

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL DELEGATED PLANNING DECISION

1.	Reference No:	4/25/2210/0F1
2.	Proposed Development:	PRIOR NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSED DEMOLITION – CALDER HALL TURBINE HALL A BUILDING
3.	Location:	SELLAFIELD, SEASCALE
4.	Parish:	Ponsonby, Seascale, 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 - Known Sites for Natterjack Toads,</p> <p>Key Species - Potential areas for Natterjack Toads,</p> <p>Gas Pipeline - Northern Gas Pipeline - 135m buffer,</p> <p>DEPZ Zone - DEPZ Zone,</p> <p>Preferred Route Corridor - Within Preferred Route Corridor,</p> <p>Outer Consultation Zone - Sellafield 10KM,</p> <p>PROWs - Public Right of Way</p>
6.	Publicity Representations &Policy	See Report
7.	Report: Site and Proposal It is proposed to demolish the redundant Calder Hall Power Station Turbine Hall A (CHTHA) which is situated in the centre of the area known as Calder Hall, on the eastern side of the	

Sellafield site.

To the north and south it is bounded by reactor buildings, which are also undergoing a process of staged decommissioning, and to the east and west by land, which previously housed supporting buildings that have already been demolished. These have been removed as part of the Calder Hall Land Clearance Project.

Constructed between 1953 and 1956 the Turbine Hall functioned as the electricity generation part of the overall nuclear power station and was the non-nuclear part of the operations.

The building is predominantly rectangular in form and comprises four interconnected structures; the Generation Hall, Steam Distribution, Control Block and Switch Room.

The Generation Hall is the largest of the four sections and runs centrally north/south between the other structures with the Steam Distribution area to the west and the Control Blocks and Switch Room to the east. The layout drawing accompanying the application shows the building specification as follows: overall 75m in length by 42m deep with a switch control section to the east protruding by some 10m x 15m in size.

The Generation Hall is the tallest section at 18.5m high. In terms of construction, the building consists of a steel frame supported on a concrete raft foundation. Externally, there are masonry walls to 1.5m high with glazing and asbestos-cement sheeting above. At the North and South end of the building there are large double-leaf sliding doors. The roof of the building is flat with a slight fall to the east and is constructed from insulated steel cladding.

Internally, the largest building contains steam turbines and condensers supported on reinforced concrete platforms 7m tall. Service connections run in a number of trenches in the main floor slab.

Reason for Demolition

The building ceased operating in 2003 and cannot be used for any other purpose. The Calder Land Clearance Project is part of the overall site remediation portfolio and once the Turbine Hall has been removed it will release a significant area of land as part of this project for reuse.

Demolition of this structure will also remove the future costs of maintaining it safely and securely.

Demolition of the building is scheduled to be carried out in the last quarter of 2026.

Method of Demolition

The demolition tasks will be undertaken by Integrated Decommissioning Solutions (IDS) an approved national contractor who have been appointed by Sellafield Ltd. They have proven experience across the Sellafield site using industry standard demolition techniques.

Pre Demolition Work

An overview of the pre-demolition work in and around Turbine Hall A is as follows: -



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- Carry out the removal of non-load bearing internal partitions, soft strip and removal of any remaining office furniture etc prior to the demolition of the building. Any other redundant and loosely stored material will also be removed from the building.
- Following a full asbestos survey, any items identified as containing asbestos will be removed in a safe manner by the selected Contractor, Erith. Any services present in the building will be disconnected as part of the soft strip, along with the internal strip out of existing nonload-bearing partitions.
- Prior to de-planting, the underground tunnels between CHTHA and the former Administration Building to the immediate east (now demolished) will be stripped out, their covers removed, and the tunnels backfilled.
- The assumed start point of demolition will be once the main hall area has been de-planted, trenches in the area have been backfilled (apart from the steam annexe trench) and any structure which contains any remaining hazardous substances have been removed and segregated from the rest of the demolition waste. Any cables associated with the OTC have been removed/disconnected, and
- The ground around the perimeter of CHTHA will be prepared for the locating of heavy machinery.

Demolition Work

Proposed demolition methodology comprises:

- Remove all cladding in a controlled manner using a scissor lift to provide access.
- Remove glazing on the perimeter of the building using a long arm excavator with selector grab, apart from the high-level glazing to the east and west of the Generation Hall (visible in Figures 4-6).
- Remove north gable using an excavator.
- From the north working south, sequentially remove the 1st and then 2nd Bays and then remove the roof at the 3rd Bay from the north.
- Create a temporary landing pad within the CHTHA footprint at floor level and pull the OTC from its rails onto the pad. Remove OTC from the area, cut up and recycle the metal.
- Remove remainder of 3rd Bay from the north.
- Move the excavator to the south end of CHTHA via the west side and remove south gable end.
- Working south to north, sequentially demolish the 1st, 2nd and then 3rd Bays from the south.
- Remove the Generation Hall roof and the upper east and west sides so that they are in line with the roof of the Steam Distribution and Control Blocks/Switch Room respectively, working each bay south to north. Two independent structures will remain: the Control Block/Switch

Room and the Steam Distribution annexe.

- Demolish the remainder of the Steam Distribution annexe north to south, bay by bay.
- Demolish the Control Block and Switch Room annexe.
- Once the building is demolished, the slab over the Control Block will be broken and removed, exposing an open trench and basement.
- The trench and basement will be backfilled using crushed demolition concrete, providing agreement with the Environment Agency can be gained. Otherwise, they will be backfilled using 6F5 or MOT Type 1 infill (Hardcore etc.).
- Make good of the general area, including proper management of any remaining in-ground features such as drainage points.
- Fill in and ensure drainage and surface run-off occurs to the existing surface water drains in the area which will remain in service after the demolition works have been completed.

Waste Streaming

- Appropriate characterisation of waste will be carried out in accordance with Sellafield Ltd.'s procedures.
- Further asbestos surveys will be undertaken to determine appropriate routes.
- An Out of Scope (OOS) Metals agreement is in place between Sellafield Ltd and IDS ("Out of Scope" refers to the status of any metal waste which contains such low levels of radioactivity and so not requiring regulation under the Radioactive Substances Act).

Future Use of Site

The building is now redundant. Sellafield Ltd is currently undertaking option studies into future development options on the CHTHA site. At present, the proposed future use is not confirmed, and the building requires demolition to remove unnecessary maintenance works. Given the potential future redevelopment at the site, the proposal is to remove the building superstructure and retain the existing concrete foundations until a future development design is confirmed.

Consultation Responses

Seascale Parish Council

No objection but request mitigation to protect the maternity bat roost.

Beckermeth with Thornhill Parish Council

No objections.

Ponsonby with Calderbridge Parish Council



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Neutral response. Requested more information regarding the transportation of waste. Queried the route of the waste arisings from the SL site and asked if they could be transported off site via Main Gate as opposed to going through Calderbridge and also whether any waste going to LLWR could be transported via rail.

Sellafield Ltd Response to Ponsonby PC

Sellafield Ltd have clarified that they will be sending waste to Workington, Flimby and Lillyhall using the route from Sellafield Main Gate via the C4037 and Blackbeck roundabout and then on the A595 north, thus avoiding Calderbridge. They also point out that traffic control measures at North Gate of Sellafield, which could route traffic through Calderbridge, are such that the vehicles used for waste movements are too big to get in or out of that gate.

As regards transporting waste to LLWR via rail this request cannot be met. There is currently no additional capacity on the Cumbria Coast rail line available for Sellafield Ltd to make use of this methodology, therefore waste from this project must be moved from Sellafield to LLWR using the existing road network.

This work will result in a maximum of seven vehicle movements between these two sites, assuming all waste types must be segregated. If aggregation of wastes into as few skips as possible is allowed by LLWR, this number of movements can be reduced to five.

Environmental Health

No objections.

Planning Policy

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must 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 2021 - 2039 (LP):

Cumberland Council continued the preparation of the LP as commenced by Copeland

Borough Council.

The LP was adopted by Cumberland Council on the 5th of November 2024 replacing the Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028 and the saved policies of the Copeland Local Plan 2021-2016.

The following key policies of the local plan are relevant to this proposal:

- Policy DS4 Design and Development Standards
- Strategic Policy N1 Conserving and enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity.
- Policy NU4 Nuclear and associated development at Sellafield

Other Material Planning Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Demolition Impacts

Waste and Transport

The proposal will generate a reasonable amount of waste.

The following waste arising has been calculated for the demolition of the building:

Metals – Non-hazardous including brass, steel, iron, mixed metals, ferrous and non-ferrous total some 139 skips (20Te). This waste will be transported off site to AVS Flimby and Cyclife, Lillyhall.

- Hazardous – VLLW including steel, mixed metals and metal mesh. These amount to 9 skips (20Te) destined for LLWR at Drigg.

Other Materials

- Non-hazardous mainly concrete and brick but also glass, plaster board and wood. Amounts to 308 skips (20Te) which will be transported to CWM or Cyclife at Lillyhall.
- Hazardous – asbestos, bitumen felt, oil and VLLW totalling 33 skips (20Te).

The removal of the demolition arisings to off-site disposal and recycling facilities will be made using 20.0Te HGV vehicles with the requirement for an estimated ten to fourteen vehicle movements per day over a period of approximately 50 working days, with sorting and segregating of arisings constraining the rate of dispatch

Where demolition arisings can be repurposed for use on the Sellafield site they will be. For example, existing trenches will be backfilled with in-situ crushed and compacted concrete, subject to characterisation results and internal approval. Demolition arisings are expected to be suitable for non-radiological free release and will be subject to radiological surveys to



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confirm this before release from the Sellafield site.

Any material unexpectedly found to be radiologically contaminated will be embargoed and sentenced to a suitable alternative disposal route.

All vehicles will be routed via Yottenfews and Blackbeck roundabouts to ensure no additional traffic occurs through villages close to the Sellafield site. However, some waste will require transportation to LLWR which will result in a maximum of seven vehicle movements between these two sites, assuming all waste types must be segregated. If aggregation of wastes into as few skips as possible is allowed by LLWR, this number of movements can be reduced to five.

This scale of waste arisings is to be expected for a demolition project of this size the majority of which requires off site transportation. This however will be for a relatively short period of time estimated at being over a period of 50 working days at a rate of a modest 10-14 truck movements daily.

The concerns raised by Ponsonby with Calderbridge Parish Council regarding truck movements and the potential for the off-site disposal route being through Calderbridge have been addressed. Sellafield Ltd have confirmed that these will be via Main Gate and Blackbeck Roundabout.

Working Hours

Demolition working hours will typically be 0700-1900 Monday-Thursday and 0700-1500 Friday. However, to minimise the impact by the demolition works on operations in adjacent facilities some weekend working may be required on an ad-hoc basis.

Off-site movements of waste will occur between the hours of 0900-1600 Monday-Thursday and 0900-1400 Friday, and HGVs will depart the site via the main gate and will be timed to avoid rush-hour traffic and minimise disturbance to surrounding areas.

Dust

Much of the demolition work does not have significant dust generation potential. However, any concrete removal and crushing shall be managed using dust suppression techniques including water sprays. The area around the turbine hall is a heavily trafficked area of the Sellafield site and all roadways are fully paved, therefore vehicle movements should not generate significant dust even during dry periods.

Ecology

Loss of Roosting Habitat for Bats

Recent ecological surveys and a Walkover in 2022 have identified the potential for bat roosts in the building and ancillary buildings. As a result it was recommended that Turbine Hall A be subject to Dusk Emergence / Dawn re-entry Surveys within the active season (May – September) to determine the presence or absence of roosting bats. It concluded that there

was a low risk.

Further ecology surveys were undertaken in 2023, the results of which discounted the building as being suitable for roosting bats as there was evidence of nesting birds including multiple nesting feral pigeons within and blocking the large gaps in brickwork that were previously described as potential bat roosts. With the current start date for the CHTHA demolition being September 2026 the intention is to reassess the structure for the likelihood of bats in early to mid-2026 to ensure the current ecology survey information remains valid. This will also address the issue raised by Seascale PC regarding protecting bat maternity roosts.

Loss of Nesting Habitat for Breeding Birds.

If any nesting birds are identified during the survey, they will be left in situ for their entire nesting period and alternative approaches to the work proposed. This may include leaving an exclusion zone around the nests to avoid disturbance.

Where possible, demolition of structures should be undertaken outside the core bird nesting season (1 March to 31 August) though it should be noted that variation in dates is possible, for example from geographical variations in climate, or due to a particularly mild winter to avoid damage or destruction of occupied nests or harm to breeding birds. If this cannot be achieved, works within the core bird nesting season will require an inspection of buildings/ structures to be cleared for breeding birds and their occupied nests by a suitably qualified ecologist no more than 24 hours prior to any works being undertaken.

Potential Mitigation

The following mitigation measures will be implemented during the demolition works to reduce ecological impacts. The mitigation hierarchy has been followed, looking to avoid, minimise or restore in the first instance.

Works to be undertaken following a Precautionary Method of Working (PMW) with regards to bats.

The PMW will be written and implemented by a suitably qualified ecologist. As a minimum this will include: -

- Inspection of accessible areas of cladding for signs of bats prior to works;
- Ecologist to be present for initial cladding soft-strip and will assess need for ongoing site presence; -

Working hours will be restricted to between 0700 and 1800 with the main noise generating activities would be restricted to between 08.00 - 17.00 hours. Works outside these hours, with the capacity to generate noise significantly greater than normal decommissioning operations, would only be undertaken with prior agreement from the local authority.

- Briefing to site staff on identification of bat roosts and what to do if a bat is found;



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- If evidence of roosting bats is found all works must cease and a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence from Natural England must be applied for and granted before works can continue.

As the presence of roosting bats cannot be ruled out, works will be undertaken following a PMW with regards to bats authored and implemented by a suitable qualified ecologist. This will detail a low impact approach to the works that will minimise the risk to bats, should they be present. This method has been proposed as the presence of bats roosting within the Application Site is considered unlikely but cannot be ruled out entirely. Following the specific mitigation measures that will be outlined in a PMW, it is considered that the destruction of bat roosts or disturbance to roosting bats is reasonably unlikely to occur, and the Proposed Scheme will not result in any significant adverse impacts to roosting bats.

Subject to the proposed mitigation being undertaken ecological impacts from the Scheme will not result in any significant negative residual effects that undermine the conservation objectives or condition of designated sites and their features of interest or protected or notable species.

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.

It has been demonstrated that the proposal to demolish Turbine Hall A 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 concern raised by Ponsonby with Calderbridge PC regarding the off-site access route for HGV movements has been satisfactorily addressed.

There are also no issues identified in relation to timescale, noise and dust particularly as any undue disturbance is only likely to be short term.

The ecological appraisal confirms there are no ecological constraints that would prevent the demolition providing further bat survey work is undertaken to confirm recent findings which identified the site as low risk, along with other ecological mitigation measures. This would also alleviate the concern raised by Seascale PC regarding maternity bat roosts.

It is recognised that the site does have future development potential. However, it is considered acceptable in the interim, given the site's location within the Sellafield boundary, to leave it in a tidy state at base (concrete foundation) slab level until its future, along with adjacent cleared areas as part of the Calder Land Clearance Project, is determined.

As the site is situated within a highly industrial and secure complex and it is not considered appropriate to require a condition covering restoration.

8.	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Approve</p>
9.	<p>Conditions:</p> <p>1. The demolition works shall be carried out within a period of five years from the date of this decision.</p> <p>Reason</p> <p>To comply with the requirements of Part 11, Class B2 (b) (ix) (aa) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended.</p> <p>2. Permission shall relate to the following plans and documents as received on the respective dates and development shall be carried out in accordance with them: -</p> <p><u>Documents</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical Note, Sellafield Bat Emergence Surveys, Atkins (2023), ref 5221914, dated 31/07/2023. - Covering Letter by Euan Hutton, CEO SL Ltd. 25 June 2025. Ref. PLC/BCC/1899. - Summary Information Report - CHTHA Issue 2 (CONFIDENTIAL). - Calder Hall Land Clearance Project Ecological Assessment by IDS Integrated, IDS REF NUMBER: 5197094-301-0025 A, Rev A, 25/01/2021. <p><u>Plans</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location Plan, ref. 1 BE 3032289 Rev F, Issue 2, scale 1:5000. - Location Plan, ref. 1 BE 3032289, Rev F, scale 1:5000 (CONFIDENTIAL). <p>Reason</p> <p>To conform with the requirement of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>



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Case Officer: Heather Morrison	Date : 24/07/2025
Authorising Officer: N.J. Hayhurst	Date : 25/07/2025
Dedicated responses to:- N/A	