

The Ark data centre would represent a massive overdevelopment. The site lies entirely within the Green Belt, although it includes some previously developed land that was utilised by the Mercure Hotel.

Planning permission was granted in 2023 for the entire site for a 30,000 sqm warehousing scheme. This permission expires in March.

However, the proposed data centre would comprise a total floorspace of **137,410 sqm—over 4.5 times the size of the currently permitted warehouse scheme.**

The development would comprise four data centre tower buildings, each 38.95m (128 ft) high; two substations, each 11m (36 ft) high; a Visitor Reception Centre, 20m (66 ft) high; and security fencing around the entire perimeter measuring 4m (13 ft) high, topped with 1m razor wire and high-security lighting. The data centre would be larger than any currently operating in the UK.

The electricity requirement is extraordinary: the data centre would use 4.5 times the electricity currently used across the whole of Hertsmere.

The data centre would use as much water as used by 15,000 residents.

Emissions are estimated to amount to 63% of current emissions across the whole of Hertsmere.

The major concern with the development is its height and visual impact. It is simply too large in terms of scale and intensity and would be visible from a wide distance. The proposal is inappropriate for this site when assessed against planning criteria and far exceeds the capacity of the site to accommodate it without causing harm to its surroundings. There are also concerns regarding overshadowing of adjacent homes, impacts on heritage assets, and detriment to the rural character of the A41.

The site would be almost entirely built upon, with the removal of most open space; over half is now woodland. Much of the site frontage is presently open land, which helps maintain the semi-rural character of the A41.

Construction is expected to take 10 years, with construction traffic compounding the already heavy traffic levels along the A41.

THE SITE NOW - EDGED RED



THE SITE WILL BE ENTIRELY BUILT OVER

