

Castle Hill

Heritage Assessment

To Support Planning Application for Cafe/Restaurant with Bedrooms and Interpretation Facilities at Castle Hill, Almondbury

November 2018





Undertaken by TheUrbanGlow Design & Heritage Ltd
TheUrbanGlow are HESPR Registered Service Providers for the Historic Environment

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CONTENTS

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION**
- 2.0 METHODOLOGY**
- 3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.0 HISTORY OF CASTLE HILL**

- 5.0 UNDERSTANDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CASTLE HILL**

- 6.0 POLICY CONTEXT**

- 7.0 IMPACT UPON DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS (INTRODUCTION)**

- 8.0 THE PROPOSAL**

- 9.0 PROPOSED PLANS**

- 10.0 THE IMPACT OF THE BUILDING UPON THE INTERIOR OF THE CASTLE HILL SITE AND VICTORIA TOWER.**

- 11.0 IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED BUILDING UPON HERITAGE ASSETS WITHOUT THE CASTLE HILL SITE.**

- 12.0 LONG DISTANCE VIEWS**
 - 12.1 Heritage Assets Around Longley
 - 12.2 Heritage Assets Around Ashes Lane
 - 12.3 Heritage Assets Around Hall Bower and Newsome
 - 12.4 Heritage Assets South of Castle Hill
 - 12.5 Heritage Assets Around Farnley Tyas

- 13.0 JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT**

- 14.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS**



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to assess the significance of Castle Hill with regard to the Planning Application for the erection of a cafe/restaurant with bedrooms, interpretation facilities, car parking and facilities.

Castle Hill has a rich and fascinating history and is perhaps the most recognisable natural landmark within the Kirklees district. As a result of its use over five millennia, the site can significantly add to our understanding of the history and significance of this part of Yorkshire within a National context.

TheUrbanGlow Design & Heritage Ltd were asked to provide a new heritage assessment of the proposal and this was undertaken in Autumn, 2018.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this assessment exercise has been based on the references to significance in the National Planning Policy Framework (as revised 2018), as informed by two non statutory Historic England documents namely; Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (2015) and Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2016).

The exercise was carried out by Andrew Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC. In order to fully appreciate the locality a number of thorough site visits were undertaken. Archive research and map regression were undertaken in order to gain a greater understanding of the significance of Castle Hill with reference to the archives of West Yorkshire and the Thoresby Society Collection.

The site visits were undertaken in October 2018 and high quality

photographs were taken using a Nikon D90 SLR with both 18-17mm and 55-200mm lenses.

The National Heritage List for England was used extensively in order to gain an understanding of the locations of designated heritage assets within the locality. Through this assessment, combined with topographical research, assets deemed to be more 'at risk' from impact were identified and these are reflected in this report.

3.0 BACKGROUND

In 2006 consultants Atkins produced a report outlining and exploring the significance and future directions for best practice conservation management of the Castle Hill site as part of Kirklees Council's attempts to create a long term, sustainable management plan for the area, in collaboration with English Heritage and WYAAS. This report was specifically focussed upon the historic and archaeological management of the site and goes to some lengths to outline and communicate the complex archaeological aspects of the site. Despite this however some important points in this report are as follows;

"It will be vital....to ensure that Castle Hill remains a treasured and widely used place..." (Atkins Summary Document)

"All decisions regarding the future management and enhancement of the Hill will be based on a clear and robust understanding of the Site and the potential issues and impacts that changes could cause"
(Atkins Summary Document.)

The report also undertook questionnaires regarding the use of the site and one particular statistic shows that 42% of people visited the site once a month at least. *(page 9 Atkins Management Plan)*

92% of visitors felt that the views from the site were also important *(page 32 Atkins Management Plan.)* and 88% of visitors agreed, or agreed

strongly, that there was a need for greater interpretation of the site for visitors.

The report goes on to state that the *“Setting, and in particular, the immediate setting (of the site) will require careful management over the coming decades.”* (Page 32 Atkins Management Plan)

As a result of this the report breaks down the area into Management Zones that were used to interpret specific areas more carefully.

The report highlights (section 4.0) the issues around events, access, management and the risks associated with increasing anti social behaviour around the site (most recently on bonfire night 2018 when hedgerows were set alight.) and the impact that such instances can have upon the monument and its future sustainability. Indeed following this the report highlights the survey results that appear to overwhelmingly (68%) support a greater year round presence upon Castle Hill, although it specifically noted the opinions of a significant amount of respondents that appreciate the current feeling of ‘wildness’ upon the hill and would prefer nothing else to be located on the site. This therefore prompts the report to highlight the need for any new facilities to be as unobtrusive as possible and that for any solution to be very carefully designed.(page 75 and Section 5 Atkins Management Plan)

The report concludes by outlining the following management points.

- Need for a formal management framework
- The need to formalise the current maintenance strategy and staffing
- The management of archaeological / historical research
- The management of ecological habitats; and
- The management of the Site’s environs

With reference to new development there is therefore a re-emphasis upon the careful development of new structures and that opportunities for enhancement should be taken where possible (i.e removal of telegraph poles) and key policies in Section 5 reiterate these points. (See policy section below)

The points outlined above and within the Atkins report are attempted to be addressed and supported through the following report. Through this we will therefore attempt to better outline the understanding and significance of the site in light of the proposals hereby advanced. The statement will assess the impact of the proposed design upon designated heritage assets whose significance or setting may be impacted upon under these guidelines.

RELEVANT KEY POLICIES FOR THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF CASTLE HILL FROM WS ATKINS REPORT (MARCH 2006)

Key Policy 1: Future decisions relating to management, conservation and enhancement of Castle Hill should respect and sustain all of its significances

Key Policy 4: The Site will be maintained as a premier recreational destination in Kirklees

Key Policy 5: The significances, story and sensitivities of Castle Hill should be communicated to as wide an audience as possible

Policy FD1: Any future development on Castle Hill should have no significant adverse impact on its:

- unique profile when viewed from outside the site;
- open and exposed character;
- archaeological remains; and
- setting.

Policy FD2: Any decisions on future enhancement or development on Castle Hill should consider its archaeological potential

Policy FD3: The management and enhancement of Castle Hill should not adversely affect its open and exposed character

Policy U2: Basic visitor facilities should be provided

Policy U6: Antisocial behaviour should be discouraged by the introduction of measures to control it

Policy U8: High quality and accessible interpretation material should be provided on Site to enhance the visitor experience

Policy U9: The views and needs of users should be taken into account in future decisions relating to the management, conservation and enhancement of Castle Hill

Policy U10: Continue to review the need for further visitor facilities for the Hill

Policy Ac5: The condition of the hilltop car park should be improved

4.0 HISTORY OF CASTLE HILL

“High as Almondbury is, Castle Hill is higher, and is crowned with a lofty tower, a striking landmark of the Victorian era. Holiday folk love to come here for the magnificent view of the Colne valley with Huddersfield in the hollow and the moors above. Below the tower is an ancient camp of 40 acres with high ramparts, a sunken way cut through the sandstone, and traces of a fort of 800 years ago.”

Arthur Mee ‘The Kings England – Yorkshire West Riding’ Edited by Arthur Mee, first published 1941. Edition 1996 by Kings England Press.

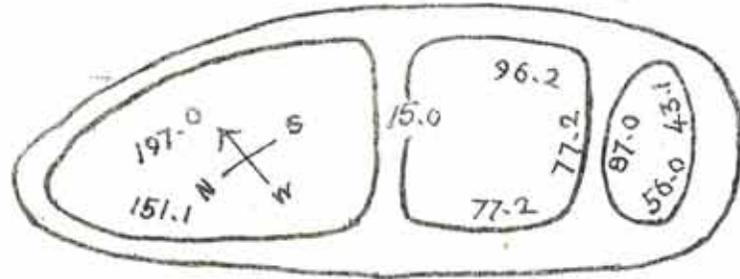
Castle Hill has a long and interesting history, indeed the 800 years of Arthur Mee has always been a conservative estimate of the monument’s age, even for his time! We now have direct evidence that the site formed part of an Iron Age encampment, and Neolithic and Bronze Age occupation is also considered likely due to the finding of flints and a polished axehead dating from around 3000BC. The majority of what is known about the site has been largely obtained through antiquarian accounts and, most notably, the work of William Varley, Archaeologist. More latterly subsequent work by West Yorkshire Archaeological Advisory Service and the RCHME has contributed and enabled the many strands of evidence to be better pieced together.

The site, being of such prominence, would have been an obvious location of interest for early peoples. Strikingly situated above what is now the Colne/Holme Valley the site can even be seen as far afield as the outskirts of Leeds, from where Castle Hill is clearly visible from the route around Roman Road 721 (as categorised by Margary 1957). The site represents an example of a Multivallate hillfort, which is a rare type of multi embanked enclosure fort within this part of the country, and the site seems to have started out as a simple palisaded enclosure of around 2ha dating to around 550BC. There is substantial evidence for the site’s occupation in the later Iron Age when the castle was fortified and its flat plateau was occupied and cultivated. The defensive earthworks were subsequently enlarged around this time with defensive



ditches containing large stone revetments. The archaeological evidence halts around 100BC until the 12th Century AD and as such the likelihood of the site being occupied during the early Roman period is unfortunately lacking. As such the tantalising tales of the site being the abode of the Brigantian Queen Cartimandua and her husband are unfortunately not supported by the archaeological evidence. During this time however two Roman forts were constructed nearby, at Slack and Castleshaw and as such it seems possible that the site would have some role to play within the Roman strategy or as a beacon site.

The archaeological evidence picks up again in the 12th Century when many of the extant earthworks were substantially altered and rebuilt to create the Motte and inner bailey associated with a small castle under the reign of King Stephen, whose license to crenellate was granted to the Barons Lacy of Pontefract in 1137. During works to the castle inner and outer bailey’s were created by the creation of a large ditch across the centre of the fort plateau, the infill of which was used to create a small motte to the souther western side. It may have been at this time that



SAXON FORTIFICATION. CASTLE HILL.

Above: Sketch diagram of the earthworks of Castle Hill from Hulbert (1882).
 Below: The inner ditch separating the Motte from the inner bailey.



the associated village was established and the settlement was granted a market in 1294, although this ultimately failed and the castle was ruinous in the late 16th century.

The hill was noted in Camden's, *Magnus Britannia* (1586) and described as follows;

“Six miles from hence (Halifax) and not far from the river Calder, neere unto Almondbury, a little town standing upon a high and steep hill, which hath no easy passage or even ground unto it but on one side, are seen the manifest tokens of a rampire, some ruine of walles and a castle, which was garded about with a triple strength of forts and bulwarks. Some will have this to be Olicana, but the truth said otherwise, and namely, this it is Cambodunum... Yet afterward, there was a castle built in the same place, which King Stephen, as I have read, confirmed to Henry Lacy”.

It may have been this account that led to the erection of a beacon on the hill during the potential invasion of the Spanish Armada two years later, as part of the ‘fire over England’ system of warning beacons. This was again utilised as such during the Napoleonic Wars when another beacon was constructed as an early warning system. A beacon still stands on the hill following the 500th anniversary of the Armada in 1988 when the event was re-enacted.

The site seems to have always fired the imagination and the social accounts of the site being used for leisure and for the amenities and enjoyment of the local people are very common within Victorian antiquarian accounts. Rev Charles Augustus Hulbert (1882) states, in his beautifully romantic fashion, that the site is *“much frequented for recreation by the inhabitants of Huddersfield (that flourishing daughter of Almondbury)-which lies, by day, as a map below. And at night like a lower firmament, with its thousand lights.”*

The site was so popular that in 1810 a pub was built atop the hill and accounts of everything from cock fighting to bare knuckle brawls can be

found in the archives.

The idea of erecting a 'Victoria Prospect Tower' (Hulbert 1882) was first conceived in 1849, when a private company was formed for the purpose. The scheme was for an eighty foot tower, a museum of antiquities, refreshment rooms, an observation terrace and a private room for subscribers. As one observer put it;

"Huddersfield, being without any place of attraction to the visitor, it is hoped that the deficiency will be supplied and that advantage will accrue to the village of Almondbury. At present the school excursions resort to Kirklees (meaning Kirklees priory, (seat of the Armytage family and grave of Robin Hood near Brighouse)."

A vast number of shares were sold but the scheme ultimately collapsed when Mr George Lock, Agent to the Ramsden Estate, objected to the building of a 'Castle in the air' on top of Castle Hill.

The idea never went away however and, due largely to the efforts of Mr Isaac Horden, Cashier to the Ramsden Estate, and Mr G.W Tomlinson (who ultimately gained much of the credit for the scheme) the proposal for a tower, this time to mark Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, was resurrected. A quote from the letter from Tomlinson to the Mayor:

"Huddersfield with its widely extended municipal boundary has a feature within its borders which I believe to be unique. I know of no city or borough in the kingdom with an elevation of 900 feet above sea level such as we have on Castle Hill and I therefore propose that a Tower should be built on the summit of the Hill with a platform on the top, at least 100 feet high, making a total height of 1000ft."

A committee was later formed, subscriptions collected and the estate were persuaded to lease the site to the Trustees of the Tower for 999 years. On the 25th June, 1898, John, Frechville Ramsden, in the presence of his father, Sir John.W.Ramsden, officially laid the corner stone, and on the 24th June 1899 the tower was officially opened by the



Above: The laying of the cornerstone of Jubilee Tower on 25th June 1898.
Below: Jubilee/Victoria Tower standing as a 'Castle in the sky' today.



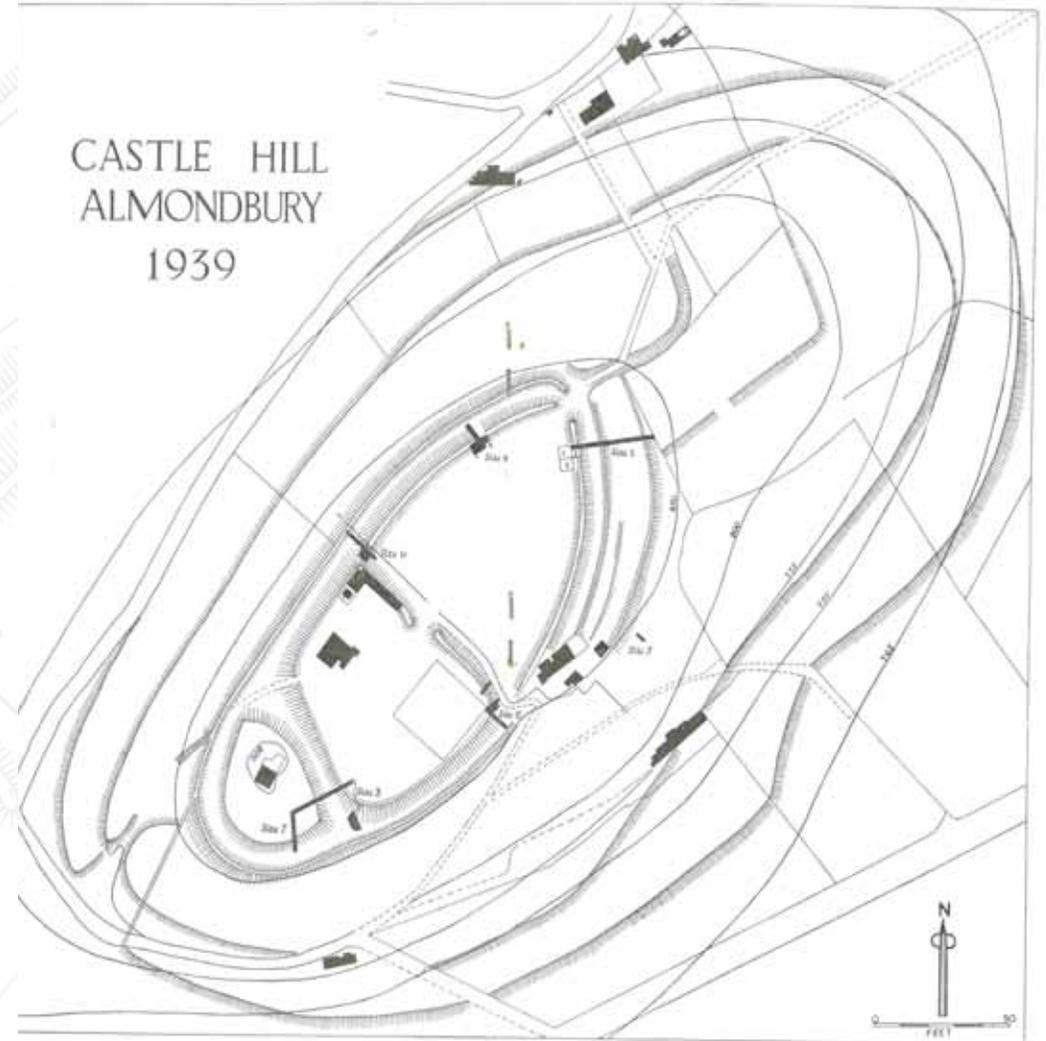
Earl of Scarborough amongst a quire of local people. The stone for the tower came from nearby Crossland Hill and the base of the tower were built four feet thick, which later tapered to two feet at the turret.

The Victoria Tower was not built without opposition however, some people thought it was a waste of money and that a more useful building should have been erected for the occasion. Bearing in mind the fact that Huddersfield did not even have a public library at the time, it is possible to see their point!

In 1960 the tower, which had previously stood 1000 feet above sea level, was renovated and the top seven feet were removed. The tower now stands at 996.7 feet precisely! The tower has become an icon for Kirklees and the people of the surrounding towns, especially those of the Heavy Woollen District, north of Huddersfield within whose sweeping, long distance vistas, the castle and its tower are so easily visible. This iconic status has seen the image of the castle being included on everything from 'Welcome to Kirklees' signs in the late 1990's, to the logo of the Huddersfield Examiner.

The site still fulfils its long held role as a focus of community pride and outdoor activity and the tower itself is open on school holidays and special events. The noticeboards recently erected on the site attempt to communicate the history of the area and illustrate the thriving community pride in the site as a destination but as always such things are open to vandalism and erosion through weather.

Despite this great communal interest in the site there is something of an anti climax when the peak of what clearly seems to be a destination from afar is reached and the visitor is met by a rather lonely place with precious little quality interpretation.



Plan of the trenches as opened by Varley in 1939.



Castle Hill seen from Bruntcliffe Road near Birstall highlighting the impact that the site has upon communities as far away as Leeds district.

5.0 UNDERSTANDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CASTLE HILL

Castle Hill is of undeniable significance on a National scale, due both to its rarity as a multivallate hillfort typology within the north of England, its historical associations and its proximity and relationship to other designated heritage assets. The site also has an ingrained and meaningful relationship with the people of the local area and this is reflected not only in the site's use as a destination, its visibility and people's perception of the place, but also through its use as an iconic location, the Grade II Listed Jubilee Tower only enhancing this experience through its occasional use as a community building.

Assessing significance is therefore an essential part of proactive conservation management and is synonymous with the Conservation Management Plan produced by Atkins consultants in 2006. Through such an assessment it is possible to understand what qualities of importance are manifest within an identified heritage asset, and this, in turn, allows *"a clear and robust understanding of the Site and the potential issues and impacts that changes could cause."* (Atkins 2006)

Such an assessment can identify areas of particular sensitivity, or, equally, areas of opportunity for enhancement, change, or for the greater appreciation of the asset as a whole. It is recognised (Atkins report) that Castle Hill is currently underutilised and that the future custodianship of the site is a priority for the Council and local community as a whole.

The Atkins report outlines several key themes that are important for understanding the significance of Castle Hill. These are as follows:

- Archaeological and historical significance
- Landscape significance
- Ecological significance
- Significance of the Site's Setting
- Geological significance
- Intangible significances

Since this report Historic England have further distilled the ways to define significance through the following 'associations' in their guidance Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008).

This provides an updated guide for assessing and understanding the types and subtleties of significance. They are Evidential value, Historical Value, Aesthetic Value and Communal Value;

Evidential value: The evidence which a building, structure or place can provide about the past. This is generally concerned with evidence through archaeological or physical, recorded evidence of which there is no other written evidence available.

In terms of Castle Hill the site has the potential to reveal much greater evidence of past people's and the use of the site, not only now, but in the future as technology and our greater understand improves. Such evidence could involve a greater understanding of the early defences of the site or could reveal further evidence of the potential for Neolithic settlement in the area.

Historical value: The means through which past people, events or life can be associated or illustrated through a place in a way which present and future generations can comprehend.

Castle Hill therefore has great historical significance that can be revealed archaeologically, socially or visually.

Aesthetic value: This may derive from intentional design, including the work of an artist or craftsman, or it may be the fortuitous outcome of the way a building or place has evolved. It is concerned with the way people can draw stimulation from a place either sensory or intellectual.

Castle Hill is an icon for the area and the experience of the visitor is enhanced through the historical and aesthetic aspects of the place. The site appears to have been a place of inspiration for many at least since Victorian times and the Victoria Tower itself was built originally to provide a place for visitors to learn more about this site.

Communal value: Many places have strong local connections through memory or collective experience. Such value is often more intangible but no less important.

The deep relationship between the people of Kirklees through memory or past associations with the site is well documented. The sites continued attraction for visitors, school groups and even the kite flying traditional all enhance the sites' communal value.

In light of the above reasons, the designated scheduled monument, and despite the relatively low grade of Listed Buildings within the locality, the overall significance of Castle Hill is believed to be of **HIGH SIGNIFICANCE**. The below report shall therefore consider this in the context of the proposed application.

6.0 POLICY CONTEXT

Section 16 of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework (2018) places particular emphasis upon the understanding of significance in relation to proposed development. It states that heritage assets are "an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance." The emphasis being upon the enjoyment and quality of life that heritage assets contribute to current and future generations.

Paragraph 189 provides guidance on the management of heritage assets through the Planning system;

189. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include,

heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

The assessment (below) has been undertaken in the spirit of policy 189 and has gone to great lengths to understand the significance of the site through the methods outlined above and through appropriate archaeological expertise.

190. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

The NPPF clearly sets out in this paragraph that Local Planning Authorities should seek to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage assets conservation and the proposal. We believe that this submission has understood and addressed the potential for such conflict and have sufficiently minimised any potential conflict through the substantial improvement as proposed throughout this resubmitted application.

192. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a. the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b. the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality;*
- c. the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

We believe that the proposal before the Local planning Authority clearly demonstrates that the proposed building has been based soundly upon the

need to sustain and enhance the site of Castle Hill for future generations and is moreover consistent with the Atkins Conservation Management Plan as commissioned and completed in 2006. We believe that this approach is wholly consistent with paragraph 192 and that the proposals do indeed make a positive contribution to the economic viability and sustainability of the site and that they make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

193. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

194. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

195. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The proposal before the Local planning Authority will not cause substantial harm to the designated heritage assets or their setting. Indeed, as will be discussed below, Harm to the historical environment through this proposal is considered to be minimal and only what is absolutely necessary in order to release and generate the large potential future community benefits that can then be delivered. As such there is a clear and convincing justification for new development to provide a year round attraction at the site that can accommodate the very real need for greater understanding and appreciation of the site, not to mention the very great need for natural surveillance to the site that only a full time occupation of a place can provide.

View of Castle Hill from Hall Bower, the Motte can clearly be seen.



7.0 IMPACT UPON DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS.

The proposal advanced by the applicants has the potential to cause harm to designated heritage assets or their setting through the introduction of a new building within that setting. However, as outlined below, harm will be less than substantial and the impact of such harm will be very limited.

Due to the very nature of Castle Hill, the impact from such proposals could extend to very great distance. However, the proposal before the Local Planning Authority is a very low scale building whose scale and dominance the designers have gone to great lengths to minimise. Nevertheless by the very nature of introducing new buildings or structures into such a sensitive context, there will likely be some impact to heritage assets. This will generally be contained within the immediate area of the Scheduled Monument but there is the potential for development to visually encroach over the defensive outer banking of Castle Hill and thereby impact upon heritage assets farther afield. The rest of this report will attempt to assess this impact in light of the high significance of the site through an identification of heritage assets that will be most likely to be affected.

8.0 THE PROPOSAL

The proposed building has been some time in development and abides by guidance contained within CABE/Historic England design guidance 'Building in Context' amongst other best practice examples of integrating contemporary architecture into the historic environment. Indeed the proposed building is a fine example of contextual modernism that manages to include enough accommodation to create a viable scheme whilst being highly responsive to its historic setting and context.

The building is therefore a low rise structure that is defined, and takes its inspiration from, the landscape forms and elements that are found within the Castle Hill defences and within the wider landscape. The subtle, curved roof form does well to disguise the linear form of the building and the quality modern materials, grounded within the robust, traditional sandstone of the local area provide a truly modern expression that at the same time reinforces and promotes local distinctive forms and motifs. As mentioned previously, and in other documents concerned with this scheme, the proposed building will accommodate a much needed destination facility to Castle Hill that will also create a year round presence and thereby significantly reduce the issues of anti social behaviour that have plagued the site over the years.

It is important to remember that Castle Hill has been a site that has been shaped by human hands, potentially for over five millennia! The main impacts have been the sequence of fortifications, palisades, retaining walls or ditches. The mid phase of development around the 12th century involved the restructuring of many of these earthworks and the creation of an artificial Motte upon which was placed a castle, well and, around this, a village. More latterly, the Victorian's focus upon Castle Hill as a destination, resulted in the most dramatic change to the site through the erection of Jubilee Tower. The impact of this was extreme and resulted in the iconic status that the site now has. Finally, the integration of World War Two structures and the laying out of paths and sign boards have all had some form of impact upon the site. The proposal before us therefore is one that simply wishes to build upon this tradition so that the site is not

'preserved in aspic' as this would most certainly preclude the site from evolving for future generations.

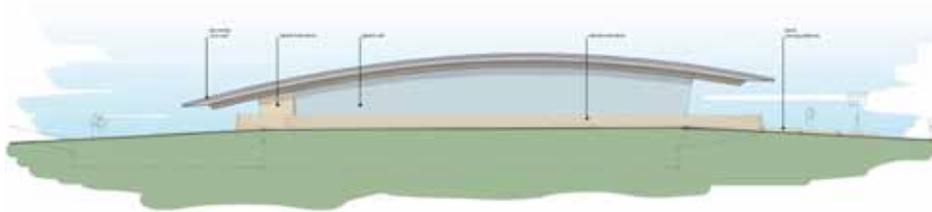
Impact of the Proposal.

The main impact of the proposal will be through the introduction of new built forms within the site. As far as this report is concerned there are two main issues to address here, these are basically concerned with;

- a) **The impact of the proposal within the monument site and any impact upon the Jubilee Tower; and**
- b) **The impact of the proposal without the monument site and any impact upon local heritage assets in the surrounding area.**



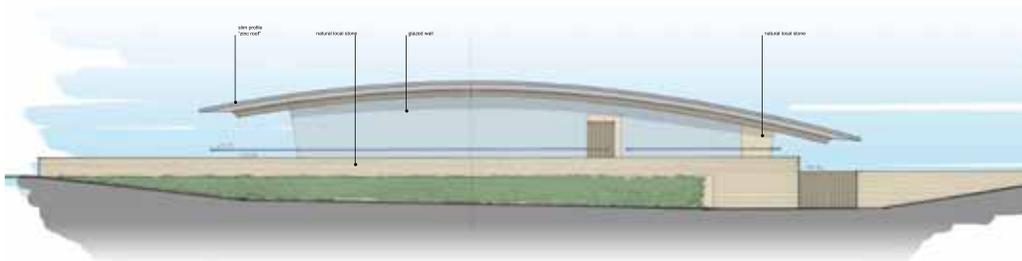
Jubilee Tower from Ashes Lane looking up towards the fortifications and embankments. The dominant feature always the tower.



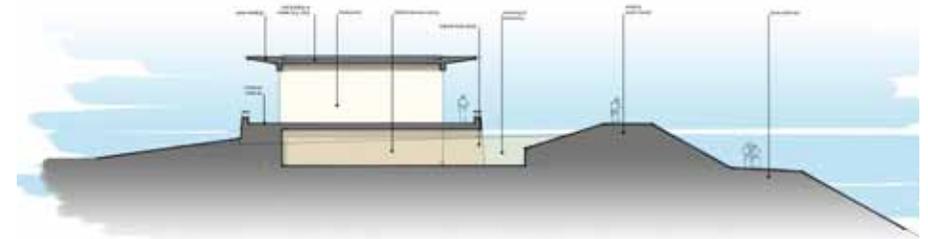
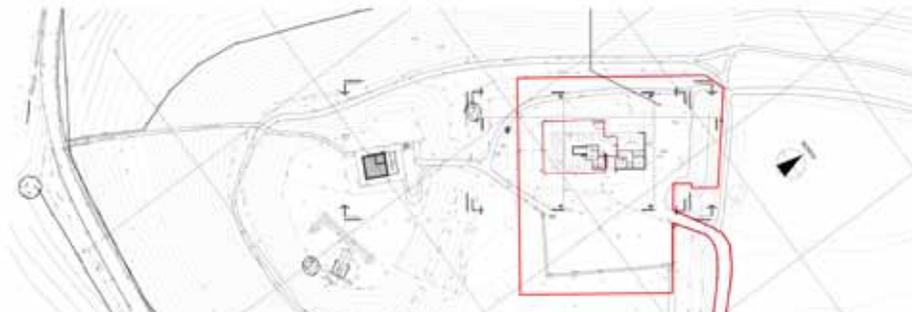
Proposed Elevation 2



Proposed Section CC



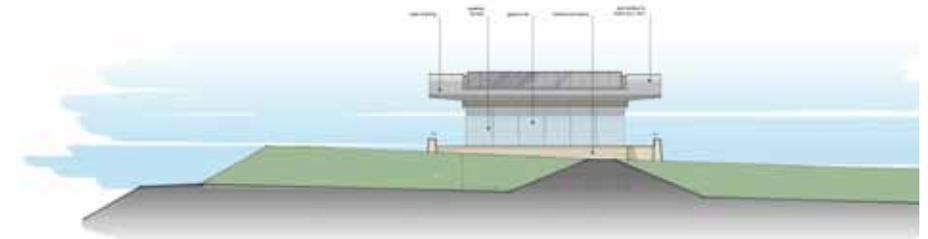
Proposed Elevation 1



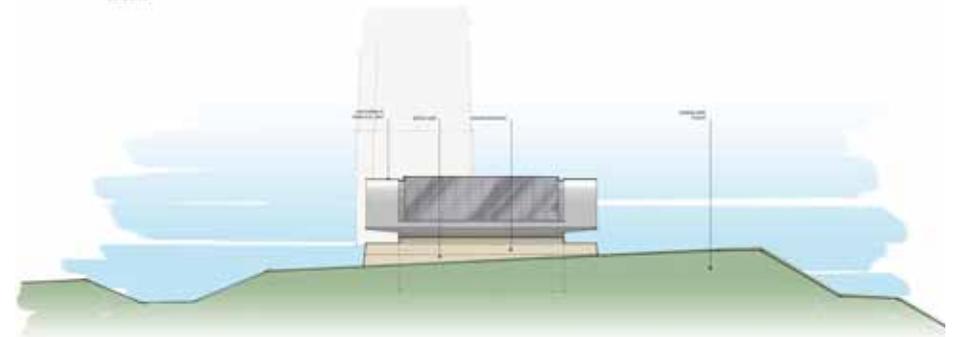
Proposed Section AA



Proposed Section BB



Elevation 3



Elevation 4

10.0 THE IMPACT OF THE BUILDING UPON THE INTERIOR OF THE CASTLE HILL SITE AND VICTORIA TOWER.

List descriptions

CASTLE HILL Victoria Tower **GVII**. 1897-9. Architect: Isaac Jones, of Herne Hill, London. Contractors: Messrs Ben Graham of Crossland Moor. Hammer-dressed stone. Slightly battered tower, square in plan. Machicolations. Crenellated parapet. Slightly higher start tower corbelled out on north-east corner. Various single-light windows. Built to commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee, instead of a Free Public Library, the alternative suggestion.

Scheduled Monument Record 1009848

Castle Hill: slight univallate hillfort, small multivallate hillfort, motte and bailey castle and deserted village.

The Scheduled Monument site is experienced partially through the sense of arrival upon the high plateau of Castle Hill when either arriving by car or by foot. The steep incline, or the curved highway, threading its way beneath the defensive embankments all contribute to this rewarding sense of arrival.

For the pedestrian, the main focus is always upon the tower and this is often the first port of call (for any first time visitor in any case). The site of the tower, and the possible Motte site therefore provide the highest point within the complex, and as such the best views are deemed to be obtained from there.

The proposed building will introduce a new form within the castle site. However the dominance of the Motte will be maintained through the dominance of the Victoria Tower, the defensive Inner ditch and the rise in topography of the man made (medieval) landscape. The integration of a new form therefore will not be in competition with this dominance as any new building on the lower grounds would, and always have, appear(ed) subservient to the Inner Bailey/Motte area. The building is low, linear

and in many ways entirely consistent with the kinds of ancillary buildings, such as Great Halls, Kitchens and Barracks that one would traditionally associate with a Medieval Castle where such buildings would be clustered at the feet of the Keep. Even an Iron Age site would experience this hierarchy where higher status roundhouses would be located within the inner, more protected/significant areas.

The proposed building therefore abides by such hierarchical traditions and will in no way compete with either the defences, or the Victoria Tower.

Neither will the proposed building undermine the aesthetics of landscape forms of the site. Instead, the curving form, local sandstone and modern materials will reflect (almost literally in terms of the glazing elements) and enhance the understanding of the site.

When seen from within the rest of the monument site, or on approach, the building will appear as a long, low structure of unashamedly modern materials. However the curvature of the roof, reflecting the topographical forms will significantly lessen the building's scale. Harm therefore to the structures within the site is certainly Less than Substantial and can be considered to be Minor within a scale of divisions of harm.

11.0 IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED BUILDING UPON HERITAGE ASSETS WITHOUT THE CASTLE HILL SITE.

“Castle Hill is the dominant feature of the landscape. It rises above the surrounding settlements, and affords unspoilt views to and from Huddersfield and the surrounding settlements. Its height, compared with the relative low lying areas around it, means that it can be seen from an area of at least 10km around the Site, with the impressive structure of Victoria Tower further enhancing its appearance from afar, and providing what many consider to be an iconic representation of Huddersfield” (Atkins para 3.317 page 50 Management Plan)

As mentioned above the impact of Castle Hill reaches far and wide and within this sphere there are several designated heritage assets that may be affected by any proposal. Within the assessment the following designated heritage assets are considered to have the potential to suffer from most harm, although any harm to these assets is considered to be Less than Substantial.

The topography of the area means that visible impact at least will be limited to certain areas. Although harm to setting can occur in areas where there is no intervisibility, for instance where development affects a main approach or is considered important due to historic ownership etc, it is considered that such harm in this case will be unlikely. However the Grade II* Longley Hall, being the seat of the Ramsden’s has been more fully assessed where accessibility allows.

Notwithstanding this, this assessment can reveal that actual visible impact of the proposal within a two mile radius will be, at numerous points, extremely limited by topography. Almondbury for instance will have negligible intervisibility. Therefore the likelihood of harm to designated heritage assets there or the Almondbury Conservation area is likely to be negligible and of mainly historical associative impact.

Areas to the south of Castle Hill are also rarely exposed to the visible appearance of the proposed building. These assets generally occupy

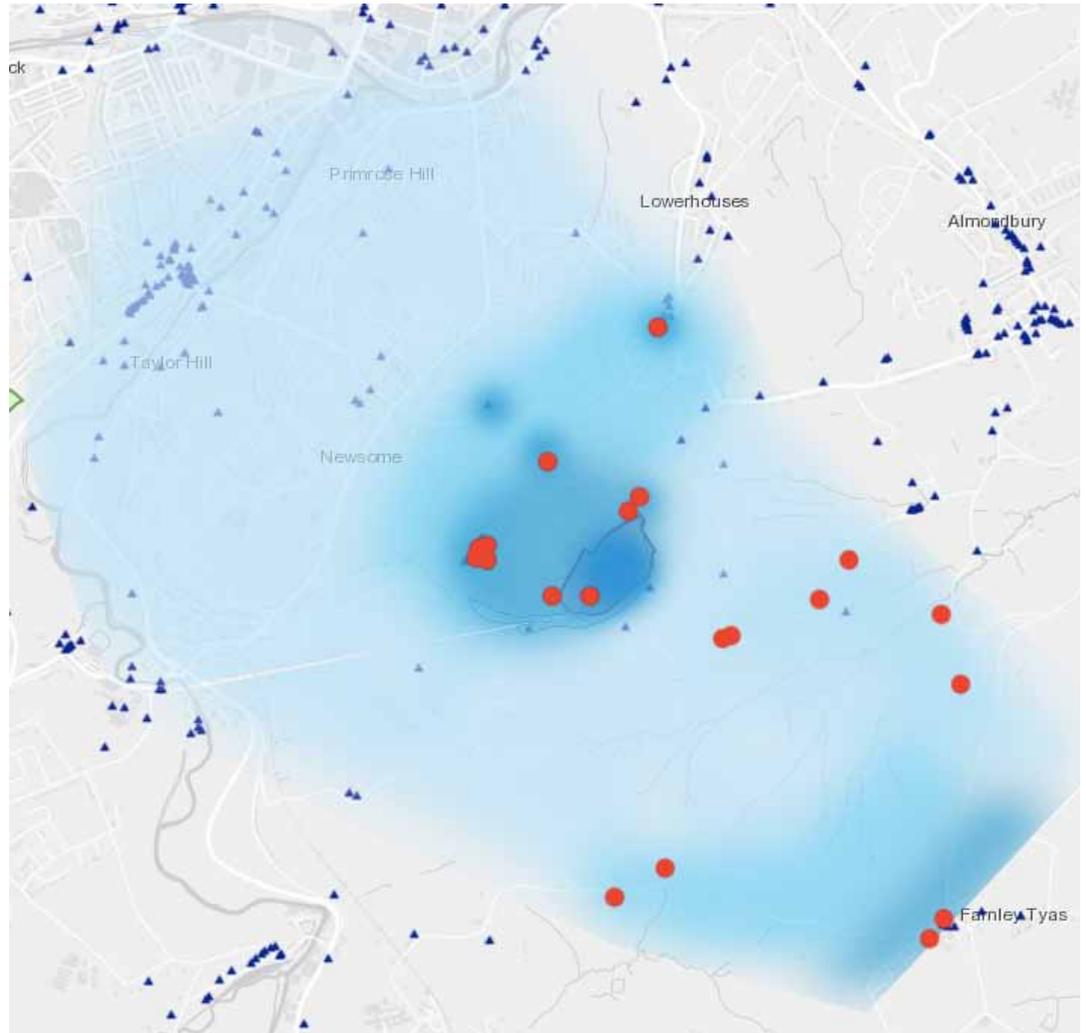


Above: Castle Hill from the south. Note the distance between Victoria Tower and the beacon. The proposed building will sit lower to the right of this view. Below: Castle Hill from Lumb.



the lower slopes of Castle Hill and the Colne Valley and, due to the topography and height of the site, there will be limited, if any, impact.

Farnley Tyas however occupies a high ridge of land almost on eye level with Castle Hill. As such impact may be greater. However, only limited glimpses can be obtained from Farnley Tyas and the main Listed structures are all visually shielded from the site by other buildings across the road. As such, direct impact upon the listed buildings of St Lucius' Church and Yew Tree Farm will be highly limited. The wider setting however of these buildings could be affected by glints from expanses of glazing, or from the modern form of the building. However this is discussed below.



Above: Areas of sensitivity around Castle Hill showing the potential for greater impact (dark blue) and lesser impact (light blue) of the proposals. NB that Almondbury itself shares little intervisibility with the peak of the hill itself, although this does not mean that the relationship through setting is removed.

Left: The flat plateau of Castle Hill when seen from Farnley Tyas.



12.0 LONG DISTANCE IMPACT

The Atkins Conservation Management Plan states the following with regards the landscape around Castle Hill.

The proposed design integrates exceptionally well into the site. It is a modern interpretation of the defining characteristics of Castle Hill and uses the man made landscape forms present to define itself. The impacts of this upon longer distance views therefore are much more limited than a more conventional (i.e pitched gable form) building would be. This is apparent in historic images where the former pub is seen as a flanking structure to the Victoria Tower. The proposed building will therefore have two likely impacts;

1) Firstly the curvature of the roof and the slight protrusion over the ridge lines of Castle Hill. This will manifest itself as a subtle curvature that may, to some limited extent, compete very slightly with the dominance of the Medieval Motte upon which the Victoria Tower stands. There is therefore the potential for some limited harm to this dominance. However, the Motte feature itself is already difficult to perceive other than to the trained eye. As such any difference to this view in silhouette or when seen against the sky will be extremely limited. Secondly, the Motte is already extremely well defined, by the sheer dominance of Jubilee Tower. It is this tower, more than anything else that marks the site of the Inner Bailey and the Motte. Anything else around it is subservient. The proposal in this application will likely be more subservient than most.

Harm therefore to this relationship will again be minor. There may be more impact upon this perception from Listed properties in Hall Bower that look directly towards the North East side of the hill would probably experience this impact more than anywhere else. However, the dominance of the tower again leaves us in no doubt as to the location of the Motte area.

2) The second longer distance impact will be the potential for glazing reflection from the new building. This may have the potential for the 'light spikes' associated with glazing when seen from a distance. However, such an impact would only occur at certain times, in certain weather conditions

and would be dramatically reduced through the roof overhang that would preclude anything but the lowest sun glare to reflect. Indeed if any such illumination did occur through reflection, this could well be construed as a modern interpretation of the beacon effect upon Castle Hill. Therefore, due to the un-predictability of this phenomenon and the means undertaken to reduce such an impact, the harm associated with this will likely be minimal.



Listed cottages at Hall Bower that directly face towards Castle Hill.



Views to the West showing rigid enclosure patterns of the lower Pennines.

12.1 Heritage Assets around Longley

Longley Hall is a Grade II* Listed house dating at least to the 14th Century. The Hall is more significant in relation to Castle Hill due to it being the seat of the Ramsden family from the 16th to the early 20th centuries. The Ramsden's being the local landowners of the estate. Longley is a small hamlet of cottages and ancillary buildings associated with the Hall and Castle Hill is dominant above the settlement. However mid twentieth century development of suburban semi detached housing has contributed much to the erosion of this relationship. The proposal will in no way dilute this physical relationship or the dominance of Castle Hill and the proposed building will likely not be visible from the immediate locality of the Hall.

NB: 19thC Diagram showing a view of Longley Hall with Castle Hill in the background. It is unclear whether this particular view was ever available as tree cover and topography would now make this particular view near impossible to obtain. As such this may constitute a certain amount of artistic licence.



Images:

a) Longley Hall front view.

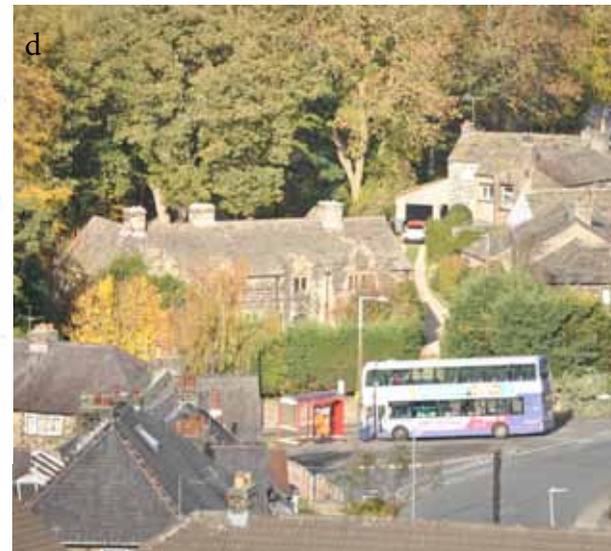
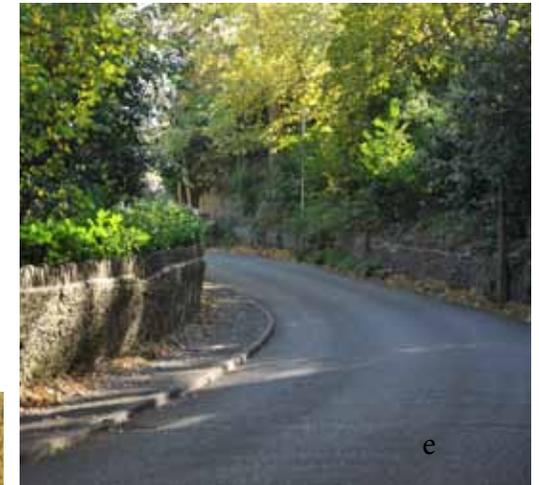
b) Sketch drawing from Rev Hubert's History of Almondbury 1882.

c) Other ancillary cottages within the Longley complex.

d) View of Longley Hall from the approach towards Ashes Lane.

e) Highly characterful lane next to Longley hall.

f) View of Castle Hill from in front of Longley Hall.





12.2 Heritage Assets around Ashes Lane

Ashes Lane runs along the cusp of the hillside around the North side of Castle Hill. It is home to several dispersed farmsteads that have a direct relationship to Castle Hill. Views of the application site are limited, although some encroachment over the Castle defences may occur. In light of this some impact may occur to the immediate outlook of some of these listed cottages. Despite this however, the forms of the building and its strong relationship to the landscape forms will help to minimise this harm.

Images:

- a) 112 Kaye Lane, GVII
- b) View of Castle Hill from Ashes Lane around 155 Ashes Lane.
- c) 155 Ashes Lane seen from the West.
- d) 157-159 Ashes Lane.
- e) 158 Ashes Lane that stands at the end of Castle Hill Side lane.
- f) View from Castle Hill Side towards 158 Ashes Lane.
- g) View from Ashes Lane towards isolated (possibly Lathes houses) of 165 Ashes Lane.





12.3 Heritage Assets around Hall Bower and Newsome.

Hall Bower is a collection of mainly 18th century cottages that have a direct outlook onto the north of Castle Hill. The long terraces rely upon their rural setting for much of their significance and, despite this being eroded through some later development, the isolated semi agricultural character is important for the appreciation of several Listed buildings. The view upon Castle Hill will be slightly impacted upon by the proposal, but the proposed building will be much less prominent than the previous public house and the curvature of the hill side will remain, thereby substantially mitigating any notable harm.

Images:

a) View of Castle Hill from Listed cottages in Hall Bower with number 158 Ashes Lane immediately to the right of Victorian Tower. Note the dominance of the tower asserting the dominance of the Motte. The proposed building will be farther to the left of this scene and reflect the countour of the land as well as being hidden by trees.

b) Cottages of Hall Bower.

c) Non Listed former church in Hall Bower, illustrating the dominance of Castle Hill and Victorian Tower.



12.4 Heritage Assets to the South of Castle Hill

To the south of Castle Hill are located several listed farmsteads and houses reminiscent of the yeoman farmer with some early examples of encased timber frame structures. Many of these buildings rely upon Castle Hill for their setting, however, in terms of visibility at least, there will be very little impact upon the designated assets, due mainly to the steep topography and the impossibility of inter-visibility between the assets in the valley and the top of Castle Hill. Even Victoria Tower is barely visible from some places.

Longer distance views, from around Farnley Tyas however would show the proposed structure being within the visible setting of the assets. Despite this however, the contextual design and sunken design of the building impact would be reduced as much as is possible.

Images:

a) Clay Hall GV II Listed building, Victoria Tower just visible behind the garage.

b) 'Lumb' and associated farm buildings GVII. Tucked away within the valley.

c) Panoramic image of Castle Hill showing the above two listed buildings in the foreground to the right.

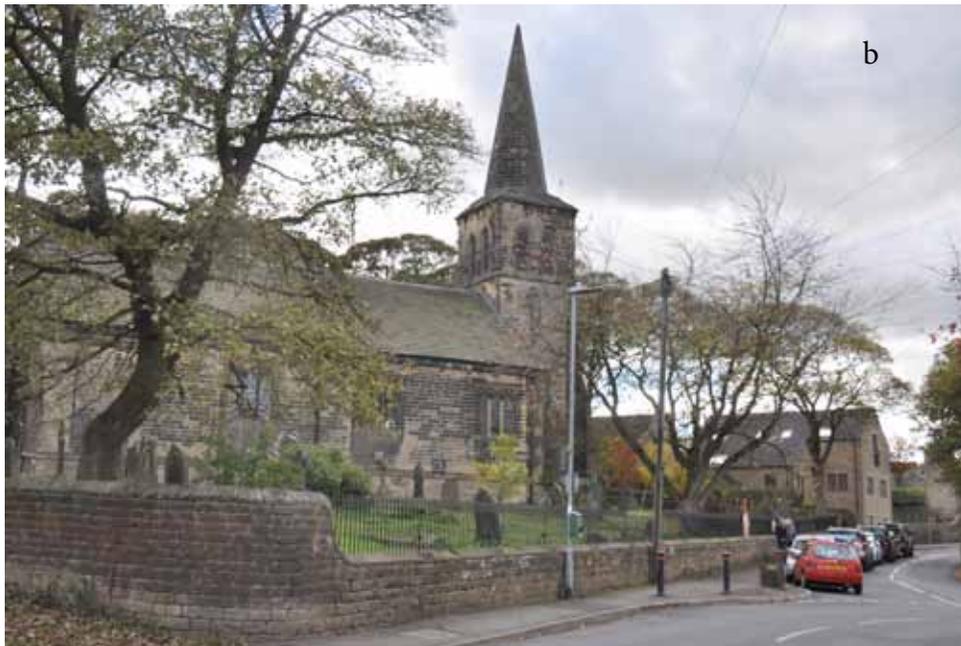


12.5 Heritage Assets around Farnley Tyas.

Farnley Tyas stands high upon the opposite escarpment to Castle Hill to the south. The two main Listed buildings within the village are the Church of St Lucius GVII and Yew Tree Farm GVII. Castle Hill is obviously an important landmark within the vicinity but any views of the hill itself are now obscured by other buildings that enclose the village street. As such only select glimpses can be obtained towards Castle Hill. Any impact will therefore be similar to other long distance viewpoints. The new building will likely be seen, but harm will be minimised through its design.

Images:

- a) View of Castle Hill as glimpsed from Farnley Tyas. This view is only very limited.
- b) Church of St Lucius.
- c) Barn at Yew Tree Farm.



13.0 JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

The proposed intervention onto the Highly sensitive site of Castle Hill has been assessed and it is recognised that, simply by definition of introducing new development onto the site, some harm will likely occur. Harm will however will not only be considered Less than Substantial, but any harm will be Minor when assessed against degrees of harm.

Despite this the public benefits of the proposal need to be weighted against this harm as part of a justification for the scheme. As has been alluded to in other documents, the potential for this scheme to deliver public benefits is very great. It will not only achieve the aims of the Council, and local peoples', desire to recreate a destination and facilities here, but it will also allow the ability to engage a much wider public audience not only in the history of Castle Hill, but also in the history of Kirklees. Indeed it was this desire to inspire and educate that the Victorian's were so keen on.

The Atkins report highlighted very clearly the very real issues around the future management of Castle Hill, and, although several respondents were keen to the see the site left empty and 'natural' there are significant risks to doing this through leaving the site without any custodianship and through failing to maximise the opportunities for communicating the rich and wonderful history of this site. Indeed, by revisiting these arguments we are in danger of re running the debates of the Victorians in deciding whether to build their 'castle in the sky'. It would be unfortunate indeed if we were negate the opportunity presented by this scheme over arguments that were resolved over 120 years ago!

This proposal has all the qualities of a landmark piece of architecture that fully responds to the significance of the site and could contribute to the local economy through great benefits of improved image and also improved visitor numbers.

These are all justification enough in our opinion, however perhaps the greatest benefit is that of the ability of this building to enable a presence

to be found on Castle Hill once again. This will result in robust natural surveillance and activity out of hours and will substantially reduce the perpetration and the fear of crime and anti social behaviour that currently exists. It could also help communicate the issues of custodianship of this important site and help to mitigate the impacts of visitor numbers through education, not only of the archaeology and historical significance of this place, but also through ecological awareness. This in turn will mitigate much of the potential harm that could occur to this site if nothing is delivered and this is surely of very great public benefit.

14.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Taking into account the location of the building upon the site of the previous pub and hotel building, the proposal should be considered a natural evolution of the site, and one that is, actually, far more contextual to its sensitive site than any previous structure has ever been!

In summary, the impact of the building will not impact upon archaeologically sensitive levels, it will be tucked well within the site and largely hidden by the steep fortification embankments. Its form will not be 'alien' in any way, and instead it will reflect the distinctive topography of the site and the landscape forms that define the South Pennines area. Therefore any harm of the proposed building will be minor. When taken into account the public benefits of providing a new, much needed, facility and a modern, contemporary piece of architecture - that will allow visitors to appreciate and understand the historical and natural environment of this place – the harm may even be considered Negligible.

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An aerial photograph of a stone tower on a hill, with a city visible in the background. The image is overlaid with several logos and text.

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