

**CUMBERLAND COUNCIL
DELEGATED PLANNING DECISION**

1.	Reference No:	4/25/2410/0F1
2.	Proposed Development:	PRIOR NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSED DEMOLITION – THE COMPUTER ACCOMMODATION BUILDING
3.	Location:	SELLAFIELD, SEASCALE
4.	Parish:	Ponsonby, Beckermest with Thornhill
5.	Constraints:	ASC Adverts - ASC;Adverts, Flood Area - Flood Zone 2, Flood Area - Flood Zone 3, Safeguard Zone - Safeguard Zone, Coal - Off Coalfield - Data Subject To Change, Key Species - Potential areas for Natterjack Toads, DEPZ Zone - DEPZ Zone, Preferred Route Corridor - Within Preferred Route Corridor, Outer Consultation Zone - Sellafield 10KM, PROWs - Public Right of Way, Main River Consultation Area - Main River Consultation Area
6.	Publicity Representations & Policy	See Report
7.	Report:	
	Site and Proposal	
		<p>It is proposed to demolish a redundant Computer Accommodation Building located within the south-western quadrant of the Sellafield licensed nuclear site. This is part of a general clean-up of the area to make way for future new development and/or or associated activities the area has been ear marked for.</p> <p>The building is a flat roofed single-storey, sectional structure installed on site in 1988. It is rectangular in form and consists of fifteen portable cabin sections which have been joined together and customised. The building is supported by an external frame structure and has a</p>

timber base with metallic coated external plywood walls and an inner plasterboard skin. It sits on concrete blocks concealed by a steel skirt. All the windows are single-glazed and wood-framed.

The building to be demolished is situated in a partially fenced compound surrounded by tarmac and gravel, mostly compacted external surfaces. To the west side there is a large car park. It was used as offices and an IT data centre with welfare facilities.

Reason for Demolition

The building has reached the end of its useful life and is now vacant. It is in a condition where demolition and disposal is the safest and most economic option to take. It will release a significant area of land for reuse or remediation. The demolition of the building is to be completed at the earliest opportunity.

Method of Demolition

The demolition tasks will be undertaken by Sellafield Limited's (SL) appointed demolition contractors.

The activities include the following: -

- Site investigations/survey(s) and characterisation
- Determination of waste types and quantities.
- Develop the Method Statement(s), Risk Assessments and any other required documentation.
- Site set up including site delineation/fencing, demarcation of laydown areas,
- installation of welfare facilities and delivery of equipment
- Soft Strip - Removal and segregation of the structure internals e.g. fixtures • and fittings, plasterboard, insulation, wiring etc.
- The demolition of the building to base slab level and removal of all waste.
- The protection of any nearby drains or any other structure that may be impacted by demolition activities.
- The making good of the building footprint following demolition.

Environmental Impact & Waste Streaming

- Appropriate characterisation of waste will take place prior to demolition in line with SL procedures.
- Asbestos demolition surveys are to be undertaken to comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and to determine the waste routes.
- All waste types to be segregated and disposed of down the correct waste routes, following



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the waste hierarchy.

- No waste will leave the site until the results have been confirmed.

Consultation Responses

Beckermeth with Thornhill PC

No objections

Ponsonby PC

No comments received

Seascale PC

No comments received

Gosforth PC

No comments received

Environmental Health

Residential amenity is not expected to be affected by this development and site protocols / procedures will be in place to ensure its safe completion. As such, there are no further comments / objections from Environmental Health.

Ecologist

Has advisory recommendations regarding protection of bats, reptiles and other protected species before and during demolition work. These will be added as an informative to the decision.

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 the 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 2001- 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/ Transport

The proposal will generate a reasonable amount of waste.

Any hazardous waste arising such as asbestos will be dealt with appropriately by SL Licensed contractors.

In terms of transporting the waste, demolition is progressive, waste is produced daily, some days waste will leave site daily other days processing and segregating waste will be carried out until a full 40 yard RoRo skip is full. The number of loads taken off site depends on the packing fractions gained in each skip and until the demolition starts SL will not be certain how many loads the demolition will produce. The project are proposing less than 1 HGV a day for the duration of the works and that the route will be off site via Main Gate, along the A595 from Sellafield to Lillyhall. It is estimated that once demolition starts the project will take 8 - 10 weeks to complete. Whilst there may be impacts associated with waste production and transport the demolition project is only temporary in nature and in view of this and the relatively limited scale it is considered unlikely to generate any sustained adverse impacts.

Cumulative

Whilst cumulative impacts may be a potential issue there is no information available to assess this and it is considered not within the scope of this type of application.

Noise and Dust



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Given the location of the subject building well within the Sellafield site, the majority of any demolition noise will be contained and thus unlikely to create any undue disturbance beyond the Sellafield site boundary.

As regards dust much of the demolition work does not have significant dust generation potential and therefore this is unlikely to be an issue.

This is endorsed by Environmental Health who in their consultation response who are of the view that residential amenity is not likely to be affected by the demolition work and site protocols / procedures will be in place to ensure its safe completion.

Ecology

The application is accompanied by a Habitat and Ecology Survey undertaken in October 2025 which identifies that there are few ecological constraints affecting the site.

Whilst bats and reptiles are unlikely to be present it is acknowledged that there is potential for nesting birds. Externally, surrounding gravelled areas could provide suitable habitat for ground nesting birds such as Oystercatchers. The grass/scrub area to the west of the compound is also potential habitat for reptiles and breeding birds. The demolition works are unlikely to impact on this area, due to the car park in-between. Good practice will be undertaken to ensure risks are minimised as far as practicable through good demolition management, and wildlife awareness.

The proposed demolition will not impact on any other areas of ecological interest.

The Council's Ecologist in her consultation response advises:

Breeding birds

- Work is undertaken outside the breeding bird period (March - August inclusive) or if not possible a breeding bird check within 48 hours of works commencing and a buffer zone established if active nests are found to be present.
- All development work be carried out with care to avoid small mammals such as hedgehogs. Contractors should be briefed about the potential presence of small mammals with the following precautionary methods of work in place.
- Should any trenches and excavations be required, an escape route for animals that enter the trench must be provided, especially if left open overnight. Ramps should be no greater than of 45 degrees in angle. Ideally, any holes should be securely covered. This will ensure badgers are not trapped during work.
- All excavations left open overnight or longer should be checked for animals prior to the continuation of works or infilling. Back filling should be completed immediately after any excavations, ideally back filling as an on-going process to the work in hand.
- Stored materials should be raised (i.e. stored on pallets) in order to ensure that wildlife

such as hedgehogs do not shelter in the piles

Bats

- The building is to undergo a soft-strip demBreedolition. If evidence of bats is found during the demolition, then works must cease and advice sought from an ecologist who carries a Level 2 Bat Licence from Natural England.

Herptiles

- During the development, measures should be put in place to discourage amphibians from using the development area, the creation of any piles of earth, materials and rubble which could form potential artificial hibernacula and refuge should be avoided at all times. Any spoil or rubble will be removed immediately to skips, or on hard standing or short grass. This will ensure that no potential amphibian hibernation or resting sites are created.
- The storage of all loose materials must be palletised or similar so they are off the ground whenever possible.
- Should any trenches and excavations be required, an escape route for animals that enter the trench must be provided, especially if left open overnight. Ramps should be no greater than of 45 degrees in angle. Ideally, any holes should be securely covered. This will ensure amphibians are not trapped during work.
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The above will be attached to the decision as an informative.

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 relevant planning policies.

It has been demonstrated that the proposal to demolish the Computer Accommodation Building does not raise any material issues as the method of demolition is stringently controlled by Sellafeld Ltd. and there were no adverse impacts identified that cannot be made acceptable by appropriate mitigation. There are also no issues identified in relation to waste, transport, noise and dust. The ecological survey confirms there are no ecological constraints that would prevent demolition providing the ecological mitigation measures identified, especially for breeding birds, are implemented.



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	<p>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 is determined.</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: Approve</p>
9.	<p>Conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The demolition works shall be carried out within a period of 5 years from the date of this decision. <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> <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Demolition shall relate to the following plans and documents as dated and development shall be carried out in accordance with them: - <p>Location Plan, ref 1BE 3108846 Rev A, scale 1:5000 Official Location Plan, ref 1BE 3108846 Rev A, scale 1:5000 Covering Letter by Development Control Team, Sellafield Ltd, ref PLC/BCC/2383, dated 29/11/2025 Official Summary Information Report by Sellafield Ltd Demolition Group, dated October 2025. Official Habitat and Ecology Survey, by Sellafield Ltd Environmental Advisor, ref SP-COMP-CSA-00001, dated 11 November 2025.</p> <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> <p>Informative - Ecology</p>

Breeding Birds

Works should be completed outside of the breeding bird period (March – August inclusive). If this is not possible a breeding bird check should be carried out no more than 48 hours prior to the planned development to ensure no birds and their nests are present. If active nests are discovered an appropriate buffer zone should be established and works within that area ceased until the young have naturally fledged.

Small Mammals

All development work should be carried out with care to avoid small mammals such as hedgehogs. Contractors should be briefed about the potential presence of small mammals with the following precautionary methods of work in place:

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Case Officer: H.S. Morrison

Date : 04/02/2026

Authorising Officer: N.J. Hayhurst

Date : 04/02/2026

Dedicated responses to:-