



Huntingdonshire Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Site Summary

Site CfS:330

Final Draft Report

Prepared for
Huntingdonshire District
Council

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This report describes work commissioned by Huntingdonshire District Council by an instruction via email dated 21 July 2025. The Client's representative for the contract was Frances Schulz of Huntingdonshire District Council. Freya Nation of JBA Consulting carried out this work.

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The methodology adopted and the sources of information used by JBA in providing its services are outlined in this Report. The work described in this Report was undertaken between 21 July 2025 and 6 November 2025 and is based on the conditions encountered and the information available during the said period. The scope of this Report and the services are accordingly factually limited by these circumstances.

The conclusions and recommendations contained in this Report are based upon information provided by others and upon the assumption that all relevant information has been provided by those parties from whom it has been requested and that such information is accurate.

Acknowledgements

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1 Background

This is a Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) site screening report for Local Plan Site CfS:330. The content of this report assumes the reader has already consulted the 'HDC Level 1 SFRA' (2024) and read the 'HDC Level 2 SFRA Main Report' (2025) and is therefore familiar with the terminology used in this report.

1.1 Site CfS:330

- Location: Glebe Farm, Sawtry
- Existing site use: Agricultural
- Existing site use vulnerability: Less vulnerable
- Proposed site use: Natural / Open Space
- Proposed site use vulnerability: Water compatible
- Site area (ha): 52.3
- Watercourse: Unmodelled ordinary watercourse (drainage ditches)
- Environment Agency (EA) model: N/A
- Summary of requirements from Level 2 SFRA scoping stage:
 - Assessment of surface water flood extent, depths and hazards
 - Assessment of all other sources of flood risk

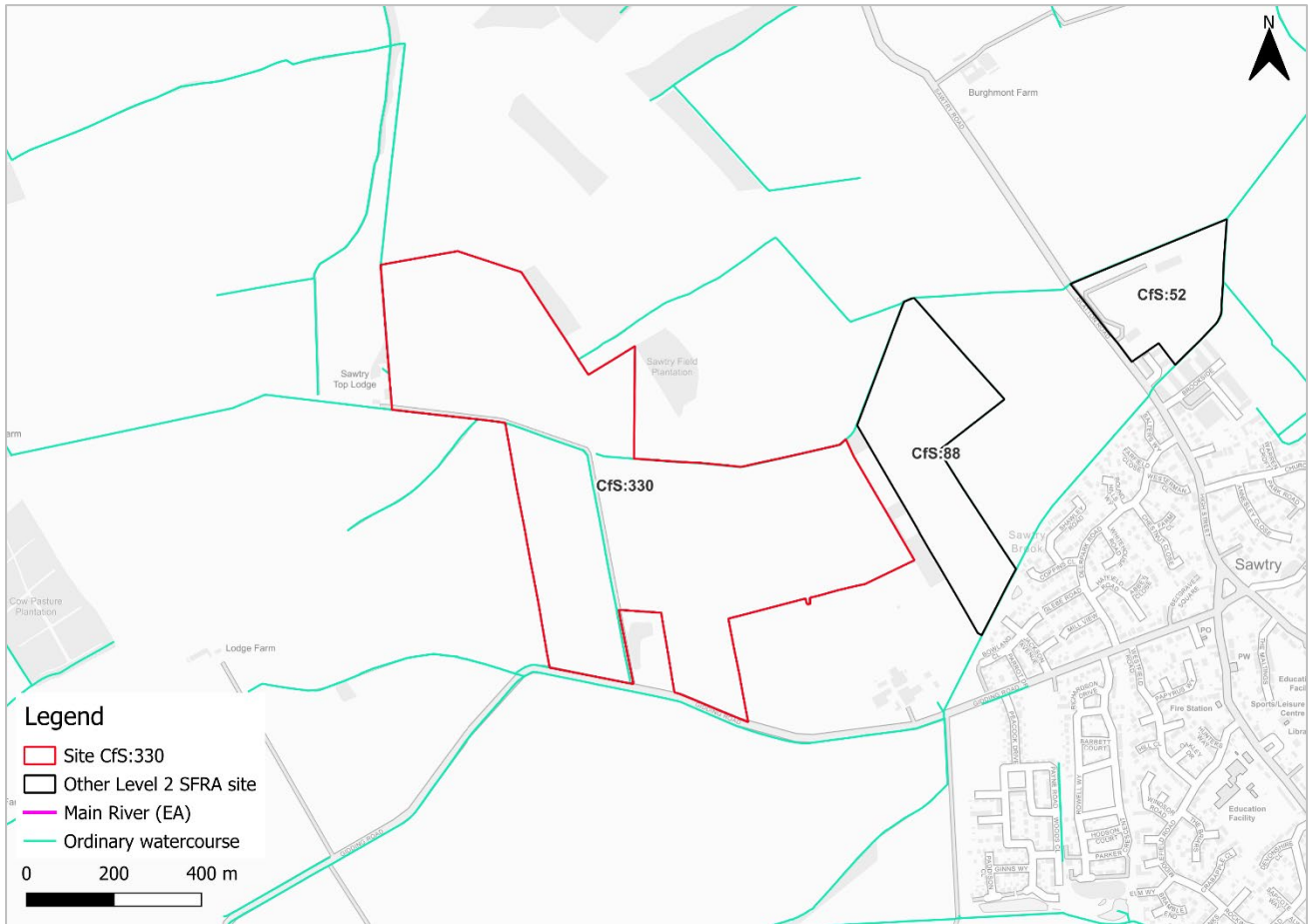


Figure 1-1: Existing site location boundary

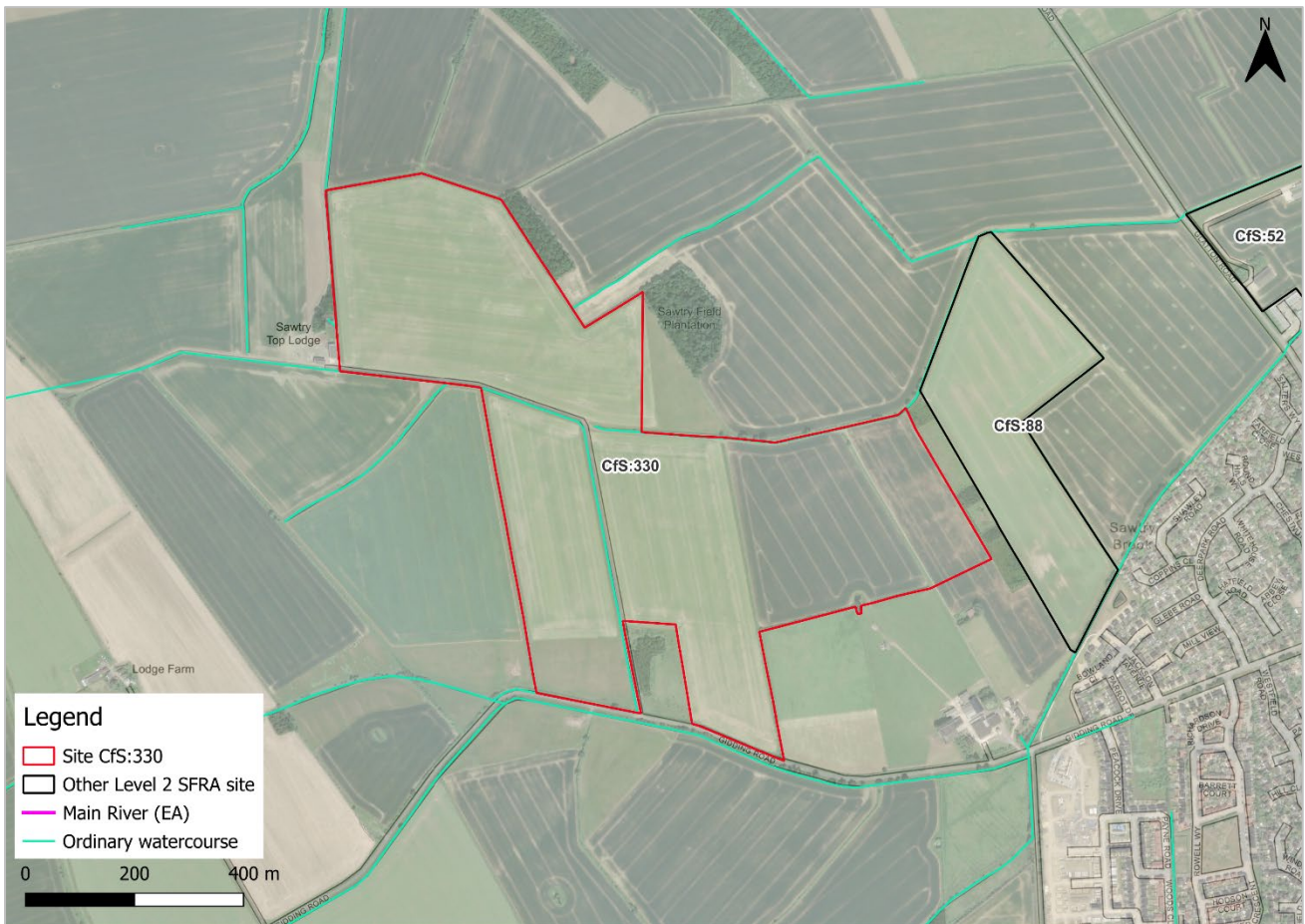


Figure 1-2: Aerial photography

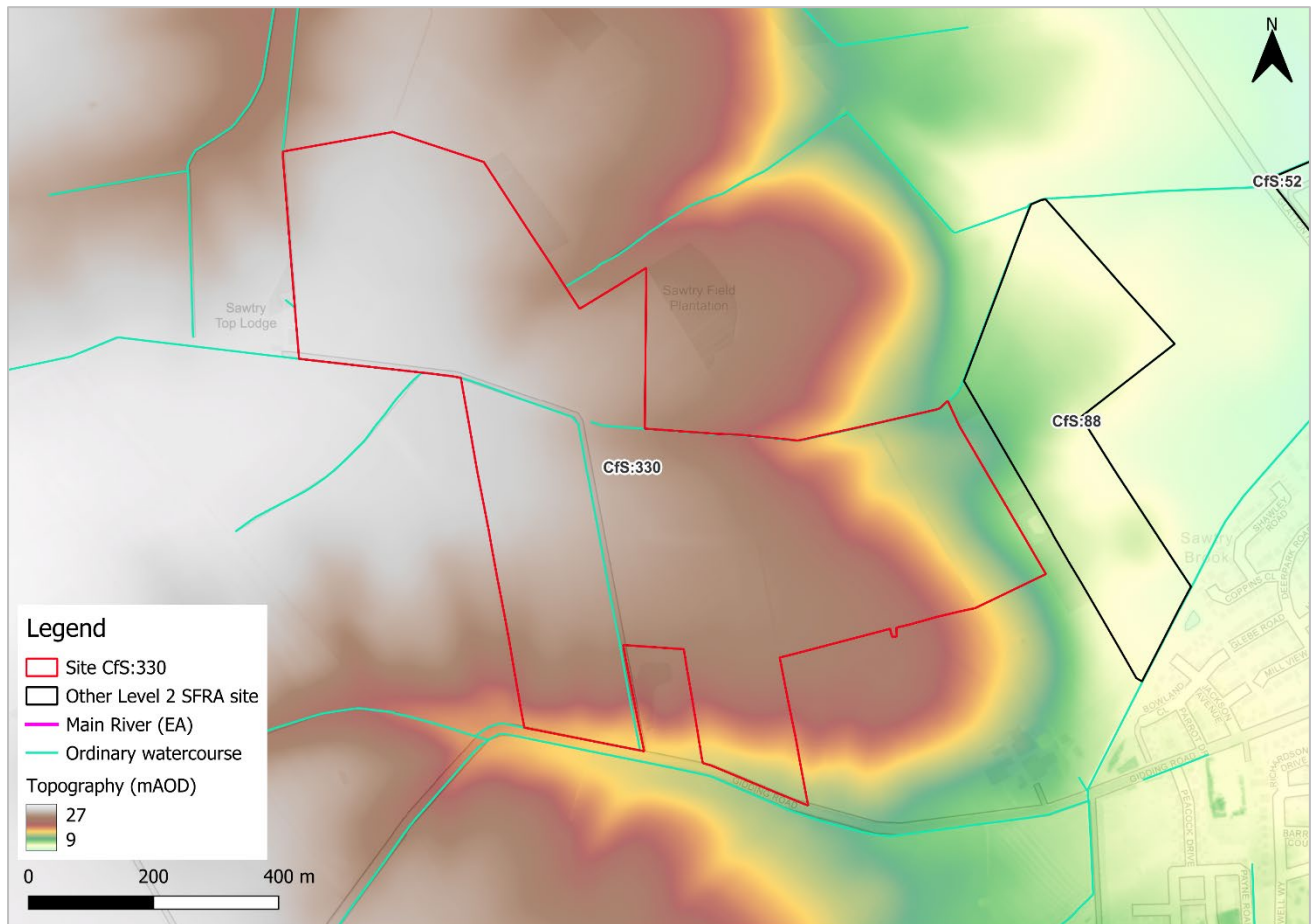


Figure 1-3: Topography

2 Flood risk from rivers and sea

2.1 Existing risk

2.1.1 Flood Map for Planning and functional floodplain

Based on the EA's Flood Map for Planning (accessed July 2025) and Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain), as updated in this Level 2 SFRA, the percentage areas of the site within each flood zone are stated in Table 2-1 and can be viewed on Figure 2-1. This version of the Flood Map for Planning does not consider flood defence infrastructure (Section 2.2) or the impacts of climate change (Section 2.3).

The site is wholly located within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk from rivers and the sea. However, there is no detailed model available for the unnamed ordinary watercourses present within the site.

Table 2-1: Existing flood risk based on percentage area of site at risk

Flood Zone 1 (% area)	Flood Zone 2 (% area)	Flood Zone 3a (% area)	Flood Zone 3b (% area)
100	0	0	0

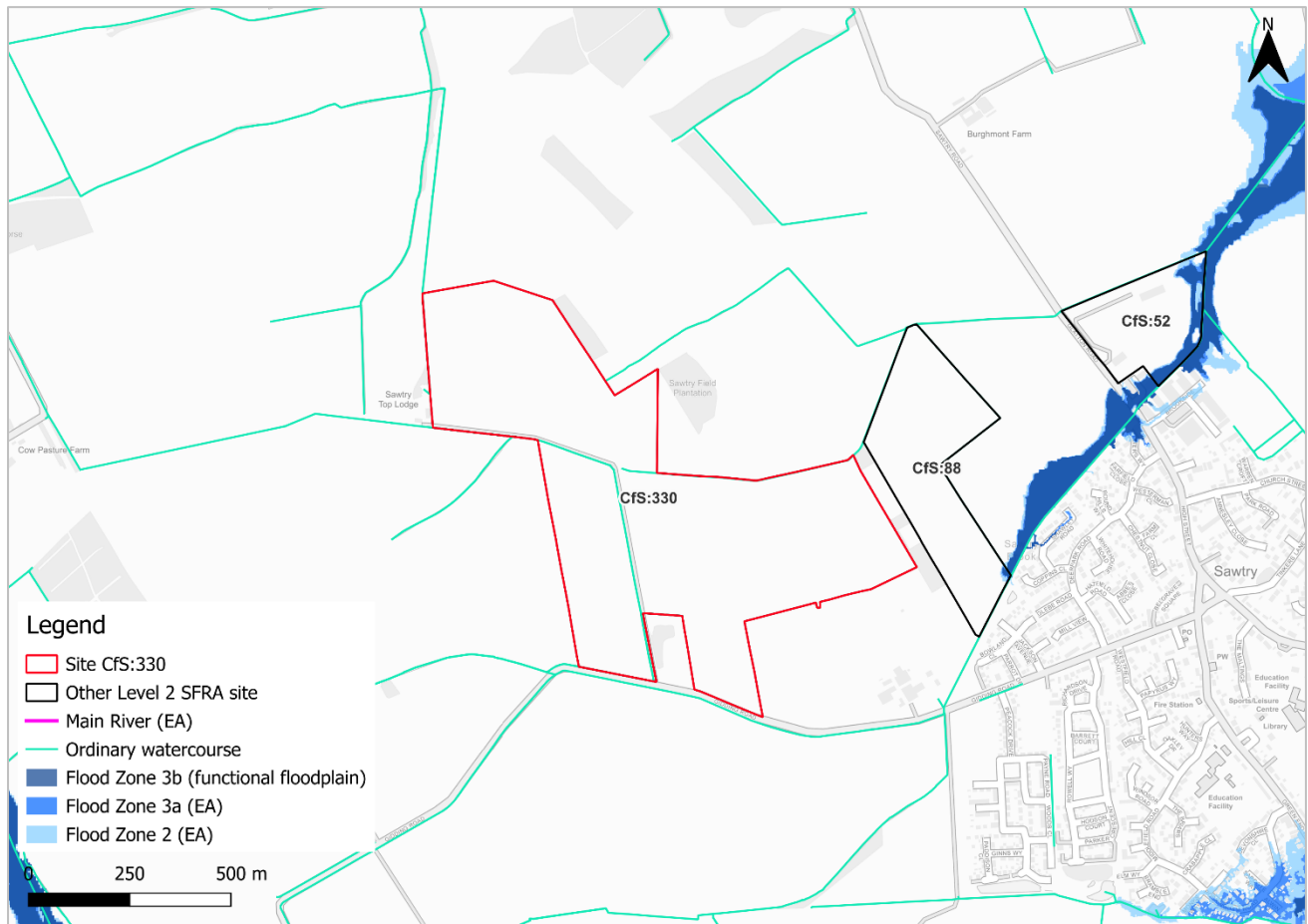


Figure 2-1: Existing risk

2.2 Flood risk management

2.2.1 Flood defences

The site doesn't benefit from any formal engineered flood defences, according to the EA's spatial flood defences dataset.

2.2.2 Working with Natural Processes

The EA's Working with Natural Processes (WwNP) dataset has been interrogated to identify opportunities for Natural Flood Management (NFM) to reduce flood risk to the site and surrounding areas. These areas are shown in Figure 2-2. Note, the WwNP mapping is broadscale and indicative, therefore further investigation will be required for any land shown to have potential for WwNP. There is potential for riparian tree planting alongside the ditches present within the west and south of the site. There is also potential for wider catchment woodland planting within the wider site. Tree planting can help to reduce runoff.

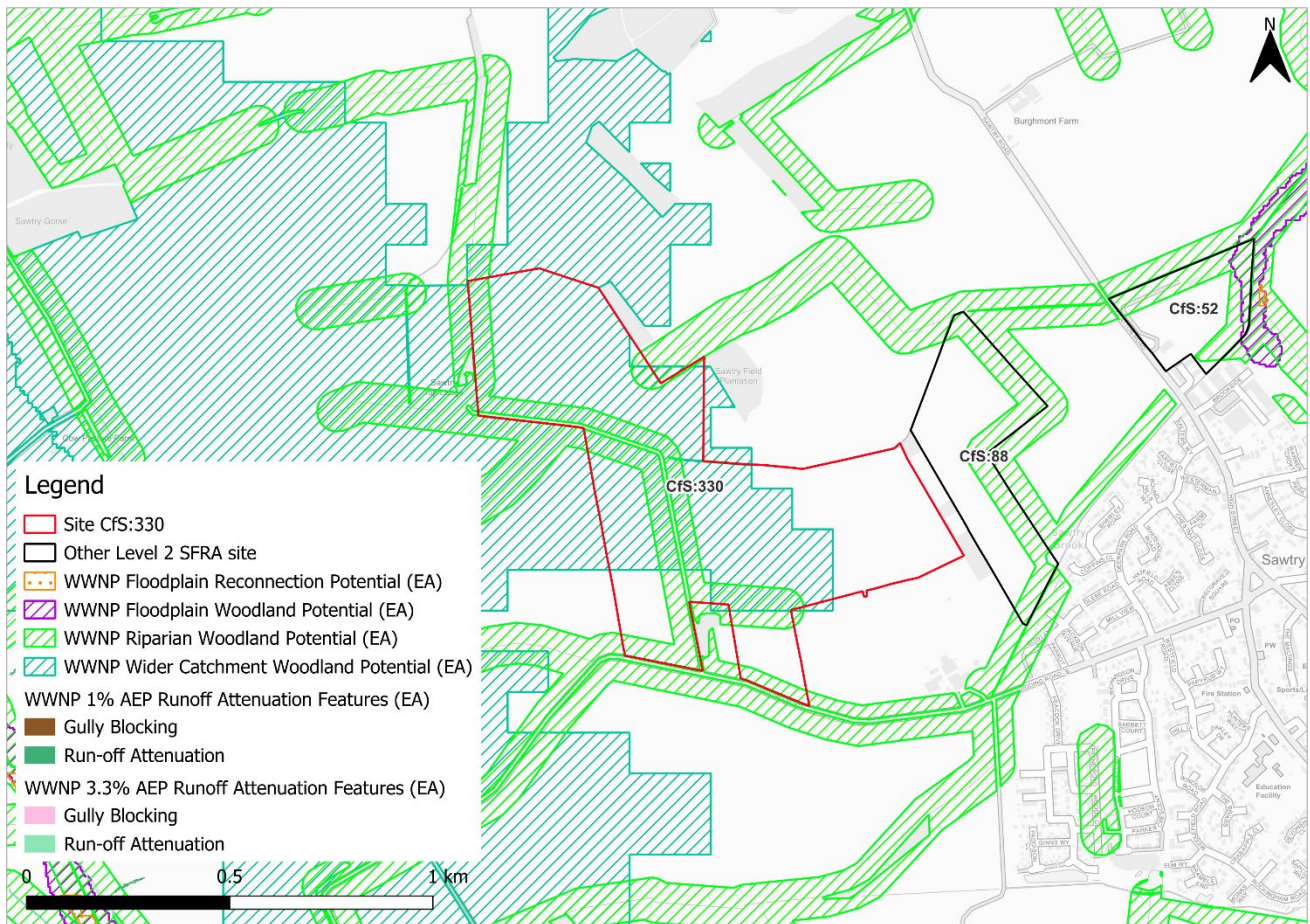


Figure 2-2: Natural Flood Management (NFM) potential mapping

2.3 Impacts from climate change

2.3.1 Fluvial

The EA's Flood Map for Planning shows the site is not at risk from fluvial climate change.

2.3.2 Tidal

The EA's Flood Map for Planning shows the site is not at risk from tidal climate change.

2.4 Historic flood incidents

The EA's Historic Flood Map (HFM) and Recorded Flood Outlines (RFO) datasets have been considered which shows that there are no recorded historic flood incidents within the vicinity of the site.

2.5 Emergency planning

2.5.1 Flood warning

The EA operates a Flood Warning Service for properties located within a Flood Warning Area (FWA) for when a flood event is expected to occur. This site is not located within a FWA.

Flood alerts may be issued before a flood warning for properties located within a Flood Alert Area (FAA) to provide advance notice of the possibility of flooding. A flood alert may be issued when there is less confidence that flooding will occur in a FWA. This site is not located within a FAA.

2.5.2 Access and escape routes

Based on available information, safe access and escape routes could likely be achieved during a flood event via Gidding Road to the south, as shown in Figure 2-3.

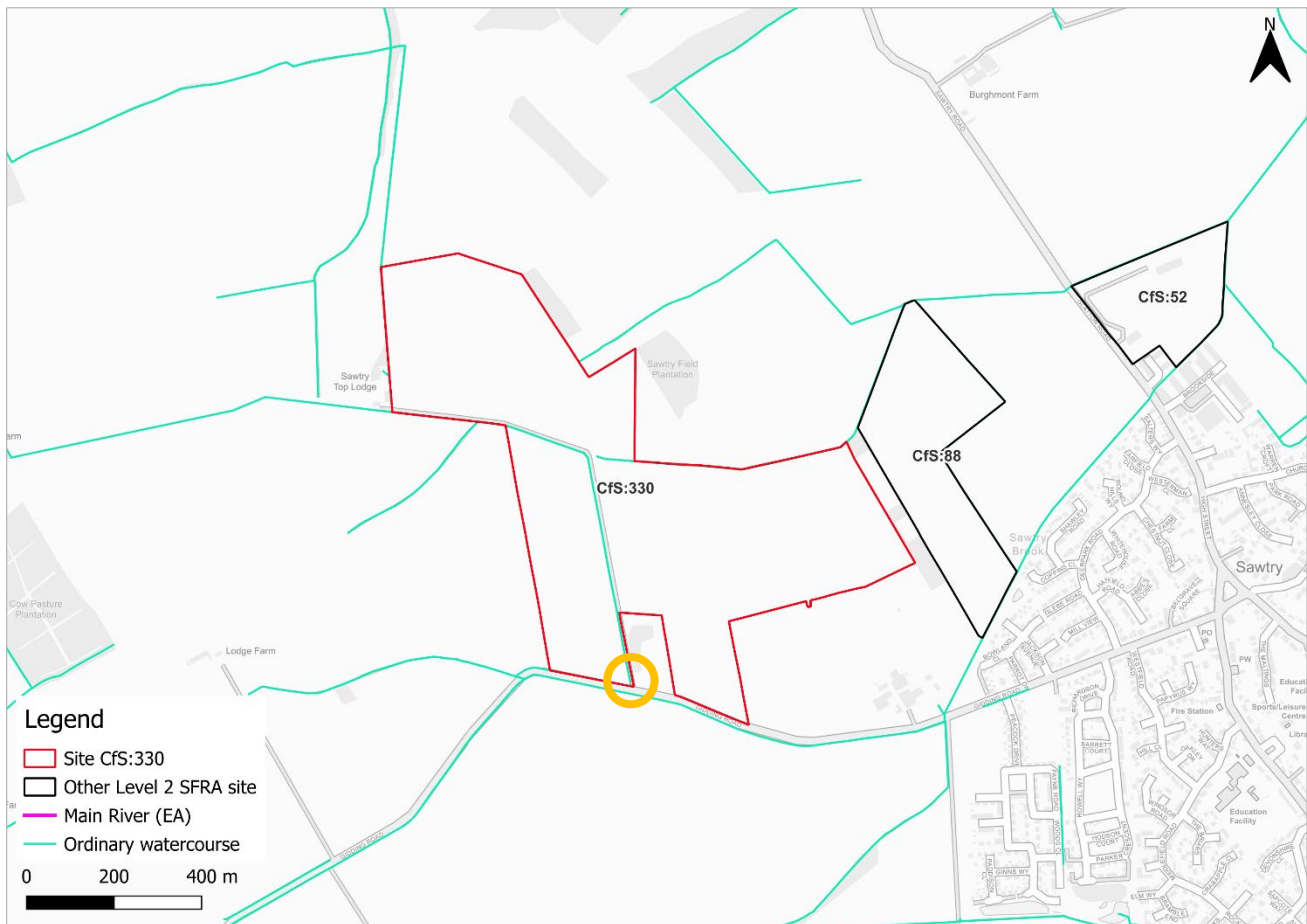


Figure 2-3: Potential access and escape routes

2.6 Observations, mitigation options, site suitability, sequential approach to development management - fluvial

- **Observations:**
 - The proposed development of the site would see a change in the risk classification from less vulnerable to natural greenspace, likely to be considered water compatible, according to the NPPF.
 - The site is located wholly within fluvial Flood Zone 1 and is not shown to be at additional risk from climate change.
 - The extent of fluvial risk from the unmodelled watercourses within the site is currently unknown. Using the 0.1% AEP surface water event as a proxy, risk is modelled to remain largely confined to the areas immediately surrounding the watercourses which generally follow the site boundary and the unnamed road between Sawtry Top Lodge and Gidding Road.
- **Defences:**
 - According to the EA's Spatial Flood Defences dataset, the site doesn't benefit from any formal engineered flood defences.

- Mitigation:
 - The ordinary watercourses should be included within the site design and layout. Infilling of drainage ditches should be avoided.
 - Were development of this site to proceed, given the proximity of this site to neighbouring site CfS:88, it would be prudent to formulate a strategy to develop these sites in tandem and for consultation between each landowner to take place to ensure a joined-up approach for sustainable development is in place.
- Access and escape:
 - Safe access and escape routes must be available at times of flood and appear to be available from the southwest of the site, via Gidding Road.

3 Flood risk from surface water

3.1 Existing risk

The NaFRA2 Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) mapping received a significant update and was published January 2025, including for surface water flood extents and depths. However, at the time of writing, the EA has confirmed that the depth information available is not structured in a way that is suitable for planning purposes. Therefore, this Level 2 SFRA considers the third generation RoFSW depth and hazard mapping in addition to the NaFRA2 extents, as agreed with the EA. Surface water depth and hazard should be modelled at the site-specific FRA stage.

3.1.1 Risk of Flooding from Surface Water - NaFRA2 extents

Based on the EA's national scale RoFSW map, as updated in January 2025, surface water risk to the site is predominantly very low. Approximately 1% of the site is at high surface water risk. A further 2% is at medium surface water risk and 3% is at low surface water risk. Risk tends to be confined to the existing field drains and topographic low spots, particularly in the east of the site. The RoFSW map shows a flow path alongside, an encroaching onto in some areas, Gidding Road.

Table 3-1: Existing surface water flood risk based on percentage area at risk using the NaFRA2 RoFSW map

Very low risk (% area)	Low risk (% area)	Medium risk (% area)	High risk (% area)
94	3	2	1

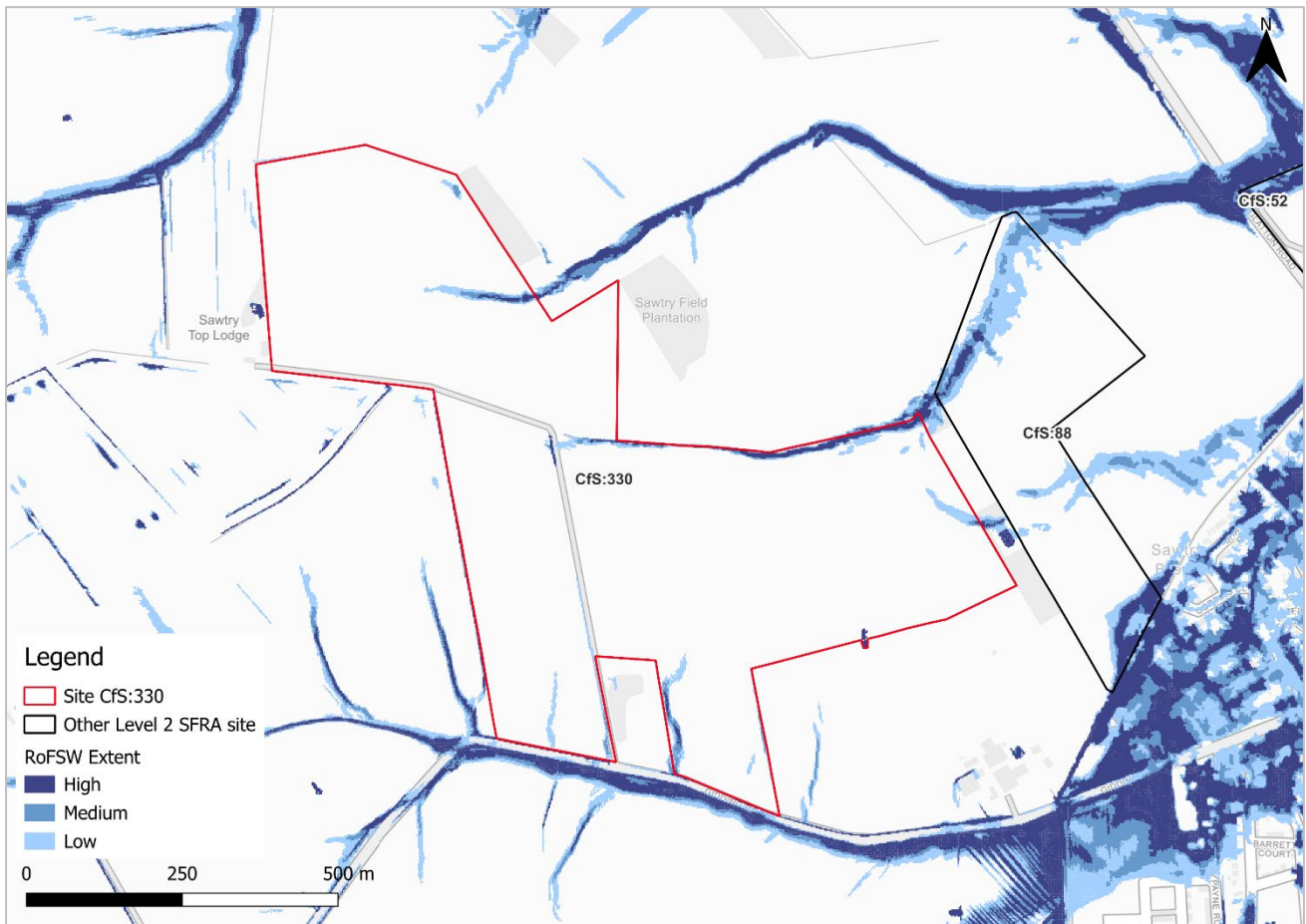


Figure 3-1: Surface water flood extents (NaFRA2 - Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map)

3.1.2 Risk of Flooding from Surface Water - third generation depths and hazard

Based on the EA's national scale third generation RoFSW map, flow paths largely remain within the channels of the ordinary watercourses along the site boundary. Outside of the ordinary watercourses, flood depths are predicted to remain below 0.15m (Figure 3-2) with a low hazard rating (Figure 3-3). The third generation mapping is similar to the NaFRA2 RoFSW mapping.

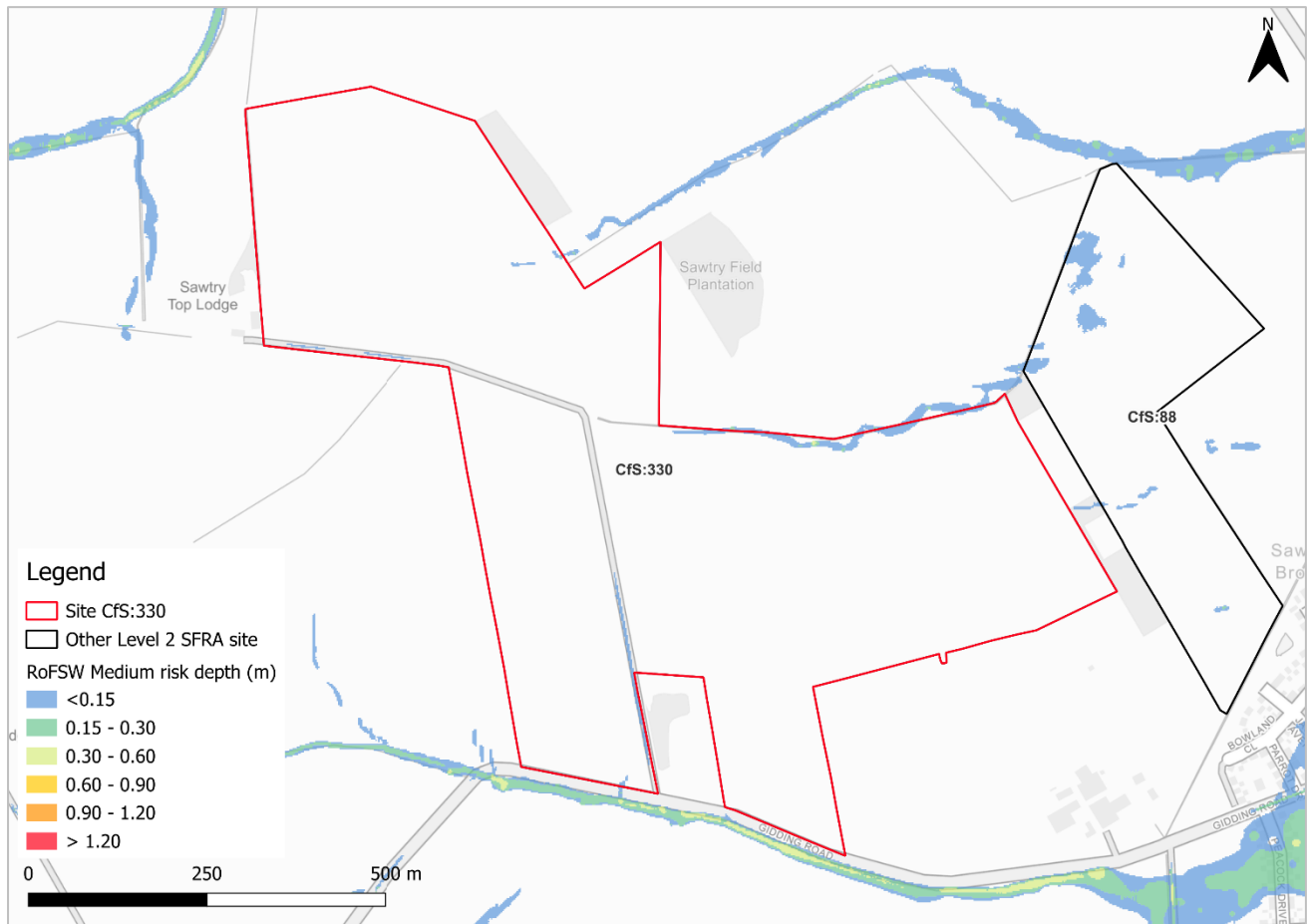


Figure 3-2: Medium risk event surface water flood depths (Third generation - Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map)

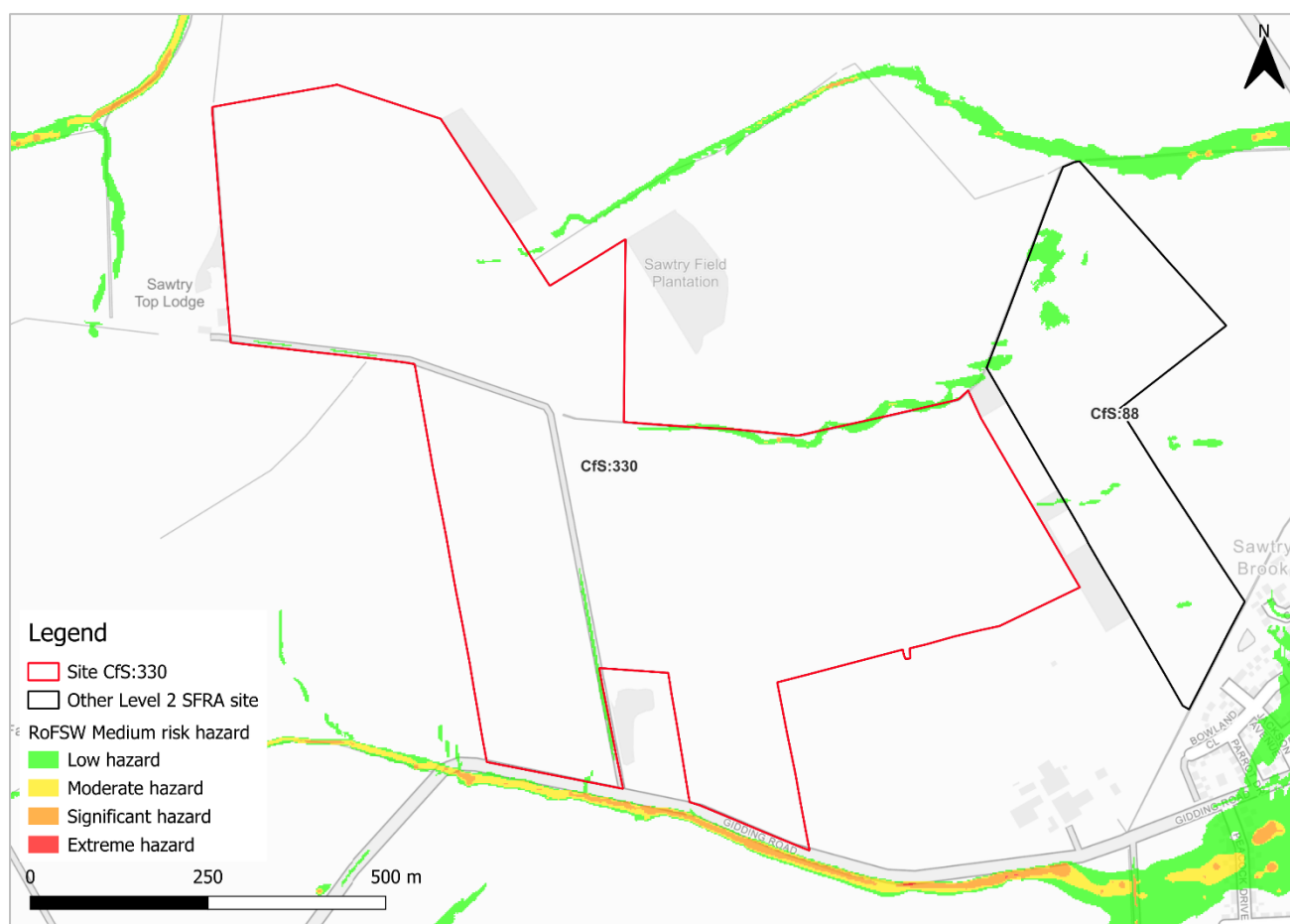


Figure 3-3: Medium risk event surface water flood hazard¹ (Third generation - Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map)

3.2 Impacts from climate change

The NaFRA2 RoFSW mapping now includes one modelled climate change scenario, the 2050s central allowance for the high, medium and low risk events. However, the upper end allowance on peak rainfall for the 2070s should be assessed in SFRAs. Therefore, at the time of writing, the available national surface water climate change mapping is unsuitable for consideration in development planning. This Level 2 SFRA considers the low risk surface water event as a conservative proxy for the medium risk event plus climate change, as agreed with the EA. The impact of climate change on surface water flood risk should be fully accounted for at the site-specific FRA stage.

Based on the information available, during the low risk surface water event, risk is largely confined to existing field drains and topographic low spots, particularly in the northeast of the site. Further areas of flooding impact the southern and eastern sides of the site (Figure 3-4).

¹ Based on Section 7.5 Hazard rating. What is the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map? Report version 2.0. April 2019. Environment Agency

Outside of the ordinary watercourses within the site, flooding is generally to depths of less than 0.15m and of a low hazard.

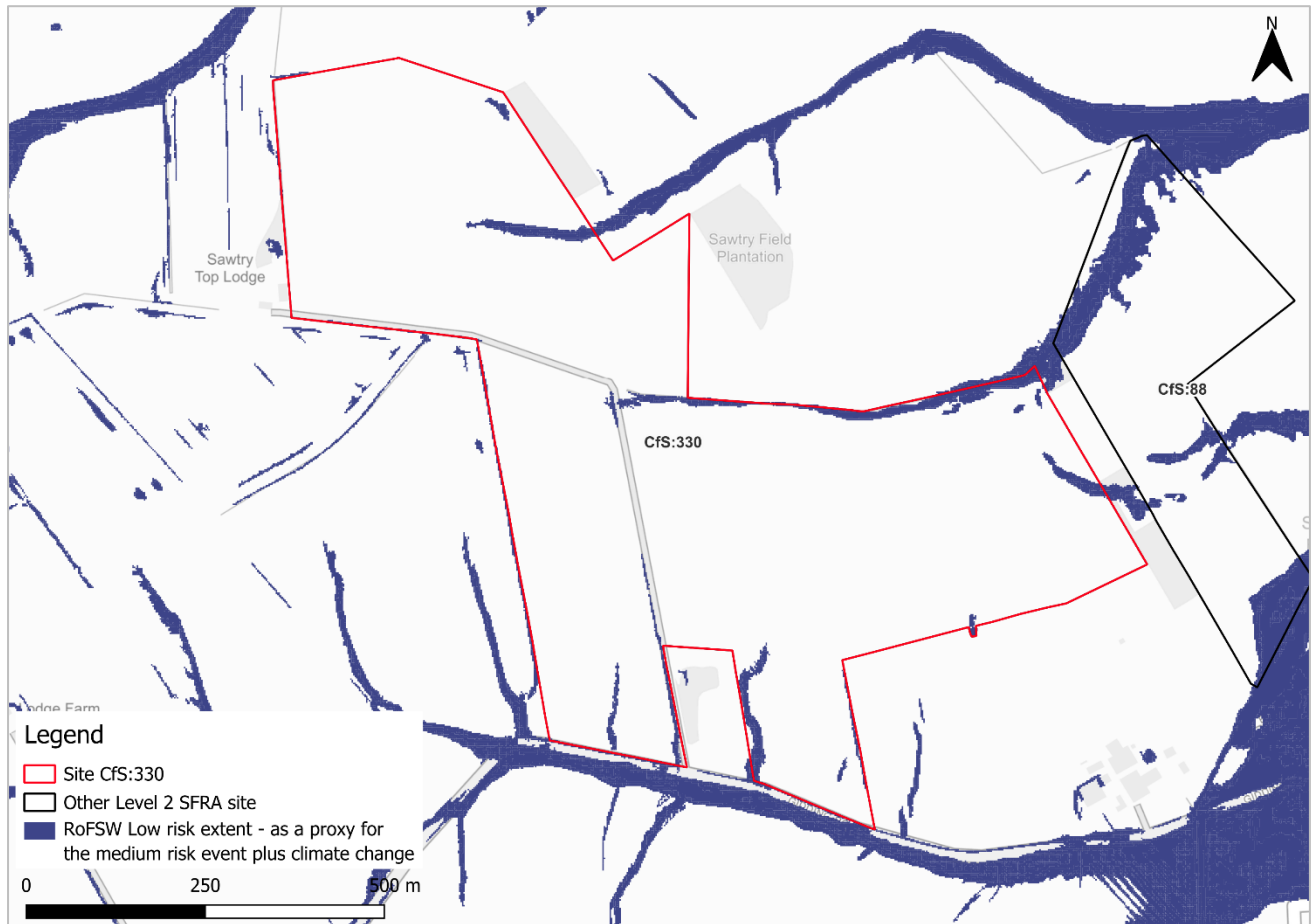


Figure 3-4: Low risk event surface water flood extent, as a proxy for the medium risk event plus climate change (NaFRA2 - Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map)

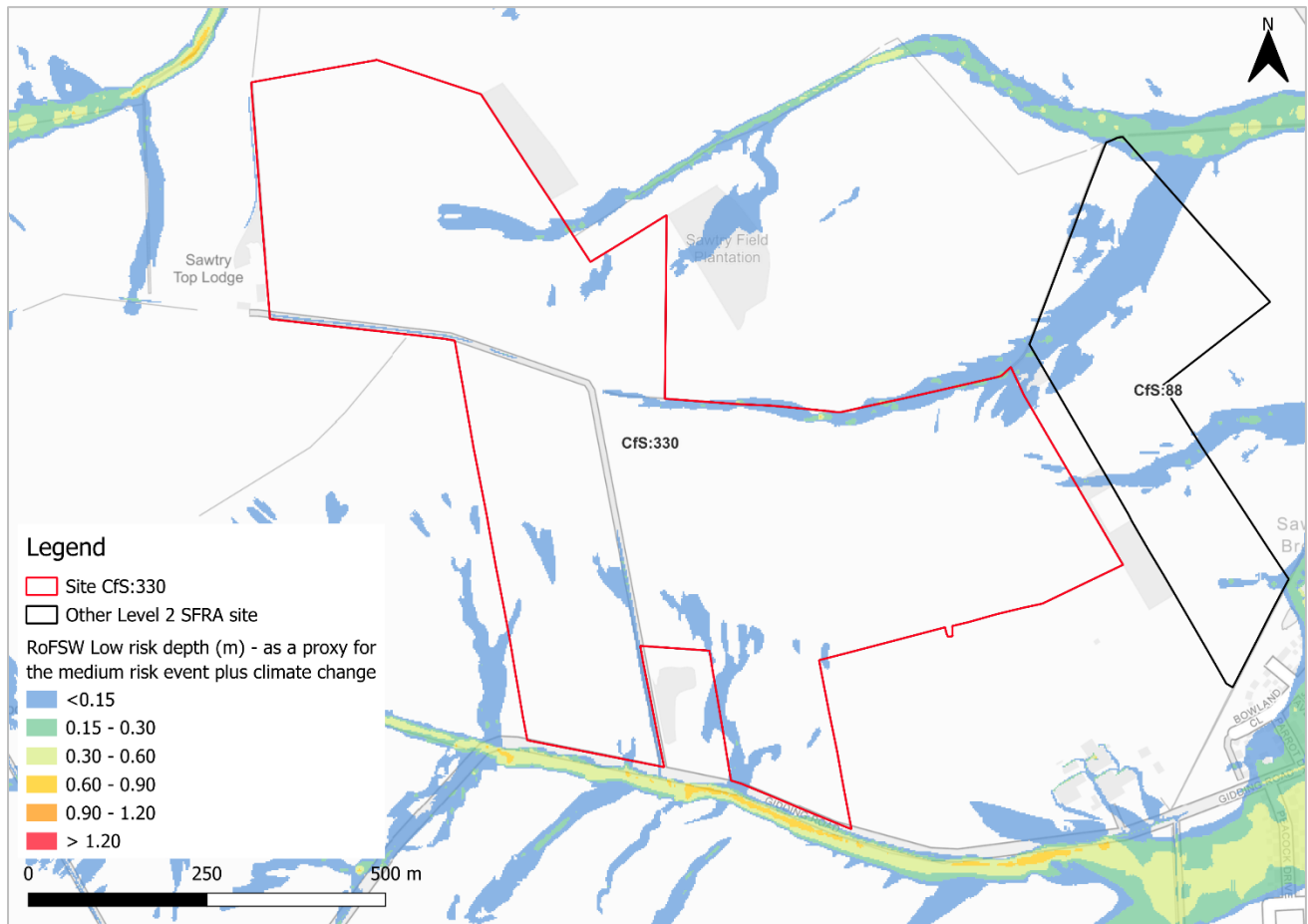


Figure 3-5: Low risk event surface water flood depths, as a proxy for the medium risk event plus climate change (Third generation - Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map)

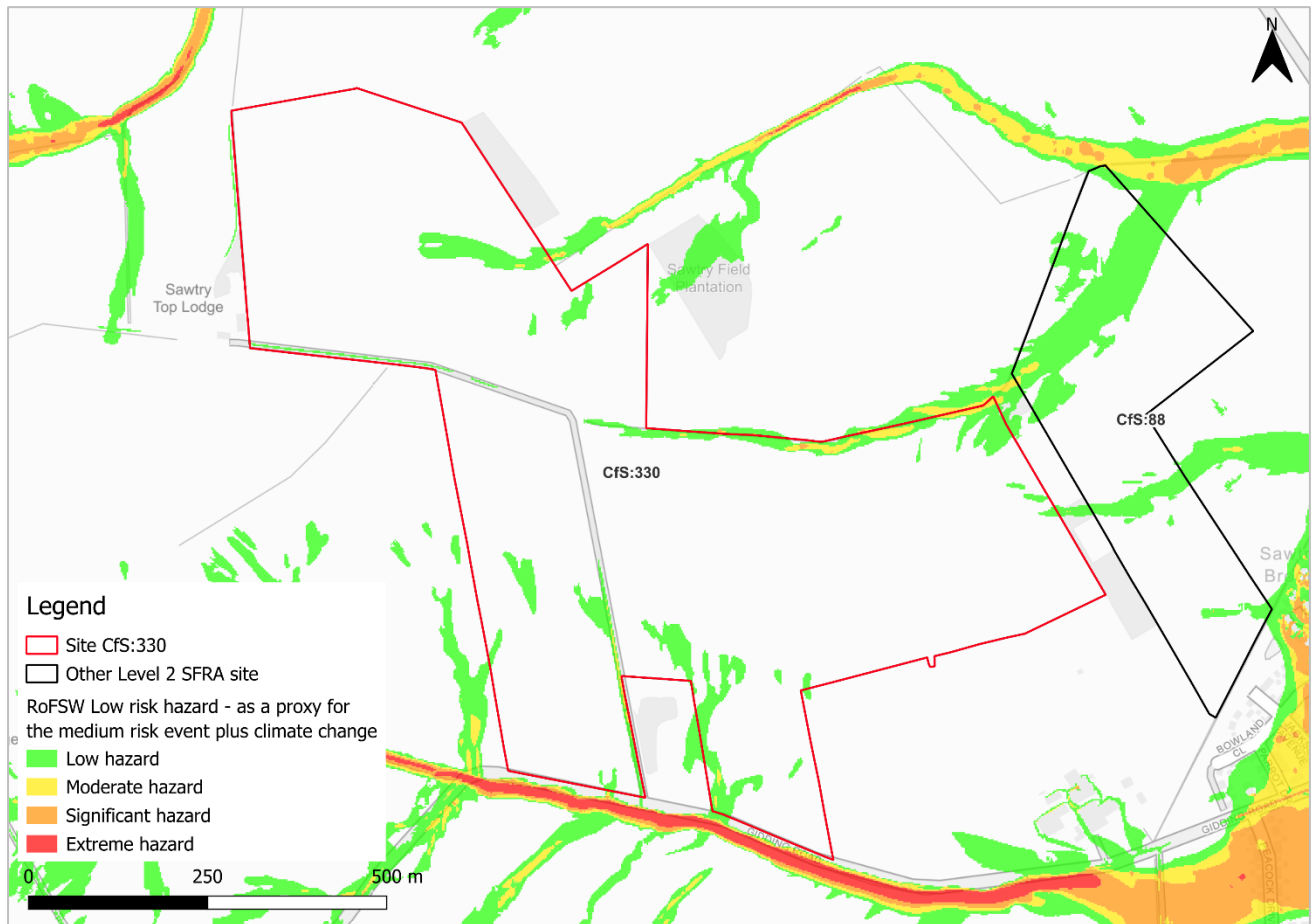


Figure 3-6: Low risk event surface water flood hazard, as a proxy for the medium risk event plus climate change (Third generation - Risk of Flooding from Surface Water map)

3.3 Observations, mitigation options, site suitability, sequential approach to development management - surface water

- Current risk to the site is predominantly very low, with 94% of the site being at very low surface water flood risk. Surface water risk in the high and medium risk events is confined to areas of ponding within drainage ditches and topographic low spots throughout the site.
- The effects of climate change on surface water have not been modelled for this SFRA, however the low risk surface water event has been used as a proxy for the medium risk event plus climate change. Risk is largely similar to the medium risk event, with a greater extent of ponding within the topographic low spots.
- Topographic low spots and flow paths should be retained onsite.
- The RoFSW map is not suitable for identifying whether an individual property will flood and is therefore indicative. The RoFSW map is not appropriate to act as the sole evidence for any specific planning or regulatory decision or assessment of risk in relation to flooding at any scale without further supporting studies, modelling, or evidence.

4 Cumulative impacts assessment and high risk catchments

4.1 Level 1 cumulative impacts assessment

A cumulative impact assessment was completed through the Huntingdonshire Level 1 SFRA (2024), which aimed to identify catchments sensitive to the cumulative impact of new development. This site is located within one catchment, namely, the Middle Level catchment. This catchment is ranked as a medium sensitivity catchment. Planning considerations for sites at medium sensitivity to the cumulative impacts of development can be found in Appendix G of the Level 1 SFRA. Cumulative impacts of development should also be considered as part of a site-specific FRA.

5 Groundwater, geology, soils, SuDS suitability

Risk of groundwater emergence is assessed in this SFRA using JBA's 5m Groundwater Emergence Map. This dataset is recommended for use by the EA in the SFRA Good Practice Guide². Figure 5-1 shows the map covering this site and the surrounding areas. Table 5-1 explains the risk classifications.

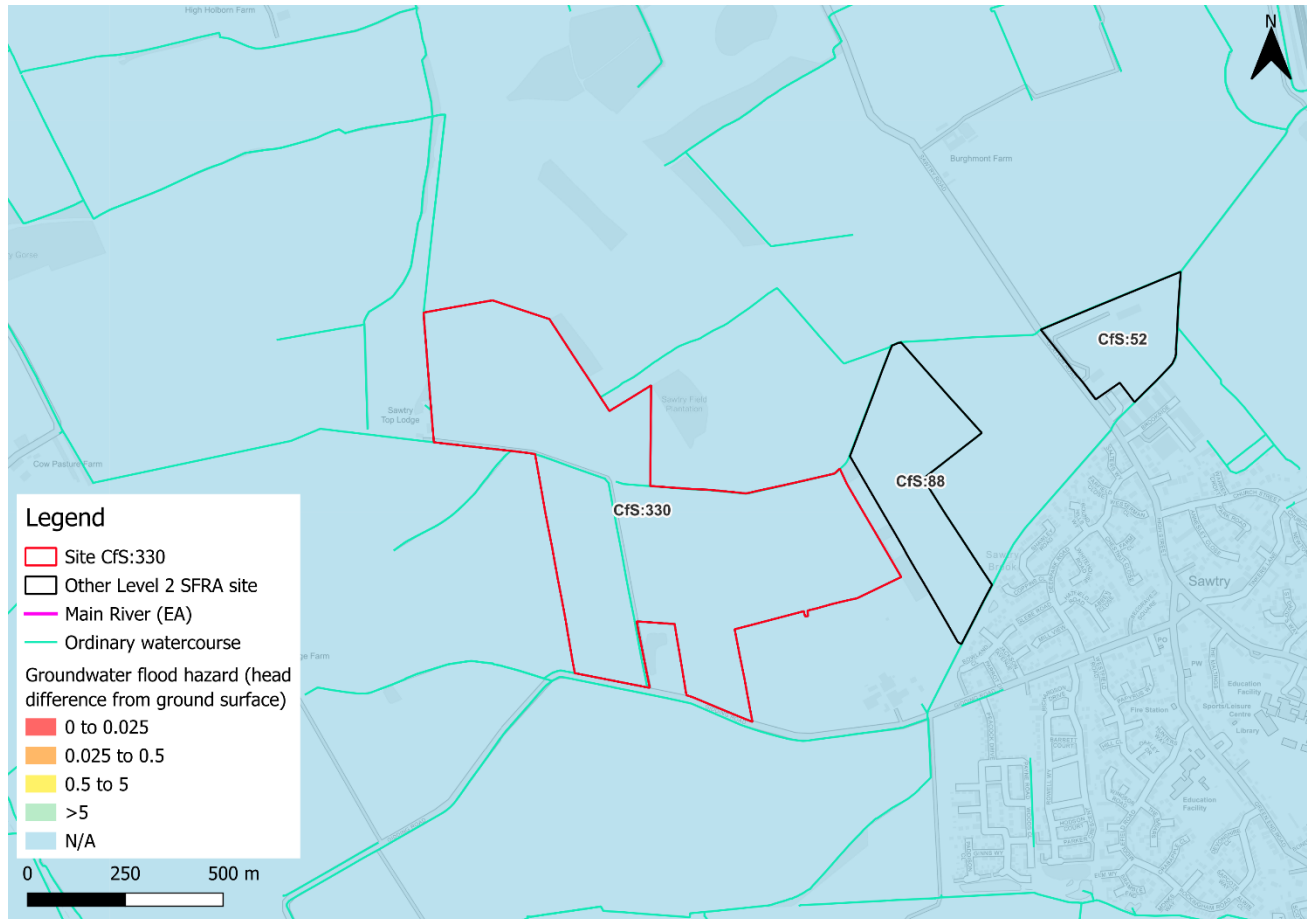


Figure 5-1: JBA 5m Groundwater Emergence Map

The whole of the site is classified as no risk from groundwater emergence. Any infiltration SuDS should therefore be suitable at this site.

² [Strategic flood risk assessment good practice guide. ADEPT. December 2021.](#)

Table 5-1: Groundwater Hazard Classification

Groundwater head difference (m)*	Class label
0 to 0.025	Groundwater levels are either at very near (within 0.025m of) the ground surface in the 100-year return period flood event. Within this zone there is a risk of groundwater flooding to both surface and subsurface assets. Groundwater may emerge at significant rates and has the capacity to flow overland and/or pond within any topographic low spots.
0.025 to 0.5	Groundwater levels are between 0.025m and 0.5m below the ground surface in the 100-year return period flood event. Within this zone there is a risk of groundwater flooding to surface and subsurface assets. There is the possibility of groundwater emerging at the surface locally.
0.5 to 5	Groundwater levels are between 0.5m and 5m below the ground surface in the 100-year return period flood event There is a risk of flooding to subsurface assets, but surface manifestation of groundwater is unlikely.
>5	Groundwater levels are at least 5m below the ground surface in the 100-year return period flood event. Flooding from groundwater is not likely.
N/A	No risk. This zone is deemed as having a negligible risk from groundwater flooding due to the nature of the local geological deposits.
*Difference is defined as ground surface in mAOD minus modelled groundwater table in mAOD.	

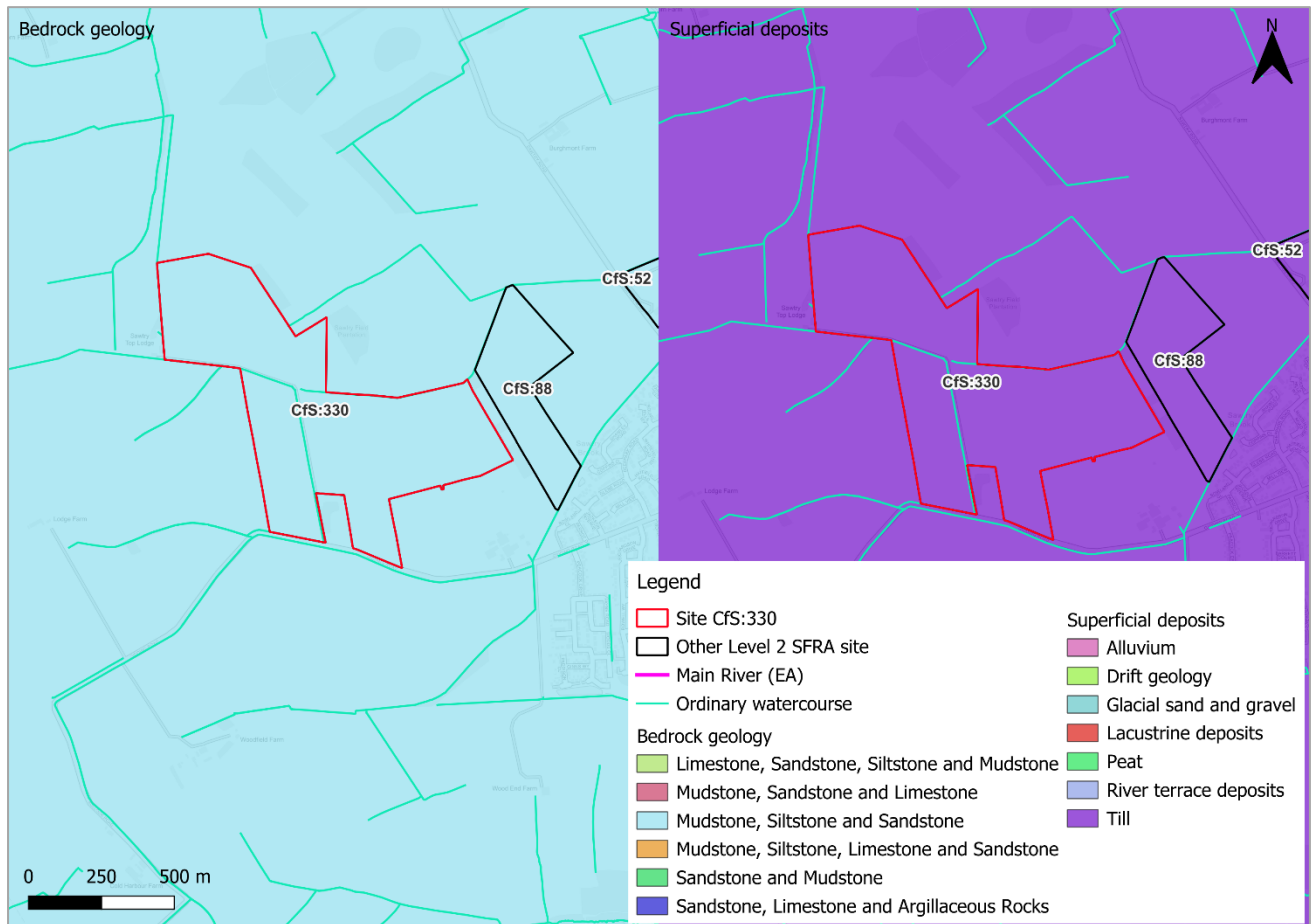


Figure 5-2: Soils and geology

6 Residual risk

Although a site may be afforded some protection from defences and / or drainage infrastructure, there is always a residual risk of flooding from asset failure i.e. breaching / overtopping of flood defences, blockages of culverts or drainage assets.

6.1 Flood risk from reservoirs

The EA's Reservoir Flood Maps (RFM) (2021) show where water may go in the unlikely event of a reservoir or dam failure. The RFM shows a 'dry day' and 'wet day' scenario. A 'dry day' scenario assumes that the water level in the reservoir is the same as the spillway level or the underside of the roof for a service reservoir and the watercourses upstream and downstream of the reservoir are at a normal level. A 'wet day' scenario assumes a worst-case scenario where a reservoir releases water held on a 'wet day' when local rivers have already overflowed their banks.

The site is not modelled to be at risk from reservoir flooding.

7 Overall site assessment

7.1 Can part b) of the exception test be passed?

This site is not required to pass part b) of the exception test as the site is proposed for natural open space, however it must still be proven that the development can be safe for its lifetime.

7.2 Recommendations summary

Based on the evidence presented in the Level 1 SFRA (2024) and this Level 2 SFRA:

- It should be appropriate to use this site for natural greenspace.
- The ordinary watercourses should be retained. Infilling of drainage ditches should be avoided.
- Opportunities for NFM features to reduce flood risk to the site and surrounding areas could be explored.
- Safe access and escape routes should be considered further to ensure safe evacuation of site users during the low risk surface water flood event.

7.3 Site-specific FRA requirements and further work

At the planning application stage, the following should be considered:

- The FRA should assess the safety of onsite ditches and ponds and ensure that access routes remain safe.
- FRA should be carried out in line with the latest versions of the NPPF; FRCC-PPG; EA online guidance; the HDC Local Plan, and national and local SuDS policy and guidelines.
- Throughout the FRA process, consultation should be carried out with, where applicable, the local planning authority; the lead local flood authority; emergency planning officers; the Environment Agency; Anglian Water; the highways authorities; and the emergency services.

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