

Application Number:	2025/0061	Application Type:	Full Planning Permission
Proposal:	Erection of a temporary meteorological mast with associated data collection and monitoring equipment, and other ancillary infrastructure.	Location:	Land to the west of Rooley Moor Road, Rooley Moor, Rossendale.
Report of:	Head of Planning and Building Control	Status:	For publication
Report to:	Development Control Committee	Date:	24 th June 2025
Applicant:	Cubico UK	Expiry Date:	27 th June 2025

Contact Officer:	Claire Bradley	Telephone:	01706 238636
Email:	planning@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

REASON FOR REPORTING	
Outside Officer Scheme of Delegation	
Member Call-In Name of Member: Reason for Call-In:	
3 or more objections received	3+ objections received
Other (please state):	

HUMAN RIGHTS

The relevant provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights have been taken into account in the preparation of this report, particularly the implications arising from the following rights:

Article 8

The right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence.

Article 1 of Protocol 1

The right of peaceful enjoyment of possessions and protection of property.

1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Members will recall that this application was brought before Committee last month and that Members made the decision to defer this application rather than delegate to officers for the following reasons:

To await the outcome of further consultation.

The application is again brought before Committee to provide the Members with further information in relation to the above, to enable the application to be determined. The original (13th May 2025) Committee report is included in Appendix 1.

2. DISCUSSION

At the previous meeting there was discussion around the following:

- Permission from Natural England regarding closure of common / access land
- Conflicts and accordance with the Council's planning policies
- Restoration of the moor and the funding of the same clarified
- Decommissioning of the construction equipment
- Delivery and transportation of construction equipment
- Access routes and warning signage
- Photos will be taken of the route before and after (to be secured by condition)
- Re-consultation to allow consideration of the proposed Construction Traffic Signage Plan

3. UPDATE / RE-CONSULTATION

Following the previous Committee meeting, final details were received from the agent in relation to the construction signage and positions on 23.05.2025. **A consultation letter was sent to everyone who had commented on the application, and Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum, Rossendale Civic Trust and Rochdale MBC on 28.05.2025, allowing 14 days to respond to the updated documents. A site notice was also posted on Rooley Moor Road in Rochdale on 03.06.2025, also allowing 14 days to respond. The final date for comments is 17.06.2025.**

A summary of comments (12 No.) received to date (10.06.2025) are as follows with any further to be reported in the Update Report:

At the previous Committee meeting on Tuesday 13th May 2025 Councillor Julie Adshead raised a question at the Development Control Committee meeting regarding an alternative to the proposed met mast.

The response from Mark Worcester (Director Planning - Turley) the planning Agent acting on behalf of Cubico was:

"What the banks require and the turbine manufacturers require is high standard and high quality data that you can only get from a met mast."

He also went on to state that it was an expensive process to install a met mast.

It then came to light that Cubico have already installed a WindCube unit close to Top of Leach.

It is understood that:

"A WindCube® is the most flexible and accurate wind measurement technology available, for both onshore and offshore projects. It is well-suited for all turbine types and supports continuous measurement campaigns throughout all project phases. Bankable data to secure funding while minimizing risk, Precise measurements for energy yield assessment, Performance verification

WindCube can be positioned almost anywhere (even offshore with the WindCube Offshore edition) and covers the rotor sweep of even the largest turbines now and in the future, including emerging offshore technologies. Wherever it is located, WindCube helps users optimize financial performance, increase efficiency, and maximize energy output."

So this raises concern about the actual need for a Met Mast.

The main objection relates to the construction access because the met mast location is on CRow Act 2000 land.

Other concerns:

Impact on landscape and views - The mast would contribute significantly to the industrialisation of the landscape which is a unique green space for Rossendale and Rochdale.

Process - Rochdale doesn't appear to have a planning application out for comment, despite the loading area in the Rochdale Conservation area of Catley Lane Head. This is a failure in process to consult with impacted communities.

Timing - The 2 year life of the mast needed for assessment of the conditions in advance of development of a wind farm is unnecessary development until such time as permission is obtained for the wind farm itself.

Safety - The proposed access route is part of the nationally significant trails; the Mary Towneley Loop and The Pennine Bridleway.

Rooley Moor Road is also known as the 'Cotton Famine Road', is a non-designated heritage asset of national and international importance. It features stone setts laid by hand by mill workers during the Cotton Famine and is a monument to a significant historical period. The Method Statement provided by the Applicants makes clear their intention to use a 10tonne tracked dumper and an 8tonne tracked excavator. These are not usual agricultural machines for use in this environment (most of the farmers and graziers use quads for their businesses) and will damage the road.

Alignment with local plans - The Rossendale Local Plan sets out the Vision which envisages that the Borough will be a place where people want to live, visit, work and invest. Rossendale's distinctive landscapes and natural assets will continue to be protected and enhanced for their intrinsic value to biodiversity and tackling climate change as well as their recreational and economic value to local people and visitors alike. How does this application support this Vision?

Impact on environment - The proposed temporary structure would be placed in a Countryside Stewardship Water Quality Priority Area, in a Drinking Water Protected Area, in a Priority Habitat Inventory - Blanket Bog, and in a Climate Change Vulnerability Buffer.

Therefore, the mast will necessarily damage the environment, and in the context of an isolated application where are the funds to address the damage? It is quite possible that the application to extend the current wind farm could be rejected leaving us with permanent damage to the moor.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identifies the presence of breeding bird territories within 500m of the site, including Skylark and Meadow Pipit, which are ground-nesting species. Skylark are a Birds of Conservation Concern Red List species. Curlew, another BoCC Red List and Priority Species, has also been recorded flying over the site. Construction during the nesting season (March to August inclusive) could cause disturbance.

Furthermore, the application is exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculations due to the proposed development area being less than 25m². However, given the temporary nature of the mast and its ancillary infrastructure, and the potential for impacts extending beyond the immediate mast location (e.g., access route, guy lines), relying solely on this 'de minimis' exemption may not adequately ensure that the proposal contributes to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as required by policy.

Lidar, has been raised as a less impactful option for wind monitoring. These remote sensing devices offer advantages like portability, easier deployment, reduced safety hazards, and potentially better data accuracy at various heights without the need for heavy equipment, significant foundations, or tall, visible structures that could impact landscape character and pose risks to birds. The Framework encourages supporting renewable energy infrastructure, but the necessity and appropriateness of a mast, particularly given less impactful alternatives, warrant careful consideration.

S59 signage and a PSPO sign at the bottom of Rooley Moor Road leading onto the Cotton Famine Road informs the public that no mechanically propelled vehicles are allowed. Cubico vehicle drivers have ignored these signs. Driving a mechanically propelled vehicle on common land is illegal, and according to the Road Traffic Act 1988, it is a criminal offence to drive a mechanically propelled vehicle on a bridleway without lawful authority. The Commoners and Rochdale Council's Public Rights of Way Officer should be consulted about allowing mechanically propelled vehicles across common land or to use the Pennine Bridleway National Trail for access to the proposed development site. Development planning policy TR2 supports the network of rights of way and states that development should not adversely affect their use or amenity.

There are many types of peat bogs in the UK but our blanket bog around these local moors is globally rare - and, with 13% of the world's blanket bogs found in the UK - these are of international importance. Our peatlands are significant in global efforts to combat climate change and achieve other Sustainable Development Goals. Their protection and restoration are vital in the transition to a zero-carbon society. It takes around 1000 years to form 1 metre of peat. Local peatland is over 10 metres deep in places, evidenced when a truck delivering materials for the construction of Scout Moor 1 wind farm fell into the peat and was completely submerged. Natural England's recently published peat map confirms that some of the deepest peat deposits are found on Scout Moor.

Updated comments from the Rossendale Civic Trust are as follows

Leaving aside the issue of the signage for the moment, this gives us the opportunity to respond to the presentation by Cubico's representative at the Development Control meeting on May 13th. The application referred solely to a Monitoring Mast which would involve a

great deal of impact in terms of appearance, technicalities of erection and access to the site, and storage of materials some distance away from its intended site.

All of these were questioned, including the storage site, which was felt to be both not suitable and maybe unavailable.

During the course of the meeting, the possible alternative of 'Lidar' monitoring was put forward, a system that must have been known to Cubico, and far less environmentally damaging than the proposed mast. When questioned on this, the suggestion of 'Lidar' monitoring was dismissed verbally by their representative on the spot and briefly, as not meeting their financial backers' criteria. He did not say how or why.

It was rather disingenuous on behalf of Cubico that, as part of their original application, they did not mention any alternative, so failing to give decision makers at all levels any background information on anything else that may have been available, and the reasons for only putting this one forward.

The review of application no. 2025/0061 should therefore open up an opportunity for this matter to be looked at again, and a reasoned decision spelt out clearly and in detail rather than be recorded as a short, dismissive sentence in a last minute situation.

The potential impact of this mast in so many respects is too important to dismiss on this short and late explanation.

Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum have commented as follows:

I am writing on behalf of the Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum (RMNF) to formally request an extension to the response deadline of 11th June 2025 for planning application 2025/0061.

One of our trustees is in the process of arranging a meeting with Rochdale's Conservation Officer, who is currently out of the office and will not return until 11th June. Given the significance of this consultation, we require additional time to ensure a thorough review of the application's impact.

Our primary concern is that most of the vehicular activity for this application will occur in Rochdale, with construction traffic passing through the Catley Lane Head Conservation Area and along the rural section of Rooley Moor Road (RMR). As you are aware, this section of RMR is not a highway but serves as a nationally significant bridleway, and is an internationally recognised, non-designated heritage asset, the Cotton Famine Road, linked to the American Civil War and the abolition of slavery.

It is essential that RMNF trustees have the opportunity to consult with Catherine upon her return so that she can review the application documents, consider RMNF's input, and submit an informed representation to Rossendale LPA.

Given these circumstances, we believe an extension of at least two weeks is both reasonable and necessary.

4. ASSESSMENT

It is for the Council to determine the application as submitted, rather than suggest alternatives. The points raised have been addressed previously in the original report and in the previous update reports.

In relation to Lidar, in an email on 03.06.2025, the agent has provided the rationale behind the chosen model as follows:

While LiDAR is a valuable tool for measuring wind, it does not provide all the data we need to fully and confidently assess the site. A met mast remains essential for several reasons:

- Data quality and accuracy: Met masts provide direct, point-based measurements of wind speed and direction - the industry standard for wind analysis. By contrast, LiDAR gathers data by scanning in a cone above the device, and this requires complex post-processing to estimate horizontal wind speeds, which can introduce uncertainty.*
- Reliability in clean air: LiDAR relies on tiny particles in the air (aerosols) to produce accurate readings. On upland sites like Scout Moor, where the air is often cleaner, this can result in patchy or incomplete data.*
- Turbulence measurement: Turbulence intensity is critical for modelling energy yield, designing the layout, and ensuring turbine safety. LiDAR is not considered reliable for capturing turbulence, particularly in complex or sloped terrain — which we expect at this site.*
- Industry confidence: Given these limitations, especially on challenging sites like Scout Moor, LiDAR alone is not considered sufficient to underpin final investment or design decisions. A met mast provides the ground-truth data needed to calibrate the LiDAR and produce robust, bankable outputs.*

In short, the met mast complements the LiDAR – it is not a replacement, but a necessary part of the measurement campaign to ensure confidence in the results.

In relation to comments from Rochdale MBC, there have been no comments from the Conservation Officer throughout the determination period of this application. This re-consultation relates to additional details with regard to the construction signage, which will not be attached to the ground and will be temporary. The use of Rooley Moor Road by construction traffic has been proposed throughout the application and has not changed.

It is not considered that the proposed signage, by reason of its scale, location and temporary nature, will have an adverse impact on visual amenity, the character of the rural area, the non-designated heritage asset, nor upon highway safety.

The re-consultation since the last meeting of Planning Committee has related to the signage only as there are no changes proposed to the design or location of the temporary Meteorological Mast itself. The impacts of the application proposal have already been considered when the application was reported to the previous Planning Committee meeting. Therefore, there is no change in the proposed recommendation, with regard to the application.

5. CONCLUSION

In light of the potential benefits to renewable energy generation facilitated by this development, and because the met mast is not likely to result in any long-term harm to the amenities of occupiers of any buildings, the landscape as viewed from the site or its surroundings, ecology, heritage assets, the safety of users of public rights of way, or aviation, it is considered that the proposals are acceptable.

Subject to appropriate conditions the proposed development is acceptable and in accordance with the Rossendale Local Plan and the Framework.

6. RECOMMENDATION

There is no change to the recommendation in the previous report which was:

That planning permission be approved subject to the following conditions.

7. CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the application form received 25.02.2025 and the following:

Figure 1 - Scout Moor - Site Location - V1C received 25.02.2025
Figure 2 - Scout Moor - Layout Plan - V1D received 25.02.2025
Figure 3 - Scout Moor - Indicative Mast Elevation - V2A received 25.02.2025
Figure 4 – Scout Moor - Mast Plan View - V1A received 25.02.2025
Figure 5 - Scout Moor - Transport Access to the Site - V2b received 04.04.2025
Figure 6 - Scout Moor - Heras Security Fence - V1C received 25.02.2025
Figure 7 - Scout Moor - Stock Fence - V1B received 25.02.2025
Figure 8 - Scout Moor - Welfare Unit - V1B received 25.02.2025
Figure 9 – Scout Moor – Construction Signage V1a received 23.05.2025
Met Mast Installation Signage received 23.05.2025
Construction Method Statement_V9 received 17.04.2025
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Atmos Consulting February 2025) received 25.02.2025.
Planning Statement received 25.02.2025

Reason: To define the permissions and in the interests of the proper development of the site.

3. Construction works and decommissioning works shall not take place outside the following hours:
Monday to Friday 08:00 to 18:00
Saturday 08:00 to 13:00
Construction works shall not take place on Sundays, or Bank / Public Holidays.
Access and egress for delivery vehicles shall be restricted to the working hours indicated above.

Reason- to ensure that site working only takes place during normal working hours in order to restrict the times during which any disturbance and nuisance may arise.

4. The Local Planning Authority shall be notified of the date on which erection of the met mast hereby permitted is completed, within 28 days of this event. The met mast shall be removed from the site and the land reinstated to its former condition no later than 3 years from the date its erection is completed.

Reason: To protect the essentially open and rural character of the Countryside.

5. Vegetation clearance works, site preparation, vehicle movements associated with the development, development work or other works that may affect ground nesting birds shall not be carried out between March and August inclusive, unless the absence of nesting birds has been first confirmed by further survey or inspections by a qualified ecologist.

Reason: In the interests of ecology/biodiversity.

6. Any excavations required in connection with the met mast hereby permitted shall not be left open overnight.

Reason: In the interests of ecology/biodiversity and public safety.

7. The construction and decommissioning of the equipment shall be carried out in full accordance with Section 6 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Atmos February 2025).

Reason: In the interests of ecology/biodiversity.

8. A pre-commencement photographic condition survey of the proposed construction traffic access route along Rooley Moor Road shall be completed and submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of development for the section of Rooley Moor Road to be used by any construction traffic.

Upon substantial completion of the development, a further post-development photographic condition survey of the same section of highway shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its approval, along with a scope of highway remedial works and timetable for rectifying any damage caused during the construction period.

Any damage shall then be repaired in conjunction with the Highway Authority in accordance with the approved scope of highway remedial works and timetable.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and protection of a non-designated heritage asset

9. No less than two weeks prior to the commencement of any construction or decommissioning works associated with the development hereby approved, signage as shown on the Construction Traffic Signage Plan shall be placed in the locations identified on that plan, to alert users of Rooley Moor Road to the works associated with the development.

The signage shall all be removed after works have been completed.

Reason: in the interests of maintaining the safety of users of Rooley Moor Road.

8. INFORMATIVES

1. The proposal complies with the development plan and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It therefore comprises sustainable development and the Local Planning Authority worked proactively and positively to issue the decision without delay. The Local Planning Authority has therefore implemented the requirement in Paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The grant of planning permission does not entitle a developer to obstruct a right of way and any proposed stopping-up or diversion of a right of way should be the subject of an Order under the appropriate Act. The applicant should be advised to contact Lancashire County Council's Public Rights of Way section by email on PROW@lancashire.gov.uk, quoting the location, district and planning application number, to discuss their proposal before any development works begin.

Application Number:	2025/0061	Application Type:	Full Planning Permission
Proposal:	Erection of a temporary meteorological mast with associated data collection and monitoring equipment, and other ancillary infrastructure.	Location:	Land to the west of Rooley Moor Road, Rooley Moor, Rossendale.
Report of:	Head of Planning and Building Control	Status:	For publication
Report to:	Development Control Committee	Date:	13 th May 2025
Applicant:	Rossendale Borough Council	Expiry Date:	21 st April 2025 EOT agreed to 16.05.2025

Contact Officer:	Claire Bradley	Telephone:	01706 238636
Email:	planning@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

REASON FOR REPORTING	
Outside Officer Scheme of Delegation	
Member Call-In Name of Member: Reason for Call-In:	
3 or more objections received	3+ objections received
Other (please state):	

HUMAN RIGHTS

The relevant provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights have been taken into account in the preparation of this report, particularly the implications arising from the following rights:

Article 8

The right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence.

Article 1 of Protocol 1

The right of peaceful enjoyment of possessions and protection of property.

1. RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be approved subject to the conditions within Section 11.

2. APPLICATION SITE

The application site is located to the west of Rooley Moor Road, which carries the Pennine Bridleway and the Rossendale Way in part.

The Application Site comprises an area of open moorland. This location has been chosen for the proposed met mast due to its elevated topography, which increases the accuracy of the monitoring data due to higher wind speeds and conditions.

The site is located in open countryside but not on Common Land or Green Belt, however, access to the site is across Common Land

3. RELEVANT PLANNING APPLICATION HISTORY

2024/0495: Scout Moor Windfarm II – Screening Request - Pending

4. PROPOSAL

The existing Scout Moor Wind Farm comprises 26 no. wind turbines and associated ancillary infrastructure. Each turbine stands to a height of 100 metres to blade tip.

In November 2024, Cubico announced that it was investigating proposals for a new onshore wind farm – to be known as Scout Moor II – comprising up to 21 wind turbines (up to 180m in height) with a generating capacity of up to 100MW, with associated infrastructure and access. The proposed Scout Moor II is located on land adjacent to the existing Scout Moor Wind Farm.

The proposed meteorological mast (met mast) is required in order to assist Cubico in obtaining a better understanding of the prevailing wind regime and to assist with the design, funding, construction and long-term operation of the Scout Moor II wind farm.

Two years of wind data are required before construction can begin. To achieve this, Cubico seek separate planning permission for the temporary met mast in advance of the main Scout Moor II wind farm application. This approach ensures that if planning permission is granted for the Scout Moor II Wind Farm, the project can be delivered by 2030, aligning with the government's Clean Power 2030 ambitions.

The proposed development comprises the erection of a 91.65-metre-high tilt-up meteorological mast, which would comprise of a heavy-duty tubular galvanised steel mast, with a maximum diameter of 219.1mm.

The proposed met mast would be held in place with inner (25m radius) and outer (50m radius) steel rope guy wires using six ground anchoring positions. The anchoring excavations are typically 3m long by 0.75m wide and 2m deep.

The proposals also include:

- Secure boxes attached to the base of the met mast which will contain data logging and telecommunications equipment, as well as the batteries to provide an independent power supply to the met mast and associated equipment.

- Meteorological instruments mounted on booms extending from the met mast. The equipment installed onto the mast will include wind vanes, atmospheric temperature and pressure monitors, wind speed gauges and data loggers. These will collect data in relation to wind speed and shear at varying heights, the prevailing wind direction and average annual temperature. Data is sent via the datalogger with bespoke designed communications and power supply systems (SIM) meaning that data is gathered remotely. The data collected will enable Cubico to refine its energy yield estimates and, as noted above, will assist in securing funding for the Scout Moor II wind farm from the selected turbine supplier, as well as supporting the construction and future operation of the wind farm.
- A lightening protection rod would also be attached to the top of the met mast.
- Ground-mounted photovoltaic modules spread across an area of 13.5m², which will be used to charge the batteries of the monitoring equipment.
- Stock fencing installed around each of the six ground anchoring positions, comprising 1m high wooden fence posts, placed at 3m intervals and installed to a maximum depth of 1m. The posts would be infilled with wire mesh fencing. Each anchoring position would include a 216m² fenced area.
- Heras security fencing installed around an area of 1,592.5m² at the base of the proposed met mast. This would comprise 3.2m high spiked wooden posts, installed to a maximum depth of 1.2m, infilled with 2m high, 3.5m long heras fence panels.

The proposed met mast would be erected for a maximum period of up to 36 months.

5. POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 2	Achieving sustainable development
Section 4	Decision-making
Section 6	Building a Strong Competitive Economy
Section 14	Meeting the Challenge of Climate change, flooding and coastal change
Section 15	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
Section 16	Conserving and Enhancing the historic environment

Development Plan

Local Plan Policies

SS: Spatial Strategy
SD2: Urban Boundary and Green Belt
ENV2: Historic Environment
ENV3: Landscape Character and Quality
ENV4: Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Ecological Networks
ENV5: Green Infrastructure networks
ENV6: Environmental Protection
ENV7: Wind Turbines
ENV9: Surface Water Run-Off, Flood Risk, Sustainable Drainage and Water Quality
TR3: Road Schemes and Development Access

Other material considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance
National Design Guide
RBC Climate Change SPD

6. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Consultee	Summary of response
LCC Highways	No objection
Rochdale MBC Highways	Objected initially. Following receipt of additional information Comments are: As long as the condition survey can be conditioned and we have a route to see remedial works undertaken on Rooley Moor Road I am happy we can protect the road surface.
GMEU - Ecology	I have no overall objections to the above application on Ecology grounds, but I would advise – <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In order to ensure the safety of passing bird species, bird line markers should be installed along the guy lines of the met mast to prevent bird collisions.• If construction commences within the nesting season (March to August; inclusive), an ecological walkover of the site should be completed prior to commencement by an experienced ornithologist in order to check for any signs of nesting birds within the site area, and within a suitable buffer zone of the mast location.• In order to protect peat and associated habitats, the good practice construction measures proposed in section 6 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal provided to inform the planning application (Atmos Feb 2025) should be required to be implemented in full
Manchester Airport Safeguarding	No objection
Natural England	General Advice Provided

7. REPRESENTATIONS

To accord with the General Development Procedure Order a site notice was posted close to the site on 26.02.2025.

Representations have been received from Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum, the Norden, Bamford & Heywood Bridleway Association, Rossendale Civic Trust and 10 members of the public all objecting to the development for the following reasons in summary:

Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum

Regarding access routes, given the impact of the proposal on Catley Lane Head conservation area and on the Cotton Famine Road and the bridleway national trail, we ask that alternatives be considered.

In the application documents Cubico state they have all the appropriate permissions required to use mechanically propelled vehicles on the moor. The RMNF trustees are concerned this might not be the case.

This application also includes a loading area at grid reference SD 86949 16086 opposite the RMR / Knacks Lane junction for the transhipment of building materials. The location of this loading area is shown to be on land noted on the Rural Land Register Map as plot 9404, which is not common land but is in green belt and next to a section of RMR that is in the Catley Lane Head conservation area, which is in the borough of Rochdale. Presumably, any engineering works required to create this loading area will need planning permission from the Rochdale LPA.

The RMNF trustees consider it to be totally unacceptable to access the proposed loading area through Catley Lane Head village and conservation area and suggest Rochdale Councils Conservation Officer should be consulted.

The applicant appears to have not mentioned the Rossendale Commemorative Boundary Stone that sits adjacent to where the proposed mast would be installed. We ask that the applicant is required to demonstrate how that will be protected if permission is granted.

Having reviewed the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, we suggest there should be no development activity during the bird nesting season, typically from early spring and through the summer months, especially given the proposed temporary structure would be placed in a priority area for Curlew. Nor should there be any activity during the lambing season. We also conclude the best way to protect degraded peat, and blanket bog is not to disturb it by digging it up to implant railway sleepers.

Further comments following reconsultation are as follows:

The CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT V8 has not been updated to reflect the changed location for the proposed loading area detailed in FIGURE 5 - SCOUT MOOR - TRANSPORT ACCESS TO THE SITE - V2B-MH (please see the attached Loading Area - Update), nor has any consideration been given to assessment of other routes to the construction site from Cowpe or Royds Road.

The RMNF trustees object in the strongest terms to the proposed illegal use by mechanically propelled vehicles on a national trail bridleway that is on common land, in green belt. We also object in the strongest terms to the Catley Lane Head Conservation Area being used to access the bridleway.

Rossendale Civic Trust

Rooley Moor is a very sensitive site in historical and natural contexts and its importance is very much underestimated in both. The development would be damaging to Rooley Moor Road. Both Rooley Moor Road and stone sett sections are included on draft Non-designated heritage assets list.

Therefore, we would urge Rossendale Council NOT to open up or encourage damaging access to this sensitive site, precariously located between heavily populated areas, and give recognition to the possible, or probable, consequences of not giving due respect to our environment.

Further representations have been received as follows:

The mast is to be constructed in RBC planning area but developer wants to access via green belt, conservation area and utilising a non-designated heritage asset (Cotton Famine Road)

Loading/unloading area is in close proximity to the junction of Rooley Moor Road and Knacks Lane. This is Green Belt, within a Conservation Area and it's construction involves engineering works. The loading/unloading area requires separate Planning approval of it's own.

No comments received from Rochdale Council's Conservation Officer.
A meteorological mast is an industrial installation, designed to support a future major engineering. Not construed as a normal installation in an agricultural setting.

Access is via Rooley Moor Road and Cotton Famine Road. For much of its length, this route is not part of the Adopted Highway Network and is a Bridleway intended for pedestrian and equine access, with occasional use by agricultural vehicles appropriate to the landscape and terrain. Cotton Famine Road is a non-designated heritage asset and should be treated with the appropriate care and respect.

The Method Statement makes clear their intention to use a 10tonne tracked dumper and an 8tonne tracked excavator. These are not usual agricultural machines for use in this environment (most of the farmers and graziers use quads for their businesses) Access by these machines to the moors should not be allowed.

At the top of Rooley Moor Road there is clear signage which indicates that the route is subject to both a Section 59 Warning and a PSPO prohibiting inappropriate access. Local residents have been actively supported GMP, in their enforcement activities for nearly a decade. Against this background, Cubico have failed to provide details of any specific legal advice they have received in relation to access.

The submitted documentation does not feature an examination of alternative options for access.

No work of any sort should be allowed during bird nesting and lambing seasons.

The set down area for equipment is at Catley Lane head at the bottom of the Cotton Famine Road. Intention is to use the Cotton Famine Road to move machinery and equipment to the site. No scoping assessment as to whether this is the only route to access the site. Strongly object to using this route as it is part of the National Trail, The Mary Towneley Loop which is used on a regular basis by horses from both the local area and from around the Country.

Road is a narrow single track road with huge ditches at both side and no passing places for miles. Should a horse encounter large machinery there is a great likelihood that it would go into flight mode and try and leave the route with catastrophic consequences to both Horse and Rider. This is our main objection.

The route is also though of great historic interest and is good for the economy of the area with visitors coming specifically to view this historical feat. The Road was never intended for modern day heavy machinery and hence using it in this way would have major irreversible detrimental impact on the road.

Aesthetics - This will radically change the open moorland and views and amenity across key heritage assets such as the Cotton Famine Road, Waugh's Well, Prickshaw and Catley Lane Head.

Potential irreparable damage to the Cotton Famine Road. This road is of important historical significance to our town, even though it is still to be officially identified as a heritage site.

Catley Lane Head is the proposed access to the wind farm which is within a conservation area. It cannot withstand the heavy traffic

The application makes no mention of any allowance/reference regarding horses or ponies, sheep or cattle, or the priority area for Curlew and redshank birds.

The mast would contribute significantly to the industrialisation of the landscape which is a unique green space for Rossendale and Rochdale. This mast would damage the views and amenity from many important viewpoints, such as Waugh's Well, Catley Lane Head, the Prickshaw Conservation Area and the Cotton Famine Road

If it is the case that the mast is ONLY required for securing third-party funding and not a mandatory requirement for securing planning, then this application should be rejected outright since the benefit is all to Cubico and the damage to the environment will be "ours".

Unfortunately the mast would probably remain after 3 years if the wind farm proposal goes ahead and if it doesn't go ahead what would be the commitment to decommission - Dulas method statement - When the mast is being decommissioned it will be carefully lowered and dismantled in sections. The foundation of the mast including the anchors will be removed if safe to do so and the area will be backfilled and compacted restoring the sites original grade.

The site is not just open moorland, it is on the highest point of Rooley Moor - Top of Leach at 474 M and adjacent to and only a few metres from, the Pennine Bridleway

All material planning considerations from the comments received have been taken into account in the determination of this application.

8. ASSESSMENT

The main considerations in this case are as follows:

- 1) Principle;
- 2) Visual Amenity/Landscape Impact /Heritage Impact;
- 3) Residential Amenity;
- 4) Access, Parking and Highway Safety and Public Rights of Way
- 5) Ecology

Principle

The application site is located within an isolated and exposed area of Countryside, the essentially open and rural character of which should be protected. However, the NPPF

and Development Plan policies are supportive of development of renewable energy resources.

The proposed development is not particularly appropriate to a rural area. However, it is intended for a temporary period and suitable re-instatement of the land is proposed following completion of the development's function.

Having regard to all of the above, the development is considered to be acceptable in principle.

Visual Amenity / Layout and Design / Heritage Impact

Paragraph 135 of the Framework states that planning decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁶; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*

In relation to the historic environment Section 16 of the Framework states *local planning authorities should take account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.*

Paragraph 210 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that *when determining applications affecting heritage assets local planning authorities should take account of:-*

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of those assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

Policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Rossendale Local Plan state that all proposals for new development in the Borough will be expected to take into account safeguarding and enhancing the built and historic environment.

Whilst the mast will have an industrial character, and will be visible from a wide area, it is a temporary installation that will aid the future provision of renewable energy. The mast, whilst not a particularly attractive structure, will not have a significant long-term negative impact on the character of the landscape.

In view of the above, it is considered that in terms of visual amenity and temporary impact on landscape character, the proposed development is in accordance with Policies ENV1, and ENV3 of the Rossendale Local Plan.

With regard to any impact on the historic environment, the development utilises Rooley Moor Road to access the site. This is a non-designated heritage (NDHA)

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF states *“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.”*

Access to the site is through Catley Head Conservation Area.

In terms of the impact on NDHA and the Conservation Area, it is unlikely that the development will impact materially on the significance of these assets due to the short length of time the road will be in use and the temporary nature of the mast. The Highways section of this report discusses any possible damage to Rooley Moor Road

As such, the scheme is in accordance with Section 16 of the Framework and Policy ENV1 and ENV2 of the Rossendale Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

The Framework advises that Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

“Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience”

Policy ENV1 of the Local Plan states that all proposals should take account of the following:

- “c) *Being sympathetic to surrounding land uses and occupiers and avoiding demonstrable harm to the amenities of the area*
- d) *The scheme will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on neighbouring development by virtue of it being overbearing or oppressive, overlooking or resulting in an unacceptable loss of light:- nor should it be adversely affected by neighbouring uses and vice versa.”*

The closest dwelling is 1.3km from the site. The proposed development will not impact on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers and is in accordance with Policy ENV1 and the Framework.

Access, Parking and Highway Safety and Public Rights of Way

Access to the site is from Rochdale, through Catley Head Conservation Area, utilising Rooley Moor Road.

Rochdale MBC Highways have been consulted and whilst initially objecting in relation to the use of Rooley Moor Road, following amendments to the construction method statement are now satisfied with the development subject to a condition in relation to a condition survey of Rooley Moor Road being carried out to ensure that there is a process in place for remedial works to be undertaken on Rooley Moor Road if required following the development.

LCC Highways have no objection to the proposed development.

RMNF have objected to the use of Rooley Moor Road for a number of reasons some of which are not planning-related.

However, the Construction Method statement V8 has provided an assessment of why other routes to the site have been discounted and confirmed that there are no works required to the loading area.

Subject to the recommended condition, the proposed development is acceptable in terms of access parking and highways safety.

Ecology, Trees and Biodiversity Net Gain

Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan advises that:

“The Council will expect development proposals to conserve and, where possible, enhance the natural and built environment, its immediate and wider environment, and take opportunities for improving the distinctive qualities of the area and the way it functions.”

“Policy ENV4 Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Ecological Networks states:

“Development proposals that have potential to affect a national or locally-designated site, as shown on the Policies Map and its immediate environs, or on protected habitats or species, will be expected to be accompanied by relevant surveys and assessments detailing likely impacts. A sequential approach should be followed to avoid harm and where possible enhance biodiversity, and where not possible, provide appropriate mitigation and, as a last resort, on and off-site compensatory measures to offset the impact of development”.

All development proposals should seek to protect and enhance biodiversity, and will be requested to quantify any net gains”.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been submitted alongside the application. Comments from the Council’s Ecology consultant (GMEU) are as follows:

I have no overall objections to the above application on Ecology grounds, but I would advise –

- In order to ensure the safety of passing bird species, bird line markers should be installed along the guy lines of the met mast to prevent bird collisions.*
- If construction commences within the nesting season (March to August; inclusive), an ecological walkover of the site should be completed prior to commencement by an experienced ornithologist in order to check for any signs of nesting birds within the site area, and within a suitable buffer zone of the mast location.*
- In order to protect peat and associated habitats, the good practice construction measures proposed in section 6 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal provided to inform the planning application (Atmos Feb 2025) should be required to be implemented in full*

Reasons – conservation of protected species and notable habitats

Subject to conditions relating to the measures detailed above, the proposal is acceptable in terms of ecology and biodiversity and in accordance with Policies ENV3 and ENV4 of the Rossendale Local Plan.

9. CONCLUSION

In light of the potential benefits to renewable energy generation facilitated by this development, and because the met mast is not likely to result in any long-term harm to the amenities of occupiers of any buildings, the landscape as viewed from the site or its surroundings, ecology, heritage assets, the safety of users of public rights of way, or aviation, it is considered that the proposals are acceptable.

Subject to appropriate conditions the proposed development is acceptable and in accordance with the Rossendale Local Plan and the Framework.

10. CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the application form received 25.02.2025 and the following:

Figure 1 - Scout Moor - Site Location - V1C received 25.02.2025
Figure 2 - Scout Moor - Layout Plan - V1D received 25.02.2025
Figure 3 - Scout Moor - Indicative Mast Elevation - V2A received 25.02.2025
Figure 4 – Scout Moor - Mast Plan View - V1A received 25.02.2025
Figure 5 - Scout Moor - Transport Access to the Site - V2b received 04.04.2025
Figure 6 - Scout Moor - Heras Security Fence - V1C received 25.02.2025
Figure 7 - Scout Moor - Stock Fence - V1B received 25.02.2025
Figure 8 - Scout Moor - Welfare Unit - V1B received 25.02.2025
Construction Method Statement_V8 received 14.03.2025
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Atmos Consulting February 2025) received 25.02.2025.
Planning Statement received 25.02.2025

Reason: To define the permissions and in the interests of the proper development of the site.

3. Construction works and decommissioning works shall not take place outside the following hours:
Monday to Friday 08:00 to 18:00
Saturday 08:00 to 13:00
Construction works shall not take place on Sundays, or Bank / Public Holidays.
Access and egress for delivery vehicles shall be restricted to the working hours indicated above.

Reason- to ensure that site working only takes place during normal working hours in order to restrict the times during which any disturbance and nuisance may arise.

4. The Local Planning Authority shall be notified of the date on which erection of the met mast hereby permitted is completed, within 28 days of this event. The met mast shall be removed from the site and the land reinstated to its former condition no later than 3 years from the date its erection is completed.

Reason: To protect the essentially open and rural character of the Countryside.

5. Vegetation clearance works, site preparation, vehicle movements associated with the development, development work or other works that may affect ground nesting birds shall not be carried out between March and August inclusive, unless the absence of nesting birds has been first confirmed by further survey or inspections by a qualified ecologist.

Reason: In the interests of ecology/biodiversity.

6. Any excavations required in connection with the met mast hereby permitted shall not be left open overnight.

Reason: In the interests of ecology/biodiversity and public safety.

7. The construction and decommissioning of the equipment shall be carried out in full accordance with Section 6 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Atmos February 2025).

Reason: In the interests of ecology/biodiversity.

8. A pre-commencement photographic condition survey of the proposed construction traffic access route along Rooley Moor Road shall be completed and submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of development for the section of Rooley Moor Road to be used by any construction traffic.

Upon substantial completion of the development, a further post-development photographic condition survey of the same section of highway shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its approval, along with a scope of highway remedial works and timetable for rectifying any damage caused during the construction period.

Any damage shall then be repaired in conjunction with the Highway Authority in accordance with the approved scope of highway remedial works and timetable.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and protection of a non-designated heritage asset

11. INFORMATIVES

1. The proposal complies with the development plan and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It therefore comprises sustainable development and the Local Planning Authority worked proactively and positively to issue the decision without delay. The Local Planning Authority has therefore implemented the requirement in Paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The grant of planning permission does not entitle a developer to obstruct a right of way and any proposed stopping-up or diversion of a right of way should be the subject of an Order under the appropriate Act. The applicant should be advised to contact Lancashire County Council's Public Rights of Way section by email on PROW@lancashire.gov.uk, quoting the location, district and planning application number, to discuss their proposal before any development works begin.

Prepared by:



Client: Cubico Invest

Project: Scout Moor

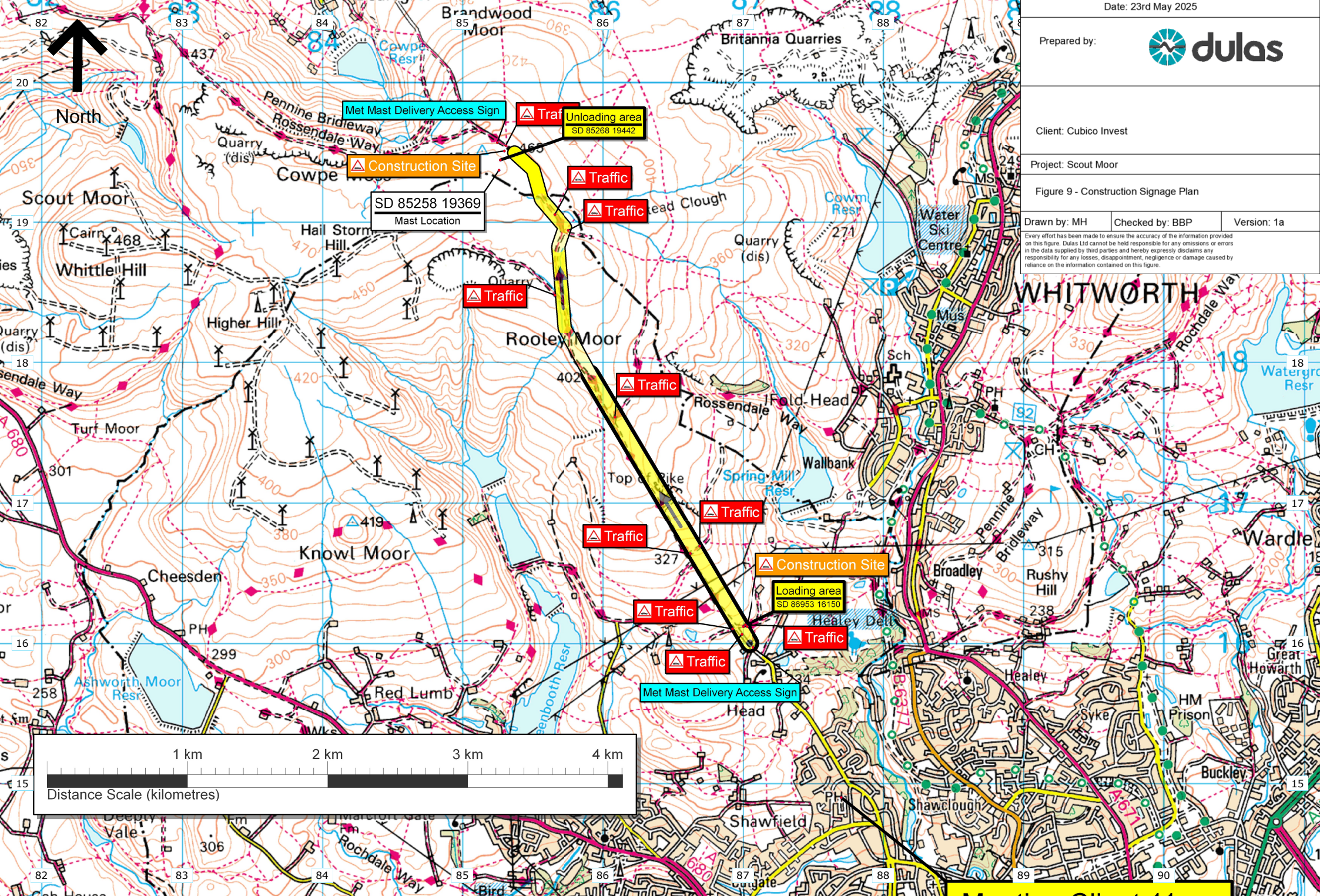
Figure 9 - Construction Signage Plan

Drawn by: MH

Checked by: BBP

Version: 1a

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided on this figure. Dulas Ltd cannot be held responsible for any omissions or errors in the data supplied by third parties and hereby expressly disclaims any responsibility for any losses, disappointment, negligence or damage caused by reliance on the information contained on this figure.



Met Mast Installation Signage

The following free-standing signage is proposed to be utilised and will be located identified in the Signage Location Plan (drawing ref. Figure 9 Version 1a):



600mm x 450mm



600mm x 450mm



600mm x 450mm

The following signage will be affixed to a c.1.8m static wooden post, with an overall height above ground of c.1.5m (c.30cm within the ground) and will be located adjacent to the Met Mast Installation Site as identified in the Signage Location Plan (drawing ref. Figure 9 Version 1a).



In an emergency
contact
01654 705000

Site Safety

	DANGER Construction work
	No unauthorised entry
	All visitors must report to site supervisor
	High viz vests must be worn at all times
	Safety helmets must be worn at all times
	Foot protection must be worn at all times

600mm x 400mm



dulas
Inspiring renewable energy

In an emergency
contact
01654 705000



Danger

**Risk of injury or death
if mast is tampered with**



Danger

**Keep clear during
electrical storms**



**Authorised persons
only beyond this point**

450mm x 300mm