About the application

Application number: 2024/93494	
What is the application for?:	(amended plans) Erection of restaurant/café/bar, six guest rooms, exhibition/int
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 have made repeated representation against this proposal as repeated application amendments have been made – detailing the very many flaws in the arguments presented by the applicant and the proposal's incompatibility with Planning Law and the site's Scheduled Monument status.

An exceptional case has still not been made for this proposal and the public benefits do not outweigh the permanent harm which would be caused.

I do not intent to restate all my objections again as they have been reported numerous times. I will merely summarise the grounds for objection:

Impacts on the site's archaeological and landscape importance
Fundamentally this proposed building is still in the wrong place – it should not be sited in the middle of a sensitive and nationally significant scheduled monument which is in the green belt.

Commercial v Wider Public Benefit
The proposal still does not convince me that the plans are other than primarily for private gain, I have concerns that the business will adversely impact on the access of other users of the site.

Building design
The proposed building does not demonstrate exceptional design quality or real sensitivity to the landscape context.

New Services could impact adversely on the archaeology and ecology of the hill
The application still gives little indication of how services will be brought to / from the site for large-scale usage (ie sewerage and surface water drainage) . This raises specific concerns about the impact of the development on the archaeological site

Parking intensification and concerns for archaeological impacts.
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A new restaurant / rooms / bar will inevitably increase parking demands which cannot be fully managed currently so will become worse in future with increased erosion and damage.

Vehicular access concerns and lack of robustness of projected traffic data.
The new Kirklees traffic report recently received appears to massively underestimate the impacts of having a commercial business on the summit of the hill (brewery waggons, food deliveries, staffing movements as well as restaurant / bar users).

I would ask the panel to also look to the future before making their decision
• Will restrictions on the applicant and the operation of the site (hours / numbers etc) be properly enforceable (particularly given their previous history of non-compliance with planning law)
• What happens to the building if the facility fails commercially?
• If that happens will the applicant then seek to convert the building into a residential property for their exclusive use?
• Will public access to the whole of the site be guaranteed in the long term?
• Can the authority guarantee that the applicant will not return with some further proposals if they struggle financially which could be equally incompatible with the site – fencing / increased parking spaces / widening of road access etc?

In conclusion I believe that later generations will never forgive the authority if it gives permission for this building which will deface one of the most significant Iron Age hillforts in the country which is a Scheduled Monument of national importance.

Don’t facilitate the vandalism of one of Kirklees’s premier historic sites.