

'The Costessey Point Project'

Restoration Design, undertaken by REEF Consultancy Ltd, on behalf of Peter Kettringham and Norfolk Anglers Conservation Association.

1.0 – Introduction

This design report follows on from the recommendations made by Windrush AEC in a scoping study of River Restoration Proposals in July 2001. It builds on and extends the findings and recommendations made in the study, it will not repeat information already contained within it. A copy of this report is included in appendix 3.

The Scoping study was submitted to Environment Agency Fisheries (EA), Conservation, Development Control and Flood Defence Functions. English Nature (EN), Norwich also received a copy.

Subsequent to this a site meeting was held with EA staff on 24th April 2002 to discuss the projects aims and objectives. After this meeting written feedback was obtained from Conservation, Flood Defence and Development Control representatives regarding design considerations to be built into the design, before submission of Land Drainage Consent / Appropriate Assessment. A further site meeting was held on 4th of March 2003 with EA & EN staff as a pre-application meeting.

This design report has been funded in partnership with the Environment Agency – Fisheries, Recreation & Biodiversity Team, Ipswich.

Throughout the report, normal convention is followed with respect to bank identification, i.e banks are designated Left Hand Bank (LHB) or Right Hand Bank (RHB) whilst looking downstream.

2.0 - Objectives of the Scheme

The over-arching aim of the Project is to restore river habitat and reverse the declining fortunes of the fishery.

This scheme is holistic and is designed to bring a wide ranging suite of benefits, to not only the fishery, but the wider ecological, conservation and cultural heritage status of the River Wensum Special Area of Conservation (cSAC).

2.01 - Conservation & Fisheries

Key SAC features to benefit from the works will be:

- Water Vole (*Arvicola terrestris*)
- Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*)
- Bullhead (*Cottus gobio*)
- Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

- White Clawed Crayfish (*Austropotomobius pallipes*)
- Water Crowfoot (*Ranunculion fluitantis*)

E.U. Habitats Directive Annex II species will also benefit, including Barbel (*Barbus barbus*), and Brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) which is also a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species.

Other species of fish that are targeted to benefit from the works will be roach, dace and chub.

The scheme also falls within the boundaries of the Department of Environment Food, & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Broads Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA). The ESA provides payments to farmers to enter into conservations plans. Components of this design are eligible for ESA funds.

2.02 - Flood Defence / Development Control

The emphasis of the project will be on design features that either remain neutral or indeed improve the flood conveyance / storage characteristics of the river and its floodplain.

2.03 – Local Heritage, Community and Sustainability

By improving river habitat, the scheme is promoting sustainable conservation management and recreational usage of the Wensum cSAC.

This will be of benefit to local businesses providing local, regional and national anglers the services they require when visiting the area. Increasingly anglers are demanding a high quality 'experience' in harmony with sustainable fish populations and the natural environment. For example this type of niche Market is currently being promoted by the Welsh Tourist Board, as part of the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy, in partnership with the EA. With the Costessey Point being steeped in such a rich heritage of angling traditions it is hoped that new and older generations of anglers may well once again visit a river restored to its former glory.

The project has already formed a local community partnership (The Costessey Point Project), including local landowners, farmers, fishing clubs and associations. The Environment Agency, DEFRA and The Anglian Rivers and Otters Project have also support the project with staff time and advice. Before forming the partnership membership of the fishing club had fallen to a handful of individuals. The open membership is now in excess of 60 with a healthy waiting list of anglers wishing to support the aims of the project.

The project will provide knock-on benefits for fisheries down-stream. As fish populations expand they will translocate as far as Hellesdon Mill, some 4km downstream. This will provide further benefits to open-access and club fisheries fisheries.

Completion of the project will further stimulate local community interest in the rivers valuable ecological and cultural heritage. It is planned to hold a series of annual open day educational events to promote the Projects management of the river as an example of best practice.