

Hillsborough Castle to be opened up

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Lady Alice Temple In the grounds of Hillsborough Castle

Plans to transform Hillsborough Castle, the Queen's official residence in Northern Ireland, into a major new heritage resource are underway with the help of a grant from HLF.

Development funding of £151,000 was awarded to Historic Royal Palaces to help them fully develop their plans and secure the full £5million grant requested for the project.

The Castle is part of a 100 acre estate made up of historic buildings, gardens and parklands. With its historic design and current use as a functioning royal palace, visitor facilities are in need of improvement in order to welcome the 200,000 people expected to visit the site each year by 2019.

[quote=Paul Mullan, Head of HLF Northern Ireland]"Thanks to National Lottery players, Hillsborough Castle and its gardens will be conserved and opened up to visitors, with the opportunity to learn more about its fascinating heritage at the heart of the attraction."[/quote]

As well as providing visitor essentials such as car parking, two entrance locations, retail space and public toilets, the plans will conserve and protect the heritage of the site while helping the public to learn much more about it.

Historic buildings such as the Pineapple Houses, Hot Houses and Stables will be used to house the new visitor facilities. The Walled Garden and the Lost Garden will see their original planting, cascades and dams restored. New crossings, bridges, adventure play facilities and trails will be introduced throughout the gardens to encourage visitors to explore the beautiful green spaces.

Visitors to the Castle itself will be able to explore three of the seven State Rooms, the Throne Room, the Drawing Room and the Staircase Hall. These rooms will be carefully restored and opened up to give us an insight into their history.

And there will be opportunities for people to get involved in learning new skills by taking part in training activities or by volunteering as a tour guide or gardener.

Paul Mullan, Head of HLF Northern Ireland, said: "Thanks to National Lottery players, Hillsborough Castle and its gardens will be conserved and opened up to visitors, with the opportunity to learn more about its fascinating heritage at the heart of the attraction."



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[The project will see the site transformed and made more accessible with new visitor facilities](#)

[**National Lottery grant to open up Hillsborough Castle's heritage**](#)