

The Valeon data centre: security and site layout, in the developer's own words

Xlinks' public materials describe the Valeon data centre campus mainly in terms of jobs, investment and “preserved” heritage buildings, and say little about how the site itself would be secured, accessed or laid out once built. A technical briefing prepared by the developer's own consultants, Arthian, for Torridge District Council in April 2026, together with the council's own highways correspondence and other records held by the group, sets out a fuller and more precise picture. This sheet sets out what those documents say, in the developer's and the council's own words, about the security regime, the site's access arrangements and its physical layout.

1. A dual-perimeter, Critical National Infrastructure-secured campus

The developer's own briefing describes a security model built around national infrastructure status, not routine commercial premises security. Section 7 of Arthian's April 2026 briefing to the council confirms a dual-perimeter security model consistent with Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) designation. Data centres were designated CNI by government in September 2024. The briefing describes the outer perimeter as enclosing the community greenspace, the proposed Visitor Centre and the relocated Grade II listed buildings, and refers to PAS68-rated vehicle security barriers and multi-factor authentication as part of the access control regime.

2. What this means for the “publicly accessible” greenspace and heritage buildings

A cluster of listed buildings and a community greenspace are described as accessible to the public, but sit inside a CNI-grade secure perimeter. The developer's own summary describes the relocated listed buildings as being reused as a data centre campus Visitor Centre, with the surrounding land presented as community greenspace. Once a dual-perimeter, PAS68-barriered, multi-factor-authenticated security model of the kind CNI designation calls for is applied, it is not yet clear what “publicly accessible” will actually mean in practice, including what opening hours, security checks or escorted access might apply, and exactly where the outer secure line will run relative to the greenspace and Visitor Centre.

3. Access and traffic: the routes behind the site layout

The council's own highways officers have not yet confirmed the access point the developer's own strategy assumes. Arthian's own desktop-based Access Strategy for the site identifies Darracott, close to the proposed access corridor, as the intended route in from the A386. Devon County Council's own highways officer responded by asking directly whether this is “already agreed to be the only site access,” indicating that, as of the correspondence seen by the group, it was not a settled point.

The council's own officers describe the surrounding road network in terms that go well beyond the developer's public reassurance. Devon County Council's highways officer states that, in places, the roads on the route are “barely above 2.0m” wide, and has required a full topographical survey of the whole route from the A386 to the site entrance. The same officer notes that the wider B-road network between Torrington and Barnstaple is, for the most part, only 5.5 to 6.0 metres wide and single vehicle width only in places, “where large vehicles have to stop and fold in wing mirrors to pass another large vehicle.” Junction survey locations specifically required by the council include the A386/B3227 junction and the Delves Grave

junction, and the officer separately suggested a survey at Gammaton Cross to the north as a route “highly likely to come up on SatNav” for drivers approaching from that direction.

Existing traffic on the route is also flagged as a constraint. The same correspondence notes that Linden Close already carries regular large vehicle deliveries to Dartington Crystal, and states it is “doubtful that a 16.5m HGV can pass another vehicle on much of the route.” The council has also asked that no traffic surveys or construction activity take place around the Early May Bank Holiday, when Torrington's May Day festivities cause road closures, and has separately asked the developer directly why so much on-site parking is needed “for what appears to me to just be a load of big sheds,” a question that does not appear to have been answered in the correspondence seen by the group.

Security staffing itself is a recurring traffic movement in the operational layout, not only a construction-phase issue. The developer's own transport consultant confirms in writing that, once operational, the data centre would generate a consistent level of traffic associated with on-site staffing, shift-change movements, 24/7 security personnel, scheduled maintenance and servicing visits, and occasional HGV activity for equipment replacement, plant deliveries or waste removal. As previously reported by the group, no Transport Statement or Construction Traffic Management Plan covering either the construction or operational phase has yet been published for public scrutiny.

4. Lighting and security infrastructure as a landscape and amenity issue

Security fencing, lighting and access control are not a footnote to the scheme. The group's own planning objection checklist identifies security infrastructure, including fencing, lighting and access control, as a matter with direct landscape impact in its own right, alongside external lighting from 24-hour operation more generally. Huntshaw is a rural parish with very low existing light levels, and the group's Health and Wellbeing working papers have separately identified artificial light at night, including from security and operational lighting, as a potential factor in sleep disruption for nearby residents. No external lighting scheme or light-spill assessment for the secured campus has yet been published.

Key point: The developer's public materials describe the campus mainly in terms of jobs, investment and preserved heritage. Its own technical briefing describes a dual-perimeter, CNI-grade security regime enclosing the greenspace and heritage buildings it calls publicly accessible, a site access route the council's own highways officers do not yet regard as confirmed, a surrounding rural road network its own officers have already described as too narrow in places for the scale of traffic proposed, and a security and lighting scheme that has not yet been published in detail.

Sources: Arthian Ltd, “Valeon Data Centre Campus, Update for Torridge” (Document Ref: 319327-REP-LPA-001, Issue 1.0, 13 April 2026), prepared for Stratus Data Development Ltd; Devon Data Centre & BESS Action Group, “Valeon Data Centre Campus, Analysis of Arthian Briefing to Torridge District Council” (August 2026); Devon Data Campus - Planning Objection Checklist (Revised), 25 July 2026; Health and Wellbeing Sub-Committee Working Remit; Devon County Council Highways and Arthian Ltd email correspondence re Stratus Data Development, Devon Data Centre, Great Torrington (project ref. 319327), 6 October 2025 to 13 April 2026, held in the group's records; Council Correspondence - Source Emails (Raw Text), compiled 21 August 2026.

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