



# Hayes Digital Park

Design and Access Statement

Part 1 of 4

Client Colt Data Centre Services

Project Hayes Digital Park

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<b>Part 1</b>	<b>Introduction and Site Analysis</b>
	Purpose of this document
	Site description / Overview of Development
	Policy Content
	Site Context / Urban Typologies
	Site Opportunities and Constraints







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Revision Number **P02 (Planning Update)**

Date Issued 08/08/2025

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Purpose of this document

This document was prepared to support the planning application to the London Borough of Hillingdon (LBH) for the proposed development of a data centre campus at Hayes Bridge Retail Park and Heathrow Interchange, Hayes UB4 0RH.

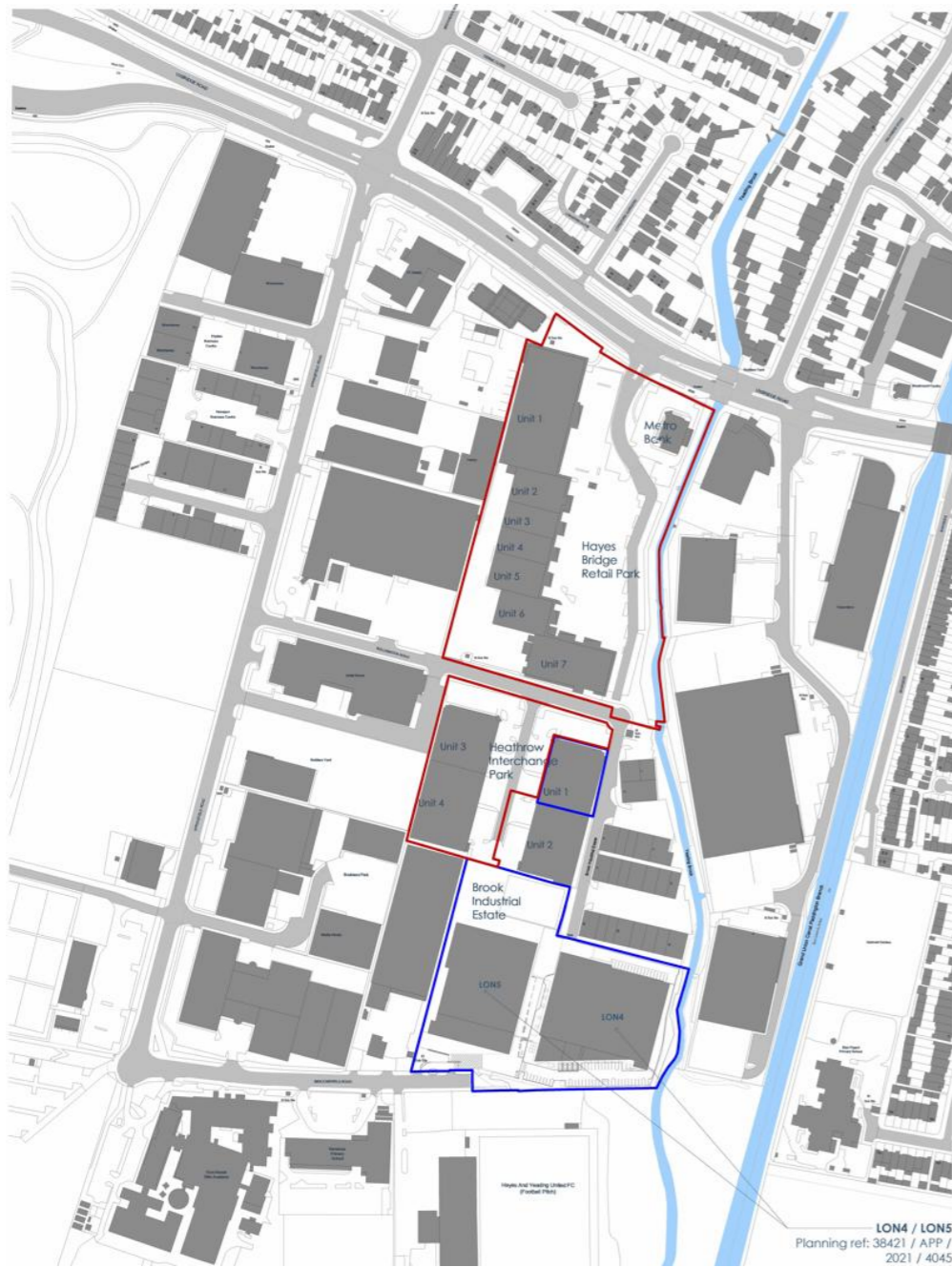


Image 1.1.1. Site Location Plan

### 1.2. Site Description

The proposed HDP Masterplan comprises a total 4.4ha site area consisting of:

The site consists of two distinct parts which together have a site area of approximately 4.4ha but are separated from each other by Bullsbrook Road, an adopted highways which serves other premises within the wider commercial area.

On the northern side of Bullsbrook Road is Hayes Bridge Retail Park. The Hayes Bridge Retail Park consists of a terrace of seven retail units and a standalone commercial bank (Metro Bank) set around a central surface car park which is accessed from the Uxbridge Road. The majority of these units are vacant. It is anticipated that demolition of units within the retail park (save for Metro Bank) will take place whilst this application is being considered in accordance with an application for prior notification of demolition.

To the south of Bullsbrook Road and Hayes Bridge Retail Park is Heathrow Interchange. Heathrow Interchange consists of a series of industrial units arranged into two parallel terraces which are orientated north-south and separated from each other by an open yard with parking and vehicle turning which is served by Bullsbrook Road. Each terrace is split into two units so that there are four units within Heathrow Interchange. Prior notification of demolition of Unit 1 (ref. 71554/APP/2024/2490) and it is envisaged that the unit will be demolished whilst this application is being considered. There is a live application for planning permission for a substation in this location (ref. 71554/APP/2025/47). Unit 2, the southern unit on the eastern terrace, is outside of Colt's ownership and is excluded from this application.

### 1.3. Overview of Development

The application is in hybrid format. This consists of full planning permission for a data centre building (to be known as LON06) and outline planning permission for two further data centre buildings (to be known as LON07 and LON08) and an Innovation Hub.

LON06, LON07, and the Innovation Hub are to be located on the site of Hayes Bridge Retail Park with LON08 (and the substation for which there is a separate application for full planning permission for) to be located on the site of Heathrow Interchange.

The description of development for the application is below:

*Hybrid planning application for a four-phased redevelopment to deliver a data centre campus comprising of:*

- **Phase 1** – Full planning permission for (a) a data centre building (b) energy, power, and water infrastructure (c) site access and internal roads including a vehicular and pedestrian link between Uxbridge Road and Bullsbrook Road (d) site security arrangements and security fencing (e) hard and soft, green and blue, infrastructure and (f) other ancillary and auxiliary forms of development;
- **Phase 2** – Outline planning permission for (a) an Innovation Hub (b) hard and soft, green and blue, infrastructure and (c) other ancillary and auxiliary forms of development;

- **Phase 3** - Outline planning permission for (a) a data centre building (b) energy, power, and water infrastructure (c) internal roads (d) site security arrangements and security fencing (e) hard and soft, green and blue, infrastructure and (f) other ancillary and auxiliary forms of development; and
- **Phase 4** - Outline planning permission for (a) a data centre building (b) energy, power, and water infrastructure (c) internal roads (d) site security arrangements and security fencing (e) hard and soft, green and blue, infrastructure and (f) other ancillary and auxiliary forms of development.

## 1.4. The need for data centres

Data centres are the backbone of our digital economy, where the physical storage, processing and distribution of data occurs to facilitate digital activities from banking, healthcare, education, entertainment, online shopping, research to businesses and government activities.

The sector has experienced significant growth in the past decade, in particular since the Covid 19 pandemic, when reliance on digital platforms increased exponentially. Digital trends continue to drive data centre growth, with the rise of artificial intelligence applications, robotics and the Internet of Things (IoT).

London is placed as one of the dominant data centre hubs in the EMEA region, and in September 2024 the UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology has designated UK data centres as Critical National Infrastructure (CNI), alongside energy and water systems, highlighting their importance.

Site selection for data centres is based on favourable conditions such as: fibre connection, power availability, safe environment, weather conditions and proximity to users to minimise latency. Hayes satisfies this criterion for site location, thus attracting data centre operators and high-tech companies as end users.

## 1.5. Policy context

### 1.5.1. Hillingdon Local Plan

The Council is updating and replacing its Local Plan. Consultation period ongoing.

In conformity with the adopted London Plan 2021.

Key existing design challenges identified:

The new Local Plan needs to ensure good design in buildings and the public realm that is not only attractive, but also highly functional. This may include design that helps mitigate the effects of climate change, encourages active travel (walking and cycling), and it's accessible, adaptable, healthy and safe.

- Improving the design quality of new development,
- Ensuring design responds to environmental issues including flooding, noise, urban heat island effect, and air pollution,
- Exploring opportunities for new public realm and ensuring it is inclusive, and places can be accessed by all residents,
- Proactively planning for appropriate tall buildings, while addressing local constraints such as context, airports and the desire for an interesting skyline,
- Ensuring development strengthens waterways such as canal edges and rivers,

Economy section:

- Understanding and accommodating any new and evolving needs for commercial, business and service floorspace.
- Hillingdon has a large amount of industrial land with relatively low vacancies, which should be protected and intensified in accordance with the London Plan.
- Data Centres are an essential piece of digital infrastructure to support the UK's service-based economy. Demand for data centres has increased in recent years in Hillingdon, with impacts on industrial sites, character and amenity, and the energy network.

Green infrastructure and natural environment section:

- Green infrastructure and the natural environment are valuable in storing carbon, cooling the climate and filtering the air and water. A key challenge is building for a growing population whilst also improving on the network of green infrastructure, including through urban greening.

Sustainable infrastructure section:

- Air pollution is a major health challenge. Two thirds of the borough have been designated an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) since 2003 due to high levels of nitrogen dioxide. Despite measures to reduce pollution, in parts of the borough, particularly close to Heathrow, level remain above legislative air quality limits.
- The need for digital infrastructure will likely continue to ensure global competitiveness, however this need must be balanced against any harm arising, particularly to the existing local context.

#### Transport section:

- How to balance this target with the low levels of public transport accessibility for large areas in Hillingdon, with 86% of the population in an area of PTAL 2 or lower, significantly lower than the average for London (49%).
- Some parts of the borough are remote and do not benefit from existing or planned public transport, potentially making the inappropriate from some uses.

#### What the new Local Plan could achieve

- Ensure that data centres and other unique uses are located and designed appropriately, so that nuanced impacts are mitigated, such as impact on the power grid and utilisation of waste energy are considered.
- Seek the maximum practical provision of green infrastructure from new development,
- Be updated to include the Biodiversity Net Gain requirement,
- Protect existing ecological sites and seeking other opportunities to create new habitats, and
- Provide strong protection for trees and require new development to provide additional trees where possible, and
- Continue to implement the Urban Greening Factor in development.
- Reduce water run-off from developments by requiring Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) to tackle flooding and climate change impacts.
- Help meet net zero carbon targets by lowering the carbon impacts of the built environment,
- Improve the energy efficiency of both new and existing buildings,
- Set out a positive framework for generation of sustainable energy including solar and air and ground source heat pumps, and encouraging use of decentralised energy networks,
- Meet new London Plan requirements, including for zero carbon, carbon offsetting, whole life-cycle carbon assessments on development referable to the Mayor of London, and encouraging use of BREEAM targets for carbon reduction in development, and
- Continue to direct new development away from high flood risk areas and require sustainable urban drainage in new developments.
- Ensure that development is located and designed to improve air quality.
- In line with the London Plan, the Local Plan should seek to rebalance the transport system towards walking, cycling and public transport. The Mayor of London has set out an ambitious target for Hillingdon for 75% of all trips to be by public transport, cycling or walking by 2041.
- Following the London Plan 'Healthy Streets' approach, the Local Plan should deliver patterns of development which allow short journeys by walking and cycling and create streets which are safe and pleasant to use.
- New development should provide charging facilities for electric vehicles where car parking is provided. The current target of 5% of parking spaces is below the 20% outlined in the London Plan.

## 1.6. The London Plan 2021

### 1.6.1. Chapter 3 Design - Policy D9 Tall buildings

#### A. Definition

Based on local context, Development Plans should define what is considered a tall building for specific localities, the height of which will vary between and within different parts of London but should not be less than 6 storeys or 18 metres measured from ground to the floor level of the uppermost storey.

#### B. Locations

- 1) Boroughs should determine if there are locations where tall buildings may be an appropriate form of development, subject to meeting the other requirements of the Plan. This process should include engagement with neighbouring boroughs that may be affected by tall building developments in identified locations.
- 2) Any such locations and appropriate tall building heights should be identified on maps in Development Plans.
- 3) Tall buildings should only be developed in locations that are identified as suitable in Development Plans.

#### C. Impacts

Development proposals should address the following impacts:

##### 1) Visual impacts

- a) the views of buildings from different distances:
  - i) long-range views – these require attention to be paid to the design of the top of the building. It should make a positive contribution to the existing and emerging skyline and not adversely affect local or strategic views
  - ii) mid-range views from the surrounding neighbourhood – particular attention should be paid to the form and proportions of the building. It should make a positive contribution to the local townscape in terms of legibility, proportions and materiality
  - iii) immediate views from the surrounding streets – attention should be paid to the base of the building. It should have a direct relationship with the street, maintaining the pedestrian scale, character and vitality of the street. Where the edges of the site are adjacent to buildings of significantly lower height or parks and other open spaces there should be an appropriate transition in scale between the tall building and its surrounding context to protect amenity or privacy.
- b) whether part of a group or stand-alone, tall buildings should reinforce the spatial hierarchy of the local and wider context and aid legibility and wayfinding
- c) architectural quality and materials should be of an exemplary standard to ensure that the appearance and architectural integrity of the building is maintained through its lifespan
- d) proposals should take account of, and avoid harm to, the significance of London's heritage assets and their settings. Proposals resulting in harm will require clear and convincing justification, demonstrating that alternatives have been explored and that there are clear public benefits that outweigh that harm. The buildings should positively contribute to the character of the area

- e) buildings in the setting of a World Heritage Site must preserve, and not harm, the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site, and the ability to appreciate it
- f) buildings near the River Thames, particularly in the Thames Policy Area, should protect and enhance the open quality of the river and the riverside public realm, including views, and not contribute to a canyon effect along the river
- g) buildings should not cause adverse reflected glare
- h) buildings should be designed to minimise light pollution from internal and external lighting

2) Functional impact

- a) the internal and external design, including construction detailing, the building's materials and its emergency exit routes must ensure the safety of all occupants
- b) buildings should be serviced, maintained and managed in a manner that will preserve their safety and quality, and not cause disturbance or inconvenience to surrounding public realm. Servicing, maintenance and building management arrangements should be considered at the start of the design process
- c) entrances, access routes, and ground floor uses should be designed and placed to allow for peak time use and to ensure there is no unacceptable overcrowding or isolation in the surrounding areas
- d) it must be demonstrated that the capacity of the area and its transport network is capable of accommodating the quantum of development in terms of access to facilities, services, walking and cycling networks, and public transport for people living or working in the building
- e) jobs, services, facilities and economic activity that will be provided by the development and the regeneration potential this might provide should inform the design so it maximises the benefits these could bring to the area, and maximises the role of the development as a catalyst for further change in the area
- f) buildings, including their construction, should not interfere with aviation, navigation or telecommunication, and should avoid a significant detrimental effect on solar energy generation on adjoining buildings

3) Environmental impact

- a) wind, daylight, sunlight penetration and temperature conditions around the building(s) and neighbourhood must be carefully considered and not compromise comfort and the enjoyment of open spaces, including water spaces, around the building
- b) air movement affected by the building(s) should support the effective dispersion of pollutants, but not adversely affect street-level conditions
- c) noise created by air movements around the building(s), servicing machinery, or building uses, should not detract from the comfort and enjoyment of open spaces around the building

4) Cumulative impacts

- a) the cumulative visual, functional and environmental impacts of proposed, consented and planned tall buildings in an area must be considered when assessing tall building proposals and when developing plans for an area. Mitigation measures should be identified and designed into the building as integral features from the outset to avoid retro-fitting.

**D. Public access**

Free to enter publicly-accessible areas should be incorporated into tall buildings where appropriate, particularly more prominent tall buildings where they should normally be located at the top of the building to afford wider views across London.

## 2. Site analysis

### 2.1. Site location

The London Borough of Hillingdon is located in greater London, bounded by Harrow, Ealing and Hounslow and the Colney Regional Park to the west, within the bounds of the M25. It's the second largest borough, with a range of characters and development typologies, including Uxbridge Town and Hayes Town centres, suburban residences, Brunel University campus, retail parks and industrial developments, RAF Northolt air force base and Heathrow, a major international airport operating thousands of flights per day.

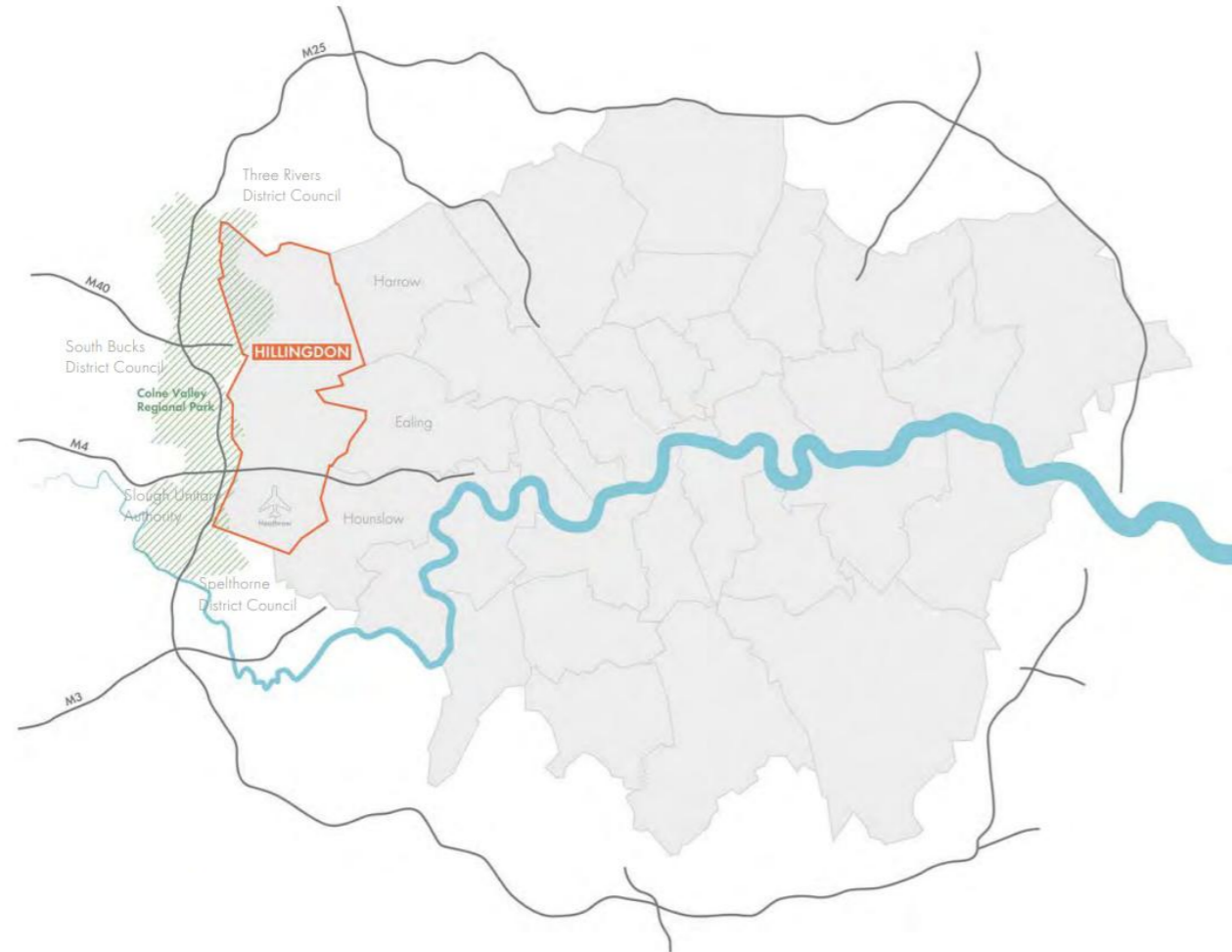
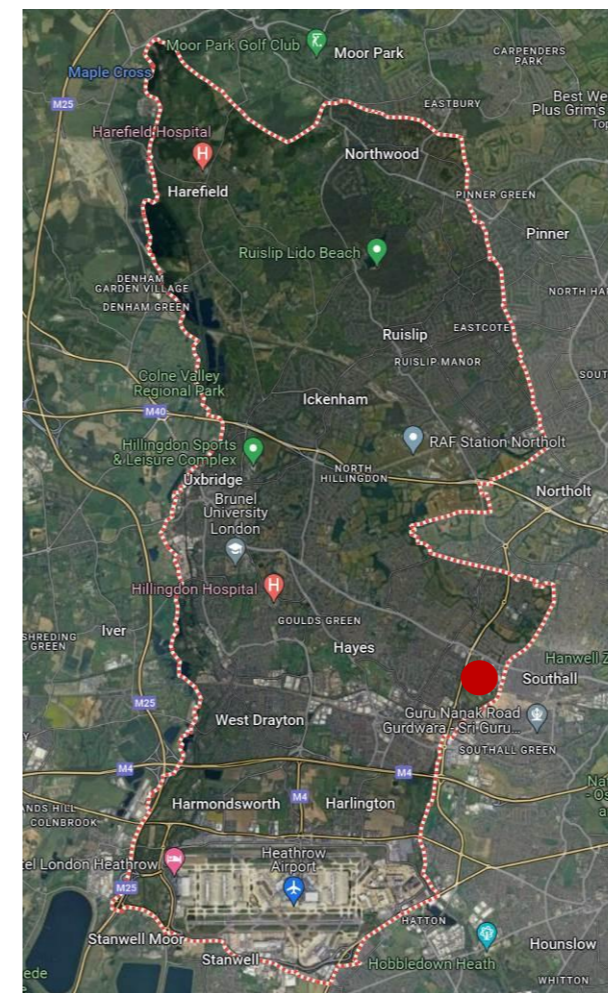


Image 2.1.1 – London Borough of Hillingdon context map



Images 2.1.2 & 3. Site location within Hillingdon Borough.

## 2.2. Site Context - Urban Typology

Hillingdon Townscape and Character Study identified a mix of 16 morphological types present in the borough, as illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

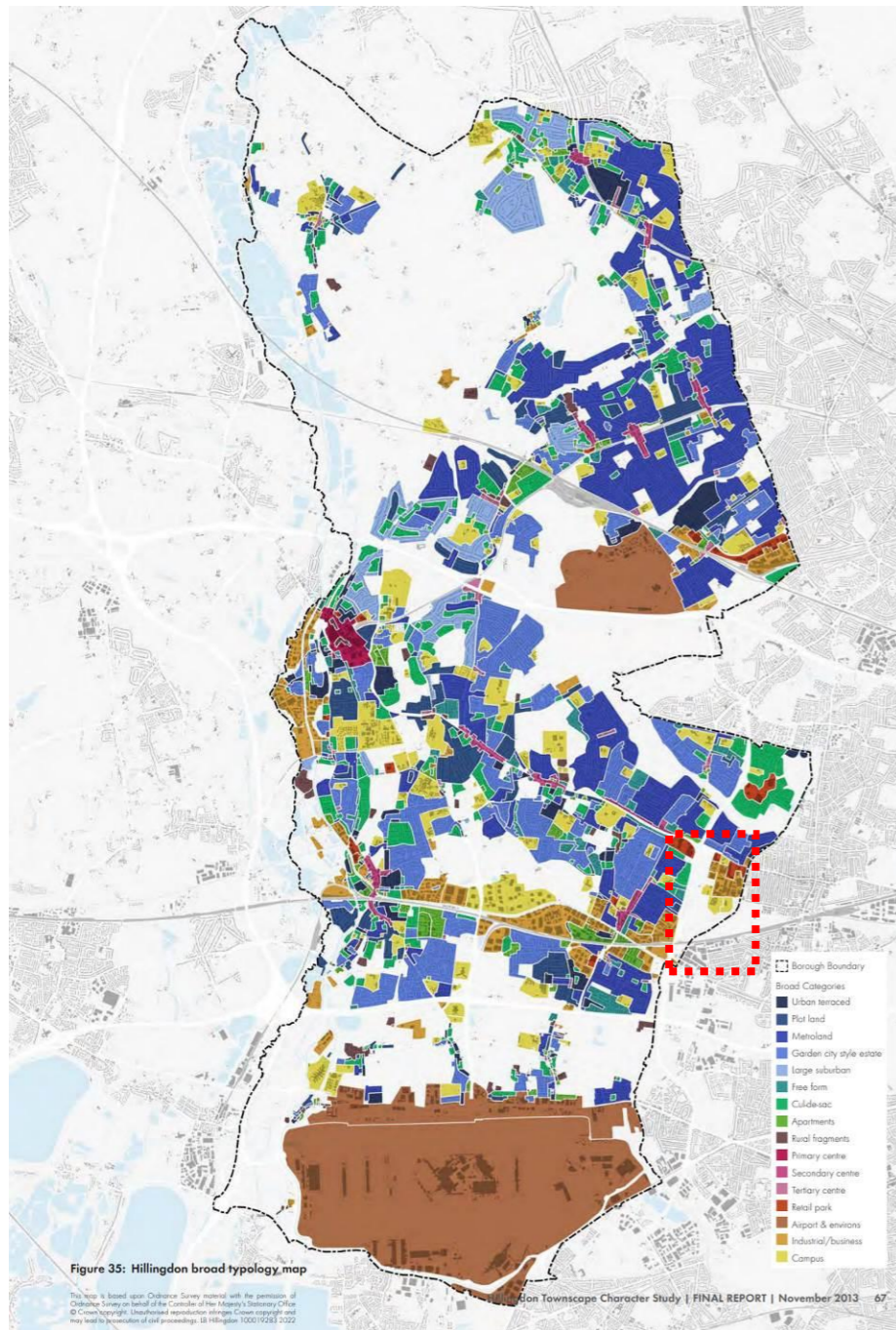


Image 2.2.1 – Hillingdon broad typology map, extracted from Hillingdon Townscape Character Study.

The Hayes Digital Park site is located in an area currently classified as Industrial/Business, adjacent to a Campus typology to the south (Guru Nanak School and Hayes Football Club) and Retail Park to the north (current retail centre along Uxbridge Road). A residential area of Garden city style state and plot land typologies is identified north of Uxbridge Rd, across the application site.



Image 2.2.2 – Google image aerial view of site area and existing typologies

## 2.2.1. Industrial / Business

Primarily clustered along the railway line that runs east to west and crosses the borough.

The existing Brook Industrial Estate site, Heathrow Interchange site in proximity to Grand Union Canal, within the designated Strategic Industrial Land (SIL).

The main characteristics of this typology include low rise, utilitarian design with absence of public realm. The architectural façade treatments comprise corrugated metal panels and brick, punch windows or lined glazing in some cases.



Image 2.2.1.3. Google Maps view of businesses along Springfield Rd.



Image 2.2.1.1. Google Maps view of West London Film Studio Stage 6 and Express business along Beaconsfield Rd.



Image 2.2.1.4. Google Maps view of Safe Tech building along Springfield Rd.



Image 2.2.1.2. Google Maps view of Reach business along Springfield Rd.



Image 2.2.1.5. Google Maps view of businesses within Heathrow Interchange site.

## 2.2.2. Retail Park

The Retail Park area is located between Uxbridge Rd to the north, Bullsbrook Rd to the south, Grand Union Canal to the east and Springfield Rd to the west. It's characterised by large, low rise rectangular floorplates. The facades are clad with metal panels with a brick base at ground floor, in some cases. Glazed areas are kept to a minimum for key display and entrance areas. Big scale signage dominates the facades for store identification. Car park areas are significant to accommodate a large number of visitors.



Image 2.2.2.1. Google Maps view of Hayes Bridge Retail Park



Image 2.2.2.3. Google Maps view of Springfield Road Retail Park



Image 2.2.2.2. Google Maps view of Hayes Bridge Retail Park (continued)



Image 2.2.2.4. Google Maps view of retail units between Yeading Brook and Grand Union Canal

### 2.2.3. Uxbridge Road

Mixed typologies present along Uxbridge Road, where clusters of shops, suburban residential properties, multi-story apartment blocks are found.

North of Uxbridge Road, fine grain residential is the predominant urban typology, with a mixed of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties dating back a few decades.



Image 2.2.3.1. Google Maps view of shops / residential typology at Uxbridge Rd and Springfield Rd intersection.



Image 2.2.3.3. Google Maps view of mixed shops and activity centre along Uxbridge Rd.



Image 2.2.3.2. Google Maps view of residential typology north of Uxbridge Rd



Image 2.2.3.4. Google Maps view of residential building along Uxbridge Rd and Coldharbour Ln.

## 2.2.4. Campus

Guru Nanak School, Hayes & Yeading Football Club, Hyatt Hotel campus represents the campus typology found adjacent to the application site. These are a cluster of buildings sharing a common function and architectural aesthetics, i.e.: modulation of window openings, cladding material, façade treatment colour palette.



Image 2.2.4.1. Google Maps view of Guru Nanak Sikh School



Image 2.2.4.3. Google Maps view of Hayes & Yeading United Football Club



Image 2.2.4.2. Google Maps view of Guru Nanak Sikh School (continued)



Image 2.2.4.4. Google Maps view of Hyatt Place Hotel campus.

## 2.2.5. Green space

Minet Country Park is found near the application site, within a 10-minute walking distance to the main access point on Springfield Road, offering 32 hectares of green space, children's playground, picnic areas, a cycle circuit and a visitor centre.

Pedestrians also have access to the Hillingdon trail, which stretches 20 miles north-south along the Grand Union Canal and a portion of the Yeading Brook.

Within the application site boundary, pedestrian access to the Yeading Brook is currently unavailable, as exemplified in Image 2.3.5.4, where fences and vegetation create a dead-end barrier for pedestrians walking along Beaconsfield Road. Access to Yeading Brook is also blocked from Uxbridge Road, as shown in Image 2.3.5.5.



Images 2.2.5.1 & 2. Minet Country Park images, courtesy of Woodland Environmental UK



Image 2.2.5.4. Google Maps view of Bullsbrook Rd cul-de-sac leading to Yeading Brook



Image 2.2.5.3. Google Maps view of Grand Union Canal



Image 2.2.5.5. Google Maps view of Yeading Brook from Uxbridge Rd, next to Metro Bank

## 2.2.6. Data Centre

The applicant has been granted consent for two data centre buildings with a standalone substation and fuel store in an adjacent plot along Beaconsfield Road. Application reference: 38421/APP/2021/4045.

LON4 and LON5 as illustrated in the accompanying images, set the precedent for data centre use within the existing industrial setting. Architectural massing and overall building aesthetics have been discussed and agreed with Hillingdon throughout the planning process, in a series of collaborative pre app and design workshop sessions. Similar approach to the Hayes Digital Park proposal, as discussed in greater detail in following Consultation chapter.



Image 2.2.6.2. studioNWA 3D view of data centre pedestrian approach to LON4 and LON5



Image 2.2.6.1. studioNWA 3D view of LON4 and LON5 data centres, as approached from Beaconsfield Rd

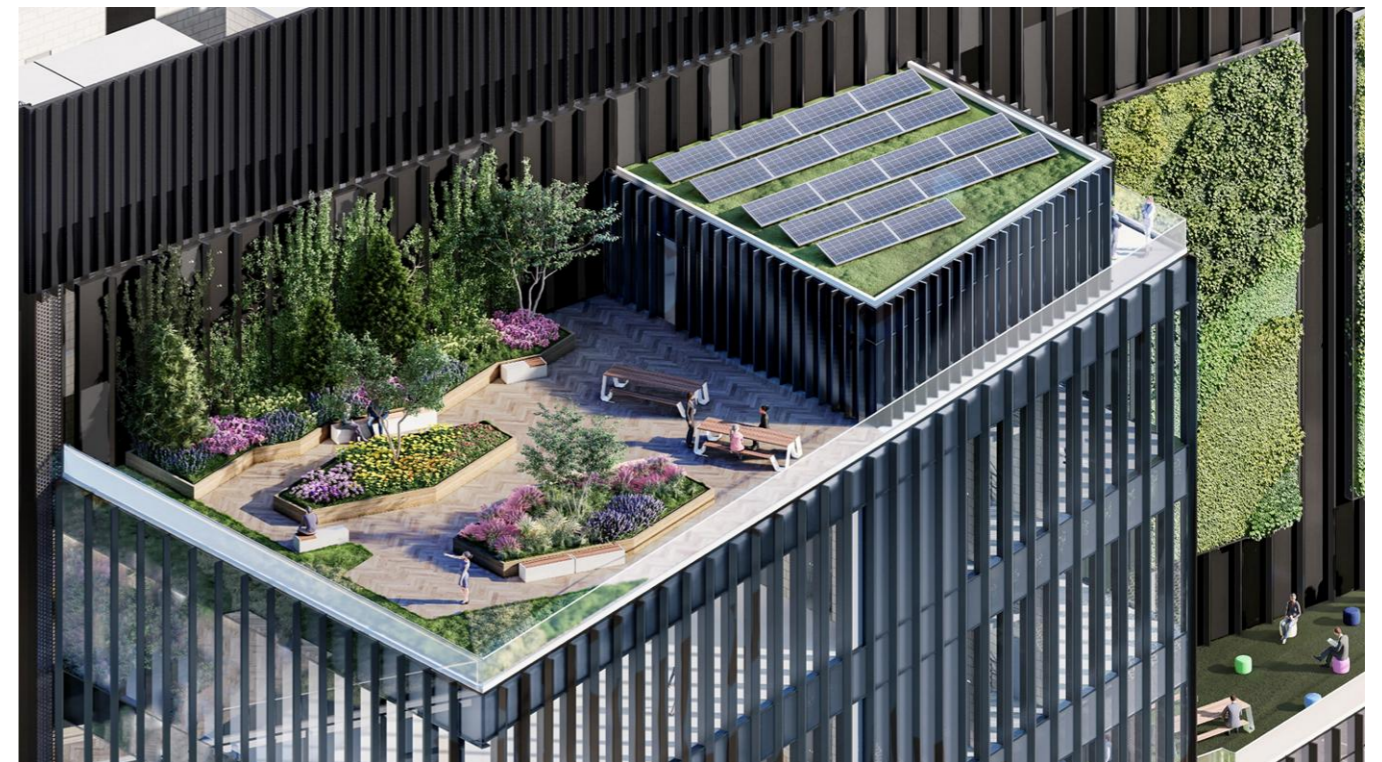


Image 2.2.6.3. studioNWA 3D view of LON4 amenity terrace at office block

## 2.2.7. The Green Quarter

Approved and under-construction developments in the vicinity of the application site include The Green Quarter: A residential development west of Grand Union Canal, comprising 8,100 new homes distributed in buildings averaging 7 to 15 stories high. Remediated land to deliver 13 acres of wetlands, parkland and meadows.



Image 2.2.7.1. Green Quarter computer generated image by Berkley Group.



Image 2.2.7.2. Green Quarter computer generated image by Berkley Group, Phases 1, 2 & 3.

The Green Quarter is seen as an example of growth and intensification along Broadway and the border between Hillingdon and Ealing.

Please refer to townscape studies accompanying this application, produced by Icenl, which provide an in-depth assessment of existing and emerging urban typologies.



Image 2.2.7.3. Green Quarter aerial view in context, image produced in VuCity, by JTP Arch.

### 2.3. Site Opportunities and Constraints

Site opportunities and constraints have been identified by the design team, which have helped inform the design of Hayes Digital Park since its inception.

Key elements for consideration are captured in the following image, as presented at pre app 1.

KEY - OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS			
Site boundary of application site	Primary and secondary vehicular arteries connecting to site	Opportunity for public realm	Location of existing substations
Layout under planning permission reference 38421/APP/2021/4045	Vehicular entrance to Industrial Unit 2	Opportunity for stepping down building masses along pedestrian route	Residential development - Nearest sensitive noise receptors
Industrial Unit 2 to be retained in place	Vehicular maneuvering area to retained Industrial Unit 2	Tall building (Existing)	Water courses - Grand Union Canal and Yeading Brook
Property under lease by landlord to be retained	Vehicular entrance to Metro Bank	Tall building (Permitted) Under planning reference 69827/APP/2021/1565	Existing cycling route

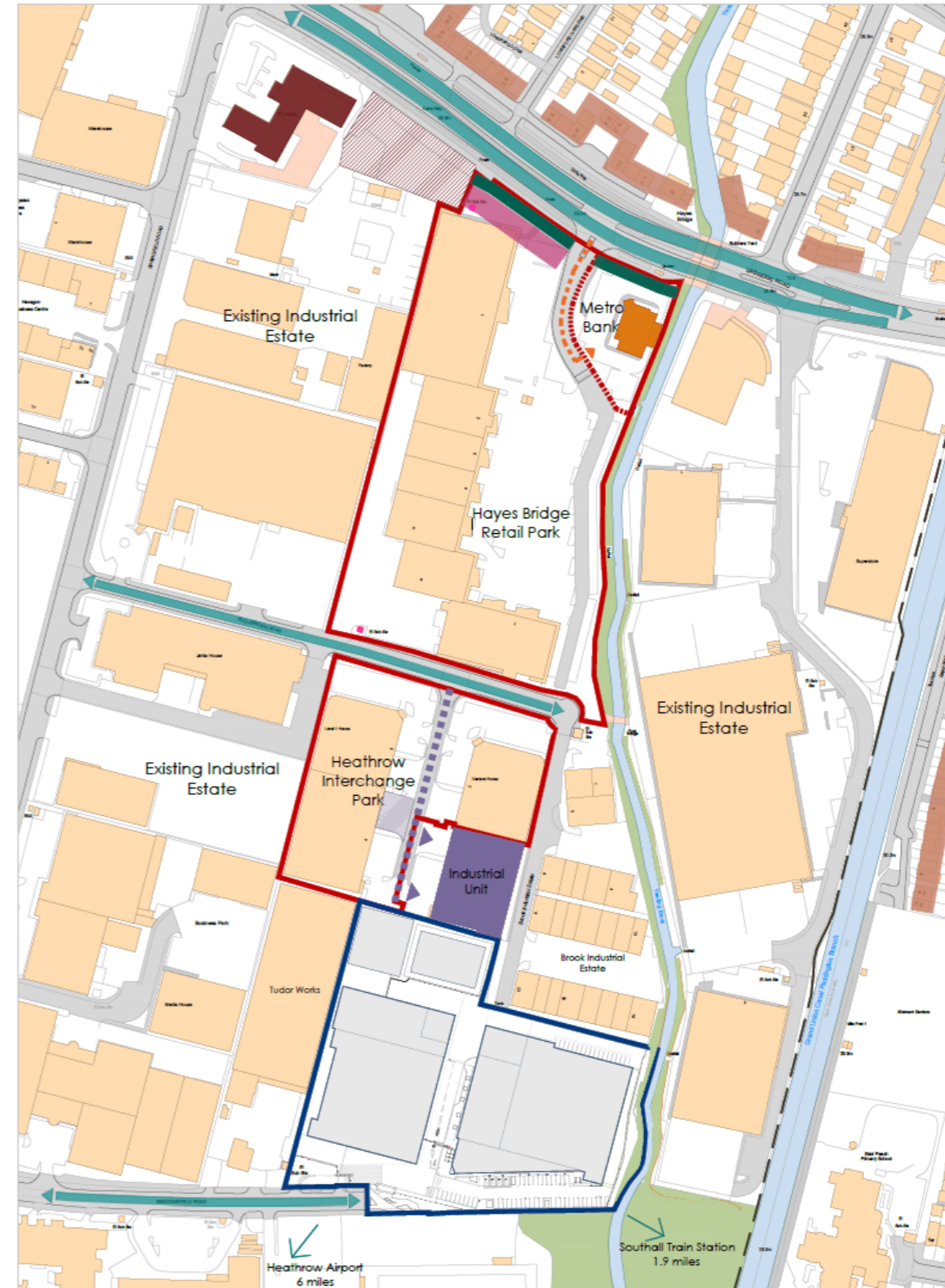


Image 2.3.1. Site opportunities and constrai