

Response ID ANON-QXPV-84WA-K

Submitted to Local Plan for Buckinghamshire sites survey
Submitted on 2026-02-27 12:30:59

About you

In what capacity are you responding to this survey?

On behalf of a business, group or other organisation

Other respondent capacity:

Organisation details

What is the name of your business, group or organisation?

Name of organisation:
Brown Not Green Chesham Ltd

What is your role or position?

What is your role or position in the group or organisation:
Director & Chartered Surveyor

What is your business/group/organisation email address?

group/organisation email address:
phillip@[REDACTED].com

Site response 1

Please give the site reference number:

Site reference number:
3136

Please give the site address (including postcode):

Site address:

Land to the North of Lye Green Road at North East Chesham HP5 3NQ

What is your connection with the site? (e.g. local resident, local councillor)

Connection to site:
Local Resident & Director of not for profit private company representing Chesham Residents

Is the site suitable in principle for the proposed use?

No

Please give the reasons for your answer:

This site is NOT "Grey Belt" by virtue of the fact that it is self evidently NOT Previously Developed Land, NOR is it failing to strongly contribute to any of three purposes identified in National Government Guidance in relation to Green Belt designation.

Specifically;

- a) The land has for decades has formed a definitive barrier and maintained a "green gap" that has checked the unrestricted sprawl of the larger built-up area of Chesham
- b) The land has again, for decades prevented neighbouring settlements to Chesham from merging into one another or becoming part of "Greater Chesham" specifically the established smaller settlements and hamlets of Lye Green, Botley, & Orchard Leigh.
- d) The land has for many years preserved the setting and special character of the historic town of Chesham as well as the character of Lye Green where there is a listed building (White House).

BNG commissioned an independent professional Landscape Survey in 2019 by SLR Consulting which identified several viewpoints that illustrated the extent of visibility of any potential development upon this site at Lye Green, from adjoining open countryside including land within the AONB (now National Landscape). This illustrates that the Lye Green in particular, IS meeting the requirement of Green Belt designation.

As such any development of this site will injuriously affect the “openness” of the wider neighbouring countryside with a potentially adverse effect on the nearby area of National Landscape.

In addition, any Grey Belt sites need to be suitably located in sustainable locations (ie close to or a short walk to public transport) – Chesham topography involves steep hills and the subject land is some distance from the town centre or its train station and the need to negotiate either Nashleigh Hill or White Hill is hardly conducive to encourage cycling or walking to/from the town centre or station. As such the site is an unsustainable location for development.

Draft national policy places a presumption in favour of development near “well-connected” rail stations. It would be incorrect to assume this location is within easy walking distance of Chesham station (and it is significantly further away than suggested guidance of 1500m / 15–20 mins walking time) and is also problematic given the local topography. Furthermore, Chesham Station with a maximum of two trains an hour is hardly “well connected”.

If this land is incorrectly categorised as Grey Belt, this will create an unjustified presumption in favour of development that will have profound injurious impact upon the wider town and community..

Additionally, whilst not currently reflected in current National Guidance, BNG contends that another material consideration of weight is that this area is productive agricultural land, parts of which are graded b or “Best & Most Versatile” (BMV) agricultural land. According development on such land should be the very last resort as once it is developed it is lost forever and such losses of BMV land undermines national food security.

It is NOT grazing land or empty fields that previously might have been “set aside” and as productive plant growing land it is a scarce and vital resource.

Farmland is also vital for biodiversity. – It is unwise to forfeit this biodiversity on productive farmland where any development is unrealistic or problematic in terms of being able to create biodiversity net gain on site, as is now required by Government.

Agricultural land also provides a habitat for wildlife and some of the proposed site support species of wildlife that are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act.

The land at Lye Green has poor natural drainage being mainly of clay soil. It is located on the top of the plateau overlooking the town. In heavy rain or during prolonged wet periods, the fields flood and it is not uncommon for Lye Green Road to become flooded with surface water overflowing from the fields onto the road. If the land were to be developed this problem will be exacerbated and with risk of additional surface water run off downhill into the town or nearby prevailing developed areas or could compromise the globally scarce chalk stream network that flows through the town. Gees Spring is located in the woods directly adjacent to this land..

Accordingly, significant drainage infrastructure improvements would be necessary at this location.

The site is poorly served by local highways and access can only be created off Lye Green Road or Lycrome Road. Lycrome Road is particularly narrow near the Black Cat pub and is effectively single lane with little ability for two way traffic at its narrowest. The junction with Nashleigh Hill (A416) and Lycrome Road is already busy and as evidenced recently whilst Two Dells Lane was closed for water main replacement and traffic was being diverted down Lycrome Road, and throughout that period that highways junction experienced significant queues of traffic waiting to turn left or right out of Lycrome Road. Accordingly, significant highways infrastructure improvements will be required for any development of Lye Green fields to be acceptable in terms of road users.

It is acknowledged that Bucks (& Chesham) has difficulty meeting a 5 year housing supply. This is as much an indication of an unrealistic and flawed Standard Methodology (created by Central Government) of calculating housing needs as it is of the physical constraints (topography & infrastructure) prevailing locally.

The Buckinghamshire area generally and Chesham more specifically, is also subject to various development restraint policies such as Green Belt, National and Landscape (formerly AONB) as well as Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and these policies should NOT be sacrificed for expediency to address an arbitrary and unrealistic assessment of housing need.

BNG questions:

- Whether this creates pressure to allocate Green Belt sites prematurely.
- Whether alternative sites elsewhere in the county have been sufficiently explored before identifying land around Chesham. - National planning policy requires previously developed (brownfield) land and urban capacity to be fully assessed before Green Belt release is considered.
- Whether the Council co-operating with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities over best use of strategic neighbouring sites (such as Bovingdon Airfield)?
- Has Buckinghamshire Council demonstrated that all viable brownfield land within Chesham town centre has been robustly assessed? - Why have some of the car parks and other brownfield sites promoted by groups such as Chesham Renaissance, not been included?
- Has development potential within existing urban areas been optimised?
- Why are Green Belt and agricultural sites being considered while town centre capacity appears under-utilised?

If all this hasn't been done properly, Green Belt release may not meet the required “exceptional circumstances” test justifying the proposed release of Green Belt land for development.

In conclusion, this site is clearly NOT “Grey Belt”, it is an unsustainable location that is prone to flooding, is poorly served by existing highways and will require significant infrastructure improvements whilst will represent loss of valuable good agricultural land and its development will threaten biodiversity and wildlife habitats.

What opportunities and advantages could development of the site bring?

Opportunities and advantages of development:

Aside from more housing, it is difficult to quantify any advantages only injurious effects on the wider area. The cost of necessary infrastructure improvements is likely to result in the housing being unaffordable to many and its distance from the town centre will only promote car usage and place further strain on Cheshams highways.

Are there infrastructure issues that would have to be addressed in the development of this site?

Yes

If you answered 'yes', please provide further details:

Please see previous comments herein regarding highways & drainage infrasture. There are also likely to be increased demands upon local schools, doctors and other community facilities.

Other than infrastructure, please provide details of any other potential barriers or challenges relating to development of the site:

Barriers and challenges:

Please see previous comments herein

Please provide details of any important environmental features on or near the site:

Important environmental features:

Please see previous comments herein notably los of BMV agricultural land, adverse effects on biodiversity, injurious affects on local wildlife and potential for placing environmental strain on the globally scarce chalk stream network nearby.
The site is also located on a Water Source Protection Zone.

Are there any important community assets near the site?

Yes

If you answered 'yes', please provide details:

The site was briefly listed as an Asset of Community Value under the Localism Act in 2019 but that decision was revoked subsequently. However, many hundreds of people still continue to use the public footpaths that cross the site for informal outdoor recreation AS WELL AS their use of numerous informal unadopted paths around the edges of all the fields also for various forms of informal outdoor recreation. There are SIX unadopted informal footpaths around the land are still subject to an awaited Definitive Map Modification Order submitted by BNG in early 2019 which are supported by hundreds of witness statements from local people including those who supported BNG's unsucessful attempts to have these fields listed as a Town or Village Green in 2023 yet the fields are still used by local people for walking etc and their use is still not confined to the adopted public footpaths.

Are you aware of any previous promotion of this site for development?

Yes

If you answered 'yes', please provide details:

The land was previously propsed as an allocation site for housing in the draft Local Plan for Chiltern & South Bucks District Council but that Plan was subsequently withdrawn.

Have any issues been raised by local residents or businesses in relation to development of the site?

Yes

If you answered 'yes', please provide details:

Brown Not Green Cheshasm Ltd is a not for profit private company created by concerned citizens of Chesham in response to proposals in 2015 in the previous draft Local Plan for Chiltern & South Bucks District Councils that they felt would adversely affect the wider town and particularly the community NE of Chesham at Lye Green as well as many surrounding villages including Ley Hill, Botley, Whelpley Hill, & Ashley Green.

BNG represents over 1,800 supporters and brief background details can be found at; www.BrownNotGreen.com

Please provide any further local information or context that you think is relevant to the development of this site:

Local information:

Would you like to respond on a further site?

Yes

Site response 2

Please give the site reference number:

Site reference number:
212

Please give the site address (including postcode):

Site address:

Land south of Lycrome Road (also known as North East Chesham) HP5 3LA

What is your connection with the site? (e.g. local resident, local councillor)

Connection to site:
Local Resident

Is the site suitable in principle for the proposed use?

No

Please give the reasons for your answer:

This site is NOT "Grey Belt" by virtue of the fact that it is self evidently NOT Previously Developed Land, NOR is it failing to strongly contribute to any of three purposes identified in National Government Guidance in relation to Green Belt designation.

Specifically;

- a) The land has for decades has formed a definitive barrier and maintained a "green gap" that has checked the unrestricted sprawl of the larger built-up area of Chesham
- b) The land has again, for decades prevented neighbouring settlements to Chesham from merging into one another or becoming part of "Greater Chesham" specifically the established smaller settlements and hamlets of Lye Green, Botley, & Orchard Leigh.
- d) The land has for many years preserved the setting and special character of the historic town of Chesham as well as the character of Lye Green where there is a listed building (White House).

BNG commissioned an independent professional Landscape Survey in 2019 by SLR Consulting which identified several viewpoints that illustrated the extent of visibility of any potential development upon this site at Lye Green, from adjoining open countryside including land within the AONB (now National Landscape). This illustrates that the Lye Green in particular, IS meeting the requirement of Green Belt designation.

As such any development of this site will injuriously affect the "openness" of the wider neighbouring countryside with a potentially adverse effect on the nearby area of National Landscape.

In addition, any Grey Belt sites need to be suitably located in sustainable locations (ie close to or a short walk to public transport) – Chesham topography involves steep hills and the subject land is some distance from the town centre or its train station and the need to negotiate either Nashleigh Hill or White Hill is hardly conducive to encourage cycling or walking to/from the town centre or station. As such the site is an unsustainable location for development.

Draft national policy places a presumption in favour of development near "well-connected" rail stations. It would be incorrect to assume this location is within easy walking distance of Chesham station (and it is significantly further away than suggested guidance of 1500m / 15–20 mins walking time) and is also problematic give the local topography. Furthermore, Chesham Station with a maximum of two trains an hour is hardly "well connected".

If this land is incorrectly categorised as Grey Belt, this will create an unjustified presumption in favour of development that will have profound injurious impact upon the wider town and community..

Additionally, whilst not currently reflected in current National Guidance, BNG contends that another material consideration of weight is that this area is productive agricultural land, parts of which are graded b or "Best & Most Versatile" (BMV) agricultural land. According development on such land should be the very last resort as once it is developed it is lost forever and such losses of BMV land undermines national food security.

It is NOT grazing land or empty fields that previously might have been "set aside" and as productive plant growing land it is a scarce and vital resource.

Farmland is also vital for biodiversity. – It is unwise to forfeit this biodiversity on productive farmland where any development is unrealistic or problematic in terms of to being able to create biodiversity net gain on site, as is now required by Government.

Agricultural land also provides a habitat for wildlife and some of the proposed site support species of wildlife that are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act.

The land at Lye Green has poor natural drainage being mainly of clay soil. It is located on the top of the plateau overlooking the town. In heavy rain or during prolonged wet periods, the fields flood and it is not uncommon for Lye Green Road to become flooded with surface water overflowing from the fields onto the road. If the land were to be developed this problem will be exacerbated and with risk of additional surface water run off downhill into the town or nearby prevailing developed areas or could compromise the globally scarce chalk stream network that flows through the town. Gees Spring is located in the woods directly adjacent to this land..

Accordingly, significant drainage infrastructure improvements would be necessary at this location.

The site is poorly served by local highways and access can only be created off Lye Green Road or Lycrome Road. Lycrome Road is particularly narrow near the Black Cat pub and is effectively single lane with little ability for two way traffic at its narrowest. The junction with Nashleigh Hill (A416) and Lycrome Road is already busy and as evidenced recently whilst Two Dells Lane was closed for water main replacement and traffic was being diverted down Lycrome Road, and throughout that period that highways junction experienced significant queues of traffic waiting to turn left or right out of Lycrome Road. Accordingly, significant highways infrastructure improvements will be required for any development of Lye Green fields to be acceptable in terms of road users.

It is acknowledged that Bucks (& Chesham) has difficulty meeting a 5 year housing supply. This is as much an indication of an unrealistic and flawed Standard Methodology (created by Central Government) of calculating housing needs as it is of the physical constraints (topography & infrastructure) prevailing locally.

The Buckinghamshire area generally and Chesham more specifically, is also subject to various development restraint policies such as Green Belt, National and Landscape (formerly AONB) as well as Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and these policies should NOT be sacrificed for expediency to address an arbitrary and unrealistic assessment of housing need.

BNG questions:

- Whether this creates pressure to allocate Green Belt sites prematurely.
- Whether alternative sites elsewhere in the county have been sufficiently explored before identifying land around Chesham. - National planning policy requires previously developed (brownfield) land and urban capacity to be fully assessed before Green Belt release is considered.
- Whether the Council co-operating with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities over best use of strategic neighbouring sites (such as Bovingdon Airfield)?
- Has Buckinghamshire Council demonstrated that all viable brownfield land within Chesham town centre has been robustly assessed? - Why have some of the car parks and other brownfield sites promoted by groups such as Chesham Renaissance, not been included?
- Has development potential within existing urban areas been optimised?
- Why are Green Belt and agricultural sites being considered while town centre capacity appears under-utilised?

If all this hasn't been done properly, Green Belt release may not meet the required "exceptional circumstances" test justifying the proposed release of Green Belt land for development.

In conclusion, this site is clearly NOT "Grey Belt", it is an unsustainable location that is prone to flooding, is poorly served by existing highways and will require significant infrastructure improvements whilst will represent loss of valuable good agricultural land and its development will threaten biodiversity and wildlife habitats.

What opportunities and advantages could development of the site bring?

Opportunities and advantages of development:

Aside from more housing, it is difficult to quantify any advantages only injurious effects on the wider area. The cost of necessary infrastructure improvements is likely to result in the housing being unaffordable to many and its distance from the town centre (being even further away from the Town Centre than site OPUS ref 3136) will only promote car usage and place further strain on Chesham's highways.

Are there infrastructure issues that would have to be addressed in the development of this site?

Yes

If you answered 'yes', please provide further details:

Please see previous comments herein regarding highways & drainage infrastructure. There are also likely to be increased demands upon local schools, doctors and other community facilities.

Other than infrastructure, please provide details of any other potential barriers or challenges relating to development of the site:

Barriers and challenges:

Access is particularly problematic at this site. Lycrome Road has poor visibility by the existing agricultural access and even if a new access is created slightly further along Lycrome Road sight lines are still restricted. Lycrome Road itself is narrow becoming almost single vehicle width near the Black Cat pub. The road junction between Lycrome Road and Nashleigh Hill (A416) is busy, already frequently congested and the addition of hundreds of new homes in this site will by virtue of it being an unsustainable location, create additional traffic congestion on an already busy road. Significant highway improvements would be required.

Please provide details of any important environmental features on or near the site:

Important environmental features:

Gees Spring rises in the woodlands in the western corner and is believed to interrelate with the globally scarce chalk stream network which includes the River Chess that flows through the town.

The site is also known to represent the habitats of various wildlife some of which are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act including badgers. Japanese knotweed has been a reoccurring problem within the land too.

Are there any important community assets near the site?

Yes

If you answered 'yes', please provide details:

The site was briefly listed as an Asset of Community Value under the Localism Act in 2019 but that decision was revoked subsequently. However, many hundreds of people continue to use the public footpaths that cross the site for informal outdoor recreation AS WELL AS their use of numerous informal unadopted paths around the edges of all the fields also for various forms of informal outdoor recreation. Those unadopted informal footpaths are still subject to an awaited Definitive Map Modification Order submitted by BNG in early 2019 which are supported by hundreds of witness statements from local people including those who supported BNG unsuccessful attempts to have these fields listed as a Town or Village Green in 2023 yet the fields are still used by local people for walking etc and their use is still not confined to the adopted public footpaths.

Are you aware of any previous promotion of this site for development?

Yes

If you answered 'yes', please provide details:

The land was previously proposed as an allocation site for housing in the draft Local Plan for Chiltern & South Bucks District Council but that Plan was subsequently withdrawn.

Have any issues been raised by local residents or businesses in relation to development of the site?

Yes

If you answered 'yes', please provide details:

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BNG represents over 1,800 supporters and brief background details can be found at; www.BrownNotGreen.com

Please provide any further local information or context that you think is relevant to the development of this site:

Local information:

Would you like to respond on a further site?

Yes

Site response 3

Please give the site reference number:

Site reference number:

NO OPUS REF but listed as Chesham EAsT in NESS (inc GB Pro Forma Refs CH005 7 CH006)

Please give the site address (including postcode):

Site address:

UNKNOWN - See NESS Position Statement pages 10 - 23 inc

What is your connection with the site? (e.g. local resident, local councillor)

Connection to site:

Local Resident

Is the site suitable in principle for the proposed use?

No

Please give the reasons for your answer:

This site is NOT "Grey Belt" by virtue of the fact that the majority is NOT Previously Developed Land, NOR is it failing to strongly contribute to any of three purposes identified in National Government Guidance in relation to Green Belt designation.

Specifically;

a) The land has for decades has formed a definitive barrier and maintained a "green gap" that has checked the unrestricted sprawl of the larger built-up area of Chesham

b) The land has again, for decades prevented neighbouring settlements to Chesham from merging into one another or becoming part of "Greater Chesham" specifically Botley.

d) The land has for many years preserved the setting and special character of the historic town of Chesham as well as the character of the area. There are a number of listed buildings nearby, notably:

- Codmore Farmhouse (45 Lye Green Road): A Grade II listed, 15th-century timber-framed farmhouse with 17th-century alterations.
- Barns at Codmore Farm: Both East and West barns at the farm are listed.
- Brockhurst Farmhouse (Lye Green Road): A 17th-century Grade II listed farmhouse.
- Granary at Brockhurst Farm: Also listed as Grade II.
- Lye Green House: A Grade II listed building, featuring a designated North Barn.
- White House: Located in Lye Green.
- Nashleigh Farmhouse: Located nearby

As such any development of this site will injuriously affect the “openness” of the wider neighbouring countryside with a potentially adverse effect on the nearby listed buildings.

In addition, any Grey Belt sites need to be suitably located in sustainable locations (ie close to or a short walk to public transport) – Chesham topography involves steep hills and the subject land is some distance from the town centre or its train station and the need to negotiate White Hill is hardly conducive to encourage cycling or walking to/from the town centre or station. As such the site is an unsustainable location for development.

Draft national policy places a presumption in favour of development near “well-connected” rail stations. It would be incorrect to assume this location is within easy walking distance of Chesham station (and it is significantly further away than suggested guidance of 1500m / 15–20 mins walking time) and is also problematic given the local topography. Furthermore, Chesham Station with a maximum of two trains an hour is hardly “well connected”.

If this land is incorrectly categorised as Grey Belt, this will create an unjustified presumption in favour of development that will have profound injurious impact upon the wider town and community..

Additionally, whilst not currently reflected in current National Guidance, BNG contends that another material consideration of weight is that this area is productive agricultural land, parts of which are graded b or “Best & Most Versatile” (BMV) agricultural land. According development on such land should be the very last resort as once it is developed it is lost forever and such losses of BMV land undermines national food security.

It is NOT grazing land or empty fields that previously might have been “set aside” and as productive plant growing land it is a scarce and vital resource.

Farmland is also vital for biodiversity. – It is unwise to forfeit this biodiversity on productive farmland where any development is unrealistic or problematic in terms of being able to create biodiversity net gain on site, as is now required by Government.

Agricultural land also provides a habitat for wildlife and some of the proposed site support species of wildlife that are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act.

The land at has poor natural drainage being mainly of clay soil. It is located on the top of the plateau overlooking the town. In heavy rain or during prolonged wet periods, the fields flood and it is not uncommon for Lye Green Road to become flooded with surface water overflowing from the other fields onto the road. If the land were to be developed this problem will be exacerbated and with risk of additional surface water run off downhill into the town or nearby prevailing developed areas or could compromise the globally scarce chalk stream network that flows through the town. Gees Spring is located in the woods directly adjacent to this land..

Accordingly, significant drainage infrastructure improvements would be necessary at this location.

The site is poorly served by local highways and access can only be created off Lye Green Road. Lye Green Road is busy especially at rush hour with children being dropped off at both Brushwood School & Chesham Grammar School nearby and to access the town involves dribbling down White Hill which is both steep and narrow. Large vehicles inc buses struggle to pass each other and traffic already queues up/down White Hill with the pressure of additional house and their related car movements adding to the problem. Accordingly, significant highways infrastructure improvements will be required for any development of Chesham East to be acceptable in terms of road users.

It is acknowledged that Bucks (& Chesham) has difficulty meeting a 5 year housing supply. This is as much an indication of an unrealistic and flawed Standard Methodology (created by Central Government) of calculating housing needs as it is of the physical constraints (topography & infrastructure) prevailing locally.

The Buckinghamshire area generally and Chesham more specifically, is also subject to various development restraint policies such as Green Belt, National and Landscape (formerly AONB) as well as Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and these policies should NOT be sacrificed for expediency to address an arbitrary and unrealistic assessment of housing need.

BNG questions:

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- Has development potential within existing urban areas been optimised?
- Why are Green Belt and agricultural sites being considered while town centre capacity appears under-utilised?

If all this hasn't been done properly, Green Belt release may not meet the required “exceptional circumstances” test justifying the proposed release of Green Belt land for development.

In conclusion, this area is clearly NOT “Grey Belt”, and it is an unsustainable location that is prone to flooding, is poorly served by existing highways and will require significant infrastructure improvements whilst it will represent loss of valuable good agricultural land and its development will threaten biodiversity and wildlife habitats.

What opportunities and advantages could development of the site bring?

Opportunities and advantages of development:

Aside from more housing, it is difficult to quantify any advantages only injurious effects on the wider area. The cost of necessary infrastructure improvements is likely to result in the housing being unaffordable to many and its distance from the town centre will only promote car usage and place further strain on Chesham's highways.

Are there infrastructure issues that would have to be addressed in the development of this site?

Yes

If you answered 'yes', please provide further details:

Please see previous comments herein regarding highways & drainage infrastructure. There are also likely to be increased demands upon local schools, doctors and other community facilities.

Other than infrastructure, please provide details of any other potential barriers or challenges relating to development of the site:

Barriers and challenges:

Not Known

Please provide details of any important environmental features on or near the site:

Important environmental features:

Not Known

Are there any important community assets near the site?

I don't know

If you answered 'yes', please provide details:

Are you aware of any previous promotion of this site for development?

No

If you answered 'yes', please provide details:

Have any issues been raised by local residents or businesses in relation to development of the site?

I don't know

If you answered 'yes', please provide details:

Please provide any further local information or context that you think is relevant to the development of this site:

Local information:

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Would you like to respond on a further site?

No