

Fact Sheet

Data Centre, Swanbank

Learn about the development at Lot 5 Unnamed Road, Swanbank

File number:

- (a) 12285/2026/MCU -
Warehouse (Data Centre)

<https://developmenti.ipswich.qld.gov.au/>



1. What is a data centre?

A data centre is typically a purpose-built facility that houses computer servers, data storage and networking equipment. It supports services such as cloud computing, banking, communications, streaming, online shopping and artificial intelligence. Supporting infrastructure commonly includes cooling systems, electrical equipment, batteries, security systems and standby generators.

2. Why are more data centres being proposed?

Demand is growing rapidly for cloud storage, online services, cybersecurity, digital communications and high-performance computing. Data centres can support digital services, business development and specialist employment, but their location, scale and resource needs must be considered carefully.

3. How many data centres are located in the Ipswich local government area?

There is one operational data centre in the Ipswich local government area located at 151 Sinnathamby Boulevard, Springfield Central that has been operational since 2009.

A development application (Number 12285/2026/MCU) was submitted to Council on 4 August 2026 for a new data centre at Lot 5 Unnamed Road, Swanbank. The application is currently under assessment and material is available by undertaking an application search on Council's [Development.i](#) system.

4. Does a data centre need planning approval?

Approval requirements depend on the site, the proposal's scale and the applicable planning laws.

In addition to a planning approval, separate approvals or agreements for matters such as utility connections, building work, fire safety and dangerous goods may also be required.

5. Why is the data centre application at Swanbank being assessed against the superseded planning scheme?

The *Planning Act 2016* provides a statutory mechanism for applicants to seek Council's agreement to have a future development application assessed under a superseded planning scheme following the commencement of a new planning scheme. This is a normal part of the implementation of a new

Planning Scheme. Superseded planning scheme requests are not unexpected.

Council considered and agreed to the superseded planning scheme request (Council File Number 9000/2026/SPSR) in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *Planning Act 2016*. Following the approval of that request, the applicant has six months to lodge any subsequent development application under the superseded planning scheme. As detailed above, this subsequent development application has now been lodged.

The approval of a superseded planning scheme request should not be interpreted as support for, or approval of, any future development proposal. The development application will be assessed on its own merits against the assessment benchmarks of the applicable planning framework, noting that the previous planning scheme will be used for this assessment.

6. What issues are considered during assessment?

A range of matters are considered with regard to the planning framework and assessment benchmarks which are included in the 2006 Ipswich Planning Scheme. These include:

- Land-use compatibility, site design, building scale and visual impact
- Noise from cooling equipment, transformers and generator testing
- Ability for the facility to be connected to electricity, water and other servicing infrastructure (e.g. roads, stormwater)
- Traffic, access and parking
- Stormwater, waste and ecological matters

7. Will a data centre be noisy?

Potential noise sources include cooling fans, chillers, pumps, transformers and standby generator testing.

It is expected that as part of the application material, the requirements of the planning scheme are addressed. This is likely to include an acoustic assessment. As part of such an assessment, it may be necessary to undertake monitoring of the current site and background noise, as well as the existing noise levels at nearby sensitive locations.

The reporting will then look at the likely noise outputs from the proposal and model noise at nearby homes and other sensitive locations. In some cases, it may be necessary for the proposed development to include mitigation measures. This may include separation distance, equipment selection, acoustic enclosures, barriers, building orientation, operating controls, monitoring and limits set by approval conditions.

8. How much electricity does a data centre use?

Electricity use varies substantially with facility size, computing load and cooling design. Large facilities can require significant, continuous supply. The relevant electricity network provider assesses connection capacity and any required upgrades. Any development approval will require connection to the electrical network.

Council will not specifically assess electricity use of a proposal, this will be up to Energex.

9. Do data centres use water?

Some cooling systems use water, while others rely mainly on air or closed-loop systems. Consumption can vary with technology, climate and workload. Assessment may consider potable and recycled water use, seasonal demand, water efficiency, drought conditions, wastewater and whether servicing upgrades are needed.

Council will not specifically assess water use of a proposal. Any development approval will require connection to reticulated water supply which is regulated by Urban Utilities.

10. What about air quality and standby generators?

Standby generators are generally intended for power interruptions and periodic testing. Depending on the number, fuel type, testing program and proximity to sensitive locations, an air-quality assessment may be required depending upon the proximity to sensitive receivers. Controls can include cleaner technology, stack design, testing restrictions, maintenance, fuel standards and emissions monitoring.

11. What if a proposed data centre structure / building affects views or local character?

Data centres can be large buildings with limited windows and substantial rooftop or external plant. Assessment may consider setbacks, height, façade treatment, landscaping, screening, lighting and views from public places and nearby properties. Depending upon the size of the proposed facility, a visual amenity assessment may be requested as part of the development application process for consideration.

12. Will a data centre affect local roads and traffic?

Traffic impacts are generally greatest during the construction phase, when workers, deliveries and construction vehicles are accessing the site. Once operational, data centres typically generate relatively low levels of daily traffic compared to many industrial, commercial or retail developments. Traffic and access arrangements are assessed as part of the development application process and may include road upgrades or other mitigation measures where required.

13. What security measures are typically used at data centres?

Data centres generally contain critical digital infrastructure and typically incorporate security measures such as controlled site access, perimeter fencing, surveillance systems, security lighting and on-site monitoring. The specific security arrangements vary between facilities and operators.

14. Do data centres operate 24 hours a day?

Most data centres operate continuously to support digital services that are required around the clock. While facilities may operate 24 hours a day, development applications are assessed having regard to potential impacts on surrounding properties, including noise, lighting, traffic and visual amenity.

15. Are data centres considered hazardous facilities?

Data centres are not generally classified as hazardous industrial uses. However, they may contain equipment such as batteries, fuel storage for standby generators and electrical infrastructure. The handling and storage of these materials is subject to relevant building, fire safety, environmental and workplace health and safety requirements.

16. How many jobs will a data centre create?

Given the scale of some data centres, they can support substantial temporary construction employment in local areas, while ongoing operational staffing is usually smaller and more specialised in nature.

17. Why aren't all development applications for data centres publicly notified?

The level of assessment for a development application is not determined by Council on a case-by-case basis. Rather, the applicable planning scheme, together with the *Planning Act 2016* and Planning Regulation 2017, prescribes the level of assessment for particular land uses and development types.

Development that is generally consistent with the intent of the planning scheme and can be assessed against defined assessment benchmarks is typically categorised within the planning scheme as code assessable. Code assessable development applications are assessed against the relevant provisions of the planning scheme and do not require public notification.

Development that may have broader or more significant impacts and requires a more comprehensive assessment process is generally categorised as impact assessable. Impact assessable development applications are required to undergo public notification, allowing members of the community to make submissions.

While code assessable applications do not require public notification, information associated with all development

applications is publicly available through Council's Development.i website which can be accessed using the following link: <https://developmenti.ipswich.qld.gov.au/>

18. How can the community have a say?

If a proposal is impact assessable and therefore publicly notified, the public notice will explain where to view the documents, the submission period and how to comment.

To be considered in the assessment process and to obtain any applicable appeal rights, submissions must be properly made in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act 2016*. Generally, this means a submission must be received during the public notification period, state the grounds of the submission and identify the submitter.

Individuals or organisations who make a properly made submission on an impact assessable application may have appeal rights in relation to Council's decision, subject to the provisions of the *Planning Act 2016*.

Notwithstanding that applications may be code assessable, community members are welcome to provide feedback to Council at any time regarding planning matters, including future amendments to the planning scheme.

Information associated with all development applications is publicly available through Council's [Development.i](https://developmenti.ipswich.qld.gov.au/) website.

19. Does lodging an objection automatically stop a proposal?

No. Submissions are considered as part of the assessment, but the decision must be made under the applicable planning framework. A proposal may be approved, approved with conditions or refused.

For further information on how to make a submission to a development application, please refer to the [following link](#).

20. Are there any regulations from the Queensland or Australian Government that require specific assessment as part of a development application?

There are currently no specific regulations from the Queensland or Australian Government of these facilities regarding land use, servicing etc. It is understood that both levels of Government are considering additional regulation and possibly legislation changes to address the regulation of these facilities. This fact sheet will be updated if additional regulation is available.

Document last updated: 27 August 2026