

From: [Planning](#)
To: [DC Support](#)
Subject: FW: Objection to Grey Belt Classification – Application 25/01346/OUT
Date: 15 January 2026 14:43:55

From: David C. Levinger [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 January 2026 14:43
To: Planning <Planning@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>
Subject: Objection to Grey Belt Classification – Application 25/01346/OUT

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Dear Sir(s),

Further to my earlier objection we wish to submit a new objection based on study of the most recent documents of Planning Application - 25/01346/OUT.

Objection to Grey Belt Classification – Application 25/01346/OUT

We object to this application on the grounds that the Committee’s use of a “grey belt” classification for the site is contrary to national planning policy and guidance:

- **Lack of Formal Green Belt Assessment:** The designation of the site as “grey belt” is not supported by any rigorous, criteria-based Green Belt review as required by Planning Practice Guidance. National guidance expects authorities to produce a Green Belt assessment evaluating how the land performs against Green Belt purposes (a, b, d) and considering if footnote 7 protected policies apply(1). No such transparent assessment has been provided, undermining the validity of the grey belt label.
- **Failure to Apply NPPF Green Belt Purposes:** The committee report fails to properly apply NPPF paragraph 143, which lists Green Belt purposes. By narrowly claiming the site does not “strongly” serve certain purposes, the report overlooks clear conflicts (e.g. encroachment into open countryside) and ignores that any harm to Green Belt must be given substantial weight. The site lies in designated Green Belt and “grey belt” is not a formal designation under the NPPF absent the strict criteria being met(2). Crucially, footnote 7 policies (protecting adjacent ecological and heritage designations) have been overlooked – the proximity of a Grade I listed church, Conservation Area and sensitive habitat triggers policies that provide a clear reason for refusal(3).
- **Previous Rejection in Plan Reviews:** This location has been considered – and not released – in successive Local Plan reviews, indicating that it was found

unsuitable for removal from the Green Belt(4). The Cherwell Green Belt Studies (2017 & 2023) assessed the site against all five Green Belt purposes and did not support its development. That plan-led evidence base has been ignored in favor of an ad hoc “grey belt” argument.

- **NPPF Paragraph 155 Gateway Not Met:** NPPF ¶155 sets a high bar for deeming development not inappropriate on grey belt land, including demonstrating no fundamental harm to the remaining Green Belt and compliance with specific conditions. This gateway cannot be lawfully engaged without a robust, evidence-based classification of the land as grey belt. In the absence of a credible assessment meeting national policy tests, the proposal remains inappropriate development in the Green Belt, for which no very special circumstances have been shown. The grey belt classification is unsound and should be rejected, and the application refused on Green Belt grounds.

We respectfully request that this objection be taken into account and added to the formal record for the committee’s consideration.

REF 1. Green Belt - [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/green-belt)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/green-belt>

REF 2, 3, 4: Committee Report

<https://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/documents/s61857/Committee%20Report.pdf>

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