Oxford City Council

Sites and Housing DPD: Pre-Options
Report on public consultation

February 2011
1. Introduction

1.1 Overview of the project
A ‘pre-options’ public consultation took place to help in the generation of options for the Sites and Housing Development Plan Document (DPD). This DPD will form part of Oxford’s Local Development Framework (LDF). The final adopted version of the document will set out permissible uses on identified sites, as well as giving guidance about how the sites should be developed. It will also contain new development control policies for residential development in Oxford (including student accommodation and houses in multiple occupation - HMOs).

1.2 Stages in production of the Sites and Housing DPD
There are several stages involved in the production of a DPD (to a large extent the stages are dictated by the planning regulations) of which this is the first.

Pre-options consultation At this first stage, no document was produced. Instead, people were asked to give their initial thoughts on suitable types of development on the sites that had been identified and to think about types of policies they would like to see to guide new housing development. The results of this consultation will be one of the considerations that will help us determine our options for each site and to help identify preferred options for managing housing development generally.

Options consultation Using analysis carried out at the pre-options stage we will produce a document that sets out policy options for each site. Where appropriate it will state a preferred option. It will include a brief analysis of each site and explain the method used to determine our options.
A separate document will set out possible housing policy options. This will set out alternative policy approaches, and in most cases will state the preferred option of the City Council.

Proposed submission consultation Once comments are received on the options documents we will draft a submission document. There is a formal period of consultation on this document. Comments must be received in writing (or by email) as they will be submitted to the Secretary of State. There is little scope to make changes to the document at this stage.

Final stages There is a short time to make minor changes to the document before the document, evidence base and comments received are submitted to the Secretary of State. An independent examination is carried out. If the document is found sound, changes recommended by the Inspector are made and the document is taken to Full Council to formally adopt.
2. Consultation process

2.1 Purpose of the consultation
The purpose of this consultation was to involve local communities in the earliest stages of discussions about the potential sites and options for housing policies, before any documents are published. It was considered important to seek the views of the public on issues we are covering in the DPD, and gather suggestions as to how we could take forward policy. The consultation focused on contacting local people and local organisations.

2.2 Consultation methods
People were encouraged to come along to consultation events held in 5 sessions across the city. We wanted to give people a chance to have their say, and there were a number of ways they could comment at the events. To stimulate thought and discussion we had some introductory boards that listed questions to think about, for example which sites are suitable or not suitable for development; how can sites be best developed; should the affordable housing threshold be changed; should we be giving more, or less, priority to allocating land for student accommodation; is the aim of achieving excellence in sustainability more or less important than providing affordable housing? These boards also gave background information to ensure people were aware of constraints and parameters, for example high level strategic planning policies already in the Core Strategy, the influence of other strategies, policies and statutory bodies and the importance of being able to deliver (i.e. site viability, landowner preferences, etc).

These events gave the opportunity for people to see large maps showing the sites so far identified and to comment about suitable uses for those sites. There were three discussion tables each with a large map of a different part of Oxford. Sites were colour coded to ensure people were aware if the green belt was a constraint etc. People could talk to facilitators about the sites, write their comments on comment forms and place flags on particular sites showing their comments relating to that site/place counters to represent uses they considered suitable for that site. Scribes were also available at the discussion tables if people wished to make comments verbally.

To help people comment on housing issues, 5 boards were set up giving an overview of issues with ‘thought bubble’ spaces where people could add their thoughts using post-it notes. There was also a facilitated housing discussion table. Displayed on this table were charts showing local ‘characters’ representing the communities of Oxford, expressing views on the issues by way of speech bubbles. People could place coloured dots to show whether they agreed or disagreed with these views, and use post-it notes to add their own thoughts.

Opportunities were available for people to make comments even if they could not attend the events or did not wish to. All the information available at the events was also put on our website and was displayed in the City Council’s Ramsay House offices after the events. People could comment on the online consultation portal or download comment forms. We also took comments by email.

2.3 Who did we want to reach about the events?
- Local people
- Residents’ associations, community groups, parish councils and active city wide groups.
- Individual members of the online consultation portal
- City Council Members

A full list of organisations and people contacted directly is listed in Appendix A.
2.4 What methods were used to contact and advertise to these groups?

- **Posters**
  → on 67 community notice boards
  → other boards in public places - leisure centres (5), libraries (7), community centres (8) City Council offices (5)
  → Area committees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>Flyers and posters</td>
<td>1(^{st}) Nov 2010 (meeting cancelled)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowley</td>
<td>Flyers and posters</td>
<td>3(^{rd}) Nov 2010</td>
<td>John Bunyan Baptist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>Flyers and posters</td>
<td>4(^{th}) Nov 2010</td>
<td>North Oxford Association Community Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central South and West</td>
<td>Flyers and posters</td>
<td>9(^{th}) Nov 2010</td>
<td>Town Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East area</td>
<td>Flyers and posters</td>
<td>16(^{th}) Nov 2010</td>
<td>Marston British Legion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>Flyers and posters</td>
<td>17(^{th}) Nov 2010</td>
<td>Larkrise Primary School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Flyers to advertise the events**
  → left at Area Committees
  → left in leisure centres (5), libraries (7), community centres (8) City Council offices (5)

- **Local groups**
  → 17 residents groups were contacted to ask them to inform their members of the events and offering to provide them with flyers if they were willing to distribute those. (That we are aware of, Feilden Grove Residents’ Association and Friends on Old Headington both requested flyers to distribute. The Civic Society included a reference to the event in their November email to members. The New Marston South and Jack Straw’s Lane residents associations put references to our events on their website.)
  → Offer to attend local group meetings to inform of Planning Events
  → Asked to put article in community newsletters. An article was placed in Leys News (Nov 2010) and the Rose Hill Newsletter (Nov/Dec 2010).

- **City Council website**
  The events were advertised on the main website from the 29\(^{th}\) October 2010. Maps of the sites were uploaded on 19\(^{th}\) November 2010.

- **Article in Your Oxford**
  An article advertising the events, giving details of dates and venues, was placed in Your Oxford, which was delivered to all Oxford homes between 1\(^{st}\) and 19\(^{th}\) November 2010.

- **All City Councillors emailed**
  Members were emailed on 21\(^{st}\) October 2010. They were informed of the dates of the consultation events and provided with a list of the main sites in each of the Area Committee areas. Members were emailed again on 19\(^{th}\) November 2010 to inform them that maps of the sites were posted on the website.

- **Media:**
  → We put out a press release, which was posted on the front page of the City Council’s website on 4\(^{th}\) November 2010 and on 19\(^{th}\) November 2010.
  → There were front page and inside stories in the Oxford Times and on their websites on 4\(^{th}\) November 2010 and 25\(^{th}\) November 2010.
  → There was an article about the events on the BBC Oxford website on 23\(^{rd}\) November 2010

- **Council Twitter**
Announcements were twice made on the City Council’s Twitter page, as follows: “We want to hear from residents of Oxford about the future shape of your community. Drop-in sessions taking place: http://tinyurl.com/2vy4d2x 4:38 AM Nov 4th” and “We want to hear from residents of Oxford about future shape of your community. Drop-in sessions start tomorrow: http://tinyurl.com/35vwhvu 3:34 AM Nov 23rd”. Currently over 2,300 people are following the Council on Twitter.

- **Informed Council’s contacts directly**
  Contacts on the main planning policy database were informed by email/letter on 4th November 2010. Information about the consultation was added to the City Council’s main consultation portal, Inovem, and everyone on the system was emailed about the events on 5th November and also on 22nd November when all the consultation documents were uploaded. The 76 hard to reach groups on the Council’s database were emailed on 4th November 2010.

- **Informed staff of the major employers in Oxford**
  Ten major employers in Oxford were emailed and requested to place a notice advertising the consultation events on their intranet systems. We are aware of information having been posted on the intranet’s of University of Oxford, Oxfordshire County Council, BMW UK Manufacturing Plant Oxford, Oxford Radcliffe Hospital NHS Trust, Rutherford Appleton Laboratory (CCLRC), Oxfordshire Mental Healthcare NHS Trust, Oxfordshire PCT. (as well as it being on the City Council website).

- **Advertising at Oxford Brookes**
  A Lecturer promoted the consultation events and distributed flyers to Oxford Brookes students. Officers attended an Oxford Brookes housing advice roadshow on 8th November 2010) to talk to students and leave flyers.

- **Other meetings:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headington Forward</td>
<td>Headington organisations and resident representatives (Cllr Roy Darke,</td>
<td>25th Oct 2010 and 8th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cllr David Rundle, Richard Bradley, Tony Joyce, David Bascombe, Ian</td>
<td>December 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humphries, Patrick Coulter, Colin George, Katie Barratt)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement Monitoring</td>
<td>Elected tenants and leaseholders (about 12 attendees)</td>
<td>17th Nov 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Results of the consultation

The following section summarises the comments received during the consultation process, including feedback given on the events themselves. More detail is shown in the appendices. The report provides a summary of responses in order to report and analyse the results. It does not reproduce every comment received word for word, but it does cover all aspects of the comments received on each site/issue.

Thank you to everyone who came along to an event and to everyone who gave us comments about the sites and housing issues.

3.1 Overview of drop-in events

The following table shows the number of attendees who were counted at each of the consultation events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Visitor count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Oxford Community Centre, Princes Street</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summertown Community Centre, Diamond Place</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jubilee Hall, Sorrell Road, Blackbird Leys</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headington Baptist Church, 78 Old High Street</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre, St Ebbe’s Street</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following tables and graphs show the responses received to the questions on the comment form available at the events. However, these graphs only represent those people who chose to answer some or all of the questions on the comment form.

We also received more detailed feedback on the events themselves on comment forms and orally at the events. These are summarised in Appendix B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender (where stated)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One person described themselves as having a disability.
Overall opinion of the event

The location of the event was

It was easy for me to get my views across

The methods and the material used was helpful

The issues were made clear to me

- Good
- OK
- Poor

- Yes
- Partially
- No
3.2 Overview of feedback on Sites
The greatest volumes of comments were received on the four City Council owned car park sites: Diamond Place, Headington, St Clement’s and Union Street. The majority of comments received relating to these sites objected to the principle of development on the car parks. The most common reason for objecting to development on the car parks was a fear that the local centres would be adversely affected by a drop in trade and that some people who rely on the car would be excluded from the district centres. Some considered it feasible to provide development and parking, for example by undercroft or underground parking, but there were concerns that this would result in an overall loss of parking and that it would create a dangerous/unpleasant environment. Some of those who saw development as possible still wanted to see levels of parking maintained both during and after any construction work.

Most other sites that elicited high numbers of responses were greenfield sites, particularly larger sites with a rural character, such as land off Marston Ferry Road and Ruskin College fields. Objections were made to development of Ruskin College fields because people considered the site important to the setting of the conservation area, and because they felt it should be maintained as it kept a rural feel within the built up area. It was clear on the maps that Marston Ferry Road sites would only be considered for Green Belt compatible uses, but people feared that even recreational uses could affect the nature of the river corridor and that flood storage would be affected which could have serious consequences for flooding elsewhere.

General comments about the sites were that Oxford could not take any further development, particularly without sufficient infrastructure improvements. Some comments also related to the importance of maintaining green spaces and biodiversity within the city.

Comments made on specific sites at the five events (using marker flags or orally) and received later via email, online consultation portal and letter are summarised in Appendix C.

No comments were made on the following sites:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7 Ambulance Resource Centre</th>
<th>127 Northfield Hostel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 Banbury Road (7-19)</td>
<td>105 Land off Osney Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Between Towns Road</td>
<td>106 Land rear of Oxford Retail Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Blackbird Leys Community Centre</td>
<td>131 Old Road Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Car park to the rear of cinema complex</td>
<td>136 Oxford and Cherwell Valley College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 Cowley Centre</td>
<td>139 Oxford Science Park (Littlemore)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 Crescent Hall</td>
<td>140 Oxford Science Park (Minchery Farm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 Headington Preparatory School</td>
<td>146 Radcliffe Infirmary site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114 Littlemore Mental Health Centre</td>
<td>160 Slade Hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118 Littlemore Park</td>
<td>172 The Blackbird Public House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121 Maintenance Depot (former storage depot)</td>
<td>188 Westlands Drive and Redland Road square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126 Nielsens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3 Overview of feedback on Housing

3.3.1 Housing comments by topic

Appendix D provides a summary of all comments made in relation to the five topics Affordable Housing, Student Accommodation, Houses in Multiple Occupation, Residential Design, and Sustainable Homes. A number of more general comments are summarised under ‘Other comments’.

Affordable Housing

Overall, there was strong support for retaining at least the current requirement for 50% affordable housing on qualifying sites (which is in any case required by the Core Strategy). Where a preference was expressed, some felt that social housing should be prioritised over other tenures. However some also commented that key worker housing should be encouraged, or even brought within the definition of affordable housing. Views were expressed that all sites should include a mix of tenures. Some felt that alternative forms of affordable housing should be promoted, such as more residential boat moorings, or co-housing schemes.

A couple of people commented that there should be greater flexibility, either in the policy requirements (too restrictive?), or in the way in which social landlords manage their stock (‘flexible tenure’).

Student accommodation

Overall, there was a feeling that there is too high a concentration of students residing in particular parts of the City – mainly East Oxford and Headington. There was considerable support for the idea of focusing future student accommodation away from predominantly residential neighbourhoods. Some in particular objected to the idea of concentrating student accommodation for Oxford Brookes University in proximity to the main campuses (Gipsy Lane / Headington Hill), rather the student population should be spread more evenly across the City.

However there were also a number of comments that supported locating student halls of residence close to the Universities, as this would have transport benefits, and potentially make available more family dwellings elsewhere. It was also suggested that students would choose to live in shared houses over purpose-built accommodation due to preferable location. A couple of views were expressed that there should be no restrictions in principle on location of student accommodation, and that good management was more important.

Some felt that no more land in Oxford should be used for student accommodation, so that conventional housing could be prioritised. Some felt that the only way to protect or promote balanced communities in Oxford was to prevent any further expansion in university students. However others supported the activities of the universities and their students as being important to the economy of Oxford.

A particular concern was parking pressure being exacerbated by student accommodation. It was felt by some that very strict curbs on car use by students is important.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

By far the largest number of comments supported restricting the number of HMOs across Oxford. Many felt that communities were suffering from antisocial activities as a result of the number of student HMOs, such as noise late at night, on-street car parking pressures, and overflowing bins. Some felt that restricting HMO development should reduce the loss of family homes, thus increasing turnover of family housing, and help to maintain balanced communities.
Some specifically supported the principle of lowering the threshold (by number of occupants) at which the Council is empowered to control the use of a house as an HMO.

There were a number of comments expressing concern that there seemed to be no distinction made between student-occupied HMOs and those occupied by working people for affordability reasons. Some suggested introducing different rules for student and ‘non-student’ houses. Some felt that better management of HMOs, or heavier penalties on antisocial activities, would be fairer than imposing blanket restrictions.

A small number specifically supported the student population as reflecting the longstanding presence of the universities, or for supporting the viability of local businesses.

Residential design
A number of issues were raised in relation to the quality and space standards applicable to new residential developments. There were a number of general comments about the need for high quality architecture and adequate space. Specific concerns included ensuring appropriate building heights, not building on flood plain, maintaining building lines, ensuring wheelchair friendly access to and in ground floors, resisting flat roofs, ensuring balconies maintain privacy for neighbours, preventing privacy and overlooking problems, resisting out-of-keeping development, and the need to encourage modern architecture.

Some comments were made in respect of appropriate densities. Most who commented on this felt there is a need to prevent ‘town cramming’ issues – we should not squeeze too much development onto brownfield sites as this can result in cramped rooms and gardens, and impact on the character of the area and people’s quality of life. However others supported increasing housing densities in some areas.

Some commented in particular that ‘garden grabbing’ and residential infill should generally be resisted. Others however considered that suitability of garden land for development depends on the size of the garden plot. One or two people suggested more development on larger greenfield sites in order to avoid intensification. A few expressed particular concern over additional parking pressure being created by infill development.

There were some that strongly felt there was a greater need to ensure adequate parking provision for new developments, which can lead to problems in neighbouring streets. An alternative view given by others was that private residential parking should be restricted to reduce traffic generation.

Sustainable homes
The overarching emphasis emerging from the public was on the need for new build developments to meet high sustainability standards. Some felt that we cannot afford not to prioritise the sustainability credentials of development. Some stated that it is cheaper to run a ‘green home’ even if this adds to the cost of construction.

Specific means of building in sustainability could include utilising solar energy, energy conservation, energy generation, insulation, and provision of green infrastructure. Some also felt there should be financial incentives to improve existing homes, such as free installation of photovoltaics.

Some felt that alternative forms of low-impact or high ‘eco-spec’ housing should be promoted, such as more residential boat moorings, or co-housing schemes.

Other comments
A range of comments were made in relation to other planning or more general issues affecting Oxford. A number of people felt that more attention needs to be paid to the additional infrastructure needs arising from new development, such as roads, pavements, sewers, schools and public transport. A couple of comments suggested we should resist building on local centres’ car parks, due to long-term effects on businesses and the community.

A few comments were made that there was not enough focus on the needs of disabled people relevant to planning policy, at the public events.

3.3.2 Housing comments by location
The section below summarises the main issues arising at each of the five workshops, and may give an indication of what concerns people most in those areas.

East Oxford Community Centre

Affordable housing: There were a number of comments generally supporting a strong commitment to requiring affordable housing.

Student accommodation: A number of comments were made suggesting that East Oxford is becoming an unbalanced community due to the high student population, therefore student related development should be steered towards other areas or capped altogether. A couple of people felt that providing student accommodation is important to allow growth of the education sector as an important contributor to the local economy, and that student accommodation should not be segregated from the rest of the community.

HMOs: This issue attracted the most comments. Some expressed frustration at the problems evident to them from a concentration of HMOs in their area, such as parking pressure and general appearance. However just as many felt it important to recognise that HMOs provide affordable accommodation to working people, including graduates. A few commented that it would be better to tighten up on management or the standard of HMO properties.

Residential design: Comments related to use of local materials; long-term consideration of Oxford heritage; suggestion of increased density in East Oxford; objection to open space development, and the need to consider congestion.

Sustainable homes: Comments were almost unanimously strongly supportive of promoting low carbon housing. Promotion of houseboats as a sustainable housing solution was suggested.

North Oxford Community Centre

Affordable housing: Comments generally supported the need to provide affordable housing in new development. Alternative ways of doing so were suggested, including co-housing and residential boating.

Student accommodation: A number of people commented that students need to be housed in Oxford, with some suggesting it is better to provide student accommodation close to the university campus they are intended to serve. Other comments included the need to provide facilities for students on-site, and concern over the height of student blocks.

HMOs: Some people highlighted the problems associated with HMOs, such as bins and over-concentration. Some suggested stricter management of HMO landlords, or doing more to deal with problems of rubbish.
Residential design: Comments were made on a variety of design issues, including building line/height standards; allowing more greenfield development to avoid infilling; achieving good disabled access; preserving fine architecture; restricting private parking; better policing of planning applications, and comment on the merits of co-housing schemes.

Sustainable homes: There was overall recognition of the importance of sustainable housing for future generations. Particular ways of achieving this were mentioned: improved construction standards; residential boat ownership, and co-housing schemes.

Jubilee Hall, Blackbird Leys

Comments on housing issues included suggestions that: a lower threshold for HMO definition is adopted; over-intensification should be avoided particularly in socio-economically deprived areas; Council should help meet the cost of energy efficiency / micro-generation, and importance of preserving green spaces.

Headington Baptist Church

Affordable housing: Some comments specifically supported retaining the 50% requirement for affordable housing. Some questioned the definition of affordable housing. A couple of comments suggested more flexibility may be needed when developing smaller sites (for example, use of smaller units attracting a lower market rent).

Student accommodation: Many comments supported in principle the development of more student accommodation as a better alternative to students ‘living out’. Some felt there should be an overall limit on student numbers in Oxford. There were diverging ideas about the best location, with some supporting new accommodation close to Brookes University, or integrated with residential neighbourhoods, whilst others felt there was already a concentration of students living in Headington, or that 1st and 2nd year students should be “kept away” from some areas.

HMOs: The largest number of comments sought to restrict changes from family size dwellings to HMOs widely across the City, for reasons of amenity, parking pressures and community balance. Some people suggested that other types of accommodation were needed to take pressure off housing stock, such as more accommodation for students provided by the universities, more smaller flats in new developments, and more housing for older single people. There were a couple of comments seeking a more robust approach to management of HMOs to deal with some of the issues.

Residential design: Some people felt that houses need more adequate parking provision, as streets are already crowded with cars. One person suggested more basement or multi-storey parking may provide a solution. Although another person suggested limiting parking on new developments to encourage walking and cycling. There were a few comments on the need to ensure privacy, particularly where garden land or infill development is proposed.

Sustainable homes: Comments generally supported the need to build more sustainably. There were suggestions that there should not need to be a choice between affordable housing and high standards of sustainability, and that affordable housing should be built sustainably too. Another comment suggested that developers are offered financial incentives to develop sustainably. A further comment suggested that measures such as wind turbines and solar panels should only be considered where a meaningful contribution to energy requirements can be made.

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Centre, City Centre
**Affordable housing:** There were two comments made. One supported more flexibility of tenure, such as ending social tenures for life. The second suggested more should be done to reduce the number of empty properties managed by social landlords.

**Student accommodation:** Comments were varied in nature. One person objected to any further university expansion. Another considered that all 1st and 3rd year students should be expected to live in purpose built student accommodation. Another felt students should live in mixed communities and not confined to particular areas. A further comment stated that student accommodation has to be located to be attractive to students (such as in the Cowley Road area) else students will choose not to live there, and live in HMOs instead.

**HMOs:** Most comments suggested the definition of an HMO over which the Council has control needs to be changed to include smaller properties. One person felt that Oxford cannot restrict HMOs, as this may affect the viability of businesses reliant on the student population, and would push students into unsuitable areas which had poorer access (and therefore might lead to more car ownership).

**Residential design:** A couple of comments were made that the appropriateness of developing residential garden plots depends on the size of the plot considered – some may be big enough to support new housing.

**Sustainable homes:** The comment made stated that the highest environmental standards should be expected, and solar panels should be a requirement.

### 3.3.3 Summary of table workshop results

The table workshop presented to the public a number of contrasting viewpoints relating to the five main topics being covered in the Housing DPD: affordable housing policy; student accommodation; HMOs; residential design, and sustainable homes. Participants were invited to stick coloured dots against comments indicating whether they agree or disagree with the comments.

Additional thoughts written against the viewpoints giving further thoughts and opinions have been incorporated into the analysis of all comments reported above, and as shown in **Appendix D**.

The results of the ‘voting’ are not seen as necessarily representative of the communities’ views, and were primarily intended to stimulate discussion. Nevertheless, they may give a very broad indication of the balance of opinion on these issues, and may to some extent reflect the differences in views depending on where in Oxford people live. The results are reported in full in **Appendix E**.

Some broad patterns identified are¹:

i) Across all the workshops, the five comments attracting most dots or ‘votes’ **agreeing** are listed below.

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¹ Note that the ‘viewpoints’ reported in the main body of this report have been shortened for brevity. The full versions can be found in **Appendix C**.
“There are too many shared houses [HMOs] in my street” (40 agree; 5 disagree)
“Shared houses [HMOs] take family houses away from the property market thus reducing affordability” (40 agree; 4 disagree)
[Nurse says] “Priority should be to build flats or houses affordable to buy/part-buy for modest income individuals” (39 agree; 1 disagree)
“Responding to climate change should be top priority. All new housing sites should provide some of their own energy.” (37 agree; 2 disagree)
“There are too many badly built extensions and infill buildings in my neighbourhood.” (36 agree; 4 disagree).

ii) Across all the workshops, the five comments attracting most dots or ‘votes’ disagreeing are listed below.
“Climate change will happen anyway whether or not we build sustainably. Affordable housing should take greater priority.” (3 agree; 26 disagree)
“We should build more houses and flats instead of student accommodation. Happy for students to live out in houses.” (11 agree; 22 disagree)
“I don’t agree with social housing in my neighbourhood. Affordable housing should only be built on large sites or its own land.” (5 agree; 20 disagree)
“Young people create a vibrant Oxford. Allowing shared & student houses [HMOs] is important to maintain this.” (14 agree; 20 disagree)
[Student says] “I prefer to ‘live out’ to be close to my college and to live with friends. It should be my choice where I live.” (6 agree; 19 disagree)

iii) The following areas of concern generated the most ‘votes’ at each of the area workshops:

East Oxford: Generally the most interest was in HMOs and student accommodation. The results indicate a high level of concern with the number / concentration of HMOs, and a definite preference for students to live in purpose-built accommodation. There were also many votes on residential design issues, in particular indicating reluctance to see building on residential garden land, and preferring more cycle parking and less car parking in developments.

Summertown: The greatest support was indicated for prioritising shared ownership or intermediate market housing for modestly paid workers. There appeared to be less concern evident over student accommodation and HMOs than in East Oxford and Headington. Residential design and sustainability generated only a moderate number of votes.

Blackbird Leys: Too few votes were made to draw any patterns from this workshop.

Headington: The concern most evident was the concentration of HMOs, and the problems perceived to come with this concentration (both amenity and their impact on the affordability of family homes). Students living in purpose-built accommodation was generally favoured. A number of votes were also made to support prioritising intermediate housing available for modest income individuals to buy/part-buy.

City centre: Too few votes were made to draw any patterns from this workshop.

3.3.4 Conclusions

Looking at all the views expressed above at the drop-in events, it can be concluded that the accommodation of Oxford’s many students, and associated high numbers of HMOs, is perhaps the issue of greatest concern within the scope of the Housing DPD. This concern is particularly evident in East Oxford and Headington areas (which are the two areas closest to Oxford Brookes University). Many are concerned with the high number of student or shared households, compared with families, couples and single person households. However some in these areas were also keen to recognise the
importance of the Universities and their students, and the contribution HMOs make to meeting housing needs.

On other issues, the views expressed showed generally strong support both for building more affordable homes of all kinds, and building all homes to a high standard of sustainability. A wide range of comments were made at all events on general principles of residential development and design. There was concern over adequate parking provision. Some felt that infill development on garden land should be discouraged, but others that this is okay in principle provided the plot is of adequate size.
4. Next steps

4.1 Next stages of the document and forthcoming consultation

An options document is being produced currently, drawing on technical work, existing policies and guidance, advice of bodies such as the Environment Agency and the comments received at the pre-options consultation. The options document will set out alternative policy approaches for sites and housing policies. We are expecting to consult people on the Options document in July 2011.

4.2 How we will use the contact details we have

(i) People who submitted comments to us or who signed the prize draw form and provided an email address: These people will be emailed by us advising them to sign on to the City Council’s online consultation portal (www.oxford.gov.uk/consultation) to ensure that they are kept informed of the next stages unless they did not tick the box indicating further interest. We are seeking to minimise the use of paper by encouraging consultation via our consultation portal. This also enables people to update their own details should they move or change their email address. Anybody already on our consultation portal need not re-register but should ensure that in “My Profile” in the consultation portal they have ticked an Area of Interest to be “Planning and Regeneration”.

(ii) People who submitted comments to us or who signed the prize draw form and but did not provide an email address: We will hold their postal address details on our Planning Policy database so that these people will be contacted about the next stage of the Sites and Housing DPD unless they did not tick the box indicating further interest.