

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	261503
Site Address:	Three Mile Cross Sewage Pumping Station, Basingstoke Road, Three Mile Cross, Reading, RG7 1AX
Expiry Date:	23 July 2026
Site Visit Date:	22 July 2026
Proposal: Prior approval submission for demolition of the existing decommissioned SPS building, including associated minor structures and foundation.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Three Mile Cross – Modest Development Location
Flood Storage Area
Nitrate Vulnerable Zones 2021 Designations
Bat Roost Suitability Habitat
Amber Risk Zone for Great Crested Newts
SSSI Impact Risk Zone
Special Protection Area 7km Linear Mitigation Zone

PLANNING POLICY/LEGISLATION

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Section 55	Provides that 'development' includes the carrying out of building operations on land, and 'building operations' includes structural alterations or additions to buildings.
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Section 57	Planning permission is needed for all development of land.
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Section 187a	Enforcement for breach of conditions
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The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

Section 7	Prior approval applications: time periods for decision
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Article 3	In conjunction with Schedule 2, Part 11 Class B grants planning permission for any building operation consisting of the demolition of a building
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Article 4	Provides that the planning authority may give direction to restrict the effect of Article 3
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PLANNING HISTORY

Planning history for the site is available to view on the Council's planning website. No planning history on the site is relevant for this planning application.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No objection
WBC Highways – No objection subject to conditions
Trees and Landscape – No objection subject to conditions
External
None

REPRESENTATIONS	
Parish/Town Council	Shinfield Parish Council raised no objection to the application.
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	No comments received

PART B.1 APPRAISAL				
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)			Yes	No
1	s.55	Does it constitute development?	✓	
2	s.191	Would it be contrary to an enforcement notice?		✓
3	s.187a Art.3 (4)	Would it be contrary to any condition imposed by any planning permission granted or deemed to be granted?		✓
The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)			Yes	No
4	Art.3 (5)	Are the building operations involved in the construction of the original building lawful?	✓	
5	Art.4	Is there an 'Article 4 Direction' in effect for the site?		✓
6	Sch.2 Pt. B	Does it consist of the demolition of a building?	✓	
7	B.1(a)	Has the building 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?		✓
8	B.1(b)	Is the demolition relevant demolition for the purposes of section 196D of the Act (demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area)?		✓
9	B.1(c)	Is the building used, or last used, for a purpose falling within Class A4 (drinking establishments) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order, including a purpose as described in Class AA (drinking establishments with expanded food provision) of Part 3 of Schedule 2 to this Order?		✓

PART B.2 APPRAISAL
Development under Class B is permitted subject to the following requirements under Part B.2:
<i>b)(i) ...the developer must, before beginning the development apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the</i>

authority will be required as to the method of demolition and any proposed restoration of the site.

The application was accompanied by the following documentation:

- Demolition Notice Statement
- Location Plan
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement
- Demolition Risk Assessment and Method Statement
- Bat Mitigation Report
- Application form
- Cover letter

Given the level of demolition proposed, it is considered this documentation is sufficient for the Council to ascertain that the method of demolition is acceptable and the site will be remediated appropriately.

Following demolition, it is proposed to undertake works to install new sewers and repurpose the existing storm tank to increase the capacity of the sewer network. As these works are entirely below ground level, they fall within the scope of permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 13, Class B(a) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

WBC Highways raises no objection to the proposed demolition, subject to the inclusion of an informative advising the applicant that separate consent will be required for any off-site parking, loading, or unloading arrangements located outside the red line boundary of the application site. All necessary permits, consents and approvals relating to such works must be obtained prior to the commencement of development.

WBC Landscape and Trees raise no objection to the proposal, subject to a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan. These documents can therefore be secured by condition in the event that planning permission is granted.

Environmental Health also raises no objection to the proposal, subject to the demolition works being undertaken in accordance with the submitted Risk Assessment and Method Statement (RAMS), and provided that all reasonable measures are implemented to minimise noise, dust, vibration, and any other potential disturbance to neighbouring occupiers throughout the demolition process.

On the basis of this information and given the relative minor impact of the demolition process (subject to being in accordance with the submitted documentation), prior approval is required and is given.

(b)(ii) an application described in paragraph (b)(i) 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;

The application was accompanied by a written statement and note in relation to the site notice. There is confirmation of payment of the correct fee.

(b)(iv) subject to paragraph (b)(v), the applicant must display a site notice by site display 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;

A site notice statement and subsequent picture of the site notice in situ was provided by the applicant. There is nothing to suggest that the sign was not in place for the entire period.

(b) (vii), (vii), (viii) and (ix) relate to the provisions when determining a prior approval application. Where applicable, this has been accorded with.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Although the impact of development on protected species is not specifically referred to in the GPDO, consideration is nonetheless required under the duty imposed by Regulation 9 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This requires consideration as to whether there is a reasonable likelihood of protected species being present and affected by a development proposal, including those requiring prior approval.

The application site lies within an area identified on the Council's records as potentially suitable for bat roosts and within an amber impact risk zone for Great Crested Newts (GCN). It is also located within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone and the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area 7km Linear Mitigation Zone. The applicant also notes that 'Building 1' and some of the trees on site offer suitable habitat for nesting birds.

A bat mitigation report has been submitted to accompany this application. The report confirms that no evidence of roosting bats has been recorded during surveys completed to date; however, the works will be undertaken in accordance with a precautionary method of working (PMoW) under supervision.

The ecological assessment also considered the potential presence of Great Crested Newts. Whilst the site falls within an amber GCN impact risk zone, the submitted ecological walkover concludes that GCN are unlikely to be present. No records of amphibians were identified during the desk study and the small-scale habitats on site were found to offer limited sheltering and foraging opportunities for amphibians. Furthermore, the nearest potential waterbodies are separated from the site by the M4 motorway, which was identified as a significant barrier to dispersal. On this basis, Great Crested Newts were scoped out as a constraint to the development and no specific mitigation measures were considered necessary.

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Notwithstanding the conclusions of the ecological assessment, protected species may occasionally be encountered during construction works. In the event that any Great Crested Newts, bats, nesting birds or other protected species are discovered during demolition, vegetation clearance or groundworks, works in the affected area should cease immediately and advice should be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist. Subject to adherence with this precautionary approach, and having regard to the findings of the ecological assessment that the site provides limited suitability for Great Crested Newts, it is not considered that the proposal would result in an adverse impact on protected species. Informatives are recommended to ensure that contractors are aware of their responsibilities under wildlife legislation.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010):

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Prior Approval - Approval
Date:	21 July 2026
Earliest date for decision:	17 July 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>MC</i>
Date:	22.07.2026