

POETS (Planning Oxfordshire's Environment & Transport Sustainably)

contact.poets@gmail.com

www.poetsplanningoxon.uk

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To all members of Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire's 5 District Councils and Oxfordshire MPs

Planned housing growth damages environment but fails to meet need

Oxfordshire is currently facing rates of housing growth that far outstrip anything that has been achieved in the past. They could result in a doubling of the population and housing stock in the space of thirty years, and would have a dramatic effect on the county's environment and services.

We urge you as our elected representatives to reconsider. For well over 50 years politicians of all parties have pursued policies to protect Oxfordshire's environment, and specifically Oxford's character and setting within its green belt. These policies should not be discarded without overwhelming cause.

However, no such cause exists. While there is undoubtedly housing need in Oxfordshire, current proposals will fail to deliver sufficient genuinely affordable housing to rent or buy. Instead, speculative house building such as that currently planned will lead to an increase in commuting, mainly by private car – the antithesis of the sort of development that should be promoted in response to climate change.

We are a group of current and former planning and transport academics and senior local government officers, with many decades' experience of working in Oxfordshire. We attach papers which we have produced on housing in the county, together with a press release to accompany their publication. They

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are also available on our website at www.poetsplanningoxon.uk along with more information about POETS.

We hope that you will find them of interest, and would be happy to meet to discuss the issues raised.

Yours faithfully

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Members of POETS

Katie Barrett, former planning policy manager at Vale of White Horse District Council, local plans officer at South Oxfordshire District Council and transport policy manager at Oxfordshire County Council

Chris Cousins, former head of sustainable development at Oxfordshire County Council

Noel Newson, former chief assistant engineer at Oxford City Council, group manager for sustainable transport at Oxfordshire County Council

Gill Oliver, former planning policy manager, South Oxfordshire District Council

Gordon Stokes, honorary visiting research associate at Transport Studies Unit, University of Oxford

Riki Therivel, visiting professor in environmental assessment, Oxford Brookes University and director, Levett-Therivel sustainability consultants

Ian Walker, former spatial planning manager at Oxfordshire County Council

Elizabeth Wilson, principal lecturer in environmental planning, Oxford Brookes University

Roger Williams, former head of transport at Oxfordshire County Council

David Young, former director of environmental services at Oxfordshire County Council

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