

OpenVoiceNews U.K.

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

Advanced Data Centre to Replace Commercial Site in Hemel Hempstead

August 3, 2025

— Categories: Real Estate



A major redevelopment plan in Hemel Hempstead has taken a significant step forward. Outline approval has been granted for a 5,100-square-metre data centre to replace the existing Blue Box Storage site on Maylands Avenue.

Submitted to Dacorum Borough Council in September 2024, the proposal outlines the demolition of the current commercial building to make way for a purpose-built facility designed to meet the growing demand for digital infrastructure. The approved plans include space for ancillary offices, a substation, external servicing areas, and on-site parking.

While full details of the building's design, landscaping, and layout are still to be submitted, the planning officer confirmed that the proposal meets key planning criteria at this stage. "The illustrative plans demonstrate that an acceptable scheme in these terms can be accommodated on the site and, in particular, that satisfactory space for landscaping and tree planting to the Maylands Avenue frontage would be available, together with suitable height setbacks to help mitigate the impact of the proposal on the street scene," the officer's report stated.

The development comes as demand for data centres continues to rise. Businesses and institutions are increasingly reliant on secure facilities to store, process, and manage data. Data centres, which house vital IT equipment such as servers, storage systems, and networking infrastructure, are critical to modern digital operations.

Planning documents explain that the existing building is no longer fit for purpose and that redevelopment offers a viable long-term solution. The applicant stated, "The proposed development would secure the site's long-term employment function whilst responding to an important opportunity to deliver a data centre use, for which there is demand (yet few suitable sites) and increasing policy support at the national level. "

The project has been presented as one that enhances local digital capabilities and strengthens the borough's economic potential. Located within a recognised employment area, the site is seen as a logical candidate for redevelopment, offering benefits without placing undue strain on surrounding infrastructure.

Alongside economic goals, the scheme has also considered environmental and design factors. Early proposals highlight the inclusion of green buffers and planting along the frontage, helping to maintain the street's visual appeal and integrate the new structure with its surroundings.

With the outline permission now in place, the applicant will be required to submit a more detailed application covering the remaining aspects of the design before construction can begin. Nonetheless, the initial green light suggests the council views the project as a welcome addition to the borough's business and technology landscape.

The approval aligns with broader national trends that favour investment in digital infrastructure. Both private developers and local authorities recognise the value of such developments in securing long-term economic resilience.

Once complete, the Hemel Hempstead data centre is expected to play a key role in supporting digital operations for a range of sectors, while also contributing to job retention and future-focused growth within the town's thriving commercial district.