To: letters at Oxford Mail

From: Steve Dawe, Cowley Area Transport Group – [www.catg.org.uk](http://www.catg.org.uk)

53 Bulan Road Oxford OX3 7HU – 11th October 2021

Dear Editor,

George Monbiot is quite right (*Oxford Mail,* 11th October 2021). There is no need to build on greenfield sites when so many sites in Oxford are available, and are near to existing facilities households need. The City Council has failed to recognise that the public and private car parks of Oxford can have housing built at their edges, or as apartments above surface level. Large vacant spaces exist on industrial sites too. And what about the City’s empty shops and offices?

But there are two other serious issues the City Council is ignoring. First, 3000 homes as the start of developments at Grenoble Road means about 2 cars per household. Since Oxford’s road junctions were at capacity in 2018, where is the traffic going to go(1)? These homes will be served by delivery and utility vehicles as well.

Housing plans for Oxfordshire do not recognise that usage of water in the Oxford and Swindon water catchments will reach maximum in 2023(2). Getting water from elsewhere would have energy usage implications and supposes such water will be available. The City’s own documentation includes noting future water shortages, referring to the Thames Water Resources Management Plan 2020-2100. For the area Thames Water covers we will be:

* 387 million litres of water short per day by 2045
* 688 million litres of water short per day by 2100(3)

This makes a nonsense of housing projections for Oxfordshire, just as such projections show no appreciable regard for the traffic implications of 100,000 extra homes by 2031 – if built – and fantastical numbers by 2050.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Dawe

COWLEY AREA TRANSPORT GROUP – [www.catg.org.uk](http://www.catg.org.uk)

Notes:

1. National Infrastructure Commission – *Running out of road: investing in cycling in Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford.*
2. Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy Summary report for 2021-2040, p. 17.
3. Oxford City Council, *Air, Water and Land Quality topic paper* – part of associated papers for Oxford City Plan 2040 consultation, p.6.