

Hello Charlotte,

*I've been able to look at appendices B and C (and policies P2 and P9 of Appendix A) of the OPDC's letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> March before getting embroiled in the Inquiry and hearings that I've got programmed in my diary for the next five weeks. As a result, you can respond to Emma Williamson as follows.*

*Firstly, I must congratulate the OPDC on conducting such an extensive re-write of the plan within the period since I issued my Interim findings.*

*Secondly, subject to the adjustments which I set out in the attached schedule, I am content for the OPDC to publish these Modifications for public representations to be made.*

*This should not be taken to imply that I endorse the soundness of the Modifications or the Plan as proposed to be modified, simply that I recognise that they cover the ground which, in the examination so far, I have identified as needing to be covered and are an adequate response to the matters I have raised. Whether they give rise to any new matters of soundness which need to be addressed will only become apparent as public representations are made in response to them and as I work my way through the evidence base (Appendices D-T) which accompanied them. I will examine the evidence base whilst the Modifications are out to public consultation. I will consider the representations made at the end of the period of consultation and when the OPDC itself has had an opportunity to comment on any representations made.*

*In publishing the Modifications for public representations to be made, the OPDC should also publish its Minor Modifications but should make it clear that I will only be considering representations made on the Main Modifications, not the Minor Modifications, unless the representation can convince me that a Minor Modification should be regarded as a Main Modification.*

*I note what is said about the timing of the publication of the Modifications in relation to the Mayoral elections. The Inspectorate recognises that the pre-election period starts on 29 March until the local elections on 6 May. During that period, if there are local elections in the area of a Local Plan under Examination, final local plan reports and soundness letters are not issued, because of the risk of local political sensitivities. Whether to initiate a public consultation is up to the OPDC but attention should be given to section J of the advice given to civil servants on consultations during an election period; [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/844380/General\\_Election\\_Guidance\\_2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/844380/General_Election_Guidance_2019.pdf)*

*Nevertheless, I trust that this reply to the OPDC's letter of 5 March will allow the OPDC to prepare its publication material and programme for a start as soon as possible after 6 May.*

*Best wishes,*

*Paul Clark*  
INSPECTOR