

Appendix 6

Non Technical Summary of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Parking Standards SPD

The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of planning policy documents.

The first stage of the SA was to produce an LDF Scoping Report, which was issued for consultation in February 2006. This identified key sustainability issues in Oxford. 25 sustainability objectives were selected covering a wide variety of environmental, social and economic issues such as flooding, biodiversity, climate change, energy efficiency, waste generation, affordable housing and economic growth.

The second stage is the production of the Sustainability Appraisal Report. A key element of the Sustainability Appraisal Report involves testing the Parking Standards SPD against the SA objectives in order to identify likely positive or negative impacts. This assessment concluded that the Parking Standards SPD is likely to have a positive impact on the environment. Encouraging more sustainable modes of travel should help reduce CO₂ emissions and thus help to combat climate change. Promoting sustainable urban drainage and discouraging front garden parking both help to reduce flood risk. The SPD is also likely to have beneficial social effects, such as by focusing on making efficient use of land, which will help to ensure enough people are within walking distance of local shops and services to support them. Promoting greater travel choice could also have the effect of widening social inclusion, and the use of more sustainable modes may result in a healthier lifestyle.

Travel Plans and Transport assessments could be costly to implement, which may prevent development required to meet Oxford's social and economic needs from being constructed. However, it is considered very unlikely that costs will be high enough to discourage new development, and Travel Plans and Transport Assessments are likely to play an important role in ensuring the acceptability of new development. There are likely to be benefits to an employer, such as reducing the amount of land used for parking, which mitigate against initial costs. Furthermore, the SPD only clarifies existing policy relating to Travel Plans and Transport Assessments, so its effect could only be minimal.

The SA therefore concluded that the impact of the Parking Standards SPD on the 25 sustainability appraisal objectives is likely to be positive.