

The Planning Inspectorate

COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)

Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable. This can be found in the notification letter sent by the local planning authority or the start date letter. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender.

Appeal Reference: APP/P2935/W/20/3244389

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference

Appeal By

Site Address

SENDER DETAILS

Name

Address

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- Appellant
- Agent
- Interested Party / Person
- Land Owner
- Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- Final Comments
- Proof of Evidence
- Statement
- Statement of Common Ground
- Interested Party/Person Correspondence
- Other

YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

Objection to planning application APP/P2935/W/20/3244389

I am a Hexham resident, and artist. My work is based on and inspired by the Northumberland landscape, its flowers and wild plants, its wildlife and birds including The Wild Wannies. I make frequent forays into this wild landscape to sketch and take photographs that form the starting point of my work. It is my livelihood.

As an artist I have no objections to the concept of public art - such schemes simply need to be the right piece in the right place with the support of the local community. The 'Ascendant' proposal cannot claim to be any of these things.

Nor do I believe that this proposed development has anything to do with honouring Her Majesty The Queen.

My main concerns regarding the proposed sculpture are based on mainly environmental concerns:

1. The scale - wholly inappropriate given the proposed site, in the middle of an open, tranquil wilderness where it will be seen for many miles around. Perhaps this is precisely the point as far as Lord Devenport is concerned but that perhaps puts it in the category of vanity project rather than anything connected with honouring the Queen.

2. We are in the middle of a climate emergency and as such Northumberland County Council declared a climate crisis last June.

In this respect the carbon footprint of this project is extremely relevant. This project will require a not insignificant amount of concrete to hold the blade erect.

In order to lay this concrete, hundreds of tons of rock will have to be removed by blasting and the use of heavy duty vehicles coming in and out of the site.

This will not only desecrate the area, it will also disturb everything wild that lives within the Wannies landscape.

Once erected, if visitor numbers do increase, the desecration and disturbance will continue with increased traffic along a minor single track road, litter and damage and disturbance to a beautiful wild and tranquil place.

By way of example, I am reliably informed by someone from the Northumberland Wildlife Trust of the current impact of diesel and petrol vehicles on even in the wildest most rural parts of Northumberland on some of the rare orchids and wild flowers that once grew in abundance. Some of these plants are now seriously endangered from the tiny quantities of nitric oxide in the air. The Wannies no doubt has its own share of such plants which, if there is increased levels of traffic to this wild and remote spot may well cease to exist.

Having declared a climate emergency, The Planning Inspectorate is not only morally but now legally obliged to observe such climate change provisions.

Finally, there is a significant difference between erecting the wind turbines that currently exist on Lord Devenport's land and this proposed piece of public art.

The wind turbines at least perform a practical purpose in providing electric power to our homes and help reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.

They are not permanent and will be removed after 25 years.

They do not set any precedent for other tall structures.

The 'Ascendant' on the other hand would be a permanent structure - once erected it would not or could not be removed.

The 'Keep the Wannies Wild' Facebook group, of which I am a member, has just short of 2000 members from all walks of life, some local, some of us from different parts of Northumberland, some from further afield. I have joined the group because I am one of the many for whom the wildness of the Wannies is what make it such a special place for us all. What unites us is our shared opposition to this development - very few people support it.