

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

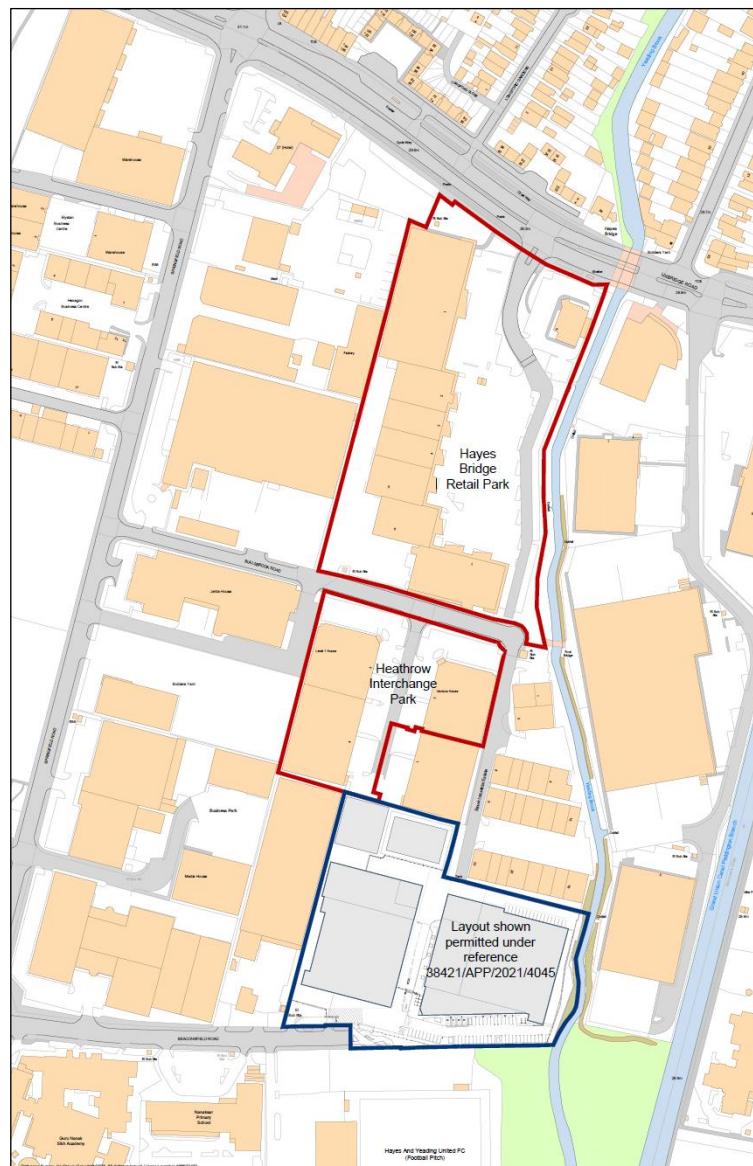
- 1.1.1 Colt Data Centre Services (the Applicants / Colt) are proposing to re-develop Hayes Bridge Retail Park and Heathrow Interchange Park (the Site) in the London Borough of Hillingdon.
- 1.1.2 The Proposed Development assessed within this Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) consists of the redevelopment of the Site to provide a new data centre campus with associated office space and an innovation hub.
- 1.1.3 A hybrid planning application has been submitted for the re-development of the Site to London Borough of Hillingdon Council ('LBH / the Council') seeking planning consent for the development of the Site. The development assessed as part of the EIA has also included wider elements on site consented via separate planning applications (including the demolition and delivery of the substation 'Substation 2'). Given nature and relationship of the Proposed Development and the consented developments on the Site, for completeness, for the purposes of this EIA this has formed part of the development assessed. Full details are contained within **Chapter 3 – The Proposed Development** of this Environmental Statement (ES).
- 1.1.4 Given the nature of the application, the assessments have been undertaken on the basis of Outline Parameter Plans alongside detailed plans. Further details on the approach to the assessment are provided in **Chapter 5 – EIA Approach**.
- 1.1.5 The location and the extent of the Site is identified by the red line shown on the Figure 1.1 below (see separate Figure 2.1 to view full size drawing XXX-NWA-S1-ZZ-DR-A-01-000). In total, the Site covers an area of approximately 4.5 hectares (ha).

1.2 Planning Context

- 1.2.1 The Proposed Development will be considered in accordance with the relevant local, regional and national planning policies and guidance. The ES takes into consideration the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The primary purpose of the NPPF is to set out the government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It broadly seeks to encourage sustainable development, with paragraph 11 directing local planning authorities to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This aims to ensure development is not delayed by the planning process, providing it accords with the development plan. The NPPF is accompanied by the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which is also considered within the ES.
- 1.2.2 The London Local Plan is the spatial development strategy for London which was adopted in March 2021. The plan contains the majority of regional level planning guidance, providing guidance on a range of issues including optimising site capacity, economic policy and design. There are also regional Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance (SPD/SPG) which are considered within this statement.
- 1.2.3 The Hillingdon Local Plan is the relevant local development plan framework and provides detail policies for the assessment of planning applications. It is comprised of two sections, the Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Part 2 which covers development management policies. In addition to these documents, the local plan also includes various SPD and SPGs which cover a variety of issues. The Council is updating and replacing its Local Plan. Consultation period ongoing.

- 1.2.4 Colt secured planning permission from the London Borough of Hillingdon (LBH) in 2022 for the redevelopment of the former Trinity Data Centre, Veetec Building, and Tudor Works sites at Beaconsfield Road in Hayes to deliver two data centre buildings (alongside substation and tank rooms) which together provide more than 37,000sqm of floorspace (planning ref. 38421/APP/2021/4045).
- 1.2.5 Since the granting of planning permissions for the two data centre buildings, Colt has acquired Heathrow Interchange and Hayes Bridge Retail Park (the Site). The southern boundary of Heathrow Interchange immediately abuts the northern boundary of the site that Colt is presently redeveloping under planning permission 38421/APP/2021/4045.
- 1.2.6 The northern parcel of the Site has an application approved subject to the agreement of a S106 (ref. 1911/APP/2022/1853) for “Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a single commercial building for employment purposes Class E(g)iii, B2 and B8, along with ancillary offices, gatehouse, associated infrastructure including; service yard, car parking, drainage and hard and soft landscaping”. This application was recommended approval at committee.

Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan (extract from drawing reference XXX-NWA-S1-ZZ-DR-A-01-000)



1.3 Environmental Impact Assessment

1.3.1 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. 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.

1.3.2 This document is the ES submitted with the planning application for the Proposed Development and sets out the results of the EIA undertaken. This ES is prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the 'EIA Regulations'). A separate Non-Technical Summary (NTS) provides a summary of the main findings of the ES.

1.3.3 The Proposed Development falls within Schedule 2 Section 10(a) of the EIA Regulations as an "Industrial estate development projects". The criterion to be considered for Part 10 (a) Industrial Estate Development Projects is given in column 2 as "the area of the development exceeds 5 hectares."

1.3.4 The Proposed Development may also be considered to fall under Part 13(b) of Schedule 2 (changes and extensions to Schedule 2 developments), however the criteria for Part 13(b) would be the same as Part 10(a).

1.3.5 The area of this development proposal is on a site of around 4.5ha which is below the 5ha threshold. However, when considered in combination with the adjacent site to the south, the total area of both developments exceeds this. Whilst the development to the south does not form part of the Proposed Development and benefits from planning consent for data centres under application 38421/APP/2021/4045, given the Applicant is the same and the potential for cumulative impacts, it was agreed with the LPA to screen the Proposed Development in this context.

1.3.6 A Screening Opinion (Appendix 1.3) was received from LBH on 25 October 2024 which confirmed the Proposed Development would qualify as EIA development. Therefore, an Environment Statement has been prepared to accompany the planning application.

1.3.7 A formal scoping exercise has not been undertaken. Within the Screening Opinion, and through subsequent discussions with LBH, a clear indication was provided on the required scope of the EIA focusing on the environmental topics for which significant effects were considered likely to occur. Separate technical discussions have also been held as part of the pre-application consultation to confirm the assessment scope for the topics scoped into the EIA. Full details of the EIA screening and scoping process is set out within **Chapter 5 – EIA Approach**.

1.3.8 The scope of the EIA comprises the following technical chapters:

- **Chapter 6** **Air Quality**
- **Chapter 7** **Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change**

1.3.9 An EIA has been undertaken for the Proposed Development described in **Chapter 3 – 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.

1.4 Environmental Statement Structure

1.4.1 This ES comprises the Main Report, Figures, supporting Appendices and a separate NTS. Following this introduction, the ES Main Report is organised as follows:

- Chapter 2. Site and Local Context
- Chapter 3. Proposed Development
- Chapter 4. Consultation, alternatives and design evolution
- Chapter 5. Approach to Assessment
- Chapter 6. Air quality
- Chapter 7. Climate change and greenhouse gases
- Chapter 8. Summary of mitigation, residual effects and interaction effects

1.4.2 Chapter 2 provides a description of the Site and its surroundings, and Chapter 3 explains each element of the Proposed Development and defines the physical and operational aspects assessed by the EIA. The alternative options considered during the site selection and environmental influences on the design process are explained in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 sets out the approach taken to the assessment.

1.4.3 Environmental issues assessed in the EIA process are then reported in Chapters 6 and 7, with the majority of associated figures provided as separate files (PDF), although some are set within the text of the Chapters. Chapter 8 provides a summary of the proposed mitigation, residual and interaction effects.

1.4.4 A glossary of terms used within the ES is provided in Appendix 1.2.

1.5 The Project Team

1.5.1 Those working on the EIA are as follows:

- **Savills:** EIA co-ordination;
- **Cundall:** Air Quality and Climate Change

1.5.2 The EIA has been coordinated by Savills with the technical assessments and input undertaken by the project team. An outline of the qualifications/experience of the assessors to demonstrate competency in accordance with the EIA Regulations is provided in Appendix 1.1.

1.6 Availability of environmental information

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

1.6.2 <https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/6379/Search-planning-applications>

1.6.3 A copy of the ES on USB Flash Drive can be obtained for a charge of £25 from: *southamptonplanning@savills.com*, Telephone 01202 856 800. A printed copy of the NTS can also be obtained free of charge from Savills.

1.7 Consultation

1.7.1 Should interested parties wish to make representations on the content of this ES, they should be made in writing to:

*Planning Department
Hillingdon Council Civic Centre
High Street
Uxbridge
UB8 1UW*

1.7.2 Alternatively, representations can be made online by following instructions at:

<https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/6379/Search-planning-applications>