

Broadland Flood Alleviation Project: rare & scarce plants

Divided Sedge *Carex divisa*



Description and distribution: A patch-forming species with stems up to 80 cm tall. Nationally scarce, it is associated with damp, grassy & marshy places, often near the sea. In the project area it is known to be present in the grazing marshes around Breydon Water.

Potential impacts: Flood defence works have the potential to reduce populations of the plant. Disturbance of the grazing marsh may destroy the plant itself & disturb its seedbank.

Mitigation: Baseline surveys are used to establish the presence & distribution of Divided Sedge in the works area prior to scheme initiation. Where impacts are unavoidable, the aim is to ensure that populations are subsequently restored to at least their former levels. Previous experience has demonstrated that the rhizomes (root systems) of the plant are extremely robust and tolerant of moderate levels of disturbance and compaction. Plants are therefore partly protected in situ using fencing to limit the extent of access routes and working areas during a scheme. Translocation is used where loss and damage are unavoidable. This is achieved by stripping and storing topsoil containing the plant's rhizomes, which is subsequently spread upon suitable finished areas.