About the application

Application number: 2024/93494	
What is the application for?:	Erection of restaurant/café/bar, six guest rooms, exhibition/interpretation room
Address of the site or building:	Victoria Tower, Castle Hill, Lumb Lane, Almondbury, Huddersfield, HD4 6TA
Postcode:	

User comments

Type of comment: An objection	
Do you wish your comments to be published on the website anonymously?	Yes

I am writing to formally object to the proposed planning application for the construction of a restaurant, visitor centre, and bar on the site at Castle Hill in Almondbury, which lies directly adjacent to an ancient Iron Age development of significant historical value and a site that is a haven for wildlife and for local walkers and nature-lovers.
I strongly believe that the proposed development is and always has been entirely inappropriate for the following reasons:
1. Historical and Archaeological Impact:
The proposed development will inevitably compromise the integrity of the Iron Age site, which is of immense historical significance. Constructing commercial facilities in such close proximity to this culturally valuable site risks damaging or disturbing artifacts, structures, and the overall historical landscape. The planning application fails to adequately address these concerns, leaving the historical integrity of the area at risk.
2. Ecological Impact:
The site serves as an important refuge for various species of wildlife, including those listed as vulnerable or protected. The development, including the increased human activity, light pollution, and disruption from noise, would severely impact the local wildlife population. It would also create an unsustainable environment for rare species of butterfly, moth and other insects as well as rare birds such as short-eared owls, linnets and yellow hammers, whose habitats could be irreversibly disturbed, leading to long-term ecological damage.
3. Environmental and Social Disturbance:
The proposed development will cause significant disruption to an area currently valued by dog walkers, nature enthusiasts, bird watchers, and other visitors who come to enjoy the natural environment. The introduction of a commercial development will create noise pollution and light pollution, ruining the peaceful, rural atmosphere that the area currently provides. Furthermore, it will lead to an increase in littering, antisocial behaviour, and the risk of accidents due to inadequate parking and traffic disturbance, particularly late at night.
4. Traffic and Parking Concerns:
The proposal fails to adequately address the inevitable increase in traffic, which will cause congestion in an area which is clearly not suited for such large volumes of vehicles. Visitors arriving and leaving at late hours will only exacerbate issues, causing

vehicles. Visitors arriving and leaving at late hours will only exacerbate issues, causing disruptions for local residents and wildlife alike. The steep access road up to the site at the top already causes congestion and difficulties for drivers trying to pass each other. The poor access will further result in vehicles being parked inappropriately in the lower lay by or along Lumb Lane, creating hazards and additional strain on the surrounding infrastructure.Any works to widen the access road would damage the structure of the Iron Age hill fort and cause inevitable harm to wildlife habitats.
5. Unsuitability for Commercial Use:
Given the site's historical and ecological importance, it is my firm belief that this development is wholly incompatible with its surroundings. The area should be preserved for public enjoyment, biodiversity, and heritage protection, rather than being transformed into a commercial facility that will irreversibly alter its character.
Given that Kirklees Council are investing considerable public funds to partnership with the White Rose Forest tree planting initiative to develop extensive woodland in the area immediately surrounding Castle Hill - how on earth does the proposed planning application for the area at the top of Castle Hill fit in with the woodland planting initiative? Kirklees Council partnered with White Rose Forest in order to meet targets on carbon sequestration, creation of biodiversity corridors, natural flood management, community engagement and woodland access standards.
Kirklees is taking part in this woodland planting initiative because this area was identified as one where there is a lack of public access to woodland and open spaces, so why on earth would Kirklees Council at the same time proceed with a planning application which will damage and destroy one of its most beautiful natural assets - the historical ancient site of an Iron Age fort at Castle Hill. It simply makes no sense whatsoever.

6. Highly Suspect Integrity and Reliability of the Developers:
I find it quite unbelievable that these developers have yet again been allowed to reapply with this amended planning application after all the shocking history of this application since the old pub was pulled down (failing to abide by the previous plans, pulling down the structure illegally, selling off the original masonry, beams etc and therefore failing to protect any remnants of the history of the previous old pub building). The majority of the local community have absolutely no faith that these developers will stick to their plans or that they will in any way aim to maintain the beauty and integrity of this site if this horrendous proposal were to go ahead. It breaks my heart to picture what this much loved local beauty spot will turn into if this horrendous building were to be allowed to be built. All previous iterations of this application have been so overwhelmingly rejected by the local community, it is quite mind-bogglingly bizarre that Kirklees Council continue to allow these developers to make repeated planning applications for this proposed abomination of a building on a site of such outstanding beauty and historical significance. It all stinks of corruption and I object in the strongest possible terms.

In conclusion, this proposed development represents a significant long-standing threat and harm to the historical, environmental, and ecological integrity of this unique site. It would not only damage the local ecosystem but would also harm the peaceful enjoyment of the countryside for those who value the area as it is. I urge you to REJECT this application once and for all.