

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

5 October 2016

Dear XXX ,

**LETTER TO ELECTION CANDIDATES – WITNEY BY-ELECTION**

**Will you work with us to ensure a fairer balance between the needs of local people and those of landowners and developers?**

Need Not Greed Oxfordshire (NNGO) is a coalition of nearly 30 community groups from across Oxfordshire. Groups in the Witney constituency area include Rural Oxfordshire Action Rally (ROAR), Help Preserve Burford Campaign, Society for the Protection of Bampton, Woodstock Action Group and Hands off Hanborough. The secretariat for the coalition is provided by CPRE Oxfordshire.

NNGO fully support the need to build more homes, in the right places at the right prices, supported by the right infrastructure, for local people. Additionally we support providing for a modest level of economic growth. But current plans propose 100,000 new houses by 2031, equivalent to two cities the size of Oxford, at least 85,000 new jobs, and more than 200,000 additional people - a 30% increase in our population.

There is widespread concern that these current "growth at any cost" plans, promoted by the unelected and unaccountable Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) are unrealistic, unachievable and that if pursued will threaten to overwhelm our infrastructure, services, landscape and communities. Meanwhile, many of our local villages are paying the penalty of speculative development, such as the 170 houses allowed on appeal at Hanborough and the recent decision by the Secretary of State to overrule West Oxfordshire District Council and allow 260 houses at Burford Road in Witney.

*We ask you as Parliamentary candidate to tell us how, if elected, you would work with us to meet this challenge. In particular, will you pledge to support the following changes to national government policies? (And, if not, we would welcome a dialogue on why you feel this is not appropriate.)*

- Ensuring that developers cannot effectively override or bypass local plans. In particular, imposing an emergency break on large developments opposed by local planning authorities, but permitted by inspectors on the grounds of "no local plan" and/or lack of 5-year housing supply, since these loopholes are increasingly being used to justify and force through anti-social and bitterly opposed development.

- Rebalancing the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to ensure a fairer balance between the needs of local people and those of landowners and developers. For example, taking steps to discourage ‘landbanking’ (the failure to build out existing permissions) and considering better mechanisms to ensure the uplift in land value from planning permission goes back to the community, supporting the provision of adequate infrastructure.

- Creating genuinely sustainable and attractive communities, often with higher densities to minimise land take, rather than depressing "any town" developments designed to maximise developer profit, eg restoring a comprehensive framework of mandatory minimum standards for sustainability, social inclusiveness, design and space provision in new housing.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Helena Whall

On behalf of Need not Greed Oxon coalition



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

Coalition Secretariat, c/o CPRE Oxfordshire, First Floor, 20 High Street, Watlington, Oxon OX49 5PY.

Email: [info@neednotgreedoxon.org.uk](https://4.exchange2010.livemail.co.uk/owa/redir.aspx?SURL=M87xhqz5T2lb5_vMXAZKWqUX6I5KUJshJ7FP1ZZ5uVhd9VTWRRfTCG0AYQBpAGwAdABvADoAaQBuAGYAbwBAAG4AZQBlAGQAbgBvAHQAZwByAGUAZQBkAG8AeABvAG4ALgBvAHIAZwAuAHUAawA.&URL=mailto%3ainfo%40neednotgreedoxon.org.uk)

Website: [www.neednotgreedoxon.org.uk](http://www.neednotgreedoxon.org.uk)