Saunderton: our update, 23 October 2026

At the community event on 14 October, we took a long list of questions and made a set of commitments to follow up, published in an email and on the Community Hub on 23 October. Thank you to everyone who came, and to everyone who has written to us since. This update covers each one: what we have done, what is still open and when you will hear from us next.

Exciting news: the Community Development Programme results are in

Thank you to everyone who took part in our first Community Development Programme public vote. 390 local people voted, and we are delighted to confirm funding for four projects: **studio repairs at Bledlow Ridge Primary School, accessibility improvements at the village shop, solar energy storage at Bledlow Ridge Village Hall, and new outdoor space at West Wycombe Preschool.**

The programme is a dedicated fund for local projects, decided by the community. Applications came from Bledlow Ridge, Saunderton, Princes Risborough and the surrounding villages, and a panel shortlisted seven projects for residents to vote on, with VIRTUS providing the funding.

It was a close contest across all seven shortlisted projects, and we are grateful to every group that applied.

Read the full results and the story behind the programme on the Saunderton Community Hub: https://virtuscommunityhub.com/index.php/en/locations/uk/saunderton

Where each action stands

Area	Status	When you will hear next
Construction timeline	This is published on the Community Hub	Key updates will be continually added as we confirm timings
Ensuring lorries are sealed and updated marshal briefings on handling complaints	This is done. All marshals are instructed to check exiting lorries are secure, have been re-briefed on stating driver standards and are aware of how to handle community feedback if approached directly	–
Second exit onto Haw Lane: safety review	We are conducting a safety review and are investigating possible solutions	We will share an update as soon as a suitable solution has been found
Meeting with principal contractors' senior managers	This has been completed and they are fully briefed	–

Correction on the Bledlow Ridge Facebook group	This is completed	–
Communications strategy	We will publish an outline on the Community Hub regarding our proposed communications strategy with the community, which we welcome feedback on. In addition, we have put in place a new internal framework to ensure timely follow up to email enquiries.	30 Oct
Replies to emails	Emails will now be acknowledged within three working days and further followed up upon where more information is required.	–
Republished site visuals on the Hub	This is complete and now available on the Community Hub	–
Landscaping updates	This is ongoing, and photo updates will be published as work is carried out.	On the Community Hub, as work progresses
Expanded acoustic modelling	Consultants have been instructed. The survey programme is being confirmed	We will have a clear idea of the next key milestone by 30 Oct
Locations for expanded modelling	Requests open until 23:59 - 23 October	-
Green belt references in the draft local plan	As the draft local plan is still in consultation we cannot comment on this point but have ensured that our planning consultants are aware of this to monitor for the future.	-
2008 planning permission and possible restriction on diesel use	Our planning advisers have again investigated and found no reference to this in the 2008 planning permissions.	-
Update on the Section 73 application and questions on the separation of the sound element	We are in consultation with Buckinghamshire Council, our legal advisers and our planning consultants about what is possible for the sound element of our Section 73 application (PL/25/6761/VRC). We will confirm the position as soon as we can. The rest of the application is unchanged. The existing sound conditions remain in place while we carry out further surveys as committed to. We have asked for the acoustic reports that were on the planning portal to be withdrawn, so that we can publish fully updated	30 October

	surveys and modelling once they are complete.	
Query regarding placement of temporary cabins	Investigated and no agricultural land is being used.	–
Community email newsletter	Planned for November launch	Sign-up will be available on the Hub before the end of November
Community meetings with an independent acoustic specialist	Open	We will organise a series of meetings once results are available

Construction timeline

Construction is planned to finish at the end of 2028, with the four data centres completed in phases. As each one is completed, site activity and heavy construction traffic will reduce.

The full timeline is on the Community Hub.

Traffic and driver behaviour

We heard concerns about lorry speeds, driving behaviour, chalk spills and incidents involving other road users, and about the second site entrance, which sits on a blind corner. Below is an update on what we have done to date and what is still in progress.

Marshals at the site exit now make sure all lorries are properly sealed to prevent load spill. Marshals have also been briefed on how to respond to concerns from the public and pass them directly to the VIRTUS team for follow up.

A meeting with senior managers from the principal contractors to review and agree further measures on driving standards was carried out last week. Now that Haw Lane has fully reopened, drivers of vehicles that fit under the bridge are told by a traffic marshal to turn right as they leave site. All vehicles are wheel-washed, and a road sweeper runs along Haw Lane through the day. In addition, we have requested that our main site contractor installs a sign reminding drivers to respect local speed limits and encourage safe driving behaviour. We are also investigating the possibility of putting in place a camera to capture all site vehicle registrations for ease of checking against any concerns raised from the community.

We have published an article on the Hub explaining how to report an incident involving a vehicle. We have also confirmed that VIRTUS contracts with haulage companies contain no incentives for the amount of debris they are able to collect per day. As a follow up, VIRTUS will instruct our general contractors to write to subcontractors and their suppliers asking that their drivers also do not have these in their contracts. We cannot enforce this, but we will ask for this to be adhered to wherever possible.

The safety review of the second exit onto Haw Lane is still ongoing, with possible solutions being investigated.

How to contact us, and how we will respond

Email community@virtusdcs.com with questions, concerns and ideas. We will acknowledge emails within three working days, and most will get a full reply in that time. Some questions may require additional internal resource and a longer window for detailed reply. In those cases, we will acknowledge them and keep you updated. Our team reviews open enquiries twice a week.

We will keep posting on Facebook, but we cannot always manage discussions through comments or private messages. Please email us instead, as that inbox is monitored regularly.

Going forward, the Community Hub is the main place for project information, updates and answers to common questions, and it is also a route for sending us feedback.

Visuals and landscaping

The visuals we published remain representative of the development being built, and we have republished them on the Hub. Landscaping continues throughout construction. The site will be fully landscaped in line with the approved planning proposals by the time all four data centres are complete, and VIRTUS will maintain it after that.

We are working with Chiltern Rangers to plant an additional 272 trees on the 25 acres that will stay undeveloped. Chiltern Rangers and VIRTUS will maintain that land together, including the public footpath network. We will post landscaping updates on the Hub as they happen.

Sound, expanded acoustic modelling and the Section 73 application

Since our last published meeting report, we have asked for the existing sound surveys and modelling reports to be withdrawn from the Buckinghamshire Council planning portal, so that we can publish fully updated surveys and modelling once they are complete and avoid further confusion with conflicting reports.

The existing sound planning conditions relating to sound remain in place while we carry out further surveys. We are in consultation with Buckinghamshire Council, our legal advisers and our planning consultants about what is possible regarding the sound element of our Section 73 application (PL/25/6761/VRC). We will be able to provide an update on this on 30 October. The existing sound conditions from remain in place while we carry out further surveys as committed to.

Our acoustic consultants have been instructed to expand the modelling across a wider area. Requests have already come in for Bledlow Ridge, Saunderton, Loosley Row, Saunderton Lee, Lacey Green, Bradenham and Longwick. We are confirming the survey programme with our consultants and will share it as soon as it is established.

The last day for additional locations to be added to the assessment is today (23 October) to ensure that the work can progress in a timely manner. When the methodology and locations of the work have been fully scoped by the acoustic consultants, we will publish this on the Community Hub. Everyone who registered for updates at the 14 October event will be told when the findings are published on the Hub.

We will hold a series of further community meetings once the results are available, with an independent acoustic specialist present to explain them and answer questions. We would also welcome proposals from the community for a third party to work with our acoustic consultants, who can get in contact with us at community@virtusdcs.com. **We would appreciate receiving the details for this nominated third party by 11th November** to ensure we can progress the works in a timely manner.

Green belt and the existing planning permission

We have raised two questions with our planning advisers. The first is the references in the new draft local plan to protecting green belt areas from commercial development. As the draft local plan is still in consultation we cannot comment on this point but have ensured that our planning consultants are aware of this to monitor for the future. The second is whether the existing planning permission placed any limit on diesel use on site. Our planning advisers have again investigated and found no reference to this in the existing planning permissions.

Temporary cabins

We have checked the legal title reports which cover restrictions over the site, and we cannot find any legal restriction over that part of the site/access, with no references to specific agricultural use only.

Next dates to note

23 October: this update, and the deadline for requesting additional modelling locations.

30 October: our update on the Section 73 application.

Before the end of November: a community newsletter, with sign-up on the Hub.

Ongoing: updates on the Hub and in the parish Contact magazine wherever useful. We also plan to hold regular community sessions going forward at regular intervals, or when there is a key update such as the expanded acoustic surveys and modelling results. We will confirm the first dates and venues for these sessions in the next couple of weeks.

Thank you for working with us. We know we have not always met the standards residents expect, and we are committed to doing better. Please send questions to community@virtusdcs.com.

The VIRTUS Community Team

VIRTUS
Data Centres