

Theme park aim campers with m

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A MOORLANDS leisure park has put forward plans for a major expansion which will create new jobs.

Alton Towers wants to create 102 accommodation pods, showers and toilet blocks and a reception building.

Bosses have submitted a planning application to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council which also includes 'associated support buildings', landscaping, parking and drainage works.

It is anticipated that the development, if approved, would create new employment opportunities at the site.

A design and access statement submitted on behalf of the applicant's by Manser Practice Architects and Designers, said: "Alton Towers Resort is operated by Merlin Entertainments Group Ltd. It is the UK's most popular and largest theme park and the only top 10 visitor attraction in the West Midlands.

"It is a significant contributor to the local and regional economy both directly and indirectly. It is a large employer in Staffordshire Moorlands District Council area providing employment to a range of skill and occupation levels. The majority of employees live locally.

"The proposed Phase 2 pods development will have a positive effect on the local visitor economy by extending the accommodation offer and thus encouraging visitors to stay at the park for a longer period of time. The development will create new employment opportunities at the resort and will contribute to the local economy through direct and indirect spending.

"The site is located to the north of the Enchanted Village Lodges Development.

"The pods have a relatively small individual footprint compared with the existing Enchanted Village lodges on the adjacent site – thus making the general scale of the development acceptable within the surrounding context.

"The existing hotels to the west and canopy range to the east will have a greater height compared to the proposed development. All pods will have a maximum height from finish floor level to ridge of 2.6 metres."

Each pod is designed to sleep up to four people, with one double bed and two singles.

The statement said: "The internal areas are simple (with changing and WC facilities provided elsewhere). They will provide space to sleep, with basic small power, heating and a small window and glazed timber frame door to provide daylight and natural ventilation.

"Materials for the pods are pre-selected and the style has been chosen to complement the surrounding area and adjacent Enchanted Village development but provide a different style of accommodation to address the market demand for a more camping style accommodation.

"The palette natural and rustic in its nature, design to weather into the environment and consists of Siberian larch external cladding, timber door and window frames and galvanised britmet roof tiles."

A decision will be made by planners within 13 weeks.