

Intermodal Logistics Park North Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) project

Informal Non-Statutory Consultation Summary Report

Prepared for Tritax Big Box Developments
July 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises the non-statutory consultation activities carried out by Intermodal Logistics Park North Ltd to inform the emerging proposals for Intermodal Logistics Park North (ILP North), a proposed Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) located within the administrative areas of St Helens Borough Council, Wigan Borough Council, and Warrington Borough Council.

Intermodal Logistics Park North Ltd (the Applicant) is a limited company under the beneficial ownership of Tritax Big Box REIT plc.

ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

The project was publicly launched in Summer 2024, when the project website went live and information was sent to key stakeholders, informing them of the project and offering briefings.

An eight-week non-statutory public consultation took place between Monday 27 January and Friday 21 March 2025. The feedback received will help to shape the emerging design of ILP North, which will be refined before being presented at a later statutory consultation phase planned for Autumn 2025.

Throughout the non-statutory consultation phase, a range of engagement methods were used to encourage open dialogue with the community about the initial proposals for ILP North. These included a dedicated project website, newsletters distributed locally, in-person and online events, stakeholder briefings, as well as promotion of the consultation via social media and local media channels.

The project website acted as a central platform for consultation materials and included an online feedback form. Printed versions of the form were also available at public events. To ensure the consultation was accessible and flexible, feedback could additionally be submitted via freepost and email.

During the non-statutory consultation phase, four in-person events took place at local venues as well as one public online webinar to provide an alternative to the in-person events. In addition to this a further online webinar was held for parish councils.

Following the non-statutory consultation period, the feedback received was collected and analysed. All feedback has been reviewed and considered as outlined in this report and used to support the continuous development of the project.

Throughout the eight-week consultation period, 233 responses were received.

NEXT STEPS

A statutory consultation is planned for Autumn 2025. This phase will provide an opportunity for both the general public and statutory stakeholders to provide further comments on the progressed project design. Ahead of the statutory consultation, a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) is being prepared to outline how the Applicant intends to consult with prescribed consultees and the local community. An application for a DCO (Development Consent Order) is expected to be submitted in Spring 2026, with a decision anticipated in 2027.

INTRODUCTION

Approach to engagement

The Applicant's consultation strategy from the outset has been to conduct a formal two-phase consultation process, including both non-statutory and statutory stages to engage with as many people as possible. This is in addition to the ongoing engagement with statutory bodies and those persons with an interest in the land affected by the proposals.

The non-statutory consultation was an early opportunity for the community and statutory consultees to learn about ILP North and provide initial feedback. The later, statutory, consultation, which will be delivered in line with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008, will then provide an opportunity for both the community and statutory consultees to provide further comments on the progressed project design. This feedback will be considered in preparing the final scheme for submission and will be reported in the Consultation Report.

The initial phase of engagement aimed to introduce the project to key stakeholders including MPs, councillors, and parish councils, while also launching the project website. The eight-week non-statutory consultation took place from Monday 27 January to Friday 21 March 2025.

A hybrid consultation approach was adopted in order to ensure inclusivity and accessibility. This hybrid consultation combined in-person events with digital engagement, through the dedicated project website, social media and webinars. A telephone number was also provided for local people to ask questions, provide feedback or request printed materials.

This approach ensured that individuals who were unable to, or might prefer not to, attend in-person events, could still access the consultation materials and actively participate in the process.

Legislative context

ILP North is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and will proceed through the Development Consent Order (DCO) planning process. This is because the proposals meet the thresholds set in the Planning Act 2008 relating to SRFIs which mean that consent must be sought by a DCO and not a planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The Secretary of State for Transport will make the final decision regarding the application's outcome, based on the recommendations and findings of the Planning Inspectorate who will assess the application and will hold an examination on the scheme which members of the public and statutory bodies can participate in.

Effective consultation is a critical element of the DCO process, offering an opportunity for community and stakeholder input into the evolving proposals. The feedback received, in conjunction with technical studies and environmental assessments, will be used to inform and shape the DCO application before it is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

The Planning Act 2008 includes the requirement for a statutory consultation prior to application submission, and outlines requirements such as publicity and statutory parties to be consulted. The Applicant has taken a multi-stage approach to consultation, opting to

undertake a non-statutory consultation to help inform the design development, ahead of the statutory consultation stage.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with local representatives

Following the launch of the project website in summer 2024, information was distributed to key stakeholders to introduce the project and offer briefing opportunities. These early-stage engagements provided valuable initial input on both the project’s design and the proposed approach to consultation, while also helping to establish open and ongoing communication with local representatives.

In January 2025, key local stakeholders - including all relevant parish councils, local Members of Parliament, and key councillors from St Helens Borough Council, Wigan Borough Council, and Warrington Borough Council - were informed of the proposal ahead of or at the outset of the informal non-statutory consultation. Each was invited to attend a dedicated briefing on the project.

Stakeholder	Date of meeting
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority	Wednesday 15 January 2025
Transport for Greater Manchester	Friday 17 January 2025
Members of St Helens Council	Friday 24 January 2025
Officers at Warrington Council	Friday 14 February 2025

Landowner engagement

Upon the launch of the non-statutory consultation, a package of material was issued to identified landowners which included a letter, consultation brochure, newsletter, feedback form and freepost envelope. The letters informed the landowners about the early-stage consultation for ILP North and invited them to engage with the project team to discuss how their land interest may be affected as the plans develop.

The Applicant continues to engage with affected landowners as the proposals are progressing.

Engagement with statutory consultees

As part of the development of the technical design and environmental assessment work, engagement has taken place with a number of statutory parties since Summer 2024, including St Helens Borough Council, Wigan Borough Council, Warrington Borough Council, National Highways, Network Rail, Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England.

An introductory meeting with the Planning Inspectorate took place on Tuesday 30 April 2024 and subsequent meetings were held on Tuesday 7 January and 24 June 2025.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

APPROACH TO CONSULTATION

The aim of the non-statutory consultation stage was to clearly present the project and gather feedback, which it was anticipated would help us to refine our proposals for ILP North whilst ensuring the project is developed sensitively to the neighbouring community.

PROMOTING THE CONSULTATION

To promote inclusivity and gather feedback representative of the local community, the non-statutory consultation was publicised through a broad range of channels, as detailed below.

Newsletter

Newsletters were mailed to all residential and business addresses within the Consultation Zone (CZ) shown in Figure 1.

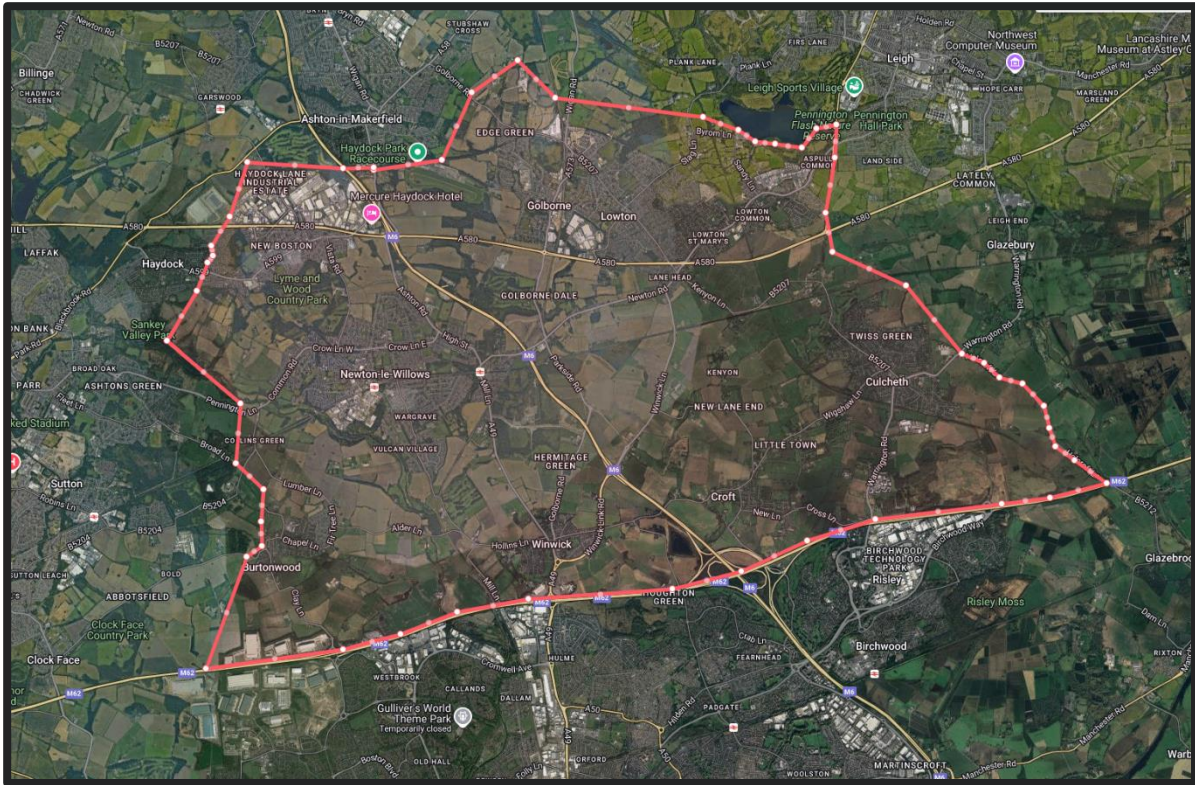
The four-sided newsletter included an introduction to the project and an overview of the proposals, details of deposit locations, details of the consultation events, and the various contact channels.

The CZ included 36,183 local addresses and was designed to consider:

- Existing physical features such as main roads
- Capturing entire communities rather than excluding small numbers of properties
- Feedback from St Helens Council to include nearby industrial estates

The newsletter was also mailed to statutory consultees, local organisations, community groups and 'under-represented' or 'Seldom Heard' groups and individuals who may be less likely to participate in or respond to traditional consultation techniques. Examples of seldom heard groups that were informed of the non-statutory consultation include: Age UK Mid Mersey, National Autistic Society and Dyslexia Association.

Figure 1 Consultation Zone



Poster

Posters were distributed to local village halls, libraries and Parish Councils and other public buildings within the CZ, accompanied by a letter requesting their local display. These posters provided a brief overview of the project, and details of the consultation events and various contact channels. This helped to raise public awareness and ensured that information about the consultation reached a broad local audience.

Social media

To publicise the proposals and consultation, paid for Facebook advertising distributed information to an 8km radius of the site, ensuring that communities outside of the CZ newsletter zone were informed of the plans and had the opportunity to comment.

These advertisements included information about the need for a SRFI in the area, and information about the consultation and events. The posts encouraged active participation, urging the online audience to visit the dedicated project website and attend consultation events.

In the immediate run up and during the consultation the Facebook advertisements reached 152,351 people, had over 2,506 engagements* and 2,657 link clicks.

**Post engagement includes actions that people take involving ads while they're running. Some examples of actions that may count towards post engagement: post shares, post reactions, post saves and post comments.*

Press release

Local media was used to further disperse information about proposals for ILP North and the consultation programme. A press release was issued ahead of the non-statutory consultation to announce its launch, detailing the proposals and various feedback mechanisms.

These releases were distributed to local media outlets as well as infrastructure-focused publications, including those specific to rail freight.

Stakeholder letters and emails

Stakeholders were contacted via mail and email ahead of and during the non-statutory consultation.

CONSULTATION MATERIALS

A variety of consultation materials were produced to facilitate the engagement process. These materials included:

- a comprehensive information brochure and feedback form
- exhibition banners
- the Red Line Boundary Plan
- the Illustrative Consultation Plan
- the Public Rights of Way Plan
- the Schematic Rail Terminal Layout
- topic papers covering:
 - air quality
 - acoustics and vibration
 - archaeology
 - climate and energy
 - ecology
 - flood risk and drainage
 - geology, soils, land contamination and hydrogeology
 - health
 - heritage
 - landscape and visual
 - public rights of way
 - rail freight
 - socioeconomics
 - transport and highways
 - policy and need
- a community newsletter
- a poster
- a dedicated project website

Dedicated project website

A dedicated project website, www.tritaxbigbox.co.uk/our-spaces/intermodal-logistics-park-north/, was live throughout the non-statutory period to provide information about the proposals, and to host an online feedback form.

The website presented information about the proposals, a project timeline and a host of FAQs. A Documents Library allowed people to view and download all consultation documents, ensuring online visitors could access all materials available at the in-person consultation events.

Additionally, the website provided an opportunity to sign up for the webinar events and to register for updates throughout the duration of the consultation and planning process. The website remains live and the information accessible as part of the informal consultation remains so.

Information brochure

A comprehensive 24-page brochure was available to provide information about the proposals, project milestones, the consenting process, our approach to the Environmental Impact Assessment and our approach to community benefit.

The information brochure was proactively sent to politicians, local organisations, parish councils, statutory consultees, landowners and seldom heard groups in advance of the consultation launch. It was available for pickup at the four in-person events, and a hard copy could be requested by phone and email. During the non-statutory consultation, a total of two hard copy requests were received.

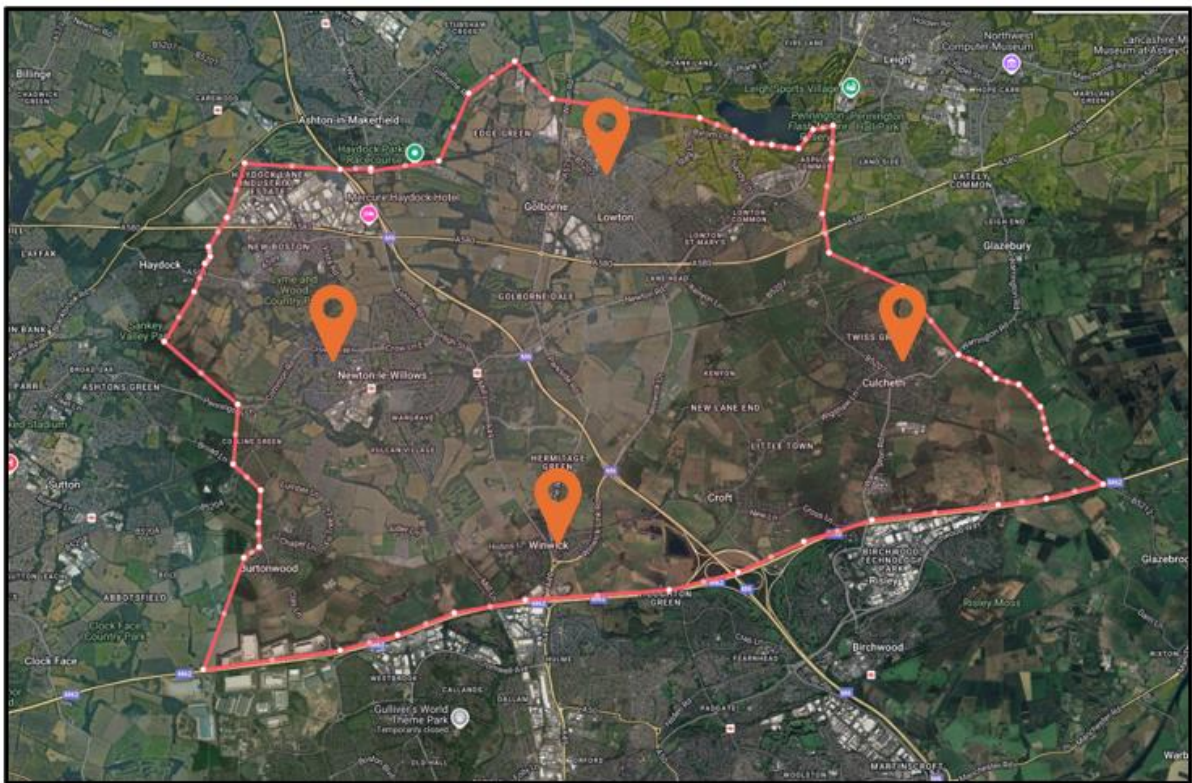
CONSULTATION EVENTS

In-person events

Four in-person events were hosted at local and accessible venues in close proximity to the site, the locations of the events are shown in relation to the CZ in **Figure 2**. These events were scheduled to ensure inclusivity, with one event on a Saturday and three events on weekdays running into the evening. The event details were as follows:

Date	Time	Location	Number of attendees
Monday 10 February 2025	2:00pm-7:00pm	Crownway Community Centre, Crown St, Newton-le-Willows, WA12 9DA	80
Thursday 13 February 2025	2:00pm-7:00pm	Golborne Parkside Sports & Community Club, Rivington Ave, Golborne, WA3 3HG	107
Friday 28 February 2025	2:00pm-7:00pm	Winwick Leisure Centre, Winwick, Warrington, WA2 8LQ	83
Saturday 1 March 2025	10.00am – 2.00pm	Newchurch Parish Hall, 7-9 Common Ln, Culcheth, Warrington, WA3 4EH	40

Figure 2 Consultation Event Locations



At each event there were:

- 13 exhibition banners presenting the proposals for ILP North, with maps and plans for inspection by attendees
- Information brochures to take away
- Feedback forms to complete at the event or at home (with a Freepost envelope)
- Hard copies of topic papers to read
- Digital surveys to complete at the event
- Members of the project team, including consultants undertaking technical and environmental assessments, available to talk through the proposals and to answer questions

Webinars

One public webinar was held to offer an alternative to those who couldn't attend the in-person events. Another webinar was held for members of all relevant parish councils to attend to receive a briefing on the proposals. The webinar details are as follows:

Webinar	Date	Time	Number of attendees
Parish Council Webinar	Monday 3 March 2025	6:30pm-8:00pm	3
Public Webinar	Wednesday 5 March 2025	6:30pm-8:00pm	18

The project team provided an overview of the proposals and participants were then given the opportunity to ask questions. A recording of the public webinar was made available on the project website afterwards.

Feedback form

The feedback form served as the core tool gathering community insights on the evolving proposals.

The questionnaire incorporated a combination of multiple-choice questions and free-text sections to provide participants with the flexibility to express their views comprehensively. As well as general comment boxes, the form also directly requested feedback on key elements of the proposals, including job-related benefits, site-specific questions and Public Rights of Way.

Deposit locations

A host of local venues were used as deposit locations, where physical copies of the consultation materials could be inspected. Details of these deposit locations were as follows:

Newton-le-Willows

- Newton Le Willows Library, Crow Ln E, Newton-le-Willows, WA12 9TU

Golborne

- Golborne Library, Tanners Ln, Golborne, WA3 3AW

Culcheth

- Culcheth Library, 440 Warrington Rd, Culcheth, Warrington, WA3 5SL

At the request of a local councillor, an additional unofficial deposit location was established at Winwick Leisure Centre following the launch of the informal non-statutory consultation, providing hard copies of consultation materials for public access.

FEEDBACK

A total of 202 responses were received during the non-statutory consultation from the community. Of these, 163 were submitted via the feedback form. This includes submissions through the online project website, hard copy forms completed at events, and those sent via post or email to the project inbox. In addition, 36 general feedback responses were submitted directly to the project inbox, along with three letters.

We also received 21 feedback responses via email from statutory consultees. Furthermore, seven email responses were received from non-statutory organisations, along with four completed feedback forms submitted on behalf of non-statutory organisations. Where both individual and organisational responses were submitted, only the official organisational response has been counted under organisational feedback. Any individual responses from

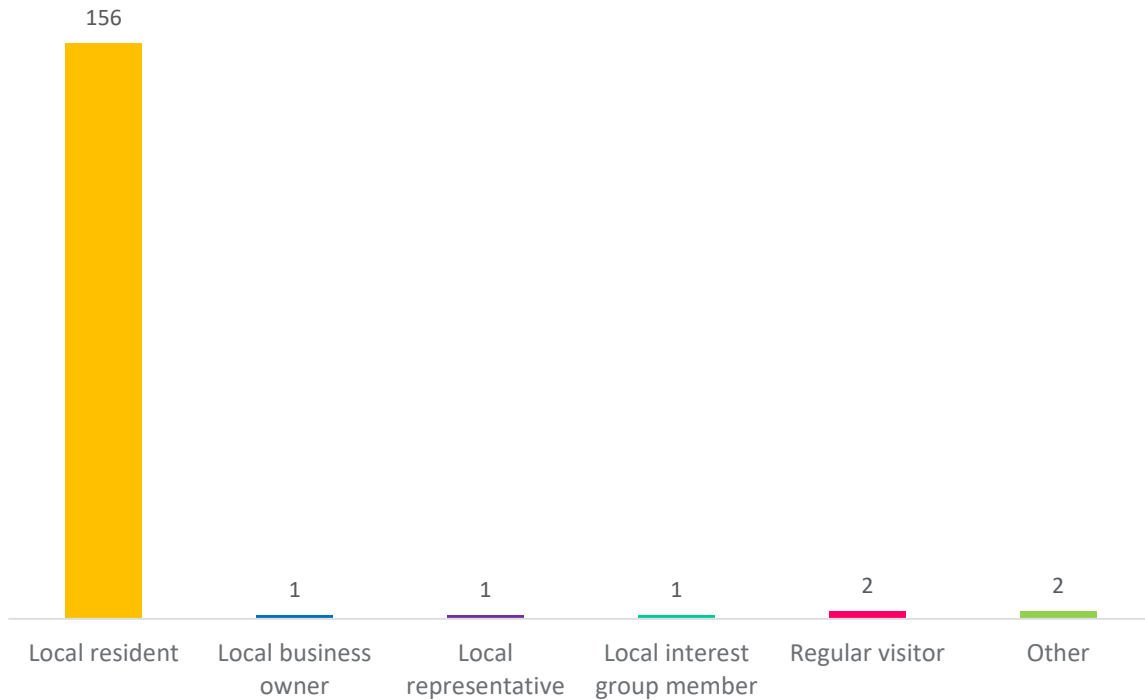
members of those organisations have been included within the general public feedback totals.

	Feedback form	Emails	Letters	Total
Community	163	36	3	202
Statutory consultees	0	21	0	21
Non-statutory organisations	4	0	0	4

Responses to closed questions

This section presents and discusses the feedback gathered through closed questions on the feedback form. The data in the charts below only includes responses received from members of the public through the feedback form.

Q1. Q1. How would you describe your interest in Intermodal Logistics Park North (ILP North)?

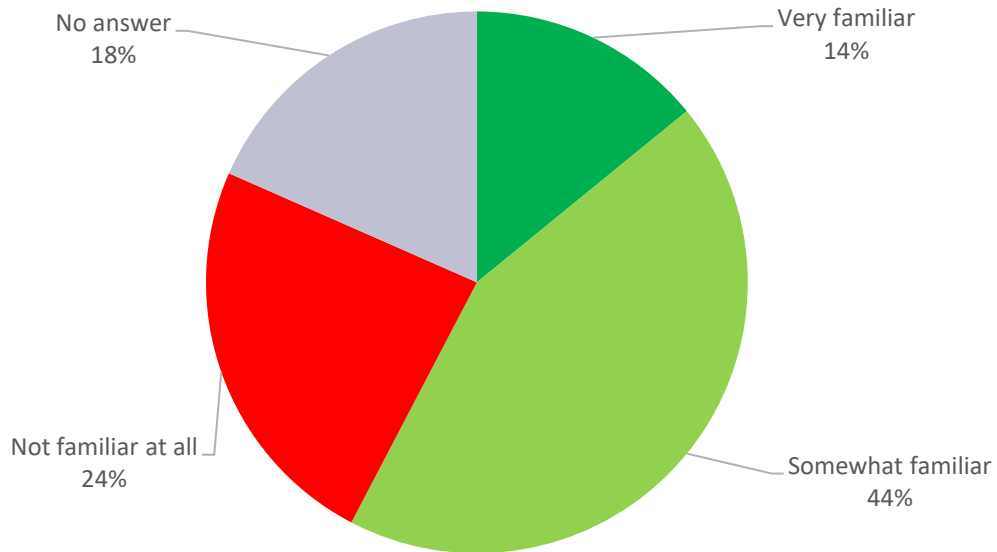


Question one on the feedback form asked respondents their main area of interest in ILP North.

The majority of respondents (156 out of 163) identified themselves as local residents. Few responses came from local business owners, representatives, or interest group members (one each), and only a small number were from regular visitors (2).

Two respondents selected 'other'; one respondent described themselves as a former parish councillor whilst the other mentioned that they fall under multiple categories.

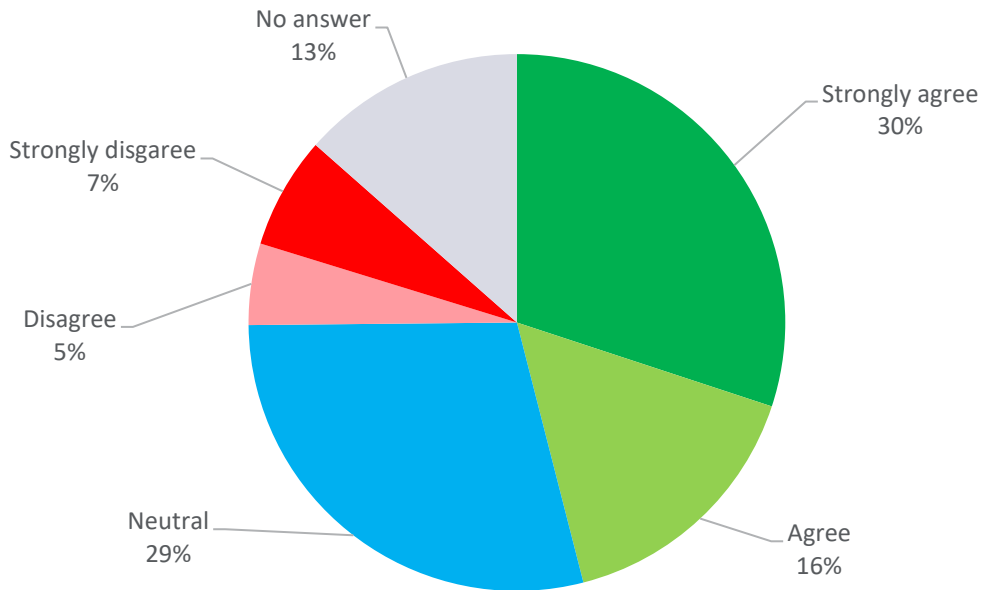
Q2. Before exploring our consultation materials, how familiar were you with the concept of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI)?



Question two asked respondents how familiar they are with the concept of an SRFI.

The responses indicate a varied level of prior awareness of the SRFI concept among participants. While a notable proportion (71 respondents) reported being somewhat familiar, only 23 stated they were very familiar. Conversely, 39 respondents were not familiar at all. A significant number (30) did not answer this question.

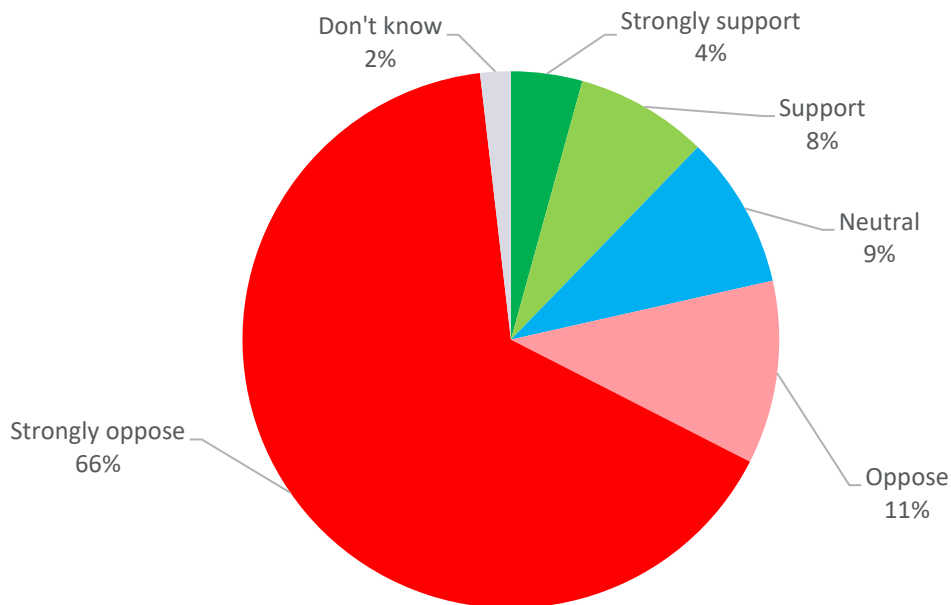
Q3a. Do you agree with the principle of transferring freight from road to rail as a way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and congestion?



Question three asked respondents whether they agreed with the principle of shifting freight from road to rail as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and congestion.

The majority of respondents expressed support for the principle of shifting freight from road to rail, with 49 strongly agreeing and 26 agreeing. A significant proportion (47 respondents) remained neutral. A smaller number of participants disagreed (8) or strongly disagreed (11). Additionally, 22 respondents did not answer the question.

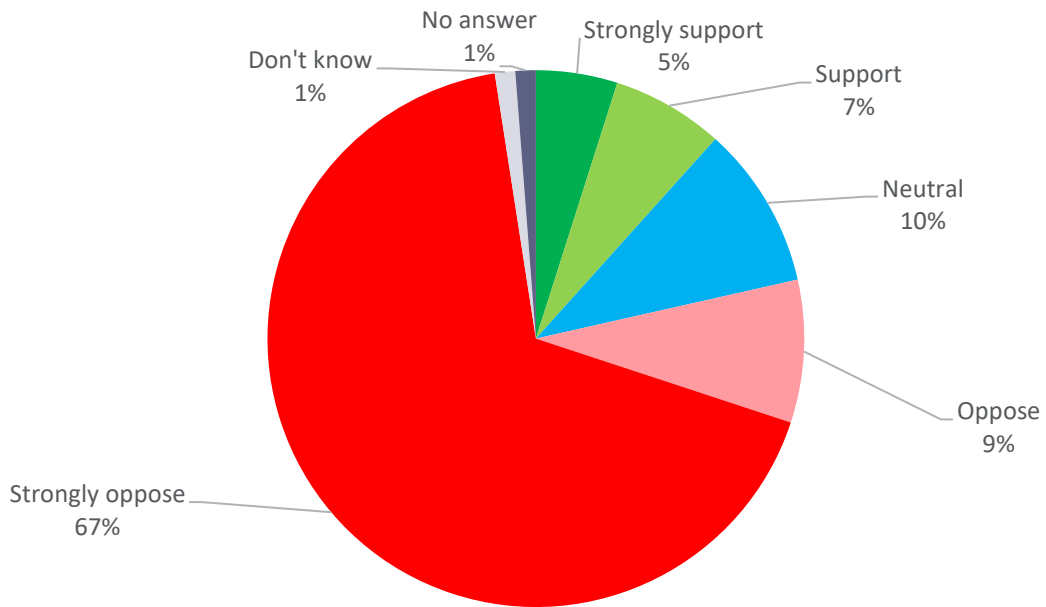
Q4a. We’ve shared our early-stage plans for ILP North, a new Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) project. How supportive are you of our proposal to develop an SRFI in this location, designed to enhance local, regional, and national transport links while boosting the North West’s connectivity to global markets?



Question four asked respondents how supportive they were of the proposal to develop and SRFI at this location.

The data shows a predominantly negative response to the proposal, with 107 respondents strongly opposing and a further 18 opposing the development of an SRFI at this location. In contrast, a smaller group expressed support, with 7 strongly supporting and 13 supporting the proposal. A moderate number (15) selected a neutral stance, and a few (3) indicated they did not know.

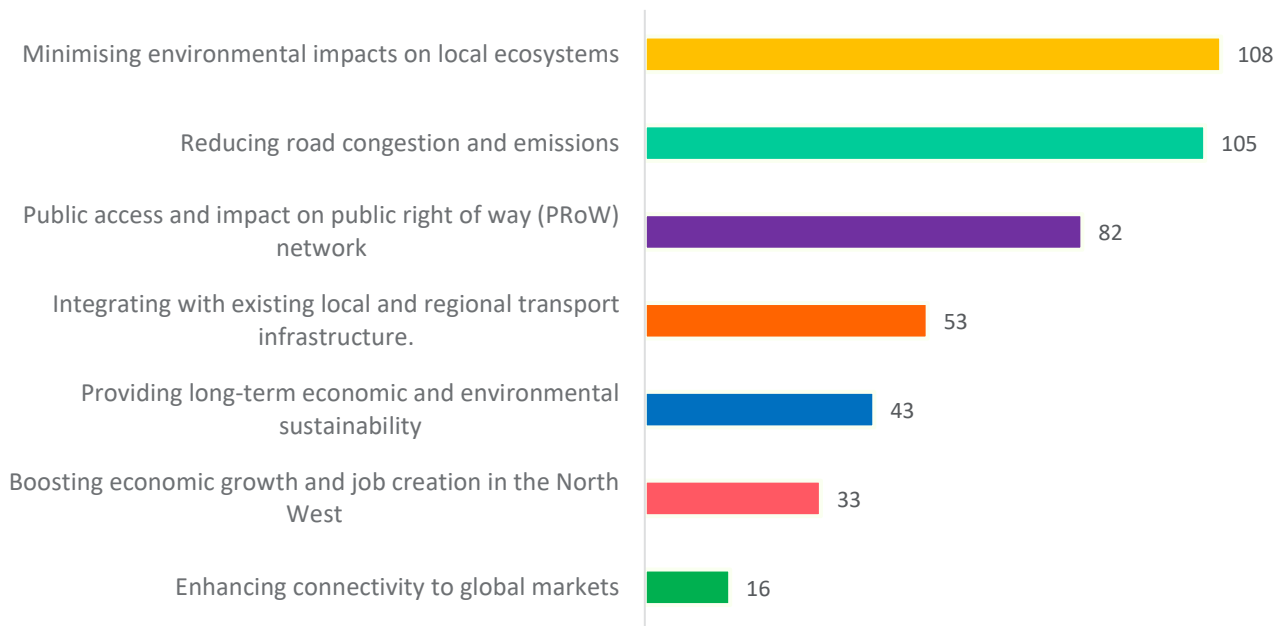
Q5a. Considering the excellent transport connectivity and the inclusion of the site within the Liverpool City Region Freeport, how supportive are you of the proposed location for ILP North?



Question five asked respondents how supportive they were of the proposed location for ILP North.

The majority of respondents (110) strongly opposed to the site’s proposed location, with a further 14 opposing. A small number expressed clear support (8 strongly supported and 11 supported), while 16 respondents remained neutral. A few were undecided (2 selected “Don’t know”) and 2 did not answer.

Q8a. Which of the following factors are important to you when you are considering the development of an SRFI like ILP North?



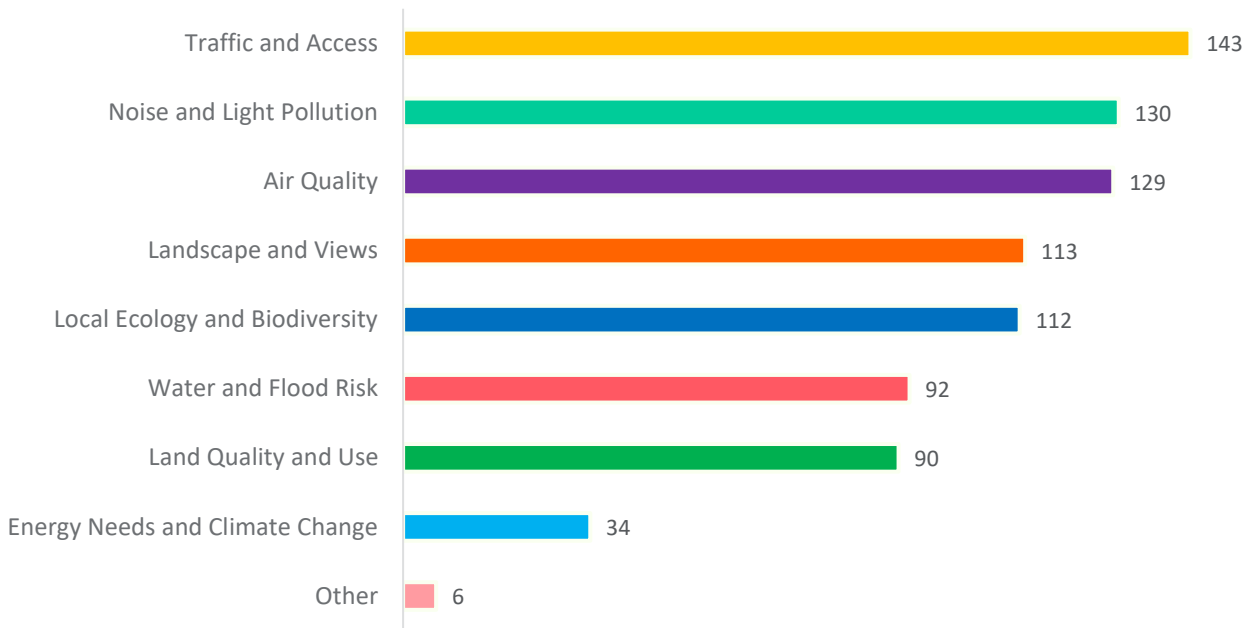
Question eight asked respondents to select which of the below factors were important to them when considering a development such as an SRFI:

- Reducing road congestion and emissions
- Boosting economic growth and job creation in the North West
- Enhancing connectivity to global markets
- Minimising environmental impacts on local ecosystems
- Integrating with existing local and regional transport infrastructure.
- Providing long-term economic and environmental sustainability
- Public access and impact on public right of way (PRoW) network

The data shows that “Minimising environmental impacts on local ecosystems” (108) and “Reducing road congestion and emissions” (105) were the most frequently selected priorities, followed closely by “Public access and impact on the public right of way (PRoW) network” (82).

Factors relating to transport integration (53), long-term sustainability (43), and economic growth and job creation (33) were also considered important by a notable number of respondents, though to a lesser extent. Comparatively fewer participants selected “Enhancing connectivity to global markets” (16).

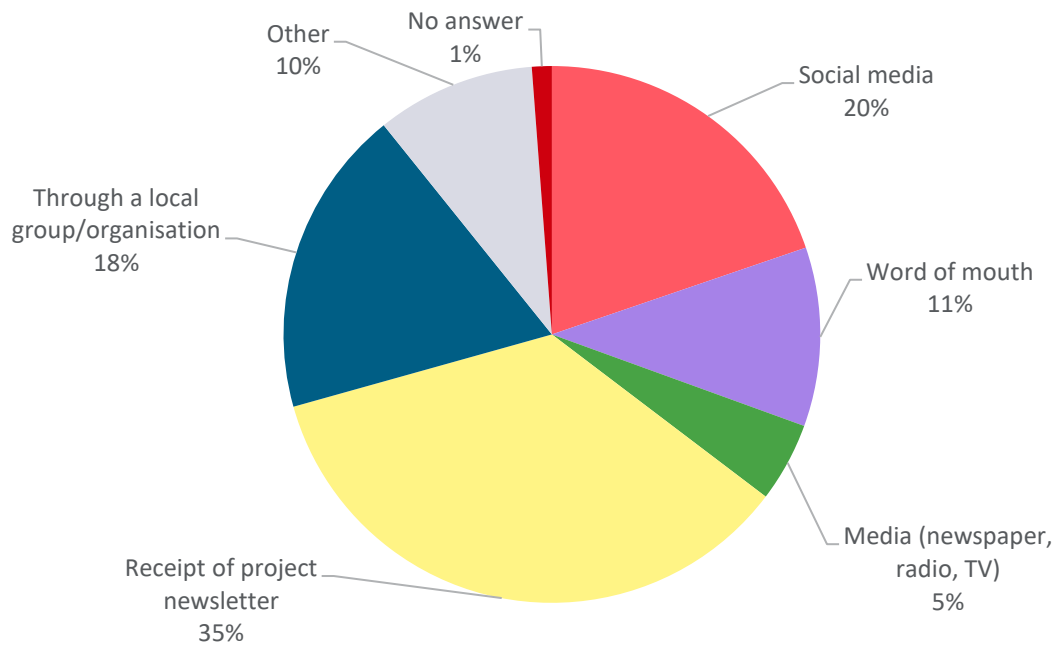
Q9a. What potential environmental issues in relation to the proposals are most important to you?



The most commonly cited issues were Traffic and Access (143), Noise and Light Pollution (130), and Air Quality (129). Landscape and Views (113) and Local Ecology and Biodiversity (112) also featured prominently. Other key topics included Water and Flood Risk (92), Land Quality and Use (90), and Energy Needs and Climate Change (34).

A small number of respondents (6) selected "Other" and highlighted a range of additional concerns, including the lack of supporting infrastructure, potential impacts on historical sites, vibration, residential property blight, disruption to farming activities, and a desire to maintain the area in its current state.

Q13. How did you find out about this consultation?



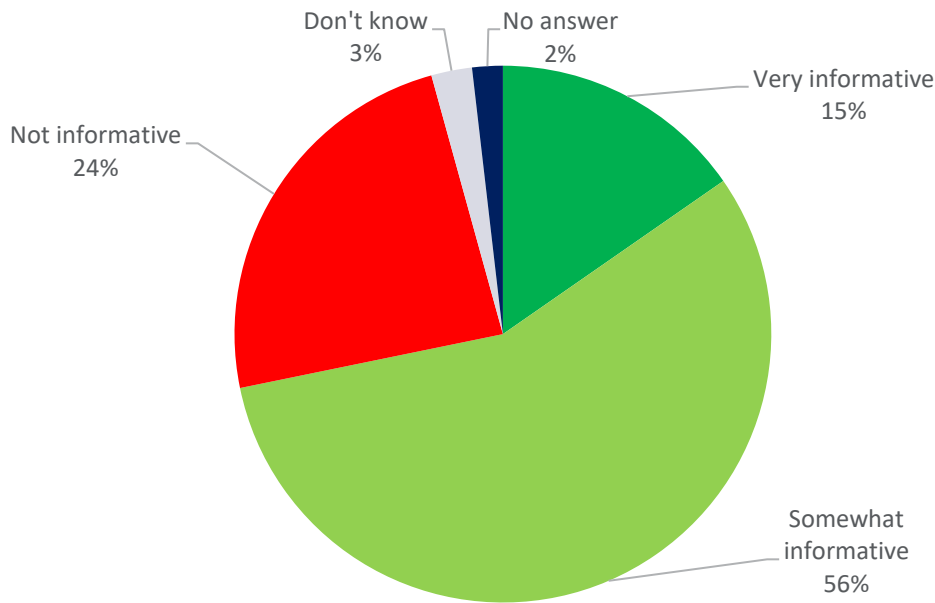
Question thirteen asked respondents how they had found out about the consultation.

The most common way respondents became aware of the consultation was through the project newsletter, cited by 59 individuals. This was followed by social media (33) and communication via local groups or organisations (31). Word of mouth (18) and media sources such as newspapers, radio, or TV (8) played a smaller role. Only 2 respondents did not provide an answer.

A further 16 respondents selected “Other,” suggesting a variety of additional, less common methods also contributed to awareness. Notably, nine of these specified that they had found out about the consultation through multiple channels listed in the question. Other individual responses included:

- Accidental Google search for "Parkside Development"
- All of the above except for media, also through email
- Attended consultation after leaflet through door
- Attended consultation in person
- Leaflet
- Neighbour leaflet
- Through post and through LENDF (Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum)

Q14. How informative have you found our consultation?



Question fourteen on the feedback form gauged respondents' perception of the consultation's informativeness.

The majority of respondents (92) found the consultation to be somewhat informative. A smaller group (25) considered the consultation very informative. However, 39 respondents felt it was not informative. Four respondents selected don't know, and three gave no answer.

OTHER RESPONSES

Email and letter responses

During the non-statutory consultation period, a total of 56 emails and three letters were received and treated as formal consultation responses. Of the email responses, 21 were submitted by statutory consultees.

Responses received from statutory parties and organisations

Feedback was received from 21 statutory consultees and 11 non-statutory organisations, totalling 31 organisational responses.

CONCLUSION

The non-statutory consultation for ILP North represented a key stage in engaging with local communities and relevant stakeholders, offering an opportunity to provide feedback on the early design proposals. The consultation highlighted a wide range of views, reflecting the diverse perspectives within the community. Notably, several respondents acknowledged the importance of shifting freight transport from road to rail as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and alleviating road congestion.

Transport and highways

Respondents expressed strong interest in transport and highways, with particular concerns around increased traffic volumes and the potential impact on local road networks. These concerns were often accompanied by suggestions for infrastructure improvements, the introduction of routing strategies, traffic management measures, and enhancements to public transport provision. It is important to note that while some preliminary assessments have been undertaken, detailed assessments, such as a Transport Assessment, are yet to be finalised. These topics will be explored in greater depth as part of the upcoming statutory consultation, which will include more informed proposals related to transport impacts and mitigation.

Impacts and further detail

A number of respondents expressed disappointment with the perceived lack of detail in the consultation materials, particularly regarding projected traffic figures, traffic routing, and proposed mitigation measures. The upcoming statutory consultation will provide more comprehensive information on these areas. This will include detailed assessments of potential environmental and ecological impacts, with particular attention to mitigation strategies. These topics will be presented in the Preliminary Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) and draft application documents, which will offer a clearer understanding of the likely effects of the project and how they will be managed.

Suggested design changes

A number of design changes were suggested as part of the feedback. The project team will consider these as part of the ongoing design development process. As part of the statutory consultation material, the Applicant will show where changes have been made as a result of stakeholder feedback.

Next steps

The project team will carry out a statutory consultation in Q4 2025, during which both local communities, organisations and statutory consultees will be invited to provide further feedback. This phase will involve further stakeholder engagement, and a series of public events designed to offer a detailed view of the updated proposals.

A key element of this consultation will be the presentation of the PEIR. This comprehensive document will outline the potential environmental effects of the proposed development, supporting informed feedback and engagement.

Submission of the Development Consent Order (DCO) is currently anticipated in Q1/Q2 2026. Throughout this period, the project website www.tritaxbigbox.co.uk/our-spaces/intermodal-logistics-park-north/, will remain available, providing continued public

access to project information. The site will be regularly updated to reflect the latest developments and consultation materials.