

NEWS RELEASE

NEW NATIONAL 'PRAYER' LANDMARK GIVEN GREEN LIGHT AND EXPECTED TO CONTRIBUTE MILLIONS TO THE ECONOMY



A new national landmark which aims to profile a million answered prayers has been given the go ahead to be built on a site near Coleshill on the outskirts of Birmingham. *Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer*, which will eclipse the size of the Angel of the North, will stand at 169 feet and is expected to attract 300,000 visitors each year, contributing £9.3 million to the local economy.

The iconic 'eternal' arch structure will be constructed using one million bricks with each representing individual prayers that have been answered for people across the country. In addition, using interactive technology and a bespoke app, visitors will be able to use their smart device, holding it against any brick to read the individual answered prayers and the personal stories behind them.

After North Warwickshire Borough Council granted planning permission, the Secretary of State ratified the decision, giving *Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer* CEO Richard Gamble the green light to start the build. The former chaplain of Leicester City Football Club is the visionary behind the monumental structure.

Gamble says: "It's been 16 years since the idea was first born. To finally receive the official consent is incredible. We are building a very special landmark and it is an amazing opportunity for the British people to leave a legacy of hope for future generations. *Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer* will make hope visible to the UK. It is unique in that it is all about the community: it is crowd-

funded and a million people will come together to crowd-create this incredible piece of art with their stories of hope. What we're doing is historic."

It is anticipated that *Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer* will create 60 new jobs during its two year construction phase from 2021, thereafter providing 20 full-time positions for employees to work for the charity in the visitor centre, café, bookstore and a 24 hour on-site chaplaincy support service. It is also estimated that the monument will generate an additional gross social value of £1.4 billion, including £430 million in charitable donations.

Gamble continues, "We want to celebrate and remember all the prayers that God has answered for individuals throughout our nation's history. Each answered prayer could provide hope to those who visit. Our desire is to create thought-provoking public art and offer a space for recreation and reflection for everyone. Our hope is that those who visit will see how God can bring peace in life's storms and be encouraged to reflect on the power and relevance of prayer."

Andy Street, the Mayor of the West Midlands and a member of the judging panel who decided on the design comments, "I am delighted *Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer* has now finally got planning permission and work can get underway. It's an incredibly ambitious, stunning project and is a landmark for the Midlands. It has been a long process, but this landmark will serve as a place of hope for many, and one that will help us remember the Christian heritage of our nation. A massive thank you should go to everyone involved who has turned this vision into reality."

After a global competition run by the Royal Institute of British Architects between 2016-2019, the winning Möbius strip concept, using an 'eternal' surface which seemingly has no beginning and no end, was put forward by Paul Bulkeley, from Snug Architects in Southampton.

Construction is expected to begin in Spring 2021 with completion in Autumn 2022.

Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer is looking to gather one million answers to prayer. Share yours by going to www.eternalwall.org.uk/testimony

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For more information, high res images, videos, interviews or comment, please contact Tamara Thompson at *Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer*. E: tamara@eternalwall.org.uk

For more information about *Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer* please visit:

Web: www.eternalwall.org.uk

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/eternalwalluk>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EternalWallUK>

Economic Impact Report Doc:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/twxb6p0ca6zlsu8/Eternal%20Wall%20of%20Answered%20Prayer%20-%20Economic%20infographic%20-%20A4.pdf?dl=0>

NOTES TO EDITOR

About Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer

Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer is a project to build a Christian landmark in a prominent location in the heart of the UK between the M6 and M42 motorways near Birmingham. This piece of public art will be made of one million bricks, each one representing an answered prayer shared by people from our nation, over history and by the current generation. Each one will tell an individual's story of them praying to Jesus and the answer they received. It will be public art declaring 'Jesus is alive, He listens and He answers'.

The vision of this project is to create a nation of storytellers; to transform the culture of the country, to become one where stories of the miraculous can become part of the nation's consciousness; and that Christians are emboldened to share their personal answered prayer stories. There are three elements to this vision being realised.

We wish to...

...preserve the Christian heritage of the nation

...ignite a faith for prayer on a national level

...proclaim Jesus to the country.

The structure will tower 51.5m (169ft) into the skyline and will be seen by over 500K journeys per week, with expected visitor numbers of 300K per annum.

About Richard Gamble

Richard is the visionary behind the colossal project to build *Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer*. Having the idea in 2004, he felt the go ahead to launch in 2015, and for the past five years Richard has shared the incredible concept all around the UK, rallying people behind the belief that one individual's answered prayer can be another person's hope.

After becoming a Christian in 1990 Richard studied at bible college and then worked for British Gas before leaving the big corporate world to make his mark in entrepreneurship, co-founding both a software business and a marketing consultancy. With a keen love of football, he became CEO of Sports Chaplaincy UK, and was former chaplain of Leicester City Football Club (before they were famous and won the Premiership!) Richard lives in Leicestershire and is married with three children.

About the design

Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer takes the shape of an infinity loop called a Möbius strip. When the title of 'The Wall' was first introduced as a name for the project, people raised concerns about how this might have connotations of a dividing and separating structure. However, this interpretation is far from the case. The Möbius strip is unorientable, it has neither beginning nor end, and it can never be classed as a static, finite wall. Created by taking a ribbon, giving it a half-twist, and then re-joining the ends to form a loop, the shape is essentially a single surface running fluently in an ever-connecting line. As a result, a person can never be on the outside or the inside of it. For *Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer*, the continuous nature of the band represents how God is always listening and always answering our prayers.

About Paul Bulkeley

Paul came up with the design for *Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer*, winning a global competition between 2016-2019 run by the Royal Institute of British Architects. His concept gained him top spot in an international field of 133 entries from 28 countries.

He is the founding director of Snug Architects, an award-winning practice that was selected in 2017 by the RIBA as one of only nine role model practices. He has over 22 years of experience in Architecture and Urban Design and is a recognised thought leader in the industry, having spoken internationally on design and business ethics. Paul is also a Teaching Fellow at the University of Southampton where he pioneered a civil engineering and architecture degree. Paul lives in Lymington, near the Hampshire coast with his wife and four children, but grew up on the banks of the river Congo.