

Minutes to the Meeting of
Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)
Held on Monday 10th December 2012, at Lowton Social Club.
<http://www.lendf.co.uk>

- Chairman – Ed Thwaite (ET), Secretary – Irene Thomson (IT)
- Welcome to members, visitors and guests
- *Apologies received from Cllr James Grundy, Gill Turner, Graham Maskery, Kath Houlton, Ed Houlton*

No. of Attendees = 45

1. **Minutes from last meeting** – not read at meeting but copies had been sent out by email and paper copies were available.

Some members do not have computers and paper copies are delivered to those individuals. In the case of a meeting date change, or police alerts, it would be useful to have mobile numbers so that 'text messaging' can be used. Please contact Ed or Irene.

2. **Bank Balance**

LENDF current balance details on view at the meeting for those present. An application has been made to the Small Grants scheme run by Wigan Council – this is to help with LENDF's administration costs.

3. **Short Notices**

Police Matters – Ed had recently spoken with the police for an update on the 'gatherings' of youths at the Oaklands Road Play Area. PC Mayo confirmed that officers had attended the area recently with a police van and 'spoken' with each of the youths, taken their details, and asked them to move on. Unfortunately they moved over to the Braithwaite Road area and the police again had to move them on. There are a number of locations in the borough which currently have Dispersal Orders and this is why they are congregating in Lowton. LENDF will continue to monitor the situation.

The Police also mentioned that speed checks are programmed for Newton Road and Kenyon Lane. Therefore please continue to keep to the speed limit !

[Note from Irene – A resident has asked that a warning be given to residents that cars are being broken into even on your own driveway. Even though the vehicle did not contain any items on show, the incident resulted in a broken window and damage to the car. This was duly reported to the police using the 101 telephone system.]

Andy Burnham Meeting – LENDF have requested a meeting with Andy Burnham to discuss all the land in Lowton which is being allocated in Wigan's Core Strategy for residential development. This meeting has now been arranged for January 3rd at 7.00pm – venue Lowton Social Club, Newton Road. We would like representatives from all corners of the Lowton East Ward to be present and shall send out invites to the existing residential groups. Those present at tonight's meeting who wished to attend were asked to leave their details with Irene.

4. Wainhomes – Outline Planning Application has been Submitted

Several residents came to tonight's meeting with the news that Wainhomes have now submitted their application. They had received a letter from Wigan Council dated 7th December with a request for comments by 31st December 2012. The reference number is A/12/77592 and can be viewed on Wigan's website <http://kinnear.wigan.gov.uk/planapps/PlanAppsDetails.asp?passAppNo=A/12/77592> A copy of this letter is available on LENDF's website in Latest News and under Current Issues/Housing Page3/Wainhomes.

Wainhomes have submitted a large number of documents with their application which are from their various consultants in relation to many aspects of the proposals. All can be viewed online at the link above and include:

- Transport Assessment
- Environmental Statement
- Geo Environmental Site Appraisal
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Crime Impact Assessment
- Screening Opinion
- Land Quality Assessment
- Bat Survey
- Ecological Report
- Great Crested Newt Study
- Noise Assessment
- Tree Survey
- Travel Plan
- Master plan
- Detail Plans
- Access and Design Statement
- Utilities Statement
- Community Involvement
- Planning Statement
- Location Plan
- Planning Application Form
- Press Notice
- Environmental Statement Non Tech Summary

If you wish to view the actual file or discuss the details of the application you can contact Mr D Rawsthorne, Wigan Council, on 01942 489127.

On display at tonight's meeting was a large plan of the proposals kindly supplied by Cllr Grundy.

The meeting then developed into a very lively discussion on the various 'issues' which residents feel have not been considered by Wainhomes:

- Existing congestion – a resident of Ranworth Drive has now commenced taking photographs of the traffic queues on Church Lane !
- Possible roundabout on Church Lane – would be problematical for HGVs !
- Farmland should not be used for development – sites already exist which are ready for development, e.g. Firs Lane, Bickershaw and the BICC site in Leigh.
- Schools – already full !

- Many properties suffer from subsidence – pile-driving has occurred on many occasions to underpin properties, therefore the land not suitable for building !
- Drainage – both surface water and sewer water has been an ongoing issue in the area and is still not satisfactorily solved !
- They do not own the land !
- Payment to Wigan Council (building levy) – the Council have previously stated that they need money for the infrastructure in Hindley! Therefore no benefit of the money would be seen by Lowton residents.

Wainhomes' application in relation to the Core Strategy

Ed then provided a summary of the current position of the Core Strategy which was suspended for 6 months by the Government Inspector in the summer of this year. This was done as the Inspector felt that Wigan's plans for the Borough were not acceptable as they stood. The Inspector is due to be back at Wigan Council's offices in February/March 2013 to recommence the procedure.

LENDF, and all others who objected and stated they wish to take part in the proceedings, will be attending the Inspector's meeting(s) and will be given a 'seat' at the discussion table. At this table will be representatives from various Council departments, and representatives/consultants from each of the house builders. A public audience is permitted though any comment made by an individual in the audience will not be recorded or acknowledged by the Inspector. Andy Burnham and Cllr Grundy have requested to be included at this table. We will keep members up to date with proposed meeting dates and times so that anyone wishing to be in the audience may come along with LENDF. Individuals in the audience are allowed to pass notes to those at the table.

Submitting your comment to Council

Options were then discussed on how to put forward comments and objections to the Wainhomes application before the 'deadline' of 31st December. Also the issue of informing more residents of the situation was debated. Ed asked Peter Sargeant, Chairman of Lane Head South Residents Group, who was present at tonight's meeting for his opinion on this 'deadline' Peter stated that quite often these deadlines slip or are adjusted, and also that comments are accepted/acknowledged up to the day before the Planning Committee. Nevertheless it is important to put comments in as soon as possible but bear in mind that no acknowledgement will be sent to you by the Council.

The strong feelings being put forward by those immediately affected was that an 'objection group' could be created which would then communicate directly with the Council. LENDF would advise such a group if it were created.

Ed requested that all members review the document on LENDF's website which will be used as the basis of our evidence to the Inspector of the Council's lack of thought when putting forward land in Lowton for residential development, and our arguments for the land to be removed from the Core Strategy or that the Core Strategy be made null and void. This would force the Council to start afresh and create a new Core Strategy which would probably better reflect the current economic situation.

Anyone planning to write an objection letter regarding the Wainhomes' proposal may find useful information contained in our document.

If the Council decide to put the Wainhomes application before the Planning Committee there is an opportunity for residents to speak directly to the committee. You must write

to the council and state that you wish to take part. You may only get 8 minutes in which to state your case so it is advised to be prepared and if possible attend the public gallery of another committee meeting to observe and experience how they are conducted. The target date for it to reach a planning committee meeting is March 3rd 2013 (as per council's own website).

LENDF will submit an objection letter and request to be at the Planning Committee meeting.

In relation to comments to be made by 31st December it was mutually agreed that LENDF would prepare a pro-forma letter. This will be emailed out to all members (and put onto the LENDF website) with a request that members print some off and contact their neighbours, their whole street, and ask them to sign it there and then so that all completed letters can be delivered to the council en mass.

There will be Council notices in the media regarding the application and also notices on lampposts and strategic boundary points of the land itself i.e. public footpaths. Please look out for these.

5. Any Other Business

Due to the late hour it was decided to conclude the meeting at this point.

6. Next LENDF Meeting

Monday 14th January 2013 @ 7.30pm (Lowton Social Club)

Should you find any omissions or discrepancies in these minutes please contact me on lendf99@gmail.com and let me know as soon as possible and the errors will be rectified.

Irene Thomson,
Secretary – LENDF