

To The Chief Executive,
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council,
Civic Centre,
West Street,
Oldham,
OL1 1XL

23 December 2005

Dear Sir,

THE OLDHAM REPLACEMENT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN - REPORT ON THE OBJECTIONS

I was appointed by the First Secretary of State, together with Mr George Arrowsmith, to hold a public inquiry into objections to the Revised Deposit Draft of the Oldham Replacement Unitary Development Plan. A pre-Inquiry meeting was held on 17 November 2004 and the Inquiry itself took place between 25 January and 6 April 2005. It closed on 18 October 2005. I attach my report which contains my recommendations on the actions which the Council should take in respect of the objections.

We have considered 4873 duly made objections. 66 objectors and/or their representatives appeared at the Inquiry and addressed 48 cases. Before and during the Inquiry 107 objections were unconditionally withdrawn and the matters they raised are not considered further. During the Inquiry we held two Round Table Discussions. These related to Housing and Renewable Energy. At these sessions, objectors and/or their representatives took part in discussions on a wide range of issues. Reports of these sessions, together with the report in the pre-Inquiry meeting, are included as appendices.

The Report is arranged in 14 chapters which reflect the composition of the RUDP. Although the Report is submitted in my name and is my responsibility, my colleague, Mr Arrowsmith, has made an equal contribution. In agreeing to an assistant Inspector, it was indicated that the Council needs to move to adoption as quickly as possible because of the advent of new regulations and a new development plan system. We have borne this in mind at all stages. In addition we have identified a degree of uncertainty in respect of several issues. These include, the Housing Market Renewal Programme, employment strategy, the on-going audit of open space, sport and recreational facilities and the Regional Spatial Strategy's approach to the Green Belt. Consequently, it seems to us that the RUDP is in some respects an interim plan which will soon be overtaken by the Local Development Framework.

In producing the Report every effort has been made to assist the Council in achieving its aims. It has been written in the short form with the main points made by the objectors and the Council incorporated into the conclusions. The Council's cases have not been summarised as they can be found in full in the proofs of evidence which are filed in the RUDP Library at the Council's offices. We do not specifically refer to all the detailed points but they have been taken into account. Similarly we have not responded to supporting representations but have borne them in mind. In several cases, there are large numbers of objectors and their names are not included in the main body of the Report but they are listed in Appendix A. As was stressed on a number of

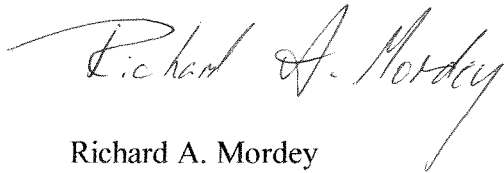
occasions, objections made in writing have been given equal weight to those made orally at the Inquiry.

The RUDP and the Report have also been written against a background of changing national and regional guidance. This is reflected in the Report and in the Council's List of Proposed Technical Changes to the Plan dated October 2005. I have recommended that the Plan be modified accordingly.

A schedule of duly made objections, is included in the appendices to the Report. These are all available at the Civic Centre. A number of acronyms have been used. In most cases their meaning is quite clear. The Glossary which is included in the RUDP provides further explanation. In the interests of speed and brevity I have not included a separate glossary. For the same reason I have not made specific reference to individual Inquiry documents in the text.

Finally, I wish to thank all the participants in the Inquiry. I especially want to thank Steve Ramsden, the Programme Officer. There is no doubt that the smooth running of the Inquiry and associated proceedings was the result of his patient and friendly efforts. I would like to express my appreciation to the Council team together with the objectors and their representatives for their co-operation in helping the Inquiry to proceed smoothly despite obvious pressures. My very grateful thanks are also due to my colleague George Arrowsmith who worked closely with me for a number of months helping to make the Inquiry a pleasant and worthwhile experience.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard A. Mordey". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

Richard A. Mordey
Inspector.