

Date November 2024

Design & Access Statement

Proposed Demolition of The Millennium Building

at

Court Hey Park
Roby Road
Huyton
Liverpool
L16 3NA

Design & Access Statement

Introduction

This statement has been prepared to support the prior notification for the Demolition of the Millennium Building, Court Hey Park, Roby Road, Huyton L16 3NA.

Court Hey Park is a popular and Green Flag awarded park in Roby. The park was the former home of the National Wildflower Centre from 2000 to 2017, who occupied the Millennium Building, Courtyard Buildings, Walled Garden, and workshop buildings.

In January 2017 the operator of the National Wildflower Centre, Landlife, went into liquidation and the lease of the area known as the National Wildflower Centre was surrendered back to Knowsley Council as the landowner. The Council became responsible for the structure on site known as the Millennium Building which was the centrepiece of the former National Wildflower Centre and included an onsite café, galleries and office space. The building, built in 2000, had fallen into disrepair and was subject to vandalism and arson following the sudden closure of the National Wildflower Centre.

Since 2017 Knowsley Council have explored opportunities to bring the former National Wildflower Centre site including the Millennium Building, into positive use and to secure funding to refurbish the buildings. This has resulted in the Community Asset Transfers of the Courtyard Buildings to One Knowsley and the Walled Garden area to Incredible Edible Knowsley, and the opening of a community park Café, Espositos on site. The Council also secured a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to undertake a site wide feasibility study to develop a heritage-based masterplan for Court Hey Park.

A condition survey of the Millennium Building was undertaken to fully consider the costs associated with repairing and reopening the Millennium Building to public use. This survey confirmed that the investment needed to repair and reopen the building far exceeded the cost to demolish and re-instate the footprint as public open space in line with the masterplan for the site.

The proposal is to demolish the Millennium Building and for the area to be landscaped and reopened into the public realm of Court Hey Park. These works will provide a flexible space for events and activities and also enable further progression of the proposed masterplan for the park.

Main Building

The Millennium Building is a long and narrow concrete building, which was originally designed to be a gallery space. Linear building 160 metre long, designed as a sculpted inhabited wall. Constructed of cast concrete with oak timber cladding with a flat roof terrace garden.

The roof was compromised by the installation of a “living roof” by Landlife and in the former café area the roof had collapsed;

The utilities and services were cast into the concrete structure of the building.

There had been significant damage through vandalism and arson to the windows, panelling and interior causing concern in regard to the structural integrity.

The hydraulics that controlled the exterior panels along the west of the building had failed.

The building currently has electric, gas and water supplies serving the main building, which are being disconnected.

Site

Court Hey Park is a Green Flag awarded park site in Roby and is one of four borough status parks across the borough. The park is home to nine different stakeholder groups housed within the Courtyard, Walled Garden, Cricket Pavilion and pitch, Garages, Workshops, and Bowling Green. There is on-site parking, a play area, and a mixture of parkland, woodlands, wetlands, path networks and the Court Hey Brook runs along the north/south boundary.

The site is accessible via Roby Road and the Millennium Building sits within the centre of the site (Appendix A) and is not currently accessible to the public. The area in which the building is situated is enclosed by a 1.8m high palisade fencing is secured by locked vehicular entrance gates and various

Operating times

The building has been vacant since January 2017.

Access

The site is accessible via Sherwood Drive. Construction traffic will be managed via the Traffic Management Plan at the time of the works as not to impact local businesses, public or residents.

Security

There is CCTV surrounding the building and the whole site, which is monitored by Knowsley Security.

The Proposed Demolition

The demolition of the building will be done in a coordinated manner to minimise disruption to the local community, local businesses, residents and public. A sectional dismantling of the building will be carried out by a 360 Degree Excavator with various demolition attachments. The site will be hoarded off from public access for the duration of the demolition with all construction vehicles, machinery and welfare being contained within the site hoarding. Construction traffic will be managed via a full construction management plan which will be issued before any works commence.

An Ecological Clerk of Works will be onsite throughout the works to complete a pre-commencement check of the site, any stored materials and the immediate vicinity of development footprint will be carried out prior to any works each morning.

The area of standing water highlighted within the Ecological appraisal will be hoarded off to provide protection from the proposed demolition.

Materials that may cause entrapment or be used by amphibians as refugia such as rubble piles, plastic or metal fencing, as well as those which could be potentially harmful to terrestrial mammals such as chemicals, should not be left around the site following the cessation of daytime work.

Nesting bird checks will be completed on the building every 48 hours during nesting season (March -August). If a nest is discovered work must stop and an exclusion zone will be established to prevent disturbance.

Landscaping will follow the demolition to create safe and level public access to areas currently fenced from public access. (Appendix B). the works will entail:

- Removing the old gate at the front and associated fence up to the café space, which will create a through access to the sunken garden and include the pond.
- Installing a Security mesh fence as shown on the drawing, this will secure the Forest School area (2.4m high) and the Incredible Edible area (this section will be 3.0m high, and have a ridge top for maximum security and a maintenance access gate).
- Laying a bitmac surface to the central area.
- Putting a 2m wide landscape strip in front of the fence

Summary

This report is to be read in conjunction with the following planning information, submitted as part of the demolition planning application.

- AS-000 SOUTHMEAD LOCATION PLAN
- PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

Appendix A – Site map showing location of the Millennium Building

Appendix B – Site map showing location of the pond

Appendix C – Site map showing proposed landscaping

