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Design and Access Statement

Purpose

Provide temporary contractor accommodation and welfare facilities for up to four years to help facilitate a number of major projects on the islands identified within the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP), including the Town Hall Cultural Centre and Museum, and Housing Delivery projects.

Several major projects by Partners are happening concurrently which are vital to the Islands, and this contractor compound would allow for works to continue through the summer season when accommodation is in short supply, and will also alleviate pressure on project budgets.

A key challenge to these projects happening is the availability of contractors to complete necessary works. On island contractors are in incredibly high demand and often do not have the capacity to fit in large projects. There is significant appetite from the mainland-based private sector, but to enable these contractors to actually work on island providing accommodation is vital.

Site

The proposed site is a stone yard/grassland storage site, with Porthmellon Industrial Estate to the North-East on one side, Porthmellon Waste Site and associated workshops to the South-West, and more grassland to the East and South. For the past two years the Stoneyard has been successfully used for contractor accommodation for Teignmouth Maritime Services, supporting the Coastal Defence Works Project.

The site is out of public view, causing no detrimental impact to the Isles of Scilly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and ensuring that the contractors have privacy. Its position behind the Industrial Estate and adjacent to the engineering yard of the Waste Site means that it is away from residential areas and less likely to cause noise disruption.

The proposed site layout has been determined in consultation with the previous users of the site, taking into account their actual lived experience of the site, and the most efficient use of space on the site.

The site is Duchy of Cornwall owned, so we are in the process of agreeing a license which will permit the use of the site for a contractor compound, subject to planning.

Planning Policy and History

The Isles of Scilly Local Plan details the spatial, economic and environmental strategy for the islands, and seeks to juggle the oftentimes conflicting need for accommodation while preserving the outstanding natural environment, boosting the local economy, and providing cultural enrichment for islanders and tourists alike.

Aim 1 of the Local Plan aims to “ensure new development is appropriately located, sited and designed to maintain and enhance the environment avoiding any significant environmental impacts, or provide appropriate mitigation including the reuse of previously developed land and the more efficient and effective use of all sites and buildings”.

The Stoneyard is a very good example of this, because the site is out of the way of residential areas, unlikely to contain significant archaeological remains, and we are seeking to reuse all of the

accommodation units and welfare unit currently on the site to avoid the environmental impacts of shipping the units back, and shipping new ones over to replace them. We are still seeking to bring over additional units, but reusing the accommodation units already on site will reduce the quantity requiring transport.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) states in **Paragraph 124** that “planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement.” This planning application seeks to make efficient use of land that otherwise would revert to being empty, aside from occasional storage of rock, and the accommodation units that are already on site.

Policy LC4 Staff Accommodation acknowledges that staff may not be able to be housed within existing accommodation on the islands, especially during the summer season when any accommodation is booked up well in advance by tourists. The policy therefore permits the provision of more staff accommodation if workers cannot feasibly be housed elsewhere.

Aim 5 of the Plan describes the need to engender and support “a strong, vibrant and healthy island community with an improved quality of life for its residents...Facilitate growth that improves the sustainability and self-sufficiency of the island’s communities through the provision and retention of viable services and facilities that supports its cultural, health and social well-being”.

The use of the site for contractor accommodation will support multiple projects, but the first will be the Town Hall Cultural Centre and Museum Project. This project will breathe much needed new life into the Town Hall and enable visitors and locals alike to enjoy an iconic, culturally and historically significant building, provide an exciting, accessible and interactive new home for the much-loved Museum, and supply the islands with a large, all-weather multi-purpose event space which can be used throughout the year.

Similar planning applications for contractor compounds are below:

Planning Application P/22/051 Stoneyard. Temporary change of use of land from Sui Generis (Stoneyard) to Class C3 (Dwellings) for the provision of 7 no. portable single living containerised accommodation units for a period of up to 2 years to accommodate workers delivering the Coastal Defences project.

Planning Application P/23/086 Parting Carn. Temporary use of land as a construction compound with associated welfare facilities to support South West Water upgrade to waste and water infrastructure across the Isles of Scilly for up to four years. (pending decision)

Planning Application P/15/016 Parting Carn. Extension of batching plant site for siting of temporary sleeping cabins for Kier site staff.

Planning Application P/14/004 Parting Carn. Temporary use of agricultural land for use as a mobile batching plant and construction compound together with temporary residential accommodation for works associated with the upgrade of St Mary’s Airport.

The most relevant is P/22/051 Stoneyard. As referenced above, the Stoneyard secured planning permission to be used as a temporary contractor compound for the past two years to support in the Coastal Defence Works project. The workers using the compound were very satisfied with the accommodation units and the site for the duration of their contract.

Parting Carn has recently applied for permission for a contractor compound for South West Water, and has a history of planning permission for similar compounds (included above). The most recent planning application for South West Water will enable major upgrades to infrastructure around the islands, and this project will be happening at the same time as projects this contractor compound at the Stoneyard will support.

Development Proposal

The proposal is to site 16 accommodation units, four diner units and a laundry unit on the Stoneyard, to provide sufficient facilities for contractors engaged in various projects identified in the SAMP over the next five years.

The accommodation units are 2.87m wide, 4.325m long and 3.23m tall including waste tanks underneath. The laundry unit is 6.10m by 4.88m and the diner units are 2.87m wide, 3.35m long and 3.23m tall. The accommodation units will be laid out in two lines of 8, with 4 metres clearance between them for fire protection.

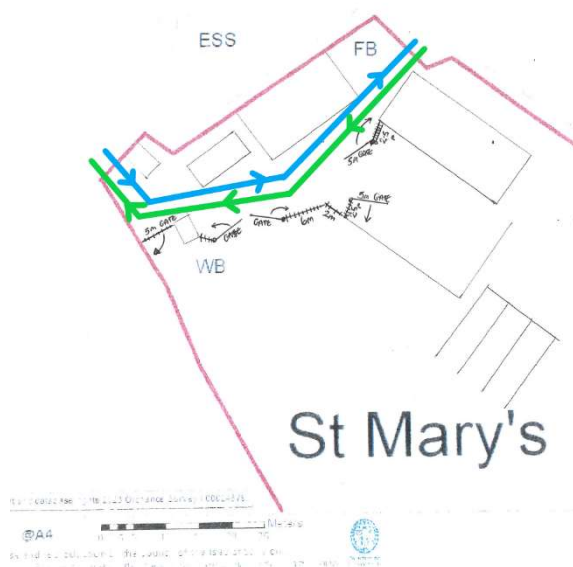
The units do not require permanent foundations but have jack-legs which are fixed into the ground. The site therefore does not need any groundworks and can easily be reinstated to its former use as sui generis Stoneyard at the end of the five years.

Decking will also be placed between the units to provide a better, more comfortable space for the contractors. This will sit on top of the ground and will be removed at the end of the change of use.

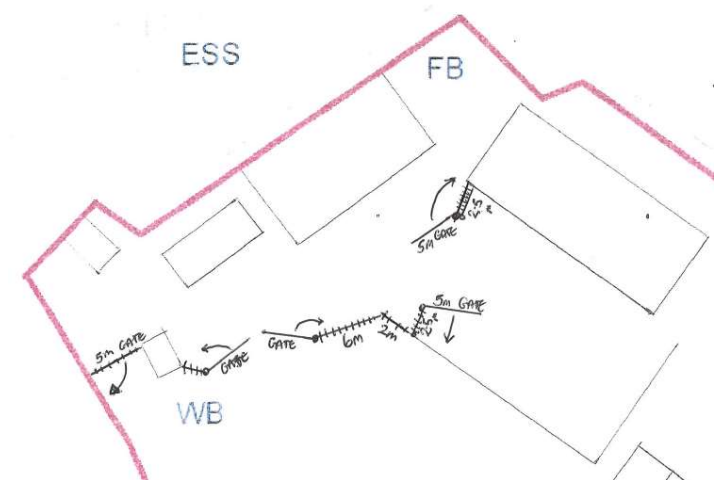
Temporary mesh panel fencing will be installed as a protective barrier around the site, and will be positioned to avoid disturbing the Japanese Knotweed.

Access

Zoning will be implemented in the Waste Site to section off the engineering yard from the rest of the operations and provide keyholders vehicular and pedestrian access to the Stoneyard outside of the operational hours of the Waste Site. Zoning will require additional fencing – detailed on the plan below. This zoning plan has been designed by the site managers of the Waste Site to minimise impact on operations.



Access Route



Fencing for Zoning

In case of a flood, evacuation routes for both pedestrians and vehicles are shown in the Flood Risk Assessment.

Services

A new water connection will be provided to the site. Water to the site will be sub-metred off the supply at the Waste Site. The trenching route has been planned to avoid crossing the leat, since this is where the surface water drains.

The electricity will be provided by a temporary generator until a connection can be made by National Grid. The diesel will be bunded and spill kits will be located close by in the event of a spill.

Steel waste holding tanks are shared one between two accommodation/diner units and will be emptied by suction tanker as required, and effluent will be taken to the South West Water plant.

Ecology/Environment

The site is grassland which has been used for the storage of rock, has no habitats that would be disrupted by the accommodation and welfare units, and otherwise has little ecological value. There is Japanese Knotweed on the site, which is under careful management by the Operations Team. It is in its 4th year of treatment in a 4-5 year programme. The accommodation and welfare units will be sited to prevent disturbance to the weeds, and the site users will be made aware of mitigation measures to prevent the spread of the Japanese Knotweed. The proposed use will not impact ongoing treatment and prevention.

Flooding

The site is in Flood Zone 2/3 and therefore requires a Flood Risk Assessment, which is included in this planning application. However, the compound will be temporary, and is unlikely to experience a large-scale flood event during its lifetime.

There will be measures on site to ensure that the risk of flooding is not increased by the presence of the units, and to make sure that users of the units are safe. The accommodation and welfare units are on jacklegs which ensure that the units are raised above the ground and allow surface water to flow to the leat and soak into the ground as it does currently.

Archaeology

Trenching for services will be very shallow and predominantly contained within the existing Moorwell site, and no groundworks are needed to provide foundations for the Bunkabins or welfare units. The site is also not nearby to any designated archaeological sites, and the consultation response from the Cornwall Archaeological Unit on the previous planning application for this site states that it is "unlikely any significant archaeological remains will be disturbed by the limited proposed groundworks."

Noise/Light

The proposed site lies next to the engineering yard of the Waste Site and Porthmellon Industrial Estate. The noise from these sites will not affect the contractors using the Stoneyard for accommodation because the noise will only be during working hours. Because the Stoneyard is next to industrial areas and not residential areas, noise from the contractors' compound will not affect

residents. The site manager will give the contractors a briefing on appropriate behaviour, noise levels and use of the site before the contractors are allowed to use the accommodation units.

Low level lighting such as has been used by the previous contractors on site (festoon lights) will be used on this contractor compound to avoid impacting the Isles of Scilly Dark Skies.