

**COUNCILLOR ANDY GRAHAM**

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**WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

7 March 2023

Julia Simpson  
Area Director  
Environment Agency  
Red Kite House  
Howbery Business Park  
Benson Lane  
Crowmarsh Gifford  
Wallingford  
OX10 8BD

Dear Julia

### **Challenge to fluvial flood zone maps for The Moors area in Ducklington**

We are writing to express our concerns and to challenge the accuracy of the current EA published floodzone map that covers The Moors area in Ducklington.

The basis for our challenge is that this area was reclassified from Floodzone 3 to a Floodzone 1 as part of the EA's modelling review titled "St Johns lock to Shifford" that was carried out over 2010/11. However, as per the EA's Windrush flow data at Newbridge, flood events over the last 20 years have been increasing both in terms of frequency and severity. In addition to the 2007 floods, this area has suffered from 2 major flooding events in the last 10 years, one in 2014 and the other in 2020, both of which as per the EA's model have been classified as greater than 1 in 100 year events. As the Council doesn't have access to the model report and isn't aware of any substantial schemes or changes to the local hydrological situation it is questioning this decision.

As you know the fluvial flood zone maps are critical in guiding the determination of major housing development applications. The fact that this site has now been reclassified as Floodzone 1 has prevented flood risk being permitted as a factor either by the Council's planning committee or by the national inspector. The Council is keen to ensure that a correct decision is made on a current planning application on the Land East of Witney Road Ducklington - 21/03405/OUT.

Continued....!

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The Council is therefore formally asking your assistance in:

- providing the drivers behind this significant change in the floodzone, and
- conducting an urgent review of your flood model for this area, accelerating the timing of your own scheduled modelling review which is currently scheduled to provide updated results in the spring of 2024.

We look forward to hearing from you shortly and are happy to meet to discuss the matter in more detail.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Graham', written in a cursive style.

COUNCILLOR ANDY GRAHAM  
Leader of the Council