

Design & Access Statement – Dark Forest, Theme Park Facility Building

Alton Towers, Alton: Proposed installation of 6no portable cabins with tensile sheet domed canopy between forming a new purpose-made structure.

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1.0 Introduction

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Smytheman Architectural in support of an application for full planning consent submitted to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, commissioned on behalf of Merlin Entertainments, Alton Towers. This document intends to demonstrate that the applicant has carefully considered the site, the building and the wider context when formulating the proposals.

This document should be read in conjunction with the following drawings:

- ATFB-SA-DF-XX-DR-A-0101_Location Plan
- ATFB-SA-DF-XX-DR-A-0102_Existing Site Plan
- ATFB-SA-DF-XX-DR-A-0302_Existing Sections and Elevations
- ATFB-SA-DF-XX-DR-A-0103_Proposed Site Plan
- ATFB-SA-DF-XX-DR-A-0201_Proposed Floor Plan
- ATFB-SA-DF-XX-DR-A-0301_Proposed Sections and Elevations
- ATFB-SA-DF-XX-DR-A-1101-No Dig Surfacing Detail

2.0 Location

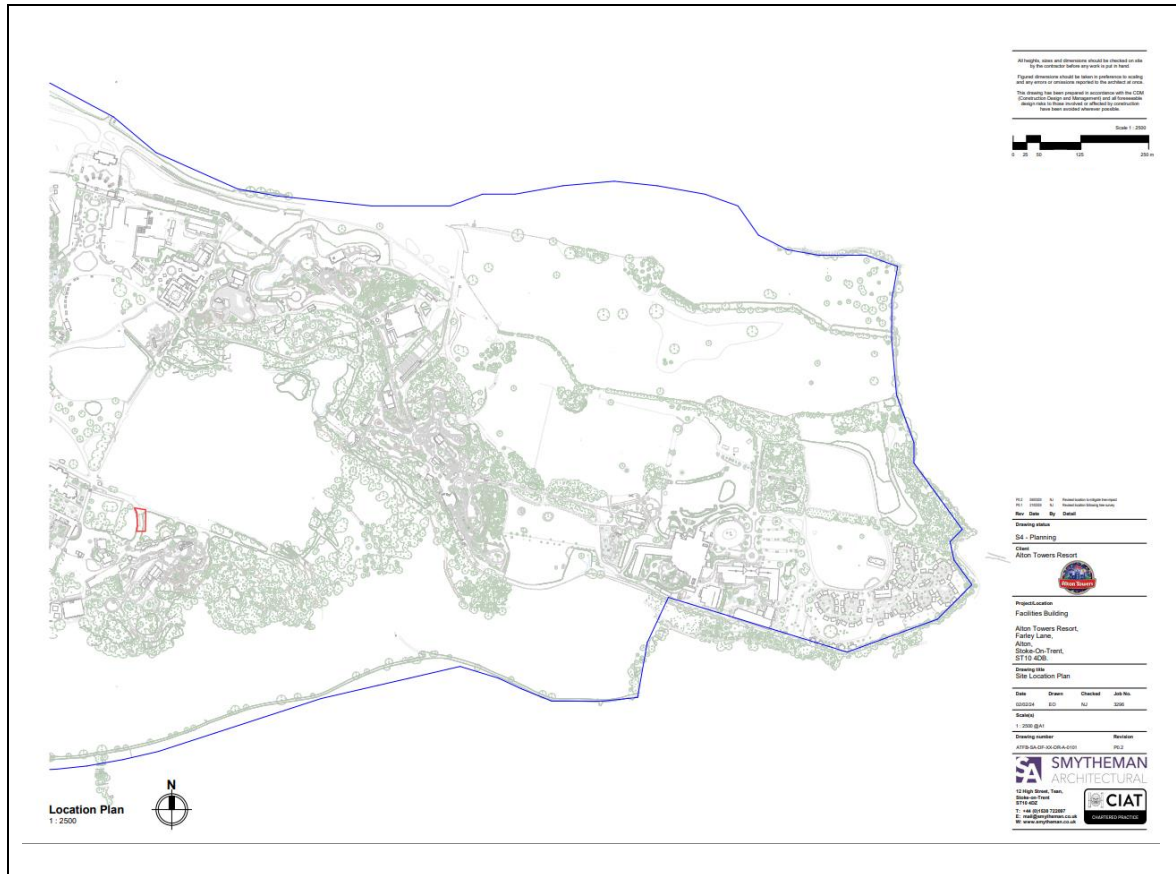


Figure 1: Alton Towers Resort Site Location edged blue with the proposed site edged in Red.

The proposal is for the installation of 6no portacabins (3 per side lengthways) and a domed central roof fixed to a supporting lightweight steel structure.
The application site is within Alton's conservation area and a separate Heritage statement has been provided to supplement this report.

The site is a not in a flood-risk zone.

The site area (defined by the Red Boundary) is 660m².

Under the current Regulations, a check has to be made as to whether the site falls within a flood risk plain. Below is an extract from the Staffordshire Moorlands interactive planning map which indicates the site in question does not fall within either of the flood zone areas.

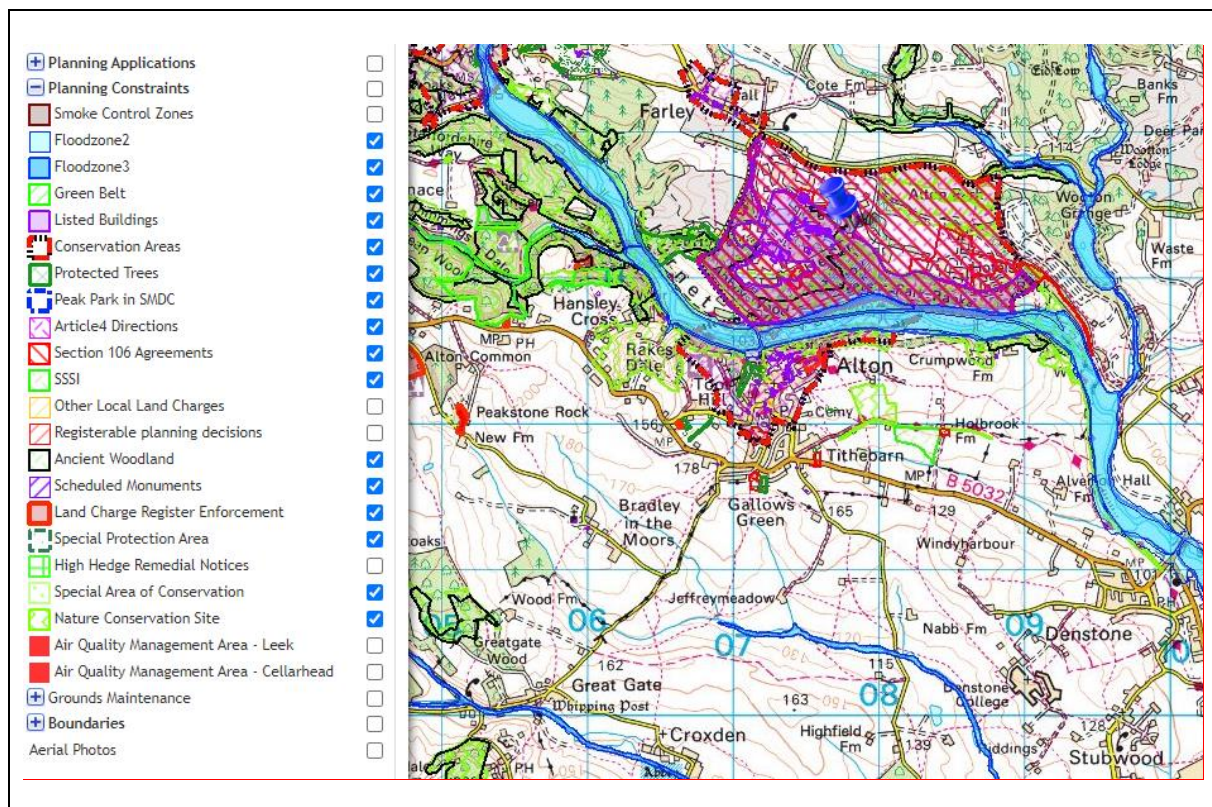


Figure 3: Interactive map extract from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council showing the site located under the 'Blue pin'. This demonstrates that the site is outside of the local authority's designated green belt areas but sits within a conservation area and does not fall into either Floodzone 2 or 3.

3.0 Proposals

The identified site comprises a parcel of land bordered by groups of trees within the themed area known as Dark Forest in the Alton Towers Resort site. To the West is The Alton Towers Manor House and the Legend of the Towers attraction Hex, to the East are two attractions Rita and Thirteen and to the south is Fountain Square a large paved vista with a link to the main Fountain Square Skyride station. The site is currently used for themed use and storage with portacabins placed randomly to provide a mismatch of buildings with no coherent use.

The proposed site has a footprint of approximately 660m².

4.0 Design

4.1 Use

The proposal is for the installation of a structure consisting of a set of domed lightweight steel frames on which a 'tensile sheet' or tarpaulin will be draped tight and fixed between 2 sets of 3 portacabins laid end to end.

4.2 Amount

The proposed layout will result in a 'building' footprint of 472 sq.m.

The two lines of portacabins are located 8.05m apart, 35.85m long and 2.5m wide with an eaves height of 2.5m and linked by a domed ridge approximately 5.70m above ground level. We consider the layout of the group of buildings an efficient use of space within a locality that is currently used for residual storage.



Figure 5. A photorealistic view to show the domed roof between the portacabin side buildings

4.3 Layout

The new layout has been influenced by a need to provide a permanent structure which can be removed should the need arise without damage to the surrounding landscape, providing a Theme Park facility building. The building will have access from the front with additional Fire Escape doors and ramps positioned around the perimeter of the building in accordance with Building Regulations and Fire Officers report. These positions have been noted on the accompanying drawings, but the positions may change depending on the use and internal layout, which at this point is unknown. Water – there is requirement for: - water, 63amp 3 phase electrical supply, Merlin network & CCTV.

4.4 Scale & Massing

The proposed building is situated within a current pathway route, the entrance will be Dark Forest side, not via this path. To the South is Dark Forest which houses the attractions RITA and THIRTEEN. To the West is the attraction Hex. To the East is the grade II listed Swiss Cottage.

4.5 Appearance and Materials

Materials for the various components are as follows:

- Roofing to the dome canopy to comprise a dark green sheet 'tensile' or 'tarpaulin' membrane draped tight over a light-structured steel frame or of similar approval.
- Portacabin walls to be a dark green standard corrugated steel sheeting panel system or similar approved.
- Internal decorative finishes to be approved at a later date.

4.6 Landscaping

The site landscaping will not be affected by this proposal. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been carried out and will be under separate cover as part of the planning application documents.

The report outlines the tree survey, the heights and spread of all trees, Root Protection Areas (RPA's) where noted and thus its conclusion stating that with the use of no dig construction methods the new building will have negligible impact upon the trees spread or roots and that the trees themselves are of little value to the setting of the Park.

4.7 Traffic Generation, Access and Car Parking

There will be no additional traffic generation associated with this proposal.

Access to the site will not be affected by this proposal and as a result there will be no increase in parking requirements.

Disabled users will have full access and level thresholds will be provided throughout.