

Minutes to the meeting of  
Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)  
held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011, at Lowton Labour Club as per agenda.  
<http://www.lendf.co.uk>

- Chairman - Ed Thwaite (ET), Secretary - Jan Johnston (JJ)
- Welcome to members, visitors and guests
- Also present: Cllr James Grundy (JG)
- *Apologies received from Cllr Pam Gilligan, Cllr James Cowley, Ed Houlton, Carol Leigh, and Dennis Eubank*

No. of Attendees = 26

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1. Minutes from last meeting - not read at meeting but copies had been sent out by email and paper copies were available.
2. Committee Announcement - **Jan Johnston has requested 'time-out' from her** role as Secretary to the Forum for personal reasons. This request has been granted and Ed acknowledged and thanked Jan for her tireless efforts towards **building the Forum into 'a voice for the community'**. **Until the AGM on 9<sup>th</sup>** January Irene Thomson will step into her shoes and will be accompanying Ed to a seminar on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December regarding the Localism Act.
3. LENDF's Bank Balance - displayed for all to view. Monies held in the bank total £995.76 and Cash in Hand totals £63.46.
4. Golborne and Lowton Forum - ET explained the closure of the Forum and its implications. The new system of delegating budgets to projects will be via a bi-annual meeting and JG pointed out that papers had been circulated to all Councillors and the matters are to be discussed at Council meeting on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> Dec. ET reiterated that the new system needs to engage with **community groups and JG agreed that LENDF's function is working well for** Lowton. Stan Walker suggested that LENDF invite Gillian Bishop (Executive Director Environmental Services) to future meetings. LENDF have tried to communicate with the Council in the past but as yet have not received a response. Hopefully with the passing of the Localism Act this will change and a dialogue can be opened. Following the seminar to be attended by ET and I T on Wednesday a letter may be sent to Gillian Bishop.
5. Sainsbury's Golborne - **LENDF have received a letter from Sainsbury's stating** that a planning application for the new store has been submitted to Wigan Council and the decision is pending. All plans and documents can be viewed on **the Council's website. Sainsbury's did ask if LENDF could supply a letter of**

support to the Council and have offered an update meeting with LENDF. ET to survey the application and plans before responding.

6. **LENDF's website** - A new design for the website is currently being considered into order to update the format and make it easier for viewers to follow the **progress of the Forum's activities**.
7. **8<sup>th</sup> Wonder** - JJ sent an email to 8<sup>th</sup> Wonder regarding a parking issue which had occurred recently. Kerry Tyrer responded that he had spoken with the resident in Hesketh Meadow Rd about the problems of parking and stated that they were working closely with the Police regarding anti-social behaviour and the parking issue in the area also that no meeting had occurred with Cllr Pam Gillian as yet. He also confirmed that the purchase of the Civic Hall was still not complete though they had no intention in their plans of changing the outside façade of the Civic Hall. Their efforts were currently being concentrated on the internal facilities.

JG stated that 8<sup>th</sup> Wonder was still on a temporary lease basis with the Council and he had concerns over the number of staff recently laid off. If the sale does not complete then the Civic Hall will be put through the sale process again. At this point the community could bid for it. There is a covenant on the site which states that housing can not be built.

8. **Wigan's Core Strategy** - A sub-committee meeting of members was held on 24<sup>th</sup> November to discuss the content of a presentation to be put forward government inspector about proposals for building on the A580 corridor (Notes of meeting available on website). This document will be issued to the hearing sessions which will be on 31 January 2012. A draft has been formulated (circulated to sub-committee) and this will include attachments as evidence to **support the 'arguments'** within the document. This draft was summarised by ET and its contents discussed.

One resident pointed out that a previous application for housing on Pock Nook Lane had been refused due to 4 schools being in a 1 mile stretch on Newton Rd and the increase of traffic generated by the development would be an issue for children safety when walking to school.

JG pointed out that the drainage issue around Lowton was in fact not due to United Utilities but the private drainage system which was inadequate. This **was originally installed during the time of the Golborne UDP and only 9" bore pipes** were used.

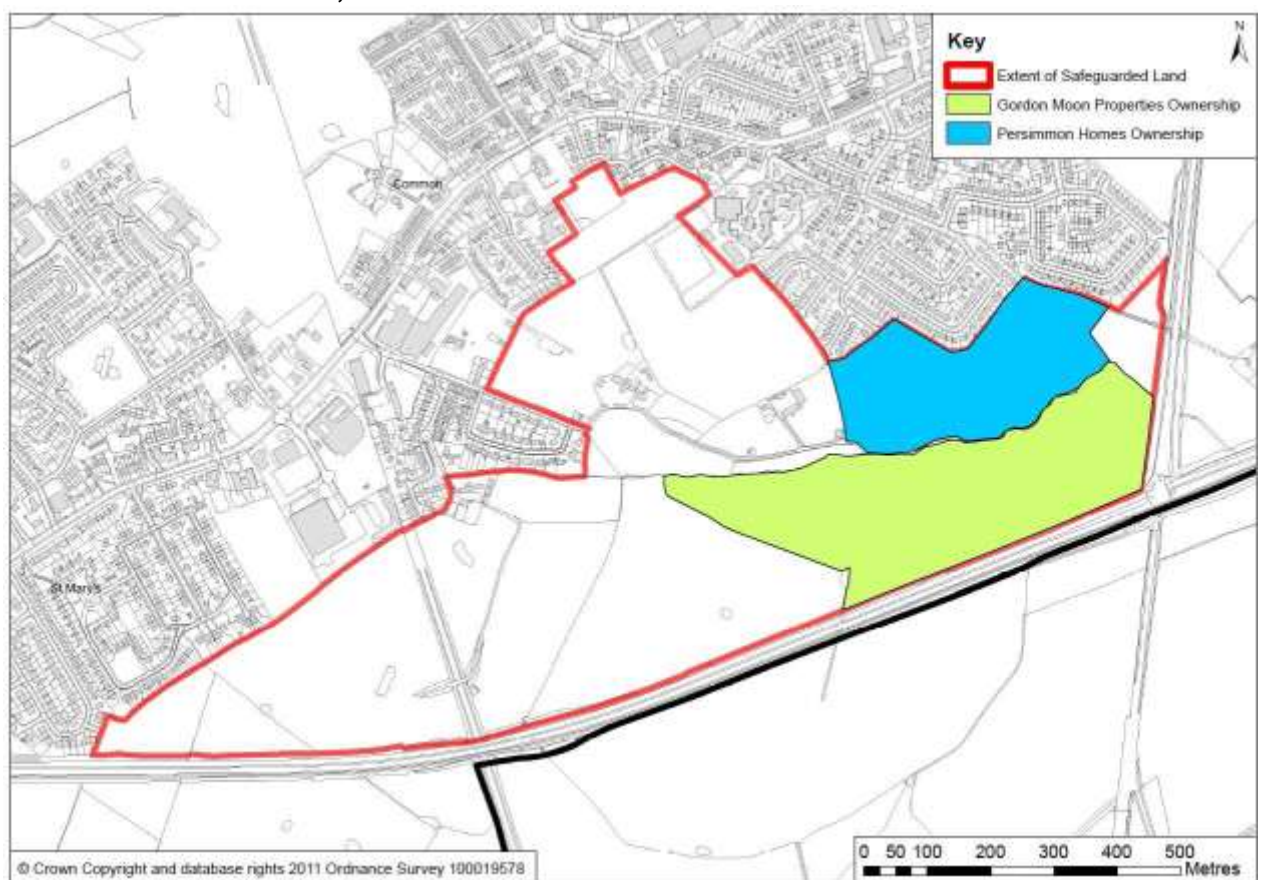
**ET stated the definition of 'Safeguarded Land' is confusing as it is hard to clarify to the phrase 'White Land' which was the previous designation of the**

area in question. 'White Land' was previously used as a reason for refusal for planning permission for a single dwelling on Pocket Nook Lane.

A land ownership plan in Wigan Local Development Framework - KEY SITE AND BROAD LOCATIONS EVIDENCE PAPER (August 2011) shows parcels of land already in the ownership of house builders! Curiously it does not show any other owners! This Evidence Paper's purpose is to support the Core Strategy!! The full document can be viewed at

<http://www.wigan.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/1A34DD0D-5481-40A2-BC33-15E8A4990FB6/0/132KeySiteandBroadLocationsEvidencePaper.pdf>

**Figure 22 : Site ownerships map - East Lancashire Road Corridor – Land at Pocket Nook Lane, Lowton broad location**



Other documents which make interesting reading are:

- Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Infrastructure Needs Assessment

Both of which can be viewed from this link

<http://www.wigan.gov.uk/Services/Planning/Policies/DevelopmentFramework/InfrastructureDeliveryPlan.htm>

9. Localism Act - Legislation for this act was passed on November 15<sup>th</sup>. There is a plain English summary on the LENDF website. The act will give more weight to communities, for example JG pointed that:

- Council can not put up Council Tax above the government level without a local referendum
- Communities have a right to bid for local buildings i.e. pub, post office, civic centre
- Communities will be involved in future development in their area

ET read out to the meeting **a selection of summaries from the 'Plain English Guide'**. For instance **Section 106 monies are obtained by allowing development as long as part of the scheme has a 'community' element. For example the development opposite St Luke's church has a co-op and two restaurants together with a 'community hall'**.

It has been noted that any monies gained from the development of building in Lowton East would not be spent in Lowton but would be used elsewhere in the Borough - i.e. Hindley!. The Localism Act will change this and ensure that some monies for our community stays in our community. The Act gives us more control over the level of development as applicants have to enter into consultation with local groups before submitting their applications.

SW suggested that the LENDF constitution be checked in light of this new Act and ET agreed that the Forum must continue to be non-political and serve everyone in the ward

The Act may not have an effect on the current Core Strategy as its process was started 2 years ago and no-one could foresee the change in legislation. All **Wigan's documents are currently being viewed by the Planning Inspectorate, and** with the Localism Act in mind this is good timing for the communities to get involved.

A question was raised about the delay with the completion of development on Slag Lane/Fir Tree Lane Marina (Bickershaw site). The proposals were for 680 houses and the infrastructure is in place. JG reported that the development **was on hold 'awaiting developers'**.

10. Green Meadow Independent Primary School - Melissa Richards (MR) spoke to **the meeting about the school's application to become a 'Free School'**. It had come to the school's attention that many parents in the area were struggling to

find schooling. They do not wish to increase the number of pupils (24 per class) and that they will keep the First Steps Nursery as a private enterprise.

MR was **asked if the new pupils would be 'local' as concerns were already in** existence about speeding traffic on Laburnum Road, Cherrytree Rd and Fir Tree Avenue. She confirmed that priority would be given to local children. ET suggested that the issue of traffic speed could be solved with the **encouragement of a '20mph enforcement' being placed** on the applicable roads. ET also suggested that MR attend the next meeting of OMRA for further opinions and ideas.

11. Date of Next Meeting - 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012 - AGM of LENDF

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Irene Thomson took the minutes at this meeting and typed them up for emailing out to all members and the website. Should you find any omissions or discrepancies in these minutes, please let her know as soon as possible and the errors will be rectified. Please use [lendf99@gmail.com](mailto:lendf99@gmail.com)

Ed Thwaite  
Chairman  
LENDF