

NEED *not* GREED OXON

Planning for Real **NEED** not Speculator **GREED** in Oxfordshire

PRESS RELEASE

Tuesday, 21 September 2016

‘Council Leaders abandon local democracy’ says Need not Greed Oxfordshire coalition

Need not Greed Oxfordshire is deeply concerned to learn that the Oxfordshire Growth Board has this week published a list of numbers and locations for the allocation of Oxford's unmet housing need around the Districts, without any public consultation or adequate notice for the public to respond before it meets next week to sign off the plan. [1]

A total of 14,850 further houses are to be spread around the county, beyond those already in the individual Districts Local Plans. The proposed apportionment is as follows: Cherwell - 4,440, Oxford - 550, South - 4,950, Vale - 2,220 and West - 2,750. These figures are derived from a 'Spatial Options Assessment' which identifies allegedly suitable sites for housing in each District. [2]

David Illingworth of the North Abingdon Local Plan Group, a member of the Need not Greed Oxfordshire coalition said: "We believe this process is undemocratic and severely undermines the Local Plan process.

"While the Growth Board says that the final decision about where houses should go lies with District Councils in their Local Plans, this is actually a *fait accompli* - Councils will not be able to reject the numbers and locations signed off by their Leaders who are the voting members of the Growth Board. We have been here before - the SHMA was agreed behind closed doors by Council Leaders, tying the hands of Councillors, many of whom did not agree with the housing targets and going against the wishes of the public, the majority of whom do not want to see such a high level of growth in Oxfordshire.

"Need not Greed Oxfordshire supports the call made by the Oxfordshire branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) for a return to a proper County

Structure Plan, where the planned growth levels for our county are not ultimately determined by OxLEP - an unelected quango, but transparently, by a democratically accountable body."

David Illingworth concluded: We want to see a return to democratic planning in Oxfordshire. We believe there is an alternative vision for the future of our county - one that is not based on forced economic growth at all costs, but which focuses on meeting local people's real needs. The public should be given the opportunity to have a proper say on the future of Oxfordshire."

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

1. See Oxfordshire County Council News Release, 16 September:
<http://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshire-councils-work-together-to-tackle-oxford-housing-shortage/>
2. The detailed Spatial Options Assessment is here:
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/communit yandliving/partnerships/GrowthBoard/OxfordSpatialOptionsFinalReport.pdf>

Need not Greed Oxfordshire is a coalition of 29 local campaign groups from across the Oxfordshire, which is challenging the forced economic growth strategy in the county. To see a full list of coalition members go to:
<http://www.neednotgreedoxon.org.uk/coalition/>

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