



Wickham Residents' Association News Update

Funtley Tip Landfill and Solar Farm - Withdrawn

The application from Navigate Corporation/SLR to install a 10.5 MW on the old Funtley Tip in Titchfield Lane started its life in November 2021 and was due to be decided by the Hampshire County Council Regulatory Committee on 13 September 2023. The HCC Planning Case Officer published his report to the Committee on 6 September 2023 recommending refusal and on 7 September the applicant, Navigate/SLR, withdrew the application. In recommending "refusal" Planning cited many issues of which the main one was the proposed import of 1.15 million tonnes of inert material to raise the 18-hectare site by an average of 3 metres. This was considered to be excessive and unnecessary. The full report from HCC Planning can be found on the HCC Regulatory Committee website - <https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/documents/g10631/Public%20reports%20pack%2013th-Sep-2023%2010.00%20Regulatory%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

Many thanks to the 200+ objectors who quickly showed that this community, Knowle and Wickham, have strong and valid concerns about the project. The WRA and the

vast majority of objectors support a Solar Farm but object to the extent of the landfill and the potential safety risk of the proposed massive importation of materials, over 5 years, along the narrow lanes leading to Funtley Tip. With substantial help from several residents, WRA has been involved in reviewing documents from the applicants and sharing our fact-based analysis with HCC Planning, through frequent contact and reports.

We have received great support from Cllr Patricia Stallard, Chairman of Hampshire County Council, who has facilitated our communication with HCC Planning, and we have also had help from KRA and members of W&KPC, with experience in planning matters. The newly elected W&KPC is fully supportive, and they recently updated their objection based on the new data that WRA provided. Recently we have also secured generous help from three experts in Planning, Surveying and Civil Engineering. They have provided a technical review, of the landfill and proposed solar panel system, showing that there are better alternatives, requiring minimal landfill, which can be installed quickly and safely. This was presented to HCC Planning on 3 August 2023. Our thanks to them for their valued input which was acknowledged by the HCC Case Officer in his report where he commented: *"Advisors, with first-hand experience of siting solar farms on former landfill sites, to the Wickham Residents' Association, concur. They add that there is little detail on the underlying landfill site's 'ability' to safely absorb the weight from above or full justification*

for the need for 1.15 million tonnes of imported material."

A professional Road Safety Risk Assessment by Vectos in January this year clearly showed that Titchfield Lane, Fontley Rd and Mill Lane have 21 locations totalling 840 metres where **"a truck and a family car cannot pass without encroachment"**.

Despite this strong evidence to the contrary, HCC Highways continues with the position that adding eighty-four 30-ton 4 axle tipper truck movements per day to the route poses no additional road safety risk. This is wrong and WRA will continue to press HCC Highways for a review.

It is important to note that the applicants, Navigate/SLR, can still submit another application, without fee, within the next 12 months. This will be closely monitored, and any development will be flagged directly to members and on the WRA website and Facebook pages.

Why WRA Membership Matters

It is unfortunate that the voices of individuals and even whole communities are too frequently heard but ignored or never even solicited.

When the Funtley Tip Landfill and Solar Farm Application was posted in November 2021, only a few people were notified. However, WRA heard your shout and joined in. The notification was widened, and we gained a meeting with the Case Officer on site. Since those initial events we have maintained a constant watch for new data being posted, gathered support and we have lobbied the authorities to good effect.

This is how WRA can provide a collective approach which is more likely to yield a result than individual initiatives.

WRA regularly updates all members of the community through the Parish Magazine, our website and Facebook pages but as a member, you will also have a direct link:

- we communicate directly to you via email or phone and in turn you can communicate directly to us.
- as issues and opportunities arise, we will seek your comments and advice.
- you are eligible to attend and vote at our AGM.
- you are an integral part of a conduit to the Parish Council and other Authorities and Public Bodies.

Being a Member of the WRA gives you a bigger voice and as an Association representing residents we can act quickly and directly and bring expertise to bear to ensure what is said is correct and valid.

WRA is properly constituted with a strong code of conduct, but we are not constrained by other priorities, procedures and protocols and our only priority is to represent the interests of this community. The more members we have the stronger our voice and the quicker we can get things done.

TOGETHER WE ARE ALL STRONGER – JOIN US AND HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Membership is available to anyone 18 or older living in the PO17 postcode area.

Joining is simple and FREE just e-mail your name, address, and contact number to membership@wickhamresidents.org.uk

OR visit our website at wickhamresident.org.uk.

Parish Sports and Recreation

Existing and new facilities for the whole Parish are now

under serious review in the Parish Council with full resident consultation planned. Here are updates on just two aspects under consideration.

Mill Lane

The Parish Council Recreation Committee will now publish updates and information documents on the Parish website. For the latest information go to <https://wickhamparishcouncil.org/mill-lane-sports-and-recreation-facilities/>

Surveys are now taking place among sporting organisations to update information and add new information, so that authoritative data may be used to inform the residents of consultations that will take place before the Council makes final decisions.

The PC Rec Committee agreed to recommend to the Full Council that a professional market research agency be appointed to conduct the consultation. This will ensure the exercise is both thorough and demonstrably fair.

The Rec

The availability and permitted use of a £150,000 fund, secured from the developers at Wykeham Vale, for the improvement of sports facilities, including the pavilion, at Wickham Rec, is to be explored.

It was noted that the new Outdoor Gym equipment appears to be well used and proposals for conversion to LED lighting for the Tennis Club are being pursued. Windbreaks are also under consideration.

completely new, relating to the Parish, that you feel needs some attention please contact us in confidence at myvoice@wickhamresidents.org.uk.

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If you have any questions, comments supporting information, or something