

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 14 August 2017, at Lowton Social Club

<http://www/lendf.co.uk>

- Chair – Ed Thwaite, Covering Secretary – Gill Turner
- Cllr Kath Houlton, Cllr Ed Houlton
- Raj Chandarana – HS2
- Gillian West – HS2
- Christine Smith – Five Acres
- Jeanette Smith – Five Acres

Apologies – Cllr James Grundy

Number of attendees: 41

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

2. **HS2**

Raj Chandarana – HS2 (Community and Stakeholder Engagement Manager, North West) spoke to those present at tonight's meeting. He reported he has been dealing with LENDF for over 4 years now.

- The route has now been confirmed north of Crewe and also the western section.
- Raj reported he will be handing over part of his role to our new contact, Gilly West, contact Gillian.west@hs2.org.uk He will be concentrating more on the Greater Manchester area including the airports. Raj will still be in touch, is still contactable and will attend some future meetings.

The next steps in the 18 months:

- The next stages will be challenging.
- They will organise the best deal for us as a community.
- They will be back in a few months regarding the routes and will have slides to show more details. Perhaps HS2 staff will attend from 5pm before one of our meetings.
- We can have our say, have input and object to things we are not happy with and they will continue to listen.
- Things will be happening behind the scenes.

Route:

- It is technically the same as the plans in 2013 with slight changes.

- The Rolling Stock Depot has been taken out of the plans. A small victory and Raj congratulated us for all the hard work done by the community. This was a significant decision for our area.
- The trains passing will now be a couple per hour each way (4 per hour). Raj explained there is no capacity for more than this.
- HS2 will run from 05:30 to 23:30 but not 24 hours as planned if the overnight depot had been passed.
- The line through Lowton will be in a cutting and the group is asking for a cover on this and Raj promised to look at this. The community should demand a green tunnel.
- The construction will take 6/7 years and will start around 2020/2024. There will be road diversions: some will be temporary and some permanent. They will work with us regarding road closures to minimise disruption (Environment Impact Assessment) – not just for amphibians, insects and animals but people our spaces/work/and where we live, what the impact will be during the construction.
- HS2 will work with the community to mitigate and minimise disruption and get other suggestions from the local people of alternative ideas.
- There will be a few months' consultation for traffic impact reports across the route. This will start with the public rights of way (PROWL) as they will be being used more during the school holidays. In September they will start again on the roads to capture numbers of cars, vehicles and pedestrians.
- HS2 will gather all the information from Local Authorities/community/local businesses and will offer solutions, we can challenge any decisions.
- HS2 will present findings to Parliament to (10 Parliamentary Candidates working on this project in 2019).
 - The Candidates can challenge decisions made by HS2 and listen to objections from various sectors.
 - The objections could be from businesses about loss of passing trade, school routes like parents having to drop off children at different schools, public transport disruption, etc.
- The HS2 Team (M2) is now based together (from different areas – engineering, engagement and environment). They can discuss issues collectively.

Property Compensations:

- There was only one compensation scheme – Exceptional Hardship Scheme.
 - There is now the Greater Certainty Scheme – if you live in the safeguarded area (60m each side of the proposed track). You should have received a blight notice, if you have not let them know. You will receive the market price + 10% + advice on the next steps.

- Need to Sell Scheme – this is looking at the next three years if need to sell. Reasons need to sell below:
 - ✓ Health and need to relocate (e.g. moving from house to a bungalow).
 - ✓ Downsize
 - ✓ Upsize
 - ✓ Move of job
- Raj reported some of these reasons will ask you to disclose information (GP notes and personal details) but their team can help with these.
- You cannot use HS2 as a reason to move.

Information Events:

- Raj reported they want to hold information events roughly every two months and there will be drop-in sessions. The team will help with any forms that need completing and could advise on easier paths to follow for residents.

Questions asked at tonight's meeting:

Completion of forms – these are not easy to follow.

- There will be a dedicated team to give advice to help people with the forms.
- The team will be honest and if they cannot help and feel there is a reason not to complete the forms they will say they cannot do so and why.

Clarify Report from Transport Minister – about route to Scotland:

- The trains are all capable of high speed. There are two – pure high speed trains and trains that can run on high speed tracks and classic tracks.
- Wigan/Glasgow/Edinburgh rail will upgrade tracks to classic/high speed in the future.
- In the next 100 years (when funding opportunities are available) the Westcoast and Mainline lines will be upgraded.
- Scotland reported upgrading their own lines (again possibly in sections up to Glasgow/Edinburgh in the future).
- The aim is to be able to travel from London to Scotland in less than 3 hours.

Timescales:

- HS2 could not do research/consultations during the General Election, etc.
- They are getting information/data/traffic surveys from Transport for Greater Manchester/Wigan Council. They will present a draft environmental impact study in 2018 and it should cover an 18 month cycle to cover holidays and seasonal impact.

Traffic surveys – what do they analyse?:

- These will record time of day, will cover 24 hours and can analyse pedestrian flow as well as traffic flow.
- Methodology of reports – these can be explained in detail at drop-in sessions.

Impact of new builds and new houses around Plank Lane:

- Projections and reports look at planned new house builds beyond 2046.
- Raj reported a huge shift in the potential demand of houses/industry in the area and the report has to anticipate the impact of the growth of building for now and in the future.

LENDF thanked Raj and Gilly for attending tonight's meeting.

LENDF's Chairman then reported that there will be money available from HS2, which a constituted community group could apply for (Raj has offered to ensure LENDF is constitutionally set up correctly for this).

During the construction process we could ask to extend the Atherleigh bypass to the motorway as this would help keep traffic flowing and benefit Lowton greatly.

Ed Thwaite also suggested that we should let Warrington and Trafford Council fight to change the actual route.

3. Five Acres, Kenyon Lane, Lowton – Presentation

Christine Smith and Jeanette Smith (sisters and both Physiotherapists) discussed their proposed plans to change the current site to an age friendly facility and details below were mentioned:

- Accommodation – like a village.
- Bespoke development, co-designed with local residents.
- The idea is for people who want to downsize.
- This could prevent hospitalisation with the facilities and support on site.
- It could even be for people who are discharged from hospital.
- Health and Wellbeing centre with swimming facilities, gym, health screening, allotment, community gardens to keep retired residents active.
- Digital involvement in properties to suit resident like monitoring of BP/heart rates and will match technology with the person.
- Wigan Council reported agreed on the idea and it fits with their community strategies.
- Wanting support to take site out of Greenbelt and to come up with ideas for the proposed venture/concept.

Questions asked regarding proposal:

- How many residents proposed? = mix of dwellings but not plans yet decided. Developers have been to give their input.
- Traffic? – possible shuttle service suggested. Five Acre's residents probably not travelling at peak times as retired.
- Service charges? – could not answer this question at this time.

- Greenbelt – if planning accepted will this set the precedent for builders to apply to build on Greenbelt land? It was reported this would be done under ‘special circumstances’.
- Would there be a proviso for local residents only? – could not answer this question at this time.
- Footprint – Maudsley a good design.

4. Parkside Update

A time slot of 20 minutes will be allocated at the next meeting (11th September) if needed.

5. Travellers

It was reported they are now on the small first car park on Pennington Country Park. Discussions took place:

- Police are not responding as the law allows.
- Wigan Council and Police met and their strategies are the same as before.
- Police reportedly leave it to the Council to deal with Travellers.
- Possibility of LENDF writing to the Government regarding this issue as it is the same all over the country.
- Private land in Birmingham, owner now has an approximate bill of £10,000 to clean 250 tons of rubbish left by Travellers as well as court costs.
- It was suggested that the next Conservative flyer have a questionnaire on the back with objections regarding the Travellers.
- LENDF to contact Mayor of Manchester, Andy Burnham, as we have had dealings with him in the past on this issue.
- It was reported that someone had a letter from the Court of Human Rights about how Travellers were treated and using aggression.

6. Civic Hall (Rose Centre)

- Youths vandalised outside and Council have cleaned it up.
- Police are involved with youths and families.
- It was confirmed there is no permission issued to demolish the site and there is no planning permission granted.
- Because of the vandalism and break in the Management told staff to close the centre with immediate effect and all bookings have been cancelled.
- The Lowton Operatic and Drama Society (LOADS) has been asked to remove their belongings and is looking for a place to store them.

7. St Luke's War Memorial and Tree

- War Memorial Trust have provided the majority of the costs (£31,000) to refurbish it. The local Councillors will also donate from the Brighter Borough Fund towards the refurbishment.
- The old tree will be cut down and removed in the near future due to rot. A new tree will be planted in its place.

8. Pensioners' Parties

Malcom Jones, Chair of Oaklands and Meadows Residents Association (OMRA) has acquired funding for these and the next one will be on Wednesday 11th October 2017.

9. Last Night of the Proms

This year's concert will be on Saturday 14th October 2017.

- LENDF would like to thank the 3 Towns Operatic Society who will be attending.
- Chair will write to LGNCC Choir for their input on previous proms but due to having to use the Lowton Social Club as the venue, there will not be enough room for them to perform.

10. Mount Tabor

After a Court Hearing in July the site has been granted Village Green Status. This ensures the land is set aside for local people to use for leisure activities and the community now have control of it.

- The fight for this piece of land started in 2015 and everyone would like to thank Kathleen and Colin Johnson, members of Lane Head South Residents Group and Cllr Kath Houlton for their hard work.

11. AOB

St Catherine's Church

- Permission has been granted to knock it down.
- Contractors have been awarded to remove asbestos in the next few weeks.
- Demolition will follow
- Public access to site will be restricted.

Crime in Lowton

- There have been some car thefts, mainly from unlocked vehicles. Please move things out of site and lock vehicles.
- Thieves climbing through open house windows. Please be vigilant and close windows.

Winwick Lane

- This has been de-primed but residents pushing for a weight limit. Warrington and Wigan Councils agreed to this but Warrington has changed their minds due to objections from Croft and Culcheth Parishes.

Leigh Market

- It has been reported Wigan Council intend to sell the marked to a private enterprise. There will be a consultation however like in other towns this could lead to increased rents and eventually no market.

Cedar Avenue and surrounding streets/roads

- There will be maintenance in the area in the next couple of weeks. Cabins will be dropped off for workmen.

Next LENDF monthly meeting

Monday 11th September @ 7:30pm (Lowton Social Club)