

**Design and Access Statement**

This design and access statement has been prepared on behalf of Alton Towers Resorts Operations Limited to accompany an application for planning permission and listed building consent for the rebuilding of the Oratory structure at Alton Towers Resort, following recent storm damage. The statement has been prepared in accordance with Communities and Local Government 'Guidance on information requirement and validation' published in March 2010. The CLG guidance states that a combined statement is appropriate for an application for planning permission and listed building consent.

The statement will cover the key design principles and concepts applied to the proposed development. It should be read in conjunction with the application submission, including plans, drawings and photographs.

**Context**

The Oratory is located within the Birdcage Gardens at Alton Towers Resort. The gardens are located in the south western part of the site as illustrated in the site location plan (ref: CL3224-129). The structure is built into the corner of the 'Garden Wall east of Alton Towers', which is registered as a Grade II listed. The wall encloses roughly a square shape surrounding the Birdcage building, which is also a Grade II listed structure.

**Amount**

The Oratory is a small structure within the corner boundary of the garden's wall. It has a floorspace of approximately 6 meters square. The floriated cross on the gable of the Oratory marks the highest point of the structure at 4.7 metres. The cast iron gate, a feature of the 2007 restoration, at the entrance of the Oratory will be reinstated.

**Layout**

The Oratory has a very simple layout. There is one small enclosed area which is accessible down two low steps adjacent to the entrance. The details of the building include, an opening marked with a trefoiled head and there is a small window on the south elevation. The Oratory was originally intended to be a small space for quiet refection by the sixteenth Lady of the Shrewsbury and there are two small benches internally on either side of the structure. Limited restoration work will be carried out on the adjoining boundary walls to ensure that are repaired to a safe standard. The proposed rebuilding works will also seek to repair and reconstruct the Oratory and boundary walls to their original design, proportions and materials.

**Scale**

The enclosed application drawings (ref: AL2.05 and AL2.04) illustrate the scale of the proposed development. As it is only a small historic structure which has been in place for many years, it is not expected to be out of context with its surroundings, indeed rebuilding the structure will have a positive impact on the garden. As detailed above the original building proportions will be retained as part of the rebuilding works.

**Landscaping**

The rebuilding work to the structure is not intended to alter the existing landscaping.

**Appearance**

A list of the materials proposed to be used in the rebuilding of the Oratory structure is included in the enclosed method statement and application form. As the method statement and covering letter state the majority of the structure will be constructed using materials salvaged from the Oratory.

**Access**

The structure is only accessible from the entrance way within the Birdcage gardens. Alton Towers Resort is open to visitors during between March and October each year. However, there is no public access to the Birdcage gardens. The structure can be viewed from the footpath on its southern elevation.

**Significance of Heritage Asset**

As previously mentioned, the structure is part of the Garden Wall east of Alton Towers which is Grade II listed. This application seeks to rebuild the listed building to its restored condition and reinstate the heritage value that has been lost through the recent damage. The structure contributes to the overall setting of the unique historic landscape found at the theme park, which Alton Towers Resorts wish to see protected and maintained.