

Bradley Lane Development Site, Newton Abbot TQ12 1NF

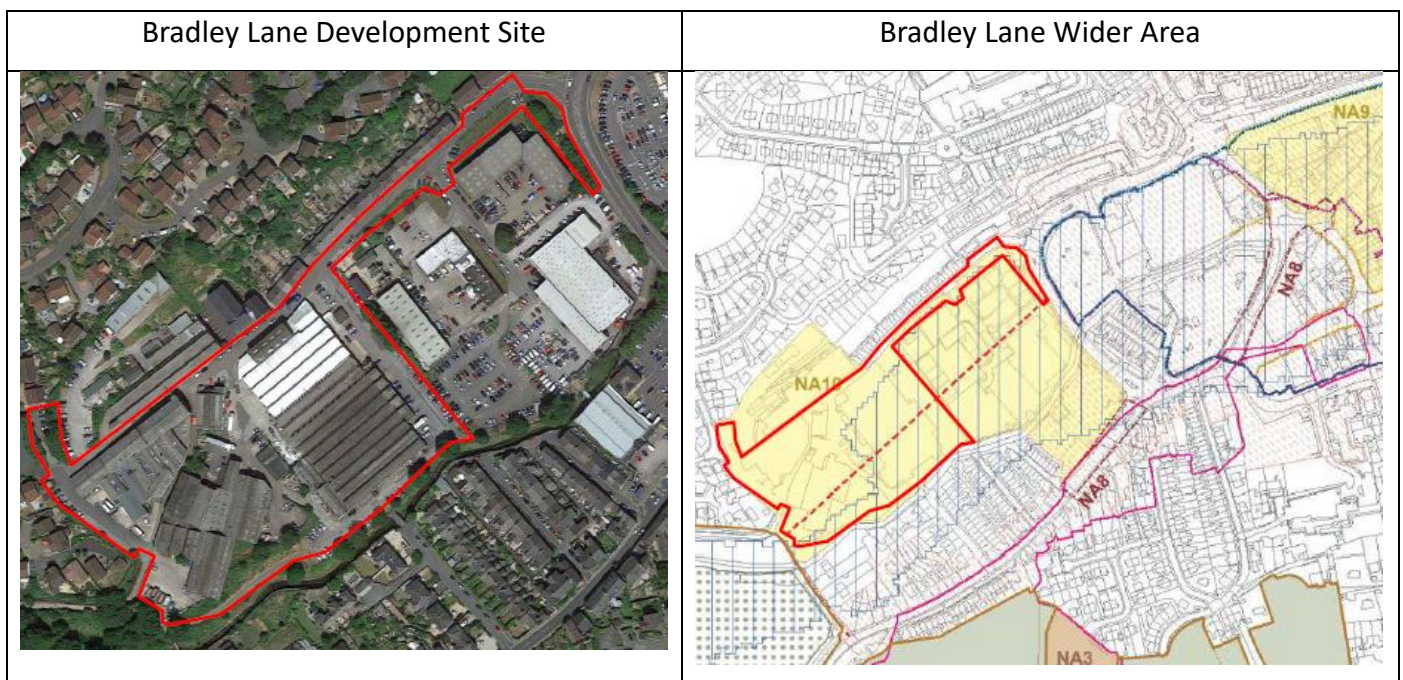
Demolition Report

16 July 2024

Produced by Teignbridge District Council

1. Background

1.1 The Bradley Lane Development Site and wider area (see below) has been a long-standing regeneration priority for the Council.



1.2 The area represents an exciting opportunity for Teignbridge District Council (TDC) with the aim of delivering.

- Much needed town centre affordable housing
- Improved pedestrian and cycle routes
- Regeneration of a complex and difficult brownfield site
- New private housing close to the town centre
- Improved flood risk resilience with improvements along the river Lemon

2. Development Partner Selection and Status

2.1 Lovell Partnerships Ltd.

2.1.1 Following conclusion of a marketing campaign by Montagu Evans in June 2021, Lovell Partnerships Ltd. (LPL) were the sole bidder.

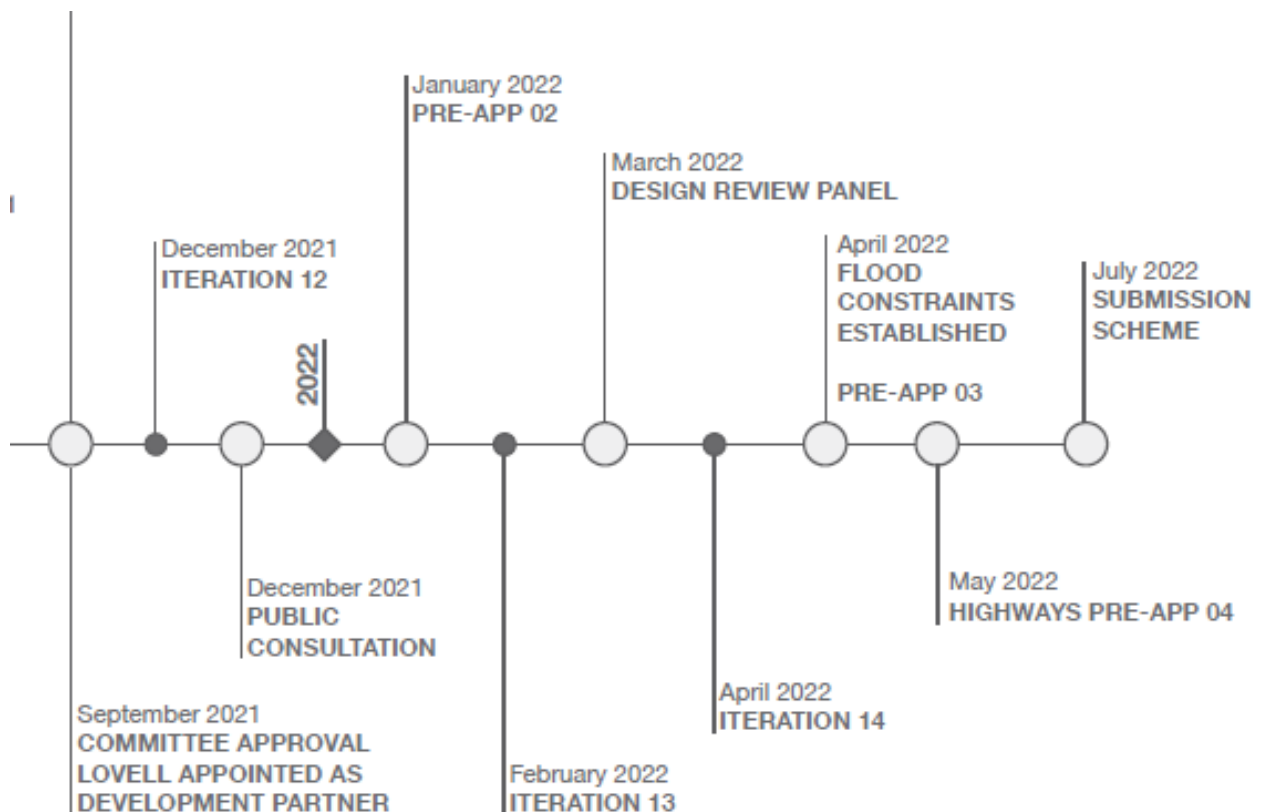
2.1.2 LPL land payment was structured as 5% upon exchange of contracts, 45% payable post planning and 50% 12 months thereafter. The purchase price was not fixed and could be reduced should abnormal costs arise. LPL anticipated starting on site in March 2022 following submitting planning in October 2021.

2.1.3 TDC were contributing £400k grant funding to decontaminate the site / demolition.

2.1.4 The proposal was based on 89 Dwellings across a 2.63 hectare (6.5 Acre) Gross / 1.82 hectare (4.5 Acre) Net site. The proposal included a Homes England sponsored 40% affordable housing allowance.

2.2 Pre-Application Discussions and the Current Position

2.2.1 The design and planning process was complex with the planning application actually submitted in July 2022 and validated on 7th September 2022. The table below shows the run up to the submission.



2.2.2 The proposals went through a series of post submission evolutions following discussions with planners and design review panels.

2.2.3 Plans to include retaining part of the Launa building, stone barn, and the former engine room chimney were being explored, however, consequently viability is understood to have been an issue.

2.2.4 TDC's contract with LPL expired in May 2024 with the developer's principal condition precedent of securing planning permission remaining unsatisfied as the planning progress had stalled.

3. Development Programme

3.1 TDC needs to consider the future of the site and how to progress the wider regeneration aims. The three priorities are:

- Secure the site and ensure it is made safer for the unexpected prolonged period of Council ownership.
- Physically prepare and de-risk the land for development.
- Identify a new development partner, delivery method or exit route.

4. Secure the site and ensure it is safer for the unexpected prolonged period of Council ownership

4.1 Security Issues

4.1.1 The site has been subject to significant incidents of anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Several of the buildings' roofs have failed and unauthorised access has been gained through broken windows and openings.



4.1.2 There have been the following Police incidents in 2024.

- 1 x January
- 1 x February
- 1 x March
- 5 x May
- 6 x June

4.1.3 As we can see unauthorised activity is increasing and this is anticipated to escalate further during the upcoming School summer holiday period. Once a pattern of access is established the situation is likely to escalate.

4.1.4 There has been several failed arson attacks in the buildings alongside numerous intrusions and attempted entry. Internally there is significant physical damage to the various partitions and structures. Externally, bricks and other large items have been thrown at the roofs causing damage and large openings. This has led to water degradation of the floors and several of them are no longer safe.

4.2 Perimeter Fence

4.2.1. TDC have been actively managing the site to deter intruders and make good damage as it occurs. With the previous prospect of imminent development, understandably TDC have been reluctant to spend significant resources on the buildings. The situation has now reached a critical point and as the development

agreement is expired a comprehensive approach is needed to safeguard the site for the unexpectedly prolonged period of Council ownership / responsibility.

4.2.2 An instruction has been made to install a 3m high steel palisade boundary fence to better secure the site. The fence will make use of some existing buildings' elevations and will incorporate elements of razor wire as shown in Appendix 1.

4.2.4 Installing the fence also has the additional benefit that it can contribute towards a compound and site fencing during the site preparation contract. Usually, a contractor would install site hoarding and with the perimeter fence in place that cost can be excluded and vitally will also help to speed up a start on site.

5. Physically prepare and de-risk the land for development

5.1 Background

5.1.1 Housebuilders and developers will always seek to minimise risk and place as much certainty as possible into their financial models. Should there be an element of risk such as ground contamination, then it is common practice to price in that risk at the upper end of expectations. This increased cost then erodes the land value.

5.1.2 Prudent landowners will look to remove as many barriers as possible prior to any sale and ideally present the site to the market in what is known as an "Oven Ready" state. This gives the developer little room for negotiation and allows for more accurate assessment of the bids received.

5.1.3 This is why housebuilders are attracted to green field sites as all the costs are quantifiable, there are fewer variables and unknowns therefore delivery is much more straightforward.

5.1.4 Brownfield development in contrast is complex and has numerous challenges not limited to:

- Made or formed land that requires additional foundations.
- Ground contamination
- Restricted utilities connections and complex easements
- Rights of light
- Constrained access
- Difficult construction access, oversailing and loading
- Conservation Areas and proximity to Listed buildings.
- Noise and air pollution
- Existing buildings
- Rights of support and party wall issues
- Historic rights of way, covenants, and occupational arrangements

5.1.5 Any developer considering the Bradley Lane site would want to clarify the risk and mitigate the following:

- Made land and piled foundations.
- Flooding
- Ground Contamination
- Restricted utilities connections and complex easements
- Noise and air pollution
- Existing buildings
- Rights of support and party wall issues
- Historic rights of way, covenants, and occupational arrangements
- Diversion of the leat
- Access road improvements and utilities works

5.1.6 The main issue in promoting the site will be the existing buildings and how they are dealt with. Existing buildings present several risks whilst being held until development commences. There is the issue with Health and Safety and this is often exacerbated as developers are rarely located near the sites they develop.

5.1.7 Demolition costs, risk of statutory heritage protection and unseen contamination all detract from the market appeal of the site.

5.1.8 Positives of retaining buildings including giving a built form precedent for planning purposes.

5.1.9 Additionally, provided a building is lawfully occupied in part for a period of six months within the three years immediately prior to planning determination the buildings can contribute CIL credits. This reduces the CIL liability and improves viability. This was the strategy, as set out in the September 2021 report to full council, however, this approach has now run its course due to the length of the hold period.

5.1.10 The other matters can be dealt with by grant funding or obtaining appropriate costings and reports.

5.2 Existing Building Viability

5.2.1 The initial development parameters for the location are set out in Policy NA 10 of the Local Plan. This seeks to create a residentially led mixed use location that enhances the vibrancy of the area.

5.2.2 At the LPA's request, LPL explored incorporating Part C of the policy, to "seek to retain buildings that make a positive contribution to the physical environment and diversity of uses on the site" and considered retaining part or all, of the older buildings on site but concluded:

The viability of the scheme relies upon the delivery of high-quality housing. The current condition of the building fabric relates strongly to the to the previous buildings uses and does not translate well into residential dwellings. There would need to be significant alterations to the building fabric to meet required building regulations compliance. Therefore, a more future-proofed design to minimise operational carbon emissions would be to provide high quality new homes for the

site. Traces of the site's history through the exploration of water and steam power helps to tell an evolving story of the site through its ages, not capturing one iteration of the site.

5.2.2 In simple terms the cost of converting the existing buildings will be greater than the value they create. This loss could be cross subsidised from the new build sections of the development, but this will materially reduce the land value and any developer's profit.

5.2.3 The acid test has been LPL not progressing with the development, having been taken down a route that retained sections of the buildings on site, it is not a scheme that works.

5.3 Heritage Aspects of the Existing Buildings

5.3.1 The supporting Planning Application Historic Area assessment submitted as part of the Lovell Application (*Appendix 2*) stated that *Bradley Mill, is undesignated and of limited heritage value.*

5.3.2 The assessment stated.

"The buildings are therefore considered to be non-designated heritage assets of low significance, of local importance, compromised by preservation and in part poor survival of contextual associations... The significance of the site relates mainly to significance of the groups of buildings, along with other aspects of the character (and in particular topographical setting) of the area and associated townscape features such as the early leat and lanes."

5.3.3 The site is not situated or included within the boundary of a designated area, and there are no designated heritage assets within its boundaries. There does not appear to be a register of locally listed sites albeit one was proposed as part of the Local Plan.

5.3.4 Based on the reports commissioned and statutory designation of the buildings they are classified as being of limited historic value and importance. If the aim is to deliver housing on the site and generate wider economic benefit, it would be possible to justify their demolition.

5.3.5 For a balanced view it should be recognised that there are some groups that consider parts of buildings or buildings do offer heritage value and merit. A suite of documents have been included in the main report's appendices which sets out arguments for the heritage value of structures and also proposals for redeveloping the existing buildings to bring them back in to use.

5.4.6 It is important to bear in mind the viability of such visions to reuse the buildings, the demand, a business case and the constraints of the site such as flood risk. A vision / concept needs to be demonstrated as deliverable having taken in to account all of the constraints of the site and the existing buildings limitations.

5.4 Planning

5.4.1 Demolition generally is covered by Permitted Development Rights (PDR), subject to:

- The building must not be in a conservation area.
- It must not be a dwelling house, school, or other protected building type.
- The demolition must not involve creating a significant adverse impact on the surrounding environment.

5.4.2 Based on the above, it is believed the demolition of the buildings at Bradley Lane can be undertaken without the need for a planning application and is covered under PDR.

5.4.4 The Senior Planning Officer (Major Projects) has confirmed that a Prior Notice will be required prior to the demolition works commencing.

5.4.5 The Prior Notice allows for the LPA to consider the method of demolition and the restoration of the site.

5.5.6 In tandem TDC will serve a Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP) to the Environment Agency to ensure the EA are satisfied the clearance works would not exacerbate local flooding.

5.5.7 If TDC elects to undertake the site clearance in phases then separate Prior Notices can be served for different elements of the site. As the LPA can only consider demolition and restoration within the scope of the Prior Notice it is likely the demolition will be Permitted development.

5.5.8 Separate Prior Notices would enable TDC to phase the demolition and allow work to start on the less contentious buildings whilst reviewing options to retain key parts of buildings if Council decides they offer heritage value.

5.5 Protected Species

5.5.1 Prior to any demolition of the buildings AECOM will undertake the following:

- Desk Study
- Extended UKHab Survey of the site and 10m buffer
- Daytime Bat Walkover

5.5.2 This will generate a report and recommendations to ensure if any protected species are identified they are not adversely disturbed by the demolition.

5.6 Demolition Implementation

5.6.1 Any demolition proposals are likely to be contentious and the high-profile nature of the site will attract public attention.

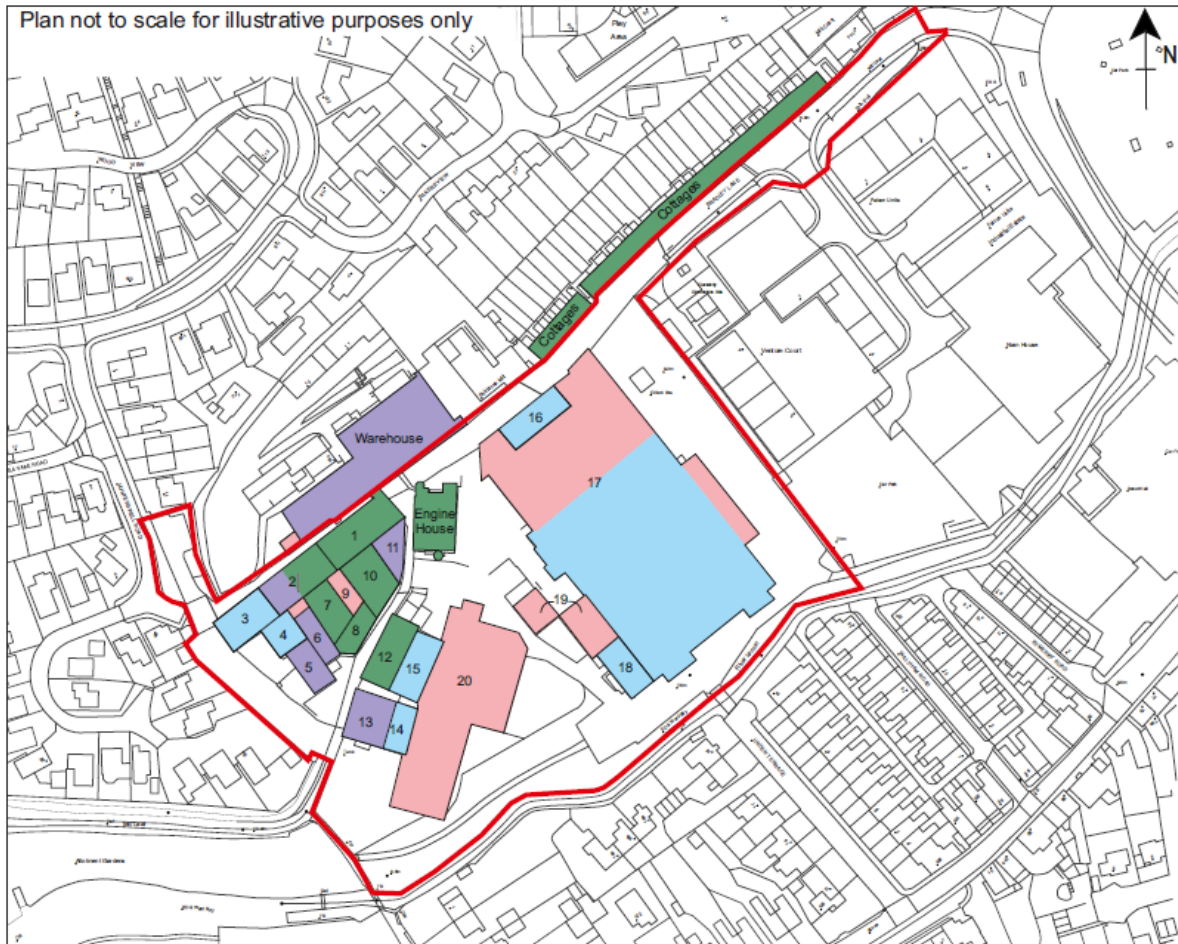
5.6.2 The LPL planning application consultation process generated significant criticism and public concern that Newton Abbot was losing an important part of its heritage.

5.6.3 This also included comment from Historic England who urged TDC to designate the location as a Conservation Area. They did not however consider the buildings worthy of being Listed.

5.6.4 Accepting that the buildings are a major barrier to bringing forward the site and ultimately that demolition is needed, it may be prudent to adopt a two-stage process. This would comprise demolishing all the buildings with the exception of the high profile “Launa” building and plans could be explored to retain the front section of this building.

5.6.5 The former engine room chimney in the centre of the site should also be capable of retention without significant difficulty should the Council decide the remains of that structure are worth keeping.

5.6.5 As represented by the green sections of Buildings 1 and 2 and the circular chimney of the engine house below.



- 1883
- By 1905
- by 1930 - ?c.1920
- After 1943

5.6.6. As demolition progressed and in the context of the Launa not being scheduled for immediate demolition, we could engage in a wide consultation programme to explain why they need to be removed. There is with this option the risk that the Launa building ends up not being demolished and will require a solution to the identified holding cost issues.

5.6.7 The two-stage approach will also have cost implications. If the contractor had to demobilise and then restart on site this would likely lead to an overall increase in costs.

5.6.7 What is important is for TDC to proceed with demolition of the majority of the site and utilise the grant funds, should approval be given, before they expire.

5.6.8 At this stage it is also unclear if the front section of the Launa Building can be retained and should section be removed are the retained walls and roof able to support themselves.

5.7 Public Affairs

5.7.1 This site will require a sensitive and correctly articulated consultation process. The case for demolition will need to be handled openly and transparently. Explaining the facts and detailing how the buildings are not viable will be critical.

5.7.2 As explanation is also needed on how the status quo cannot be maintained and if left, the buildings will ultimately fall into disrepair.

5.7.3 TDC knows from its experience with LPL, securing a partner has been thwarted due to viability. This position is unlikely to change and ultimately the buildings will degrade. This message needs to be communicated effectively and seen as part of a wider benefit not in isolation.

5.7.3 A public affairs consultation programme can develop and marshalled internally by the team who have experience in this area.

5.8 Scope of the works

5.8.1 The exact specification and employer's requirements have yet to be drafted but should include:

- Compliance with all Construction Design and Management (CDM) and Health and Safety (H&S) legislation.
- Undertake full demolition survey of the site.
- Safe removal of all asbestos from site.
- Demolish and remove from site all buildings and above ground structures to existing ground level.
- Suitable non contaminated materials crushed and collected into piles on site for reuse.
- Voids, pits, and basements infilled with clean crushed hardcore.
- The site left in a clean condition with all hazardous materials removed.
- Appropriate testing and analysis of tanks, storage facilities and vessels prior to removal.
- Disconnect, decommission, and remove all services from the site save one consolidated location for future contractor welfare.
- Provide temporary support to maintain stability to any adjoining structures or features.
- Prove and comply with an agreed Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP).

5.8.2 Particular attention will have to be paid to Bradley Lane once the Launa Building is demolished. The basement section supports the highway and once removed the carriageway will need buttressing. This most likely will be through shuttering and timber supports.

6. Programme

Event	Period From	To
TDC Assess development potential and secure site with palisade fencing.	July 2024	August 2024
Submit Prior Notice and supporting documentation.	July 2024	August 2024
Define Demolition Contact Employers Requirements and Tender Period	July 2024	September 2024
Level Site and decommission utilities.	October 2024	March 2025

7. Costs

7.1 The demolition costs budget is provided within the main report's Appendix 11 (Part ii only).

8. Identify a new development partner or exit route.

8.1.1 Once the site is cleared and the services decommissioned a significant element of risk will be removed from the site. This will improve the market appeal of the land and expand the number of potential bidders.

8.1.2 The removal of a loss-making element of the development will enhance the viability of the project and lead to a more liberated design that can correlate with the surrounding street scene.

8.1.3 TDC (Teignbridge District Council) should be ambitious and seek to secure a development partner that provides high quality, innovative and attractive housing. This should include the creation of a design guide and planning framework for the site.

8.1.4 The details of what Council would like as an outcome for the site will be considered in later stages following the high priority short term necessary works.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 A debate is necessary to establish which buildings or structures, if any, Council would choose to retain. The implications of retaining any buildings or parts of buildings need to be very carefully considered.

9.2 The buildings approved for demolition should then be demolished as soon as possible and, if approval is given by MHCLG, using FHSF grant.

9.3 TDC submit a Prior Notice(s) for the demolition of buildings which has a 28 day notice period.

9.4 Commission AECOM to tender the demolition contract and proceed with clearing the buildings in accordance with the programme and budget.