



UNION4 PLANNING

Teledata UK Ltd

Simon House, Brownley Road, Manchester,
M22 5RA

Demolition of existing building and construction of two-storey data centre and plant together with the reconfiguration of access arrangements and parking layout, new landscaping and associated works

PLANNING STATEMENT

June 2023



UNION4
PLANNING

Document Control

Project: Simon House, Brownley Road

Client: Teledata UK Ltd

Job Number: U0396

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Date: June 2023

Revision: 01

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Union4 Planning on behalf of Teledata UK Ltd ('the Applicant') in support of a full planning application for the construction of a new data centre in Wythenshaw Town Centre. The proposals include the demolition of the existing vacant unattractive building and redevelopment to provide a state of the art data centre, forming part of a wider 'campus', in combination with the adjoining 'Delta House' site to the north. Proposals have been the subject of two rounds of pre-application advice and this submission responds positively towards and incorporates the advice that has been received.
- 1.2 The site will be operated by Teledata UK Ltd, who were founded in 2005, providing premium colocation, cloud hosting and data services to business across the UK. Teledata's headquarters are located at the aforementioned Delta House, which adjoins the application site. The current facility at Delta House provides approximately 6,500 sqm of data centre service to over 250 clients. There is a need for additional capacity to meet the demands of colocation and cloud hosting customers looking for a Manchester presence. The new facility in conjunction with Delta House will deliver a data centre 'campus', which will be a focus for such technology and a catalyst for further investment into the region.

About the Occupier: Teledata UK Ltd

- 1.3 Teledata have been providing clients with high-quality colocation, server hosting, workplace recovery and data centre services for over a decade and in 2016 they acquired 1st Easy, entering the cloud marketplace, and doubling staff numbers. Teledata have invested over £1 Million in a Security and Operations Control Centre at Delta House. The data centre is internationally unique in that it has an NSI Gold Approved BS5979 security centre on-site and investment into the building includes over £2 Million into energy efficiencies, making Teledata one of the most energy efficiency conscious providers in the UK. In 2022 Teledata were acquired by Datum Datacentres as part of a regional expansion strategy creating the Datum Group with colocation facilities in the two most economically active regions of the UK. Datum was itself acquired by UBS Asset Management Real Estate & Private Markets business (REPM) in September 2021. As a sustainable Acquisition fund there are therefore set requirements that need to be met in terms of sustainability credentials. There is therefore a strict requirement for these proposals to meet these same credentials.

Summary of Development Proposals and Planning benefits

- 1.4 The existing building currently benefits from planning permission for the change of use from its existing commercial use (Use Class E) to a mixed-use data centre and offices (Sui Generis) as approved through application reference 132638/FO/2022. This consent agreed a total of 1,470

sqm of data centre floorspace. The acquisition of Teledata brings with it the opportunity of further investment and therefore the provision of a new facility which was previously not an option.

- 1.5 The existing building provides insufficient floor space to cater for demand and the comprehensive development delivers a more operationally efficient building with substantively improved sustainability and energy credentials. The proposals support the regeneration objectives of the Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework which identifies the *"potential opportunity for further expansion of the Data Centre economy given Wythenshawe's emerging profile, strong digital infrastructure and available power capacity"* (page 31). It also provides the opportunity for significant improvement to the visual appearance of the site with a building of high quality design and landscaping.
- 1.6 The scheme has evolved through discussions with Manchester City Council and with full acknowledgement of the emerging Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework, seeking to compliment and act as a catalyst to the wider residential led regeneration.
- 1.7 In summary the proposals provide the following planning benefits:
 - Optimising the use of a previously developed and unattractive site in a sustainable District Centre location.
 - Delivery of a data centre use in accordance with the objectives of Development Plan policy and the Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework.
 - Providing visual improvements to the site with a building of high design quality which is more appropriate in the emerging residential context.
 - Improved landscaping and biodiversity.
 - Improved drainage with attenuation of run off resulting in net benefit to local drainage network.
 - Overall improved layout and circulation space.
 - The delivery of a building with improved energy and sustainability credentials.
 - Provision of modern design and technologies achieving energy efficiency targets of PUE of 1.2 (far in advance of the industry average of PUE 2.0).
 - Utilisation of renewable and sustainable resources including use of NVO bio-fuel for the generators, PV panels, EV charging points etc.
 - Supports the delivery of a data centre 'campus' with the associated benefits in terms of overall economic benefits, job creation (initially circa 15 new staff) and a catalyst for additional investment to the region; and
 - Potential for heat recovery to supply local homes.

Content of the Planning Application

1.8 In addition to this Planning Statement, the application comprises the following documents:

- Application Form and Certificates
- Plan Drawings
- Design and Access Statement
- Air Quality Assessment
- Construction Management Plan
- Contamination Phase 1 Environmental Assessment
- Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy
- Noise Assessment
- Sustainability and Energy Report
- Transport Statement
- Travel Plan (Framework)
- Construction Method Statement
- Tree Survey and tree protection plans
- Ecology Scoping Assessment: Protected Species Report

Structure of this Planning Statement

1.9 This Planning Statement is set out as follows:

- Section 2 provides an overview of the site location and description, including details of any relevant planning history.
- Section 3 Statement of Community Involvement
- Section 4 describes the design evolution through the pre application process.
- Section 5 describes the proposed development.
- Section 6 sets out the policy context pertaining to the proposals.
- Section 7 outlines the planning and environmental considerations.
- Section 8 provides a summary and conclusions.

2.0 Site and Surrounding Area

The Site

- 2.1 The application site has an area of approximately 7,572 sqm and is located on the corner of Wavell Road and Brownley Road in Wythenshawe. It consists of Simon House, a vacant two storey flat roof building and Delta House, an 8 storey building to the north.
- 2.2 Simon House is a rectangular building fronting Wavell Road. It was formerly used as a Job Centre and benefits from a lawful Class E use, providing approximately 2,478 sqm of vacant office floorspace. It is constructed of concrete facing panels and white uPVC windows and doors and is surrounded by a 2.5m high steel palisade fencing. The building is surrounded by hard standing with 40 parking spaces. The existing site has a separate single access from Wavell Road.
- 2.3 Delta House is an existing data centre operated by Teledata/Datum, which takes the form of an 8 storey three-pronged star shape building. It is surrounded by hard standing with 43 car parking spaces and areas for chillers and generators. In terms of vehicular access, it has separate access and egress from Wavell Road.
- 2.4 The existing Delta House has approximately 1,390 sqm of floorspace of which circa 650 sqm is occupied. The occupation of the existing building is limited by power constraints. Part of the floorspace is leased to two separate office occupiers. There are approximately 15 people working across the existing building.

Surrounding Area

- 2.5 The site lies to the east of the town centre, within an industrial/commercial park. The surrounding area is largely commercial in nature with Brownley Road establishing an eastern boundary for this, beyond which sits residential properties.
- 2.6 A two storey building occupied by a children's nursery lies directly to the north of Simon House and east of Delta House. The closest current residential properties lie to the north of the nursery building and to the east of Brownley Road.
- 2.7 The land immediately opposite to the south has been cleared ahead of development, identified for residential use within the emerging Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework. The framework shows terraces of townhouses on this site although there are no applications or detailed proposals at this stage.

Figure 1: Application Site (approximate)



Source: Google Maps (2023)

- 2.8 Figure 2 shows the existing Simon House building and its relationship with neighbouring Delta House data centre.

Figure 2: Existing building and surrounding context



Source: Google Maps (2023)

Planning History

- 2.9 On the 15 June 2023 a prior notification application was submitted on behalf of Teledata UK Ltd for the demolition of the existing Simon House building. This application is currently awaiting validation (Reference 137327/DEM/2023)
- 2.10 On the 25 April 2022 planning permission (Reference 132638/FO/2022) was granted for:
- "Change of Use from E1 (Commercial) to Sui Generis (Mixed Use - Data Centre and Offices) and the siting of a new substation within GRP hut, and the installation of electrical transformer, fuel cell, air condensing units and generator".*
- 2.11 This application approved the change of use of the property with the ground floor converted into data centre halls (1,470 sqm) with the first floor retained in office use (1,007 sqm). The approval also consented a number of items of plant, comprising a new substation within a GRP hut, an electrical transformer, a fuel cell, air condensing units (roof top mounted) and an emergency back-up generator.
- 2.12 Figures 3 and 4 identify the approved location of the generator, transformer, fuel cell and substation identified at figure 3 and the location of the roof mounted condenser units identified at figure 4.

Figures 3 and 4: Location of Approved Plant



Source: Officers Delegated report to application reference 132638/FO/2022

- 2.13 The following historic planning applications also relate to the existing building:

Application Reference	Description	Status
044245/FO/SOUTH393	Ground floor toilet extension and refurbished entrance	Approved
042387	Installation of 5 windows to Brownley Road elevation of building	Approved
042218	Notice of Intended Crown Development	Approved

	Erecting of 2.4m high palisade fencing with entrance gates	
018517	New entrance area and extension to mess room	Approved

Emerging Character

- 2.14 The Site is within the Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework area which supports commercial uses including specifically data centre uses. The land to the south is identified for large scale residential development. The illustrative plans show terraces of housing opposite Simon House with flatted development to the west. Wavell Road is therefore a transitional location between the existing commercial uses and future new homes to the south.
- 2.15 There are no planning permissions or current or emerging planning applications for the site to the south, but the proposals have been considered in the context of the aspirations for the area and the delivery of a new residential quarter.

3.0 Statement of Community Involvement

- 3.1 Consultation is recognised as an essential tool for balancing the views and needs of different interest groups and securing mutually compatible solutions and as such has played an important role in the evolution of the application proposals.

Policy Background

- 3.2 In respect of pre-application engagement, paragraph 39 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that “early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community”.
- 3.3 In addition, paragraph 41 of the NPPF states that *“the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits”*.

Consultation Strategy

- 3.4 The proposals have been through the pre-application process, comprising an initial meeting with Planning Officers which took place on the 28 March 2023, followed by a second pre-application meeting which took place on the 20 April 2023.
- 3.5 The key element of the scheme which has evolved through officer feedback has been the detailed design to the proposed building and particularly the façade treatments, landscaping, and sustainability credentials.
- 3.6 The proposals were presented to the Ward Councillors at a virtual meeting on the 7 June 2023. The sustainability credentials of the building were of particular interest as was the future potential for the use of heat recovery to supply local homes. Overall the proposals were strongly welcomed by members.
- 3.7 Based on the site’s location within the existing commercial area there are no adjoining residential uses and therefore a formal public engagement event was not considered necessary in this case. However, Teledata have been in regular contact with the nursery to keep them updated of the emerging proposals.
- 3.8 The DAS and Section 4 of this Statement set out how the proposals for the site have evolved over the consultation period and have sought to positively accommodate comments made during these consultations.

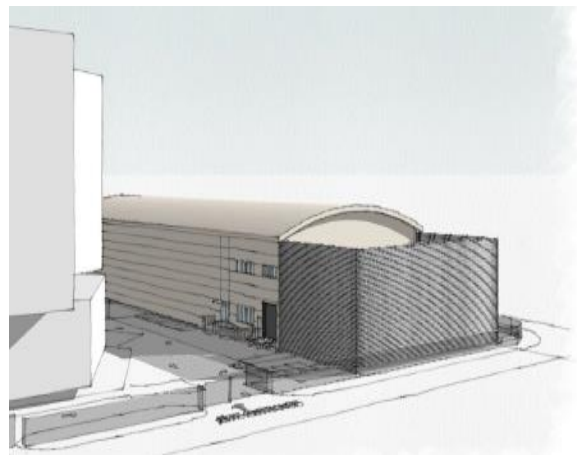
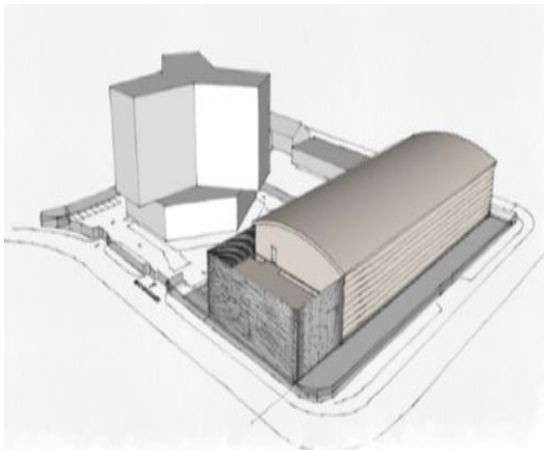
4.0 Design Evolution

- 4.1 The development proposals hereby submitted have been the subject of two separate pre-application discussions and subsequent advice from Manchester City Council (MCC). The draft plans tabled at the second and most recent pre-application meeting in 20th April 2023 were additionally sent to the Ward Councillors for comments in May 2023. This section summarises the design evolution that has been driven by the consultation comments received through the pre application process, as well as through the evolution of the operational requirements of the occupier.

Pre-Application 1: March 2023

- 4.2 The first pre-application meeting took place on 28 March 2023. At that stage, it was explained by Teledata that originally the intention was to retrofit the existing building as per the change of use consent, however, with the acquisition of Teledata by Datum, there is now the opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment which allows greater optimisation of the site in terms of visual improvements and sustainability.
- 4.3 It was confirmed by MCC that the use as a data centre has been established and would therefore be acceptable in principle, subject to appropriate design. In summary the quality of the building design was considered to be the key consideration, particularly in regard to the emerging Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework and the gateway nature of the site and proximity to future residential uses.

Figure 5: Indicative images of bulk, scale and massing



Source: TTSP

- 4.4 A design pack was tabled including indicative images of the elevations and site layout plans as shown at Figure 5 above. The principal issue raised was the apparent bulk of the southern elevation onto Wavell Road and the need to provide elevational interest and activity to the street frontages. MCC officers advised that the design should be commercial but not industrial looking and should

relate well to the Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework and future housing to the south. It was advised that the use of brick work may be an effective way to break up the elevational massing.

- 4.5 The applicant advised that due to security requirements and the function of the cooling corridor that runs along the length of the building it would not be possible to have windows along the Wavell Road elevation however other detailing could be used to give interest and activity to the elevation and break up the massing.

Pre-Application 2: April 2023.

- 4.6 A second pre-application meeting took place on the 20 April 2023, predominantly focusing on the design treatment and how the massing of the building could be broken up using a mix of materials and patterns. The concept design discussed showed the use of 2 areas of brick work on the southern elevation and one area on the eastern elevation to break up the bulk of the building, with the use of terracotta-coloured panels between to reduce the industrial appearance. This was welcomed as a significant improvement to the previously tabled industrial structure.

Figures 6. Illustrative Elevation



Source: TTSP

- 4.7 The scheme tabled also included significant new planting around the building, further breaking up and softening the setting of the building as viewed from Wavell Road and Brownley Road. Removal of the existing unattractive steel palisade fencing and its replacement with a lighter weight mesh fencing, enabling clearer views into the site, was also agreed as a significant improvement and a move away from the current unwelcoming and industrial appearance of the site.

- 4.8 The movement away from the previous 'industrial' appearance and use of different patterns and materials to break up the built form, together with additional planting and improvements when compared with the current situation, was fully supported by MCC Officers.

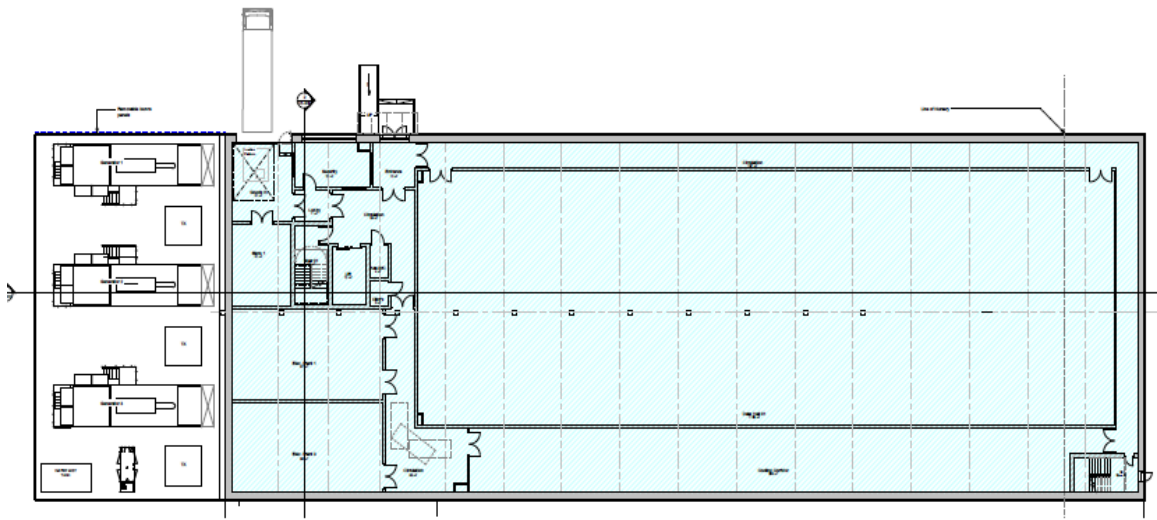
5.0 Proposed Development

5.1 Planning permission is sought for the:

"Demolition of existing building and construction of two-storey data centre and plant together with the reconfiguration of access arrangements and parking layout, new landscaping and associated works".

5.2 The proposed building will comprise approximately 4,299 sqm (GEA) of sui generis floorspace and will house a large data hall and cooling corridor across both the ground and first floor levels along with other various elements including electrical plant rooms, storage rooms, a reception area, ancillary offices for casual use and WCs. The proposals include 3 emergency standby generators at ground floor and a chiller deck above with 6x chiller units. As the name suggests, the generators will only be used in emergencies in the event of a power failure to the building or when being tested.

Figure 7: Proposed Ground floor Internal Layout



Source: TTSP

Layout and design

5.3 The proposed building has a footprint of 2,149 sqm and a total floorspace across both floors of 4,299 sqm (GEA). The open topped plant enclosure adjoining the western side of the building covers an area of 464 sqm (GEA). Given that the existing building provides a total floor area of 2,477 sqm, the redevelopment will equate to an increase in floorspace in the region of 1,822 sqm, optimising the redevelopment of this brownfield site and its employment contribution.

5.4 The proposed building has a gently curved barrel roof design with a maximum roof height of circa 13.2 m. Photovoltaic panels will be installed on the south facing part of the roof.

- 5.5 The façade treatments include a mix of materials, finishes and patterns to reduce the bulk of the built form when viewed from the public realm. The plant enclosure adjoining the western elevation of the building will be open from above, but enclosed on the south, west and north sides by a louvred enclosure. Suggested details of the proposed materials and colours can be found in the DAS. The specific materials would be secured by planning condition.

Landscaping

- 5.6 The site currently appears as bleak and industrial in nature, with limited soft landscaping either within or around the site. The only soft landscaping present comprises some scrubby trees just within the eastern and southern fence lines and a strip of poor quality grass outside the fence line, along the southern boundary.
- 5.7 The proposed landscaping will constitute a significant enhancement, with new tree and shrub planting along the southern and eastern boundaries. This new planting is not only important in general terms, softening the appearance of the new building, improving biodiversity, and providing a greener setting for forthcoming residential development to the south, but it is also important to the applicant by improving the image and appearance of the site from a commercial perspective, as one of their show case facilities. This desire to create a show case facility is reflected in the high-quality materials and landscaping proposed. The specific plant and tree species and management of the landscaped areas can be secured by planning condition as necessary.

Access

- 5.8 The main pedestrian entrance to the site will be at the north elevation, fronting Delta House, via a ramped and stepped access to negotiate the level changes between the building's interior (raised to maintain the integrity of internal plant from damp egress) and the slightly lower level yard area to the north. This entrance will be accessed direct from the car parking shared with Delta House.
- 5.9 A scissor lift will be provided within the 'goods-in' bay at the northwest corner of the building to remove the need for ramped access from the car park area.
- 5.10 The existing vehicular access point at the northwest corner of Simon House will be stopped up and vehicular access to the site will be via the existing Delta House access point, off the western leg of Wavell Road.

Car Parking and Transport

- 5.11 As above, the proposals will consolidate the Delta House and Simon House sites into a single data centre complex with a shared access plot and car parking around the Delta House building. The

parking provision will also be formalised to provide parking for 43 vehicles (including 2 x accessible parking spaces) and 10 cycle spaces. It will also include the introduction of two EV charging points.

- 5.12 Due to the nature of data centres, there will be limited additional vehicle movements associated with the proposals, nor the need to retain any of the additional car parking currently present around Simon House.

M & E and generators

- 5.13 The proposals include 3 standby generators, and 6 chiller units located within the plant enclosure at the western end of the building. The generators will only be used in an emergency when there is power failure across the site, or for testing and maintenance purposes. (Testing would take place between 9am and 5pm and would typically be biweekly for 30-45minutes). The generators will run on NVO fuel, a fossil free alternative to mineral diesel.

Energy and Sustainability

- 5.14 The client's environmental, social, and governance principles and sustainability standards have been integrated in the design process to improve the sustainability of the development. It is intended the building would meet BREEAM Very Good.
- 5.15 The scheme design will include energy efficiency solutions including:
- Provision of modern design and technologies achieving energy efficiency targets of PUE of 1.2 (far in advance of the industry average of PUE 2.0).
 - Specific design to handle external temperature of 40°C, to mitigate risk of heatwaves.
 - Efficient chilled water-cooling system adopted with free cooling technology.
- 5.16 The scheme will utilise the following renewable and sustainable resources:
- Adoption of renewable HVO biofuels to fuel emergency generators.
 - Introduction of Photovoltaic (PV) roof panels.
 - Introduction of EV charging points.

Security

- 5.17 The existing steel palisade fence will be removed, and the site will be surrounded by a more attractive and transparent wire mesh security fencing, backed up by security lighting and CCTV.

6.0 Planning Policy Context

- 6.1 This section considers the planning policies and legislative framework which together provide the context by which a planning application will be considered. It identifies the national and local policies which are contained within statements of Government policy and the Development Plan for the area, or which may otherwise be material to the consideration of the proposed development.
- 6.2 The overall planning policy context is set by the National Planning Policy Framework (2021). The Development Plan in this instance comprises Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD (2012) ("CS"), and saved policies contained within the UDP. These documents are supplemented by a number of Neighbourhood Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).
- 6.3 The Development Plan is currently under review with the initial Issues consultation carried out on the new Manchester Local Plan in 2020. The Local Development Scheme 2022 (LDS) targets the publication of the Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) in Summer 2023, followed by consultation on the Publication Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19) in Winter 2023, Examination of the Local Plan in Summer 2024 and adoption in Winter 2024.

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

- 6.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in July 2021 and promotes the delivery of sustainable development that meets the needs of the community.
- 6.5 Paragraph 8 sets out the three overarching objectives to sustainable development which are an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective.
- 6.6 The NPPF retains a "*presumption in favour of sustainable development*" with Paragraph 11 stating that "*for decision-taking this means... approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.*"
- 6.7 There are a number of key paragraphs contained within the NPPF which are relevant to the proposals and are summarised in brief below.
- 6.8 Paragraph 81 highlights that "*planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.*"

6.9 Paragraph 83 goes on to state that *"planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries..."*

6.10 Section 11 refers to 'making effective use of land' with Paragraph 119 stating:

"Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-development or 'brownfield' land."

6.11 Section 12 refers to 'achieving well-designed places' and Paragraph 126 highlights that *"the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities."*

6.12 Paragraph 134 states that significant weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in the area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Development Plan

6.13 The Development Plan for the site comprises the Core Strategy (2012) and saved policies from the UDP together with other Supplementary Planning Documents.

Relevant policies in the Core Strategy are as follows:

- Policy SP1 Spatial Principles
- Policy DM1 Development Management
- Policy EC1 Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester;
- Policy EC2 Existing Employment Space
- Policy CC5 Transport
- Policy CC9 Design and Heritage
- Policy EC10 Wythenshawe
- Policy C2 District Centres
- Policy T1 Sustainable Transport
- Policy EN1 Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas
- Policy EN4 Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development

- Policy EN5 Strategic Areas for low and zero carbon decentralised energy infrastructure
- Policy EN6 Target Framework for CO2 reductions from low or zero carbon energy supplies
- Policy EN7 Energy Infrastructure Opportunities
- Policy EN8 Adaptation to Climate Change
- Policy EN14 Floodrisk
- Policy EN15 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- Policy EN16 Air Quality
- Policy EN18 Contaminated Land and Ground Stability

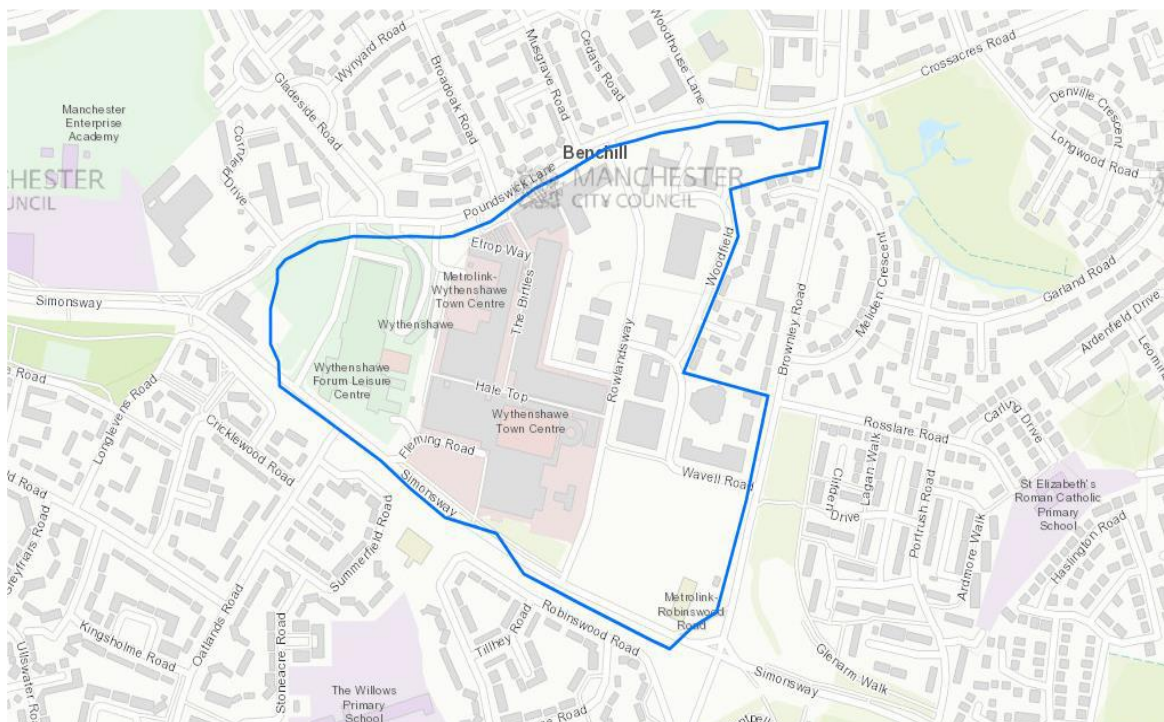
Relevant Saved UDP Polices

- Policy DC26 Development and Noise

Policy and Land Use Designations

- 6.14 The site is located within Wythenshawe District Centre to the east of the town centre area. The site has no other land use designations and is not an allocated site. It is not within a conservation area and there are no listed buildings within the site or in the vicinity.
- 6.15 The site is within Flood Zone 1 and therefore at a low risk of flooding, however it is within a Critical Drainage Area. The site is located approximately 200m from the Greater Manchester AQMA.

Figure 8: Extract from Proposals Map



Relevant Material Planning Considerations

6.16 The following are also material considerations in the determination of the application:

- National Planning Policy Guidance
- The Places for Everyone Plan (2021)
- Wythenshawe Civic Centre: Development Framework Issue 10 Draft (2023)
- Guidance to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (2007)
- Manchester Work and Skills Strategy 2022-2027
- Manchester's Digital Strategy 2021-2026

Wythenshawe Civic Centre: Development Framework

6.17 This Development Framework has been prepared to guide the regeneration of Wythenshawe Civic Centre.

6.18 The Framework identifies the need to utilise vacant units to improve employment opportunities. The contribution of Data Centres is specifically identified, with the guidance identifying *"the potential opportunity for further expansion of the Data Centre economy given Wythenshawe's emerging profile, strong digital infrastructure and available power capacity"* (page 31).

6.19 Figure 9 shows the relationship of the site with the commercial (blue) and emerging residential (green) opportunities that are identified within the Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework.

Figure 9: Extract from the Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework



Source: Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework

7.0 Planning and Environmental Considerations

7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that, if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.2 This section assesses the planning and environmental considerations that are relevant to the planning application, which are summarised under the following headings:

- Principle of Development
- Delivering Regeneration and Economic Development
- Scale, Massing and Design
- Landscaping and Biodiversity
- Highways and Parking
- Noise
- Energy and Sustainability
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Contamination

7.3 Each of the above matters are covered in detail below.

Principle of Development

7.4 The principle of the data centre use on the site has already been established by the approval under permission reference 132638/FO/2022 for the change of use of the existing building to a sui generis use which included approximately 1,470 sqm of floorspace for use as a data centre. This permission remains extant until 24 April 2025. The Officer's Delegated Report for this previous consent acknowledged and accepted the applicants existing operation at Delta House and the need to expand into Simon House to provide further services and capacity.

7.5 It is not possible to expand the data centre capacity of Delta House itself as the building does not have the necessary power capacity into the existing data halls. The floor loadings are also not sufficient and the logistics of moving kit through an 8 storey building is not viable. The existing Simon House does not provide as much storage capacity as a new building and whilst this was the previous consented solution, the additional funding made available through the acquisition of Teledata affords the opportunity for a more holistic approach to the development.

7.6 The redevelopment provides the opportunity for a new state of the art data centre with the associated sustainability and energy credentials that can be maximised. The proposals optimise a

previously developed site in a sustainable and accessible location within the District Centre. Policy C1 identifies District Centres as having an essential role in providing key services. Policy C2 of the Core Strategy requires development in District Centres to promote the efficient use of land, particularly through considering options for multi-storey development and supports reuse and regeneration of land. It also recognises that *"New development should positively contribute to the reuse and regeneration of land and premises, together with wider regeneration and investment strategies"*.

- 7.7 Policy C7 specifically relates to Wythenshawe District Centre. The supporting text recognises that the ongoing regeneration of Wythenshawe will incorporate inter alia the replacement of outmoded office space (Para 10.49).
- 7.8 The Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework additionally recognises the opportunity in the area to utilise vacant units to improve employment opportunities. It specifically supports the provision of Data Centre uses within the District Centre (page 22).
- 7.9 The redevelopment of this vacant previously developed site and the use of the site for a data centre use is therefore fully in accordance with the objectives of the Development Plan and the Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework.

Delivering Regeneration and Economic Development

- 7.10 The proposed new building in conjunction with the existing Delta House will form a data centre 'campus' which will be a focus for such technology and a catalyst for further investment into the region.
- 7.11 Allowing and facilitating business and economic growth is a key driver within the NPPF. Paragraph 81 states:

"Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential."

- 7.12 Policy EC1 of the Core Strategy, 'Employment and Economic Growth', supports proposals that deliver economic growth with identifies priorities including, *inter alia*, improving digital

infrastructure delivery to businesses and residents. The proposed data centre will play an essential role in the area's digital economy. The data centre will further expand the availability of fibre networks in the local area, which will benefit local businesses and be attractive to future potential tenants of the area as third party fibre and telco operators invest to connect their assets into the site. This was proven to be the case following the installation of the existing data centre at Delta House.

- 7.13 The Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework highlights the opportunity for maximising digital connectivity with *"further potential to expand the existing digital infrastructure through future development and to install future-proof transformational digital infrastructure, for example with new ducting and fibre to support new homes, business and industry"* (page 18). The Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework recognises the importance of this industry in Wythenshawe and the need for regional data hubs outside the historical core markets, such as London. It specifically references Delta House and Teledata and the opportunity for the delivery of other Data Centres.
- 7.14 Policy EC2, *'Existing Employment Space'*, seeks to retain and enhance existing employment spaces and sites. Alternative uses are supported where it can be demonstrated that, *inter alia*, the existing use is unviable and on balance, proposals are able to offer greater benefits in terms of the Core Strategy's vision and spatial objectives than the existing use.
- 7.15 The new facility would work in conjunction with the existing Delta House operation providing the much needed additional storage capacity for colocation, cloud, dedicated server hosting and workplace recovery services. The additional capacity supports the overall growth of the sector within the region.
- 7.16 The proposals support the objectives of the 'Manchester Work and Skills Strategy 2022- 2027' which seeks to develop Manchester as a connected city, stating: *"We will become a digitally inclusive city, with better digital infrastructure, access to digital technology and skills"* (Page 27).
- 7.17 The proposals further support the objectives of the Manchester Digital Strategy which provides the vision and framework to realise Manchester's ambition to be a world leading digital city by 2025. The Strategy recognises Manchester as:

"...already one of Europe's fastest growing technology cities. We already have a strong and resilient digital sector, acknowledged as the UK's second technology city, consistently outperforming all cities outside of London"

- 7.18 The proposals hereby submitted support the delivery of the 'Strategic Priorities' as set out in the Digital Strategy, which include *"becoming a digitally inclusive city, with better digital infrastructure, access to digital technology and strong and lifelong digital skills"*.
- 7.19 In summary, the expansion of existing data centre capacity through the redevelopment of Simon House is crucial, ensuring there is sufficient capacity for existing and future needs whilst maintaining the effectiveness, efficiency and accessibility of the centres. The creation of a data centre 'campus' provides the opportunity for expansion of the sector in the region, expanding on the city's existing knowledge base to further raise the profile of the industry in Manchester. In this regard, the proposals provide the added benefit of indirectly generating economic growth and employment provision within the wider area, thus, having substantive benefits in terms of the Core Strategy's vision and spatial objectives. The proposals therefore support the objectives of the NPPF and Policies EC1 and EC2 of the Core Strategy, as well as the objectives of the cities digital and employment strategies.

Scale, Massing and Design

- 7.20 The existing building has no aesthetic merit and significantly detracts from the appearance and feel of the area. The proposed new building offers the opportunity for the significant improvement to the visual appearance of the site. Policy C2 of the Core Strategy states that new develop should reflect and enhance the character of the existing centre. Whilst Policy CC9 requires the design of new buildings to be of the highest standard in terms of appearance and function.
- 7.21 The immediate area is commercial / industrial in nature. There is no predominant architectural style or form, but the commercial buildings typically have large footprints and range in height from single storey buildings to the 7 storey Alpha House to the northwest and the 8 storey Delta House to the north.
- 7.22 The proposed new building maintains the broadly rectangular form of the existing building and frontage onto Wavell Road, but marginally increases the built footprint of the building, making more efficient use of the site. The data centre has been kept at 2 storeys, although the barrel design of the roof increases the height of the new building at its centre to circa 13.2 m. This provides generous internal floor to ceiling heights and allows the required internal environmental conditions. In the context of the surrounding buildings the scale and built form of the proposed building is considered to be fully appropriate.
- 7.23 It is recognised that within the emerging Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework Wavell Road forms the boundary between the existing commercial buildings and a new residential quarter. The existing building has no design merit, and its removal offers the opportunity for significant visual improvements.

- 7.24 In response to the emerging context of the area, the design of the building has moved away from an industrial appearance and looks to provide a commercial building that maintains the necessary functional requirements whilst also being appropriate to a residential setting.
- 7.25 Operationally, it is not possible to have fenestration on the Wavell Road elevation due to security and the cooling corridor running along the building, however the use of a mixed material pallet of terracotta cladding and panels of brickwork help to break up the bulk of the building and add interest on this key elevation. The use of brick is the preference for the future housing to the south and thus the use of brick detailing seeks to ensure that the development would sit comfortably next to residential uses.
- 7.26 The scale of the building also helps demark this important gateway to the centre which necessitates a building of certain stature.
- 7.27 Taking the above points into account, it is considered that the proposed new building will fit appropriately within the surrounding context. It is also considered to be of a design and scale that is reflective of surrounding buildings and will result in a substantive visual improvement. The proposals are therefore in accordance with the principles of Policy C2 and CC9 of the Core Strategy and would not compromise the aspirations set out in the Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework.

Landscaping and Biodiversity

- 7.28 Policy EN15 '*Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*' supports developments that "*maintain or enhance sites of biodiversity and geological value throughout the City*". It further states that "*Developers will be expected to identify and implement reasonable opportunities to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on-site or adjacent to the site, contributing to linkages between valuable or potentially valuable habitat areas where appropriate*".
- 7.29 An Ecology Scoping Assessment was carried out by Envirosolutions. This concluded that the site has been highly modified and is considered not to be of any significant biodiversity value. There was no obvious potential for bat roosting, with no suitable habitat for nesting birds or any other protected species.
- 7.30 The existing site is covered by hard standing in its entirety. In accordance with Policy EN15 the proposals include space for planting along Wavell Road providing the opportunity for a mix of vegetation including shrubs and trees to provide a significant enhancement to the site in terms of visual appearance and biodiversity.

Highways and Parking

- 7.31 The site is within a sustainable location within the District Centre and the new data centre will be located next to the current data centre at Delta House. The creation of the 'campus' allows for connected trips and deliveries to both sites. It is intended that there would be shared access, parking and servicing for both buildings.
- 7.32 Policy CC5 of the Core Strategy, dealing with 'Transport', seeks to ensure that development includes adequate parking provision for cars and bicycles. Such provision should be based on the parking standards described in Appendix B of the Core Strategy. There is no maximum provision set for sui generis uses and it is expected that this will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Within the District Centre, office floorspace has a requirement for 1 space per 35 sqm with the general industrial standard being 1 space per 60 sqm.
- 7.33 The actual data centre itself would have a minimal permanent on-site presence with the majority of trips being those of engineers. Delta House, with its mix of data centre floorspace and ancillary offices has a staff of approximately 15.
- 7.34 There are currently 30 parking spaces at Simon House and 43 spaces at Delta House. The proposed new building will extend over the existing parking spaces at Simon House and therefore all parking provision will be located at the Delta House portion of the site. As such, the campus will share a total of 43 spaces. With the existing 15 staff at Delta House and the addition of a further 15 for the new data centre there is limited need for parking spaces. There is therefore sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional parking that would be required by the additional data centre floorspace.
- 7.35 Cycle parking will be provided, with space for 10 bicycles at the ground floor of the building.
- 7.36 The application is supported by a Transport Statement which has been provided by RGP to assess the implications of the proposed new building from a highways and transport perspective. The reduction in parking provision is demonstrated as being acceptable within the Transport Statement.
- 7.37 The existing site entrance will be blocked up and there will be a separate access and egress shared with Delta House. Deliveries will be on site and vehicles will centre the site and circulate around Delta House to exist.
- 7.38 Overall, it is confirmed that the submitted scheme is acceptable from a transport and highways perspective and is in line with the previous consent. Consequently, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with relevant planning policy contained within the Development Plan, which

seeks to ensure that developments do not have a severe impact on the operation, safety or accessibility of the highway network.

Noise

Operational Phases

- 7.39 The proposed data centre will require the installation of additional plant, required predominantly for the cooling of the building together with generators for emergency power. These are to be sited within the building to the far west away from the nursery and future residential uses. An Environmental Noise Assessment is submitted in support of this application. This assesses the predicted noise levels of the proposed 6 x proposed chiller units and 3 x generators against the baseline noise levels.
- 7.40 Saved Policy DC26.3 of the UDP resists developments in residential areas or near schools, hospitals, nursing homes and similar institutions that are likely to have an unacceptably high level of noise. Policy DC26.5 recognises that where necessary, noise levels can be appropriately mitigated through insulation and noise barriers.
- 7.41 This report assesses the impacts on the nearest existing noise receptors. It also looks at the impacts on the vacant site to the south to ensure that any future residential uses will not be subject to unacceptable noise levels. It is concluded that with the inclusion of acoustic louvres, noise levels of the proposed plant will meet the MCC specific requirement for all existing and proposed neighbouring residential receptors which results in no action being required.

Construction Phase

- 7.42 The Construction Method Statement (CMS) sets out noise mitigation measures related to the construction period in order to suppress noise and vibration generated on site during demolition and construction. Such measures include adhering to the specified working hours, using 'silenced' plant and/or equipment, using mains power instead of generators wherever possible, turning off engines during loading/unloading of goods and other noise mitigating strategies. Full details are set out within Section 6 of the CMS.
- 7.43 The proposed development is therefore in accordance with Saved Policy DC26 of the UDP which seeks to ensure that residents and surroundings are not subject to unacceptable levels of noise pollution, and Policy NBE11 which supports development, provided that it does not give rise to unacceptable levels of pollution including any noise impacts.

Energy and Sustainability

- 7.44 The planning submission is supported by an Energy and Sustainability Report. This has been completed in accordance with the Explanatory Notes to Policy EN6 of the Core Strategy which are set out at Appendix A of the Strategy.
- 7.45 Policy EN4 requires all development to follow the principle of the Energy Hierarchy being designed:
- *"to reduce the need for energy through design features that provide passive heating, natural lighting and cooling;*
 - *to reduce the need for energy through energy efficient features such as improved insulation and glazing;*
 - *to meet residual energy requirements through the use of low or zero carbon energy generating technologies"*
- 7.46 The Energy and Sustainability Report highlights that whilst data centres are not required to comply with Part L of the Building Regulations, various technologies will be implemented in the design to ensure that the building operates at an optimal level. Such technologies include:
- Indirect Free Cooling to Data Hall Areas (4MW of cooling) including potential for future upgrade capability for heat recovery
 - Direct Free Air Cooling with potential for heat recovery to plant areas
 - Class leading energy efficient UPS Systems (>97% efficient).
- 7.47 The building will utilise computational fluid dynamics (CFD) in the design process, ensuring that the available site power capacity and available space to increase rack count capacity is maximised, providing annualised PUE of less than 1.2 for this.
- 7.48 The design of the building will achieve minimisation of the overall embedded carbon through careful material selection and appropriate design, with the final facility subject to a life cycle carbon assessment to demonstrate the overall environmental performance of the building.
- 7.49 Policy EN5 of the Core Strategy covers '*Strategic Areas for low and zero carbon decentralised energy Infrastructure*' and requires that in certain areas of the City, including District Centres, new development, regeneration and retrofit projects, will be expected to take place in the context of more detailed proposals for decentralised low and zero carbon energy infrastructure in the form of planned energy proposals.

- 7.50 Policy EN6 requires all development over 1,000 sqm to meet the target shown in Tables 12.1 or 12.2, unless this can be shown not to be viable. This should be demonstrated through an energy statement. Such a statement will be expected to set out the projected regulated energy demand and associated CO2 emissions for all phases of the development. Target 2 at table 12.2, 'Electricity intense buildings', is +10% increase on Part L 2010.
- 7.51 The scheme will utilise the following renewable and sustainable resources with the adoption of renewable HVO biofuels to fuel emergency generators, the introduction of Photovoltaic (PV) roof panels and the introduction of EV charging points
- 7.52 Policy EN 8, '*Adaptation to Climate Change*', requires that all new development will be expected to be adaptable to climate change in terms of the design, layout, siting and function of both buildings and associated external spaces. In achieving developments which are adaptable to climate change developers should have regard to the following:
- Minimisation of flood risk by appropriate siting, drainage, and treatment of surface areas to ensure rainwater permeability.
 - Reduction in urban heat island effect through the use of Green Infrastructure such as green roofs, green walls, increased tree cover and waterways.
 - The need to control overheating of buildings through passive design.
 - The opportunity to provide linked and diverse green space to enhance natural habitats which will assist species adaptation.
- 7.53 The protection of the facility against climate change is fundamental. It is imperative that specific temperatures are maintained, and the building is fully secured from water infiltration. The building is specifically designed to handle external temperature of 40°C, to mitigate risk of heatwaves and also incorporates efficient chilled water-cooling system adopted with free cooling technology.
- 7.54 The supporting FRA and drainage assessment sets out the proposed SuDS to provide source control management, improve water quality, reduce flood risk and provide amenity and biodiversity. The nature of the use and the need to protect against water damage means that the introduction of green roofs or walls are not a viable option.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.55 The site is within a critical drainage area and the application is supported by a site specific Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Strategy (SuDs) prepared by Lyons O'Neill.
- 7.56 Policy EN14 'Flood Risk' requires that inter alia "*all new development should minimise surface water run-off, including through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and the appropriate use of Green*

Infrastructure. Developers should have regard to the surface water run-off rates in the SFRA User Guide. In CDAs, evidence to justify the surface water run-off approach / rates will be required”.

- 7.57 In assessing the proposed drainage strategy against the surface water drainage hierarchy, it is concluded that discharge into a combined sewer is the only viable option.
- 7.58 SuDS will be used where practicable and viable throughout the site to provide source control management, improve water quality, reduce flood risk and provide amenity and biodiversity. A below ground attenuation tank (size: 215m³) is proposed to attenuate surface water runoff. A hydrobrake manhole is proposed downstream to limit surface water runoff to 2.07 l/s (Q_{bar}) into the existing combined manhole 8903 via gravity. Swales are proposed at the rear of the data centre to convey surface water runoff from external hard-surfacing areas.

Air Quality

- 7.59 This application is supported by an Air Quality Assessment produced by PJD Consultants. This assesses the traffic generation at both construction and operational stages and the use of the emergency generator.
- 7.60 Policy EN16 'Air Quality' seeks to improve the wider air quality within Manchester, and particularly within Air Quality Management Areas, developers will be expected to take measures to minimise and mitigate the local impact of emissions from traffic generated by the development, as well as emissions created by the use of the development itself.
- 7.61 The data centre use will have a very low traffic generation compared to the original office use. The total site will have 43 car parking spaces and it is estimated there would be in the order of 14 daily two-way vehicle trips to Simon House. The construction phase would be subject to a 'small' impact (i.e., less than 10 construction vehicle visits per day at peak).
- 7.62 The generators will only be in use for testing (bi-weekly for max 1 hour) and for emergency use. Notwithstanding this the use of NVO biofuel provides reductions on direct emissions compared with Diesel.

Contamination

- 7.63 A Phase 1 Contamination Report prepared by Enviro Solutions has been submitted. This preliminary environmental site assessment indicates that the site can be classed as low risk in terms of contamination and the risks to the identified receptors (e.g., human health, controlled waters, buildings) following redevelopment is considered to be low.

8.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 8.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Union4 Planning on behalf of Teledata UK Ltd in respect of proposals for the demolition of the existing building and redevelopment to provide a new data centre.
- 8.2 The site is a previously developed site within Wythenshaw District Centre and where employment and commercial uses are encouraged and safeguarded. The principle of a data centre use has been established through the grant of planning permission 132638/FO/2022.
- 8.3 The proposals would optimise the use of this vacant site and bring it back into beneficial use. The additional data centre floorspace will provide a vital business facility, facilitating economic growth and prosperity including the provision of new jobs which would be circa 15 in the first instance.
- 8.4 The proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant national and local planning policy context and represents an efficient use of previously developed land, allowing for optimal use of the site and representing a sustainable form of development.
- 8.5 The scheme has been brought forward in consideration of not only the existing character but also the emerging context set out in the Wythenshawe Masterplan which seeks to deliver a new residential quarter.
- 8.6 The Wythenshawe Town Centre Development Framework additionally recognises the opportunity in the area to utilise vacant units to improve employment opportunities. It specifically supports the provision of Data Centre uses within the District Centre (page 22).
- 8.7 Wavell Road would be the boundary between the existing commercial area and the future emerging residential quarter. The design and built form of the scheme have responded to this, moving away from an 'industrial' design using a variety of façade treatments include a mix of materials, finishes and patterns to reduce the bulk of the built form when viewed from the public realm.
- 8.8 There is currently no vegetation on site. The scheme introduces landscaping with a mix of planting along Wavell Road providing visual improvement and a substantive increase in terms of biodiversity.
- 8.9 Energy and Sustainability credential with energy efficiency measures including the provision of modern design and technologies achieving energy efficiency targets of PUE of 1.2 (far in advance of the industry average of PUE 2.0). The utilisation of renewable and sustainable resources including adoption of renewable HVO biofuels to fuel emergency generators, introduction of Photovoltaic (PV) roof panels and EV charging points.

- 8.10 The application is supported by relevant environmental reports demonstrating that any potential impacts of the development are mitigated or avoided. It is concluded that there will be no adverse impacts on any nearby sensitive receptors.
- 8.11 We consider that the proposed development accords with the relevant adopted planning policies and associated guidance at the local and national level. We would also respectfully submit that the proposed development accords with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, and that planning permission should be granted.