This battle is my 9 to 5 - I won't stop until I have my £620m of Bitcoin back'



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'wearing a white polo shirt, is sat in a large black office chair and in front of a computer screen.James Howells tried to sue Newport council to gain access to the tip where his hard drive ended upIt has been more than a decade since James Howells' hard drive - containing Bitcoin now worth hundreds of millions of pounds - ended up on a landfill site.

But despite facing numerous setbacks, he is determined to continue on his mission to retrieve it."This is my job, if you will. My 9 to 5," he said, adding he would "absolutely not" give up.

The value of the cryptocurrency has dramatically increased in recent months, and with the hard drive currently worth about £620m, Mr Howells said "it makes sense for me to focus my energy on this" - although he does do some other work with crypto currencies.Mr Howells, from Newport, claimed his ex-partner mistakenly threw out the hard drive, containing 8,000 bitcoins, in 2013, with it ending up in a tip owned by Newport City Council.

Last month, a High Court judge threw out his efforts to access the landfill or get £495m in compensation, saying there were no "reasonable grounds" for bringing the claim and "no realistic prospect" of succeeding at a full trial. Mr Howells was an early adopter of cryptocurrencies, mining the Bitcoin in 2009 when it was a small fraction of its current value.

He has said that his former partner accidentally dumped the hard drive – about the size of a mobile phone – containing a Bitcoin wallet in 2013. As its value soared, he organised a team of experts to attempt to locate and recover it.

He repeatedly asked permission from the council for access to the site, offering it a share of the missing Bitcoin if it was successfully recovered.

After Mr Howells launched legal proceedings, the council applied for a High Court hearing to ask a judge to dismiss the claim before going to trial – which the judge did last month.

The council argued its environmental permits would forbid any attempt to excavate the site for the search and previously said such work "would have a huge negative environmental impact on the surrounding area".

Unwilling to give up, Mr Howells now believes he has two options open to him to retrieve the digital wallet – launch a case at the Court of Appeal, or work with investors to try to buy the landfill site from the council, after it announced the site is "coming to the end of its life" and it plans to close it within the next two years