

# A proposed reservoir in the Fens

## Survey activity

As we shape our proposals for a new reservoir in the Fens and its connecting infrastructure, we're carrying out a range of surveys to help us understand more about the land we could be working on.

Surveys are vital in allowing us to gather important information about the area to help inform our design, and how we might manage any potential impacts. This fact sheet explains more about the surveys we're carrying out and what people can expect to see as we carry out these important activities.



### Ground investigation surveys

We will be carrying out ground investigations on land identified for the main reservoir site and associated water infrastructure, to help us understand what land factors we need to consider as we develop our plans for building the reservoir.

#### Boreholes

**Why:** We need to install a number of boreholes so we can monitor water quality and groundwater levels. We shall also use these boreholes to extract samples of soil and rock for laboratory analysis so we can develop a detailed picture of the underlying geology.

**What:** These will be small, deep holes dug into the ground and once installed, they will be capped, left with a small tube protruding and marked above ground so the locations are visible. Each one will take between three and five days to install, though we will need to return to monitor them at various points throughout the year.

**How:** Activity will be low-level but there may be some noise while the drill rig is working. You may also see a small group of workers with construction equipment travelling across the main reservoir site and associated water infrastructure to install the boreholes.

#### Trial pits and archaeological digs

**Why:** We need to dig a number of trenches and pits to tell us more about the land conditions, including what archaeological and geological features might be present and what the drainage capacity in the area is.

**What:** Some of these will be relatively shallow pits that we will excavate, fence off and monitor over the course of a week. Others will be larger and much deeper, to help us look more closely at the bedrock features and take samples. They will take around four to six weeks to install subject to weather.

**How:** There will be teams of up to 10 people – depending on the trial pit size and depth – excavating the land in different locations. You may hear some noise while the excavator is working, and see people and equipment on site, including temporary welfare facilities. Once the surveys have been completed, the land will be reinstated.

## Non-intrusive surveys

These involve a small team visiting the main reservoir site and the areas identified for the associated water infrastructure to observe any environmental factors that might influence our proposals.

While any disruption will be low-level, you may see more people present in these areas, or slightly more traffic on the roads.

### Geophysical investigations

Geophysical investigations are largely non-intrusive surveys.

**Why:** Geophysical investigations around the site will help us to monitor below the ground surface to see if there are any manmade or natural features present that we need to investigate further.

**What:** These investigations involve laying out electrical monitoring equipment on areas we're surveying to

detect anything below the surface. There won't be anything visible apart from short spikes above ground for the recording equipment. The investigations will take place over around three days in each location.

**How:** There isn't a need for any construction machinery for these investigations, but you may see a small team laying out electrical equipment in different locations. The team will reach these locations using a tow-truck and a small trailer.

### Otter and water vole surveys

We'll be looking to visit the margins of ponds, ditches and other watercourses within our indicative project boundary to check for signs of these mammals. If we don't find signs of their presence, a habitat suitability assessment would be recorded.

### Great Crested Newt surveys

We'll visit ponds and ditches across the survey areas to see if great crested newts and other amphibians are present. This involves recording habitat features, taking water samples and potentially setting bottle traps. We would need to return to repeat assessments and carry out monitoring.

### Badger surveys

A walkover of field margins, ditches and woodlands will be carried out, to help us identify and map badger setts and pathways. We may also ask to follow up with more detailed surveys to determine population sizes and map territories.

### Aquatic surveys

We'll visit ponds, ditches and other watercourses to carry out visual checks and take water samples, to see whether additional, more specialist surveys are needed.

### Habitat surveys

Our ecologists will access parts of the study areas to identify and review the habitats present and record their condition. In areas we've not visited before, we would also check for signs of other protected species to help us understand if additional, more detailed, surveys are needed.

### Bird surveys

We'll visit habitats that have the potential to support breeding birds during the core nesting season – from April to June – to identify the presence of birds and whether there is evidence of them breeding. We'll also carry out surveys outside of breeding season, to identify any locations and habitats that might be important for non-breeding birds.

### Reptile surveys

We'll be looking for the presence of reptiles around the land areas included in our phase two proposals. This may involve placing 'reptile mats' in suitable areas for a short period of time, which absorb heat to attract nearby reptiles. We'll then check the mats regularly to see if any reptiles are present.

### Bat surveys

We'll survey trees, hedgerows, woodlands and buildings using mobile and static equipment for detecting bats. In some cases we may need to do physical inspections of features as well, using ladders or trained tree climbers.

## Find out more

To understand what our latest proposals include, visit our website at:

 [www.fensreservoir.co.uk/proposals/our-latest-proposals/overview/](http://www.fensreservoir.co.uk/proposals/our-latest-proposals/overview/)

If you have any questions at all, please contact us on:

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