

PLANNING REF : 262274
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 49 Audley Street
:
: RG30 1BS
SUBMITTED BY : Ms Isobel Smith
DATE SUBMITTED : 12/10/2026

COMMENTS:

I am deeply concerned about both the local and global impact of the proposed data centre.

As someone who lives locally, and frequently visits Thames Valley Park to swim, paddle board, walk and enjoy the nature reserve, I am very concerned about possible pollution (including heat and noise pollution) to the nearby nature reserve. The planning application claims that the plan would result in a net gain for biodiversity, but I am not sufficiently reassured that wildlife will not be negatively impacted. The plan only says that heat cycling will be explored, and I don't think it's acceptable to move forward with the project without a commitment around this. Other data centres (eg in the United States) have also had severe impacts on air quality, affecting local residents' health.

This site is also close to residential buildings, and I am concerned about the impact on residents.

As someone who lives nearby and relies on Thames Water and the local electric grid for water and electricity, I am concerned about the impact on availability and cost of utilities for local residents. We have already experienced a hosepipe ban recently due to the reduced rainfall and increased heat caused by climate change, and I do not want to see electricity and clean water diverted from human use to power data centres.

On the topic of climate change, I am more broadly concerned by the global environmental impact of the recent rapid increase in data centre use. Data centres are known to release a lot of heat and use huge amounts of power, which has been used to justify increased use of fossil fuel based power stations. This is unacceptable, and incompatible with addressing the climate change and preserving human life.

I am also concerned by the economic implications of the rapid growth of data centre use for training large language models and other similar technologies. The proposal on the project's website says that the data centre will increase local jobs, but this has not been mentioned in the planning application. Many organisations are already rolling back their use of LLMs due to their unreliability, and I have seen many economic commentators argue that the current approach to AI is forming an economic bubble which will at some point burst. I also feel that referring to data centres as critical infrastructure when they are used to train LLMs is inaccurate - these are not an essential technology for quality human life. I would prefer more transparency about exactly what the data centre would be used for.