

F.A.O. Rachael Simpkin
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Moorlands House
Stockwell Street
Leek
Staffordshire
ST13 6HQ

14 Regent's Wharf
All Saints Street
London N1 9RL

020 7837 4477
london@nlpplanning.com

nlpplanning.com

Date 11 May 2015
Our ref 03224/IR/8865279v1
Your ref PP-04157303

Dear Rachael

**SMDC: Application for Minor Material Amendment Pursuant to Planning Permission
ref. SMD/2014/0782**

As discussed earlier this week Alton Towers Resort is required to install a landing stage in association with the approved High Ropes attraction. Whilst a Non Material Amendment (NMA) was submitted to address other small scale proposed changes, SMDC has advised that the inclusion of a landing stage will require a Minor Material Amendment (MMA) application.

To address this requirement, on behalf of our client, Alton Towers Resort, a company forming part of Merlin Attractions Operations Limited, please find enclosed a Minor Material Amendment (MMA) application seeking approval for small changes to planning permission ref. SMD/2014/0782 which permitted a new High Ropes attraction at Alton Towers Resort.

The application comprises:

- 1 Application form (signed and dated);
- 2 Arboricultural Assessment, prepared by Tree Heritage;
- 3 Application drawings, prepared by Nichols Brown Webber (see schedule 1 of cover letter);
and
- 4 Zip Wire Landing Area Information Pack, prepared by JM Adventure.

A cheque for £195, made payable to "Staffordshire Moorlands District Council" to cover the Council's application fee has been submitted under separate cover.

Background

Alton Towers is the UK's most popular and largest theme park, making it an important generator for tourism. It has up to 1600 guests per night sleeping on site which is expected to rise to 2000 in 2015. As such, to continue to attract existing and new visitors the Resort must continually refresh its activities and provide a diverse range of facilities on site.



Accordingly, on 21 January 2015 an application (ref. SMD/2014/0782) was approved for:

“Demolition of existing single storey corrugated building and installation of new high ropes course including the erection of a new single storey building and new play area.”

Due to progress made at the detailed design stage, a series of small changes constituting Minor Material Amendments are proposed to the layout of the approved high ropes junior course, the new building and immaterial changes to pathways. The installation of a landing stage is also proposed.

In addition, on 8 April 2015 an application to discharge the pre-commencement conditions was submitted in parallel to this application under separate cover (ref. DOC/2015/0049). As such, the information submitted to discharge the conditions has been prepared with reference to the proposed non material amendments, the subject of this MMA application.

Proposed Non Material Amendments

Junior Course

It is proposed to amend the layout of the course to extend northwards in order to provide a zipwire finish. It was previously anticipated that a zipwire would be a short element of the course between existing posts as part of the approved layout. However, after further detailed design work it is considered that the proposed amended layout with a zipwire at the finish of the course will enhance the visitor experience for junior guests. No changes are proposed to the larger adult course.

Tree Heritage has prepared an Arboricultural Assessment to assess the proposed revised layout of the Junior Course. It notes that no additional trees are required to be removed as the course has been specifically designed to fit within the existing trees. Accordingly, the proposed changes will have no additional implications for woodland, or individual trees within it.

Building amendments

Due to progress at the detailed design stage, a series of small amendments are proposed to the appearance of the building; however the building will continue to provide support facilities to the attraction in terms of toilet, café and store room. The proposed amendments include the following:

- 1 Reduction in overall size of the building. Please see drawing 373-88-11A for detail.
- 2 Removal of the decking to the north west and south east of the building as it will now benefit from level access and removal of the paved area to the north. The paved area will be replaced with porous paving.
- 3 Removal of windows on the south west elevation.
- 4 Replacement of the central double door on the south east elevation with two single doors to provide a baby changing facility.
- 5 The rollershutters on the north east elevation will increase in size.



Pathways

It is proposed to amend the layout of the pathway to the north of the approved building. Given that it is proposed to remove the boardwalk at the east of the building, the associated pathway providing access will be removed. Likewise, the pathway to the north of the building will be amended as access to the paved area adjacent to the building is no longer required. Instead a new paved area will be installed to the north and east of the building to provide access.

Landing Area

In order to allow visitors to land safely from the zip wire, the proposed landing area is required to be incorporated within the course layout. It will measure approximately 10m in length and 3.5m in width and will be positioned at the end of the zip wire elements of the course. Please refer to the JM Adventure information pack for more detail.

Conditions

In agreeing the proposed MMAs we ask that conditions 2, 8, 9 and 10 are amended accordingly to refer to the correct drawing references. Furthermore, given that the separate discharge of conditions application (DOC/2015/0049) will have been processed and discharged prior to the determination of this MMA application, the revised planning permission will also need to amend conditions 3, 4, 5 and 9 to confirm that the development should be completed in accordance with the approved details, and any reference to 'prior to development commencing/installation' removed.

Summary

Overall, it is considered that the proposed amendments are immaterial in nature in the context of the whole High Ropes Course attraction. The small changes to the layout of the junior course and the relocation of the zip wire will enhance the visitor experience for younger guests. The proposed amendments to the building and pathways will not significantly alter the visitor experience. In particular, the building will continue to provide support facilities to the attraction.

We trust that we have provided you with sufficient information to validate the application. Should you require any additional information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleague Tor Barrett.

Yours sincerely

Hannah Whitney
Planning Director

Copy

Neil Walker
Mark Kerrigan

Alton Towers Resort
Alton Towers Resort



Schedule 1 Application Drawings

Drawing Title	Reference	Superseded Drawing	Scale
Block Plan	373-88-2C	373-88-2	1:1000@A1 1:500@A2
Site Plan as Proposed	373-88-4C	373-88-4	1:250@A2 1:500@A4
Buildings as Proposed	373-88-11A	373-88-11	1:100@A3