DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

NORWICH APEX DATA CENTRE

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

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PROJECT:
Norwich APEX Data Centre
Land west of West of Ipswich
Road (A140), Norwich, NR4 6GA
16200019052-TPA-XX-XX-RP-A-00001

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P01

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INTRODUCTION

1.0

APPLICANT

Norwich APEX Limited

PROJECT

Norwich APEX Data Centre

1.1 INTRODUCTION

A DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT is a 'short report accompanying and supporting a planning application to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain the proposal in a structured way', providing a framework to explain how the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting, and to demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users.

The level of detail in a Design and Access Statement (DAS) should be proportionate to the complexity of the application, but should not be long.

In this regard, the DAS has been prepared in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) publication 'Guidance on Information Requirements and Validation' (March 2010), which accompanies government policy on information requirements for planning applications.

The purpose of the DAS is to explain the rationale behind the design and access proposals for the Site. This DAS forms part of a comprehensive package of information comprising the planning application.

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013, the DAS is provided for development on the Site and includes:

- The steps taken to appraise the context and how the design of the development takes that into account;
- What consultation has been undertaken, and what account has been taken of the outcome of the consultation;
- The design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development; and
- How the proposed development realises the design principles and satisfies local and national planning policy requirements

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.0

2.1 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the proposed development of a data centre at Land west of Ipswich Road, Keswick.

The statement explains the design principles that have informed the development of the proposals and demonstrates how the scheme responds positively to its site, surrounding context, and planning policy. It considers the evolution of the design, the rationale behind the proposed layout, scale, appearance, landscaping, access, movement, and sustainability measures, together with the approach taken to creating a high-quality and functional development.

The proposals have been informed by a comprehensive programme of technical assessments, including landscape and visual, transport, ecology, drainage, heritage, noise, arboricultural, and environmental studies. These assessments have shaped the design process to ensure the development is appropriate to its setting and achieves a balanced response to operational requirements, environmental considerations, and planning objectives.

This statement should be read alongside the accompanying planning application documents, including the Planning Statement, Environmental Statement, Landscape Strategy, Transport Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, and other supporting technical reports, which together demonstrate the suitability of the proposed development.

2.2 WHAT IS A DATA CENTRE?

A data centre is a secure, purpose-built facility that houses computer servers, networking equipment and associated infrastructure used to store, process and distribute digital information. Data centres provide the computing power that supports a wide range of digital services, including cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI), financial transactions, telecommunications, healthcare systems, online retail, public services and business operations.

Modern data centres operate continuously, providing highly resilient and secure environments that ensure the uninterrupted delivery of digital services. To achieve this, they incorporate robust electrical infrastructure, standby power systems, cooling equipment, advanced security measures and high-capacity fibre-optic communications networks.

Data centres form an essential part of the UK's critical digital infrastructure and underpin many aspects of everyday life and economic activity.

2.3 SITE SELECTION

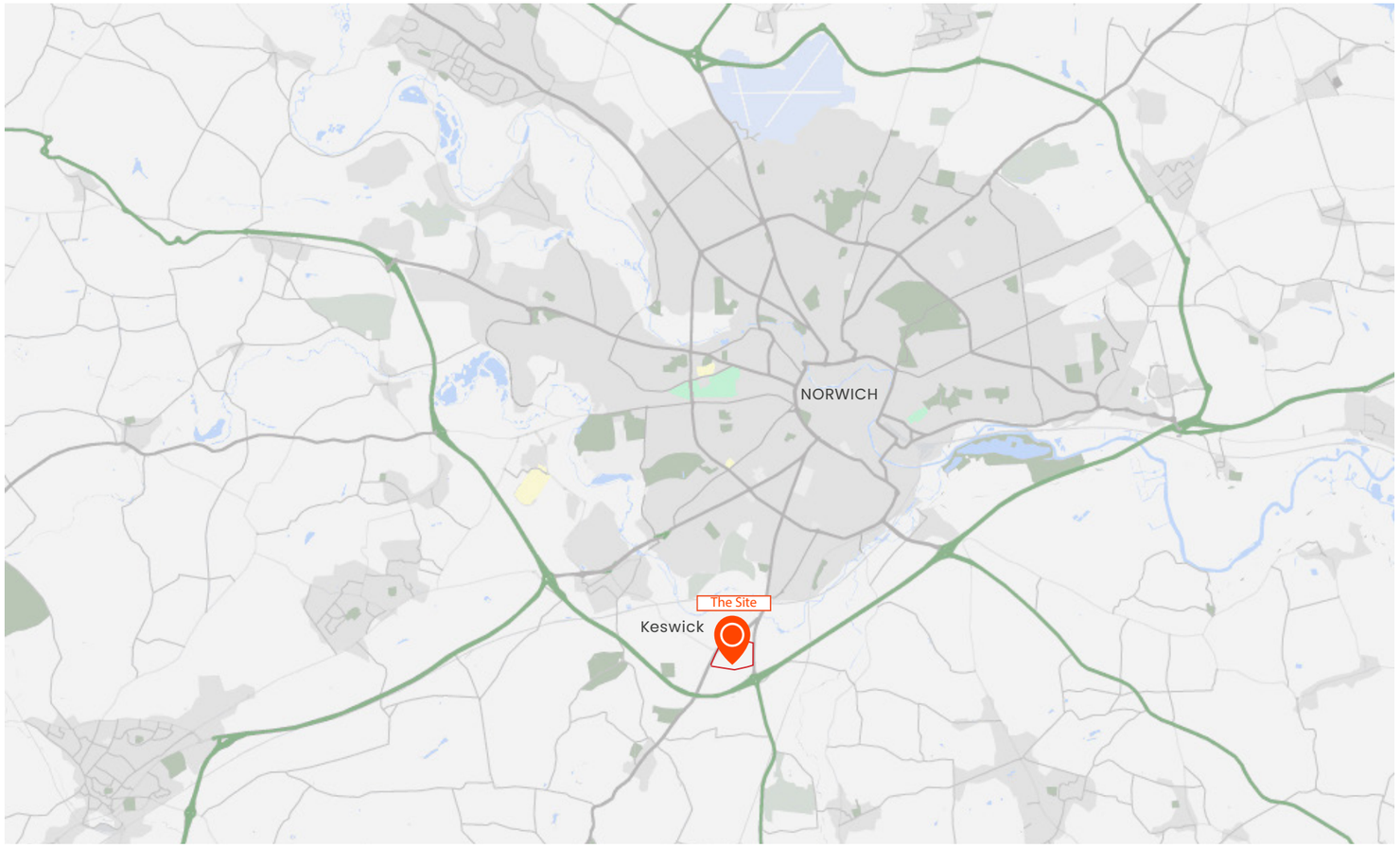
The selection of the application site has been driven by the operational requirements of a modern data centre and the need to locate development where appropriate electrical infrastructure is available to support its operation.

Data centres require access to a secure, resilient and high-capacity electricity supply. Consequently, the availability of suitable grid infrastructure is a principal factor in site selection, alongside fibre connectivity, transport accessibility, environmental considerations and planning constraints.

The application site is strategically located in close proximity to the Hornsea 3 onshore substation and the National Electricity Transmission System, which is powered by renewable wind generated energy. This location provides access to readily available renewable electrical capacity within the transmission network capable of supporting the operational requirements of the data centre.

The presence of available electrical capacity at this location represents a significant site selection advantage. It enables the proposed development to utilise existing strategic energy infrastructure efficiently, reducing the need for extensive off-site reinforcement works and making effective use of established transmission assets. This approach supports the efficient delivery of nationally important digital infrastructure while aligning with wider objectives to optimise the use of existing infrastructure.

Furthermore, the site's proximity to the point of electrical



Site location map with application site boundary outlined in red

connection minimises the extent of new connection infrastructure required, thereby reducing land take, construction impacts and environmental effects associated with inefficiencies of longer cable routes.

The proposal represents the logical co-location of critical digital infrastructure with strategic energy infrastructure, making efficient use of available electrical capacity while supporting national and local objectives for sustainable economic growth, investment in digital infrastructure and the transition to a resilient, low-carbon economy.

The site is subject to an extant planning consent for *"Proposed employment development consisting of B1, B2 and B8 uses, associated access and landscaping; and proposed link road between the A140 and the B1113, including new roundabout"* under Reference 2017/2794.

The approved scheme resulted in 28,329m^2 of B1, B2 and B8 floor space, along with consent for a link road between the A140 and B1113.

The site is allocated for Use Classes E(g), B2 and B8 under Policy S.KE.1 under the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP), as an urban fringe. The site was allocated as it was considered a sustainable urban extension, focusing development in locations with the best access to jobs, services and existing and planned infrastructure.

The proposed use falls within the allocated Use Classes and therefore forms a logical location for the proposal.

Illustrative Masterplan from extant planning consent, ref: 2017/2794

2.4 APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

The full planning application is submitted by Ingleton Wood on behalf of Norwich Apex Data Centre.

The application package contains the following documents:

1. Architectural, Engineering, Landscape and Planting Plans
2. Arboricultural Impact Assessment
3. Ecological Impact Assessment
4. Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
5. Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
6. Construction Surface Water Management Plan
7. Transport Assessment
8. Travel Plan
9. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
10. Heritage Statement
11. Archaeological Investigation Reports
12. Energy Statement
13. Sustainability Statement
14. Acoustic Assessment
15. Air Quality Assessment
16. Contaminated Land Assessment
17. Waste Management Plan
18. Materials Management Plan
19. Statement of Community Involvement
20. Design and Access Statement
21. Planning Statement

The Design and Access Statement is prepared by TPA Studio along with the following architectural drawings:

- 1620019052-TPA-SW-00-DR-A-90000
- 1620019052-TPA-SW-03-DR-A-90004
- 1620019052-TPA-ZZ-00-DR-A-20100
- 1620019052-TPA-ZZ-01-DR-A-20101
- 1620019052-TPA-ZZ-02-DR-A-20102
- 1620019052-TPA-ZZ-03-DR-A-20103
- 1620019052-TPA-ZZ-00-DR-A-20110
- 1620019052-TPA-ZZ-00-DR-A-20111
- 1620019052-TPA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-21000
- 1620019052-TPA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-22000

The following Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with Ingleton Wood Planning Statement and the accompanying consultant reports.

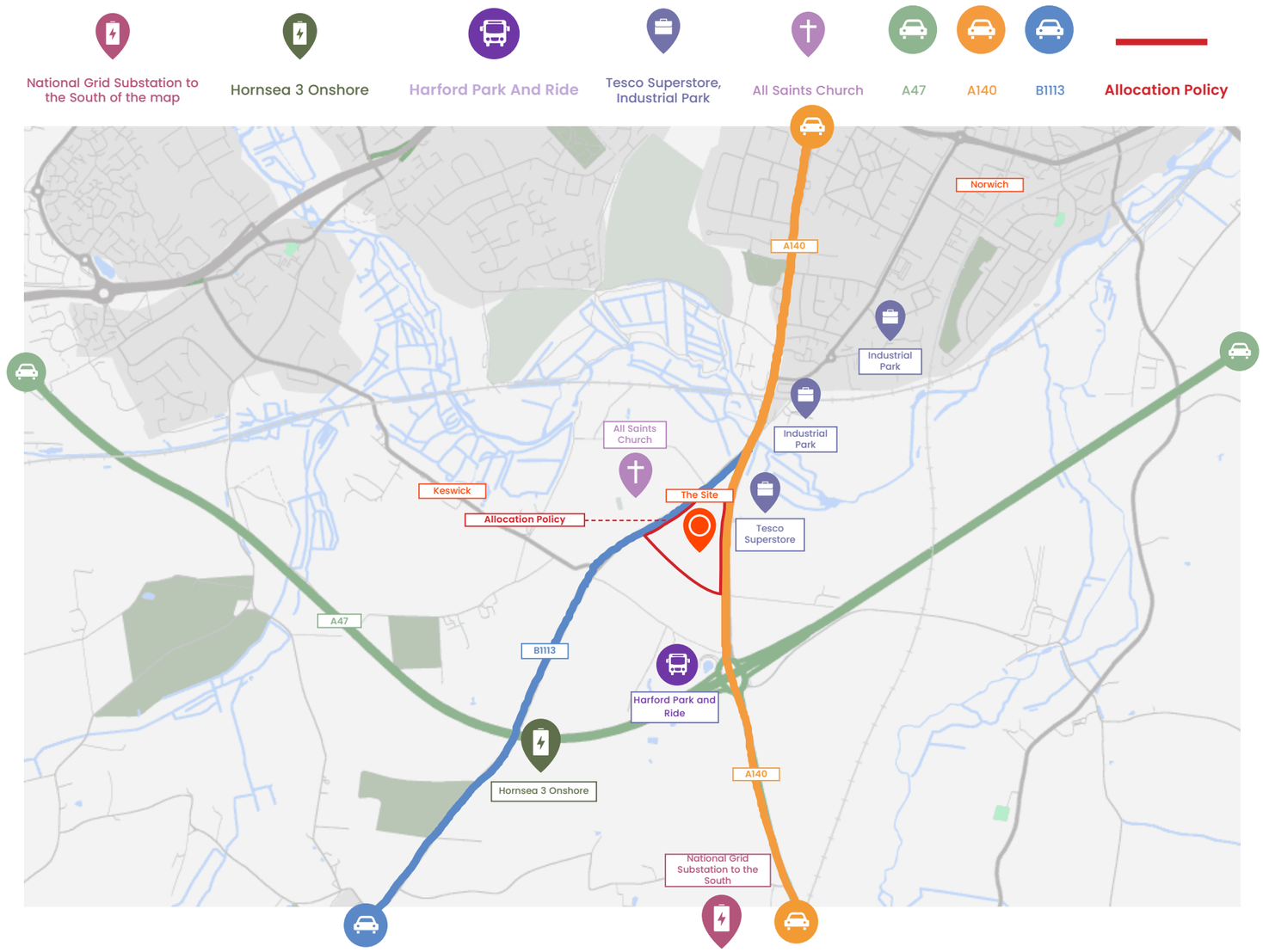
SITE CONTEXT

3.0

3.1 SITE LOCATION

The site identified for the Norwich Apex Data Centre comprises a triangular parcel of land located between the B1113 and Ipswich Road, to the south of Norwich. The overall site area extends to approximately 12.98 hectares, including a landscaped area located to the north of the B1113 which forms part of the wider landscape strategy for the development.

It is positioned between the established southern edge of Norwich and the surrounding rural landscape. The immediate surroundings comprise a mix of commercial, residential, transport and agricultural land uses. To the north-east of the site is a Tesco Superstore and associated extensive car park, while two residential properties are located immediately north of the site boundary. To the west lies the Church of All Saints, a Grade II Listed Building (List Entry Number 1373136), with Keswick village located approximately 600 metres further west. To the south, the site adjoins open agricultural land, beyond which are the Hartford Park and Ride facility and the Norwich Southern Bypass. Further south of the bypass is the Hornsea Three Onshore Substation and associated strategic energy infrastructure.



Site location map with application site boundary outlined in red and local context

3.2 SITE CHARACTERISTICS

The site is characterised by a varied topography, with a natural fall from south to north, reducing from approximately 26.5 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at the southern extent to approximately 6.8 metres AOD along the northern boundary. The level change across the site from east to west is generally less pronounced. These existing landform characteristics have been an important consideration in the evolution of the development proposals, informing the approach to platform levels, drainage, landscape integration and the reduction of visual effects.

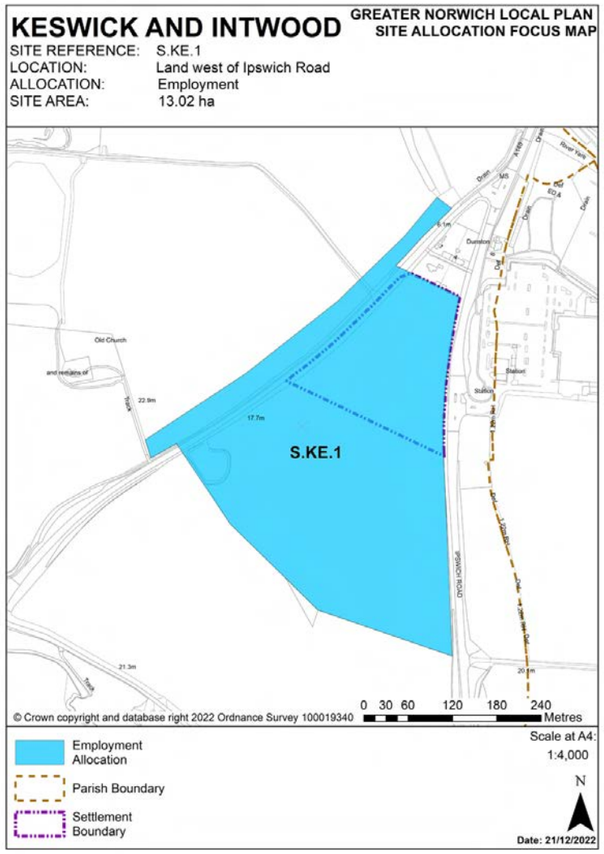
Historically, the site comprised agricultural land. However, following implementation of the extant planning permission, the site has undergone significant change, including regrading of existing ground levels and the introduction of new infrastructure and landscape features. Existing vegetation along the boundaries with Ipswich Road and the B1113 provides a degree of visual enclosure, although the site remains visible from selected longer-distance viewpoints. These views, together with the site's relationship with the surrounding landscape character, are assessed in detail within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Sheils Flynn.

VP09 - View shown from Church of All Saints, extract from Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment by Sheils Flynn

3.2 SITE CHARACTERISTICS

The Greater Norwich Local Plan identifies the site as being within an Urban Fringe location, reflecting its position at the transition between the built-up area of Norwich and the wider countryside. The site is located approximately 450 metres south of the railway line, which historically formed the boundary between the urban area and the surrounding rural landscape. However, this boundary has become increasingly influenced by existing development, including the industrial estate along Old Hall Road and the Tesco Superstore, which contribute to the established urban fringe character of the area.

The site's location provides an opportunity to deliver strategic digital infrastructure within a sustainable location, benefiting from proximity to existing urban development, transport connections, strategic electricity infrastructure and existing landscape features that can be enhanced to support the integration of the proposed development.



Extract from Greater Norwich Local Plan showing site allocation for employment

POLICY S.KE.1
Land west of Ipswich Road, Keswick

4.40 This site allocation comprises the employment allocation KES2 from the 2015 South Norfolk Local Plan which now has planning consent (reference 2017/2794) on a larger boundary. Policy S.KE.1 incorporates the larger consented area.

4.41 Norfolk Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Policy CS16 applies, as this site is underlain by safeguarded minerals resources. The benefits of extracting the minerals, if feasible, will be taken into consideration.

3.3 SITE PHOTOS

VP04

VP06c

VP07

VP09

VP11

VP12

Photos to show the site as viewed from various key locations. Extracted from Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment by Sheils Flynn, refer to Landscape Plan for view locations.

AMOUNT & SCALE

4.0

4.1 PROPOSED SITE PLAN

Proposed Site Plan, NTS