

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



January 10th 2025

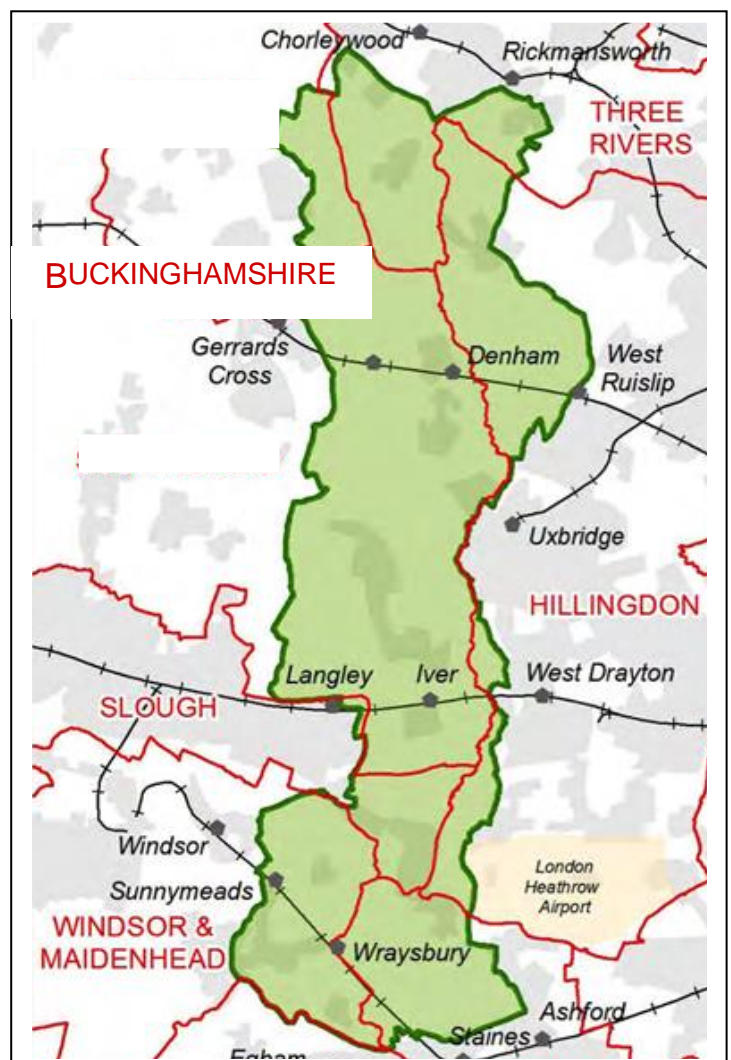
Dear Sir/Madam

PL/24/3532/OA
Data centre

This response is from and on 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 nearly 100 member organisations including local authorities, businesses, residents' associations, environmental charities and user groups. Groundwork South acts as the Park's managing agent.



The Colne Valley Regional Park has six objectives, full details of which can be found here:

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

Landscape

The Colne Valley Regional Park (CVRP) covers six local planning authority areas. 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 parochial 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.

The Colne Valley Regional Park is a Charity Trust funded by local authorities and donations from corporate sponsors and members of the public. To mitigate the development if approved, we would wish to be involved in any S106 agreement to ensure benefits accrue to the CVRP consistent with national and local planning policy.

This application is for a new data centre comprising three buildings of approximately 25m in height on Green Belt land to the east of the previously approved data centre on Thorney Business Park.

The land is in the Colne Valley Regional Park as well as being Green Belt. Policies CP9 in the South Bucks Core Strategy and IV13 in the Neighbourhood Plan should be considered. However, this application makes no reference whatsoever to the CVRP, or the impact the proposal will have on the loss of land to development without any positive contribution to the CVRP in the form of mitigation or compensation. This should be addressed. Or the application should be refused.

One of the six objectives of the Park is access to the countryside. Public footpaths run along the northern side of the Grand Union Canal and along the western boundary (this footpath previously crossed the railway line until the bridge was demolished). These footpaths will become a lot less attractive to the public as a direct result of this development. Access from the site to Iver Village on bicycle and on foot should be facilitated by this development: failure to do so will mean a great opportunity will be lost.

The site is visible from nearby publicly accessible locations. Landscape improvements and BNG will take time to come to fruition. The developer was sent examples of potential mitigation projects in the Ivers (and within the Park) but these are not included in the proposal.

The land now proposed for data centres is recognised in the Ivers Neighbourhood Plan policy IV15 as a potential housing site. The applicants state that housing (presumably a much smaller amount) and station car parking can be provided on a site to the east, but this proposal is not part of this application and therefore there is a potential loss of allocated housing should the data centre be approved.

The land is within a sustainable location – but only provided pedestrian improvements are made for access to Iver station in any subsequent application.

However, the cumulative impact of the number of approved and proposed data centres in the local area can only have a negative impact on the overall quality of the environment and the residential character and standard of living of nearby Richings Park ,and more widely on access and the quality of the landscape and its watercourses within the CVRP.

Yours sincerely

Jane Griffin
Trustee CVR