FORMER SIPSON GARDEN CENTRE

# Non-Technical Summary

October 2026

VIRTUS
Data Centres

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| **Project:** | Former Sipson Garden Centre |
| **Client:** | VIRTUS Data Centres |
| **Job Number:** | 709799 |
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# 01
# Introduction

# 01
# Introduction
## Background

VIRTUS Data Centres (the 'Applicant') has submitted a planning application to the London Borough of Hillingdon (LBH, the Council) seeking planning consent for the redevelopment of the Former Sipson Garden Centre, to the east of Sipson Road, Sipson (the Site) to provide a new data centre.

The description of the development is as follows:

> *'Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for access) for the redevelopment of the former Sipson Garden Centre site to provide a data centre facility, including associated energy infrastructure, security measures, landscaping, and access arrangements.'*

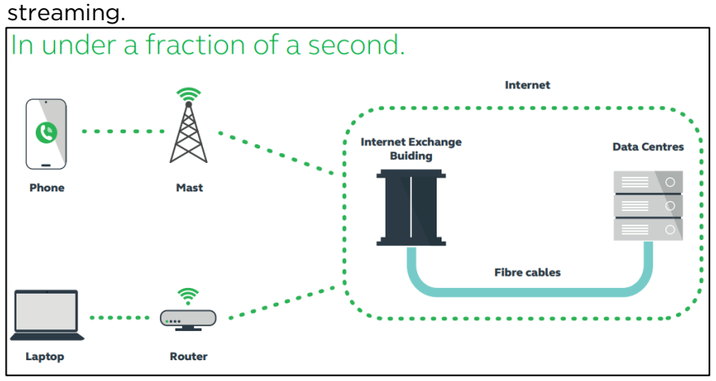
A full description of the development is set out within Section 3.

The Site measures approximately 6.9 hectares and is partially previously developed land, occupied by the Former Sipson Garden Centre with open fields to the south.

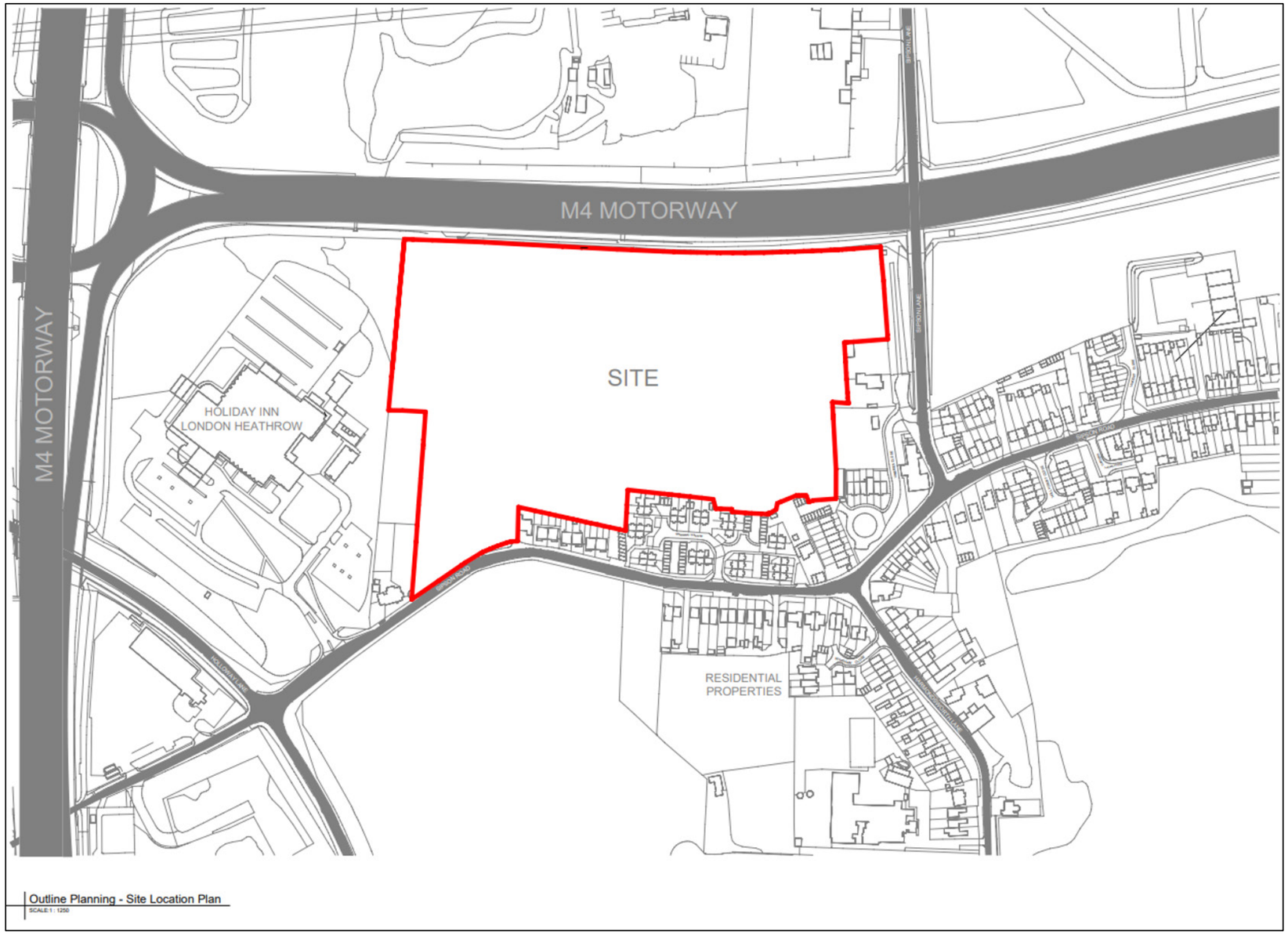
The Site boundary and context are identified by the red line shown opposite.

**What is a data centre and why are they important?**

A data centre is a building that contains computers and equipment used to store, process and manage digital information. They support the online services we use every day, such as websites, emails, cloud storage and video streaming.




**Site Location Plan (Ref. PGF-ACM-00-XX-DR-AR-051000 Rev. P1)**



# 01
# Introduction
## Environmental Impact Assessment

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a process that formally considers the construction and operational aspects of a proposal that may have significant effects on the environment.

### *Screening*

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the 'EIA Regulations') set out the types of development that must always be subject to an EIA (defined as Schedule 1 development) and other development that will only require assessment if it is likely to give rise to significant environmental effects (defined as Schedule 2 development).The process to establish whether an EIA is required is known as Screening.

Given the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, the Applicant concluded that significant environmental effects could arise. Therefore, it was considered that the Proposed Development qualifies as EIA development as defined within the EIA Regulations.

As such, a formal Screening Opinion was not requested prior to beginning the EIA process.

### *Scoping and EIA Consultation*

During the preliminary stages of the EIA process, a request was made to the Council for its EIA Scoping Opinion (26th August 2026). The purpose of this is to identify what the Council considers to be the main environmental issues associated with the Proposed Development. As part of the Scoping process, statutory consultees were advised of the proposals and given the opportunity to provide comments in order to assist the Council in the formulation of their Scoping Opinion.

The Council's EIA Scoping Opinion was received on the 12th October 2026. The following environmental topics were requested to be Scoped into the EIA.

- Air Quality
- Archaeology
- Climate Change & Greenhouse Gases
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Noise and Vibration
- Utilities and Energy Infrastructure

A Utilities Statement has been submitted in support of the application and the connection to Laleham Substation addressed within the Environmental Statement as a whole. The routing and specification of this cable has also been included therefore, as this has been qualitatively considered within the wider ES, a separate Utilities and Energy Infrastructure chapter has not been included within the ES.

In addition, the Cumulative and in-combination effects will be included within each of the separate chapters.

These topics have been assessed through the EIA process, and the outcomes of the assessments have been presented in the Environmental Statement (ES) and are also summarised in Section 7 of this Non-Technical Summary (NTS).

### *Environmental Statement*

The findings of an EIA are described in a written report known as an Environmental Statement (ES). An ES provides environmental information about the scheme, including a description of the development, its predicted environmental effects and the measures proposed to mitigate adverse effects: information that is taken into account in the planning decision. The ES has been prepared in accordance with the EIA Regulations.

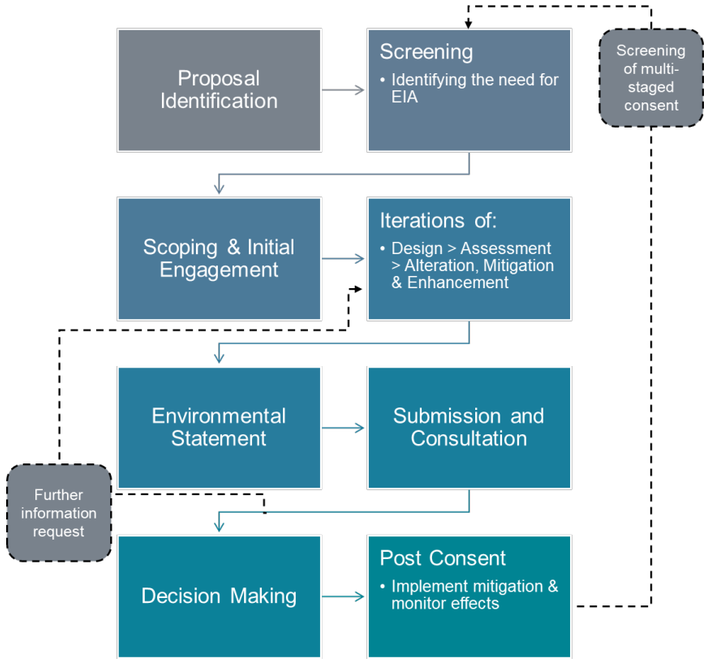
This document is the Non-Technical Summary (NTS), which provides a summary of the main findings of the ES, including the significant environmental effects, mitigation and residual effects predicted to result from the Proposed Development.

Subsequently, when the Council is deciding whether to grant planning permission, it can do so in the full knowledge of any significant effects predicted and take this into account in the decision-making process.

The Applicant has commissioned Savills to co-ordinate a formal Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) including the preparation of an Environmental Statement (ES) and Non-Technical Summary (NTS) (this document) to support the planning application for the Site.

The NTS sets out the key issues and findings of the ES in a manner that is widely accessible to the general public and stakeholders.

The ES and this NTS accompany a suite of documents that together support the planning application submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA).



02

# Site and Local Context

## *Site Location*

The site is situated on the eastern side of Sipson Road, to the northeast of Sipson village centre and within the London Borough of Hillingdon. The Site is bound by the Holiday Inn hotel to the north, the M4 Spur Road (Junction 4) to the east, Sipson Lane and Lady Nafisa Secondary School for Girls to the south. Residential properties bound the Site to the west, beyond which lie open fields. The Site lies approximately 1km north of Heathrow Airport. The M4 Spur Road is to the immediate east of the Site boundary. The Site is also located around 2.5km east of the M4/M25 interchange.

## *Site Description*

The Site is approximately 6.9 ha in size with the northern part of the Site previously occupied by the former Sipson Garden Centre (which closed in 2011) and the southern area of the Site is comprised of open fields.

The north and western boundaries of the Site are predominantly delineated by trees and shrubs with the rear of the residential gardens facing the Site to the west. An established tree belt is present along the southern boundary, near Sipson Lane. Along the eastern boundary lies the M4 Spur Road with a few trees along the boundary.

### Planning Context

The site forms part of the Green Belt, albeit a significant proportion of the Site comprises previously developed land following its former use as a garden centre.

Planning permission was sought for *'The development of a Centre of Excellence for servicing and repair of Airside Support Vehicles (Use Class B2), consisting of a service building with 7no. service bays and 1no. storage bay, an ancillary two storey office building, with associated hardstanding, parking, a wash bay, plant, solar PVs, landscaping and drainage'* (reference 67666/APP/2023/3721) on Site. Permission was granted on 7 March 2025, and this remains the current use on Site.

### Site Access and Public Rights of Way

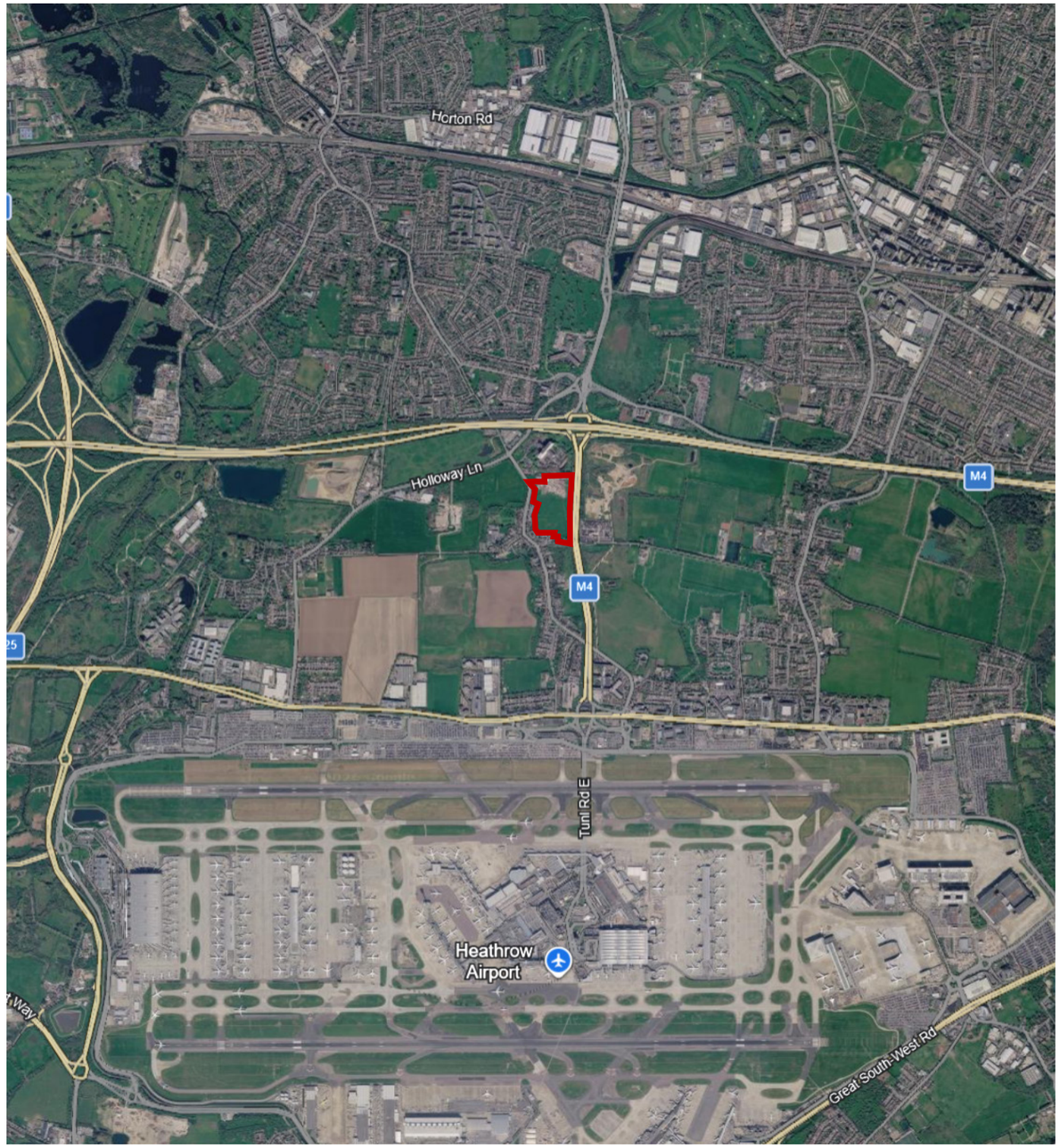
The Site is accessed from Sipson Road in the north-west via the access associated with the former Sipson Garden Centre. The nearest railway station to the Site is West Drayton station which is located approximately 2.2km to the northwest.

This provides access to Elizabeth line services between Reading and Abbey Wood, as well as National Rail services between Reading and Paddington. Similarly, Elizabeth Line and Paddington London Underground services are located at the Heathrow Terminals.

The nearest bus stops to the Site are situated on Sipson Road circa 80m to the north of the Site access. The bus stops are served by bus route 222 which runs between Hounslow and Uxbridge and operates with an approximate frequency of one service every 10 minutes during the week (Monday-Friday).

According to TfL's WebCAT planning tool, the Site has a Public Transport Access Level (PTAL) rating of 1a/1b (poor). There are no Public Right of Way (PRoW) on the Site.

**Site Location in Context with the wider area**



## Flood Risk and Drainage

The Site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, which has a very low probability of flooding. The nearest main river is the River Colne approximately 1.8km to the West, and does not appear to be hydraulically linked, due to topography and development in the area.

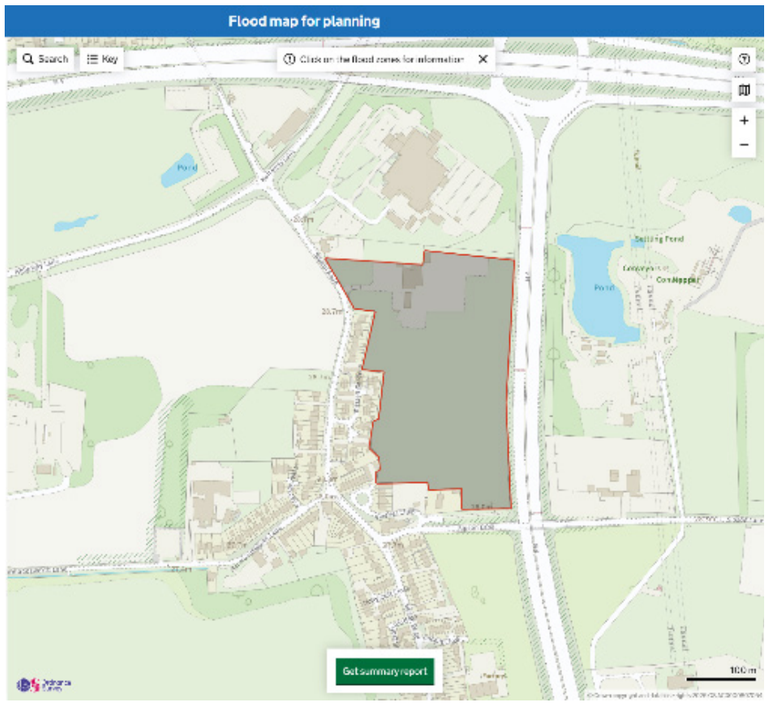
The EA Flood Map for Planning shows that the Site, in its entirety, is in Flood Zone 1 which means the Site is at a lower than 0.1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) of flooding from fluvial or tidal sources. The Site is also not considered to be at risk of flooding due to Climate Change (2070 to 2125).

The EA Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) map 'shows flooding that is likely to occur as a result of rainfall with a 3.3% (1 in 30), 1% (1 in 100) and 0.1% (1 in 1000) chance of happening in any given year'. The Site has some fairly sizeable areas at risk of surface water flooding and do not align with preexisting overland drainage pathways. Therefore, there are likely areas of localised ponding in topographical low points.

### *Flood Risk Maps*

**Left:** Flood Risk from Rivers and Sea (with climate change); **Centre:** 1 in 30 Surface Water Flooding map; **Right:** 1 in 100 Surface Water Flooding map.

**Fluvial Flood Zone Map with Flood Zone 1 across the Site**




**1 in 30 Surface Water Flooding Map**




**1 in 100 Surface Water Flooding Map**



## *Agricultural Land Quality*

The Site has significant areas of disturbance and dereliction on parts of the Site mostly associated with the former garden centre. Agricultural Land Classification ranges from Grade 1 – Excellent to Grade 5 – Very Poor.

The Site consists of a band of Grade 3a – Good (0.85ha) which then moves into an area of Grade 2 – Very Good (1.96ha) extending west to east across the Site and toward the southeast. The remainder of the Site is Grade 4 – Poor, to the northeast of the urban area, a patch adjacent to the M4 Spur Road and along the southern boundary.

## *Air Quality*

The Site is within the Hillingdon Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) as well as the Sipson Air Quality Focus Area, reflecting the Site's proximity to London Heathrow Airport. The AQMA was declared due to high levels of Nitrogen dioxide $NO^2$. In the Council's most recent publicly available Local Air Quality Management report (LB Hillingdon, 2025) annual mean concentrations of nitrogen dioxide were well below the air quality objective (<75%) in 2024 at most locations where monitoring takes place.

## *Archaeology and Built Heritage*

### Archaeology

The Site lies within Policy DMHB 7 – Archaeological Priority Areas and Archaeological Priority Zones, of the London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2: Development Management Policies (2020), identifies the Site within the Heathrow Archaeological Priority Zone (Heathrow APZ).

### Built Heritage

There are no listed buildings on Site. However, there are five Listed Buildings (statutory) within 1km of the Site: Elder Farmhouse (Grade II), c.920m southeast The King William IV Public House (Grade II), c.150m southwest; Lanz Farmhouse (Grade II), c.320m southwest; Sipson House (Grade II), approximately 750m southeast; War Memorial Cherry Lane Cemetery (Grade II), c.650m northeast. There are also three Locally Listed Buildings (non-statutory) in proximity to the Site.

## *Ecology and Nature Conservation*

### Designated Sites

There are no national or local statutory ecological designations on the Site. The Southwest London Waterbodies Special Protection Area (SPA) is located 4.8km to the southwest of the Site.

There are two nationally designated nature conservation sites (SSSI) within 5km of the Site (Staines Moore (c.4.5km south-west) and Wraybury Reservoir (c.4.8km south-west)). There are nine non-statutory designations within 2km of the Site, the closest being Stockley Road Rough Site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation (SBINC) c.800m to the north of Site.

### Habitats and Species

The site is mainly comprised of modified grassland with some area of developed land. There are three small areas of young deciduous trees on the eastern boundary and two lines of deciduous fruit trees along the northern boundary of the Site. No evidence of protected or notable species was recorded on site despite the presence of a number of suitable habitat features.

## *Ground Conditions and Contamination*

The Site is underlain by Silt and Gravel which sit above a clay bedrock.

Five active or recently closed landfills are located within 250m of the Site. These include a closed non-biodegradable waste facility (48m to the north-east), an expired licence mixed waste facility (53m northeast), an active non-biodegradable waste landfill (76m southeast), an inert waste landfill (115m east), and an operational landfill (128m southwest).

A preliminary risk assessment has identified a risk of unexploded ordnance (UXO) due to historic World War II military activities near the Site. Prior to commencement, a standard detailed UXO assessment will be undertaken to ensure no risk to the public.

## *Noise and Vibration*

Baseline sound conditions at the Site are dominated by road traffic noise from the M4 to the east and the north of the Site. Heathrow Airport is also located approximately 1 km to the south of the Site; however, as aircraft activity occurs in an east-west direction out of the airport, they do not have a significant influence on baseline noise levels at the Site.

## *Utilities*

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) is the electricity Distribution Network Operator (DNO) for the Sipson area. There are also low voltage cables on the Site which serve the former garden centre. A new connection will be made to the Laleham Substation by 2030 which is intended to serve the Data Centre.

Cadnet operate and maintain the gas distribution infrastructure in the area. There are no existing gas pipelines within the Site boundary, however, there is a 12-inch low pressure gas main in Sipson Road (adjacent to the Site).

Affinity Water are the statutory water authority in the Proposed Development area, and they have a potable water network in and around the site. Thames Water are the statutory sewage authority and have a sewage network running adjacent to the site.

There are several telecom operators with existing telecoms infrastructure within the adjacent public highway including Openreach, Virgin Media and Vodafone.

## *Heathrow Airport Expansion*

Heathrow Airport has well publicised plans for a third runway for the last few decades. Notwithstanding this, Heathrow Airport is only at pre-application stage and have not yet submitted a Development Consent Order (DCO) application for the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and is therefore, not considered to be a committed scheme for the purposes of the Environmental Statement.

# 03
# Proposed Development

# 03
# Proposed Development

As noted in Section 1, the Proposed Development which has been assessed within the EIA comprises:

> *'Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for access) for the redevelopment of the former Sipson Garden Centre site to provide a data centre facility, including associated energy infrastructure, security measures, landscaping, and access arrangements.'*

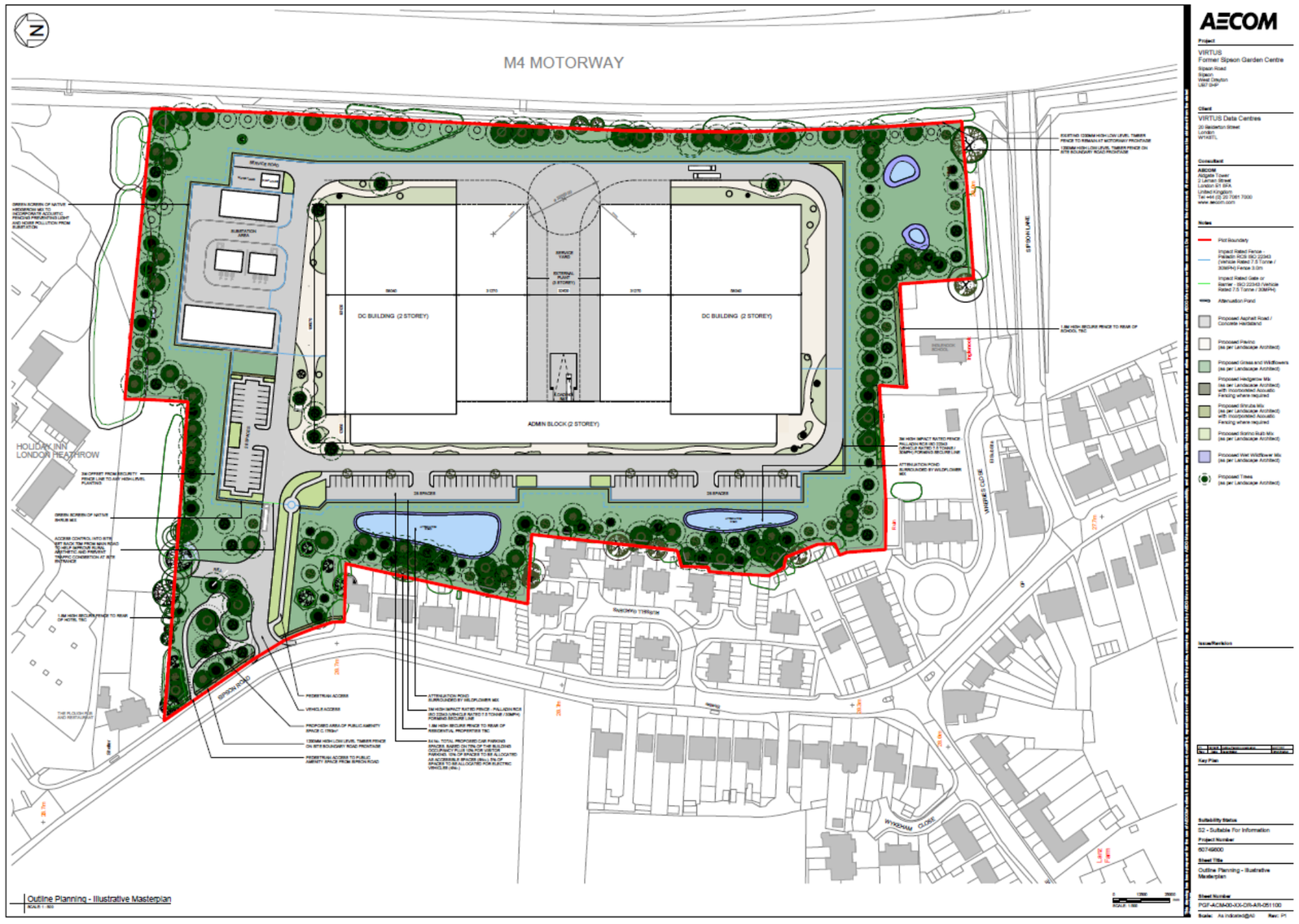
The EIA has assessed the quantum and type development set out below:

- Demolition of existing structures on the Site (c. 1,265 $m^2$);
- Data Centre (DC) building (54MW Capacity) (2 storeys of up to 26,000 $m^2$) and Office / Administration block (2 storeys of up to 6,500 $m^2$), External Plant (3 storeys of up to 17,500 $m^2$); for a total of up to 50,000 $m^2$ (GFA);
- Ancillary Buildings (including substation, pumphouse and water tanks) (1 storey up to 4,000 $m^2$);
- Landscaping area (approximately 34,195 $m^2$) – of which proposed as Public Amenity Space (approximately 1,760 $m^2$);
- Electricity grid connection;
- Car Parking provision of 84 spaces (including, 8no. accessible spaces and 4no. Electric Vehicle spaces); and
- Maximum building height up to 20m.

The illustrative masterplan (right) shows *one way* in which the Proposed Development could come forward however, the Proposed Development is defined by the parameter plans on the following pages which define the scale, mass and quantum of development and allow significant environmental effects to be identified. These are:

- Demolitions parameter plan
- Development Parcels parameter plan
- Building Heights parameter plan
- Land Use parameter plan
- Access and Movement parameter plan
- Landscape and Green Infrastructure parameter plan
- Public and Private Realm parameter plan

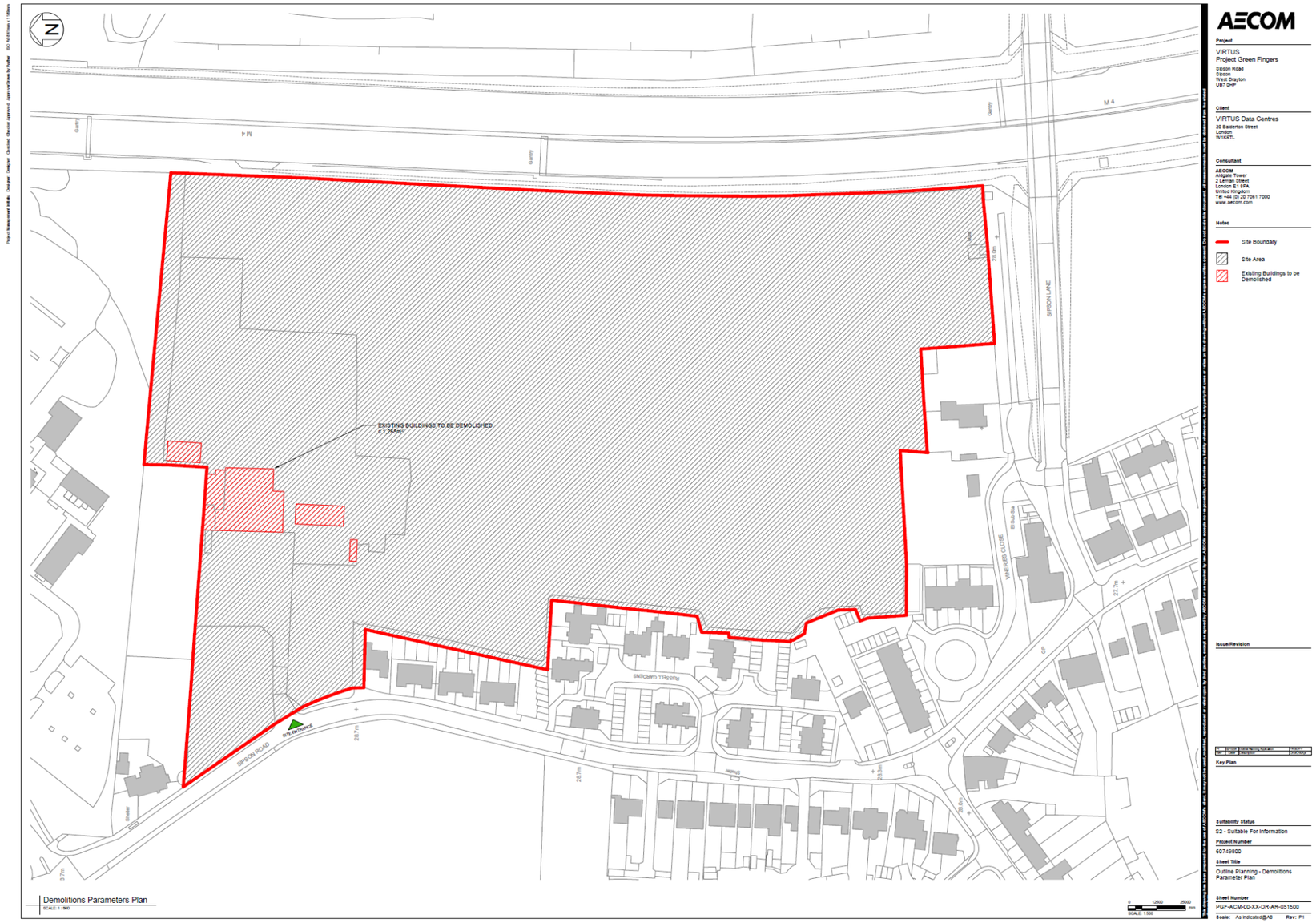
## Illustrative Masterplan



# 03
# Proposed development
## Demolitions

The Site is proposed to be cleared with the existing buildings on Site to be demolished in order to make way for the Proposed Development. These buildings equate to approximately 1,265m² and are located to the north of the Site.

### Demolitions Parameter Plan



# 03
# Proposed Development
## Development Parcels Parameter Plan

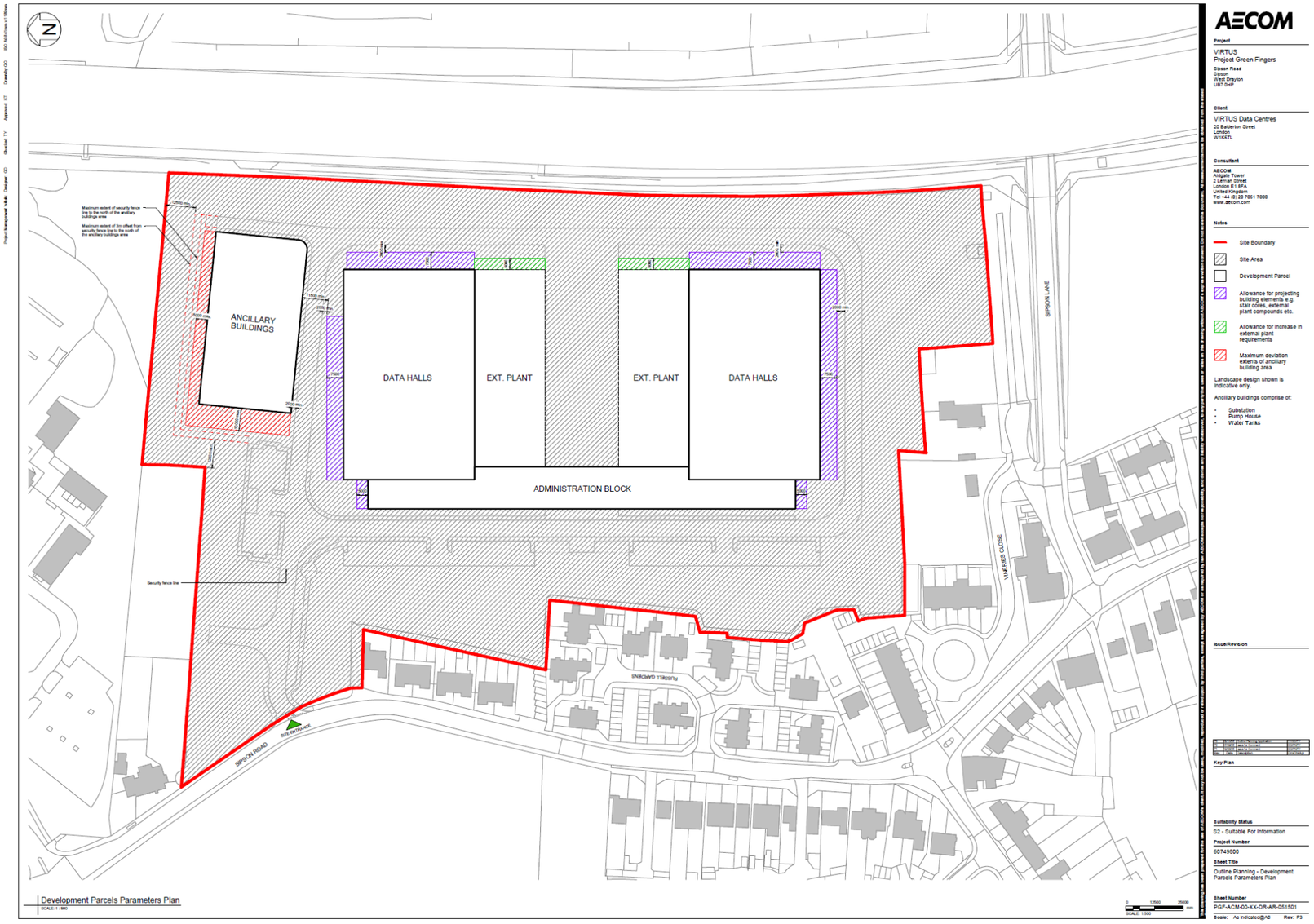
The main Data Centre building is proposed to be located within the centre of the Site, with the administration block facing along the western side of the building, connecting the two data halls and two external plants. A separate ancillary building is located to the north of the Data Centre building. The Site entrance will remain on the western boundary, from Sipson Road. Surrounding the two buildings, the Land Use will consist of landscape and infrastructure.

The ancillary buildings to the north of the Site are anticipated to comprise a substation; pumphouse and water tanks. These will be enclosed by an impact-rated fence up to 3m in height.

External plant (including the back generators) is proposed to the east of the main DC building. An access road is proposed around the Site and with car parking provision (including EV and disabled provision) along the northern and western side of the building.

The Development Parcels Parameter Plan shows the maximum extent of any external plant or stair cores for the building

**Development Parcels Parameter Plan**



# 03
# Proposed Development
## Building Heights Parameter Plan

There are four different height zones for the Proposed Development. The two data halls, external plant and ancillary buildings will have a height of up to 20m (+49m AOD).

The administrative block will have two different heights: the central area and ends (north and south) connecting to the two data halls and external plant will have a height of up to 15m (+44m AOD); and along the western elevation of the main building, providing the frontage of the building will be at a block height of up to 10m (+39m AOD).

The ancillary building to the north of the Site will also have a maximum height of up to 20m (+49m AOD) due to the height necessary for the substation building however, other buildings in this area are likely to be under 7m (+36m AOD) however, for maximum flexibility and to represent a worst-case scenario, this area has been shown with the maximum possible height.

For the rest of the Site, a maximum height of up to 5m (+34m AOD) is permitted. This area will not contain any buildings and will consist of perimeter landscape, roads, carparks, service yards, cycle parking, fencing and signage.

**Building Heights Parameter Plan**



# 03
# Proposed Development
## Land Use Parameter Plan

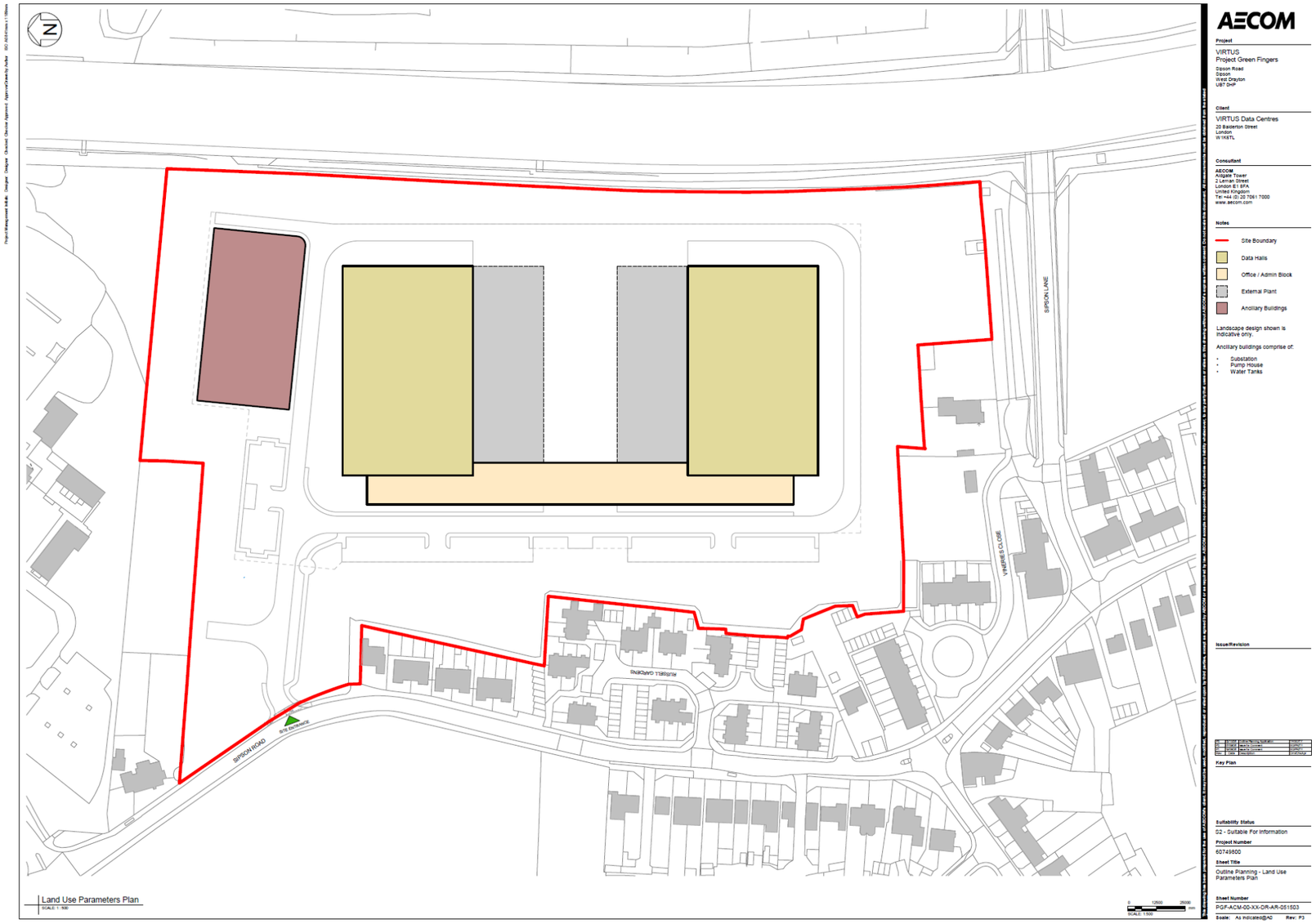
The Use Class of the Site will be B8 (Storage and Distribution), as a physical warehouse storing electronic data.

The delineation in the land use plan is to identify which elements of the proposals are intended for their respective uses. The building is split into two data halls, each with its own external plant. This also denotes the office/administration block to the west. The ancillary buildings are then located to the north.

The main DC Building is located within the centre of the Site, with the office space and Back of House (BOH) operations situated to the north and west of the main DC building.

| Building Area | Footprint ($m^2$) |
|---|---|
| DC Building Footprint Area, comprising:<br>- Data Halls: 10,805 $m^2$<br>- Office/Administration Block: 3,000 $m^2$<br>- External Plant: 5,465$m^2$ | 19,270 $m^2$ |
| *Deviation allowance for stair cores and external plant which overlaps landscaped area (not included in final total below)* | 2,545$m^2$ |
| Ancillary Buildings Area (including substation, pump house and water tanks) | 3,145 $m^2$ |
| Roads and Car Parking Area | 13,290 $m^2$ |
| Landscaping Area | 32,435 $m^2$ |
| Public Amenity Area | 1,760 $m^2$ |
| **Total Site Area** | **69,900 $m^2$** |

**Land Use Parameter Plan**



# 03
# Proposed Development
## Access and Movement Parameter Plan

Existing vehicular access points will be retained, with new access gates set back from Sipson Lane to improve the Site's security and vehicular manoeuvring. The proposal also includes landscape enhancements, new security fencing and gates.

Three areas of car parking are proposed along the western elevations of the administration block and the ancillary buildings. One cycle parking area is proposed near the western elevation of the administration block, between the two car parking areas.

### Access and Movement Parameter Plan



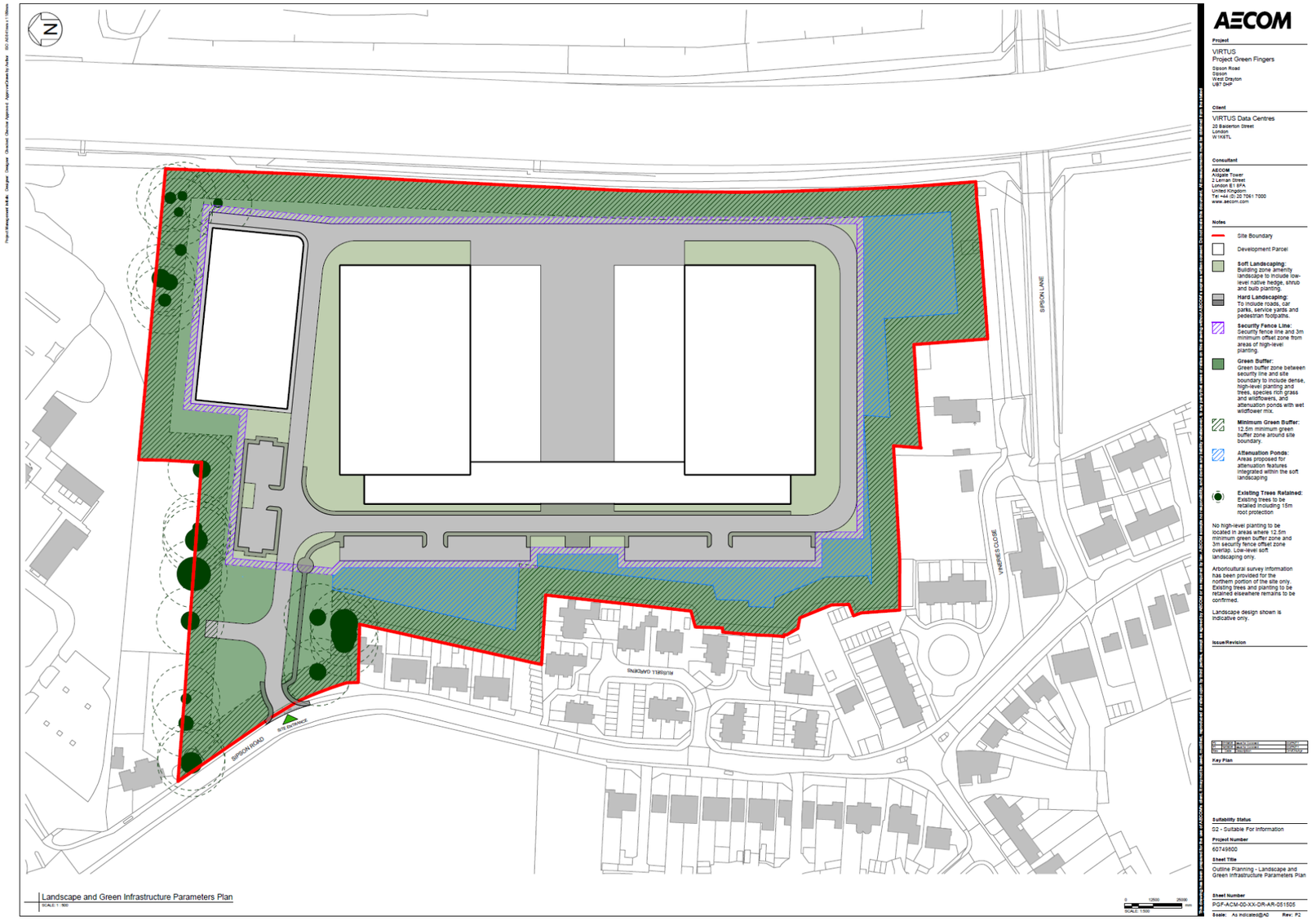
Around the buildings there will be hard and soft landscaping, with hard landscaping to include roads, service yards and car parks.

A security fence line will encircle the data centre and ancillary buildings. The security fence will have a minimum offset zone of 3m from areas of high-level planting. Inside the security fencing, there are areas of soft landscaping which include low-level native hedging, shrub and bulb planting. Soft landscaping is predominantly located immediately adjacent to the proposed buildings and hard landscaping. No soft landscaping is proposed outside the security fencing.

A Green Buffer Zone, measuring a minimum of 12.5m from the Site's boundaries will be implemented around the periphery of the Site. This area will include dense, high-level planting and trees, species-rich grassland and wildflowers. Trees will be located near the entrance (western boundary) and along the northern boundary. The existing trees and planting to be retained elsewhere remain to be confirmed.

Drainage attenuation ponds are proposed along the western side of the proposed car parking area and to the south of the main building.

**Landscape and Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan**



# Proposed Development

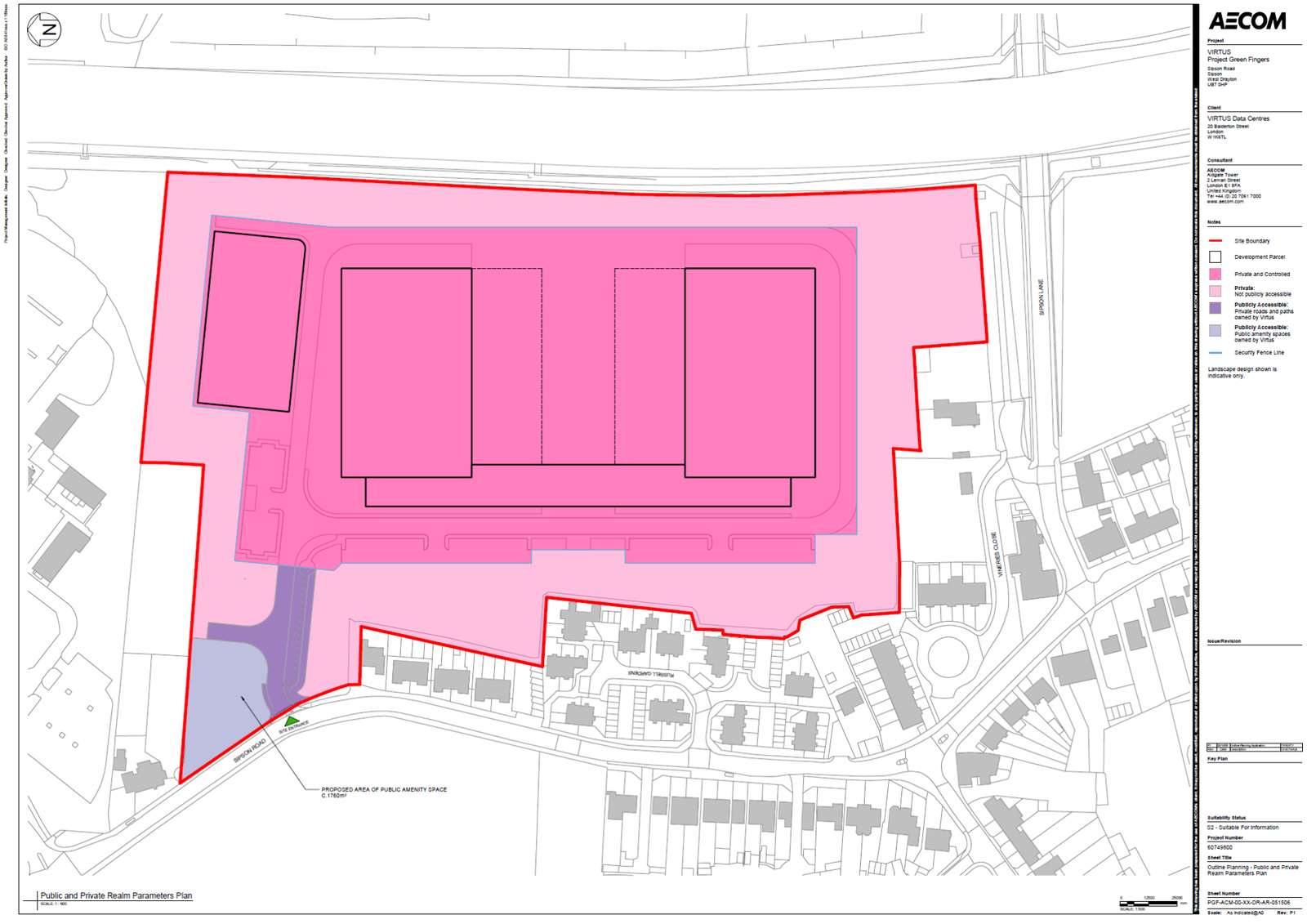
## Public and Private Realm Parameter Plan

The private and controlled realm is within the security fencing area, around the data halls; administration block; external plants; ancillary building; and car parking/cycle parking area. Only data centre personnel can access this area and access would be restricted.

Private land is predominantly located around the outside of the security fencing and going up to the Site boundaries. The access road is a private road owned by the applicant but can be publicly accessible.

There is an area of proposed public amenity space. The primary public open space is located towards the northwestern side of the Site nearest the site entrance. This area of proposed public open space is approximately 1760 $m^2$.

### Public and Private Realm Parameter Plan





Illustrative CGI View of the Proposed Development

## *Access and Parking*

Car parking is located to the west and northwest of the Site. The illustrative masterplan sets out 84 car parking spaces provided across the Site; 8 of these spaces would be accessible disabled spaces and 4 spaces would be for electric vehicle charging for employees and visitors to the Site. These areas would also contain a cycle store and parking to encourage sustainable travel to the Site.

## *Drainage and Flood Risk*

Drainage channels to service yard areas and gullies for access roads will manage surface water outfall from the building and hard services. Oil separators will ensure pollution from HGVs does not get into the wider network.

Foul water will connect to buried Thames Water drainage in Sipson Road.

## *Ecology Mitigation and Enhancement*

The Proposed Development will minimise the loss of vegetation and retain as many trees as possible. Indirect impacts may result during construction on retained habitats due to the installation of new cables, removal of vegetation, increases in noise, air and dust pollution and the potential for non-invasive species to spread however, these measures will be controlled through a CEMP.

Sensitive lighting for bats, retention of habitats for breeding birds, native and near native planting, no invasive species planting, 4no. Bat boxes and at least 6no. Bird boxes will provide mitigation and enhancement across the Site.

## *Landscaping and Boundary Treatment*

Landscaping will be provided along the boundaries of the Site in the form of species rich grass and wildflowers. There will also be a large number of trees to screen the development from residential properties.

The balance between soft and hard landscaping in the service areas around the DC building will be in the form of native bulb planting, shrub planting and native hedge mix.

A Public Amenity Space area is included to the northwest of the Site.

Security fencing is also included to secure the Site from members of the public both for public safety and to protect against hostile interference or terrorist acts.

## *Energy and Sustainability*

Low carbon technologies will be incorporated in the form of heat pumps and solar PV panels will be installed on the roof of the administration building. Contributions will also be made to the Carbon Offset Fund. Other sustainable measures including sustainable drainage, water efficiency, sustainable transport and landscape infrastructure as well as green roofs, permeable paving, and rain gardens will be incorporated.

## *External Lighting Strategy*

The Site is close to light emitting sources and is classed as being in a Suburban Area with medium light density. The proposals will ensure any glare and visual distraction to the M4 Spur Road is minimised through carefully selected column-mounted lights and dark-sky friendly building-mounted lighting which will minimise any upward spill and protect sensitive ecological receptors.

## *Utilities*

For on-site energy generation, the Proposed Development will provide 132 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear and 2no, Stepdown Power Transformers, which will be owned and operated by the applicant.

It is currently understood that a new electricity connection will be made to Laleham Substation, which is approximately 8km south of the Site. This connection would not be available until 2030. It is understood that the new electricity connection is expected to comprise 2no. HV circuits rated to 95 MVA at 132kV each, that will be routed from the National Grid Laleham Substation.

At present, details of the cable route and its delivery are unknown. However, it is assumed that this would be routed under existing road/transport routes. Given the current uncertainty around the cable, consideration is necessarily high level and proportionate to the information available. Once further information is known on the grid connection route and method, there may be a requirement for further environmental information to accompany the applicable application for consent.

The conclusions in relation to the proposed grid connection are subject to the limitations associated with the absence of a confirmed cable alignment and construction methodology at the time of assessment. A high-level consideration for each technical topic chapter has been undertaken below. As such, taking into account that the grid connection and routing are unknown at this stage, all topics are not anticipating that significant effects would be likely to occur as a result of the grid connection.

Backup generators will also be provided for the data centre to ensure emergency power in the event of a National Grid failure. These generators will be tested intermittently.

A range of water saving measures are expected to be incorporated into the Proposed Development.

There are a number of existing telecommunications operators who can provide for the Proposed Development.

# 04
# Consultation, Alternatives and Design Evolution

## Consultation

### *EIA Scoping Request*

In August 2026, VIRTUS Data Centres submitted a request for the formal EIA Scoping Opinion of the London Borough of Hillingdon Council (LBH). A Scoping response was received on the 12 October 2026. The EIA Scoping response stated that the following chapters should be included: Air Quality; Archaeology; Landscape and Visual Impact; Noise and Vibration; Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Cumulative / in-combination effects; and Utilities and Energy Infrastructure.

The EIA considers the above topics across the whole Environmental Statement. Considerations for Utilities and Energy Infrastructure have been considered as part of the individual technical chapters and the future connection to Laleham Substation in 2030. The Proposed Development will not be operational until the connection becomes available. As the Proposed Development will not be able to operate until the connection to the Laleham Substation becomes available, the Applicant considers that significant effects are not likely. As such, Utilities has not formed an EIA chapter.

An assessment of the cumulative / in-combination effects have been considered as part of each technical chapter.

### *Public Consultation and Community Involvement*

In the lead up to the planning application and throughout the development's design, a programme of consultation has been and will be continued with both statutory and non-statutory consultees, and with members of the public, where appropriate. Full details are provided in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and are submitted as part of the planning application documents.

A website, https://virtussipson.co.uk/, was commissioned to publicly promote the plans and associated consultation. Flyers were also distributed to site neighbours and politicians and letters were sent to site neighbours.

A public exhibition was held at the Harlington Scout Hut on Monday 7 September 2026, in which members of the public were invited to read and inquire about the development plans and provide feedback.

The Leader of Hillingdon Council, relevant cabinet members, chair of the planning committee Ward members, the Constituency Member of Parliament (John McDonnell MP) and London Assembly member Bassam Mahfouz were also invited to attend the exhibition.

The team welcomed residents to the consultation, responded to their queries, listened to their comments and requested that they record their opinions on paper feedback forms or provide feedback using provided iPads. The paper feedback forms included identical questions as the online form.

The consultation process for the Proposed Development was extensive and inclusive, involving various stakeholders and the local community. Through incorporation of public comments, the design evolved through an iterative process, incorporating feedback from stakeholders and technical inputs to minimise environmental impact and enhance the overall development.

**Flyer distributed to the local community before the community consultation**



### *Pre-application consultation with LBH and the GLA*

There has been an extensive programme of pre-application discussions between the Applicant, LBH and the GLA. The Applicant has sought to work positively together throughout the pre-application process. The dates of the consultations held are detailed in the table below:

| Consultation Event | Date |
|---|---|
| LBH Pre-Application No.1 | 27 May 2025 |
| LBH Pre-Application No.2 | 17 July 2026 |
| GLA Pre-Application | 1 August 2026 |
| LBH Design Workshop 1 | 9 September 2026 |
| Public Consultation | 7 September 2026 |
| LBH Design Workshop 2 | 23 September 2026 |

A summary of the discussions held are detailed below:

- Pre-application consultation with LBH commenced early in the design process with initial meetings held on 27 May 2025. Officers advised that the Site's Green Belt location and potential loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land represented key planning considerations. A need for a robust planning and technical evidence base was also highlighted.
- Further consultation was undertaken on 17 July 2026 following progression of the scheme design. Officers advised that the site may be capable of being considered Grey Belt land subject to robust supporting evidence. LBH emphasised the importance of demonstrating a clear need for the data centre supported by a comprehensive Alternative Sites Assessment and wider planning justification. Further advice from Officers stated that scale, massing and visual prominence of the development required careful consideration and design refinement and a landscaping strategy were encouraged.
- A design consultation workshop was held on 9 September 2026 and 23 September 2026 following the pre-application consultations. The purpose of these workshops was to review the emerging masterplan, landscape strategy, parameter plans and design approach. Discussion focused on proposed scale, the landscape framework, treatment of Site boundaries and opportunities to reduce the perceived visual impact of the development. Officers welcomed the proposed reductions in car parking, the expansion of landscaping and green infrastructure, and the exploration of enhanced public amenity areas. Feedback was provided by officers on the approach to building envelopes, access and movement, building heights and distinction between public and private areas.

The Proposed Development has evolved since conception and work has been undertaken by the design team to address the comments made by officers, where possible. A detailed explanation of how the scheme has evolved to take account of the consultation process is provided in the DAS.

## Alternatives

Given the nature and purpose of the Proposed Development, the assessment of reasonable alternatives to the development presented in the ES considers options within the following categories.

- **Do Nothing:** under this scenario no development is implemented at the Site and baseline conditions continue in their current trends. This option would not result in the delivery of a critical piece of data infrastructure in a sustainable location and the benefits from the Proposed Development would not be realised.
- **A Different Design**: under this scenario the Proposed Development is realised with alternative scales and layouts, often in the context of developmental constraints present at the Site. This option is discussed further below.

The design of the Proposed Development has been developed to minimise the environmental impact and, where possible, deliver environmental enhancements.

## Design Evolution

The design of the Proposed Development has been developed to minimise the environmental impact and, where possible, deliver environmental enhancements.

The proposals have been driven by the need to deliver a high-performance data centre that responds sensitively to its context whilst meeting the Applicant's operational and capacity requirements.

The masterplan has been informed by a series of iterative site test-fits. Six options were developed and assessed by the design team:

- Site Test-Fit Option 1: Single 2 storey data hall building
- Site Test-Fit Option 2: Two 2 storey data hall buildings
- Site Test-Fit Option 3: Two 3 storey data hall buildings
- Site Test-Fit Option 4: Three 3 storey data hall buildings
- Site Test-Fit Option 5: Single 2 storey data hall building with ancillary office block
- ***Site Test-Fit Option 6: Two 2 storey data hall buildings with ancillary office block***

The Site test-fit optioneering and assessment of the early constraints resulted in Option 6 being chosen as it delivered the client's capacity and accommodation requirements, whilst maximising urban greening.

Option 6 also broke down the overall building mass into data hall blocks which allowed all external plant to be positioned behind or between buildings, effectively screening it from surrounding receptors and directing noise away from residential properties and toward the M4 Spur Road.

The inclusion of the ancillary office block further enabled the building to be reduced in scale where the operational requirements of the data halls were not required.

05

# Approach to Assessment

## What is EIA?

Under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, the purpose of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is 'to protect the environment by ensuring that a local planning authority, when deciding whether to grant permission for a project, which is likely to have significant effects on the environment, does so in the full knowledge of the likely significant effects, and takes this into account in the decision process'.

The Environmental Statement is the main document produced as part of the EIA process. This consists of:

- Volume 1a: Main Statement – where potential significant effects are reported and the main assessment completed;
- Volume 1b: Figures – where technical figures are located;
- Volume 2: Appendices – where technical appendices are located.

This is supported by a Non-Technical Summary (this document), which intends to give a lay-persons guide to the Site, the approach to the assessment and the findings of each chapter.

## Approach to Assessment

In order for the significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development to be identified and assessed, it is necessary to clearly identify all the components of the Proposed Development. As the planning application is being made in Outline, the EIA assesses the construction and operation effects of the Proposed Development through outline parameters (a set of parameter plans, which allow some flexibility for development within defined limits).

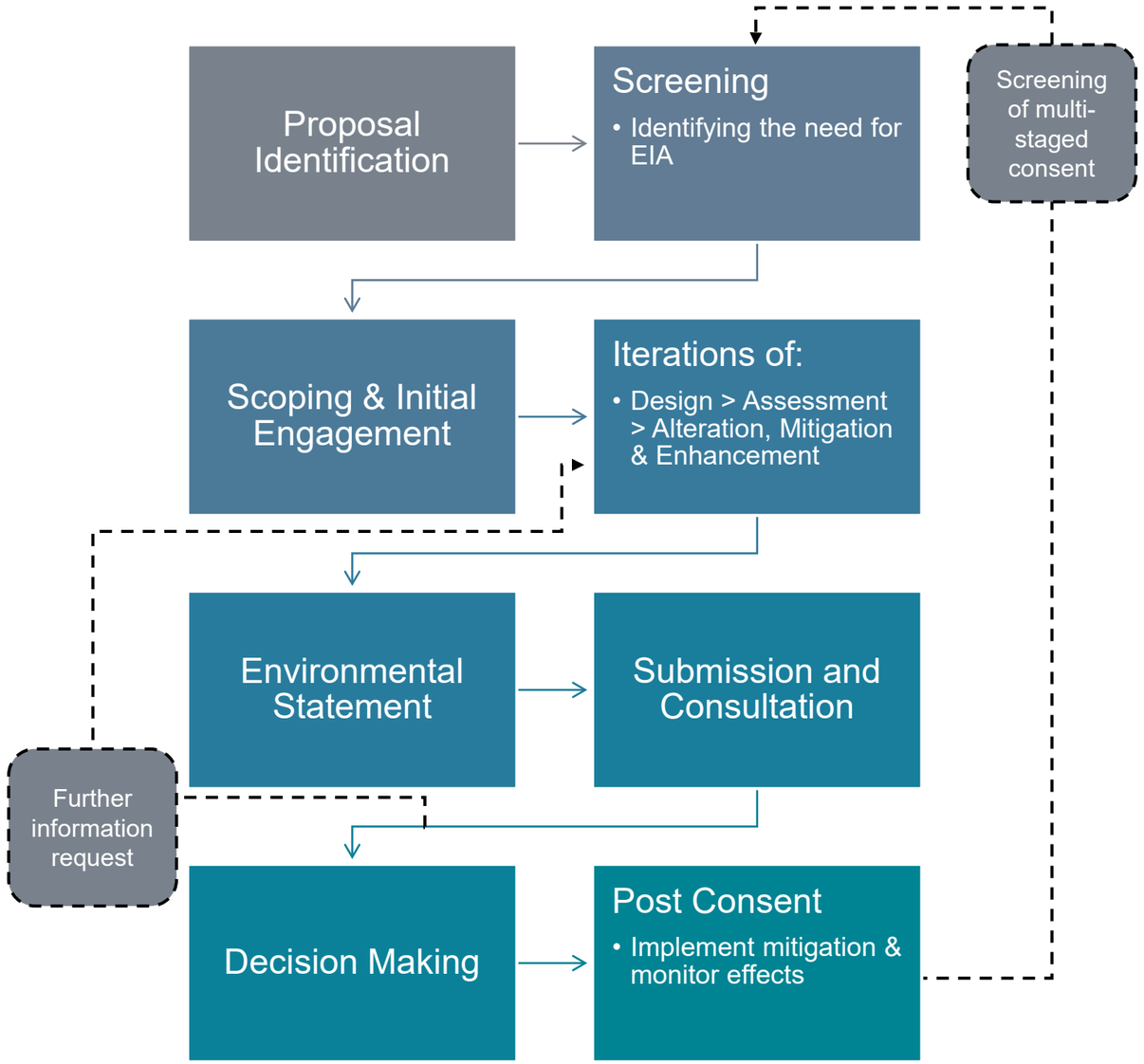
The outline parameters identify the maximum extent of development in order to assess a robust development scenario. This allows inherent flexibility for future applications within these parameters. This is the 'Rochdale Envelope'. The Parameter Plans set out the required information to allow the environmental effect of the Proposed Development to be assessed with sufficient certainty.

Where there is no topic specific guidance available, a generic framework of assessment criteria and terminology has been developed to enable the prediction of potential effects and their subsequent presentation. The development of this framework has drawn upon the experience of Savills and project team of undertaking EIA.

Heathrow Airport has well publicised plans for a third runway for the last few decades. Notwithstanding this, Heathrow Airport are only at pre-application stage and have not yet submitted a Development Consent Order (DCO) application for the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and is therefore, not considered to be a committed scheme for the purposes of this Environmental Statement.

As the Proposed Development is intended to constitute a permanent installation with no foreseeable end-of-life phase, the EIA has not assessed a decommissioning phase. However, the Climate Change assessment assesses a scenario in which the data centre building operates for a 60-year period, including its subsequent decommissioning. This is to enable a time-limited period to be assigned to the assessment of greenhouse gases, this does not constitute the decommissioning of the building.

**The EIA Process**



# 06
# Project Team

# 06
# Project Team

When undertaking an EIA, it is important that the assessments are carried out by competent experts. The Applicant is responsible for the preparation of the Environmental Statement1.

In order to ensure the completeness and quality of the Environmental Statement, the developer must ensure that it is prepared by these competent experts. The Environmental Statement must be accompanied by a statement from the developer outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts. This is included within the main Environmental Statement at Appendix 1.1.

For brevity, a list of organisations involved in the preparation of this Environmental Statement is provided below.

The EIA Project Team is led by consultants, Savills, with input from other specialists internal and external to the company. The Project Team comprises:

| Main Environmental Statement Chapter(s) | Topic | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| 00 | **Cover and Contents** | Savills |
| 01 | **Introduction** | |
| 02 | **Site and Local Context** | |
| 03 | **Proposed Development** | |
| 04 | **Consultation, Alternatives and Design Evolution** | |
| 05 | **Approach to Assessment** | |
| 06 | **Air Quality** | AECOM |
| 07 | **Archaeology** | Savills |
| 08 | **Climate Change & Greenhouse Gases** | AECOM |
| 09 | **Landscape and Visual** | Savills/AECOM |
| 10 | **Noise and Vibration** | AECOM |
| 11 | **Summary of Mitigation, Residual and Interaction Effects** | Savills / All |

07

# Findings of the EIA

## *Introduction*

An air quality assessment has been undertaken in line with industry standard guidance and methodologies.

## *Baseline/Existing Conditions*

The Proposed Development and surrounding area are located within the London Borough of Hillingdon's Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and is partially within the M4 and Heathrow Air Quality Focus Areas (AQFA). Both AQMA and AQFAs declared due to elevated roadside concentrations of NO2. However, monitoring data and background map data suggest that existing air quality is of a reasonable standard with no exceedance of a national Air Quality Objective (AQO) value measured since 2022.

## *Key Environmental Receptors*

The key receptors include the nearby residential receptors such as: Holiday Inn Hotel to the north of the Proposed Development; Residential properties on Sipson Road to the west of the Proposed Development; and The Lady Nafisa Secondary School for Girls to the south of the Proposed Development.

## *Inherent Mitigation*

The submission of a CEMP and Outline Operational Traffic Management Plan (OOTMP) will include standard best practice measures to reduce the impact of traffic movements and construction effects. Additionally, backup emergency generator testing will limit the impact of emissions during normal and emergency operation. The generators will operate at the load required for no more than the number of hours per year identified in the assessment.

## *Potential Effects*

### Construction Phase

A construction dust and site emissions assessment has reviewed the risk of impacts occurring based on the nature of construction works activities and their potential to generate dust emissions and the sensitivity of the area to be impacted by those emissions. The risk determined has been used to identify the level of mitigation capable of controlling impacts to the extent that any effect is not significant. The mitigation measures described are standard best practice on all well managed construction sites across the UK.

Construction road traffic emissions have been assessed following a simple qualitative approach, in the absence of construction traffic data. Professional judgement has determined that unmitigated impacts from construction traffic emissions will be slight adverse at worst, due to the limited number of daily average construction vehicles likely required for construction, the temporary nature of those emissions, and the fact that existing and future baseline air quality in the area is not at risk of exceeding a national AQO value. The effect of such an impact is not significant.

### Operational Phase

A similar approach was also applied to operational traffic emissions. Operational phase traffic data was available to inform the assessment, but only for the road links directly north and south of Proposed Development access road. That traffic impact on the local road network will disperse with increasing distance from the site. Due to the limited number of daily average operational vehicles, and the fact that existing and future baseline air quality in the area is not at risk of exceeding a national AQO value, the impact of unmitigated impacts from operational traffic emissions will be slight adverse at worst. The effect of such an impact is not significant.

An assessment of backup generator emissions has been undertaken using dispersion modelling to quantify the impact of testing and maintenance and emergency operation on local air quality. The assessment has determined that the impact at most receptors is negligible and at the worst affected receptor is slight adverse. The effect of such an impact is not significant. The assessment of backup generator emissions has also calculated the number of hours of emergency operation before the probability of an exceedance of a national AQO value is unacceptable. Emergency operation for up to 55 hours per year results in a probability of an exceedance of ~1% (i.e. a 1 in 100-year event) and emergency operation for up to 64 hours per year results in a probability of an exceedance of ~5% (i.e. a 1 in 20-year event).

## *Additional Mitigation Measures*

No additional mitigation measures are considered necessary beyond those identified within the technical chapter which include best-practice measures and controls on the testing of backup generators.

## *Cumulative Effects*

Cumulative effects are likely to occur at receptors close to the Site. Other cumulative schemes are a sufficient distance from the Site such that cumulative effects are not considered likely to occur.

## *Summary*

The assessment has demonstrated that the construction and operation of the Proposed Development does not cause a significant effect on local air quality, nor does it contravene national, regional or local planning policy.

## *Introduction*

This chapter assesses the potential effects of the Proposed Development on archaeological remains within the Site and its surroundings. The assessment considers any known or potential archaeological remains that may be affected by the construction and operation of the Proposed Development.

## *Baseline/Existing Conditions*

A study area extending 750m from the Site has been defined, within which known archaeological assets have been examined to inform an assessment of the likely nature, extent, preservation and significance of any archaeological remains that may be present within or adjacent to the Site. The study area contains evidence of human activity ranging from the Prehistoric to the Modern periods, including settlements, field systems, agricultural landscapes, and trackways. This demonstrates that the wider area was occupied and exploited over a long period of time and indicates the potential for archaeological remains to survive within the Site. A previous archaeological investigation in the northern part of the Site identified remains dating to the Prehistoric, Roman and Post-Medieval periods, together with features of unknown date. The Site also lies within the Heathrow Archaeological Priority Zone, an area identified as having high archaeological potential and containing significant remains dating from the Prehistoric to the Modern periods. However, parts of the Site, particularly within the southern area, have been affected by modern development and a former wooded area, which may have heavily disturbed any surviving archaeological remains.

## *Key Environmental Receptors*

Human activity ranging from the Prehistoric to the Modern periods, including settlements, field systems, agricultural landscapes, and trackways and the Site lies within the Heathrow Archaeological Priority Zone.

## *Inherent Mitigation*

The submission of a programme of archaeological works would first need to be set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (more than one may be required) to be submitted to and approved by the LPA Archaeological Officer.

## *Potential Effects*

### Construction Phase

Two archaeological receptors that may be affected by the Proposed Development have been identified, comprising known buried archaeological assets within the northern part of the Site and previously unidentified archaeological assets. The significance of these receptors has been assessed as low. However, the significance of any currently unknown remains that contribute to a better understanding of the regional Prehistoric landscape could be assessed as medium. Following the implementation of appropriate archaeological mitigation, any buried archaeological remains affected by the Proposed Development would be identified, investigated and recorded before groundworks commence. Although some archaeological remains may still be disturbed or removed, the information gained through archaeological investigation would largely offset the moderate or major adverse effect by preserving a detailed record of their character, extent, chronology and significance.

Groundworks associated with the Proposed Development have the potential to directly affect any surviving buried archaeological remains and would result in a high magnitude of impact. Without additional mitigation, it is predicted that the construction phase of the Proposed Development would result in a moderate adverse effect on archaeological remains of low significance, and a major adverse effect on any remains of medium significance, both of which would be significant.

### Operational Phase

No operational impacts on archaeological remains are anticipated. Therefore, potential operational impacts have been scoped out of the assessment.

## *Cumulative Effects*

Given the receptors identified on Site, their distance, ranging from 2.1km to 4.9km, none of the submitted or approved schemes shown on this figure are considered likely to result in cumulative effects on any known or potential archaeological remains within the Site.

## *Summary*

The residual effect is assessed as negligible, which is not significant.

## *Introduction*

The assessment considered two aspects of climate change:

- Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, including emissions generated during construction and operation of the Proposed Development and their contribution to climate change; and,
- Climate resilience, considering how future changes in climate could affect the Proposed Development and its users.

## *Baseline/Existing Conditions*

The climate change assessment considers both the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated by the Proposed Development and its ability to withstand the effects of future climate change. The Site is currently not operational as a garden centre and is therefore assumed to generate minimal to no existing GHG emissions. Future climate conditions have been considered using recognised UK Climate Projections (UKCP). The latest climate projections are based on UKCP18 to describe changes to mean climatic conditions including expected changes in temperature, rainfall and extreme weather during the construction and operational lifetime of the Proposed Development. Construction risks are assessed against the 2041 to 2070 and 2071 to 2100 projection data, as a worst-case scenario.

## *Key Environmental Receptors*

The key receptors for climate change and greenhouse gases are the global climate. For the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA), this is the Proposed Development itself and the future users of the Site (including workers and visitors), as well as its vulnerability to future climate conditions.

## *Inherent Mitigation*

Measures have been incorporated into the design and construction approach to reduce GHG emissions and improve resilience to future climate change.

During construction, a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be implemented. Specific measures in the CEMP will control emissions, materials use and construction practices and reduce impacts to the workforce. This will reduce GHG emissions during construction. In addition, a Circular Economy Statement (CES) will ensure that the Proposed Development can identify and explore opportunities to reuse the materials from the existing buildings on Site as well as reducing overall construction waste to landfill.

During operation, the Proposed Development will incorporate low-carbon technologies such as Air Source Heat Pumps and Solar photovoltaic panels. The proposals will be supported by a range of HVAC systems, including air-cooled chillers that provide chilled water to fan wall units serving data halls. Water-efficient sanitary fittings will also be installed to reduce water demand. Externally, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) will be designed to manage extreme rainfall.

## *Potential Effects*

### Construction Phase

Construction will generate GHG emissions, mainly from the manufacture and transportation of construction materials and the operation of construction plant and equipment. However, this is assessed as not significant for GHG Emissions. Seven potential climate-related risks were also considered during construction, none of which are expected to result in significant effects.

### Operational Phase

Operation of the Proposed Development will result in a large amount of GHG emissions, principally because of its high energy requirements. Operational emissions over the 60-year assessment period are assessed as significant. Additional mitigation measures have been identified which may enable a not significant effect to be demonstrated however, this requires further evidence at the detailed design stage.

Nine potential climate-related risks were also assessed during operation. The main significant risks relate to surface water flooding and extreme heat. More intense rainfall could overwhelm drainage systems and cause flooding, while prolonged periods of high temperatures could affect electrical and cooling infrastructure.

## *Additional Mitigation Measures*

As a result of some potentially significant effects being identified, additional measures are recommended. Good practice measures in the form of the Climate Neutral Data Centre Pact will be signed up to. Additionally, additional measures such as raising critical infrastructure to be above the probable maximum flood level, use of heat tolerant material, debris and dust management procedures and the installation of additional drainage storage tanks at flood risk areas are proposed. Additionally, measures such as implementing permeable paving, monitoring weather forecasts and ensuring the building is designed in a resilient manner to prevent pressure during extreme wind, flooding and other weather events will mitigate significant effects. Ensuring HVAC units are designed to achieve stated optimal temperatures in the event of extreme heat is also recommended.

## *Cumulative Effects*

Cumulative effects are not separately assessed for climate resilience because this assessment considers how future climate conditions could directly affect the Proposed Development itself.

## *Summary*

Overall, GHG emissions associated with construction and decommissioning are expected to result in Not Significant effects. No significant climate resilience risks have been identified during construction.

During operation, GHG emissions are assessed as having a Significant effect, primarily because of the high energy requirements of the Proposed Development however, this can be reduced to Not Significant with the implementation of the above measures.

The main climate risks during operation relate to surface water flooding, extreme wind and storms, and extreme heat. Measures incorporated into the design, together with the additional adaptation measures proposed, will help improve the resilience of the Proposed Development to future climate conditions.

## *Introduction*

The Landscape and Visual Impact chapter assesses how the Proposed Development could affect the character and landscape features of the Site and surrounding area, together with views experienced by residents, road users, recreational users and people using nearby public footpaths.

## *Baseline / Existing Conditions*

The Site is not covered by any national, regional or local landscape designations however, it is located within the London Metropolitan Green Belt. The Site comprises the Former Sipson Garden Centre, including disused buildings and hardstanding, together with modified grassland, scrub and boundary vegetation.

The surrounding landscape has a mixed urban-fringe character influenced by housing, the M4 motorway, M4 Spur Road, Heathrow Airport and the Holiday Inn Hotel. The Site is generally well screened from the north, west and south by existing buildings and vegetation. The Site is highly visible from the M4 Spur Road, to the east; Sipson Road, to the west; and, Sipson Lane, to the south. The majority of surrounding views are considered to be of low value because they are influenced by roads, existing development and other infrastructure.

## *Key Environmental Receptors*

Key landscape receptors include the character of the Site and surrounding area; existing grassland, trees, hedgerows and scrub. Key visual receptors include users of public footpath H68; and residents of Sipson Lane, Vineries Close, Sipson Road and Russell Gardens as well as users of nearby roads, Lady Nafisa Secondary School, and the adjacent Holiday Inn Hotel.

## *Inherent Mitigation*

Landscape and visual mitigation has been incorporated into the design. Existing boundary vegetation would be retained and enhanced wherever practicable, with a minimum 12.5m-wide landscaped buffer around the Site. The green buffer would include new trees and shrubs, species-rich grassland and wildflowers. Sustainable drainage features and an areas of publicly accessible amenity space would also be provided. The closest buildings would be positioned at least 40m from neighbouring residential gardens.

## *Potential Effects*

### Construction Phase

Construction would introduce demolition works, cranes, construction plant, temporary compounds, and vehicle movements. This would temporarily alter the character of the Site and remove approximately 5.2ha of modified grassland. Most effects on the wider landscape and public views would not be significant because of existing screening, the short-term nature of construction and the urban character of the surrounding area.

Some temporary visual effects for users of footpath H68 and for some nearby residential and school receptors, including residents of Sipson Lane, Vineries Close and Russell Gardens and users of Lady Nafisa Secondary School are considered significant.

### Operational Phase

The Proposed Development would permanently change the character of the Site by replacing areas of grassland, hardstanding and existing buildings and structures with a data-centre, associated infrastructure and new landscaping.

Some landscape effects will occur for landscape character areas however; these are not considered to be significant adverse effects. Some minor beneficial effects on landscape features with replacement and species-rich landscape planting will occur, albeit these are also considered to be not significant.

Significant visual effects would remain for users of footpath H68 and for some residents closest to the Site, including properties on Sipson Lane, Vineries Close, Sipson Road and Russell Gardens.

These effects would generally reduce as the high-planted green buffers around the Site matures, particularly during the summer months. The remaining visual effects are not considered to be significant because views would be filtered by intervening built form or landscape planting or experienced by less-sensitive receptors (e.g. passing motorists on the M4 Spur Road).

## *Cumulative effects*

Cumulative landscape and visual effects are considered unlikely to be significant due to the distance between cumulative schemes and the Site, as well as the limited visibility between the schemes. No significant cumulative landscape or visual effects are predicted.

## *Summary*

The Site is not covered by any landscape designations (albeit is in the London Metropolitan Green Belt), and its existing landscape character is influenced by the Former Sipson Garden Centre, surrounding development, Heathrow Airport and major transport infrastructure. The development would result in a significant change to the character of a small part of the Site and significant visual effects for a limited number of nearby residents and users of footpath H68 may result.

The retention and enhancement of green buffers with high-level planting including new trees, meadow planting, sustainable drainage features and public amenity space, would help integrate the development into its surroundings.

Effects would reduce as planting matures and establishes however, some significant effects remain during winter when vegetation is not in leaf. No significant cumulative landscape or visual effects are predicted.

## *Introduction*

This chapter considers the potential effects of noise and vibration arising from the construction and operation of the proposed data centre development at the Former Sipson Garden Centre site. The assessment has focused on nearby homes, a hotel, a school and a place of worship that could be affected by noise or vibration generated by the development. The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with relevant national planning policy, guidance and British Standards.

## *Baseline / Existing Conditions*

The current sound environment around the site is dominated by road traffic noise from the M4 motorway and surrounding local roads. Baseline noise monitoring was undertaken in early 2025 to establish existing noise levels and provide a benchmark against which future noise effects could be assessed.

## *Key Environmental Receptors*

The nearest sensitive receptors include residential properties on Sipson Road, Russell Gardens and Vineries Close, the Holiday Inn Heathrow M4 hotel, Lady Nafisa Secondary School for Girls and Sipson Christian Fellowship Church.

## *Inherent Mitigation*

See below in construction and occupation phase sections.

## *Potential effects*

### Construction Phase

Construction activities will generate temporary noise and vibration from plant, machinery and construction operations. The assessment found that most nearby receptors would experience noise levels that are not considered significant. However, higher noise levels could occur at the nearby school and church during the noisier phases of construction works. Without mitigation, these effects could be significant.

Construction vibration levels are predicted to remain low and below levels that would normally give rise to significant effects. Construction traffic is expected to use routes that do not pass residential properties and therefore is not expected to result in significant traffic noise effects.

To minimise construction impacts, best practicable measures will be implemented through the Construction Environmental Management Plan. These include maintaining plant and equipment appropriately, locating noisy activities away from sensitive receptors where possible, using temporary screening barriers, and maintaining communication with neighbouring properties. Additional acoustic barriers and targeted liaison with the school and church are proposed to reduce temporary construction noise.

With these measures in place, no significant residual construction noise or vibration effects are predicted.

### Operational Phase

The principal operational noise sources associated with the development are cooling equipment (chillers), emergency generators and associated electrical infrastructure. Noise modelling was undertaken to predict sound levels at nearby receptors during normal operation and during emergency generator testing or operation.

The initial assessment indicated that noise from cooling equipment could result in significant effects at nearby residential properties if no additional mitigation was provided. Similarly, generator testing and emergency operation scenarios could result in significant effects at nearby receptors without mitigation.

A range of mitigation measures has therefore been incorporated into the design. These include:

- Acoustic attenuators on cooling equipment.
- Silencers fitted to generator exhausts.
- Acoustic enclosures around generators.
- Building and screening features that help reduce the propagation of operational noise.

Following implementation of these measures, operational noise levels are predicted to fall below the relevant assessment thresholds at nearby residential and non-residential receptors. Although a slight increase in traffic noise associated with operational vehicle movements is predicted, the change is small and not considered significant.

## *Additional Mitigation Measures*

Please see above mitigation measures as part of the construction and operational phase.

## *Summary*

The assessment concludes that:

- Construction noise effects can be reduced to acceptable levels through the implementation of mitigation measures.
- Construction vibration effects are not expected to be significant.
- Construction traffic noise effects are not expected to be significant.
- Operational noise from the data centre can be controlled through acoustic mitigation measures incorporated into the design.
- Operational traffic noise effects are not significant.
- No significant residual noise or vibration effects are expected during either the construction or operational phases of the development.

Based on the assessment, the proposed development can be delivered without giving rise to significant long-term noise or vibration effects on surrounding communities, provided the identified mitigation measures are implemented.

08

# Summary, Interactive Effects and Next Steps

## Summary of Effects

### Summary of Residual Effects

A brief summary of the residual effects remaining, once any additional mitigation is taken into account, for each technical chapter is as follows:

#### *Air Quality*

With the mitigation measures, which are considered standard best practice on all well-managed construction sites, the effect of construction phase impacts is **not significant**. No additional mitigation measures are required to control operational phase emissions, and the residual effects are **not significant.**

#### *Archaeology*

**Buried Archaeological Assets within the northern part of the Site:** The significance of the effect on any buried archaeological remains within the northern part of the Site, following the implementation of the mitigation measures, would remain **significant**. However, the proposed mitigation would secure a detailed record of their character, extent, chronology and significance prior to their disturbance or loss as a result of the Proposed Development. It is considered that the information obtained through the proposed mitigation measures comprising archaeological investigation, would largely offset the significant adverse effect. Therefore, applying professional judgement, the residual significance of effect on any such remains is assessed as **not significant.**

**Previously Unidentified Archaeological Assets:** The significance of effect on any previously unidentified buried archaeological remains within the Site, following the implementation of the mitigation measures, and depending on the nature of the archaeological remains, would remain **significant**.

However, the significance of any such remains would derive primarily from their archaeological evidential value. The proposed mitigation would secure a detailed record of their character, extent, chronology and significance prior to their disturbance or loss as a result of the Proposed Development. It is considered that the information obtained through the proposed mitigation measures comprising archaeological investigation, would largely offset the significant effects. Therefore, applying professional judgement, the residual significance of effect on any such remains is assessed as **not significant**.

No operational impacts or effects are anticipated on any known or potential archaeological remains within the area of the Proposed Development or the wider study area.

#### *Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases*

The significance of effects for the construction stage and decommissioning stage is assessed as **not significant** with no additional mitigation measures suggested besides those already included in the Proposed Development's inherent design mitigation. Therefore, it is expected that residual effects during construction and decommissioning will also be **not significant**.

Following commitment to, and implementation of, the additional mitigation measures recommended, the operational stage GHG emissions may result in a not significant effect through demonstration of industry alignment to best-practice measures for carbon reduction in data centre developments. However, the residual effect cannot be reduced to not significant until evidence is provided showing commitment to the additional mitigation measures and therefore, remains **significant**.





# 08
# Summary, Interactive Effects and Next Steps

## Summary of Effects

### *Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact*

The Proposed Development would result in an inevitable significant change to landscape character, with an area of modified grassland, hardstanding and buildings being replaced by a data centre with associated parking and landscape buffers. This would have a residual **significant** effect on the Hillingdon Landscape Character Assessment Area 'K2 Harlington Open Gravel Terrace' in which the Site is located.

Whilst the proposals will result in the loss of modified grassland, there will be some minor benefits to other landscape features across the Site, including the introduction of a public open space, water features and a diverse green buffer including trees and meadow. Existing boundary trees would also be retained unless they are unsafe or in poor health.

Whilst the data centre would include buildings up to 20m in height, this would be much lower than the adjacent Holiday Inn which rises to approximately 40m. It would also benefit from a degree of screening by adjacent buildings and vegetation within the village of Sipson to the west and south and the Holiday Inn and M4 corridor to the north. The flat nature of the surrounding landscape means that there are no elevated views towards the Site other than private views from the upper storeys of the adjacent Holiday Inn. The most visually open public views of the Proposed Development would be from a short stretch of the M4 Heathrow Spur Road immediately to the east of the Site however due to the existing low value of these view and low sensitivity of the road users visual effects would be **not significant**.

The only significant residual changes to public views would be from a public right of way to the east of the Site, to the south of Sipson Lane (reference H68) during the winter months only. Other significant residual visual effects would be on views on the relatively small number of residents on the eastern and southern parts of Sipson that would have views towards the new buildings. These would include residents of Russell Gardens, Vineries Close and Sipson Road to the west of the Site. There would also be residual effects on residents of Sipson Lane to the south during the winter months when trees are not in leaf. During the Summer months, these impacts would be **not significant** due to the softening provided by the mitigation planting.



### *Noise and Vibration*

The assessment of temporary construction phase activities accounts for potential direct effects due to construction noise and vibration emissions, and indirect effects due to construction phase traffic noise. **No significant** residual effects are identified as a result of construction noise or vibration, or construction traffic noise.

After implementation of additional mitigation, **no residual significant** effects are identified as a result of operational data centre noise. **No significant** effects are identified as a result of operational phase traffic.

# 08
# Summary, Interactive Effects and Next Steps
## Summary of Interactive Effects

As part of the Environmental Statement, effects that are likely to interact with one another to create any additional significant effects are required to be reported. These constitute the following:

### *Construction Phase*

Combined interactive effects on the local population could result from impacts on the workforce from climate change. Nearby residents and school users could experience significant visual impacts. Additionally, increases in construction traffic are likely to have a not significant effect, on residential receptors.

Nevertheless, when taken in combination, it is unlikely that effects will interact with one another to create a significant effect during construction to result in long term significant effects over and above those identified individually.

### *Operational Phase*

Similar to construction effects above, nearby residential receptors are likely to experience a change in landscape features resulting in significant effects. Additionally, climate change impacts and impacts from emissions due to noise generators are likely to result in not significant effects.

However, when taken in combination, it is unlikely that effects will interact with one another during operation to result in long term significant effects over and above those identified individually.

The ES has considered how the environment and the local community would be affected by the Proposed Development.

A range of likely effects have been predicted to occur as a result of the Proposed Development, both beneficial and adverse, and mitigation measures have been identified either within the scheme design or additionally to minimise or offset identified adverse effects where possible.



# 08
# Summary, Interactive Effects and Next Steps
## Next Steps

The ES has been submitted alongside other documents in a planning application to the Council. Prior to making a decision, the Council will consult with relevant statutory and non-statutory bodies for advice on the proposals. Members of the general public are also welcome to make comments on the application during this time. The feedback from these consultations will be taken into account by the Council in reaching their decision.

The Environmental Statement and other planning application documents can be viewed on the Council's planning applications website:

https://planning.hillingdon.gov.uk/OcellaWeb/planningSearch

A copy of the Environmental Statement on USB flash drive is available at a charge of £25.00. Enquiries in respect of these or printed copies of the ES and Appendices should be made to Savills: SouthamptonPlanning@savills.com, or alternatively, telephone 02380 713 900. A printed copy of this NTS can also be obtained free of charge from Savills.

Should interested parties wish to make representations on the content of this ES, they should be made in writing by post or by email at:

Planning Department

London Borough of Hillingdon

Hillingdon Council Civic Centre

High Street

Uxbridge

UB8 1UW

planning@hillingdon.gov.uk

Alternatively, representations can be made online by following instructions at:
https://planning.hillingdon.gov.uk/OcellaWeb/planningSearch



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