

The artist who will create a landmark to Queen Elizabeth II is revealed

Tuesday 28 August, 2018

West Country-based sculptor, Simon Hitchens is the artist chosen by Lord Devonport to realise his vision for a monument to Queen Elizabeth II and The Commonwealth. After a month of exhibitions in which shortlisted artists Simon Hitchens, Colin Rose and Peter J. Evans displayed their interpretations of Lord Devonport's idea, which originated some 25 years ago, Hitchens' steel sculpture has been chosen to be taken forward to a pre-planning application.

Speaking of the developments, Lord Devonport said, "The quality of the three proposals was extremely high and it was very important to me to gather public feedback, from the website and our exhibitions which is why we extended our community consultations in July."

The public feedback echoed that of the selection panel with Hitchens' proposal coming out on top, as the unanimous favourite. As such, a team of engineers will now work alongside the artist to develop a detailed technical design which will form part of the pre-planning application required by Northumberland County Council.

"With a project of this size and scale," explained Lord Devonport, "the pre-planning application process allows us to identify some of the specifics of the site and the construction. For example, through some detailed work we have carried out with Ordinance Survey, we have discovered that the optimum height for the landmark is 55m rather than 60m we originally anticipated. With the former being the precise height difference between the landmark site at Cold Law and the nearby Wanney Craggs, this will sit symbiotically within the landscape."

The inspiration for the project, which will ultimately encompass the 55m high landmark as well as walking trails, is the reign of Queen Elizabeth II and her leadership of The Commonwealth. The landmark will celebrate unity, diversity and the shared heritage between The Commonwealth of Nations and will feature artistic input from writers, creatives, artists and sculptors from various Commonwealth countries.

If and when organisers receive permission to build the landmark and national fundraising campaign will be initiated to fund what is expected to be a £2m venture.

elizabethlandmark.co.uk

THE ELIZABETH LANDMARK this initiative is the vision of Lord Devonport and it aims to produce a contemporary landmark and cultural destination at Cold Law on the Ray Estate in Northumberland, celebrating Queen Elizabeth II's services to the country and her lifelong dedication to the Commonwealth. It is an ambition to develop a 55m high public sculpture designed by artist Simon Hitchens. It will be situated on the Ray Estate in Northumberland and will be open to the public 365 days a year. www.elizabethlandmark.co.uk

LORD DEVONPORT is Terence Kearley, 3rd Viscount Devonport (b. 29 August 1944) and is a British Peer. He sat in the House of Lords from 1973 for 26 years. He has been living on the Ray Estate permanently since 1972 and has spent the past four decades restoring buildings, replanting native trees, cultivating the land and building shelters for livestock. He has a passion for the environment, farming and rural communities of Northumberland and works with or champions various foundations and causes to improve the land for farmers and public use. He has played an instrumental part of the regeneration of Consett and pioneered the major development of a windfarm on his land in Northumberland profits from which now guarantee five local parishes significant annual investment for 25 years, to support local regeneration and educational projects.

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