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Vicki Nobles words at public inquiry

9 November 2021

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Good morning/afternoon Inspector

My name is Vicki Nobles. I am a resident of Dimmer in the parish of Castle Cary and a founder member of the local group Care4Cary, whose aim since 2009 is to help ensure the appropriate local development of the area in and around Castle Cary for the benefit and continued amenity of local residents and businesses.

I wish to cover two topics: local concern and the Monarch's Way.

It is clear from the number of attendees today that this proposed development is of considerable local concern. In fact, this is the tip of the iceberg. We have organised, with the support of Castle Cary Town Council, Ansford Parish Council and many local tradespeople, an offline petition. It respectfully requests that the Planning Inspector dismisses this appeal. The petition has been signed by 1,461 people who live in, visit, know and love Castle Cary and by users of our rural Railway Station. Madam, could you advise the best way I can share this petition with the inspectorate? Should I send by post to the Case Officer the completed forms or a hard copy pdf? Or would a soft copy pdf by email be preferred?

This concern expressed by the petitioners is driven by their objections to the needless loss of unspoilt rural landscape and anger at the unthinking threat to local heritage.

The footpath from Cary Station to Ansford abuts the proposed site and forms part of the Monarch's Way. I wish to address its importance as part of the journey King Charles II took after losing the battle of Worcester in 1651. The Lord of the Manor in Cary refused to take him in, so having hid in a ditch in Lower Ansford, King Charles II stayed the night in one of the oldest houses in the parish before leaving for Trent the next day.

Should this housing development be built, users of this footpath which links the station to Ansford will see 200 houses, estate roads, street lights and motor vehicles. The green field and the view will be gone, as will the romance of that part of the King's journey.

In our view the proposed 200 dwellings site represents an urban development insensitive to its rural setting. The developers' revision to insert a green strip between this development and the adjacent Monarch's Way does not resolve this whatsoever. It is a sop, offered late in the day.

Finally, may I suggest that in addition to the roads and footpaths near to the site you take the opportunity to visit Haddon Wood, located between Sutton and Alhampton and adjacent to the Monarch's Way. This wood is part of the Woodland Trust. It is popular with local dog walkers and from its hillside position above Bolter's Lane has wonderful panoramic views notably over the station and the site, onto Ansford. Due to its elevated position, there is far greater visibility of the site from Haddon Wood than the photograph supplied by the appellants from Bolter's Lane would suggest.

Madam, I wish to thank you for your consideration of these points.