

## Application 2018/93591 as amended with new design of building

We strongly object to the proposed application being approved.

The following comments are not weighted in terms of importance, given their position in the submission. All are equally important to us.

While we note that the design has substantially changed in its visual aspect, it still is not appropriate for the site.

Many of the original application issues have still to be addressed in the application, such as, the overriding benefits of the special circumstances to build on Greenbelt, the waste and sewage handling, ingress and egress, etc. that have been raised before.

The new building still takes up a substantial footprint of the scheduled monument site, which would not allow for any further archaeological investigations or creating a sympathetic heritage site in the future if the community wished to do so (obviously with planning considerations). This site is an important national heritage site that needs to be preserved for generations to come.



Figure 1 A view of Castle Hill at sunset  
(2019.12.29) copyright

We note that the footprint is still substantially larger than the old hostelry and that given the number of restaurant covers and space allocated for vehicles, the top of Castle Hill may well be considered the domain of the restaurant and venue owners. This is unacceptable. We have been up on Castle Hill on many occasions recently where, without the building, the car park is already fully occupied and the open aspect of the site is being utilised by the community and visitors (see image – taken on what would be the footprint of the building. This day had a full car park). The image shown is a day when the tower was open, and the car park was full.

The proposed building will dominate the site, it will also be subterranean in part, which is to a depth far beyond that which has been surveyed for these applications. We are concerned that this may have a physical impact on the historic site.

The notion that the 'by appointment' interpretation centre during the hours of 10am and 4pm is going to add value above and beyond what is current available for visitors to the site has not been demonstrated or been developed in such a way as to mean it is public access friendly. It is not needed or appropriately developed as an added benefit.

Will the owners be happy managing the toilet facilities for walkers if they are not getting added benefit from those using the facilities? Will it be maintained and cleaned to a high standard?

The hotel and restaurant have a large number of table covers. There is evidence from local residents of Hall Bower that when the original building was a pub that the noise stopped the back bedrooms being used and especially in the summer when windows could not be opened due to the nuisance.

The veranda would bring this noise pollution back on to Castle Hill after a long period without the impact. This is not progress and does not fit with the requirements of the NPPF or Greenbelt.

What happens if the restaurant and hotel accommodation is not successful? We have been informed that there had been previous submissions that looked to the building to become a night venue. This change of use would be outside of the Greenbelt requirements. What happens to the venue if it is not successful? What safeguards would be in place to stop the change of use being inappropriate or the site being left to fall into disrepair if the owners did not get their way to change its use?



*Figure 2 Jul 2018 from Hall Bower and Nov 2019 from Beaumont Park*

Even with the new proposed design, the visual impact on the landscape would be considerable. The figure 2 are images from Beaumont park and Hall Bower. Both illustrate what the current views are. It is clear just from these images that the visual

impact would be considerable and not in keeping with the scheduled ancient monument status of the site. We appreciate that there was a smaller building on the site previously, however, this is not a brownfield site and the buildings were removed by the current owners and therefore it has effectively placed the site back to before the building was in place (albeit with a Victorian tower).

There has been no effort on the part of the lease holder to demonstrate how the ingress and egress will be managed, other than to widen the road with passing places. This has the potential to create more issues than it solves and the widening would not be sufficient (as shown on the drawings) to handle two large vehicles on the road, especially as some of those would be delivery and refuse vehicles.

We see no evaluation of the requirement for additional beds on the site given the local supply of accommodation. We have seen no impact assessment on the local community if this application goes ahead. As Greenbelt, the NPPF requires the application to demonstrate a need above the current facilities as part of the added benefit. We see no demonstration to meet that requirement, and therefore we believe the application does not meet the requirements of the NPPF.

END