



Statement of National Importance

Grenfell Tower

Introduction

This Statement of National Importance (hereby referred to as the ‘Statement’) has been prepared by AtkinsRéalis UK Limited (AtkinsRéalis) on behalf of our client, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (the ‘Applicant’), to support a non-urgent Crown Development application for full planning permission in respect of Grenfell Tower, Grenfell Road, North Kensington, London, W11 1TG (the ‘Site’). The 0.51-hectare (ha) Site is located within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

The Site is now classified as ‘Crown land’, as land in which MHCLG has a relevant interest. MHCLG and the Secretary of State are responsible for its maintenance.

This application for Crown Development is submitted pursuant to section 293D of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). This Statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of article 4(1)(c)(iii) of the Town and Country Planning (Crown Development Applications) (Procedure and Written Representations) Order 2025.

MHCLG’s appointed Principal Contractor is carefully and sensitively taking down Grenfell Tower (the ‘Tower’). These works are being conducted under permitted development (PD) rights granted to the Applicant by Part 19 Class Q of Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. This application aims to secure the necessary consent to complete the works, noting that this does not include the basement. Notification to utilise these PD rights was issued by MHCLG on the 23rd of September 2025.

The Proposed Scheme

The Proposed Scheme comprises the sensitive works to carefully take down Grenfell Tower. The basement will be retained and protected with a waterproof topping. An access point will be provided to ensure safe access into the existing (retained) basement.

The non-urgent Crown Development application for full planning permission is sought for the following description of development:

“The works to take down Grenfell Tower”.

Document Purpose

The purpose of this Statement is to set out the reasons why the Applicant considers the development to which the application relates to be of national importance. This Statement has been prepared in accordance with the guidance set out in the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) for Crown Development, made by Matthew Pennycook, Minister of State for Housing and Planning, on the 13th February 2025. The WMS sets out that *“the Secretary of State will in general only consider a development to be of national importance if, in her opinion, the development would:*

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- *involve the interests of national security or of foreign Governments;*
- *contribute towards the provision of national public services or infrastructure, such as new prisons, defence, or border infrastructure;*
- *support a response to international, national, or regional civil emergencies; or*
- *otherwise have significant economic, social, or environmental effects and strong public interest at a regional or national level.”*

Significant Social Effects and Strong Public Interest at a Regional and National Level

The Applicant considers that the Proposed Scheme meets the WMS criterion that Crown Development may be of national importance where it would “*otherwise have significant economic, social, or environmental effects and strong public interest at a regional or national level*”. In summary:

- **Significant social effects:** the works are directly connected to the Grenfell Tower fire and the continuing effects on bereaved families, survivors, and the wider community. The works are being undertaken sensitively to help enable an appropriate next stage for the Site.
- **Strong public interest (regional and national):** the tragedy and the Government’s response remain the subject of sustained national scrutiny, including through the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and ongoing response, and the public debate on building and fire safety.
- **Public safety and assurance:** independent engineering advice has identified that the Tower’s condition will continue to deteriorate over time. Completing the works to carefully bring down the Tower supports the Government’s duty to manage risk and protect the public.

The sensitive works to carefully take down Grenfell Tower has significant social effects and is a matter of strong public interest at both the regional and national levels.

The Proposed Scheme responds to the Grenfell Tower fire, which caused significant structural damage to the Tower. Despite extensive propping to maintain its stability, the Tower’s structural integrity has declined and would continue to deteriorate the longer it remains in place. The advice from independent expert engineers was to take down the Tower. MHCLG is, therefore, acting in the public interest and for public safety by carefully taking down the Tower.

The tragedy at Grenfell Tower was Britain’s worst residential fire since World War II. Seventy-two innocent lives were lost in an avoidable tragedy, eighteen of them children. The national interest in the tragedy is evidenced by the National Inquiry, national media coverage, and legislation in response to it.

Grenfell Tower regularly receives press coverage. After meeting with bereaved families and survivors of the tragedy, the Deputy Prime Minister announced the decision to carefully take Grenfell Tower down to the ground. This was a headline across national media, demonstrating the strong public interest in the works. Additionally, in the past year, Netflix released a documentary about the tragedy, ‘Grenfell: Uncovered’.

Legislation has been introduced in response to the Grenfell Tower fire. The Building Safety Act (2022) introduced reforms that gave residents and homeowners greater rights, powers, and protections to make homes safer.

There is strong public interest in the work to take down Grenfell Tower and the future of the Site. Following the completion of the Proposed Scheme, it is proposed that the Site will become home to the Grenfell Tower Memorial. For the avoidance of doubt, this application does not address or provide details of the Site’s future use. Details and the design of the memorial will be provided in due course, along with the submission for the necessary planning consent.

Matters relating to Grenfell Tower are dealt with at a national level by the government. In 2018, a former Secretary of State committed in the House of Commons on the 29th November 2018 that “*the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea take no role in making decisions regarding the Grenfell Tower site. Once ownership transfers, Government will make operational decisions, such as those on safety, security, and access, until the long-term future has been determined by the community*”. Ownership of the Tower transferred to the Government on the 15th July 2019. Due to the 2018 commitment, it would be inappropriate to apply for permission under the standard local planning authority route.

While the decision to carefully and sensitively take down the Tower was a high-profile decision with national interest taken by the former Deputy Prime Minister in 2025, extensive engagement was carried out with bereaved families, survivors and local communities. Prior to the decision, the former Deputy Prime Minister met with bereaved families, survivors, and residents in the immediate community. Monthly updates, including environmental monitoring, are shared on gov.uk, door-dropped to local residents, and shared with groups. These monthly updates, along with additional correspondence, have informed the community about the works to carefully take down the Tower, including how the Principal Contractor is carrying out the works. In addition, bereaved families, survivors, and the local community have been invited to attend monthly meetings with the Principal Contractor, and an extensive door-knocking campaign has been conducted in the local area.

Conclusion

This Statement has been prepared by AtkinsRéalis on behalf of our client, MHCLG (the ‘Applicant’), to present to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government the Proposed Scheme’s national importance.

The Proposed Scheme, to carefully take down Grenfell Tower, is considered to be of national importance for the purposes of Crown Development applications, having regard to the WMS criterion that a development may be nationally important where it would “*otherwise have significant economic, social or environmental effects and strong public interest at a regional or national level*”. In this case, the works have significant social effects, attract strong and sustained public interest at both regional and national levels, and are being progressed by central Government in the public interest to address ongoing public safety considerations associated with the site.

Accordingly, it is considered that the application for Crown Development should be accepted on the basis that the Proposed Scheme is of demonstrable national importance.