

02 May 2023

Development Management,
Regulatory Services,
Scottish Borders Council,
Council Headquarters,
Newtown St Boswells,
Melrose,
TD6 0SA.

Our Ref: 405.064770.00001

Dear Sir / Madam,

**RE: PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF A TEMPORARY GUYED LATTICE METEOROLOGICAL MAST OF UP TO 121 M IN HEIGHT ON OPEN MOORLAND WITHIN OLIVER FOREST, TWEEDSMUIR, SCOTTISH BORDERS, WITH REQUEST FOR MICRO-SITING OF UP TO 10 M.
E-PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE 100619130**

Introduction

A planning application is submitted to Scottish Borders Council for the erection of a temporary meteorological mast (met mast) at NGR 308238, 624566. Figures 1a, b and c (enclosed) show the location of the proposed mast. Additionally, Figure 2 shows the proposed layout of the met mast and guy wires. Positioning of the met mast and guy wires have been considered to avoid watercourses, deep peat and forestry; and would not require removal of any trees for installation¹.

The application is made by SLR Consulting Ltd on behalf of Oliver Forest Wind Farm Limited.

The met mast would have a height of up to 121 m and would consist of a guyed lattice design as set out on Figure 3. The mast would be supported by anchored guy wires, fitted with bird deflectors to minimise potential collision risk to birds. The met mast would be equipped with instrumentation capable of measuring wind conditions on Site, including speed, direction, pressure and temperature. The anemometers at the top of the mast would be positioned at a maximum height of 120 m with lightning finial rods extending above this for lightning protection up to a maximum overall height of 121 m.

¹ It should be noted that the OS base mapping used on Figures 1b, 1d and 2 does not depict an accurate on the ground forestry edge to the south of the proposed met mast. Figure 1c shows the aerial imagery of the forest edge and location of the proposed guy wires in accordance with this forestry. No part of the proposed development would be located any closer to the existing tree line than shown and no trees would need to be removed for the installation or operation of the mast.

Access to the mast would be made using existing forestry access tracks on the Site.

Temporary planning permission is sought for a period of up to five years. Once sufficient wind and weather data has been gathered, the met mast will be decommissioned and removed from the Site.

Site

The proposed met mast would be located on open moorland ground approximately 1.4 km west of the junction of the A701 and a minor road leading to the Talla Reservoir at the village of Tweedsmuir. The location of the Site is shown on the enclosed Site Location Plans Figures 1a, b and c. A photograph of the proposed Site location and surrounding area is also provided below (Photograph 1). To provide some flexibility when erecting the mast, as ground conditions can be unpredictable, a micro-siting allowance of up to 10 m is requested and has been allowed for within the application Site red line boundary. It should be noted that installation of the met mast and guy wires would not require the removal of any trees.

The application Site extends to approximately 0.45 ha and comprises open moorland. Access to the Site is available using the existing forestry access tracks. Minimal ground works would be required for erection; anchor points would be excavated for guy wires to be secured into. Once the mast has been decommissioned and removed, the ground would be reinstated leaving minimal trace of the structure.

Photograph 1: Proposed Site Location



Environmental Considerations

Careful attention has been given to the location of the proposed met mast to minimise potential environmental effects. An onsite survey has been undertaken by the proposed mast installer and the location of the proposed met mast base and anchor points has been chosen to avoid forestry and small streams and gullies that cross the Site. The Site location is relatively flat and located a suitable distance away from the trees.

Habitat surveys undertaken on the Site have identified the location of the proposed met mast and guy wires to be on E1.6.1 blanket bog. Based on initial peat surveys undertaken on the Site, peat depths at the location of the proposed met mast and guy wire anchor points are less than 0.5 m which is considered to be shallow and suitable for the mast to be erected.

Glenmuck Bog (a Local Biodiversity Site) sits approximately 450 m to the south west of the proposed met mast base location and would therefore not be affected.

Protected species surveys undertaken at the Site have not identified any signs of activity of protected species within 500 m of the proposed met mast location.

As identified above, the mast would be fitted with bird deflectors to make the guy wires more visible to birds. The diverters would be added to the guy wires at 5 m interval spacing on outside wires and 5 m interval spacing on inner wires up to 20 m only. The diverters will be fixed prior to mast erection and maintained throughout the lifetime of the development.

Planning Application

This planning application comprises the following documents which have been submitted via the ePlanning.Scot portal:

- Planning Application Form (including completed notice to owners certificate);
- Site Location Overview at 1:250,000 (Figure 1a);
- Site Location and Land Ownership Boundary at 1:25,000 (Figure 1b);
- Site Location at 1:2,500 on aerial photography (Figure 1c);
- Site Layout Plan at 1:750 (Figure 2)²; and
- Typical Elevation Plan (Figure 3).

The Site area is 0.45 ha. Using the e-Planning fee calculator, it has been calculated that the application fee is £2,500. A payment for £2,580 has been made to Scottish Borders Council which covers the requisite application fee and £80 advertisement fee.

² The proposed met mast layout could not be fully depicted on a figure with a scale of 1:500. This figure has been produced at a scale of 1:750 for this reason and this matter has been discussed with Craig Miller via telephone on 20 April 2023. It has been confirmed by Craig Miller that this scale would be suitable for submission.

I trust that the information submitted via the ePlanning Portal and in this cover letter are sufficient to allow validation of this planning application. I look forward to receiving confirmation of this matter in due course.

Yours sincerely
SLR Consulting Limited

Lorraine Doherty

Lorraine Doherty
Senior Consultant – Environmental & Social Impact Assessment