

PINEWOOD SOUTH DATA CENTRE

# Summary of the planning application

June 2025





# What is proposed?

## Data Centre

A data centre of up to 55,000 sq m is proposed:

- data processing halls
- plant and services: power supply, heat management, back-up generators
- offices, security and management
- access, circulation and parking

## Community gardens

A community garden of 6 acres:

- growing space
- orchard
- informal recreation
- learning space
- multi-use site hub building



## KEY

### Site

- Application boundary
- Landscape area
- Vehicular circulation
- Hardstanding areas

### Community gardens

- Community gardens

### Data centre

- Data centre
- Roof level plant
- Ground level plant
- Site hub building

- Ancillary plant
- Substation
- Decked car park
- Ancillary uses

### Film studio

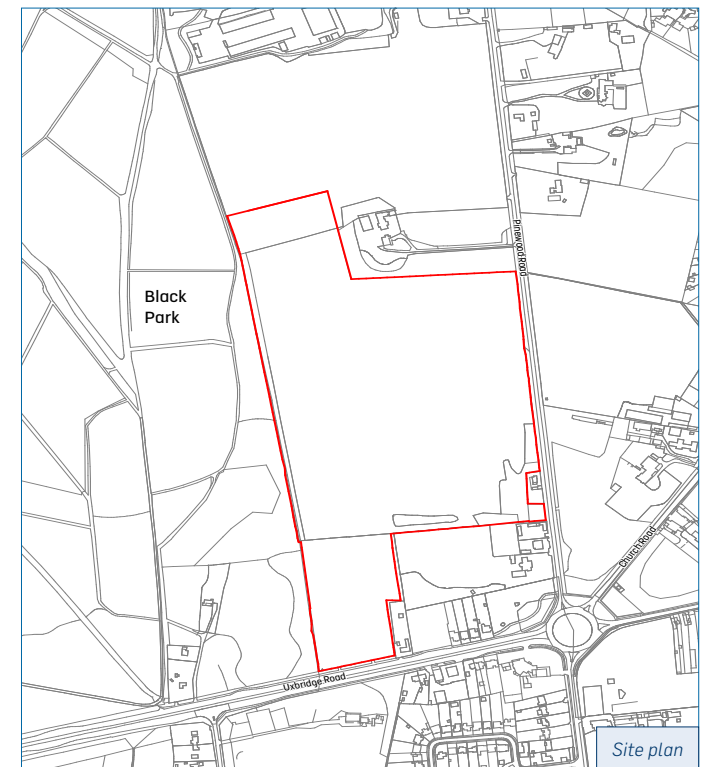
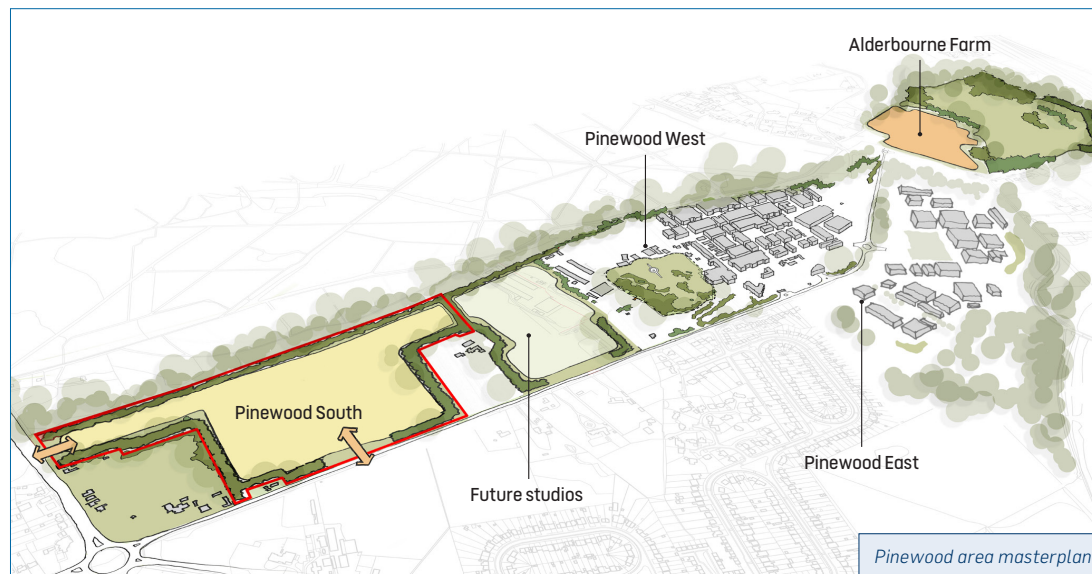
- Sound stage
- Utility building
- Workshops
- Office, entrance & canteen
- Backlot
- Multi-storey car park



# Where is the site?

The development site is located south of Pinewood Studios at Iver Heath. It is around 20 ha (48 acres) of low grade agricultural land used for silage production, being the site of a restored former quarry.

The site is in the ownership of Pinewood Studios and there are extant planning permissions for two studio based schemes, both of which could be developed and represent a fall-back position.



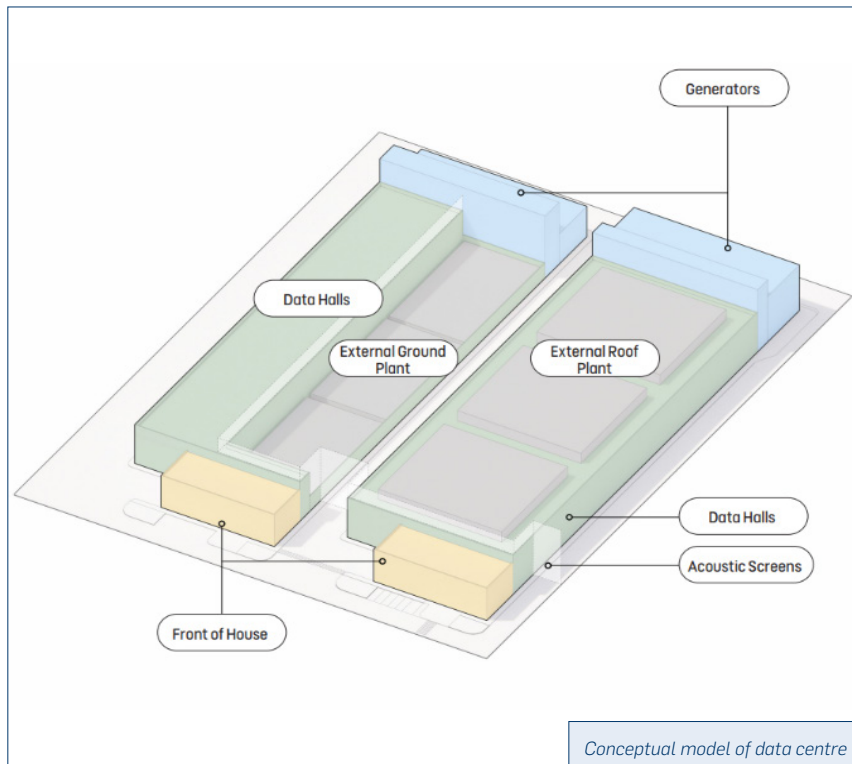


# What is a data centre?

The data centre would comprise:

- data halls (processing)
- plant and heat management/negotiation
- back-up generators
- control and management space (front of house)
- service buildings (ancillary)
- sub station(s) (power management)
- site hub (entrance control and security and site management)
- decked car park

The film studios are not part of this application.





# Who needs data centres?

“Data centres are the engines of modern life, they power the digital economy and keep our most personal information safe”

*Technology Secretary 2024*

Technology is developing at a fast pace driven by the use of digital data on multiple devices that are embedded in businesses, organisations, services, Government, our economy and society at large.

This is bringing a need for super fast data processing and substantial digital storage. The rate of growth in need/demand is currently exponential.

Data centres which serve cloud based computing functions require a particular combination of factors:

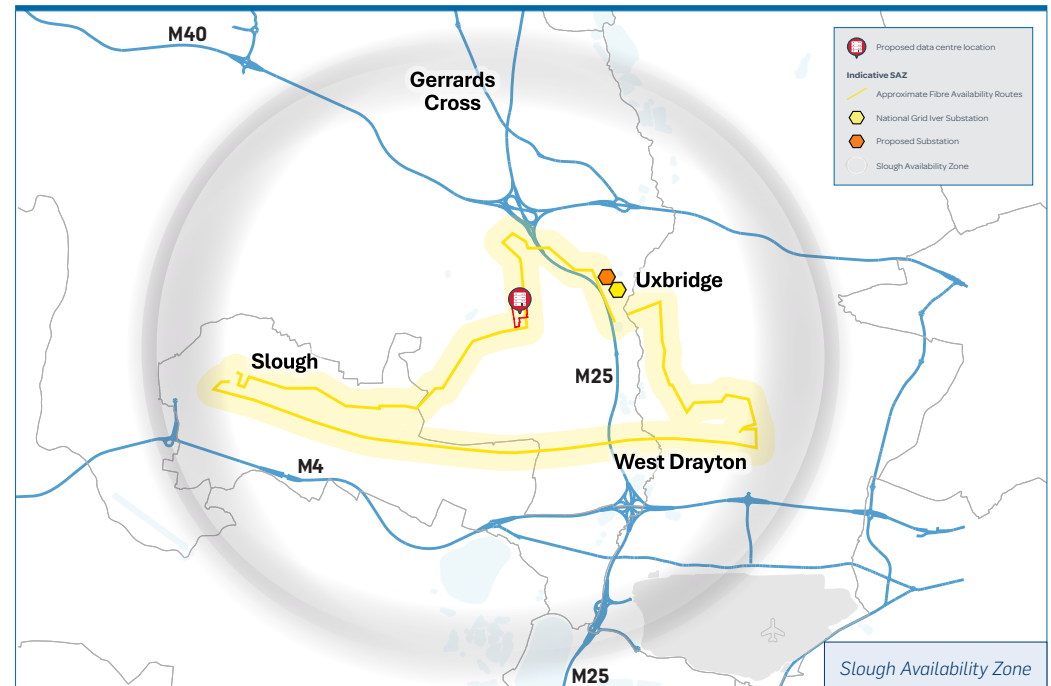
- high speed fibre networks
- ability to cluster
- major power supply
- international connectivity and recognition

Data centres cluster in areas where the fibre network is super fast, power is available and they can connect together. These areas are known as Availability Zones (AZ). The leading UK AZ is Slough-Hayes which is also the second largest in the world.

The UK Government is supportive of new data centre provision and has included their expansion in the National Industrial Strategy.

“Targeted, long-term infrastructure investment is a vital catalyst to success.... Further, additional data centre capacity and access to fast, secure, and reliable digital connectivity is essential....”

*(National Industrial Strategy, Invest 2035, page 35)*





# What is the need?

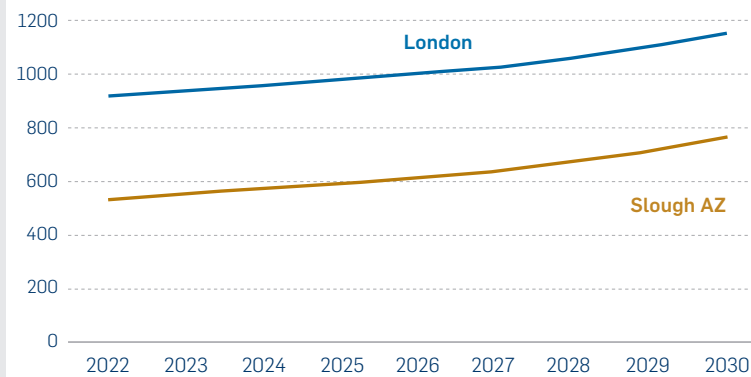
The London region is served by a number of AZs including Slough. London is of international significance alongside Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Paris and Dublin in Europe.

The growth in demand for data centres that serve cloud computing, including some forms of AI, to 2030 is substantial.

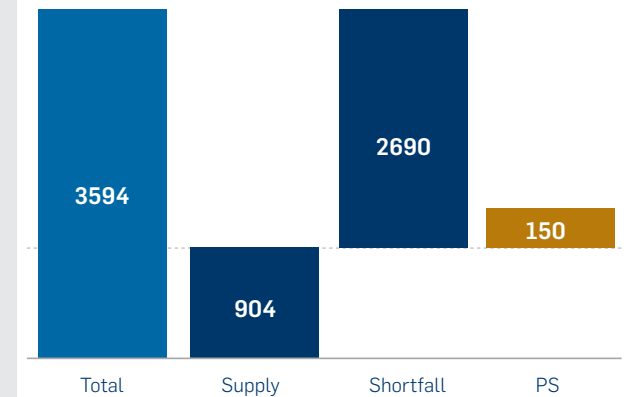
The approval and development of schemes to meet this growth is not keeping up with demand by a significant degree.

In Slough AZ there is a forecast need for 25-30 new data centres by 2030. The pipeline is unlikely to meet this unless new schemes and infrastructure is accelerated, including power supply.

### London and Slough AZ growth



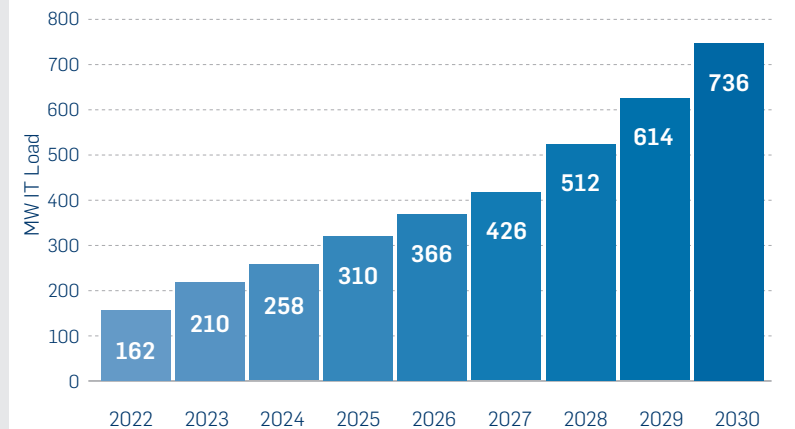
### Capacity shortfall SAZ to 2030



The proposed Pinewood South data centre could provide around 5% of this need.



### Forecast need SAZ to 2030

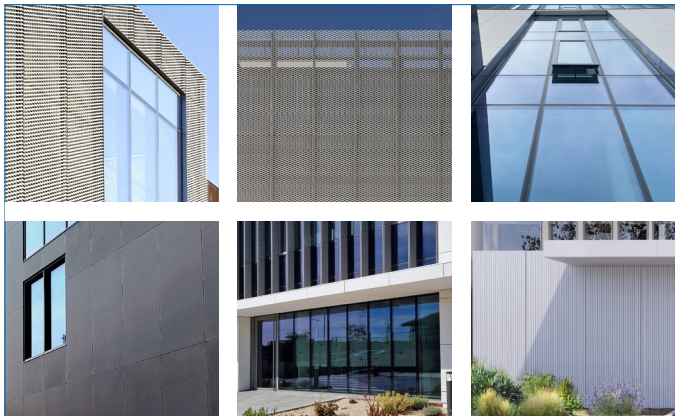




# What might it look like?

The proposed data centre has been designed in outline to show how it can be satisfactorily accommodated on the site. The whole development is set within a substantial landscape framework of existing and proposed planting.

The buildings have not yet been designed but are anticipated to focus upon coloured metal cladding and glass to give a high-tech, lightweight and non-dominant appearance.



## Legend

	Red line boundary		Proposed woodland planting		Proposed lawn/amenity grass		Proposed community garden
	Existing trees retained		Proposed scrub planting		Proposed wetland swale/attenuation		
	Proposed primary avenue trees		Proposed hedge		Proposing paving areas		
	Proposed pine/feature trees		Proposed shrub planting		Proposed roads/car park travel lanes		
	Proposed car park/scattered trees		Proposed species-rich grassland		Proposed parking spaces		



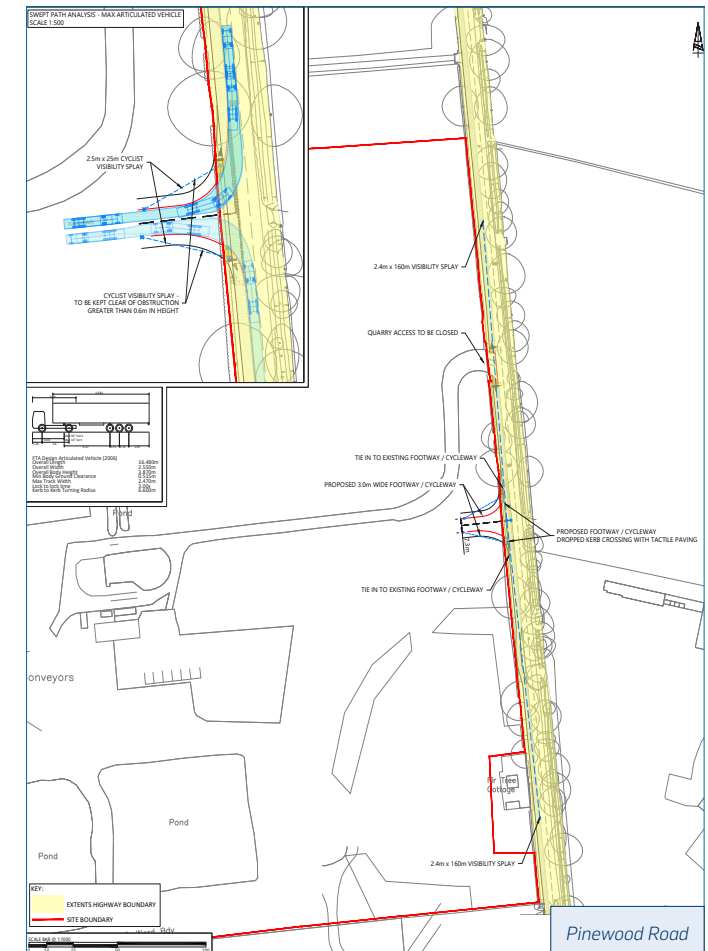
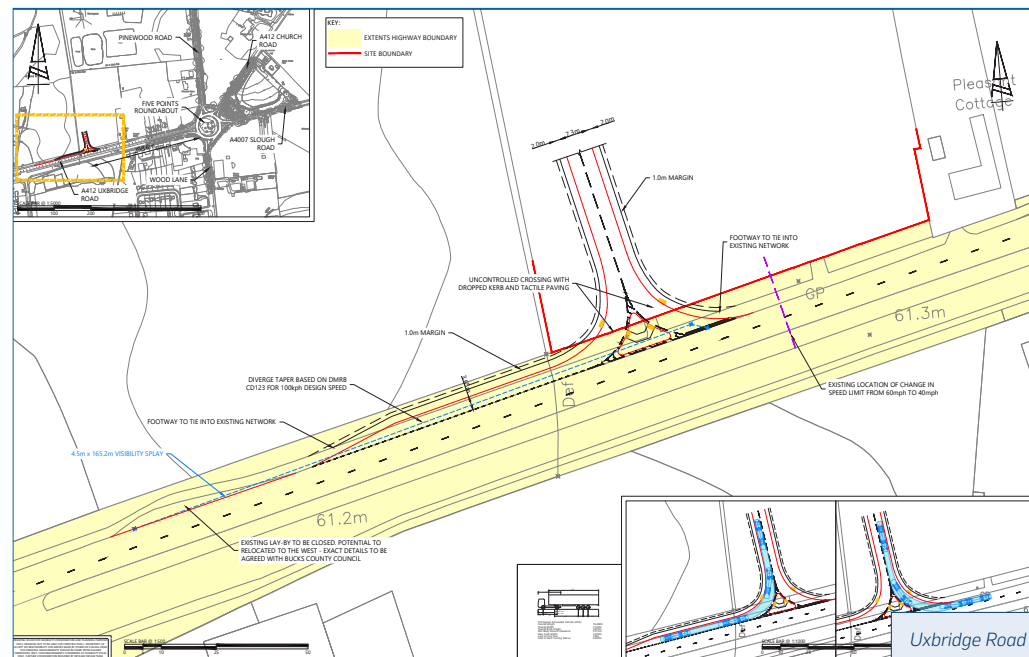
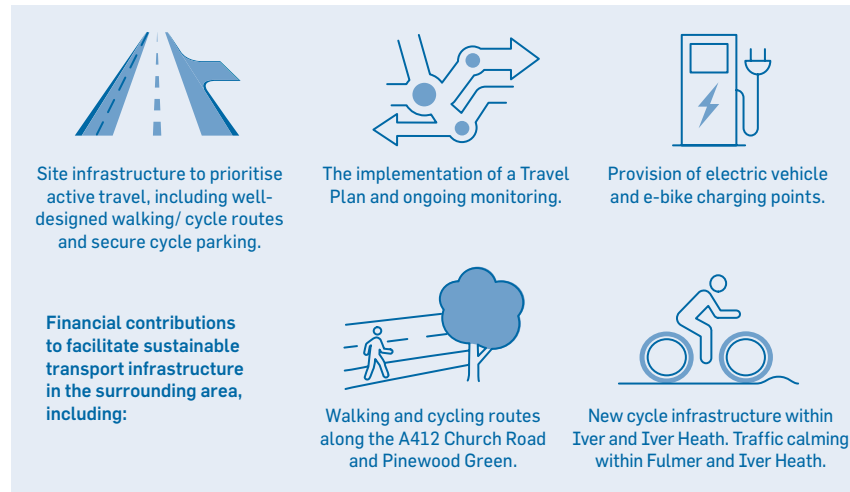
# How would traffic and travel work?

The data centre would generate about 75% less traffic than the previously approved film studios based schemes.

Access would be provided from Pinewood Road and Uxbridge Road.

The development would encourage sustainable travel.

The Seven Hills Road improvement scheme is not required for the data centre. The need for this improvement will be reassessed should the film studios scheme come forward





# What else is proposed?

A community garden is proposed on about six acres of land at the south of the site.

The garden could comprise:

- growing space
- orchard
- informal recreation
- learning space
- multi-use hub building

Pinewood would provide the land and set up with the site becoming self sustaining in the medium term.

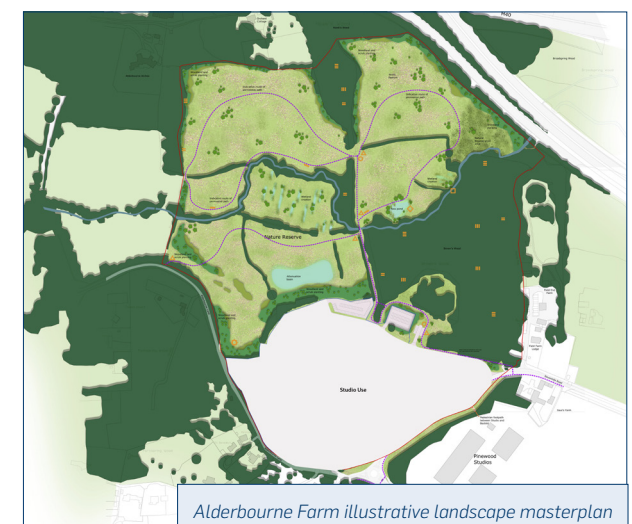
As part of the application, an undertaking is proposed that would deliver a 60 acre nature reserve at Alderbourn Farm, providing ecological enhancements, new habitats, water meadow, walking routes and sustainable land management.



Community garden plan



CGI of proposed community garden



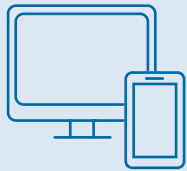
Aldbourn Farm illustrative landscape masterplan



# What are the benefits?

The development would bring a range of important benefits.

## Economic



The proposed development would cost around £1.2billion and total project value, including all computing equipment, potentially, double that.



The construction would support around 1,300 full-time jobs per annum.

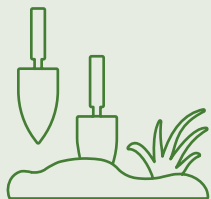


On completion, the development would create approximately 235 on-site full-time jobs.



Overall, the development would support between £240 million to £370 million in GVA annually and at least 1,000 to 1,300 full-time jobs across the London and South East economies.

## Environmental



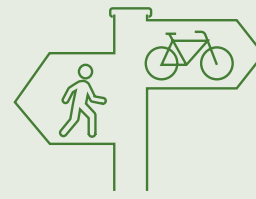
Community garden



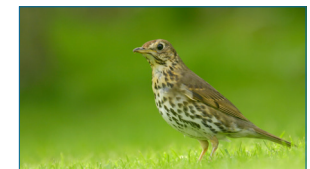
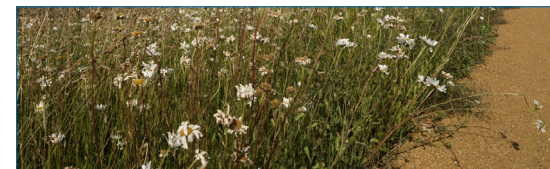
Aldbourn Farm nature reserve



Street trees programme



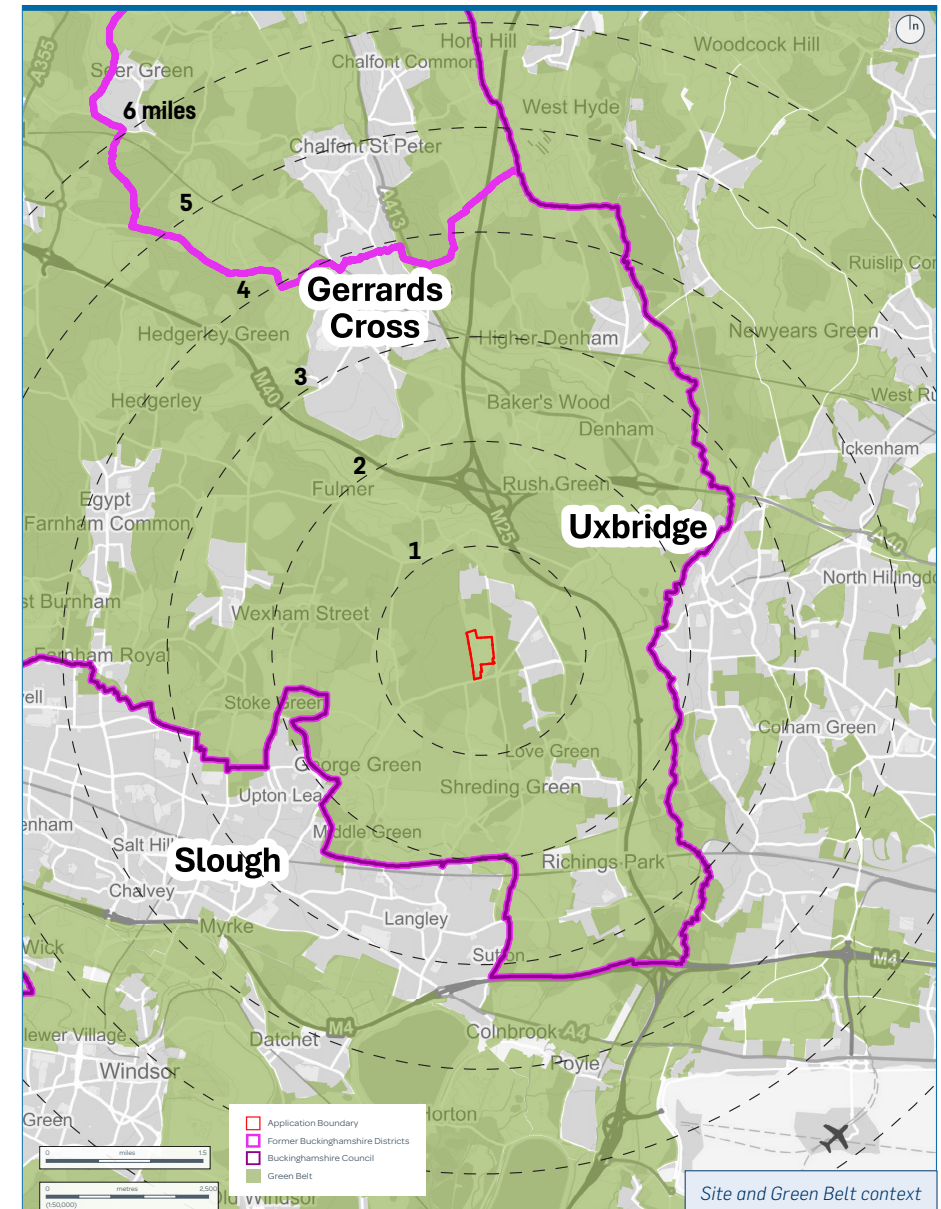
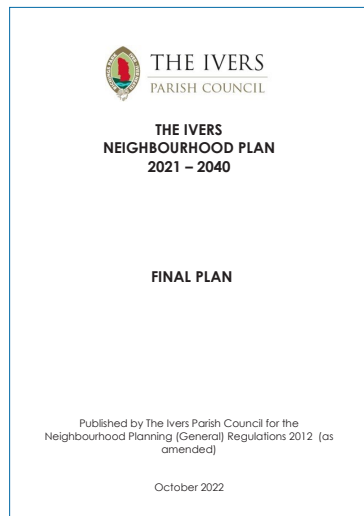
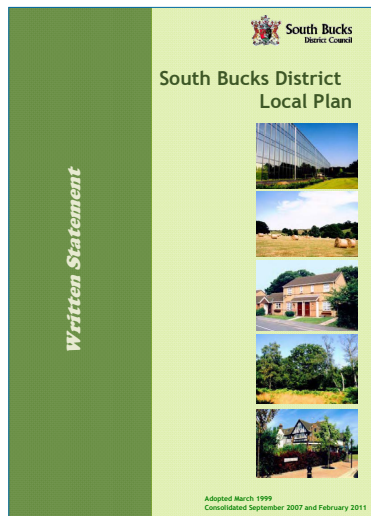
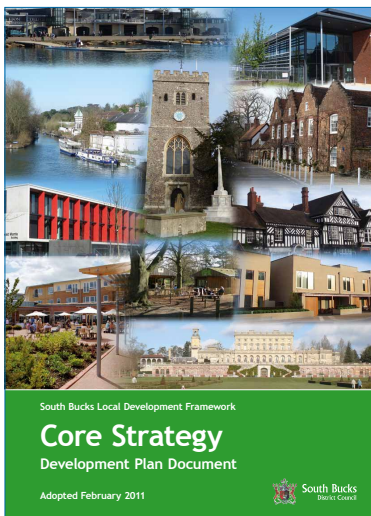
Peace Path improvements





# How will a decision be made?

The applicant has submitted a comprehensive planning case to Buckinghamshire Council.<sup>1</sup>



A key planning issue is the location of the site in the Green Belt.

The Government has recently amended planning policy to include the status of 'grey belt' which are sites that do not strongly contribute to the purposes of Green Belt, where there is a clear need for development and in a sustainable location.

The application scheme includes an assessment which concludes that the site is grey belt and does

not have to show that there are exceptional circumstances to depart from Green Belt policy (as was the case for the recently approved CyrusOne data centre off Seven Hills Road in Iver Heath).

The development is also in accordance with the various plans for the area.

In these circumstances a grant of planning permission is justified.

1. See application reference PL/25/2076/OA on the Council's planning portal