

# Thorney Island Habitat Creation Scheme

## Briefing Note – August 2022

### Introduction

The Environment Agency (EA) is working in partnership with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and Chichester Harbour Conservancy, to develop a habitat creation scheme through managed realignment of the coast at the south-western edge of the Barracks on Thorney Island. With expert support from JBA Consulting and VolkerStevin, a new set-back flood defence is proposed to protect the barracks, allowing the existing defence to be breached and allow seawater to cover the low-lying land as the tide goes in and out. This will enable new intertidal habitat to develop seaward of the new defence over time. This important habitat is in rapid decline from coastal squeeze in Chichester Harbour and this project will compensate for some of the losses, as legally obliged under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, and bring significant benefits to the environment and wildlife.

Ground investigation results confirmed the presence in low concentrations of the insecticide DDT, previously widely used in agriculture and industry and banned in the UK since 1986, in the soil at several locations across the project area.

### Current Project Work

While the DDT levels encountered are safe and acceptable for the land's current farming use, there is a lack of UK regulation regarding safe levels of DDT when released into the marine environment. The project team have been working closely with specialist marine consultants, EA marine specialists, the MOD, Chichester Harbour Conservancy and Natural England to define the scope of a DDT risk assessment. This additional work is required to assess the likely impacts of DDT on the marine environment and local wildlife if the soils at Thorney Island are covered by tidal water. We have also undertaken significant sampling and survey work to inform our study.

We have now commissioned the DDT risk assessment to our specialist consultants, and we expect this work will be completed by January 2023.

Once we have the results of the risk assessment, we will share our findings and way forward with our partners, NE, the Marine Management Organisation and other key stakeholders.

### Next Steps

We have slowed some elements of the project as the team investigate the potential impacts of the DDT found in the ground investigations. This is an important step we need to complete to ensure that our project does not cause any harm to the environment.

We will have further clarity on the project direction and timescales once we receive the results of the risk assessment and have discussed our findings and way forward with the relevant stakeholders. And we will continue to update you.

If you would like further information regarding the project, please email [Thorney.Island@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Thorney.Island@environment-agency.gov.uk) or call 03708 506 506. For further information please see [Thorney Island Information Page](#).

