# Oxshott High Street redeveloping?

Plans to redevelop part of a Surrey high street have been put forward.

Oxshott village store and post office and a former takeaway spot could be knocked down and transformed into a whole new high street development. The proposal features two large commercial spaces on the ground floor for residents, and nine apartments spread over the first and second floors.

"This is a significant opportunity to improve the character and appearance of this part of the High Street," planning documents state. Details reveal the new building design will be traditional and reference the neo-classical/Georgian style houses which match the surrounding character of Oxshott.

For market sale, the property could consist of 6 one-bed and 3 two-bed flats in the heart of the high street. This reflects the most critical type of housing needed in Elmbridge borough and will help fill the gap between the existing shortfall, according to the planning statement.

Planning permission was previously granted on the site in October 2023 for a similar scheme to create five apartments. The new proposal seeks four extra homes to be added, as well as including additional land from The Victoria pub to the back of the site for an extra eight parking spaces.

Oxshott village store and post office, (No. 50 on the high street) is currently a two-story building at 8.52m. But under the proposed development plans the height would scale up to 12m tall rather than the 9.65m previously approved.

Only one person has objected to the scheme so far, claiming the new design is "overbearing and will adversely dominate the high street". Concerns were also raised by residents in the comments' section that the path would be obstructed during the demolition and development of the buildings and how construction would operate on the site.

Not the only part of the village's high street to get a new look, the Heath buildings opposite to the village store and post office will also be redeveloped after planning permission was agreed in October 2024. The new Heath buildings will be 13.2m tall from the ridge.

Comments on the application are welcome on Elmbridge Borough Council's website until July 4, with a target decision date for July 17.

# **Grafton Stables to Remain Green Space**

Grafton Stables in Cuddington, a 13.5-acre green space bordered by residential properties, is set to remain open to the public after Surrey County Council (SCC) confirmed it will be managed by the council's Countryside Team.

Earlier this year, the council placed the land on the market with the potential for housing development—sparking local concerns that up to 40 homes could be built on the site. The move led to significant opposition from residents, local groups and councillors, who argued that the site's mature trees—some protected by Tree Preservation Orders—and its value as a community green space made it unsuitable for development.

Local County Councillor **Eber Kington** (RA Ewell Court, Auriol & Cuddington) met with SCC officials to highlight planning restrictions and the importance of the site to the community. "I felt there was a strong case against the sale," he said. "The site is a vital part of our local green space network."

Cuddington Residents' Association, the local sports community at Wandgas Sports and Social Club and other campaigners also put forward an alternative bid to retain much of the green space, alongside limited development to fund its upkeep. Meanwhile, Cuddington Borough Councillors Kim Spickett and Phil Neale launched petitions that attracted more than 1,000 signatures.

In March, a motion was passed at County Hall, calling for SCC to adopt a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) policy—a process that allows local authorities to transfer land to community groups at less than market value if it promotes social and environmental well-being. With no existing CAT policy at SCC, Councillor Kington's motion cleared the way for Grafton Stables to be considered under such a scheme.

Following discussions, SCC has now confirmed that the site has been withdrawn from sale and will instead be managed as a public green space. Resident Julie Willis, who has lived next to Grafton Stables since childhood, welcomed the decision. "It's an

incredible outcome for the community and for the trees and wildlife that call this space home," she said.

No details have yet been released on how the new countryside management arrangements will operate, but residents and community groups are expected to be invited to help shape the future of Grafton Stables.

Related report:

Shock as Surrey Council Puts Protected Woodland Up for Auction

# Epsom Derby's Speed and Spirit Captured in New Station Art Project

A new art installation at Tattenham Corner Station is shining a light on Epsom's rich racing heritage while adding a burst of creativity to commuters' journeys. This initiative, part of the Art@thestation project launched at Epsom main station in October 2024, transforms everyday travel into a gallery experience, offering young artists a unique platform to share their work.

Led by The Art Society Epsom with support from Southern Railway and its London head office, the project celebrates the energy and excitement of Derby Day and the iconic Tattenham Corner bend. Local artists were invited to explore the theme of 'Speed'—a nod to both the daily rush of life and the fast-paced world of horse racing.

The project's success has been driven by collaboration between Angie Child, Head of Young Arts Volunteers at The Art Society Epsom, and Ben Robinson, Commercial Development Manager at the University for the Creative Arts Students' Union (UCASU). Their efforts have brought together a striking collection of images that celebrate local identity and creativity.

One of the contributors, Richa Elangovan, a Master's student in Graphic Design at UCA Farnham, shared:

"My artwork and style consists of messaging through my concept illustrations: topics I'm passionate about include environmentalism, climate change, feminism, and human and animal rights. I use art as my tool for expression on issues otherwise sidelined."

The installation is a testament to how art can enrich public spaces, spark meaningful conversations, and bring the community together. Ben Robinson said:

"We're proud to support young talent and bring this celebration of the Derby into the heart of the community. A massive thank you to The Art Society Epsom for partnering with us on this. We're always looking to showcase student work and can't wait to see how these pieces brighten the station this summer."

For local artists and residents keen to get involved, Angie and her team welcome new participants—contact her at Volunteers.tase@gmail.com to be part of this dynamic project.

Meanwhile, the UCA Students' Union continues to seek out new venues for student art—anyone with a space that could use a creative spark can reach out to ben.robinson@uca.ac.uk.

Photo L to R: Ben Robinson, Alistair McGeachy, Richa Elangovan and Angie Child

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# **Epsom Derby Day Tips**

Derby Day at Epsom is one of the highlights of the British racing calendar, with a stellar card for racegoers to enjoy in Surrey on Saturday afternoon.

The Derby itself is a hugely historic race, having been held at the Surrey course for a remarkable 245 years. The free entry for the inner course makes the event even more unique, providing families the perfect opportunity to enjoy a day of racing, with seven races in total on the card.

Wet weather is projected for Derby Day, with thunderstorms presenting the possibility of disruption, but a top class cast of

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runners and riders will bring in the punters.

Read below for a preview of the Epsom card courtesy of Racing TV, who offer the latest horse racing free bet offers.

#### 13:00 Princess Elizabeth Stakes (Fillies' And Mares' Group 3)

The opening race of the day will see 11 runners taking the just over a mile trip for this Group 3 contest. The two favourites for the race look to be Royal Dress and **Skellet**, with little to choose between this pair, the latter's scope for improvement this season and form on softer ground gives her the edge for this contest.

### 13:35 Betfred Diomed Stakes (Group 3)

For this second Group 3 contest, this race has an interesting triple Group 3 winner from Germany, in the form of Geography. However, a lack of UK experience and inclement weather conditions on good to soft ground suggests the likes of **Persica**, could fare better, having won in similar conditions in April at Newmarket.

#### 14:10 Betfred 3vo 'Dash' Handicap

A large field will line up for the third race, which is a 5f 'Dash' which is the only Class 3 race of the afternoon. **Mademoiselle** looks a progressive type and made a strong second-placed start to this season having finished 2024 in fine form with two wins, although this is a step up in class.

#### 14:45 Aston Martin 'Dash' Handicap (Heritage Handicap)

Another short race to precede the main event of the afternoon, with this one being a Class 2 contest. Oisin Murphy's presence on board **Jer Batt** is a positive indicator for a horse who is also on a competitive mark for trainers David & Nicola Barron, making this one to watch.

#### 15:30 Betfred Derby (Group 1)

One of the highlights of the season, The Derby is run over 1m4f with prize money of £909,628 for the winner making it the richest race of the British Flat season.

Vying for this prize will be the leading trainers and jockeys, with the combination of Aidan O'Brien and Ryan Moore winning an 11th Oaks for O'Brien on Friday, a feat they could repeat for the Derby. They will combine to boost Delacroix's hopes, but **Pride Of Arras** is a huge hope after just two races for Ralph Beckett and good pedigree for this trip.

### 16:15 Encore Lifestyle Northern Dancer Handicap (GBBPlus Race)

Up next, another race run over 1m4f, but this time a handicap. An interesting contest, but with a favourite who has gone well in the mud for Ralph Beckett, it will be hard to look past **Valvano**, who also has handicap form.

#### 17:00 Hong Kong Jockey Club World Pool Lester Piggott Handicap (GBBPlus Race)

The penultimate race of the day is a Class 2 with a £38k prize for the winner, to keep the punters entertained following the main event. Despite a disappointing handicap debut, **Hornsea Bay** has since been gelded and could go well under Danny Tudhope.

### 17:40 JRA Tokyo Trophy Handicap

The final race of the day, and the 2025 Derby meeting, is a 6f sprint. For this, **Eye Of Dubai** looks like an interesting proposition for a yard which has won this race twice before, and has two Class 2 wins under their belt to call upon when checking the form book.

#### **Selections:**

13:00 - Skellet - 9/2

13:35 - Persica - 5/2

14:10 - Mademoiselle - 6/1

14:45 - Jer Batt - 13/2

15:30 - Pride of Arras - 5/1

16:15 - Valvano - 9/2

17:00 - Hornsea Bay - 11/2

17:40 - Eye Of Dubai - 13/2

Image: Horses racing Image: Credit Paul. CC BY 2.0

# Surrey talk for those not afraid of Virginia Woolf

"Mrs Dalloway" at Woking. Celebrating the 100th anniversary of Virginia Woolf's iconic novel from the Lushington Archive at Surrey History Centre

Virginia Woolf's use of members of her own family and close friends as models for her characters is well known. Her father, that eminent of all eminent Victorians, Sir Leslie Stephen was the curmudgeonly Mr Ramsay in To The Lighthouse and her mother, the beautiful Julia Jackson, is sensitively portrayed as his long-suffering wife. Other characters in the novel are drawn from friends who were invited to stay with the family at Talland House where the Stephen family spent their summer holidays. One of those families was that of the lawyer and positivist, Vernon Lushington whose daughter Kitty married newspaper owner Leopold Maxse and became the model for Mrs Dalloway in Woolf's iconic novel.

To celebrate the centenary of the publication of Mrs Dalloway, Dr David Taylor will tell the story of Kitty Maxse and her relationship with Virginia Woolf and other members of her family from the Lushington family archive held at Surrey History Centre. This talk will follow the Surrey History Trust AGM.

Location: Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking GU21 6ND.

Date and time: Monday 30 June, 7pm to 9pm.

Tickets: free, register online.

Surrey History Centre for more news click HERE

### Farnham Museum repairs hitting £2M

The cost of repairing "one of the most important buildings in Surrey" has ballooned to nearly £2 million after further setbacks were discovered - with Waverley Borough Council now on the hook for about three quarters of a million pounds.

The Grade 1 listed Farnham Museum has been protected due to the exceptional interest in its rare design. Its listing places it alongside some of the nation's most famous landmarks including Buckingham Palace, Hampton Court and the Cenotaph.

In March 2023, funding for the project was secured after the Arts Council gave Waverley Borough Council a grant of £734,335 for essential repairs to its Wilmer House, Georgian home, in West Street.

The council-owned building had fallen into disrepair with the cash used to address decaying brickwork, its collapsing second floor window arches, and deeply eroded mortar joints.

Further exploratory work uncovered a wrath on additional problems with the budget growing ever since. Senior councillors has described the work as vital to protecting the "extremely valuable building" and that describing its worth in monetary terms "felt a little grubby".

Following the Tuesday, June 3, meeting of Waverley Borough Council, which agreed to set aside an additional £243,000 for the project, the total cost is expected to be £1,720,000 – of which £735,000 will be funded by the council.

Councillor Kika Mirylees, portfolio holder for community services and leisure said: "Wilmer House is a grade one listed building and is extremely rare being one of fewer than 20 buildings of its type..

"As a grade one listed building it sits alongside other somewhat more famous buildings such as Buckingham Palace, Hampton Court, the Tower of London and the Cenotaph. However, as we know, the challenges that come with a grade 1 listed building are not easy."

She added: "The first phase was always going to be one of uncertainty, we knew that, until the scaffolding came down and we saw what was lying behind it. The extra funding we need will be for the parapet wall and the two chimneys, which will make up the majority of the extra funding because we can not leave them as they are.



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"Their deterioration is much greater than expected and they were not part of the tendered contract. "Like it or not Waverley has a statutory obligation to carry out the repair work in a timely manner due to planning law and health and safety concerns – and the funding given to us by the Arts Council."

It is expected that the work will take about 18 weeks to complete and will be finished by mid October, the meeting heard. Any delay would have a knock on effect and push the project into the next year, resulting in a third consecutive winter shut down and costing a further £69,000.

Cllr Mark Merryweather, portfolio holder for finance, assets and property added: "When you go up there and have an expert explain to you the history of the building, the skill that went into the original works there, it almost feels slightly grubby to start monetising it, because it is an extremely valuable building.

"But having said that we have to, we are a council, we have a responsibility – not only to our taxpayers, but to Farnham and the borough, and to the nation because this is a nationally important building.

"In our stewardship and custody I am confidant its going to be looked after the way it should. Its disappointing we've found more work that needs to be doing but no one can say we weren't fully aware of the risk."

Museum of Farnham JT initials (Image Google)

# **Epsom Racecourse: Preview and Tips for Oaks Day**

The Derby meeting is upon us and the greatly-anticipated Oaks Day card hosts seven intriguing races.

Read below for a preview of the Epsom card courtesy of Racing TV, who offer the latest horse racing free bet offers.

Kicking off the afternoon's top class action is the Listed Surrey Stakes, run over seven furlongs (1.30). Topping the ratings is The Waco Kid, whose two starts so far this season has been far below his best, so connections try him in first time cheekpieces here in the hope that he can recapture his Tattersalls Stakes winning form of last year, in which race he finished ahead of Diego Ventura. Given a fair amount of weight by the colts, Formal might spring a surprise on a track which just might suit her.

Next is the two-year-olds' Woodcote Stakes over six furlongs (2.05), which introduces just one debutant in the shape of George Baker's Trinculo, who has his work cut out for him on his first try here amongst a high quality field. Charlie Appleby has a very good strike rate at Epsom, therefore his talented, fast colt Maximised looks the most likely of these, but Havana Hurricane could be a close second.

The Group 1 Coronation Cup is next, with a quality multi-national field of seven runners (2.40). French raider Calandagan tops the ratings, has beaten some of his opponents here in the past and is fit from a run in Dubai in April. He's tough and will be up to this, but is untried at this tricky track. Bellum Justum ran a good race in the Derby over course and distance last year and has taken a step forward this term already, so could pick up a place at least. Irish Oaks winning filly You Got To Me musn't be underestimated in this company, but does lack a prep run.

3.15 brings the Nifty 50 Handicap, run over a mile and quarter. John & Thady Gosden have a very strong strike rate of 31% at Epsom, therefore their runner Mutaawid is worth considering after a particularly impressive six-length win last time at Newmarket, but he has been heavily penalised for that performance by the handicapper. Roger Varian's Defiance should have a chance, having finished a close second over course and distance last year in the Blue Riband Trial, but may need this run to get up to speed for the season, leaving Rathgar looking a good option with proven ability over undulating tracks and remaining on the same mark as his last three starts.

The eagerly anticipated feature is next; the Group 1 Oaks over a mile and a half (4.00). Godolphin's 1,000 Guineas winning Desert Flower is the best on ratings by a long way, but she is untried over this trip. There is, however, plenty of staying power throughout her pedigree, so this is unlikely to have too great an impact on her ability to win the second leg of the fillies' Triple Crown. Aidan O'Brien's Miinie Hauk ought to be her main competition, but Ed Walker's Qilin Queen, who is well equipped with a staying pedigree and shouldn't be underestimated.

The penultimate race of Oaks Day is a handicap run over a mile and half a furlong (4.35). Ebt's Guard is slowly improving and could be at the sharp end here, while Bopedro comes from David O'Meara's bang in-form stable and wouldn't be without a chance having placed on both his last starts with an eyecatching jockey booking in Rossa Ryan. Two Tempting is last year's winner, but has risen sharply in the weights since that performance. A lower weighted, reliable sort such as Mr Baloo might be a better option.

The finale is a seven-furlong handicap of 13 runners (5.10). Rhoscolyn was last year's winner of this race, and returns on a one-pound lower mark than his victory, but he might want slightly good to soft or soft ground. Although well beaten by Rhoscolyn that day, Darkness does have good course form and, having won well last time out at Thirsk, arrives in good sorts. He might prefer good ground here, but is versatile enough to cope with softer going if the rain comes.

#### **Epsom selections - Friday**

- 1.30 Formal
- 2.05 Maximised
- 2.40 Calandagan
- 3.15 Rathgar
- 4.00 Qilin Queen e/w
- 4.35 Mr Baloo
- 5.10 Darkness

Image: David Jones Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license

# Surrey examines a plea for a 20mph road

A campaigner says a Surrey council is "missing the point" about safety as hopes for a 20mph speed limit on a rural road have been scuppered.

Surrey County Council (SCC) claim the traffic measures on Ford Road in Bisley would be too costly.

Dr Ayres started a petition for a 20mph speed limit, arguing residents should be able to got to the shops without "such fear and intimidation that they experienced when confronted by coaches and HGVs at 30mph".

He presented his campaign at a SCC Highways, Transport and Economic Growth meeting on June 3.

Over 120 people signed the petition calling for the current 30mph speed limit to be lowered to protect pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and other road users from the increase in traffic, particularly HGVs.

Several large commercial premises are located on Lucas Green Road. Often HGVs will come off the A322 Guildford Road, drive through Ford Road to get to their destination.

Matt Furniss, cabinet member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth Decisions, said he recognises the concerns raised but said that drivers generally comply with the 30mph speed limit on the narrow rural road and that it has a relatively good safety record.

But Dr Ayres slammed the council's response for "missing the fundamental point of this petition" by focusing on the HGVs and drivers on the road. He said it was about "the safety and wellbeing of the vulnerable road users who frequent Ford Road".

He said: "I do not accept commercial interests in Lucas Green Road should dictate what happens in Ford Road."

The road has a "relatively good safety record", according to a report, with only one personal injury collision in 2021 in the 10 year period between November 2014- October 2024.

As the current speed limit is 30mph, and the existing average speed is over 28mph, council documents state the road would need more than just a sign to reduce the speed successfully.

These measures could consist of road humps, raised road tables, road narrowing, chicanes and priority give way pinch points.

The report read: "The cost of introducing traffic calming measures over such a length of road (approximately 2km) would be substantial, especially since significant improvements to the existing street lighting are likely to be required to comply with the appropriate design standards for the installation of traffic calming measures."

Council officers also warned the additional features could have negative effects; for instance, traffic tables could cause noise and vibration from the HGVs or that speed cushions could even lead to road damage.



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Concerns were also raised that if the speed limit changed to 20mph on Ford Road, residents on Lucas Green Road would also want a reduced speed limit.

The report said, given the roads are interlinking and are similar in character and measures introduced in one road are likely to have impacts on the other road, introducing traffic measurements would likely create "significant concern" for those residents on the other road.

A traffic engineer said: "We're aware of the issues and hopefully we can in the future change the speed limit." She added the council will include the road on a list for schemes that need funding in the future.

### **Surrey schools shorter Summers?**

Summer holidays could be shortened in Surrey in favour of a longer October half-term break, after a county council decision. The change by Surrey County Council (SCC) means the October half term will now be two weeks long instead of the normal one week, with five days taken off the usual summer holiday period in July 2027 instead.

A public opinion survey carried out from December 2024 received 3,775 responses. Approximately 56 per cent of people agreed with having a two week autumn half term, while 36 per cent opposed the idea. Clare Curran, SCC Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning, said the results from recent public consultations with schools and residents show "there is a clear appetite for change". She said 60 per cent of schools that responded were in favour of a two week autumn half term, 30 per cent were against, and a further 10 per cent were undecided.

The two week autumn half-term break for community and voluntary controlled schools will begin in the 2026/27 academic year. Cllr Curran added: "This work is in response to the national conversation regarding school term times, and the feedback received by the council from schools, school staff, and families regarding the challenges of differing term dates. It is our intent to facilitate the council, schools and multi academy trusts working in partnership to set term dates that are consistent across the county." The school year will still have 195 days, including five INSET days, the council said.

Related reports:

Surrey schools not out for so long in summer?

# Thames Island Festival given go-ahead

The show will go on for an exclusive summer concert on a private island in the Thames. D'Oyly Carte Island has been given the go-ahead to host three days of music and entertainment as part of the Weybridge Festival over July 4-6, 2025.

The private island, inaccessible to the public for part of the year, opened its grounds last year for Weybridge Festival and celebrated music ranging from Motown and Soul to 70s' and 80s' soft rock.

In January 2025, the festival plans were put on hold as Elmbridge Borough Council decided to stop the event going ahead due to "serious health and safety concerns". After four months of working on risk assessment and escape plans, the weekend concert can now go ahead.

A unique location, only one bridge serves as the connection from the mainland to D'Oyly Carte Island. Officers raised the alarm that the evacuation routes in the event of a fire or an emergency were not enough for the requirements.

Owner of the Island and event organiser Mr Andy Hill said: "It's an island, it's surrounded by water, it's 50 yards from the mainland. My experience of human beings, if confronted with burning to death or taking on 50 yards of the Thames—I know what I would do. People that are confronted with death will do a lot of things to avoid it."

Mr Hill explained people can evacuate via the bridge in 5 minutes and 3 seconds—just 3 seconds over the legal time. He also added there will be a ferry that is available for the "odd straggler who can't get on".

The environmental officer said she is "still concerned about Mr Hill's attitude and competency to health and safety, and fire safety". Officers stressed their key concern was the evacuation plan as they were not satisfied proper emergency routes and exits



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were in place. The environmental officer said the barge is not licensed to carry people.

Councillors recognised Mr Hill had put plans in place like an evacuation plan and alternative routes. But Cllr Paul Hughes, chairman of the licensing committee, said: "I really encourage you to carry on working as there are clear issues that need to be resolved."

Mr Hill said after the meeting: "We have worked very closely with the Fire, Police and Health & Safety for the last four months to ensure the events in 2025 are as safe and enjoyable as they were in 2024 and we very much thank these services for their valuable input. We are very grateful to the three Councillors at the TENS hearing who listened to the points made by all parties and concluded that the extensive safety measures that have been put in place will result in a safe and fabulous event with some sensational performers."

#### Related reports:

Surrey's D'Oyly Carte Island concerts cancelled.

Bridge to private D\'Oyly Carte Island, Weybridge. (Credit: Google Street View)