

Appendix B

Non Technical Summary of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Balance of Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document (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 a Local Development Framework (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 Balance of Dwellings SPD against the SA objectives in order to identify likely positive or negative impacts. The assessment concluded that the Balance of Dwellings SPD should help achieve some of the key SA objectives, particularly those which relate to social issues. These include meeting local housing needs by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent affordable home; improving the health and well being of the population by ensuring that suitably sized accommodation is provided to meet the needs of different family unit sizes; and reducing social exclusion by ensuring that some parts of Oxford are not dominated by exclusively large units and others by small units. The Balance of Dwellings SPD is unlikely to have a significant impact on the environmental and economic SA objectives, though it may make it easier for workers who need to live in Oxford to find suitable accommodation by requiring the provision of a balanced and suitable distribution of dwelling types.

There are no obvious negative adverse social, environmental or economic impacts. However, as an SPD, the advice cannot have requirements beyond those already set out in policy, or beyond what would be necessary to negotiate for anyway in order to make otherwise unacceptable developments acceptable. Therefore there is no evidence that there will be any conflict between the SPD and sustainability objectives.

The Balance of Dwellings SPD aims to provide further advice on the mix of dwelling types that should be provided in new housing developments, in order to ensure that the size of units provided meet the needs of differing sizes of household and do not result in over provision of certain unit sizes.

Monitoring will be important to ensure that any potential unexpected negative effects are identified

The SA concluded that the overall impact of the Balance of Dwellings SPD on the 25 sustainability appraisal objectives is likely to be positive