

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)
Discussion Notes -Tuesday 3rd December, at Lowton Social Club.
<http://www.lendf.co.uk>

- Chairman – Ed Thwaite (Ed T), Secretary – Irene Thomson (IT)
 - Cllr Grundy
 - Cllr Gilligan
 - Transport for Leigh – Ged Tyrell
 - Ann Lowe – Chair, Lane Head South Residents Group
 - Helen Edward – Braithwaite Residents Association
 - Howard Cooper
 - Gordon Nash
 - Malcolm Jones – Oaklands Meadows Residents Association
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Ed Thwaite welcomed everyone to tonight's discussion and then recapped on LENDF's position regarding HS2 whilst waiting for the arrival of Ged Tyrell.

Cllr Gilligan does agree with LENDF's stance but wanted residents to acknowledge that the needs of future generations are important. She believes that today's children will benefit from better transport facilities from this area to enable them to travel to universities and jobs.

Cllr Grundy stated that a 'green environment' is also important for both the children of today and tomorrow.

Lowton's current issue is traffic congestion and this does need immediate attention from the authorities. HS2 is far in the future. One possibility currently being discussed by the Council is reopening of the station at Golborne. The newly electrified rail tracks means that a new service is starting running every hour to Scotland from Manchester. The station would also serve both Liverpool and Manchester. This is the ideal place for a station, car parking is available and there is a bus passing in both directions that runs from Leigh to Wigan every 10 min.

LENDF supports Wigan in their desire to open Golborne Station

Ged Tyrell then joined the meeting and Ed passed him a copy of the LENDF letter recently sent to George Osborne and Patrick McLoughlin.

At this point each person present was asked to give their individual opinion on an interchange station. Various responses included: need for a bypass, positive comments about Golborne Station, TFL station on the side of A580 is not acceptable. All would support an interchange station down Wilton Lane together with a bypass from Atherleigh Way to Winwick Lane. Although all felt we only need Kenyon Junction or Golborne bringing back into use, both would be great.

All agreed this bypass is needed now irrespective of the station.

HS2 consultation at Leigh Sports Village – additional information gained included that HS2 would use 4 tracks and would need to be on a loop to service a station, and also that 400 metres of platform is required. Ged Tyrell stated that they would actually only need to slow down and need 400 metres.

Ged Tyrell also stated that HS2 have 3 options which run through this area.

Ed commented on Andy Burnham's original idea for the station on the Manchester to Liverpool line at Wilton Lane. LENDF would support this.

Mr Adamson's land was taken out of the Core Strategy. He could cope with HS2 running through it. However if TFL station was allowed to progress it would destroy his farm together with four others completely. The fields would then be unfarmed and turn into scrubland – this would become attractive to developers!

Kenyon Junction – Transport for Greater Manchester have rejected this as a location for the station. However it is still the cheapest option.

Ged stated that freight needs to be on the West Coast ML and passengers on HS2.

Ged is not a decision-maker and can only put forward proposals.

The predicted costs of the previous idea of a station at Pennington was £75m but predicted costs for a station at Kenyon Lane are £12m.

Would the area be better or worse with a station? Relying on technical reports to prove its possible is not the best way to put plans forward.

Size of proposed car park – TFL proposal is for 250 spaces but Bents Garden Centre has 1,000 spaces! This creates a worry that the car park will be far bigger than proposed at the moment.

It was agreed by everyone present that all residents need to be asked 'what they want?'

Transport for Greater Manchester are due to produce a report in January 2014 – then HS2 will decide on further consultation (which will include HS3). The route itself will be finally decided in November 2014.

The impact on Lowton could be lost in the bigger picture therefore the voice of Lowton will not have any power and will be ignored.

All objectors to HS2 are those whose land HS2 goes through.

Cllr Gilligan asked TFL that if a major objection was put in by residents would it be heard? Ged said speak to the residents of Crewe! In other words no.

Lowton is the sacrificial lamb for the greater good. It is emotional for Lowton and for Ged it's a passion to get a station.

HS2 Ltd said TFL are a campaign group and the decision will only be made by the Secretary of State. It will become a HS2 project. Then they would talk to residents about mitigation measures.

Newspaper article stated loop line will go ahead even if HS2 was cancelled. Ged said yes.

The bypass is the main point of resident's concerns, but benefits/costs will become unbalanced in TFL proposals to TFGM. Ged will ask TFGM to give costs for making the link road/bypass to carry HGVs.

Added benefit of a loop line is to allow trains on the Chat Moss line to carry on and not stop at Lowton.

Will the proposal documents be available to the public? – Yes.

TFGM are looking at all options including LENDF's.

TFL have alienated so many people with their plans.

VOTE – Who wants to see a station at Wilton Lane and a bypass? – All said Yes.

Ged will inform TFGM of our preferred option and will 'table' the bypass idea too. Other options are in draft.

Warrington wants the HS2 for economic reasons.

Ed asked TFL to put their discussions with TFGM in writing – Ged said he would speak to them and then put information onto TFL website.

Road infrastructure will be necessary and will cause disruption. Taking loop out will save money and help pay for the bypass.

Wigan Council's Infrastructure Assessment passed to Ged for his information.

Meeting closed amicably.