Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

Planning (Development Management)

APPLICATION NUMBER:	R/2021/0728/PND
LOCATION:	DORMAN LONG TOWER SOUTH BANK COKE WORKS SOUTH BANK
PROPOSAL:	PRIOR NOTIFICATION FOR DEMOLITION OF DORMAN LONG TOWER

APPLICATION SITE AND DESCRIPTION

The application seeks prior approval for the demolition of Dorman Long Tower, Teesworks Site, South Bank, Redcar.

Dorman Long Tower is a concrete structure, measuring approximately 56 metres in height.

The applicant has stated within the supporting covering letter that the building is structurally unsound and therefore cannot remain. The site has also been identified as one of a number of opportunities to clear assets in advance of future redevelopment, in line with Teesworks' aspirations for the wider site area as set out in its Regeneration Master Plan.

Consultee Responses

Applications for Prior Approval for Demolition differ from that of a regular planning application in that the regulations prescribe that the consultation process for such applications which is limited to the display of a site notice by the applicant. The wording within the legislation states the applicant must display a site notice on or near the land on which the building to be demolished is sited and must leave the notice in place for not less than 21 days in the period of 28 days beginning with the date on which the application was submitted to the local planning authority. The applicant in their submission has provided a copy of the notice which is dated 19th August 2021 and states that any responses to the notice should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority before the 9th September 2021.

As a result of the public consultation process at the time of writing the report 28 objections have been received by the Local Planning Authority. The objections are summarised below:

- Lack of public consultation on the process and future of the building
- Building is an iconic landmark for the area that should be retained and reused to protect heritage of the area
- What survey work has been done on structural stability of building and cost of repair
- Has the presence of asbestos been examined

- Impact on Black Path within exclusion zone
- Impact on electric cables in area
- Impact on train line and are protection methods enough
- Demolition works have commenced before application determined
- Impacts on ecology on the tower including birds and bats
- Lack of vision for the area and its heritage
- Tower is on relatively small footprint in relation to wider Teesworks site
- Destroying local history
- With right design this could be an iconic building at the site
- Impact on climate from demolition
- Council should issue a building preservation notice
- Tower is protected under Policy LS4 of the Local Plan
- Local Authority should have designated these heritage assets across the site
- Fine example of brutalist architecture in the North East
- Historic importance of the name Dorman Long
- Tower is aesthetically diverse and unique
- Impact on health of dust from explosion
- Concern of Teesworks Heritage Task force recommendations not considered

PROPOSAL

The applicant in support of the application has provided a cover letter that identifies the proposed development, sets out the legislative background to Prior Notification applications, a description of the site, reason for demolition, proposed restoration of the site and considerations of requirements for environmental impact assessments.

The application has also been supported by a method statement for the demolition of the tower. This has been prepared by Precision Demolition Company Ltd who are the explosives engineers on behalf of the demolition contractor Thompsons of Prudhoe Ltd.

Within the method statement is a plan, SBCO-ATX-NZT-ZZ-DR-S-1002 Rev. P01 that illustrates the location of the tower as well as a cross section of the tower.

CONSIDERATION OF PLANNING ISSUES

The proposal to demolish the Dorman Long Tower has the potential to fall within the definition of Schedule 2 Development as specified in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

The applicant in their submission has considered the potential impacts of the development with regard to whether the demolition would constitute EIA development.

In considering whether the development would constitute development that is considered EIA development therefore requiring the submission of an ES, the LPA have considered the impacts of the proposed development with regard to local population, use of resources, highways impacts, ecology, landscape impacts, flooding and natural/built heritage (set out further below). The impacts relating to these topics are considered to be temporary in nature due to the project being for demolition, while any impacts are also only considered to be of a local nature.

With regard to natural and built heritage, it is acknowledged that the structure to be demolished relates to the previous use of the site therefore having direct links to the local population. The structure is however not situated within a conservation area, nor is it a Listed Building. There is therefore not considered to be significant impacts with regard to heritage matters that would require the submission of an EIA.

It is considered that through the demolition method statement and the mitigation measures that the proposed demolition works would not result in significant environmental impacts that would require the works to be supported by an EIA with the significance not being beyond the local area.

Applications for Prior Approval for Demolition differ from that of a regular planning applications in that demolition, while being classed as development under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, is Permitted Development granted by virtue of part 11 (Class B) of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 subject to an application to the local planning authority for determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the method of demolition and any proposed restoration of the site. In accordance with Class B.2(b)(ii) this application must be accompanied by a written description of the proposed development, a statement that a notice has been posted in accordance with paragraph (b)(iv) and any fee required to be paid.

As stated above Prior Approval for demolition deals only with the method of demolition and the after care of the site and these issues are examined below.

Method of Demolition

The application has been supported by a method statement for the demolition of the tower. The tower is to be demolished by way of controlled explosion.

The submitted method statement has established an exclusion zone and methods for the protection of assets within that exclusion zone. The exclusion zone is identified within Sketch 2.2 of the method statement and includes a radius of 150m from the centre of the tower. The method statement proposes to introduce protection measures for land to the south of the site including Network Rail property by way of the stacking of steel containers as detailed within Sketch 2.1 of the method statement.

The method statement has also established the scope of works for the demolition. The scope of works as set out within the method statement is as follows:

Dorman Long Tower is a concrete box structure approximately 17m wide x 22m lg x 56m high. It is estimated to be 5200 tonnes.

It will be collapsed by removing support on the east elevation together with intermediate support along the north and south elevations proportionally to remove a wedge as shown red on Sketch 6.1, thus causing the structure to rotate east towards Wilputte Bunker.

It is supported on eighteen concrete columns, as shown also on sketch 6.1

Material will be displaced over two floors at the east elevation to a height of approximately 9m, decreasing proportionally towards the west elevation.

It is considered that displacing this amount of material is necessary to ensure continued instability and rotation as shown in Sketch 6.2.

The concrete panels on the ground floor together with concrete panels on the first floor will be removed by mechanical means during pre-weakening break out as directed.

There are two elements to the structure that will also be removed by mechanical means during pre-weakening breakout as shown on Sketch 6.1. One element is on each of the east and west elevations.

The method statement also acknowledges that there will be a need for preparation works prior to demolition. The scope of these works as set out within the method statement is as follows:

Demolish and clear any obstructions in the line of fall of the bunker.

Mark out the required pre-weakening break out as per Sketches 3.1 and 3.3.

Carry out the pre-weakening breakout and remove any internal walls as directed by the explosive engineer.

Notify persons and authorities that may be affected, of the intention to fell the bunker by explosives (already considered under section A). This is to include all stakeholders.

Prepare and make ready 'at source' blast protection. Steel containers can be used to form a wall between railtrack property and the blast area together with suitable lengths of conveyor belt with two oversized holes cut in the top to hang off two lengths of rebar inserted in two predrilled holes above the blast area of each column.

Mark out the required pre-weakening break out as per Sketches 6.1.

Set out the drilling pattern as per Sketches 6.3 and commence drilling.

Note that the drilling is to be carried out off each floor level. Additional height maybe gained using an 600x600 “hop-up” providing it is a suitable distance from any edge, podium or a MEWP.

A mobile diesel compressor (150 cfm) will be used to power our BBD 15E Pneumatic rock drills and drill rods.

Place the required explosives, stem and connect them together using detonating cord.

All explosive materials will be placed on the day that they are delivered to the site. No unplaced explosives will be stored on the site overnight.

The quantity of explosives required for each shot hole is based on the ratio of the volume of concrete to be displaced with respect to explosive charge weight. This having been based on numerous similar sized concrete structures will ensure that total displacement and total fragmentation of the concrete section is achieved. The explosives engineer will also consider a number of other factors such as the condition of the concrete, the proximity of the hole to a free edge and the presence of debris in the hole at the time of charging.

The charged holes will then be stemmed with Ceramicist fast setting grout and Plystem clay tamped in place with a stemming rod.

Lay out the starter line / shot firing cable to the control / firing point and make final detonator connections etc.

At the pre-arranged time brief and locate the sentries in their designated positions around the perimeter of the exclusion zone.

Follow the standard countdown procedure leading to the blowdown.

The detonation will take place subject to confirmation that the exclusion zone is maintained clear of all persons by the Thompsons appointed manager who shall liaise with those authorities and persons who may be affected by the demolition.

The statement also includes a summary of the calculations in determining the required operations for demolition, procedures should there be a misfire or stand-up and a risk assessment for the proposed operations.

Based on the information that has been provided the Local Authority have no objections to the proposed method of demolition that is to be carried out by suitably qualified professionals.

Aftercare of Site

The proposed structures to be demolished are considered to be in a location surrounded other industrial and commercial buildings and structures. While the demolition and clearance remove a structure from within the existing street scene and skyline as well as an empty part to of the wider Teesworks site, it is considered that the aftercare of the site would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the surrounding area either with regard to general amenity or visual appearance and will allow for future development of this site and the wider STDC site.

Conclusion

The proposed method of demolition and retention of the site thereafter is considered to be acceptable given the location of the site and the potential development that will take place at the site in future years.

It is acknowledged that there is opposition to the demotion of the tower from the public and local Councillors. The comments submitted as part of the consultation process have been considered and summarised within the report. However as stated above legislation only allows Local Planning Authorities to consider the method of demolition and any proposed restoration/aftercare of the site. While the concerns of the public are noted with regard the historical and cultural importance of the tower, these are not matters that can be considered in the assessment of this application.

Taking the above into consideration it is considered that the Prior Approval of the Local Planning Authority is not required for the proposed demolition.

RECOMMENDATION

Taking into account the content of the report the recommendation is to:

PRIOR APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED

Informative Note: The applicant is reminded that in accordance with Part 11, Class B (Viii) (bb) of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 the development must be carried out in accordance with the details submitted with the application.

Case Officer	
Mr D Pedlow	Acting Development Services Manager
David Pedlow	10 September 2021

Delegated Approval Signature	
Adrian Miller	Head of Planning and Development
	10 9 2021