

# **Planning Report**

*In respect of*

## **Amendments to a Data Centre Development**

**at Citywest Business Campus,  
Naas Road, Dublin 24**

*Prepared by*

**John Spain Associates**

*On behalf of*

**K2 Strategic Infrastructure Ireland Ltd**

**July 2022**



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.0 On behalf of the applicant, K2 Strategic Infrastructure Ireland Ltd., this planning report forms part of a planning application for amendments to an extant planning permission (Reg. Ref.: FW18A/0301) on a site at the junction of Kingswood Drive and Kingswood Road within Citywest Business Campus, Naas Road, Dublin 24. The application site is bound to the east by greenfield lands and beyond by the R136, a dual carriageway, to the north by Kingswood Drive, and to the west by Kingswood Road.

1.1 The proposed development is described as follows:

*"The proposed development comprises amendments to the development permitted under Reg. Ref.: SD18A/0301. The proposed amendments comprise the following:*

- *Alterations to the permitted two storey data centre building including internal reconfiguration, alterations to finished floor levels, alterations to the building footprint to provide for the relocation of an internal staircore to the south of the building, and the replacement of the enclosed first floor level with an open screened roof mounted plant space (resulting in a reduction of 4,091 sq.m in the gross floor area (GFA) of the data centre building).*
- *Associated alterations to the façade of the data centre building, including alterations to fenestration, cladding, step-out in the southern façade to accommodate a staircore, and a reduction in the eastern building parapet height of c. 2 metres.*
- *The provision of a canopy over the loading docks on the east facade.*
- *Alterations to the permitted generator compound, generators, and flues, including a reduction in the number of generators (5 no. now proposed), and provision of MV rooms within the generator compound.*
- *Provision of an ESB substation compound in the northeastern portion of the site, comprising a single storey substation building (with a GFA of c. 125 sq.m), 2 no. transformers, client control building (with a GFA of c. 47 sq.m), and associated access arrangements within a 2.6 metre high security fence. The ESB substation compound will be accessed from Kingswood Drive.*
- *Omission of the permitted sprinkler tank, pump room and 10kV Substation, reconfiguration of the permitted car parking, and revisions to permitted boundary treatments.*
- *Associated alterations to landscaping, access and internal road arrangements, services, lighting, and layout, and all associated and ancillary works."*

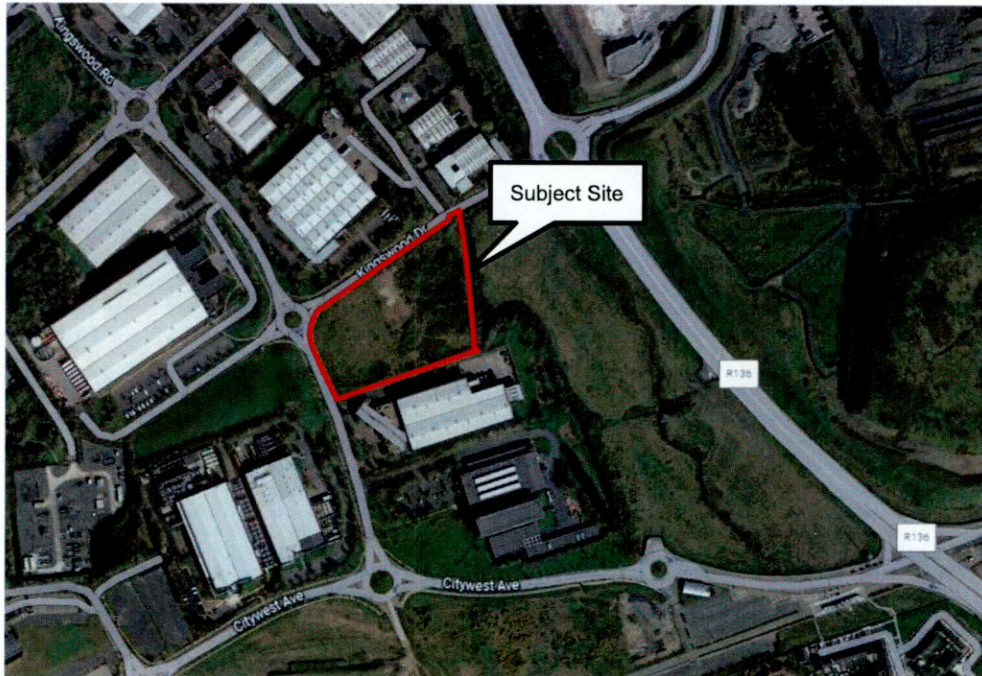
1.2 The applicant, K2 Strategic Infrastructure Ireland Ltd., which operates as 'K2 Datacentres', is part of the Kuok Group, which is a Singaporean based multinational company. The Kuok Group, through its subsidiaries, engages in trading, shipping and transportation, financial services, manufacturing, leisure and recreation, real estate, media, and hotel businesses. K2 Datacentres is a relatively new business area within the group, and they have identified Ireland as the location for their European Headquarters.

1.3 The extant permission on site (under Reg. Ref.: FW18A/0301), was subject to a final grant of permission on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February 2019. The current amendments have been formulated as part of the detailed design of the permitted development and in order to meet the requirements of future occupier of the development. As detailed within the accompanying architectural drawings (existing and proposed) and the photomontages submitted, the proposed amendments will not significantly alter the permitted development in terms of its layout, function, or use.



## **2.0 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT**

- 2.1 The subject site is a brownfield site, located in the eastern part of the Citywest Business Campus and to the south of the Naas Road / N7, Dublin 24. The site has a total area of c. 1.942 hectares.
- 2.2 The subject site is located at the corner / junction of Kingswood Drive and Kingswood Road and is bound by warehouse / industrial / logistics units to the north, south and south-west. Further east is the R136 Outer Ring Road, connecting the M7 to the N81 to the south.
- 2.3 The wider Citywest business campus is bound by the Naas Road (N7) to the north, the R136 to the east and Citywest Avenue to the South.
- 2.4 The site is accessible via the internal business campus estate road system from west and north.



**Figure 2.1: Location of the subject site (approximate outline in red)**

- 2.5 Part of the subject site has been used as a temporary builders' compound. The wider context is defined primarily by commercial and industrial development. Three data centres in operation are located in close proximity, to the southwest of the subject site, BT Ireland data centre, the Keppel data centre and Equinix DB1 data centre. The closest dwelling is located c. 400m to the south from the subject site, separated by commercial and industrial units, Citywest Avenue and undeveloped infill lands.

## **3.0 PLANNING HISTORY**

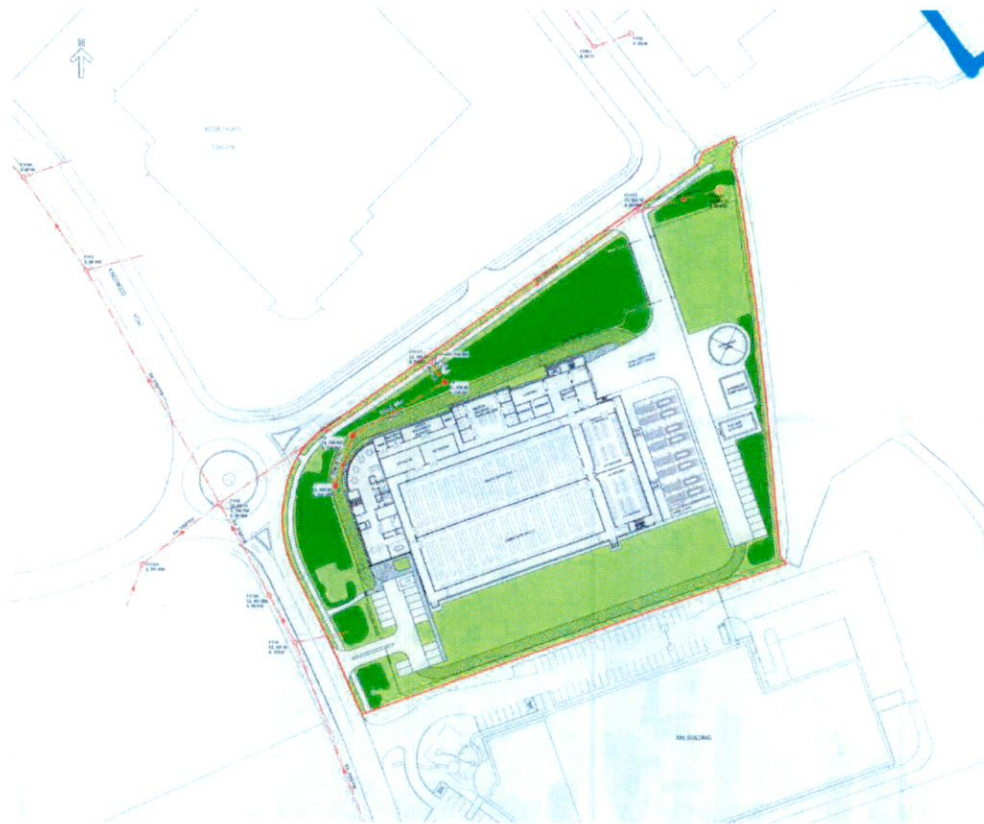
- 3.1 The following comprises a summary of relevant planning history pertaining to the subject site and adjacent lands, including the parent permission, which the current application seeks to amend. This planning history is based on a review of the South Dublin County Council online planning search system.



### **Parent Permission**

Reg. Ref.: SD18A/0301

- 3.2 On the 4<sup>th</sup> of February 2019, a final grant of permission was issued for development at the subject site, for a development comprising the following:
- “Construction of a 2-storey data centre (including associated office space) of 10,622sq.m, associated generators, sprinkler tank and sprinkler pump, and 10kV electricity substation. The proposed development also provides for associated plant at roof level, all associated site development works, landscaping, car parking, and 2 vehicular entrances off Kingswood Drive and Kingswood Road, all on a site area of 1.9ha.”*
- 3.3 The above-referenced development is the permitted development, which the current application seeks to amend.
- 3.4 The Planner’s Report prepared in respect of the application for the parent permission noted that the development was consistent with the pattern of development in the area and was therefore acceptable. It was further noted that the scheme demonstrated a high standard of landscaping, to help enhance the visual appearance of the development. The Report further noted that the development would not result in any unacceptable impacts on residential amenity, including in respect of noise impacts and visual impact. Ultimately, the Planner’s Report concluded that the development complies with the requirements of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022.
- 3.5 The current amendments maintain the overall permitted design aesthetic and layout of the permitted development. The high quality of landscape treatment is maintained, and there is a decrease in the overall floor area of development previously permitted, while a different substation layout and design is also provided on site in line with the detailed design requirements and connection offer made by ESB for the development. It is considered that the proposed amendments will remain in accordance with the relevant planning policy context, as set out in further detail below.



**Figure 3.1: Extract from permitted site layout plan approved under Reg. Ref.: FW18A/0301**

**Subject Site**

Reg. Ref.: SD07A/0747

- 3.6 On the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2007, a final grant of permission was issued by the Planning Authority in respect of development at the subject site comprising a light industrial/warehouse unit with 2 storey ancillary offices, showroom and associated car park, electricity sub-station, sunken dock, service yard, landscaping and other ancillary works.
- 3.7 An Extension of Duration of this permission was subsequently granted under the Reg. Ref.: SD07A/0747/EP on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2012.

**Adjacent Lands**

Reg. Ref.: SD22A/0013 & ABP Reg. Ref.: PL06S.313603 (Data Storage Facility)

- 3.8 On the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2022, a notification of decision to grant of permission was issued by the Planning Authority in respect of development to the southwest of the subject site described as follows:

*“The installation of an energy storage unit at an existing data centre facility. The development involves the placement of three ISO 40ft. shipping containers containing back up storage units at Keppel Data Centre, Citywest Avenue, Citywest Business Park, Dublin 24”*



- 3.9 On the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2022, a first party appeal has been lodged to An Bord Pleanála. The case is due to be decided by 19/09/2022.

Reg. Ref.: SD16A/0376 (Change of use to warehouse/light industrial use)

- 3.10 On the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2017, a final grant of permission was issued by the Planning Authority in respect of development to the northeast of the subject site comprising the change of use of existing warehouse area of 1,071sq.m to warehouse/light industrial use, provision of additional fire escape door on each of north-west, north-east and south-east elevations (3 doors total), provision of 4 roof mounted extract fans, provision of 3 additional external condensers on the south-east elevation.

Reg. Ref.: SD21A/0150 (4 Warehouse/industrial units)

- 3.11 On the 17<sup>th</sup> of November 2021, a final grant was issued by the Planning Authority in respect of development to the east of the subject site described as follows:

*“Construction of 4 warehouse/industrial units in 3 buildings of c. 13,611sq.m total gross floor area (including ancillary offices and operational facilities) and up to 15m in height, with rear service yards; 155 car parking spaces; 72 cycle parking spaces; water services infrastructure and sustainable urban drainage system features, including relocation and resizing of a pump station permitted under SD15A/0391; internal road network accessed via 2 site entrances established in the previous planning applications on the Eastern and Southern sides of the site, via the roundabout at Citywest Avenue and the R136 outer ring road; amendments to the proposed tree pits along the green-link permitted under SD15A/0391; public lighting, landscaping, planting and boundary treatments throughout the development; all other necessary site and infrastructural works to facilitate the development.”*

- 3.12 A request for Further Information was made on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 2021, which raised 3 no. items.

Reg. Ref.: FW15A/0391

- 3.13 On the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2016, a final grant was issued by the Planning Authority pertaining in respect of development to the southeast of the current subject site described as follows:

*“Installation of site services including the construction of a new gravity foul sewer, foul pumping station and rising main discharging to the public sewer, connection to the public watermain, boundary landscaping and planting treatments including removal of central hedgerow, provision of 'green link' path. Installation of a sub-surface collector drain and infilling of central dry drainage channel. Vehicular and pedestrian/cyclist access points, internal road commencement (details as marked on submitted plans) and all ancillary development works as necessary to facilitate future development at this site.”*

- 3.14 An Extension of Duration of this permission was subsequently granted under the Reg. Ref.: SD15A/0391/EP. The notification of decision was made on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2020.

Reg. Ref.: SD18A/0253

- 3.15 On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October 2018, a final grant of permission was issued by the Planning Authority for the development of a new external plant and equipment zone to the side

of an existing building at 4033 Citywest Avenue, Citywest Business Park, Dublin 24, to the southwest of the subject site.

Reg. Ref.: S00A/0357

- 3.16 On the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2000, a final grant of permission was issued by the Planning Authority for the development of an advance facility including two storey offices for industrial and related uses, with provision for sub-division into two units, ESB sub-station, and associated site development works with access from new interchange at Naas Road, Brownsbarn at Citywest Campus, Dublin 24, to the southwest of the subject site.

Reg. Ref.: S00A/0232

- 3.17 On the 13<sup>th</sup> of October 2000, a final grant has been issued by the Planning Authority for the modification to existing building at Unit 4027-4029 Citywest Business Campus, Brownsbarn, Naas Road, Dublin 24, to the southwest of the subject site.

Reg. Ref.: S99A/0478

- 3.18 On the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 1999, a final grant has been issued by the Planning Authority for the development of two storey offices for industrial and related uses, a ESB sub-station and associated site development works at Citywest Campus, Brownsbarn, Naas Road, Dublin 24, to the southwest of the subject site.

Reg. Ref.: SD03A/0560

- 3.19 On the 12<sup>th</sup> of November 2003, a final grant of permission was issued by the Planning Authority for the development of a distribution warehouse unit incorporating two storey ancillary showroom and offices, with associated service yard, car parking and site development works, and including an internal ESB sub-station at Site No. 4078, Kingswood Road, Citywest Business Campus, Brownsbarn, Naas Road, Dublin 24, to the south of the subject site.

- 3.20 Reg. Ref.: SD06A/0151

- 3.21 On the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2007, a final grant of permission was issued by the Planning Authority for the extension to an existing facility at Unit 4078, Kingswood Road, Citywest Business Campus, Brownsbarn, Naas Road, Dublin 24, to the south of the subject site.

Reg. Ref.: S99A/0697

- 3.22 On the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2000, a final grant of permission was issued by the Planning Authority for the erection of two-storey head office and light industrial facility on Naas Road, Brownsbarn, Dublin 24 at Citywest Campus, to the north of the subject site.

Reg. Ref.: SD06A/0946

- 3.23 On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 2007, a final grant of permission was issued by the Planning Authority for the development of an industrial unit at Kingswood Road, Citywest Business Campus, Naas Road, Dublin 24, to the west of the subject site.



#### **4.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**

4.1 As set out above, the brief description of the proposed amendments to the development permitted under Reg. Ref.: FW18A/0301, as provided within the public notices, is as follows:

*"The proposed development comprises amendments to the development permitted under Reg. Ref.: SD18A/0301. The proposed amendments comprise the following:*

- *Alterations to the permitted two storey data centre building including internal reconfiguration, alterations to finished floor levels, alterations to the building footprint to provide for the relocation of an internal staircore to the south of the building, and the replacement of the enclosed first floor level with an open screened roof mounted plant space (resulting in a reduction of 4,091 sq.m in the gross floor area (GFA) of the data centre building).*
- *Associated alterations to the façade of the data centre building, including alterations to fenestration, cladding, step-out in the southern façade to accommodate a staircore, and a reduction in the eastern building parapet height of c. 2 metres.*
- *The provision of a canopy over the loading docks on the east facade.*
- *Alterations to the permitted generator compound, generators, and flues, including a reduction in the number of generators (5 no. now proposed), and provision of MV rooms within the generator compound.*
- *Provision of an ESB substation compound in the northeastern portion of the site, comprising a single storey substation building (with a GFA of c. 125 sq.m), 2 no. transformers, client control building (with a GFA of c. 47 sq.m), and associated access arrangements within a 2.6 metre high security fence. The ESB substation compound will be accessed from Kingswood Drive.*
- *Omission of the permitted sprinkler tank, pump room and 10kV Substation, reconfiguration of the permitted car parking, and revisions to permitted boundary treatments.*
- *Associated alterations to landscaping, access and internal road arrangements, services, lighting, and layout, and all associated and ancillary works".*

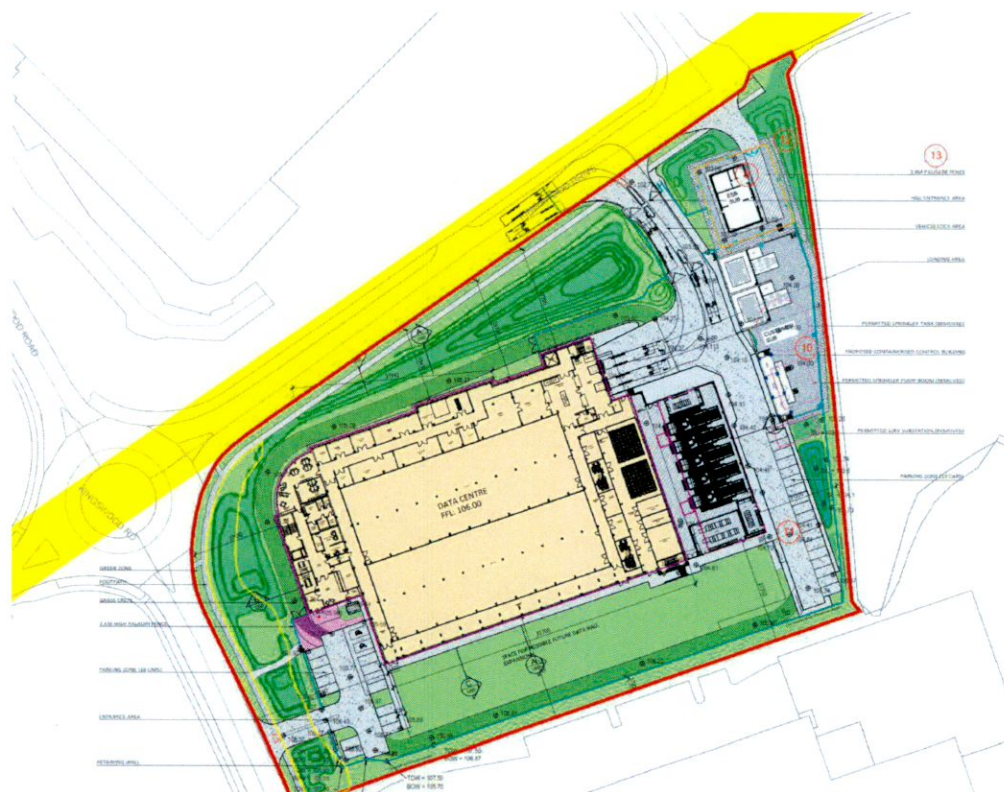
#### **Amendments to the Permitted Site Layout**

- 4.1 The proposed amendments include alterations to the previously permitted site layout of the data centre development on site. These changes are clearly identified on the proposed site layout plan submitted as part of the current application, as prepared by RKD architects. As is evident from the drawings and 3D images submitted, the overall nature and layout of the scheme is maintained following the proposed amendments, albeit with several updates and improvements.
- 4.2 The proposed amendments include the provision of an ESB 38kV Substation building (c. 125 sq.m) and a modular client control building structure (47m<sup>2</sup>) to the North-East corner of the site. The permitted scheme predicted the use of this area for a possible future 110kVA substation and transformers, however as a connection offer has now been made for the proposed development at a voltage of 38kV, no 110kV substation would be required, and the power requirements of the development can instead be dealt with via the current more minor amendments.
- 4.3 An additional access / egress point is proposed to allow for a direct access to the proposed substation from Kingswood Drive. The additional access and egress point will improve safety and ease of circulation of large vehicles within the development site, avoiding potential conflicts between vehicles which need to access the data centre



building / generator area and the vehicles who need to access the ESBN substation. The boundary treatment for the substation provides for 2.6m Palisade fence around ESBN Substation, in accordance with ESBN requirements.

- 4.4 The customer side of the substation comprises two transformers and the aforementioned modular / containerised control building, surrounded by a security fence. An access is proposed to the west of the customer substation, between the transformers and the control building, accessible from the main entrance to the north.
- 4.5 The permitted Sprinkler Tank, pump room and 10kV Substation on site are omitted as part of the proposed amendments, as these structures are now no longer required on foot of detailed design development and the inclusion of a 38kV substation as proposed.
- 4.6 The proposed amendments include the reconfiguration of the permitted car parking arrangements on site. The extant permission provides for 45 no. spaces (including 16 no. spaces which were marked for 'future parking'). The proposed amendments and reconfiguration of the parking provision on site results in the provision of 35 no. car parking spaces in total. The bicycle parking provision will remain as previously permitted.
- 4.7 The amendments to the permitted layout of the development are relatively minor in nature in terms of the appearance of the development on site, and the development retains its high standard of architectural and landscape layout, which was noted by the Planning Authority in their decision to grant permission for the extant permission on site.

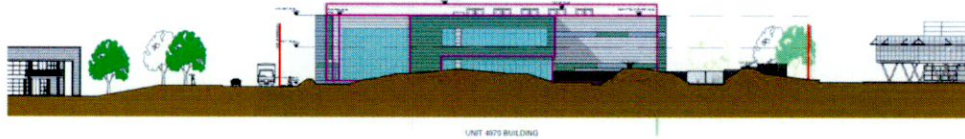


**Figure 4.1: Extract from RKD Architects' Site Layout Plan, which clearly labels and illustrates the proposed amendments**



### Amendments to the Permitted Data Centre Building

- 4.8 The proposed amendments include alterations to the design of the permitted data centre on site. As with the alterations to the permitted layout, the updates to the design of the data storage facilities reflects the refinement and detailed design of the permitted development, and the requirements of the future occupiers for the scheme. The 'proposed' drawings prepared by RKD Architects clearly identify and label the proposed amendments to the data centre building, and also include in purple the outline of the building per the parent permission, demonstrating the relatively minor impact of the proposed amendments on the appearance of the building.



**Figure 4.2: Proposed contiguous elevation illustrating the amended data centre building**

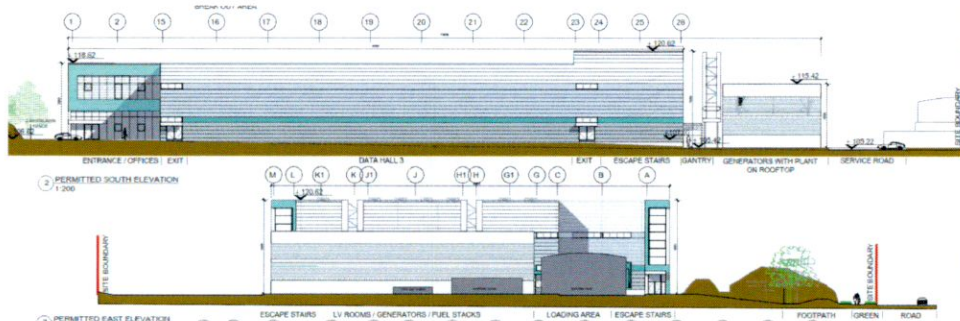
- 4.9 These amendments include internal reconfiguration of the permitted building, alterations to finished floor levels, alterations to the building footprint to provide for the relocation of an internal staircore to the south of the building, replacement of enclosed first-floor area with an open screened external roof mounted plant space, resulting in a total gross floor area reduction of 4,091 sq.m for the data centre building.
- 4.10 A canopy is provided over the loading docks on eastern façade of the data centre building, to provide additional protection during loading dock operations.
- 4.11 These amendments include and result in alterations to the permitted building elevations with the removal and replacement of the slot windows in Data Hall façade with feature colour cladding, a step out in the southern façade to accommodate a stair core, the adjustment of building floor levels, resulting in a reduction of 0.62m in the finished ground floor level, from the permitted level of 106.62m to the proposed ground floor level of 106.0m, and reduction of the eastern parapet height of the building by 2.02m
- 4.12 The RKD Architects drawing pack provides a clear illustration of the previously permitted and proposed outline of the data centre building on site, in order to allow for an understanding of the impact of the proposed amendments. As demonstrated within the drawings, and the photomontages submitted, the amendments will not result in any significant change to the perceived scale, massing, or bulk of the permitted development on site.
- 4.13 The area schedule prepared by RKD Architects and submitted herewith clearly demonstrates the elements of floorspace reduction and addition across the



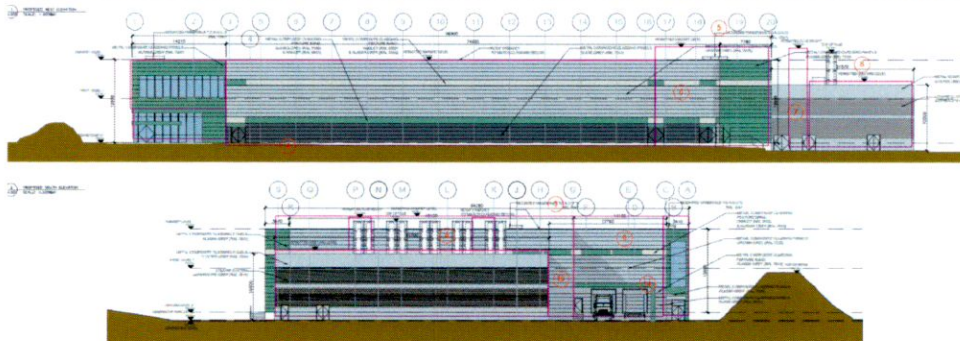
development. The alterations proposed to the data centre building result in a reduction of 4,091 sq.m in its internal area, due to the replacement of internal floorspace with open, screened plant area at first floor level. This change, along with the introduction of a 38kV substation building and client control building, and the omission of the previously permitted 10kV substation and sprinkler tank result in a total gross floor area of 7,582 sq.m on the overall site, which represents a reduction of 3,966 sq.m in total when compared to the extant permission to which the amendments relate.

**Amendments to Permitted Generator Area**

- 4.14 The proposals include amendments to the permitted generator compound, generators, and flues. This includes a reduction in the number of generators from 8 no. permitted generators to 5 no. proposed generators, a reduction of 0.55m of the generator flue height from the permitted 120.40m to the proposed 119.85m, and provision of 3 no. MV rooms within the generator compound.
- 4.15 It also is proposed to connect the generator enclosure to the main building with louvre walls as part of the proposed amendments.
- 4.16 These changes are clearly illustrated in the accompanying drawing pack prepared by RKD Architects, which indicates the previous location and extent of generators and plant, alongside the amended design proposals.
- 4.17 The application is accompanied by updated photomontage imagery which clearly demonstrates the minor nature of these amendments in the context of the overall permitted development. As demonstrated within the AWN Consulting noise and air quality assessments accompanying the amendment application, the proposed amendments will not result in any significant noise or air quality impact which might cause a nuisance to the locality.



**Figure 4.3: Extract from RKD Architects' Proposed South and East Elevations**



**Figure 4.4: Extract from RKD Architects' Permitted South and East Elevations**



### **Associated Amendments and Ancillary Works**

- 4.18 The proposed amendments include associated changes arising from the amendments outlined above. This includes amendments to hard landscaping and planting (especially in the Northeast corner), boundary treatments and security gates. When considered either individually or in combination, these proposed associated amendments will not have any significant impact on the nature, scale, layout, or appearance of the permitted development on site.
- 4.19 The proposals also include all ancillary and associated development works and associated services.

### **5.0 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

#### **National Planning Framework – Ireland 2040**

- 5.1 The National Planning Framework was published in February 2018 and contains policies which are supportive of the development of ICT infrastructure, with particular reference made to 'datacentres'.
- 5.2 National Strategic Outcome 6 of the NPF relates to the creation of "A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills". This strategic outcome is underpinned by a range of objectives relating to job creation and the fostering of enterprise and innovation.
- 5.3 The following objective, relating to ICT infrastructure (including datacentres) is included under National Strategic Outcome 6:

*"Promotion of Ireland as a sustainable international destination for ICT infrastructures such as data centres and associated economic activities."*

- 5.4 The current application proposes amendments to a permitted data centre development, in a location which is well suited and serviced to accommodate such a use. The proposed amendments are therefore supported by this policy provision.
- 5.5 The NPF further states under National Strategic Outcome 6:

*"Ireland is very attractive in terms of international digital connectivity, climatic factors and current and future renewable energy sources for the development of international digital infrastructures, such as data centres. This sector underpins Ireland's international position as a location for ICT and creates added benefits in relation to establishing a threshold of demand for sustained development of renewable energy sources."*

- 5.6 Having regard to the above, the National Planning Framework is clearly favourably disposed to the location of ICT infrastructure in Ireland, and the proposed development, comprising amendments to a permission for development which comprises of such ICT infrastructure, is therefore considered to be wholly in accordance with this key body of national planning policy.

#### **Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly**

- 5.7 The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) were adopted by the Regional Assembly on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2019. The subject site is within the Dublin region of the EMRA, with the RSES



targeting and promoting development within or close to the city. The permitted development on site, and the amendments now proposed, will facilitate the appropriate development of an underutilised site, within an existing business park and within the built-up area of Dublin.

5.8 Within the RSES, Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 8.25 states the following:

*“Local Authorities shall:*

- *Support and facilitate delivery of the National Broadband Plan.*
- *Facilitate enhanced international fibre communications links, including full interconnection between the fibre networks in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.*
- *Promote and facilitate the sustainable development of a high-quality ICT network throughout the Region in order to achieve balanced social and economic development, whilst protecting the amenities of urban and rural areas.*
- *Support the national objective to promote Ireland as a sustainable international destination for ICT infrastructures such as data centres and associated economic activities at appropriate locations.*
- *Promote Dublin as a demonstrator of 5G information and communication technology.”*

5.9 It is submitted that the subject site is an appropriate location for the development of a data centre development (as already permitted) having regard to the location and the zoning of the subject site, its proximity to good quality road infrastructure and the serviced nature of the subject site. As the current amendments seek to facilitate the delivery of a permitted data centre development, it is submitted that the current application accords fully with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the EMRA.

## **6.0 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

### **South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022**

6.1 The statutory Development Plan for the area at the time of writing is the South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022. It is noted that the application is likely to be decided under the recently adopted 2022-2028 County Development Plan, which is dealt with below.

6.2 The subject site is located within the Citywest Business Campus and the proposed development is considered to accord with the vision, aims and objectives of the Development Plan by helping to deliver economic and employment growth in a sustainable manner.

6.3 Before addressing the immediate land use zoning context, which the proposal is considered fully consistent with, we note there a number of other policy and objectives in the Development Plan which the proposed development on the subject lands is considered to be consistent with, as listed below.

*Policy ET2 - Facilitate and support the regeneration of underutilised industrial areas that are proximate to urban centres and transport nodes and to promote and support more intensive compatible employment and/or residential led development in regeneration zones.*



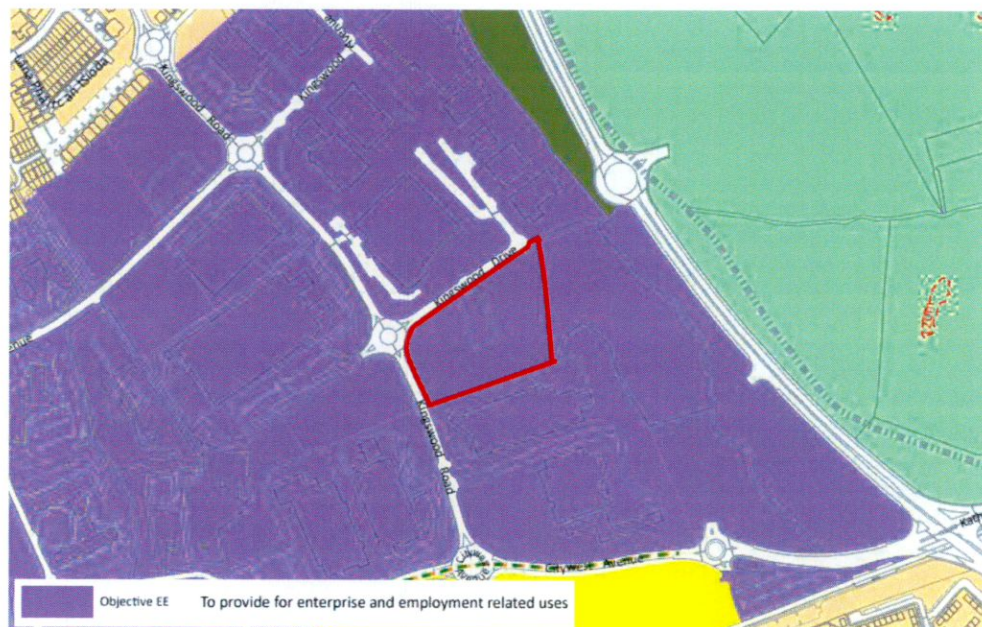
*Policy ET3 - Support and facilitate enterprise and employment uses (hightech manufacturing, light industry, research and development, food science and associated uses) in business parks and industrial areas.*

*ET3 Objective 2 - To prioritise high tech manufacturing, research and development and associated uses in the established Business and Technology Cluster to the west of the County (Grange Castle and Citywest areas) to maximise the value of higher order infrastructure and services that are required to support large scale strategic investment.*

*IE4 Objective 1 - To promote and facilitate the provision of appropriate telecommunications infrastructure, including broadband connectivity and other innovative and advancing technologies within the County.*

### Zoning

- 6.4 The application site is subject to the EE – Enterprise and Employment zoning objective as indicated in Figure 6.1 below.



**Figure 6.1: Extract from Zoning Map 8 of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022 (approximate extent of the subject site outlined in red).**

- 6.5 This zoning objective seeks “*To provide for enterprise and employment related uses.*”
- 6.6 The ‘EE’ Zoning Objective does not make specific reference in the list of permitted uses to a Data Centre development. However, having regard to the permission extant on site for a data centre development, it is considered that the proposed development comprising of amendments to the extant permission complies with the land use zoning objective for the site.
- 6.7 It is considered that the proposed amendments to the permitted data centre development accord with the EE zoning objective and the vision for EE zoned lands as set out in the Development Plan. Moreover the permitted development, as amended will provide employment in the context of a new facility which reflects the pattern and design of development in the vicinity.



### **Car and Bicycle Parking**

- 6.8 The subject site is located in Zone 1.
- 6.9 "Data centres" are not listed as a category under the development plan for the car standards in table 11.23. However, a maximum parking provision of 1 space per 50 sq.m is set out within the development plan for "Offices", which includes "Office Based Industry, Science and Technology Based Enterprise, and Business Park".
- 6.10 Under the parent permission, a total provision of 45 car parking spaces were permitted to serve the data centre (including 15 'future spaces'), the proposed amendments include the reconfiguration of parking on site, resulting in a final provision of 35 parking spaces.
- 6.11 "Data centres" are not listed as a category under the development plan for the bicycle standards in table 11.23. The proposed amendments do not result in any change to the permitted quantum of cycle parking.

### **Other Relevant Objectives**

- 6.12 ET3 Objective 5 seeks *"To ensure that all business parks and industrial areas are designed to the highest architectural and landscaping standards and that natural site features, such as watercourses, trees and hedgerows are retained and enhanced as an integral part of the scheme."*
- 6.13 ET3 Objective 6 is *"To ensure that business parks and industrial areas are designed to promote walking, cycling and public transport."*
- 6.14 The current application includes an Architectural Design Statement prepared by RKD which sets out the design rationale for the amendments to the scheme that are now proposed. The proposed amendments will not detract from the permitted design, and the proposed development remains in accordance with the design criteria for industrial and employment areas.
- 6.15 Section 11 in relation to construction and demolition waste states the following:  
*"Construction and demolition waste management plans should be submitted as part of development proposals for projects in excess of any of the following thresholds:*
- *New residential development of 10 units or more,*
  - *New developments other than above, including institutional, educational, health and other public facilities, with an aggregate floor area in excess of 1,000 sq metres,*
  - *Demolition/renovation/refurbishment projects generating in excess of 100 cubic metres in volume of construction and demolition waste, and*
  - *Civil engineering projects in excess of 500 cubic metres of waste materials used for development works on the site."*
- 6.16 In accordance with the objective set out above, a Resource & Waste Management Plan prepared by AWN is submitted with the current amendment application.
- 6.17 ET1 Objective 3 is *"To support the continued development of economic clusters to the west of the County by prioritising compatible and complementary enterprise and employment uses that would not undermine the established character of these areas."*



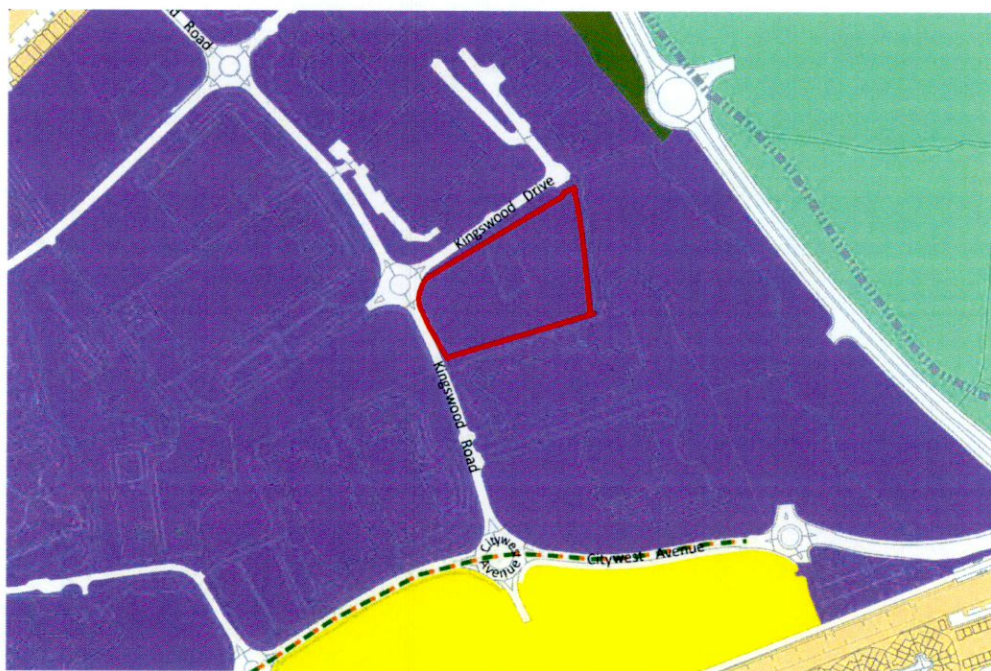
- 6.18 ET3 Objective 3 seeks *"To support the phased expansion of the established Business and Technology Cluster to accommodate strategic high-tech manufacturing investments, research and development and associated uses."*
- 6.19 The permitted data centre is appropriately sited and will be accommodated within a bespoke building at a location which provides the requisite services for such a development, and which is appropriately zoned under the County Development Plan.

**South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028**

- 6.20 As noted above, the current application will be decided under the new 2022-2028 Development Plan, as it will be the operative Development Plan on the date of decision. At time of writing, while the new Development Plan has been adopted, it has not yet come into force, but will do so during August 2022. As the final consolidated version of the Plan as adopted is not available at time of writing, the following is based on a review of the Draft Plan, the Material Amendments to the Draft Plan, and the recent notice of the Planning Authority to the Office of the Planning Regulator under Section 31(AM)(6) of the Planning and Development Act.

**Zoning**

- 6.21 The subject site is zoned EE with to aims *'To provide for enterprise and employment related uses'*.



**Figure 6.2: Extract from Zoning Map 8 of the Draft Development Plan**

- 6.22 Within the Development Plan as adopted by the Elected Members of the Council (and notwithstanding a recommendation to the contrary by the Office of the Planning Regulator), 'Data Centre' use has been listed as a not permitted use under the EE zoning objective.
- 6.23 It is noted that the Planning Authority have issued a notice to the Office of the Planning Regulator under Section 31(AM)(6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as



amended), highlighting that the recommendation of the OPR in this regard has not been followed in the making of the Development Plan.

- 6.24 It is considered likely that a Ministerial Direction will be recommended by the OPR in order to require the Development Plan to comply with national and regional planning policy, any the OPRs previous recommendation in this regard. On that basis it is considered likely that 'Data Centre' use will ultimately not be a 'not permitted' use under the EE Zoning objective, however this is subject to the future consideration of the OPR (and potentially the Minister).
- 6.25 In the event that a draft Ministerial Direction is issued prior to the making of a decision on the current application, pursuant to section 31(4) of the Act, the parts of the Plan to which the draft direction relate will be deemed not to have effect. On that basis, in such a scenario the current application could be determined without the permitted use on site representing a 'not permitted' use under the relevant EE zoning objective.
- 6.26 In any event, even in the scenario where 'Data Centre' is a not permitted use under the EE zoning objective at the time of decision on the current amendment application, it is noted that data centre use has already been permitted on the subject site (under the parent permission to which the current amendments relate). Therefor in such a scenario the proposed amendments would comprise amendments to a permitted non-conforming use.
- 6.27 Section 13.1.1 of the Plan states the following in this respect:

*"There are instances throughout the County where land uses do not conform with the zoning objective of a site. These include instances where such uses:*

- 1. were in existence on 1st October 1964 (i.e. prior to planning legislation), or*
- 2. have valid permission, or*
- 3. have no permission and may or may not be the subject of enforcement proceedings.*

*Development proposals that relate to uses referred to under categories 1 and 2 above, particularly those that would intensify non-conforming uses, will be permitted only where the proposed development would not be detrimental to the amenities of the surrounding area and would accord with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. This includes the integration of land use and transport planning."*

- 6.28 While the current application relates to amendments to a permitted use (i.e. no. 2 above would be of most relevance), the proposed amendments do not intensify the permitted use, and in fact result in a reduction in the overall floor are of development on site. Furthermore, the amendments have been demonstrated to not be detrimental to the amenities of the area (refer to the air quality, noise, EIA Screening, and planning assessments provided), and would accord with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. Therefore, even in the event that a Ministerial Direction is not issued in relation to the permissibility of 'Data Centre' use under the EE zoning objective, permission should still be granted for the amendments proposed to the permitted development on site.

#### **Parking**

- 6.29 As noted above, the proposed amendments result in a reduction in the level of car parking provided to 35 spaces, while the level of cycle parking remains unchanged.



### **Economic Development and Employment**

- 6.30 EDE1 Objective 5 seeks *"To support the implementation of the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan to support the objectives for the South - West Corridor and the area within the M50 by the:*
- ➔ *Promotion of high tech, manufacturing and research and development in Grange Castle Business Park and Citywest.*
  - ➔ *Intensification of industrial lands and mixed-use development at Naas Road/Ballymount and in Tallaght Town Centre/Cookstown while ensuring, to the greatest extent possible, the sustainability of existing businesses and employment.*
- 6.31 Section 9 defines the Citywest Business Campus as a *"modern business park located in the west of the County with capacity to attract large scale industries of regional, national and international significance, due to the availability of large plot sizes, infrastructure and corporate park style environments."*
- 6.32 The draft development plan recognises that *"the requirement for data centres is increasing with social and technology needs such as 5G, smart cities and artificial intelligence."*
- 6.33 EDE5 Objective 1 is *"To prioritise hi-tech manufacturing, research and development and associated uses in the established Business and Technology clusters to the west of the County (Grange Castle and Citywest areas) maximising the value of higher order infrastructure and services that are required to support large scale strategic investment."*
- 6.34 EDE5 SLO1 is *"To ensure that the campus style environment in Citywest is maintained to promote an attractive landscaped setting for the existing and future business within the business park."*
- 6.35 EDE7 Objective 2 sets out requirements relating to space extensive employment developments. In this regard, it is noted that the amendments relate to an already permitted space extensive use, which is already subject to a connection offer to supply power to the development. The proposed amendments arise on foot of detailed design and occupier requirements and relate to a use which is already permitted at this location. The development presents a high quality of design, and the previous permission and the current amendment application provide sufficient information in relation to traffic, water services, energy, and overall design to support the proposed development. It is submitted that, as the use is established and permitted on site, the proposed amendments will not give rise to any change in the compliance of the proposed development with the policy context.

### **Surface Water Drainage**

- 6.36 IE2 Objective 10 seeks *"To require all development proposals to provide a separate foul and surface water drainage system – where practicable."*

### **Sustainability / Renewable Energy**

- 6.37 E3 Objective 3 seeks *"To require all new development to be designed to take account of the impacts of climate change, and that energy efficiency, energy provision and renewable energy measures are incorporated in accordance with national building regulations and relevant policy and guidelines."*

## **8.0 ASSESSMENT OF OTHER RELEVANT PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening and Appropriate Assessment**

- 8.1 An Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report has been prepared by AWN Consulting and is submitted along with this planning application. The EIA Screening Report sets out that the proposed development does not meet or exceed any threshold which would require the mandatory submission of an EIAR and will not have any significant environmental impact which would necessitate the undertaking of subthreshold EIA.
- 8.2 The EIA Screening Report provides a robust appraisal of the amendments to the permitted development against all relevant parameters and finds in each instance that the proposed development will not require preparation of an EIAR.
- 8.3 An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report is included with the application, which has been prepared by Moore Group. The Screening Report concludes that it is not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment Process in respect of the amendments to the permitted development now proposed.

### **Ecological Impact Assessment**

- 8.4 As part of the current amendment application pack, an Ecological Impact Assessment is submitted as prepared by Moore Group to inform the consideration of the current application.
- 8.5 The report concludes that the predicted effects from the proposed development are 'not significant' on habitats, flora, fauna or biodiversity and that there are no predicted effects on any European sites.

### **Air Quality, Climate and Noise Impact Assessments**

- 8.6 As part of the current amendment application pack, detailed air quality and noise impact assessments are submitted as prepared by AWN Consulting.
- 8.7 The reports confirm that the proposed amendments will not result in any significant impact on air quality and climate. Likewise, the noise impact assessment confirms that the development 'as amended' will not result in any significant noise impact.

### **Architectural and Cultural Heritage Assessment**

- 8.8 An Architectural and Cultural Heritage Assessment has been prepared by CRDS Archaeological & Historical Consultants.
- 8.9 The report concludes that there will be no predicted impacts on archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage relating to the proposed development, and therefore no mitigation measures are required.

## **9.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1 This application seeks permission for amendments to a permitted data centre development on a site located at the corner of Kingswood Drive and Kingswood Road within Citywest Business Campus, Naas Road, Dublin 24.
- 9.2 The proposed amendments are mostly minor in nature and will not impact on the permitted layout or design of the development significantly. The proposed



amendments also result in a decrease in the overall floor area of development permitted on site, predicated on detailed design and refinement of the development on foot of potential future occupier requirements.

- 9.2 The development of this site and the amendments now proposed are in accordance with the policies and objectives of the National Spatial Strategy, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly, and the South Dublin County Development Plan.
- 9.3 It has been demonstrated within this report, as well as within the accompanying drawings, documents reports submitted herewith, that the proposed amendments will result in relatively minor changes to the permitted development in terms of its layout, appearance, and scale. The design and layout of the permitted development and the proposed amendments thereto also provides for an appropriate use of the subject site which is cognisant of existing and permitted surrounding land uses.