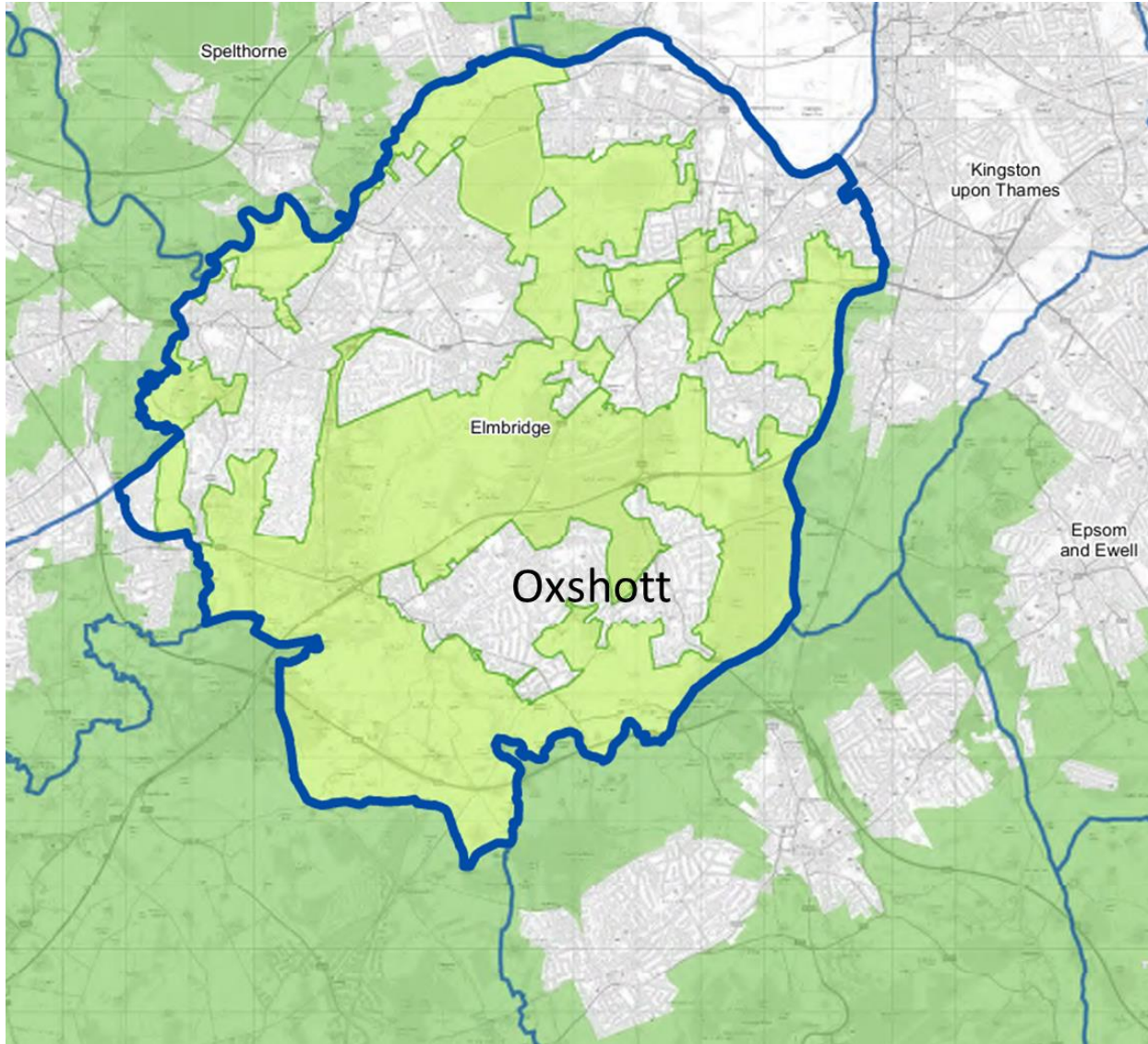


GREEN BELT MEETING 22ND MAY 2025



Elmbridge Green Belt

Source: Elmbridge Borough Council Green Belt
Boundary Review Methodology and Assessment
Issue Rev C | 14 March 2016

AGENDA

1. CONTEXT - ANTHONY WOLFE
2. FEDORA: WHAT WE ARE DOING - ANTHONY WOLFE
3. STATUS of CLOUDS HILL FARM & THE PADDOCKS
4. AN ELMBRIDGE BC PERSPECTIVE - ANDREW BURLEY
5. QUESTIONS
6. CONCLUSION – IAN DILKS

CONTEXT – this is complex!

- Broad range of new government legislation
 - National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”)
 - Planning Practice Guidance
 - Definition of Green Belt v Grey Belt
 - New housing target for Elmbridge BC: > 1800 houses pa

Elmbridge Borough is exposed with no Local Plan

- Local government to be re-organised:
 - Elmbridge Borough Council to be wound up
 - New Surrey entities (1, 2 or 3 TBD) to be created
- Threat of Woking debt

Oxshott is exposed with the threat of it being split into 2 in new Surrey unitary entity

PURPOSE OF FEDORA & ITS GREEN BELT GROUP

- To establish the facts
- To develop a 2-level approach
 - strategic arguments for resisting development on Green Belt land
 - more detailed arguments for particular sites
- To encourage and provide support to local groups/Residents Associations for particular sites - see Charlwood Drive
- To liaise with local councillors at both Elmbridge BC and Surrey CC
- To liaise with officers of Surrey Highways and Elmbridge Planning Department
- To liaise with developers of individual sites
- To liaise with other local organisations: CDRA, SDRA and CCHT

FACT FINDING – PROGRESS TO DATE

For potential Green Belt development sites:

- Ownership of Green Belt land identified
- Identified where Tree Protection Orders ARE in place: e.g. one of very few, SA11 Area TPO
- Sites of environmental accreditation identified – very few found
- Number of houses where planning applications have been granted but NOT built since 2021: > 2000
- Meeting with Crown Estate requested

RESULTS OF SURVEY

- 100 responded - thank you for the heartfelt views.

Plenty of interest shown - all 250 copies of surveys left at Munch & Wiggles, the Oxshott deli and Oxshott station were taken

- No surprises with 3 themes identifiable:
 1. No development on Green Belt around Oxshott
 2. A focus on no development on a specific site
 3. A selective view of sites to be defended and those where development was acceptable with mitigating measures
- Consistent concern with traffic, access to schools and capacity at local doctors' surgery

N.B. Across Elmbridge there is a desire for affordable housing

A FEW POINTS TO CONSIDER (1)

Definition of Grey Belt (as per new National Planning Policy Framework)

“For the purposes of plan-making and decision making, Grey Belt is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising:

- Previously developed and/or
- Any other land that**does not strongly contribute** to any of the purposes (a) , (b) or (d) in Para 143.”

These 5 purposes (“the Golden Rules”) are:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas
- To prevent neighbouring *towns* merging into one another
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic *towns*
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

FEDORA
The Voice for Oxshott

N.B. The approach to what is or is not Grey Belt has been **inconsistent** since it was introduced this year.

A FEW MORE POINTS TO CONSIDER (2)

Key points from **recent successful challenges** to Green Belt developments *since February 2025 (Source ChatGPT)*

- Lack of “very special circumstances”
- Harm to openness and character
- Inadequate consideration of alternatives
- Misalignment with local plans
- Protection still strong despite policy changes

REASON TO OBJECT – SUSTAINABILITY & GREEN SPACES

Ensuring a development is in a **sustainable location** is key. This has a very broad interpretation but does explicitly cover the provision of:

- Sustainable transport solutions
- Schools
- Doctors surgeries
- Access to Green Spaces

Criteria for **Green Spaces** covered in s107 of the NPPF

- Reasonably close proximity to the community it serves (no definition in the NPPF)
- Local in character (not an extensive tract of land)
- Demonstrably special to a local community, incl:
 - Beauty
 - Historic significance
 - Recreational value
 - Tranquility
 - Richness of wildlife

REASON TO OBJECT – DESIGN CODE

Characteristics specific to Oxshott (identified in the consultation on the draft DESIGN CODE, 2023) included:

- The landscape setting of Oxshott is key to its character
- Oxshott High Street is distinctly different with a cluster of diverse buildings housing largely independent stores
- Views across Oxshott from the Heath and surrounding green and wooded areas are locally valued. There is a semi-rural character at the settlement edge
- Generally green character throughout settlement with high incidence of trees and hedging
- Strong and green boundary treatments
- Greenery in the front gardens of Oxshott's terraces is a key characteristic
- Green belt surrounds the settlement

CROWN ESTATE LAND AROUND OXSHOTT



Oxshott Green Belt sites
owned by the Crown Estate

SA-11 14.7 Hectares

SA-14 6.2 Hectares

SA-15 11 Hectares

SA-17 5.5 Hectares

SA-18 26.7 Hectares

SA 11 & 14 were submitted
on behalf of the Crown
Estate to EBC 2019, 2020
and 2024

CLOUDS HILL FARM – ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

MARCH 2025



Possible development of up to 250 dwellings
50% affordable housing

A SANG has been approved to the southwest [Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace]

Fairmile Homes have held consultations:

- twice with residents directly affected in Charlwood Drive – most recently on 12th May
- with all Oxshott residents at the Village Centre – on 15th May

Outline Planning Application to be submitted July 2025
Detailed Planning Application to be submitted 4Q (TBC)

In principle agreement from developer to mitigation actions:

- Possible contribution to path to village
- Commitment to protecting oaks with TPOs
- Height of houses/blocks of flats limited
- 5m buffer and screening
- Direct access to SANG

THE PADDOCKS – ILLUSTRATIVE MASTER PLAN

1Q 2025



Possible development of up to 250 dwellings. 50% affordable housing

Outline Planning Application submitted recently

Possible mitigations include:

- Access to Polyapes
- Discussions on-going about pedestrian access across railway bridge
- Possible solution for junction with A245 being sought

DEALING WITH THE IMPACT

EBC can impose conditions on a range of issues:

- Compliance with own policies and input from statutory consultees
- Use of s106 to secure developer contribution (but not ring-fenced)
- Use of s278 to require developer to deliver Highways improvements
- Funding requests must be proportionate

Surrey CC is an important statutory consultee for **Highways** and **Flood Risk** and will advise on requirements. Would be the counterparty for s278

Surrey CC/NHS responsible for planning/provision of **education** and **healthcare** - but not directly linked to development

Mitigating actions can help deal with pre-existing problems