
Statement of Community Involvement

Prepared by:

Savills

Prepared for:

Ark Data Centres Ltd



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1. Introduction

Introduction

- 1.1. This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared on behalf of Ark Data Centres Limited (or 'Ark') to support a planning application for the development of additional data centre capacity at the site known as "Land South of Westwells Road, Neston, Corsham" as an extension to Ark's existing Sparing Park Campus to the north. The description of development is as follows:

"Redevelopment of site to deliver extension to existing Spring Park data centre campus consisting of (a) free standing data centre building (b) energy, power, and water infrastructure (c) site access and internal roads (d) site security arrangements (e) diverted Public Rights of Ways (f) hard and soft, green and blue, landscaping and (g) other ancillary and auxiliary forms of development."

- 1.2. The application is accompanied by a package of plans and documentation which seek to illustrate the proposals whilst commenting on their environmental and technical acceptability and performance. A Planning Statement, provided by Savills, provides an overview of the application.

Overview of Applicant

- 1.3. Established in 2005, Ark develops and operates secure and efficient purpose-built data centres, operating UK campuses at Spring Park in Corsham, Cody Park in Farnborough and Meridian Park in Enfield.
- 1.4. Ark has also secured planning permission for, and is committed to delivery of, a 36,000sqm in Longcross (which will be known as Longcross Park) and for a 60,000sqm data centre at Bulls Bridge Industrial Estate in Hayes (which will be known as Union Park). Ark is also progressing an application for 40,000sqm of data centre floorspace in Park Royal (which will be known as Alliance Park).
- 1.5. Ark is pioneering new approaches to environmentally sustainable data centres and has procured 100% Renewable Energy Guarantees Origin (REGO) backed renewable energy since 2013 and have long term supply agreements in place to 2023.
- 1.6. Ark has been involved with the Spring Park project for over 10 years and has taken it through each stage of the planning process. Data centres P1, P2, P3, P4 and SQ17 are completed and operational, P5 (now known as P5 North) benefits from a recently granted planning permission (ref. 19/11352/FUL) and there is a live application for a further data centre (known as P5 South) on the Hawthorn Works site (ref. PL/2022/01975). The campus development also includes a generator area, substations, landscaping (including a retained "bat flight corridor" and nature conservation area), roads, and drainage.

Statement Purpose and Structure

- 1.7. The purpose of this Statement is to report upon the various stages of public and stakeholder consultation that have taken place in advance of the submission of this planning application. Following this short introduction the Statement is structured to report on engagement with:
- **Section 2:** Wiltshire Council;
 - **Section 3:** Corsham Town Council; and
 - **Section 4** Local Residents.
- 1.8. In doing the above, The Statement draws heavily on a number of documents that are included as appendices.

2. Wiltshire Council

- 2.1. A written pre-application request was submitted to Wiltshire Council on 8th December 2022. Design was clearly at an early stage with the submission consisting of a package of documents (included as Appendix 1) which provided background to Ark's Spring Park Campus, an overview of the site and its context, and an indication of what the proposals would be like albeit detailed elevations, visuals, or soft landscaping details were not provided. This was accompanied by a series of technical notes on ecology, drainage, archaeology / heritage, and landscape and visual matters.
- 2.2. A written response was provided by Wiltshire Council on 18th May 2023 and the pre-application response is included at Appendix 2. The following conclusions are reached in Wiltshire Council's pre-application response:
- Overall, there is considered to be compelling reasons to conclude at this stage that the principle of a new data centre on the Sands Quarry site would be supported by the Local Planning Authority;
 - Would suggest a less commercial aesthetic and appropriate design approach which would also help moderate the impact if it were to continue along and wrap around the facades of DC02;
 - Notwithstanding the above, the Council's Landscape Officer does advise that, in their opinion, the proposed development could probably be accommodated successfully within the site (over the longer term) without resulting in far reaching adverse effects to landscape character or public visual amenity / receptors;
 - The Council's Conservation Officer has advised that whilst it seems unlikely to result in a high level of harm to the setting of heritage assets, care should be taken to soften the elevations where possible along with a comprehensive landscaping scheme;
 - The development is likely to be capable of being configured and designed in such a manner that would be appropriate to the locality (which is in part defined by significant areas of residential development) and comply with development plan policy; and
 - Matters that will be particular important will be the supporting noise mitigation, ecological and drainage schemes.
- 2.3. Using the same information that was submitted to Wiltshire Council as part of the pre-application request (and included at Appendix 1), a request for an EIA Screening Opinion was submitted on 8th December 2022.

- 2.4. The letter from Wiltshire Council confirming that the proposals would not be EIA development (and would therefore not require an Environmental Statement) is included at Appendix 3. The concluding paragraph from that response is replicated below:

“In this particular instance, whilst likely to be substantial, and I acknowledging the proximity to the Bath and Box Mines bat SAC, the development would not located within a particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable location and would not result in a significant impact on any area beyond its immediate locality. It is not considered that the proposal would have any potentially hazardous environmental implications for the site that could not be addressed through the submission and consideration of supporting information to a planning application. The conclusion to your cover letter does include a comprehensive list of those assessments which are in the process of being prepared and will support the forthcoming application.”

3. Corsham Town Council

- 3.1. Ark met Corsham Town Council members on 15th February 2023. At the meeting, Ark and Savills representatives presented initial (and high level) proposals in the form of a deck of slides. The slides also provided an overview of what data centres are (and why they are required) as well as Ark's involvement in the delivery of the Spring Park Campus. The deck of slides is included at Appendix 4.
- 3.2. The meeting minutes agreed between Ark and Corsham Town Council is included at Appendix 5.
- 3.3. Subsequent to this, an item was included within the "Neston News" written by Jeremy Brook (Town Councillor for Corsham Neston Ward) which provided a further summary. This is included as Appendix 6.

4. Local Residents

- 4.1. Ark hosted a public consultation event on 20th July 2023 between 18:30 and 21:00. The event was hosted at Neston Memorial Hall. Prospective attendees were encouraged , but not obligated, to register their interest in attending.
- 4.2. The event was advertised by erecting site notices outside of the site and posting letters to all properties within the “Neston” electoral ward.
- 4.3. The Site Notices are included as Appendix 7 and the location of Sites Notices is identified on Appendix 8.
- 4.4. Letters were sent to all residents within the Neston Ward. The letter sent to residents is included at appendix 9.
- 4.5. Representatives of Ark, Savills, and Hale were in attendance to answer questions and a series of boards were on display as replicated at Appendix 10. These provided an overview of Ark, the site, Ark’s proposals, and the response to various technical matters.
- 4.6. Feedback forms were provided encouraging attendees to provide written comments to the project team. The project team also made attendees aware that comments provided by email or by post would also be welcomed.
- 4.7. No formal register of attendees was taken but approximately 75 people attended the public consultation and feedback was provided both verbally during the consultation and in writing (both at and following the event).

Comments Raised	Ark Response
The site is a greenfield site and not previously developed land	This was considered extensively by the Planning Inspector in the consideration of the residential appeal with the conclusion being reached by the Planning Inspector that the site constituted previously developed land formerly used by the Ministry of Defence. Policy 37 (Military Establishments) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy supports redevelopment of such sites for employment generating uses.
Verified Views in Public Exhibition Boards were incorrect	The Accurate Visual Representations that were displayed during the public exhibition were prepared by Construct Media, a leading architectural visualisation company. A Method Statement outlining how these representations have been prepared is submitted as part of the planning application. The viewpoints were selected as being representative viewpoints from key publicly accessible locations outside of the site’s boundaries.
Proposals will generate additional vehicle movements and increase congestion	A Transport Assessment prepared by IMA Transport Planning is submitted as part of this planning application. This shows that the proposed data centre will generate

	73% of AM peak trips and 63% of PM peak trips when compared to the permitted residential scheme. The Transport Assessment confirms that there is capacity on the local highways network for the proposed data centre development both now and in 2028 when it is expected that it will first be operational.
History of speeding along Westwells Road and Moor Green	This is understood but it is not considered that this will be exacerbated by the proposed development. Ark will make Wiltshire Council Highways aware of these concerns but it is not anticipated that the proposals will trigger any offsite highways works.
Feeling that there were already enough data centres in Corsham and that should be located elsewhere	National planning policy encourages making the most efficient use of previously developed land, whilst Policy 37 (Military Establishments) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy supports redevelopment of such sites for employment generating uses. There are also clear benefits with locating a data centre next to an existing data centre campus.
The data centre building too big	A Landscape and Visual Appraisal prepared by EDP, which considers visibility of the site from a range of short and long range viewpoints, concludes that, as a result of sensitive design, site topography, and enhanced landscaping, the development is well-integrated within views from the wider area. Recognising that the sensitivities are along Moor Green and Westwells Road, the design approach seeks to step the building from east to west with the eastern block being a storey taller and all rooftop plant being on the western rather than eastern block.
The proposed landscaping approach considered inadequate	The proposed landscaping scheme includes a comprehensive package of green and blue infrastructure which is focussed on screening the site from Westwells Road and Moor Green. This includes a network of bunding and the planting of 4m mature trees on Day 1. This allows the Landscape and Visual Appraisal prepared by EDP to conclude that, as a result of sensitive design, site topography, and enhanced landscaping, the development is well-integrated within views from the wider area.
Insufficient landscaping along southeastern corner of site	It is noted that the landscaping plan presented during the public exhibition included a landscape gap to the southeast of the site. The updated landscaping plan shows additional planting and bunding in this location, helping to screen the proposed building from the residential property at this location.
Site is liable to flooding and development of site will increase risk of surface water flooding	According to the Environment Agency's Indicative Flood Map for land-use planning (Rivers and Sea), the site lies within Flood Zone 1, which is classified as land where flooding from rivers is very unlikely (having a less than 0.1% (1 in 1,000) chance of flooding occurring in any one year). The risk of flooding to the Site from pluvial, groundwater and artificial sources has also been assessed and found to be low.
Extant residential permission not readily deliverable due to Grampian Condition	The site benefits from full planning permission with the Planning Inspector for that appeal considering that a Grampian planning condition can appropriately be used

	to allow for the granting of planning permission whilst ensuring that an adequate solution could be delivered. Nevertheless, Ark can deliver an acceptable drainage solution for the site through the use of infiltration that can be achieved within the site's boundaries and without the use of third party land.
Buildings in Spring Park Campus considered poorly designed	The proposed data centre will incorporate an enhanced design approach to other data centres operational at the Spring Park Data Centre Campus, including the use of anthracite grey cladding and vertical timber fins to add visual interest.
Lighting of existing data centre buildings within Spring Park Campus visible from homes and concern that building will also be illuminated	Ark is reviewing lighting arrangements for their existing data centre buildings with the aim of delivering an improvement for local residents. The proposed lighting scheme is designed to be 0 lux at the site's boundaries, something that is required given the site's boundaries are used as bat corridors.
Cannot see how a biodiversity net gain can be achieved	A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been undertaken by Tyler Grange using the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric 4.0. Whilst the proposals incorporate a modest element of tree removal, the vast majority of habitats to be lost were found to be of negligible ecological value such that a biodiversity net gain of 11.83% is to be achieved through onsite planting and the creation of an attenuation basin within the red line boundary, as well as the enhancement of land to the south of the application site which is under Ark's ownership. It is envisaged that the requirement to deliver and maintain this will be controlled through planning condition or planning obligation.
Can hear existing data centre campus and concern that additional data centre building will exacerbate this	
Queries around use of generators and frequency of their use.	Generators are included within the proposals to provide power in the extremely rare event of a power failure. From Ark's experience of operating the Spring Park Data Centre Campus, this has been for a matter of hours over the last 10 years. The generators will also be subject to a testing regime but this will be infrequent but regular (in the sense that its hours can be controlled).
Concern that Ark will deliver future development within blue line boundary to south of application site.	The land within the blue line boundary was purchased by Ark as a single package along with the application site. It is required to deliver the biodiversity net gain and its retention for this purpose will be controlled via planning condition and / or planning obligation. There are no plans for further development beyond the application site and the application site layout would preclude this.
Development will result in the loss of public rights of way (PRoWs) across the site and any re-routed comparable routes will be of inferior quality.	Ark explored options for the retention of the existing PRoWs across the site but this both (1) would mean that they would be set completely within the context of the proposed development and (2) would result in an inferior scheme being delivered to that proposed. Ark's proposals incorporate the re-routing of these PRoWs which will be formed of hoggins and set within a landscaped setting.

Appendix 1

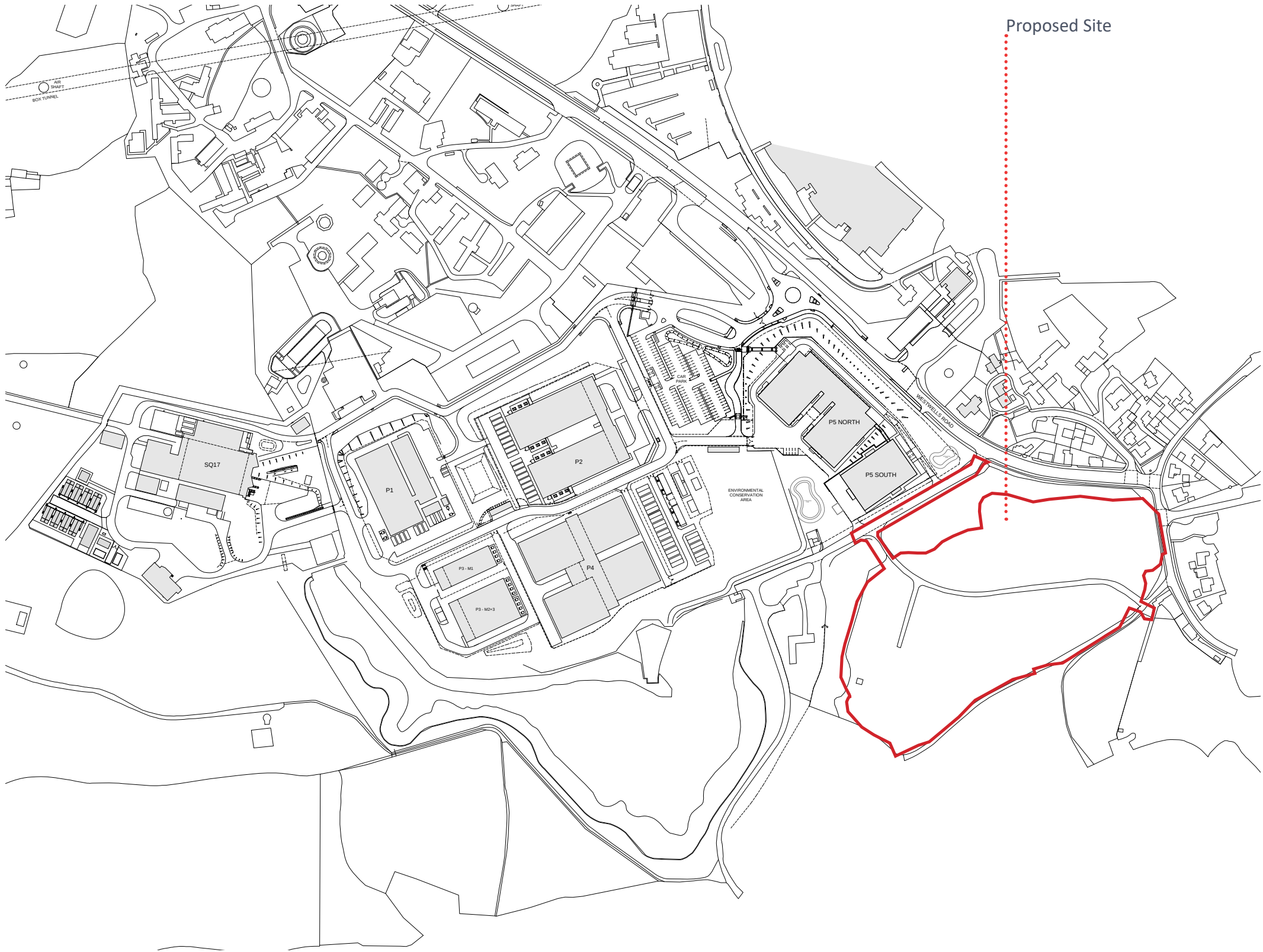
Spring Park South
Produced on behalf of Ark Data Centres
December 2022



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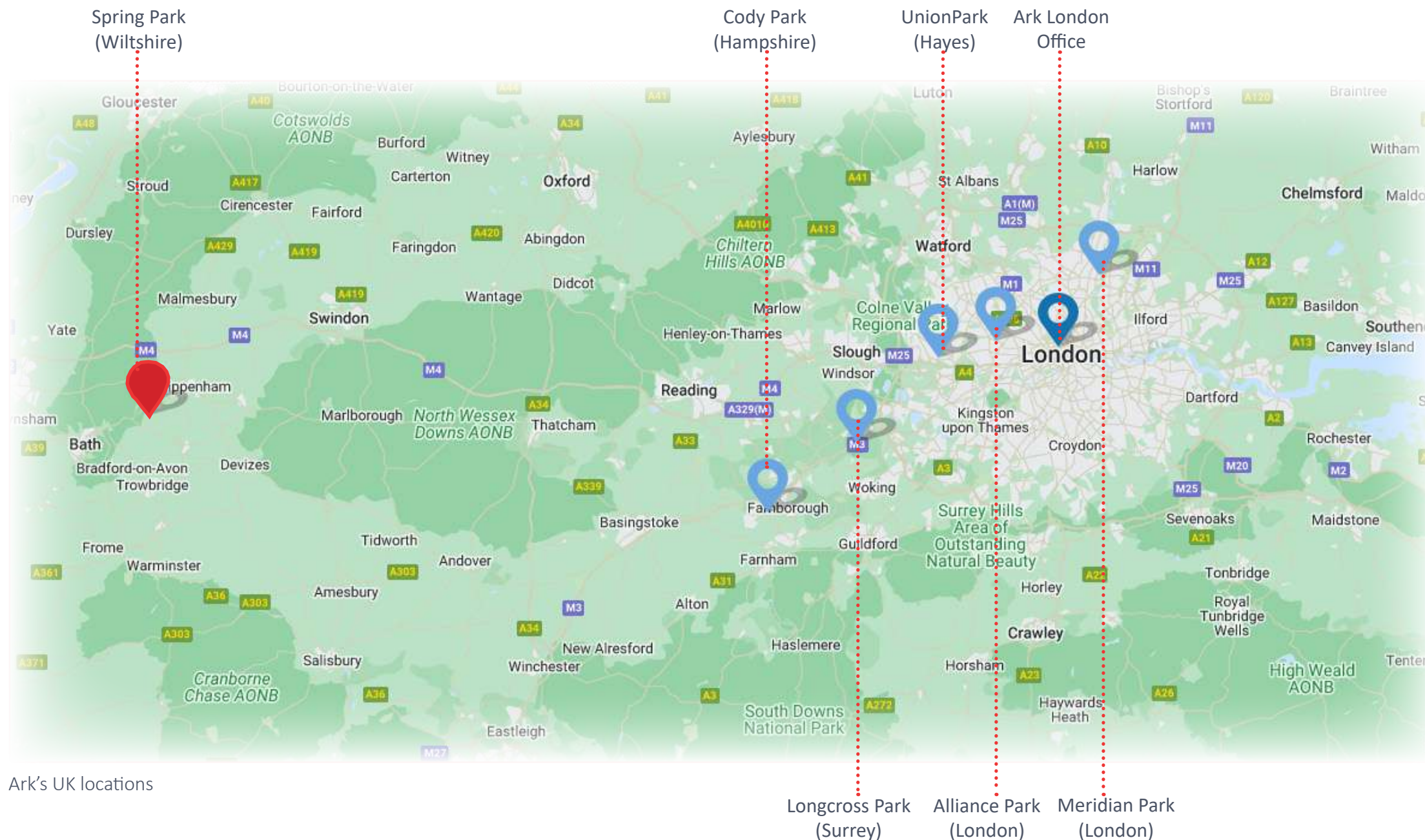
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1.0 Introduction



Spring Park Masterplan
NTS

1.0 Introduction



Established in 2005, Ark develops and operates secure and efficient purpose-built data centres. Ark operate UK campuses at Spring Park in Corsham, Cody Park in Farnborough and Meridian Park in Enfield and are in the process of delivering additional data centre capacity in Hayes (to be known as Union Park), Park Royal (to be known as Alliance Park), and Surrey (to be known as Longcross Park).

Ark has been involved with the Spring Park data centre campus project for over 10 years and has taken it through each stage of the planning process. Data centres P1, P2, P3, P4, and SQ17 are completed and operational, P5 North benefits from a recently granted planning permission, and there is a live application for a further data centre (to be known as P5 South) on the Hawthorn Works site. The campus development also includes generator areas, substations, landscaping (including a retained green corridor and nature conservation area), roads, and drainage.

The campus has a very light touch on the surrounding area but hosts process and activities which are essential to economic and social progress.

2.0 Site Location



2.0 Site Location

Ark has secured the freehold interest of the site known as “Land South of Westwells Road, Neston, Corsham”.

The need for additional data processing and storage is growing at an unprecedented rate, whilst available and deliverable sites are very limited. Spring Park is a successful campus already and expansion makes sense for a number of very clear operational and environmental reasons. For equally clear reasons, the site is the only opportunity to do this at Spring Park on previously developed land.

The site has a total area of 3.6ha and is previously developed land, consisting of a series of visible footings and foundations that remain intact from when the site was used by the Ministry of Defence during World War Two. Ark’s land holding also includes the tree belts along the site’s southern, western, and northern boundaries whilst the extent of the site runs eastwards up to Moor Green.

The site’s recent planning history confirms it is a sustainable location for development and as signalled above, delivering additional data centre capacity as an extension to an existing campus (rather than starting again somewhere else) makes sense on a number of levels.

3.0 Site Photographs



Google Earth aerial view of application site



Photograph 1



Photograph 5

3.0 Site Photographs



Photograph 2



Photograph 3



Photograph 4



Photograph 6



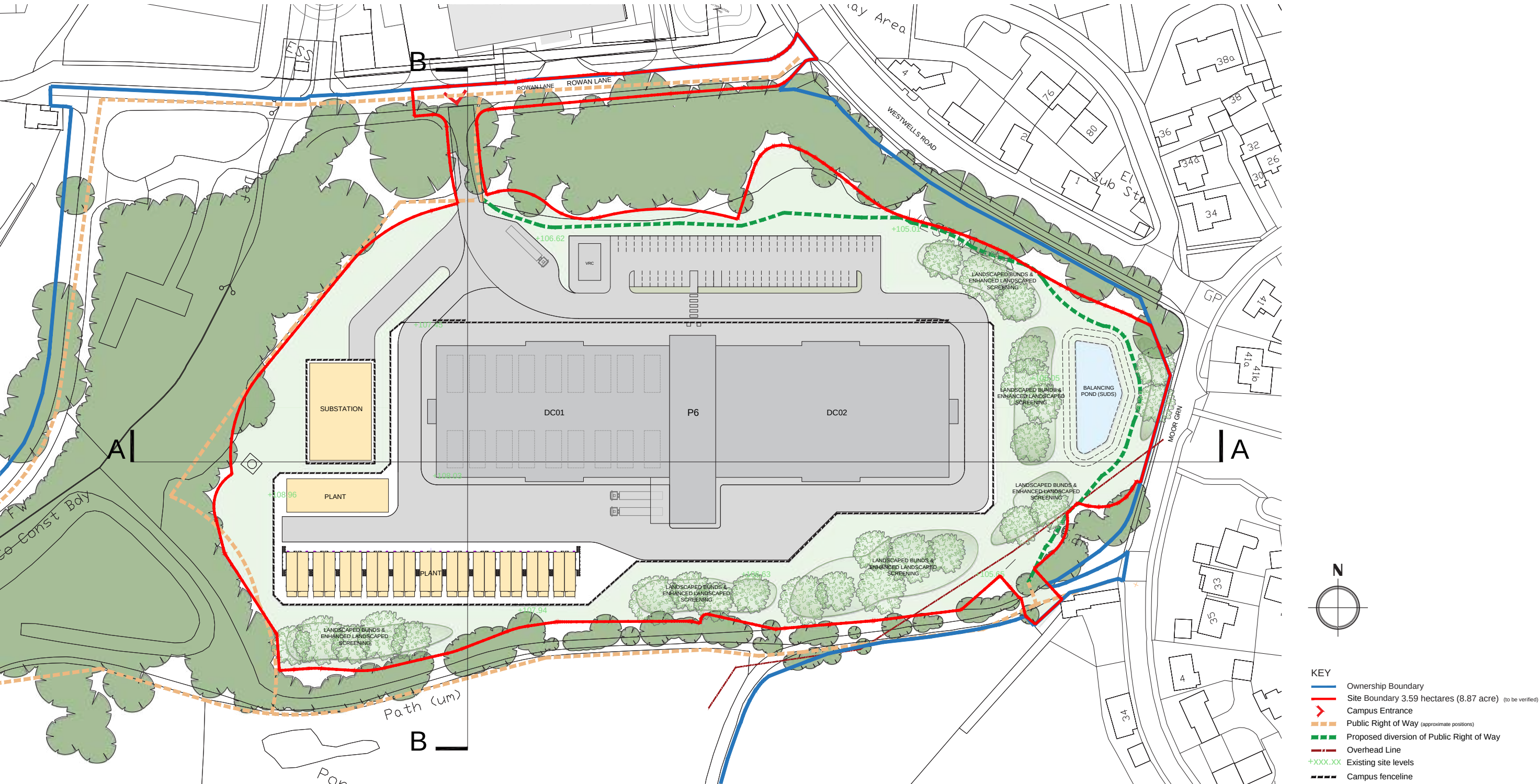
Photograph 7



Photograph 8

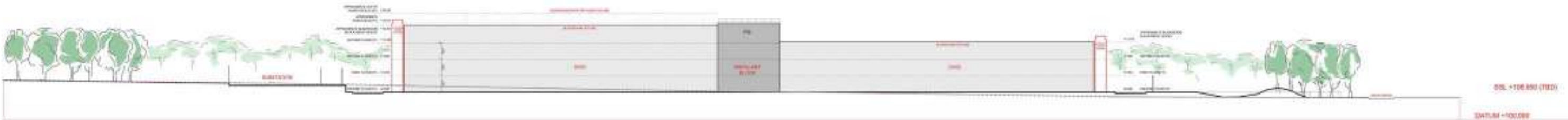
4.0 Proposal

4.1 Site Layout

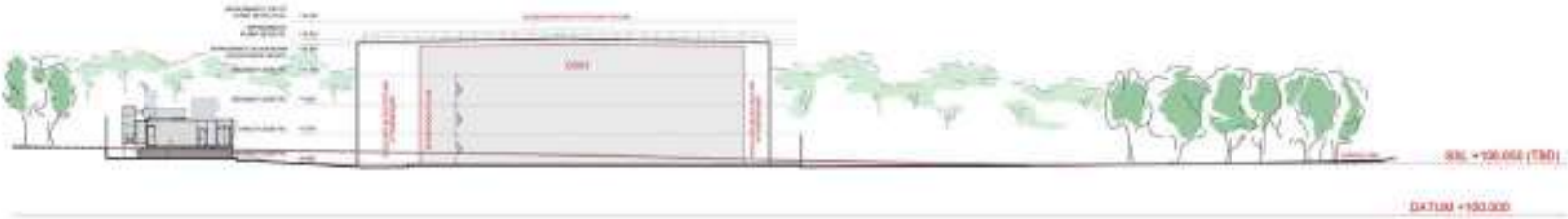


Like all commercial buildings, design reflects function and requirements – which for data centres are driven by security, efficiency and resilience. However, data centre design has evolved quickly and significantly – Spring Park is a history lesson in this respect, with the first buildings to the north very different to what has been constructed or approved further to the south more recently. For this southern expansion, a much more sophisticated design is both possible and proposed and signals of this are shown later in this design document. The key headlines are:

- a) A scheme which makes the best use of the site but doesn't stretch its' capacity;
- b) A single main building which sits centrally and is collared by substantial space and landscaping;
- c) Opportunities for innovation in materiality and elevational treatment which respond to context (see section 5);
- d) A commitment to efficiency which makes commercial and environmental sense; and
- e) Supporting electrical infrastructure and circulation space sitting behind the main building (which screens it from the surrounding area).



02 Proposed Site Section AA



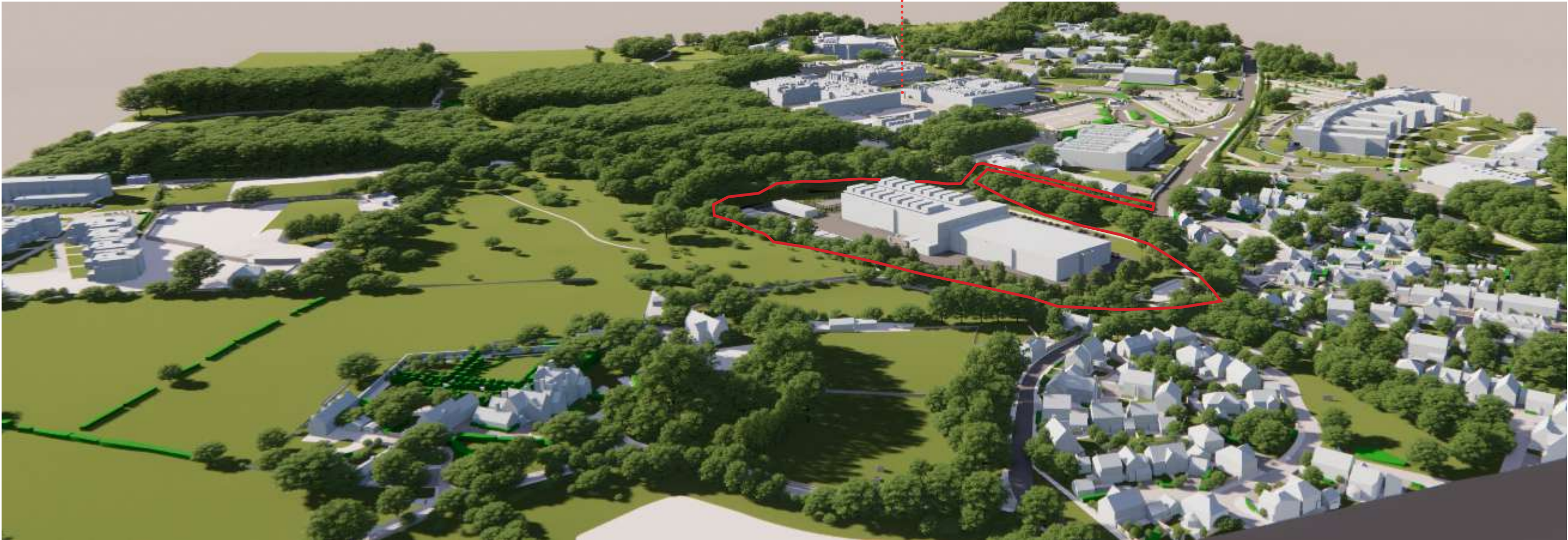
03 Proposed Site Section BB

4.0 Proposal

4.3 Aerial view - Existing



Ark Data Centre
Spring Park
Campus



5.0 Architectural Aspirations

Ark has developed data centres in a variety of locations across the UK. Its' design team has considered what will work best for the site and has carefully considered the context it sits within. Whilst no decisions have been made at this stage, the images on these pages indicate the treatments that are available – and are a strong signal of the high quality in building design and landscaping that will feature as further progress is made. Architecturally the focus will be on a mixture of screening, solidity and transparency for the main building, whilst landscaping proposals will retain and enhance what is there already and add substantial new planting and features – especially on the site's boundaries. This will present opportunities for biodiversity gains as well.

Images of recent UK Ark Campus':

- Ark - Longcross Park
- Ark - Spring Park

Architectural Aspirations:

- Screening
- Solidity
- Transparency

Landscaping:

- Landscaped bunds
- Soft landscaping - balancing pond (SuDS)



Ark- Longcross Park (Chertsey)

Ark- Spring Park- P5 North (Corsham)



5.0 Architectural Aspirations

Screening & Landscaping



Solidity & Transparency



Screening & Landscaping



Appendix 2

Tim Gent
Ark Estates 4 LTD c/o Savills
2 Kingsway
Cardiff
CF10 3FD

Development Services
Wiltshire Council
Tel: 0300 456 0114
Email: developmentmanagement@wiltshire.gov.uk
www.wiltshire.gov.uk

18 May 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

Application No: ENQ/2022/01951

Application Type: Pre-Application enquiry

Proposal: Confidential Pre-application Enquiry - Redevelopment of Site to extend Spring Park Data Centre Campus

Site Address: land south of Westwells Road Neston Corsham Wiltshire

I refer to your pre-application enquiry which was lodged/registered on 08 December 2022. Based on the receipt of specialist comment from prospective consultees, below is a setting out of the main issues likely to be raised if a planning application were to be submitted and a view as to its likely success.

Proposal

It is understood that Ark Data Centres Ltd have secured the freehold interest of the c.3.6Ha site, most often referred to as Sands Quarry, at the Southern end of Westwells Road. As you identify, the site benefits from outline planning permission for up to 81 homes with access from Rowan Lane (application reference 18/09884/OUT and appeal reference APP/Y3940/W/19/3243873).

From your submission, the development proposal appears to comprise a single, free-standing data centre building along with ancillary supporting plant, infrastructure and security fencing. The building is to vary in height, but with a maximum of 18.3m (including plant). Vehicular access is to be via Rowan Lane with a dedicated, on-site car park.

Principle

The site is not allocated for development within the development plan, the site does benefit from planning permission for development (albeit of a residential type). When granting that permission, the appeal Inspector regarded the land as previously developed (PDL) and a former military site (despite it not being used for such for close to a century). Nevertheless, these circumstances do suggest that the site will, in principle, be suitable for some form of development.

Whilst there is perhaps no specific policy within either the Wiltshire Core Strategy or the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan that specifically identifies this land for employment development, there are several which do allude to and promote the appropriateness of such: notably, CP34 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy as well as policies BE1, BE2 and BE3 to the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan. The previous 2018 appeal decision does pronounce upon the relevance of policy CP37 (relating to redundant military establishments), but it is perhaps undisputed ground that the amount of floorspace being proposed would greatly exceed whatever built footprint can be discerned from its distant past.

However, it is clear that, contextually, the site is well related to existing commercial and military development on the opposite side of Westwells Road and Rowan Lane, with the West Corsham locality being identified by the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership: Strategic Economic Plan (March 2014), as being an important centre for in the information and communications industries within Wiltshire. The context within which the site lies, as well as its recent planning history, are considered to be significant material considerations weighing in favour of the principle of new commercial development taking place of the land.

Overall, there is considered to be compelling reasons to conclude at this stage that the principle of a new data centre on the Sands Quarry site would be supported by the Local Planning Authority.

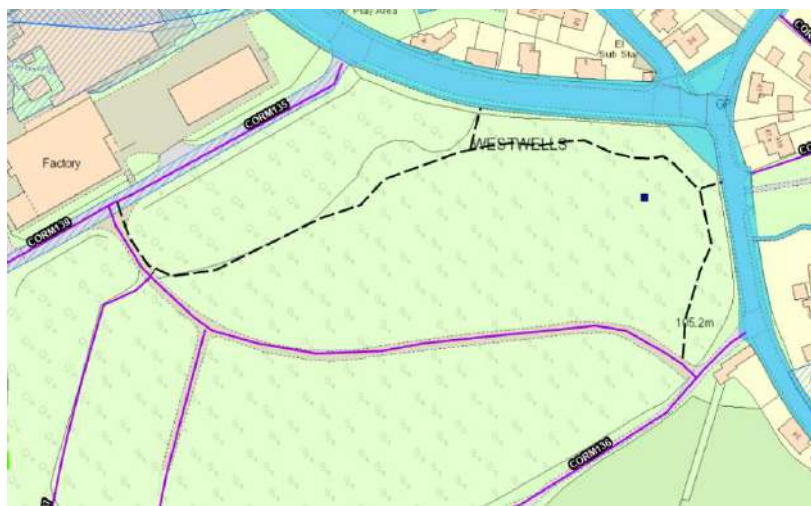
Highways and rights of way

Unfortunately, no comment has yet been received from the Council's Highway Engineer. However, it is known that Westwells Road and its key junctions have been improved as part of the development which has been carried out in the locality over the past decade. Further, it is also accepted that data centre type development is not likely to generate the levels of vehicle movements as other form of employment (or indeed the consented housing development on the site). In that context, and so as to avoid delaying the sending this opinion, it is proposed that the Highway Engineer comments are separately forward when received.

Existing Public Rights of way in the form of public footpaths are located along Sands Lane to the south (footpath CORM136 & CORM140), along Rowan Lane to the north (footpath CORM 139 & BOX106) and short connecting public footpaths also pass through the site (footpaths CORM135, CORM136 & CORM137). CORM135 appears to run through the middle of the site along with other more informal paths, well used by dog walkers etc.

With regard to those Rights of Way, as is acknowledged within your submission, public footpath CORM135 would require extinguishment and diversion – and of course locally, it would be very important for a good area of open space (and public accessibility to it) retained around the Westwells/Moor Green intersection. The Council's Rights of Way team advises that, in addition to a proposed diversion route, a layout plan but they must also show the existing paths crossing the site on the plan if an application for planning permission is submitted.

Within their comments, the Council's Rights of Way Officer suggests that CORM135, be diverted up to the point that the access road leaves Rowan Lane, so that it runs on a separate constructed footway 2 metres wide alongside the road. This will reduce pedestrian and vehicle conflict. The diverted route of CORM135 will need to be constructed as a 2m wide hoggin path. It would also be useful if additional link paths could be created to link in to Westwells road in the region of house number 3 Westwells Road and a link to CORM138 or the Tarmac footway just South of that. So as to assist, this is shown on the on the extract below as a broken black line. The Council's Rights of Way Officer also requests that the future maintenance of the path is included within the maintenance of the open spaces.



Where it is necessary to divert or extinguish a public footpath to enable a development (prior to commencement), an application must be submitted to Wiltshire Council at the earliest opportunity under section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. It is advised that an application to divert or extinguish is made concurrently with the application for planning permission. Full details of affected rights of way and proposals to divert or extinguish them are still required as part of the application for planning permission. To expedite the process of dealing with affected rights of way the Council does retain powers to make (but not confirm) an Order before planning permission is granted. For more information please contact rightsofway@wiltshire.gov.uk.

Design, appearance, landscaping

It is undeniable that the proposed development would be substantial and to a large extent, fill the site. Similarly, the building itself would be somewhat utilitarian, in a similar manner to the data centre development which can be seen on the adjoining Spring Park site, on the opposite side of Rowan Lane.

As you are aware, the Council remains concerned about the potential impact from large scale data-centre type development upon the character and appearance of Rowan Lane as a rural lane and an entrance to high quality residential development. In this particular case, however, it would appear that the proposed data centre could be positioned some distance (and preserve intervening landscaping) which would avoid an immediate and irrevocable urbanising effect. However, regard should be had to policy BE3 to the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan which requires, inter alia, an active frontage to be created to Westwells Road to contribute to the creation of a more coherent community.

The submission appears to show the taller, 18.5 m high 'western wing' of the building (labelled as DC01) would also be the focus for the busier and potentially more noise generating elements of the development (eg., the vehicle access to the development from Rowan Lane, substation and external plant, HGV bays and car parking and lighting associated) would be positioned well back from Rowan Lane and, critically, Westwells/Moor Green and its preponderance of housing in this location. In their comments, the Council's Urban Design Officer observes that, in the above context, it is appropriate that only the loop road is shown passing around the eastern part of DC02 and no other such external uses and activity appear to be located here.

Also observed by the Council's UDO, and judging by the supplied cross-sections, the slightly lower, 14.5m high 'eastern wing' (labelled as DC02), whilst also set some distance back from the Westwells and Moor Green frontage, does still have the potential to be readily apparent, rising above the existing perimeter vegetation and proposed landscape bunding and screening wrapping around DC02. This indicates a significant visual presence and bearing on the immediate housing opposite along Westwells Road and Moor Green from the North-West round to the historic building group (Jaggards) to the south and over the field between (which would act as a significant buffer) including the PROW through this. This relationship could be more apparent from the way the two roads and residential curves around the site perimeter. This could be especially when native trees would not be in leaf and given the density and depth of this and new cover shown, its growth rate and impermanent nature of such planting as opposed to the substantial depth of the existing copse on the western side of the site.

Within their commentary, and so as to perhaps moderate the impact identified above, the Council's UDO has asked whether any consideration has been given to an alternative layout? For example it would appear in principle possible from the extent of surrounding open space within the site to rotate the footprint of DC02 ninety degrees setting its south end façade just forward of the central P6 element towards the field and essentially maintaining the placing of the car park, but this would significantly set the building considerably further back and away from Westwells Road and Moor Green, DC02 not extending eastwards of the car park shown, or for example as orientated on the Site layout, articulate the mass, while accommodating the same volume by stepping DC02 down from four instead of three shown (ie height of DC01) to three to two storeys (not three as shown at this end) ie in equal thirds from west to east across the footprint of DC02 as orientated on the Site

layout. In this respect, the requirements of policy BE3 to the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan would be relevant.

With regard to external materials, the UDO goes on to comment that the use of articulated timber cladding to the façade (photo examples in 5.1 architectural aspirations), would suggest a less commercial aesthetic and appropriate design approach which would also help moderate the impact if it were to continue along and wrap around the facades of DC02 as appears to be shown for the Ark -Longcross Park photo and part façade photo lower left on second page of 5.1, and this were a weathered natural finish such as larch blending with the general colour of tree branches especially when trees not in leaf. The industrial feel of the Spring Park P5 example in this setting would appear harsh whereas this grey cladding would be suited to DC01 i.e., out of this immediate setting and where the depth of woodland cover would appear to offer a substantial foreground to this from the South west and west. It is also appropriate that no roof mounted plant appears to be shown on DC02 adding to this height, and this should be tidily arranged and enclosed on DC01, and of muted not bright colour and shade as for the cladding, to avoid appearing ungainly and boldly standing out on the skyline.

A substantial size and run of windows in the upper storeys of DC02, for example as shown on the Spring Park P5, and to stair wells if facing towards the houses on Westwells Road and Moor Green also has the potential to unduly impact on the amenity of these residents, creating a sense of or actual overlooking of residential windows and gardens and loss of privacy especially looking down and across from the top storey of the north east and south east corner return facades.

There could also be significant artificial light spill from windows which could be visually intrusive in this direction particularly as the building would be operating at night and could be well occupied continuously. In this regard I feel it would also be beneficial for the Landscaped bund shown at the north east corner to continue on round to screen the north west corner of the car parking and similarly continued at the south east corner closing the gap. Indeed, if window openings throughout DC02 could be limited, set apart and incorporating the façade articulation across these as the photo example lower right on second page of 5.1 shows, this would help the setting of DC02 generally.

It's accepted that some form of security fencing will be required for this type of development, and which of course is likely to appear utilitarian. However, this is shown as being reasonably set back from Westwells Road and Moor Green. The landscape area on the east side of DC02 would appear to be open to the public with the PROW indicated running through this. While the routing of this would suggest users of the path could be generally apparent and visible from these roads to deter potential misuse of this area in proximity to the residential, this could conflict with the substantial depth and coverage of relatively dense planting that would appear to be necessary to moderate DC02, the bunds appear rather low in section AA (4.2) and therefore correspondingly small in area in proportion to the height of DC02. This suggests an intermediate secured off area forward of the Security fence containing higher and wider bunds with the denser tree planting and outside this a more visibly open wide margin either side of the path and containing the SUDs pond following around Westwells Road and Moor Green.

Landscaping

The site does not lie within a nationally protected landscape and is not covered by any local landscape designation/s. The application site shares no inter-visibility with the Cotswolds AONB or the Green Belt, both of which are located circa. 700m to the north of the site, due to intervening topography (rising land), existing woodland and existing/urban development/settlement areas. Neston Conservation Area lies circa 150m to the southeast of the site.

A Tree Preservation Order (N/TPO194 MIXED) currently protects the existing woodland and trees on the application site and on land within the applicant's adjoining land holding.

Existing Public Rights of way in the form of public footpaths are located along Sands Lane to the south (footpath CORM136 & CORM140), along Rowan Lane to the north (footpath CORM 139 & BOX106) and short connecting public footpaths also pass through the site (footpaths CORM135, CORM136 & CORM137). Indeed, the retention of a good area of publicly accessible landscaped area would likely be a key consideration weighing favour of the development.

In general, the site currently serves as a transitional separating green open gap separating existing large-scale employment uses (Spring Park, and MOD Corsham Site) from the more intimate smaller scale residential areas of Westwells, Moor Park, and Neston.

Within their comments, the Council's Landscape Officer notes the submission is accompanied by a 'landscape and visual briefing note'. They confirm that while this note provides some useful contextual information it does (perhaps understandably) lack the analysis and balanced conclusions reached so as truly inform the consideration of a planning application. For example, within the document, much is made of the context of site to existing employment and data centre areas North, but little reference is made to the adjoining residential context and highly characteristic natural stone buildings and rural settlement along Sands Lane and Westwells leading towards Neston etc. Similarly, the note doesn't really consider whether the scale and nature of proposed development is appropriate to the locality.

Notwithstanding the above, the Council's Landscape Officer does advise that, in their opinion, the proposed development could probably be accommodated successfully within the site (over the longer term) without resulting in far reaching adverse effects to landscape character or public visual amenity / receptors. There would be an obvious land use change within the site itself due to the height and scale of building proposed and accordingly it would be important for local street and placemaking character that the location and footprint of the building itself includes sufficient standoffs to adjoining streets and roads (due to the scale and height of the proposed new building) while the design and use of materials should be sympathetic to its more rural settlement and greater residential context and setting (rather than repeating the large white shed / box design of previous phases). Existing site and peripheral trees and woodland need to be retained as part of the development and significant areas of new tree planting / landscaping are anticipated to be necessary to help break up and filter views of the whole building, provide a characteristic woodland setting to the development, and provide appropriate transition with countryside to the west. The design of perimeter landscaping, site boundary enclosures should complement the existing rural character of Sands Lane, local rural rights of way network and adjoining areas of residential and historic built environment.

Noise and disturbance

Due to the proximity of the development to relatively large numbers of residential properties, and in the context of policies CP55 and CP57 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy, it would be expected that any planning application should be supported by a full assessment as to the potential effects from the development to the amenity and living conditions of those residents, as well as proposals to mitigate those effects and impacts.

In other respects, it is also known that the land is highly contaminated and for that reason, for a development of this scale, it would be important for an application to be submitted complete with a construction management plan that sets out how the management of the land will be handled so as to avoid impacts on the surrounding residential properties.

Heritage

Archaeology

The Council's Archaeologist has considered the submission and advises that in their view the provided Archaeology and Heritage Technical Note submitted as part of this pre-application enquiry sufficiently characterised the archaeological potential of the proposed application area.

Were a planning application to be submitted for this site, it is advised that an archaeological trial trench evaluation be undertaken which could be secured via an appropriately worded planning condition. The costs of this work would be borne by the applicant.

It should be made clear that, in this case, the archaeological trial trench evaluation would form the first stage of possible further archaeological mitigation. Further archaeological investigation may be

required either prior to or during construction or both. This would be dependent on the results of the archaeological evaluation undertaken prior to construction. Analysis and reporting commensurate with the significance of the archaeological results of further mitigation may also be required.

Conservation

There are no heritage assets located in the immediacy of the site, but slightly further afield is the Neston Conservation Area as well as listed buildings at Jaggards and the opposite side of Westwells Road. The Council's Conservation Officer has advised that whilst it seems unlikely to result in a high level of harm to the setting of heritage assets, care should be taken to soften the elevations where possible along with a comprehensive landscaping scheme.

Ecology

The submission of the Ecology Technical Note (Tyler Grange, 30 Nov 2022) and the associated Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Daniel Ahern, Aug 2022) is noted, thereby reflecting the sites sensitive location close to the Bath and Box Mines SSSI and SAC. It is clear that results of outstanding ecology surveys remain outstanding, and those results have the potential to influence the final design and net gain calculation.

In the above context, the Council's Ecologist advises that a full suite of survey results should support any future application, along with an overarching ecological impact assessment (EclA). The additional components in the Technical Note's conclusion should be submitted too, alongside a detailed lighting plan and details of vegetation removed/planted. A shadow HRA is welcomed.

It should also be noted by the applicant's ecologist that there are roosts likely to be of significance to the population of lesser horseshoe bats associated with the SAC within close proximity to the site, less than 300m to the southern site boundary. This may not have come up via the local records centre data search. The Technical Note has indicated that they feel a full season's suite of bat activity surveys is not necessary; this will require full justification in the final EclA.

The Council's Ecologist has also referenced the potential acoustic impact that might occur from the operational aspect of the proposal - the boundary habitat is being retained, but given that this is likely to be prime bat habitat used by bats associated with the SAC, any potential impact on the function of that habitat to bats (and other protected species) must be fully investigated.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Submission of the condition assessment sheets used in the site assessment is required, together with the unlocked Biodiversity Metric spreadsheet used to calculate net gain. This should be accompanied by maps referencing the current measured habitats within the site and those proposed for mitigation or for BNG.

Where no net loss of functional habitat has been demonstrated within the application site, in line with CP50 and NPPF but there is insufficient space within the development to achieve 10% net gain for biodiversity, the LPA will accept off-site habitat creation to fulfil the BNG requirement.

In the first instance the developer should seek and secure a suitable site within the local area on which to deliver BNG, carry out the baseline assessment of habitats and an assessment of the net gain that could reasonably be achieved at that site, using the Biodiversity Metric (current version) and submitting the "before and after" maps for the receptor site, as part of the application submission. Alternatively, the developer may use a third party broker to deliver the required number of biodiversity units, on a receptor site agreed with the LPA, or may apply to use the council's own biodiversity offsetting scheme.

It is understood that as of 1st April 2023, Wiltshire Council will be offering an enhanced pre-application and discretionary ecology advice. Further details of this service and the fees and charges are available by contacting ecologyconsultations@wiltshire.gov.uk.

Drainage

The submission has been considered by the Council's Drainage Engineer and the below sets out the basic advice they have provided in response. In other respects, and as you will be aware, the ability to satisfactorily drain from the site was extensively considered at the time of the previous appeal.

Flood risk

The Wiltshire Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, SFRA Data Explorer, has indicated that the site is located within Flood Zone 1, and is likely to not be at risk from pluvial flooding, groundwater flooding, or flooding from artificial sources. No historic flooding incidents related to the site have been identified.

Overall, the site is shown to be at moderate cumulative risk of flooding in the future from all sources. A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required for this application. The site-specific FRA should demonstrate that the site is not adversely affected by flood risk from different sources, and how the flood risk from all sources will be managed without increasing flood risk to the development itself or elsewhere. It should also outline the proposed drainage strategy for the site. The applicant is referred to the Environment Agency's advice on how to prepare an FRA, as well as their standing advice for vulnerable developments.

Drainage strategy and design

At that time, the appellant seeks to rely upon an existing private drainage system running from the appeal site to an open culvert at Spring Lane but were not able to full demonstrate that this system was adequate (indeed, it is known to have failed and/or blocked in some parts, requiring repair and the agreement of up to 13 third parties). Nevertheless, the appeal Inspector was not concerned about how realistic it would be to undertake those repairs and manage such a drainage system and chose to make use of a negatively worded planning condition in that respect. Clearly, the existence of such a condition does not, in the real world, move the matter of securing a satisfactory drainage scheme forward any. It is assumed this is the reason why this proposal moves towards an on-site solution.

The full comments of the Council's Drainage Engineer and Wessex Water have been provided as an appendix to this letter.

Sustainable construction

Core Policy CP41 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires new non-residential development to achieve BREEAM "Excellent". In that respect, the comments of the Council's Climate Change team are provided as an appendix to this letter.

Conclusion

Whilst there is perhaps no policy within either the Wiltshire Core Strategy or the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan that specifically identifies this land for employment development, there are several which do allude to and promote the appropriateness of such: notably, CP34 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy as well as policies BE1, BE2 and BE3 to the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan. When considered and viewed through the prism of the site's proximity to significant amounts of employment and military development at Westwells Road, there are considered to be compelling reasons to conclude at this stage that the principle of a new data centre on the Sands Quarry site would be supported by the Local Planning Authority.

Clearly, the matter of the adequacy of the proposed access and surrounding highway network to support the use will need to be considered and the comments of the Council's Highway Engineer will be forwarded once received.

In other more detailed respects, the development is likely to be capable of being configured and designed in such a manner that would be appropriate to the locality (which is in part defined by significant areas of residential development) and comply with development plan policy. Matters that will be particularly important will be the supporting noise mitigation, ecological and drainage schemes.

Since the development is substantial, and the proximity to residential properties it is strongly advised that you reach out to the Corsham Town Council and the local community to discuss your plans for the site prior to the submission of any planning application. As is referenced above, the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan sets out several policies that set out requirements of development of this type in and around Westwells – policies BE1, BE2 and BE3 especially – and there are sure to be strong opinions about how any new development should be delivered.

I trust the foregoing the above is of assistance at this stage in advance of a planning application being submitted. However, please do note that this advice represents an officers' informal opinion based upon the information you have provided. It is given without prejudice to any decision the Council may make on any subsequent formal planning application. In particular, a planning application will be the subject of publicity and consultation in accordance with the Council's procedures which may bring to light additional issues, and as you will be aware, advice offered is based on the planning policies that apply at the time of writing.

Yours faithfully

Head of Development Management

Encs:

Council Drainage Engineer commentary
Wessex Water commentary
Council Climate Change team commentary

Appendix 3



**The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)
Regulations 2017**

Screening Opinion - EIA Not Required

Application Reference Number: PL/2023/09577

Decision Date: 31 March 2023

Applicant: Ark Data Centres Ltd

Particulars of Development: EIA screening request for a proposed extension of Spring Park Data Centre Campus

At: Spring Park Data Centre Campus, Land South of Westwells Road, Neston Corsham, Wilts, SN13 9GB

I refer to your request received 12th December 2022 under Part 2, Regulation 6 to the 2017 Regulations, for an opinion as to whether Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for the above referenced development.

The aim of the EIA Regulations is to ensure that major projects that are clearly likely to have impacts on the environment are subject to an EIA so that these impacts are fully assessed and understood before planning permission is granted. Development proposals of varying types are categorised in the EIA Regs as either Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development, depending upon the nature and scale of the development. Development proposals within the former category must always be subject to an EIA, while those within the latter category must be subject to a determination as to whether the proposals are likely to have significant effects on the environment where one of the threshold criteria is exceeded. In addition, if development falls within Schedule 2 but is within a sensitive location, even if the minimum criteria is not met, a screening opinion is still required to decide whether the proposal is likely to have significant environmental impacts and therefore if an EIA would be required. The first stage of the screening process is therefore to determine whether the development proposals are listed under Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 of the EIA Regs.

EIA ASSESSMENT:

The site

Notwithstanding the name given within the submitted documents, the site to which this screening opinion request relates comprises the site known locally as Spring Quarry at the South-Eastern end of Westwells, adjacent to its junction with Moor Green.

The submission confirms that the extend of land extends to some 3.6Ha in area. The land itself consists of made ground covered by vegetation (albeit which has, on occasion, been stripped by successive owners). The site benefits from outline planning permission for up to 81 dwellings homes

with access coming (reference: 18/09884/OUT and appeal reference: APP/Y3940/W/19/3243873), which is extant until April 2024, but remains unimplemented at this time.

The identified site is not covered by any specific landscape designation, it being located some distance to the East of the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Bath and West Wiltshire Green Belt. Indivisibility of the site with those designations is limited due to topography and vegetation. The site is, however, within 1.0km of the Box Mines SSSI and the Bradford on Avon and Bath bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and previous appeal decisions confirming that the site supporting roosts for three bat species. It is therefore likely that the site is within its impact risk zone of the SSSI and SAC and any development of the site would be likely to have significant effects on the conservation objectives of the SAC. Regulation 63(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) would require an Appropriate Assessment (AA) is undertaken.

Notwithstanding its proximity to the SSSI and SAC, the application site is not located within a 'sensitive area' as defined in the 2017 Regulations.

The proposal

Although no floorspace is set out within the submitted covering letter or indicative elevational details, it is clear from the submission that the development would be a substantial three storey building, with supporting sub-station, fixed plant, parking and access infrastructure as well as security fencing, lighting and other measures.

Schedule 2 to The Regulations

It is agreed that the proposed development would fall within Schedule 2, Category 10(a) (Industrial estate development projects) to the 2017 Regulations. At some 3.6Ha, the site area would exceed the indicative 0.5ha threshold of Category 10(a) by some margin. It is assumed that the reference to 5Ha being the relevant threshold within the covering letter is an error and that a screening opinion is required.

The Planning Practice Guidance notes (PPG) provides guidance to the effect that the indicative thresholds are precisely that: indicative. It should not always be presumed that developments above the indicative thresholds should always be subject to EIA, or those falling below these thresholds could never give rise to significant effects and rightly demand EIA. Rather than a *slavish* adherence to the specified thresholds each development should be considered on its merits.

To assist with this test, Schedule 3 to the EIA Regulations "selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 Development" identifies generic criteria with which to determine whether a proposed development is likely to give rise to significant environmental effects.

The test for the need for an EIA is, therefore, whether the proposal would be likely to give rise to significant effects on the environment by reason of factors such as size of the development, cumulative impact with other development and the risks of accidents having regard in particular to substances or technologies used, as set out in Schedule 3.

Characteristics of development

Size and design of development

No information is provided as to the footprint of the new building, but it is clear that it would consist of substantial development, with built form filling a significant proportion of the some 3.6Ha site.

Notwithstanding the likely proportions of new development, the Spring Quarry site to the immediate North and North-West data consists of substantial building and would therefore contextualise visual impacts of new development. Nevertheless, it remains likely that the building would be highly visible in the Westwells street frontage and permissive footpaths on elevated ground to the South and West, albeit such views also contextualised by significant development at the nearby MoD establishment.

In view of the contextualising elements of existing development along Westwells Road and lack of intervisibility with the AoNB and Green Belt designations some distance to the East, it is considered that any potential impacts upon the landscape are capable of being considered through the conventional planning application process and are not sufficiently complex or interrelated to other impacts which would demand EIA.

Cumulative effect with other development

The Regulations confirm that the effect that each application (or request for an opinion) must be considered for EIA on its own merits. However, and as advised within the PPG, in judging whether the effects of a development are likely to be significant, regard must be had to the possible cumulative impact within any existing or approved developments.

Under reference PL/2022/01975, development has been proposed for the immediately adjoining land to the North (effectively the closest part of the Spring Quarry site to the application site fronting Rowans Lane), which would bring substantial built form very close to the application site and the development now being proposed, thereby enclosing Rowan Lane. Nevertheless, whilst the cumulative impact of the two elements of Spring Park being proposed may be significant, it is not considered to be of such a magnitude or nature that could not be fully considered through the planning application process and would not trigger Environmental Impact Assessment to be carried out.

Whilst it is acknowledged that substantial development has been permitted in the locality in the recent past (including permitted, but as yet implemented, residential development at the North West extremity of Westwells, under reference 14/11354/OUT (and subsequent amending permissions), it is considered to be of a nature and distance from this site so as to limit a cumulative visual impact which would demand EIA. Whilst matters relating to traffic generation are considered in a separate section below, the likely combined impact from traffic generated by this development and that proposed, permitted and recently built in the locality will be a significant matter to consider but remains one which is capable of being assessed through the planning application process.

The proposed development is not considered likely to give rise to significant cumulative environmental effects which demands EIA.

Use of natural resources and production of waste

The site will not involve the development of made ground (albeit land which is covered and surrounded by vegetation), it being demonstrably PDL. Largely for this reason, it is not likely that the described development will make use of natural resources such as land, soil, water which would demand the completion of EIA. Impacts upon biodiversity are considered in a separate section below.

General construction waste is expected during construction, which will be managed and disposed of by the appointed contractor in accordance with the waste hierarchy and prevailing legislation. It is understood that a Waste Audit would be produced and submitted as part of any planning application.

Pollution, noise, nuisance and risk of accidents and/or disasters and risks to human health

A development of this scale would likely require the submission of a Construction Management Plan type document, so as to limit nuisance and accidents. Whilst there is housing in proximity to the site (notably Westwells and Moor Green), the impacts upon their amenities may be adequately considered as part of a planning application and is not considered to be automatically determinative of significant environmental effects or a need for EIA to consider those impacts.

In this particular instance, the site is not located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and any potential impacts in relation to air quality, noise and vibration will thus be associated with the increase in construction traffic, site plant, dust emissions, and operational traffic.

Location of development

The existing land use

The land is known to be made ground and has historically been used by the military for purposes exigent to the two world wars. Accordingly, the land is likely to be heavily contaminated. However, this is not an uncommon situation on land in the locality and is capable of being considered and address through the planning application process and does not in itself trigger the need for EIA.

Relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of the natural resources in the area and absorption capacity of the natural environment

Ecology – It is understood that an ecological assessment will be completed and submitted with any future planning application so as to establish the value of habitats on and around the site and the species present. The site is located in close proximity to the Bradford on Avon and Bath bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and, as referenced elsewhere, an Appropriate Assessment will likely be required under Regulation 63(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). As per previous applications at the nearby Spring Park site, the Appropriate Assessment can be undertaken as part of the consideration of a future planning application and would not in and of itself demand that EIA is undertaken.

Again extrapolating from the previous application Spring Park, the following matters should be incorporated into any future planning application:

- Lighting - if proved to be an issue in this location, this is likely to be able to be resolved through appropriate conditions and assurances that the previously secured ecological corridor to the south of the Spring Park site is retained.
- Commuting/foraging - if bats are using this location at present, the development does not seem to be proposing significant vegetation clearance etc., although the retention of ecological corridor is critical in this regard.
- Roosts – prior to their demolition, existing buildings at the site will need to be fully surveyed for roosts, and, depending on results, proposals for mitigation assessed.

The Council's Ecologist has provided detailed comments and are attached as an appendix to this opinion.

Landscape and existing and new planting – It is noted that there are significant trees and hedgerows on the site and that a tree survey will be required in advance of a planning application being submitted. Accordingly, a tree survey should clearly demonstrate trees to be retained and removed; the canopy spread and roof protection areas for all trees to be retained in relation to new buildings; an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and tree protection plan. In this context, there is considered to be no reason why EIA should be required in this instance. The commentary within the submitted Landscape and Visual Briefing Note prepared by EDP is noted.

Flood risk - Your covering letter suggests that the site is not within an area of high flood risk, with the Environment Agency Flood Risk Map indicating that the Site is within Flood Zone 1, which is defined as having a less than 0.1% annual exceedance probability of fluvial or tidal flooding. As such, no significant effects in relation to flood risk are considered to arise which cannot be considered via the conventional planning application process.

Population density – Although in reasonable proximity to significant areas of residential development, the proposed use is not unusual in the context of other similar development which can also be found along Westwells. The construction phase will require careful control so as to avoid unacceptable impacts on the amenity of surrounding residential occupiers and in the event of a planning application being submitted, it is recommended that a Construction Method Statement is supplied.

Heritage – As is stated in your supporting letter, the site does not lie within any Conservation Area and is not covered by any other heritage designations. No Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings or Registered Parks and Gardens occur within a 1km radius of the site. The site is not located within an area of archaeological importance nor are there any designated sites listed in the Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Environment Record (HER) located within the site boundary. It is noted that the HER records two ‘monuments’ in close proximity to the site – evidence of a Second World War military camp and a spoil heap which was probably created from work carried out by the Royal Engineers in the late 1930s to create the nearby Central Ammunition Depot. Considering the limited number of heritage assets in its wider zone of influence, it is highly unlikely that the form of development proposed will generate any significant impact upon the historic environment. A planning application comprising supporting information is capable of being considered through the planning application process and would not need EIA.

Conclusion

Guidance within the PPG states, in the case of Schedule 2 developments, the need for EIA should be considered on the basis of whether the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

In this particular instance, whilst likely to be substantial, and I acknowledging the proximity to the Bath and Box Mines bat SAC, the development would not be located within a particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable location and would not result in a significant impact on any area beyond its immediate locality. It is not considered that the proposal would have any potentially hazardous environmental implications for the site that could not be addressed through the submission and consideration of supporting information to a planning application. The conclusion to your cover letter does include a comprehensive list of those assessments which are in the process of being prepared and will support the forthcoming application.

When assessed against Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, as well as the guidance within the PPG, it is concluded that **Environmental Impact Assessment is not required** for the development described in your letter of 12th December 2022.

Parvis Khansari - Corporate Director, Place

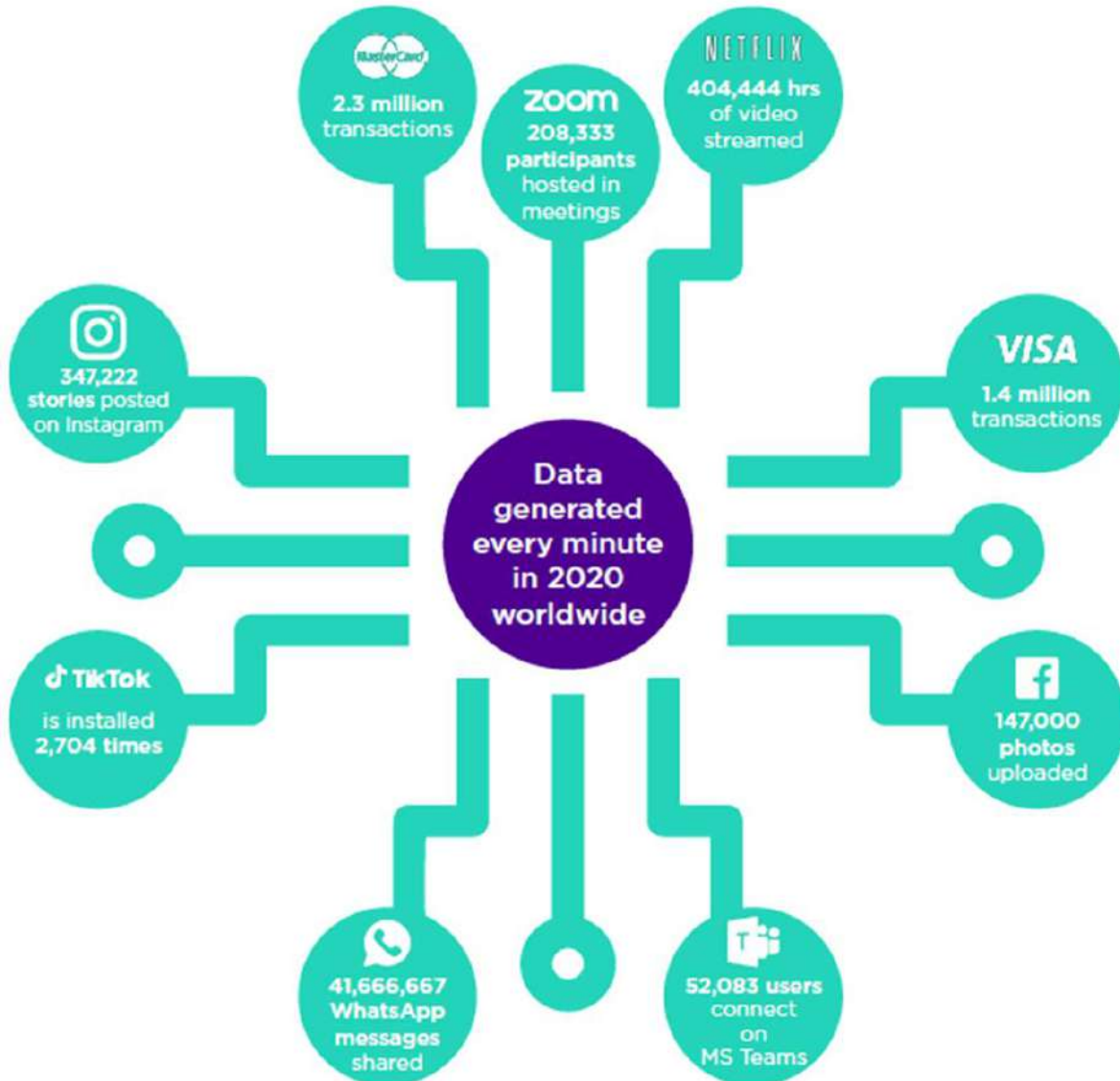
Appendix 4

Proposed Extension of Spring Park Data Centre Campus

Land South of Westwells Road, Corsham



Significance of Digital Economy

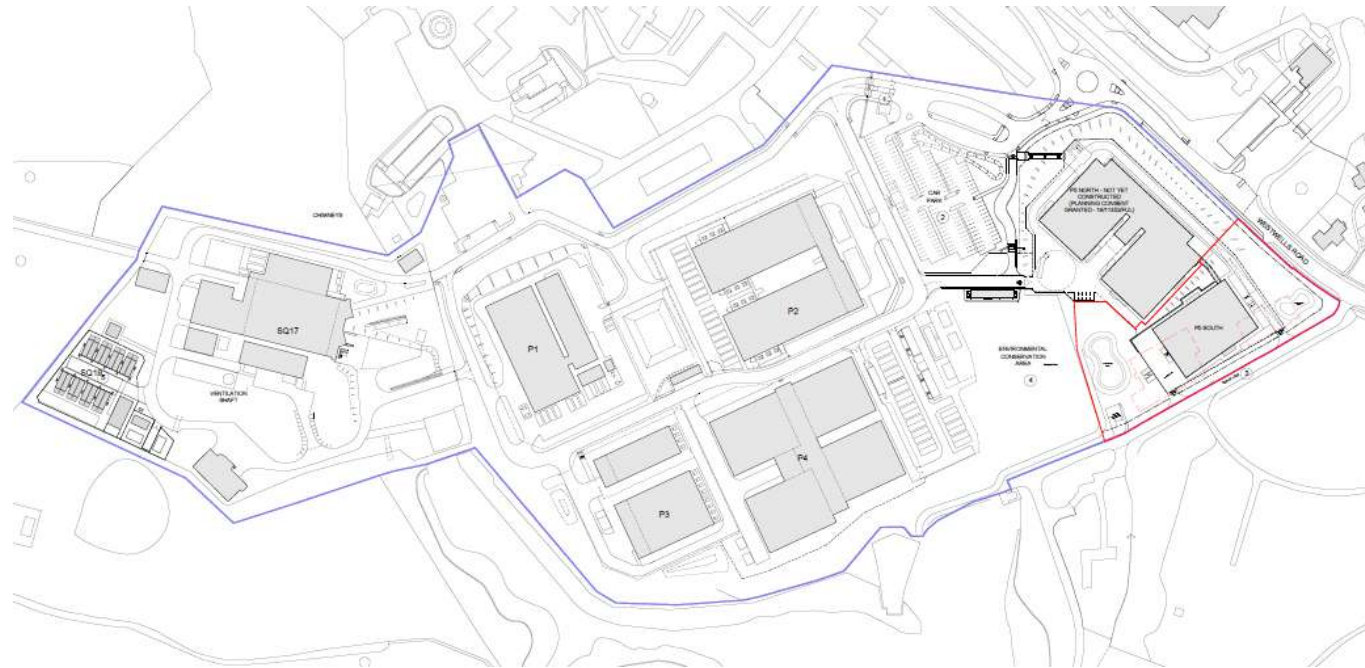


- Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain For the Future - “This fourth revolution is characterised by a fusion of technologies that is blurring the lines between the physical, digital and biological worlds”;
- Sir John Armitt - “data is now as important to UK infrastructure as concrete or steel”;
- Secure, resilient and affordable data management is critical;
- Not only do data centres store and process this data, they are the places where the latest technology is deployed to accelerate data processing and data management;
- Specific locational requirements (relating primarily to the proximity to fibre, availability of power, and proximity to users to minimise latency) determine where data centres can be located.

- Established in 2005, Ark develops and operates secure and efficient purpose-built data centres;
- Three existing data centre campuses (Cody Park, Meridian Park, and Spring Park. Delivering three new data centre campuses (Alliance Park, Longcross Park, and Union Park);
- Clients include major telecommunications providers, businesses operating in highly regulated markets such as the finance industry, and educational institutions;
- Joint venture with the Cabinet Office allows public sector to access services at a fraction of the cost of their competitors and to drive down their own carbon footprint.



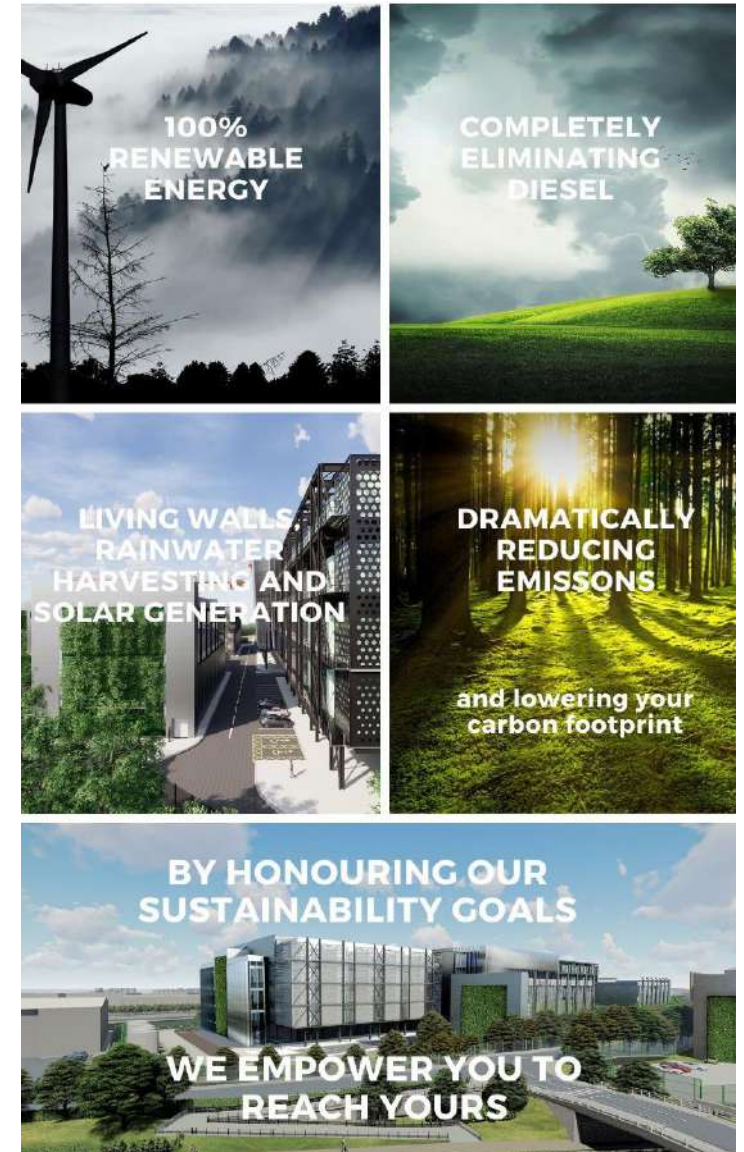
Ark at Spring Park



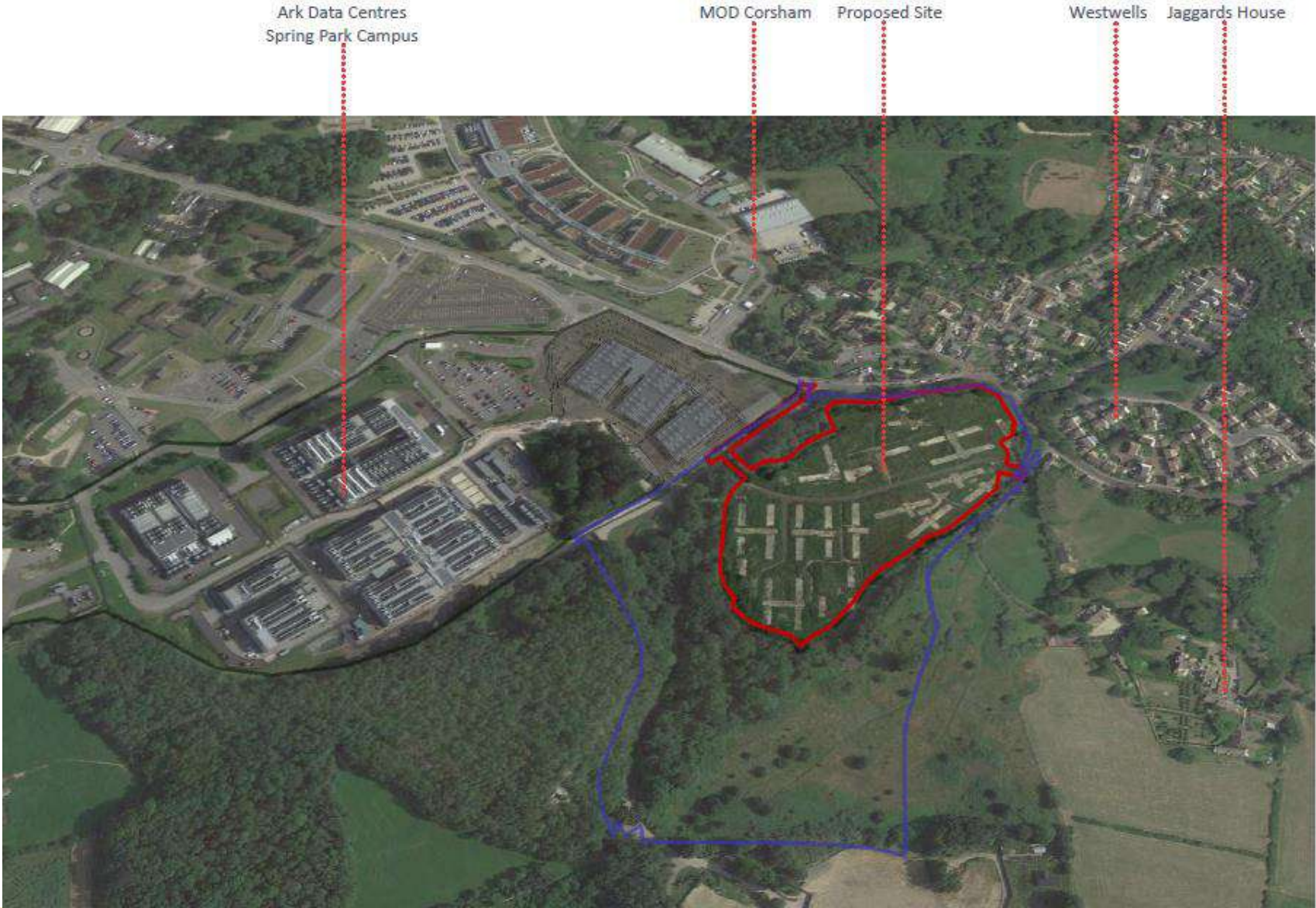
- Ark has been involved with the Spring Park data centre campus project for 15 years and has taken it through each stage of the planning process;
- Data centres P1, P2, P3, P4, and SQ17 are completed and operational, P5 North benefits from a recently granted planning permission, and there is a live application for a further data centre (known as P5 South) on the Hawthorn Works site;
- The data centre campus also includes back up or UPS infrastructure, substations and landscaping, roads, and drainage.

Ark's Sustainability & Environmental Credentials

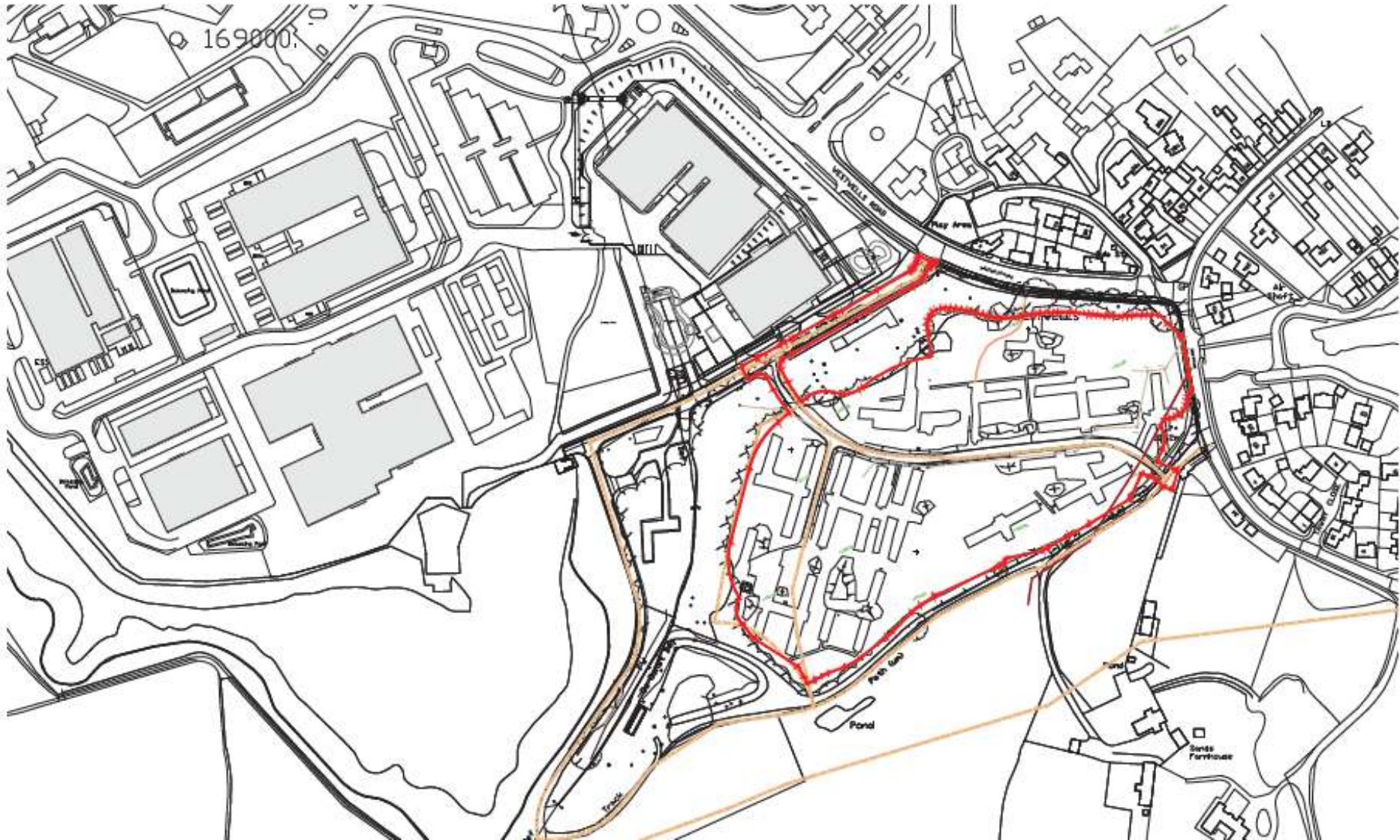
- The Sustainability Strategy for the proposed development will:
 - Match or exceed today's requirements.
 - Anticipate tomorrow's needs; and
 - Adapt and remain relevant into the future.
- Ark has purchased 100% green energy (Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin) company wide since 2013;
- Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil back-up generators for uninterrupted power supply. Not a fossil fuel and better for air quality than diesel;
- Maximising on-site renewables – PV on roof areas where possible;
- Electric vehicles (EV) charging points and infrastructure;
- Incorporation of high quality soft landscaping, including maximisation of green and brown walls and roofs.



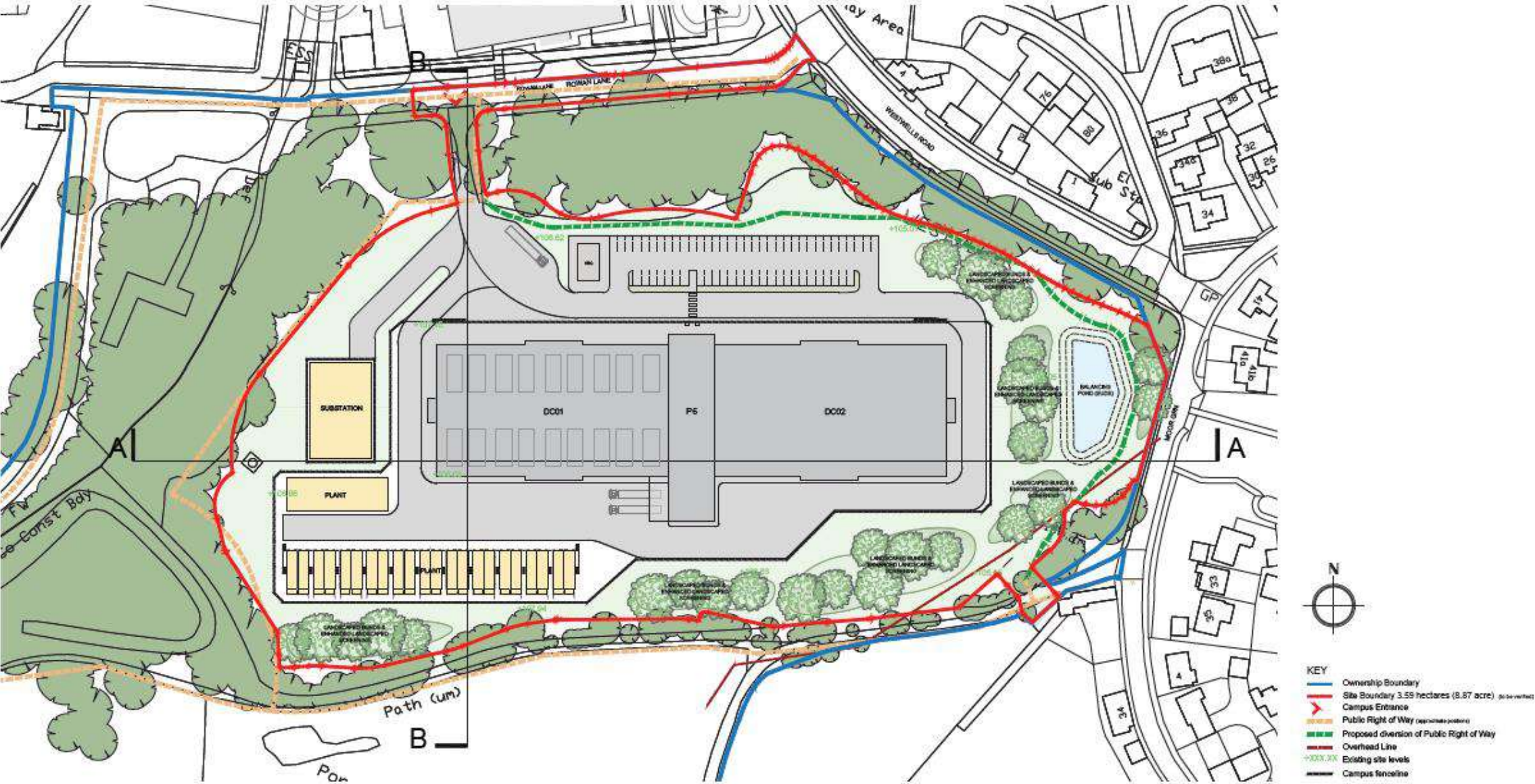
Site Location



Site Location



Proposed Site Plan



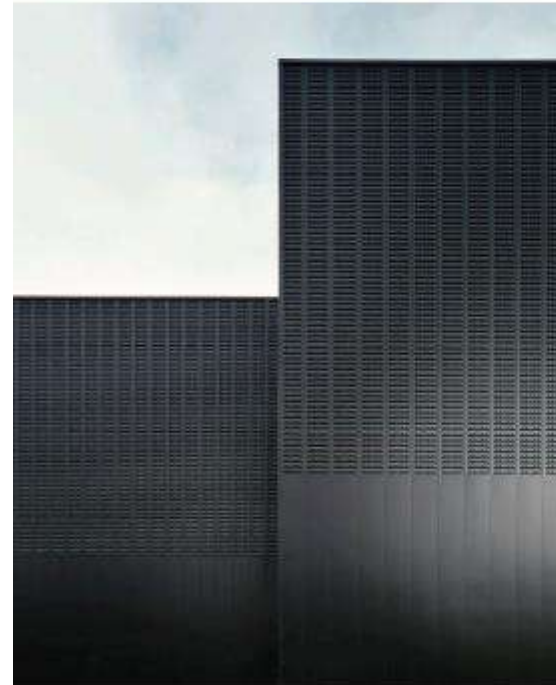
Potential Design Approach



Ark- Longcross Park (Chertsey)



Ark- Spring Park- P5 North (Corsham)



Next Steps

- Receipt of EIA Screening Opinion from Wiltshire Council;
- Pre-Application discussions;
- Assessment and design refinement;
- Submission of planning application;
- Determination period including consultation – including Corsham Town Council and local residents; and
- Consideration of application by Wiltshire Council Members at Planning Committee.

Thank You



Appendix 5



Notes of the Pre-planning Meeting held on 15 February 2023 with Savills and Ark regarding the Land South of Westwells Road

Present Tim Gent – Savills, Nick Heard – Savills
Allan Bosley – Ark, Rob Silvester – Ark, Tim Coxon – Ark
Corsham Town Councillors S Abbott, H Belcher OBE,
N Brakspear, J Brook, A Brown, R Hopkinson, M Jackson,
A Mackie, A Thomas, G Ward and A White.

In Attendance Mrs K Gilby (Finance and Planning Officer, CTC)
D Martin (Chief Executive, CTC)
Cllr D Walters (Wiltshire Councillor)

In Attendance Online Town Councillors A Crockford, J Roberton

Points covered:

Ark and Savills were waiting for a decision on whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required for the site and also on pre-application advice.

Ark was signed up to the Climate Neutral Data Centre Pact. They aimed to be as sustainable as possible. All power used is from sustainable sources in accordance with the Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin scheme. Back-up generators are fuelled by hydro-treated vegetable oil. PV is installed on roofs where possible. EV charging points are in place. Rainwater is harvested and used on site. The generators are only for back-up in case of a grid failure which is exceedingly rare.

The site has an existing permission for housing which was allowed at appeal. The appeal established that the area within the red line was brownfield land.

The area within the blue line but outside of the red line boundary is owned by Ark and would not be developed.

The existing Public Rights of Way would need to be diverted around the edge of the site.

Biodiversity net gain could be achieved on the site.

Areas where there are particular ecological sensitivities, would be kept dark for bats.

The proposal would be for two buildings linked by a glazed area. The height would be 14.5 metres on the eastern edge and slightly higher on the western edge due to the topography.

It was queried whether the building could be sunk into the ground – this was not possible due to water levels, flood risk and cost.

It is anticipated by Ark that mounding and planting could be used to limit the visual impact.

Discussions were being held regarding local transport provision jointly with Ark, MOD Corsham and BSU in relation to linking with the proposed Corsham Station.

Most of the cooling was via fresh air cooling rather than water.

Fire risk was discussed. The buildings would be fitted with automatic fire suppression systems.

The skill level of jobs created was queried – a range of skill levels would be required. Ark would look to maximise local employment opportunities where possible.

It was suggested that perhaps a curve could be incorporated into the design. Ark suggested that, whilst this could be considered, there is an opportunity to incorporate other design features.

The level of noise was queried – the generators would be sited to the west of the site. A noise assessment would form part of any application.

Engagement with the local community was encouraged.

Appendix 6A

service on the tour... remains open for private prayer
and to visitors each day from 09.30-16.00hrs. All are welcome to spend time in the church and to
join us for services.

"Let your hope make you glad. Be patient in time of trouble and never stop praying."

Romans 12:12

Charles Todd – Churchwarden

Donkey Field – Update

Many Neston residents attended the recent open evening at Neston Memorial Hall on Thursday 20th July. As most will know, the people of Neston have been fighting to retain the Donkey Field as an amenity space and green buffer between the village and the civil and military complexes in Westwells Road. A housing developer had bought the site and was finally successful in gaining planning permission to build 80+ houses. Shortly after, it was sold to Ark Data Centres which has built 5 Data Centres next door and is building a 6th on the old Stephen's Plastic site, opposite the Donkey Field. Its proposal is to build a 7th on the Donkey Field.

This proposal was put to the Town Council earlier, where concerns were raised over the height, traffic, ecological impacts, etc. Basically, the site is now approved for housing, though the developer chose to realise a profit and 'move on'. Modern houses tend to come with 2 or 3 cars per house, resulting in a large impact on our narrow roads. The new Data Centre will have significantly fewer vehicles and many are already using the other sites. The other plot between the Donkey Field and Wadswick Green was earmarked for future housing but Ark assures us, it has no intention of building on that site.

Appendix 6B

Like most of you, I would rather the site was left as a village amenity, but now that planning permission has been granted, it will be very difficult to stop any development. A 'business' use should not have the same impact on our local infrastructure as 80 or more houses would.

Jeremy Brook – Town Councillor – Neston Ward

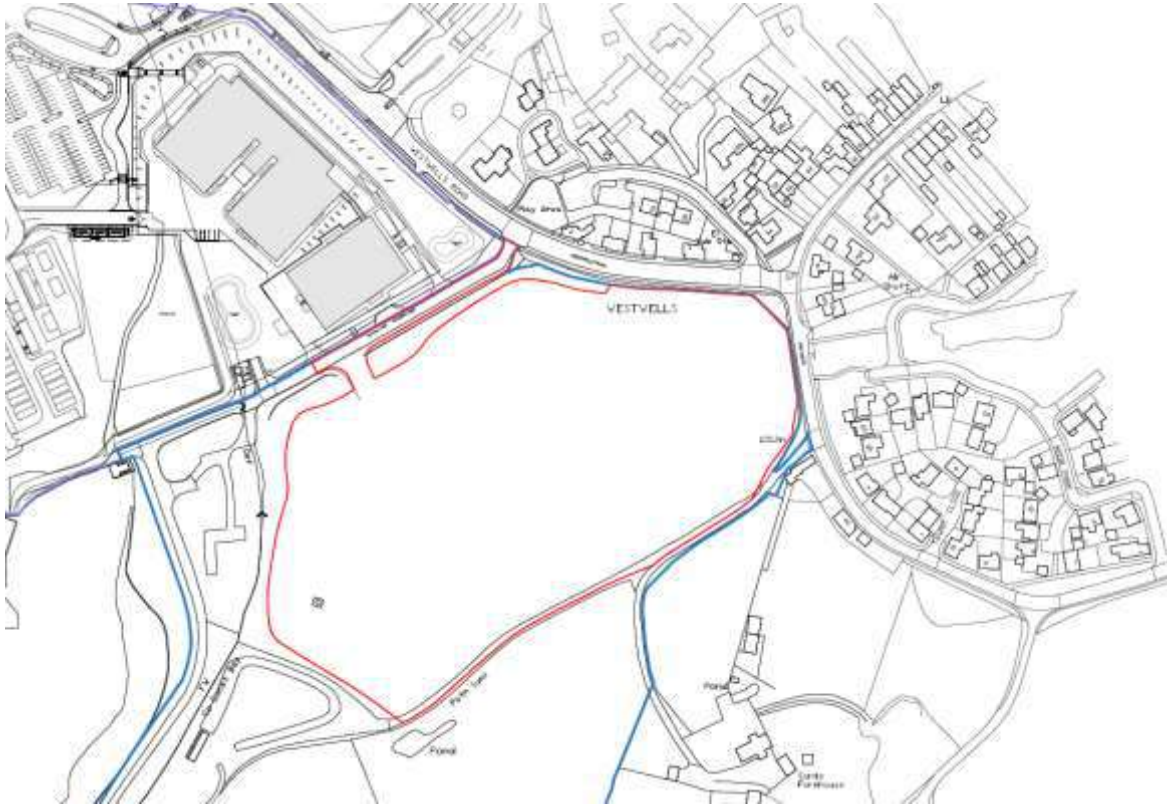
Pelargoniums: 12 Varieties – Perennials & Shrubs

Levington's M2 Compost – 75 L bags – Delivery Available

Appendix 7

Proposed Expansion of Spring Park Data Centre Campus at the Former Sands Quarry Site

Public Consultation Event



Ark Data Centres operate the Spring Park Data Centre Campus and is preparing a planning application for a data centre at the Former Sands Quarry Site as an extension of the Campus.

A public consultation event is to take place where the proposals will be on display and where Ark and members of their consultant team will be on hand to respond to questions.

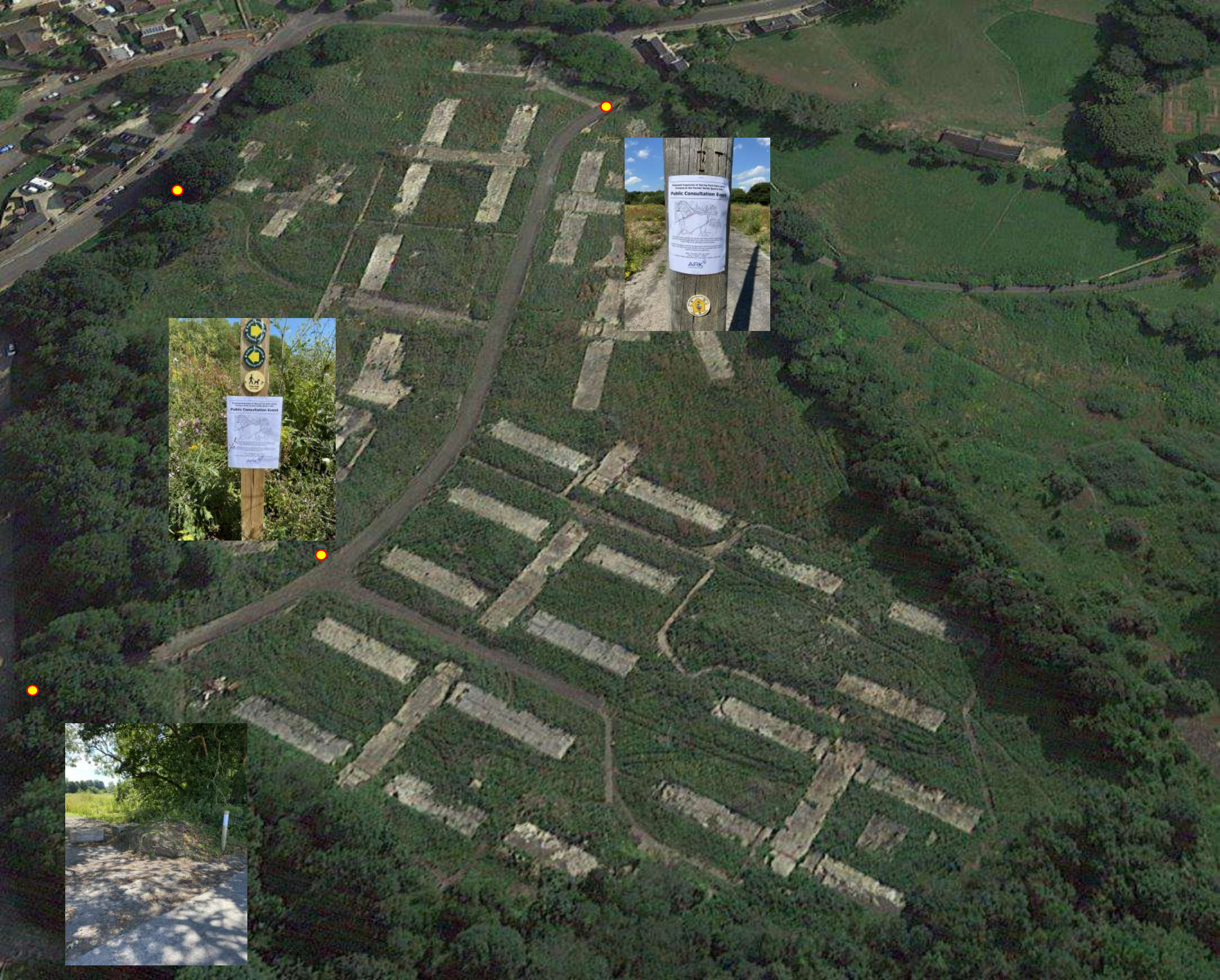
Date: Thursday 20th July 2023

Time: 6:30pm - 9:00pm

Location: Neston Memorial Hall, Pool Green, Neston, SN13 9SN



Appendix 8



Appendix 9

7 July 2023

The Savills logo, featuring the word "savills" in a red, lowercase, sans-serif font, positioned within a yellow rectangular background.

XXX
XXX
XXX
XXX
XXX

E: planningconsultation@savills.com
DL: +44 (0)29 2036 8920

2 Kingsway
Cardiff CF10 3FD
T: +44 (0) 29 20 368900
savills.com

Dear Sir/Madam,

PROPOSED EXPANSION OF SPRING PARK DATA CENTRE CAMPUS AT THE FORMER SANDS QUARRY SITE

Established in 2005, Ark Data Centres (Ark) design and operate secure and energy efficient purpose-built data centres. Ark has been developing the Spring Park Data Centre Campus project for over 10 years and has taken it through each stage of the planning process. Five data centres are operational with planning permission for a sixth data centre and a live planning application for a seventh. The Spring Park Data Centre Campus includes back up electrical infrastructure, substations and landscaping, roads and drainage.

As a local resident, you will have witnessed the development of Spring Park over the last decade and that the data centre campus has brought significant benefits to your community. The data centres have been sensitively designed and developed. Ark has taken opportunities to protect and enhance biodiversity, reduce any impact on local residents, businesses and the use of the site as a data centre means that there are relatively few traffic movements. Both during construction and operation, the data centres provide local jobs.

In today's digital world, data centres are becoming an essential part of life, and a vital component of the national and global economy. Ark wants to continue to invest in Corsham and in Wiltshire, so that Spring Park can expand and continue to contribute to meeting the need for the core infrastructure that underpins all digital activity across government, business and community. As such, Ark is in the process of preparing a new planning application for a new data centre at the Former Sands Quarry Site as the next phase of development at its Spring Park Campus.

We have organised a public consultation event where Ark and members of its consultant team will be on hand to explain the scheme and answer any questions you may have. Details for this are below:

Date: Thursday 20th July 2023

Time: 6:30pm - 9:00pm

Location: Neston Memorial Hall, Pool Green, Neston, SN13 9SN

Whilst registration is not essential, we'd be grateful if you could let us know if you will be attending by emailing planningconsultation@Savills.com.

Yours faithfully,

Savills

Offices and associates throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East..

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Appendix 10

01 Overview of ARK

Data centres store and process the increasing amount of data generated. They are climate controlled spaces for the continuous operation of computer servers, supported by mechanical and electrical infrastructure. They are critical facilities that bring data transmission, storage and management – together with the supporting networks - into general or conventional definitions of infrastructure.

Ark operate three existing data centre campuses (Cody Park, Meridian Park, and Spring Park) and are delivering three new data centres within London;

Clients include telecommunications providers, cloud providers, businesses, educational institutions, and the Cabinet Office which allows public sector bodies to access services at a fraction of the cost of their competitors.

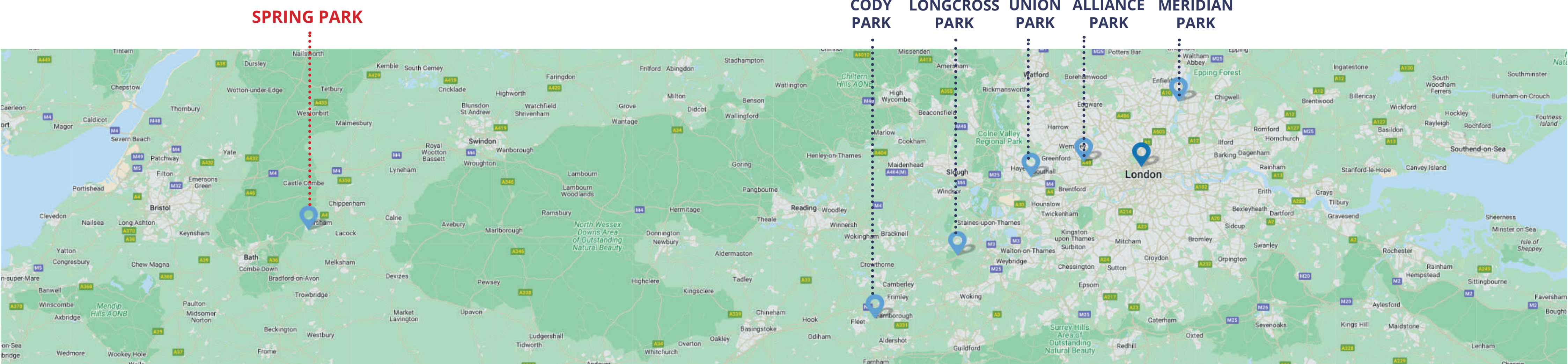


Commitment to sustainability

The development would use 100% green energy, back-up generators would use Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), photovoltaic panels will be incorporated at roof level along with electric vehicle charging points and rain-water harvesting.



CODY PARK LONGCROSS PARK UNION PARK ALLIANCE PARK MERIDIAN PARK

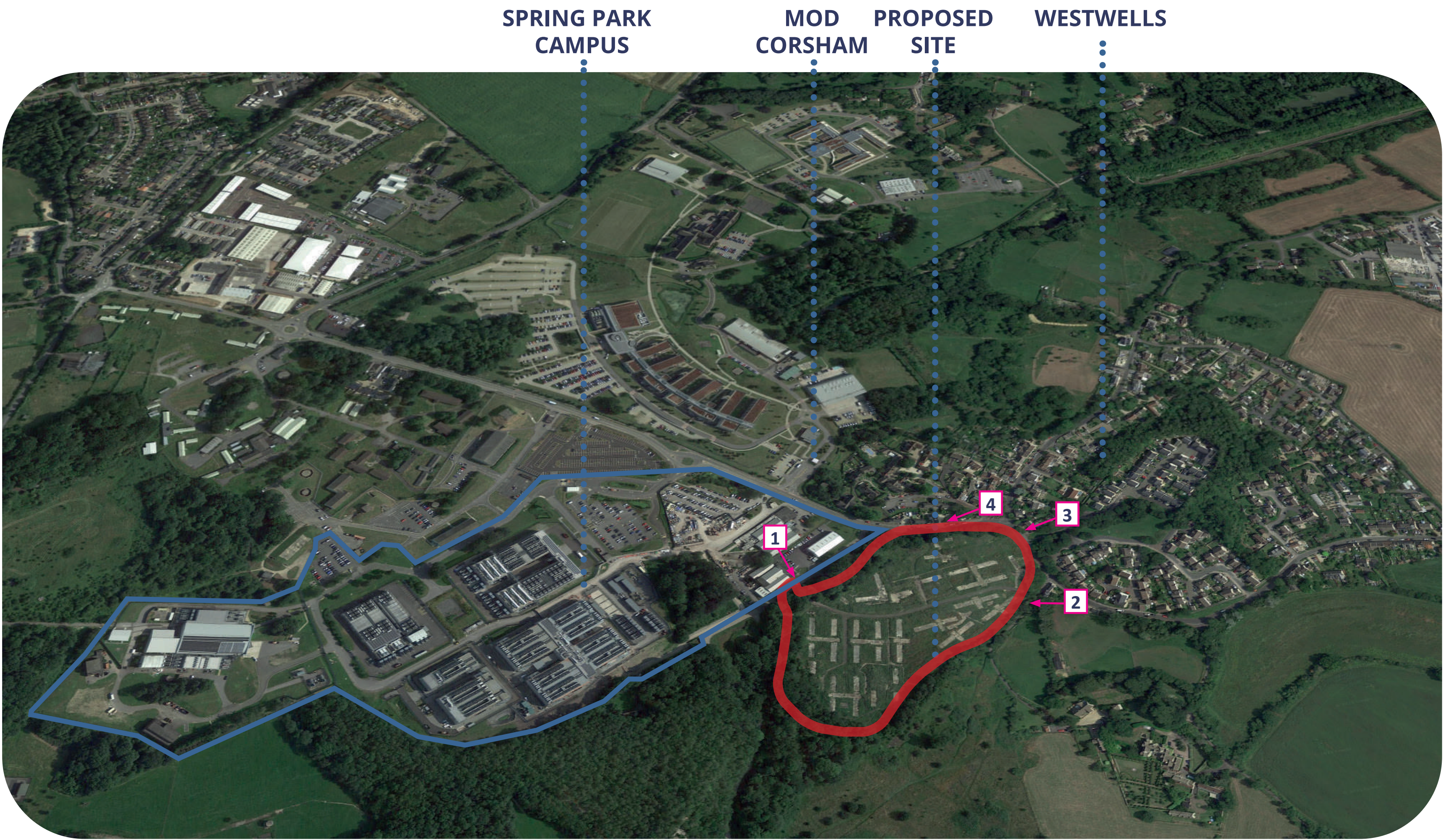


02 Site Context

SPRING PARK

Ark has been developing the Spring Park Data Centre Campus project for over 10 years and has taken it through each stage of the planning process. Five data centres are operational with planning permission for a sixth data centre and a live planning application for a seventh. The Spring Park Data Centre Campus includes back up electrical infrastructure, substations and landscaping, roads and drainage.

As a local resident, you will have witnessed the development of Spring Park over the last decade and that the data centre campus has brought significant benefits to your community. The data centres have been sensitively designed and developed. Ark has taken opportunities to protect and enhance biodiversity, reduce any impact on local residents, businesses and the use of the site as a data centre means that there are relatively few traffic movements. Both during construction and operation, the data centres provide local jobs.



03 Proposed Development



04 Verified Photo Montages

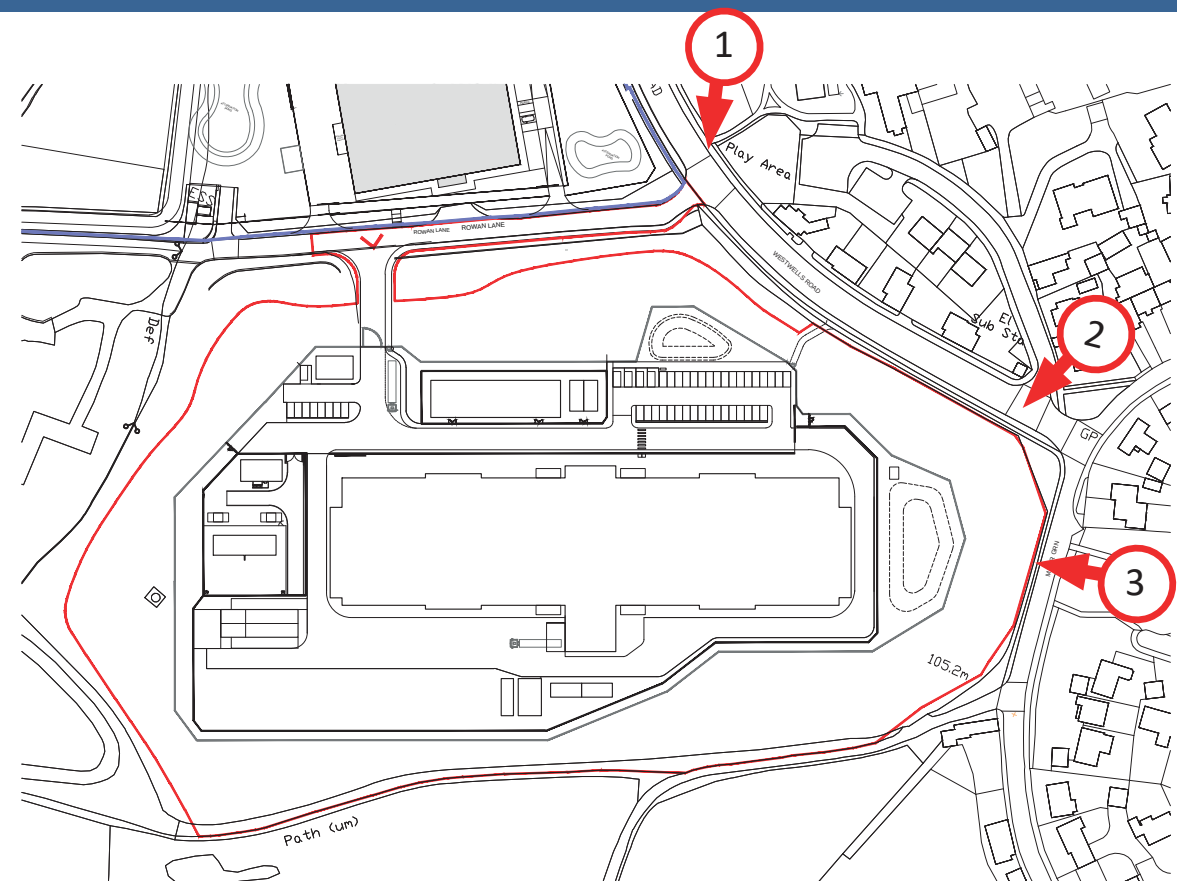


Image Viewpoint

The verified photomontages below shows a visual representation of what the proposed development may look to human standing at the photographic viewpoint. 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



VERIFIED PHOTO MONTAGE 1
Outline of proposed building



EXISTING PHOTOGRAPH 2
View looking South-West from Westwells Road



VERIFIED PHOTO MONTAGE 2
Outline of proposed building



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



VERIFIED PHOTO MONTAGE 3
Development visual including enhanced landscaping - day one

05 Technical and Environmental Considerations

AIR QUALITY

- Air Quality Assessment to be submitted at planning application stage;
- As with Ark's existing back-up generators at Spring Park it is intended that the cleanest technology will be used that is commercially viable.
- Emissions to be regulated by the Environment Agency providing ongoing legislative assurance of acceptability of impacts



ECOLOGY

- Application to be supported by Ecological Impact Assessment including surveys of protected species;
- An improvement of over 10% of existing biodiversity on site achieved through habitat creation both onsite and in a parcel of land offsite immediately to the south;
- Management of ecological zones to be controlled through planning conditions.



HERITAGE

- Heritage and Archaeology Assessment to be included within planning application;
- Anticipates that there would be no impact on surrounding heritage assets, including the Grade II* listed Jaggards House and the Neston Conservation Area.



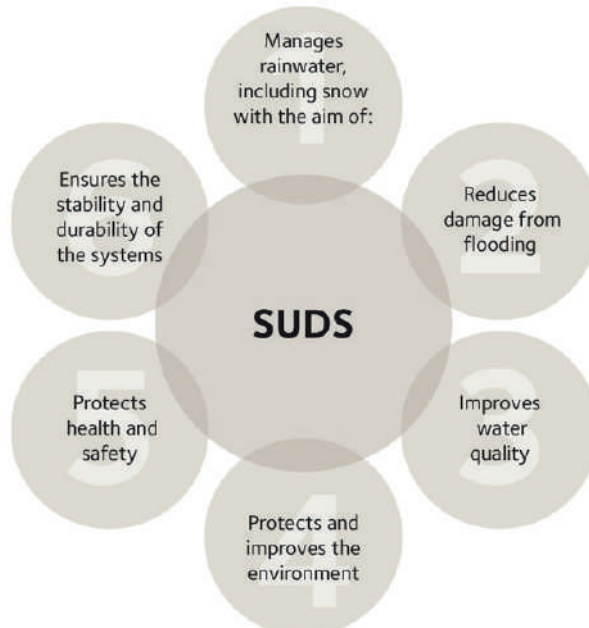
TRANSPORT

- It is forecast that the proposed development would generate considerably fewer trips than the consented residential scheme;
- Low number of heavy goods vehicles associated with nature of data centre use;
- Public Rights of Way to be sympathetically diverted and improved within enhanced landscaped zones.



DRAINAGE FLOOD RISK

- There is a low risk of flooding as the site is within Flood Zone 1;
- Incorporation of onsite sustainable drainage design (SuDs) including attenuation ponds, storage tanks, and rainwater capture;
- Reduced risk of flooding within the surrounding area.



LIGHTING

- Working collaboratively, the consultants design will be an environmentally friendly lighting scheme with zero Lux wildlife corridors for the protection of species; and
- Lighting incorporated in scheme to be screened by extensive boundary landscaping enhancement



ACOUSTICS

- Noise Impact Assessment to be prepared at planning application stage;
- As with the rest of Ark's Spring Park estate there will be suitable acoustic mitigation measures incorporated into the design



LANDSCAPING

- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to support planning application;
- Significant enhancement of existing landscaping across the site as well as incorporation of landscape features such as bunds and attenuation basins;
- This development will greatly enhance the landscaping and as such will integrate well with the wider context



06 Approach to Soft Landscaping and Public Rights of Way



- Site Boundary
- Land under the Control of the Applicant
- Existing Trees, Tree Groups and Scrub to be Retained
Refer to the Arboricultural Report
- Existing Neutral Grassland to be Retained
- Proposed Tree Planting
- Proposed Mixed Native Hedgerow Planting
Topsoil Depth: 450mm
Mulch: Jute/Hessian Mulch Matt in BNG Area; Bark Mulch along Moor Green
- Proposed Native Thorny Scrub Planting
Topsoil Depth: 450mm
Mulch: Jute/Hessian Mulch Matts
- Proposed Native Feathered Tree and Understorey Shrub Mix
Topsoil Depth: 450mm
Mulch: Jute/Hessian Mulch Matts
Undersown with Shade-tolerant Grass/Wildflower Mix (Emorsgate EH1 @ 4g/m²)
- Proposed Earth Mounding
Max. 1 in 4 Gradients on Outer Faces
- Proposed Earth Mounding - Indicative Heights (Metres Above Ground Level, m AGL)
- Proposed Native Shrub Mix
Topsoil Depth: 450mm
Mulch: 75mm Bark Mulch
- Proposed Wetland Planting Mix
- Permanent Wet Areas - SuDS Basins and Proposed Wildlife Pond
- Proposed Close-Mown Grass
Product: Low Maintenance Fineturf
Supplier: Germinall
Sowing rate: 20g/m²
Topsoil Depth: 150mm
- Proposed Species-Rich Meadow Grass
Product: EM1 Basic General Purpose Meadow Mixture
Supplier: Emorsgate Seeds
Sowing rate: 4g/m²
Topsoil Depth: 150mm
- Proposed Wetland Meadow Grass to Attenuation Basins
Product: EGS Meadow Grass Mixture for Wet Soils
Supplier: Emorsgate Seeds
Sowing rate: 4g/m²
- Proposed Gravel Path
Tanalised Timber Edging - 25mm x 100mm
To be Laid Over a Weed Suppressant Membrane
- Proposed Dog-Proof Fence and Gate
Timber Post and Rail with Stocknetting
- Existing Public Footpaths
- Proposed Diversion of Public Footpaths
Hoggin surface (2m wide) to paths, requiring 'no-dig' construction techniques where paths lie within retained tree Root Protection Zones. Path to be aligned at least 2m from any tree stems.
- Possible Additional Footpath Connection to Moor Green



A LANDSCAPING SECTION THROUGH WESTWELLS ROAD



B LANDSCAPING SECTION THROUGH MOOR GREEN



C LANDSCAPING SECTION THROUGH ROWAN LANE