



## **CORE DOCUMENT K.6.2**

Planning appeal Ref: APP/P2935/W/20/3244389

Cold Law, Stiddlehill Common, near Ridsdale, Ray Estate, Northumberland

Construction of a publicly accessible landmark, commissioned to  
commemorate Queen Elizabeth II and the Commonwealth

**Summary Proof of Emma Anderson BA (Hons)  
on behalf of 'Keep the Wannies Wild' (KTWW)**

February 2021

1. I attended both committee meetings and spoke on 2 July when councillors resolved to refuse planning permission. They had made a site visit, asked many questions and had a reasoned discussion. I consider that their decision was soundly based in line with their democratic duties.
2. I compiled the *Miscellany* which demonstrates that The Wanney area is culturally iconic and highly valued by those who live there or visit for recreation. Their recreation includes walking, rock climbing and observing nature, together with creative pursuits such as photography, art and writing. The climber, Martin Bewick, tells us that "*the sense of remoteness...is an integral part of the Wannies experience.*" Mary Ann Rogers talks of "*the wildlife and landscape painting so closely connected to this part of Northumberland [being] what interests [her] visitors*". As Kathleen Partridge demonstrates in her poem 'Smiling Along', recreational and creative pursuits contribute to their participants' physical and emotional well-being: "*worries are lost*" and "*a sense of well-being returns*". David Baines recalls "*the peace over the Wannies while watching the birds*" while Guy Thouret's breath is taken away by the panorama that unfolds before him as he drives home across the Wannies. Jane Daghish is, quite simply, "*amazed*" by views of the Border hills and the "*lovely wild countryside all around*". The Wannies is a sensitive landscape, such that this human-made intrusion would be highly damaging. For this reason, members of KTWW regard the Wannies as "*a special place worthy of our protection*".
3. The damage done to Cold Law itself would be devastating. Those living in and visiting the wider area would always regard 'Ascendant' as a metaphorical slap in the face and would never come to love it. The construction activities would be invasive and disruptive and go on for, perhaps, a year. The introduction of alien species, such as concrete and steel, into this sensitive landscape would be unsustainable. So too would the inevitable increase in pollution and noise created by greater numbers of car-borne visitors. But it is the violent mutilation of Cold Law itself, tearing it apart and piercing its heart in the name of art, which would cause the most significant distress to local people and those who seek recreation in the Wannies in this shared landscape.
4. The final, visual impact of 'Ascendant' would be colossal and overbearing from closer viewpoints that are popular with walkers, climbers and naturalists. The effect on landscape character and appearance would be severely damaging because of the structure's height, tilted form and industrial materials. It would affect users of the countryside for hours on end, not just via fleeting glimpses.

5. The *Miscellany* (Appendix 2) describes how writers and musicians have found inspiration in the Wannies for centuries. Today, local artists, photographers, writers and nature lovers continue to find inspiration in the beauty and wildlife of the same area, proving that the quality of being inspired by a unique location is timeless. Of course, those who love nature also live with the disappointment that, in all likelihood, hen harriers will never return to breed in the Wannies if 'Ascendant' is permitted. My experience as a life-long bird watcher, someone who, in the past, planned and led professional birdwatching holidays in Northumberland, leaves me with a deep understanding that these are the things that attract sustainable tourism. They should be encouraged, not deterred.
6. The proposal would damage the area's existing tourist businesses which rely on the beauty, tranquillity and remoteness of the landscape and its natural and cultural history.