

# **Alton Towers Resort: Pods Development Phase 2 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment**

Alton Towers Resort

27 February 2018

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# **Appendices**

**Appendix 1: Plan Showing Landscape Policy Designations**

**Appendix 2: Landscape Character Areas**

**Appendix 3: Key Plan Showing Viewpoints**

**Appendix 4: Visual Assessment Sheets**



## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Lichfields to examine the landscape and visual impact of the Resort Pods development proposals.
- 1.2 The consideration of the landscape and visual impacts of the proposals involves two separate but inter-related assessments:
- 1 consideration of the impact on the character and quality of the landscape in the vicinity of the site; and
  - 2 an evaluation of the visual impact of the development on views, viewers and visual amenity.
- 1.3 While the assessment has also taken into consideration the heritage receptors in the vicinity of the site, including conservation areas and listed buildings which may be affected by the development proposals, specific consideration of the significance and impact of the proposed development on below ground heritage assets is set out in the Archaeological Impact Letter prepared by Archaeological Research Services Ltd and in relation to above ground built heritage assets in the Cover Letter prepared by Lichfields.
- 1.4 The report is structured as follows:
- 1 Section 2 sets out the policy context for the assessment
  - 2 Section 3 describes the methodology
  - 3 Section 4 sets the baseline for the assessment
  - 4 Section 5 assesses the effects of the development on landscape character and the visual impact
  - 5 Section 6 summarises the report.

2.0

## **Policy Context**

### **Site Designations**

2.1

A review of national, regional and local policy has been undertaken to establish the policy baseline for development which may affect the landscape character of Alton Towers Resort and the surrounding area. Various landscape and heritage designations apply to the site and can be summarised as:

- 1 The gardens at Alton Towers Resort are listed Grade I on the Register of Parks and Gardens and incorporate several listed structures and buildings, including the Grade II\* listed Towers. These elements are all designated heritage assets (NPPF)
- 2 The estate is located within the Alton-Farley Conservation Area (designated 1971) the character and appearance of which should be preserved or enhanced
- 3 The site is also within a Special Landscape Area
- 4 The Bunbury Earthworks, located to the south west of the Towers, is a Scheduled Ancient Monument
- 5 The area of woodland to the south of the application site is identified as 'Grade I County Site of Biological Importance.' The effects of the development on the nature conservation value of the site are considered in the separate Ecology Report.

### **Relevant Planning Policy**

2.2

National and local level policy and guidance relating to landscape protection have also been reviewed. Of particular relevance is the following:

- 1 Local Planning Policy and Guidance:
  - a SMDC Core Strategy (2014)
  - b Churnet Valley Masterplan (2014)
  - c Alton/Farley Conservation Area Designation (1971)
- 2 Landscape Character Assessments:
  - a Natural England National Character Area Profiles (2014)
  - b Landscape and Settlement Character Assessments (2008)
  - c Churnet Valley Landscape Character Assessment (2011)
- 3 Relevant Guidance:
  - a Woodland Management Plan (2011)
  - b Alton Towers Pods Ecological Assessment (2018), prepared by Baker Consultants
  - c Landscape institute Guideline for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (2013)
  - d Landscape Institute - Advice Note 01/09 "Use of photography and photomontage in landscape and visual assessment" (2009)



## **3.0 Assessment Methodology**

### **Approach to Assessment**

- 3.1 This study has been undertaken using a methodology for landscape and visual impact assessment based on wide experience of analysing the effects of developments in urban and rural areas and devising measures to mitigate potential effects. The methodology is in general conformity with the approach set out in the guidelines prepared by the Countryside Commission and the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment (3rd edition 2013).
- 3.2 This report comprises two interrelated assessments:
- An assessment of the impact, or change, on the character and quality of the landscape; and
  - An assessment of the visual impact of development on views, viewers and visual amenity.
- 3.3 Landscape and visual impacts generally, but do not necessarily, coincide.
- 3.4 The assessment comprised a three-stage process:
- 1 A desk based study of the site and surroundings (the information gathering stage - the baseline)
  - 2 Analysis of the information gained to establish the character of the Site and the surrounding landscape, the existing impact of the Site and the views and viewers likely to be affected by the Development, and
  - 3 An assessment of the impact on the character and quality of the surrounding landscape and impact on views, viewers and visual impact due to the Development.
- 3.5 The significance of the effects on the landscape and/or visual resources is a function of the sensitivity of the affected landscape and visual receptors and the magnitude of change that they will experience. The resultant effects on the landscape and visual resources can be beneficial, neutral or adverse.
- 3.6 The assessment considers the significant environmental effects during the construction period as well as in the long term when the development is in use. In addition to the indirect effect the development would have on the wider landscape it also considers the direct environmental effects on the existing landscape within the site where there is potential loss of features of landscape value.
- 3.7 The night time lighting effects are also considered within this assessment.
- 3.8 The extent of survey and analysis for the assessment of landscape value and character has been based on the landscape and visual assessment work already undertaken in connection with the Alton Towers Long Term Plan. This identifies landscape character areas and key views. The provision of a pods development forms part of the Long Term Plan and its effects are confined to a sub-set of the views identified in the Plan.

### **Landscape Assessment Methodology**

- 3.9 Landscape is a product of the interaction between a range of physical characteristics (e.g. topography, vegetation and buildings) and human activity (e.g. land use, human culture and history).
- 3.10 The assessment of landscape effects requires the existing characteristics and quality of the application site and the surrounding area to be considered. The relative quality and sensitivity of the surrounding landscape is defined and quantified in order that the proposed development

and its effects can be evaluated. Sensitive landscape components include landscape designated areas and in this case, the Alton Farley Conservation Area and listed buildings and structures (specifically the listed buildings on the Alton Towers site).

- 3.11 Landscape impact assessments require a balance of objective and subjective techniques. Objective techniques usually involve measurement and quantification of the various components which make up the environment. These techniques establish the “character” of the area. Subjective approaches, on the other hand, rely on the judgement and responses of the surveyor. They are generally more descriptive and seek to evoke the aesthetic characteristics of the landscape and the reactions of people to it. They establish the “quality” of the area.
- 3.12 For each character type/area identified, the key characteristics which give the area its distinct sense of place are listed. These are usually positive features but can also be negative and are important indicators of the current character of the landscape. If the key characteristics identified were to be lost or changed, there would be consequences for the current character of the landscape. This would normally be negative but can be positive where the original feature had a negative influence on the character, as is often the case in urban fringe locations. Key characteristics are therefore seen as sensitive receptors that could be directly or indirectly affected by the Development.
- 3.13 The assessment of landscape character/type comprises a factual description of the overall character for each character type/area, with reference to landform, land cover, land use and settlement and how these interact together. Comments on condition, or quality, are included as appropriate. This is followed by a judgement of the value, or importance, of each character type/area and the potential for improvement which, combined, are an indicator of the ability of a landscape to sensitively accommodate new development. The assessment of the value of is based on the criteria given in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Landscape Value

Value	Typical Criteria
Very high (Exceptional)	Strong positive landscape character/structure or visually coherent groups of well-designed buildings/streets and spaces Distinctive/rare/unique features worthy of conservation Strong sense of place May be protected by national or international landscape or heritage designation (world heritage site/National Park/AONB) No detracting features Sensitive to inappropriate change
High	Strong positive landscape character/structure or coherent groups of well-designed buildings/streets and spaces Distinctive/rare/unique features worthy of conservation Strong sense of place May be protected by national or regional landscape or heritage designation (National Park or Conservation Area) Occasional detracting features Sensitive to inappropriate change
Medium	Recognised landscape character/structure or relatively coherent grouping of buildings reasonably well-related to the public realm Some features worthy of conservation Sense of place Some detracting features Potentially sensitive to inappropriate change

Low	Distinguishable landscape character/structure Buildings of limited visual interest with poor spatial definition Some features worthy of conservation No particular sense of place Some detracting features Scope for positive change
Poor	Weak landscape character/structure or undistinguished area lacking sense of place No features worthy of conservation Frequent detracting features Frequent scope for positive change
Very Poor	Degraded/damaged landscape character/structure or poor townscape lacking cohesive form and structure with very little or no visual interest Extensive detracting features Significant scope for positive change
Value	Typical Criteria

3.14 The magnitude of landscape and townscape effects is set out in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Definition of Magnitude of Change to Landscape/Townscape

Classification	Magnitude
High	Total loss or major alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the baseline and/or or totally out of character with the receiving landscape
Medium	Partial loss or alteration of one or more key elements, features or characteristics and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not substantially uncharacteristic when considered in the context of the receiving landscape
Low	Minor loss or alteration of one or more key elements, features or characteristics of the baseline and/or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic in the context of the receiving landscape
Negligible	Very minor loss of one or more key elements, features or characteristics of the baseline and/or the introduction of elements that are very similar to the existing landscape

## Visual Assessment Methodology

3.15 The assessment of the visual impact of the development relates to the changes that will occur in views as a result of the development, viewers' responses to those changes and the effect the changes have on visual amenity. The existing situation - the baseline - has been recorded, establishing the components, character and amenity of the existing scene. Analysis of the effects of the proposed development on those views has then been undertaken with reference to the application plans, photographs of the existing situation and the visualisations produced by Nichols Brown Webber.

3.16 To establish the visual role of the study site, a desktop assessment was carried out using GIS software followed by fieldwork to identify key public viewpoints and to confirm the site's "visual envelope". This term refers to the zone within which the study site is currently visible. The extent of the visual envelope is influenced by three main factors. These are:

- obstacles between the viewer and the site, (vegetation, mounds or buildings);
- topography; and,

- weather conditions.

- 3.17 The result of the GIS assessment and fieldwork led to the identification of a number of key views in the Alton Towers Long Term Plan. From this more general work, seven views have been selected as ones which could be affected by the proposed pod development (see Plan 373/99/20 at Appendix 3) and are described further below.
- 3.18 The field survey was undertaken on a number of dates in order to identify both summer and winter visibility. As the establishment of visibility and important views is constrained by the levels of public accessibility, the study considers visibility from roads, public footpaths beyond the site and public open space. The effect of the development on walkers using the footpaths crossing the Alton Towers Resort is considered under Landscape Character.
- 3.19 Visual effects relate to changes in available views of the landscape and the effects of those changes on people. Visual impact assessment is concerned with:
- direct effects (adverse or beneficial) due to proposed development upon representative views through intrusion or obstruction;
  - the reactions and numbers of viewers who may be affected; and,
  - the overall effects on visual amenity.
- 3.20 The effect on a view is a factor of the sensitivity of the view and the magnitude of the change to it. The sensitivity of visual receptors to change is categorised according to a number of factors: the quality and sensitivity of the landscape, the activity and expectations of the receptors and the importance of the view. Sensitivity to change is rated as set out in **Table 3.3** below.

Table 3.3: Sensitivity of Receptors of Views

Classification	Sensitivity (capacity of people, at particular locations - the visual receptors - to accept change).
High	Public open spaces where focus is on views/ public rights of way through highly valued landscapes, immediate setting of elements of national cultural heritage value that are not compromised, residential properties with good visual amenity
Medium	Public rights of way through landscapes of moderate scenic/ value, setting for elements of local cultural heritage value or national value whose settings are already compromised, residents with compromised visual amenity
Low	Observer within area of low landscape quality, or medium landscape quality where significant elements detract, people at work or transient views receptors such as motorists.
Negligible	Observer within area of very low landscape quality (e.g. industrial areas/busy main roads ) that has very few positive characteristics

- 3.21 The magnitude of the change to representative views has been predicted using the visualisations which provide an understanding of the distribution of land use, heights and location of buildings set out on the application plans. The magnitude of change is categorised as negligible, low, medium or high and these are set out in **Table 3.4** below

Table 3.4: Definition of Magnitude of Visual Effect

Classification	Magnitude
High	Very large change to the view. Development comprises major new

	component in the view. No/limited screening.
Medium	The proposals are a visible and recognisable new element within the scene and would be readily noticed. May replace existing development. Screening of some but not all elements.
Low	The proposals can be seen but would comprise a minor component in the view. Awareness of the proposals would not have a major effect on the scene. Significant screening
Negligible/Nil	Nil to very slight change to views.

## Significance Criteria

- 3.22 The significance of the effect on the landscape or view is categorised as being high, medium, low or negligible. The nature of the change to the landscape or view is categorised as being beneficial, neutral or adverse dependent upon the character of the existing scene/area and the new development's role within it. The matrix for identifying these effects is shown in **Table 3.5** below. Those cells shaded grey represent landscape or visual effects which are likely to be environmentally significant:

Table 3.5 Matrix of Effect Significance

	Sensitivity of Receptor/Receiving Environment to Change/Effect				
Magnitude of Change /Effect		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
	High	Major	Moderate to Major	Minor to Moderate	Negligible
	Medium	Moderate to Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Low	Minor to Moderate	Minor	Negligible to Minor	Negligible
	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

- 3.23 It is important to note that while the matrix above provides a tool for assessing the effects of the development. Professional judgement will need to be applied in reaching conclusions rather than a mechanistic application of the formula.

## Consultation

- 3.24 The representative views contained in this assessment have been agreed with officers at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council as part of the pre-application process.

## Summary of Proposals

- 3.25 The proposals comprise Phase 2 of the pod development at Alton Towers and includes the following:

*"102 accommodation pods, shower and toilet facility buildings, reception building, tipis and associated support buildings, hard and soft landscaping and parking and drainage works at Alton Towers Resort"*

- 3.26 The Phase 2 development will be located to the east of the existing Alton Towers Hotels and to the north of the existing Enchanted Village (Phase 1 lodge development) on an area of land used for overflow car parking.

- 3.27 A full summary of the proposals is set out in the cover letter and Design and Access Statement.

**4.0****Baseline**

- 4.1 The Alton Towers site occupies a small ridge above the wooded valley along the river Churnet to the south and a minor tributary stream to the north. The topography of the site ranges from 140m AOD to the north east to around 188m AOD to the west at the highest point of the site. The southern half of the site is predominantly mature woodland. To the north east of the site the land cover is more open with meadows and areas of car parking – the Alton Towers Hotel and Splash Landings Hotel are located in this area. To the western side of the site there are the themed areas of the park, the Towers and original Gardens.
- 4.2 The most visible structures on the site include the Towers (Grade II\*), the Flag Tower (Grade II), the Alton Towers Hotel and Splash Landings Hotel. Several of the more recent rides have elements reaching approximately 20-25m above ground level. The existing trees on the site range in height, on average, from 15m to 20m tall. However, there are several notable specimens of up to 30m in height.
- 4.3 The application site is located to the east of the Alton Towers Hotels and occupies an area of 1.87ha. The site is currently maintained grass and used for overflow parking during peak times. The site is well screened by woodland to the north, beyond Car Park J, and east. There is also woodland screening to the south, beyond the approved Phase 1 lodge development. As a result, the site is well contained in terms of a view from beyond the Alton Towers Resort site boundary. There are a small number of existing mature trees on the site. Beyond the woodland screen to the east is the JCB testing site.
- 4.4 As detailed at section 2.0, Alton Towers Resort is located within an area subject to a number of landscape specific designations. These have been considered as part of establishing the sensitivity of the landscape change.

**Landscape Character Baseline**

Table 4.1 Landscape Character Baseline

Character Area	Description	Receptors	Character Area Sensitivity
1. Alton Towers - Woodland and Gardens	This area includes the main Towers building, the wooded valley sides and mature broadleaf woodland in the Alton Towers Resort. The average tree height is approximately 20m with some notable examples of Redwood and Pine reaching 27-30m (approx. 212m AOD). A variety of additional woodland species both native and non-native have been added to the registered park and garden through its history as a country residence and park visitor attraction. Within this Character Area is an Iron Age hill fort.	Registered Garden, Iron Age hill fort, and listed buildings. Within the Alton/Farley Conservation Area. Nature conservation site and site of Biological importance.	High sensitivity - Preservation and enhancement of heritage and biodiversity encouraged. Direct and setting effects on listed buildings

2. Alton Towers - Car park	Open area with little built form. Predominantly large areas of hard standing used as car parking as well as grassed areas east of the Alton Towers Hotel and Spa	No biological receptors. Within the Alton/Farley Conservation Area. Footpath bisects land to east of Alton Towers Hotel	Low sensitivity - Potential for improvement.
3. Alton Towers - Meadows / Overflow car park	Landform in this Character Area comprises open grass land (used as overflow parking), individual mature and veteran trees.	A Site of biological importance but not applicable to the application site. Within the Alton/Farley Conservation area.	Medium sensitivity - Potential for improvement.
4. Alton Towers - Themed attraction areas and Hotel	Visitor rides and attractions are interspersed with mature trees and ancillary visitor and service buildings. Attractions are connected with pedestrian walkways. Built form in this Character Area is predominantly between one and two storeys with an average height of approximately 192m AOD. Theme park rides in this Character Area are up to 201m AOD in height (Rita).	The setting of The Towers and other listed buildings. Within the Alton/Farley Conservation Area	Low sensitivity - Potential for improvement.
5. Alton Village	Small village sheltered within a dip in the landscape to the south of the steep wooded valley of the Churnet. This Character Area predominantly made from brick and sandstone residential development with notable buildings of Alton castle and St Peter's Church.	Alton Castle, St Peter's Church and listed buildings (approx 40). Within Alton/Farley Conservation Area	Medium Sensitivity - setting of historic buildings should be protected.
6. Landscape to south of the Churnet (Dissected sandstone uplands)	Flat open fields with hedgerows and some mature trees. Dispersed villages on smoothly undulating upland pasture. Narrow lanes follow boundaries of late 18th century field enclosure in regular rectangular pattern.	Countryside character. No specific heritage receptors.	Medium/high sensitivity – Potential for hedge row improvement.

7. Landscape to the north of the Churnet (Dissected sandstone cloughs and valleys, sub type forest)	Land rises above the Churnet to peaks at Cauldon and Weaver Hills. Hills give clear views across the lower plateau to the south. Land use is primarily pasture with substantial field boundaries, although some are in need of repair.	Countryside character. No specific heritage receptors.	Medium/high sensitivity – removal of landscape detractors encouraged.
8. Highland fringes of limestone, gritstone and dissected sandstone	Hill tops are covered by open grassland allowing long views across the surrounding landscape. Detractors to the character include quarries extracting limestone.	Countryside character. No specific heritage receptors.	Medium/high sensitivity – removal of landscape detractors encouraged.

Source: Lichfields

4.5 The Character Areas above identify that the landscape to the north and south of the Alton Towers Resort has a medium/high sensitivity to change, with existing detracting features such as quarries and degraded hedgerows. Although the Staffordshire Landscape Character Assessment identifies these areas as very sensitive to change they are not classed as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or any other national designation. As a result, they are considered to have a medium/high sensitivity to change in this assessment.

4.6 The Alton Towers Resort is divided into four distinct sub Character Areas; (1) the Towers, woodland and gardens, (2) the car park, (3) the meadows/overflow car park and (4) the attractions and hotels. The car park character area is identified as having a low sensitivity to change. While the whole of the ATR area is within the Alton/Farley Conservation area, the sensitivity to change varies according to the nature, presence or proximity of existing development. Areas of the Alton Towers Resort site are therefore considered to vary from low to high in relation to their sensitivity to change.

## Visual Impact Baseline

4.7 The scope of visual impact assessment includes seven viewpoints which have been assessed in connection with the proposed development. Each view is classified in terms of its receptors and sensitivity. The numbering is based on the Long Term Plan Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. These numbers will be used in all site specific visual assessment work in order to achieve consistency and avoid confusion. In this summary table, the existing role of the Alton Towers Resort is identified, as this sets the baseline for future development on the site. Photographs for each view (as existing and proposed) are contained in Appendix 4.

Table 4.2 Baseline View Sensitivity

View	Role of Alton Towers/view descriptions	Receptors	Sensitivity
2	The Towers and Flag Tower are visible above existing woodland on the site. Glimpses of the north car park are available between hedgerows marking the southern boundary of the meadows. The JCB test track is just visible. The application site is not visible	Walkers	High
5	The Alton Towers northern meadows are visible	Walkers	High



	in the middle ground. The application site is obscured by trees.		
9	The Splash Landings Hotel is glimpsed as a red and white roof line amongst the existing woodland on and surrounding the site. The turrets of the flag tower are glimpsed on the tree line. No other built form within the park is visible. The application site is not visible	Walkers	High
12	View from Town Head (1) footpath. Glimpses of Splash Landings, ATH, mobile masts and light masts. The application site is not visible	Walkers, horseriders	High
13A	View from Town Head (2) footpath. Glimpses of Glimpses of Splash Landings, ATH, mobile masts and light mast. The application site is not visible	Walkers, horseriders	High
13B	View from Town Head (3) footpath. Glimpses of Glimpses of Splash Landings, ATH, mobile masts and light mast. The application site is not visible	Walkers, horseriders	High
13C	View from Town Head (4) footpath. Glimpses of Glimpses of Splash Landings, ATH, mobile masts and light mast. The application site is not visible	Walkers, horseriders	High

- 4.8 The numbered views are a subset of those identified in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment produced for the Long Term Plan. These have been selected as a representative of views for testing. In other views the application site is not visible due to topography or other screening or due to the direction of the view.

## Night

- 4.9 At night, the Alton Towers Resort contains a number of lighting sources which are visible in the views identified above and in the wider landscape. These include:

- Streetlamps on internal access roads
- Safety and security lighting (for example in car parks)
- General amenity lighting
- Light from moving vehicles
- Light spill from the windows of buildings

- 4.10 These effects combine to create a higher level of artificial light source than would be typically found in a rural area.

## 5.0

## Assessment

## 5.1

The baseline assessments identify the sensitivity of the relevant surrounding landscape character and identified views of the application site. The sensitivity is used to assess the potential locations identified for new development in order to establish parameters for the scale of new development which can be accommodated without significant effect to the landscape character or visual amenity surrounding the site.

## 5.2

The assessment below is based on a series of visualisations produced by Nichols Brown Webber and set out at Appendix 4. For each viewpoint, the visualisation sheet shows:

- 1 The view as existing (all winter views)
- 2 The view as proposed showing the proposed development as green wirelines.

### Effects on Landscape Character

## 5.3

The proposed development is within Alton Towers Meadows/Overflow Car Park character area which is identified as a character area of 'low sensitivity'. The predicted effects on the character area are as follows:

- 1 Visibility of parts of the pods development in views from the public footpath which passes through the Alton Towers Resort to the east of the Alton Towers Hotel
- 2 Loss of open grassland within the character area

## 5.4

The proposed development will be low rise and comprises a modest extension to the existing Resort within the wider landscape. It will be seen in the surrounding context of the existing Phase 1 lodge development to the south (the 'Enchanted Village') and the Alton Towers Hotels to the west. Moreover, the development will be accompanied by a landscaping scheme that will assist in screening the development from the surrounding area. Accordingly, the cumulative effect of the proposals on walkers is not considered to be significant.

### Visual Impact

## 5.5

The visual impact of the proposals on the seven key views has also been considered. A summary of the visual effects is provided below.

Table 5.2 Summary of Visual Effects

View	Sensitivity	Effect	Comment
2	High	Nil	No part of the Phase 2 pods development will be visible
5	High	Nil	No part of the Phase 2 pods development will be visible
9	High	Nil	No part of the Phase 2 pods development will be visible
12	High	Nil	No part of the Phase 2 pods development will be visible
13A	High	Negligible	Only the top of the tipis from the Phase 2 pods development will be visible during winter months.
13B	High	Nil	No part of the Phase 2 pods development

			will be visible
13C	High	Nil	No part of the Phase 2 pods development will be visible

- 5.6 Overall, it is concluded that the Phase 2 pods development will have no discernible impact on the surrounding key views. The tipis would be just visible in View 13A but the colour and tone of the fabric structures would be muted and hence recessive. Over time, landscaping around the lodge and pod sites will mask these views completely.

## **Night**

- 5.7 The proposed development will be accompanied by a lighting strategy that will be based on low level lighting which would be sensitive to the potential for bats in the area. Accordingly, lux levels would be relatively low to ensure there is no adverse ecological impact. Therefore, proposals would not lead to any landscape character or visual harm as a result of the introduction of additional sources of artificial light.
- 5.8 The car parking for the pod development is located at Car park J. This area is currently the subject of an application for safety and amenity lighting. The lighting scheme at Car Park J has also been designed to minimise light spill and sky glow effects. There would be no material cumulative effects in conjunction with the pods' lighting scheme or in comparison with the extant Lodges Phase 2 planning permission.

## **Overall Effects**

- 5.9 Overall, it is concluded that the proposed pods development would have a negligible impact on key views, given that the proposed development will not be visible from any of the surrounding views, apart from a minor temporary impact to viewpoint 13A, where the very top of the tipis would be seen during winter months.

## **6.0 Summary and Conclusion**

- 6.1 The assessment has considered the landscape and visual effects of the proposed Phase 2 pods development.
- 6.2 The proposed development will be seen in the context of the existing Enchanted Village development and Alton Towers Hotels adjacent to the application site, and will benefit from a landscaping scheme that will assist in screening the development. The effect on landscape character is therefore considered to be negligible.
- 6.3 With respect to the long range views of the site from beyond the Resort boundary, a detailed assessment has been undertaken for seven viewpoints identified for assessment in the Long Term Plan. The proposed development will be screened by existing woodland and accordingly the proposals will not be visible, thus having no discernible effect on the key views.
- 6.4 Overall, the pods development will not result in any materially adverse effects on the landscape character or key views during the day or at night.



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