

Kirklees Council
Planning Services
PO Box 1720
Huddersfield
HD1 9EL

Date: 30 September 2026

Our ref: 72909/01/CD/RBa/41605097v4

To Whom It May Concern

Application to determine whether Prior Approval is required for the proposed Demolition of Buildings: Birkdale High School, Wheelwright Drive, Dewsbury, WF13 4JB

On behalf of Kirklees Council, this application has been submitted to determine whether prior approval is required for the demolition of Birkdale High School, Wheelwright Drive, Dewsbury, WF13 4JB under Class B, Part 11 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

Application Submission

This application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (ref. PP-15245288) and comprises the following:

- Completed application form;
- This Covering Letter (including the Site Notice at Annex 1);
- Site Location Plan (drawing no. 722062-WCL-SGN-XX-DR-S-106, rev. P1)
- Site Plan Showing Demolition Extents (drawing no. 722062-WCL-SGN-XX-DR-S-0101, rev. P1)
- Existing General Site Sections (drawing no. 722062-WCL-SGN-ZZ-DR-S-0401, rev. P3)
- Proposed General Site Sections (drawing no. 722062-WCL-SGN-ZZ-DR-S-0402, rev. P3)
- Tree Constraints, Impacts and Protection Plans (drawing nos. 26654-ARB 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 07, 07)

The requisite application fee has been paid directly to Kirklees Council.

Description of the Proposed Development

The description of the proposed development is:

“Demolition of all buildings on the former Birkdale High School site comprising the Main School Building, Science Block and Sports Hall Building”.

Proposed Demolition Works

Please describe the building(s) to be demolished

All buildings on the former Birkdale High School site comprising the Main School Building, Science Block and Sports Hall Building are proposed to be demolished. The buildings to be demolished are located are shown on drawing ‘Site Plan Showing Demolition Extents’ (reference: 722062-WCL-SGN-XX-DR-S-0101, rev. P1).

Photographs showing the typical condition of the site are included below:

Figure 1

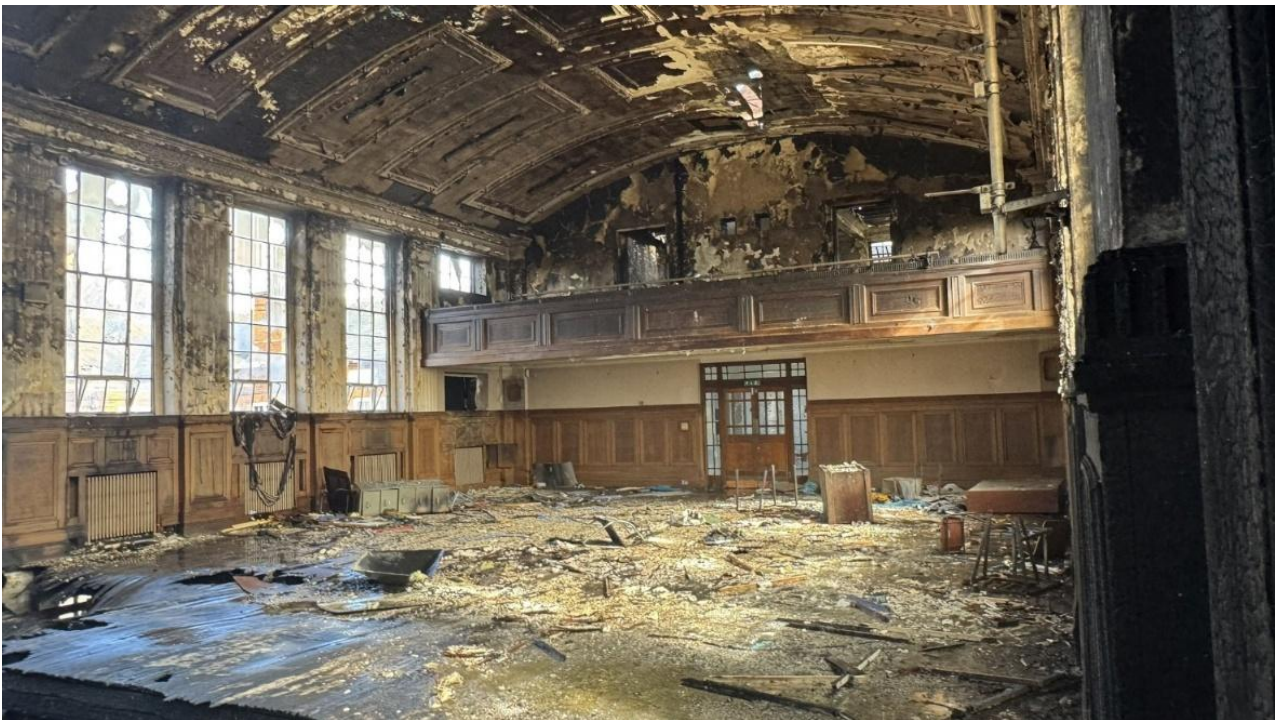


Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Why demolition needs to take place

The former Birkdale High School has been vacant since its closure in 2011 and, despite ongoing management and security measures, has experienced progressive deterioration over a prolonged period. Repeated incidents of vandalism, theft, unauthorised access and deliberate arson have significantly compromised the condition of the buildings and accelerated their decline. Structural inspections have identified numerous serious safety concerns, including fire-damaged and unstable structures, unrestrained masonry, weakened structural elements, timber floor rot, collapsed ceilings, extensive water ingress, damaged staircases and below-ground voids. The condition of certain areas is such that the structural integrity of the buildings cannot be reliably assured.

The buildings have also been heavily affected by criminal damage and unauthorised occupation, resulting in widespread loss of building fabric, broken glazing, removal of roof coverings and building services, and the accumulation of debris. The repeated arson attacks have further exacerbated existing structural defects and created additional risks associated with unstable and fire-damaged elements. The deteriorated condition of the site is reflected in the findings of professional surveys, which recorded a number of areas that could not be safely accessed due to fire damage, structural instability, confined spaces and unsafe conditions. In several locations a precautionary approach has been necessary, including the presumption that asbestos-containing materials may remain present until remediation works can be undertaken.

The site occupies a location which is bounded by residential properties and is adjacent to publicly accessible land, including a well-used public right of way. Despite extensive efforts to secure the site, incidents of unauthorised access and anti-social behaviour continue to occur. The combination of persistent trespass, structural instability, fire damage and the presence of hazardous materials creates an unacceptable risk of serious injury or loss of life. The severity of this risk is such that Kirklees Council maintains a continuous 24-hour security presence to deter trespass and protect members of the public. Whilst this measure assists in managing the immediate risk, it does not address the underlying condition of the buildings and cannot provide a sustainable long-term solution. Demolition therefore represents the most effective and proportionate means of permanently removing an ongoing risk to public safety, eliminating the attraction for further anti-social behaviour and enabling the site to be placed in a safe and secure condition.

The proposed method of demolition

The demolition works will be undertaken by a suitably qualified specialist demolition contractor in accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015, relevant health and safety legislation and an approved demolition methodology.

Prior to the commencement of structural demolition, the site will be secured and all necessary service isolations confirmed as undertaken. Existing boundary protection will be reviewed and supplemented where necessary to deter unauthorised access and ensure the safety of neighbouring land users throughout the works. Particular consideration will be given to maintaining safe public access along the existing public right of way crossing the site through the use of physical segregation, temporary fencing, signage and controlled working areas. Impacts of demolition upon existing trees on site has also been considered. The proposed tree removal and protection detail is shown on the submitted drawings (reference: 26654-ARB 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 07, 07).

A comprehensive programme of soft strip and asbestos abatement works will then be completed. A pre-demolition asbestos survey has identified asbestos-containing materials within the Main Building, Science Block and Sports Hall Building, including insulation residues, asbestos insulating board, mastics, gaskets, woven products and asbestos cement materials. Previous arson attacks have resulted in areas of significant fire damage, some of which could not be fully inspected due to structural instability and health and safety constraints. Consequently, a precautionary approach will be adopted whereby fire-damaged and inaccessible areas will be treated as potentially asbestos-contaminated until appropriately remediated. All asbestos removal works will be undertaken by suitably licensed contractors in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and associated Health and Safety Executive guidance before structural demolition commences.

Upon completion of the soft strip and asbestos removal works, the Main Building, Science Block, Link Bridge and Sports Hall Building will be demolished using appropriate mechanical demolition techniques, including specialist demolition plant. Demolition will be undertaken in a controlled sequence designed to minimise the risk of uncontrolled collapse and to safely manage the known hazards identified through site inspections, including fire-damaged structures, unstable masonry, weakened floors, retaining structures, varying site levels and areas where the structural integrity of the buildings cannot be reliably assured.

It is proposed to undertake the works within the following hours:

- 09:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday
- 08:00 to 13:00 Saturdays
- No working on Sundays and Bank Holidays

Particular care will be taken in relation to ground conditions and below-ground structures. The contractor will verify whether ground floor slabs are ground-bearing and, where voids are present beneath floor structures, these will be removed and appropriately treated to ensure that no sub-floor voids remain following completion of the works. The demolition methodology will also account for retaining walls, buried structures, historic foundations and identified surface features which may indicate the presence of below-ground chambers. Any unexpected contamination or hazardous materials encountered during the works will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements.

Appropriate environmental controls will be implemented throughout the demolition works to minimise impacts upon neighbouring properties and the surrounding area. Dust generation will be controlled through the use of water suppression measures, damping down of demolition materials, careful management of demolition arisings and regular site housekeeping. Noise and vibration will be monitored on site and managed through the use of modern well-maintained plant and equipment, together with the careful sequencing and programming of demolition activities. Measures will also be implemented to prevent mud, dust and debris from being deposited on the public highway, including wheel cleaning facilities where required.

Throughout the demolition process, materials will be segregated to maximise opportunities for recycling and recovery. Demolition arisings will be managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy, with suitable materials retained for reuse on site where practicable and safe to do so. The works will also be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the ecological assessments prepared for the

site, including any required mitigation measures relating to protected species and vegetation management.

Spoil and rubble disposal

Demolition arisings will be managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy, with priority given to the reuse and recycling of materials where safe, appropriate and compliant with relevant standards. Materials arising from the demolition works will be segregated on site into separate waste streams, including concrete, masonry, metals, timber and hazardous materials, to maximise opportunities for recovery and recycling.

Subject to material testing and verification of suitability, crushed concrete and masonry arising from the demolition works will be reused on site wherever practicable as engineered fill material to infill former building footprints, sub-floor voids and areas requiring regrading as part of the site's restoration. This approach will reduce waste generation, minimise the quantity of material requiring off-site disposal and reduce associated vehicle movements.

The reuse of suitable materials on site will be managed through an appropriate Materials Management Plan, which will identify the source, suitability, testing requirements, handling procedures and proposed end use of materials retained on site. This will ensure that all materials intended for reuse are appropriately assessed and managed in accordance with relevant environmental and engineering requirements.

Any surplus material that is unsuitable for reuse on site will be removed by licensed waste carriers and transported to appropriately licensed recycling, treatment or disposal facilities. The objective will be to maximise recycling and recovery and minimise the volume of waste sent to landfill.

Asbestos-containing materials and any other contaminated or hazardous wastes will be segregated from general demolition arisings and managed under strict, controlled conditions. Such materials will be transported by licensed waste carriers to appropriately licensed hazardous waste treatment or disposal facilities in accordance with all relevant legislation. Asbestos waste will be securely packaged, labelled and disposed of in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and associated statutory requirements.

Overall, the demolition works will be undertaken in a manner that maximises material recovery, minimises waste and ensures all demolition arisings are managed, transported and disposed of in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.

Details of the proposed restoration of the site

Following completion of the demolition works, the site will be restored to create a safe, stable and visually appropriate landform, removing the risks associated with the existing vacant and deteriorating buildings. All building structures, foundations requiring treatment, sub-floor voids and other below-ground features identified during the works will be appropriately addressed, with voids infilled using suitable engineered materials to ensure the long-term stability of the site.

The site will then be regraded in accordance with the approved restoration proposals to provide a coherent and sustainable landform that integrates with the surrounding topography. Ground levels will

be reprofiled to remove abrupt changes in level, with finished gradients designed to provide a safe and manageable site generally not exceeding 1 in 3. Existing retaining walls will be retained where appropriate, whilst redundant structures, including the former main entrance steps, will be removed as part of the restoration works.

Wherever suitable and compliant with relevant engineering and environmental standards, recycled demolition materials generated from the works will be reused on site as engineered fill in accordance with an appropriate Materials Management Plan. This approach will support sustainable demolition practices, minimise waste generation and reduce the need for off-site material disposal and importation of fill materials.

Any exposed steelwork, foundations, services, obstructions, or remnants of the former buildings requiring removal will be cut back or removed to the required level to ensure the site is left in a safe condition. All demolition debris, temporary works, plant, compounds and associated materials will be removed from the site upon completion.

A post-demolition topographical survey will be undertaken to verify the final site levels and restoration works. The site will then be left in a safe, secure and maintainable condition. Retaining suitable demolition materials on site will also preserve opportunities for their beneficial reuse within any future redevelopment of the site, including the formation of development platforms, road sub-bases and other engineered groundworks, thereby reducing the need for imported materials and supporting a more sustainable approach to future development.

Posting of notice

A notice has been prepared in accordance with B.2 (b) of Class B, Part 11 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO (2015). A copy of the site notice is shown in **Annex 1**.

On 29 September 2026, a total of 6 site notices were posted at:

- 1 Alexandra Crescent
- 2 Birkdale Grove
- 3 Healds Road
- 4 The Oval
- 5 Victoria Crescent
- 6 Wheelright Drive

A map showing the locations of the site notices and photographs of the site notices placed in each of the above locations are included at **Annex 2**.

The site notices will be in place for no 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. Sufficient public notice will therefore be given of the proposed demolition.

We trust this provides all the information required to determine whether prior approval is required. If we do not hear otherwise following the statutory 28 day period, we will proceed with the demolition in

accordance with the details set out in this submission in accordance with Class B, Part 11 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. B.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ryan Barrett
Senior Planner
MPlan (Hons) MRTPI

Annex 1: Site Notice

SITE NOTICE

APPLICATION TO DEMOLISH A BUILDING

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended)

An application to demolish: **All buildings on the Former Birkdale High School Site, Wheelwright Drive, Dewsbury, WF13 4JB comprising the Main School Building, Science Block and Sports Hall Building**

Has been submitted to Kirklees Council by: **Kirklees Council**

On: **30 September 2026**

(The applicant has applied to the Local Planning Authority for a determination as to whether prior approval will be required for the method of demolition and any proposed restoration of the site)

Demolition is due to begin: **16 November 2026**

If you wish to make any comments, please send them in writing before: **21 October 2026**
(21 days from the date of display of this notice) to:

Kirklees Council,
Planning Services,
PO Box 1720,
Huddersfield
HD1 9EL

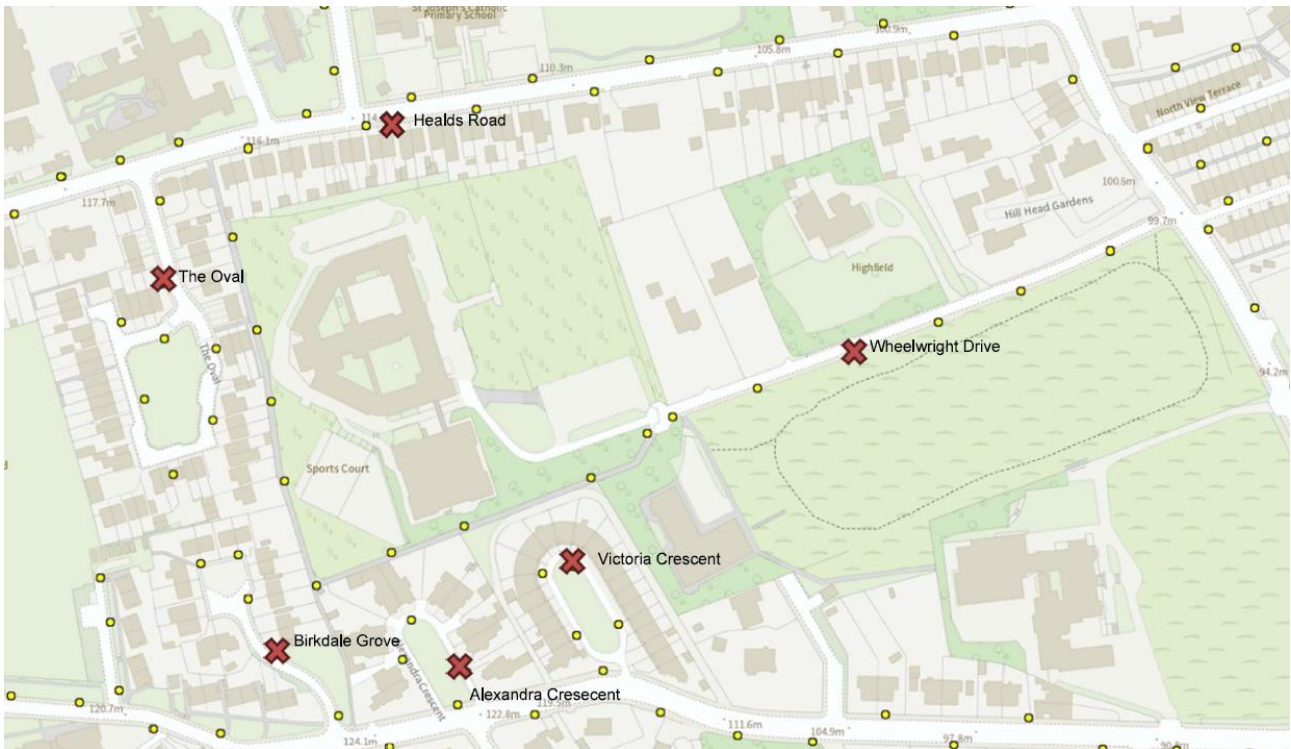
Copies of this application can be viewed online on the Kirklees Council public access website at <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/default.aspx>

Signed: **Lichfields (on behalf of Kirklees Council)**

Date: **30 September 2026**

Annex 2: Site Notice Location and Photographs

Site Notice Locations



Alexandra Crescent



LICHFIELDS

Birkdale Grove



Healds Road



The Oval



Victoria Crescent



Wheelright Drive

