

After investigation last season, there has been interest in rebuilding the **Spire of Oblivion's Edge**, a ruined settlement in **Screed** near the **Black Plateau**. Oblivion's Edge was once devoted to the observation and analysis of the Black Plateau, built as close as possible without being subject to that phenomenon's deleterious effects. Although mostly reduced to ruin during the fall of Spiral, an elite team of crack civil servants have stolen into Screed to assess the possibility of returning it to its former glory.

The region that the Spire of Oblivion's Edge is situated in is a harsh landscape of ruins and rocky desolation. The jagged ridge that the Spire stands on, a ridge that eventually rises into the flank of the Plateau itself, sees little life - few trees grow, although a large number of hot springs bubble up amongst its cracked summits and pour streams down towards the flatter lands around it. The road that once led to the Spire has largely collapsed under landslides, and very few of the cliff-face walkways have survived. Currently, the main surviving paths to the Spire are those staircases hewed out of the ridge's very rock.

Almost nothing remains of the Spire above ground. The settlement is mostly reduced to tumbled stones and a few half-collapsed walls. The terraces have succumbed to decades of hammering rain and howling wind, with mudslides tearing great gouges out of them. The Spire relied on the **Night Orchard** for its mana - a series of mana sites in the form of carefully-sculpted pits dug into the ground, within which carefully tended growths of crystal would slowly build into entire, glittering, gleaming trees of raw mana that could be harvested - but the crystal-pits are now mostly collapsed or half-buried, their occult geometries ruined but for a **single, powerful site** that has somehow survived the ravages of time. Twin shrines of Courage and Wisdom, situated at each end of the ridge, are nothing but dilapidated shells of stone now.

Beneath the ground, however, the civil servants have found the Spire's subterranean halls and galleries to be largely intact. There are some collapses and cave-ins, but the old halls here have withstood ruination - some of which bear the truly ancient hallmarks of the precursors who once raised Spires in these lands before humans ever walked here. The Spire's central vault, still magically protected and, according to investigation at the summit, housing a protective spirit of Night, is sealed off by a tunnel collapse.

Based on what is left of the Spire of Oblivion's Edge, the Civil Service has assessed the **following costs would be involved for rebuilding the Spire**. Fortunately, the extensive subterranean galleries mean that there is a solid foundation upon which to begin. All of the following costings would **require a Senate motion** authorising the commission, and would be classified as a **folly**.

- Rebuilding Oblivion's Edge to serve as a **basic outpost** would cost 10 White Granite and 20 Crowns in labour costs. This would not serve as a true Spire - it would not be a settlement, but rather a habitable watch-post keeping vigil over the Black Plateau's borders.
- With 20 White Granite and 40 Crowns in labour costs, Oblivion's Edge could be rebuilt as a **minor Spire** - an actual settlement capable of housing a permanent population of civilians.
- With 35 White Granite and 70 Crowns in labour costs, Oblivion's Edge could be restored to its former state as a **moderately-sized Spire**. However, while it could house a significant population, that population would not spring up from no-where overnight - effort would be needed to persuade citizens to come to Oblivion's Edge and begin a new life there.

- With 50 White Granite and 100 Crowns in labour costs, Oblivion's Edge could be built larger and prouder than it ever was before, with structures befitting a **major Spire** and with plenty of room for a burgeoning population to grow within.

In addition to the above, any of the sizes of reconstruction could be augmented in the following ways.

- By spending an additional 10 White Granite and 20 Crowns in labour costs, Oblivion's Edge could be rebuilt as a Citadel rather than as a Spire - with sturdy defences, drilling grounds and training houses for Sentinels. This would **not** render the Citadel the equivalent of an actual fortification, but would help protect it against what dangers the Black Plateau may vomit out, and allow it more military means for responding to events around the Black Plateau.
- By spending an additional 10 Mithril and 20 Crowns in labour costs, Oblivion's Edge could be rebuilt with magical foci, divinatory spires, occult sinks and other arcane structures to aid it in its vigil over the Black Plateau. Such construction would return Oblivion's Edge to its former purpose as a monitoring Spire, able to sense shifts in the Plateau's resonance more keenly and granting more magical means for responding to events.
- By spending an additional 10 Weirwood and 20 Crowns in labour costs, Oblivion's Edge could be rebuilt with improved terraces and gardens, its Virtue shrines raised up to greater heights, its stores improved and the local infrastructure around it rebuilt. Screed is a harsh environment and the Spire will require food and resources to be imported to sustain it, but this extensive construction would not just render Oblivion's Edge self-sufficient but indeed a producer of goods, and make it a faster-growing oasis of life in the waste, with more culture and luxuries for its population. This would allow the Spire more resourceful and mercantile means for responding to events around the Black Plateau.

In addition to all the above, the Civil Service have identified certain other possibilities. The proximity to the Black Plateau is harsh and wearing on the mortal mind, especially without the resources that the additional construction with Weirwood would grant the inhabitants. Reportedly, the previous Spire-dwellers used a phoenix feather to help combat the Plateau's effects, but there are other means that could ease the weight. Were a dose of True Liao secured, then a conjunction might allow the placement of a **permanent Consecration** on the site to hold back the Plateau's influence. Alternatively, gathering the 24 ilium needed to place a **permanent Solace of Chimes** in the Spire would also have much the same benefit. Finally, given the magical nature of the Plateau phenomenon and the risk of meddling by the Realms, were some sort of large-scale version of There Is No Welcome Here placed on the area and made permanent with a significant sum of ilium, it would aid in holding the Plateau's influence back and also offer great protection against Realm spirits and magical threats.

Rebuilding the Spire can begin immediately, if desired. However, the Grendel currently hold Screed. This does not make the effort impossible - the orcs have little to do with the Black Plateau and largely give it a wide berth. If rebuilding begins prior to Screed's conquest, there is the risk that the Grendel may discover and attack it, which might be fended off via a conjunction of the Sentinel Gate - but it is still a danger that must be kept in mind. The Civil Servants suggest, however, that were the **Vale of Shadows** ritual to be placed upon the sole remaining functioning mana site on the Spire's grounds, that would likely protect the whole location from such a threat. It seems that this mana site will be amongst the **spoils of war** in Spiral.