

AAH Consultants.

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1 Bar Lane
York
YO1 6JU

Date: 6th May 2026

Our Ref: 25/05576/SCR

Dear Sir/Madam

**SCREENING OPINION UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
(EIA) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017**

Land 300 Metres North Of 50 Research Avenue North Riccarton Currie

**EIA Screening Request - Request for EIA Screening Opinion. Proposed
construction of a data centre campus.**

I refer to your request dated 19 December 2025 for a screening opinion on whether the proposal is EIA development.

The development is for the construction of a Data Centre campus with associated infrastructure (electricity substation, district heating kiosks, emergency back-up generators), internal roads, footpaths, car / cycle parking, access points, fencing, landscaping and green space.

Three main buildings are proposed with the illustrative scheme that are capable of 200 MW utility demand capacity. The three buildings would have a combined external footprint of 54,690 m² and associated electricity substation would have a footprint of 15,625 m². The maximum building height is detailed as 23 metres (excluding chiller plant / flues) over one and two storeys. Ancillary office space would be accommodated internally. The site area is of 30.5 hectares in total. The application states it will include appropriate easement of underground pipeline infrastructure / overhead power lines in the design of the development. Regarding this, an underground cable connection is intended to connect to Currie Substation. As there is a functional interdependence between this cable connection and the operation of the Data Centre campus, these works have been considered as part of this EIA screening opinion.

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 area of development exceeds the 0.5 hectares threshold in column 2 of these regulations. Therefore, a screening opinion is required in accordance with schedule 3 of The Town and Country (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

This letter constitutes the Council's formal Screening Opinion on whether this is an EIA development and an EIA Report is required. In coming to a determination, I have considered the criteria as set out in The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 and the advice set out in Circular 1/2017.

The potential for direct and indirect significant effects of the proposed development on factors specified in regulation 4 (3) of The Town and Country (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 and interaction between those factors (population and health; biodiversity; land, soil, water, air and climate; material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape) have been considered. The effects on the environment of factors such as the developments' nature, size or location are summarised below.

The nature of the data centre development will have effects on the climate with resultant carbon emissions and greenhouse gases produced. However, its location in Scotland where there is an availability of renewable energy supplying the grid helps to support a data centre development with a lesser carbon footprint than other locations in the UK. The size of the data centre development in terms of its power load is not disproportionate for this type of a development. Data centre developments are not identified as Schedule 1 Development under Regulation 2(1) therefore do not automatically require an EIA on the basis of their effect on the climate. A significant environmental effect is not anticipated.

The developments' location is likely to have direct / indirect effects on sensitive areas as defined in Regulation 2(1), as well as upon other historic, landscape and biodiversity designations. The development is physically large. However, significant environmental effects on these designations are not likely when considering factors including the developments size, the surrounding topography, surrounding land resource and infrastructure. It is not anticipated that a significant environment effect on the Union Canal Scheduled Monument will occur having regard to the characteristics and extent of development as a proportionally small part of the Union Canals' wider setting.

Similarly, the use of all other natural resources is not considered a likely significant effect having considered a combination of nearby availability of resources, measures incorporated to minimise resource use through specific features identified and the developments' location on the site.

The exact route of the intended underground cable connection is not known. However, its impact is anticipated to be limited due to the relative proximity of the site to the intended connection at Currie Sub Station, its proximity to existing infrastructure and the temporary nature of any impact during its construction.

Whilst no significant environmental effects are anticipated, the planning application will allow opportunity to mitigate and effectively reduce impacts. Appropriate mitigation can

be secured in relation to climate impacts (low / zero carbon technology, an efficient water system, waste heat strategy, blue / green infrastructure), visual impacts (appropriate landscaping, lighting & materials) and pollution (noise & air quality mitigation measures).

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. The screening opinion document sets out the detailed assessment in this regard. This decision notice states the decision and summarises the key factors. 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 Data Centre campus development.
- 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 not located within a sensitive area as defined within the regulations (2)1.
- The sites' location in Scotland supports use of renewable energy which will help reduce the developments carbon footprint.
- Data centre developments are not identified as Schedule 1 Development under Regulation 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.
- Whilst impacts on historic, landscape and biodiversity designations are anticipated, these are not likely to result in a significant environmental effect in EIA terms and can be assessed through the planning application process.
- It is not anticipated that a significant environment effect on the Union Canal Scheduled Monument will occur having regard to the characteristics and extent of development as a proportionally small part of the Union Canals' wider setting.
- Impacts from associated underground cable connection are anticipated to be localised and temporary in nature.
- Necessary mitigation can be secured in relation to waste heat, sustainability, noise, light, design, flood risk, landscaping and ecology through the planning application process.

I trust that the screening opinion is self-explanatory. If you require any further guidance please contact me on lewis.mcwilliam@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

