

## Rob Meetham Proof of Evidence Summary

- 1.1 This Proof of Evidence has been prepared by Rob Meetham CMLI. I am a landscape architect and a chartered member of the Landscape Institute (LI). I graduated with a MLA from Newcastle University in 1997 and became Chartered in 2002.
- 1.2 This statement deals with the Authority's landscape response to the ground (a) appeal that *'planning permission should be granted permanently or in the alternative temporarily for the development described in the Notice'*.
- 1.3 In this summary, I set out how, in my opinion, the development is still, almost 6 years after installation:
  - a prominent and incongruous feature in the landscape;
  - adversely affects landscape character, natural beauty and the setting of the sensitive and valuable landscape of the moors; and
  - does not comply with national and local planning policy and guidance as they refer to landscape.
- 1.4 Policies relevant to this Proof are contained in the NPPF (primarily paras 127, 170 and 172), the Peak District National Park Authorities Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Landscape Strategy.
- 1.5 I contend that, while some areas of the plastic mesh track have naturalised and some restoration of previously degraded areas (as a result of damage caused by previous vehicle use) has taken place – the appeal development (when taken as a whole):
  - demonstrates limited vegetation establishment on the mesh (even after almost 6 years) and where vegetation has established, this is dominated by grass. This conflicts with the surrounding heather, bracken and rush.
  - demonstrates clear and obvious harm to landscape character (in terms of conflict with a *'quality of wilderness'*, *'few obvious signs of human influence'* and *'natural beauty'*).
  - demonstrates clear conflict with Landscape Policy (as defined in the NPPF, the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and the Landscape Strategy).

- 1.6 The development demonstrates clear – but relatively localised – adverse visual effects as a result of the man-made nature of the mesh and its lack of accommodation (by appropriate vegetation establishment) into the landscape.
- 1.7 As the track has been installed for almost 6 years, I contend that it is unlikely to establish and naturalise further to any significant extent in the future. The adverse landscape and visual effects of the appeal scheme will not therefore significantly reduce in the future.
- 1.8 I therefore respectfully request that the appeal is dismissed and the refusal of planning permission is confirmed.