

Our Ref: High Ling Bank PNOD  
Your Ref: PP-12645691



11 January 2023

Development Management  
Cumberland Council  
The Market Hall  
Market Place  
Whitehaven  
CA28 7JG

Dear Sir / Madam ,

**HIGH LING BANK, GOSFORTH: APPLICATION FOR PRIOR APPROVAL FOR THE DEMOLITION OF FARMHOUSE, ATTACHED BARN BUILDING, COACH HOUSE AND OUTBUILDINGS**

On behalf of our client Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, Avison Young are submitting a planning application for prior approval for the demolition of a farmhouse, attached barn building, coach house and outbuildings at High Ling Bank, Gosforth.

This prior approval application has been submitted on Planning Portal (Reference: PP-12645691) and comprises the following plans and reports:

Please find the following plans and forms to support this letter:

**FORMS AND DOCUMENTS**

- Application Forms (Avison Young);
- Covering Letter (Avison Young);
- Demolition Method Statement (Avison Young);
- Ecological Constraints Study (Biome);
- Site Notice Statement;
- Structural Report (March 2019) (WDS);
- Structural Report Addendum (July 2023) (WDS); and
- Structural Sketches (WDS).

**PLANS**

- Location Plan.

**THE SITE**

High Ling Bank is located approximately 1.5km east of Sellafield Nuclear Site and 1.5km north west of Gosforth in Western Cumbria. The property comprises a farmhouse, an attached barn building, a coach house and outbuildings. High Ling Bank is connected to the A595 in the east by a small service road that runs to the north of the property. The A595 runs to Gosforth in the south and Egremont to the north. The immediate surroundings of the property is mainly comprised of mature trees, with agricultural land located beyond.

## **PROPOSED WORKS**

The buildings are proposed to be demolished under Class B, Part 11, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) order 2015. The proposed works comprise the demolition of a farmhouse, attached barn building, coach house and outbuildings.

The farmhouse comprises random stone masonry walls which support a slated traditional purlin/truss roof structure and the first floor joists. The barn is formed in similar masonry to the farmhouse which supports a slated timber purlin and king post truss roof structure. There are two outbuildings adjacent to the farmhouse, a coach house off the left hand gable of the house, and some general outbuildings opposite the house which bound the courtyard. These buildings are of similar construction to the main farmhouse and barn.

An initial non-disruptive visual Structural Inspection was undertaken at the property in March 2019, concluding that the property was generally in a poor condition and was in need of significant remedial measures. A further non-disruptive visual structural inspection was carried out at the property in July 2023. Between March 2019 and July 2023 the property has been unoccupied and no remedial works were carried out. The farmhouse was found to be significantly affected by damp and the internal finishes were in a poor condition. The condition of the main structure had worsened since the inspection in March 2019 and the right hand portion of the property continues to be in need of rebuilding. Considering this, WDS conclude that the farmhouse is structurally inadequate and a total rebuild should be reconsidered over a refurbishment.

The adjoining barn was also perceived to have deteriorated since the original inspection, with significant amounts of rebuilding work required. The roof and timber lintels were in need of replacement with the front arch requiring a rebuild. WDS consider that the extent of structural remedial work required ensures that the structure is unsuitable for conversion to habitable space.

The coach house was found to be in a generally adequate structural condition with minor repairs required to the lean-to timber frame structure and the front stone arches. Additionally, a number of cracks and joints in the masonry will need to be re-tied. The trees adjacent to the building were found to be affecting the property causing movement of the rear wall, therefore any remedial works would involve the removal of the trees located within a 12m radius of the property.

The updated Structural Survey also found the outbuilding to be in a poor structural condition, with significant deterioration noted since the last inspection. The left hand third of the building had suffered further structural movement, and is in need of a total rebuild. Similarly, the stone masonry to the mid portion of the front elevation is excessively weathered and likely needs rebuilding. Considering this, WDS deem the property inadequate for conversion, therefore demolition should be a consideration.

## **PROTECTED SPECIES**

As set out in the Demolition Method Statement, a Protected Ecology Study and Ecological Constraints Study was undertaken in August 2023 to support this application. Bat Surveys completed in 2020 and 2023 concluded that day roosts of various species were present in a number of the buildings. A peak count of seven Soprano Pipistrelles were confirmed in the farmhouse, while five Brown Long-eared Bats, five Soprano Pipistrelles and one Whiskered/Brandt's Bat were recorded in the adjoining barn.

Up to three Brown-Long-eared Bats and one Natterer's Bat were noted in Outbuilding 1, with no evidence of larger or more important roosts identified. No bats were founded roosted In Outbuilding 2. As set out in the Demolition Method Statement, the applicant recognises that any works that could destroy or modify a bat roost/access point or disturb roosting bats, will require a Natural England licence to enable the works to be completed legally.

Due to the potential presence of nesting birds within all buildings at High Ling Bank, the applicant recognises that any works with the potential to impact nests should ideally be completed outside the bird nesting season (1 March to 31 August). Should demolition works need to be undertaken during the nesting season, a survey to identify any nests which may be impacted will be required. Should an occupied bird nest or a nest in the process of being constructed be encountered, works will cease in this area and will only re-commence once the birds have fledged or the nest is abandoned.

#### **DEMOLITION METHOD STATEMENT**

The Demolition Method Statement has been prepared by Avison Young and sets out the description of works to be undertaken. The statement also outlines the Environmental Surveys that have been undertaken to support the application.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Overall, the demolition of a farmhouse, adjoining barn, coach house and two outbuildings at High Ling Bank, Gosforth is required as most of buildings are in poor structural condition and are no longer fit for purpose. An initial Structural Inspection in March 2019 determined that the property was generally in a poor condition and was in need of significant remedial measures. A further inspection in July 2023 confirmed this position, with no remedial works undertaken in the time period between the two surveys.

A Protected Ecology Assessment and Ecological Constraints Study, undertaken in August 2023, noted the presence of various species of bats within all of the buildings with the exception of Outbuilding 2. The presence of nesting birds was also found within all of the buildings. As confirmed in the Demolition Method Statement, the applicant understands the licenses and precautions to enable the works to take place. This is set out in greater detail above.

On the basis of the information included within this submission, we consider that it has been sufficiently demonstrated that prior approval is not required for the proposed demolition. However, should you require any further information to assist you in reaching a decision, please do not hesitate to contact me on my details below.

#### **FEE PAYMENT**

We calculate the planning application fee would be £120.00 with a flat rate service charge of £64.00.

#### **NEXT STEPS AND CONTACT**

The above details and supporting documents have been submitted to the Council via the Planning Portal. We look forward to discussing the application with you in further detail.



In the meantime, should you have any queries or wish to discuss any aspect of the application further, please do not hesitate to contact me using the contact information provided below.

Yours faithfully

**Tom Wignall**  
**Graduate Planner**