



National Grid

FORMER SAXON STREET GASWORKS, MILES PLATTING, MANCHESTER

Application for Prior Notification of Proposed
Gasholder and Ancillary Infrastructure Demolition



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Ancillary Infrastructure Demolition

WSP

Three White Rose Office Park
Millshaw Park Lane
Leeds
LS11 0DL

Phone: +44 113 395 6200

Fax: +44 113 395 6201

WSP.com

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Prepared by	Sally Garford			
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1.1. National Grid proposes to dismantle a redundant gasholder and associated buildings and infrastructure at the former Saxon Street gasworks, Manchester.
- 1.1.2. Whilst gasholders previously stored gas for subsequent distribution to the national grid, gas is now stored within the main gas system and kept at the necessary pressure to supply both the regional and local network by a series of Pressure Reduction Stations (PRS). As such, gasholders no longer have an operational purpose and are redundant infrastructure.
- 1.1.3. There is a significant cost to National Grid to safely maintain such structures which are now no longer required.
- 1.1.4. If the gasholder is demolished, the resultant brownfield land can be brought back into beneficial use.
- 1.1.5. This report supports a submission under Class B, Part 11 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (the GPDO), for the demolition of buildings in light of case law to determine whether prior approval for the method of demolition is required.
- 1.1.6. This application is a resubmission following the withdrawal of application ref: 130583/DEM/2021. The previous application was submitted on 07 June 2021. Following submission, the Council confirmed that further information was required, including a bat survey, a Demolition Management Plan and an Asbestos Management Plan. The decision was made by the applicant to withdraw the application and resubmit once all outstanding matters could be addressed. The application was formally withdrawn on 28 June 2021.

1.2 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

- 1.2.1. Schedule 2 Part 11 Class B subsection (b)(i) (aa) requires that the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether prior approval will be required as to the method of demolition and any proposed restoration of the site.
- 1.2.2. The local planning authority have 28 days to determine whether prior approval is required in accordance with subsection (vii). If no decision is made within the 28 days, the proposed demolition can be carried out in accordance with the submitted details.

1.3 SITE FACTUAL BACKGROUND

- 1.3.1. The application site is owned by National Grid and comprises 1no. above ground, Type 37 guide frame gasholder with an I-section lattice girder, disused above ground pipework and 4no. ancillary buildings (boiler room, electrical intake room, brick store and store room). The site largely contains dense trees/vegetation.
- 1.3.2. The site is primarily accessed off Bradford Road. A secondary access point is off Gleden Street.
- 1.3.3. The immediate surrounding uses include residential and industrial uses, a public house and Ashton Canal and its associated towpath.

1.4 PROPOSED METHOD OF DISMANTLING

- 1.4.1. The method of dismantling is set out within the Demolition Management Plan (DMP) contained within the Outline Demolition Methodology (ODM) prepared by the contractors, Erith, and is submitted to support this application.

- 1.4.2. The methodology complies with the environmental safeguards (including CIRIA Guidance Note C692 'Environmental Good Practice on site and current HSE guidance) and guidelines focused on minimising disturbance/ nuisance to the local area. Some infilling works may be required to facilitate the proposed dismantling works ie importing material to the site in order to create a ramp to allow machinery to access the void. The infill material used on site will be subject to National Grid's rigorous chemical screening process to ensure it is appropriate to use.
- 1.4.3. The site will be secured following the proposed demolition works. Estimated timeframes and vehicular movements, which could vary, are set out in the supporting ODM. If the programme can be reduced, this may result in a modest increase in HGV movements, but the extent (timescales) of disturbance would be reduced accordingly.
- 1.4.4. The aim will be to undertake the demolition process over an anticipated period of approximately 7 months, commencing in September 2022. However, this is an estimate and the works can be carried out within 5 years of the grant of prior approval.
- 1.4.5. The site access to the public highway is via Gleden Street and/or Stracey Street. The timing and nature of vehicle movements will be agreed to limit any potential impact upon their operations. National Grid is committed to the highest standards of working practices to ensure that disturbance to the public is minimised during the period of works.
- 1.4.6. We consider that the council can reasonably conclude that prior approval is not required and that the development can be carried out in accordance with the details submitted in this application.

2 FACTUAL BACKGROUND

2.1 SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1.1. The site is owned by National Grid and covers approximately 9.707ha. It is located to the north east of Manchester City Centre within an urban area. The site comprises 1no. above ground gasholder in the south western part of the site within a palisade fenced compound. Ancillary buildings and disused above ground pipework lie to the north, south and east of the gasholder. The remaining areas of the site predominantly comprises trees/vegetation. The site boundaries are secured via palisade fencing and red brick walling.
- 2.1.2. A site location plan has been submitted in support of the application.
- 2.1.3. Access is provided off Bradford Road, via Gleden Street and/or Stracey Street.
- 2.1.4. The site formed part of a larger area subject to outline planning permission granted in December 2012 (ref: 093340/REP/2010/N2), which permitted the following development:

“Application for new planning permission to replace extant planning permission 083447/OO/2007/N2: OUTLINE APPLICATION for the principle of mixed use development comprising 466,063 sqm of residential floorspace (equating to a maximum of 4,348 residential units), Class A1 retail, Class A2 offices, Class A3 restaurant, Class A4 public houses and Class A5 (hot food takeaways (2028 sqm in total), Class B1 (offices) and Class D1 non-residential accommodation and Class D2 Assembly and Leisure (11,121 sqm in total) and a primary school plus associated access and open space, in order to extend the time limit for implementation.”

2.2 SURROUNDING CONTEXT

- 2.2.1. The site is located within a mixed use area and is bound by a public house, industrial units and Bradford Road to the north. Ashton Canal and its associated towpath lie to the south. The south eastern part of the site wraps around a live gas compound operated by Cadent. New Viaduct Street borders the south eastern boundary. A vehicle repair shop is located to the east and residential properties lie adjacent to the site’s western boundary on Glenden Street and Millhead Avenue.
- 2.2.2. Dense vegetation is located to the site boundaries and forms a buffer between the site and the adjacent uses.

2.3 STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

- 2.3.1. The site is not located within a conservation area and it is not considered to be located within the setting of any of listed heritage assets.
- 2.3.2. The site is located in Flood Zone 1, as identified on the Environment Agency Flood Map.
- 2.3.3. There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) within the site.
- 2.3.4. In adopted policy, the Core Strategy (2012), the site is not allocated for a specific use, albeit it is located within the ‘Regional Centre’. Policy EC 3 states that *“employment generating uses including offices and other commercial development will be encouraged”* and that housing, high density housing in particular, is also appropriate in these areas.

- 2.3.5. The site also falls within 'East Manchester' policy area under Policies EC 5 and H 4. Policy EC 5 states that *"East Manchester is expected to provide approximately 80-85ha of employment land."*
- 2.3.6. Policy H4 states:
- "East Manchester, over the lifetime of the Core Strategy, will accommodate around 30% of new residential development. Priority will be given to family housing and other high value, high quality development where this can be sustained. High density housing will be permitted within the parts of East Manchester that fall within the Regional Centre which are adjacent to the City Centre. These neighbourhoods include Ancoats, New Islington, Holt Town and Chancellor's Place; to the west of Alan Turing Way, and within Eastlands, Newton Heath, Openshaw and Gorton district centres as part of mixed-use schemes."*
- 2.3.7. The site also falls within the jurisdiction of Policy EN 15, which seeks to maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity or geological value, and Policy EN 9, which seeks to maintain existing green infrastructure.

2.4 SUMMARY

- 2.4.1. There are no environmental sensitivities associated with the site, nor any effects on sensitive receptors which cannot be adequately managed through the demolition process.
- 2.4.2. The relationship to adjacent uses (in particular housing) is considered in the following sections along with a review of ecology and other such matters.
- 2.4.3. Nevertheless, a review of the background to the site does not highlight any risks of significant environmental effects as a result of these temporary works. Section 3 of the reports proposes dismantling process.
- 2.4.4. The surrounding area includes industrial and residential uses, a public house and a public towpath. The proposed works will be temporary in nature, albeit they will be appropriately managed, with measures put in place to minimise any potential impact as much as possible.

3 PROPOSED METHOD OF DEMOLITION

- 3.1.1. This application relates to the dismantling of the gasholder, associated infrastructure and post-demolition restoration site works. An Existing Site Layout Plan showing structures to be demolished has been submitted in support of the application.
- 3.1.2. The gasholder no longer serves an operational purpose in the storage and movement of gas. The dismantling works will therefore provide a brownfield site for development within a sustainable location, which can be brought back into beneficial use.

3.2 METHOD OF DEMOLITION

- 3.2.1. All infrastructure, plant and equipment to be dismantled is purged of gas and decommissioned to allow its safe removal. The gasholder has also been purged, isolated, and disconnected from the gas network. The gasholder will be dismantled to ground level with the below ground structure remaining in-situ to retain the stability of the surrounding land.
- 3.2.2. The DMP, which confirms the method of dismantling, is found within the submitted ODM. This includes 'cold methods' with a range of specialised heavy-duty dismantling attachments working in a controlled methodical manner from the top down, and 'by hand' with the contractors dismantling the associated piping infrastructure piece by piece. As set out in the supporting ODM, appropriate safeguards will be applied to protect local amenity.
- 3.2.3. The steel from the gasholders will be sorted before being removed for recycling. It is anticipated that over 90% of material removed will be recycled.
- 3.2.4. Prior to the demolition of the gasholder, the gasholder will be dewatered to a drainage discharge point.
- 3.2.5. The application site will be secured throughout the duration of the works. The site is already secure, but additional security and fencing will be installed within the site boundary, as detailed in the ODM, to prevent unauthorised access. The existing boundary fence around the proposed site will be retained during the demolition works. Some infilling works may be required to facilitate the proposed dismantling works ie importing material to the site in order to create a ramp to allow machinery to access the void. The infill material used on site will be subject to National Grid's rigorous chemical screening process to ensure it is appropriate to use. The proposed site would be cleared and secured upon completion of the proposed works.

3.3 PROGRAMME AND DEMOLITION TIMING

- 3.3.1. The proposed dismantling work is anticipated to last approximately 7 months, likely starting in September 2022, which may then conclude in April 2023. Note however this is an estimate and the works can be carried out within five years of the grant of prior approval.
- 3.3.2. Anticipated vehicular movements are set out in the supporting ODM. To minimise impact of traffic on surrounding roads, vehicle movements will be staggered to avoid queuing along Bradford Road. These are estimated timeframes and vehicular movements, which could vary depending upon the contractor's requirements.

- 3.3.3. Evidently there will be fluctuations in the number of movements through the programme meaning some weeks will experience greater levels of activity and others far less. Therefore, these estimations are purely indicative and are subject to change once the proposed works have started.
- 3.3.4. If the programme can be reduced, this may result in a modest increase in HGV movements, but the extent (timescales) of disturbance would be reduced accordingly. HGV movements will be managed to avoid peak periods of congestion and anti-social hours.

3.4 ACCESS AND FLOOD RISK

- 3.4.1. Access to the gasholder will be via the existing gated entrances on Gleden Street and/or Stracey Street, off Bradford Road. A Traffic Management Plan will be prepared and adhered to, in order to manage vehicle movements. This access can sufficiently accommodate the types of vehicles which will typically undertake gasholder dismantling works. Access to the site can be controlled by a Site Management Plan, should one be considered necessary by the contractor. The timing and nature of vehicle movements will be agreed to limit any potential impact on the surrounding area.
- 3.4.2. There is already an access road, but the condition is unknown and there may need to be some works to improve this.
- 3.4.3. The level of hardstanding on the site will not increase. There will be some removal of vegetation to facilitate the demolition works, however this is unlikely to significantly increase risk of flooding. Any access improvements works are likely to involve importation of permeable granular material which won't significantly worsen flooding.

3.5 ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARDS

- 3.5.1. National Grid has experience from over 150 gasholder demolition projects and only selects contractors from a panel of approved organisations and specialist contractors. All contractors have a track record of working alongside National Grid to their exacting standards (which go above and beyond statutory requirements) and benefit from the knowledge gained from National Grid's experience of such projects.
- 3.5.2. National Grid is a highly risk averse organisation and require documentation from the appointed contractors which covers all potential environmental eventualities. Environmental Management Plans will be prepared by the contractor in respect of the matters including (but not necessarily limited to) noise, dust, odour, water sampling and vehicle movements to ensure appropriate monitoring and management is in place during the dismantling works.
- 3.5.3. Contractors will be made aware of the site constraints and will be required to undertake the works in accordance with strict protocol, which minimise potential impacts on the neighbouring uses.
- 3.5.4. All relevant Building Regulation consents will be obtained, and works will be closely coordinated with the council's Building Control Department and with an Environmental Protection Officer with statutory best practice measures to be adopted in relation to hazardous materials (ie asbestos), noise and air pollution.
- 3.5.5. National Grid will seek to minimise all negative effects of the works in all cases and are a responsible operator and neighbour to surrounding uses. The below details various safeguards that will be put in place during the course of the works.

3.6 SITE WORKING PRACTICES

- 3.6.1. The programme is temporary and has been designed to minimise local disturbance for local occupiers and users of the highway network. It is proposed that working hours will typically be between 08.00 to 17.30 Monday to Friday and no work on weekends or Bank Holidays to minimise local disruption. Any revisions to this would be discussed with the Council.
- 3.6.2. Materials will be stockpiled on site to enable timed vehicle movements which avoid local peak traffic and other highway sensitivities. Vehicle movements will be in order of those set out earlier.

3.7 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 3.7.1. National Grid will seek to ensure that any perceived effects on adjacent properties is minimised through appropriate working practices and community engagement. National Grid will also demonstrate that it is a responsible neighbour and treat community matters with the highest regard. They will ensure that any potential effects on adjacent properties is minimised through appropriate working practices and community engagement. This will include engagement with neighbouring commercial premises.
- 3.7.2. The local community will be provided with information on the nature and content of the works in advance of commencement.
- 3.7.3. All contractors working on the project will be vetted for competence in line with current HSE guidance. National Grid requires all contractors to make commitments to complete the works in a safe and considerate manner adhering to National Grids minimum standards documentation. These specifications are very clearly set out in the tender documentation.

3.8 NOISE, DUST AND VIBRATION MONITORING

- 3.8.1. Noise, dust and vibration monitoring equipment will be installed and impacts of noise and dust pollution will be recorded and mitigated in accordance with British Standard Guidance (for example BS 5228:2009: Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Site, the Noise Abatement Act (1960) and CIRIA Guidance Note C692: Environmental Good Practice on Site (2010), and National Grids own guidance relating to the Specification for the Demolition of Redundant Structures).
- 3.8.2. The appointed contractor, Erith, sets out the environmental monitoring which will be undertaken to ensure the demolition works will have no adverse impact upon the sensitive receptors identified in the Environmental Management Plan contained within the ODM.
- 3.8.3. This document will be made publicly available on request.
- 3.8.4. Where necessary (depending on prevailing weather conditions, for example), other measures will be utilised, such as wheel washing facilities for all vehicles leaving the site.

3.9 ECOLOGY

- 3.9.1. The site was subject to an Ecological Appraisal undertaken by Icen Ecology Ltd in January 2022. The Ecological Appraisal is submitted to support this application.
- 3.9.2. The nearest statutory designated site is Clayton Vale Local Nature Reserve which is located 700m to the east of the site. The nearest non-statutory designated site is Ashton Canal, which is located immediately adjacent to the site to the south.

- 3.9.3. There are no confirmed protected species on site, however the Appraisal confirms that a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment was undertaken which identified three buildings (referenced B1, B2 and B3) within the site as having 'Low' potential to support a bat roost, and that the onsite habitats also have 'Low' suitability for foraging/commuting bats.
- 3.9.4. The Appraisal recommends that a single emergence (dusk) survey for bats should be undertaken on buildings B1, B2 and B3 to confirm if they support a bat roost, prior to demolition.
- 3.9.5. Other precautionary mitigation measures are recommended within the Appraisal to mitigate any potential impacts on ecology during the works. Please refer to the supporting Appraisal for further information.
- 3.9.6. It should be noted that prior approval was previously granted for the demolition of the gasholder and associated structures on site in light of this ecological context under outline planning permission ref: 093340/REP/2010/N2.

3.10 ASBESTOS AND GROUND CONTAMINATION

- 3.10.1. An Asbestos Demolition Survey undertaken by WYG is submitted to support this application.
- 3.10.2. The Survey confirms that asbestos is present within some of the existing structures and within debris on the site. As such, the contractors have produced a site specific 'Plan of Work With Asbestos Containing Materials', which details the method of safe removal and disposal of asbestos containing materials on the site, as part of the dismantling, in accordance with statutory guidelines and asbestos survey agreed with National Grid. Please see the supporting Plan of Work Document for further details.
- 3.10.3. Any waste generated from asbestos removal will be recorded and disposed of in accordance with the Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations. The contractor will ensure that adequate Duty of Care provisions are put in place for the transportation and disposal of wastes from the site in line with the obligations of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- 3.10.4. The works comprises the removal of the holder and associated infrastructure to ground level. The concrete base will remain in-situ therefore no ground works are proposed. As the ground will not be broken by the dismantling works there are no ground contamination risks arising from the proposal.

3.11 CHARACTERISTICS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 3.11.1. The extent of the pollution and nuisance impacts identified will be limited to those uses which lie adjacent to the site and adjoining the transport route. The production of waste will not be significant and will be mitigated through the proposed recycling and re-use of materials; ie 'waste' arising from the works will be negligible.
- 3.11.2. Transboundary impacts will be limited to the transportation of material from the site. These movements will not result in significant impacts on the local highway network and would be temporary in nature.
- 3.11.3. The works will not cumulatively with other existing and/or approved development result in significant effects on the environment.

3.12 VISUAL AMENITY

- 3.12.1. The gasholder is visually prominent within the local area due to its scale, however the structure is not considered to be particularly ornate, nor is it in optimal condition. These factors, and the low sensitivity of local receptors, dictate that any impacts arising from removal of the gasholder will be negligible. In the long term, the dismantling of the holder will be beneficial to the site and surrounding area. The removal of the gasholder was previously considered acceptable within outline permission ref: 093340/REP/2010/N2, and the removal of the gasholder and associated infrastructure will enable the site to come forward for alternate uses.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1.1. This report supports a Prior Notification application under Class B of Part 11, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (the GPDO) for the dismantling of a gasholder and associated site restoration.
- 4.1.2. In accordance with the GPDO, the method of works and post site remediation, along with proposed safeguards have been included within the submission. The works will be undertaken in accordance with the details as set out within this report and the enclosed supporting documents.
- 4.1.3. It is, therefore, entirely appropriate for the Council to conclude that Prior Notification is confirmed and no further details are required as part of the application (ie that Prior Approval is not necessary).



Three White Rose Office Park
Millshaw Park Lane
Leeds
LS11 0DL

wsp.com

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