



Project: Modular Fish & Elver Pass

Location: Thetford, Suffolk

Thetford Sluice Fish & Elver Pass

Client: Environment Agency & Birse Civils



Thetford, a small market town in Suffolk, features an important crossing of the Little Ouse River and a large sluice gate structure which controls its levels, Thetford Sluice. The original sluice design lacked any fish pass facility but featured a canoe portage slope against the headwall. Inspections carried out by the Environment Agency (EA) and ACE concluded that a fish pass could be incorporated into the portage, whilst retaining its original use.



Birse Civils was awarded the reconditioning works package for this structure and looked to ACE to design and install a practical solution for this fish pass to also include eel passage. This would bring the whole structure in line with EU and EA requirements. ACE's unique system is the UK's first modular HDPE fish pass, containing a number of fantastic features. Each ACE modular section (which can include elver passage) simply bolts down saving a vast amount of installation time, a more traditional time-consuming installation would have had each baffle supplied separately requiring complex setting out and mounting.



The simplicity of this product dramatically reduces the required amount of civil work needed, which reduces the cost of the overall project for the EA. In addition to the large cost saving of using HDPE in place of stainless steel, the ACE HDPE system significantly reduces the theft potential as HDPE has little or no scarp value. HDPE has a much lower material carbon footprint than a stainless-steel comparative.

Let's not forget that this design, alongside our many other solutions, has allowed safe and continuous fish and eel passage to all our underwater friends.

ACE and Birse Civils have worked closely on a number of similar sites in the past including St. Germans pumping station. Thetford is yet another example of our on-going professional collaboration. ACE is proud to have designed and worked in conjunction with Fisheries Technical Manager for the EA and would like to thank Kye Jerrom for his assistance throughout this project.

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