

Land South of Westwells Road | BUILDING P6 | CORSHAM

MAY 2024 | **Design and Access Statement**



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Aerial View of the Spring Park P6 proposed site

1.0 Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Ark Data Centres Limited in support of their submission of a Full Planning Application for the development of a new Data Centre within their proposed Spring Park South campus in Corsham.

This statement is set out to assist in the understanding of the design principles and access considerations which have been applied in developing the scheme both architecturally and within the social, economic and natural environment.

The Full Planning Application is for the development of a new data centre with associated external works. The Gross External Area (GEA) proposed is 25,159 sqm.

The new data centre ( Building P6 ) is proposed to be sited directly south of Rowan Lane and Westwells Road. The site is previously developed land and is well related to the existing campus.

Throughout the design process the team has engaged in a continuous process of evaluation and consultation to ensure that the emerging design would best meet the expectations of all stakeholders. Following on from pre-application consultation, the resulting proposal is described in full detail within this statement.

A public consultation was held on 20 July 2023 at Neston Memorial Hall, where the project was presented to local residents. This process is covered in more detail in the Statement of Community Involvement submitted as part of this application. On this occasion, comments and concerns were received, analysed and considered to improve the development and ensure that it works in harmony with its surroundings.

The application site extends to 7.37 hectares and is located within the administrative boundary of Wiltshire Council.

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPF) requires that Design & Access Statements (DAS) set out the narrative for the design approach and design rationale for schemes submitted for Planning consent. As such, this document demonstrates how the scheme has considered the local context and how design principles have been applied to achieve a high-quality design for the proposed development. Consideration is also given to the ‘National Design Guide’ (published in 2019). The Design Guide notes that the DAS should provide a framework for applicants to explain how a proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting and demonstrates that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users.

This report should be read in conjunction with the application drawings and supporting/supplemental information, which are supplied as separate documents.



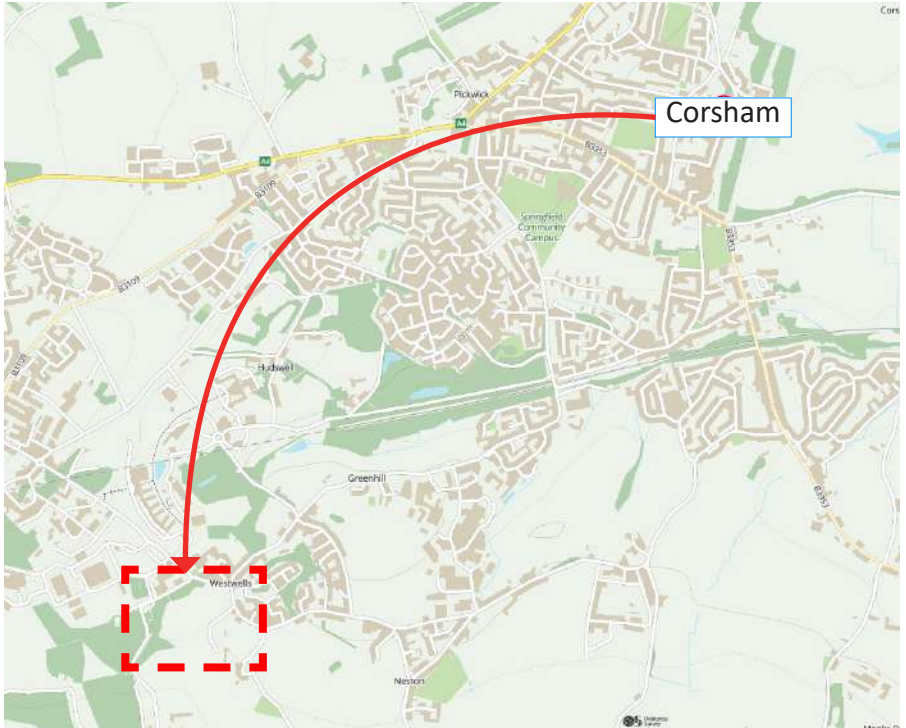


2.1 Site Location

The application site is located approximately two miles south west of Corsham, Wiltshire; situated directly south of Rowan Lane and Westwells Road.

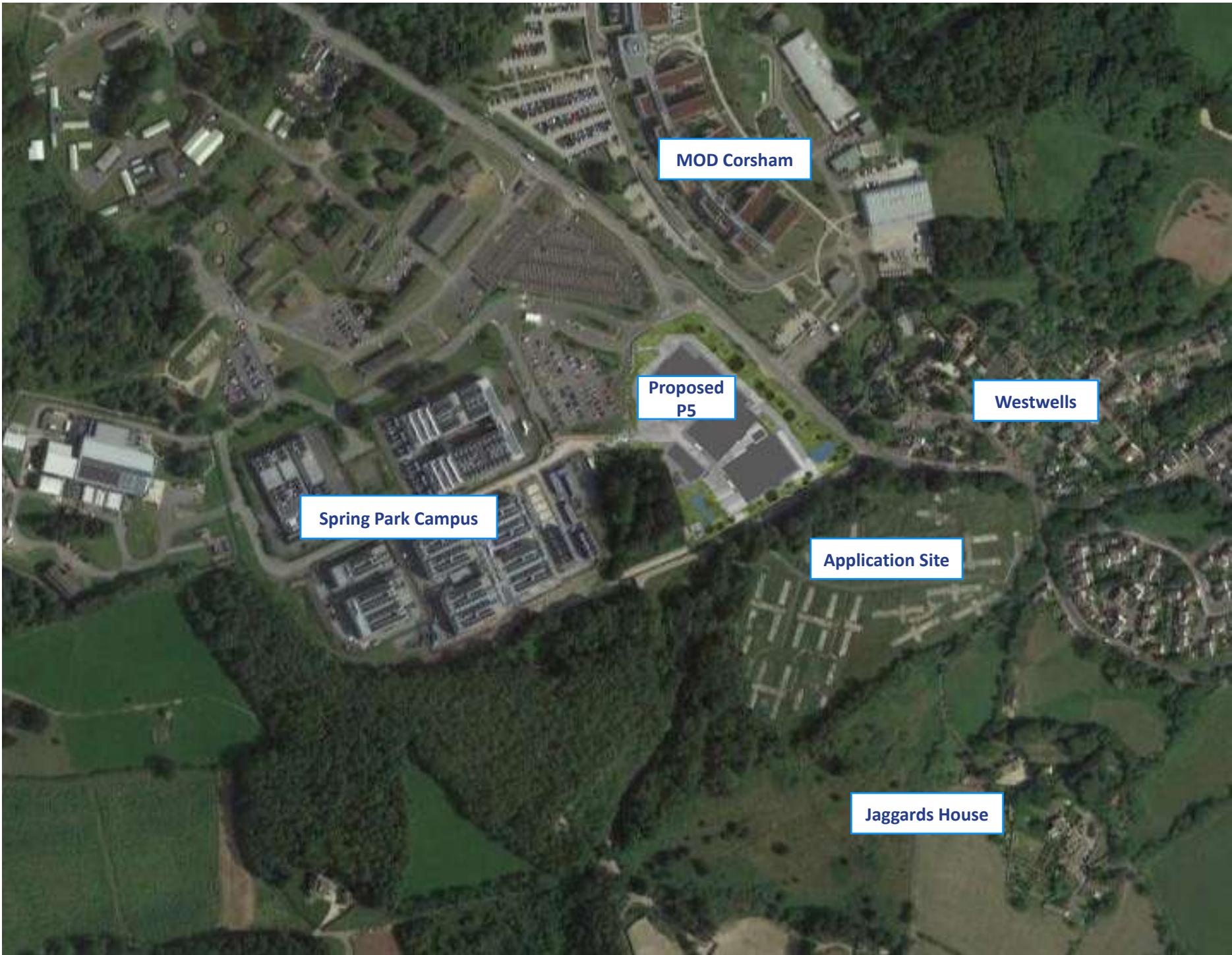
The application site area is approximately 7.37 hectares in area.

The application site (outlined in red) falls within Ark land ownership (Outlined in blue).



Applicant Ownership Boundary  
Planning Application Boundary





2.2 Existing Context

The application site is located south of Rowan Lane adjacent to Ark’s established Spring Park Data Centre campus, west of Westwells Road.

To the east are residential properties. A retirement village is located to the south of ARK’s property line. An established wooded area is located to the west of Rowan Lane. MOD Corsham is situated north of Westwells Road

Neston Conservation Area is situated directly east of Jaggards House.

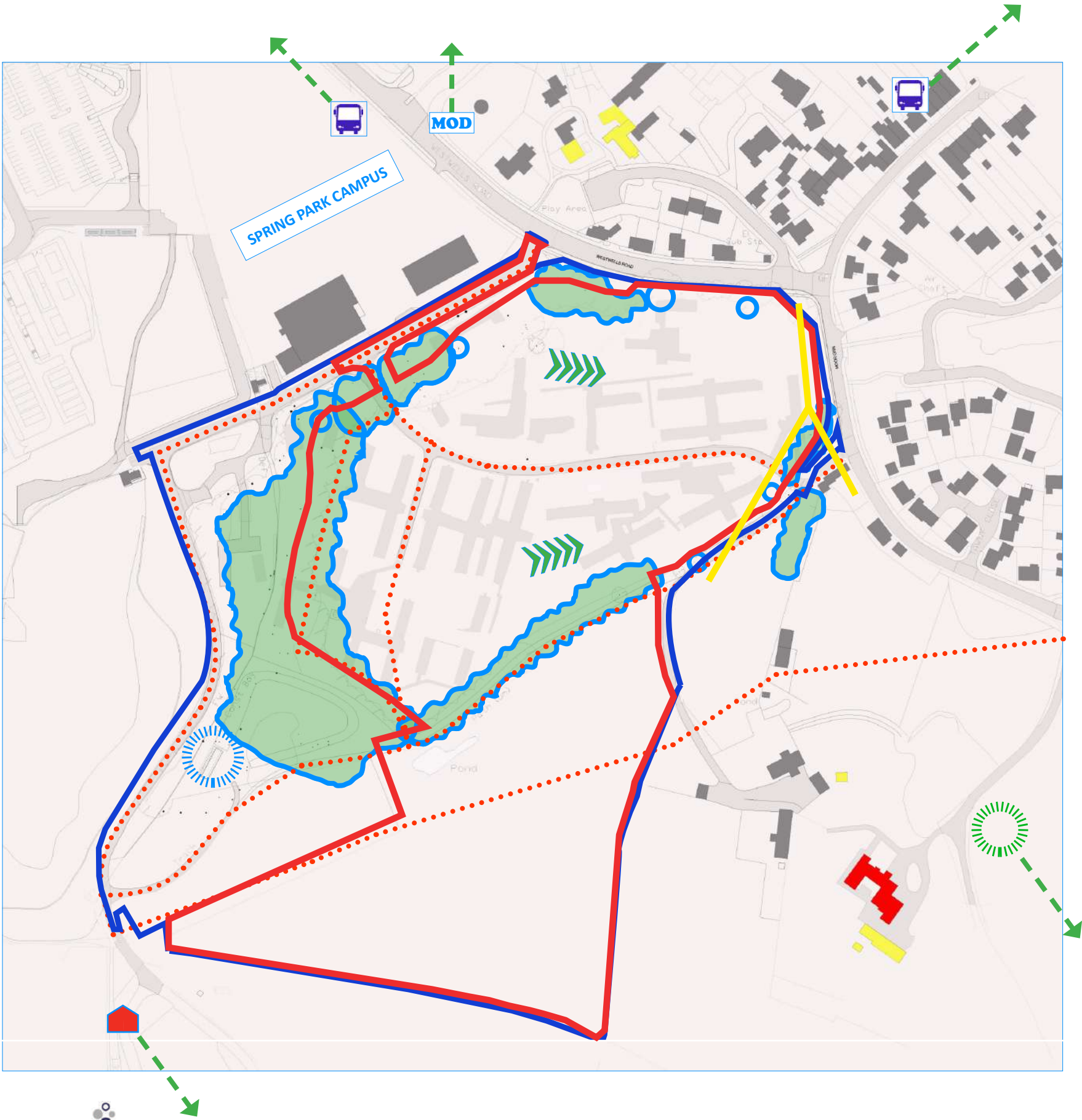
The proposed development is to be located centrally within the application site. The land is currently unoccupied with only the exposed foundations of the demolished 20th century refugee camp.



2.2.1 Existing Context - Photographs







2.3 Constraints and Opportunities

- Planning Application Boundary
- Applicant Ownership Boundary
- Public Rights of Way
- Grade II Listed Building
- Grade II\* Listed Building
- Bus Stop
- Retirement Village
- MOD campus
- Overhead cables and poles
- Extent of Tree Preservation Orders N/TPO194 MIXED
- Potential Horseshoe Bat roost. ( Disused shaft )
- Topography
- Neston Conservation Area
- Existing building footings

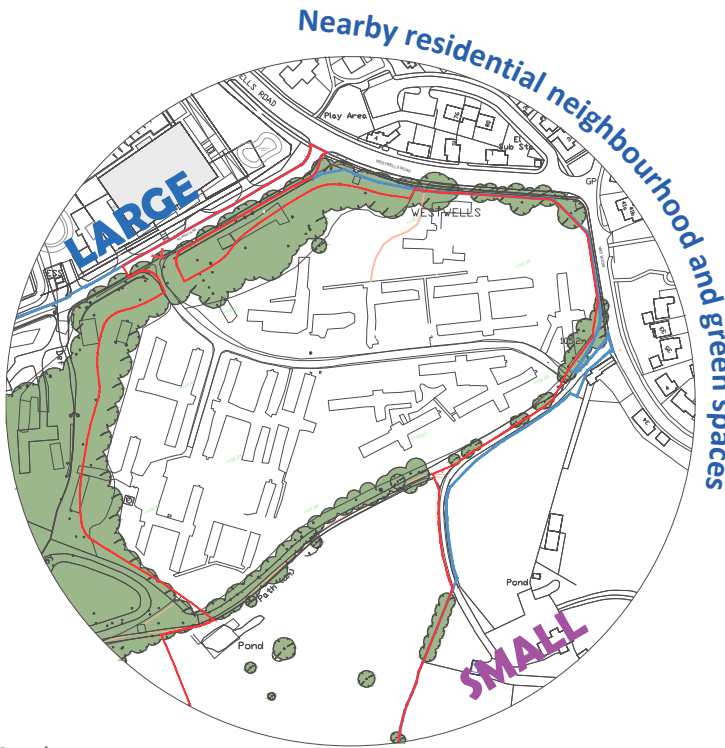


2.4 Contextual Opportunities



Screening-

- Existing tree line forms a partial seasonal screen to adjacent residential areas
- Topography predominately level in terms of sight lines.



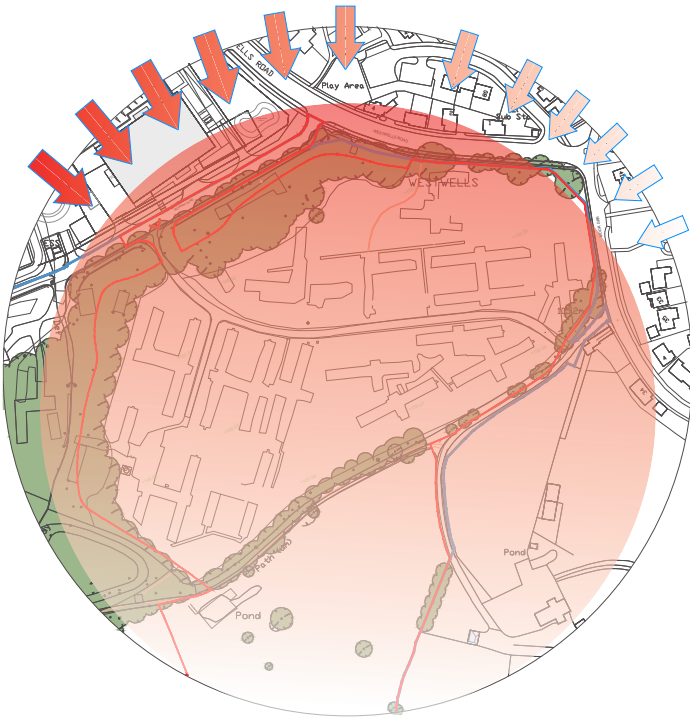
Scale-

- Two storey domestic properties adjacent to site.
- Spring Park P5 13m high adjacent to Rowan Lane



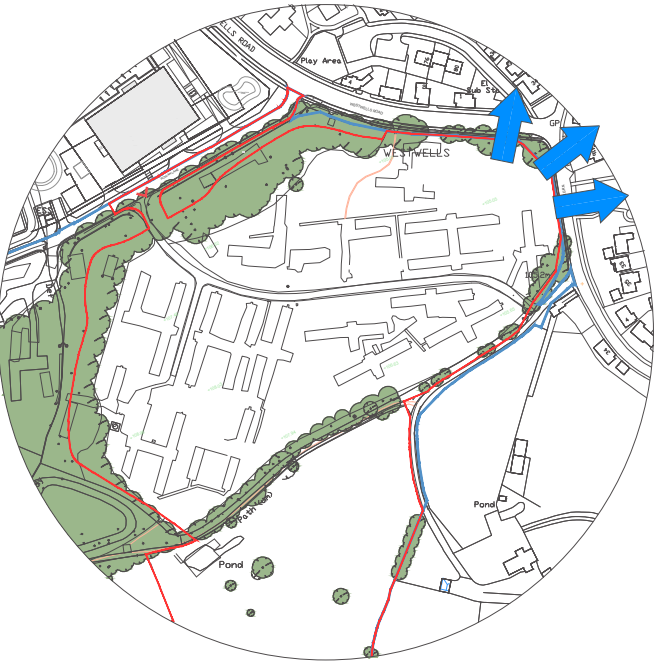
Access-

- Existing access via Rowan Lane
- Access available via Moor Green
- Diverted PROW's



Density-

- Densely developed Spring Park Campus to the north west.
- Site perimeter predominately farm land and low density housing



Presence-

- Prominent location on the corner of Westwells Road and Moor Green
- Three houses on Westwells Road face directly onto the site



Sustainability-

- Application site is classified as a Brownfield site.





3.1 Masterplan

The proposed new data centre facility Building P6 will operate as a fully autonomous facility located immediately south of the existing Data Centre campus operated by Ark Data Centres Ltd, known locally as the Quarry Sands site.

The design approach to the new P6 building is intended to enhance the ‘business campus within a parkland aesthetic’ that Ark have successfully delivered on the existing Spring Park site.

The new development will be sympathetic with the established ecological conservation area to the west of the application site. The new P6 building will contribute to Wiltshire’s established position as a centre for the Information and Communication industry.

The application site has previously been granted planning permission for a residential development and the new proposal for a data centre will result in a far lower population and minimal impact on local resources such as schools and smaller increase in vehicular traffic.

The proposal locates the building footprint within the brownfield site avoiding encroaching on the greenfield areas within the applicant’s ownership.

Spring Park South Masterplan



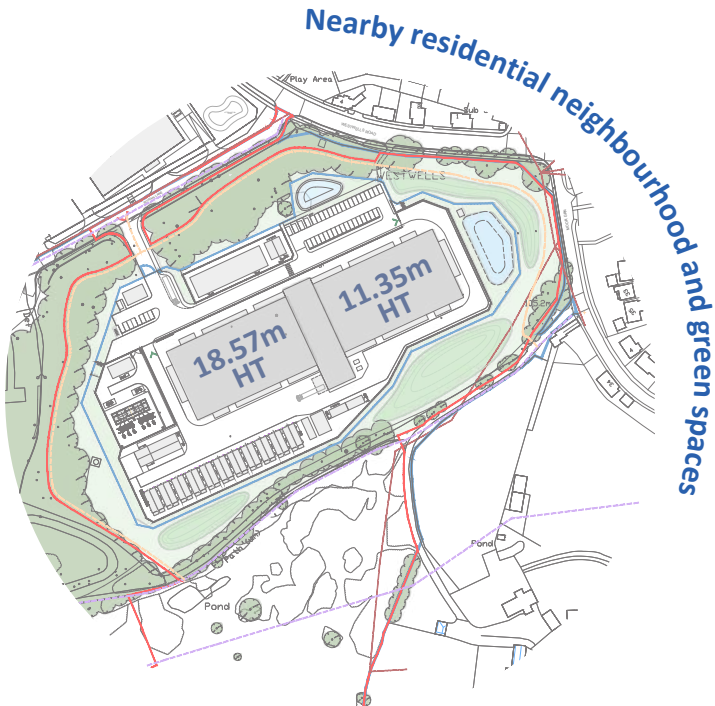
3.1.1 Contextual Responses



Screening-

Enhance existing perimeter landscape to form visual screen.

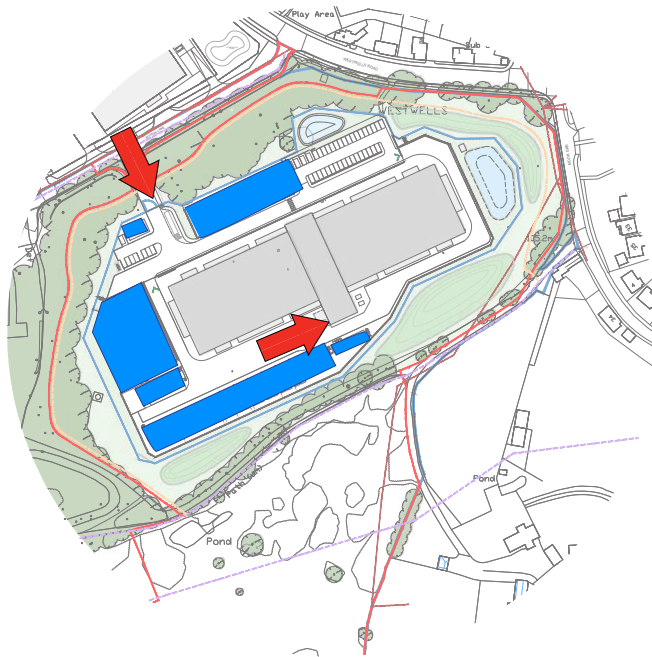
- Maximise new planting to site perimeter
- Introduce landscaped bunds to conceal building volume



Scale-

Respect adjacent neighbourhoods and green spaces

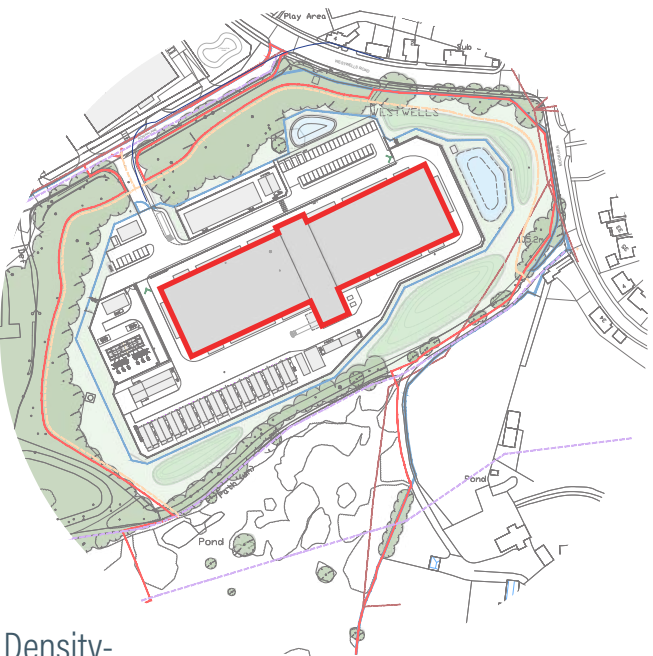
- Minimise building height to three stories to the east and four to the west
- Locate roof top plant to the west away from residential neighbourhoods



Composition and Access-

Minimise operational and visual impact on neighbourhood

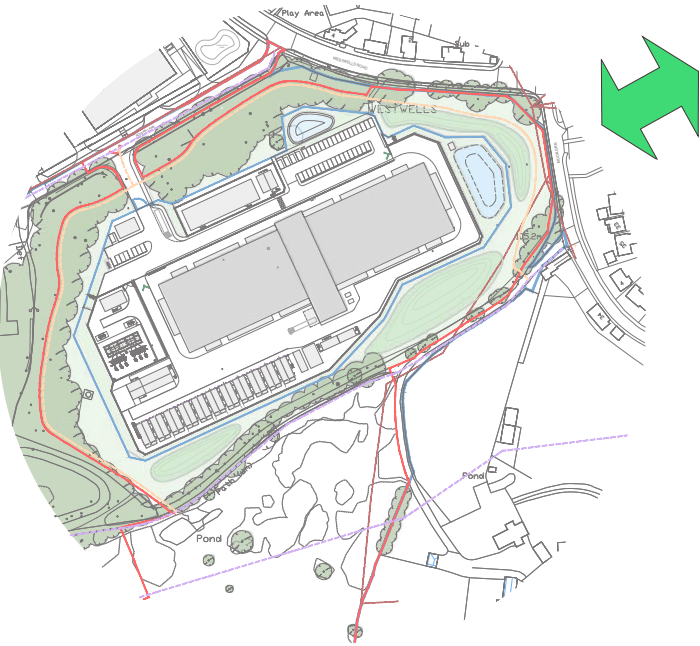
- Locate all ancillary buildings away from Westwells Road
- Locate entrance away from Westwells Road



Density-

Locate largest building centrally on site and ancillary buildings nearby

- Application site area 4.38 hectares
- P6 Ground Level footprint- 7047m<sup>2</sup>



Presence-

Provide enhanced facade treatment to public views

- High quality contrasting materials and articulated facade
- Provide a thoughtful architectural presence in the winter season
- Building orientated so that the short end of the building faces residential area



Sustainability-

Provide sustainable water management strategy

- Maximise SUDS in landscape close to Westwells Road
- Utilise reclaimed water for building services





3.2 Layout

Campus Layout

The proposed layout has been informed by the site’s opportunities and Ark’s operational requirements, whilst also considering the immediate context.

The proposed data centre campus will comprise:

A three and four-storey building to house the data storage function and ancillary uses. The following uses are proposed;

- Visitor Reception Centre (campus security house)
- Standby generators
- High Voltage (HV) Electricity Substation
- Car parking
- Extensive landscaping + SUDs

The entire campus will be bound by a perimeter security fence. A second, inner security fence will surround the data hall building, large extents of the inner security campus fence will sit behind landscaping which will be planted with trees and low-level shrubbery. This planting will help to provide screening for the development along the eastern and southern edges of the site adjacent to Westwells village and Jaggards House further on south-east.

A single storey Visitor Reception Centre is located adjacent to the campus access point off Rowan Lane. The Visitor Reception Centre will be the security hub for the campus where the security processing of both visitors and deliveries to the site will take place.

The position, volume and orientation of the proposed data centre and ancillary buildings has been developed with special concern to the existing residential area on the eastern edges of the site.

Occupied office areas have been designed to not overlook residential properties to respect privacy. Extensive landscaping will be deployed across the campus for the purpose of SUDs, biodiversity, on-site amenity and screening. In particular the provision of a significant amount of accessible green space at the junction of Westwells and Moor Green.

The existing PROW’s that cross the site will be diverted within the red line boundary and repositioned within the natural setting of the proposed soft landscaped areas.

Spring Park South Masterplan



3.2.1 Typical Floor Plan





### 3.3 Public Consultation

A public consultation was held on 20 July 2023 at Neston Memorial Hall, where the project was presented to local residents. The public consultation provided Ark Data Centres (the Applicant) the opportunity to talk directly with the local residents on key aspects of the proposal, which included:

- Drainage
- Landscaping buffering and mounding
- Publics Rights of way provision (alignment and quality)
- Verified views
- Plant noise and attenuation
- Lighting

Images of the presentation boards are shown to the left.

A Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Savills has been prepared to cover public and stakeholder consultation matters.

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3.4 Use

The proposed development will be for one data centre with ancillary office space, external roof plant and associated service yard.

The data centre will have the following characteristics.

- Be used to house critical computer systems and associated communications infrastructure crucial for the knowledge economy.
- Include sophisticated building management controls (fresh air cooling, fire suppression, redundant/backup power supplies, etc.).
- Be designed to be efficient in form and true to its function.
- Be maintained by an organisation for the purpose of handling the data necessary for its operations.

Typical data centres users include:

- Financial institutions where their customer’s account information is maintained and transactional processes are carried out.
- Mid-sized and larger organisations, where their business data is processed, managed and stored.
- Government institutions, where their operational data is processed, managed and stored.

The proposed data centre will lie well within the capacity of the site and have a small percentage of inhabited office areas with low occupancy. This means that a low volume of vehicle movements will be required to support it, reducing the impact of the development on the surrounding transport network. This is considered further in the Transport Assessment which accompanies this submission.

The economic significance of data centres, and their role as a sector for economic growth in local and regional planning and economic policy, is set out in the Planning Statement.

Wiltshire council have been consistent in determining applications at Spring Park that Data Centres should be considered to be Class B8.



Data Centre Internal images



3.5 Sustainability

Ark considers itself a leader in delivering and operating sustainable developments within the data centre sector and as such the proposed development has been developed with sustainable design principles at its core. By using cutting edge and best available technologies and design Ark Data Centres minimize on-site energy consumption and emissions. The project’s sustainability goal is to achieve BREEAM Excellent rating for the proposed data centre.

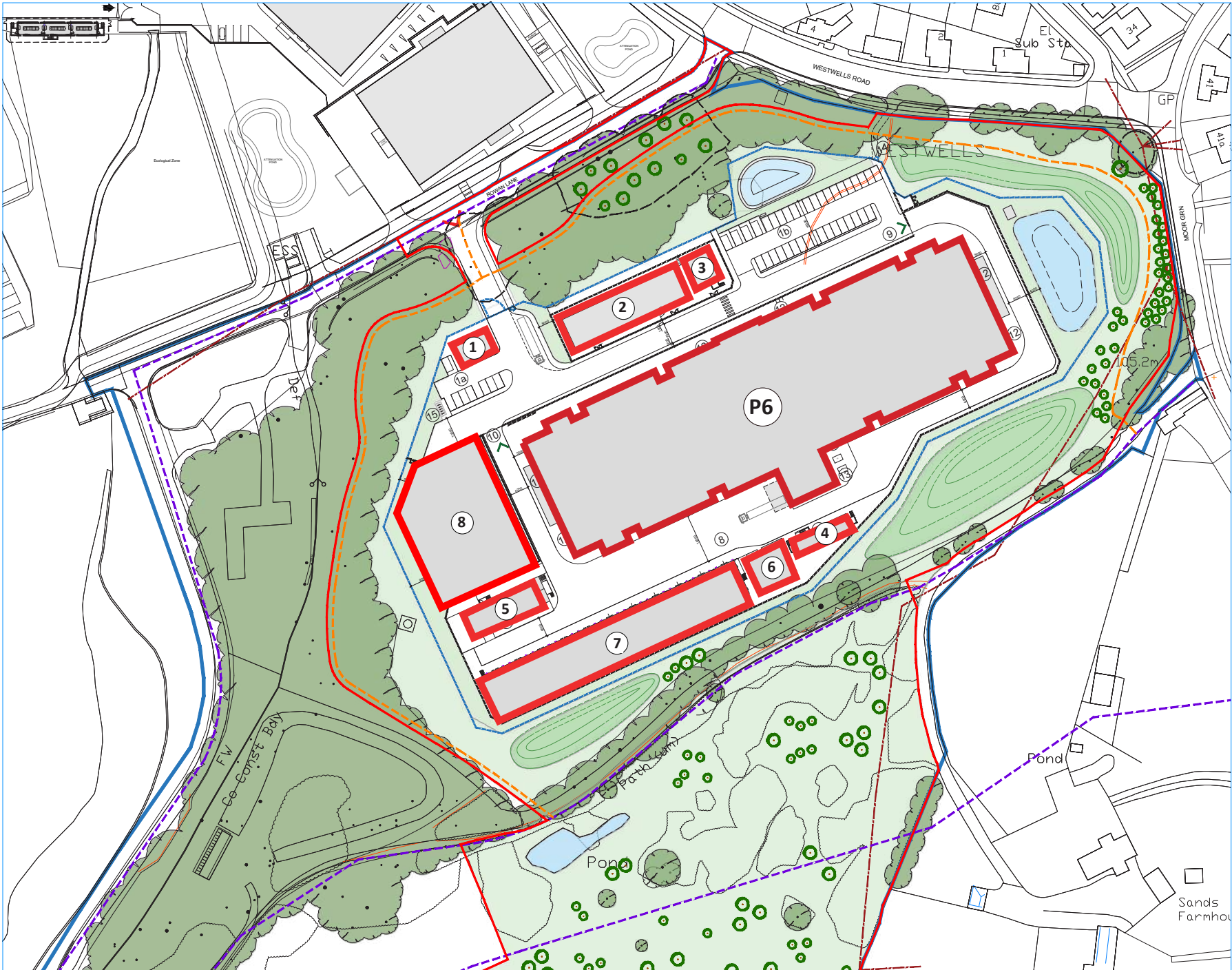
- **Climate Change and Energy:** The design of the Proposed Development will include measures for energy efficiency such as energy efficient lighting, controlled by automatic occupancy-based systems and materials used in construction should achieve low U values. Ark’s innovative approach to deploying the necessary cooling and electrical infrastructure systems required to support the IT equipment will deliver a reduction in energy demand and hence a reduction in CO2 emissions when compared to an equivalent modern data centre.
- **Construction:** Measures will be incorporated into the design to limit impacts on the community considering lighting, noise, air quality and traffic. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will address the control of noise and dust, hours of working, control of water run-off, vehicle routing, road/footpath closures or diversions and waste disposal.

- **Ecology:** The Landscape Strategy seeks to enhance biodiversity by protecting existing habitats and providing additional planting and opportunities for increased biodiversity.
- **Transport and Movement:** A travel plan will be prepared to ensure that future employees at the proposed development will be able to travel to work using sustainable travel methods, including the provision of charging points for electric vehicles. Potential traffic impacts have been addressed in the Transport Statement, which concludes that the proposed development will significantly reduce the potential trip generation to the site.
- **Resources:** During the construction phase, a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) will set out monitoring and targeting requirements for managing resources consumed. The proposed development will be provided with sufficient space for the collection of waste and recycling of paper, plastic, cans and glass. Materials proposed to be used in the construction of the buildings are high quality and durable. Construction materials would be selected in line with the principles of the Building Research Establishment (BRE) ‘Green Guide to Specification’ selection criteria.

- **Water management and re-use:** Ark has history of deploying rainwater-harvesting systems so that rainwater can be used in the evaporative cooling systems so reducing the impact on the local utility supply and reducing the amount of on-site water treatment required. In the ancillary spaces water saving devices would be incorporated into the detailed design to ensure efficient use of water resources (restricted flushing devices in WC cisterns, automatic shut-off devices on basin taps and low flow showers). An Attenuation Pond is provided along with a Water Treatment Tank building for this purpose.
- **Drainage Strategy:** Hydrock will provide a site specific drainage strategy for the Spring Park P6.
- **Business:** The new business space that will be created through the proposed development will complement and enhance those businesses already in the local area with the creation of jobs.
- **Buildings:** The design of the development will provide a contemporary appearance. Commitments have been made to use roof, wall and glazing materials with low ‘U’ values in order to reduce the transfer of heat to / from the building.







Proposed Site Plan

- Applicant Ownership Boundary
- Planning Application Boundary

3.6 Areas

Plot Area: 7.37 hectares

Area Schedule - Gross External Area (GEA)

|                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Building P6 3/4 Storeys</b> | <b>m<sup>2</sup></b>       |
| Data Halls DC01+DC02           |                            |
| Level 0                        | 7,673m <sup>2</sup>        |
| Level 1                        | 7,673m <sup>2</sup>        |
| Level 2                        | 7,673m <sup>2</sup>        |
| Level 3                        | 4,241m <sup>2</sup>        |
| <b>Grand Total</b>             | <b>27,260m<sup>2</sup></b> |

Ancillary Accommodation

|                               |                   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Visitor Reception/Security | 90m <sup>2</sup>  |
| 2. Water Treatment Plant      | 504m <sup>2</sup> |
| 3. Splitter Building 1        | 90m <sup>2</sup>  |
| 4. Splitter Building 2        | 90m <sup>2</sup>  |
| 5. HV/LV Switchroom           | 225m <sup>2</sup> |
| 6. Fire Suppression Plant     | 81m <sup>2</sup>  |

External Plant

|                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 7. Generators 22 total | 1,525m <sup>2</sup> |
| 8. Substation compound | 1,460m <sup>2</sup> |

Total car parking spaces;

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| Staff- standard    | 34 |
| Staff- disabled    | 4  |
| Visitors- standard | 7  |
| Visitors- disabled | 1  |

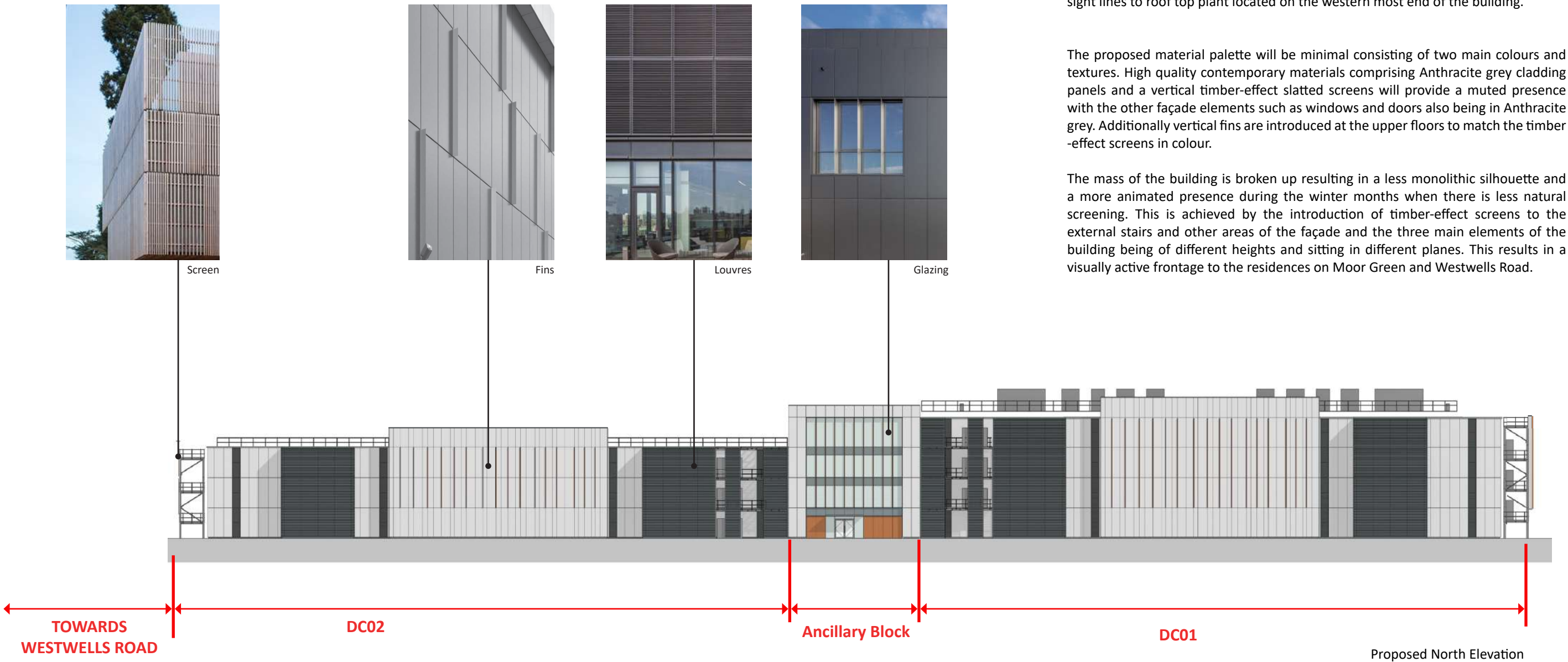
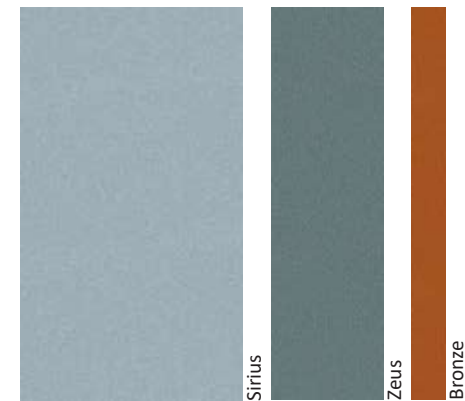
Electrical charging facilities to be provided. Number tbc.

The parking provision for the new development is explained within the submitted Transport Assessment. This provides the site-wide parking strategy that has been applied across the campus.

Notes:  
The areas have been calculated in accordance with the RICS code of Measuring Practice, 6th Edition, 2009 using the stated option, GEA.  
The areas are approximate and relate to the likely areas of the building at the current state of the design. Any decisions to be made on the basis of these predications, whether as to project visibility, pre-letting, lease agreements, conveyances and the like, should make due allowance for the increase and decreases arising from the following :

- Design Development
- Accurate site survey, site levels and site dimensions
- Construction methods and building tolerances
- Local Authority and Statutory consents





3.7 Appearance

The proposed Data Centre (P6) will have a low-key presence onto Westwells Road and Moor Green. P6 will be significantly screened with extensive new planting and banded landscape complementing the existing protected trees.

The intention is for the visual appearance of the new P6 building to move away from the more industrial aesthetic of the existing Spring Park campus to a harmonious relationship with the local environment both natural and architectural and minimise the ‘urbanising’ effect of locating a large mass on the perimeter of the site.

The mass of the P6 building responds to its context and reduces to three storeys to the east of the site where existing residences are located, its location, set back from the road will further minimise the presence of the mass of the building and eliminate sight lines to roof top plant located on the western most end of the building.

The proposed material palette will be minimal consisting of two main colours and textures. High quality contemporary materials comprising Anthracite grey cladding panels and a vertical timber-effect slatted screens will provide a muted presence with the other façade elements such as windows and doors also being in Anthracite grey. Additionally vertical fins are introduced at the upper floors to match the timber-effect screens in colour.

The mass of the building is broken up resulting in a less monolithic silhouette and a more animated presence during the winter months when there is less natural screening. This is achieved by the introduction of timber-effect screens to the external stairs and other areas of the façade and the three main elements of the building being of different heights and sitting in different planes. This results in a visually active frontage to the residences on Moor Green and Westwells Road.





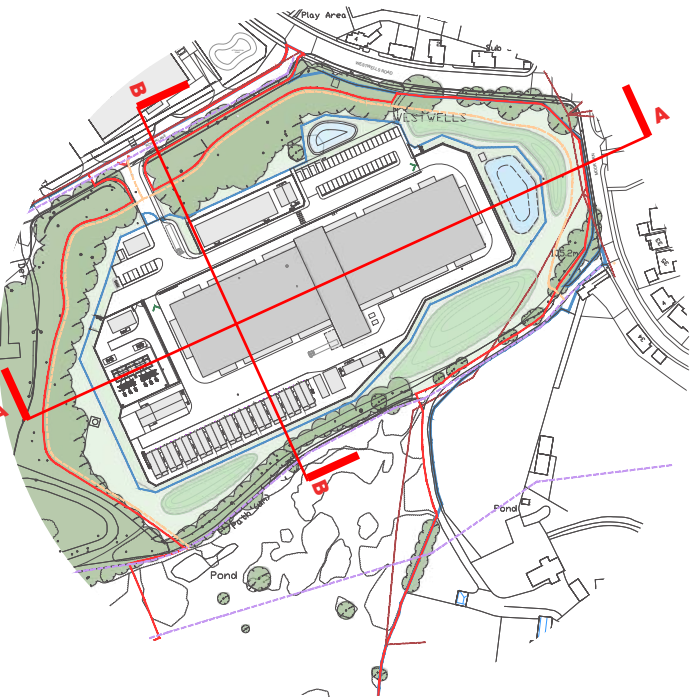
3.8 3D Visuals

Visualisation of the proposed application site looking south-west.



View looking south-west





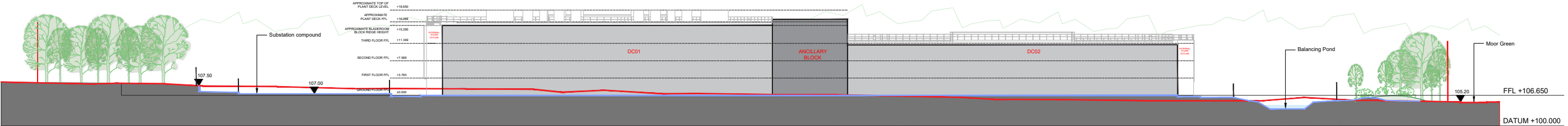
3.9 Scale

The visual impact of the data centre has been broken down through both articulation of surface and use of materials and colours.

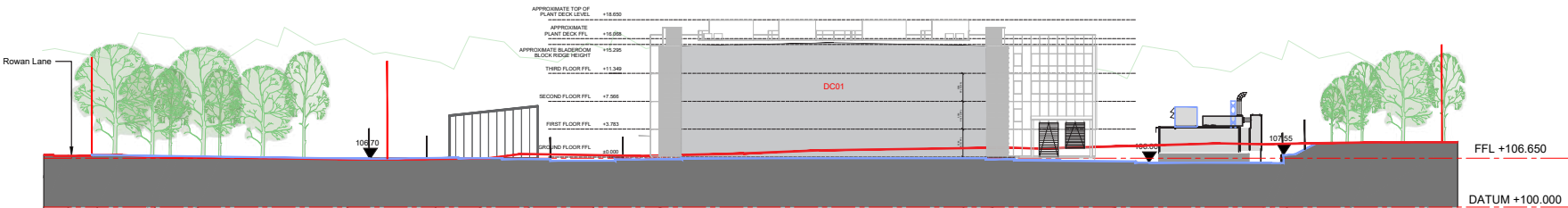
The physical mass of the data centre is formed in response to the demands of the existing context. The D02 data hall is set to three stories to minimise visual impact on the nearby residential areas and the D01 data hall is raised to four stories far back from the Westwells Road elevation.

The presence of the P6 building is further minimised by the introduction of large bunds formed in the landscape and the introduction of extensive planting which in addition to the existing landscape will contribute to screening the new building from view.

The sections below demonstrate how the above strategy results in the new P6 building having a sympathetic scale and mass in relation to its immediate environment.

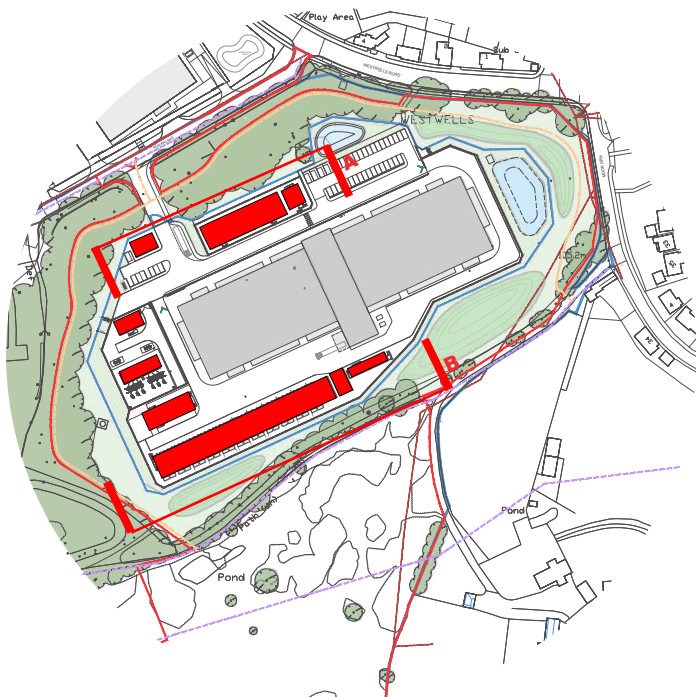


Section AA



Section BB





3.9.1 Scale: Ancillary Buildings

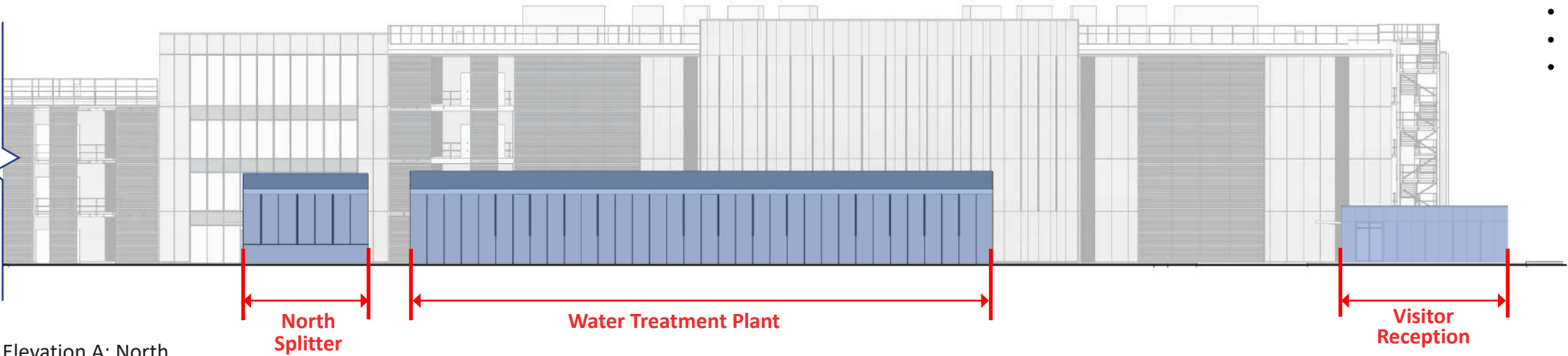
Ancillary buildings to the main Data Centre building are clustered towards the western edge of the site away from Westwells Road. These buildings house a variety of support functions as well as the main visitor reception.

The P6 building is approximately two and a half times taller than the surrounding ancillary buildings which face out of the site and are largely screened from view by planting, both by the existing trees and the proposed new planting.

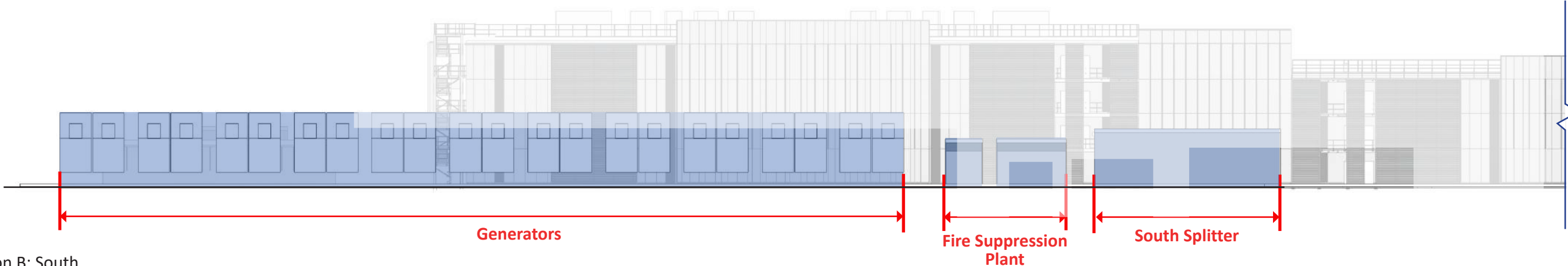
Materially the ancillary buildings will follow the P6 building in terms of elevational treatment. The stand-by generators are free standing pieces of mechanical plant with no enclosure.

The Ancillary Buildings comprise the following functions;

- Visitor Reception Centre (VRC)
- HV Switchroom
- Standby Generators
- Two Splitter Buildings
- Fire Suppression Plant
- Water Treatment Plant



Elevation A: North



Elevation B: South





Extract from *Detailed Soft Landscape Plan* by EDP Ltd, which is part of the *Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Statement* included on this Planning Application's documents

3.9.2 Soft Landscaping and Biodiversity

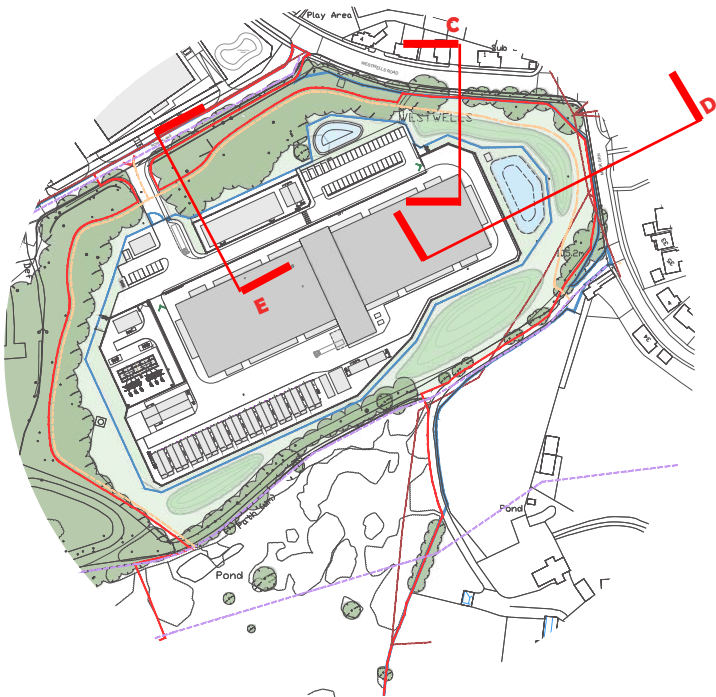
The application will be supported by a full and robust Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA), setting out the potential impacts upon the range of local landscape and visual receptors. The process of LVA has identified key site constraints and opportunities and has been informed by a number of site-specific and more wide-ranging surveys relating to trees, local residents and users of the wider landscape.

In response to the process of LVA the scheme has sought to maximise the prevailing opportunities whilst addressing the identified constraints, resulting in a design which achieves a number of positive landscape outcomes:

- The development respects the existing tree stock around the site, as identified through the BS5837 tree survey and assessment, and protects trees designated under a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
- The scheme provides significant areas of undulating soft landscaping along the eastern and southern boundaries, thus protecting the amenity – and views – of local residents and footpath users.
- Further landscaping is provided along the southern boundary, within the area to the south, and around the internal SuDs basins to increase species diversity and habitat creation.
- Overall there is a significant increase in vegetation and tree planting compared to the existing site.
- The scheme requires the diversion of a number of footpaths, with new alignments providing safe and convenient routes, which are usable year-round.
- Through sensitive design, and the location of the site within a low point in the local landscape, the development is well-integrated within views from the wider area.
- The development will deliver a varied landscaping through the creation of neutral grassland and scrub, re-instating a historic pond, and standard tree planting across the site. This approach, in tandem with the purchase of biodiversity credits from a habitat bank will deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity



3.9.3 Soft Landscaping Sections



Section CC

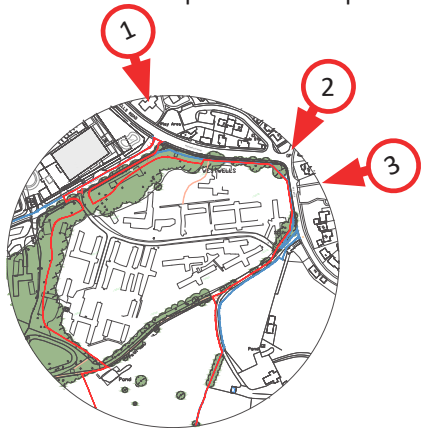


Section DD



Section EE





3.9.4 Verified Photo Montages

The verified photomontages below show a visual representation of what the proposed development will look like to a human standing at the selected photographic viewpoints. All photographs are taken with a camera and lens combination, resulting in a “standard” focal length (equivalent to the cone of human vision), accurately positioned at a set height above ground level. A GPS Survey is gathered and converted to be used for view verification.



EXISTING PHOTOGRAPH 1  
View looking South from Westwells Road



EXISTING PHOTOGRAPH 2  
View looking South-West from Westwells Road



EXISTING PHOTOGRAPH 3  
View looking West from footpath between the Stoneworks and Moor Green



VERIFIED PHOTO MONTAGE 1  
Outline of proposed building shown as red dashed line. 119m from camera position to closest point on the building.

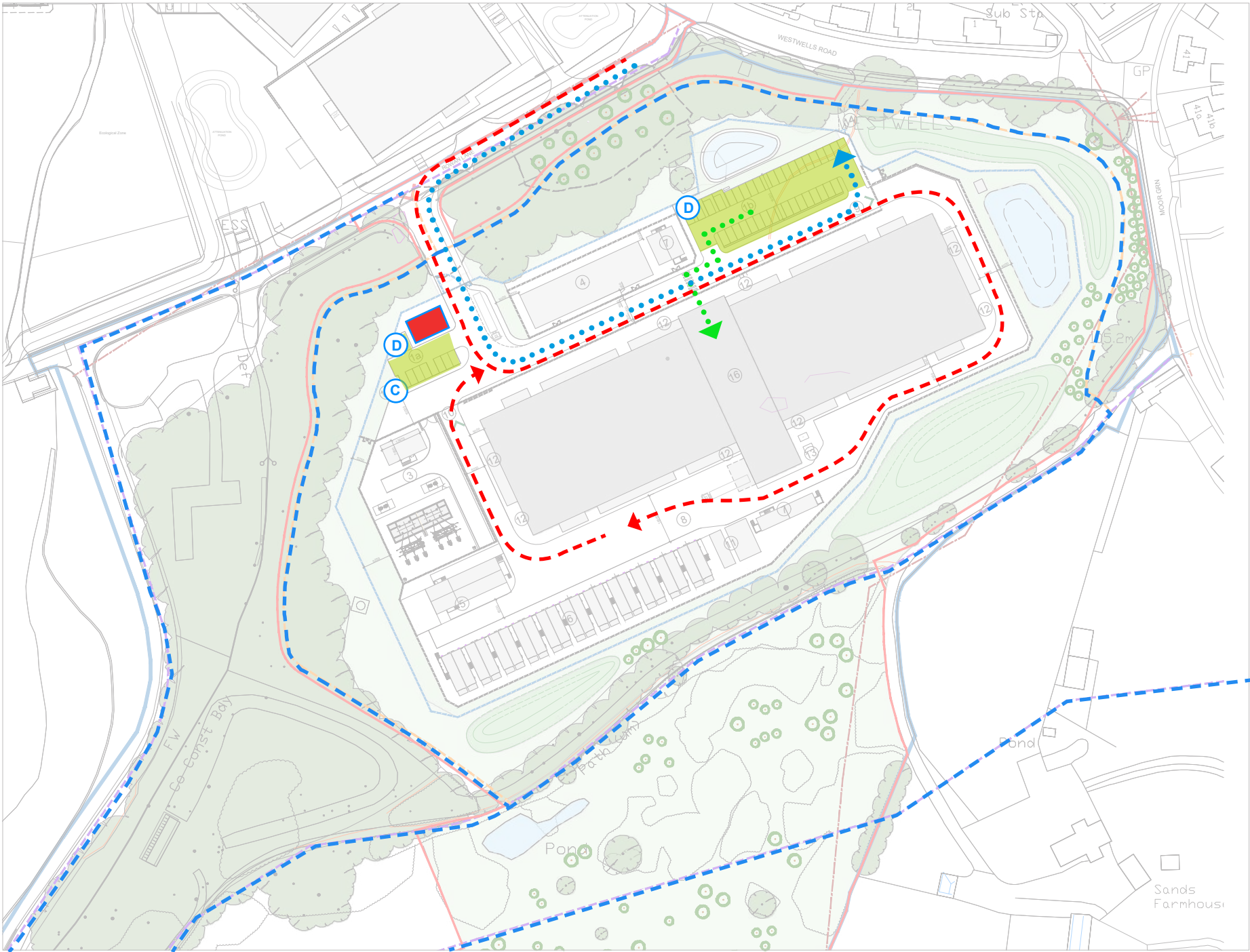


VERIFIED PHOTO MONTAGE 2  
Outline of proposed building shown as red dashed line. 99m from camera position to closest point on the building.



VERIFIED PHOTO MONTAGE 3  
Development visual including enhanced landscaping - day one. 89m from camera position to closest point on the building.





Site Plan

4.1 Access

Movement to, through and within the site has been carefully considered.

Ark’s security protocol requires all cars to be parked outside of their data centre security fence lines. Staff car parking is located to the north east of the site and visitor car parking is located adjacent to the security gate house.

All deliveries will enter via the main entrance and a parking bay is provided for a single articulated lorry to allow drivers to clear security without blocking Rowan Lane and allowing cars to pass into the site. A one way system for delivery vehicles has been planned to negate the need for turning circles when accessing the loading bay.

Pedestrian access will be provided next to the main vehicle entrance gates via security turnstiles. Drop kerbs and tactile paving will be introduced for pedestrian crossings where necessary.

Cycle parking is provided adjacent to the security gatehouse with fully accessible showers provided within the new building.

The building and the layout of the site are designed to be fully inclusive in line with the Equality Act 2010. Designated disabled parking bays are located adjacent to the principle entrance. Any changes in level will be dealt with by means of drop kerbs.

Public Rights of Way

There are multiple pedestrian rights of way across the site and is popular with dog walkers. The intention is to divert those currently passing directly through the application site whilst maintaining existing access to Rowan Lane and Westwells Road.

This arrangement is described more detail in Savills Planning Report. It is proposed that Ark will take on the responsibility for maintaining the PROW across the site.

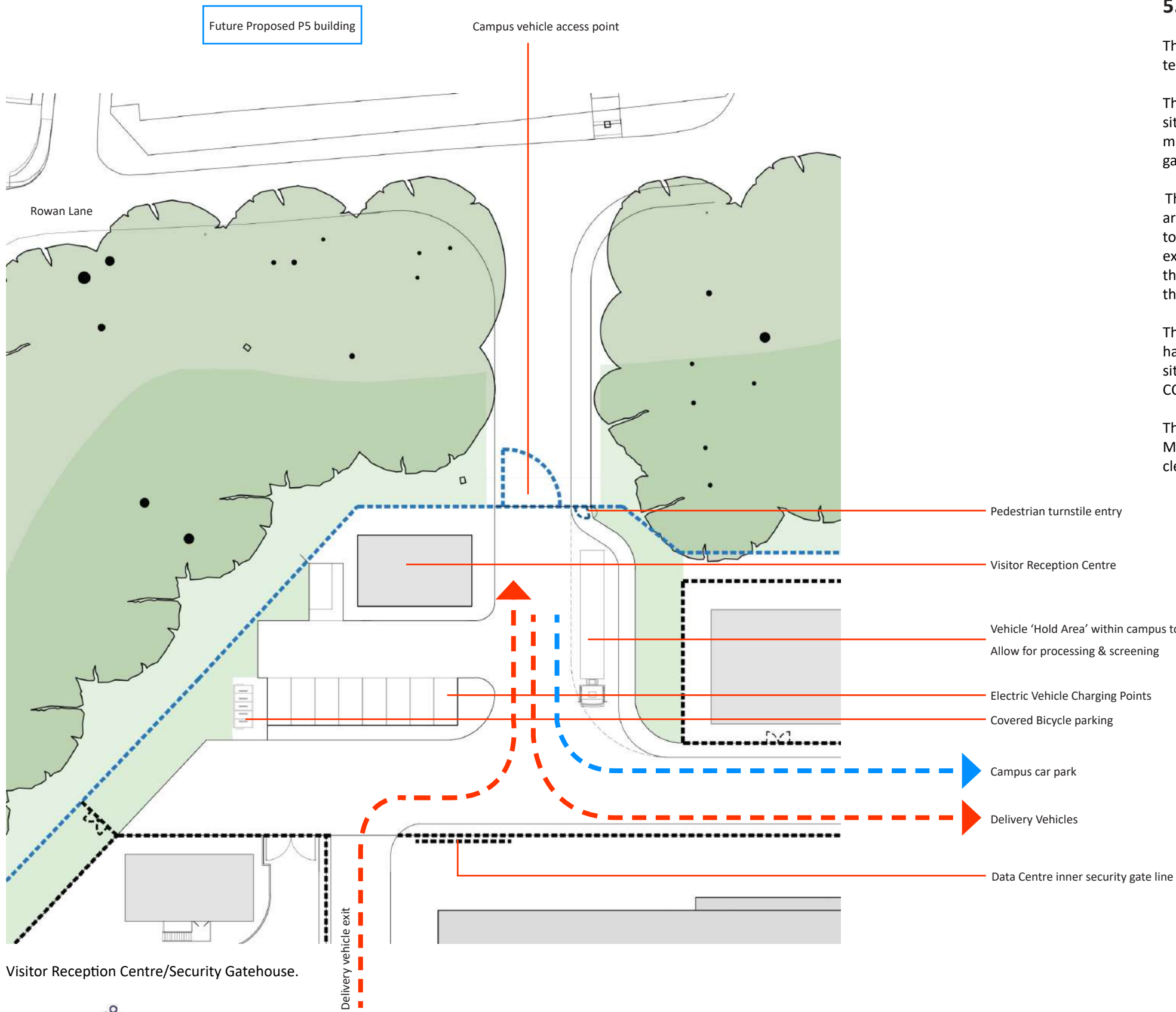
Sustainable Travel

The proposed development has a strong commitment to encouraging sustainable means of transport. In addition to the environmental benefits this will help reduce the number of vehicles travelling to and from the site.

A minimum of two charging points for electrical vehicles is to be provided along with bicycle parking. The nearest bus stop withing walking distance is Basil Hill Barracks on Westwells Road.

A Transport Statement by IMA has been produced to support this planning application.





5.1 Ark Management

The new data centre will be managed by a Ark Campus Management Team. This team will be responsible for security, operations and maintenance.

The new data centre will be protected by a perimeter fence enclosing the application site and an inner security fence enclosing the main Data Centre. Site Security will manage all visitors to the campus who will be processed through the security gatehouse facility located to the north west of the site connecting onto Rowan Lane.

The security officers are charged with ensuring only authorised visitors or contractors are permitted onto site and, where appropriate, carry out vehicle searches prior to allowing access. A dedicated on campus 'Vehicle Hold Area' is provided for this exercise to both screen and process vehicles that need to access the campus beyond the guardhouse. This prevents congestion on Rowan Lane by holding vehicles off the highway.

The security team will receive and administer Visitor Access Forms, check visitors have suitable access cards to allow them on to campus and ensure deliveries to the site have been booked in. The site will be monitored 24 hours a day by the on-site CCTV cameras.

The Landscape contractors are charged with adhering to the agreed Landscape Management Plan, as well as general maintenance such as litter picking, snow clearance and salt spreading.





The proposal is for a high quality development using quality materials expressed in a functional and elegant design that will enhance Ark’s established data centre campus.

The proposed development will be implemented in line with Ark’s sustainability requirements. The scheme will be integrated within the surrounding context through the provisioning of contextually appropriate design and land use. The proposed development will also minimise the impact on the local road networks and the wider environment. The intention is to achieve a BREEAM rating of Very Good. The proposals are in line with national and local policy, best practice guidance and have been informed by a rigorous site assessment process.

