

Thorney Lane Business Park

EIA Screening Opinion Request

July 2024

Prepared on behalf of Thorney Lane LLP

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Contents

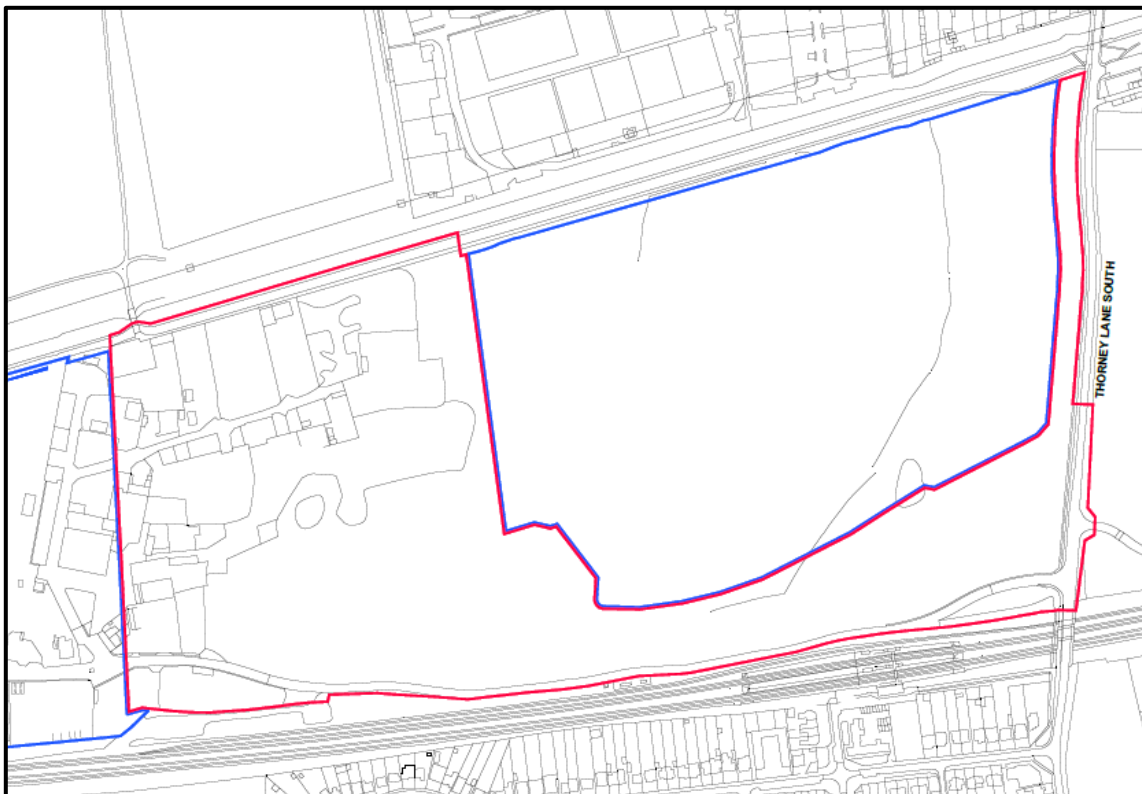
1. Introduction.....	1
2. The Site.....	2
3. The Development Proposed.....	2
4. EIA Screening	4
5. Consideration of the Proposed Development.....	7
6. Conclusion	28

EIA Screening Opinion Request

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On behalf of Thorney Lane LLP (the 'Applicant'), Savills is writing to request a formal Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') screening opinion from Buckinghamshire Council (BC / the Council) in connection with proposed data centre development on land at Thorney Lane Business Park ('the Project').
- 1.2 The description of development for the purpose of this EIA Screening Opinion Request is:
- "The Proposed Development will comprise data centre development comprising up to 90,000 m² Gross Internal Area (GIA) / 110,000 m² Gross External Floorspace (GEA) of B8 use class floorspace with a maximum height parameter of 25 m alongside associated access, parking and landscaping."*
- 1.3 This request for a screening opinion is made under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the 'EIA Regulations'). In accordance with Regulation 6(2) of the EIA Regulations, this report contains:
- A site plan;
 - A description of the development and demolition works required;
 - A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development; and
 - Where information is available, a description of any likely significant effects of the proposed developments on the environment.

Figure 1 Site location plan (see full plan appended)



2. The Site

- 2.1 The Site is 18.6 ha in size and is rectangular in shape. The Site is located approximately 5 km east of Slough, near to the edge of the M25 motorway. It is bound to the north by the Grand Union Canal, to the west by the remaining area of the Thorney Lane business park, to the east by Thorney Lane North and to the south by the mainline railway. The Site is currently partly in use as an business park, with a smaller part of the Site currently characterised as greenfield. The majority of the Site is classified as Green Belt, aside from the north western corner which is outside of the Green Belt boundary.
- 2.2 The western portion of Thorney Lane Business Park has planning consent for three data centres under reference PL/22/1775/FA. This application was screened for EIA under application reference PL/22/1742/EIASR. Whilst no Screening Opinion was issued, the application was not subject to EIA.
- 2.3 Existing site levels are approximately 31 m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and are generally flat. The Site is entirely within Flood Zone 1 and the nearest area of Flood Zone 3 is located approximately 750 m south west of the Site. The majority of the Site is not at risk of surface water flooding, although some small areas of the Site are classified as low and medium risk (up to 3.3% annual chance of localised flooding).
- 2.4 The Site is located within the South Buckinghamshire District Council Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) No. 2 (Buckinghamshire), which runs from the M25 Junction 15 up to M25 Junction 16 (from the M4 in the south to the M40 in the north).
- 2.5 Historically, the Site was used for gravel extraction until the 1960's, when it was subject to landfilling of construction and demolition waste before part of the Site was developed for industrial use.

Local context

- 2.6 The closest residential receptors to the Site are located approximately 250 m south, on the other side of the railway line. On the northern side of the canal there is the Ridgeway Industrial Estate, which has a number of commercial uses including freight and transport. Beyond Ridgeway Industrial Estate is the village of Iver, which is predominantly comprised of small residential neighbourhoods, which are separated from the Site by the canal and agricultural land. To the east of the Site is the K9 pet shop and, on the other side of the M25, the Iver North Water Treatment Works and the Court Lane Industrial Estate.
- 2.7 There are no environmentally designated sites on the Site or within 2 km of the Site. There are a number of heritage assets within 2 km of the Site, the nearest of which being the Thorney House Grade II listed building approximately 900 m south east. Also of note is the crop mark scheduled monument at Thorney approximately 1 km south east.
- 2.8 There are a number of Public Rights of Way near to the Site. The IVE/17/6 footpath runs alongside the Grand Union canal to the north of the Site. To the west of the Site the IVE/15A/1 footpath runs along the western boundary of Thorney Lane Business Park.

3. The Development Proposed

- 3.1 The proposals are for data centre development comprising up to 90,000 m² GIA / 110,000m² GEA of B8 use class floorspace. Total building heights are proposed to be up to 25 m in height. Site levels are proposed to be approximately 32.00 m AOD.
- 3.2 An illustrative layout showing a potential option for developing the Site based on emerging designs can be seen in the Figure 1 below. This shows each data centre is expected to be

aligned horizontally, with office facilities in the eastern end of each building and backup diesel generator gantries located on the western end of each building.

Figure 2 Illustrative Layout



- 3.3 Each data centre is expected to have a dedicated car park on the eastern side, where the buildings will be accessed from. The south-western section of the Site will be dedicated to utilities infrastructure such as substations and foul pumping facilities.
- 3.4 The primary access for the Site will be from the south east via a new roundabout junction with Thorney Lane, with a second roundabout proposed to provide access to the Proposed Development (as shown above) and future proof access to the land to the west which is subject to an allocation in the Iver Neighbourhood Plan. Whilst the access proposals will be subject to a separate planning application which is expected to be submitted in advance of the data centre application, both the access proposals and data centre are considered together in this Screening Opinion Request.

- 3.5 The Site will be bordered by landscaping on the southern, eastern and northern sides. The southern part of the Site will also host a drainage basin, while the eastern and northern landscape buffers will have swales.
- 3.6 The layout provides for pedestrian access around the east of the Site to be able to cross the Grand Union Canal to the north via the existing crossing.

4. EIA Screening

Introduction

- 4.1 In determining whether the Proposed Development constitutes EIA development, consideration should be given to the following:
- If the proposed development is of a type listed in Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations;
 - If not, whether it is listed in Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations;
 - Is it located within or partly within a sensitive area;
 - Does it meet any of the relevant thresholds and criteria set out in Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations and/or
 - Would it lead to likely significant effects on the environment?
- 4.2 These points are explored further in this section with reference to the EIA Regulations and supporting Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG').

Schedule 1 Projects

- 4.3 The Proposed Development is not of a type listed in Schedule 1.

Schedule 2 Projects

- 4.4 Schedule 2 identifies development types where, if the relevant threshold criteria are exceeded, further consideration is required (with reference to Schedule 3) in order to determine whether significant effects are likely, in which case, EIA is required. We consider that the Proposed Development falls within Part 10 (a) of Schedule 2:
- '(a) Industrial estate development projects'.*
- 4.5 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.*
- 4.6 The Proposed Development may also be considered to fall under Part 13(b) of Schedule 2 (changes and extensions to Schedule 2 developments) if the LPA consider this project to be an extension of the already consented data centre development, however the criteria for Part 13(b) would be the same as Part 10(a) and therefore the thresholds are met if either is applied.
- 4.7 The proposal is for three data centres with total floorspace up to 90,000 m² GIA / 110,000 m² GEA. The proposal is, therefore, Schedule 2 development for which screening the need for EIA should be conducted. The EIA Regulations provide that development listed in Schedule 2 is EIA development if it is likely to have a significant effect on the environment by virtue of certain factors such as its nature, size or location.
- 4.8 The PPG sets out further guidance and criteria against which Schedule 2 developments should be considered and provides that EIA is unlikely to be required for industrial estate development

projects unless the site area for the new development is more than 20 hectares. Finally, it provides that key issues to consider in any determination would include the potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise.

- 4.9 This screening assessment has been prepared to indicate whether the Proposed Development would be likely to result in significant environmental effects. In order to achieve this, Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations and the PPG need to be taken into account. Information on these is set out below.
- 4.10 Sensitive areas are defined in the EIA regulations as:
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest and European Sites;
 - National Parks, the Broads, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and
 - World Heritage Sites and Scheduled Monuments.
- 4.11 In certain cases, local designations which are not included in the definition of sensitive areas, but which are nonetheless environmentally sensitive, may also be relevant in determining whether an assessment is required. Furthermore, in considering the sensitivity of a particular location, regard should also be had to whether any national or internationally agreed environmental standards (e.g. air quality) are already being approached or exceeded.

Schedule 3 Criteria

- 4.12 Regulation 5 of the EIA Regulations states that when determining whether a Schedule 2 is EIA development, the relevant local planning authority must take into account in making that decision:
- (a) any information provided by the applicant;*
- (b) the results of any relevant EU environmental assessment which are reasonably available to the relevant planning authority; and*
- (c) such of the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations as are relevant to the development. The three broad selection criteria included at Schedule 3 that should be considered are: 1. Characteristics of the development; 2. Location of the development; 3. Types and characteristics of the potential impact*
- 4.13 We have considered the Proposed Development against these below, having regard to the characteristics of the potential impacts.
- 4.14 Characteristics:
- The size of the development;
 - The cumulation with other existing and/or approved development;
 - The use of natural resources;
 - The production of waste;
 - Pollution and nuisances;
 - The risk of major accidents;
 - Risks to human health.
- 4.15 Location:
- The existing land use;

- The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area;
- The absorption capacity of the natural environment.

4.16 Potential Impact:

- The extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population);
- The nature of the impact
- The transboundary nature of the impact;
- The intensity and complexity of the impact;
- The probability of the impact;
- The duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development; and
- The possibility of reducing the impact.

Consideration of Cumulative Effects

4.17 PPG (Environmental Impact Assessment: Paragraph: 024 ref: 4-024-20170728) states:

Each application (or request for a screening opinion) should be considered on its own merits. There are occasions, however, when other existing or approved development may be relevant in determining whether significant effects are likely as a consequence of a proposed development. The local planning authorities should always have regard to the possible cumulative effects arising from any existing or approved development.

4.18 In addition the PPG (Paragraph: 025 Reference ID: 4-025-20170728) states:

An application should not be considered in isolation if, in reality, it is an integral part of a more substantial development (Judgment in the case of R v Swale BC ex parte RSPB [1991] 1PLR 6). In such cases, the need for Environmental Impact Assessment must be considered in the context of the whole development. In other cases, it is appropriate to establish whether each of the proposed developments could proceed independently (R (Candlish) v Hastings Borough Council [2005] All ER (D) 178 (Jul); Baker v Bath & North East Somerset Council [2009] All ER (D) 169 (Jul)).

4.19 The following Environmental Impact Assessment screening checklist is to aid the Council and ensure that the relevant issues are considered and to provide a clear audit trail, as suggested by the PPG.

5. Consideration of the Proposed Development

Application Thresholds	
i. Does the Proposed development fall within Schedule 1 (Y/N)?	N
ii. If yes, what is the applicable description?	-
iii. Does the Proposed development fall within Schedule 2 (Y/N)?	Y
iv. If yes, what is the applicable description?	10(a) Industrial estate development projects
v. Is any part of the Proposed development to be carried out in a defined Sensitive Area (see Regulation 2(1))	N
vi. What is the applicable threshold/criteria in Schedule 2?	the area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.
vii. Does the Proposed development meet/exceed the applicable threshold (Y/N)?	Y
If yes to (iii) and then (v) or (vii) the proposed development will require EIA if it is likely to have significant effects on the environment.	

Possible effects on the environment
<p>The following information has been prepared with reference to the selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development, provided in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Characteristics of development (a) – (g) 2. Location of development (a) – (c) 3. Characteristics of the potential impact (a) – (h) <p>Features of the proposed development and any measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment have been identified as per the PPG guidance at Paragraph 023 of the Environmental Impact Assessment chapter (ID 4-023-20170728).</p> <p>The Applicant has a good understanding of the possible environmental effects of the proposed development and, as such, the illustrative layout of the proposed development includes inherent environmental mitigation to respond to the constraints and potential impacts on and off site.</p> <p>In the absence of inherent and additional mitigation and in advance of any judgments of the significance of individual effects, the possible environmental effects of the proposals are considered to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality – from emissions and dust generated during the construction phase and emissions resulting from the operation of the Proposed Development • Noise and vibration – from the construction and operational phases of the proposed development

Possible effects on the environment

- Landscape and visual effects – local impacts on surrounding human receptors through the development of the Site; near and far-field views of the buildings from the road network, public rights of way, and residential properties
- Social and environmental effects – including the creation of new employment during construction and operation
- Transport – the traffic movements associated with the construction phase of the Proposed Development on the local road network
- Biodiversity and ecology – the effects on existing biodiversity and ecology from the development of the Site and introduction of new landscaping
- Risks to human health – the risk of accidents or disasters resulting from the construction phase of the Proposed Development
- Climate change – the effects on climate through GHG emissions during the construction and operation phase
- Ground conditions – the effects on ground conditions through the mobilisation of potential contaminants during the construction phase

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons) If the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable.
	Briefly explain reasons and, if applicable and/or if known, include name of feature(s) and proximity to site(s)	Is a significant effect likely, having regard particularly to the magnitude and spatial extent (including population size affected), nature, intensity and complexity, probability, expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact and the possibility to effectively reduce the impact? If the finding of no significant effect is reliant on specific features or measures of the project envisaged to avoid, or prevent what might otherwise have been, significant adverse effects on the environment these should be identified in bold .
Natural resources		
Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	No Existing site levels are approximately 31 m AOD and are generally flat. A development platform is proposed, which will raise site levels by approximately 1 m, although site topography will remain flat. Given that existing and proposed site topography is flat, changes to the topography are not proposed.	N/A
Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes The vast majority of the materials required for the construction of the Proposed Development are common natural and manufactured materials generic to the construction of industrial estate developments. The fit-out of the data centre will require the procurement of servers and other	No Given the scale of the Proposed Development in the context of the supply of the required materials, this is not likely to result in a significant impact associated with the use of natural resources.

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons) If the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable.	
		related equipment such as microchips and electronic boards which contain critical raw materials and rare earth elements, such as gold and palladium.		
Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, e.g. forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?	No	<p>The majority of the Site is currently in use as an business park and therefore is partly classified as brownfield land. The south-eastern portion of the Site is greenfield land which will be partially retained as greenfield and SuDS, aside from the southernmost data centre which will take some of the area. The agricultural land class of the Site is classified as non-agricultural due to the existing industrial use on the Site.</p> <p>The Site is part of a minerals safeguarding area as part of the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. However, it is understood from previous ground investigations on the Site that it was subject to gravel extraction until the 1960's when it was used for landfilling of construction/demolition waste and then developed for industrial use. Therefore, given previous mineral extraction and subsequent landfilling, it is considered unlikely that any mineral resource would remain on site.</p>	N/A	

A Screening Criteria Question		B Response to the Screening Criteria question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons) If the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable.	
Waste					
Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?		Yes	During the demolition and construction phases, waste will be produced by standard construction processes through the period. During the operational phase, there will be negligible waste production.	No	<p>During construction, the approach to sustainable ways of working will seek to optimise construction methods and material use, and implement best practice waste management, retaining as much as possible of any excavated material within the development area.</p> <p>Waste would be minimised primarily through re-use on the Site itself, and where this cannot be achieved, by recycling elsewhere if possible, with disposal to a licenced facility used as a last resort. This will ensure that adverse effects from the management of waste will be unlikely, including from removal of the structures already built on site.</p> <p>Demolition waste will be reused wherever possible and materials that cannot be used will be disposed using a licensed waste operator.</p> <p>A Construction and Operational Waste Management Plan will be submitted alongside the planning application.</p>

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons) If the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable.
Pollution and Nuisances		
Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	<p>Yes</p> <p>The primary influence on air quality will take place during demolition and construction, with emissions and potentially dust generated from demolition activity and construction traffic being the primary source.</p> <p>During the operational phase, the Proposed Development will reduce the number of vehicle trips on the surrounding road network, with the TA predicting 542 fewer HGV movements and 178 fewer light vehicle movements each day across the local highway network. Given there is predicted to be a reduction in vehicle trips, it is considered unlikely that significant effects on air quality will occur due to transport.</p> <p>During operation, diesel generators are required for emergency backup power generation. These are expected to require routine maintenance startups which will be a temporary localised source of air pollution.</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Whilst there is likely to be some dust creation during construction, this would be controlled by appropriate planning conditions. Through the adoption of standard best practice measures, the likely residual impact of the Proposed Development is not considered to be significant in accordance with Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) guidance. Mitigation measures such as implementing a dust management plan, ensuring screens are placed around dust producing activities and using dampening techniques would further reduce the potential dust impacts. Air quality impacts from construction vehicle emissions can be reduced through best practice construction techniques, such as ensuring that vehicles are not left idling. The above can be implemented and managed through the production of a CEMP. Overall, it is considered unlikely that the Proposed Development will result in significant air quality effects during the construction phase.</p> <p>During operation, the use of diesel generators for emergency power generation</p>

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons) If the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable.	
				<p>may result in temporary localised effects on air quality. However, given the temporary nature and a lack of nearby sensitive receptors, it is considered unlikely that this will result in significant effects.</p> <p>An Air Quality Assessment will be submitted alongside the planning application.</p>
<p>Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>During the construction phase, construction traffic and machinery will generate new sources of noise and vibration. The closest noise sensitive receptors to the Site are the residential properties to the south of the Site along Bathurst Walk (approximately 200 m at the closest point). The main line railway is located between the Proposed Development and these residential receptors, which is likely to be the primary source of noise affecting the residents and considered likely to mask noise coming from the Site.</p> <p>Noise during operation is restricted to the emergency backup diesel generators which will require temporary startups for maintenance purposes.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Noise and vibration associated with the construction of the development has the potential to impact upon these receptors. However, impacts will be temporary and will be limited to daytime hours via commitments in the anticipated CEMP. Although the construction works will be carried out during the daytime, some equipment, such as power generation plant for security or lighting, may be required to run at night. All plant will be selected, maintained and positioned to minimise potential noise impacts. It is therefore considered that demolition and construction impacts can be appropriately mitigated through the use of appropriate equipment and standard best practice methods to ensure no significant effects occur. The effects of any construction noise</p>

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				<p>and vibration would be minimised by compliance with relevant environmental protection legislation and through accordance with best practice.</p> <p>During operation, noise generated by the backup diesel generators is restricted to temporary maintenance or emergency situations. Given the distance to the nearest sensitive receptors and the intervening noise sources with the railway line, it is considered unlikely that any significant effects will occur.</p> <p>A Noise Impact Assessment report will be submitted alongside the planning application.</p>
<p>Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A ground investigation has been undertaken which states that contamination has not been identified in groundwater. Given the previous land use as a landfill site and the existing use as a business park, the presence of land contamination is possible.</p> <p>The risk of contamination to land or surface water is considered to be limited to the demolition and construction stages. The nearest surface water receptor sensitive to water pollution is the Grand Union Canal adjacent to the north of the Site.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>If contamination is found on site during the construction phase, best practice procedure will be followed to ensure the risk to receptors is minimised. Standard best practice construction processes will ensure the risk of contamination to watercourses and land is minimised. These measures will be implemented via the CEMP.</p>

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons) If the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable.	
<p>Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?</p>	Yes	<p>Obligations under the Environment Act 1995 require local authorities to declare an AQMA at sensitive receptor locations where National Air Quality Strategy ('AQS') Objectives have been or are predicted to be exceeded. The Site is within the South Bucks District Council AQMA No. 2, which was declared in 2018 due to exceedances in nitrogen dioxide emissions criteria.</p>	No	<p>Based on the reduced operational traffic generation predicted by the TA, it is not considered likely that significant effects on the AQMA will occur.</p>
Population and Human Health				
<p>Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?</p>	No	<p>The Site's location within the UK is such that natural disasters, including those caused by climate change, are not considered to represent a likely risk to the Proposed Development.</p> <p>The Proposed Development will be designed in accordance with recognised and accepted best practice in terms of highway design, specification of drainage and current building regulations. It is considered that, whilst there is always a potential risk of an accident, this risk is managed through design measures and through compliance with statutory design guidelines, such that a significant environmental impact is unlikely.</p>	N/A	

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons) If the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable.	
<p>Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)</p>	No	<p>A ground investigation has been undertaken which states that contamination has not been identified in groundwater and that the Site is not considered to pose a significant risk to off-site receptors. Based on this, it is not considered likely for water contamination to result in significant effects to nearby receptors.</p> <p>The primary influence on air quality will take place during demolition and construction, with emissions and potentially dust generated from demolition activity and construction traffic being the primary source. These effects will be reduced by using standard best practice construction methods in a CEMP such as wheel washing of HGV's prior to leaving site.</p> <p>Due to the presence of the railway line nearer to the residential receptors (200 m south of the Site) it is considered unlikely that the Proposed Development will result in significant effects on human health relating to noise emissions</p>	N/A	
Water Resources				
<p>Are there any water resources including surface</p>	No	<p>The Site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, meaning it has a low risk of flooding. However, as</p>	N/A	

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waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?		<p>the Site area is greater than 1 ha, a Flood Risk Assessment is required to be submitted with the planning application.</p> <p>The Grand Union Canal is located adjacent to the north of the Site. A drainage strategy will be submitted with the planning application which will ensure that surface water is suitably managed to minimise the risk of impacts occurring on the canal. The drainage strategy will include measures such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) which help to reduce the risk of flooding and reduce the level of pollutants in runoff.</p>		
Biodiversity (species and habitats)				
Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project? (e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water-bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or	No	The Site does not contain any statutory or non-statutory ecological designations and there are none within 2 km of the Site. Therefore, significant environmental effects on designated sites is considered unlikely to occur.	N/A	

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons) If the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable.	
woodlands, undesignated nature reserves or parks. (Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local)).				
Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?	No	<p>The Site contains an area of green space in the southern section, however it is considered this is unlikely to have significant ecological value given the historical use as a landfill site and the existing nearby industrial uses. The remainder of the Site is in use as an industrial area and therefore is considered to have negligible ecological value.</p> <p>A Preliminary Ecological Assessment was undertaken for the adjacent planning application (ref. PL/22/1775/FA). The assessment found that there were no great crested newt eDNA pond survey results for district licensing or class survey licence returns within 2 km of the adjacent site. The line of trees along the canal was found to include a number of species such as hedgehog, bats and nesting birds. The buildings on the site were found to be lacking in roosting opportunities for bats. Parts of the site were suitable habitat for reptiles, such as grass snakes and slow worms, in low populations. The assessments conclusions indicate that the Site is unlikely to have high ecological value or significant populations of protected</p>	N/A	

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		species. Therefore it is considered unlikely that there will be significant ecological effects as a result of the Proposed Development.		
Landscape and Visual				
Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated / non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?¹ Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	No	The Site is not within or nearby to a National Landscape (previously AONB). The nearest National Landscape is approximately 15 km north west of the Site.	N/A	
Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people? (If so, from where, what direction, and what distance?)	No	The development zone of the Site is currently mostly in use for a range of industrial buildings. The proposed use may increase the height of buildings in the Site, although it will not change the existing character. The nearest receptors are from a footpath along the canal to the north and the	N/A	

¹ See question 8.1 for consideration of impacts on heritage designations and receptors, including on views to, within and from designated areas.

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		residents to the south. The footpath is screened by hedgerows and the Site cannot be viewed from the north. The receptors to the south are located over 200 m away and would already view the existing business park. Therefore, it is not considered likely that the Proposed Development would result in significant landscape or visual effects.		
Cultural Heritage/Archaeology				
Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated / classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	No	<p>There are no designated heritage assets on the Site but there are a number of listed buildings in the vicinity, the closest of which are within a 1 km radius of the Site (see site description). The Site benefits from a substantial degree of containment by existing settlement pattern, landform and existing green infrastructure. As such, it is considered the Site has the capacity to accommodate the Proposed Development without significantly impacting the setting of nearby heritage asset or adversely impacting in the local or wider landscape.</p> <p>The Site is not located within an archaeological priority area and contains no designated buried heritage assets (such as scheduled monuments). It was previously in use as a landfill site and is</p>	N/A	

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)		C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons) If the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable.	
		currently partly in use for industrial purposes. There are no overriding archaeological constraints to the Proposed Development. During construction, standard best practice working methods will be followed to ensure that, should any below ground non-designated heritage assets be discovered, appropriate mitigation fieldwork will ensure adverse impacts are avoided.		
Transport and Access				
Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	There are a number of Public Rights of Way near to the Site. The IVE/17/6 footpath runs alongside the Grand Union canal to the north of the Site. The IVE/15A/1 footpath runs along the western boundary of Thorney Lane Business Park.	No	Whilst there are a PROWs in the vicinity of the Site which are used by the public, these will be retained and will not be physically affected by the scheme. It is likely that potential effects of the scheme will be limited to visual impacts that would not be significant.
Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	During the construction phase, HGVs and construction related vehicles will be required to access the Site and use the surrounding road network to remove and import materials. This may exceed the current baseline, although the Site is currently used for industrial activity and therefore the	No	Vehicle movements can be controlled through appropriate traffic management and routing agreement with restrictions imposed over timings as appropriate. A temporary impact could arise during construction on local traffic which could affect people who live and work in the area. However, the Site is

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		<p>baseline will account for some HGV's using the local road network currently.</p> <p>During operation, it is likely that traffic flows from the Site will reduce as data centres will require only a small number of staff for maintenance purposes. Flows during operation will also be small vehicles rather than HGV's, meaning there should be an overall reduction in HGV movements during operation.</p>	<p>within an area with well-established road and travel infrastructure. Therefore, with the implementation of standard control methods, significant environmental effects are not considered likely during construction phase.</p> <p>As the Site is currently partially developed and used as a business park, vehicle movements associated with the Site and the remainder of the business park are a prominent feature of the existing environmental baseline. Once operational, the Proposed Development will reduce the number of vehicle trips on the surrounding road network, with the TA predicting 542 fewer HGV movements and 178 fewer light vehicle movements each day across the local highway network. Given the proposed use, the composition of vehicles accessing the Site would predominantly be cars, although some HGV trips may be required (approximately 5%). Given the surrounding industrial land uses to the west of the Site, commercial vehicle movements are an existing feature on the surrounding road network. Therefore, the Proposed Development is not considered to introduce a significant negative change in vehicle</p>

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				composition on the network. The overall scale and nature of the Proposed Development is not considered likely to result in significant adverse effects on traffic or transport. Consequently, it is not considered that the scheme warrants an EIA on transport grounds.
Land Use				
Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.	Yes	The Thorney Lane Business Park is located partially on the Site. It is proposed for demolition as part of the Proposed Development. The remainder of the business park is to be demolished as part of the adjacent consent (PL/22/1775/FA).	No	The business park is comprised of storage containers, small industrial units and aggregate storage piles which are not considered to be sensitive to redevelopment. Whilst they will be displaced as part of the demolition stage, it is considered that there is suitable alternative industrial space in the locality and therefore significant effects are unlikely.
Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes	The land to the west of the Site has planning consent for three new data centres under application reference PL/22/1775/FA.	No	Whilst the proposals are adjacent, once operational they will have very little traffic generation, as discussed above, and therefore are considered unlikely to result in significant cumulative effects (see below).

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Land Stability and Climate				
Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No	The Site's location within the UK is such that natural disasters, including those caused by climate change, are not considered to represent a likely risk to the Proposed Development. For example, it is considered that the likelihood of an earthquake with a magnitude sufficient to cause damage to buildings and/or loss of life occurring and impacting the Site is extremely low.	N/A	
Cumulative Effects				
Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase?	Yes	In respect of potential cumulative effects with other development, PPG advises that <i>"each application (or request for a screening opinion) should be considered on its own merits. There are occasions, however, when other existing or approved development may be relevant in determining whether significant effects are likely as a consequence of a proposed development. The local planning authorities should always have regard to the possible cumulative effects arising from any</i>	No	A qualitative review of the cumulative schemes has been undertaken. The Site is separated from surrounding areas by a number of linear constraints, including the Grand Union Canal to the north, the mainline railway to the south and the M25 to the east. These linear constraints separate the Site from all but one of the cumulative schemes reviewed, which is considered to limit the

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	<p><i>existing or approved development</i>" (ID 4-024-201740728).</p> <p>Consideration has been given as to whether there is potential for likely significant effects to occur through the combination of the Proposed Development with other existing or approved developments. A GIS search of the Glenigan planning application database has been conducted, which looked to identify planning applications within 3 km of 50 dwellings or more or 1,000 sqm commercial space or more. The search returned the following sites:</p> <p>Planning approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SITE 1: Langley Business Centre, Station Road, Langley, Slough, SL3 8DS (P/00437/093) - 60 Flats & Data Centre/Offices. • SITE 2: Link Park, Thorney Mill Road, Hillingdon, UB7 7EZ (PL/21/4584/OA) - Data centre of up to 55,000 sqm • SITE 3: Comag, Tavistock Road, Hillingdon UB7 7QE (24843/APP/2022/2403) - 105 Residential Units & Community Hub 	<p>possibility of significant cumulative effects with those schemes.</p> <p>Site 4 (PL/22/1775/FA) is the only cumulative scheme in close proximity to the Site which is not separated by any of the constraints outlined above. The application was accompanied by a number of technical reports, which are summarised below.</p> <p>The Archaeological Desk Based Assessment found the overall archaeological potential to be low to moderate, and that any further archaeological mitigation requested could be fulfilled with standard archaeological planning conditions. The Heritage Statement found only potential for indirect effects on heritage assets.</p> <p>The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal concluded that no negative significant effects will occur to important biodiversity receptors, including legally protected species and designated sites.</p> <p>The Flood Risk Assessment concluded that the development has a low risk of flooding from all sources and that runoff could be</p>

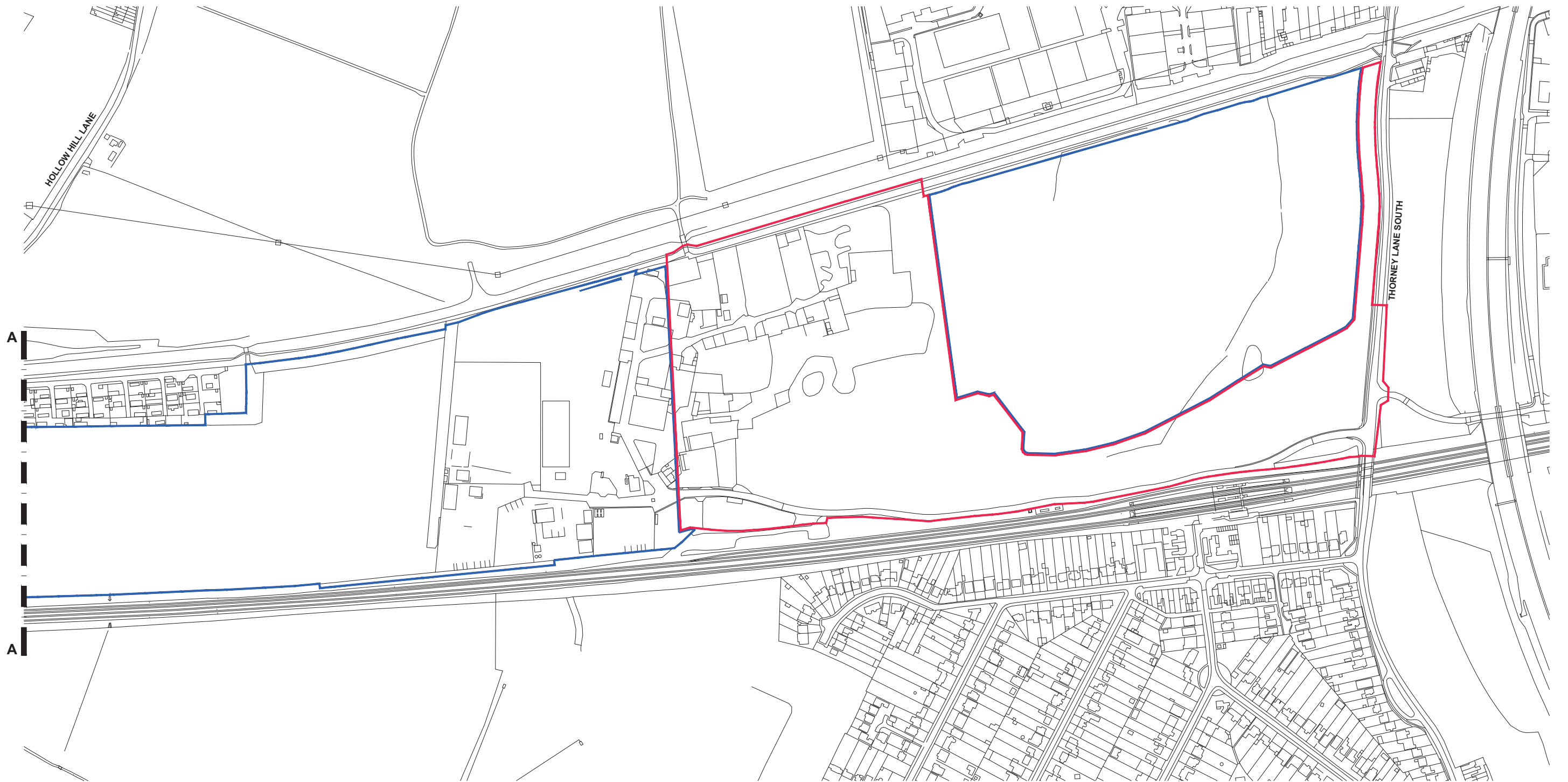
A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or N/A)	C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons) If the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Site 4:</u> Thorney Business Park, Thorney Lane North, Iver, SL0 9HF (PL/22/1775/FA) - 3 Data Centres • <u>Site 5:</u> Land At Yiewsley Library & 2 Falling Lane, Otterfield Road Yiewsley, Hillingdon, London, UB7 8AB (76795/APP/2023/2503) - 95 Flats & 1 Library <p>Planning applications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Site 6:</u> Morrison's, 41 - 67 High Street, Yiewsley, Hillingdon, Hillingdon, London, UB7 7QQ (2370/APP/2023/1727) - 158 Flats & 1 Supermarket • <u>Site 7:</u> The Willow Tree, 62 Station Road, Langley, Slough, Berkshire, SL3 8BT (P/01272/020) - 53 Flats • <u>Site 8:</u> Colnbrook Logistics Centre, Colnbrook by Pass, Slough, Berkshire, SL3 0EB (P/12244/012) - Industrial & Warehouse Unit • <u>Site 9:</u> Court Lane Industrial Estate, Court Lane, Iver, Buckinghamshire (PL/22/4145/OA) - Data centre (Use Class B8 (Data Centre)) of up to 65,000sqm (GEA) 	<p>managed sustainably to ensure flood risk didn't increase elsewhere.</p> <p>The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment found the site is of lower landscape value and sensitivity and that the development would result in generally low magnitude adverse effects which are localised and would not constitute significant effects in EIA terms.</p> <p>The Noise Impact Assessment concluded that noise is unlikely to be a significant impact during operation or during back-up generator testing.</p> <p>Given that the conclusions of the technical reports which accompanied the planning application for Site 4 (as summarised above) show that significant effects were unlikely, it is considered that significant cumulative effects are unlikely due to the similar nature of the predicted effects.</p>

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Transboundary effects					
Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects? ²		No	Impacts are unlikely to be transboundary, given the scale and nature of the development proposed and its location within the UK.	N/A	

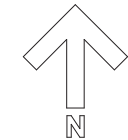
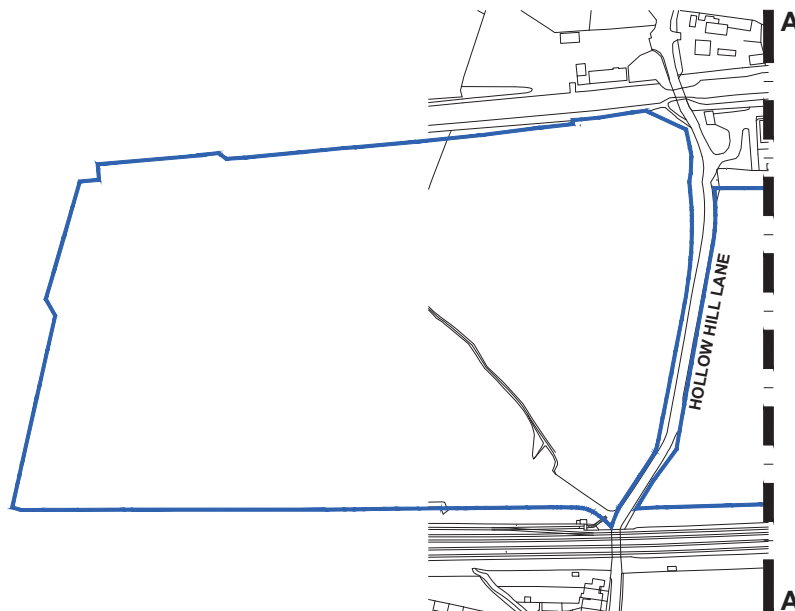
² The Regulations require consideration of the transboundary nature of the impact. Due to the England's geographical location the vast majority of TCPA cases are unlikely to result in transboundary impacts.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Proposed Development does not qualify as a Schedule 1 development. However, it does fall within the description of 'Infrastructure Projects 10(a) Industrial Estate Development Projects' within the first column of Schedule 2 of the Regulations and exceeds the applicable threshold criteria set out in Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations. It therefore requires screening in order to determine whether significant environmental effects might be associated with its development, such that it is considered to be EIA development.
- 6.2 To determine whether the Proposed Development comprises EIA development, it is necessary for the local planning authority to consider whether it is likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking account of the selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the Regulations.
- 6.3 The Site is not within or partly within a sensitive area as defined in Regulation 2(1). The Site and adjacent land uses are not considered to be sensitive to the development of the Site. The consideration has included the assessment of cumulative impacts with other existing and/or approved developments in the vicinity.
- 6.4 Our assessment concludes that the characteristics and location of the development are unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects, alone, or in accumulation with other developments.
- 6.5 The planning application in respect of the Proposed Development will be accompanied by the full suite of technical reports in order to address adopted policy and the Council's validation requirements.
- 6.6 Regulation 6(6) of the EIA Regulations advises that a local planning authority shall adopt a screening opinion within three weeks of the date of receipt of a request, and Regulation 5(5)(a) requires the main reasons for its conclusion to be identified, with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Schedule 3.
- 6.7 We trust the information provided above by the Applicant will assist the Council when adopting its opinion as to whether or not the Proposed Development constitutes EIA development.



- Application boundary
Site area: 18.63ha
- Other land in the ownership of the Applicant



50m SCALE 1:2500

PLANNING

Revisions

Job Title

PROPOSED DATA CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

Location

THORNEY LANE BUSINESS PARK
THORNEY LANE SOUTH, IVER

Drawing Title

SITE LOCATION PLAN
DC2

Date 21/11/22 Drawn

Scale 1:2500 @ A1 Checked

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