Greg Lindley Representation Statement for Clowne Community Association examination points

I am informed by BDC that we are representor no 8513

I am also informed by the Programme Officer that we will attend the Session on 29 January on Issue 5- although as set out below our concerns also impinge on other Issues too especially the risk to the Green Belt and the watercourse environment and our Conservation area.

We are aware that this community submission is inadequate in its assessment but we have been unable to grapple with the complexity of the process and rely on the Inspector to allow for our shortcomings and any failure to understand the breadth of documents- and their inter-relationships.

We also rely on our original representation made during the plan process.

Scale of Development planned for Clowne - Clowne North

We are and have been confused by a process that seems to have regularly changed its mind and direction over the last few years (driven by Govt changes and local decisions) and is seeking to resolve the future of this bit of the world.

We do not believe this document, and the Clowne North proposal, will do that for the benefit of Clowne.

We believe that the damage from this document is a price Clowne will have to pay for Bolsover Councils process.

The planning decision about the future of our town is obviously multi faceted and not a simple straight line graph. If you multiply expected population growth by household size you get a figure for growth nearer the 575 houses than the present 2,000 or so.

So we understood 575 houses for Clowne back in 2013 – it was a lot but it was vaguely understood

The figure we have now is dressed up as a Strategic decision. But in truth it is mainly driven by the calculation of needing 1,000 houses to pay for a new primary school. Clownes future now is decided by that calculation. Now if everything else was resolved that may be sustainable. But, what flows from this large number is damage to Clowne. The series of significant policy issues and questions that led Bolsover DC to reject Clowne North in 2010/12 have not been resolved by this proposal. The policy argument that the planning decision should do no harm is failed by this so called Strategic decision. It is large but not very strategic. It is tied to motorway commuting and to reliance on the private car and not public transport. If it was in any way strategic it would have/should have reliance on public transport at the heart of the proposal and this is not central -it is an after thought = simply putting a designation of transport hub on the map doesn’t deliver anything.
In our original submission on the plan from June 18 and December 2016 we questioned the housing target for Bolsover as a whole. And suggested that the need for new allocations was relatively modest. We quoted the 3600 target for new housing against an existing planning approval commitments figure of 3,000. Given the district as a whole only needs 600 additional new housing approvals Clowne does not need 1500 at Clowne North alone.

The Clowne North proposes to take away existing industry from Clowne Station Road IE away and places it in the Green Belt - such a thing is neither strategic nor exceptional in GB terms. It also takes away large areas of good quality agricultural land when there are other land options available at a point in time when the worlds future food security is increasingly understood to be uncertain and when GB needs to strengthen its ability to feed itself – which needs good quality agricultural land to be preserved.

We do not believe the change of position by Bolsover DC on Clowne North is well founded or that it has resolved any of the issues BDC themselves set out when they rejected Clowne North previously in 2010/12.

From our original submissions and Bolsover DC own documents – these key issues were (and still are)

"Firstly the impacts of development on the land. These include the loss of agricultural land; the loss of allotments; the loss of recreational land; the loss of Green Belt land; loss of watermeadows; and the loss of wildlife, and wildlife habitat. The site contains three Local Wildlife Sites and is adjacent to two more. Derbyshire Wildlife Trust has expressed concerns as to whether the impact of the proposed development could be satisfactorily mitigated.

Secondly, infrastructure concerns. These include: the impact on the highway network, both around the site and in Clowne; the impact on waste and effluent; the impact on Harlesthorne Dam and Millwood Brook; the need for a site for a new school; and the impact of pollution.

Thirdly, the need for the proposed development. Respondents state there is plenty of: business parks; industrial sites; low income housing; empty houses in Clowne, and nearby settlements; more suitable sites; and that other (brownfield) sites should be developed.

Fourthly, issues of integration. That the site should integrate with the existing town rather becoming a separate entity, and that existing Rights of Way should be protected.

Fifthly, the loss of identity. This is the concern regarding the loss of Harlesthorne as a settlement and its integration with Clowne, as result of the Clowne North site. Other issues raised include: the impact on the Southgate House Conservation Area; and that the timeframe is unrealistic. In addition Government Office have said that for a site expected early in the Core Strategy there is an expectation that detailed delivery matters such as availability and infrastructure will have been resolved.

The Core Strategy should also make it clear how development will be advanced, for example through a Masterplan or Supplementary Planning Document.

(And later)....

There is clearly considerable doubt over whether development can be effectively integrated with the existing town."

There are other options for Clownes future that have not been fully set out for the community to understand.

The decision on Clowne North was made through a series of closed meetings where we were not engaged as community.

We were then presented with the results afterwards as a Strategic choice - such presentation was flawed as it didn’t make any sense and truly gave no alternative that made sense.
The alternatives for Clowne have been reviewed and set out afterwards internally in BDC to make a semblance of having reviewed alternatives for Clowne- but these were not explained when the Strategic consultation was undertaken.

There is nothing strategic about it we feel.

It is simply big and gets the commuters quickly to the motorway and it has huge potential to damage Clowne countryside and Clowne town centre in various ways- traffic and environmental damage Conservation area buildings to be damaged , town centre environment and townscape will be damaged.

This is not a solution- rather it is a penalty to be paid in future by Clowne.

It damages wildlife and watercourse and Green Belt

And we simply don’t need that many houses in Clowne

It doesn’t achieve the needed housing provision for affordable/social housing- Waystone are gearing up now to argue they cannot afford the social housing percentage provision.

The Clowne Parish Council Household Survey 2016 that set out the needs for Clowne is nowhere recorded nor referred to ?

Green Belt

The policy for protection of the role of the Green Belt is clearly stated and should be followed by implementation. Instead Bolsover then directly go against their own policy. Why is that?

They then later say the GB fields here perform a Green Belt function and then have prepared a documents that seeks to allow the developer to override it.

It is a false argument to pick small elements of the Green Belt field sand say they have less of a role.

This destroys the integrity of the Green Belt here between Clowne and Barlborough and then makes what is left less functional and prone to more chipping away in future . This GB policy should be applied here and the developer should be asked to look at the other alternatives for both the employment use(which is not needed in the plan period on Bolsover ‘s own figures) and that the proposed road link should also avoid this sensitive environment and use an alternative route that exists to go up A618 to the Van Dyke cross roads and then the A619 to access the M1.

This avoids impacting on the sensitive environment on the watercourse above Bumpmill Pond and avoids the already busy roundabouts at Barlborough links.

The Garden Village proposal here is not an exceptional case for taking Green Belt- it is big but not exceptional. Picking away at individual plots of land in the designated Green Belt is contrary to policy
and is a technical exercise if little value- it is the overall nature of the Green Belt separation here that is important for achieving the policy of open space separation between the settlements.

**Employment**

There is no case for taking Green Belt land for employment – and especially when a good part of that in the Clowne North proposal is existing industry that Waystone are intending to move from the existing Station Road IE that is against BDC own policy to protect existing industry.

Bolsover figures show sufficient employment land and there is the likelihood that employment land at the Coalite site will come forward in the plan period that is under represented.

**Clowne-Conservation Area Policy and impact**

Vision 9.10 of the Conservation Area Appraisal document says that we will seek opportunities to enhance the areas character and appearance?

We see no evidence that this is being followed- indeed quite the opposite- the chipping away at character and environment and history of Clowne sees our Conservation areas obviously undervalued and buildings and street scenes at risk of being lost.

The original Clowne Conservation Area Appraisal document appears to be from 2005/6 with no review since?. There are elements and key buildings and street townscape that are unrepresented / undervalued. For instance No1 High Street is 1767 Thomas Tompkin but is not referred to.

Of particular concern is the cluster of buildings at the heart of the North Road rail conservation area. To lose these would destroy the whole sense of building form and street scene and the sense of space on the junction of North Road/ Station Road and the new Mill Green Way roundabout. The relationships between the buildings here are the form of build undertaken by the mining/rail industry in the mid 1800’s – the survival of the booking office as a rare overbridge rail building is nowhere acknowledged. The sense of enclosure and tightness is part of the unique nature of this part of Clowne but is regarded as a problem rather than an asset.

We have very real concern that the damage to this area will see it become damaged by partial or full demolition of conservation area buildings.

We cannot envisage any scenario where the attempt to integrate with Clowne centre can avoid significant and irrevocable damage, losing links to our towns past history and creating something bland and of no character in its place.