

**Resilience works:** Home raised and retrofitted

**Typology:** Highset elevated, lightweight framing

This couple lived through two major riverine flood events — first in 2011, then again in 2022. After the devastation of 2011, they made the decision to rebuild the lower floor of their home to be flood-resilient.

The rebuilding process was deeply frustrating. As one of them recalled, insurers insisted on replacing everything like-for-like, which “struck me as madness. I remember saying, ‘What lunatic would plan to fail again?’”



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Determined to avoid that outcome, they rebuilt with materials that could withstand water — concrete, solid timber, metal — nothing that could rot, swell, or crumble.

When the 2022 floods brought a foot of water into the house, everything held up. Even the cabinetry was unaffected. As they put it, “It was no longer a catastrophe — more like a big spring clean.”

Initially, they had planned to sell the home. But after the rebuild, the family fell in love with the house again and decided to stay. The irony wasn’t lost on them: the river — the source of the risk — was also part of the attraction.

Looking back, they saw the original construction as typical but shortsighted — plasterboard and pine framing, with no consideration for water. “But this is a floodplain. It was always going to happen again.”

Now, they say they feel safe, knowing the house can withstand up to around three metres of inundation. “Of course, no one wants to flood — but we’ve removed the fear.”

Their designer had summed it up best, they said: “Don’t try to talk about resilience after a disaster. Talk about preparedness before. That’s where the change happens.”

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*“When storms come, they’re now just a spring clean – not the catastrophe they once were. We feel safe, protected, and no longer live in fear of the next flood.”*

– Homeowner