

## **WINNINTON SOLAR FARM - WRITTEN BY CLLR J DEVINE, PRESENTED BY CLLR J BURGESS**

we attended a meeting at Winnington Scout Hut along with Councillor Devine of the group Toxic Free Tomorrow. (TFT) On Sunday 30th November, this group was set up to challenge the decision to allow the development.

Present were group committee members, CWaC Councillors, Northwich Town Councillors and local residents.

Briefly and to bring you up to speed.

### **1st September 2023,**

Planning application received to develop the Limebeds on Winnington Avenue involving the importing of thousands of tons of construction waste by the developers Infinis Solar Developments and Green Earth Developments in collaboration with Tata Chemicals.

### **23rd July 2024**

CWaC refused planning permission by virtue of the material required to be imported to the site and the associated HGV movements meant it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the additional traffic generated by the development can be safely accommodated within the highway network.

Subsequently the developers appealed this decision.

### **1st July 2025,**

the appeal was heard by the government inspector and the decision was overturned and the development was allowed.

2 action groups are operating at present TFT (Toxic Free Tomorrow) and Stop the HGVs, both with the same end in mind which is to hopefully stop this development.

Through Go Fund Me £6000.00 was raised to engage a Barrister to explore the possibility of challenging the development, the barristers view was that correct procedure and due diligence had taken place by developers and any appeal to the high court would fail, however the barrister did say that the action groups should concentrate on the 41 preconditions as required by the government inspectorate before the development can begin.

The TFT has various experts on board and major concerns have been raised as to the toxicity of the Limebeds and any disturbance could become an environmental disaster, I have a good understanding of what has been dumped there over many years. This will be more fully investigated by the relevant agencies.

This is just one line of investigation, others will become more apparent as the 41 preconditions are investigated.

I would remind all that this project is not about a solar farm development but is all about the millions of pounds that would be generated for the developers in accepting the construction waste material.

Another meeting took place With TFT on **Monday 15th December at NTC**, Judy Phoenix, Jim Devine and myself attended.

It pretty much took the format of the earlier meeting, although with a more defined way forward, and what the TFT committee could bring to bear on the developers, we were hoping to have a stall on artisan day in Northwich prior to Xmas to speak to people and hand out leaflets, unfortunately this was deemed too much of a rush and it was decided it would happen in the new year, all the committee members contributed to a fund for the printing of leaflets and other stuff that may be needed along the way.

It was also agreed that Northwich BID (business improvement district) needs to be brought more onboard to fight the developers proposal, this is proceeding, BID is made up of businesses large and small throughout Northwich who would suffer significant harm to trading should this project go ahead

There will be periodic meetings with Tata and stakeholders, it looks like around 5 members of our group TFT will attend, at the moment I am not sure who sets the agendas but it will not be TFT so either Tata, Green Earth Developements (likely) or CWaC. Their next meeting is planned for **15th January 2026**

At the moment most of our hopes are based on the 41 pre conditions which have to be discharged before any development can take place some of which are quite onerous, hopefully with the experts we have on board a golden nugget will be found that stops this project.

This is a brief overview of what is taking place and there will be more reports to follow, it will be a lengthy process with many issues involved and as with Jim and Judy I will do my best to attend future meetings and report back.

I would like to mention that TFT (Toxic Free Tomorrow) is a cross party group of the political spectrum who have come together to oppose this cynical ploy of greenwashing in order to reap millions of pounds while in the process destroying our communities health, they have a Facebook presence for regular updates.

It has to be said that one or two issues relating to possible actions by TFT may have to remain confidential to the committee and not be put in the public domain until thoroughly investigated.

We will keep you posted on any further significant developments

Jeff Burgess  
Jim Devine