



National Grid

FORMER BRADFORD ROAD GASWORKS, MANCHESTER, M40 7BW

Application for Prior Notification of Proposed
Gasholder and Ancillary Infrastructure Demolition





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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 Bradford Road 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.

1.2 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 a single gasholder with associated infrastructure including a boiler room, chimney and redundant pipework.
- 1.3.2. The immediate surrounding uses include Alan Turning Way (A6010) to the north of the site. The south of the site is characterised by car parking for the Etihad Campus. There is a railway line to the west of the site, running north to south with a landscaping buffer between it and the gasworks.

1.4 PROPOSED METHOD OF DISMANTLING

- 1.4.1. The precise method of dismantling has yet to be finalised and will not be confirmed until the contractor is appointed. Nevertheless, the methodology will comply 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. The works will be undertaken in accordance with the Outline Asbestos Management Plan and Outline Demolition Method Statement.
- 1.4.2. As part of the restoration of the site, the void which results from the removal of the gasholder, will be infilled with material to be imported to the site. 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. Over the dismantling period, it is estimated that there would be approximately 20no. vehicle movements per day, potentially peaking at 70no. movements per day for infilling. The demolition

works are anticipated to take circa 35-40 weeks and the infilling 30-40 weeks, albeit these stages will likely overlap. These are estimated timeframes and vehicular movements, which could vary depending upon the contractor's requirements. 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 18 months, commencing in May 2023. However, this is an estimate, and the works can be carried out within 5 years of the grant of prior approval.
- 1.4.5. Prior to the demolition works commencing, the gasholder would be dewatered ie any water which has accumulated within the gasholder will be removed. This constitutes part of the maintenance of the gasholder, which can and will be undertaken outside of the proposed development sought under this application.
- 1.4.6. The site access to the public highway is via Broxton Street. 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.
- 1.4.7. 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 two parcels of land. The northern parcel is approximately 5.054ha, and the southern parcel is approximately 0.988ha. The two parcels are approximately 180m apart, with a strip of vegetated land lying between them. The site is located to the northeast of Manchester City Centre within an urban area. The site comprises a single gasholder in the northern part of the site within a palisade fenced compound. Ancillary buildings and disused above ground pipework lie to south and west of the gasholder, and the piping runs to the south of the northern parcel of land. The remaining areas of the site predominantly comprises trees/vegetation. The site boundaries are secured via palisade and welded mesh fencing.
- 2.1.2. A site location plan has been submitted in support of the application.
- 2.1.3. Access is provided via Broxton Street.

2.2 SURROUNDING CONTEXT

- 2.2.1. The site is located within a mixed-use area and is bound by a major road, a large car park, and a railway line. Adjacent uses are largely industrial premises, but also include a fire station, and the Phillip's Park Cemetery. Alan Turing Way borders the northern boundary. Large scale car parking is located to the south, and a mixed industrial/residential area lies across the adjacent railway line.
- 2.2.2. Dense vegetation is located to the site boundaries and forms a buffer between the site and the adjacent uses.
- 2.2.3. Another gasholder is located southwest of the site on Saxon Street, with a prior approval for demolition application approved earlier this year (132850/DEM/2022).

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. In the Core Strategy (2012), the site is allocated within the *Sportcity* East Manchester Sub Area (Extant UDP Policy EM11). The area is a major focus for regeneration activity of previously developed land, due to its strategic position and excellent existing and proposed infrastructure links. International sports facilities and mixed used development such as hotel, leisure and other commercial uses along Alan Turing Way will be supported by the Council.
- 2.3.4. The site 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 redevelopment of the site is therefore supported in policy and the proposed dismantling of the gasholder and infilling of the resultant void is a crucial step in facilitating this redevelopment.

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 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. 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 exact method of dismantling will be determined by the appointed contractor. The tender process is a design and build framework. This means that National Grid set out the parameters for the proposed demolition. There are a number of different methods which can be used. These include 'cold methods' with a range of specialised heavy-duty dismantling attachments working in a controlled methodical manner from the top down or 'by hand' with contractors using cutting equipment to cut down each gasholder piece by piece. In either scenario, appropriate safeguards will be applied to protect local amenity. Further detail is provided in the Outline Demolition Method Statement.
- 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. This constitutes part of the maintenance of the gasholder, which can and will be undertaken outside of the proposed development sought under this application.
- 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, 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. Once the redundant infrastructure has been removed, the resultant gasholder void will be infilled. 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 18 months, potentially starting in May 2023, which may then conclude in November 2024. 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. Subject to contractor design and uncertainty, we estimate approximately 20no. vehicle movements per day over the dismantling period, potentially peaking at 70no. movements per day for infilling.

The demolition works are anticipated to take circa 35-40 weeks and the infilling 30-40 weeks, albeit these stages will likely overlap. These are estimated timeframes and vehicular movements, which could vary depending upon the contractor's requirements. 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.

- 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 Broxton Street. 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 may be some removal of vegetation to facilitate the demolition works, however this is unlikely to significantly increase risk of 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 18.00 Monday to Friday and 09.00 to 13.00 on Saturdays and at no times on Sundays and 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 will be required to prepare a Noise and Vibration Monitoring Plan and a Method Statement/Procedure for Dust Control and an Air Quality Management Plan. These documents will form an Environmental Management Plan, the details of which will be finalised once a contractor has been appointed. Works will then be carried out in accordance with the Environmental Management Plan, a copy of which will be made publicly available on request.
- 3.8.3. 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 a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Report prepared by Atkins in June 2022. The PEA is submitted to support this application.

- 3.9.2. Whilst the works may have potential to affect habitats, measures are proposed in the report to mitigate any potential impacts during the works.
- 3.9.3. Some trees may need to be removed to facilitate the works. Trees will be protected on the site, and any tree removal will only be done where necessary.

3.10 ASBESTOS AND GROUND CONTAMINATION

- 3.10.1. An Asbestos Re-inspection Survey undertaken by Environment Essential Ltd is submitted to support this application.
- 3.10.2. The Survey confirms that asbestos is present within some of the existing structures on the site. As such, an Outline Asbestos Management Plan has been prepared which will be adhered to.
- 3.10.3. The works comprises the removal of the holder and associated infrastructure. 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 a similar gasholder 400m southwest of the site was previously considered acceptable, 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 restoration, 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).



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