

7 July 2016

Dear Oxfordshire Council Leaders,

We are writing to ask what plans are in place to reconsider the OxLEP SEP growth targets for Oxfordshire and what implications these are expected to have for housing numbers.

In the light of Brexit, the Government’s recent downgrading of economic forecasts and the drop in share price of the major housebuilders, this would seem the right time for a review of the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), and the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) that underlies it. Will you now take this next logical step?

Much of Oxfordshire’s high-tech and research based economy, on which the growth strategy is predicated, relies on EU funding and investment. OxLEP itself is managing at least £16.3m of EU funds for the period 2014-2020. BMW (and other businesses) may now reconsider plans for investment and jobs in the County. An understanding of how changes may affect funding for the necessary infrastructure to support the growth proposed is also critical. Infrastructure projects such as the Oxford flood alleviation scheme and the East-West rail link may be at risk (Oxford Times, 30 June). Uncertainty has increased and growth rates seem likely to fall and there may even be a recession.

Need Not Greed Oxfordshire’s concern with unrealistic housing targets has always been the danger of sacrificing valuable land (Green Belt and greenfield) now for speculative jobs which may or may not come about in the future. Now is an even more appropriate time to take stock and to re-think before the damage becomes irreparable.

Need Not Greed Oxfordshire therefore believes prompt action is required to review the SEP and the Oxfordshire SHMA and to introduce more realistic growth targets for the county.

We assume this matter will be discussed at the next Growth Board meeting, and would be pleased to meet with you in advance to discuss further our concerns.

With regards

Helena

**Helena Whall**

**on behalf of the coalition**

cc:

Nigel Tipple, Chief Executive, OxLEP

Victoria Prentis, MP

Andrew Smith, MP

David Cameron, MP

John Howell, MP

Nicola Blackwood, MP

Ed Vaizey, MP

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

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