



**ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**

**VOLUME 2**

**APPENDIX 13.5 – SCHEDULE OF LIKELY  
LANDSCAPE EFFECTS**



## APPENDIX 13.5 SCHEDULE OF LIKELY LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

REGIONAL			
<p><b>Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study 2004</b>  <b>Wooded Estatelands LT</b></p>			
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY	
<p>Key characteristics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rolling topography with localized steep slopes;</li> <li>Large blocks of ancient woodland and mixed plantations of variable sizes;</li> <li>Large parklands and mansion houses;</li> <li>A regular-shaped field pattern dominated by arable field;</li> <li>Small villages with strong vernacular character.</li> </ul> <p>The Wooded Estatelands covers a large strip of landscape from the eastern end of the Costwolds to the north of Bicester. The character is described as <i>"a wooded estate landscape characterised by arable farming and small villages with a strong vernacular character."</i></p> <p>The Study Area does exhibit the majority of the key characteristics listed above. The condition of the landscape is general good, nevertheless field boundary vegetation is occasionally fragmented by extensive farming and there are views of visually intrusive barn complexes and business parks.</p> <p>Most areas have a strong sense of enclosure due to the combined effects of undulating landform, prominent blocks of woodland, hedgerow and hedgerow trees. In places, there are occasional open views across fields but they are frequently interrupted by small areas of woodland and large hedgerow trees.</p>	<p><b>Value</b></p> <p>The Wooded Estatelands LT is an arable landscape frequently interrupted by blocks of woodland, some of which are ancient semi-natural woodland. Within the Study Area, the majority of the LT is not formally designated however, there are two Registered Parks and Gardens, three Conservation Areas, many listed buildings, two Scheduled Monuments and numerous PRow. The hedgerow pattern is strong but there are areas of arable intensification where hedges are well trimmed, intermittent or have been removed entirely. The key characteristics listed in the baseline are well represented in this part of the Wooded Estatelands. Overall, the landscape value is considered to be <b>High</b>.</p>	<p><b>HIGH</b></p>	
	<p><b>Susceptibility</b></p> <p>Although development of the nature proposed is not a common feature of the Study Area, the existing leisure / recreational uses of the Site (as golf course) and other features such as leisure centres or business parks do form occasional features. The local planning policies support the leisure / recreational use of the Site and - as described in the baseline - the landscape contains features that afford a moderate to high level of containment. The M40 and large scale RAF airfield (c. 1km to the south west of the Site) have a noticeable influence over the character of the landscape and considerably reduce the level of tranquillity, especially when close to their proximities. Overall, the Wooded Estatelands LT has a medium level of ability to accept the type of the development proposed, with landscape susceptibility considered to be <b>Medium</b>.</p>		
		MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)	EFFECT
		<p><b>Construction Phase</b></p> <p>During construction, alterations to the landscape resources of the Site would have a limited influence on the overall character of the Wooded Estate LT, with the majority of the mature boundary vegetation of the Site retained as part of the Proposed Development and most areas of planting retained in the northern areas of the Site. Construction works would introduce a temporary uncharacteristic level of activity into the local area but the impact would only affect a small part of the overall character area, in the vicinity of the Proposed Development, with the wider area remaining unaffected. There would be earthworks associated with the creation of a construction platform for the hotel, waterpark, car parks and other associated facilities, with bunding provided along the southern boundaries and the creation of some new ponds. However, these alterations would have a very limited influence on the wider character of the LT. Construction activities (including cranes, plant and construction of new built form) would influence the character of the landscape in close proximity to the Site but would also have a limited influence on the wider character of the LT. Overall, given the extent of enclosure provided by surrounding landscape features, the magnitude of impact is considered to be <b>Low Adverse</b>.</p>	<p><b>Direct Temporary Short Term Minor Adverse</b></p>
	<p><b>Operation Phase (Year 0)</b></p> <p>The Proposed Development would introduce additional large scale built form into the landscape. The resort buildings would be situated on an area currently used as golf course, so would not reduce any of the agrarian features found in the wider landscape. There would be minimal loss of key landscape features, particularly along the M40 and A4095 boundaries, where new native woodland planting and species rich boundary hedgerows are proposed to strengthen areas of existing vegetation. Overall, given the extent of enclosure provided by surrounding landscape features, key characteristics of the wider LT, would remain unchanged - therefore the magnitude of change is considered to reduce to <b>Very Low Adverse</b>.</p>	<p><b>Direct Temporary Short Term Negligible</b></p>	
	<p><b>Operation Phase (Year 15)</b></p> <p>At year 15 the structural landscape planting - provided as mitigation to further soften views of the new buildings - would have established. The woodland, proposed along the northern, western and southern boundaries would reflect the current wooded character evident in the wider landscape and would allow the Proposed Development to assimilate sympathetically into the wider landscape setting. There would be improvement in landscape resources as the proposed multi-functional green infrastructure matures, providing an increase in high quality landscape features when compared to the current highly managed landscape of the existing golf course. Over time the geographical extent of change is considered to become barely perceptible, with the magnitude of change improving to <b>Neutral-Very Low Adverse</b>.</p>	<p><b>Direct Permanent Long Term Negligible / Neutral</b></p>	

LOCAL LEVEL		
Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study 2004		
CW/59 Middleton Stoney		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
<p>The landscape character is described as:</p> <p><i>“The area is dominated by large arable fields and localised improved grassland. There are smaller grass fields around villages, particularly Kirtlington. Woodland is a strong landscape element, and large woodland blocks are associated with the parklands and estates. It is mainly ancient semi-natural woodland, with species such as ash, oak, hazel, and field maple, as well as mixed plantations. Throughout the landscape, there are belts of young mixed and coniferous plantations next to roadside hedges and they often function as field boundaries. Hedgerow trees such as ash, sycamore and occasionally oak are found in some roadside hedges, but they are sparser to the north where there is more intensive arable cropping. In parts there are dense corridors of willow and ash, belts of semi-natural woodland and poplar plantations bordering watercourses. Hedgerows vary from tall, thick species-rich hedges with shrubs such as wayfaring tree, dogwood, hazel, field maple, spindle and wild privet through to low, gappy internal field hedges. Parklands are prominent feature throughout and they include Middleton Parks in the north and Kirtlington Parks in the south.”</i></p> <p>The CW/59 Middleton Stoney LDU covers a large extent of Wooded Estate lands in the context of the Study Area. The local character is strongly influenced by the wooded parkland estates including the Bignell Park located to the immediate north east of the Site. The good vegetation coverage, in association with slightly undulating landform and various settlements, provides a strong degree of containment and enclosure.</p>	<p><b>Value</b></p> <p>As is the case for the Wooded Estate lands LT, within the Study Area the majority of the LDU is not formally designated however, there are Registered Parks and Gardens (Middleton Park and Kirtlington Park), Chesterton Conservation Area, many listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments and numerous PRow. The field boundary hedgerows are generally well maintained and the landscape condition within the privately owned parkland estates are generally good. Overall, the landscape value of CW/59 Middleton Stoney LDU in the context of the Study Area is considered to be <b>High</b>.</p>	<b>HIGH</b>
	<p><b>Susceptibility</b></p> <p>As is the case for the Wooded Estate lands LT, overall the CW/59 Middleton Stoney LDU has a medium level of ability to accept the type of the development proposed, with landscape susceptibility considered to be <b>Medium</b>.</p>	
		MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)
	<p><b>Construction Phase</b></p> <p>During construction, alterations to the landscape resources of the Site would have a limited influence on the overall character of the CW/59 Middleton Stoney LDU, with the majority of the mature boundary vegetation of the Site retained as part of the Proposed Development and most areas of planting retained in the northern areas of the Site. Construction works would introduce a temporary uncharacteristic level of activity into the local area but the impact would only affect a small part of the overall character area, in the vicinity of the Proposed Development, with the wider area remaining unaffected. There would be earthworks associated with the creation of a construction platform for the hotel, waterpark, car parks and other associated facilities, with bunding provided along the southern boundaries and the creation of some new ponds. However, these alterations would have a very limited influence on the wider character of the LDU. Construction activities (including cranes, plant and construction of new built form) would influence the character of the landscape in close proximity to the Site but would also have a limited influence on the wider character of the LDU. Overall, given the extent of enclosure provided by surrounding landscape features, the magnitude of impact is considered to be <b>Low Adverse</b>.</p>	<b>Direct Temporary Short Term Minor Adverse</b>
	<p><b>Operation Phase (Year 0)</b></p> <p>The Proposed Development would introduce additional large scale built form into the landscape. The resort buildings would be situated on an area currently used as golf course, so would not reduce any of the agrarian features found in the wider landscape. There would be minimal loss of key landscape features, particularly along the M40 and A4095 boundaries, where new native woodland planting and species rich boundary hedgerows are proposed to strengthen areas of existing vegetation. Overall, given the extent of enclosure provided by surrounding landscape features, key characteristics of the wider LDU, would remain unchanged - therefore the magnitude of change is considered to reduce to <b>Very Low Adverse</b>.</p>	<b>Direct Temporary Short Term Negligible</b>
	<p><b>Operation Phase (Year 15)</b></p> <p>At year 15 the structural landscape planting - provided as mitigation to further soften views of the new buildings - would have established. The woodland, proposed along the northern, western and southern boundaries would reflect the current wooded character evident in the wider landscape and would allow the Proposed Development to assimilate sympathetically into the wider landscape setting. There would be improvement in landscape resources as the proposed multi-functional green infrastructure matures, providing an increase in high quality landscape features when compared to the current highly managed landscape of the existing golf course. Over time the geographical extent of change is considered to become barely perceptible, with the magnitude of change improving to <b>Neutral-Very Low Adverse</b>.</p>	<b>Direct Permanent Long Term Negligible / Neutral</b>

SITE LEVEL		
Landscape Character of the Site		
BASELINE	RECEPTORS AND THEIR SENSITIVITY (COMBINED JUDGEMENT ON VALUE AND SUSCEPTIBILITY)	SENSITIVITY
<p>Key characteristics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-established and heavily managed golf course;</li> <li>Localised areas of engineered undulating landform;</li> <li>Small woodland / tree belts;</li> <li>Number of various sized ponds;</li> <li>Parkland style tree planting; and</li> <li>Presence of the Hotel and Spa, car park, lighting and other associated facilities.</li> </ul> <p>The Site does not contain many key characteristic features defined in the OWLS. Landscape components of relative value include the woodland / tree belts along the western and north eastern boundaries and to the northern part of the Site. The value of existing trees is mostly low with limited ecological and amenity value, as identified by the Arboricultural Report.</p>	<p><b>Value</b></p> <p>The Site is not associated with any landscape related designation. There is no physical or visual connection with any surrounding heritage assets. The landscape is well maintained and in a good condition. The existing landscape resources are unremarkable and not notable components that provide any considerable contribution to the wider character of the area (beyond the immediate boundaries of the Site, e.g. vegetative enclosure along the A4095). The Site is heavily influenced by the adjacent M40 and the level of tranquility is relatively low, especially in areas close to the motorway. Overall, the landscape value of landscape at Site level is considered to be <b>Medium</b>.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>
	<p><b>Susceptibility</b></p> <p>Development of the Site in the nature proposed would change a large proportion of the currently soft landscaped Site to incorporate large scale built form and large areas of car parking. The proposed leisure uses would replace existing leisure uses, removing golf provision on the Site but providing alternative recreational provision. There is reference adjacent to the Site – in the form of the existing Hotel and Spa – to recreational / hospitality use, albeit the nature of development proposed would require considerably larger built form. Existing public access to the Site is constrained by the current golf course use and the proposals for improvement and landscape diversification to a considerable portion of the northern part of the Site – along with opening up its use to the general public – would increase the accessibility of the Site in terms of public amenity. There are considerable opportunities to mitigate landscape impacts within the Site, improving character in many areas. Overall, the Site itself is considered to have a high capacity to accept the type of the development proposed and the landscape susceptibility is considered to be <b>Low</b>.</p>	
		<p><b>MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT (SCALE, DEGREE OF CONTRAST, DISTANCE FROM RECEPTOR, EXTENT AND DURATION)</b></p>
	<p><b>Construction Phase</b></p> <p>During construction, there would be temporary direct effects on the character of the Site, where the existing golf course will be turned into an active construction site and presence of emerging built form. There will be direct loss of some existing low value grassland and a number of trees – mostly scattered between the current fairways (determined to be of low value by the Arboricultural Survey). The existing landform will also be modified to prepare for the building platform and associated infrastructure, along with construction of mounding along the southern boundaries and additional ponds in various areas. The majority of the construction works would be largely limited to the central parts of the Site. The majority of the boundary vegetation (the key landscape features) will be retained and hoarding will be erected to provide another layer of containment. Vegetation and ponds in the northern part of the Site will also be retained and protected from any potential damage from construction work. With the retention of the most valuable features and removal of largely low value features, on balance the magnitude of impact is considered to be <b>Medium Adverse</b>.</p>	<p><b>Direct Temporary Short Term Moderate Adverse</b></p>
	<p><b>Operation Phase (Year 0)</b></p> <p>The Proposed Development will permanently transform the existing golf course to a leisure resort, introducing large scale built form set in a high quality landscape. There will be a localised loss of boundary vegetation to accommodate a new access off the A4095, but the character of the road will largely remain unchanged given the retention of existing vegetation and provision of supplementary planting. The new built form and car park will involve removal of some trees (mostly low value) within the central part of the Site. This will be compensated by establishing a hierarchy of planting structure that comprises new woodland planting, new parkland trees, species-rich hedgerows around the perimeter of the car park, additional hedgerow trees, extensive trees and hedgerows within the car park, shrubs / ornamental planting (close to the hotel), and extensive areas of wildflower grassland. As a result, there would be a considerable improvement on the existing landscape resource of the Site, reflecting the parkland / woodland character in the surrounding landscape and assimilating the Proposed Development into its context. Most of the existing ponds would be retained and enhanced. On balance, the magnitude of change is considered to improve to <b>Low Adverse</b>.</p>	<p><b>Direct Temporary Short Term Minor Adverse</b></p>
	<p><b>Operation Phase (Year 15)</b></p> <p>Landscape mitigation and enhancement proposals along the boundaries of the Site will have matured to provide substantial screening and softening of the new built and helping to further assimilate Proposed Development to the landscape of the Site. New woodland planting will be establishing well to offer a stronger coverage and further enhancing the local wooded landscape character. Although there will be permanent presence of the new large scale built form, the landscape proposals will provide a well established landscape setting that breaks up its massing, with a high quality external landscape in the immediate context of the new buildings. On balance, given the establishment of enhanced landscape features in many areas of the Site, the magnitude of change is considered to improve to <b>Low Beneficial</b>.</p>	<p><b>Direct Permanent Long Term Minor Beneficial</b></p>