This paper sets out a critique of the Sustainable Development Goals in relation to target 8.7 pertaining to the eradication of forced labour and modern slavery. The paper argues that by combining the aims of ‘economic growth’ and the eradication of modern slavery within the same goal – 8 – the SDGs fail to address how the former can comprise, and even compel, the existence of the latter. This paper examines the case of debt-bonded brick kiln workers in Cambodia’s burgeoning capital city, Phnom Penh, as exemplary of modern slavery. The focus is on how debt-bonded labourers are linked to the city’s much-construction sector growth, a key driver of its sustained rising GDP over the past two decades. This paper emerges from a wider study into indentured labour in the Cambodian brick-making industry entitled “Blood Bricks: Examining the Climate Change-Modern Slavery Nexus in the Cambodian Construction Industry”. It comprises data collected from over 30 brick kilns. In total, 80 interviews were conducted with brick workers and a further 10 interviews with factory owners and foremen. Analysis thus stems largely from interview findings, and is supplemented by secondary data. This study ultimately finds that economic growth in Phnom Penh’s construction sector is directly fuelled by modern slavery in the city’s brick kilns. It also highlights instances where the state is implicated in enabling the practice of modern slavery, thus suggesting that states looking to forge growth can actively engender this form of indecent work. The implication is therefore that the stated aim of ‘sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth’ can in fact be in contravention to the aim of providing ‘decent work for all’. We contend that in order to address the causes of modern slavery and therefore ‘eradicate’ it as stated in target 8.7, the aim of ‘growth’ needs to be decoupled from ‘decent; work’. This paper therefore looks to build upon a growing scholarly interest in modern slavery to think about how to address it as a structural issue of economic growth, rather than as an outlier to it.