

From: Cath Bruzzone <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 15 March 2025 19:57
To: Richmond Local Plan
Subject: Local plan consultation - response from Eel Pie Island resident

Categories: Consultation Response

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For the attention of the Planning Inspector

I am a resident of [REDACTED] and I am writing to you to object strongly to the proposed modifications to the Local Plan, specifically Main Modification 44, the proposed redefinition of the 'functional flood plain' with the inclusion of Eel Pie Island, moving it from Flood Zone 3a to Flood Zone 3b which will have a seriously harmful affect on island residents, sports facilities and businesses.

1. Eel Pie Island is a real benefit to the LBRuT: it has a historic significance and brings tourists and visitors to Twickenham. Twickenham Rowing Club for example was founded in 1860, sponsored by the exiled kings of France. Declaring the island a functional flood zone would have a serious negative consequences for the residents, sports facilities and businesses, inevitably affect its vibrancy and the reduce island's role as an attraction for the Borough.
2. Eel Pie Island is in a tidal section of the Thames and the tide is controlled artificially between Richmond and Teddington Locks. The level of the tide is mostly kept artificially low in this area and in any case, within six hours, high tides have completely subsided. The island is higher than the rest of the river bank, and it hasn't flooded in the past 25 years. Most of the houses are also built even higher. It appears that there has been confusion in the designation of the island in the past and misunderstanding of the flood risk. This needs to be addressed and corrected, using evidence.
3. The Council is about to develop the riverside directly opposite Eel Pie Island, presumably encouraging people to come and live and work there and enjoy the new facilities and yet it intends to blight this same area by declaring it a flood risk. This doesn't make any sense.
4. Eel Pie Islanders already have problems obtaining insurance for their homes as insurance companies are risk-averse and, despite the lack of evidence of flooding, use the proximity of the river to refuse insurance or offer prohibitive premiums. Any change in the designation will certainly mean that islanders will not be able to get insurance at all. Clearly this will be a disaster for the residents, sports facilities and business owners.
5. Many homes and businesses on Eel Pie Island are over 50 years old. They need upgrading and building work has always been a feature of the island. We ourselves have added an extra floor to our house. Businesses thrive and residents love living on the island. So as they grow their businesses, increase their families or make space for elderly care, they rebuild or improve their homes and offices, thus improving the local area. Obtaining finances for these improvements will be badly affected by the proposed re-designation. The refusal of planning permission for new extensions has already started. As there is no evidence of flooding or the risk of flooding, this is simply unfair.

6. This is the first time we have heard of this drastic change to the nature of the island and we understand that representatives of the island were not allowed to speak at a previous meeting where amendments to the Local Plan were being considered. As we are so severely affected, this is also grossly unfair.

For all these reasons, I object strongly to these modifications and hope that island residents can soon be reassured that the re-classification will not take place or an exception will be made for Eel Pie Island.

Thank you.

Catherine Bruzzone

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