

Spring Park Data Centre Expansion: What the Planning Conditions Mean

Wiltshire Council has granted planning permission, subject to extensive conditions, for an extension to the Spring Park data centre campus on land south of Westwells Road, Neston. The conditioning has been driven primarily as a consequence of NWAG's legal intervention supported by residents objections and funding legal support..The approved proposal includes a new data centre building, energy, power and water infrastructure, access roads, security arrangements, changes to public rights of way, landscaping and associated works. NWAG has challenged the approval on a number of grounds and as a consequence of our interventions ARK has been subjected to a number of stringent conditions. The WCC permission does not allow the development to proceed without further controls. Thirty conditions set out what must be approved, monitored or delivered before construction, during the works and once the site is operating. . Some of the conditions could halt the development if ARK cannot meet the criteria. Based on the developers previous behaviours with respect to non-compliance with conditions on noise, lighting and drainage it can be anticipated that ARK will try and counter or alter these constraints whilst avoiding public scrutiny. NWAG is working hard to ensure that this does not happen.

The 30 conditions at a glance

1. **Time limit:** Work must begin within three years of the permission date.
2. **Approved documents:** The development must follow the approved plans, reports and management documents listed in the decision notice.
3. **External materials:** Wall and roof materials and samples must be approved before above-ground work starts.
4. **Eastern retaining wall:** Its position, materials, cross-section and appearance must be approved before above-ground work starts.
5. **Construction traffic:** A plan must control vehicle numbers, routes, access, parking, loading, wheel washing, road cleaning, delivery times and restoration of temporary working areas.
6. **Off-site highway works:** Detailed highway improvements must be agreed and built before the new access comes into operational use.
7. **Travel plan:** Before opening, a full plan must promote sustainable travel, appoint a co-ordinator and provide monitoring.
8. **Deliveries and servicing:** A management plan must be approved before the development is used.
9. **Car parking:** A strategy must cover the number and layout of spaces, electric-vehicle provision and enforcement.
10. **Landscape scheme:** Detailed planting, levels, enclosures, parking, routes, surfaces, structures, lighting and services must be approved before above-ground work.
11. **Landscape delivery:** Planting must be completed promptly, maintained and replaced if it fails within five years; hard landscaping must also be delivered as agreed.
12. **Existing trees:** Site work must follow the approved Arboricultural Impact Assessment.
13. **Soakaway testing:** BRE 365 infiltration tests must be completed at the proposed locations and depths before development begins.

14. **Groundwater monitoring:** A monitoring plan, baseline readings and a 12-month programme must be approved within three months of commencement.
15. **Hydrogeological risks:** An updated risk register and design constraints, including Ministry of Defence/DIO advice, must be approved before work starts.
16. **Flood modelling:** Before occupation, detailed hydraulic modelling must compare pre- and post-development flood behaviour, including exceedance routes and safe pathways.
17. **Drainage performance review:** Within three months of the drainage system becoming operational, its effectiveness must be assessed; deficiencies may trigger a replacement scheme and long-term maintenance plan.
18. **No connection to private downstream drainage:** A compliance statement must confirm that the scheme will not use private drainage systems downstream of the site.
19. **Construction surface water:** A plan must manage temporary drainage, storage, sediment, pollution, exceedance flows, phasing and maintenance throughout construction.
20. **Unexpected contamination:** If previously unknown contamination is found, affected work must stop until an approved remediation strategy is in place.
21. **Lighting:** Site lighting must follow the approved JCA report and meet the requirements for environmental zone E2 to limit obtrusive light.
22. **Noise:** Operational noise must not exceed the levels predicted in the approved SWECO acoustic report.
23. **Archaeology:** A programme of archaeological investigation, analysis, publication and archiving must be approved and carried out before development in the relevant area.
24. **Permitted use:** The building may be used only as a data centre, not for other Class B8 storage or distribution uses.
25. **Construction ecology:** A Construction Environmental Management Plan must protect habitats, trees and protected species, set work timings and responsibilities, and provide evidence of compliance.
26. **Biodiversity documents:** The development must follow the approved biodiversity metric, plans, landscaping, lighting and ecological enhancement documents.
27. **Long-term landscape and ecology:** A Landscape and Ecology Management Plan must set objectives, responsibilities, maintenance, monitoring and adaptive management for the life of the development.
28. **Biodiversity net gain:** A Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan must explain habitat creation, 30 years of management, responsibilities and monitoring reports at specified intervals.
29. **Fuel storage:** The location, design, capacity and number of fuel tanks must be approved before installation and retained as approved.
30. **Generator testing:** Routine testing of back-up generators is limited to 9am–6pm, Monday to Friday, with no weekend testing.

What residents may notice

Before major construction begins, the developer must secure approval for several detailed plans, particularly those covering traffic, drainage, ecology, archaeology and materials. During construction, residents may see managed construction traffic, temporary drainage controls, ecological protection areas and archaeological work. The conditions are intended to

reduce highway risk, flooding, pollution, noise, light spill and harm to landscape or wildlife. Once the site is operating, controls will continue. These include limits on noise and lighting, managed deliveries and parking, restricted generator-testing hours, continuing drainage checks, and long-term landscape and habitat management. Biodiversity measures are to be monitored for 30 years

Keeping informed

Residents who want the precise requirements, approved drawings or later submissions should consult the planning record for application PL/2024/05527. Many of the most important safeguards depend on the Council approving further details, so future discharge-of-condition applications will be relevant to anyone following the project.