

## Planning ContactCentre

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**From:**  
**Sent:** 28 November 2018 18:46  
**To:** Planning ContactCentre  
**Subject:** Planning Reference 2018/62/93591/W: Café/restaurant with bedrooms etc. Castle Hill, Almondbury

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Café/Restaurant with bedrooms etc. Castle Hill, Almondbury**

My objections to this development are as follows:

(1) The site is Green Belt: there were no special circumstances cited for a new building on Green Belt in the previous applications and there are none now.

(2) Castle Hill is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, an important and fragile site, part of our local and national heritage. This modernistic, mainly glass and metal, new build would be totally out of character on this ancient hill.

(3) A visitor centre on the hill is not necessary; the idea of housing “undercover exhibition and interpretation facilities” within this development is just a cynical ploy to get a new pub/restaurant/hotel built. Similar historical and archaeological sites provide unobtrusive information boards. Those on Castle Hill give an excellent overview of the history, archaeology, natural history and geology of the site. Regarding toilet facilities, these are usually non-existent at similar archaeological sites: the public would next expect to find such a convenience atop Glastonbury Tor or Maiden Castle, for example, but this does not put off the many thousands of visitors these similar sites attract.

(4) Access to the hill is very dangerous. The proposed traffic light scheme is “designed for none public highway use and for private roadways only”. Public road users will actually be massively inconvenienced at busy times due to queuing traffic if such a system is set up.

(5) The plans appear to exceed the original footprint of the pub that was destroyed; the taking of extra land will, presumably, in order to provide adequate car parking.

(6) Inevitably, harm will result from the actual construction process due to the necessary supply of materials and the coming and going of plant and machinery on this fragile site. The tranquillity of the Nature Reserve will be severely compromised.

In conclusion:

Entrepreneurs with overriding commercial interests are not fit custodians of our heritage. This applicant has already displayed a cavalier attitude to our local heritage as well as to the Council’s planning regulations. The supporting “Heritage Assessment” is awash with waffle and goes into flights of fancy in its attempt to justify an inappropriate construction comprising materials that are not in keeping with this location. It cynically invokes a ‘tradition’ of development on the site, stating “It is important to remember that Castle Hill has been a site that has been shaped by human hands, potentially for over five millennia!” and claims that any harm done will be “negligible”. We are no longer in the Iron Age, or the Victorian Age; both the Jubilee Tower and the former public house were erected using shovels and horse drawn carts. It is more important to remember that the Thandi brothers will be employing JCBs.

Custodianship of Castle Hill is the Council’s responsibility; it should not be left in the hands of pub owners, especially those with a history of heritage destruction. The hill’s archaeological integrity should be protected from insensitive commercialism and the site’s green belt status should be respected, therefore I urge you, please reject this inappropriate planning application.