EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
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19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

EPSOM & EWELL TIMES

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Oxshott Uproar as 800 Object to Green Belt Housing Plan

23 March 2026



More than 800 objections later, a controversial plan for 250 new homes on green belt land in Oxshott is set to be decided by a planning committee, and the recommendation is for approval.

Amidst traffic concerns, infrastructure worries and wanting to protect the green belt, councillors must decide if this huge village expansion in Oxshott is to go ahead.

Elmbridge Borough Council's planning committee will consider the outline application for Clouds Hill Farm on Wednesday, March 25.

The proposal would see existing buildings on the 23-hectare site demolished to make way for a new housing estate, along with roads, parking, public open space and a "suitable alternative natural greenspace" (SANG).

At this stage, only the access points from Leatherhead Road and Woodlands Lane are being decided, with details like layout, design and landscaping to come later if permission is granted. The homes are expected to be two to three storeys high.

Planning officers have recommended approval, arguing that, on balance, the benefits outweigh the harm.

They say the scheme would help deliver new housing, including affordable homes, and could meet national planning rules for building on so-called "grey belt" land. Surrey County Council highways officers have also raised no objection, subject to improvements.

But the application has sparked a major backlash locally. More than 800 letters of objection from over 600 households have been submitted, citing worries about traffic, safety and pressure on local services.

Residents say the area's roads are already congested and fear an extra 250 homes would make things worse, particularly along the busy Leatherhead Road.

Others argue that the village lacks the infrastructure of schools, GP surgeries and public transport to support a development of this size.

Environmental concerns have also been raised heavily. Objectors warn the plans would mean the loss of Green Belt land, wildlife habitats and trees, and question whether the development can genuinely deliver the required biodiversity net gain. Some have also flagged flood risk and drainage issues.

Campaign groups and residents' associations have gone further, claiming the site is not in a sustainable location and that the project could permanently change the character of the area.

People claim there is not much public transport in the area so there will be a heavy reliance on on cars, making the quiet Surrey village busier.

Support for the scheme has been far more limited, with a small number of submissions pointing to the need for more housing and potential improvements to walking and cycling routes.

If councillors agree with officers, outline permission will be granted, but only if the developer signs a legal agreement to secure key contributions, including affordable housing, environmental mitigation and transport measures.

If that deal is not finalised within six months, the application could still be refused.

Emily Dalton LDRS

Photo: Stables and outbuildings at Clouds Hill Farm, Oxshott. (Credit: Fairmile Group Ltd./Elmbridge Borough Council planning documents).

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