

Officer Recommendation: No Objection

DATE VALID - 16th November 2017
TARGET DATE - 14th December 2017

APPLICATION NUMBER – 17/02649/DED

LOCATION:

Redhill Gas Holder Station Hooley Lane Redhill Surrey RH1 6DG

APPLICANT:

SGN

C/o Agent

AGENT:

Firstplan Ltd

Bramah House
65-71 Bermondsey Street
London
SE1 3XF

PROPOSAL:

Dismantling of gasholders and associated structures.

SITE VISIT DATE:

CONSULTATIONS

Contaminated Land Officer - Recommends conditions

Environmental Health Officer - No objection based on restricted hours or working and noise/dust monitoring proposed by applicant in method statement

Environment Agency - No objection - Understand dismantling process will not include any subsurface groundworks. However, it is noted from documentation provided that there may be some infilling after removal of the gasholders. Any imported material will be required to be accompanied with a certification to demonstrate that it will not increase the potential for ground contamination at the site. Any sludges or water removal from the site will be required to be undertaken in accordance with current waste Duty of Care regulations and under any appropriate licensing/permitted/consenting requirements. It is noted from the Generic Method Statement that a water treatment plant may be used - this will require a Mobile Treatment Plant. The applicant should be made aware that any works within 8m of the main river will required a Flood Risk Activity Permit from us.

REPRESENTATIONS

Neighbours - Two responses in support of the demolition were received. Two objections were received raising issues of:

- Health fears (air pollution)
- Inconvenience during the works
- Inadequate parking
- Noise and disturbance
- Overlooking and loss of privacy
- Loss of private view
- Loss of/harm to trees
- Drainage/sewage capacity
- Harm to wildlife habitat

Both of the objections also include concerns regarding the future redevelopment of the site (and lack of information about any such proposals). Any future application for redevelopment would be considered on its own merits.

Councillors - No request for referral to planning committee

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Urban Area

Employment Area

RELEVANT LEGAL CONTEXT

Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B

SITE AND CHARACTER APPRAISAL

The site comprises a former gasworks on the northern side of Hooley Lane. On site at present are two large gasholders (a smaller frame guided gasholder and larger spiral guided gasholder) which are now redundant as well as a number of smaller single storey structures previously associated with operation of the gasholders, some of which will remain.

The site abuts a pair of semi-detached residential dwellings on the northern side of Hooley Lane, and the southern side of Hooley Lane is similarly residential in character. To the north, the site adjoins Kingsfield Way which is part of a residential estate. The Redhill Brook runs to the western boundary of the site and is partially culverted. To the east are a footpath and the railway line. There are a number of trees on an adjoining the site.

PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT HISTORY

There is no planning history directly associated with the site; however, potentially relevant applications relating to adjoining sites (12 to 14 Hooley Lane) and the adjoining industrial site are as follows:

14/01952/CLP - Ground remediation comprising excavation, of up to 0.6M below ground level on the back garden of properties no 12 and 14 hooley lane, including excavation of

soil underlying existing concrete cover on the gardens and replacement as existing layout - Permitted development

14/01973/CLP - Ground remediation comprising excavation, of up to 0.6M below ground level on the back garden of properties no 12 and 14 hooley lane, including excavation of soil underlying existing concrete cover on the gardens and replacement as existing layout - Permitted development

04/02360/CU - Change of use to car rental (retrospective) - Approved with conditions

10/01852/F - To retain four new containers that were subject to a temporary planning consent - Approved with conditions

ASSESSMENT

The application seeks determination as to whether prior approval is required for the demolition of the two gasholders and a number of associated smaller structures. The applicant states that the gasholders are no longer required for operational purposes and thus represent a significant maintenance, security and safety liability for them.

This application is made under the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

Part 11 Class B permits any building operation consisting of the demolition of a building provided:

a) the building has been rendered unsafe or otherwise uninhabitable by the action or inaction of any person having an interest in the land on which the building stands and it is practicable to secure safety or health by works of repair or works for affording temporary support:

This does not apply in this case; the structures are former operational gasholders and are no longer required by the utilities provider

b) The demolition is not "relevant demolition" for the purposes of section 196D of the Act (demolition of an unlisted etc building in a Conservation Area):

It is not - the site is not within a Conservation Area

c) The building is a not specified building and the development is not undertaken during the specified period, regardless of whether, in relation to the development, a prior approval event has occurred:

The structure is not a specified building as per the definition in the GPDO

The relevant criteria of Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B.1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 are considered to have been met.

CONDITIONS, paragraph B.2:

Development under Class B is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development:

(i) aa) the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a 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; and

(ii) bb) in cases where the building is not a community asset and is used for a purpose falling within Class A4 (drinking establishments) of the Schedule to the Use Class Order, send a written request to the local planning authority as to whether the building has been nominated (this does not apply in this case).

METHOD OF DEMOLITION

Two residential properties adjoin the site on Hooley Lane, with further residential dwellings to the rear on Kingsfield Way, all of which are in relatively close proximity to the existing gasholders which would be demolished. The boundaries of the dwellings on Hooley Lane are less than 10m from one of the holders to be demolished and the neighbouring properties on Kingsfield Way are under 20m from the demolition site. Both are therefore in very close proximity to the proposed works.

The application was supported by a Planning Statement and two generic method statements for the standard process adopted for removing gasholders. The applicant argues that the process is akin to dismantling rather than demolition as it requires a methodical and planned approach given the nature of the site. It is noted from the submission that no below ground works are proposed.

A separate General Environmental Management Statement was submitted with the application which sets out the site working programme (inc. hours of work), means of community engagement and measures for dust and noise monitoring. The applicant's submission states that due to the nature of the gasholders and dismantling undertaken, significant dust arising is not considered likely. The statement also details how Asbestos will be dealt with. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that - given the applicant is intending to adhere to fixed working hours (08:00-18:00 Mon-Fri and 08:00-13:00 Sat), together with the proposed noise and dust monitoring in accordance with British Standards, there should not be a problem in terms of impact on neighbours.

There are a number of trees within and adjoining the site, including a prominent group of trees along the eastern boundary which are considered to make a positive contribution to the visual amenity of the locality. However, given the nature of the demolition/dismantling works, it is not felt that any adverse impact on these trees would necessarily arise.

The Planning Statement refers to an Ecological Walkover Survey which identifies the site as being of low ecological potential. It includes a number of recommendations, including in relation to bats, which if implemented would be sufficient to ensure no adverse impact on biodiversity or ecology.

The Planning Statement and subsequent email correspondence from the agent confirms that vehicle movements resulting from the demolition process are expected to be limited with perhaps 10 movements at the beginning and end for mobilisation/de-mobilisation and 1-2 movements per day during the dismantling. The agent confirms that all movements will be undertaken outside of peak hours. The County Highway Authority has offered no comments on the application.

The Contaminated Land Officer suggested a number of conditions regarding contamination. However, following confirmation that no ground works are proposed (only above ground dismantling); the Contaminated Land Officer agrees that these conditions are not necessary. Remediation of any ground contamination or ground gas issues would need to be addressed through any future application for redevelopment.

PROPOSED RESTORATION

As above, the gasholders are no longer operational and are a maintenance liability. The Planning Statement does refer to potential future development; however, at this early stage no detail is given.

The gasholders would be dismantled and the waste material removed from the site and disposed of or recycled.

The gasholders are very large, imposing structures. Whilst they are set back from Hooley Lane, they are nonetheless very dominant within the street scene and are not felt to make a positive contribution being very utilitarian in appearance. Their removal from the site, leaving in effect a site cleared to ground level (save for some small retained structures), is not therefore considered to cause any harm to the character or visual amenity of the area - even in absence of immediate proposals for restoration.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set out above I consider that PRIOR APPROVAL IS NOT REQUIRED.

In reaching this conclusion I have taken account of all other matters raised by this application but have found nothing which outweighs the main planning issues upon which I have based my recommendation. In reaching this conclusion I have had due regard to the articles and conventions of the Human Rights Act.

Permission be No Objection

INFORMATIVES

1. The applicant is advised that any works undertaken within 8m of the main river near to the site will require a Flood Risk Activity Permit from the Environment Agency. For more information, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits>.

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2. The applicant is advised to contact the Health and Safety Executive prior to works commencing.