

President: Rt.Hon. the Lord Randall of Uxbridge Kt.PC.

Planning Service
Buckinghamshire Council
King George V House
King George V Road
Amersham
HP6 5AW



September 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

CM/0036/21

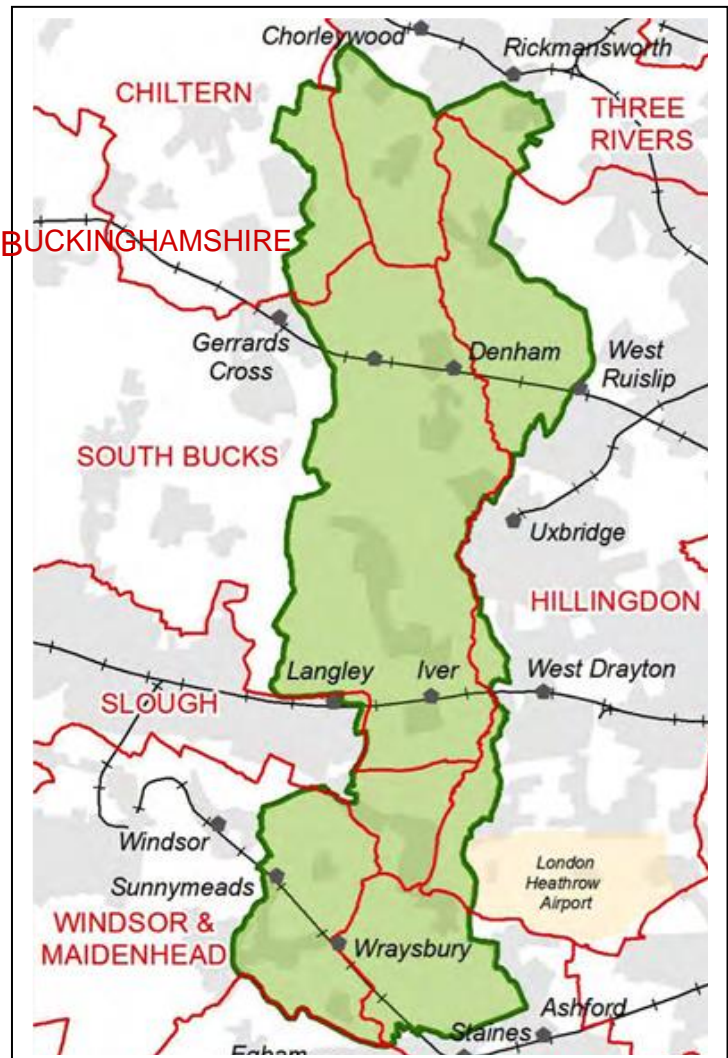
Mineral extraction and provision of access to facilitate the development of the Colne Valley Services and associated works proposed under planning application ref (PL/20/4332/OA)

Land Adjacent to M25, Between Junctions 15 & 16, Iver Heath Buckinghamshire

**This response is from and behalf of
The Colne Valley Regional Park**

The Colne Valley Regional Park was founded in 1965 when local authorities – including Bucks County Council – showed great foresight in agreeing to work together to preserve and enhance this precious area for recreation and nature conservation.

It is supported by more than 80 member organisations including local authorities, businesses, residents' associations, environmental charities and user groups. Groundwork South acts as the Park's managing agent.



Colne Valley Park Trust

Charity Registration Number: 1181303

Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company

A company limited by guarantee. Registered in England. Company No. 08131867

Registered Office: c/o Colne Valley Park Visitor Centre, Denham Court Drive, Denham,
Buckinghamshire, UB9 5PG
www.colnevalleypark.org.uk

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The Colne Valley Regional Park has six objectives:

<https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/whats-special/>

Landscape

The Colne Valley Regional Park (CVRP) covers eight local planning authorities. As a result, the valley is rarely, if ever, considered at a landscape scale.

The creation of a Green Infrastructure Strategy <https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/green-infrastructure-strategy-downloads/> for the Colne Valley Regional Park aims to bring the green and blue on the map to the forefront of planning policy and decisions, and feature the landscape of the Valley as a whole, rather than from the perspective of its various council boundaries. These boundaries are an administrative convenience – they don't exist as real barriers to people and wildlife. The Crane Valley has been added to this strategy to provide a truly landscape-scale picture of the area.

This cross-border approach is entirely consistent with Green Belt policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Summary of response

The whole site is within the Colne Valley Regional Park and is designated Green Belt.

We recognise that mineral extraction is one of the accepted uses within the Green Belt however we are concerned about the extraction of minerals in this location as a precursor for the development of a motorway service area.

In our response on the motorway service area latest scheme, we mentioned concerns regarding the hydrology of the area and the impact of the development on the Alderbourne catchment. This concern is repeated here. The mineral extraction will result in the reprofiling of the land to provide a platform to build the MSA.. It has not been demonstrated in this application that there has been sufficient research to show that there will be no long-term impact on the Alderbourne by the reprofiling. Boreholes have been dug to ascertain water levels however these have been dug in two of the driest summers ever. This land traditionally has a high water table. Indeed, the response from the Minerals and Waste Officer in his response to the MSA application dated 3rd August 2022 refers to complications due to the presence of the Alderbourne including high ground water levels.

We note that the Environment Agency in their comments on the MSA and indeed in the applicants own consultants advice that there will be impacts on the Alderbourne. This is a rare chalk stream and damage to its hydrology will have a profoundly negative effect on this feature.

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In addition there are veteran trees on the site and nearby woodland, of which some is ancient, which would be adversely affected by this proposal, in particular by dust. This would also have an adverse impact on flora and fauna in the area.

There will also be adverse impacts from heavy traffic and lighting on nearby residents in Iver Heath and potentially on those using public rights of way.

The CVRP therefore **objects to this application** on the basis that this site has not been previously identified for mineral extraction and should not proceed unless permission is granted for the MSA development subject to adequate safeguarding on the issues identified above and mitigation as outlined in our response to application PL/20/4332/OA dated February 2021 and the subsequent response of June 2022 including further information on the NPPF context for why mitigation is justified.

The application as it stands conflicts with our objectives, is inconsistent with the aims of the Regional Park, and may cause actual harm.

Buckinghamshire Council should therefore support the CVRP in delivering its six objectives which are consistent with this paragraph and is contrary to Core Policy 9 and therefore you should not allow this development as it stands.

The applicant should be advised by the Colne and Crane Green Infrastructure Strategy when looking at additional mitigation.

Jane Griffin
Director
Colne Valley Regional Park

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