

A proposed reservoir in the Fens

Phase Three Consultation –
Approach to Community Consultation





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1. Introduction

Anglian Water and Cambridge Water are consulting on a proposed new strategic reservoir in the Cambridgeshire Fens that would help meet the growing demands on water supply in the East of England.

This document outlines how we are consulting with local communities and stakeholders to ensure their feedback continues to help shape our proposals.

Our phase two consultation took place in summer 2024 and our third phase of consultation is taking place in autumn 2025, where we are gathering feedback from communities, landowners and a wide range of stakeholders on our latest proposals.

This document sets out the details of where, when and how we are consulting with affected communities and shares our phase three consultation plans with wider stakeholders.

It also explains who we are and why the reservoir is required to meet the future demands for public water supply and our responsibilities to the environment.



About Anglian Water

Anglian Water supplies water and wastewater services to almost seven million customers in the East of England and Hartlepool. We employ around 5,000 people in the region. As a purpose led-business, we recognise we have a huge opportunity – and responsibility – to contribute to the environmental and social wellbeing of the communities we serve. As one of the largest energy users in the East of England, we are also committed to becoming a net zero carbon business by 2030.

Anglian Water is investing heavily today to help prepare for tomorrow. We continue to lead the water sector in tackling leakage,

exceeding our regulatory targets in excess of 10 years running.

Work is already underway on a half-billion-pound investment to lay hundreds of kilometres of new, interconnecting pipes to bring water from the wettest areas in the north of Lincolnshire to the drier areas in the south and east of the region.

We are also installing over one million smart meters in customer homes, and delivering a multitude of abstraction reduction programmes, protecting precious chalk streams and rivers.

About Cambridge Water

Cambridge Water is a water only company supplying high-quality drinking water to around 351,000 people in and around the city of Cambridge. Our operating area extends from Ramsey in the north to beyond Melbourn in the south, and from Gamlingay in the west to the east of Cambridge city.

We have provided an essential service to customers since 1853, when we were founded in the interests of public welfare to supply clean water. Our small size and strong local focus mean we are firmly embedded in the communities we serve.

As well as putting customers' needs at the heart of all our decision-making, we actively

work in partnership with our local communities. We also act as the guardians of our assets, building resilience with regular investment. And we run an efficient business that is in everyone's interests.

We are currently delivering our largest-ever investment programme. Over the five years to 2030 we are investing £926 million in services that are important to our customers and communities, while at the same time protecting and enhancing the environment we all rely on and enjoy.

2. The Project

Strategic context

To ensure we have a reliable water supply for future generations, we're planning and coordinating resource needs on a national and regional level.

The National Framework for Water Resources explores England's long term water needs. It considers what actions are required to provide water in the future, and how much is needed in each region.

The five regional water resource groups develop regional plans. In our region, that's **Water Resources East (WRE)**. Regional plans set out more detail on the water supplies for the region, including the needs of the environment. The WRE regional plan identifies the need for new reservoirs as a key element of an overall package to ensure our region can continue to thrive.

Water companies then develop a **Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP)** setting out their plans and investments – such as improving efficiency;

managing demand; addressing leakage; restoring the environment; and building new water resources.

Anglian Water and Cambridge Water's latest WRMPs demonstrate how we will ensure a sustainable and secure supply of clean drinking water for our customers from 2025 to 2050, building on our previous WRMPs. The plans identify new reservoirs as crucial investments we need to make to help meet the growing demands on water supplies in the East of England.

The proposed new reservoir in the Fens continues to be an important feature of our plan, helping to secure water supplies for the region amid the challenges of a changing climate, while protecting and restoring the environment.

Through all our work to develop the proposals for the reservoir, we've sought input from a range of stakeholders, alongside our own assessments. This has ensured our work has been informed by those responsible for the local area and the region's environment, as well as our own teams.

Our team has been carrying out vital surveys to better understand the land we could be working on. The findings of these surveys continue to inform our proposals, and more information is available in our [fact sheet](#).

Our engagement:

As we continue to progress our proposals for the reservoir, we have been engaging with:

- National bodies such as the Environment Agency, Natural England, and Historic England.
- The relevant local authorities to keep informed of their own proposals for the region, and seek their opinion on how the reservoir could minimise potential impacts, and maximise potential benefits.
- Existing water-focused groups including Water Resources East and the Fens Water Partnership.
- Representatives of the agricultural sector, including the National Farmers Union, to hear their views on the importance of water to agriculture as a key industry for the local economy.

- Local landowners and residents who may be directly affected by the proposals.
- Members of the public during our first two phases of community consultation, alongside ongoing feedback. This work has helped guide and inform the development of our proposals to ensure we're assessing factors that are important for the region.

This continued engagement has helped guide and inform the development of our proposals to ensure we're assessing factors that are important for the region, as well as the local communities where the reservoir and the associated water infrastructure will be located.

These groups and organisations, alongside others, are encouraged to provide their feedback to this consultation.

Since November 2023, we have been running a Community Liaison Group (**CLG**). Forming an important part of our continuing engagement, the CLG includes parish councils and elected representatives, local conservation and environment groups, local community organisations and networks including youth and leisure groups. This forum provides an opportunity for representatives of the communities nearest the proposed reservoir site to be kept informed regarding updates to our proposals, ask questions and provide feedback.



A new reservoir in the Fens

Anglian Water and Cambridge Water's proposed new reservoir in the Cambridgeshire Fens would help meet the growing demands on water supply in the East of England.

The new reservoir would store more water so it's always on tap when we need it, meeting the challenges of a changing climate and a growing population. It would mean less water is taken from sensitive sources, such as chalk streams, helping us to protect and restore the environment.

Alongside meeting these challenges, the project presents significant social, economic and environmental opportunities. Our vision for

the project goes beyond just building a reservoir. We want to create a place where water, people and nature come together.

That means creating space for wildlife, such as wetlands, alongside enabling new recreational and educational activities, and including natural places for people to explore. It also means creating new jobs and opportunities for local businesses and tourism.

Creating a whole new water supply project

The new reservoir is at the heart of a whole new water supply project.

Together with the associated water infrastructure we need to transfer water to the reservoir, treat the water, and supply it to homes and businesses, it would secure a reliable water supply for generations to come.

To build the reservoir itself, we would excavate soil and underlying material from the site and use this to help create a surrounding embankment that will contain the water in the reservoir.

In addition to the main reservoir site, our proposals also include:

- Equipment to take in water flows, pump the water and, where needed, treat it to remove impurities and manage water quality.
- A new water treatment works located at the main reservoir site.
- Underground pipelines to transfer water to the reservoir and onwards into supply.
- New service reservoirs at points where we connect to the existing water supply network.

About the project development and planning process

The proposed reservoir is classed as a project of national significance.

It will therefore be developed in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 and follow the process for submitting an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO).

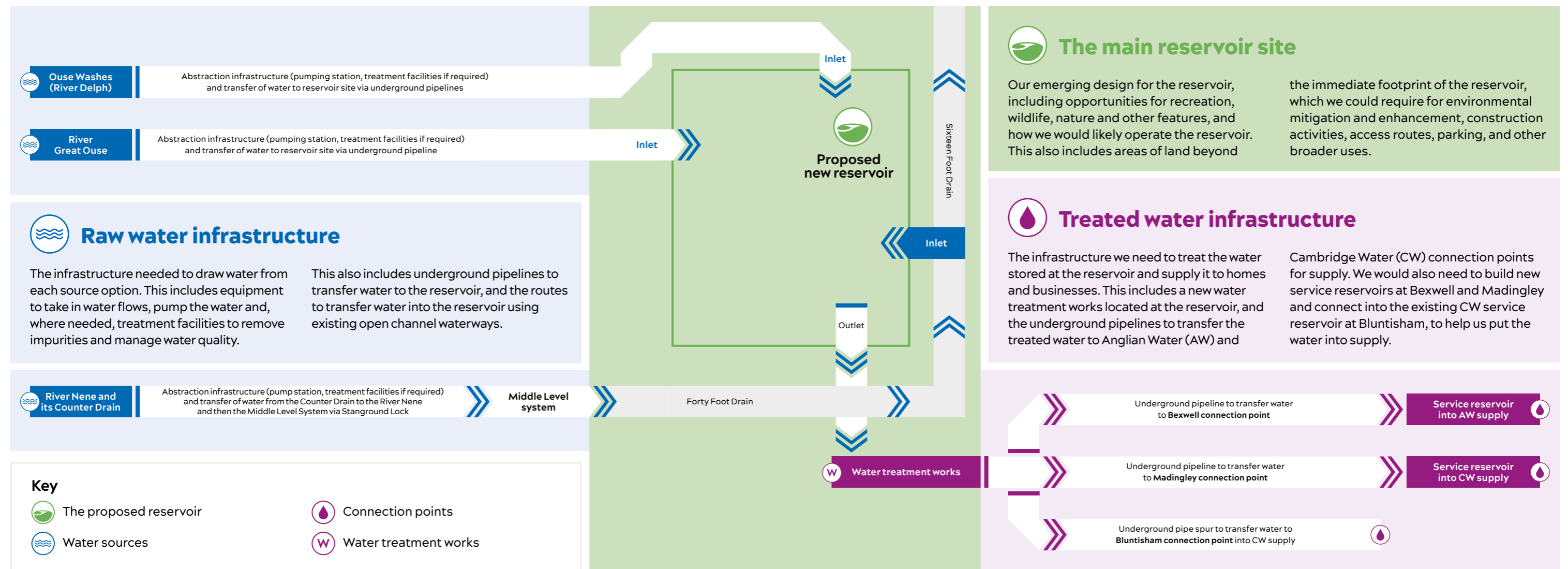
This requires applicants to develop proposals in detail, including thorough environmental assessments, prior to submitting an application to the Planning Inspectorate (the government agency responsible for operating the planning process). A key part of this pre-application process is consultation with communities and stakeholders so their feedback can help influence the proposals and identify opportunities to mitigate potential effects.

As key stakeholders, local authorities have a key role throughout this process, including by providing feedback throughout the stages of the application, and discharging and enforcing requirements if development consent is granted.

When the proposals are finalised and an application submitted, the planning inspectors will examine the application before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Ultimately, it will be for the Secretary of State to decide whether the project should be granted development consent.



Development consent would provide the necessary approvals to construct, operate and maintain the reservoir.



3. Consultation overview

Our aim is to gather feedback from all those who may be affected by our latest proposals for a new reservoir in the Fens and its associated water infrastructure.

Our approach to consultation

We are taking a multi-stage approach to consultation to present our work as it develops and invite comment from communities and stakeholders at each stage.

Through this approach we intend to develop our proposals in response to feedback, in addition to our own environmental and engineering assessments.

By working with communities and stakeholders, we aim to deliver a project that addresses the impacts and brings forward the opportunities identified by consultees.

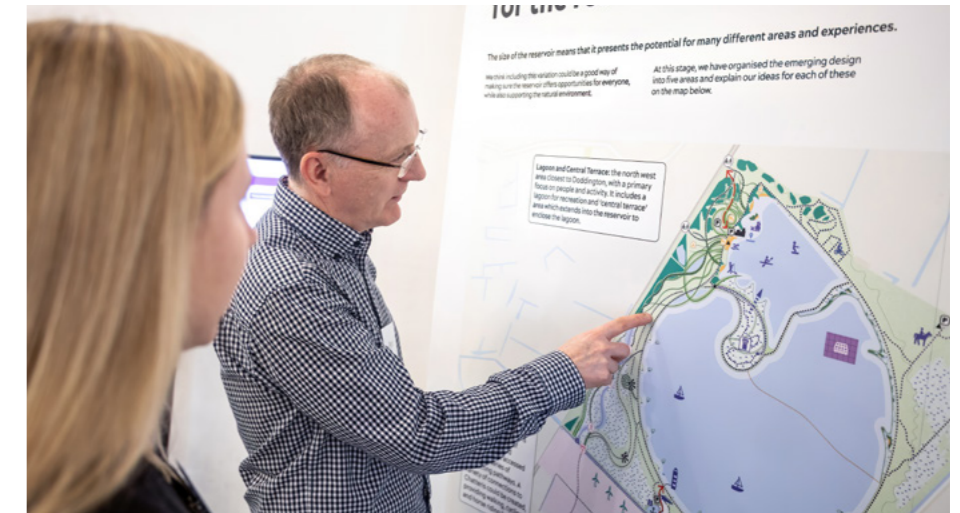
DATE	CONSULTATION PHASE	OVERVIEW
Autumn / winter 2022	Phase one	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preferred site for the reservoir and potential opportunities for recreation and environment.
Spring / Summer 2024	Phase two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging design for the reservoir, including early proposals for recreation, environment and access. Proposed areas for associated water infrastructure including water sources, treatment works, pipelines, pumping stations and other operational infrastructure.
Autumn 2025	Phase three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further developed design proposals for the reservoir. Further developed proposals for associated water infrastructure. Proposed construction plans for the reservoir and its associated water infrastructure. Early information on the potential environmental impacts of the project.
2026	Phase four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A whole scheme solution including near final proposals for the reservoir and its associated water infrastructure for the DCO application. The proposed draft Order Limits. Preliminary environmental information on potential effects of the project. Emerging proposals for managing the impacts of the development.



What we learned from our phase two consultation

During our phase two consultation, we received valuable feedback on the ways we engaged with local communities. This included how we publicised the consultation, the information we made available, and the community events we hosted.

We're making sure that this feedback influences the approach to our phase three consultation.



How feedback is helping shape our approach to consultation

TOPIC	WHAT PEOPLE TOLD US	HOW WE'RE CONSIDERING THIS
Consultation materials	While many people found the consultation materials informative and useful, some suggested that the materials could provide more detail and clarity in places.	We are using a simpler and more intuitive structure to our materials in our phase three consultation. This includes making information easier to find by making less use of supplementary documents and fact sheets, and presenting information more geographically, so that people can easily find out about everything happening near them, as well as the project as a whole. The consultation materials can be found in our document library here .
Consultation events	To help broaden the reach of the consultation, some people requested that more events be held outside working hours in the future.	In our phase three consultation, we're hosting more events outside of traditional working hours wherever possible, to make sure as many working people as possible have the opportunity to attend.
Project website	Some people felt the online materials, such as our interactive map, could be made easier to navigate.	We've made sure that our online materials and maps are as accessible as possible in our phase three consultation. We've reviewed the website structure to ensure that information is easy to find and presented clearly, while also increasing the functionality of our interactive map.
Publicising the consultation	Some people asked for the consultation to be advertised in more public places, as well as featuring in community and local news publications.	In our phase three consultation we're publicising the consultation in key public spaces, continuing our work with local parish and town councils. This includes displaying posters within the community, and working with editors of local publications to ensure the consultation is well publicised. For our phase two consultation, we worked with our community liaison group (CLG) to identify the best local outlets for advertising the consultation, and we're doing that again this time.

Our phase three consultation

What we're providing information on

The consultation materials present our latest proposals for the reservoir and associated water infrastructure. They demonstrate how our designs have evolved since our phase two consultation, including how the feedback we received helped us improve our proposals.

A summary of the feedback we received to our phase two consultation, and how we've responded, can be found on our [website](#).

Our phase three consultation includes:

- **proposals for the main reservoir site**, including how it could feature in the landscape and connect to nearby communities, and the features it could include for people and nature
- **proposals for the raw water and treated water infrastructure** we would need to transfer water from sources to the reservoir, treat it and supply it to Anglian Water and Cambridge Water customers
- **how we could deliver the project** including our early thinking on construction and transport options
- **our approach to the environment** including how we're assessing the project's potential impacts, what we've learned to date, and the steps we could take to manage any impacts during both construction and operation
- **early plans on providing power for the reservoir**, including our current proposals for powering the site using renewable technology.

Where we are consulting

We've developed a consultation zone based on the potential effects of the proposed reservoir and its associated water infrastructure.

This considers that the potential effects of each element are potentially different – such as underground pipelines and other above ground infrastructure – and that some effects could be permanent, while others temporary.

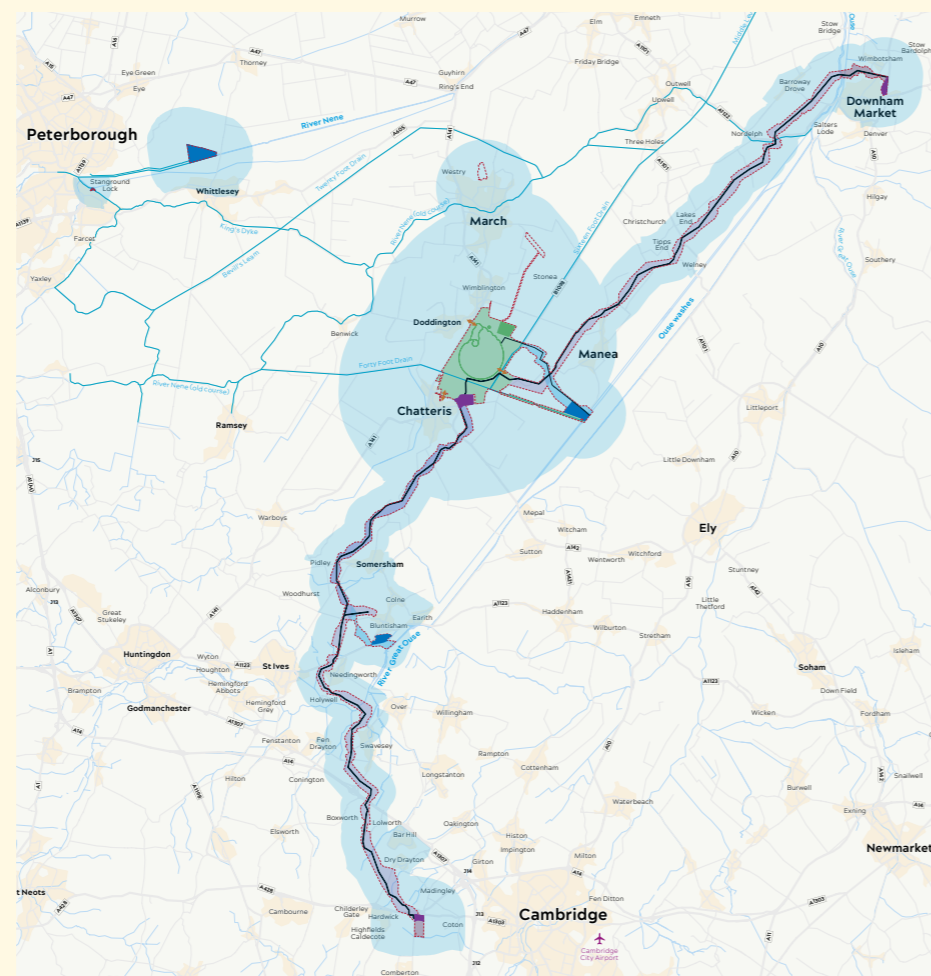
In developing the consultation zone we've considered those who may be affected by lasting effects linked to the reservoir such as land use or visual effects and temporary effects resulting from construction, such as construction noise.

The zone comprises:

- The area around the main reservoir site, extending approximately 5km from the indicative project boundary which includes the areas we propose to use temporarily during construction.
- The area around the associated water infrastructure (e.g. abstraction infrastructure and service reservoirs), extending approximately 1- 2km from the indicative project boundary which includes the areas we propose to use temporarily during construction, where this is not in the zone above.

- The area around the underground pipeline corridor, extending approximately 1km from the indicative project boundary which includes the areas we propose to use temporarily during construction, where this is not in the zones above.

The focus of our consultation is in this zone, including community events and household mailings.



8 WEEKS

15 OCTOBER TO 10 DECEMBER

THIS IS OUR THIRD NON-STATUTORY CONSULTATION IN A MULTI-PHASE APPROACH.



Who we are consulting

Our phase three consultation is taking place from 15 October to 10 December.

Consultees included are:

Prescribed stakeholders and local authorities

Stakeholders defined as prescribed by the relevant planning regulations. This includes prescribed consultation bodies (such as the Environment Agency and Historic England), statutory undertakers (including owners of rail, gas and electrical infrastructure) and local planning authorities.

We have identified additional stakeholders who may be interested in our proposals because of their area of knowledge or specialism (for example, conservation groups).

Persons with an interest in land

People who own or occupy the land in question or who could be affected by the project in such a way that they may be able to make a claim for compensation.

We have been engaging with landowners, where they can be accurately identified, who are immediately affected by the area of our proposals.

We are committed to supporting those affected by our proposals as the project develops. One of the ways we plan to do this is through a residential property support scheme (RPSS). This would offer support to eligible homeowners within a specific zone nearest the main reservoir site, who would need to sell their properties before the project has consent and acquisition of property commences.

The scheme was launched at the same time as the phase two consultation and information about who can apply and the process they need to follow is available on the project [website](#).

Local communities

Local communities affected by the proposals, including residents and businesses, groups and organisations who are considered part of these communities. These include:

- Communities in the consultation zone.
- Elected representatives of these communities (such as MPs and ward councillors).
- Representatives of people considered seldom heard within these communities.

Ahead of the consultation, we reached out to representatives of those groups who are seldom heard in the planning process, and have also sought advice from the local authorities on which representatives to include. Based on aspects of user experience of mobility, confidence and accessibility, the following characteristic groups have already been identified:

- Younger and older people.
- Those with physical disabilities or learning difficulties.
- Those who are time poor (such as those with young families or without typical working patterns).
- Those with English as a second language.
- Gypsy, traveller and boating communities.

Where possible, we have engaged directly with these groups in the appropriate format, for example, we have been engaging with young people through visiting local schools.

4. How we are consulting

We're undertaking a range of activities during the consultation to ensure people have opportunities to engage with the project.

We are committed to delivering consultations that anyone can take part in.

We have placed equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of our business planning and decision-making.

An accessible approach

As with our phase two consultation, we've aimed to make our consultation materials, events and feedback process as accessible as possible. We have designed an approach which allows people to engage at their own convenience, as well as being in line with current planning best practice. It also provides good opportunities to ensure activities are suitable for those with disabilities or who have health and mobility difficulties.

We're using digital tools to allow for a greater variety and quality of consultation materials, compared

solely with printed documents. Our website has been designed with accessibility in mind, and is compliant with industry web content accessibility guidelines.

However, some people are unable to engage digitally, or may prefer not to do so. To address this, the consultation will remain accessible to those without digital access, through physical events with hard copy materials that provide people the opportunity to meet our teams and find out about our proposals. Our project freephone number is also available. Anyone wishing to

contact the project team can leave a voicemail and we will call them back.

All physical events are planned to be accessible and inclusive to ensure there are no barriers to engaging with the project and that we engage with as wide a demographic as possible. We are doing this through a variety of means such as ensuring our event venues are wheelchair accessible and have adequate parking, as well as having events across a range of times and days of the week in order to accommodate a wide range of working patterns.



Consultation materials

We've created a variety of materials for our phase three consultation.

Collectively, these publicise the consultation and provide varying levels of detail about the proposals so people can choose the information relevant to their own interest.

We are creating all materials with accessibility in mind, so they are easy to understand and make good use of images and diagrams to explain our work.

The available materials are listed below.

CONSULTATION MATERIAL	DETAIL
Project website	Full details of the project proposals are available on the project website, including all consultation materials and a digital feedback form and an interactive map.
Consultation newsletter	A consultation newsletter, with a high-level explanation of the project and clear signposts of how to find out more (including the website address, contact details for the project team and details of consultation events). The newsletter is being sent to all residential and business addresses in the consultation zone.
Consultation brochures	Explaining our latest proposals and how these have changed since our last consultation. They also explain what we are consulting on, how people can take part and where more information can be found.
Supplementary report(s)	Providing more detailed explanations of our latest proposals and how we developed them, for people that have a desire to see more technical information and details. Reports explain the work we've completed to decide on our latest proposals, and provide an update on our environmental assessments and the types of mitigation measures we've identified for managing impacts.
Explainer information	A range of infographics, diagrams, animations and explanatory content to help aid understanding and provide wider context on a range of topics and themes that we know are important to people.

Making materials available

All materials are available on the consultation website, and people are encouraged to view all materials online as a first course of action. Hard copies of the community materials – including the consultation brochures and feedback form – will be available at the consultation events.

Requests for hardcopy and alternative format consultation materials can be made by contacting the project team, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. This includes materials translated to other languages, and large text versions.

Technical reports and supporting information will also be available online. Reference copies of reports will be available to view at consultation events. Large scale OS maps of the proposals will also be available at in-person events – with feedback suggesting these provided useful context during previous consultations.



Consultation events

We're running a programme of in-person events where members of the public can meet our team, ask questions, and find out about our proposals. These events ensure people can access the consultation and more information in areas near them.

Event locations have been chosen to maximise accessibility for all those affected by the project. They are being held in central locations such as community halls in the towns and villages closest to the

proposed site for the reservoir, and where associated water infrastructure could be located.

When selecting venues, we've also taken into account feedback received during our last consultation, and a building accessibility checklist has also been completed to ensure all venues being considered are accessible for all.

We've also ensured that some events fall outside of traditional working hours – whether that's

opening later in the evening, or taking place at the weekend.

Events will be attended by representatives of Anglian Water and Cambridge Water. This will include a comprehensive range of subject specialists at each event, so that members of the public can ask questions on specific topics.

COMMUNITY EVENTS		
LOCATION	DATE	TIME
St Wendreda's Church Hall, March, PE15 9PY	Monday 3 Nov	3pm-8pm
Wimblington Parish Hall, PE15 0QT	Friday 7 Nov	1pm-6pm
Bar Hill Village Hall, CB23 8SU	Saturday 8 Nov	10am-3pm
Queen Street Church, Whittlesey, PE7 1AY	Monday 10 Nov	3pm-8pm
Bluntisham Village Hall, PE28 3LR	Tuesday 11 Nov	11am-4pm
Downham Market Town Hall, PE38 9DW	Thursday 13 Nov	3pm-8pm
Doddington Village Hall, PE15 0TG	Friday 14 Nov	1pm-6pm
The Bricstan Hall, Chatteris, PE16 6BE	Saturday 15 Nov	10am-3pm
Manea Village Hall, PE15 0JN	Tuesday 18 Nov	3pm-8pm
Swavesey Memorial Hall, CB24 4QU	Friday 21 Nov	1pm-6pm



To find an event near you, visit our interactive map online at: projectmap.fensreservoir.co.uk/

5. Publicising the consultation

The consultation is being publicised using a range of tools to reach as wide an audience as possible, and to encourage participation in the consultation. This publicity is based around key milestones across the consultation period.

CONSULTATION NEWSLETTER

A consultation newsletter will be sent to all residential and business addresses in the consultation zone.

MEDIA RELATIONS

News releases are being issued to local and regional media to coincide with each milestone. A press release has been issued to mark the launch of the community consultation.

ONLINE MEDIA

Key dates and information are publicised online via our social media channels, news and project websites. We're working with local authorities and other regional partners to utilise any existing channels to increase participation, and encourage local groups to share details of our consultation through their own channels.

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING

Published advertisements are featuring in local newspapers. These include key dates, website details and information on how to get involved.

POSTERS

Posters are being issued to elected representatives, parish councils and to suitable community locations (such as libraries) with details of the consultation. We have requested posters be displayed in the local area.

6. How to take part and how we will use feedback

How feedback can be provided

People and organisations are encouraged to complete a response and/or provide separate comments through the following response channels. All response channels are free to use.

METHOD	DETAILS
Feedback form	We encourage individuals to fill in and submit the online feedback form on the website fensreservoir.co.uk . Hard copies will also be available on request and at events.
Email	Comments can be emailed to info@fensreservoir.co.uk
Freepost	Response forms and other comments can be sent to our freepost address: Freepost Fens Reservoir The freepost address is the only text needed on the envelope, no stamp is required.



Anglian Water cannot guarantee that responses submitted through methods other than those set out above will be included in our analysis and reporting.

The project freephone is available for people to ask questions or request hard copy documents. We are not able to accept verbal comments (via the hotline or in

events) as feedback submissions. Where this is required for accessibility reasons, we will manage these on a case-by-case basis.

All responses must be received by the deadline. Only under exceptional circumstances would we accept responses submitted after that date.

What we do with feedback provided

We will review all of the feedback we receive and consider this alongside further technical work. We will present how we have developed our proposals, including how we have taken on board the feedback we received, as the project progresses.

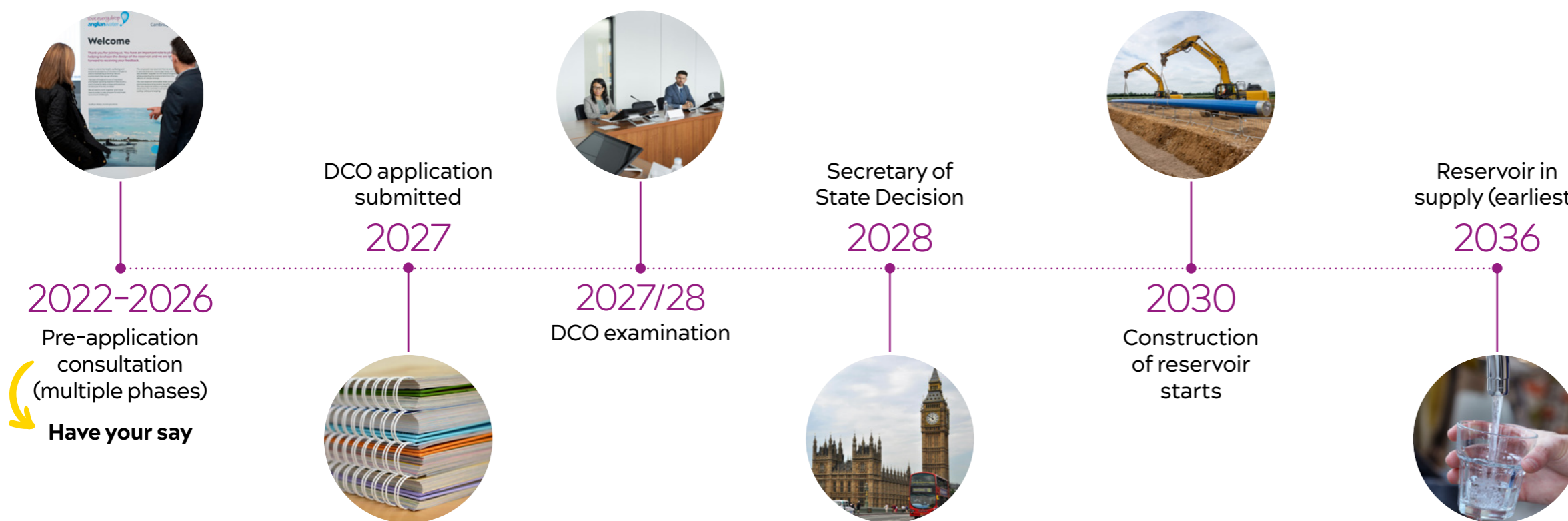
This will include publishing a phase three consultation report that summarises the feedback we have received and how we have considered it.

Data privacy

Anglian Water is committed to protecting the personal information we are given. We manage personal information in accordance with all applicable data protection laws, including the General Data Protection Regulations which came into effect in 2018. For more information about how Anglian Water and third parties working on our behalf collect and process your data, please see our full [data privacy notice](#) on our website.

As part of the planning process, the Planning Inspectorate may request full copies of any feedback submitted to the project. The Planning Inspectorate's data privacy notice is available on its [website](#).

You can see where you will have the chance to comment on our proposals on this timeline



Please note: this timeline is indicative only and may change as our proposals develop.

Get in touch

You can contact the project team by:

 Email info@fensreservoir.co.uk

 Freephone **0800 915 2492**

 Write **Freepost Fens Reservoir**

 Website fensreservoir.co.uk

