

Horsey Wetland Project

As part of our EU-funded CANAPE project, the Broads Authority is a project partner in a two-year multi-benefit wetland project aiming to test ways to develop a more sustainable future for Broads resources in terms of soil, water and people.

From August 2021 to December 2022 we will create a field trial of wet farming. The new crop will filter water, and provide building material and livestock feed. It will result in cleaner water and carbon will be locked in the peat soil.

Collaboration with the Broads Internal Drainage Board, Environment Agency, Natural England and land manager (Horsey Estate) will test the conversion to wetland and, crucially, share lessons learnt with Broads farmers and land managers.

A 1.3 hectare field (about two football pitches) on the Horsey Estate will test a new way of farming peatland. The demonstration field will retain water and create connection to the catchment via a controlled slow flow of water through the field, for the first time since land drainage began.



Background facts

The Broads is a last remnant of a vast wetland habitat that covered much of East Anglia 1,000 years ago, before modern drainage changed the watery wilderness into agricultural fields. Wetlands are significantly threatened places. Since 1700, 87% of global wetlands have been

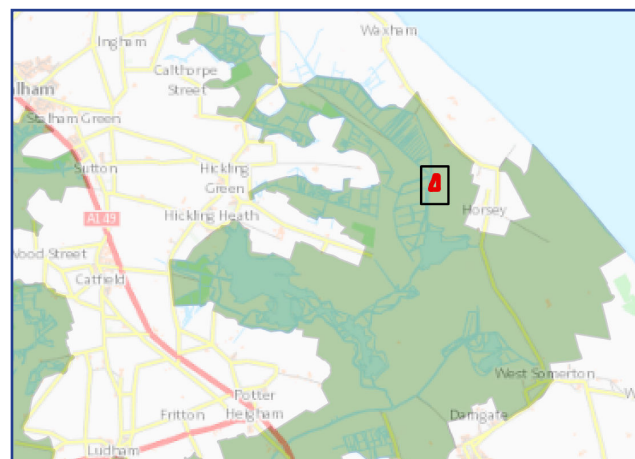
lost, a rate three times faster than natural forests. There is growing interest in investment for peatlands, nature-based climate solutions and green jobs. This project helps prepare for new government and private investment, and protects precious peat soils and water resources.

Benefits we expect

- the most important element of the project is exchanging knowledge and learning with Interreg project partners in CANAPE (Creating a New Approach to Peatland Ecosystems) who have been trialling such projects for many years
- informing the business decisions of farmers who may want to apply this learning to other areas
- cleaning and purifying water
- rewetting deep peat soil to reduce carbon emissions and help fight climate change
- growing wetland crops, which could be used for bioenergy or building materials, such as thatch or insulation boards
- informing land drainage in the Broads, including the replacement of pumping stations
- working with researchers to produce evidence on wetland plant propagation carbon calculation and wetland farming

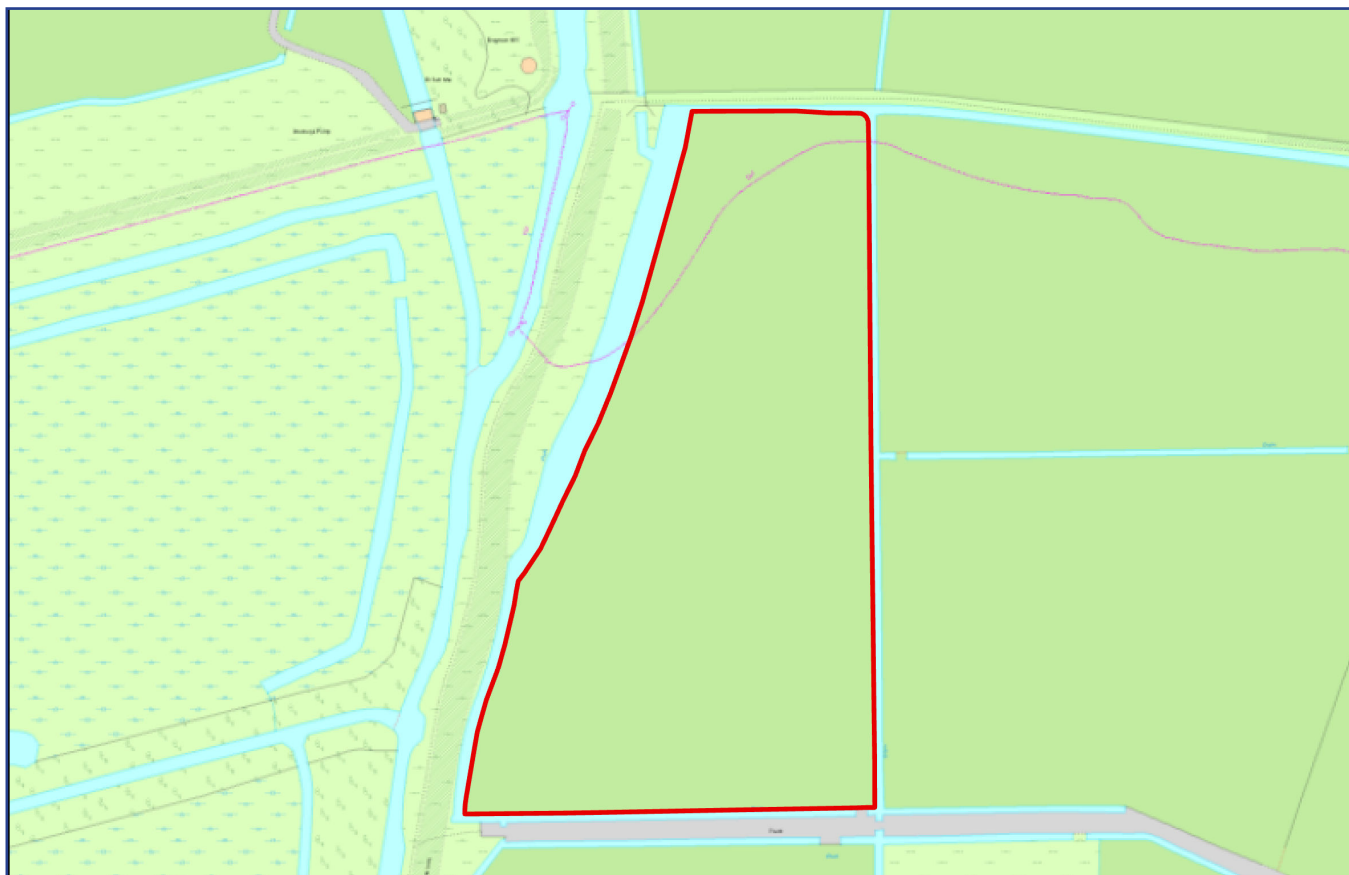
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Location of the wetland demonstration site



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