

Ecological Walkover Survey

Project Information & Site Context

Site Name & Location	4 Hugh Street, St Mary's	Grid Reference	SV 90233 10592
Client Name	Henry Riley	Report Number	RT-MME-163130
Site Area (ha)	0.1 hectares	Topography	Flat
Summary of Proposals	<p>This survey was undertaken to inform a planning application for the redevelopment of an existing Co-operative supermarket, adjacent storage units and disused bank facility.</p> <p>The proposed work will be confined to the ground floor. The redevelopment will not impact existing living accommodation or roof spaces above any of the operational areas. The survey therefore focused on areas to be impacted by the scope of work.</p>		

Methods

Field Survey	<p>An ecological walkover survey of the site was undertaken on 6th May 2024 by Tom Docker CEcol MCIEEM (Managing Director) during which the location and extent of all habitat types present within the site were noted. The presence, or likely presence, of protected species within the site was also recorded.</p> <p>In accordance with current guidance regarding Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), the red line boundary for the proposed redevelopment is entirely occupied by previously developed land with a sealed surface. It is therefore exempted from the need to achieve mandatory BNG as it falls beneath the <i>de minimis</i> threshold.</p>			
Weather Conditions	Temperature (°C)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind Force (Beaufort)	Precipitation
	13	20	F2-3	Nil
Constraints	None. All areas of the site could be fully accessed.			

Results

Nature Conservation Sites	<p>The northern boundary of the site directly abutted Town Beach, which forms part of the Isles of Scilly potential Special Protection Area (pSPA), cited for its seabird assemblage and breeding populations of storm petrel <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>, great black-backed gull <i>Larus marinus</i>, lesser black-backed gull <i>Larus fuscus</i> and shag <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>. No evidence of breeding activity by any of these species was recorded on or adjacent to the site during the survey, although lesser black-backed gull was observed feeding and loafing adjacent to the quay, c. 100 m north of the survey area.</p> <p>The northern site boundary is also c. 60m from the boundary of the Isles of Scilly Complex Special Area of Conservation (SAC), designated for its important intertidal and low-tide habitats and reefs. The nature of redevelopment work proposed will fall entirely within the built environment and is considered unlikely to pose a risk to any of the features for which the SAC is designated, however a precautionary recommendation for a Construction Ecological Management Plan is made below.</p> <p>Although no adverse impacts on either of these internationally designated sites are anticipated, consultation with the local planning authority is advised to determine whether a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is needed to evidence compliance with the</p>
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	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). A recommendation is made below.
Overview of Habitats	<p>The footprint of the proposed planning application was entirely occupied by the built environment, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A two-story building housing the existing Co-operative supermarket facility with offices, storage and accommodation above. This structure comprised rendered and painted stone and brickwork, with a pitched, slate-tiled roof and slate-clad dormer windows. The ground floor featured large glazed windows and doors that made up the supermarket frontage, with a series of single-glazed windows in wooden frames interspersing the frontage of the first floor. • A two-storey disused bank, separated from the supermarket by a narrow concrete alleyway. This building was of similar construction to the Co-operative supermarket, comprising rendered and painted stone and brickwork with a pitched, slate tiled roof. The former bank occupied the ground floor, with residential accommodation above. • A three-storey maisonette to the rear of the supermarket, fronting directly onto Town Beach. This block was constructed from rendered brickwork and featured a pitched, clay-tiled roof with a clay ridge tile. The ground floor was adjoined to the supermarket by a flat roofed storage and packing area, however the upper storeys were residential accommodation. • A “back of house” area comprising a concrete yard with a series of single-storey chillers and produce stores. The most substantive of these were two adjoined, single-storey concrete structures with half-pitched corrugated asbestos panel roofs. The main storage area directly fronted onto Town Beach and featured a series of boarded windows on its northern side. The concrete yard extended into an alleyway to the east of the disused bank building, providing direct access from Hugh Street. <p>The site was devoid of vegetation aside from cracks at the edges of the concrete yard where sparse buck’s-horn plantain <i>Plantago coronopus</i> and tree bedstraw <i>Coprosma repens</i> were observed. A small amount of biting stonecrop <i>Sedum acre</i> was recorded in the guttering of the rear storage warehouse, and the wall directly abutting Town Beach supported occasional spleenwort <i>Asplenium</i> sp., fleshy yellow-sorrel <i>Oxalis magalorrhiza</i> and Pellitory-of-the-wall <i>Parietaria judaica</i>.</p> <p>All habitats on site are of low nature conservation importance. No legally protected, priority or otherwise intrinsically notable habitats were recorded.</p>
Key Species Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nesting Birds: An active house sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i> nest was recorded between the gutter and an area of lifted lead flashing within the roof structure of the former bank building. This area will not be impacted by the proposed works. The ground floor sections that will be redeveloped are tightly sealed and of negligible value to nesting birds. • Bats: Proposed redevelopment work will be confined to the ground floor, which offers negligible potential to support roosting bats. The roof structures for all buildings appear to be in good condition and offer few potential ingress points for bats, except for isolated areas of lifted lead flashing within the former bank building. These areas are located some distance away from where the redevelopment work will occur, therefore no impact on roosting bats is anticipated. • Grey Seal: Scilly Complex SAC is known to support grey seal <i>Halichoerus grypus</i>, however the site offers no habitat for this species and the adjacent Town Bay is heavily used by boat traffic and for recreation at low tide. No impacts on this species are anticipated. • Other Receptors: No other key species receptors were identified during the walkover survey.

Recommendations

The recommendations below are based on Middlemarch's current understanding of the project. If works are changed in any way these recommendations will need to be amended if appropriate.

R1	Consultation with LPA: Due to the proximity of the site to two international nature conservation sites (Isles of Scilly pSPA and SAC), consultation with the local planning authority is recommended to determine whether the proposals need to be subject to the Habitats Regulations Assessment process.
R2	Scope of Redevelopment: Should the scope of the proposed redevelopment change to include any impact on the roof structures of the existing supermarket, maisonette block or former bank, the potential for impacts on nesting birds and roosting bat should be reconsidered.
R3	Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP): A CEcMP should be produced for the site setting out the safeguards and appropriate working practices that will be employed to minimise adverse effects on biodiversity and ensure compliance with wildlife legislation. This should include measures to avoid any direct or indirect impacts on Town Beach and sensitive intertidal habitats beyond.

Quality Assurance

Date	Version	Author	Checked & Approved By
15 th May 2024	Final	Tom Docker CEcol MCIEEM (Managing Director)	Tim Hextell MCIEEM (Principal Consultant)

Photographs



Plate 1: Supermarket frontage, from Hugh Street



Plate 2: Former bank frontage, from Hugh Street



Plate 3: Rear of maisonette block, from Town Beach



Plate 4: Service yard and storage area



Plate 5: Produce store



Plate 6: Storage warehouse