



**NW**

**TAR**

# Transport Activists' Roundtable North West

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Monday, April 21st, 2008

Dear Mr. Pannell,

**Re: Planning applications associated with the 'Mersey  
Gateway' project:  
nos. 08/00200/FULEIA & 08/00201/FULEIA (proposed works  
to existing  
highway network) & 08/00211/HBCLBC (SJB listed building  
consent)**

The North West Transport Activists Roundtable (NW TAR) is an umbrella  
body

which promotes sustainable transport and sustainable land use. We have been  
in existence for nearly 10 years, operating under the auspices of the Campaign  
for Better Transport - formerly Transport 2000. We are members of North West  
Environment Link (NWEL) and we hold seats on a number of Regional Assembly  
groupings and on the Highways Agency's Northern Environmental Committee.  
We have engaged with the Local Transport Plan process with local authorities  
across the region and with the Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional  
Economic Strategy processes and are considered by the North West govern-  
mental agencies to represent the views of environmental NGOs on transport.

**Over-arching comments on the planning permissions sought**

The planning permissions currently being sought do not specifically relate to  
the  
new road bridge, formerly known as the New Mersey Crossing, which would  
provide an additional cross-Mersey connection between Runcorn and Widnes.  
It is understood planning permission will be sought separately for this. These  
applications relate to the ancillary works that would facilitate the new bridge -  
including the provision of a new strategic route through Runcorn which would  
make the journey for through-traffic longer than it is at present - and to the fact  
that the existing Mersey crossing road bridge in Halton, the Silver Jubilee Bridge,  
is a listed structure and requires permission for works to be carried out on it.

**NW TAR wishes to lodge a strong objection to these planning  
applications.**

They represent an integral part of a totally unsustainable project which is at  
odds with a number of national and regional governmental agendas, namely:

- sustainability & the need to recognise environmental capacity constraints
- improving water quality & protecting the wider environment & biodiversity
- reducing CO2 and other harmful emissions and tackling climate change
- improving the inter-connections between land-use and transport policies
- reducing the need to travel and embracing the 'smarter choices' options
- reducing social exclusion (both the new & existing bridge would be tolled)

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- tackling health inequalities and improving the quality of life overall

Extra-ordinarily, no health impact assessment appears to have been carried out.

Please note, this is a holding response. We will respond to the EIA separately.

Yours sincerely,

**LILLIAN BURNS, Convenor**