

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT APPRAISAL SCREENING OPINION
(under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)
(Scotland) Regulations 2017)

Address: 1 Redheughs Avenue, South Gyle Edinburgh, EH12 9RH	Applicant/ Agent: [REDACTED] 24 Stafford Street Edinburgh EH3 7BD
Summary Description of Development: Construction of a Green Data Centre with associated infrastructure, landscaping, servicing, car and cycle parking; formation of public park with sports facilities; and formation of active travel routes	
Date of Receipt of Screening Request: N/A	
Application or Pre- Application: Application	
Reference Number (Application/ PAN): 25/04239/PPP	
Sufficient Information to Make Assessment: Yes	

Declaration:

We have screened the proposals and determined that EIA is not required for this submission, for the reasons detailed below.

Signed... [REDACTED](Planning Officer)

Signed [REDACTED](Team Manager)

Date 18 December 2025

IDENTIFYING THE DEVELOPMENT:

1. Is the development of a type described in Schedule 1?

NO

*Yes – Proceed to declaration EIA is required
No – Proceed to next question.*

2. Is the development of a type listed in column 1 of schedule 2 which:

- a) is located wholly or in part on a 'sensitive area' as defined in regulation 2(1) (see paragraph 45;

OR

- b) meets one of the relevant criteria or exceeds one of the relevant thresholds listed in the second column of the table in Schedule 2.

YES

If No, proceed to declaration.

The development is a 'Schedule 2 Development' as defined under Regulation 2 (1) of The Town and Country (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017. It is classed as an 'Urban development project' under section 10 – Infrastructure projects part b) of the table.

The related application reference 25/04239/PPP is for planning permission in principle where the area of development is 5.74 hectares in total. As this area of development exceeds the 0.5 hectares threshold in column 2 of these regulations, a screening opinion is required in accordance with schedule 3.

Consideration of EIA

3. Is the development likely to have a significant effect on the environment taking into account the following areas?

Selection Criteria for Screening Schedule 2 Development	
In accordance with Schedule 3 of the Regulations the following selection criteria are used to inform the screening opinion:	
Characteristics of development	
1. The characteristics of development must be considered having regard in particular to—	
	<i>Likely significant effects - Yes/ No?</i>
a) the size and design of the whole development;	<p>No</p> <p>The Townscape and Visual Appraisal (TVA) anticipate the developments size and design would have a moderate effect within 1 km of the site with impacts reducing further away.</p> <p>Lighting levels and illuminance identified in the submitted lighting strategy are not anticipated to be significant.</p> <p>Noise impacts from construction and operation (traffic, plant / ancillary equipment) in the Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) anticipate low impacts on residential properties.</p> <p>With regard to the above, no significant effect on the environment is anticipated.</p> <p>These matters can be assessed in further detail through an Approval of Matters specified in Condition (AMC) or imposed by planning condition as appropriate. This includes detailed design matters (building height, scale, materials and position), light (light spill plans & illuminance restrictions if necessary) and noise (detail of mitigation measures and implementation). Construction noise can be managed through a combination of regulatory controls out with the planning system if necessary.</p>

<p>b) the cumulation with other existing development and/or approved development;</p>	<p>No</p> <p>There is a potential cumulative visual impact from the proposed development and approved developments (extant planning permission 20/02068/FUL for mixed-use development and planning permission 24/00820/FUL for an arena (class 11) with associated uses).</p> <p>This may impact on views in the TVA from the south of the site. However, this area is largely brownfield, identified for re-development in City Plan 2030 (LDP) and has no specific landscape, historic or environmental designation.</p> <p>There are potential cumulative construction impacts (noise, vibration, dust) and operational (traffic) impacts from this development and those approved above. However, the characteristics of this development (storage use) and approved developments do not give rise to any specific significant effects on the environment in this urban location.</p> <p>Whilst the Air Quality Assessment (AQA) identifies mitigation for construction impacts through a Construction Emissions Management Plan (CEMP) this is not considered enforceable through planning. However, the applicant would be required to comply with separate Air Quality legislation. No significant impacts from its operations are anticipated in the AQA.</p>
<p>c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Data centre developments have potential to use large amounts of water to control the buildings temperature.</p> <p>The method of cooling (air or water, closed or open loop system) has not been finalised. Whilst both methods are outlined in the PPP application, the applicant has stated that given the sites' location (not in proximity to recycled or process water)</p>

estimates are based on the air-cooling method.

This matter can be assessed further through the planning application process. The suitability of the chosen method (s) can be examined in detail (including review of its sustainability credentials) and in consultation with Scottish Water as imposed through planning condition or as a reserved matter for an Approval of Matters Specified in Condition (AMC) application as appropriate.

Similarly, there is potential for a large energy consumption and power use for the development (approximately 210 MW) are estimations at this stage.

It is recognised the decarbonisation of the electricity grid in Scotland is not yet complete. However, the sites' location in Scotland helps support use of green energy as there are a ready supply of renewable energy and a cool climate. These aspects help support data centres with lesser carbon footprints than other locations. Additionally, whilst likely effects of each development must be assessed individually, the data centres' scale (power use) is not disproportionate to other proposed / existing data centre developments in the UK.

Additionally, Scottish Government' NPF4 outlines Green Data Centres as likely to have a negligible impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emission reduction targets (page 112).

Further assessment of this matter can also be made through the planning application in principle. 'Low Carbon MEP options' are highlighted in the submitted 'Energy and Sustainability Statement Including Waste Heat Strategy'. The suitability of such equipment can be assessed through the building's overall energy performance by a carbon life cycle assessment which can be imposed by planning condition.

	<p>Separate consents and agreements will also be required with NESO (National System Operator) and SPEN (Scottish Power Energy Networks).</p> <p>On this basis, significant environmental effects from energy or water use are not considered likely.</p> <p>Development will be located on land of limited environmental value given its brownfield characteristics where recent demolition has occurred.</p> <p>Other environmental effects likely to occur include developing existing green, open space which includes tree removal. However, ecological impacts can be assessed through the planning application through review of the ecological assessment report. Mitigation can be provided through compensatory planting and open space imposed by planning condition or as a matter to consider with an AMC application as appropriate.</p> <p>Soil impacts will occur as green, open space identified as capable of producing a wide range of crops (James Hutton Institute) will be developed. However, this is a proportionally small part of the entire site that is surrounded by development therefore significant impacts are not anticipated.</p> <p>Whilst the site is identified as containing surface water flood risk, the land is mainly brownfield and surrounded by development. Flood risk can be appropriately assessed through the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) with planning permission in principle application. A detailed FRA and SWMP can also be imposed as a planning condition.</p>
d) the production of waste;	No

	<p>As above, data centre developments use a large amount of energy and subsequently produce large amounts of heat.</p> <p>The buildings energy performance would be considered through building standards legislation with compliance demonstrated through a UK approved methodology calculation.</p> <p>A planning condition can be imposed for details of a waste heat recovery plan and the sustainability credentials of the development through the carbon life cycle assessment as detailed above.</p> <p>As outlined, Scottish Government' NPF4 outlines Green Data Centres as likely to have a negligible impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.</p> <p>On this basis, impacts from waste heat are not considered likely to result in a significant environmental effect.</p>
<p>e) pollution and nuisances;</p>	<p>No</p> <p>The developments' construction would generate dust with impacts on air pollution with carbon emissions generated and noise through use of machinery.</p> <p>However, there is nothing specific about the development to suggest significant environmental effects whilst the site is not within a designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).</p> <p>Similarly, from the development's operation the anticipated vehicular trips in the submitted Transport Statement are not considered significant. The site is also well connected to sustainable transport modes which helps encourage transport by sustainable means.</p> <p>Similarly, noise pollution from its operations can be mitigated through the</p>

	<p>requirement for detail and implementation of noise mitigation measures imposed by planning condition or as a reserved matter of an AMC application as appropriate.</p> <p>Other aspects that would contribute to pollution have been assessed through consideration of the use of natural resources (1 c) and production of waste (1 d) sections above.</p>
<p>f) the risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;</p>	<p>No</p> <p>The site is not within an area identified as containing any specific flood risk. The drainage strategy takes account of climate change and can be considered through the planning application process. No other specific risks of major accidents are identified.</p>
<p>g) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).</p>	<p>No</p> <p>The developments' construction would generate dust with impacts on air pollution. However, there is nothing specific about the development to suggest the effect on human health would be significant whilst the site is not within a designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).</p> <p>Similarly, anticipated vehicular trips in the submitted Transport Statement are not considered significant. The site is also well connected to sustainable transport modes which helps encourage transport by sustainable means.</p> <p>No specific risk to water contamination is identified.</p>
<p>Location of development</p> <p>2. The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered having regard in particular to—</p>	
	<p><i>Likely significant effects - Yes/ No?</i></p>

<p>a) the existing and approved land use;</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>The site is not in an area of environmental sensitivity. The existing office land use is a well-established land use in the area surrounding the site.</p> <p>The proposed storage use is compatible with this urban context. It will be surrounded by other developments and will be spatially detached from environmental designated areas to the west.</p>
<p>b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Developing greenspace would have impacts on soil and land. However, the site has no specific environmental designation. The area of greenspace is a proportionally small part of the whole brownfield site.</p> <p>Similarly, associated tree loss has potential for adverse biodiversity impacts. These impacts can be assessed through submitted ecological impact assessment and tree survey with the application. Mitigation can be secured by planning condition or as a reserved matter of an AMC application as appropriate for replacement planting and greenspace.</p> <p>Whilst impacts on water and energy will occur (as outlined elsewhere in this report), the site's location is not of particularly geographical sensitivity.</p>
<p>c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment paying particular attention to the following areas—</p>	
<p>(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;</p>	<p>Not applicable (N/A) to this site.</p>
<p>(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;</p>	<p>N/A to this site</p>
<p>(iii) mountain and forest areas;</p>	<p>N/A to this site</p>
<p>(iv) nature reserves and parks;</p>	<p>N/A to this site</p>
<p>(v) European sites and other areas classified or protected under national legislation;</p>	<p>N/A to this site</p>

(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;	N/A to this site
(vii) densely populated areas;	No. Existing densely populated areas are located to the sites' north and east. A proposed populated area would be located to the south / south-west. These areas are suitably separated from the development whilst its detailed design (noise, light, scale) can help reduce impacts. No significant effect is likely.
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	No The site is not in an area with any specific landscape, historic, cultural or archaeological designation. Given the developments' scale, its urban context and separation distances retained to areas of designation no significant effects on these matters are likely.
<p>Types and characteristics of the potential impact</p> <p>3. The likely significant effects of the development on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 above, with regard to the impact of the development on the factors specified in regulation 4(2), taking into account—</p>	
	<i>Likely significant effects - Yes/ No?</i>
(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	No The development would be over 50 metres from nearest residential property of approved planning permission 20/02068/FUL and over 150 m from existing residential properties. Potential impacts (noise, light, visual) from the development have been outlined in planning application 25/04239/PPP. These impacts are not atypical of the site's urban environment. In tandem with these separation distances retained no

	significant effects on the environment are anticipated.
(b) the nature of the impact;	<p>The nature of the impact will be visual as the developments scale, mass and illumination will be visible in short and long views.</p> <p>Additionally, there will be a sensory impact as the development and associated infrastructure will create noise and vibration.</p> <p>However, the development will be in an urban area where such impacts already occur. The extent of these impacts is not anticipated to be unusual in this context or cause a significant effect.</p>
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact;	<p>No</p> <p>The development is not in proximity to any country or area boundary. Impacts (visual, sensory) are not anticipated to be perceived to any significant extent out with the sites immediate urban area.</p>
(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;	<p>No</p> <p>The impact would be intense as it is anticipated the development would operate during day and night-time hours. However, the nature of impact (visual, sensory) is not considered particularly complex in the site's urban context near commercial and office use. The overall effect would not be significant.</p>
(e) the probability of the impact;	<p>No</p> <p>There is a high probability of impacts. The development will be visible, create noise, dust, traffic and use natural resources.</p> <p>However, these impacts are not unusual for a development within this urban context. The extent of these impacts is not anticipated to be significant in this location.</p>

<p>(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;</p>	<p>No</p> <p>The expected onset of impact is not anticipated to be sudden as it is likely the development would be constructed in phases. Associated impacts (noise, dust etc) would therefore likely be intermittent and temporary during this period.</p> <p>As potential planning permission would be granted permanently the operational developments' duration would be long term. Furthermore, its operational hours would likely be continuous with a frequent impact.</p> <p>However, the impacts would be reversible should the use cease or change. The developments' nature is not considered particularly complex, and its impacts would not be long-standing. These impacts are not atypical of the site's urban context.</p>
<p>(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development;</p>	<p>No</p> <p>There would be a cumulative visual and sensory impact from the development in tandem with other approved developments detailed in section 1. Such effects are not considered significant in the site's urban context.</p>
<p>(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.</p>	<p>Climate Change</p> <p>-Sustainability information including detail for the developments cooling systems / equipment and a carbon life cycle assessment could be imposed as a planning condition or reserved matter of an AMC application as appropriate to assess its sustainability credentials.</p> <p>The impacts on carbon emissions and waste heat could be reduced through this though use of low carbon technology as part of the detailed design.</p>

-Similarly, impacts on water could be reduced through use of efficient cooling methods required through the detailed design imposed by planning condition or as a reserved matter of an AMC application.

-A Waste Heat Recovery plan could also be imposed by planning condition to assess the feasibility of re-using excess heat from the development. However, implementation of any heat recovery would likely not be controllable through the planning application.

-A detailed surface water management plan and flood risk assessment could be imposed by planning condition or reserved matter of an AMC application to ensure flood risk is managed appropriately. Impacts could be reduced through incorporating blue and green features to help reduce surface water flood risk.

-Ecological impacts could be reduced by requiring replacement planting for trees loss or new greenspace as imposed by planning condition or reserved matter of an AMC application.

-Carbon emissions from vehicular trips could be further reduced by provision of appropriate, high quality cycle parking provision and Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging imposed as a reserved matter of any subsequent AMC application to reduce likelihood of pollution emitting car journeys.

Visual

-Detailed design matters could be considered as reserved matter of an AMC application to assess the buildings scale, position, height and materials.

-Limitations to the building's height can be imposed by planning condition and use of materials to reduce visual impacts can be assessed through an AMC application.

	<p>-Compliance with the submitted lighting plan to limit the developments level of illuminance and reduce any visual impact.</p> <p>Noise</p> <p>-Detailed noise mitigation measures could be imposed by planning condition or as a reserved matter of an AMC application to ensure noise from the development can appropriately be attenuated without adverse impacts on residential properties.</p> <p>-Additionally, a condition could be imposed to ensure implementation of these measures within an appropriate time period.</p>
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<p>Overall Conclusion:</p> <p>The proposal has been screened in accordance with Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (EIA) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 and no EIA is required.</p>

4. Screening Opinion

On the basis of the information provided and the assessment carried out in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017) and Circular 1/2017 it is concluded that an EIA will not be required for this proposal.

The key points for this opinion are:

- The works are for the construction of a Green Data Centre with associated infrastructure, landscaping, servicing, car and cycle

parking; formation of public park with sports facilities; and formation of active travel routes

- They have been assessed against the criteria in schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017
- It is not considered that the proposal will have a significant effect on the environment, and an Environmental Statement is not required.
- The site is brownfield land, and in an urban environment which is not defined as a sensitive area.
- The sites' location in Scotland supports use of renewable energy which will help reduce the developments carbon footprint.
- The development will likely have a negligible impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, as stated in NPF4.
- Specific methods regarding the efficiency of the building in terms of its water and energy use can be assessed in detail through the planning application process.
- The development will likely have a negligible impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, as stated in NPF4.
- Necessary mitigation can be secured through the planning application process in relation to waste heat, sustainability, noise, light, design, flood risk, landscaping and ecology, including through the imposition of appropriate planning conditions, as outlined above.
- As the development is a multi-stage consent (planning permission in principle) further consideration of detailed design matters can be made at a subsequent stage (Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions).