

Design and Access Statement

in support of an Application for employment development:

on Land to the East of Mwyndy Cross, Talbot Green

for use as a:

DATA CENTRE

February 2026

PAC ISSUE

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On Behalf of:



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6.0 SUMMARY



1.0 Introduction



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Design and Access Statement (DAaS) has been prepared on behalf of the Maska Group Limited in support of a Detailed Planning Application for employment development on land to the east of Mwyndy Cross, Mwyndy, near Talbot Green and Llantrisant, for a new 18,220sqm (196,120sqft) Data Centre over 2 internal floors plus a 2,260sqm (24,330sqft) adjoining 3-storey office block, an adjoining loading / un-loading / plant (energy) and sub-station block, and all associated support transport infra-structure, security, services, landscaping, mitigation, such as additional hedgerow and small trees, and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) attenuation ponds. The Application also includes a new access road and 'T' junction off Mwyndy Cross.

1.2 Many towns and cities throughout the UK are grappling with the recognised need for data centers. Although, on the face of it, the UK doesn't have a shortage of data centres - there are more than 500 across the country - it is the need for greater and greater capacity in order to keep up with the demands of Artificial Intelligence (AI) that is in demand. Google have been reported as saying that the UK is at risk of being left behind in AI without more data centers, a call that the UK government has appeared to heed, designating data centers as "critical national infrastructure". Moreover, analysis of current trends suggests that global demand for data center capacity could rise at an annual rate of circa 20% between now and 2030 reaching an annual demand of between 170 to 220 gigawatts (GW).

1.3 The available land to the east of Mwyndy Cross, particularly given its inherent infra-structure connectivity, offers an ideal opportunity for the development of such a Data Centre.

1.4 The key typology components of any large contemporary data centre are embodied and expressed within the Application proposals, however, pending the specific input of the future operating company, a typical 'base' position is represented, characterised and illustrated (at this stage).

1.5 The Application proposals are intended to create employment opportunities of various kinds for the immediate and wider population, as well as become a catalyst for further development along Mwyndy Cross.

1.6 Through the design approach taken, the Application proposals are intended to 'settle' into their given situation and setting - the use of the inherent topography, existing perimeter hedgerows, small trees and woodland in combination with additional landscape 'buffering' will provide positive visual screening from both the immediate and wider contexts.

1.7 The purpose of this DaAS is to provide a clear and logical reference document that, when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and the other associated reports (by others), can inform the planning process in relation to current and relevant policy.

1.8 The DaAS responds to the requirements of local design policy and the Welsh Government's Technical Advice Note 12: Design (March 2016). As such, it will endeavour to explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposals as well as the way in which they respond to the objectives of good design in relation to: accessibility and movement (to, from and within the building); character (in respect to amount, layout, scale, appearance and materiality); landscaping; community safety; and, environmental sustainability. Moreover, with reference to the Planning Statement and the Transportation Assessment (by others), it will also illustrate how the policies relating to access have been taken into account. In particular, Policy AW5 of the LDP (New Development), criterion 2, which refers to new developments being accessible to the local and wider community through a range of sustainable modes of transport; that the site layout of the new development maximises opportunities to reduce dependence on private motor vehicles; that the new development would have safe access to the highway network and would not cause traffic congestion or exacerbate existing traffic congestion; and, that car parking would be provided in accordance with the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Delivering Design and Placemaking: Access, Circulation and Parking Requirements.

1.9 Pre-planning application advice has been sought from Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council during the initial stages of the project with a view to establishing the principal of employment development, the outcomes of which are embedded within the proposals presented here.

2.0 Briefing

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 The new data centre should be considered in the context of the continuing demand for this specific building type. Moreover, its associated supporting office, docking, services, energy centre and security facilities, together with its car parking and perimeter roadway and footpath requirements should all acknowledge the particular design and technical requisites of the building type but nonetheless recognise its 'base' position at this stage.

2.1.2 The new data centre should also be considered in relation to the site's current designation within the Local Plan (as B1 employment use), and derive an approximate building footprint appropriate to the 4.65hectares site area and immediately surrounding context.

2.1.3 The new data centre should positively respond to the inherent topographical, ecological, arboricultural, access and egress (pedestrian and vehicular), SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) and attenuation, green infrastructure and highways issues posed by the site.

2.1.4 A solution for the SuDS, including the potential for an attenuation pond or ponds should offer suitable drainage solutions that provide direct channeling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers and across the application site to nearby watercourses. In the context of the proposals, such positions should be located at the northern end of the site, and hence in relative close proximity to the adjacent wet lands and the Afon Clun water course.

2.1.5 Access and egress for both vehicles and pedestrians will need to be considered carefully. It is likely, given the potential size of the new building's footprint and associated vehicle maneuvering areas, roadways, footpaths and surface car parking, that the existing footpath / public right of way that runs east / west across the site, will need to be re-directed - perhaps via a continuation of the existing Mwyndy Cross footpath into the site.

2.1.6 The overall height of the data centre should be such that two versatile volumetric floor plates can be provided - a notional 6m floor to floor height would offer a potentially half floor relationship with the office block. The data centre should also be provided with an appropriate parapet (circa 16m) with a height to the ridge of circa 18m. Three office floor plates at a standard floor to floor height of 4m plus a plant room would suggest an overall height of circa 15m. Similarly, the overall height of the 2-storey docking and services block including roof access should be considered, in respect to visual

hierarchy, at a similar height to the office block.

2.2 THE SITE

2.2.1 The Application site constitutes the combination of two fields, split by a combined line of small trees and hedgerows, that slopes in two directions - 'down' from south to north and 'down' from west to east. Given that a data centre complex invariably requires a level situation, consideration should be given to the creation of an appropriate development plateau.

2.2.2 Although the site has significant level changes in both its north / south and east / west directions, the new building's footprint together with its immediately adjacent roadways, footpaths and surface car park should, nonetheless be designed, as far as possible, to be developed on a level plateau. Accordingly, consideration should be given to the most efficient cut-and-fill configuration across the site with no requirement for off-site waste removal etc.

2.2.3 The site has significant all round boundary 'buffering' of hedgerow and various sized trees. Given the anticipated footprint of the new building and its associated vehicle maneuvering apron, roadways, footpaths and car parking, sections of existing hedgerow and trees that currently divide the site into two fields, are likely to need removing, an arboricultural assessment will be required. Furthermore, the design may need to acknowledge the presence of specimen trees on the site, particularly in the site's north east corner, that will need to be kept.

2.2.4 The new building will need to acknowledge the site's existing ecology and, given the anticipated footprint and associated roadways, footpaths and carparking, establish whether or not any specific mitigation is required to restore the inherent biodiversity, as well as addressing any threatened or protected species and habitats.

2.2.5 The site's proximity to Junction 34 of the M4 via the Mwyndy Cross crossroads off the A4119 dual carriageway, offers excellent highways accessibility. Consideration however, will need to be given to a specific 'T' junction off Mwyndy Cross that will adequately service the Application site. In this regard, as Mwyndy Cross is designated as a no through road (it's northern junction with the main A473 link road between Pontypridd with Bridgend has been closed off), consideration may need to be given to a possible change of priority at the point at which access to the application site would occur.

2.2.6 Notwithstanding the site's essentially rural

situation and character, under the heading of 'green infrastructure', consideration will need to be given to whether, and how, a multi-functional open 'green' space, or series of spaces, and / or open 'green' features can deliver environmental and ecological benefit for not only users of the new building but the local community. The SuDS, attenuation pond(s) and any potential additional boundary hedgerow 'buffering' could contribute to the position, as could an open amenity space or spaces as part of the layout of the new building on the site - an open amenity space between the data centre component and the offices component of the new building, would offer such an opportunity, for example.

2.2.7 A data centre, by development typology, invariably requires a secure boundary condition and hence a means by which to 'hold' unauthorised vehicles and pedestrians. As such, consideration will need to be given to a security lodge, a vehicular layby and turning area, and, a pedestrian pass gate.

2.3 SERVICING, PLANT AND REFUSE

2.3.1 Data centres generally require significant electrical, at source, and back-up power supply. As such, consideration should be given to the inclusion of a large electrical sub-station / energy centre as part of the layout of the new building as well as an adequate space allowance for generators. The full extent of the energy requirement however, will only become clear once the new building's specific operations are known.

2.3.2 A refuse store to Rhondda Cynon Taff collection standards and recommendations should be provided within the body of the new building that can be easily accessed by the new building's Facilities Management Team - if part of the loading / un-loading dock component of the new building, access for refuse vehicle maneuvers and collections should be straight-forward.

2.3.5 Notwithstanding the requirement for significant electrical power, servicing spaces such as switch and transformer rooms should be considered in relation to their particular access requirements from the new building's immediately adjacent roadways and footpaths. These spaces should be considered as an integral aspect of the building's architectural composition.

2.4 CAR PARKING AND CYCLE STORAGE

2.4.1 Consideration should be given to the need for on-site car parking, primarily associated with the offices component of the new building, but also for the data centre itself. Accordingly, and in line with the recommendations of the project Highway Engineers, provision should be made for circa 100 car parking spaces to include 5% universal access spaces and 10% electric vehicle charging points.

2.4.2 A secure cycle store should be provided as part of proposals. The number of cycles should make reference to Rhondda Cynon Taff's Supplementary Planning Guidance which suggests 24 long stay stands and circa 5 short stay stands (10 cycles).



Aerial view of the Application site looking from north to south



Aerial view of the Application site looking directly down

THE BRIEF

Employment Development:

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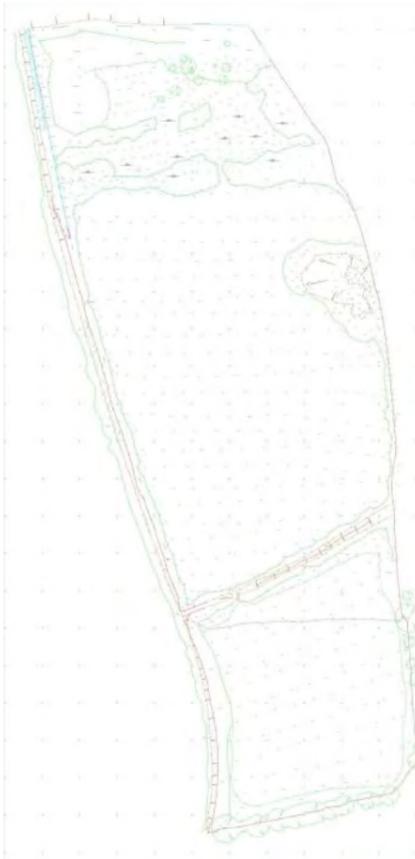
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3.0 Site Location and Context



Site Location and Context Plan



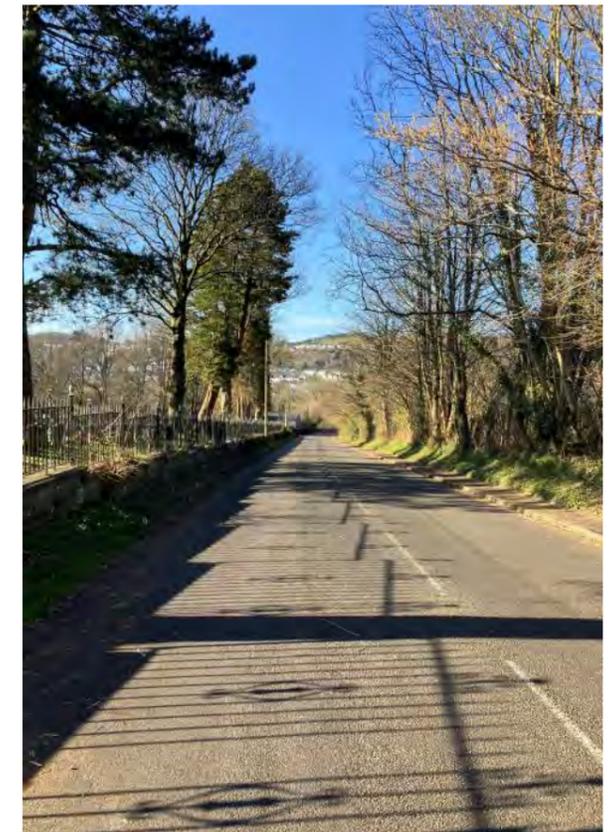
Site Topographic Survey



The Application site (on the right of the picture) looking north up Mwyndy Cross



The Application site looking east across the lower (northern) section



The Application site viewed from Mwyndy Cross looking north (right) and south (left)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 Understanding the nature of the Application site and the opportunities and constraints that it presents, provides an important foundation upon which the proposed development has been established. This section of the DaAS sets out the analysis of the site and its immediate context, and how it has been used to inform the design of the Application proposals.

3.2 SITE LOCATION

3.2.1 The Application site is located on the eastern side of Mwyndy Cross, on the outskirts of Talbot Green near Llantrisant, immediately north of the Arthur Llewellyn Jenkins Furniture Centre and part opposite (northern half) the Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery to the west.

3.2.2 Mwyndy Cross is accessed from a traffic signal controlled junction off the A4119 which runs north from Junction 34 of the M4 towards Talbot Green.

3.2.3 The Application site is bounded to the south by mature hedgerow and stock-proof fencing to the Arthur Llewellyn Jenkins Furniture Centre service yard. To the north, the site is bounded by an area of woodland and wet lands associated with the Afon Clun water course, to

the east by mature woodland and stock-proof fencing and to the west by a combination of mature hedgerow, small trees and stock-proof fencing along side the Mwyndy Cross access road and footpath (eastern side).

3.2.4 The site is an irregular-shaped piece of land that is divided into two parcels by a line of mature hedgerow and small trees that run east / west - there are periodic gaps within the hedgerow and small tree line that link the two parcels together. The site is essentially grass and used for agricultural purposes.

3.2.5 Neighbouring land uses include, as stated: a cemetery; a cluster of retail and industrial units (to the south); and a small row of residential properties (on Mwyndy Terrace).

3.2.7 Within a short distance of the Application site, and linked by an 'active travel route' along the western side of the A4119, going north, is the Talbot Green shopping park, and, going west, is the Glamorgan Vale Retail Park, as well as a large Sainsbury's store and the Leekes of Llantrisant department store.

3.2.8 Other attractions and facilities, again within a short distance of the Application site include a local leisure centre, a community centre, a golf club, a gym, various restaurants, bars and coffee shops and hotels all served



Aerial view of the Application site looking north west



Aerial view of the Application site looking south east



Aerial view of the Application site looking north east



Aerial view of the Application site looking west

**SITE LOCATION
AND CONTEXT**

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3.0 Site Location and Context

by public transport networks and stations.

3.2.9 It is worth noting that planning permission for a small data centre on land to the western side of Mwyndy Cross, directly opposite the southern half of the Application site, was recently granted, adding further built-form reference in relatively close proximity.

3.3 SITE AREA AND TOPOGRAPHY

3.3.1 The Application site is essentially trapezoidal in shape with an area of approximately 4.65 hectares.

3.3.2 The Application site slopes in two directions - from west to east 'down' by circa 7m, from south to north 'down' by circa 8m and diagonally from its south east corner to its north east corner by circa 11m. There is also a change of level between the Mwyndy Cross access road and the Application site along its western boundary of circa 2m, and, between the Arthur Llewellyn Jenkins furniture store service yard along its northern boundary of circa 2-3m.

3.4 LAND USE

3.4.1 The Application site has, historically, been used for agricultural use - at the time of preparing this document, the land was being used for the production and storage of hay and sheep grazing.

3.5 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

3.5.1 The Application site's immediate adjacency to Mwyndy Cross offers it very good accessibility, and its relatively close proximity to the A4119 and M4, offers it very good vehicular connectivity to the South Wales (and beyond) highway network, including bus services to Cardiff and Pontyclun.

3.5.2 Primary access and movement to and from the Application site will be from Mwyndy Cross via a new 'T' junction.

3.5.3 Mwyndy Cross is a relatively quiet road that provides access to the existing fields on both its eastern and western sides, as well as the Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery, Cardiff Road (via the cemetery) towards Llantrisant, various public rights of way footpaths, the Arthur Llewellyn Jenkins Furniture Centre and the houses on Mwyndy Terrace. It has been stopped-up at its northern end at, what would have been a junction with the A473 east / west trunk road that connects Pontypridd with Bridgend.



Various views along Mwyndy Cross from the junction with the A4119, past the Application site on the right, the Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery on the left to the A473 bridge at the northern end

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**SITE LOCATION
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Aerial view of the Application site with the Aurther Llewelyn Jenkins furniture store in the fore ground, Talbot Green and Llantrisant across the top of the image, and, new housing developments east of Pontyclun to the left of the image

3.0 Site Location and Context



View of the Application site looking 'up' and south towards the trees and hedgerow that divides into two sections, from the far north east corner - the specimen tree is on the left of the image.

3.5.4 Mwyndy Cross currently has a narrow pedestrian footpath along its eastern side only, that provides access to the public rights of way across both the fields to the west, the Application site itself and the other fields that adjoin along its length. The Application proposals will seek to improve this position once junctioned into the Application site by including pedestrian footpaths on both sides. Cycle access will also follow the new junctioned situation into the Application site from Mwyndy Cross.

3.6 BOUNDARIES

3.6.1 The Application site's boundaries reflect its essentially rural situation in so far as its entire perimeter is bounded by either mature hedgerow and small trees, or woodland, all with stock-proof fencing. The eastern boundary, between the Myndwy Cross access road and the site proper also includes a shallow excavated surface ditch - the ditch runs parallel to the boundary and acts as a channel for surface water run-off all the way 'down' (northwards) to the wet lands and the Afon Clun water course at the northern end of the site.

3.7 EXISTING BUILDINGS

3.7.1 There are no existing buildings on the Application site - it constitutes two connected green (grass) fields.

3.8 ARCHAEOLOGY

3.8.1 It is understood that the Application site is of no archaeological significance.

3.9 ECOLOGY

3.9.1 The Application site is located within the Afon Clun Valley and Rhiwsaeson Hill Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). A separate ecological survey and assessment is currently being undertaken, with a view to ascertaining the site's current ecological baseline. It will also establish any constraints and potential opportunities in relation to delivering effective ecological mitigation and enhancements - please refer to associated report(s) by others.

3.9.2 The green infrastructure strategy will seek to

mitigate losses and maximise the ecological value of the site through the retention and enhancement of existing hedgerows and tree lines wherever possible. In addition, the provision of new habitats utilising native species of local provenance, will help to maintain a network of interconnected green corridors, passing through and around the Application site.

3.9.3 The presence of protected faunal species will be carefully considered and inform the evolution of design proposals. With the retention and enhancement of existing habitats, and the delivery of detailed avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures, as required, not only will adverse effects be avoided, but there is an opportunity to deliver enhancements for faunal species.

3.10 FLOODING

3.10.1 It is understood that the majority of the Application site is not liable to flooding. Flooding does however impinge on the eastern edge - please refer to associated report(s) by others.

3.11 LOCAL AMENITIES

3.11.1 As previously described, the Application site is located on the edge of Talbot Green, which, when considered in conjunction with the adjacent settlements of Llantrisant and Pontyclun and Miskin, provides a wide range of amenities and services including, restaurants, bars, hotels, leisure and sport facilities, venues, shops and parks.

3.12 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

3.12.1 There are several Public Transport options within a relatively short distance of the Application site. These include the un-manned Pontyclun Railway Station which offers services to: Ebbw Vale; Maesteg; Bridgend; Pembroke Dock; and Cardiff Central, as well as several bus stops in Talbot Green providing connections to: Bridgend; Ponypridd; Tonypandy; Cowbridge; Llantwit Major; Maerdy; and Cardiff. The nearest bus stops to the Application site are located on the western leg of Mwyndy Cross, off the traffic controlled junction with the A4119.



View of the two sections of the Application site looking north directly over the roof of the Aurther Llewelyn Jenkins furniture store in the immediate fore ground

**SITE LOCATION
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4.0 Design Concept



- 1 Pontyclun
- 2 Talbot Green
- 3 Llantrisant
- 4 Afon Clun Watercourse
- 5 Small Copse With Specimen Tree
- 6 Site Area
- 7 Cemetery
- 8 Existing Public right of way
- 9 Furniture Store
- 10 Bus Stop
- 11 Under Bridge Pedestrian Access
- 12 Industrial Zones
- 13 Farm House

Context situation

DESIGN CONCEPT

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4.1 THE VISION

4.1.1 Our vision for the Application site is premised on a desire to establish a new contemporary data centre building that can be seen as 'settled' within its inherent landscape setting - a building situation that establishes a suitable development plateau through an efficient cut-and-fill solution and one that acknowledges and respects the immediately surrounding hedgerows and trees. The resulting development should legibly express the individual component pieces that constitute its building

typology and it should outwardly represent a piece of architecture that is visually well-proportioned, elegant, layered, stimulating, timeless., and above all, interesting.

4.2 SITE AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

4.2.1 The Application site has a significant change in level in two directions - it slopes 'down' from south to north and also 'down' from west to east. Moreover, its slightly irregular trapezoidal shape which narrows over

its southern third, creates a restrictive situation in respect to an appropriate cut-and-fill solution in relation to the need to create a suitable development plateau.

4.2.2 The Application site also has a small copse of trees that projects into its north east corner. The copse sits within a localised depression and contains a specimen oak tree (non-veteran) which has been identified for retention. Together with the adjacent trees, the copse will restrict the specific positioning and configuration of the development plateau.

4.2.3 Accordingly, consideration needs to be given to the impact of a cut-and-fill solution on the Application site's boundary conditions with particular emphasis on proximity and the potential need to create retaining structures.

4.2.4 Similarly, the extent of likely building footprint and associated areas of roadway, footpath, service bay maneuvering area and surface car parking will mean that the size of the SuDS and attenuations pond or ponds required to mitigate the resulting surface water



Topographic situation

run-off , will be significant. Consideration needs to be given to the location of the pond or ponds in relation to both the inherent topography of the Application site in relation to the resulting cut-and-fill required to create the development plateau, and the proximity to adjoining wet lands and the Afon Clun water course to the north.

4.2.5 Moreover, as the likely building footprint and its associated areas of roadway, footpath, service bay maneuvering area and surface car parking will require the removal of the hedgerow and small trees that divide

the site into two parcels, consideration needs to be given to providing enough site area to adequately mitigate this loss - extending the existing boundary landscape 'buffering' zones being perhaps the most effective, and natural, solution.

4.3 THE CONCEPT

4.3.1 An understanding of the Application site's particular situation together with its inherent topography

and essentially rural immediate context, have informed the conceptual thinking behind the Application proposals.

4.3.2 The concept proposals are founded on the creation of an appropriate development plateau, and in this regard, through an efficient cut-and-fill arrangement across the site that limits the extent of build towards the north, where the greatest changes in level occur, a basic building footprint together with an associated adjacent vehicle maneuvering apron, roadways, footpaths and

surface car parking can be established.

4.3.3 As the Application proposals are for a new contemporary 'base' position data centre, research into the different types of facility has also informed the conceptual thinking behind the initial concept designs. For example, there are data centres that place the majority of their mechanical and electrical plant requirements on the roof, and others that keep it within the envelope of the building. Similarly, there are data centres that locate their generator back-up and energy

DESIGN CONCEPT

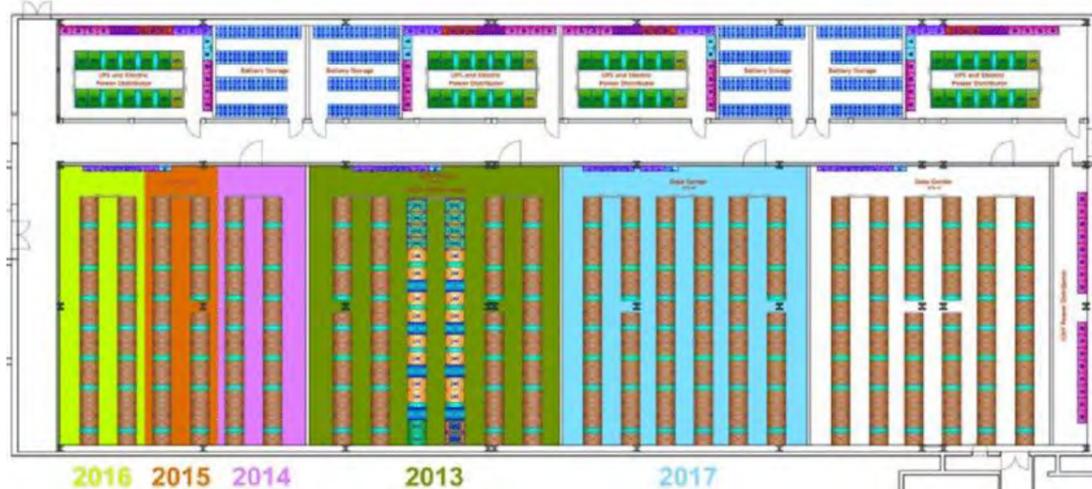
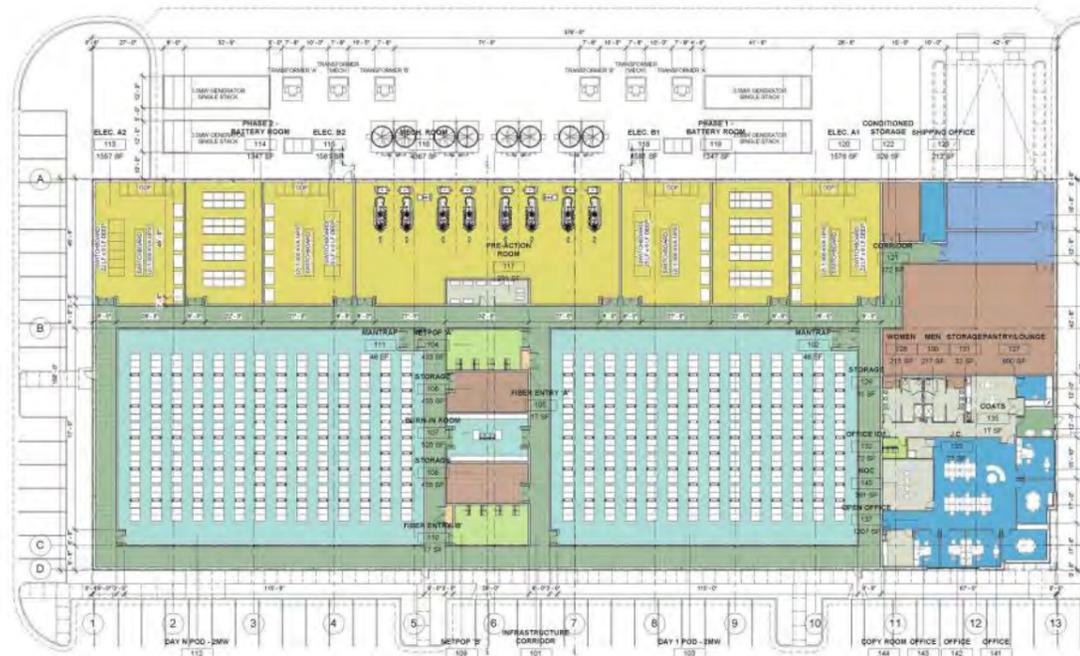
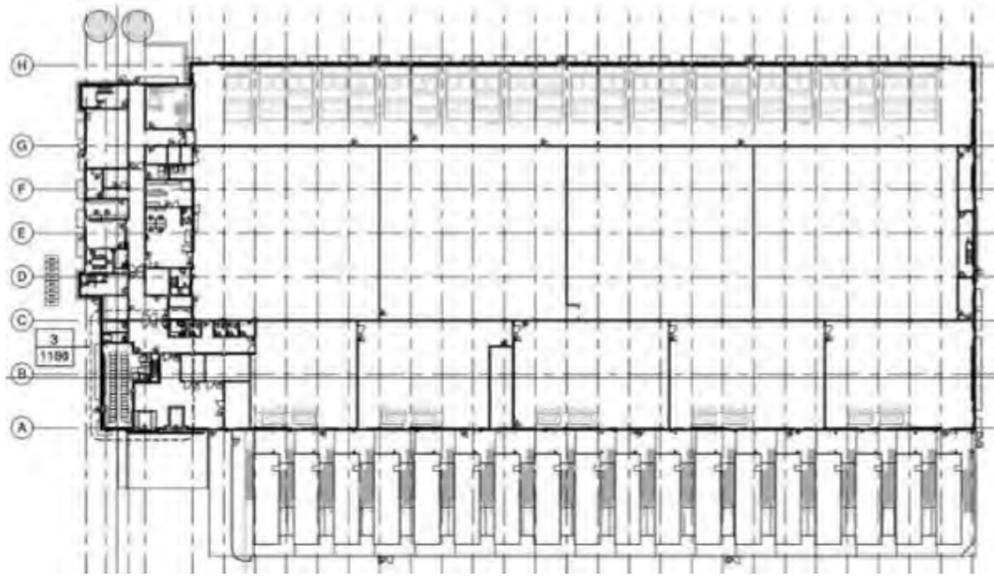
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4.0 Design Concept



Data Centre precedents



Orientation and prevailing weather summary



Site topography summary

DESIGN CONCEPT

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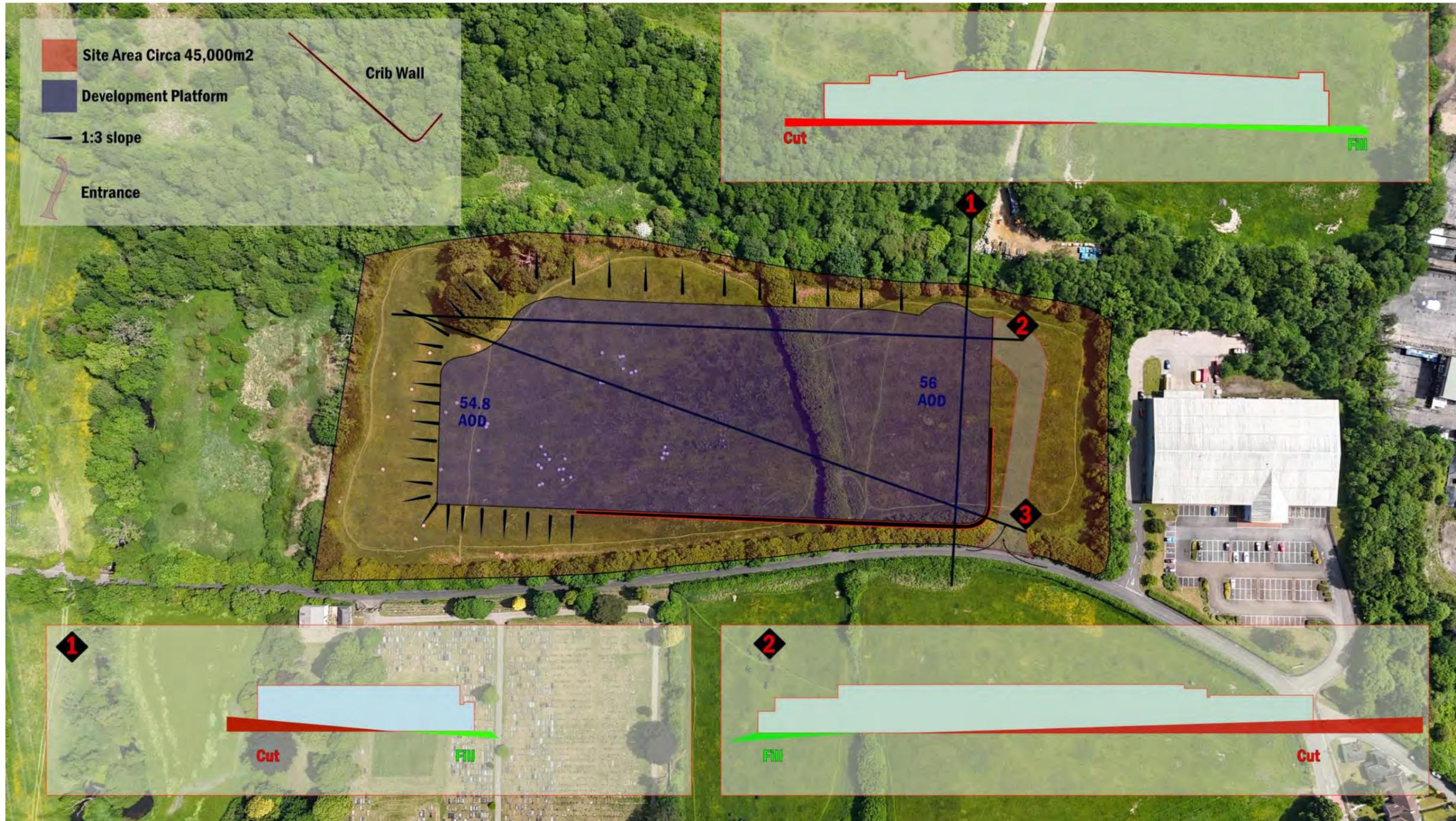
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centre plant within a separate compound or generally outside the building and others that, again, locate it within the envelope of the building.

4.3.4 Furthermore, to ensure that the Application proposals offer the most versatile scheme, the conceptual thinking has considered whether the data centre associated development components such as the offices, the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) are located as either separate, but connected (to the data centre) structures,

or absorbed within the envelope of the building in general. In this regard, the evolution of a conceptual layout for the scheme has developed on the basis of expressing the different components of the building, both from a massing and inherent configuration viewpoint and an architectural appearance one.

4.3.5 In relation to the internal layout of the data centre, in order to keep the proposals as 'base' position as possible, research into the zones for data storage servers and how they are accessed and connected to



Summary cut-and-fill - creating the 'development plateau'

the other key parts of the building has also informed the conceptual thinking behind the general layout of the building as well as how it relates to the site and the external aspects of the scheme such as the location of the SuDS / surface water mitigation pond, or ponds, and the main highway access and egress from Mwyndy Cross.

4.3.6 Our intuitive conceptual thinking for the new data centre, on the basis of the need for it to be as versatile as possible, and irrespective of specific briefing or

development quantum imperatives, was to consider it as a group of connected development pieces, plus the SuDS, the highways and the landscape aspects, that collectively comprise the scheme, but individually represent their specific functions.

4.3.7 It is important that the individual pieces or component parts of the new data centre are set out to structural grids. For the data centre component itself, there will need to be two over-layed structural grids, one for the primary space, envelope and roof of the building,

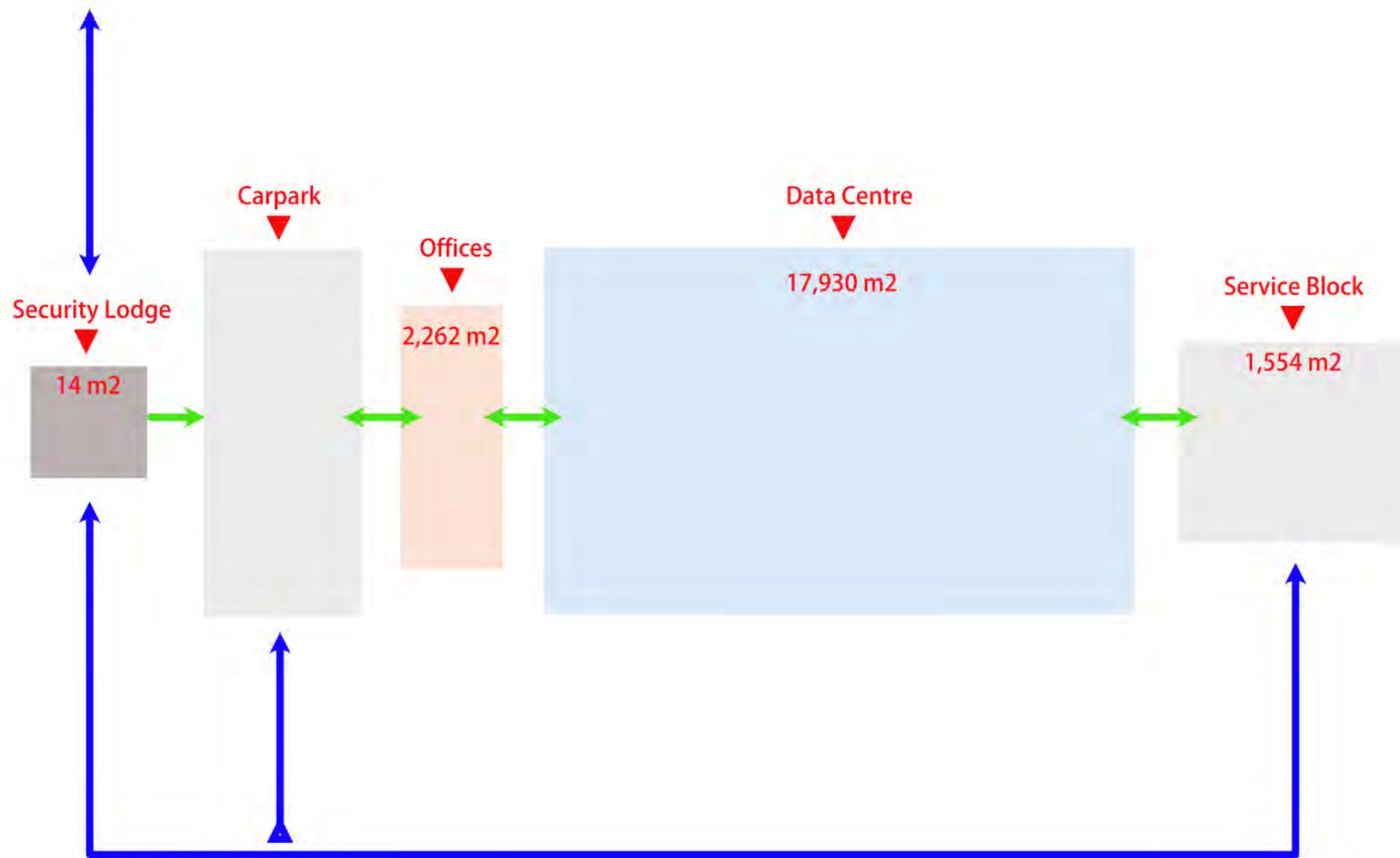
and one, due to the weight of the data centre equipment, for the support of the upper floor(s).

4.3.8 Furthermore, the relationship between the data centre component structural grids and the offices and loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) components structural grid(s) is also important, as each can be considered as an extension of the other. In this way, a 'strong' route between them which offers continuity of structural grid (s) can also aid connectivity and legibility from both an

architectural perspective and from a user perspective. Such a connecting route can also extend beyond the new building into the adjoining surface car park and perimeter areas of landscape.

4.3.9 The 'strong' connecting route provides a means by which to suggest how the various primary and supporting constituent pieces of equipment inherent within the data centre, can be positioned, in particular the location of any heat exchange, cooling or exhaust equipment or indeed any back-up power generating

4.0 Design Concept



'Base' position Data Centre component 'pieces' and inter-relationships

equipment. Moreover, it can offer a direct link to the offices floor plates for staff needing to move between the two sections of the new building, as well as offer a direct link to the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) which facilitates ease of equipment movement.

4.3.10 The 'strong' connecting route enables ease of movement between the various new building components horizontally, however, to link them vertically, particularly given that their respective floor to floor heights vary, primary service and circulation 'cores' can be positioned between each.

4.3.11 By using the service cores as essentially 'bookends' to the connecting route through the data centre, the stairs and lifts within them, provide the means by which to link the different floor to floor heights between the data centre and the offices and the data centre and the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre), together.

4.3.12 This also allows the different component parts of the new building to be visually separated from one another, and given their own specific architectural language - the data centre appears as a large industrial unit, the offices appear as a 'plug-in' contemporary commercial block and the loading / un-loading / plant

and sub-station block / compound (energy centre appears as a 'plug-in' service block. This approach provides an inherent hierarchy and visual subservience between the different components.

4.3.13 Our concept is premised on determining a form of development that 'feels' settled within its quasi rural setting and one that architecturally and legibly expresses the individual components that comprise its 3-dimensional composition.

4.3.14 It was also felt important that the emerging proposals, through the creation of a development plateau, can, as far as possible be set 'down' in relation

to the Mwyndy Cross access road.

4.4 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

4.4.1. Visual, as well as physical, impact on the setting of the new data centre is an important consideration. Although the sites to the west as well as to the east of Mwyndy Cross are essentially agricultural in nature, their potential for development in the future must still be acknowledged. Indeed, as mentioned earlier in this document, the site opposite the southern section of the Application site, on the western side of Mwyndy Cross, has recently received planning consent for a small data



Tree and hedgerow survey 1 - existing situation - identified the specimen tree to be retained and quantum of mitigation required as a result of the loss of trees and hedgerows that divides the site into two sections



Tree and hedgerow survey 2 - early proposal overlay - identified topographic (banking gradient) and specimen tree canopy clashes with the development plateau

centre. Crucially, in combination with the Application site itself, the importance of the landscaped 'buffer' zones around the perimeter(s) should be recognised.

4.4.2 As existing, the landscaped 'buffer' zone to the Application site adjacent to the Mwyndy Cross access road is relatively mature and certainly from eye level, and during the months of full bloom, will act as a significant visual barrier to the new building. Notwithstanding, the mitigation required as a result of the loss of the hedges and small trees that currently splits the Application site into two pieces, can be utilised to bolster the landscaped 'buffer' zone around all perimeter situations.

4.4.3 The conceptual thinking behind the connecting route, not just as a link between the different component parts that constitute the new data centre development, but as a means by which to join the surface car park and the SuDS requirements into the scheme as well, is a key design principle behind the emerging proposals. It is also a means of uniting these different aspects of the development together and creating a clear passage through the building and its adjoining external spaces.

4.4.4 A rigorous, yet simple, rhythmic, architectural language of different height building or component part blocks, that individually adhere to the imposed overlap of structural grids, and that are each expressed with

different flat or profiled materials, and that are collectively composed in relation to proportion and form, will offer an interesting visual responsiveness. Couple this with different colours for the different components and materials, and the new building will express a natural hierarchy and visual dynamic.

4.4.5 The main entrance for staff working in the new building should be considered via the office block. It should also be prominent, legible and be located along the connecting route from the surface car park.

4.4.6 Mwyndy Cross, on the one hand, is a functioning highway providing access and egress to the various

fields, businesses and the Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery along it, and on the other it is a no-through-road (at its northern end), having had its original junction with the A473 trunk road 'stopped-up'. A desire to open-up the immediately adjoining fields to the west before the Cefn-y-Parc Cemetery (going north), for development has already been acknowledged, and in this regard Mwyndy Cross can fulfill its highway function. The scale of the Application proposals however means that consideration may need to be given to either a potential change of highway priority at the point of access into the Application site or a simple new T-junction.

4.4.7 Continuity, via a re-routing solution, of the existing

4.0 Design Concept



Initial site capacity study and basic layout

public right-of-way that currently runs across the Application site will need to be considered, however, this, in part, can be configured in conjunction with a new pedestrian footpaths adjacent to the new highway means of access and egress for staff choosing to walk to and from the new facility, and in part connection back to the points at which it runs through the Application site's eastern woodland and western hedgerow boundary landscape 'buffer' zones.

4.4.8 The size of the SuDS requirement for the new data centre is acknowledged as being significant. Accordingly, in relation to the inherent topography of the

Application site and in particular the slope 'down' to the north towards the adjacent wet land area and the Afon Fflun water course, any attenuation pond or ponds associated with the SuDS design requirements should be considered primarily at its northern end.

4.4.9 Access for hgv's (heavy goods vehicles) to the new data centre site will need to be via an appropriate security layby off the adjacent highway. Furthermore, a security lodge and a suitable security gate arrangement as part of the general access and egress regime for the new facility will also need to be provided. An appropriate area to allow hgv's to effectively double-back on

themselves, should entry into the data centre compound be denied, will also be considered. A similar situation should also be considered for pedestrian and cyclist access and egress as well.

4.4.10 The small copse of trees that 'indent' into the north east corner of the Application site contains a mature high quality, BS5837 Category A specimen tree. As such, any vehicle turning apron or perimeter roadway associated with the servicing of the new data centre should, as far as possible, avoid its canopy and its route protection area. Consideration should also be given to deviations from the existing topography in this area as a

result of the design levels associated with the development plateau.

4.4.11 The essentially 'all-aspect' nature of the Application site - boundaries that face north, south, east and west - coupled with its inherent configuration, the typical dimensions of the individual component parts that constitute the overall development composition of the new facility, and, the desire to use the offices as the primary public view of the new building from Mwyndy Cross (as well as its main entrance) suggest that design options will follow a south to north progression of 'elements', ie the access and egress road, the security compound, the surface car park, the offices, the data centre, the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound and associated vehicle maneuvering apron, and, the SuDS mitigation pond or ponds. This progression also 'fits' with the orientation of the Application site, ie the offices at the southern end and the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound at the northern end.

4.5 DESIGN EVOLUTION

4.5.1 The evolution of the conceptual design thinking for the new data centre began as part of an initial capacity study to determine whether the principle of a large building for employment development was both viable and capable of being appropriately positioned on the Application site (as given). It was clear that despite the Application site's inherent topography - the site slopes 'down' in two directions - it would be possible.

4.5.2 Initial design thinking involved a direct response to the synthesis of: a building typology study in relation to the different kinds of data centre 'model'; an analysis of the briefing in terms of the constituent parts of the new building - where they should be positioned relative to each other - how the complex levels across the site could be manipulated and re-configured as a cut-and-fill exercise to create a development plateau; where the point of access from Mwyndy Cross could be in relation to the existing junction into the adjacent Arthur Llewellyn Jenkins furniture store service yard was located; and, how essential vehicular access and egress and movements could be pragmatically planned.

4.5.3 As mentioned in previous sections of this document, it was important to determine the most appropriate structural and internal planning grids for the data centre in particular- one grid for the essential envelope of the building, and one, given the weight of the data processing and storage equipment, for its first floor. This exercise, in the knowledge of the required area (as defined by the briefing), and the appropriate

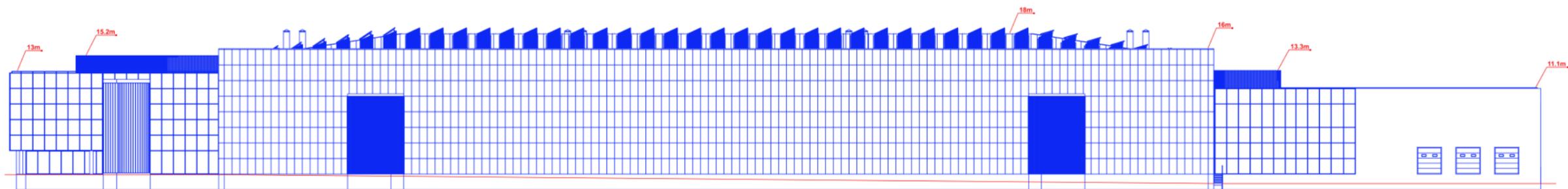
DESIGN CONCEPT

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Considered component heights

height to the parapet and ridgeline, governed the basic massing of the new building. Critically, however it established the new building's data centre component potential footprint - its potential length and potential breadth. A similar exercise was undertaken for the offices and the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) components of the new building, and, when combined together, determined its overall length and width. Add to this the area required to provide the appropriate development supporting surface car park together with all of the perimeter access roads and footways, and the fundamental size of the development plateau was determined and defined.

4.5.4 Having defined the basic development plateau, as an overall layout footprint, required for the new data centre, an exercise in establishing the most suitable location on the site in relation to an efficient cut-and-fill solution was progressed. It was clear that at the southern end of the site (the higher end) the development plateau would need to 'sit' significantly 'down', particularly in relation to Mwyndy Cross, and any proposed new site access, and at the northern end of the site (the lower end), it would need to 'sit' above Mwyndy Cross. In this situation, the cut-and-fill solution would need to introduce a steep slope 'down' to the development plateau at the southern end and a steep slope 'down' at the northern end of the development plateau as well. Similarly, from west to east, the site slopes 'down' from Mwyndy Cross which meant that a relatively steep bank, or even a retaining structure, would need to be introduced along sections of the western and eastern boundaries relative to the defined development plateau.

4.5.5 The cut-and-fill exercise determined that the most appropriate situation for the new data centre's development plateau was to slightly angle it across the site, and perpendicular to the Llewellyn Jenkins furniture

store, with the south west corner positioned relatively close to Mwyndy Cross. Moreover, given the inherent sloping topography of the site in both directions, it was also important to try to position the development plateau as far to the south as possible, thereby reducing the severity of the resulting banks at both the northern and southern ends from the development plateau to the boundary - the northern end being the most severe.

4.5.6 The precise position of the point of access and egress to and from the Application site along Mwyndy Cross, was determined by its relative proximity to the entrance into the Llewellyn Jenkins furniture store service yard. In this regard, the Local Authority guidance suggested that a junction spacing of 60m (centre to centre) was required. Unfortunately, this distance meant that the development plateau could not be located as far towards the southern end of the Application site as ordinarily would have been the preference.

4.5.7 Given the requirement for a 60m centre to centre junction spacing, a change of highway priority on Mwyndy Cross was explored. This would acknowledge the no through road situation at the northern end of Mwyndy Cross as well as the limited amount of traffic using this section of the road - it was subsequently dismissed in favour of a standard 'T' junction arrangement into the Application site from it, and, a means by which to locate the development plateau closer to the southern boundary.

4.5.8 In order to be able to offer a high degree of commercial development flexibility in relation to the potential requirements of the future operator(s) of the new data centre, the offices component, rather than being positioned as an extension of the data centre 'box', it is positioned as a separate block that is connected back to the data centre component via the connecting route, mentioned earlier in this document.

Such a situation thus means that the offices can offer a double aspect arrangement floor plate as well as greater tenant fit-out options and flexibility. Moreover, by introducing enough separation from the data centre component, the offices will be afforded good daylight penetration and the opportunity for a small external amenity space.

4.5.9 The specimen tree in the north east corner of the Application site (as identified by the appointed Arboriculturist), that is proposed to be retained, requires an appropriate root protection area at least equal to the diameter of its canopy. It also requires an appropriate adjoining gradient regime between its root protection area and the development plateau to be introduced - this may restrict the depth and configuration of the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound vehicle maneuvering apron. To ensure therefore that the development plateau does not interfere with this protection zone(s), the point at which the eastern perimeter access road around the data centre becomes, or turns into the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) vehicle maneuvering apron, a chicane configuration is needed. Again, to ease this situation, options were considered that position the development plateau as close to the southern boundary and site access as possible.

4.5.10 A key aspect of any new data centre is the amount of power required to successfully run it, and hence the size of sub-station / energy compound / centre required as part of the development. Moreover, the location of the compound / centre is key for ease of servicing and connection to the main grid. As such, each iteration of the design's evolution placed the compound as part of the loading / un-loading / plant block / compound - its precise size however, can only be fully determined once the data centre operator is known.

4.5.11 The SuDS requirement at this stage of the

design's evolution was based on assumption, pending specialist consultant input. Notwithstanding, the given size of the data centre, there was always going to be a requirement for a substantial attenuation pond or ponds, and therefore it made sense to position it, or indeed, them, at the northern end of the site where the slope 'down' to the adjoining wet land area and Afon Clun water course would have the most connective benefit. The shape of the attenuation pond or ponds will be determined by the site's contours, boundary landscaped 'buffer' configuration and the identified specimen tree root protection area and adjoining gradient measures.

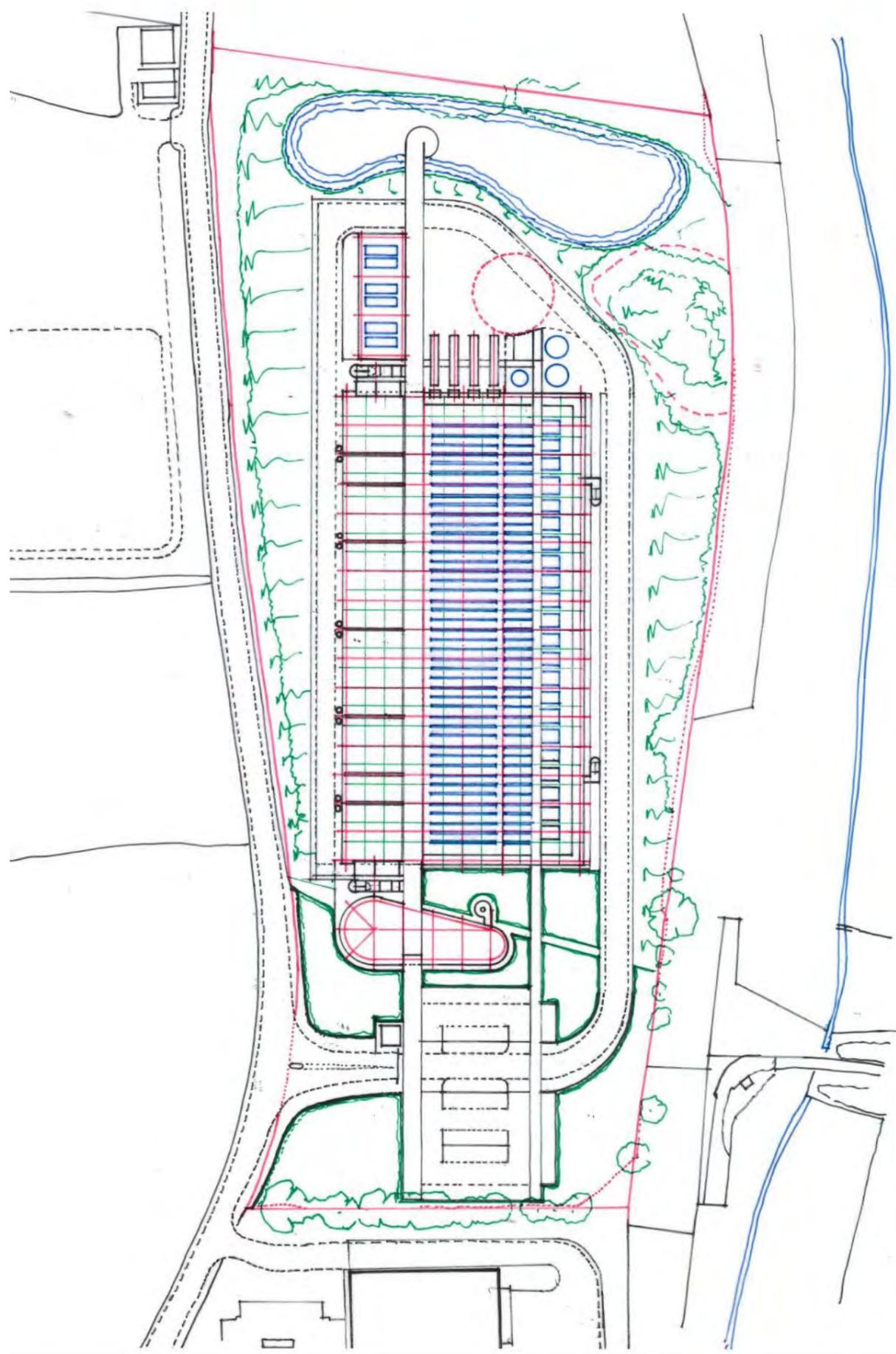
4.5.12 Height variation between the various component parts of the new data centre as a means of visually defining, expressing and enriching the massing composition was considered, and in particular, how setbacks, projections, recessions, corner emphasis and profile in this regard could also help to create visual hierarchy, differentiation and interest.

4.5.13 To ensure the maximum degree of apparent 'active' frontage to the southern (entrance forecourt) elevation as the key view of the new building when approached from Mwyndy Cross, design evolution consistently envisaged the offices component positioned in front of the data centre 'box' with a highly glazed façade. Moreover, the change of height, scale, massing and architectural character of the offices components would visually mask, partially conceal and effectively diminish the visual impact of the data centre component.

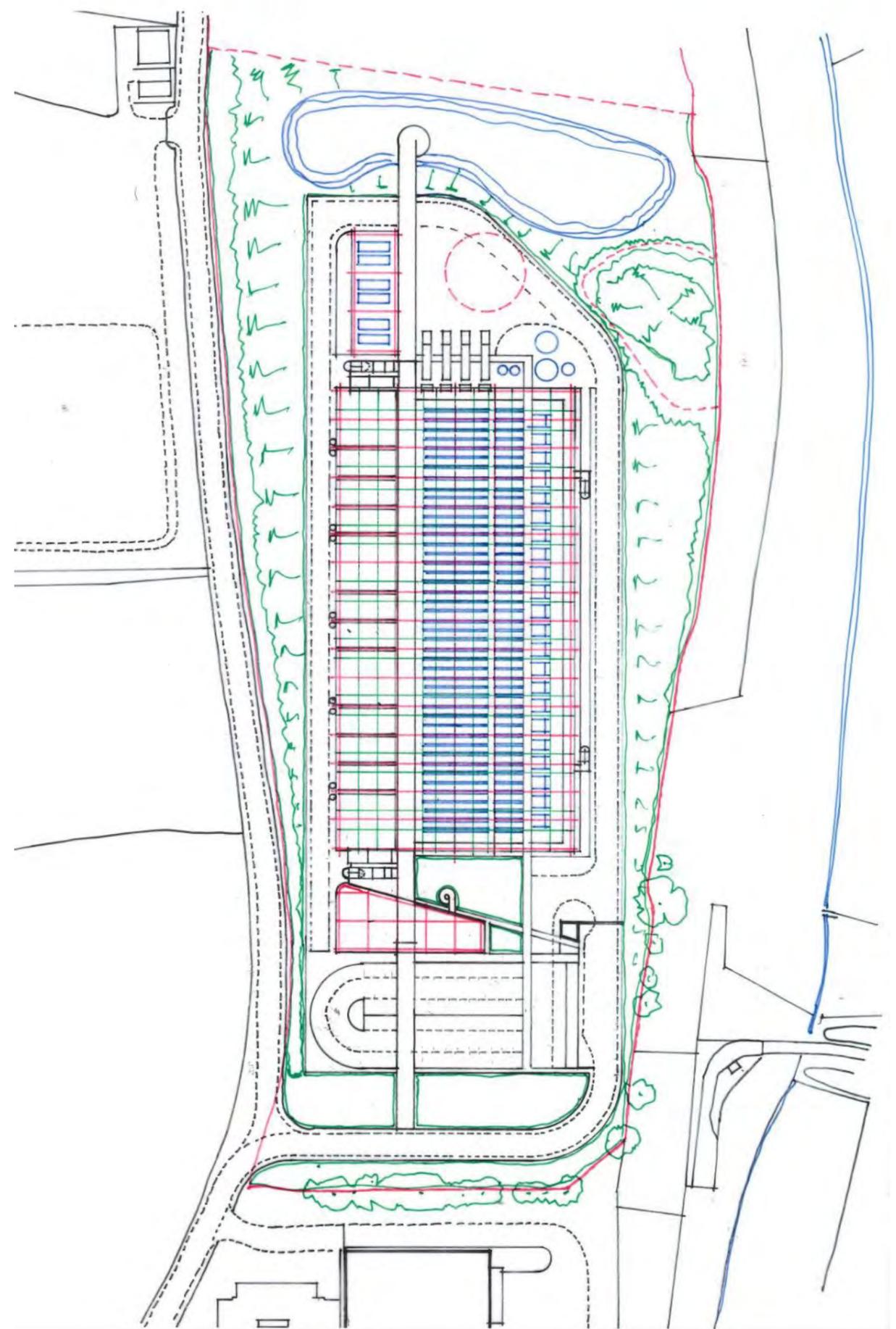
4.5.14 The likely occupancy of each component part of the data centre suggested that separate means of escape would be appropriate. As such, further massing compositional interest was added through expressed 'plug-in' staircases and vertical circulation cores.

4.5.15 In conjunction with the predominantly curtain walling of the offices component, and areas of

4.0 Design Concept



Design Concept 1 - T-junction off Mwyndy Cross



Design Concept 2 - highway priority change

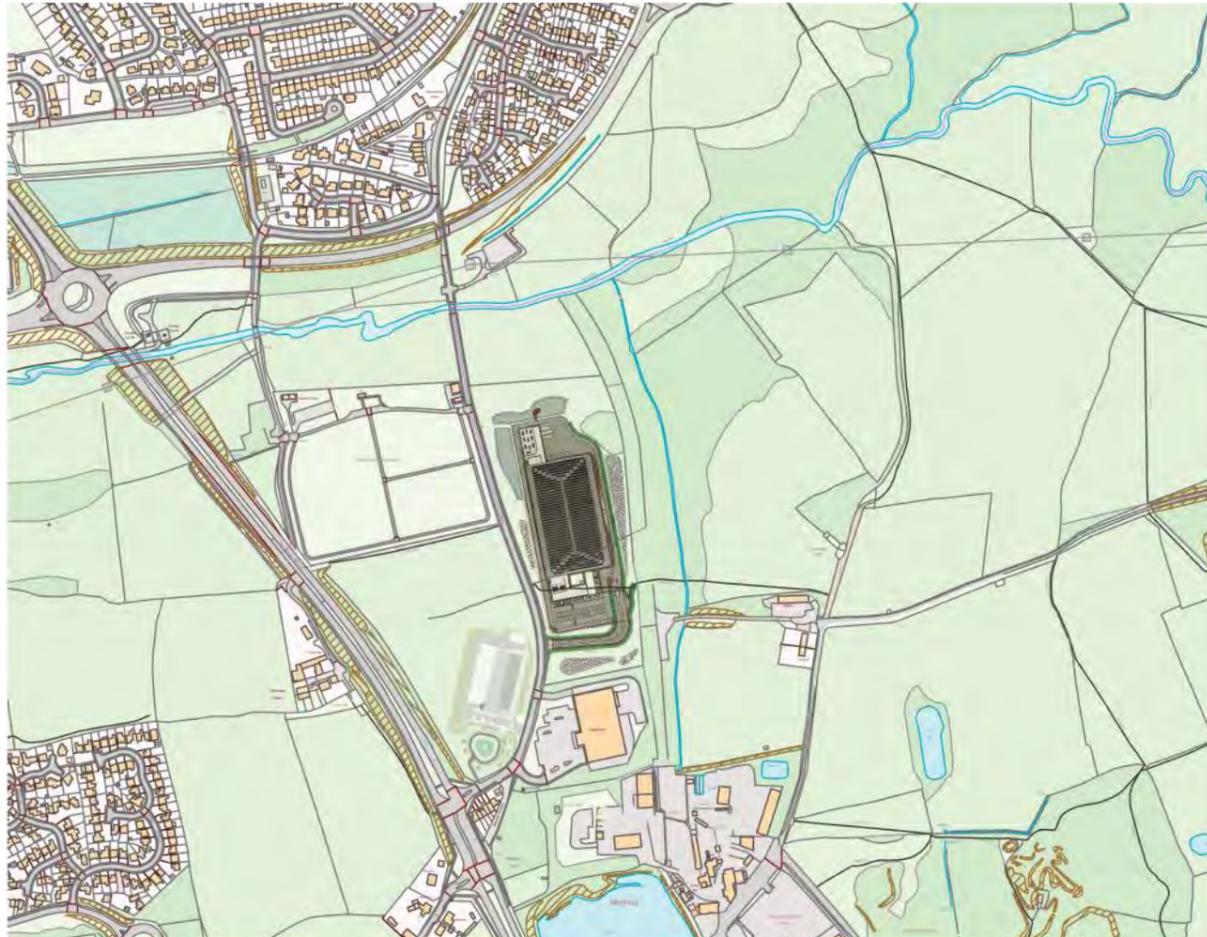
DESIGN CONCEPT

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Context plan, including the consented small data centre proposal to the west of the Application site

engineering brickwork, various panel systems were considered from ribbed to profiled to flat, together with different colour options, all with a view to emphasising compositional and visual hierarchy. The different systems would also help to accentuate any layering, set-backs, projections, recessions, corner emphasis and profiles etc.

4.6 SITE PLAN

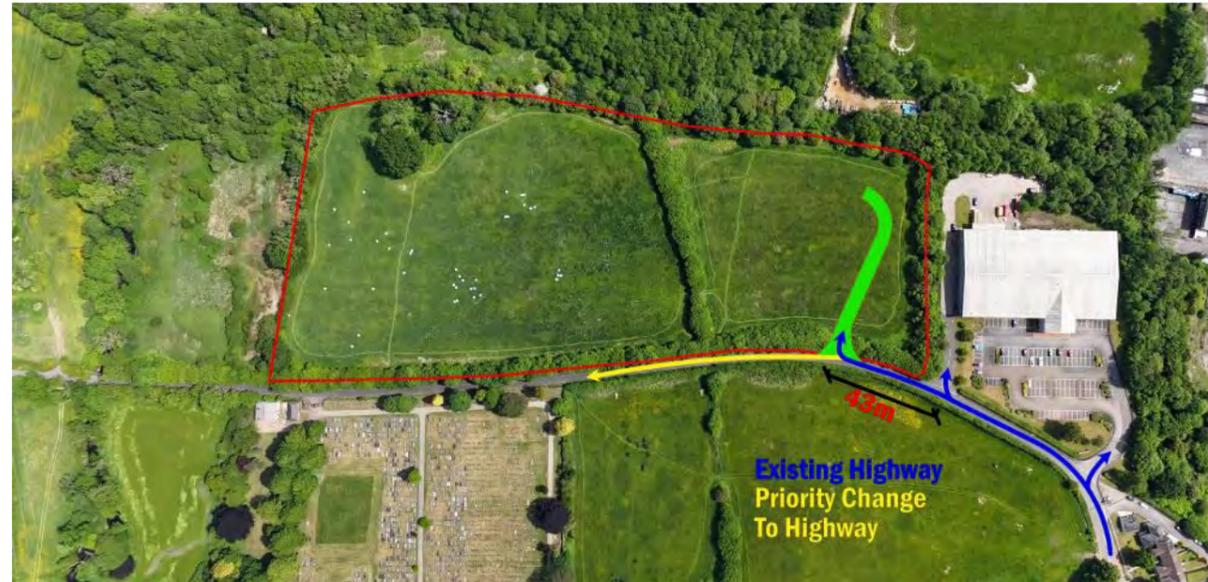
4.6.1 The Application proposals conceptual design is premised on creating an appropriate cut-and-fill, development plateau and dividing the site and the new building into separate component 'pieces', in response. From south to north, these component 'pieces' are: the vehicular access and egress and security compound off Mwyndy Cross; the staff and visitor surface car park; the offices and associated amenity space(s); the data centre perimeter roadways and footpaths; the loading / unloading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) and associated vehicle maneuvering apron; and, the SuDS flood mitigation attenuation pond or ponds.

4.6.2 The most appropriate position on the Application

site for the development plateau and its resultant proximity to Mwyndy Cross, meant that a section of retaining structure would need to be introduced in the south west corner. This meant that the front sections (southern end) of the scheme facing the new access road, are set 'down' from Mwyndy Cross, whereas the rear sections (northern end) are set 'up' from Mwyndy Cross. Also, to ensure that the most efficient use of the site, in respect to positioning the development plateau as far to the south as possible, the new access road would need to be suitably configured not only to work with the existing topography (contours) at this end, but to afford the requisite highway junction to junction distances are adhered to.

4.6.3 The extent of landscape mitigation required as a result of the removal of the existing hedgerow and small trees that currently divide the Application into two parts, has been considered as additional landscape 'buffering' along the eastern, western and southern site boundaries.

4.6.4 Given the inherent topographic constraints of the Application site and the need to create a development plateau, the site plan has been developed on the basis



Options studies for the site junction with Mwyndy Cross - priority change or T-junction (T-junction preferred and agreed)

of a 'best fit' in relation to the most economic cut-and-fill arrangement, with the result that there is a requirement for areas of banking and retaining structure. Moreover, each component part of the new data centre acknowledges its particular footprint requirements, relative situation and the role that it plays within the overall layout of the site plan. Combined with the requisite amount of perimeter access road and footpath together with the extent of staff and visitor surface car parking and servicing apron, the overall development plateau dimensions together with its position on the Application site, was defined.

4.7 PLANNING

4.7.1 Initial pre-application advice has been sought from Rhondda Cynon Taf as the Local Authority, the key outcome of which was to confirm that the Application site forms part of a Local Development Plan identified Strategic Site (the Southern Strategy Area) that includes 15 hectares of major business park use, including B1 office / employment land.

4.7.2 A screening opinion from the Local Authority has confirmed that an Environmental Impact Assessment will not be required.

4.7.3 There is no doubt that the new data centre, as a supporting development, will encourage, generate and help to bring economic prosperity and sustainability to the local economy.

4.7.4 Given the location of the Application site, in respect to its proximity to neighbouring uses, both existing and recently consented, it is considered

sufficiently distant from, in particular, any dwelling, and as such would not impact on resident visual or physical amenity. Notwithstanding, it is also recognised that the scale and massing of a data centre is often significant, and as such, the Application proposals have been designed to be 'settled' into their landscape context.

4.8 HIGHWAYS

4.8.1 The development typology of a new data centre requires good access and egress for not only hgv's, but service vehicles, emergency vehicles, private cars, cycles and pedestrians. The design development process tested different junction arrangements from Mwyndy Cross into the Application site in the knowledge of the requirement to be 60m (centre of junction to centre of junction) away from the junction into the Arthur Llewellyn furniture store service yard.

4.8.2 The width of Mwyndy Cross at the point of juncture into the Application site will be a minimum of 7.3m, as will any access road into the Application site and the data centre site itself.

4.9 LEVELS

4.9.1 As mentioned in previous sections of this document, the Application site slopes 'down' in two directions from Mwyndy Cross, requiring a cut-and-fill arrangement, to potentially include a degree of retaining structure, in order to create an appropriate development plateau.

5.0 Response to the Objectives of Good Design

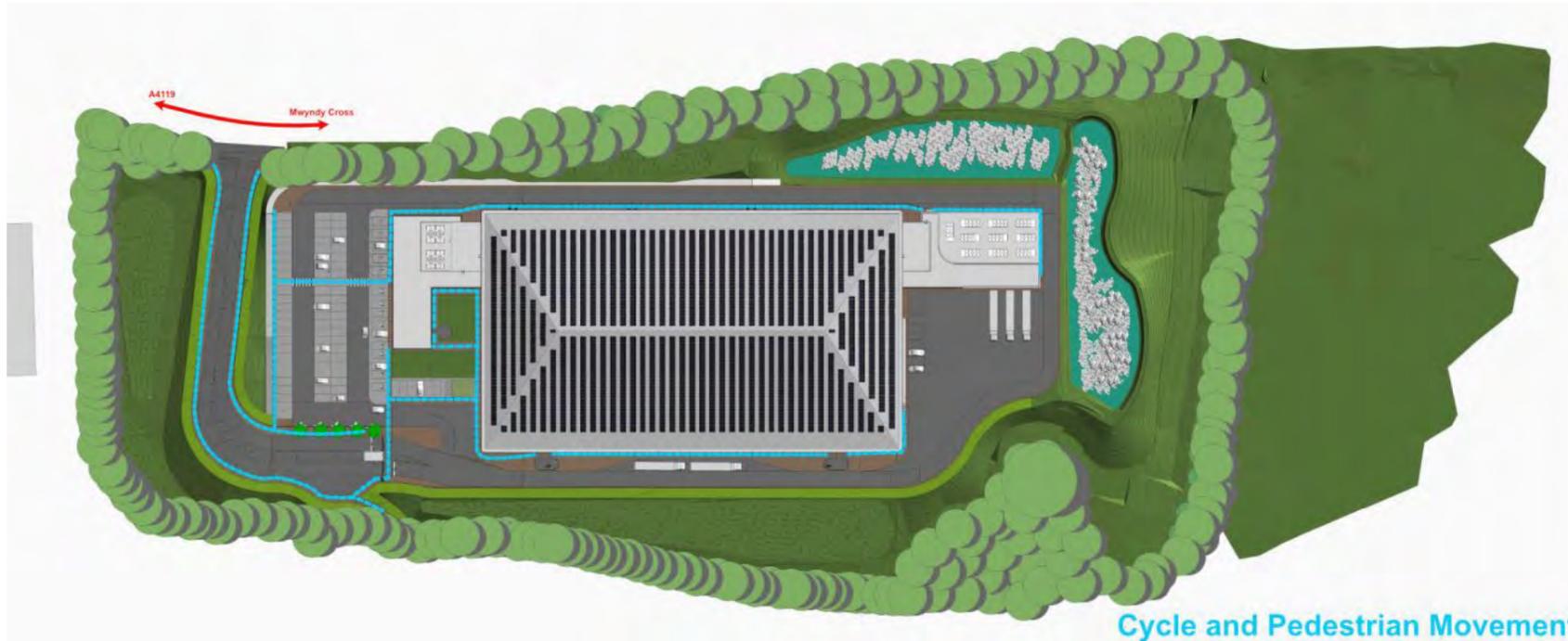


Diagram illustrating the cycles and pedestrian movements to, from and around the Application site

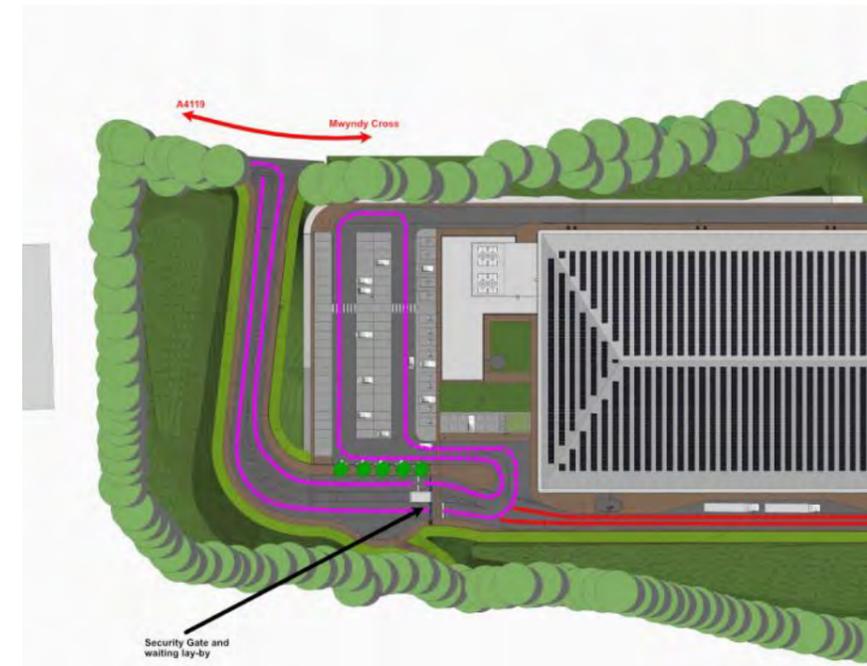


Diagram illustrating the car and hgv movements to, from and around the Application site

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 In response to the vision, and by considering the earlier sections of this DaAS as a baseline for the Application proposals, this section, demonstrates how the analysis of the site and its immediate context together with the particular requirements of the briefing, have informed the evolution of the design. This section also demonstrates that the proposals have considered the aspirations set out within (PPW) Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 (February 2024) and has addressed, in particular, the objectives of good design as set out in TAN12. It also addresses the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy in Wales, by acknowledging, and meaningfully providing for, the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, the users of public transport and the users of ultra-low emission vehicles - other private vehicle users will be acknowledged, but, where possible or appropriate in respect to 'market' requirements, minimums in relation to local policy guideline provisions will be adopted.

5.1.2 When planning new developments and infrastructure investments, this approach is central to The Wales Transport Strategy 2021, which aims to encourage a shift away from car dependency in favour of more sustainable modes of travel.

5.2 MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

5.2.1 A key requirement of the movement strategy, embedded in the Application proposals, is the desire to be able to offer good accessibility to and from the



The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning

Application site for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians. Despite its apparent remoteness, the Application site, has excellent vehicular access to the primary highway network via the Mwyndy Cross junction with the A4119, which provides links to local facilities such as the Glamorgan Vale Retail Park, a large Tesco store, a large Sainsburys' store, the Talbot Green Shopping Park and the Leekes of Llantrisant department store, and, although these facilities are primarily private car destinations with substantial surface car parks, they are nonetheless within walking and cycling distance of the Application site.

5.2.2 An important principle in this regard is the ability to facilitate sustainable movement, and hence the importance of ensuring that the Application site could be connected to the immediate and wider contexts for all modes of transport, but in particular for cycles and pedestrians.

5.2.3 In this regard, and as mentioned earlier, due consideration has been given to the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning set out in Planning Policy Wales which priorities walking and cycling and encourages the use of public transport, over the use of private vehicles.

5.3 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

5.3.1 As mentioned in previous sections of this document, the Application proposals are within a relatively short distance of several public transport options, in particular, the un-manned Pontyclun Railway Station which offers services to Ebbw Vale; Maesteg; Bridgend; Pembroke Dock; and Cardiff Central, and several bus stops in Talbot Green providing connections to: Bridgend; Ponypridd; Tonypandy; Cowbridge; Llantwit Major; Maerdy; and Cardiff. The nearest bus stops to the Application site are located on the western leg of Mwyndy Cross, off the traffic controlled junction with the A4119.

5.4 CYCLING

5.4.1 Cycling will always be promoted as an alternative mode of transport for the new data centre, particularly for staff, if they live locally. As such, using the local authority guidelines for the type of building being proposed of 1 stand for every 200sqm (long stay) and 1 stand for every 1000sqm (short stay) for the offices and

an allowance for the data centre, the service block and the security lodge, a secure covered cycle storage facility will be provided adjacent to the surface car park for 24 cycles, plus 5 Sheffield type stands (10 cycles).

5.4.2 The Application site is relatively close to the well-connected cycle networks that serve the area - the Pontyclun to Pontypridd route and the Pontyclun to Tonyrefail route (Route 4) in particular passes relatively close to the northern end of Mwyndy Cross, and hence, only a short (and safe) distance away.

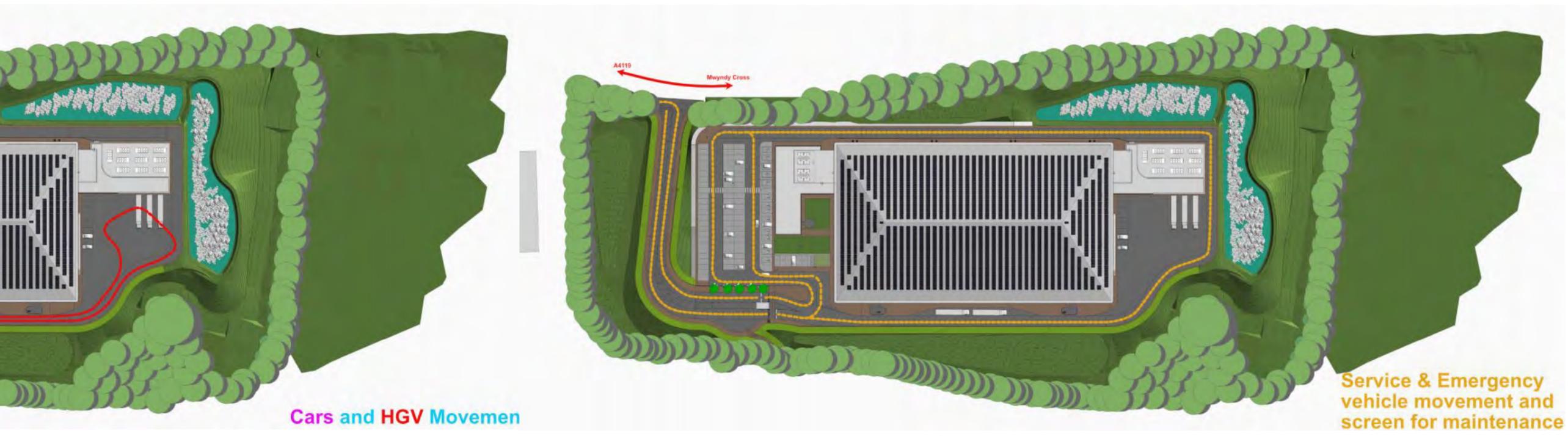
5.5 PEDESTRIANS

5.5.1 The main entrance in and out of the new data centre will be clearly 'marked' and legible as part of the primary frontage of the offices component. The main entrance will also be clearly visible from vehicles or cycles or as a pedestrian approaching from Mwyndy Cross and the new building's access road.

5.5.2 The primary pedestrian access and egress point into the new data centre complex will be via a gate adjacent to the security compound.

5.5.3 Staff and visitors will be able to (safely) walk around the entire perimeter of the new building.

5.5.4 The existing public right-of-way that currently runs across the Application site from Mwyndy Cross on its western boundary to the woodland area on its eastern



Cars and HGV Movemen

Service & Emergency vehicle movement and screen for maintenance

Diagram illustrating the servicing and maintenance movements to, from and around the Application site

boundary, will be re-routed via the footpath associated with new access road into the site from Mwyndy Cross, with the addition of a new spur that leads directly to the existing gate on the eastern boundary.

5.6 CAR PARKING

5.6.1 The Application proposals feature a surface car park, positioned immediately adjacent to the offices component of the new building, and off it's perimeter road, immediately after the security compound. A smaller, secondary car park is featured at the northern end of the new building adjacent to the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre).

5.6.2 There is space for 100 cars (altogether), including 5 u/a spaces at 5% of the total provision, as well as 10 spaces for the provision of EV charging points. Space has also been incorporated for motor cycles.

5.7 INCLUSIVE ACCESS

5.7.1 The new data centre has been designed to be fully inclusive. It will meet all statutory requirements, and no aspect of the design or layout will inhibit its use by a partially sighted, ambulant disabled or wheelchair bound person.

5.7.2 All entrance points will provide 'level' access and



Existing public right of way gate in the eastern boundary

egress to the adjoining footpaths, the open landscaped staff amenity courtyard between the offices and data centre components of the new building, and, all external perimeter footpaths.

5.7.3 Entrance doors will be automated with push pad controls to assist disabled users. Appropriate tactile paving will be provided at the proposed entrance points to ensure that pedestrians, including those with a visual impairment, wheelchair users and those with special mobility requirements can enter and exit the site and the new building safely.

5.8 EMERGENCY AND MAINTENANCE ACCESS

5.8.1 Emergency and maintenance access to the new data centre is proposed via the security lodge directly off the new access road from Mwyndy Cross. A road and

footway, either as white-lining of curbed footpath has also been introduced around the entire perimeter of the new building.

5.8.2 A layby adjacent to the rear of the data centre's loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) has been introduced in the event that service vehicle parking for access is needed.

5.8.3 There will be several points of emergency access around the new building, with each component part from the offices to the data centre to the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre), supporting at least one.

5.8.4 The perimeter road that runs around the entire data centre building has been designed to facilitate emergency and maintenance vehicle access.



Existing site perimeter landscape 'buffering' and the requisite areas (purple zones) of landscape mitigation as a result of the loss of the hedges and trees that split the Application site into two sections



5.0 Response to the Objectives of Good Design

Floor Level	Development Component				Totals
	Offices GIA (sqm)	Data Centre GIA (sqm)	Service Block GIA (sqm)	Security Lodge GIA (sqm)	Development GIA (sqm)
Ground Floor	666	9,111	778	14	10,569
First Floor	736				736
Second Floor	736	9,111	213		10,060
Third Floor	124				124
Totals	2,262	18,222	991	14	21,489
Standard car parking					79
Visitor car parking					6
U/A car parking					5
E/V charging car parking					10
Total					100
Secure individual cycle stands (long stay)					24
Sheffield-type cycle stands (short stay)					10
Motor-cycle parking area					10

Summary Accommodation Schedule

5.9 CHARACTER

Amount

5.9.1 The quantum of development proposed for the Application site is described in detail through the Area Schedule above. In summary, the Application is for 18,220sqm GIA of new contemporary data centre, 2,260sqm GIA of data centre related offices, 990sqm GIA of loading / un-loading and services / sub-station block (energy centre) and associated hgv maneuvering apron, a 14sqm GIA security compound, and space for 100 cars, (including 5 u/a spaces and 10 e/v charging spaces), 24 secure cycles (plus 10 short stay cycles) and 10 motor cycles, including all building type back-of-house and service spaces.

Layout

5.9.2 Each component part of the new building's design has been configured to afford the most efficient layout possible, all linked together via the connecting route. Component part structural grids, have helped to derive the respective key dimensions and profiles, and when combined with the new access road off Mwyndy Cross, the surface car park, the security compound, the SuDS attenuation ponds and the areas of landscape 'buffering', the result is an overall site layout of south to north sequential parts.

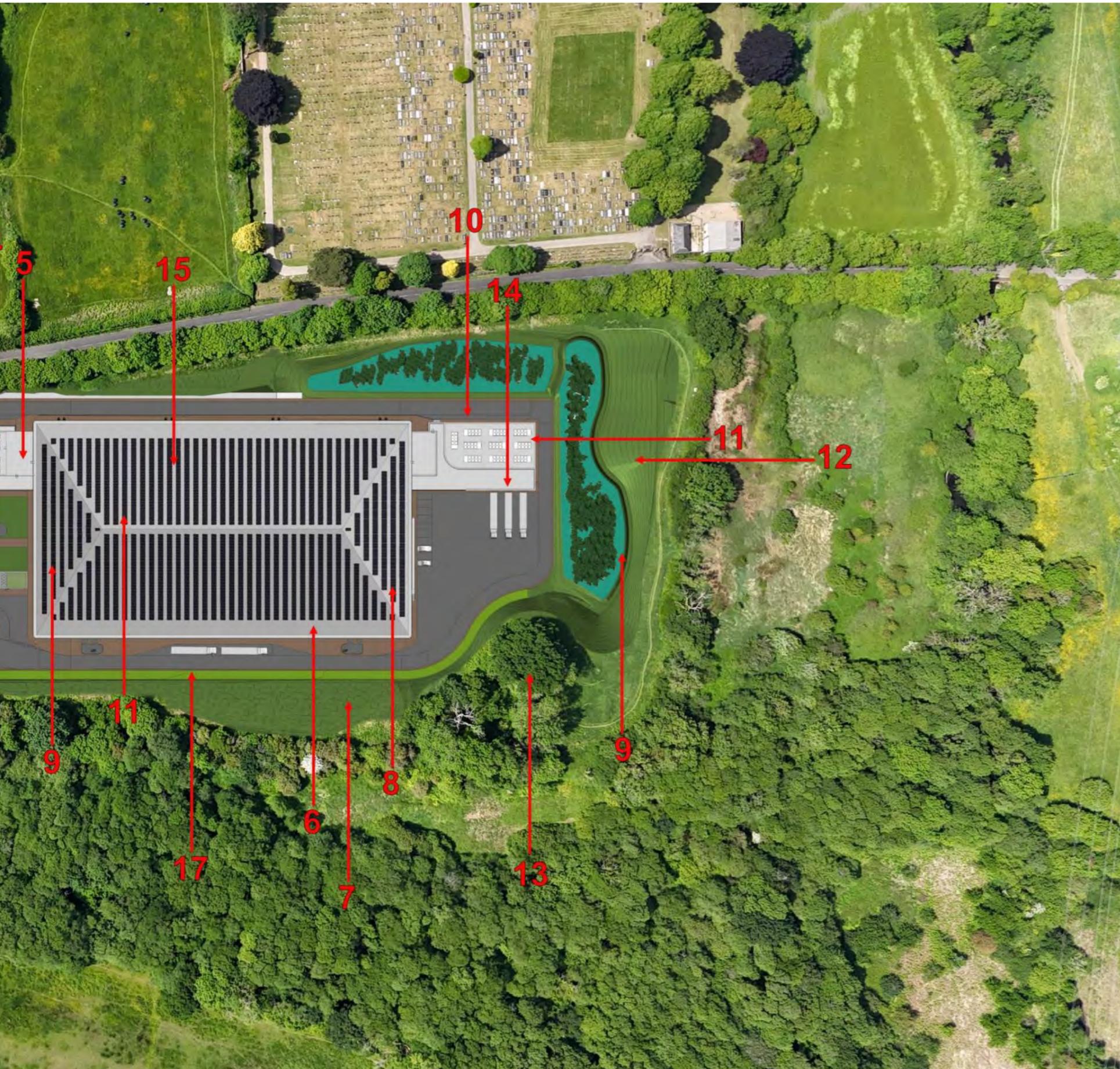
5.9.3 The new access road and junction profiles off Mwyndy Cross have been designed and configured to recognised highway standards with associated footpaths and a cycleway. The layout is specifically located along Mwyndy Cross to achieve: the mandatory 60m junction centre to junction centre distance (from the adjacent

Arthur Llewelyn furniture store service yard access road); the most responsive and effective relationship to the existing site contours at the southern end of the Application site; and, to allow the development plateau to be positioned as far to the south of the Application site as possible.

5.9.4 The security lodge and compound and associated short section of approach road allows for regular access and egress for all vehicles through a sliding gate. A waiting layby, sized for 2 x hgv's, separated by a grass verge from the main road, has been incorporated to avoid unnecessary queuing on the approach road, and, should a vehicle, including an hgv, be refused access into the data centre compound, a turning area has also been incorporated. The footpaths from the new access road off Mwyndy Cross follow the approach road and re-connect with the existing (now re-routed) public right-of-way at its eastern boundary crossing. The western approach road footpath runs past the security lodge and compound building itself which allows for pedestrian (staff and visitors on foot) access and egress at this point. The security lodge itself is a small (square) single-storey flat roofed structure with security windows for communication with drivers (waiting in the layby) and pedestrians etc.

5.9.4 The main surface car park is laid out as a simple 4-bay / 2-aisle arrangement that offers a circulatory regime for repeat search and connection to both the data centre perimeter roadway at both its eastern and western sides. Clearly marked pedestrian routes through the car park lead to the main entrance through the offices as well as to and from the data centre fire escapes. The final (design) location of the development plateau, meant that, for continuity, a cribb-lock wall





Site Plan

retaining structure was required in the south west corner of the surface car park, that extended north and east to the points of juncture with the adjoining slopes across the site.

5.9.5 The offices component of the new data centre , has been specifically located adjacent to the surface car park with a view to providing a legible main entrance and point of reference for the new building as a whole. The offices are configured using an industry and building typology standard 7.5m x 7.5m structural grid, which, in turn, provides a standard 1.5m internal space planning grid. As mentioned previously, the offices have been effectively 'pulled-away' from the data centre, thereby creating opportunities for double-aspect floor plates and a generally superior (light and airy) environment for its occupants. This configuration also provides for a 'green' visual and physical external amenity space for staff and visitors to be created. The office's primary vertical circulation and services core has been positioned to create separation from the data centre at an effectively 'dead' section of the floor plate. It's also been positioned at this point to emphasise the connection to the data centre along the connecting route that runs through the entire building and site, as well as an internal amenity space over-looking the external 'green' space, as described above.

5.9.6 The data centre component is a simple portal frame 'box' derived from two inter-locking structural grids. The primary envelope grid is configured as a 9m (x 14) steel portal frame (main envelope) in 3 x 24m equal bays across the width of the building, in combination with a secondary 6m x 6m (x 21) concrete frame (upper floor), which provides the basic overall 'box' of 72m x 126m footprint, plus the envelope construction - the 4 corners are chamfered to co-ordinate with the envelope's 1m wide panel system grid. The structural grids coincide at every 18m centres for maximum efficiency, and the connecting route runs through the entire building along the first primary grid from the west.

5.9.7 The loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) is connected to the data centre via the connecting route and is specifically positioned in the same relative plain as the offices. Like the offices, it has been designed as a 'plug-in' component and is separated from the data centre by a vertical circulation and services core (identical in layout with the exception of larger lift). Again, like the offices, this approach offers a degree of component legibility and architectural differentiation. 3 x hgv dock-leveler loading / un-loading bays from the adjoining vehicle maneuvering apron are located perpendicular to the connecting route which in turn uses the same angled

5.0 Response to the Objectives of Good Design

REMOVE EXTERNAL AME



View of the data centre from the south west



View of the data centre from the north east

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View of the data centre from the south east



View of the data centre from the north west



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approach to the lifts as the offices, for ease of internal goods and machinery movement(s). Given the 'base' position of the data centre, the precise size of the plant and sub-station / energy centre section / compound is based on precedent - there is however scope for alternative configurations subject to the introduction of a data centre operator in the future.

5.9.8 The connecting route continues from the loading / un-loading and services / sub-station block across the new building's perimeter access road 'down' a bank, via a flight of steps, at the northern end of the Application site to the primary SuDS attenuation pond - a secondary SuDS attenuation pond has been located in the north west of the Application site which is connected to the primary SuDS attenuation pond. The combined area has been calculated in response to the new building's overall footprint plus adjoining areas of surface car park, vehicle maneuvering apron, perimeter access road ways and footpaths etc - please refer to associated specialist engineering designs and report(s) by others.

Scale

5.9.9 The scale of the proposals has largely been determined by the appropriate height of the data centre component of the new building to the top of the parapet or roof ridge line. It is, of course, recognised that the footprint of the new building is significant, and hence its overall scale, will, by default, also be significant. The combination however, of the appropriate height, the creation of the development plateau, which has lowered the new building relative to Mwyndy Cross at its southern end (in particular), and, the introduction of additional perimeter landscape 'buffering', has appreciably diminished this apparent scale.

5.9.10 The differentiation and articulation between the different component parts of the new data centre, as described in previous sections of this document, have also meaningfully reduced its apparent (visual) scale.

5.9.11 The overall scale configuration and profile of the new building is considered an appropriate 'fit' in relation to the existing context, and one that would offer a suitable scale gradient in respect to Mwyndy Cross and the existing topography of the Application site, as well as the cut-and-fill proposals that have created the overall development plateau.

5.9.12 The proposed storey heights reflect the respective uses of the individual component parts of the new building - 3-storeys at 4m floor to floor for the offices component, 2-storeys at 6m floor to floor for the data centre component, and the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre).



View looking north between the data centre and the cribb-lock wall and Mwyndy Cross landscape 'buffering' zone



View across the surface car park and the main entrance into the data centre form the offices



View towards the data centre from the approach road and security compound



View towards the link between the offices and the data centre

Moreover, the balance of features such as 'plug-in' staircases, ventilation chimney stacks, curtain walling, windows and doors, and, the degree of inter-component part layering, solid-to-void and materiality profiling, represents a consistent approach to the composition of the new building in relation to the visual scale of the Application site and its immediate environs.

Appearance

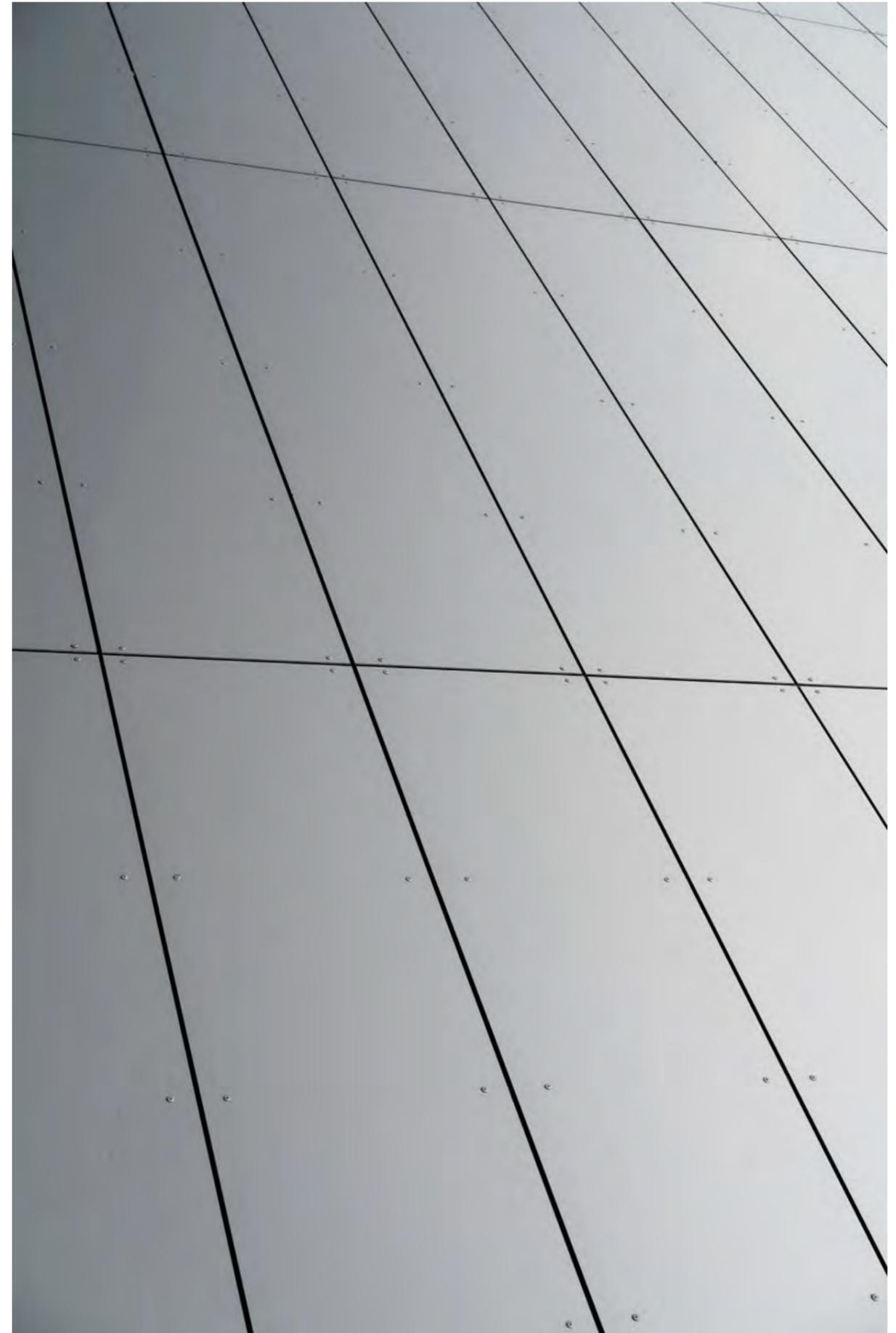
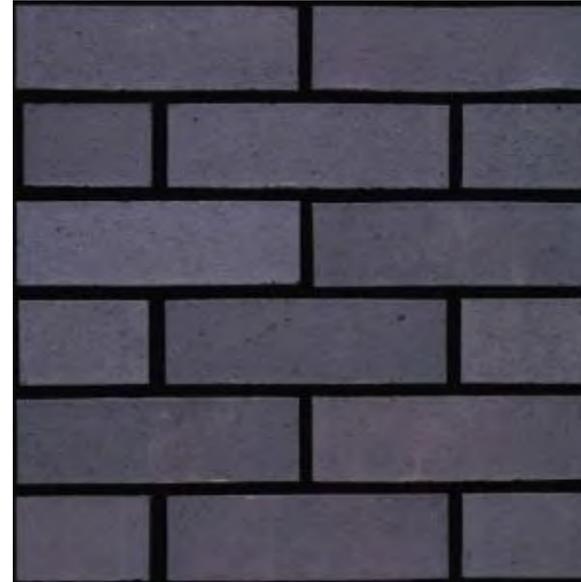
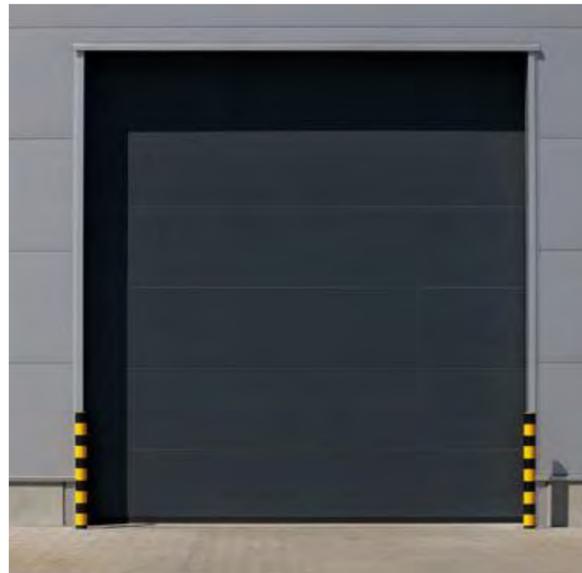
5.9.13 The ruralesque character of the Application site and its immediate context, combined with its inherent topography - sloping 'down' in two directions (south to north and west to east) - offers the opportunity for the Application proposals to be considered as a single architectural design composition that positively responds, not only to the specific typology of a data centre and its constituent component parts, but the inherent landscaped setting.

5.9.14 The partially hidden nature of the Application site, given the existing all-round perimeter landscape 'buffering' (to Mwyndy Cross, in particular) provided by the mature hedgerows and trees, and the dense sections of woodland, have also allowed the architectural appearance of the new building to be expressed as a simple, but legible, representation of its inherent typological characteristics, and to positively 'settle' into its immediate surroundings.

5.9.15 The vertically orientated flat silver cladding panels of the data centre component of the new building, which effectively constitutes a simple 'box', provided an opportunity to express the connection between its physical, 3-dimensional form and the other component parts of the new building. Plug-in staircases clad in anthracite-grey, close-centred, saw-tooth profiled metal cladding sheets, fixed vertically, and stainless steel heat exhaust chimney stacks, contrast with the silver panels to create additional interest, reference and rhythm to the two long elevations in particular. The two vertical circulation and services 'core' sections, both clad in the same anthracite-grey, close-centred, saw-tooth profiled metal cladding sheets, fixed vertically, also add a degree of framing and 'book-ending' to the data centre, and the blue engineering brick of the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) component offers a degree of visual solidity, grounding and balance to the building as a whole.

5.9.16 By contrast, the offices, at the southern end of the new building, are designed as two full upper floor plates of alternate panel and glazing curtain walling (horizontal orientation) over a set-back full-height glazing ground floor plate that creates a perimeter colonnaded walkway around the building and emphasis to the main

5.0 Response to the Objectives of Good Design



Examples of similar proposed (primary) materials - profiled cladding panels / sheets, translucent glass and brick plinths

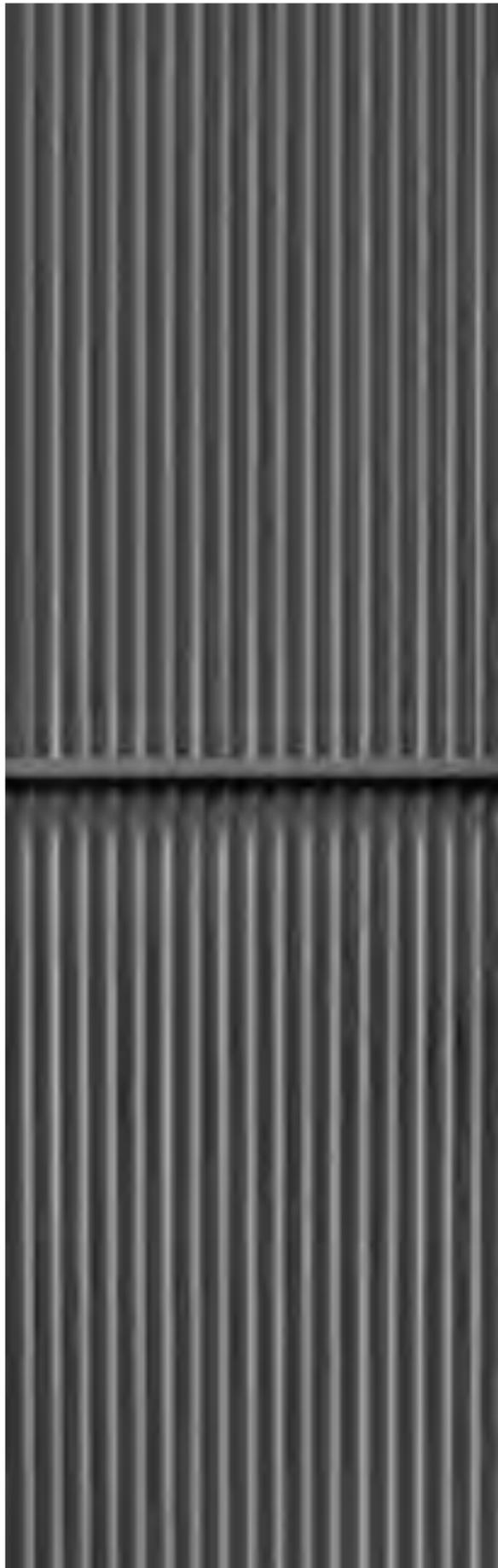
entrance. The vertical circulation and services 'core', provides the visual and physical separation between the offices and the data centre as well as the link (along the communicating route) and internal break-out amenity space that over-looks the small landscaped open courtyard. Similarly, the 'plug-in' spiral fire escape staircase which is proposed to be clad in vertically fixed translucent glass planks, adds further visual interest, and, scale and massing break-down.

the communicating route) to the dock-levelling bays and internal maneuvering areas. The block will be clad in a combination of blue engineering brick and anthracite-grey, close-centred, saw-tooth profiled metal cladding sheets, fixed vertically, to match the offices vertical circulation and services core and the two 'plug-in' fire escape staircases from the data centre, on its eastern façade.

5.9.17 Also by contrast, the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) at the northern end of the new building, is designed as a simple block that responds to its internal layout and functionality. Like the offices, the vertical circulation and services core, provides the visual and physical separation to the data centre as well as the link (along

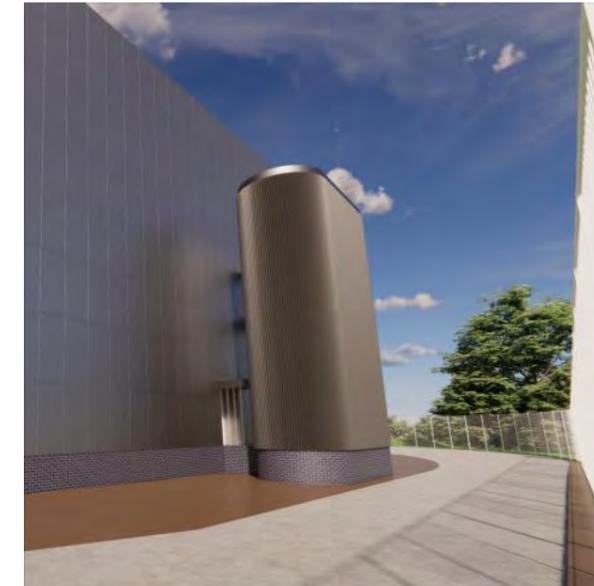
5.9.18 The small single storey, flat roofed security lodge, again, to match the other, essentially 'plug-in / service' parts of the new data centre, will also be clad in anthracite-grey, close-centred saw-tooth profiled metal cladding sheets, fixed vertically.

5.9.19 The Application proposals have responded to their given situation by suggesting a form of architectural



View of the security lodge and a fire escape staircase illustrating the anthracite grey saw tooth sheeting against the flat silver cladding panels and the use of blue engineering brick

design that legibly expresses the typological characteristics of a data centre and its supporting component parts, to include space for internal and external staff amenity, all combined with a palette of materials that aims to promote a positive visual dialogue with its setting. In this way, the appearance of the proposals is distinguished by a flat silver panel surface wall (background) material in combination with a limited



View across the external amenity space between the offices and the data centre

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View across the main SuDS attenuation ponds from the north west corner of the Application site



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Site plan illustrating the planting mitigation for the loss of the existing hedges and trees that divide the site into two sections

palette of other materials to add particular emphasis, character and expression.

5.10 LANDSCAPING

5.10.1 The landscaping is an extremely important aspect of the Application proposals. It helps to 'settle' the new building into its ruralesque situation. In this regard, the existing perimeter hedgerows and trees and woodland, when combined with the proposed additional landscaped 'buffering' will create a significant visual as well as physical barrier between the new building and its immediate context. The new access road off Mwyndy Cross however, will create a large enough 'gap' in the existing western perimeter hedgerow and tree 'buffer' zone, to offer a good visual link to the new building on approach from the south.

5.10.2 Welsh Government guidance requires that removal of existing hedgerow and tree canopy in situations such as the Application proposals, requires mitigation with re-planting at a ratio of 3:1. The



Mitigation as additional perimeter landscape 'buffering'

mitigation requirement for the identified loss of existing hedgerow and trees that currently divides the Application site into two parts has been calculated to be approximately 2,600sqm and located on the Application site plan as additional landscape 'buffer' on sections of its eastern, western and southern boundaries.

5.10.3 The new access road off Mwyndy Cross is proposed as part of a subtle re-profiling of the existing topography at the southern end of the Application site. This creates an area of grass banking to either side, which can be left as wild meadow. Moreover, a 3m wide



External visual amenity - attenuation pond

drainage swale that starts at the Mwyndy Cross junction and runs the length of the new access road and along the eastern extent of the development plateau to the primary SuDS attenuation pond, has also been introduced. A drainage swale has also been provided as part of the two SuDS attenuation pond borders.

5.10.4 The SuDS requirement has been divided into two separate but connected mitigation ponds, the combined area of which has been calculated in response to the surface area of the new building's footprint and adjoining areas of perimeter access road and surface car park etc.

The mitigation ponds will be banked around their entire perimeter, will appear as swales or wet-lands, and will incorporate maintenance access footpaths and steps at the northern end of the communicating route.

5.10.5 An area of grass has also been specifically positioned between the data centre and the offices as external amenity for staff.

5.10.6 An 'L' shaped and curved section of cribb-lock retaining wall has been introduced at the south west corner of the development plateau with a view to maintaining continuity of level surface car park across the southern end of the Application site. The cribb-lock wall has a dual purpose - aside from its capacity as a retaining structure, it offers opportunities for planting (rather like a tall rockery). As part of the landscaping strategy, this will make an attractive feature.

5.11 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

5.11.1 The requirement(s) for sustainable buildings has



There is potential for a 'green' wall within the offices

long been absorbed into the Building Regulations, and in this regard, the Application proposals will seek to fully comply, thus ensuring its 'base' energy efficiency.

5.11.2 At a fundamental level, the Application proposals, represent a building typology that is currently in demand. The ever increasing mandate for data storage, for speed of access to information, digitally, and for the use of Artificial Intelligence requires an enormous energy demand. The key to the environmental sustainability of these buildings is to ensure that they have the ability to be easily adapted for alternative uses in the future, that they have the ability to generate, at least, some of the energy demand in-situ through renewable technologies, the most obvious, in the case of the Application proposals, given their inherent north / south longitudinal situation, and hence, orientation, being the inclusion of panels of photo-voltaic cells mounted on the (vast) roof of the data centre component of the new building in particular.

5.11.3 The Application proposals are in relative close proximity to essential services, amenities and facilities, as well as, having access to established cycle networks, pedestrian routes, and, public transport - both bus and train - which together, means that, despite their apparent remoteness, they will not be entirely reliant on staff and visitors using private cars.

5.11.4 The proposed internal and external amenity spaces will encourage social interaction, well-being, health and fitness activities and possibly even recreational pursuits. The open courtyard between the data centre and the offices, for example, faces south and east, providing opportunities for sitting out in the sun at lunch time in particular as well as general well-being.

5.11.5 During the design development stages of the project, consideration for specific energy efficient design



Cribb lock wall

measures were put into place such as: levels of thermal insulation; air tightness and ventilation (both natural and mechanical); the most appropriate form of cooling for the data centre component, as well as heating and cooling of the other components of the new building - consideration was given to heat exchange in this regard for example.

5.11.6 The re-use of materials; recycling generally; energy efficient fixtures and fittings; and waste management has been, and will continue to be, under consideration as and when the Application proposals 'move' to the next stage of their technical design development.

5.12 NEIGHBOURLY ISSUES

5.12.1 The relative remoteness of the Application site has meant that issues such as over-looking, over-shadowing and over-bearing of immediately adjacent properties will not be a concern. The creation of the development plateau through the cut-and-fill proposals, has provided the opportunity to lower the new building into the site at its southern end in particular, rendering its scale and massing less apparent on approach from Mwyndy Cross. Moreover, the extent of both proposed and existing hedgerow and tree 'buffering' to the western, eastern and southern boundaries combined with existing woodland on the eastern and northern boundaries will limit any detrimental long distance visual impact when viewed across the Application site from the wider context.

5.13 REFUSE

5.13.1 Data centres, from time to time, need to handle the disposal of bulky waste, as well as other recycleable



Typical secure cycle store with 'green' roof

and general waste items. This includes ensuring that the waste is handled correctly, and its materials recycled where possible. The majority of the new building's staff will be working in the offices component of the new data centre, in addition however, allowance has been made for a minority of staff working in the data centre itself, the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre) and the security lodge. Based on our experience, at this stage of the development's evolution, allowance has been made for an appropriate amount of space for the storage of refuse, including an allowance for holding bulky waste, as well as re-cycling, food and residual waste. The actual size requirement for the refuse store including the size of the bulky waste storage area, can however be determined once the specific requirements of the future operator of the new data centre are known.

5.13.2 The refuse generated by the new building's staff and visitors, will be held within a dedicated refuse store / compound located adjacent to the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound at the far (northern) end of the new building. This will include the dedicated bulky waste holding area. Local Authority and specialist collections can be made from the vehicle maneuvering apron adjacent to this block, via the security lodge and access road off Mwyndy Cross.

5.14 COMMUNITY SAFETY

5.14.1 The Application proposals, wherever possible, have been designed to provide an inherent degree of natural as well as CCTV surveillance, with a view to deterring crime, whilst ensuring the security of staff.

5.14.2 The new building will incorporate a high perimeter fence, and has an associated security compound, including a security lodge.



Roof mounted panels of photo-voltaic cells

5.14.3 The new building's main entrance, as well as its secondary entrances, will be fully secured with access only available to staff or authorised persons by keypad or fob control or similar.

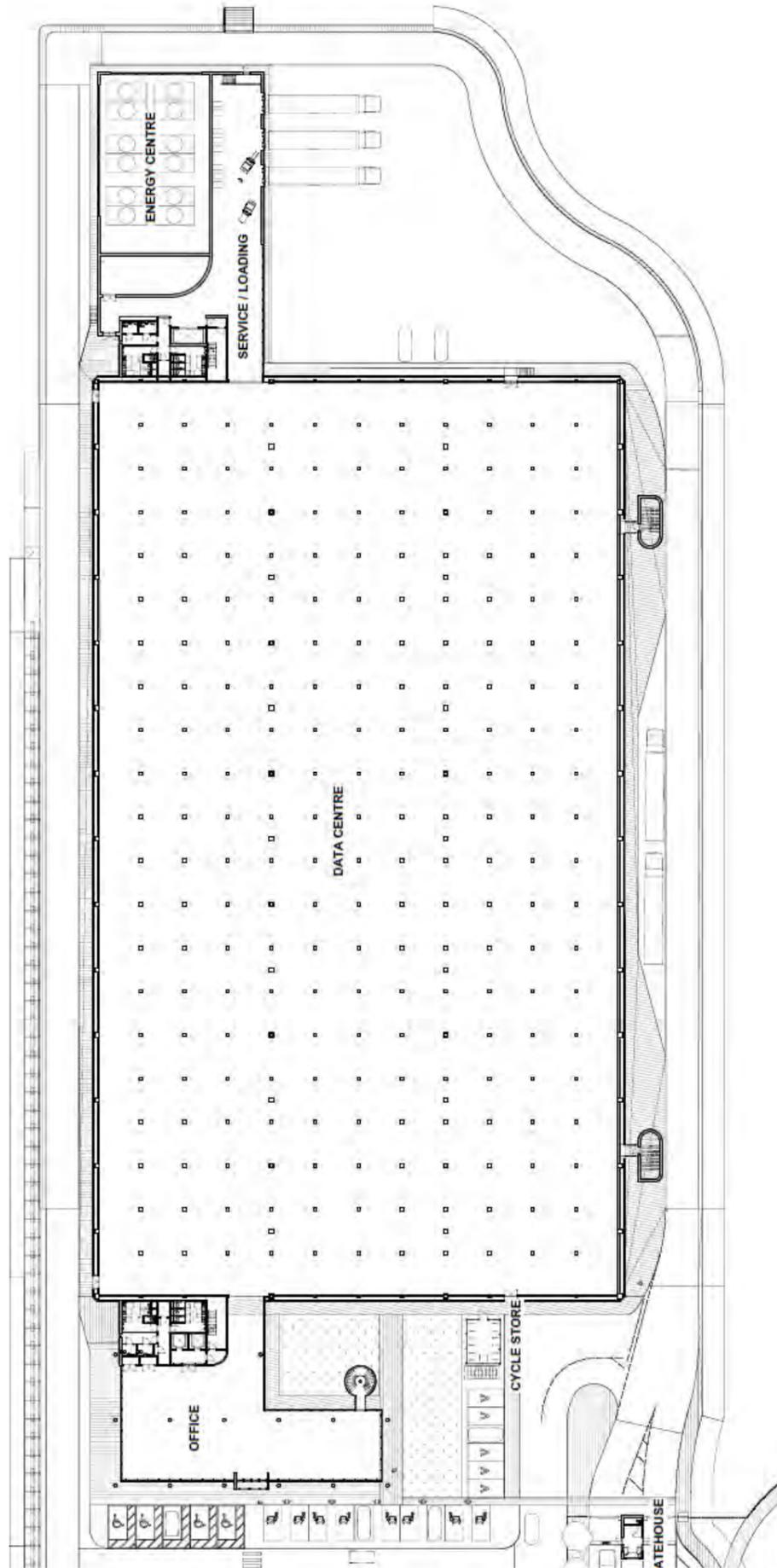
5.14.4 In terms of the specific form of the new building, the materials that have been selected are robust, particularly at lower levels where the chances of damage are greater. Recessed spaces where people can loiter have been minimised, however where they are unavoidable, it is suggested that specific use of CCTV and / or enhanced lighting will be installed.

5.14.5 The Application proposals aim to adhere to the concepts set out in Secured By Design (SBD) - the UK Police flagship initiative supporting the principles of designing out crime. In this regard, the new building has taken account of community safety issues and will offer high levels of safety and security with a view to helping to create a low crime risk environment for its staff and visitors. This will be achieved by the following:

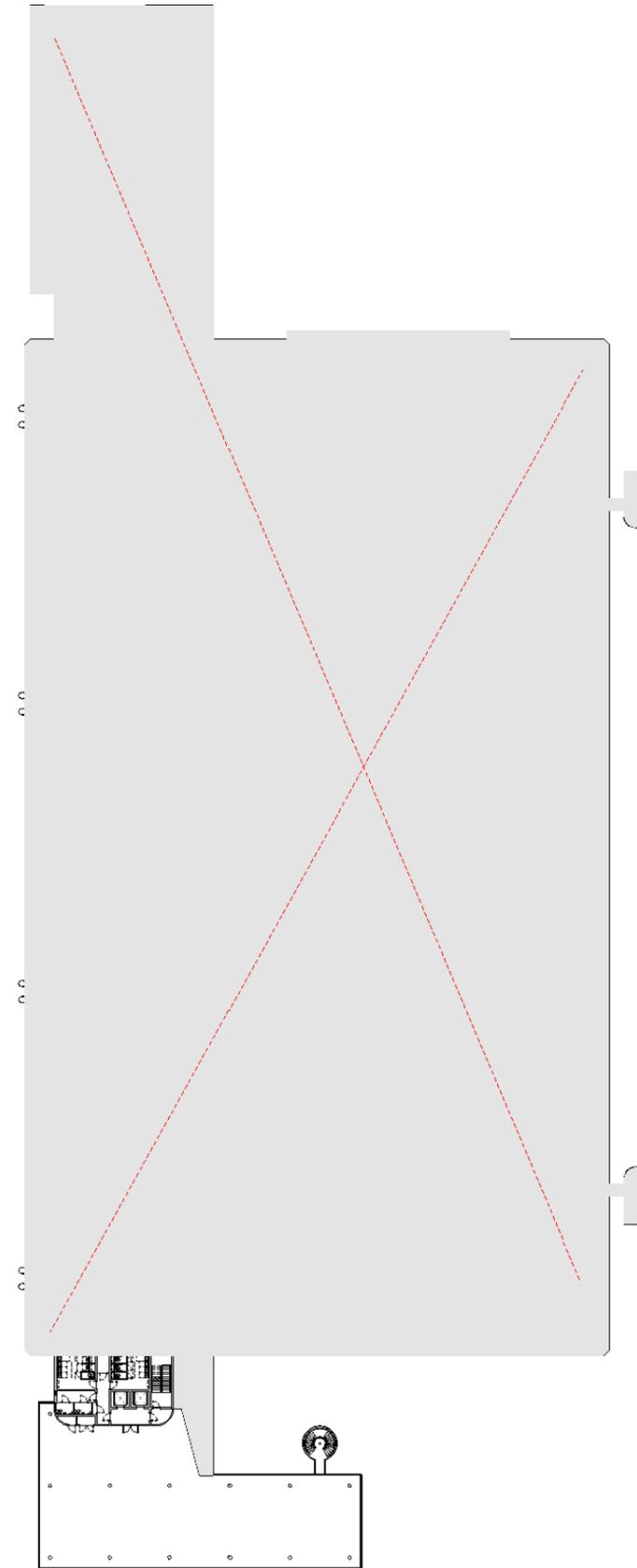
- The inclusion of dedicated security compound
- The inclusion of design features which avoid creating recesses and hidden areas that cannot be over-looked or monitored.
- Design that maximises natural surveillance
- The incorporation of strategically located lighting schemes (with and without movement sensors)
- The incorporation of CCTV systems
- The use of appropriate (robust) materials and internal /external street furniture features.
- The inclusion of a secure cycle storage facility.
- Management plan in relation to premises.

5.14.7 Further details in respect of some of the above issues such as management, lighting and CCTV, may be subject to further more specific design as part of the Application proposal's next stage of detailed design development and the involvement of an operator.

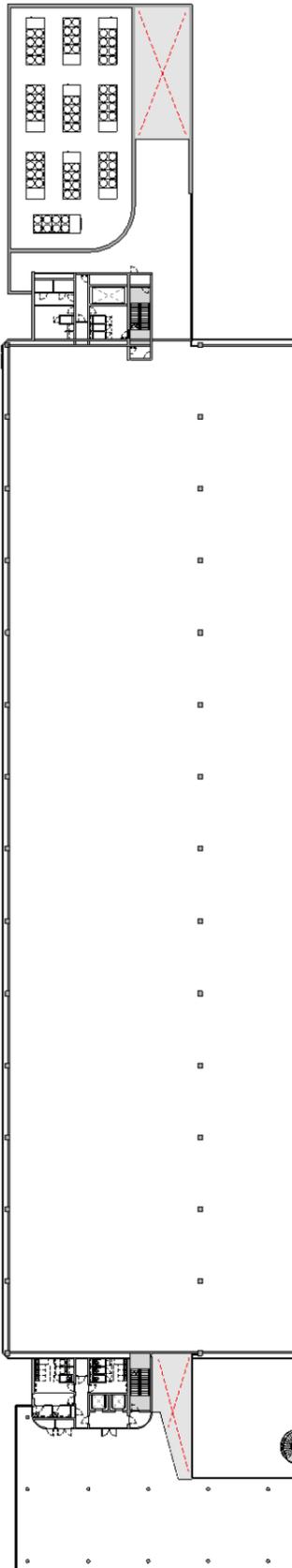
5.0 Response to the Objectives of Good Design



Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan

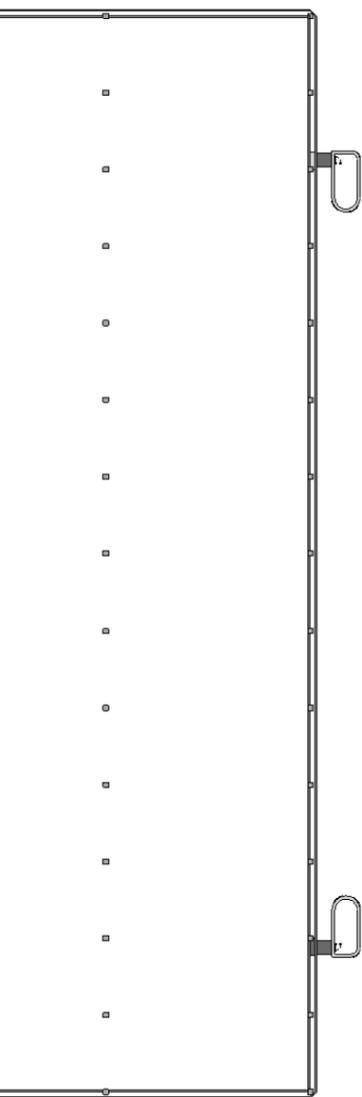
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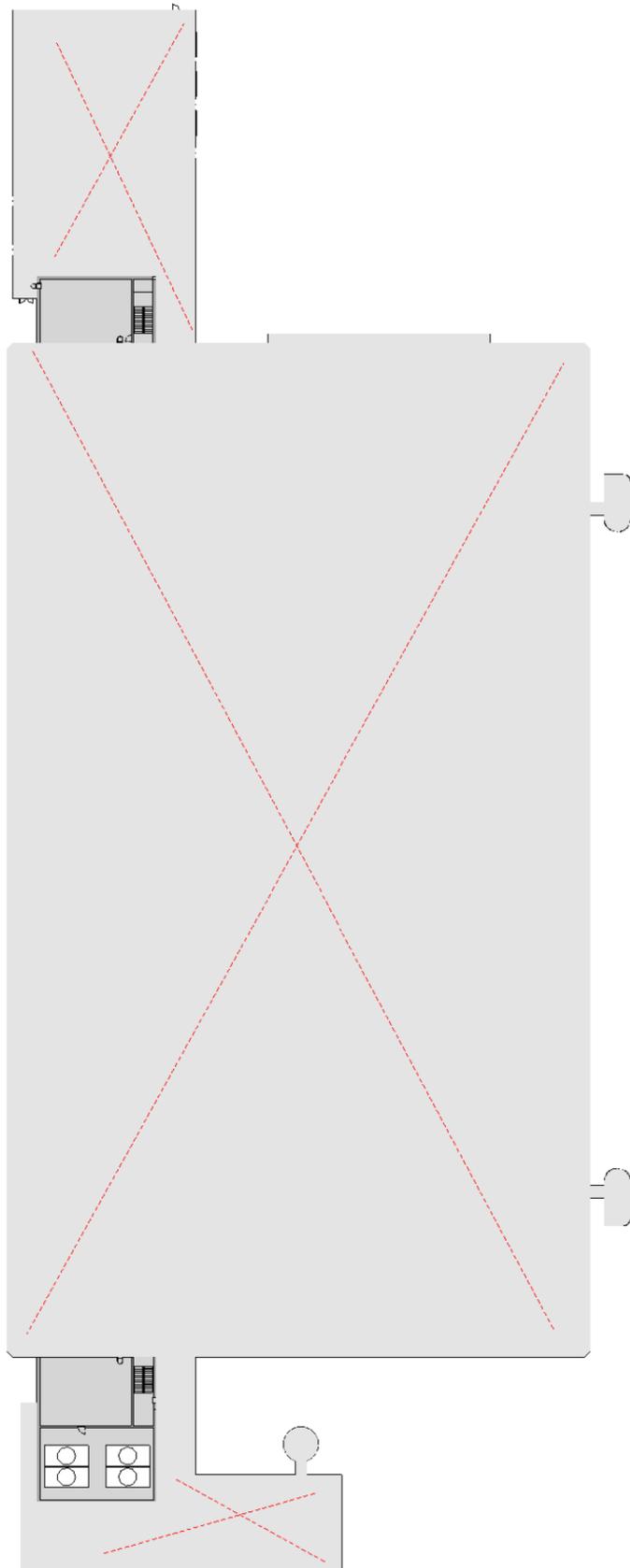
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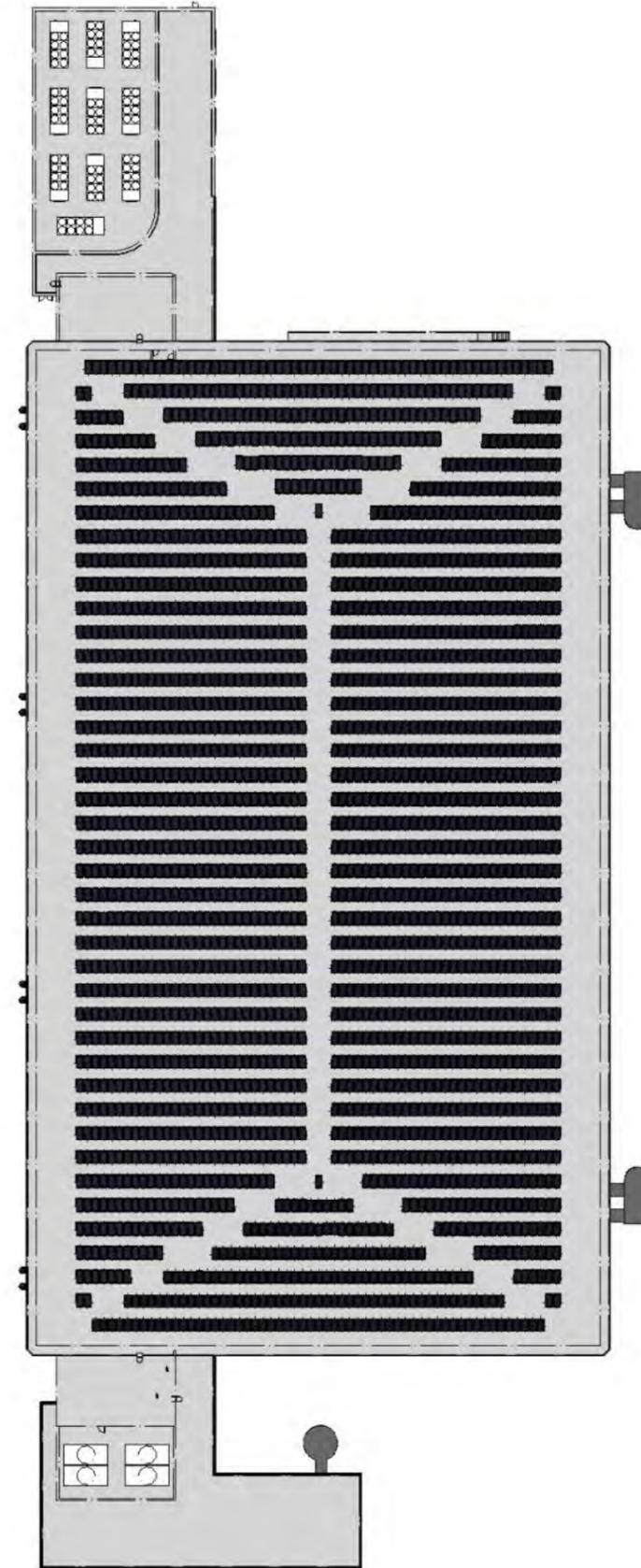


4th - Access Floor Plan
1:200



4th - Cable Server Plan
1:200

Plant Level Plan



Roof Plan
1:200

Roof Plan

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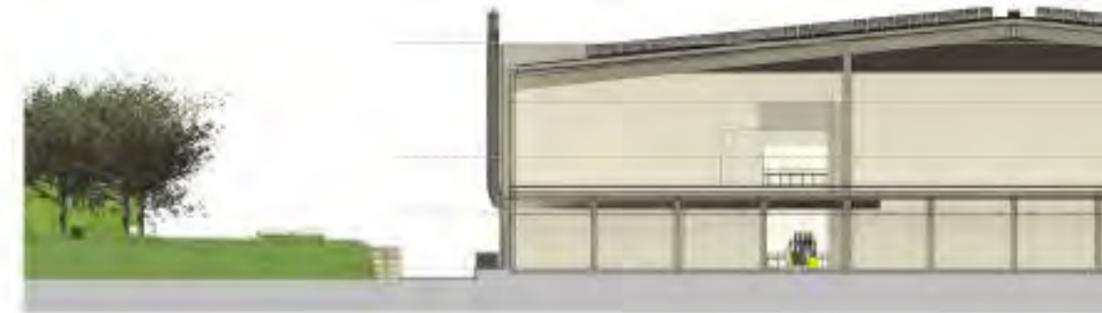
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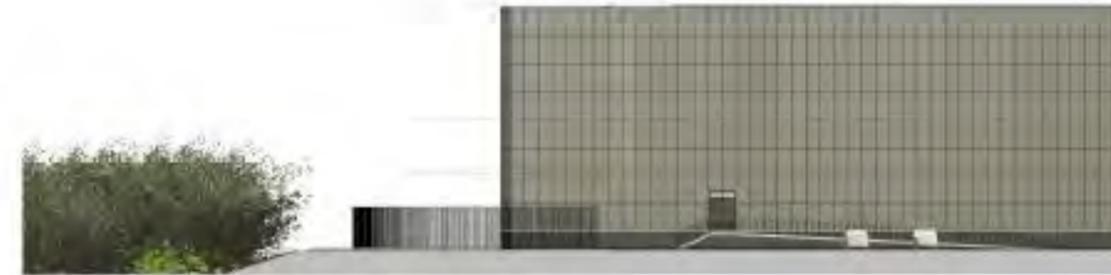
Longitudinal section through the 2-storey Data Centre



Cross section through the 2-storey Data Centre

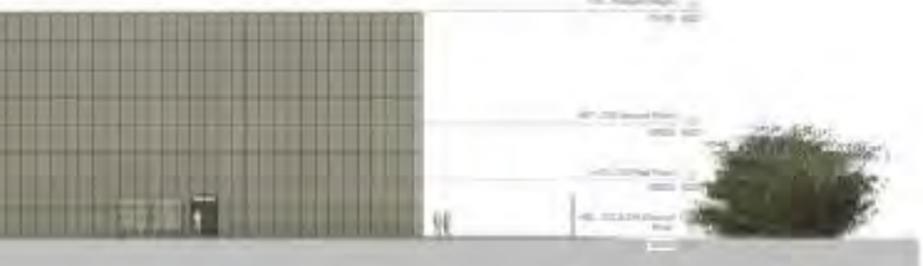
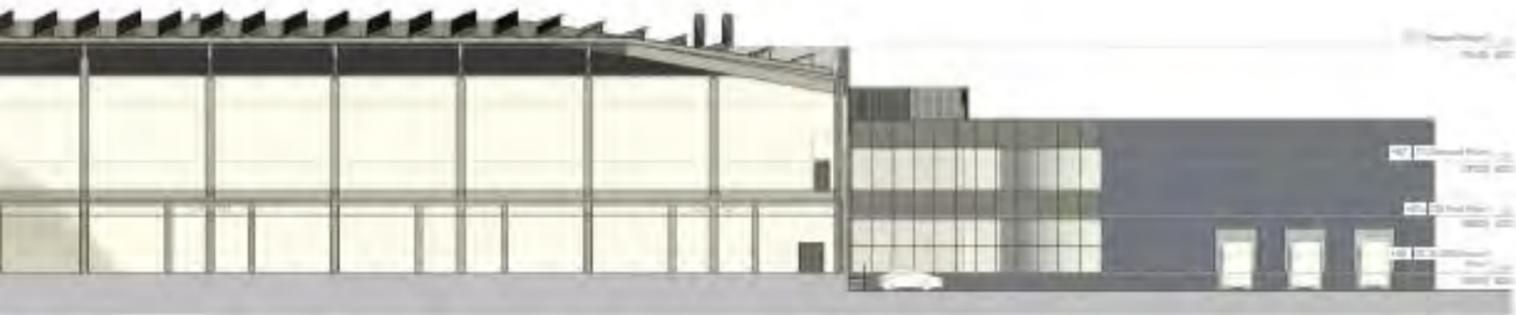


Cross section through the link between the Data Centre and Service Block



Cross section through the offices





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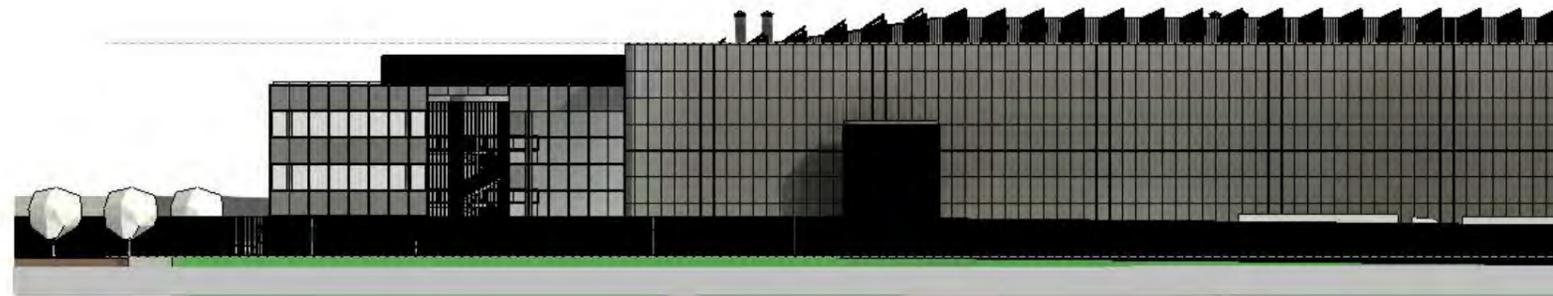
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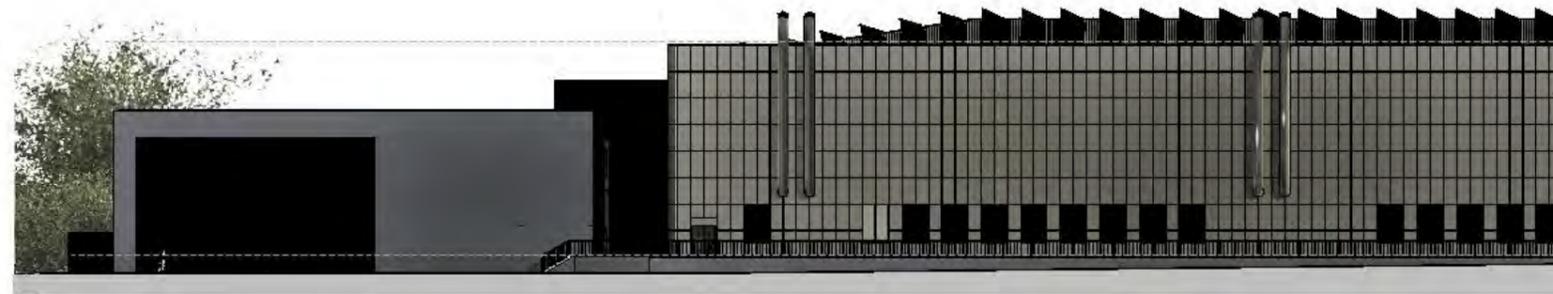
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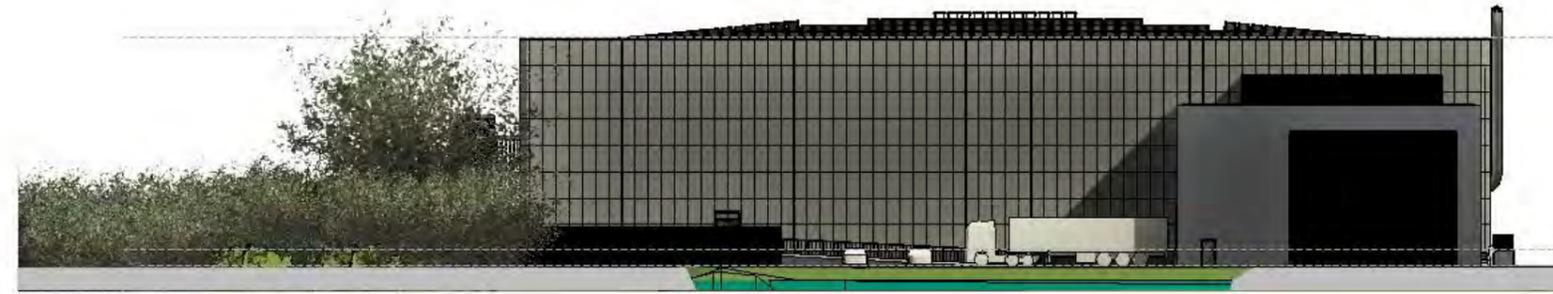
5.0 Response to the Objectives of Good Design



EAST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

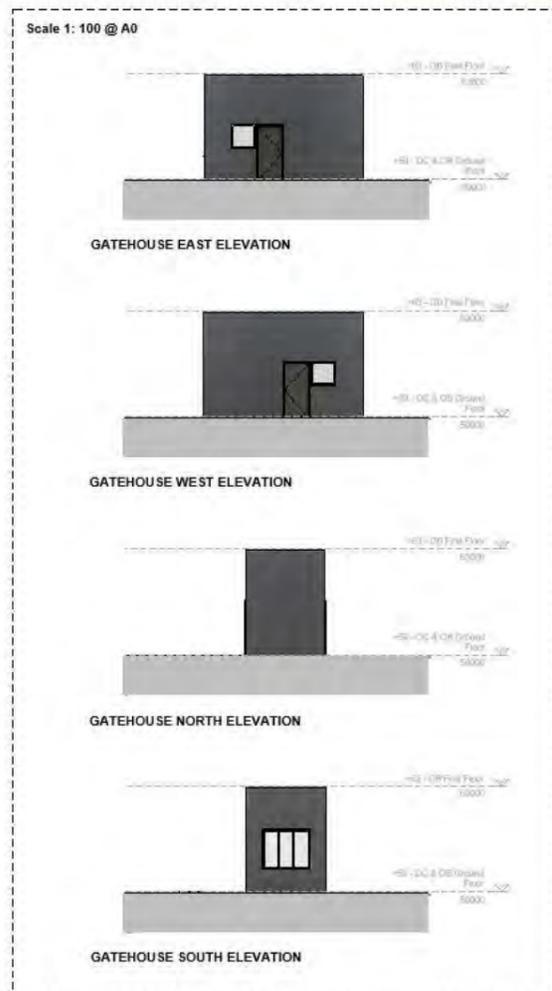
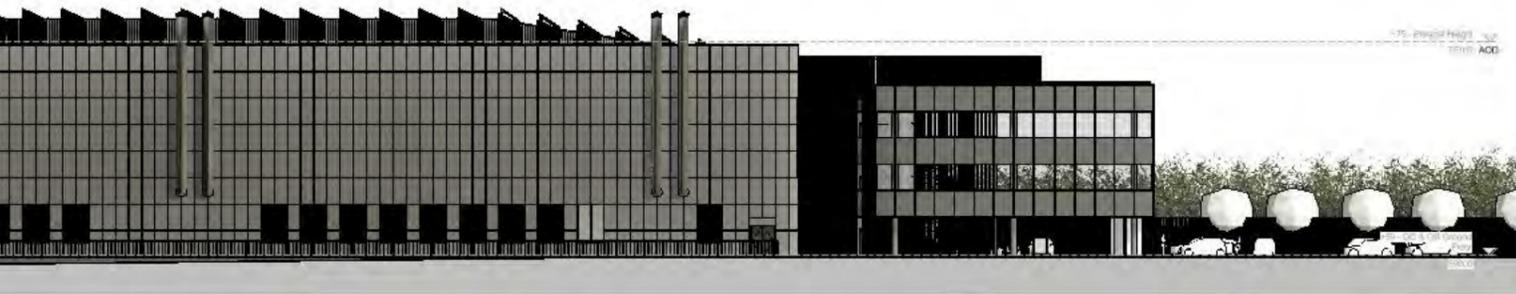
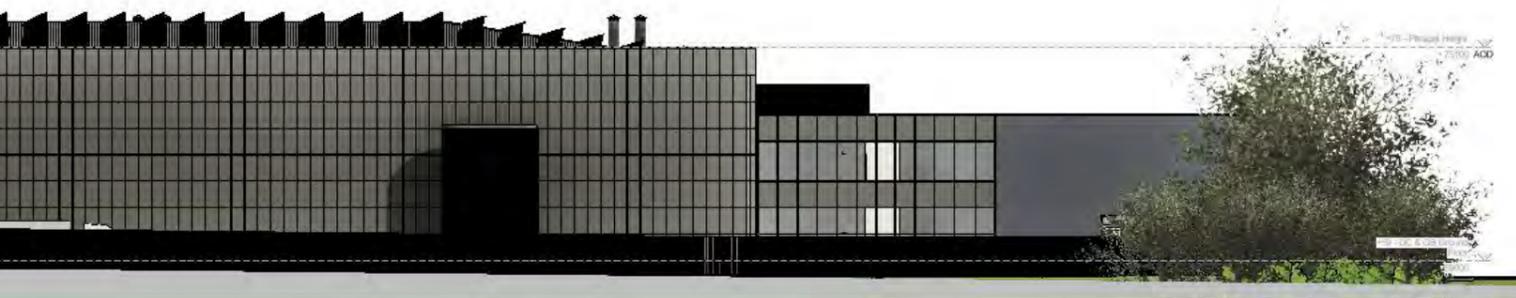
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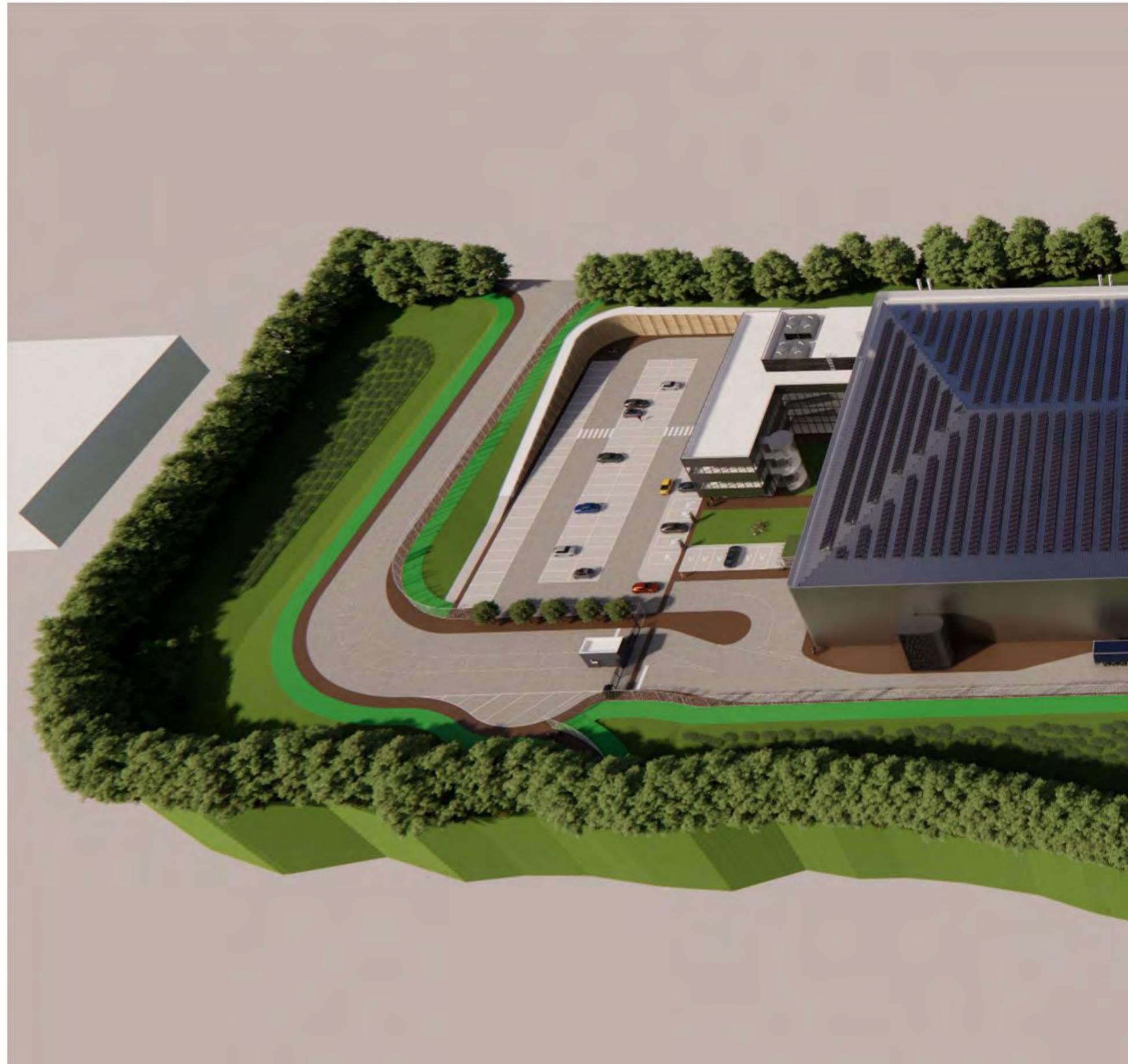
6.0 Summary

6.0 SUMMARY

6.1 This Design and Access Statement (DaAS) has been prepared to accompany a submission that includes a suite of Drawings and various Technical and Design Assessments and Reports (by others). The Application proposals represent the design of a new contemporary data centre with associated offices, loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station block / compound (energy centre), security lodge and compound, surface car park, perimeter roadways and footpaths, SuDS attenuation ponds, landscape 'buffering' mitigation, access road and new 'T' junction off Mwyndy Cross.

6.2 The Application site is relatively remote and ruresque in character and contextual situation, but is nonetheless well connected to the local highway network via the junction between Mwyndy Cross and the A4119. Through the cut-and-fill proposals that have created the development plateau, coupled with the additional perimeter landscape 'buffering', required as mitigation for the removal of the existing hedgerow and trees that currently split the Application site into two sections, the new building will be partially obscured from the majority of views towards it from the immediate surroundings, the exception being the view on approach from the new access road off Mwyndy Cross.

6.3 The Application proposals present an elegant, well-proportioned building form, with a visually dynamic, rigorous, rhythmic and positively layered architectural composition, comprising alternate flat anthracite metal cladding panels and fenestration curtain walling to the offices, flat silver metal cladding panels, fixed vertically, to the data centre, anthracite grey saw-tooth profile cladding sheets to the 'plug-in' staircases, plant enclosures and security lodge, and, blue engineering brick to the loading / un-loading / plant and sub-station



SUMMARY

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View, looking west, across the



new development

block / compound (energy centre). Together with the surface carpark, perimeter roads and footpaths, SuDS attenuation ponds and additional landscape 'buffering', the new building will present a well-mannered and architecturally interesting development.

6.4 As described in the preceding sections of this DaAS, the Application proposals are a direct design response to their given situation and briefing. The design has evolved to ensure that the maximum development potential offered by the site has been fulfilled, its floor plans, sections and elevations are disposed and configured to ensure that the most responsive and robust resolution to the briefing has been determined and delivered, and that, its three-dimensional qualities are attractive and full of visual appeal and delight in relation to the architectural design aspirations set by the project as a whole.

6.5 The Application proposals, as far as possible, accord with the objectives of good sustainable design and will integrate effectively with the surrounding land use context. In addition, they will not detrimentally impact upon any other matters of acknowledged importance, and, mitigation measures have been introduced to safeguard its integrity as necessary.

6.6 In light of the above, it is considered that the Application proposals fully accord with both national and local policies and that there are no material considerations which should prevent their positive support during the determination process period in accordance with the relevant planning policy framework.

6.7 Importantly, the Application proposals will help to fulfil the increasing demand for new data centres and simultaneously, will provide a range of employment opportunities for the area.



Employment Development:

DATA CENTRE

Planning Application

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