

Lane Head South Residents Group

Meeting minutes Bi-monthly meeting on Monday November 17th, 2025

The Conference Room at the Travelodge, Lane Head, Lowton - 7.00pm

Guest Speakers Jo Platt (JP) and Andy Burnham (AB)

Kathleen Introduced the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Apologies for absence received from: Lorraine Nordmann, Ed Houlton and Emma Fox

Approval of minutes from last meeting held in September (proposed by Christine Hill and seconded by Garry Lloyd).

Update on local issues:

Re - Tritax development, residents in agreement that if this development goes ahead it will devastate and destroy our homes. We want to share our thoughts respectfully and support each other. We want to respect and listen to **AB** and **JP**

Kathleen thanked everyone for all the many questions submitted in advance. Questions chosen represent ILPN topics and have ordered them to assist with discussion.

Kathleen read a letter from a young resident who recently moved away. "Having grown up and lived in Lowton most of my life it's really sad what is happening to the surrounding area. Relentless destruction of open spaces seems unstoppable. Parkside and then Tritax is the final straw. With Andy Burnham appearing to be supporting the development to make way for a new Man Utd football ground near old Trafford! World has gone mad. Good luck!"

Gareth provided a summary and overview on the Tritax proposals.

- The proposed ILP(North) is a Strategic Road to Rail Freight Interchange. The main site is located on ~ 500 acres of highly productive arable agricultural land on the east side of the M6 motorway. This land has never been associated with the former Parkside colliery located on the west side of the M6.

- In addition to the loss of agricultural land on the main site, the farmland north of the Chat Moss railway line up to Newton Road will also be lost for the purposes of landscaping and bio-diversity net gain.

- With the proposed addition of land within the Wigan borough the main site is approximately twice the size of the site that was the subject of a public inquiry in 2021.

- The SRFI will accommodate up 32 train movements per day (16 in, 16 out) and will operate 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Trains are up to 775m in length. Approximately 1300 ISO containers per day will be arriving/departing the SRFI.

- Approximately 1300 ISO containers worth of goods per day will be arriving at or departing from the SRFI by road (HGVs & vans) – on roads that are already congested.

- Preliminary work by Tritax has indicated up to 15 highway modifications in the local area may be required as a result of the traffic impact. One of which is a Lane Head South relief road. The routing suggested for this relief road is not acceptable to residents.

- A promise of up to 6000 jobs. The area is not well served by public transport and despite efforts to promote sustainable travel most employees will use private cars.

- Tritax is proposing a phased approach to construction spanning 10 years. Warehouses first, rail connection last – first 10 years as a road based freight interchange.

The questions below were sent to Andy and Jo in advance of the meeting. Given the question-and-answer format their responses are summarised below. The responses created further debate which is also summarised.

1. SRFI's require "good road access." Winwick Lane whilst designated an A road is a rural, former tolled country lane. Known as Back Lane (to Winwick) it has never been modified. Do you consider Winwick Lane as specified in SRFI documents has "good road access?"
2. This is really a question for Tritax but can you say why the official consultation has been separated from the traffic mitigation. Why didn't Tritax wait until the data logging exercises have been completed as this is a key factor in the project. The responses to the consultation will doubtless change when the traffic figures are released in the new year. Do you know why this process appears to have been rushed?
3. Do you concede that Tritax is lowering not only the quality of life of Lowton residents but also their house prices?
4. We are very concerned with the loss of agricultural land. The UK according to the Guardian comes 55th out of 61 countries in its connection with nature. Do you think the ILPN will push the UK up or down the list?
5. You wrote to the Chief Execs of Warrington and St Helens 11 months ago stating that you would only give your agreement to the ILPN on the condition that there was sufficient mitigation of traffic at Lane Head. Have they suggested any mitigation and are you happy that this is sufficient mitigation for traffic at Lane Head?
6. As of 25th Oct there were 42 empty warehouse units in Warrington. Why is this development, the size of a town necessary in a rural area when the area is peppered with copious warehouses?
7. If the bypass is agreed will you give your support to ILPN?
8. Do you consider public transport (bus and rail) is sufficient currently, with no service from Newton Station after 6pm. How will the ILPN improve this service for up to 6,000 employees?

Relating to Qn1 (Winwick Lane – good road access?)

AB: I have supported Lane head in previous meetings. No, Winwick lane is not a road that can take more traffic, it has become busier than we have ever known, with the congestion and reduced air quality. I objected at the public enquiry and Jo did too, but it was called in and approved by Michael Gove. I want to listen to your concerns and represent you to get changes made. Nothing can go ahead unless we get the bypass from Atherleigh way; it is a non-negotiable position, and it has to be the full road solution.

AB/JP to submit to the consultation rejecting the documents claims of "good road access" and put forward the need for a full weight restriction to be implanted.

JP: I will respond to emails received over the weekend. We have to have the bypass and it must go the full route (through Warrington); we will push the government to find a solution for this. We must

stick together and stand firm on this; it feels like things have been happening to this constituency more than most. We want the longer bypass from Atherleigh way.

JP: to take feedback and feelings from the residents and community back to Tritax.

AB: The consultation phase is open until 23 December, **I will consider a formal response, may be able to get GMCA backing** – we will consider it carefully – but we are not in a strong position, given the secretary of state approval (*for Parkside phase 1 and the Parkside Link Road*).

Many residents felt a bypass is needed now irrespective of Tritax.

Relating to Qn2 (Traffic modelling/mitigation not yet included in the consultation)

AB: I am not aware of the level of detail, so unable to comment, but it **sounds like the consultation is not being done in the correct way. We can make representation to extend the period and deadline to consider the traffic data.**

In response to a resident who had had people surveying their land:

JP: Asked for the address details to be given to her to enable her to follow up with Warrington / St Helens Councils. **We need to push Tritax to have good community contact.**

JP: Asked residents to email their concerns, to both her and the local councillors.

Residents would welcome a three-way discussion (like this evening) including Wigan and St Helens councils. Concern was also raised that the traffic modelling data being used is very out of date.

Speeding on Newton Road was also raised as a major concern.

Relating to Qn3 (Impact on quality of life)

AB stated that the issue is to not let the increase in traffic happen, so it is not destructive to houses and quality of life. There is already impact from the traffic – the area has been over developed, like an avalanche of development without the infrastructure. **We are not accepting it's a fait au complete;** our job is to push back as hard as we can to get a fairer point of balance. We want the residents to be heard.

In response to a question regarding the potential move of Freightliner from Old Trafford to ILPN and whether AB supports that move:

AB: **It is being looked at, but there is no plan yet** – the argument to move the rail freight from Trafford Park. If you have taken a train into Manchester you will know that often trains are stuck behind freight trains, as many go through there to Platform 13 and 14. Manchester is a bottle neck for trains. An alternative is to make more use of the West Coast line and remove the bottle neck in the City centre. It's a simple way to improve the rail service in Northwest.

AB: **I will take this away and consider everything I have heard tonight and give you a view on this, and I will share with you all.** If we go back to Parkside proposal back in early 2000, it was to take lorry movement off M6.

Relating to Qn4 (Does farming matter?)

JP: Farming does matter. There is a lot of farmland surrounding us, **JP promised to go back to Tritax/ Wigan raising the issue of the loss of agriculture.**

In response to a resident comment that a Tritax representative referred to farmland off Kenyon Lane as 'worthless' at the Newton-le-Willows consultation event:

JP: JP to make representation to Tritax directly, unhappy about how this consultation is being run.

AB: Serious questions need to be asked, yes it does make a difference, we will walk through it together, there are lots to play for, and a long way to go. There is plenty of scope to challenge. **The consultation has to be extended for the traffic data.**

JP: proposal development on the other side of the Lancs – the Rowan Development, a few 100 homes. Residents on that side of the Lancs are watching what is happening with the ILPN.

In response to a question regarding the possibility of representation in the Commons:

JP: The ILP is a significant project and would be signed off by the Secretary of State. Need a strong argument. **I will go back to government.**

Peter Astles raised his proposal for a country park to be included in the development. Peter expressed his wish to meet with JP and the Edge Hill researcher to discuss his proposal. Refer to website parksidecountrypark.com

Croft Parish residents are concerned laying topsoil on top of existing topsoil will create a significant flooding risk.

Relating to Qn5 (Traffic mitigation at Lane Head)

AB: We will make mitigation conditional. It should not go ahead without findings from National Highways and conversations with Developers.

AB: we will look at the whole consultation and share the outcome with you. Manchester United don't have to have this move. There is a plot of land available on current site.

AB: I will look at the details and make an informed judgement. Having lived here for 23 years, I understand how you feel.

AB: The bypass is non-negotiable. I can help fund the bypass.

AB: I must consider the whole of the city region. The current rail system does not work, freight trains congested in the city centre. **I will reserve my judgement until we come back.**

AB: Left 8.20pm for another engagement.

Relating to Qn6 (42 empty warehouses in Warrington, why is this development necessary?)

JP: We need to grow local town centres. There is no space for small business enterprises. We need to develop space for local growth and not for huge enterprises and warehouses.

In response to a question about whether there are any benefits to this area from the SRFI being in a Freeport:

JP: The Freeport belongs to Liverpool City Region and there are questions we need answers to. **JP will speak with Charlotte Nichols MP for Warrington North.**

Residents raised a number of concerns and doubts regarding the 6000 jobs claimed by Tritax. Residents have been told that many of the jobs have already been allocated. If Freightliner moves from Old Trafford they will account for 3500 of the 6000. We need to invest in young people, need to invest in our schools and youth programmes not in Warrington and St Helens but here in Golborne and Lowton.

Relating to Qn8 (Public transport and no bus services from Newton station after 6pm)

JP: No, this not sufficient. We have been pushing this and **I have a meeting with AB to discuss gaps in the public transport network.**

A resident reported that Tritax are still working on public transport and had said it was difficult to get the three councils to work together:

JP: Agreed it was difficult to get Wigan, St Helens and Warrington Local Authorities in a room together

In response to a resident's comment that the 10-year plan, where warehouses come first and rail comes afterwards – there is a concern that they may run out of money. Warehouses built but no money left to build rail and infrastructure – so we think they should build rail and road infrastructure first then follow with the warehouses:

JP: good point, we **need to sit down with Local Authorities, to look at traffic plans now and in the future.**

Other comments and questions

JP: committed to holding the authorities to account, need to keep it moving within the wider public – further meetings. Consultation is on Friday (21st) at Winwick Leisure centre.

JP: Has had meetings with Tritax and attending the consultation meetings and **I will feed back what I have heard at this meeting.**

JP: **will get in touch with the researcher from Edge Hill regarding biodiversity**

JP: Re agricultural loss. Very important, I live in the heart of Leigh, people say they do not live in a rural area, I say we do, our green space and **farmland is very important to us.** I see it as a challenge and this challenge is accepted

JP: Peter Astles' Country Park proposal important. As would be the Ornithological society representatives.

Summary of Residents' concerns/comments/questions (in no particular order or priority)

We need a bypass despite the ILPN

The Hinckley Tritax SRFI was rejected. Has this not set a precedent?

Concern that AB is supporting the Trafford Park development to the detriment of Wigan land

Resident informed by Tritax representative at Newton Consultation meeting that the farmland was "worthless." No mention of agricultural land in the Mitigation project

Tritax transport plans are not available. Details will only be available for further consultation in Feb 26, Should Consultation period be extended?

Does food production not matter?

Tritax will lead to a lower quality of life in the area

Little use of Parkside Link Road to access Golborne as was intended

Topsoil placed on topsoil will create flooding problem and create a problem with nitrogen absorption

Country Park could go some way to maintaining biodiversity

Residents need representation in Parliament to fight the Proposal

Who is going to pay for the bypass?

There is spare warehouse capacity in the area; therefore no need for further warehouses

Of the projected up to 6,000 jobs many will already be taken.

Need to invest in Lowton and Golborne young people

Unlikely these jobs will be for local people. Local means up to 20miles away

Longstanding issue of lack of bus connectivity from Newton Station. Need to reroute 610 (Wigan/ Leigh) across the East Lancs

There has always been a distrust between the 3 local authorities. They have to work together

Important that Winwick and Croft and Lowton work together to address the ILPN

Tritax considering supporting the shortest and cheapest bypass option. This is not acceptable to residents

Researcher from Edge Hill University has concerns over reduction in agricultural land

A smaller SRFI could be accommodated without utilising Wigan land

Trees will take up to 20 years to mask the site

Parkside Road/ Golborne Dale/Warrington Road now experiencing increased traffic and inevitably poorer air quality

Rowan Housing Development on the north side of East Lancs will further add to congestion

Residents need representation in Parliament to fight the Proposal

Wigan moving traffic lights back to the start of the houses on Winwick to improve air quality- part of Lane Head Air Quality Improvement Scheme. Air quality 47ug/m3 - 6-year average way above the legal limit of 40

Posters and banners against the site available or can be downloaded from LHSRG website

In the first non-statutory Consultation only 230 responses out of more the 30,000 mailings were received. Residents have to respond.

Not a done deal, please do send in questions / objections to Tritax. See LHSRG website and Facebook.

All submissions to Tritax must be made by 23rd December

Other Business

Whilst concerns are currently and rightly with the Tritax development, Lane Head is a community. The Lane Head Advent Calendar providing a countdown to Christmas by decorating windows or gardens. Two or three numbers are still available. Contact: lhsrg00@gmail.com if you can assist

Carols 'round the Tree - Sunday 7th December 4pm. Corner of Winton Road with Father Christmas and Epiphany Brass, Mince pies and Mulled wine. Donations to Wigan and Leigh Hospice. All are welcome.

Meeting closed at 9.05 pm