WIND FARMS AND VEHICULAR ACCESS

Guidance for Developers

Who we are

The Green Lane Association is a not-for-profit national membership organisation representing over 30,000 individual and affiliated members. We are dedicated to preserving the country's ancient unsealed public roads and vehicular rights of way, and we advocate for the lawful and responsible use of them. We work to promote inclusive countryside access for all, including those who are underrepresented, disadvantaged, less mobile or disabled.

Wind farm developments and vehicular rights of way

Large-scale wind farms often interact with public rights of way, including those which carry vehicular rights such as Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs), Unclassified County Roads (UCRs) and Restricted Byways (RBs).

These types of routes form a scarce but important part of the green lane network. Out of the 90,700 miles of public rights of way, only 2,300 miles are available to vehicle users – that's less than 2.5% of the network. Yet these historic roads provide essential access to the countryside for a wide range of users, including those who face daily barriers due to disability or limited mobility, and where a vehicle is their only means of reaching such areas.

These guidelines have been produced to assist wind farm developers at the preliminary planning stages and beyond, to ensure the placement of turbines and related infrastructure is designed with all users of these ancient rights of way in mind.

Please note that this document covers general guidance only. Please get in touch to discuss individual developments where we can advise more specifically: **consult@glass-uk.org**

General guidance notes

Key considerations	
Minimising route disruptions	▪ Please minimise disruptions to vehicular routes during the construction process to enable users to continue to enjoy their legal rights of way. ▪ Responsible users travel along such routes to experience the local landscape and enjoy its history as well as for solitude, socialising and general wellbeing. ▪ BOATs, UCRs and RBs form important countryside access routes for our members and other users, as well as provide connectivity to the wider green lane network.
Preserving route heritage	▪ Most BOATs, UCRs and RBs have been around for many decades if not centuries. They are part of our living heritage. It's therefore imperative that these ancient routes are preserved for current and future generations to enjoy. ▪ These historic highways not only provide recreational enjoyment for many, but also provide vital access for users with mobility and/or mental health issues, as well as those where age, chronic health and sensory sensitivities are a factor. ▪ Preserving these routes promotes inclusivity and a more equal participation in outdoor life for those who may otherwise find such places inaccessible.
Preserving route character	▪ Users of the green lane network are drawn to such roads because of their distinctive nature and unique physical features. ▪ Each BOAT, UCR and RB therefore must be carefully considered when undertaking any road improvements, to avoid altering a route's innate character.

Turbine placement and access	
Distance from Right of Way	▪ To avoid disturbance or conflict with users of BOATs, UCRs and RBs, the Association recommends a minimum separation/topple distance of the turbine height (base to blade tip height) plus 10% from the nearest edge of any routes with vehicular rights. ▪ This will also help minimise any over-sail and potential ice-throw issues.
Site construction access	▪ Access for construction purposes should avoid existing BOATs, UCRs and RBs unless the route is already suitable for construction traffic. ▪ Most routes will not be of a sufficient standard to take the weight and volume of construction traffic. ▪ Upgrading existing vehicular rights of way to accommodate construction traffic will destroy the innate nature of green roads which are already scarce – only 2.5% of rights of way available can be used by vehicles. ▪ Alternative routes for construction traffic should be sought wherever possible. ▪ As an absolute minimum, routes should be available to use outside of normal working hours ie: at the weekends and outside of 8am-6pm on weekdays.
Keep all interested parties informed	▪ Ensure that the local authority's Highways and Rights of Way Officers are kept up to date with latest plans and any potential effect on vehicular rights of way. ▪ Ensure the Green Lane Association and other interested parties are kept informed of consultations, plan updates and decisions. To contact the Green Lane Association on these matters, please email us at **consult@glass-uk.org**

Mitigation	
Route improvements	▪ If no alternative arrangements other than using existing BOATs, UCRs or RBs can be made for construction access, attention to the route's surface must be considered. ▪ A balance must be achieved between the historic character of a road and the type of traffic that will be using it for the duration of the project. ▪ Making a route 'too smooth' could result in an increase in anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping or speeding. ▪ Articulation humps or rough surfaces, particularly at each end of a vehicular right of way, will help to deter those who wish to use these routes illegally.
Temporary route diversions	▪ During site construction, temporary diversions of BOAT, UCRs and/or RBs may be necessary. ▪ If so, suitable alternatives should be sought to enable continued vehicular access for the full duration of the construction period.
Permanent route diversions	▪ Where routes need to be diverted an equivalent replacement must be given for the duration of the project, ie: the route should be the same length or longer and be of equal interest. ▪ Road surfaces must be robust enough to sustain legally allowed traffic. Materials used will be dependent on the location and geometry of the chosen route. ▪ Proper drainage must be installed to minimise water erosion and future maintenance costs. ▪ A commitment to the future maintenance of any new route needs to be agreed with the local authority and/or landowner for the duration of the project.

Please note, this is general guidance only. To discuss individual developments where we can advise more specifically, please contact: **consult@glass-uk.org**

What we can help Developers with

We have over 30 years' experience and expertise in preserving green lanes and can advise on many areas regarding vehicular rights of way, including but not limited to:

- Appropriate surface materials
- Temporary and permanent diversion routes
- Mitigation strategies
- Drainage options
- Maintenance requirements
- The impact of routes on vehicular users

For further information

Please visit: **glass-uk.org**