

Key proposals for the northern area...restoration of the boat lift, visitor moorings, cycle track, eco lodges and overnight accommodation...



1 Inclined Plane boat lift

The restoration of Foxton's boat lift is the key project at the heart of these proposals.

The historic images below show the Victorian boat lift under construction and in use. It was opened in 1900 to help the canal compete against the railways for business. It has two caissons (water-filled tanks), each capable of carrying 2 narrowboats or a barge. The journey time of 12 minutes, for 2 boats up and 2 boats down, was much quicker than using the 10 locks. Very little water was lost from the caissons, as they carried the 'same' water up and down the slope, saving this precious resource and thus making them more attractive than traditional locks.

The lift worked well, but the similar locks at Watford Gap were never improved and the anticipated increase in traffic didn't appear. This made the lift uneconomic and, in 1911, it was mothballed and subsequently sold for scrap.

The desire is to restore this magnificent feat of Victorian engineering to working condition, to create a visitor attraction of national importance.



2 Visitor Moorings...



The creation of a mooring basin will provide boaters with an appropriate stop-off point to experience the range of visitor attractions on offer at Foxton Locks. The moorings will also be located close to a selection of establishments providing refreshments.



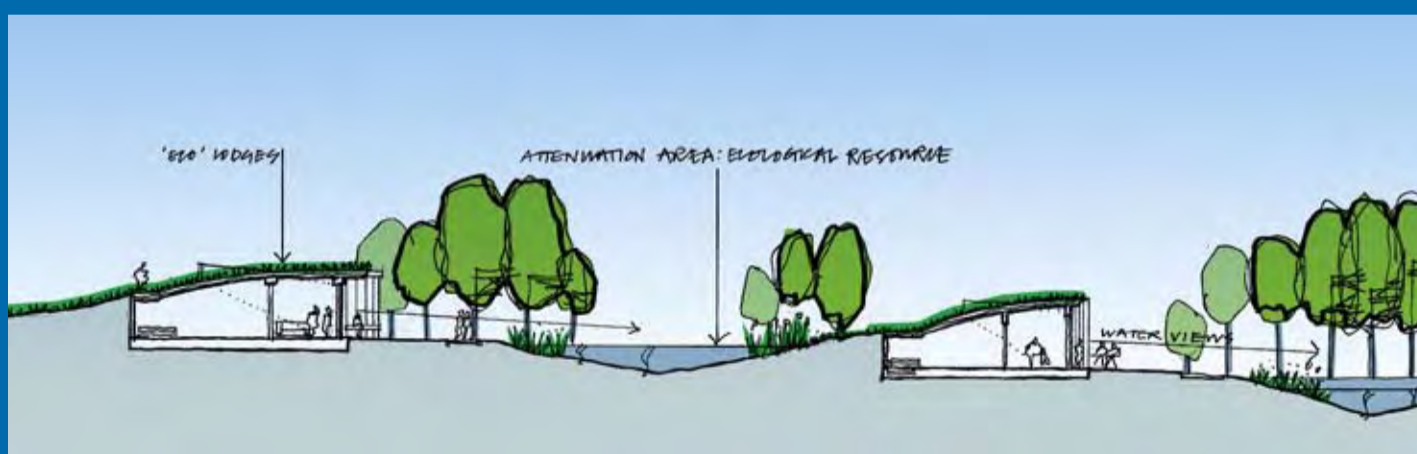
or Cycle Track

The promotion of cycling within the vicinity of Foxton Locks is a significant opportunity as the site is positioned along the Sustrans route no:6. A dry land option for the dredging transfer site could be a bike park, which would link in with the Sustrans route. This would include a bike repair shop and cycle hire as an attractor for junior mountain bikers and BMX bandits.



3 Eco Lodges

Eco lodges are proposed for the field adjacent to the access road, and will provide for stays of a few days in a tranquil, ecologically sensitive setting. The images below show eco lodges at other similar sites.



4 Overnight Accommodation

A number of overnight accommodation units are proposed to be located on the site of the old boatyard. These could be similar to youth hostel units and designed to blend into the landscape.

