

VIRTUS Data Centres is bringing forward an outline planning application for a new data centre campus in Sipson.

The proposed campus comprises a 54 MW data centre, extensive landscaping, high-quality design, habitat creation and improved biodiversity.

The proposals seek to transform the previously underused site into a well-landscaped development that balances operational requirements with environmental enhancements, delivering new digital infrastructure while providing long-term benefits for biodiversity, landscape quality and the local community.

About VIRTUS Data Centres

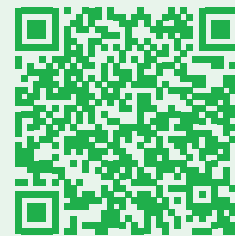
VIRTUS Data Centres is one of Europe's leading data centre developers and operators and the largest provider in the UK.

With over 15 years of proven performance, VIRTUS designs, builds and operates some of the UK and Europe's most energy and water efficient data centres.

VIRTUS remains focused on delivering sustainable, energy-efficient solutions that benefit customers, colleagues, partners, local communities, the environment and society every day.

What is a data centre and why are they important?

A data centre is a building that contains lots of computers and equipment used to store, process and manage digital information. They support the online services we use every day, such as websites, emails, cloud storage and video streaming.



Scan the
QR code to
find out more

What is an outline planning application?

An outline planning application is a way of asking a local council whether they agree with the principle of development on a site, before all the detailed design work has been completed. In simple terms, it answers the question: **“Can something like this be built here?”** rather than **“exactly what will it look like?”**



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Existing site

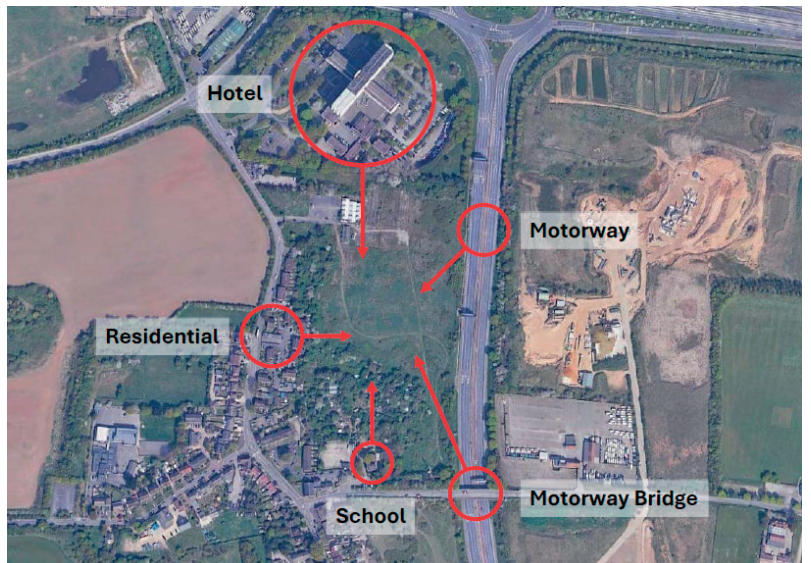
The proposed site occupies approximately seven hectares of land at the former Sipson Garden Centre. Located immediately south and west of the M4 motorway, the site is accessed from Sipson Road and sits between residential properties, the Holiday Inn Heathrow hotel, and a secondary school.

Bringing the site back into use

The proposals would bring a largely vacant and underused former garden centre site back into productive use, transforming the site into a modern, well-managed development. The scheme would deliver significant investment and create a high-quality environment.

New trees, habitat areas, sustainable drainage features and greenery would improve the site's environmental value, while careful design and screening would help integrate the development into its surroundings.

Overall, the proposals represent an opportunity to revitalise a long-neglected site and secure its long-term use.



Local considerations

The site's location presents a number of important design considerations. Neighbouring the site are homes, a school, a pub and hotel, meaning careful consideration of visual impact and the relationship between the development and its surroundings is required.

Existing trees and green spaces, prominent views into the site, drainage requirements and utility infrastructure have also influenced the design approach. In addition, the site's proximity to Heathrow Airport has informed landscape proposals, including a selection of planting that does not attract flocking birds.



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Proposals and design

VIRTUS Data Centres is submitting an outline planning application – that means the design elements set out here are only indicative, to provide a sense of what the future final buildings may look like. The indicative design combines high-quality architecture, landscaping and environmental enhancements, creating a modern data centre campus that is designed to sit harmoniously within its local context.

Building layout

The illustrative design comprises a single, purpose-built data centre arranged as two data halls with integrated office and administration facilities. The building has been positioned towards the eastern edge of the site, allowing extensive landscaping around its boundaries and creating a clear separation from neighbouring properties.

Supporting infrastructure, including a substation, parking and service facilities would be carefully integrated within the wider campus layout to ensure efficient day-to-day operation.

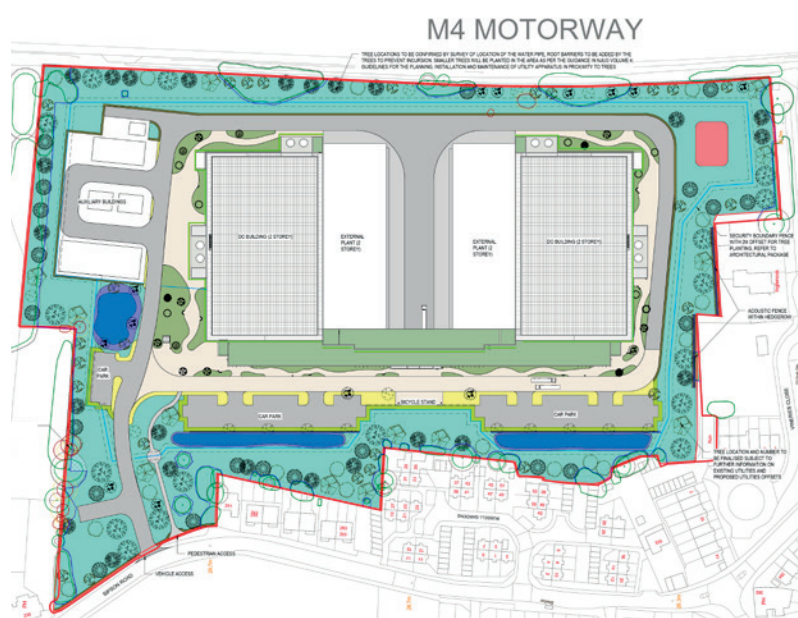
Architecture and appearance

The design aims to create a modern, high-quality building that responds sensitively to its surroundings. The massing has been broken up through a series of horizontal and vertical façade changes to avoid the appearance of one large, continuous structure. This helps reduce the perceived scale of the building and creates a more visually interesting form.

The illustrative design shows the main data hall finished in dark grey and black materials, providing a neutral backdrop that allows landscaping and green features to stand out. Administration areas facing towards neighbouring homes could use lighter brick and bronze detailing to create a more welcoming and attractive frontage.

Screening and visual impact

A key design objective has been to minimise visual impact for nearby residents. Landscaping, green walls, equipment screening and carefully selected materials will work together to reduce the prominence of the development from surrounding viewpoints. Additional planting within the site helps break up views of the building and creates a greener, more attractive setting.



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Protecting the environment and supporting local communities

VIRTUS is proud to be a long term community partner wherever new sites are located, working closely in conjunction with the local community to add real benefit to the people neighbouring our facilities. We believe in early, clear, honest and transparent community and political engagement to build trust.

Our data centres are built to the highest modern standards to limit their impact on the local community and environment.

Energy

100% of VIRTUS' energy comes from renewable sources, with 17% coming directly from offshore wind. Our power comes from a different place to the power supplied to your homes or businesses. Essentially it comes straight from the power station and is pre-contracted to VIRTUS.

We have procured a direct contract with an energy provider which does not affect supply to the local area, thereby also avoiding an impact in the way of increased prices.

Water

This data centre will be filled with water just once – using a closed loop cooling system to remove heat. Once operational, the site will need very little water to cool the data centre and its IT equipment.

Sound

Minimising noise for neighbouring homes is central to our design. We're prioritising sound containment with acoustic screening, enclosures and careful equipment siting to reduce impact on the surrounding area, including the school and hotel nearby. Any planning permission would carry strict noise conditions, agreed with the local authority.

Creating jobs

Each direct job created in the data centre industry supports more than six jobs elsewhere in the supply chain. It is anticipated that a data centre in Sipson will create many direct jobs, as well as support hundreds of jobs during construction and in the lifecycle of the data centre.

Support thriving communities

VIRTUS is committed to being a good neighbour in the communities in which we operate. That has meant supporting grassroots sports, enhancing community facilities, and investing in education and environmental initiatives.

Working with local people and organisations, we will shape a Community Development Programme tailored to the needs and aspirations of Sipson and the surrounding areas.



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Landscaping and ecology

The emerging landscaping strategy for the proposed data centre has been designed to minimise visual impact, enhance biodiversity and create a greener, more attractive setting for neighbouring residents, businesses and passing road users.

A substantial green buffer would surround the development, with new tree planting along the western, northern and southern boundaries helping to screen views of the building and reinforce the site's connection to the surrounding landscape.

Protecting nature

The scheme would introduce a wide range of native and climate-resilient planting, including trees, hedgerows, shrubs, wildflowers and meadow planting. These habitats will support pollinators and local wildlife while improving the overall ecological value of the site. Existing green corridors will be strengthened through additional planting, helping to create wildlife connections across the area.

**Boundary planting**
screening hedges and trees

**Wildflowers**
mix of species good for pollinators

**Green wall**
to soften the facade and increase biodiversity

**Natural drainage**
ponds and basins that retain rainwater runoff

**Green roof**
to increase biodiversity

**Plaza**
paved entrance area enhanced with planters and seats

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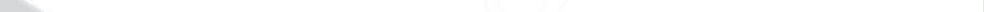
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- [illegible]

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Have your say and next steps

Our outline proposals for the VIRTUS Sipson data centre are currently being developed and we welcome all comments and suggestions.

Providing your feedback

You can provide comments using a feedback form available at our event or by using our address listed below. Please speak to a member of the team if you would like a paper copy.



This feedback form is also available on our website: www.virtussipson.co.uk

The deadline for all feedback to be received is **11:59pm** on **Monday 21 September 2026**.

Indicative timeline

- **September 2026**
Pre-submission public consultation
- **October 2026**
Submission of an Outline Planning Application to Hillingdon Council
- **November / December 2026**
Hillingdon Council invites feedback from the community
- **January 2027**
Hillingdon Council determines VIRTUS' Outline Planning Application
- **2027 – 2029**
Further detailed design work (pending planning decision)
- **2030**
Anticipated construction alongside supporting infrastructure

Contact us

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