POETS
Planning Oxfordshire's Environment and Transport Sustainably

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As Oxford Local Plan goes to Cabinet meeting this Wednesday

City Council challenged to consider New Approach to Land Use

Oxford City Council should be doing much more to prioritise land for housing rather than employment, according to POETS (Planning Oxfordshire's Environment & Transport Sustainably).

For example, the Oxford Growth Commission has flagged Oxford Central/West End as a site where development could lead to 25,000 new jobs, dwarfing the potential 1,000 new dwellings – this in a location well suited to new housing.

POETS' Chris Cousins said: "The Council website claims '*extremely high employment levels'* in the City, so surely the real challenge is to meet the housing needs of existing local residents, not to create more jobs which will add to the number of people seeking housing?"

"With the City Council shortly to consider re-submission of the Local Plan, we think there is scope for a different approach, more in tune with the needs of Oxford's residents. POETS are contacting all City councillors to ask that this issue is more robustly addressed."

Why does the imbalance between jobs and housing in the City matter?

- It puts pressure on existing housing stock, forcing up rents and prices.
- It leads to increased commuting from outside the city, adding to congestion and pollution.
- It particularly impacts those on middle and lower incomes, who have to bear the cost of travel.

Mr Cousins said: "There needs to be a more strategic approach that balances housing and jobs, and which also pays attention to the types of jobs provided and who they will benefit. Despite Oxford's strong economic potential, not everyone will either want or be able to work in a seemingly endless supply of new 'lab space'".

ENDS

Notes for editors:

1. POETS are a voluntary think tank of professionals providing analysis, commentary and ideas on sustainable planning and transport for Oxfordshire.
   Further info, incl. POETS Vision for Oxfordshire: www.poetsplanningoxon.uk

2. The re-submission of the Local Plan will be considered by Oxford City Council Cabinet on 8 July – see: https://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=527&MId=8379
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Contact

Helen Marshall, POETS, M: 07791 376365

E: contact.poets@gmail.com