Dear Madam/Sir,

I am writing to object to the findings of the Core Strategy (Regulation 19 dated April 2012) on the following grounds (specific to Whalley Village):

1. 2008-2028 is a very short term view of the housing needs of the Borough
2. In pursuit of a ‘here and now solution’ the Strategy is going to destroy existing communities and therefore the Vision for the Ribble Valley is discarded from the outset.
3. No real vision for where the additional population is going to find employment within the Borough and no vision for the additional traffic arising from those who commute to work outside of the Borough.

Taking these points in turn:

1. **LONG TERM SOLUTION** - the document identifies a need for (a minimum) of 4000 houses in the borough in the period 2028. What happens when we reach 2028? Some 4000 new houses will have been built but what of 2028 – 2048? Applying pro rata we can expect a need for a further 4000-6000 new house to meet ‘demand’. And where will they go? And what will be the additional burden on the already over stretched ‘service centre’ infrastructure? Land around the existing ‘service centres’ will have been used up and it will be necessary to repeat the exercise all over again looking for more areas to develop. Surely the strategy should be to think again with a much longer term view. If there is a need for 4000 houses over the 2008-2028 period then it naturally follows that a further 4000 maybe 6000 houses will be required in the following 20 years: so plan for it. Identify an area within the A59 corridor capable of accommodating 3-4000 houses in Phase 1, a further 4000 houses in Phase 2 and so on. Such a development (Milton Keyes springs to mind) will include its own infrastructure with shops, schools, Health Centre and Business units etc. Traffic generated by the development will join the A59 without impinging on Clitheroe and Whalley. However, it will be necessary to upgrade the A59/A671 trunk route to enable traffic to route directly to the motorway network. I note that the document identifies Standen as a strategic site with the potential for 1040 houses – this is totally insufficient and will only provide a ‘stop gap’. In summary the Strategy should be aimed at provision of land to meet the requirements of 50 years plus not fiddling about with squeezing developments in wherever a developer ‘identifies’ a quick profit opportunity.

2. **DESTRUCTION OF EXISTING COMMUNITIES** – it is interesting to note the photographs included on the Core Strategy document – together they paint a picture of a
beautiful rural area. But why did you not include a photo of King Street, Whalley at around 08.00hrs on a Monday morning? Or a photo of mums vying with each other to drop their children off at Whalley Primary School at 08.45hrs? This is what existing residents have to put up with on a daily basis and I assume that the same applies in Longridge and Clitheroe. Having observed the recent planning applications from the CO-OP (Riddings Lane, Whalley) and CEG (Lawsonsteads, Whalley) we are assured that additional traffic will only add some 1-3% to the existing traffic density. The Traffic Survey commissioned by the ‘Save Whalley Village Group’ (Capita Symonds) paints a somewhat different picture – add 3% from Lawsonsteads and 1% from Riddings Lane and a further 3% from Mitton Road (David Wilson Homes) then the picture becomes totally different. The road network in and around Whalley is unable to accommodate these increases will be completely overwhelmed. The Core Strategy identifies Longridge, Clitheroe and Whalley as ‘service centres’ but make no provision for enabling the ‘service providers’ with capacity to cope with the additional demands made upon them. Traffic has been covered already but which school can accommodate the additional children? How will United Utilities handle the additional demand for fresh and waste water? Developers brush aside any comments raised on these issues – after all they do not have to live with the consequences after an area has been ‘developed’. But residents do and I appeal to councillors to look again at the effect on the existing communities and not to accept the biased propaganda of developers, their ‘professional consultants’ and their legal teams.

3. EMPLOYMENT – 4000 additional homes has the potential to increase the working population by over 4000. At present businesses are facing the worst depression for decades and predictions for recruitment do not show a corresponding increase in employment opportunities. It must therefore be assumed that a larger proportion of the increased working population will seek work outside of the Borough. This will place additional strain on the road network but the Core Strategy makes no provision for this.

4. LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND – we should protect all land which is or could be used for livestock grazing or the production of crops. If the growing need for housing amounts to the numbers quoted in the document then the whole of East Lancashire will experience a population boom bringing with it problems far greater than where do we house them all. Of course developers would prefer to destroy green fields because there is more profit from it but their applications must be balanced with the need to retain agricultural land.

It may appear that the above objections to the Core Strategy document are far fetched and that we only really need to address the next 20 year period and that subsequent problems will fall on someone else’s shoulders; but I would repeat the Ribble Valley Borough Councils’ own Vision regarding development -

New development (is) to meet the needs of the area for growth, services and quality of life will be managed to ensure the special characteristics of the area are preserved for future generations.

The Core Strategy fails in this respect; to proceed with the proposals as defined in the document will lead to long term problems which will destroy existing communities in the short term rush to appease Government economic policy.

In summary, my concern is that RVBC is not considering the longer term and is failing in its duties to consider the impact of where these new houses are situated; piecemeal development of existing
communities as defined in the RVBC Core Strategy is neither sound nor sustainable; the additional demands placed upon them will blight the Borough for 'future generations'. The only way to meet the long term housing needs of the Borough is to establish a completely new community with its own infrastructure within the A59 corridor.

Please note that I have copied this letter to the Clitheroe Advertiser to solicit comment and opinion from other areas of the Borough.