



CASE STUDY

MAJOR DATA CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

CLIENT: CONFIDENTIAL

LOCATION: UK

HIGHLIGHTS

- Strategic Environmental Planning
- Ecological Assessment & Survey Management
- Design-led Risk Reduction

CONTEXT

Securing planning permission for a major new data centre development required a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and a coordinated approach across multiple environmental disciplines. The scheme was particularly sensitive due to its rural location, the scale of the proposed development, and the need to maintain strict confidentiality throughout the planning process.

Appointed during the early stages of project development, Arthian delivered all ecological baseline and assessment work for the EIA, alongside arboriculture, contaminated land, flood risk and drainage, noise, heritage and planning services.



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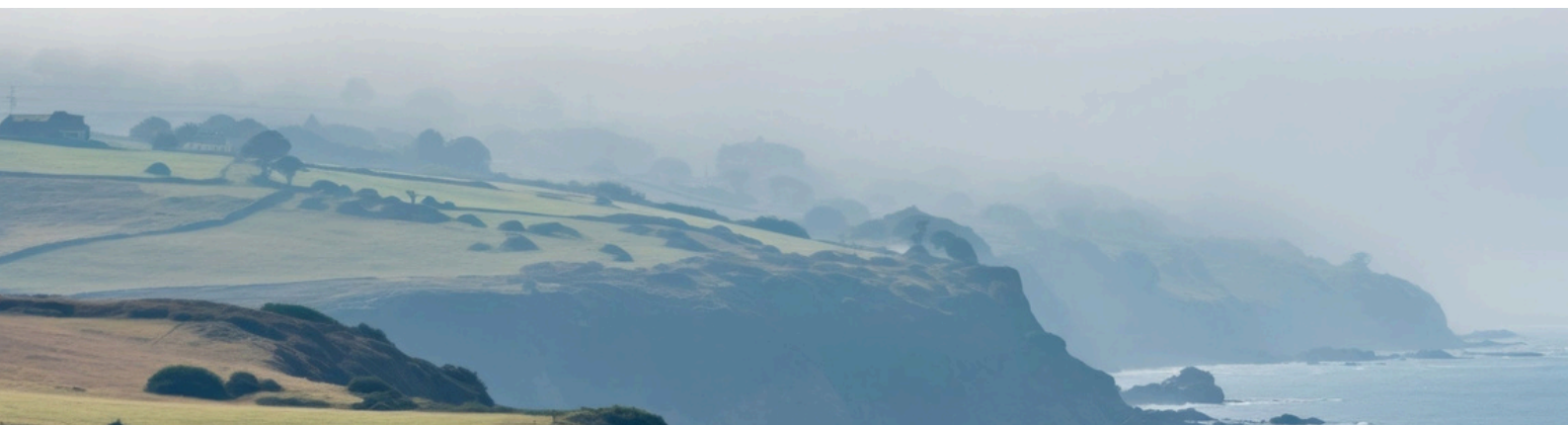
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THE CHALLENGE

With the project design still evolving as surveys commenced, there was significant uncertainty around potential environmental constraints and assessment requirements. The client's primary concern was avoiding delays to the planning programme while ensuring any ecological risks were identified and managed appropriately.

The size of the site and its rural setting required an extensive programme of ecological surveys. At the same time, careful stakeholder management was needed to maintain confidentiality and manage interactions with landowners and members of the public.



THE SOLUTION

Arthian's ecology team became involved early in the project lifecycle, providing a proactive, risk-based approach to environmental assessment and survey design. Working closely with the wider project team, a survey strategy was developed that accounted for multiple potential design scenarios, ensuring baseline data remained robust as proposals evolved and reducing the risk of planning delays.

A comprehensive suite of ecological surveys was delivered, including breeding and wintering birds, great crested newts, reptiles, otters, water voles, vegetation, bats and dormice. Throughout the programme, the team worked closely with land access representatives while maintaining a discreet and professional approach during field activities.

Alongside baseline surveys, Arthian prepared ecological screening and scoping assessments to identify key environmental receptors, evaluate potential impacts and assess a range of development scenarios. This enabled environmental risks to be understood early and informed opportunities for mitigation to be incorporated into the evolving design.



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THE SOLUTION, CONTINUED

The team provided ongoing advice to reduce planning risk, programme implications and future mitigation costs. Through close collaboration with designers and engineers, opportunities were identified to avoid ecologically sensitive areas, supporting positive biodiversity outcomes and reducing impacts on protected species. Where avoidance was not possible, targeted assessment strategies, including advanced bat survey techniques such as trapping and radio-tracking, were developed to support planning requirements.

Over an 18-month period, Arthian became an integral part of the wider project team, supporting project progression through close collaboration across disciplines and with key stakeholders. The success of this approach led to appointments on additional infrastructure projects associated with the wider development programme.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Comprehensive ecological support for the EIA process
- Reduced planning and programme risk
- Enhanced biodiversity and habitat protection opportunities
- Successful support through a confidential planning process
- Repeat appointments on related infrastructure projects



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