HBC
Key Notes on Core Strategy,
Area Based Policies re Gt. Harwood
Scheduled Meeting 2p.m. Tues. 27th Sept.
Participant D. Mason

Who’s Vision, Low Aspirations vs. High Potential

My observations are well tabulated in submissions already put forward with regard to the emerging Core Strategy. As promised I put forward for your information to support my observations / references gained from the following publications:

Planning and Property Study for Gt. Harwood
Para's 1.6/1.13/1.14/1.15/1.16/2.6/2.11/2.14/2.15/3.3/3.4/3.7/3.9/3.13/3.19 bullet point 4, 3.27. In my opinion all still applicable.

Executive Summary, Para. 4 Page 1. Positive action theme throughout the document.

Elevate Business Plan 08/11
Indicating an over reliance in Pennine Lancs. on external funding. Benefit to Gt. Harwood, Zero.

Pennine Lancs. Housing Strategy
A positive document and forward vision but note, SITS above local strategies PLACE agreed. Ref.1.1 Page 5 long term housing strategy. 1.2.2. The Market Progressions Model, entire section through to page 8. 1.3 20 Year Ambition reference to over crowding, NB Netherton Ward. 1.3.1 Economic Context. Bullet point 4 page 12, i.e. Pennine Reach still being politically opposed in Hyndburn Borough. 1.3.2 Housing, page 13 Local Policies need to be adaptable. Page 15, HBC is in competition with wider area. Moving on to objectives Chapter 2, 1.0 fully support. 1.1.1 Housing Priorities page 2, fully support, bullet points 3/4/5 fully support. Objective to Sustainable Neighbourhoods, bullet point1 fully support. Objective 3 page 4 bullet point 4, fully support, and under the Strategic themes, first paragraph page 10, lost to the Ribble Valley, under this strategy the following should also be observed: This policy sits above individual housing strategies, is compliant to the MAA, it promotes exploiting sub regional strengths, local policies need to be adaptable, growth potential is linked to preparedness, Gt. Harwoods potential lost to the Ribble Valley, net housing supply has not been responding to household growth, i.e. over crowding, Pennine Lancs. Moving to joint Core Strategy, Pennine Lancs. Notes that it is
competing with Central and West Lancashire, in terms of quality to attract and retain, Pennine Lancs. Should prepare for future growth to prevent drift to the Ribble Valley. Expansion should result in little adverse affect with imaginative housing developments created from need by releasing under occupied family homes, taking into account the predicted growth in aged population.

Hyndburn Regeneration and Housing Intelligence Reports
Page 3 Key message, bullet point 4, higher population density. Bullet point 5, growth in aged households, Page 7 reference to aged provision, Page 24 Marketability.


All the above references have guided me to the conclusions outlined in all my representations, if my reasoning can be summed up in a single question, and I do appreciate HBCs planning teams have moved considerably from the first draft Core Strategy to the present text in the deposit edition, I still conclude, and cannot understand the negativity and the misconceptions that are still evident in the said text. On accessibility, in one document it is 5 to 10 mins. away from the M65, and yet it is inferred that we have poor connections to that motorway, there is the obvious assumptive conflict, but absolutely no mention of the fact that Gt. Harwood is also well connected to the A59 trunk road, and has a better regional connection to Manchester by bus than our neighbouring borough Blackburn. Whilst I accept the quantitative work for housing provision has been done, I see no evidence of the reasoning behind the 15%500 units to be accommodated in Gt. Harwood, and there is no reference of the over reliance on the redevelopment of old mill sites and the consequences with regard to displacement/quality problems that will arise. On accessibility the text states that Gt. Harwood is constrained by the existing highway net work, when 2 planning applications recently given as directed heavy goods traffic 24/7 into the town to furnish the needs of the 2 large and one small Supermarkets. There is also reference to displacement of small businesses, however no quantitative or quality evidence is put forward as to how this will be achieved. There is also rose tinted reference to Gt. Harwood being an historic market town, when in fact it has been since the late 1800s a town industrialised to the extent that 22 mills were in full occupation. It is a Chartered Market Town, but that heading belies its traditional inherent potential

All this leads me to conclude that all the references to small scale, appropriate, being unsubstantiated subjective views, should be removed from the text and support from HBC within the text for Gt. Harwood in the final Core Strategy should promote its full growth potential in housing/commercial/industrial fields, bringing about the desired sustainable Township community. I see no reason to diminish in any way, shape or form the town's potential on the pretence that this is damaging to the wider Hyndburn Borough.
Challenge to Robustness and Soundness of the Deposited Edition of HB Core Strategy, and justification thereto

Given that all the above is sourced from Local Government/Central Government Publications, we feel there is no reason for diminishing/curtailing/restricting the growth potential within the Township of Gt. Harwood. Starting with your description of Gt. Harwood 5.6 reference to the Township being up and coming and likelihood that its attractiveness will increase, bolsters the above reasoning. Education is mentioned, but factually belies the social and educational strife within the Gt. Harwood community, i.e. faith schools vs. state schools, under performance of Norden, families gaining postal addresses outside the Borough to access schooling in the Ribble Valley, a problem for Harwood, but a problem that needs addressing within the wider text of the Core Strategy with reference to the present weak monitoring of this important issue.

Para.2, Accessibility

This reference belittles and belies the true facts on accessibility. 5 – 10 mins from the M65, signage to Gt. Harwood is poor, no reference to the A59 Trunk Rd., a major highway network to Central Lanes and Yorkshire, and no reference to the interconnectivity from Harwood to Manchester via X40/41 bus service. On Pennine Reach a multi area agreed interconnectivity transport plan, the reality being this is opposed by HBC Politicians reducing the chance of implementation, possibly isolating Gt. Harwood, a much stronger reference is essential in the Core Strategy so as to prevent mobility of Gt. Harwood citizens accessing the wider Pennine Lanes and beyond.

Para.3
Reference to Community Makeup
The Core Strategy needs a reference to expanding provision to meet Gt. Harwoods social/deprivation and shortfall in identifiable provision (aged)

Para.4
Reference to subjective negative views need to be avoided, future administration over the plans lifetime may not agree with the present administration. Reference to better sites? Heavy goods reference to 24/7 Supermarket servicing is ignored, relocation of displaced businesses, Where?

Para.5
Historic Market Town belies the reality, this is an industrialised township of some standing, its inherent legacy is a positive – need reference to formulation of an AAP. The Town is over run by circumstance, no longer a former abattoir, million pound investment/refurbishment, challenging not only this aspiration, but also the granting of planning consents for housing, needs reference widening to a holistic Harwood wide AAP.

Para.6
Remove reference to Memorial Park, unnecessary if designated? Already protected not in the control of HBC to enhance.
Policy GH1
Quantitative and qualitative information lacking for a comprehensive appraisal of robustness and soundness. Gt. Harwood needs an AAP, without the above on what grounds does this Policy stand, - from 7% 2002 to 15% 2011? Land availability has not changed, so where, when and what? There is also no reference to information on this Policy which is factually distressing industrial accommodation, it therefore follows in our opinion that the reference to the Green Belt, an addition of the wording at this time, is in our opinion needed or the Policy will not last the lifetime of the Plan.

Policy GH2
Again we reiterate there is no reasoning to restrict Gt. Harwoods potential with references to small scale/appropriate scale, it is our opinion that the horse has bolted, so to speak, Gt. Harwood has now become the hub of activity in this area of Pennine Lancashire, circumstances are such that Gt. Harwood is now attracting all quarter business from a greater area than its own rural hinterland. And as a result it has become more attractive and regained the image of an up and coming prosperous town, HBC words. So, remove all restricted references, the Core Strategy needs to recognise Gt. Harwoods full potential, this is not a threat to other Policies of HBC, it is just recognition of the reality, if there is one area of Hyndburn that the go for growth agenda could be applied it is Gt. Harwood. So Pol. GH2 should be amended with reference to the above.

In conclusion all I ask is that Gt. Harwoods potential should not be diminished and the need for an Area Action Plan is imperative to address not only the pent up potential in housing, but also addressing concerns over deprivation and market stabilisation, an Area Action Plan would also provide a safety net to maintain Gt. Harwoods industrial and commercial base, given that the Core Strategy is judged on deliverability, sustainability and soundness, the inclusion of these specific references to Gt. Harwood would be most welcome, this solely to prevent any illusions that Gt. Harwood needs to be curtailed in any way shape or form.

D MASON