

Visual Impact Appraisal

For

**Proposed Creation of a Compact “Golf Pod” Practice Facility on the
Current Hotel Tennis Court**

At

Mannings Heath Golf Course

Hammerpond Rd, Mannings Heath, Horsham RH13 6PG

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Version 1



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1	INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1	General.....	4
1.2	Background To Proposal.....	4
2	Visual Of Proposed Golfpod	31
2.1	General.....	31
3	Summary and Conclusions	38
3.1	Summary	38
3.2	Conclusion	39
4	APPENDICES	40

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

- 1.1.1 This visual assessment was undertaken in the spring months (11/05/2026).
- 1.1.2 A series of photographs were taken from key receptors within and around the site to demonstrate the visual envelope.
- 1.1.3 The site sits within the High Weald National Landscape and therefore the High Weald Management Plan 2024–2029 is the most up to date relevant document to reference.
- 1.1.4 It is considered that a full LVIA is not required for the Golfpod application as the site is already approved leisure space in the form of golf, tennis and hotel facilities. Indeed, a practice facility is common and considered ancillary on very many golf courses.
- 1.1.5 In this regard a Visual Impact Appraisal is felt sufficient for the purposes of this application given the above and the fact that it sits us entirely within the curtilage of a golf course landscape that has no public footpaths anywhere near it or Heritage assets.
- 1.1.6 Nevertheless, the site is within the High Weald National Landscape which is afforded great weight in conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty.
- 1.1.7 The covered practice bays are in themselves are open sided and “light” in form and scale (see typical details) and in this case almost entirely screened by a strong formal hedge and trees.
- 1.1.8 It is the x4 stanchions (two at 12m high and two at 15m high) that hold the nets up that will be of most interest to the planning authority. This study concentrates on assessing how the netting structure sits within the landscape.
- 1.1.9 The netting is extremely translucent and as can be seen from the montages (and other existing examples, see appendix) the stanchions are not “heavy” in the landscape given their open lattice structure and colour. Being located on lower slopes, with a strong background of mature woodland also assists with reducing the impact of the stanchions.

1.2 Background To Proposal

- 1.2.1 Although the Mannings Heath golf facility currently has a practice range but it is too short with safety / ball escape issues on its boundary and more importantly is very detached from the Clubhouse / Hotel hub and therefore impractical to use.
- 1.2.2 The GolfPod provides a practice facility close to the Hotel and Clubhouse and additionally provides a leisure option for children and adults alike given its interaction with CGI imagery and games. See Design and Access Statement.
- 1.2.3 The GolfPod structure itself only takes up an area mainly occupied by the current tennis court. There is grading beyond the actual 30m x 32m outfield , but this is to

allow the flat outfield to sit within an existing slope (cut down) . These re-graded slopes will be planted with either trees / scrub and wildflower meadow grass.

- 1.2.4 At one end are covered practice bays looking out over a synthetic grass outfield which is fully enclosed by translucent netting suspended from four aluminium lattice supports.
- 1.2.5 Some lighting is needed just for the cameras that track golf balls over 30m but this is nothing as compared with lighting that is required to illuminate an entire range outfield which is usually circa 250m by 100m. See Appendix 2 for a typical lighting design for a Golf Pod prepared by ExLed. NB At only 25m beyond the net the lux values are 0.5 which is considered dark in lighting guidance terminology and this is before grading and screen planting is considered.
- 1.2.6 Native planting will accompany the facility to assimilate it into the landscape and address the BNG requirement. NB: As can be seen from the existing site photos the location of the GolfPod is on lower ground surrounded by mature trees and hedgerow.
- 1.2.7 It is also proposed that the car park is slightly adjusted in shape to cater for the grading but no increase in car spaces is proposed and the current screen bunding around the car park is maintained.
- 1.2.8 The area where buggies are currently stored is being reshaped from linear spaces to a more compact flatter area just to the North of the GolfPod.

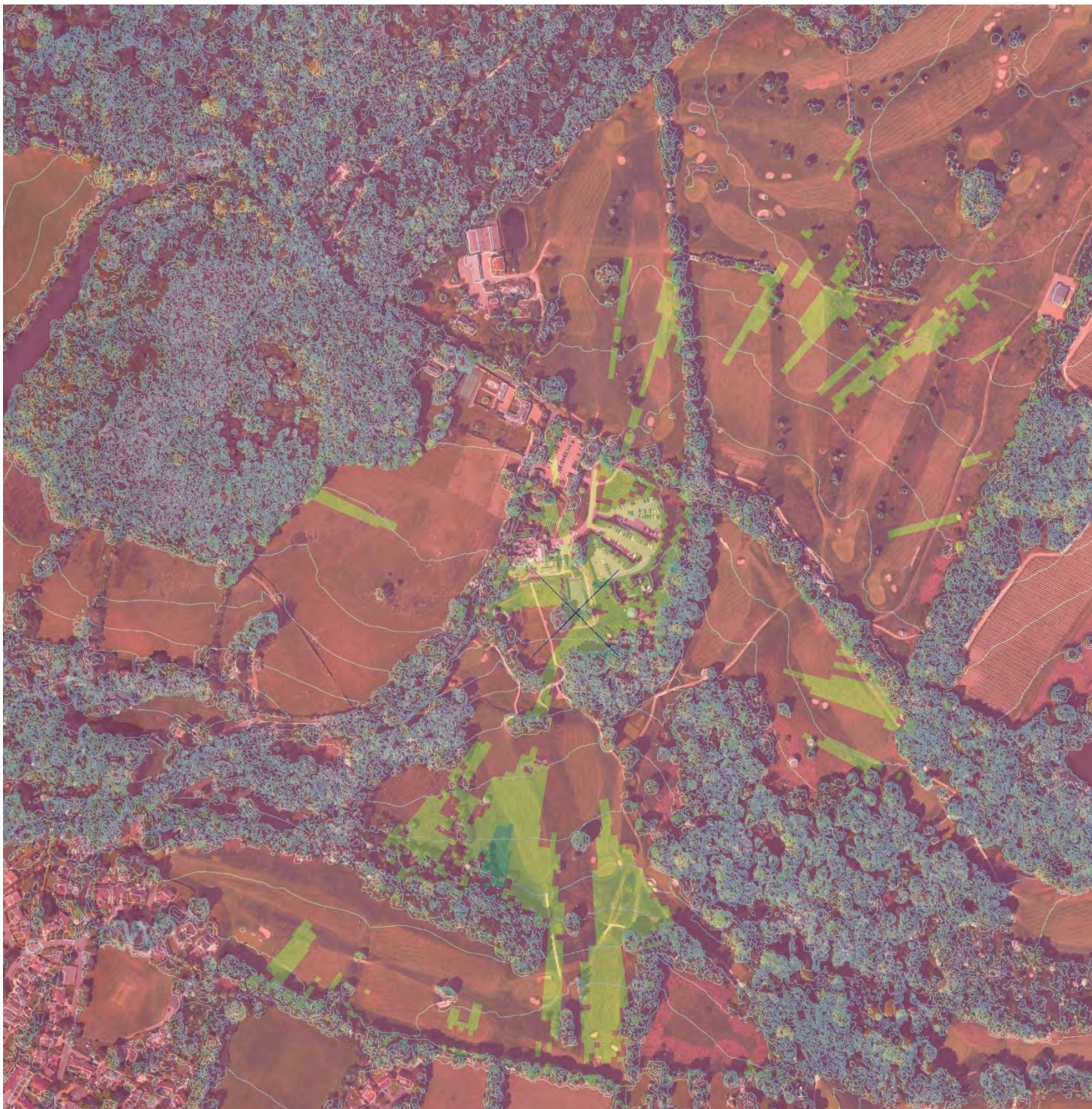


Figure 1 Zone of Visual Influence.

NB A model was set up with a 15m high point (ie one of the two stanchions that are 15m) .

The red is no visibility , the green is possible extremely limited view of the very top of a stanchion.

This is absolute worse case and given the distances involved beyond the immediate curtilage of the Golfpod the stanchion top is going to be miniscule in the landscape if not impossible to see as this is theoretical visibility .

What theoretical views are possible are on the golf course and playing golfers cannot be considered sensitive receptors.



Location of GolfPod on Tennis Court



Receptor 1 - By Hotel Entrance



Location of GolfPod on Tennis Court



Receptor 2 - Hotel Entrance Drive



Receptor 3 - From Main Road Entrance. NB Remainder of Roadside boundary strong hedgerow / tree screen



Receptor 4 – Main Road Street Scene – GolfPod Not Visible (hidden behind trees and topography)



Receptor 5 – From North of Existing Car Park



Receptor 6 – From End of Public Footpath Northeast of Site (365m away). No View Possible



Receptor 7 – Location of GolfPod Behind Trees when viewed from the East on Existing Golf Course Fairway



Sightline Towards Golfpod (beyond trees)

Receptor 8 – Location of GolfPod to the South East of the site (120m away) Behind Trees when viewed from the Existing Golf Course Fairway



Receptor 9 – Location of GolfPod to the South of the site (200m away) Behind Trees when viewed from the Existing Golf Course Fairway



Receptor 10 – Location of GolfPod to the South West of the site (250m away) Behind Trees when viewed from the Existing Golf Course Fairway



Sightline Towards Golfpod (beyond trees)

Receptor 11 – Location of GolfPod to the South West of the site (380m away) Behind Trees when viewed from the Existing Golf Course Fairway



Sightline Towards Golfpod (beyond trees)

Receptor 12 – Location of GolfPod Due South of the site (380m away) Behind Trees when viewed from the Existing Golf Course Fairway



Sightline Towards Golfpod (beyond trees)

Receptor 13 – Location of GolfPod to South East Close to House Boundary (480m away) Behind Trees when viewed from the Existing Golf Course Fairway and house garden boundary



Receptor 14 – Location of GolfPod to South West Close to Housing Boundary (480m away) Behind Trees when viewed from the Existing Golf Course Fairway



Receptor 15 – Location of GolfPod to South West (100m away) Behind Trees when viewed from the Existing Golf Course Fairway



Receptor 16 – Location of GolfPod to South West (50m away) The bays will be hidden behind the Copper Beech . Two of the stanchions and netting will be visible to the right of the Copper Beech. The foreground of this photo will be graded and planted with native trees and shrubs / wildflower meadow



GolfPod Bays hidden behind hedge on tennis court

Receptor 17 – Location of GolfPod to West (50m away) The bays will be hidden by the Hedge , the netting and stanchions will be visible although the mature tree backdrop will help absorb the structure into this view as will future planting as it matures.



GolfPod Bays Placed on tennis court.

Receptor 18 – Location of GolfPod to West (25m away) The bays will be on the tennis court . The ground to the left of the photo is to be cut down to level the “outfield “ surface (30m x30m) which will also help reduce the height of the stanchions.. The buggy storage area is to be realigned linear parking to a more compact area to the left of this photo . The netting and stanchions will be visible although the mature tree backdrop will help absorb the structure into this view as will future planting in the foreground as it matures.



Receptor 19 – Location of GolfPod from the Northeast (35m away). The bays will be visible on the tennis court . The buggy storage area is to be realigned linear parking to a more compact area to the right of this photo. The netting and stanchions will be visible although the mature tree backdrop will help absorb the structure into this view as will future planting on the banking to the car park.



Receptor 20 – Location of GolfPod from the Northeast (15m away). The bays will be visible on the tennis court. The buggy storage area is to be realigned from a linear parking set up to a more compact area to the right of this photo. The netting and stanchions will be visible although the mature tree backdrop will help absorb the structure into this view as will future planting on the banking to the car park.



Receptor 21 – Location of GolfPod from the Southeast (25m away). The bays will be visible on the tennis court. The buggy storage area is to be realigned from a linear parking set up to a more compact area to the right of this photo. The netting and stanchions will be visible although the grading and planting in the foreground will screen the GolfPod from this view. The buggy parking will be moved to a more compact area as shown.



Receptor 22 – Location of GolfPod from the North (100m away). This view is from close to the boundary of a residential property. The bays will not be visible with only very restricted glimpses of the stanchions. Once the proposed planting matures there will be no view of the GolfPod available from this location



Receptor 23 – Location of GolfPod from the North by the hotel entrance (35m away). The bays will be visible with only very restricted glimpses of the stanchions. Once the proposed planting matures there will be minimal views of the GolfPod available from this location

2 Visual Of Proposed Golfpod

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 The following photomontages show the visual impact of the proposed Golfpod. As referenced previously, due to the topography and intervening vegetation, medium to long views of the Golfpod location are non-existent. More accessible views of the facility are available only with the viewer standing close by (50m to 100m away).
- 2.1.2 The photomontages don't show mature planting which will in time screen the GolfPod almost entirely. However, some proposed planting is shown at an immature level.
- 2.1.3 Also attached are sections of the proposals showing levels and context and a copy of the ExLed lighting isolines showing the limited light spill with 0.5Lux (essentially dark) only 25m beyond the outfield.



Existing View



Proposed View (NB Some Immature Planting Shown)



Existing View



Proposed View



Existing View



Proposed View

3 Summary and Conclusions

3.1 Summary

- 3.1.1 The visual envelope is extremely restricted due to topography and surrounding thick woodland. The only clear view of the whole of the proposed GolfPod is when standing right next to it. The proposed grading associated with landscape features and the proposed significant native planting will prevent visibility of the Golfpod from any key receptors.
- 3.1.2 There are no heritage assets anywhere near the site.
- 3.1.3 There are no public footpaths on the application site with the nearest public footpath being 365m away with intervening topography and woodland (See section 2). Existing trees and topography screen the proposed GolfPod practice facility from the street scene and the few residential properties that exiting on the boundary of the golf course.
- 3.1.4 The GolfPod practice facility is situated close to the hotel / Clubhouse and car park and so is kept within the built “ hub” or hotel “ curtilage” of the landscape, which also contains a tennis court , paths , buggy parking , various sheds , tanks, Klargesters and hard landscaping.
- 3.1.5 In this regard the GolfPod is not out of context with what would be expected in a local hotel leisure and golfing landscape that has got planning approval for leisure, parking and associated buildings.
- 3.1.6 The conversion of the tennis court and remainder of the surrounding grassland into a compact GolfPod to woodland copse, wildflower meadow and water / wetland featuring (abatement zone) will enhance natural landscape to the north, east and south.
- 3.1.7 The bays themselves are set behind a large evergreen formal hedge and the actual netting is very translucent (it has to be very light for engineering reasons). The main, more prominent features, will be the 15m (back) and 12m (front) high netting support stanchions. The stanchions are painted anthracite grey which helps reduce their visual impact.
- 3.1.8 The GolfPod will have lighting but as the ExLed lighting study shows the light spill is extremely limited due to the fact that the lights required are low intensity (as a small outfield) and are directed downwards).
- 3.1.9 The tree and shrub planting will further reduce their impact, but as Section 2 illustrates these support structures are in a visual envelope that is extremely limited. The GolfPod is also cut down into the existing slope to reduce visibility. Also see montages and sections.
- 3.1.10 The photos illustrate how hidden the Golfpod feature is from every angle on the broader visual envelope. It is an open sided built form with translucent netting and

open lattice stanchions. As a facility it is ancillary to the golf complex in that it provides a golf practice and golf entertainment function that also is suited to hotel guest use.

- 3.1.11 Within this report the visual assessment includes montages of how the Golfpod will look in the landscape.

3.2 Conclusion

- 3.2.1 In conclusion, whilst the GolfPod is a “built structure” it is within the context of a golfing and leisure landscape and close to the built hub (hotel , car park , tennis , golf etc) with practice facilities being considered ancillary to a golf course. The visual envelope is very restricted with no public footpaths, residential properties , sensitive ecology or heritage assets nearby.
- 3.2.2 The Golfpod has no effect on the street scene being away from the boundary and set low down in the landscape behind trees.
- 3.2.3 Within the context of the High Weald National Landscape the stanchions will be an obvious built feature when stood very close to by an onlooker, but planting will eventually screen what are only four supports.
- 3.2.4 Turning an underused tennis court with accompanying buggy parking and short cut grass banking into a more relevant golfing facility with accompanying native woodland copse and wildflower meadow will have a **neutral** effect on the broader visual outlook as screen planting establishes.

4 APPENDICES

ISOLINE DIAGRAM

- Calculated outputs are based on 420W fittings at 100% output, using a maintenance factor of 1 to provide a worst-case scenario.
- Testing with the proposed fittings on an existing Golf Pod has indicated that outputs can be reduced to ~30% and maintain sufficient tracking where lower outputs are required.
- Proposed scheme fulfils design brief, providing suitable and uniform lighting within the bounds of the Golf Pod.
- All design results have been provided without trees. Note; however, that proposed planting at the site may assist with minimising obtrusive light to neighbouring properties.



Lighting Isolines (see ExLed Report)



ISOLINE KEY

20 Lux	1.0 Lux
10 Lux	0.1 Lux
5 Lux	

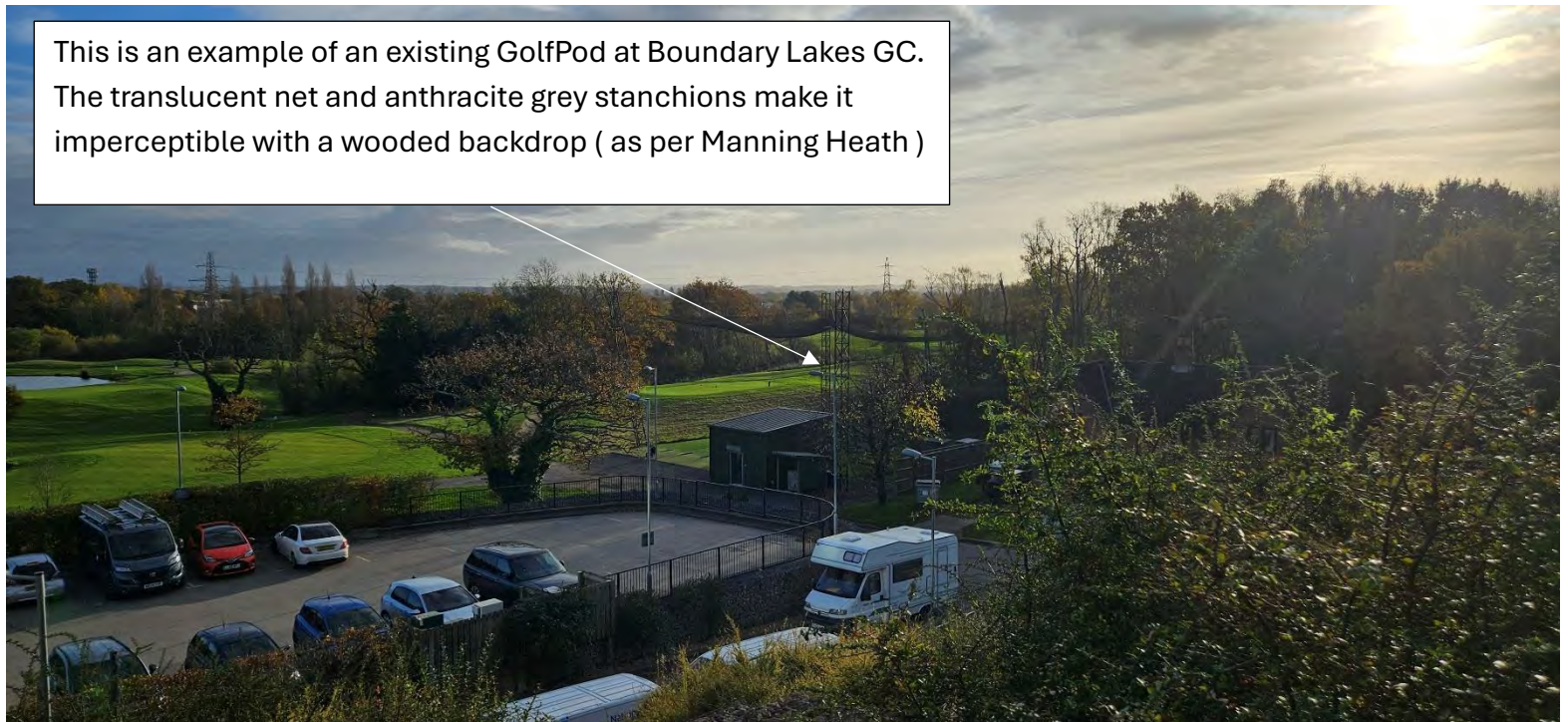


0.1 lux is considered very dark. It is roughly equivalent to the illuminance of a clear night with a full moon.

NB 0.1 Lux is also generally considered acceptable and safe for most bats



This is an example of an existing GolfPod at Boundary Lakes GC. The translucent net and anthracite grey stanchions make it imperceptible with a wooded backdrop (as per Manning Heath)



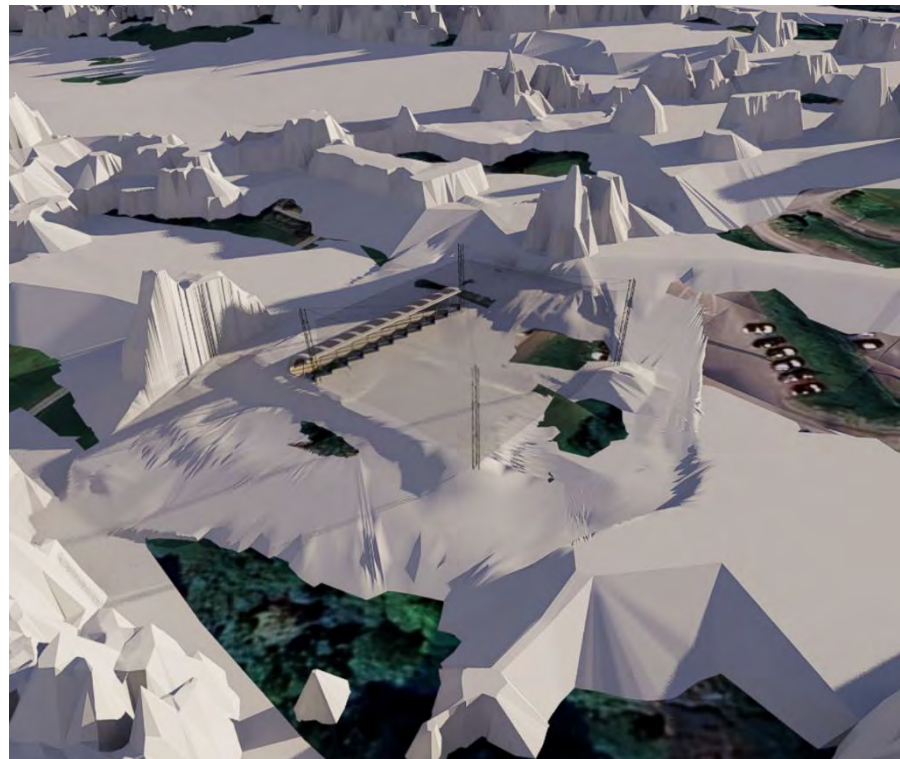
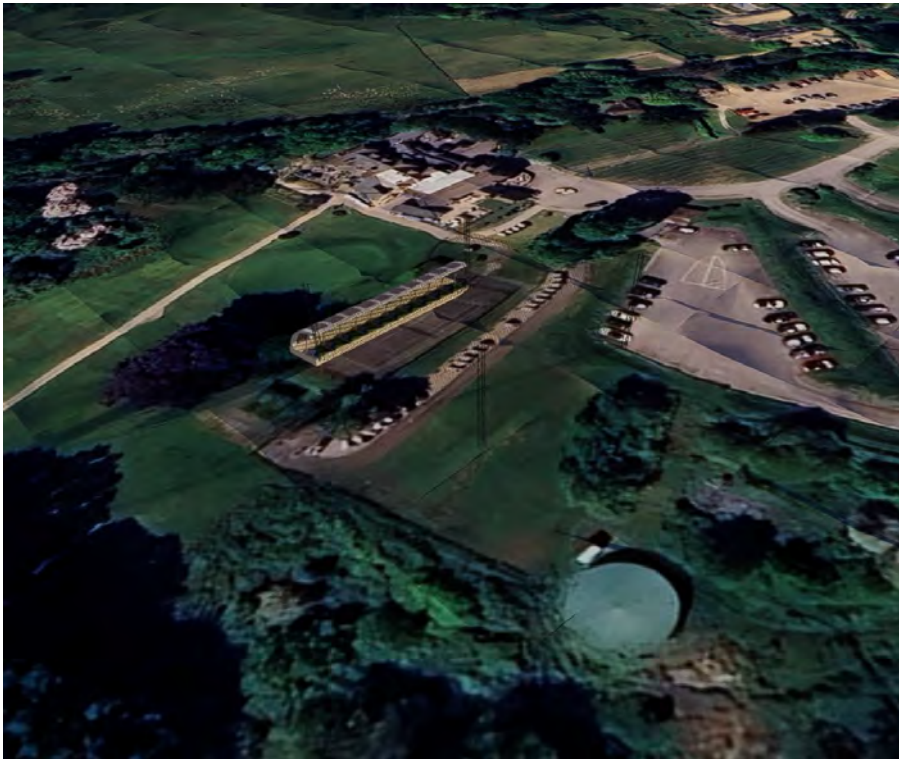
Stanchion / GolfPod Examples



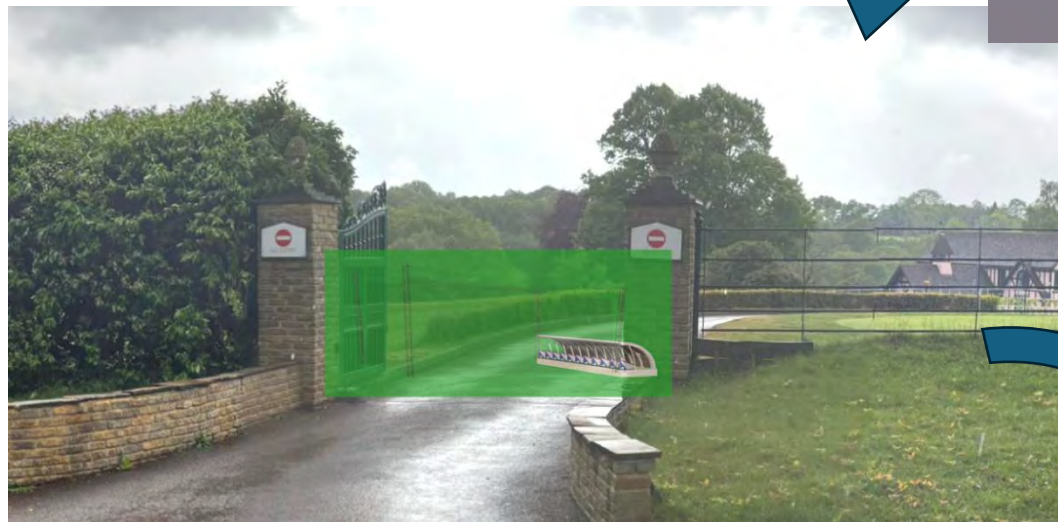
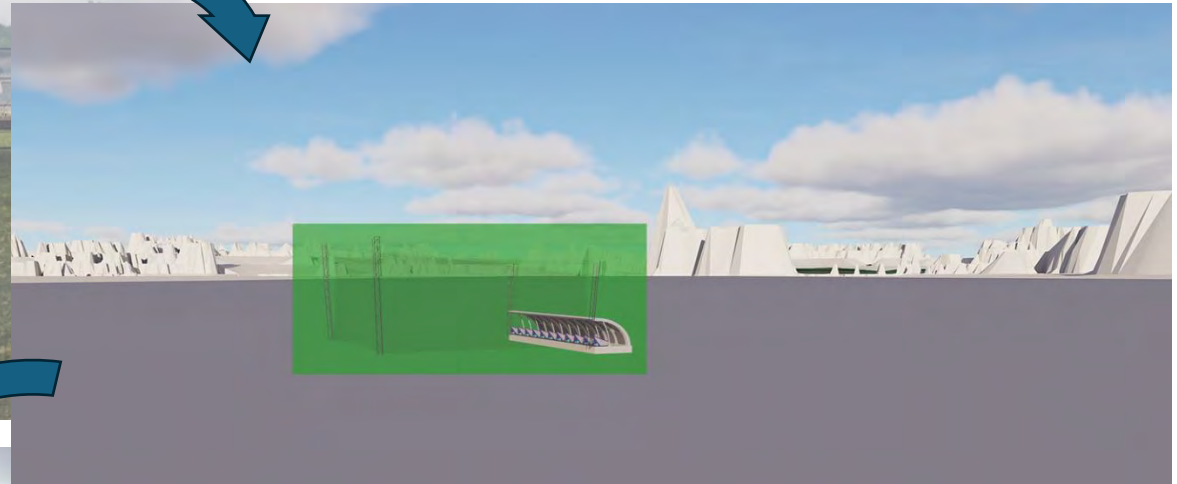
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Raw Data For Calculating Montage Development



DSM with the sites aerial & DTM showing the trees are used to align the viewpoint, and match up the focal length.



CGI model is aligned to the Viewpoint and then rendered.
The render is opened in Photoshop and the greenscreen is cropped out,
then the foreground is reapplied.

