Kiosk & Adventure Golf Course

Longleat Forest Holiday Village,
Wiltshire,
BA12 7PU

Center Parcs (Operating) Co. Ltd

Design & Access Statement

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Design & Access Statement has been prepared in support of a 'FULL PLANNING APPLICATION' for the erection of a log cabin kiosk and creation of a new adventure golf course at Longleat Forest Holiday Village, Wiltshire, BA12 7PU.

1.2 This statement has been prepared under the requirements of the Town & Country (General Development Procedures) (Amendment) (England) Order 2015. The structure and content have been informed by:

- The Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2015
- 'Design & Access Statements – How to write, read and use them' (CABE 2006); and
- Secretary of State Appeal decisions on the role of a Design & Access Statement

1.3 The statement seeks to explain the design principles for the development which are appropriate to the site and the surrounding area based on national planning and local design guidance.

2 ASSESSMENT & LOCATION

2.1 The application site is located within the Center Parcs Holiday Village at Warminster, Wiltshire. The total holiday village comprises an area of approximately 400 acres.

2.2 The Village was originally dominated by conifer trees, planted in the 1950's and managed as a plantation or timber crop. There was a windrow of older Scots Pine and grassland which has been preserved, but otherwise the area supported none of the rare species typically of Breckland.

2.3 Site selection for the proposed adventure golf has been driven by the openness of the site and the need to replace an existing maze with a more desirable activity. The design has taken into account the changes in levels that are illustrated on the drawings, a topographical survey of the site and it's features has been undertaken.

2.4 The existing location of the adventure golf is away from the main pedestrian routes and is being relocated to an area closer to the lake and sports plaza.

2.5 Local siting within the desired location was concluded by both the design and operating teams with a consensus on final locations, considering topography, minimising the impact on existing trees and ecology, working closely with the arboricultural and ecology consultants and Center Parcs' own Land Asset Manager to ensure the most sensitive scheme possible in terms of tree protection and ecology.

2.6 The existing kiosk for the maze is to be removed and replaced on the main pathway. This is where you would collect golf clubs and check-in.



Figure One: Site Location Plan.

3 DESIGN

Proposal:

3.1 The application seeks to gain planning approval to erect a log cabin kiosk and construction of an adventure golf course in place of the existing maze whilst working with the existing trees and habitats.

3.2 The proposed kiosk will be designed to fit into the surrounding woodland, it is constructed out of structural logs which are stacked on top of each other and internally timber lined. The kiosk is single storey containing the required facilities to store golf clubs and provide general refreshments and therefore will be provided with running water, drainage, and power- all connected into existing supplies with new connections.

3.3 The adventure golf course will be designed within the allocated spaces around existing trees and away from root protected zones to the Veteran tree as indicated on the proposed plans. An ecology assessment has been undertaken to consider trees and habitats so the design and construction methods can avoid damage to ecological systems.

3.4 The kiosk is below 30sqm and will include a large serving room with 3 hatches and external door. A store is provided the other side with external door entry.

3.5 The kiosk will be sited just off the existing path surrounding the lake. A new perimeter access path, to match the existing will wrap around the kiosk to provide full access for staff.



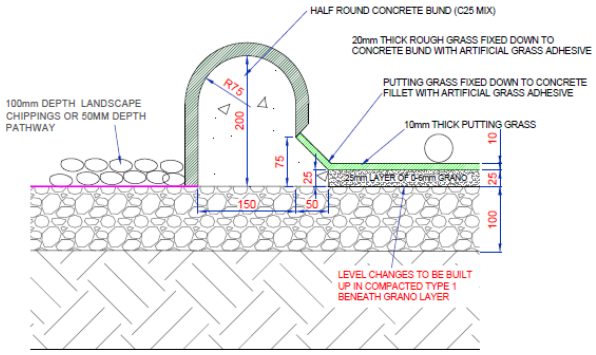
Figure Two: Existing Kiosk.



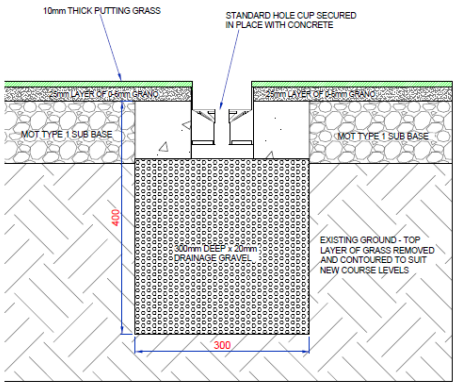
Figure Three: Existing Maze with Veteran tree in the background.

3.6 The adventure golf greens are constructed no more than 150mm below the current ground level with none of the golf course within the root protection areas as detailed on the drawings supporting the application. This avoids any adverse effect to the root structures, any paths within root protection areas are to be hand laid on top of the current ground level (levelled with good quality topsoil) refer to assured trees AIA item 12.3,

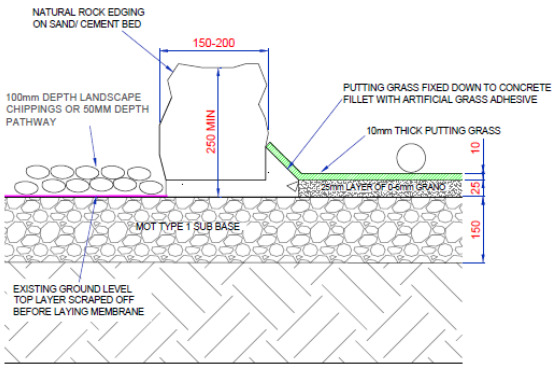
3.7 The course is to be a mixture of putting holes, grass/rock edging and pathways, refer to typical course build up drawing by Greenspan below. The ground within the golf course between playing areas to be bare ground with semi-natural habitat planted with heathers (not hard standing).



GRASS EDGING DETAIL



TYPICAL HOLE CUP DETAIL



ROCK EDGING DETAIL

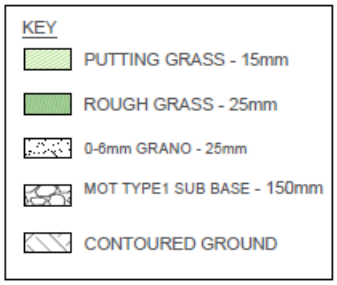


Figure Four: Typical course build-ups

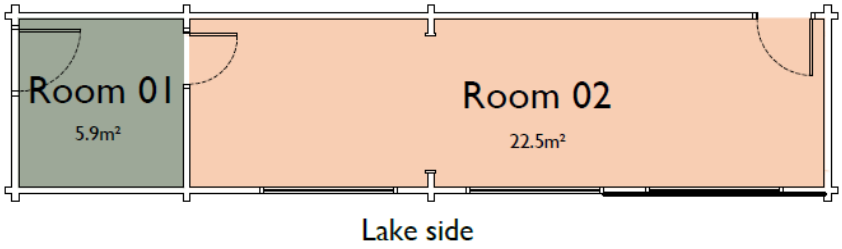


Figure Five: Kiosk Floor Layout



Figure Six: Kiosk and Adventure Golf Site Layout



Figure Seven: Typical Adventure Golf Appearance at Center Parcs Sherwood

Scale & Appearance:

3.8 The proposed kiosk will be single storey with pitched roof helping the building compliment the surrounding woodland. The overall appearance of this building is aimed to blend into the landscape as much as possible whilst providing the required ancillary spaces to allow adventure golf to operate.

3.9 The appearance of the kiosk will be stained logs with Sikkens Cetol WF771 Light Oak to again compliment the surrounding woodland area.

3.10 The pitched roof is to be finished with a synthetic slate (Tapcoslate Classic - 790 Coachman Mix to maintain a traditional look but to also minimise maintenance.

3.11 The golf course is mainly grassed holes as indicated in the previous section and illustrated within figure four. Small paths will be provided connecting each hole together, all paths are to be permeable.

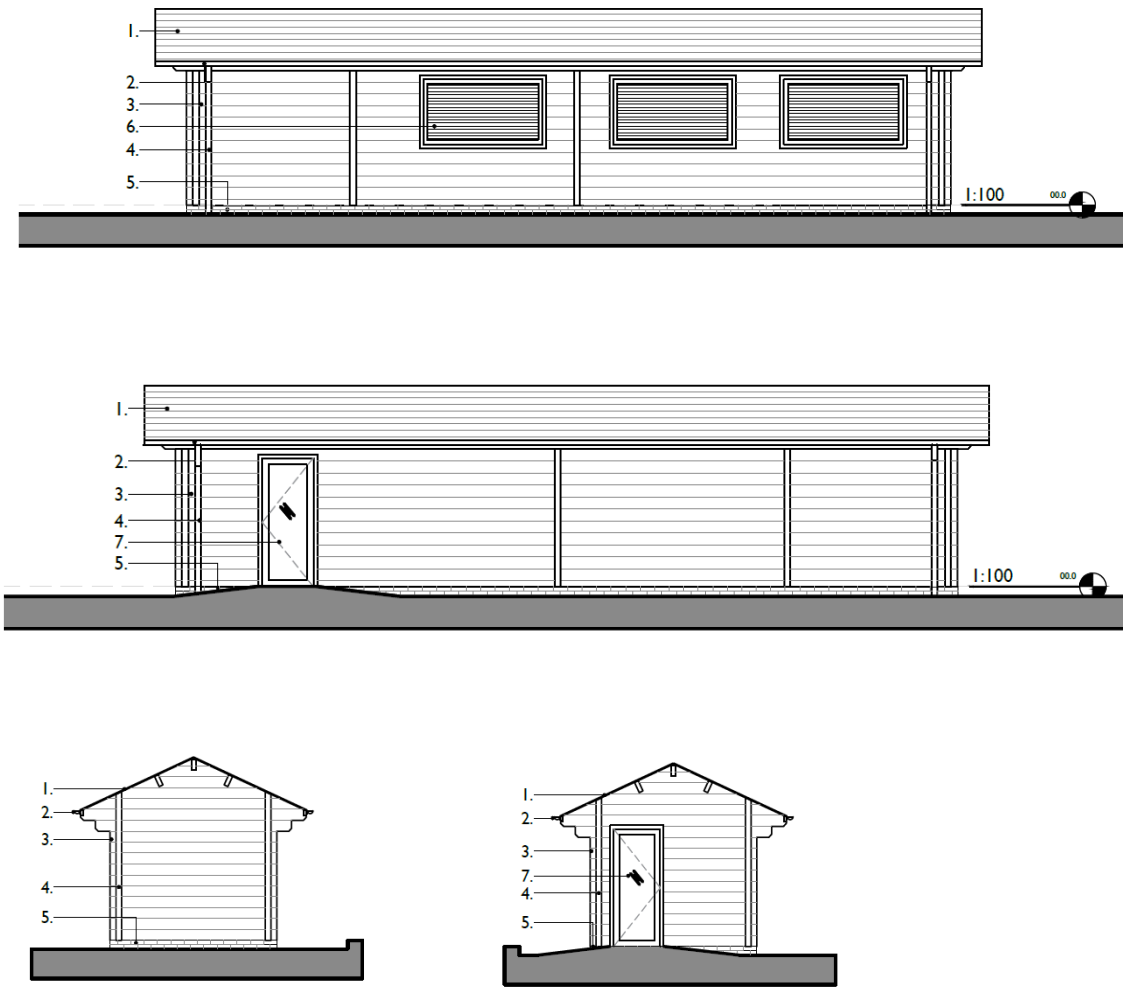


Figure Eight: Proposed Elevations.

Access:

3.12 Access to the adventure golf facility and kiosk is only for pedestrians or cyclists using the cycle store for the sports plaza.

3.13 As a holiday village, Center Parcs operates a no car zone for guests, except on change over days.

Landscape:

3.13 Disruption to the existing site landscape will be kept to an absolute minimum. Proposed landscaping would be undertaken by Center Parcs own ground keeping staff post construction and would generally be to the same type and standard of planting constantly maintained throughout the existing holiday village and to the ecological assessment as detailed within the next section.

4 SUPPLEMETARY INFORMATION

4.1 The application site is within Flood Zone One of the Flood Map for Planning, therefore will have "low probability of flooding".

4.2 The Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) prepared by CTM Wildlife (19.12.2023) also forms part of this application and concludes/ recommends the below which are to be abided by. Please refer to section 5.3 of CTM Wildlife Report.

Significant considerations

- Veteran tree

"The veteran Beech tree overhangs the proposed golf course and its root system may extend into it:

Option 1: It is advised that a tree survey is undertaken to assess the likely impact of the proposal on the veteran tree and confirm a suitable root protection area/method.

Option 2: The Government's guidance for veteran trees is for a buffer zone around it at least 15 times larger than the diameter of the tree. The buffer zone should be five metres from the edge of the tree's canopy if that area is larger than 15 times the tree's diameter. This will create a minimum root protection area."

Refer to site layout plan indicating root protection zone

- Semi-natural heather bed

"The heather bed is a rich habitat of flora and fauna with orchids, legally protected reptiles and a known nectar source for feeding insects for example. The proposed scheme has retained the heather bed (all ground within the knee rail).

It is advised that the proposed work is undertaken under a Construction Ecological Management Plan. It ought to include many of the advisories and recommendations in this report including measures to ensure the protection of and no inadvertent damage to the heather bank (movement of personnel, machinery and deposition of spoil etc. on it)."

Construction ecological management plan to be produced and followed before, during and after construction.

- Reptiles.

"Viviparous lizard and slow-worms occur on the plot (the heather bed). Potentially to a lesser extent the scrubby depression in Area 3 – and not the short-mown lawns. These reptiles are protected from harm under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

The following is recommended in order to avoid harm to them: Cut using hand tools the scrubby depression in Area 3 to 150 mm and then after at least one day to 50 mm and keep it cut until the work starts.

(1) Install a reptile exclusion fence around the outside of the heather bed (the line of the existing knee rail) for the duration of the works. (2) Maintain cover in the bed for animals during this time. (3) Immediately remove the fence upon completion of the works."

Installation of a temporary reptile-proof fence & grounds team to continue to maintain the heather bed during the construction.

Minor considerations

- Habitat Connectivity

"It is recommended that the detailed layout of the golf course provides a continuous corridor of ground habitat between the heather bed and surrounding habitat in particular to the eastern side of the plot."

The scheme retains the habitat between the heather bed and the bank to the eastern side of the plot including to the veteran Beech.

"Leave the golf course unfenced in order to allow animals such as badgers and deer unhindered passage at night."

Post & rail fences to Center Parcs' standard detail are proposed. These are 1350 mm high with three or four rails. A three rail fencing with a 389 mm gap between the ground and bottom rail is to be used in order to ensure a suitable-sized gap for badgers moving along the bank.

- Nesting Birds

"As a standard precaution – time the removal of any shrubs to be outside the nesting season (i.e. do this in September to February). If the clearance is in the nesting season, check for nests first and stop the clearance if an occupied nest is found."

Proposal to remove shrubs within the course layout prior to the nesting season.

- Bat and Lights

"As good practice – if any external lights are required (1) fit them with PIR activated sensors and/or timers to ensure lights are turned off when the golf course is not in use & (2) ensure that the surrounding trees and lake are not illuminated."

Center Parcs propose to fit 'City Light Elegance' mast lights. They are a wide beam light at 2860 lumens, designed to reflect lights downwards to the ground, rather than into the sky. The lights will be on a timer and will typically be switched off before 2100 hrs, earlier dependent upon the season. Refer to the figure seven and nine illustrating proposed lighting.



Figure Nine: Proposed Golf Lighting

4.3 The Arborcultural Impact Assessment (AIA) prepared by Assured Trees (29.01.2024) also forms part of this application and concludes the below

" The scheme has been designed taking into account the constraints of all valuable trees on the site, tree removals have been kept to a minimum and will be mitigated through additional planting. The potential impacts on retained trees have been identified and assessed and retained trees will not be harmed during development provided works are carried out in strict accordance with the Arboricultural Method Statement provided at Appendix B"

As a result the report identifies certain criteria that needs to be actioned which are detailed below.

- Arboricultural Method Statement to be followed as included within the AIA document, drawing extracts below.

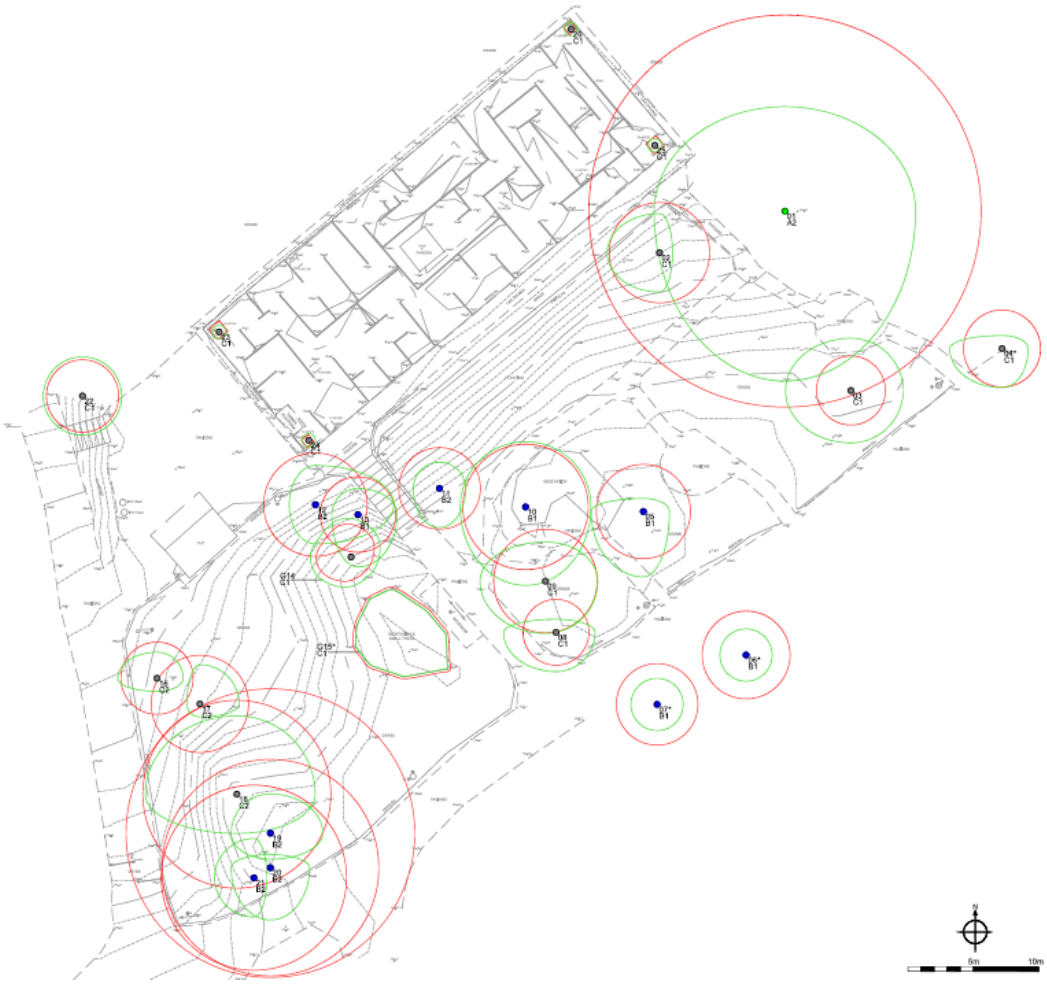


Figure Ten: Tree Constraints Plan Forming Part of Arboricultural Impact Statement

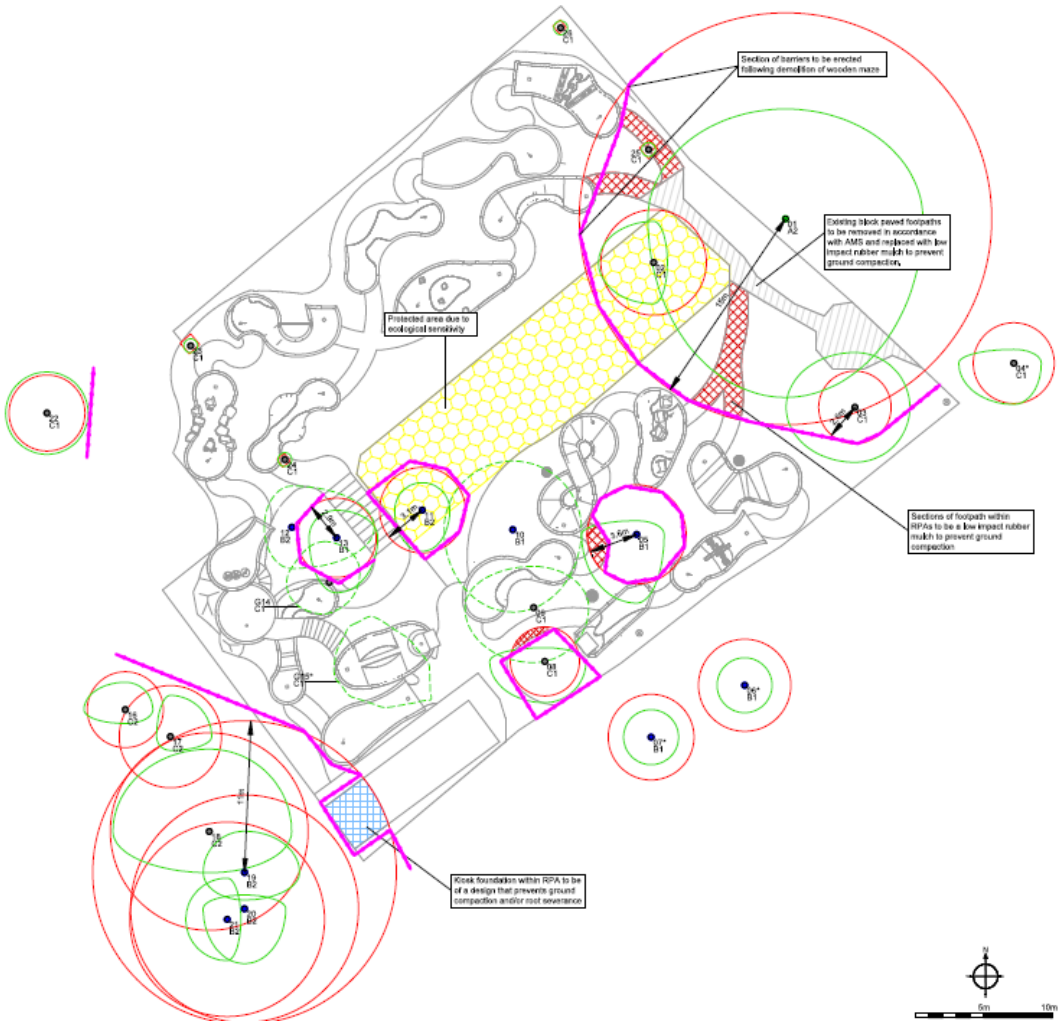


Figure Eleven: Tree Protection Plan Forming Part of Arboricultural Method Statement

- Three individual trees and two small groups of young self-seeded poplar regeneration are proposed for removal to facilitate the proposals which will be mitigated through additional tree planting around the site.

- Trees overhanging the golf course will be crown lifted at allow 2 metres clear crown height over all footpaths and golfing areas which is consistent with current tree management practices on the site.

- A section of an existing low-level wooden maze is within the Root Protection Area (RPA) of a retained tree and will be demolished by hand, prior to the erection of tree protection barriers, to prevent compaction damage within the RPA.

- Existing block paved footpaths will be removed from within the RPA of a retained tree. To prevent damage to underlying roots the works will be carried out by hand as part of the landscape phase of operations and any exposed roots will immediately be covered with good quality topsoil.

- New footpaths are proposed which include areas within the RPA of a retained tree and which will be constructed using a low impact porous rubber mulch surface to prevent compaction damage within RPAs.

- The foundations for a new customer service kiosk encroach on the RPA of a retained tree and will be of an engineered design that prevents ground compaction and root damage within the RPA.

- RPAs that are vulnerable to compaction damage will be protected from construction activity by robust physical barriers during the construction phase.

- The site does not lie within the limits of a Conservation Area and there are no trees on the site that are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order.

- Assured Trees Ltd will be responsible for the monitoring of all tree protection measures and compliance with this Arboricultural Method Statement, a pre-commencement site meeting will be held between a minimum of the Center Parcs Ground Services Manager, site foreman and the project arboriculturalist to fully communicate the measures detailed within the AMS.

- The occurrence of any unforeseen incidents that may adversely impact retained trees will be reported to the Center Parcs Ground Services Department as soon as practicable following the incident. The Center Parcs Ground Services Department will then advise on the appropriate course of action, with consultation from Assured Trees if necessary, and will produce and maintain a record of any such incidents including any subsequent measures taken.

Further detailed information is included with the Arboricultural Method Statement by Assured trees dated 29th January 204.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 The proposed kiosk and adventure golf course have been strategically located to integrate with the surrounding area whilst minimising effect on arboriculture and ecology (refer to the accompanying CMT Wildlife and Assured Tree's reports).

5.2 The appearance of the building will remain small, single storey detached and for the sole purpose of providing refreshments and providing equipment for the adventure golf course.

5.3 The choice of material finishes will be of high quality (as are all Center Parcs buildings) with the majority being natural products (timber) which forms a successful synergy between the built and natural environments.