

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL DELEGATED PLANNING DECISION

1.	Reference No:	4/24/2210/0F1
2.	Proposed Development:	PRIOR NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSED DEMOLITION – CALDER HALL BLOWER HOUSES
3.	Location:	SELLAFIELD, SEASCALE
4.	Parish:	Beckermest with Thornhill
5.	Constraints:	<p>ASC;Adverts - ASC;Adverts,</p> <p>Safeguard Zone - Safeguard Zone,</p> <p>Coal - Off Coalfield - Data Subject To Change,</p> <p>Key Species - Potential areas for Natterjack Toads,</p> <p>DEPZ Zone - DEPZ Zone,</p> <p>Outer Consultation Zone - Sellafield 10KM</p>
6.	Publicity Representations &Policy	See Report
7.	<p>Report:</p> <p>Site and Proposal</p> <p>It is proposed to demolish four pairs of redundant plant buildings, known as the Calder Hall Blower Houses (CHBH) which are located within the Calder Hall area, to the east of the Sellafield site adjacent to the redundant reactors.</p> <p>Constructed between 1954 and 1958, the buildings comprise eight steel frame “boxes”. Each of the four reactors at Calder Hall has two Blower Houses: a “Long Blower House” on the east side and a “Short Blower House” on the west side. The long ones incorporate an additional bay.</p> <p>The long blower houses are 33m long and the short 23m long and each are 18.5m in width.</p> <p>All are steel framed buildings and externally clad in steel sheet to the roofs and corrugated</p>	

cement cladding / brickwork walls. The buildings contained heavy equipment used in the generation of power for the reactors and a large overhead crane for maintenance work with the long ones also accommodating back up generation plant.

Reason for Demolition

Each building is now redundant having reached the end of its useful life and no longer serves any purpose. Maintaining them is unnecessary. The land occupied by the blower houses is also valuable for re-use.

Method of Demolition

Given the possibility for possible future redevelopment of the site, the proposal is to remove the building superstructure and retain the existing concrete foundations until a future development design is confirmed.

The demolition of the blower houses will be undertaken by an accredited national contractor. Prior to demolition, the small plant items and equipment will be removed and larger plant items drained.

The site will be secured with a temporary 'Heras' type fence to control access and egress.

Demolition will be progressive, removing one bay at a time ensuring stability throughout the operation. The final bay will be secured to ensure lateral stability. The internal gantry cranes will be removed after the gable is dismantled. Other larger items will be removed prior to demolition or as improved access becomes available.

Asbestos will be removed prior to demolition if feasible. Bulk asbestos has already been removed from the blower houses in previous phases of work. This work will be undertaken by licensed demolition contractors. Asbestos cement cladding constitutes the bulk of remaining asbestos in the blower houses. This will be carefully removed by hand and double bagged before being placed into a suitable segregated container for transport to an off-site disposal facility.

Redundant trenches will be cleared and back-filled, active trenches will be protected. Any loose radiological contamination of the building will be removed prior to demolition. Where decontamination is not possible, waste will be segregated and directed to an appropriate waste route dependant on classification.

The blower houses will be removed to the existing ground floor level and the interface with adjoining facilities made good to re-establish weather tightness

Future Use of Site

Option studies are currently being undertaken into future development potential of the site.



Cumberland Council

However, the proposed future use is not yet confirmed.

Consultation Responses

Ponsonby with Calderbridge Parish Council

No objection, but there is concern regarding the volume of traffic. Would the six 20-tonne trucks be vacating the site through Calderbridge or travelling towards Blackbeck roundabout? Whilst this is not an overly large increase in traffic there is concern regarding waste contamination/materials being transported. Confirmation of the intended route of travel is requested.

Seascale Parish Council

No Objection to the above consultation with the condition that the material is retained on site for future reuse.

Gosforth Parish Council

No objections.

Beckermeth with Thornhill Parish Council

No objections.

Applicants Comments

In response to the concerns raised by Parishes` SL Ltd, the applicants, offer the following comments:

Reference on site retention of demolition material, it is considered the requested condition is not appropriate and should not be applied to this demolition project. The materials being generated are non-usable in their final form and as such will be managed in line with the routes defined in the Building Summary Information document which accompanied the application. In the case of both asbestos and felt, re-use on the site would be illegal as these are hazardous materials and must be managed in line with hazardous waste regulations.

The volume of ferrous and non-ferrous metals being produced makes storage onsite impractical, and there are no longer any metals recycling facilities on the site hence the use of offsite recycling facilities. Generally, reuse of concrete may be possible on the site as backfill, however given the age of the material being generated, this is not possible in this case.

In line with the above points, and also noting the lack of appropriate land on the Sellafield site for storage of the material, the requirement to store this material would cause significant delays to both this and other decommissioning projects and the materials generated should be managed as outlined in the Building Summary Information document.

As regard the volume of traffic, demolition arisings will be dispatched for off-site disposal through main gate. The bulk of arisings will be headed north to facilities in Lillyhall.

The items classified as hazardous, roofing felt and asbestos cement sheets, are estimated to constitute 4No. 20Te truck movements in total. The location for these items will be determined by our waste contractor closer to the time, but it is extremely likely this will be to facilities north of site.

Planning Policy

Planning law requires applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

On 1st April 2023, Copeland Borough Council ceased to exist and was replaced by Cumberland Council as part of the Local Government Reorganisation of Cumbria.

Cumberland Council inherited the local development plan documents of each of the sovereign Councils including Copeland Borough Council, which combine to form a Consolidated Planning Policy Framework for Cumberland.

The inherited local development plan documents continue to apply to the geographic area of their sovereign Councils only.

The Consolidated Planning Policy Framework for Cumberland comprises the Development Plan for Cumberland Council until replaced by a new Cumberland Local Plan.

Copeland Local Plan 2013 – 2028 (Adopted December 2013)

The following policies are considered relevant:

ST1 Strategic Development Principles – sets out the fundamental principles to guide development in the Borough.

ST2 Spatial Development Strategy & ST3 Strategic Development Priorities – outline the overall spatial and regeneration strategies for the Borough.

ER1 Planning for the Nuclear Sector – supports developments contributing to the continuing future of the nuclear industry providing they are not unacceptably detrimental to the environment.

DM1 Nuclear Related Development – identifies principles that development in the nuclear sector should conform to.

Emerging Copeland Local Plan 2017 - 2038 (ELP):

Cumberland Council are continuing the preparation and progression to adoption of the ELP.

The Local Plan Examination Hearing Sessions were completed in March 2023.



Cumberland Council

The appointed Planning Inspector issued the post hearing letter in June 2023, which identified the next steps for the examination.

The Inspector has now considered all representations and the discussions that took place during the Local Plan Examination Hearing Sessions in 2023 and has identified a number of amendments or 'modifications' that are required in order to ensure the ELP is sound i.e. positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national planning policy.

A six-week public consultation seeking views on the proposed modifications to the ELP closed on the 28th March 2024. The Planning Inspectors Report is awaited.

As set out in Paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to the stage of preparation of the emerging plan; the extent to which objections to relevant policies have been resolved; and the degree to which emerging policies are consistent with the NPPF.

Given the advanced stage of preparation of the ELP full weight can be attached to policies where no objections have been received or objections have been resolved. Once the consultation on the main modifications to the ELP is complete significant weight can be afforded to the policies of the ELP where modifications are proposed.

The following ECLP policies (to which there have been no objections) are relevant to this proposal. Please note that as objections have been received to the proposed nuclear policies these cannot be considered relevant at this stage.

Strategic Policy DS1PU: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

Strategic Policy DS2PU: Reducing the impacts of development on Climate Change

Strategic Policy DS6PU: Design and Development Standards

Strategic Policy N1PU: Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Potential Demolition Impacts

Timescales & Noise

The demolition works are planned to take place over a 12-month period.

Working times at the demolition site will be limited to 0700-1900 Monday-Thursday. Weekend working may occasionally be required but will be limited to preparation for demolition

activities such as cable re-routing and asbestos strip to keep noise at the weekend to a minimum. There are no nearby noise sensitive receptors i.e. residences in the vicinity so noise disturbance is unlikely to be an issue in respect of residential amenity.

Due to the short-term nature of the project it is considered unlikely that any undue disturbance will be other than temporary.

Wastes and Transport

Whilst there will be a reasonable amount of demolition wastes arising and requiring off site transportation this will only be for a relatively short period of time estimated at being 12 months. This is detailed below:

Waste removal to off-site disposal and recycling facilities is estimated to require up to six 20.0Te HGV vehicles per day. It is anticipated that HGVs associated with blower house demolition will leave Sellafield site via the main gate and will be timed to avoid rush-hour traffic. At six HGV movements per day, HGV traffic associated with blower house demolition will contribute 33 days of additional traffic load, between 4-5 days per blower house. The blower house demolition works should start and finish within 12 calendar months. Any waste found to be radiologically contaminated will be embargoed and sentenced to a suitable alternative waste route. Addressing the Parish Council's concerns it has been confirmed that there is no suitable facility for retention of any demolition waste arising on site.

The concerns raised by the Parish Council regarding truck movements and the intended disposal route have been considered and whilst there will be an increase of six 20 Te vehicles per day which is a reasonable number of movements, but not unduly excessive, this will only be for a relatively short temporary period of some 12 months.

Dust generation is not expected to be significant; the structure is predominantly a steel frame requiring minimal concrete dismantling. Access roads local to the Calder facility are in good order and vehicles will not be tracking over unmade ground.

Ecology

A recent ecological appraisal confirms that the site and immediate surroundings are of limited biodiversity value.

The Site comprised buildings, sealed surface, and unsealed surface developed land. Smaller discrete areas of sparsely vegetated urban land were also present. No protected or priority habitats were present.

There were no statutory or non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation, irreplaceable habitats, or priority habitats identified during the desk study or walkover survey that may be impacted by the proposed scheme.

All the Blower Houses do offer suitability for nesting birds across the roof space, including seabird species such as gull species and oystercatcher. The main Reactor Buildings adjacent to the Blower Houses also offers suitability across the roof space for peregrine, as well as



Cumberland Council

	<p>seabird species such as gulls. The Long Blower House and Long Blower House offer suitability as well for nesting birds internally, given the presence of holes on the external walls that allow access into the buildings.</p> <p>A recent survey confirms that there are currently no ecological constraints that would prevent the demolition. The potential for wildlife incursion is currently low but the longer the structures remain in a disused state with restricted human access, the more likely wildlife incursion is.</p> <p>The appraisal recommends that the work be scheduled as soon as possible as the nesting season is officially 01 March – 31st July. There are currently no observed nests. Should work continue into nesting season, special attention should be paid to examining areas before phases of work continue, and deterrent measures employed. The contractor should undertake pre checks of areas to ensure the area is devoid of wildlife. Work should be stopped and the Contractor consulted if any nests/ other habitat or animals are found. Operatives working on the demolition project shall be provided with toolbox talks and start of work briefs to ensure they are aware of appropriate action to take on the discovery of wildlife/ nests/ other habitats during of their work.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>Demolition is classed as falling within the definition of development and only prior notification is required. This does not permit the Local Planning Authority to object to the removal of the building but only to ensure that the method of demolition and subsequent restoration is satisfactory and conforms to the above planning policies.</p> <p>The proposal does not raise any material issues in this respect as the method of demolition is stringently controlled by Sellafield Ltd. and there were no adverse impacts identified that cannot be made acceptable by appropriate mitigation. The concerns raised by Seascale and Ponsonby with Calderbridge PC's regarding number of HGV movements, access route and wastes arising to be retained on site have been addressed.</p> <p>The ecological appraisal confirms there no ecological constraints that would prevent the demolition and that the potential for wildlife incursion is currently low. There is also scope for nesting birds but this is limited.</p> <p>There are also no issues identified in relation to timescale, noise and dust.</p> <p>It is recognised that the site does have future development potential. However, it is considered acceptable in the interim, given the sites location within the Sellafield boundary, to leave it in a tidy state at base (concrete foundation) slab level.</p> <p>As the site is situated within a highly industrial and secure complex and it is not considered appropriate to require a condition covering restoration.</p>
8.	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Approve</p>

9.	Conditions: 1. The demolition works shall be carried out within a period of 5 years from the date of this decision. Reason To comply with the requirements of Part 11 Class B.2 (b) (ix) (aa) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). 2. The demolition shall be carried out in accordance with the following application plans and documents: Site Location Plan, 1 BE 3032289, Rev F, Prior Notification Covering Letter, by SL Ltd, PLC_BCC_2228, 3 June 2024. Building Summary Report, by SL Ltd. Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, by IDS Integrated, 3 June 2024. Reason To comply with the requirements of Part 11 Class B.2 (b) (viii) (aa) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).	
	Case Officer: H.S. Morrison	Date : 17/07/2024
	Authorising Officer: N.J. Hayhurst	Date : 18/07/2024
Dedicated responses to:- N/A		