

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL DELEGATED PLANNING DECISION

1.	Reference No:	4/24/2259/0F1
2.	Proposed Development:	PRIOR NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSED DEMOLITION – SELLAFIELD OVERHEAD ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION TOWERS
3.	Location:	SELLAFIELD, SEASCALE
4.	Parish:	Ponsonby, Beckermest with Thornhill
5.	Constraints:	<p>ASC;Adverts - ASC;Adverts,</p> <p>Flood Area - Flood Zone 2, Flood Area - Flood Zone 3,</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>Preferred Route Corridor - Within Preferred Route Corridor,</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 12 electricity pylons (Overhead Electricity Transmission Towers - OETT) 8 of which are situated within the Sellafield site to the northeast and 4 of which are immediately adjacent but offsite. Constructed between 1954 and 1958, the towers consist of interconnected steel frames bolted to a concrete foundation. Of the 12 towers to be removed, 6 will be replaced whilst the remaining 6 will not as they are no longer required.</p> <p>Reason for Demolition</p>	

Demolition and replacement of the OETT's forms part of the Electrical Distribution Network Upgrade Project on site.

Recent analysis has shown that full tower removal and replacement is required to provide SL with assurance of a resilient electricity supply for a lifespan of 30 years. No foundation strengthening will be required as the original foundation designs are assumed to be fit for purpose and conductor assessment is adequate.

Method of Demolition

Each of the towers is constructed of galvanized steel sections bolted together on a concrete foundation. Upon demolition each of the towers will be removed to foundation level, with the foundation slab remaining in place pending review of future remediation and/or site redevelopment plans

As 4 of the towers (AU3, AU4, BL4 & BL5) are offsite, being sited in an agricultural field with no special restrictions, they will be felled (i.e. cutting of the rear legs and pulled over in a controlled manner). All other towers which are onsite will be dismantled on a piecemeal basis by use of a crane. Once at ground level the towers will be size reduced and put into skips for removal via the agreed SL waste route.

Future Use of Site

Sellafield Limited is currently undertaking option studies into future development options on the OETT sites. The proposed future use however is not yet confirmed and the redundant OETTs require demolition to remove unnecessary maintenance works. Given the possibility for possible future redevelopment at the site, the proposal is to remove the steelwork structure and retain the existing concrete foundations until a future development design is confirmed.

Consultation Responses

No adverse responses were received from the relevant Parish Councils.

Planning Policy

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

Development 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.



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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.

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 and the Inspector's final report awaited 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

Proposed demolition activity hours will be 0700-1900 Monday-Thursday. Weekend working may occasionally be required but will be limited to preparatory works for demolition activities such as cable re-routing and vehicle access.

Wastes and Transport

Appropriate characterisation of waste has been taken in line with SL Procedures.

All of the towers in terms of waste type are categorised as excluded non-hazardous SL waste metals. It is expected not to be classified as radioactive material but will be subject to survey before release from the Sellafield site. Any waste found to be radiologically contaminated will be embargoed and sentenced to a suitable alternative waste route.

Waste removal to off-site disposal and recycling facilities is estimated to require eight 20.0Te HGV vehicle movements over a four-day span.

In terms of route, HGVs associated with this demolition will leave Sellafield site via the main gate and will be timed to avoid rush-hour traffic.

Dust generation is not expected to be significant; the structure is a steel frame requiring no concrete dismantling. Access roads local to the offsite towers are in good order, however vehicles will be tracking over unmade ground (fields) to remove the offsite towers and install replacements (where required), and this ground will be protected with GRP matting.

Ecology

Given the nature of the tower structures, colonisation by wildlife does not appear to have occurred and the SL Environmental Advisors are satisfied that there are no ecological implications arising as a result of this work.

Conclusion

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.

The proposal does not raise any material issues in this respect as the method of demolition is stringently controlled by Sellafield Ltd.



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	<p>There are also no issues identified in relation to timescale, noise, dust, waste, transport and ecology.</p> <p>Whilst the site does have future development potential it is considered acceptable in the interim, given its location within the Sellafield boundary, to leave it in a tidy state at base concrete foundation 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.	<p>Conditions:</p> <p>1. The demolition works shall be carried out within a period of 5 years from the date of this decision.</p> <p>Reason</p> <p>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).</p> <p>2. The demolition shall be carried out in accordance with the following application plans and documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Site Location Plan, 1 BE 3032289, Rev F. scale- Prior Notification Covering Letter, by SL Ltd, PLC/BCC/1812, 29 July 2024.- Summary Information Report, by SL Ltd. <p>Reason</p> <p>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).</p>

Case Officer: H.S. Morrison	Date : 15/08/2024
Authorising Officer: N.J. Hayhurst	Date : 22/08/2024
Dedicated responses to:- N/A	