

Oxfordshire Green Party Respond to Plans from Cherwell District Council to Build on Green Belt Land

On Tuesday North Oxfordshire Green Party's 2017 Parliamentary Candidate Ian Middleton delivered Oxfordshire Green Party's formal response to Cherwell District Council's Partial Review of their Local Plan which calls for the removal of large portions of Green Belt to the North of Oxford.

The review, being championed by Councillor Barry Wood, the Conservative leader of the council, is seeking to build 4400 new homes on ancient green belt land in Begbroke, Yarnton, Kidlington, Woodstock and surrounding areas.

The Green Party response highlights large areas of inconsistency, poor planning and lack of evidence within the review and disputes the council's claims that they have established the exceptional circumstances that are required by national planning guidelines to remove land from the green belt.

Ian Middleton said :

"It's clear to anyone reading the Council's review that these plans have not been properly thought through. It's not so much a review as an attempt to 'bolt on' additional housing as an expedience to meet an agreement made when the local plan was submitted in 2015"

"Much of the review contains wild assumptions about local infrastructure and many contradictory statements throughout, especially with regard to transport. The plans would join Yarnton, Begbroke and Kidlington into one massive conurbation and quadruple the population at a stroke. These proposals are not proportional or reasonable, especially as they involve the destruction of protected farmland and habitat. Once these green spaces are lost, we'll never get them back."

New figures also suggest that the basis for the review – Oxford's unmet Housing need – has yet to be fully established with Oxford City Council having no formal local plan. An ongoing national consultation about how housing need is calculated has suggested that estimates in the county and the city could be anything up to 50% overstated.

Mr Middleton has joined with Oxford West and Abingdon MP, Liberal Democrat Layla Moran - with whom the Green Party established an electoral alliance earlier this year- in calling for a suspension of the current review and consultation by Cherwell until more reliable information is available.

The Green Party's full response can be read here :

<https://northoxfordshiregreenparty.org.uk/docs/nogpPlanningObjection101017.pdf>

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