



**Table 1 Planning response to sequential characterisation of flood risk**

Flood zone (see Note a)	Appropriate planning response
<p>1. <b>Little or no risk</b>                      Annual probability of flooding:                      River, tidal &amp; coastal &lt;0.1%</p>	<p>No constraints due to river, tidal or coastal flooding.                      Low to medium risk</p>
<p>2 <b>Low to medium risk</b>                      Annual probability of flooding:                      River 0.1-1.0%                      Tidal &amp; coastal 0.1-0.5%</p>	<p>Suitable for most development. For this and higher-risk zones, flood risk assessment appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risk should be provided with applications or at time of local plan allocation. Flood-resistant construction and suitable warning/evacuation procedures may be required depending on the flood risk assessment. Subject to operational requirements in terms of response times, these and the higher-risk zones below are generally not suitable for essential civil infrastructure, such as hospitals, fire stations, emergency depots etc. Where such infrastructure has to be, or is already, located in these areas, access must be guaranteed and they must be capable of remaining operational in times of emergency due to extreme flooding</p>
<p>3 <b>High risk (see note b)</b>                      Annual probability of flooding, with defences where they exist:                      River 1.0% or greater                      Tidal &amp; coastal 0.5% or greater</p>	<p>a) <b>Developed areas</b>                      These areas may be suitable for residential, commercial and industrial development provided the appropriate minimum standard of flood defence (including suitable warning and evacuation procedures) can be maintained for the lifetime of the development (see paragraph 31 below), with preference being given to those areas already defended to that standard.                      In allocating or permitting sites for development, authorities should seek to avoid areas that will be needed, or have significant potential, for coastal managed realignment or washland creation as part of the overall flood defence strategy for coastal cells and river catchments.</p> <p>b) <b>Undeveloped &amp; sparsely developed areas</b>                      These areas are generally not suitable for residential, commercial and industrial development unless a particular location is essential, eg for navigation and water-based recreation uses, agriculture and essential transport and utilities infrastructure, and an alternative lower-risk location is not available. General-purpose housing or other development comprising residential or institutional accommodation should not normally be permitted. Residential uses should be limited to job-related accommodation (eg caretakers and operational staff). Caravan and camping sites should generally not be located in these areas. Where, exceptionally, development is permitted, it should be provided with the appropriate minimum standard of flood defence and should not impede flood flows or result in a net loss of flood-plain storage.</p>

Flood zone (see Note a)	Appropriate planning response
	<p>c) <b>Functional flood plains</b>            These areas may be suitable for some recreation, sport, amenity and conservation uses (provided adequate warning and evacuation procedures are in place). Built development should be wholly exceptional and limited to essential transport and utilities infrastructure that has to be there. Such infrastructure should be designed and constructed so as to remain operational even at times of flood, to result in no net loss of flood-plain storage, not to impede water flows and not to increase flood risk elsewhere. There should be a presumption against the provision of camping and caravan sites.</p>

Notes:

- (a) All risks relate to the time at which a land allocation decision is made or an application submitted. The Environment Agency will publish maps of these flood zones. Flood zones should be identified from Agency flood data ignoring the presence of flood defences. Local planning authorities should, with the Agency, identify those areas currently protected by defences and the standard of protection provided by those defences.
- (b) Development should not be permitted where existing sea or river defences, properly maintained, would not provide an acceptable standard of safety over the lifetime of the development, as such land would be extremely vulnerable should a flood defence embankment or sea wall be breached, in particular because of the speed of flooding in such circumstances (see paragraph 69 below).