

# Minutes of Lane Head South Residents' Group

Bi-Monthly Meeting Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024

The Conference Room of the Travelodge, Lane Head, Lowton

Kathleen Johnson welcomed everyone particularly our four guests from Wigan Council: Danny Orrell, Traffic Management and Parking Services; Steven Riley Team Leader Transport Policy; Michaela Guest, Environmental Protection Officer; Mike Orrell, Project Delivery Manager and also Jo Platt MP.

Apologies for absence were noted. 25 present.

Acceptance of minutes of the last meeting and financial report deferred to next meeting.

Gareth Edwards presented a series of slides on issues affecting Lane Head and the wider area. See attached presentation.

Responses given by Wigan Council Officers.

## **1a. Lane Head Bypass Strategic Business Case.**

The extension of Atherleigh Way hitherto known as the Lane Head South bypass which is mainly related to congestion. Wigan have forwarded their case to TfGM, which will be considered along with other projects. Appropriate funding being sought. There are no time scales. At previous meetings, with TfGM and bordering local Councils, it was stated that LHSRG would be involved in a Steering Group for the extension of the bypass. This is yet to happen.

## **1b. Business Case for Lane Head to address air quality.**

Proposal to push back the traffic lights on Winwick Lane to prevent standing traffic outside the properties where NOx levels dangerously exceed the legal limit. The scheme will include pedestrian lights and travel and cycling measures. This will be communicated to residents within the next 12-18 months.

Residents expressed their concerns that it would be impossible to prevent queuing traffic due to the sheer volume. Steven Riley pointed out that Wigan were aware of the problems associated with the scheme and there would be consultation; but that the SCOOT lights would enable free movement. This will be one of the solutions to bring the area into air quality compliance.

Money from the cancelled HS2 project unavailable as has been morphed into Network North for other projects.

LHSRG were thanked for their hard work in progressing the issues. It was noted that the impact of congestion extends into Golborne which the Neighbourhood Forum there is trying to address.

## **2. Proposals for the extra lane exiting the East Lancs onto Newton Road.**

Now 4 years since this was first mooted utilising S106 money. Passed by Wigan Cabinet in July 2022. Concerns that houses would be brought closer to East Lancs traffic and width reduction of Service Road would impede emergency vehicles.

Mike Orrell described the new design as minimal impact on residents. There would be a narrowing of around a metre near to the pedestrian crossing. A modification of the entrance to the service Road would prevent rat running.

It was hoped that a face-to-face consultation would take place rather than just a box ticking exercise in 4-6 weeks when design is completed. This would be presented to the residents and local businesses. Jo Platt was asked to facilitate a meeting with Council officers and residents. **Wigan officers agreed to return to November meeting.**

## **3. The new ANPR camera at the end of Winwick Lane.**

After a 6 week consultation period in 2023 Wigan now have Moving Traffic Powers to prosecute HGV drivers over 7.5 tons using Winwick Lane southbound. An ANPR camera was installed on 20th August at the end of Winwick Lane. After 6 months all weight offences will be issued with a fine. Hitherto only Police could enforce a weight limit. Drivers will be sent a warning letter for the first offence. A second offence will incur a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) After 6 months all weight offences will be issued with a PCN.

### **Wigan to look into notifying google maps/sat nav etc.**

Residents are concerned that once the camera is operative, HGV drivers will use Newton Road and asked if this could be weight limited.

One resident pointed out the perverse nature of the AQ figures as it requires the AQ figure to be higher in order to bring about any reduction...

In order for the camera to be used for speeding/shooting the lights, the DfT criteria is based on the number of accidents.

## **4. Warrington's refusal to weight limit Winwick Lane northbound.**

Warrington in the past have intimated that they would revise their decision not to weight limit Winwick Lane southbound once there was the means for traffic to turn back. The roundabout is now in place. Warrington now state that weight limiting the northbound stretch would cause traffic to use Warrington Roads. Many of these roads in Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft were quickly weight limited during the Parkside Inquiry, but Warrington claim the Police cannot enforce the weight limit. LHSRG believe that St Helens intend to weight limit the entrance/exit to Parkside from the A49 meaning that Wigan Roads are the only roads that can be utilised to access the site. **Wigan agreed to look into this.**

Residents felt strongly that Warrington appear to be bullying Wigan.

## 5. Air Quality.

Latest published figure by DEFRA was 45.3ug/m<sup>3</sup> for 2022; Wigan await the 2023 figure. (2023 still exceeds the legal maximum at 42.4ug/m<sup>3</sup> even with newer and lower emission vehicles.) It is anticipated that over 140 nighttime closures of the M6 SMART motorway, diverting traffic along Newton Road and Winwick Lane, will further add to the pollution.

Wigan can require Warrington to collaborate on this issue if the two measures of moving the traffic lights and the ANPR camera do not reduce the Air Quality to the legal maximum. Residents are concerned that this could take many years to achieve. Once Parkside comes online residents fear even more traffic.

Out of the 370 AQ monitoring stations in Greater Manchester Winwick Lane has been within the 3 highest figures.

## 6. Speed limit on Warrington Road

Residents believe that whilst much of the Parkside traffic heading north will exit the site via Winwick Lane towards the East Lancs, St Helens have made Warrington Road/ Golborne Dale Road key entry and exit roads to Parkside. Complaints have been received of speeding and dangerous traffic. Pedestrians are vulnerable. Two HGV's cannot pass under the bridge and high sided vehicles have to reverse back when too tall for the bridge. **Wigan will consider reducing the speed limit on their section of Warrington Road and will undertake a speed survey.**

## 7. Dolly's Stud

Situated on Winwick Lane west of railway. This appears to be a waste sorting centre. Wigan deem this to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Two enforcement notices were served in April 2023. The landowner appealed these. Wigan website states Wigan have withdrawn their enforcement. Wigan asked to clarify.

## 8. Parkside

Liz Brown led a presentation on Parkside. See attached.

Parkside Link Road is a prerequisite of Phase 2. Consultation now closed. Planning documents are not yet available and awaiting Transport Assessment. No reference to Lowton in Parkside documents. Although Parkside traffic will use J22 to access the site, residents believe Parkside traffic will also use Winwick Lane via Lane Head in significant numbers, especially now weight restrictions have been placed on Warrington and St Helens roads.

Residents requested local Council officers, Councillors and MP to engage robustly with the Parkside traffic issue in Lowton and Golborne, as currently Warrington and St Helens are actively funnelling non-motorway Parkside traffic through Lane Head and Golborne Dale Road.

It would appear that Warrington's weight restrictions were not taken into account when they stated that Parkside would have "no impact" on Lane Head. Residents believe traffic

will be use Winwick Lane to access the site. Wigan believe the motorway will be more widely used to access the site.

Residents requested local Councillors/Wigan officers to push the issue forward, not to be “walked over” by Warrington.

Please note this link for Parkside Phase 3 for more details:

<https://tritaxsymmetry.com/projects/parkside/St Helens>

### **Diggle Green**

A Kenyon Hall resident emphasised the knock-on effects of weight restrictions creating long queues on Kenyon Lane. Criticism was made of Warrington for forcing HGV’s onto Wigan roads. Criticism too of the Environment Agency who have not responded to resident complaints about Diggle Green vehicles operating outside their licensing hours and for the odious smell. Request made to Wigan to repair Kenyon Lane. A high-level meeting requested with Jo Platt MP.

Another resident spoke passionately about the effect Diggle Green was having on lives. Document attached.

### **Wigan to advise who is dealing with Diggle Green in Warrington.**

The meeting concluded at 9.05pm.

### **Post meeting updates on remainder of agenda**

- a) Red Lion Parking: NB Anyone parking at the Red Lion needs to register car at the bar to avoid a parking fine.
- b) Winton Road Playground: now complete. 6 new pieces of equipment for smaller children and a new bench.
- c) Charity Bowling afternoon enjoyable and successful £120 raised for Lime House.

Dates for Diary: Carols ‘round the Tree, Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December 4pm at Winton Road. Father Christmas and his sleigh courtesy of Rotary. Singing will be led by Epiphany Brass.

Next Meeting 18.11.24