

Prior Approval for the demolition of buildings

If you are proposing to demolish a building, or to 'substantially demolish' part of a building, you will need prior approval and Building Control approval before you start the works.

The prior approval procedure does not apply to the demolition or substantial demolition of a building included in the statutory List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest. It is an offence to demolish or substantially demolish a Listed Building without first obtaining Listed Building Consent.

An application for prior approval must include:

- (a) a location plan with the application site edged red to a metric scale of 1:1250 or 1:2500;
- (b) the application form or a letter with a written description of the proposed demolition (application forms can be found on the Planning Portal website);
- (c) a statement that a site notice has been put up at the site by the applicant or their agent (a template site notice can be found below).

The site notice must be filled out in full and be clearly displayed in a publicly accessible area on or next to the site for no less than 21 days. The prior approval process will take up to 28 days from registration to determine and it is during this period that the city council will undertake an EIA/HRA screening, if required. If no response is heard from the city council after the 28 day period then approval is considered to be granted.

Please note that for Building Control approval, a Notice of Demolition with an accompanying block plan will need to be sent to buildcontrol@portsmouthcc.gov.uk at least 6 weeks prior to demolition works beginning. The notice can be sent in at the same time as the prior approval application. A template Notice of Demolition can be found here: www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/pln-build-control-demolition-notice.pdf

Important Information

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 gives special protection to bats because of their roosting requirements and many buildings in the city have the potential to have bat roosts in them. If the building has the potential to house bats, a bat survey would be required. It is recommended that you get in touch with the city council's ecologist as soon as possible to discuss what survey requirements are necessary.

If the building is found to contain bats, a license will be required from Natural England before any works can take place.

Furthermore, if the scale of demolition would be extensive, or the site is located near to a protected habitat, then an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and/or a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) may also be required.

Unless it is known that there is no asbestos present in the building, prior to demolition, applicants will need to have an asbestos survey undertaken by a trained specialist. If asbestos is present, a demolition survey and appropriate measures will be required. For more information please see the HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/managing/survey-refurb.htm