Cumberland Council

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL
DELEGATED PLANNING DECISION

1.	**Reference No:**	4/26/2286/0F1
2.	**Proposed Development:**	PRIOR NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSED DEMOLITION – SINGLE STOREY SECTIONAL BUILDING COMPLEX
3.	**Location:**	SELLAFIELD, SEASCALE
4.	**Parish:**	Ponsonby, Beckermet 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, Main River Consultation Area - Main River Consultation Area
6.	**Publicity Representations &Policy**	See Report
7.	**Report:**	

Site and Proposal

It is proposed to demolish a vacant single storey sectional building complex formerly used as offices and welfare facilities. Situated within the Sellafield Site (western quadrant) in a fenced compound, it is surrounded by tarmac and gravel, mostly compacted. To the west it adjoins a large car park.

In form the complex is square in plan comprising three parallel rectangular structures. Each consisting of twelve portacabins which are joined together. They are connected by means of

	link corridors at each end of the building. The portacabin structures have timber bases with textured external plywood walls and an inner plasterboard skin. It is assumed that the structures sit on concrete blocks, though the bases are largely concealed by steel skirts. The structures have flat roofs with a slight pitch running north to south. are of timber construction with a bitumen sheet covering. All the windows are single-glazed and aluminium-framed. It has been in situ since 1989. **Reason for Demolition** The building has reached the end of its useful life and is in a condition where demolition and disposal is considered the safest and most economic option to take. It will reduce the life cycle costs of maintaining it safely and securely. **Future Use of Site** Demolition of the building complex will release a significant land area for reuse or remediation and enable visible progress of site clean-up. The site has not been specifically earmarked for any development at this stage. **Method of Demolition** The demolition tasks will be undertaken by one of Sellafield Ltd`s appointed demolition contractors who have proven experience using industry standard techniques. The activities include: - · Site investigations/survey(s) and characterisation · Determination of waste types and quantities. · Develop 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.

Waste Streaming

· Appropriate characterisation of waste will take place prior to demolition. Characterisation will be undertaken near the date of demolition to ensure the results are current.

· 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 the waste hierarchy.

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

Waste Removal

Waste will be removed from site on an ongoing basis throughout the demolition works. Depending on the volume and type of waste generated, some materials may leave site daily, while others will be temporarily stored, processed and segregated until sufficient quantities are available to maximise the capacity of a 40-yard roll-on/roll-off (RoRo) skip prior to transportation.

Transport and Waste Disposal Timescales

The frequency and timing of waste transportation will depend on the disposal and recovery facilities selected by the waste contractor and their distance from site. Any new waste management facilities proposed will be subject to licence and compliance checks before use.

Consultation Responses

Beckermet with Thornhill Parish Council

Found it difficult to review the application due to the lack of information provided. There was no indication on the planning application what building is being referred to nor what the building is being used for. This lack of information makes it difficult for the PC to comment effectively. They have raised the issue separately with Sellafield Ltd at the Parish Council`s Forum and it has been agreed that the relevant planning information will in future be shared at this meeting.

Ecologist

No objection subject to an informative covering breeding birds, general safeguarding of biodiversity and bats.

Local Highway Authority (LHA) and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

No objection to the proposed demolition of a single storey sectional building as it is

	considered that it will not have a material effect on existing highway conditions nor will it increase the flood risk on the site or elsewhere. **Environmental Health** No objections. It is expected that the demolition will not affect off-site residential amenity, and that it will be subject to appropriate controls and processes. **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 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. <u>Copeland Local Plan 2021 - 2039 (LP):</u> Cumberland Council continued the preparation of the LP as commenced by Copeland Borough Council. The Copeland Local Plan 2021 – 2039, (herein after referred to as the Local Plan) was adopted on 5 November 2024 and is the development plan for the former Copeland area. 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 and Transport** All waste types will be segregated and disposed via the correct waste routes, following the waste hierarchy. And no waste will leave the site until the results have been confirmed.

Cumberland Council

The following are the estimated types and amounts of waste arisings:

· 2 tonnes of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

· 35 tonnes of plasterboard waste

· 200 tonnes of general demolition waste

· Up to 40 tonnes of timber waste

· 60 tonnes of metal waste

· Up to 6 tonnes of insulation waste

In terms of transporting the waste the demolition works are expected to be completed within approximately six months and work will start at the earliest opportunity. Waste removal will be undertaken concurrently with the demolition activities, with all waste expected to be removed from site by completion of the project. No information has been provided regarding the intended waste transport route from the site.

Noise and Dust

Whilst there will inevitably be noise and dust arising from demolition activities this will not be of more than a localised scale and unlikely to emanate beyond the site boundary. Environmental Health endorse this and consider that the proposed demolition would not impact local residential amenity outside the Sellafield site. They also note that it would be subject to strict site safety procedures.

Ecology

The application is accompanied by a Habitat and Ecology Survey. This identifies that there is only scope for ground nesting birds as the site is entirely surrounded by gravel, most of it compacted. There is no suitable habitat for bats due to the construction type of the buildings and the exposed location and no evidence was found. Whilst there is potential for reptiles and breeding birds this is only on trees/scrub to the west, which is off site, beyond the adjoining carpark. The Council's Ecologist in her consultation response advises on mitigations / recommendations which will be included as an informative to help to ensure that the risk of impacts on wildlife are as low as reasonably practicable from the demolition work.

Cumulative

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

	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 planning policies. It has been satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposal to demolish the prefabricated office building does not raise any material issues as the method of demolition is stringently controlled by Sellafield Ltd. and there were no adverse impacts identified that cannot be made acceptable by appropriate mitigation. And there are no issues identified in relation to waste, transport, noise and dust. The Habitat and Ecological survey confirms there are no ecological constraints that would prevent demolition providing the ecological mitigation measures/ recommendations identified are implemented. No future specific use for the site has yet been revealed however, it is considered acceptable to leave it in a tidy state at base / concrete foundation slab level for the interim. As the site is situated within a highly industrial and secure complex and a likely candidate for reuse it is not considered appropriate to require a condition covering restoration.
8.	**Recommendation:** Approve
9.	**Conditions:** 1. The demolition works shall be carried out within a period of 5 years from the date of this decision. Reason 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). 2. Permission shall relate to the following plans and documents as received on the respective dates and development shall be carried out in accordance with them: - Documents

- Covering Letter by Sellafield Ltd, ref PLC_BCC_2445_PNOD, dated 7 August 2026, received 7 August 2026.
- Application Form for Prior Notification of Demolition, received 7 August 2026.
- Summary Information Report, (OFFICIAL) dated July 2026 by Sellafield Ltd, received 7 August 2026.
- Habitat and Ecology Survey to support demolition of building, (OFFICIAL) ref ERA/REMEDIATION/1312 - PLC_BCC_2445, received 7 August 2026.
- Waste Information, by Sellafield Ltd, received 7 August 2026
- Additional Bat Information (OFFICIAL), ref EM/26/100, issue 02, dated October 2026, received 2 November 2026.

Plans

- Location Plan, ref 1BE 3108854 A, scale 1:5000, received 7 August 2026
- Location Plan, ref.1BE 3108854 A (OFFICIAL), scale 1:5000, received 7 August 2026

Reason

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.

Informative – Ecology

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 within habitat/buildings that may be directly or indirectly impacted. If active nests are discovered an appropriate buffer zone should be established and works within that area ceased until the young have naturally fledged.

General Safeguarding of Biodiversity

- 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 and should adopt the following precautionary method of works:

	□ All work shall take place during daylight hours. □ 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. □ 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 are to be raised (i.e. stored on pallets) in order to ensure that wildlife such as small mammals, reptiles and amphibians do not shelter in the piles. **Bats** □ In the unlikely event of a bat being found during the demolition works, works shall stop until adequate advice has been sought from the ecologist or Natural England.

Case Officer: H.S. Morrison	**Date : 12/11/2026**
Authorising Officer: N.J. Hayhurst	**Date : 16/11/2026**
Dedicated responses to:- N/A	