



**CASE STUDY**

Date: 2020

Works: Demolition

Sector: Redevelopment

## Longcross Studios Building #99 Tower, Chertsey

**OVERVIEW:** Lawson Group was awarded the title of principal contractor for this prestigious project located near Chertsey, approximately 25 miles west of London. It involved the removal of specific buildings, and a drainage and services package within the site. Set in over 200 acres, the area first started life as a Ministry of Defence site. In its MoD days, the site was run as the Military Vehicles and Engineering Establishment (MVEE), which was a British defence research unit. During the 1960s, the famous ceramic Chobham armour, along with other armoured vehicle designs, was conceived here. In 2006 the site was taken over by Longcross Film Studios.

Over the years, numerous buildings, office blocks and workshops ranging in size from 2,000 sq. ft to 13,000 sq. ft were built on the site, all of which have recently



been used by various leading production companies. Many blockbuster films such as Thor 2, Fast and Furious 6 and Skyfall have been made at Longcross Studios. This first phase of Longcross studios was approx. 50 acres in size and was referred to as C1 and C2.

**CHALLENGE:** Care would need to be taken as works would continue around live services such as water, electricity, telecoms and gas. Being an ex-MOD site, there could be a risk of unexploded ordnance (UXOs) buried in the ground. Licensed asbestos was identified in multiple buildings, so this would need removing subject to a Plan of Works for each unit.



Evidence of bats had been found in an ecology report, meaning that the wellbeing of this protected species would need to be a considered factor before any demolition works could commence. The entire demolition process would need to take place over an

18-week programme. Japanese Knotweed was also identified in some localised areas of the

site and this would need to be carefully removed. Moving of current drainage, BT internet, gas, electric and water services would be required. Social distancing rules would need implementing and enforcing to keep all staff safe. Extensive welfare services for demolition operatives would be required. Thorough cleaning and hygiene practices would need to be laid down and implementing of other special measures in line with government directives.

Some businesses within the Longcross studio site would continue to operate whilst the demolition works took place. This meant meticulous planning and excellent communication channels with business owners would be required.

## SOLUTION:

### Building #99 Tower



Site welfare and parking were located on the concrete slab at the front of the site. Heras fencing was supplied by Lawson Group with debris netting attached and was positioned around the boundary of the site. For safety and security, the access gate

always remained closed and locked. The contact phone numbers for site supervisors and managers were displayed for site access.

Building #99 Tower was previously used as a telephone exchange and was built out of brick and timber with a tiled roof. It was sited next to building #114. The lower part of the structure was constructed of a mixture of concrete and brickwork walls.



Internally, this building was a challenge. Soft stripping was needed, and tiles needed to be removed for a bat check before any works could commence - but no bats were found in this building. A CAT scan of the site was carried out by the demolition supervisor who had received the relevant cable detection training.



After completion of the soft strip, demolition could commence. This started on the structure located at the lower level. A Lawson Group owned CAT 336F excavator, fitted with a hydraulic grab attachment, was used to dismantle the concrete and brickwork structure. Starting from the east-facing side of the structure, the walls were carefully removed, leaving the brick-built tower structure.

Next, the wooden and tiled roof of the tower structure was removed, followed by stepping down of the structure's four



walls. This process was repeated until the entire building had been deconstructed. The concrete and brick access bridge was also removed. The wood, brick, concrete and other associated materials were removed and lowered to ground level away from the building. These were processed in accordance with the method statement devised by Lawson Group's highly qualified project management team.



#### **RESULT:**

Building #99 Tower was safely and successfully deconstructed by Lawson Group ready for the client to redevelop.



To find out more on how Lawson Group can help with your next demolition or asbestos removal project, call 01793 782000, email [estimating@lawsongroup.co.uk](mailto:estimating@lawsongroup.co.uk) or visit [www.lawsongroup.co.uk](http://www.lawsongroup.co.uk)