

NEW POLICE HQ, NEWCASTLE

Contract: New Police Headquarters, Newcastle

Client: Gateshead Council

Principal Contractor: Willmott Dixon Group

Project Value: £750,000

In order to facilitate the construction of a new Police Headquarters in Newcastle, Thompsons of Prudhoe were employed to partly demolish the existing buildings on the site. The three main buildings were to be soft stripped, and have a number of different aspects demolished.

Due to the city centre location of the site, and the working properties surrounding it, it was vital to put a system in place to protect the public. Fencing and warning signs were erected around the perimeter of the site, with additional fencing inside the site boundary to isolate the demolition exclusion zones.

All three buildings had the asbestos removed, and were soft stripped initially, using a mixture of hand and remote methods to remove all internal fixtures and fittings.

The Forth Banks Warehouse structure was then stripped back to its original levels, which meant removing the internal flooring and concrete loading dock, as well as the exterior brickwork and roof cladding using the Komatsu 450 high reach excavator machine with a grab attachment. Dust suppression methods, and remote demolition techniques were utilised to ensure minimal disruption to the public, especially those working in neighbouring buildings.

The Link Block Annex had selected walls reduced, and the internal mezzanine floor reduced using the Komatsu PC210 (22t) excavator machine with bucket, breaker and pulveriser attachments.

The third building, which formed the main block of the structures, was the most demanding aspect of the project. Once the internal features had been stripped out, works began to remove the catacombs located below the structure.

Before these works could commence, supports and props had to be put in place to avoid the collapse of the arches and roofing during the demolition works. Once these were in place, works began with the reduction of the barrel roofing from above. Following this, a mini 360 degree excavator was used to remove the floor slabs. These works commenced in the south of the catacombs, working gradually backwards towards the

northern entrance. All debris from the demolition was gathered on the crash deck, before being removed for recycling via the southern entrance of the structure.