



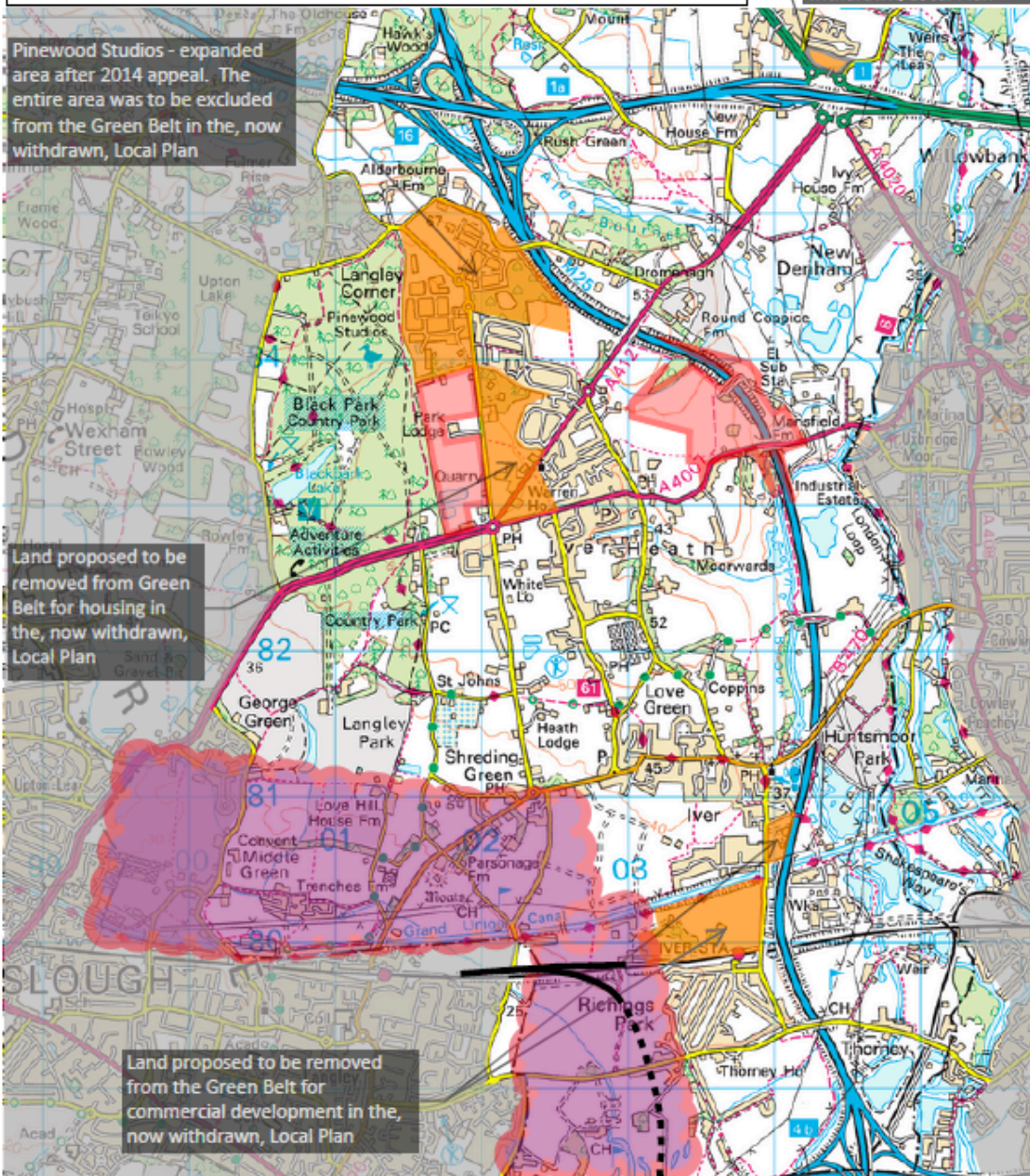
The countryside charity
Buckinghamshire

Joint Statement concerning major planning applications and strategic development pressures in the Mid-Colne/ Iver part of the Colne Valley Regional Park – April 2021

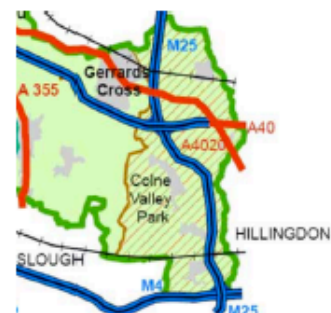
1. The current **planning applications** at Pinewood South (Screen Hub UK or SHUK) and for a Motorway Service Area (MSA) are the latest threats to the countryside in this 'Mid-Colne' part of the Colne Valley Regional Park (CVRP) and Green Belt (GB).
2. We **object to both applications because of their scale and impact on the countryside**, which has a high level of protection by virtue of its GB status and position within the CVRP.
3. The **countryside here is fragile and must be improved** so this 'inner' part of the GB functions in the way it is meant to – for its natural environment, farming & recreation/ countryside potential.
4. It must not be seen as an area to incrementally erode with major development & infrastructure projects, each step justified by its own 'very special' or 'exceptional' circumstances.
5. **Walking and cycling routes** in this part of the Mid-Colne/ Iver/ Iver Heath **must be improved** to provide **attractive, well-connected routes** – for recreation and work purposes. At present many routes are unattractive and unsafe due to the proximity of main roads and traffic.
6. The Council needs to deliver on what government policy says:
"Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land." (NPPF Para.141)
7. **See Map 1**, attached, **showing strategic development pressures** across this area.
8. **See Map 2**, attached, which illustrates the walking and cycling connectivity needed in the area of the two major planning applications.
9. **Buckinghamshire has extensive land holdings** here **and should use them to improve** the accessibility and environmental quality of this critical part of the inner London Green Belt. There are opportunities that must be seized and, if they are not, they could be lost forever.
10. If the Council (and government) is serious about the Green Belt here **a strategic view is needed** to stop what has been happening by stealth - the whittling away of the countryside without comprehensive improvement.
11. We **ask for your support** to protect and improve what is, arguably, the most under pressure area of Green Belt in the country through:
 - a. The **rejection of the SHUK and MSA applications** – certainly as presently conceived.
 - b. Pressing for a '**call-in**' of both applications by the Secretary of State if there is any chance of approval being given.
 - c. Creating the **right framework to improve this area in** the forthcoming Buckinghamshire **Local Plan**.

Map 1: Colne Valley Regional Park - Strategic Development Pressures in the Mid-Colne Area March 2021

Land to be removed from the Green Belt for commercial in the, now withdrawn, Local Plan






- Area outside of Colne Valley Regional Park. N.B. all of the CVRP is Green Belt except the main built-up areas. See diagram. →
- Sites of the Pinewood and Colne Valley MSA applications (as under consideration in March 2021)
- Areas proposed to be removed from the Green Belt in the 2019 South Bucks Local Plan (now withdrawn)
- Approximate area (only the part in the CVRP) suggested by Slough BC for future urban expansion in public documents
- Approximate route of Western Rail Access to Heathrow (underground section with access buildings shown: - - - -)



Map 2: Mid-Colne/ Iver Heath area – SHUK (Screen Hub UK) & MSA applications - key walking & cycling connections – April 2021

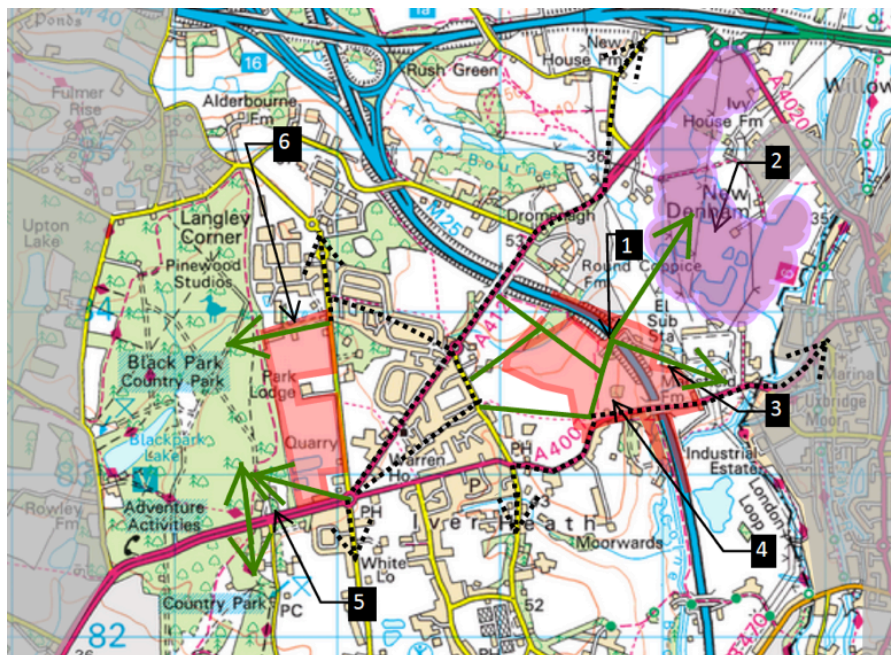
Introduction: Whilst objections were made to the principle of both major developments, we are aware of the possibility that consent may still be granted, by either the Council or after an Inquiry. Council officers are negotiating mitigation packages for that eventuality. Mitigation would need to be comprehensive and wide to offset the impacts on the CVRP and Green Belt - as outlined in our objections already lodged. An important part of that would be making the right active travel provision to 'connect up' the landscape and natural areas for walking and cycling. The focus of the plan below is to convey that, at a strategic level.

Key to Colours on Map

-  Area outside of Colne Valley Regional Park (all is Green Belt except the main built-up areas). See diagram here.
-  Sites of the Pinewood and Colne Valley MSA applications (as under consideration at Feb 2021)
-  New Denham Quarry Area. Subject to restoration scheme with a current application (CM/0004/21) - new bridleway and footpaths but as dead ends. There is the potential to open up this restored countryside in the Green Belt/ CVRP with active travel links to and across where the MSA is proposed, if that ever goes ahead.



Key walking and cycling routes - these are diagrammatic to convey the level of connectivity needed to seize the opportunities that exist. **Green** lines are those geared to enhance access in countryside locations, **Black** - - dashed ones are on or close to roads/ urban areas to create a connected network.



Notes to Map

1. **Critical opportunity to grasp – re-use of farm bridge** for active travel to enable linkage to New Denham Quarry are
2. The extensive restoration area at **New Denham Quarry** creates a 'natural' area that must be made the most of by connecting it with the wider landscape.
3. Routes can connect with the **Iver Environment Centre**.
4. **Walking and cycle routes** in and around the MSA **must follow desire lines** and be part of making access to the local landscape more attractive for users.
5. **Connection to Black Park** should be made as soon as possible from the 5 Dials junction, away from the busy A412. A crossing over the A412 is also needed to encourage walking and cycling to/ from Langley Park
6. A **walking/ cycling connection at the northern end of the SHUK site** is critical to avoid lengthy detours.