

## Questionnaire Response Suggestions.

In the text below, suggested FEDORA responses are highlighted in blue. Comments such as this are in brown. We want to emphasise that these guideline responses are suggestions for people to use as they wish. It would be far more effective if each person were to put their responses in their own words, and not “cut-and-paste”. A lot of identical responses could undermine the force of numbers in the eyes of Planning Officers and therefore we need some variation.

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### Question 1

Have you read the Options Consultation document?

### Question 2

Which area do you live in?

### Question 3

Place-making and the continued success of well designed, well-functioning places is fundamental to developing a growth strategy for the Borough.

### Question 3a

What are the key characteristics that make your area a great place to live? (*Maximum 500 characters*)

### Suggested Responses:

Rural nature with easy access to rural open spaces

Good coverage of woods with a wide variety of trees

Natural landscapes and access to network of footpaths

Separate village communities and high streets with independent shops.

A sense of space created by plot sizes

Proportionate scale and height of buildings

Sports fields, recreation grounds and allotments within the urban area

Housing density preserves the character of each individual area

*The above text totals 438 characters (with spaces).*

## Question 3b

What changes would you like to see in the borough over the next 15 years? (*Maximum 500 characters*)

### Suggested Responses:

Affordable housing near to local employment, state schools, bus and train links, health facilities and shopping

Any changes should preserve the character & quality of life of our separate villages and towns in Oxshott/Cobham/Stoke d'Abernon/Downside

Limit HGV use of A244 and A245, and reduce traffic overall, to reduce noise levels and air pollution

Increased public transport and safe cycling routes

Preservation of our green spaces – fields, woods, parks, commons, recreation grounds, trees

*The above text has 489 characters, including spaces.*

## Question 4a

This options consultation document sets out 5 options for housing growth for the borough. These are:

- Option 1 - intensify urban area
- Option 2 - optimise urban area and 3 area of Green Belt release
- Option 3 - optimise urban area and large Green Belt release
- Option 4 - optimise urban area
- Option 5 - optimise urban area and small areas of Green Belt release
- Other

Which option will best suit your area?

### Suggested Response:

As discussed at the meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> September, none of the Options on offer are ones we would choose. On balance we recommend **Option 4** as the least bad option for Oxshott, but it is an approach that carries the risk of being rejected by Elmbridge Council planning officers, Councillors or, more importantly, central Government. It is also an Option which will lead to greater pressure on building density in “Urban” areas such as Oxshott.

Many residents might prefer some sensitive and limited release of Green Belt to ease this pressure but that is not an Option on offer.

Our local Councilors have said they will strongly support and vote for Option 4 and have suggested that a strong response from residents also voting for Option 4 would help them in protecting the Green Belt; but we also know from recent experience that Green Belt protection could be used as an excuse to promote high density development elsewhere.

We have reflected these challenges in some suggested responses to later questions.

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## Question:

Please tell us why you have chosen this option (Maximum 600 characters)

### Suggested Responses:

Preserves the character of the area and is the most environmentally friendly Option as it takes no Green Belt and therefore minimizes loss of habitats and destruction of trees and green fields.

Avoids the development of new housing communities far from rail and bus links, which would seriously increase traffic and pollution.

Avoids over-dense urban development which would destroy the individual characters of our residential communities

Ensures affordable housing will be developed in areas closer to a choice of transport links.

*The above text totals 532 characters, with spaces.*

## Question 4b

Please give details of any alternative ways you think we could meet the Government's ambitious housing target for Elmbridge of 623 new homes each year for the next 15 years. (Maximum 600 characters)

### Suggested Responses:

EBC should challenge the Government's one-size-fits-all arbitrary housing target. The target is not supported by evidence. ONS data from 2016 should be used to establish targets.

A layered density policy is required, with denser housing in town centres close to shops, recreational facilities, employment and transport hubs, with less-dense housing in residential estates. This would reduce transportation needs and help retain the character of each area.

*The above text has 457 characters (including spaces).*

## Question 5

How do you think we should plan for the new homes we need in your area?

- Higher densities
- Green Belt release
- A mixture of higher densities and Green Belt release
- Other

Please provide any comments here (Maximum 500 characters)

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## Suggested Responses:

We suggest ticking the “Other” box, and then adding the following comments:

EBC must seek a reduction in the housing target, using the 2016 base statistics updated with relevant contemporary data

A greater proportion of dwellings should be near frequent, reliable transport hubs with supporting shopping

Development must respect the existing character of each area - and this respect to be paramount

No material or insensitive loss of Green Belt, green spaces, playing grounds, or allotments

No ‘one-size-fits-all’ density policy - tiered per EBC’s sustainability study

*The above text has 489 characters, including spaces.*

## Question 6a

Are you aware of any planning issues that need to be addressed in our detailed day-to-day planning policies?

We recommend that you respond “Yes”

## Question 6b

If yes, please specify which planning issues

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Density                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Design / Character                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Building heights                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Parking                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Conservation Areas                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Historic features (e.g. listed buildings) | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Sustainability / renewable energy         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Flooding                                  | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Open spaces                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Other                                     | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

Please provide an explanation of the issue(s) (Maximum 400 characters)

## Suggested Response:

We recommend that you tick as many boxes as you think are important while recognizing that some issues, such as Flooding, will automatically be considered as part of the planning process and need not be highlighted here.

In your text, you will not have space to comment on every item that you tick, only the ones you consider to be most important.

**Note:** The importance of the new Local Plan is that it will govern decisions on individual planning applications in your neighbourhood for the next 15 years. Recently, EBC has been allowing an increase in densities and other impositions on our residential areas with little differentiation for character, amenity, traffic or parking requirements. Until a new preferred strategic option is chosen for the new Local Plan, based on responses to the questionnaire, it is not possible to identify all policies that may need looking at.

Suggested comments have therefore to be hugely simplified and very selective to cover those with the most practical impact within the space limit of 400 characters.

Below there are some example answers from which you can choose topics for the comments box.

### Density, Design and Character

1. References to 'maximising' use of land should be removed and 'optimising' used instead. This is important to achieve proportionate control of density, character, access car parking and garden amenity space for new development. It is necessary to protect character and amenity, not chase housing numbers. *[306 characters with spaces]*
2. Density should apply across small newly defined character areas rather than wider settlement areas or Borough-wide. On windfall sites density, access and amenity should match and preserve the quality of residential amenity for that area. *[240 characters with spaces]*
3. Boundaries to character areas should be carefully defined to complement policies on density, design, sustainability, access, parking, open spaces, public amenity and heritage features. Absolute standards across the Borough or a settlement produce bad development which erodes existing character. *[298 characters with spaces]*
4. There must be the right development in the right places. Policies should give residents and developers confidence in delivery of quality development with clarity about preserving existing character, garden amenity, access and parking standards for the long term. *[265 characters with spaces]*

### Parking

1. Existing Parking policy is driven by the need to reduce car use. This works better in town centres with higher densities than semi-rural areas where car usage is increasing and distance from shops, schools, jobs, open spaces, public transport and other amenities doesn't help. To protect residents, parking ratios should be a fixed number per dwelling to include visitor spaces and ensure no on street parking, according to character area *[431 characters with spaces]*

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2. All development, but especially windfalls, should be able to accommodate owner and visitor vehicles on site to ensure no extra on street parking in residential areas, with garden amenity space, and safe access for all road users and pedestrians. *[248 characters with spaces]*

## Sustainability/renewable energy

1. Most development needs to be close to town and village centres. These have the retail, leisure, cultural and community resources to achieve the lowest ecological footprint and the highest quality of life for residents. *[221 characters with spaces]*
2. High quality design, renewable energy and neighbourhoods that enhance character improve the wellbeing of residents. To cater for an ageing population, independent living must be encouraged alongside the specialist accommodation. *[231 characters with spaces]*
3. With the increase in the number of residents proposed by the Government's targets, building must be in sustainable locations with facilities that encourage cycling and walking, electric vehicles, better public transport and measures to reduce traffic, particularly HGVs, to help improve air quality. *[302 characters with spaces]*

## Open spaces, and allotments.

1. Alongside retaining the Green Belt, open spaces such as recreation grounds and allotments must be retained where they are, which is where they are most needed for biodiversity, health, wellbeing and quality of life. Tree cover must be increased at every opportunity to mitigate against rising temperatures from climate change and increase biodiversity. *[355 characters with spaces]*

## Public Transport

1. To reduce car dependency, traffic congestion & pollution, the Council must ensure development only in sustainable locations, promote what is best in public transport, the rail system, and look for improvement of what is wanting, mainly the local bus network. *[261 characters with spaces]*
2. The key issue here is congestion particularly on the A244. Elmbridge has to secure road improvement schemes and investigate other potential links from the M25 to the A3, provide cycle lanes and restrict the use of the A244 and similar roads by HGV's. *[254 characters with spaces]*

## Transport

1. EBC needs its own local traffic and transport policy to supplement that of the county highway authority with a higher threshold for what is allowed for development, to improve noise and air quality functions and to discourage HGVs on local roads. *[249 characters with spaces]*

## Infrastructure

1. Before any development is approved the Council must ensure that appropriate infrastructure is in place to include not only transport, utilities, education, health but also community and social facilities. *[207 characters with spaces]*

## Affordable Housing

1. Affordable housing policy must be clear and enforceable with transparent viability tests and sites allocated across the Borough in sustainable locations. To supply homes that address local housing needs in terms of mix, size, design and tenure, needs 70% affordable. As the private

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sector won't deliver this, a public sector led delivery policy is required. Funding supplemented by transfers from London Boroughs that generate demand in Elmbridge. *[450 characters with spaces]*

2. EBC policy should include use of Compulsory Purchase powers to acquire affordable housing land close to town centres that can provide the jobs, shops and other services within easy non car travel distance for full sustainability. Such land should include all current use types to allow a wide scope and opportunity. *[318 characters with spaces]*

Housing above employment land use.

1. If, as it appears, the government is intent on Elmbridge accommodating extra population from London, the Council should consider not promoting land for employment (which can move to other boroughs) and instead using land such as industrial estates for housing. *[263 characters with spaces]*

## Question 7

Do you have any comments to make in relation to this Options Consultation? (Maximum 600 characters)

### Suggested Response:

Yes.

You may consider the consultation to be flawed and have many comments such as the lack of notice or options to use hard-copy but this will not influence future behaviour or the outcome of the consultation. We suggest therefore that you comment on issues which, if addressed, would improve the quality of the process. Please note the points of most concern to you but we suggest that two key issues which FEDORA will continue to pursue are:

The consultation document provided only 5 options and allowed minimal room for comments. This should be remedied in later stages of the process. While the Green Belt is a precious asset, use of selective sites that are under-performing might be preferable than intensified urban development

Many of the local policies need revision but the 400 characters allowed for comments is inadequate - other methods should be used to seek input

In later stages of the process, more effort should be made to widely-advise the community as to what is happening such as hardcopies and articles in local media

*The above text totals 593 characters including spaces*

## Question 8

Did you respond to the previous Local Plan Strategic Options Consultation in 2016?

**You must provide an answer to this question.**