

KESWICK AND INTWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council expresses serious concerns ahead of expected Apex Data Centre planning application

Keswick and Intwood Parish Council remains deeply concerned about the proposal by Norwich Apex Ltd to develop a major data centre on land adjoining Ipswich Road and the B1113 at Keswick.

The Parish Council understands that a formal planning application is expected shortly. We will consider that application carefully and objectively, together with the detailed technical evidence submitted by the developer and the views of local residents.

However, the scale and nature of the proposed development raise very serious concerns for our parish and the wider surrounding area.

This is not simply another commercial development. The proposal is for a 150MW data centre, incorporating a large data centre building, energy centre and associated infrastructure. The proposed facility would be substantially different in character and operation from the business park development for which the site already has planning permission.

Our principal concerns include:

- **NOISE:** the potential for continuous noise from cooling equipment, mechanical plant, energy infrastructure and other operational equipment, particularly during night-time hours.
- **IMPACT ON RESIDENTS:** the effect that persistent noise, visual intrusion, lighting and industrial activity could have on the quality of life and amenity of people living close to the site.
- **LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT:** the scale and height of the proposed buildings and associated infrastructure in an area which forms part of the rural setting of Keswick and the wider Yare Valley.
- **ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY:** the potential effects on nearby wildlife habitats and sensitive areas, including the wider Marston Marsh and Yare Valley environment.
- **ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND INFRASTRUCTURE:** the exceptional amount of electricity required by a facility of this scale and the associated infrastructure needed to support it.
- **HEAT AND ENVIRONMENTAL; EFFECTS:** the substantial amount of heat generated by the proposed facility and the need for robust, independently verified assessment of its potential environmental consequences.
- **TRAFFIC AND CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS:** the effects of construction activity, heavy vehicles and associated works on local roads and neighbouring communities.
- **LONG-TERM CERTAINTY:** the Parish Council wants clear and enforceable conditions covering noise, lighting, emergency generators, maintenance, construction hours, environmental protection and future expansion or changes to the facility.

The fact that the site already has planning permission for commercial development does not mean that every form of development is appropriate on that site. A data centre of this scale and nature must be assessed on its own merits and against its actual impacts.

The Parish Council is particularly concerned that the community should not be asked to accept assurances in place of robust evidence. Claims concerning noise, visual screening, environmental effects, energy use and the impact on neighbouring properties must be supported by detailed, independently scrutinised assessments.

We also recognise that data centres provide important digital infrastructure and that the development could bring investment and employment. Those potential benefits must, however, be properly weighed against the local environmental, social and amenity impacts.

Our position is that the interests of local residents and the protection of the character and environment of Keswick must be at the heart of the planning decision.

When the application is submitted, Keswick and Intwood Parish Council will carefully examine all of the supporting documentation and will make detailed representations to the planning authority.

We strongly encourage residents to do the same.

This is an important planning decision for Keswick, Intwood and the wider South Norfolk community. It is essential that the decision is based on the full evidence and that the voice of the local community is properly heard.

Keswick and Intwood Parish Council
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