

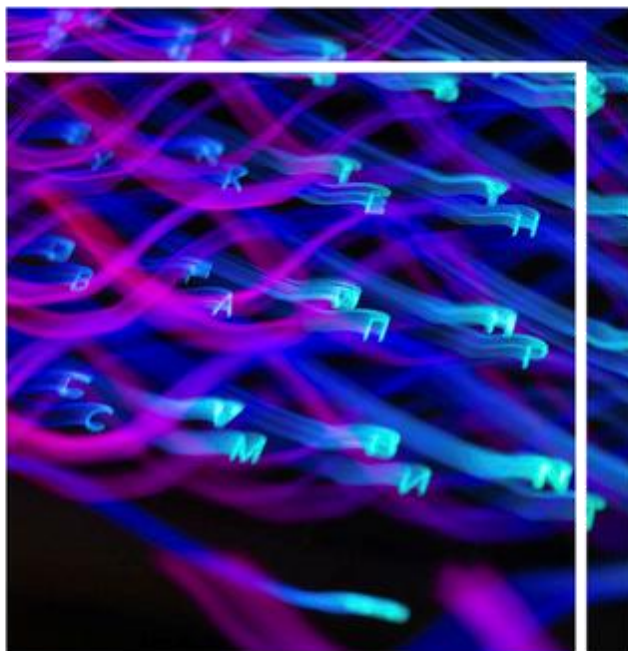
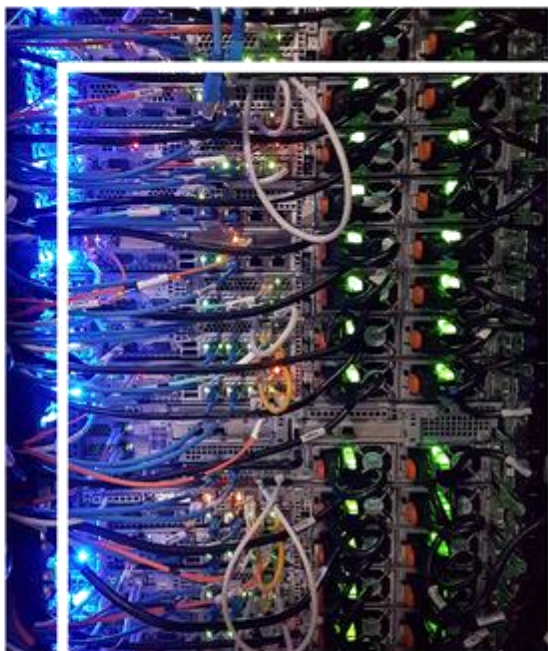


Thames Valley Park Data Centre

EIA Volume 1: Non-Technical Summary

Tyréns Hilson Moran | On Behalf of FH Trustees
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Preface

The Thames Valley Park Data Centre Environmental Statement ('ES') comprises the following three volumes:

- Volume 1 – Non-Technical Summary ('NTS');
- Volume 2 – Environmental Statement; and
- Volume 3 – Technical Appendices.

The ES presents the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') undertaken for the Proposed Development at Thames Valley Business Park. The EIA has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended), and the ES accompanies the planning application submitted to Wokingham Borough Council.

This document comprises Volume 1 of the ES and provides an accessible, transparent and concise summary of the information presented within the ES using non-technical language.

The ES and other documents submitted in support of the planning application can be viewed online through Wokingham Borough Council's planning portal.

Outline planning permission is sought by reference Parameter Plans, which establish the parameters within which the detailed design may subsequently come forward. An illustrative scheme accompanies the planning application and represents one way in which the Proposed Development could be delivered within the Development Parameters.

1.2. Environmental Impact Assessment

Tyréns Hilson Moran has prepared an Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') to accompany the outline planning application for the Proposed Development.

The requirements for EIA are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) ('the 2017 EIA Regulations'). The Proposed Development does not fall within any of the development types identified in Schedule 1 of the 2017 EIA Regulations. While it may be considered an Urban Development Project under Schedule 2, paragraph 10(b), the Proposed Development has not been formally determined to constitute EIA development.

Notwithstanding this, a proportionate and targeted EIA has been undertaken voluntarily as a precautionary measure. This approach ensures that the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Development are appropriately identified and assessed and that suitable mitigation measures are incorporated where necessary.

The findings of the EIA are reported in the ES.

1.3. Environmental Statement

The ES identifies the likely environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development, including both beneficial and adverse effects, and outlines the measures proposed to avoid, reduce or offset potential adverse effects.

The scope of the assessment has been informed by consultation with Wokingham Borough Council ('WBC') and covers the following environmental topics:

- Air Quality;
- Noise and Vibration;
- Climate Change and Resilience, including Greenhouse Gas Emissions;
- Water Resources; and
- Waste.

The ES comprises the following three volumes:

- Volume 1 – Non-Technical Summary;
- Volume 2 – Environmental Statement; and
- Volume 3 – Technical Appendices.

This document comprises Volume 1 of the ES and provides an accessible, transparent and concise summary of the EIA and its findings using non-technical language. The findings of the environmental assessments are summarised in Section 3 of this document.

2. Project Description

2.1. Site Description

The Site is located within Thames Valley Business Park, within the administrative area of WBC. It extends to approximately 5.4 hectares ('ha') and comprises previously developed land within an established commercial setting.

The Site currently comprises three office buildings formerly occupied by Microsoft, together with associated car parking, internal circulation routes, hardstanding, landscaping and ancillary infrastructure. Two of the buildings have been vacated and the remaining building is not fully occupied. The existing buildings, hardstanding and associated infrastructure would be demolished to facilitate the Proposed Development.

Vehicular access is currently provided from the internal Thames Valley Business Park road network to the north of the Site. The wider business park is characterised predominantly by office and commercial buildings, internal roads, car parking and landscaping. Thames Valley Park Nature Reserve and the River Thames corridor are located to the north, while the railway corridor is located immediately to the south. The nearest residential properties are approximately 113 m south of the Site boundary.

The entire Site is located within Flood Zone 1 and therefore has a low probability of flooding from rivers or the sea. Localised areas of low, medium and high surface water flood risk are present within the Site.

There are no statutory or non-statutory ecological designations, listed buildings or Conservation Areas located within the Site, and the Site is not located within or close to an Air Quality Management Area ('AQMA').

2.2. The Proposed Development

The planning application seeks outline permission for:

"Outline planning application (all matters reserved except for Access) for demolition of existing buildings and the construction of a data centre (Use Class B8), fuel cells for energy generation, ancillary office space and associated plant, drainage, backup power generation, sub-station, car parking, landscaping, engineering works and formation of and alterations to access roads."

The principal components of the Proposed Development comprise:

- Data centre buildings and ancillary office accommodation;
- Associated plant, energy infrastructure and servicing;
- Fuel cells for energy generation;
- Backup diesel generators;
- A substation and associated compound;
- Drainage infrastructure;
- Car parking;

- Internal maintenance and access roads;
- Landscaping; and
- Associated engineering works.

The application is submitted in outline, with all matters reserved except access. The Parameter Plans establish the limits within which the detailed design would subsequently come forward. Future reserved matters applications would be required to comply with the approved Parameter Plans.

The illustrative scheme, as presented in Figure 2-1 below, shows data centre halls positioned behind an administrative and office frontage, providing approximately 37,000 m² of floorspace excluding the fuel cells and generators. Associated electrical equipment and generators would be provided, with double-stacked fuel cells positioned to the east and west of the main building. The illustrative scheme also includes internal access roads, a maintenance road, a security lodge, car parking and landscaping.

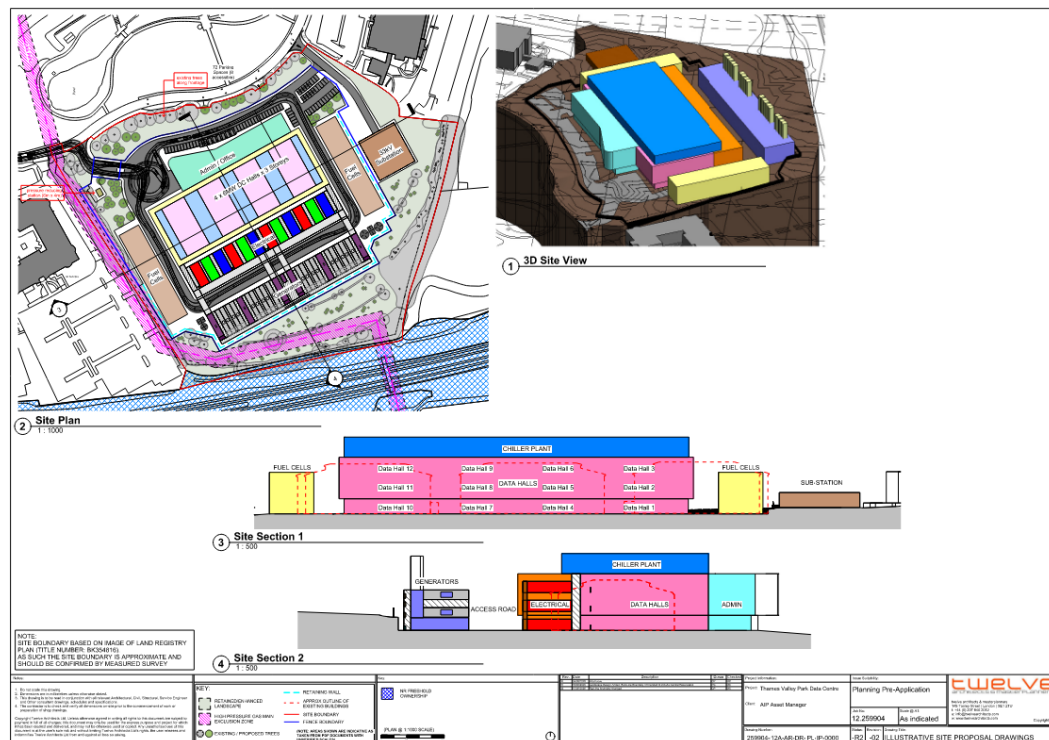


Figure 2-1 Illustrative Site Proposal (Source: Twelve Architects, 15th September 2026).

Two vehicular access points are proposed from the Thames Valley Business Park estate road. The principal access would be located at the north-western corner of the Site, with a separate emergency access further east.

The fuel cells form part of a phased energy solution intended to allow the Proposed Development to operate before permanent utility infrastructure is delivered. They are intended to provide the principal energy source until approximately 2037, or earlier if lower carbon grid electricity becomes available. Backup generators would also be provided.

The Proposed Development is targeting a BREEAM ‘Excellent’ rating.

2.3. Need for Development

The Site is located within Thames Valley Business Park, which is identified by WBC as a Core Employment Area in the emerging Wokingham Local Plan. The Local Plan recognises the importance of these areas in supporting the borough’s economic growth and future employment needs.

The UK Government has designated data centres as Critical National Infrastructure, recognising their role in supporting the digital services used by businesses, public services and individuals. The Proposed Development would provide additional data centre capacity within the Thames Valley, one of the UK’s established technology clusters outside London.

The Proposed Development is estimated to create 40–65 on-site (gross, direct) jobs to maintain and operate the data centre. It would also represent an investment of more than £200 million during construction, support local supply chains and generate business rates revenue.

2.4. Programme

The Proposed Development would require demolition of the existing buildings and structures, followed by construction and fit-out of the data centre and associated infrastructure. The programme remains preliminary and may be refined as the design, procurement and utility connection arrangements progress.

Table 2-1 provides an overview of the principal programme milestones relevant to the EIA.

Table 2-1. Indicative Development Programme

Activity	Indicative Start	Indicative Completion
Submission of outline planning application	September 2026	September 2026
Outline planning application determination	September 2026	March 2027
Design development	September 2026	December 2027
Demolition mobilisation	April 2027	April 2027
Demolition works	April 2027	October 2027
Main works mobilisation	February 2028	February 2028
Main works construction	February 2028	August 2031
Construction of the principal building shell	February 2028	February 2029
Phase 1 mechanical and electrical fit-out, providing approximately 32 MW	January 2029	March 2030

Activity	Indicative Start	Indicative Completion
Fuel cells ready for service	—	March 2029
Long-lead electrical equipment	July 2035	July 2037
Completion of the 33 kV and 132 kV grid connections	—	January 2037
Phase 2 mechanical and electrical fit-out, providing approximately 40 MW	July 2037	April 2039

2.5. Alternatives

The Site was identified following consideration of site-specific opportunities and constraints, together with relevant technical, environmental and planning factors. It was considered capable of accommodating the Proposed Development while allowing potential environmental effects to be appropriately managed through the design process. The Site was therefore identified as a suitable and deliverable location for the Proposed Development.

3. General Approach

EIA is a process through which the environmental effects of a development are identified, assessed and evaluated. This enables the significant environmental effects associated with relevant topics, such as air quality and noise, to be presented in order to:

- Enable adverse effects to be addressed through the design process by incorporating measures to avoid, reduce or offset those effects; and
- Inform decision makers of the environmental consequences of the development.

The EIA process comprises a number of key steps:

- Identifying the existing environmental conditions associated with the Site and surrounding area that are likely to be affected by the Proposed Development;
- Predicting the environmental effects, both beneficial and adverse, that are likely to occur as a result of the Proposed Development;
- Recommending measures to be adopted during construction or incorporated into the design and operation of the Proposed Development to avoid, reduce or offset predicted environmental effects; and
- Identifying the significance of the environmental effects that remain following the implementation of these measures.

The methodology used to predict and evaluate environmental effects differs between environmental topics. However, the terminology used has been standardised where possible to provide consistency across the EIA. Beneficial and adverse environmental effects are generally described as:

- **Major** – environmental effects that are significant due to the scale of the impact or the importance of the receiving environment and are key considerations in the decision-making process;
- **Moderate** – environmental effects that are significant due to the scale of the impact or the importance of the receiving environment, but are not necessarily key considerations in the decision-making process;
- **Minor** – environmental effects that are noticeable and may influence the design or approach but are not of importance to the decision-making process; or
- **Negligible** – environmental effects that result in no noticeable change to the environment.

The following sections provide a summary of the individual environmental topic assessments undertaken as part of the EIA of the Proposed Development. Each section summarises:

- The existing environmental conditions;
- The predicted environmental effects resulting from the Proposed Development;
- The measures proposed to address the identified environmental effects; and

- Any significant environmental effects that would remain following the implementation of these measures.

3.1. Air Quality

The Air Quality Chapter assesses the potential effects of the Proposed Development with regards to Air Quality during both the Construction and Operational phase. The Proposed Development is not located within an AQMA. Local air quality monitoring undertaken in the vicinity of the Site indicates that existing air quality is good, with pollutant concentrations well below the relevant Air Quality Strategy (AQS) objectives.

Construction Phase

The construction works associated with the Proposed Development have the potential to create dust. During construction, it will therefore be necessary to apply a package of mitigation measures to minimise dust emissions. Appropriate mitigation measures include, but are not limited to, implementing a Dust Management Plan (DMP). Full details of the mitigation measures required are included in Volume 2 of the ES. With these measures in place, it is expected that any residual effects will be 'not significant'.

An assessment of construction traffic emissions of NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} was undertaken at nearby sensitive receptors. The assessment found that construction traffic would result in only very small changes in pollutant concentrations, with all predicted concentrations remaining well below the relevant air quality objectives. The effects of construction traffic on local air quality are therefore considered negligible and not significant.

Operational Phase

An assessment of the operational phase has been undertaken to consider the potential air quality impacts associated with the operation of the fuel cells and the backup diesel generators. The air quality modelling indicated that annual and hourly mean NO₂ concentrations, together with PM₁₀ and daily mean CO concentrations, associated with the operation of the fuel-cells and periodic testing of the back-up generators were predicted to remain well below the relevant air quality objectives at all existing and proposed receptor locations. Although some increases in pollutant concentrations were predicted, these changes are negligible and are not expected to result in adverse effects on local air quality. Therefore, mitigation measures to protect existing receptors and future users of the Proposed Development are not required, however, recommendations have been made to encourage best-practice design.

3.2. Noise

Existing Conditions

A baseline noise survey was undertaken between 16th and 21st April 2026 to establish existing noise levels in the vicinity of the Site. The survey identified road

traffic as the dominant source of noise affecting nearby residential properties. Three representative residential noise-sensitive receptors (NSRs) located to the south and east of the Site were identified for assessment purposes.

Construction Phase

Construction activities including demolition, excavation, earthworks and building construction have the potential to generate temporary noise and vibration effects.

Construction noise was assessed in accordance with BS 5228 using the ABC assessment method. The assessment considered representative construction phases and plant assumptions derived from the outline construction programme. The assessment demonstrated that construction noise levels would remain below the relevant BS 5228 threshold values at the nearest residential receptor. As a result, construction noise effects are predicted to be Negligible Adverse and Not Significant.

Construction vibration was assessed with reference to BS 5228 guidance. Due to the separation distance between the Site and nearby residential receptors, significant vibration effects are not anticipated. Construction vibration effects are therefore predicted to be Negligible Adverse and Not Significant.

A range of mitigation measures will be implemented during construction, including preparation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), adoption of Best Practicable Means (BPM), routine maintenance of plant and equipment, management of deliveries and implementation of a community liaison procedure.

Operational Phase

The Proposed Development includes fixed mechanical and electrical plant associated with the operation of the data centre campus.

As the application is in outline form, detailed plant specifications are not currently available. Operational plant noise limits have therefore been established using measured background noise levels and requirements typically applied by Wokingham Borough Council. These limits will be used to inform the future detailed design of the development.

Provided the adopted operational noise limits are achieved, operational noise effects at nearby residential properties are predicted to be Negligible Adverse and Not Significant.

No significant operational vibration effects are anticipated due to the distances between the Site and nearby residential properties and the incorporation of vibration isolation measures within the detailed design of plant and equipment.

Residual Effects

Following implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, no significant adverse noise or vibration effects are predicted during either the construction or operational phases of the Proposed Development.

3.3. Greenhouse Gas and Climate Change

The climate change and resilience chapter of the report considers the potential effects that the Proposed Development may have on climate change by assessing the greenhouse gas emissions associated with both the construction and operational phase of the development.

The approach adopted to assess and quantify greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions follows best practice guidance published by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). A combination of industry benchmarks and data from comparable developments has been used to evaluate the Proposed Development's contribution to climate change.

The assessment estimates that the construction phase will generate approximately 109,667 tCO₂e, while operational activities, including embodied carbon associated with repair, replacement and refurbishment, are predicted to result in annual net emissions of approximately 154,315 tCO₂e. End-of-life activities are estimated to generate a total of 9,226 tCO₂e, with annual emissions of approximately 154 tCO₂e.

Based on the significance criteria set out within this chapter, construction phase emissions and in-use embodied carbon emissions are assessed as having a Major Adverse (Significant) effect on local emissions, a Minor Adverse (Not Significant) effect on regional emissions, and a Negligible (Not Significant) effect on the UK's carbon budget. End-of-life emissions are assessed as having a Minor Adverse (Not Significant) effect on local emissions and Negligible (Not Significant) effects at the regional and national levels. Embedded mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Proposed Development to minimise GHG emissions and reduce climate change impacts where practicable.

The CCR evaluated the potential effects of future climate change on the Proposed Development and assessed how the development responds to these risks across a range of technical disciplines, including transport, air quality, archaeology and built heritage, ground conditions, hydrology (including flood risk and drainage), ecology, landscape and visual impact, noise and vibration, and socio-economics.

The Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Assessment identified that the principal sources of emissions associated with the Proposed Development include embodied carbon, operational energy use, traffic emissions, water consumption and, ultimately, decommissioning activities.

To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and support the transition to a low-carbon future, the Proposed Development incorporates a range of mitigation measures, including:

- Climate-resilient building and energy design, including thermal comfort assessments, future climate adaptation measures, and resilient energy infrastructure comprising a secured grid connection, onsite fuel cells and backup generators.
- Green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancements, including the Green Ring strategy, retention and enhancement of existing trees, woodland and hedgerows, habitat creation, strengthened ecological connectivity and delivery of a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Sustainable drainage and flood management, including SuDS, attenuation storage and a drainage network designed to manage runoff and reduce flood risk under future climate change scenarios.
- Water efficiency and reuse measures, including greywater recycling, leak detection, automatic flow controls and the exploration of rainwater and greywater reuse opportunities to reduce potable water demand and improve drought resilience.

3.4. Water Resources

The Water Resources Chapter considers the effects arising from the Proposed Development on Water Resources during the construction and operational phase.

Construction Phase

The Water Environment assessment found that construction activities have the potential to affect groundwater, drainage infrastructure and local flood risk. However, with the implementation of a CEMP, adherence to best practice pollution prevention measures, and compliance with relevant drainage requirements, all identified impacts are expected to be Negligible and Not Significant. This includes effects on the Thames Water sewer network, underlying aquifers, groundwater quality, and local flood risk receptors. Overall, no significant effects on the water environment are anticipated during the construction phase.

Operational Phase

The operational water environment assessment identified no significant effects. The Proposed Development incorporates sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), attenuation storage, controlled discharge rates and hazardous chemical containment measures to protect water quality and manage flood risk. Appropriate wastewater and surface water management measures will also be implemented in consultation with Thames Water. As a result, effects on the Thames Water sewer network, groundwater quality within the Upper and Lower Aquifers, groundwater flood risk, surface water flood risk, and the Proposed Development and surrounding receptors are assessed as Negligible (Not Significant). A Minor Beneficial effect is anticipated for the Thames Water sewer network due to the expected reduction in foul sewerage volumes compared to the existing use.

3.5. Waste

The assessment considered the use of construction materials and the generation and management of waste during demolition and construction. Operational waste was scoped out because the completed development is expected to generate relatively small quantities of commercial, maintenance and electrical waste, which can be managed through established commercial waste collection services.

Demolition of the existing office buildings and construction of the Proposed Development will require materials including concrete, steel and aggregates. It will also generate demolition, construction and excavation waste, including a substantial surplus of excavated material. A review of permitted waste facilities within 10 km of the Application Site identified an established network of facilities capable of managing the anticipated waste streams.

Measures will be implemented through a CEMP and Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP), or equivalent. These will include applying the waste hierarchy, carefully procuring materials, segregating waste, reusing suitable demolition and excavated materials on-site where practicable, and transferring remaining waste to appropriately permitted facilities using licensed waste carriers. Hazardous waste will be appropriately identified, stored and managed by specialist contractors.

With these measures in place, the use of construction materials and the generation of demolition, construction and excavation waste would result in temporary, short-term minor adverse effects. The generation and management of hazardous waste would result in a temporary, short-term negligible adverse effect. All residual effects would be not significant.

4. Assessment of Cumulative Effects

The EIA has considered cumulative effects arising from interactions between the environmental effects of the Proposed Development itself and from the combined effects of the Proposed Development with other existing or reasonably foreseeable developments.

4.1. Interactions Between Environmental Effects

During demolition and construction, receptors may experience more than one type of effect, including dust, noise, construction traffic, waste handling and effects on the water environment. These effects would be temporary and would be managed through the mitigation identified by the individual assessments, including measures secured through a CEMP.

During operation, the potential for interactions between air quality, noise, climate change, water resources and waste effects has also been considered. No additional significant effects have been identified beyond those reported by the individual environmental assessments.

4.2. Effects with Other Developments

The cumulative assessment considered committed and reasonably foreseeable developments within an initial 5 km search area around the Site. This included developments within Thames Valley Business Park and the surrounding area that could overlap with the demolition, construction or operation of the Proposed Development.

The assessments concluded that cumulative noise and water resource effects would be Not Significant, subject to the identified mitigation and relevant planning and regulatory controls. No significant interrelationship effects were identified in relation to waste and materials beyond those addressed by the other technical assessments.

Greenhouse gas emissions are cumulative by their nature because emissions from individual developments contribute to global climate change. The cumulative nature of these emissions is therefore already reflected in the findings of the greenhouse gas assessment summarised in Section 3.3.

Overall, no additional significant cumulative effects have been identified beyond the significant greenhouse gas and climate-resilience effects reported for the Proposed Development.

5. Conclusions

A proportionate and targeted EIA has been undertaken for the proposed redevelopment of the Site to provide a data centre campus and associated infrastructure.

The EIA has considered the potential effects of the Proposed Development on air quality, noise and vibration, climate change and greenhouse gas emissions, water resources, and waste and materials during demolition, construction and operation.

Subject to the implementation of the measures identified within the ES, the assessments conclude that the Proposed Development would not result in significant adverse effects in relation to air quality, noise and vibration, water resources, or waste and materials. A Minor Beneficial effect is anticipated in relation to the foul sewer network because foul water volumes are expected to reduce compared with the existing office use.

The principal significant effects identified by the EIA relate to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change resilience. Elements of the construction and operational greenhouse gas emissions would result in significant adverse effects when considered against the local carbon budget, while operational energy use would also result in a significant adverse effect at the regional level. Effects against the UK carbon budget are assessed as Not Significant.

The climate change resilience assessment identifies significant adverse effects associated with future heatwave and drought events. The Proposed Development incorporates measures intended to improve resilience, including climate-resilient building and energy design, sustainable drainage, water-efficiency measures, and the retention and enhancement of landscape and ecological features.

The cumulative assessment has not identified any additional significant effects beyond the greenhouse gas and climate-resilience effects reported by the individual assessments.



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