Proposed Winwick Biogas Plant: November 2026 Update & Resident Guide

Planning Application: 2025/00859/FULM | **Location:** Land east of Winwick Link Road, Winwick
Applicant: Severn Trent Green Power | **Proposal:** Commercial Anaerobic Digestion Facility

1. WHAT IS HAPPENING?

Severn Trent Green Power continues to seek planning permission to construct and operate an industrial anaerobic digestion facility near Winwick Link Road and Highfield Lane. The site would process approximately 75,000 tonnes of organic and food waste annually to generate biomethane gas.

Following widespread objections regarding groundwater risks and underground pipework from residents, parish councils, the Environment Agency, and United Utilities, the developer submitted revised plans and technical reports in October 2026. Warrington Borough Council has initiated a further statutory consultation.

Important Status Note: This application has not been approved. The submission of amended drawings does not mean previous community or statutory objections have been resolved.

2. WHAT HAS CHANGED IN THE OCTOBER 2026 PLANS?

The primary alteration is that one underground mixing tank and two underground liquid waste tanks have been relocated above ground within an engineered containment area designed to catch potential leaks. Additional technical filings detail tank construction, pipework, drainage, and leak detection. However, key sub-surface infrastructure remains, including waste reception bunkers inside the main building.

3. GROUNDWATER & AQUIFER PROTECTION CONCERNS

The site sits directly above a designated Principal Sandstone Aquifer and near strategic drinking water infrastructure. The Environment Agency and United Utilities previously warned that escaping contaminants from underground vessels could pollute groundwater undetected. While the applicant's hydrogeological report claims above-ground tanks reduce the risk to an acceptable level, this is solely the developer's assertion. Updated statutory conclusions from both agencies remain essential.

4. POTENTIAL ABOVE-GROUND ODOUR & VISUAL IMPACTS

During a previous visit by Winwick Parish Council to an operational Severn Trent Green Power facility, underground storage was highlighted as a critical design feature for controlling offensive odours. The developer's formal Odour Assessment dates back to January 2026 and was based entirely on the previous sub-surface layout. Winwick Parish Council believes Warrington Borough Council must seek confirmation from its Environmental Protection team to determine whether an updated odour assessment is required for the revised above-ground design.

5. CORE PLANNING OBJECTIONS MAINTAINED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL

- **Inappropriate Green Belt Development:** Substantial 24/7 industrial infrastructure on agricultural Green Belt land, without demonstrating very special circumstances or exhausting suitable brownfield sites.
- **Heritage Asset Harm:** The site contains a nationally significant scheduled prehistoric bowl barrow. Historic England previously raised substantial concerns regarding setting impacts and archaeology.
- **HGV Traffic & Highways:** Significant heavy vehicle movements carrying commercial waste onto congested local junctions, alongside doubts regarding route enforcement.
- **Cumulative Burden:** Severe compounding impact when viewed alongside existing, approved, and proposed major schemes across Winwick.
- **Residential Amenity:** Round-the-clock noise, artificial lighting, traffic disturbance, and potential fugitive odour emissions affecting nearby homes.

6. GUIDANCE FOR RESIDENTS SUBMITTING CONSULTATION COMMENTS

Do I need to object again? No. Your original objection remains valid on the planning register. However, residents are strongly encouraged to submit supplementary comments focusing specifically on the October 2026 design changes, odour containment, and the appropriateness of the location.

How to submit comments: Search application reference **2025/00859/FULM** on the Warrington Borough Council online planning portal. Follow the instructions to comment before the consultation deadline. Comments need not be technical—personal observations regarding residential amenity and traffic carry significant weight.

> ***Suggested Supplementary Objection Text:***
> *"I previously objected to planning application 2025/00859/FULM and confirm that my objection remains. I understand the developer has moved three underground tanks above ground following groundwater concerns. While I recognise the changes, I remain concerned about the suitability of this location and its proximity to homes. I ask the Council to verify whether the previous odour assessment remains valid, and to consider groundwater, Green Belt harm, and cumulative local impacts. Updated consultee responses must be thoroughly assessed before any decision is taken. I reserve the right to submit further comments."*

7. NEXT STEPS & WARD COUNCILLOR SUPPORT

Warrington Borough Council will evaluate amended plans against statutory consultee advice, planning policies, and public representations. Winwick Parish Council will submit a more detailed objection to the proposals in due course and will continue reviewing the application as further information becomes available.

> **Need Advice or Guidance on Submitting Comments?**
> Residents can contact **Cllr Stuart Mann** (Independent Councillor – Burtonwood and Winwick Ward) at **cllrstuart.mann@warrington.gov.uk** for assistance in understanding the consultation process.