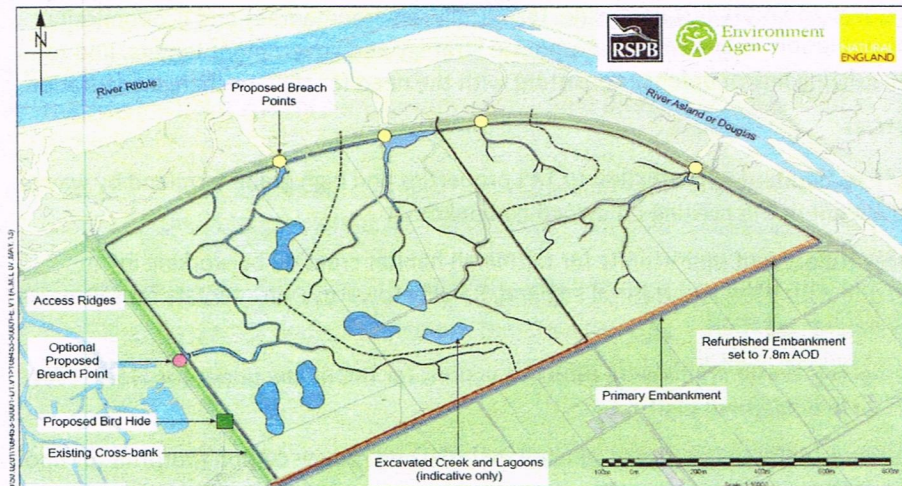


Hesketh Out Marsh East Managed Realignment Scheme

Background

In the early 1980s, Hesketh Out Marsh was claimed for agriculture by erection of an outer flood embankment which, with land drainage, saw inter-tidal saltmarsh habitat converted into farmland. This enclosure is separated from land to the south, Hesketh New Marsh, by a well-established flood embankment, originally erected in the 1800s, but which is owned and maintained by the Environment Agency (EA). This protects lowland areas to the south.

Ownership of the land within Hesketh Out Marsh divided this enclosure into two parcels of land: Hesketh Out Marsh West (HOMW) and Hesketh Out Marsh East (HOME). In 2008, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), in partnership with the Environment Agency (EA), breached the outer flood embankment for the western half of Hesketh Out Marsh to revert 168 ha of agricultural land to inter-tidal habitat. To separate the two parcels of land, a cross-embankment was constructed. This allowed breaching of the outer western embankment to confine tidal inundation across the HOMW land parcel only. RSPB now own and manage this area as their Hesketh Out Marsh Reserve.



Development of HOME Scheme (See proposed plan above)

Hesketh Out Marsh East project was then initiated following the opportunity to partner once again with RSPB to continue the retreated defence line and so create more national priority saltmarsh habitat - by breaching the adjacent section of outer embankment. But a crucial part of the project is the strengthening and refurbishment of the remaining 2km of EA owned defence, currently in poor structural condition, using site sourced material.