

Presentation to Elmbridge Planning Committee meeting 25 March 2026 to object to Application 2025/2147- Clouds Hill Farm

Speaker Ian Dilks-Director FEDORA-The Voice for Oxshott on behalf of FEDORA and local residents including RACHFD.

Supported in questions by John Russell, FEDORA's retained transport planning expert.

I have two fundamental points, green belt and site sustainability, to explain why this application should be rejected.

The officer recommendation relies on the conclusion that the site is Grey Belt. However, our experts and KC, conclude that the site is Green Belt and the Officer provides latitude within her report to allow Members to draw their own conclusions.

The site is wholly within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

An essential characteristic of Green Belts is their openness and permanence. Elmbridge's own 2016 and 2018 assessments confirm this site contributes strongly to safeguarding land from encroachment. Any proposal for up to 250 dwellings, between 2-3 stories high, would directly conflict with this core Green Belt purpose and be inappropriate development.

Sustainability is both a requirement of grey belt designation and a policy requirement for permitting development.

You have been provided with no valid evidence that this is a transport sustainable site and key pieces of CHA advice are wrong. You can ask us why.

- The CHA concludes that cycling to the railway station is not a safe option and no mitigations are possible. The ability to walk is therefore key to sustainability
- The Planning Officer explained the key evidence based guidance on behaviours is that people will walk 800m or for 15 minutes. The walk to the station from this site is 2.3Km, three times that, with no continuous footpath. It is an unpleasant walk on a road carrying 20,000 vehicles per day with a high number of HGVs.
- CHA has said that irrespective of guidance, transport professionals consider a walk of c2Km as reasonable. No evidence is provided in support of this statement, which is wrong.
- material weight is rightly given to a Department of Transport “connectivity tool”. Correct use of this tool shows that the site connectivity is in the bottom 10% of UK sites, I repeat bottom 10%. The CHA advice on this point was simply wrong which they now accept. Importantly the tool isn’t to be considered in isolation but is given material weight because it is a summary. It has been promoted by the SoS as an agreed evidence

base. The result illustrates the poor connectivity to amenities and particularly the railway station many of you will have observed. I also note the tool does not reflect quality of route, if it did the score would be lower.

In summary...

The planning officer advised that you have a choice to make on Green Belt. Can you justify to those that elected you the reclassification of this Green Belt site for development ?

On sustainability there is not a choice. All the transport evidence presented to you, when used properly, shows this site is not sustainable. It would be irrational and, given your legal responsibilities, unsafe to conclude otherwise.

I should add - we have worked closely with our Surrey councillor who shares our sustainability concerns

Thank you for listening.