

**DIRECTION BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNDER SECTION 35(1) OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008 RELATING TO A PROPOSED DATA CENTRE CAMPUS AT AMPHILL ROAD, BEDFORD IN CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE**

By email to the Secretary of State dated 24 April 2026, TLT LLP on behalf of Questpit Limited ("the Applicant") formally requested that the Secretary of State exercise the power vested in the Secretary of State under section 35(1) of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) ("the Planning Act") to direct that the proposed data centre campus ("the Proposed Development") as set out in the Applicant's formal request, be treated as development of national significance for which development consent is required.

The Secretary of State requested additional information on 13 May 2026 and this was provided in a single document on 18 May 2026. The Secretary of State has made a decision within the deadline set out in section 35A(4) of the Planning Act and wishes to convey that decision.

Having considered the Applicant's formal request (as set out in the consolidated document) and the details of the Proposed Development, the Secretary of State is satisfied that:

- the Proposed Development is a business or commercial project of a prescribed description for the purposes of section 35(2)(a)(ii) of the Planning Act and regulation 2(a)(i) of the Infrastructure Planning (Business or Commercial Projects) Regulations 2013, as amended ("the Regulations"), consisting wholly or mainly of the construction of one or more of the matters in the Schedule to the Regulations (namely paragraphs 1. Office use, 2. Research and development of products or processes and 10. Data Centres);
- the Proposed Development is within England; and
- The Applicant's formal request constitutes a "qualifying request" in accordance with section 35ZA(2) of the Planning Act.

The Secretary of State notes that the Proposed Development comprises the following as detailed or referred to in the Applicant's qualifying request and further information:

- a data centre campus of up to four data centre buildings (each equipped with data halls) with a proposed IT load of up to c.720MW across the four buildings; and
- a digital training facility to provide Science., Technology, Engineering and Mathematics students with facilities for education and research, comprising of a training centre (approximately 1,200 sqm) and office buildings (approximately 13,400 sqm)

Having considered the details of the Proposed Development against the criteria in the 2013 Policy Statement for the extension of the nationally significant infrastructure planning regime to business and commercial projects, and all other relevant matters, the Secretary of State is of the view that the Proposed Development by itself is of national significance for the following reasons:

- the proposal would be likely to have a significant economic impact;
- the proposal would be important in driving growth in the economy;
- the proposal would have an impact on an area wider than a single local authority area;
- the Proposed Development is related to a proposed gas generating station project for which development consent is required and would benefit from being considered as a single application.

The Secretary of State considers that if the details of the Proposed Development change, before submitting any application to the Planning Inspectorate, the Applicant may wish to seek confirmation from the Secretary of State that the development which is to be the subject of the proposed application is the same as that for which this Direction is given.

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE HEREBY DIRECTS** that the Proposed Development is to be treated as development for which development consent is required. Any application for development consent for the Proposed Development may also include any matters that may properly be included in a development consent order (in accordance with section 120 of the Planning Act) including ancillary matters (section 120(3)) and associated development (within the meaning of section 115(2) of the Planning Act).

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE FURTHER DIRECTS** in accordance with section 35ZA(3)(b) of the Planning Act that any proposed application for a consent or authorisation mentioned in section 33(1) or (2) of the Planning Act for the Proposed Development is to be treated as a proposed application for which development consent is required.

This direction is given without prejudice to the Secretary of State's consideration of any application for development consent which may be made in relation to all or part of the Proposed Development.



**Lewis Thomas**

**Deputy Director – Planning Casework**

Authorised to sign on behalf of the Secretary of State

15 June 2026