

Hoveton Great Broad Fish Barriers

Pre-works water vole and otter survey

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Introduction

Prior to the proposed construction of three fish barriers of Hoveton Great Broad (TG31671621) water vole and otter surveys were required to establish if either water vole or otter were present at or adjacent to the proposed construction sites.

Water Vole and Otter surveys were carried out on Hoveton Great Broad in June 2014 associated with the fish barrier works and creation of new fen areas. Very limited signs of water vole activity were found at 2 points on the margins of Hoveton Great Broad (1 small feeding station and one possible above-ground nest). One otter spraint was found on the northern shore of Hoveton Great Broad, within the area where the northern-most fen will be created. However, this was not considered to be evidence of a significant hauling-out point.

Water vole *Arvicola terrestris* are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place which water voles use for shelter or protection, and to disturb water voles while they are using such a place. If water voles are known or suspected to be present at a site, then precautions should be taken to ensure the population is safeguarded.

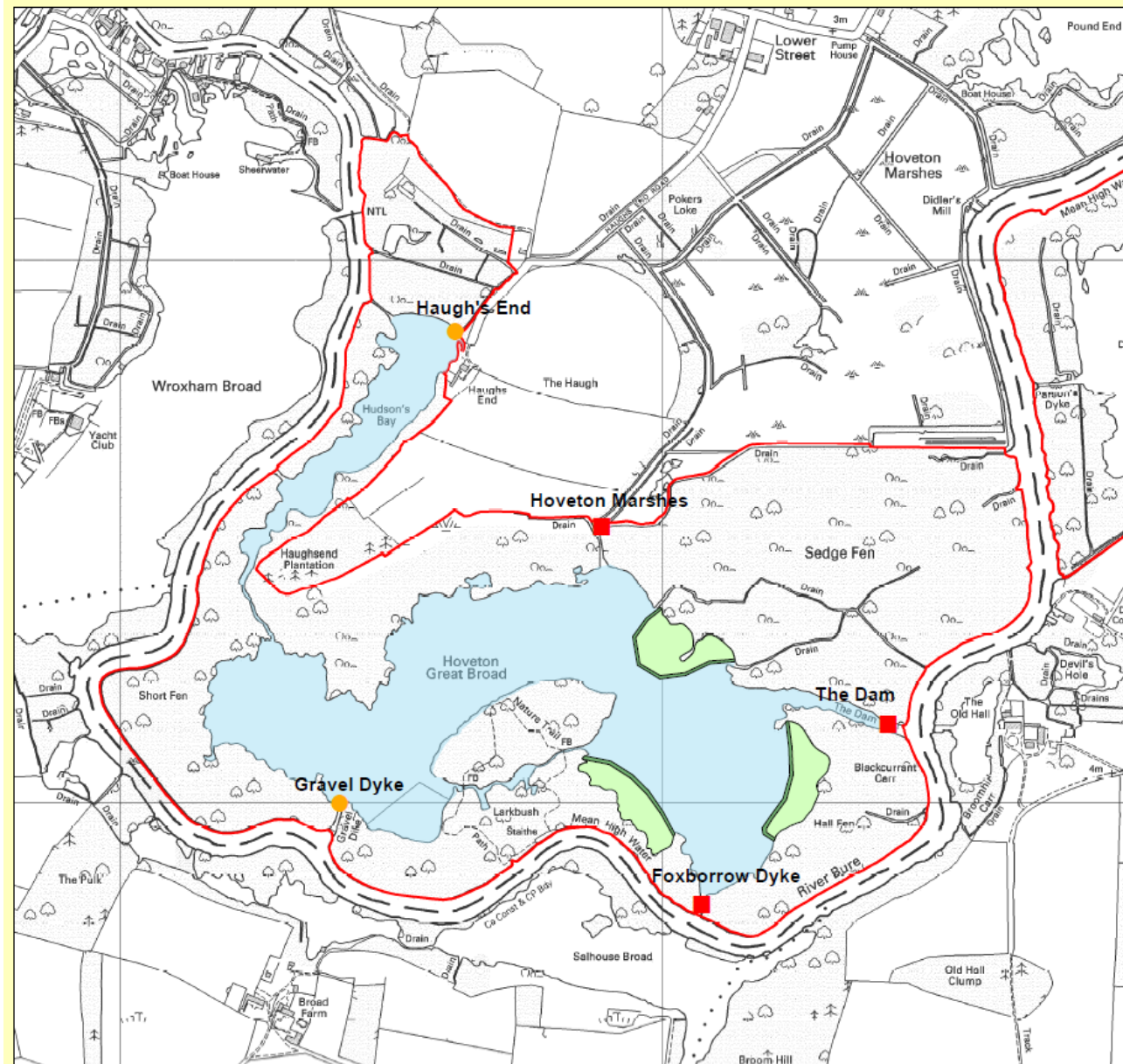
In England, otter *Lutra lutra* are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Habitats and Species Directive Annex 4, The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) and EC Cites Annex A. Otters are protected from interference with places of shelter or protection and disturbing animals using such places.

Survey sites

Three dam sites were surveyed on 17/8/20:

- The Dam (TG32421614)
- Foxburrow Dyke (TG32071581)
- Hoveton Marshes (TG31891651)

As shown on map as biomanipulation barriers on the map below (image 1).



Hoveton Wetlands Restoration Project

Biomanipulation Barriers

Biomanipulation Areas

- Biomanipulation barriers, main, passive exclusion
- Fish barriers, auxiliary if required

Sediment Disposal Areas

- Species-rich fen creation on sediment

- Bure Marshes NNR
SSSI, SAC, SPA, Ramsar boundary

Scale (at A3): 1:7,000

Map produced by Rick Southwood,
Senior Reserves Manager, The Broads
Date 5/11/2018



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Image 1: Map of proposed biomanipulation barrier locations

Methodology

Water vole:

1. A visual inspection from boat was undertaken of the habitat suitability adjacent to the proposed work sites.
2. A Standard water vole survey was from water and land looking for latrines, feeding signs, runs and burrows was conducted up to 25m from the work site.

Otter:

1. A visual survey was carried out to identify the presence of otter holts and significant hauling-out points during the water vole surveys.

It should be noted that habitat does not lend itself to effective surveying with dense scrub present along the banks of the proposed barrier sites

Results

The Dam (TG32421614):

Habitat was considered to be of low suitability for water vole adjacent to barrier site. The banks are shaded with carr woodland/scrub with little emergent vegetation in channel. The banks generally low in profile and water levels are influenced by tide and fluctuate.

No evidence of water vole presence or otter holts was found.

Foxburrow Dyke (TG32071581)

Habitat was considered to be of low suitability for water vole with conditions similar to The Dam, but with more mature Alder and higher profile banks in places, heavily shaded. Little emergent. water levels are influenced by tide and fluctuate.

No evidence of water vole presence or otter holts was found.

Hoveton Marshes (TG31891651)

Bank to the south east similar to those at The Dam with carr woodland scrub, shaded with some emergent vegetation. Northern bank consists of reedbed and fen vegetation and is considered suitable water vole habitat.

No evidence of water vole presence or otter holts was found.