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# **BASELINE ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT:**

**LAND AT**

**LA COLLETTE RECLAMATION SITE**

**HAVRE DES PAS**

**JERSEY**

**FEBRUARY 2006**

**CONTENTS**

1. INTRODUCTION ..... 3

2. SURVEY METHODS ..... 4

3. SURVEY FINDINGS ..... 5

    3.1 Habitats ..... 5

    3.2 Significant plant and animal species ..... 5

    3.3 Hedgerows..... 5

    3.4 Invasive species..... 5

    3.5 Water features..... 5

    3.6 Trees..... 5

4. POTENTIAL IMPACTS..... 6

    4.1 Habitats ..... 6

    4.2 Significant plant and animal species ..... 6

5. MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS..... 7

    5.1 Habitats ..... 7

    5.2 Significant plant and animal species ..... 7

6. REQUIREMENTS FOR FURTHER SURVEY WORK..... 8

APPENDIX – SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Ambios Environmental Consultants (AEC) was commissioned by Babtie Fichtner, to conduct a baseline ecological assessment of land at the La Collette reclamation site, Havre Des Pas, Jersey. This site comprises reclaimed land defined by the outer La Collette Phase 2 breakwater, completed in 1995.

The site is owned by the States of Jersey, and is currently provides a facility for the recycling and/or disposal of a range of waste materials, including ash from the Bellozanne Energy from Waste plant.

The survey area comprised all land within the breakwater (La Collette Reclamation, Phases I and II), as far north as the wall defining the Fuel Farm and Gas Company sites, and the J.E.C. Power Station. A field survey of this area was undertaken during February 2006, in order to assess the potential for ecological impacts that might arise from site development, and in particular direct effects on sensitive features, such as important wildlife sites and specially protected animal species. This survey addresses these potential impacts by describing features of ecological importance, and the relevant measures to mitigate for any impacts that might arise as a result of development.

This report has been drawn up with due regard to specific wildlife law on the island of Jersey (Conservation of Wildlife Law 2000), as well as the requirements of species either not commonly found (e.g. red squirrel) or absent (e.g. wall lizard) within the U.K.

The site lies to the immediate west of the South East Coast of Jersey RAMSAR site, which has been designated due to the national and international importance of its cultural, scientific and visual characteristics.

## 2. SURVEY METHODS

The assessment rationale adopted for this survey follows that given in '*Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment*' (Institute of Environmental Assessment, 1995). A field survey is used to define important ecological issues, and to determine whether or not there is a need for more detailed surveys of particular animal or plant groups.

The method of assessment involved a walkover survey of the survey area, as well as a visual assessment of land immediately adjacent. Dr David Fee undertook the survey on The 17th of February 2006.

The survey specifically aimed to identify the following:

- General habitat value.
- The presence of plant species of significant nature conservation value.
- Presence of nesting birds (or outside the breeding season habitat or features likely to be of value to nesting birds).
- The presence of animal species receiving special protection under Article 2 of the Conservation of Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2000, or habitat features likely to be of value to such species.
- The biological value of hedgerows and subsequent identification of those sections likely to provide important wildlife corridors.
- Ecological value of water features.
- The presence of invasive species, particularly Japanese knotweed, for which specific guidelines may apply prior to site development.

Reference was made to a number of existing reports containing ecological information on the ecology of Jersey, namely the Jersey Bat Report (2003), Species Action Plan for the Red Squirrel (2002), and the document 'Biodiversity – a Strategy for Jersey'. The information obtained from the present survey was evaluated with reference to the information provided in these reports.

A verbal enquiry was made with Dr Louise Magris of the States of Jersey Environment Department, who was able to confirm that there were no existing records of important habitats or specially protected animal species within the survey area.

### **3. SURVEY FINDINGS**

#### **3.1 Habitats**

The La Collette site is almost wholly comprised of man-made and highly disturbed habitats, including both open and capped ash pits, bare soil substrates, and tipped materials such as timber, rubble and plastics. Land along the wall defining the Fuel Farm and Gas Company is currently used for composting green waste.

Given the high levels of disturbance, much of the site is devoid of vegetation – the exceptions being a limited number of ruderal plant species on stored soils, and a sparse cover of rough grassland on a capped ash pit on the northern edge of the site.

Though outside any proposed development area, La Collette Gardens are found to the immediate north of the site, and a short section of scrub-covered cliff is found outside the northern site boundary (see Appendix for photograph).

Land to the east, south and west of the site comprises marine habitats that were not included within the survey area.

#### **3.2 Significant plant and animal species**

Field evidence indicates that, with the exception of a few common bird species, no significant plant or animal species are likely to be found on site.

Though unlikely, the short section of scrub covered cliff below La Collette Gardens may provide suitable habitat for wall lizard.

#### **3.3 Hedgerows**

No hedgerows present on site.

#### **3.4 Invasive species**

No invasive species were recorded on site at the time of survey.

#### **3.5 Water features**

No water features present within survey area. (N.B. Marine habitats, including tidal areas within the breakwater, would not be directly affected by any development on site, and as such were not included within the survey area).

#### **3.6 Trees**

No trees found within the survey area.

## **4. POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

### **4.1 Habitats**

None of the habitat types on site support plant or animal species of significant conservation value. There will be no impact on the adjacent RAMSAR site.

### **4.2 Significant plant and animal species**

The site is likely to receive occasional use by common bird species – meadow pipit, pied wagtail and gull species were observed roosting or feeding on site at the time of survey. Though unlikely, these birds may nest in areas where disturbance is relatively low, e.g. marginal areas of the site including the breakwater.

Development off site along the cliff below La Collette Gardens may lead to loss of habitat for wall lizard. (N.B. Presence of this species could not be confirmed at the time of survey, and the habitat may well be unsuitable. This information is provided as a precautionary measure only).

## **5. MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Habitats**

No mitigation is required for loss of the existing habitats. Any new development could however incorporate some planting of suitable tree and shrub species, particularly around the boundaries of the site, as this would provide some cover for bird species.

### **5.2 Significant plant and animal species**

#### Nesting birds

Any clearance of vegetation or buildings and other infrastructure should not be undertaken between early April and late August, to avoid disturbance to nesting birds.

Additional tree planting would provide enhanced opportunities for bird species within any new development. Suitable species could include hawthorn, blackthorn, ash and holly.

#### Wall lizard

Though any development would be unlikely to affect the cliff area below La Collette Gardens, should this area be disturbed the potential presence of this species should be assessed through appropriate survey work.

## **6. REQUIREMENTS FOR FURTHER SURVEY WORK**

There are no current requirements for further survey work prior to site development, though please note general guidance on wall lizard (Section 5.2).

Should the nature of any development lead to the possibility of impacts on adjacent marine habitats, further consultation should be made with Dr Louise Magris of the States of Jersey Environment Department.



## APPENDIX – SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



**View of southern end of site bordering breakwater**



**Typical example of limited vegetation growth on disturbed areas**



**Area of rough grassland on a capped ash pit - northern edge of site**



**Scrub covered cliff below La Collette Gardens**