

Cascades Leisure Centre, Gravesend

Landscape Statement

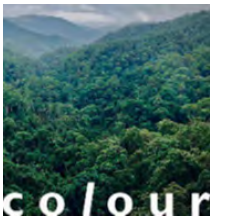
For Gravesham Borough Council with
Space & Place, Faithful & Gould and Lichfields

25th November 2022

Project no. 2333

GRV_COL_XX_XX_DOC_L_0001_06

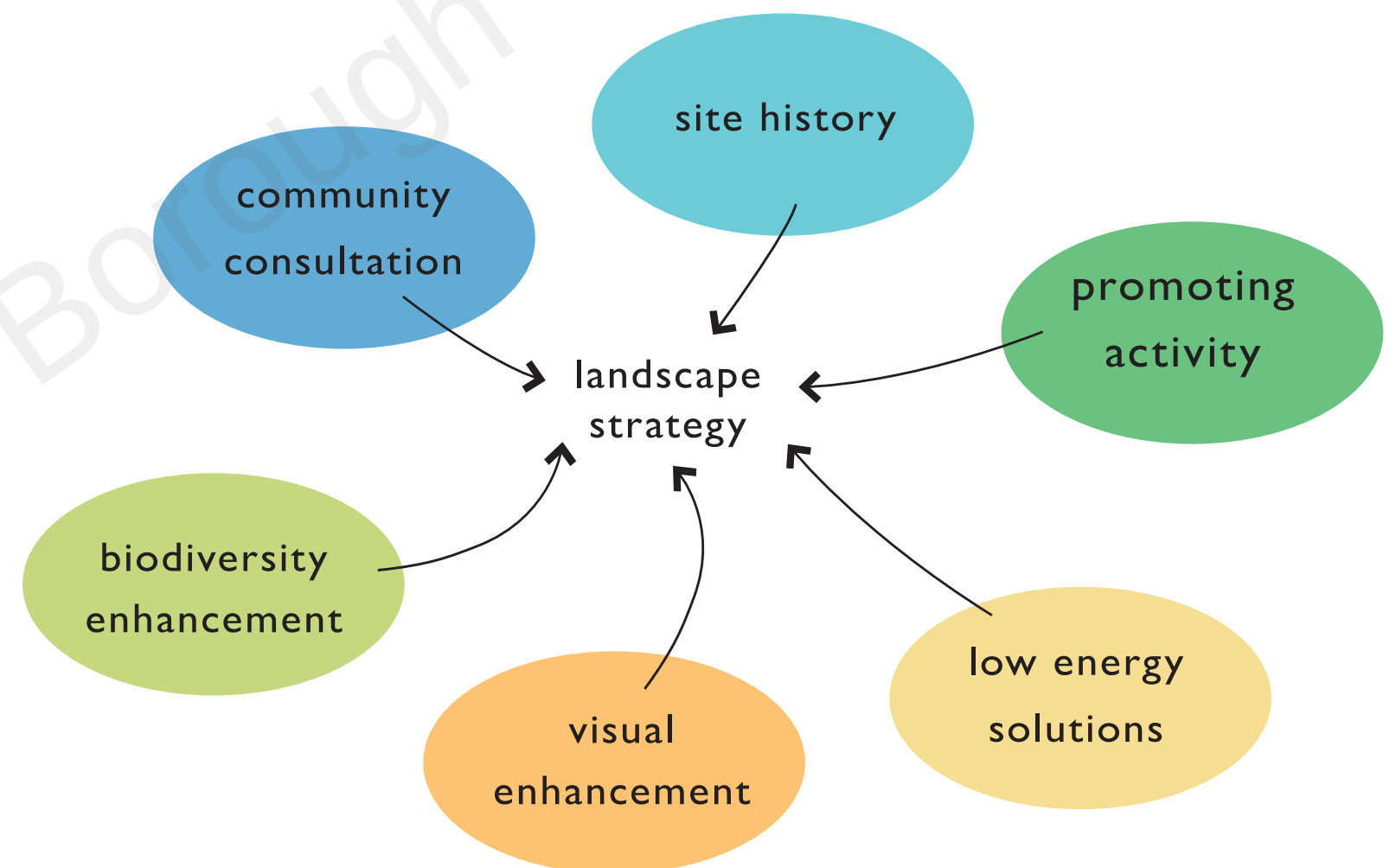
This Landscape Statement GRV_COL_XX_XX_DOC_L_0001_06 has been prepared by Colour to accompany a full planning application for the redevelopment of the Cascades Leisure Centre site in Gravesend. The application is submitted on behalf of Gravesham Borough Council.



I. Landscape approach

The landscape setting and relationship to context is a vital aspect of proposals to replace the Cascades Leisure Centre with a new state of the art facility. A design approach has therefore been developed and is being implemented that:

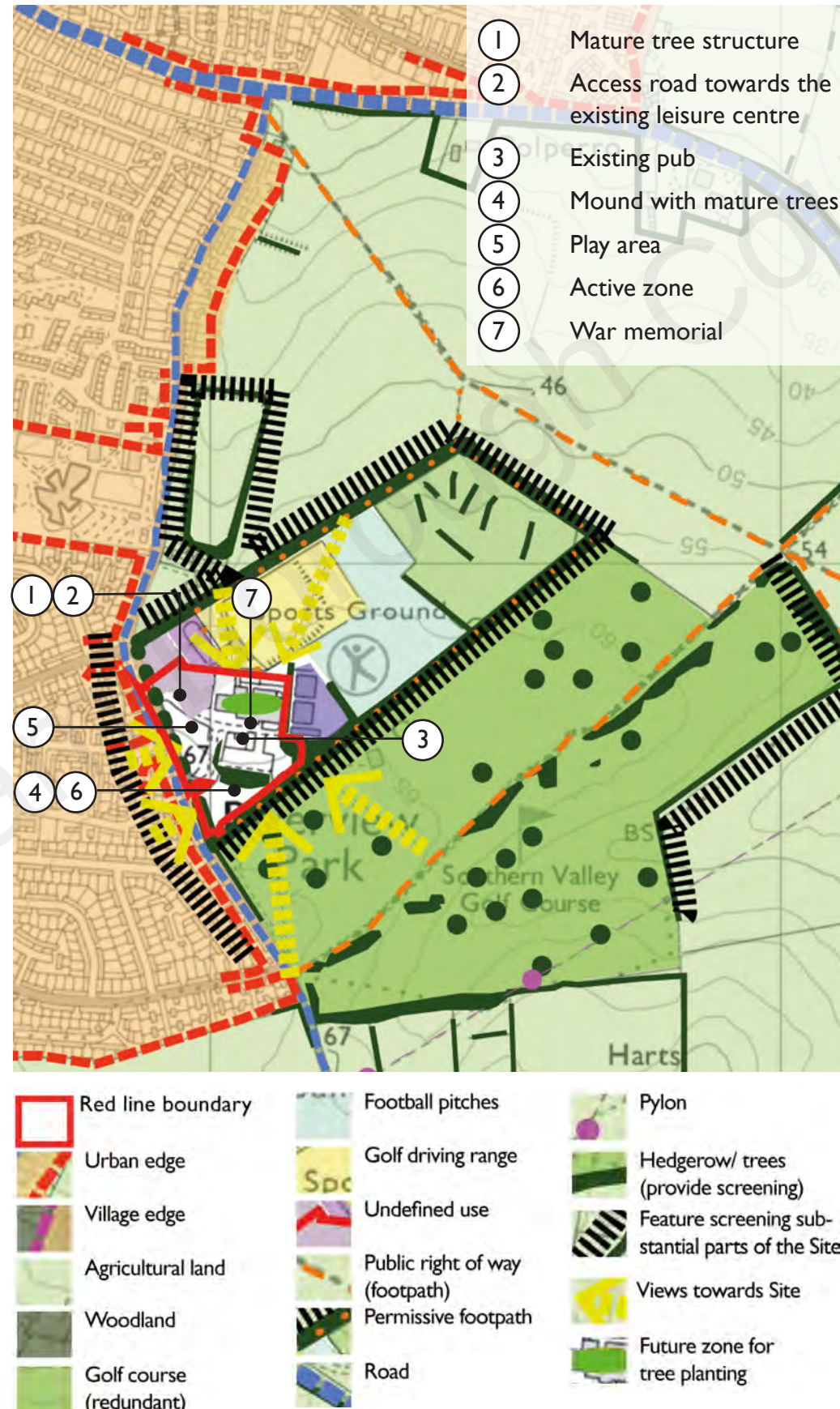
- Pays respect to the unique and important history of the site
- Works with and respects the attractive and mature landscape setting of the leisure centre
- Responds to community consultation
- Offers a broad range of opportunities for activity externally
- Takes an approach that promotes biodiversity and low energy landscape solutions
- Would lead to an enhancement of visual amenity in the wider landscape setting



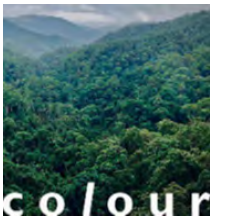
2. Existing site

To describe the existing site :

- It covers 4.5ha on the eastern side of Thong Lane, Gravesham, and within the Gravesham Borough, Riverview Ward.
- It is situated at the edge of the urban area of Gravesham, in an area designated as London Metropolitan Greenbelt.
- It is owned by Gravesham Borough Council and operated mainly as Cascades Leisure Centre which provides a number of facilities including a swimming pool, leisure pool, sports hall, and indoor sports courts. Externally, there is an equipped children's play area and two redundant tennis courts.
- Site access is gained via two points (access and egress) accommodating a one way road through that connects to Thong Lane at two points located c.165m apart. On-site car parking is provided along the north stretch of the access road and within a main car park south of the existing leisure centre complex.
- A pub with associated external space and servicing paraphernalia is located adjacent to the existing leisure centre within the site.
- Adjacent to the Site, there are additional sports/recreational facilities including two indoor tennis domes to the east, a golf driving range to the north, and football pitches to the NE. The former Southern Valley Golf Club abuts the Site's south-eastern boundary.
- Vegetation within the Site is generally limited to close-mown grassed areas and mature trees that line both the access road and the boundary with Thong Lane, and which form wooded areas on the southern and eastern boundaries, together with a wooded block on a sizeable engineered earth mound located immediately south of the main car park. There are also two short sections of hedgerow.
- The mature trees and clusters of existing buildings within and in close proximity to the Site serve to screen much of the Site from the houses on Thong Lane and the wider landscape to the north, east and south. The sense of existing enclosure / self-containment of the Site and adjacent off-site sport/leisure facilities to the north and north-east, brought about by the existing mature trees, contrasts with the openness of the golf course and rural landscape to the north, east and south.
- An Arboricultural Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Preliminary Ecological Assessment have been commissioned to identify any important tree assets and habitats so as to inform landscape proposals and quantify tree credit and loss.



Cascades Leisure Centre redevelopment Landscape Statement

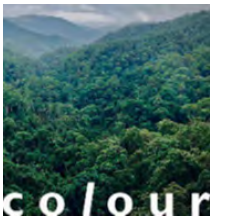


3. Context

The site is located at the eastern boundary of Gravesham, part of an urban area that leads to the Thames Estuary in northern Kent and beyond the southeast extremity of London.

The wider borough has a diverse rural landscape, from the marshes around the Thames in the north, arable farmlands to the south and east of Gravesend, and downs and woodland in the south. Part of the nationally important landscape of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is located on the eastern side of the Borough (GLP 2014, para 5.7.14 p119)

- The wider landscape beyond the sport facilities is generally open in character, with few trees. The golf course is set on relatively flat ground, as per the Site, with only localised, undulations that comprise the design of the course. Beyond the golf course, the landscape is composed of large arable fields, broken slightly by hedgerows which are tall in places but also somewhat gappy. The landscape remains very open, heading in a northerly direction towards the Thames Estuary. To the east, the mature woodland of Shorne Woods, set on ascending valley sides, screens views of built-form at and around Shorne village. There is inter-visibility between the Site and houses situated immediately opposite, on Thong Lane, but these properties also obscure views from/to regions any further west.
- Thong Lane connects Rochester Road (A226) in the north to the A2 (formerly Watling Street) to the south, and also provides access to the Kent Downs AONB including Cobham Woods, and Keskyns Community Woodland, both south of the A2.
- There are a number of PROWs that cross agricultural fields to the north, east and south of the Site, which connect Gravesham to villages of Shorne and Thong. In addition, there is a circuit of permissive paths passing around the football pitches, golf driving range and redundant golf course, which appears to be well-used by local people.



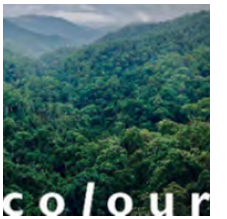
4. A rich history

The intention is to use the landscape to highlight important aspects of the site history.

- Historic maps and potted histories of the area describe the Site as agricultural land until 1932 after which it was used as an airfield for Gravesend Airport.
- On the 4th May 1936, Amy Johnson took off from Gravesend Airport on her record breaking solo flight to South Africa and back.
- Soon after, during WWII, the airfield was taken over by the Air Ministry became RAF Gravesend as a satellite of Biggin Hill from which Blenheims, Hurricanes and Spitfires of various squadrons operated at the forefront of RAF Fighter Command in the Battle of Britain.
- The airstrip was rendered too hazardous to operate by 1944 due to the risks posed by V1 rockets. In 1956, Gravesend Airport and RAF station were decommissioned.
- In 1969 the area east of Thong Lane was developed as a sports centre which, following refurbishment and the addition of a sizeable leisure pool in 1988, changed its name to "Cascades". This building complex and associated car park, play area, landscape spaces and public house, comprise the Site today.

The following interventions within the landscape will help to bring the notable events into everyday life :

- War memorial and RAF flag on flagpole to be relocated to a more prominent location
- Scaled down airfield runways transect the play area, one marked up to provide the basis for learn to ride cycling surfaces and the second calibrated with distance markers to aid numeracy through play with physical activity
- Amy Johnson would be thematically referenced with the zip wire carriage and structures running from Gravesend to South Africa
- The taxi ways around the airfield has been represented by linking path around the play area
- RAF roundel provide the colour of the wet pour rubber within the play area



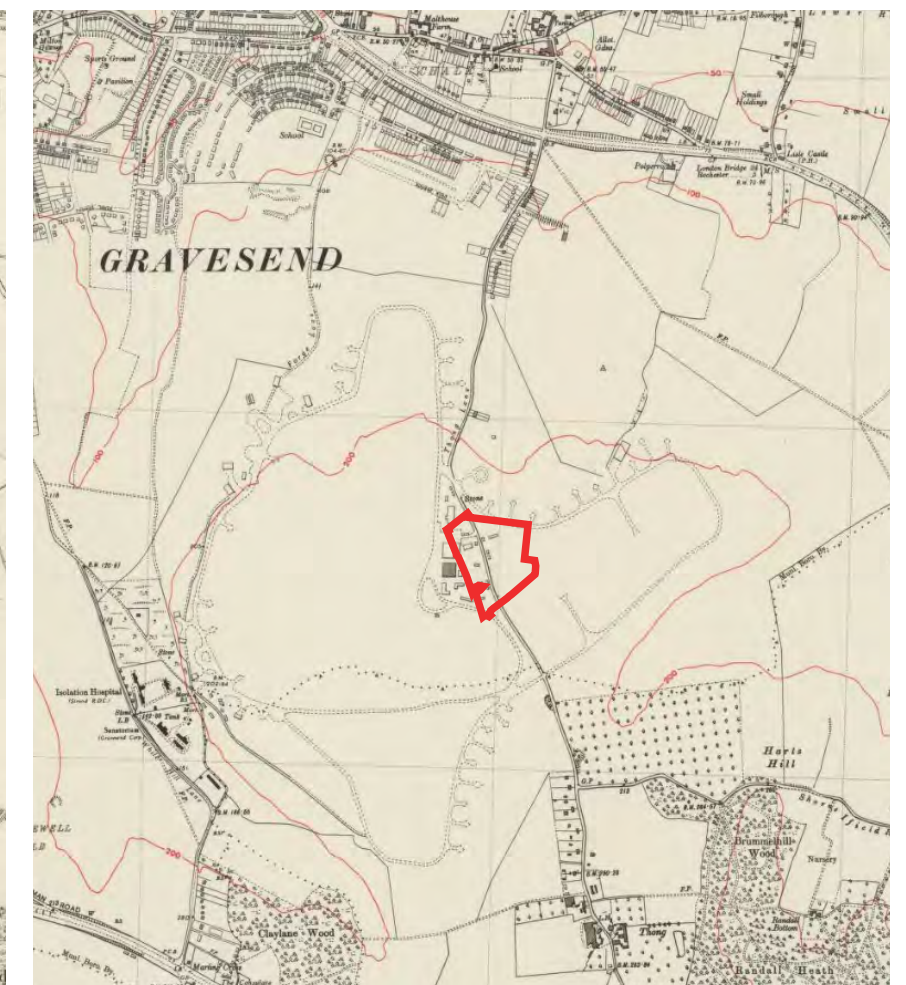
Historic photo of Gravesend Airfield



Existing memorial stone



1869 Historic Map with project red line boundary overlayed



1950 Historic Map, showing extent of Gravesend Airfield

5. Consultation



The landscape approach was discussed at a Pre Application meeting with Gravesham Council On 15.11.2022 and strongly influence by public consultation as reported in the accompanying SCI submitted in support of the planning application as undertaken by KKP as reported elsewhere in the planning application. It was clear from the responses that open space around the centre is of high value with priority areas for investment. All the key responses have been included within the landscape design proposals. These include :

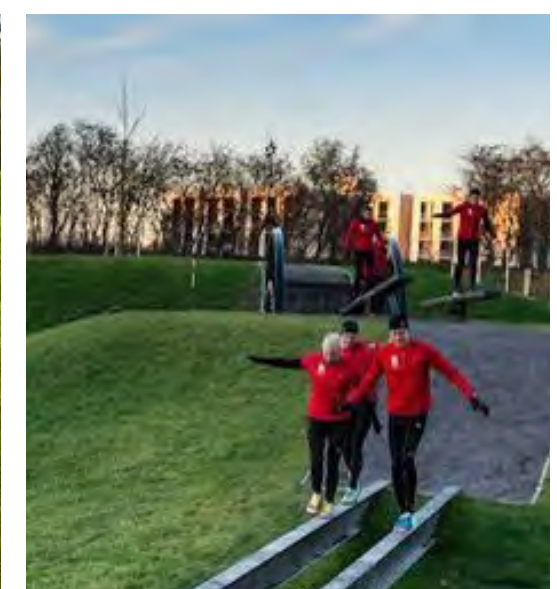
- Improved children's play facilities // a key aspect of proposals
- Walking routes and connections to existing rights of way // connected via the loop with an extra ½ mile added;
- Improved landscaping // net increase in tree planting and the landscape structure;
- Sensory garden (quiet activity space) // sensory planting introduced in key areas of the proposed landscape;
- Cycling skills area // introduced within the play area

Other responses included :

- The need for facilities to be fully wheelchair user accessible;
- Retention of the site's heritage;

Furthermore, the approach to landscape proposals and their subsequent management were discussed with the Parks and Open Spaces Manager of Gravesham Borough Council on the 17th November 2022. Key issues agreed included :

- The aspiration to improve the play facility with items of greater impact;
- Existing play items are 3 years old, therefor retain if possible, but could be migrated to other parts of the borough. The outcome is however that Colour proposals retain all existing equipment;
- Historic airport references would be included;
- The Loop would be a very positive asset and would be ideal if connected to existing walking routes as there are many walkers locally;
- There would be no need for a bike track as there is a bigger facility elsewhere;
- The local Open Space Assessment shows the existing kick around area as amenity leisure space;
- Possible outdoor green gym to be considered, a woodland trim trail has been included;
- Looking forward, Gravesham Council are keen to work collaboratively in developing up the detail of the soft landscape :
 - » The underlying chalk and Kent climate naturally lead to the need for very drought tolerant planting,
 - » Specimen trees should be large enough to resist vandalism,
 - » The proposed landscape approach looks achievable to keep on top of maintenance,
 - » Given the green environment that is being proposed, the appropriate use of reinforced grass within the car park would be quite acceptable;
- We should explore opportunities to phase the work early so that the public can see thing happening before opening of the new facility;



6. Access



Key aspects of pedestrian, cycle, bus, vehicle and service access are shown on the adjacent plan :



- Principal pedestrian movement
- Vehicle movement
- Adjacent well used permissive pedestrian route
- Cycle storage
- Leisure centre main entry
- Service access upper level
- Bus stop
- Laybye for lorries/vans
- Coaches parking

7. Landscape character areas

The landscape approach can be best understood through breaking it down into 8 character areas :

- ① Pedestrian friendly arrival spaces
- ② Main car park
- ③ 20m native woodland screen belt incorporating loop trail
- ④ Overflow car park with northern link into existing well used foot path past driving range
- ⑤ Expanded play area
- ⑥ Active landscape
- ⑦ Fenced dual purpose netball & tennis court with double gate access for occasional overflow car parking
- ⑧ Staff car parking & biodiversity gardens



8. Study areas // arrival

Clarity of movement, pedestrian priority and therefore safety are critical to reaching the main entrance of the new facility. A pedestrian priority routes via raised tables are proposed from this main entrance through the car park to the ½ mile perimeter loop. In addition, connectivity through crossings is provided to the bus stop and northern site entrance on Thong Lane via the play area.

Within the main car park, blue badge bays and coach parking are all within close proximity to the main entrance. The car park itself is intended to be as green as possible with a permeable reinforced grass surface to parking bays that limits tarmac surfaces to the search routes, coach and blue badge bays.

Overflow parking for events would be catered for within the existing hard standing to the west of the site and to the east of this. A proposed dual purpose fenced netball and tennis court is to the east of the main car park.

The layout will be developed so as to retain as many existing trees in the south-west corner of the car park as possible.

Taxi / car drop off, bicycle and motorcycle parking are all located in front of the west elevation to the proposed leisure centre within a broad band of public realm that includes a line of formal street trees that would help mitigate the loss of existing trees in this location.

- 1

2

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Pedestrian route to the main entrance

Main car park

3 no. Coach bays

Blue badge bays

Pedestrian footpath crossing

Cycle storage

Motorcycle parking

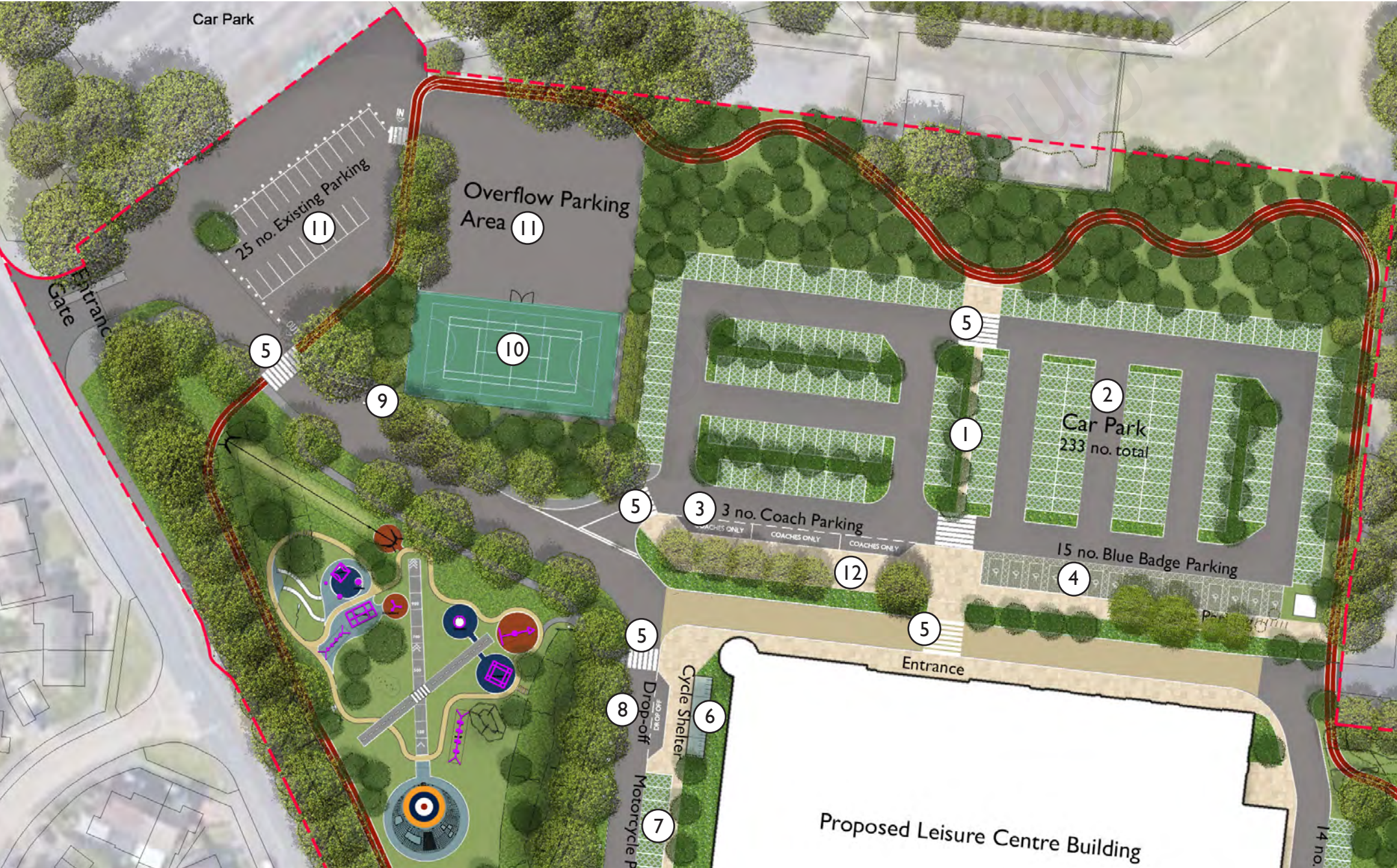
Taxi drop off

Bus stop

Fenced netball court for occasional overflow car parking

Overflow car parking

Relocation of memorial





9. Study areas // enhanced play

Set within a tree-lined triangular space along the southwest facing boundary to Thong Lane, the existing play area has an attractive location, is well connected to the community and an important ‘stepping stone’ in the approach to both the existing and proposed leisure facility. There is demand from the community to expand the play provision which is very popular and well used.

Reimagining of play at Cascades would :

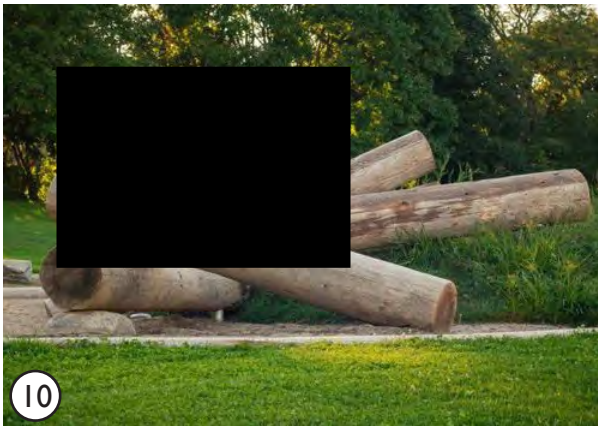
- Link the area to the history of Gravesend Airport, RAF Gravesend and the Battle of Britain
- Strengthen the green setting with native tree planting and sensory planting so as to promote the biophillic health benefits of naturalistic and exploratory within nature
- Create a more engaging 3 dimensional play setting through new features with height and landform
- Utilise existing play equipment
- Incorporate new attractions such as a landmark play tower, zip line, family slides from a new mound and a learn to ride area
- Take a ‘circular play’ philosophy that links features to maximise the benefit of the whole
- Create a broader environment for younger children



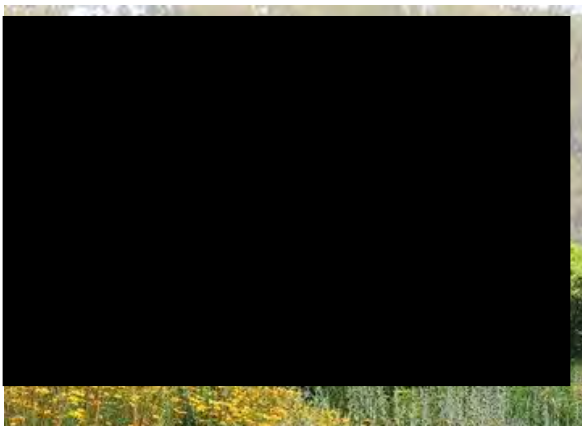
- ① Play area based on runways of Gravesend Airport. With learn to ride markings on the principal south-west -northeast runway & distance markers on the north-south
- ② Echoes of the taxiway layout would provide circular play connectivity with access to other play items
- ③ New landmark play structure
- ④ Mound with attractor on summit and family slides
- ⑤ Zip line themed on the Amy Johnson solo flight from gravesend to South Africa
- ⑥ Equipped play area on wet pour RAF roundel
- ⑦ Scattered trees and sensory planting
- ⑧ Footpath connectivity with Main-Entrance
- ⑨ Loop crossing of access road
- ⑩ Natural & exploratory play



⑤ Zip line to imitate Amy Johnson’s solo flight to South Africa



⑩ Naturalistic play environment with native trees and sensory planting



③ Landmark tower



10. Study areas // existing play equipment

Being only 3 years old, existing play equipment has been scheduled in terms of its suitability for retention. The following photographs illustrate their proposed use :

- 1 To be retained in situ
- 2 Relocated within the play area



2 no.



4 no.



4 no.



11. Study areas // activity zone

The southeast corner of the site is a well contained park-land space enclosed by mature trees with mounds to the east along the site boundary and north adjacent to the new proposed leisure centre boosting tree heights and accentuating the sense of enclosure.

Within the local Open Space Assessment, the open space is considered to be amenity leisure space.

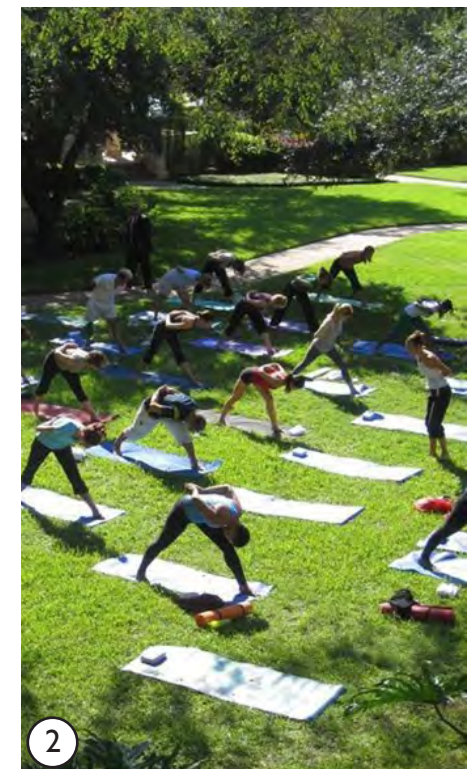
An active environment is to be created through landscape design that offers nudges that both invite impromptu activity and opportunities for programmable activities for adults and older children. The latter could be part of the Cascades offer or utilised by fitness coaches for outdoor bootcamps or training sessions.

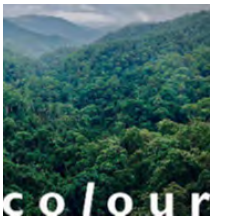
The approach to landscape design is to be :

- Full of choice
- Inclusive and retaining the existing kick-a-bout opportunity
- Containing flexible spaces suitable for programmable activities such as dance, yoga or fitness sessions
- 100m running track lanes run along southern boundary
- A 3D environment with earth mounding that re-uses site spoil for extra activity opportunities
- Set within a sensory biodiverse environment to be active within nature



- ① Kick about area with retained logs usable for a goal
- ② Big arc seat for bootcamp exercises & enclosing a space suitable for outdoor classes
- ③ Loop crossing road on raised platform with continuous track markings
- ④ Woodland trim trail beneath existing mature trees
- ⑤ 100m straight
- ⑥ Wavy loop section between trees
- ⑦ Loop climbs up mound to create 3D environment
- ⑧ Bootcamp giant steps up mound
- ⑨ Dense buffer planting and timber kick rail to protect top of retaining wall

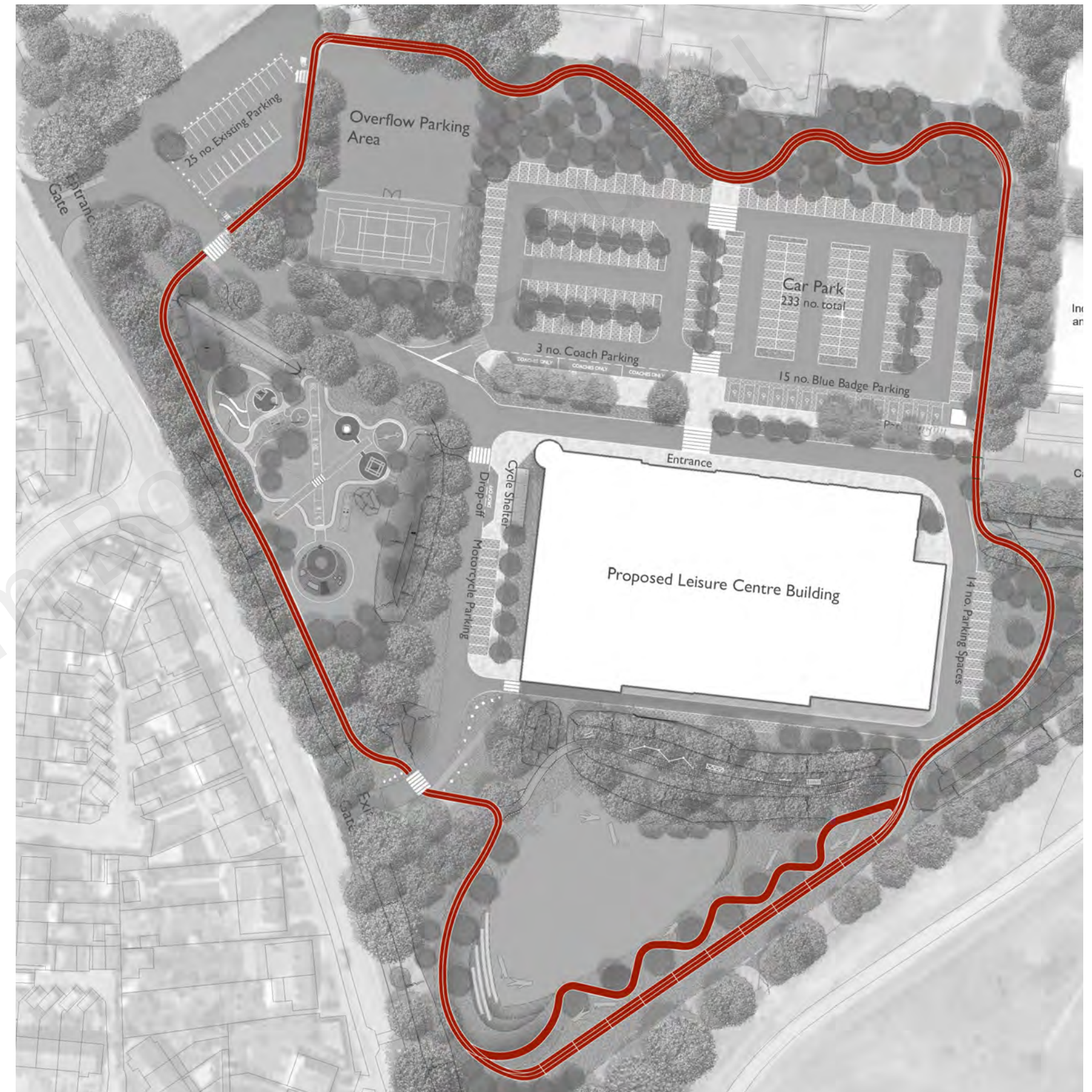
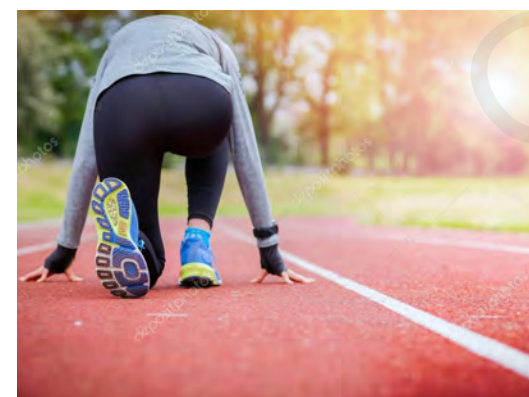




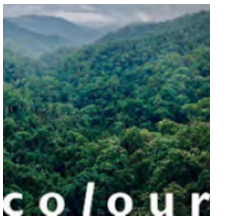
12. Study areas // the loop

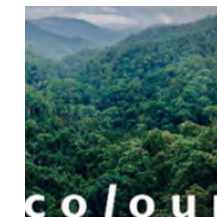
The loop is an important piece of site infrastructure with a wider local benefit that will significantly elevate the functionality of the site to encourage active lifestyles through multiple purposes and roles. Key aspects of the loop are :

- Connects into the well used the existing offsite permissive public foot path to the north of the site thereby providing greater walking options
- Measurable ½ mile distance including changes in elevation and spatial experience
- Continuous route wrapping around the site to link the various activity zones
- Generally 3m wide but may narrow to 2m where space is constrained
- Has the appearance of a sports track being red tarmac with 2 lanes marked with white lines
- Includes break out spaces at certain points for a view north towards the countryside, more focused exercises with dispersed trim trail kit and play on the way equipment
- Runs over changes existing and proposed changes in level d



13. Landscape layout plan





14. Ecological interface

Recommendations from the 24.11.22 Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA)
by Lloyd Bore of relevance to the landscape design follow :

Ancient woodland

Further to there being no ancient woodland is present on site, the mature boundary hedgerows have poor functional connectivity to areas of nearby semi natural ancient woodland, being part of the end of a chain of thick hedgerows with trees to the north of these woodlands. Survey of the boundary features found no indications that these were either remnant sections of woodland, historic hedgerow features or habitat likely to support woodland ground flora, having more tall ruderal plant assemblages. In addition, since these habitats are being retained by design, no adverse effects upon ancient woodland (through e.g., a reduction in the extent of connecting hedgerow habitat) are anticipated.

Important invertebrate species / assemblages

Additional planting of shrubs and trees as described for replacement hedging above.

In addition to additional planting, arisings from habitat management should be used to create habitat piles; twigs, leaves (not grass clippings) and organic debris piled up in a discrete corner to provide sheltering locations for insects during poor weather and additional habitat for species associated with deadwood.

Areas of grassland separate from sports surfaces should also be cut rotationally over winter and allowed to grow tall during the growing season to create a variety of grassland sward heights that will encourage common meadow invertebrate species which are currently missing from the modified grassland areas due to regular mowing throughout the growing season.

Enhance hedgerows

Current proposals would result in the loss of a small section of existing hedgerows H1 and treelines. The landscape design will be developed to incorporate a replacement section of the Hawthorn hedge – Sycamore tree line on a like-for-like basis albeit with a greater length of hedgerow and greater range of species as listed below. Since the existing hedgerow H1 is a regularly cut and comprised solely of hawthorn with sycamore standards, any replacement hedgerow would need to seek to incorporate a wider range of native species with the hawthorn, providing a mixture of blackthorn, spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), wayfaring tree (*Viburnum lantana*), wild service tree (*Sorbus torminalis*), holly, rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and elder. To to compensate for the loss of a 50m section of hedgerow, a total length of 200m of species-rich hedgerow along the southern boundary line connecting to the existing hedgerow will be proposed

Notable plants

Where possible, mature trees found on site should be retained and protected during the construction phase of the proposed development. Further details on the location and protection measures of these trees is found within the associated Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Lloyd Bore, 2022b).



- existing hedgerow to be retained
- 50 m hedgerow to be removed
- 200 m proposed native hedgerow to mitigate loss



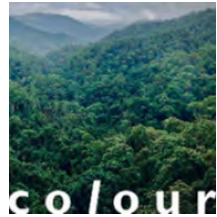
15. Arboricultural interface

Within the Site, there are many mature trees which line both the access road and the boundary with Thong Lane. Trees also form woodland blocks along the Site's south-eastern boundary, and on an engineered earth mound immediately south of the main car park. Blocks of woodland also extend around the football pitches, northern reaches of the redundant golf course, and driving golf range. These trees provide significant screening to the Site from the landscape beyond.

The Arboriculture survey has revealed that there are no A Category trees on Site, with the rest being composed of B Category and C Category trees.

Reordering the Site, as per the Proposed Development, will result in some limited conflicts between existing and proposed Site features. More specifically, the relocation of the leisure centre building and associated car park will require the removal of 26nr existing trees. Of these, only 6nr B Category specimens would be lost, with the rest being C Category. While every attempt has been made to minimise tree loss, a strategy of tree replacement has been developed, by way of compensation. The proposed car park will therefore feature an appropriate number of replacement trees which will not only replace those lost but will serve to mitigate the visual effects of built form in and around this area.





16. Planting strategy

The approach to planting at Cascades is to :

- Retain and protect as many valuable existing trees as possible
- Focus on native and biodiversity supporting species
- Developed with recommendations from the Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) ecological mitigation strategy by Lloyd Bore
- Select species that would not provide a maintenance liability in the future
- Use drought tolerant species given the location on free draining chalk in one of the driest counties of England
- Calcareous suited plants

Detailed planting plans will be provided by planning condition based on a planting strategy of the following planting treatments :

Specimen Trees

The following list detail the major and minor tree species suitable for chalky soil.

Species

Acer campestre,
Acer negundo,
Acer platanoides, A. pseudoplatanus
Aesculus x carnea,
Aesculus hippocastanum
Aesculus indica
Arbutus unedo (+) (e)
Carpinus betulus
Ceanothus arboreus 'Trewithen Blue'
Cercis siliquastrum
Corylus avellana cultivars
Corylus avellana 'Contorta'
Corylus columna
Corylus maxima cultivars
Crataegus laevigata (hawthorn)
Euonymus europaeus (spindle)
Fagus sylvatica (common beech)
Fraxinus excelsior,
Fraxinus ornus (ash)
Ligustrum lucidum AGM (e)
Malus (apple, crab apple)
Morus nigra (black mulberry)
Prunus (flowering cherries)
Pyrus (common pear)
Quercus robur (common oak)
Sorbus aria (whitebeam),
Sorbus intermedia

Species Rich Amenity Grass Mix

Meadow Grass Mixture for Chalk & Limestone Soils EG6

Suggested Sowing Rates
50kg/ha 20kg/acre 5g/m2

Description

This short, slow growing grass mixture is suitable for sowing onto thin lime-rich soils of low fertility. EG6 is a 100% grass seed mixture which can be sown alone or sown with wild flowers eg EM6F or ER1F. EM6F and EG6 are available premixed as a complete meadow mixture EM6. Generally when sowing EG6 grasses without wild flowers the sowing rate may be increased to 10-15g/m2 without compromising the development of diversity.

Composition

Anthoxanthum odoratum – Sweet Vernal-grass
Briza media – Quaking Grass (w)
Bromopsis erecta – Upright Brome
30.0 Cynosurus cristatus – Crested Dogtail (a)
30.0 Festuca ovina – Sheep's Fescue
30.0 Festuca rubra – Red Fescue
2.25 Trisetum flavescens – Yellow Oat-grass (w)

Hedgerow

Existing hedgerow diversity should be increased and the planting of a replacement hedge to mitigate the loss of part of H1 through the planting of a mixture of :

Wayfinding Tree - Viburnum lantana
Spindle - Euonymus europaeus
Hazel - Corylus avellana
Beech – Fagus sylvatica
Wild service tree - Sorbus torminalis
Holly – Ilex aquifolium
Rowan - Sorbus aucuparia
Elder – Sambucus nigra.
Blackthorn – Prunus spinosa

Species rich amenity shrubs and ground cover

Taxus baccata – prostrate
Shrub roses

Bulbs

Early snowdrops
English Bluebells

Native Woodland

Developed in accordance with the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) woodland types W8 and W12 and Pea.

Species

Beech - Fagus sylvatica
Wayfinding Tree - Viburnum lantana
Spindle - Euonymus europaeus
Hazel - Corylus avellana
Wild service tree - Sorbus torminalis
Holly – Ilex aquifolium
Rowan - Sorbus aucuparia
Elder – Sambucus nigra.
Hawthorn – Crataegus monogyna
Blackthorn – Prunus spinosa

Biodiversity Supporting Shrubs

When planting on chalky soils it is important to first establish how deep the topsoil is. Many trees and shrubs that will tolerate alkaline soil conditions may become chlorotic (yellow) on shallow soils over chalks. In some gardens the soil layer may be very thin indeed – only a few inches – before hitting solid chalk. Where this is the case, topsoil will need to be brought in to make planting possible. On shallow soils over chalk where increasing soil depth is not an option, wildflower mixes selected for chalk tolerance may still thrive.

Species

Berberis vulgaris
Buxus microphylla,
Campanula
Caragana arborescens
Ceanothus
Cistus sp.
Cytisus sp.
Cornus sanguinea
Deutzia sp.
Elaeagnus angustifolia,
Genista lydia
Geranium
Hypericum
Lavandula
Ligustrum japonicum,
Lonicera nitida,
Mahonia aquifolium,
Olearia
Paeonia delavayi
Potentilla fruticosa
Pyracantha
Ribes laurifolium
Rosmarinus officinalis
Santolina sp.
Spiraea 'Arguta' AGM,
Spiraea japonica 'Anthony Waterer'
Spiraea japonica 'Goldflame',
Vinca major,
Vinca minor

Native Meadow Mix

Wild Flowers for Chalk & Limestone Soils EM6F

Suggested Sowing Rates
15kg/ha 6kg/acre
1.5g/m2

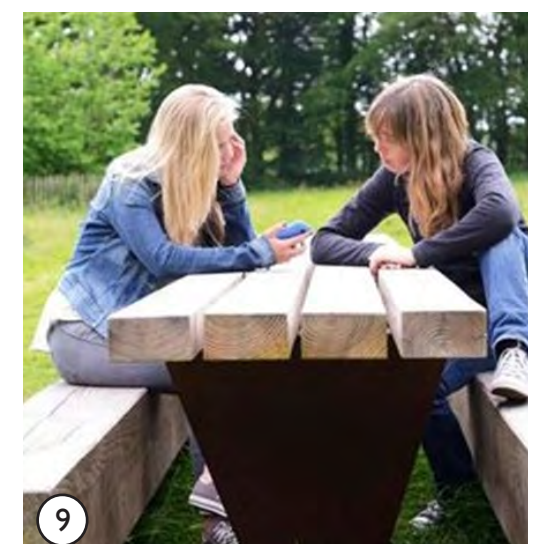
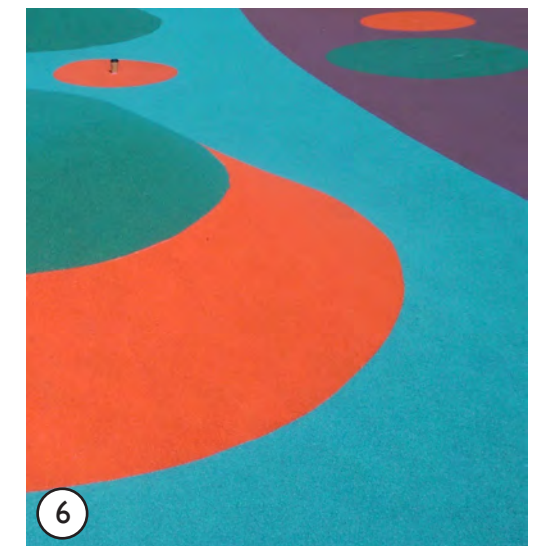
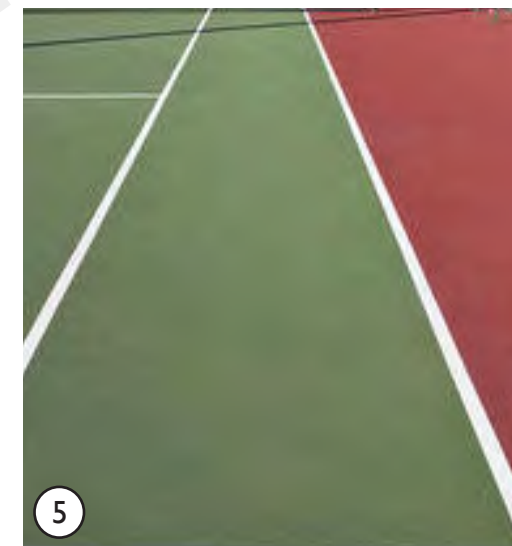
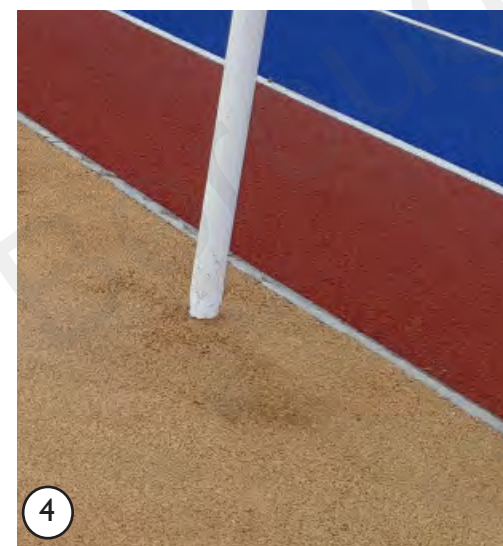
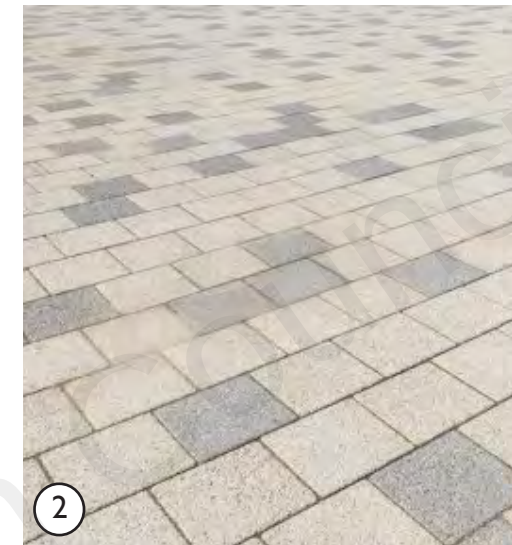
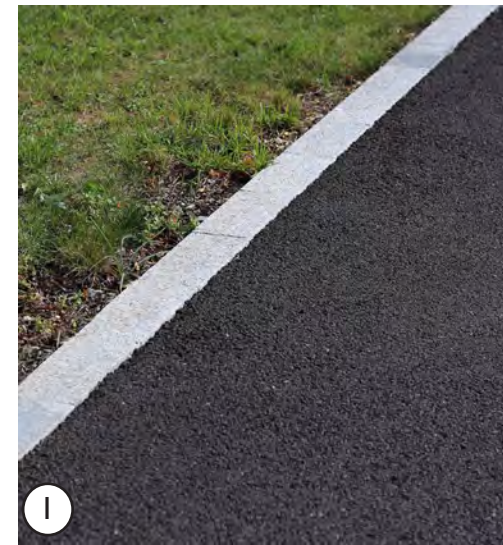
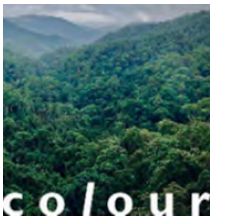
Description

This rich mixture is suitable for sowing onto thin lime-rich soils of low fertility and with a significant chalk or limestone content. Sowing EM6F directly onto exposed chalk or limestone can produce some of the most interesting results; establishment will be slower than on well developed soils, but less management will be needed.

Composition

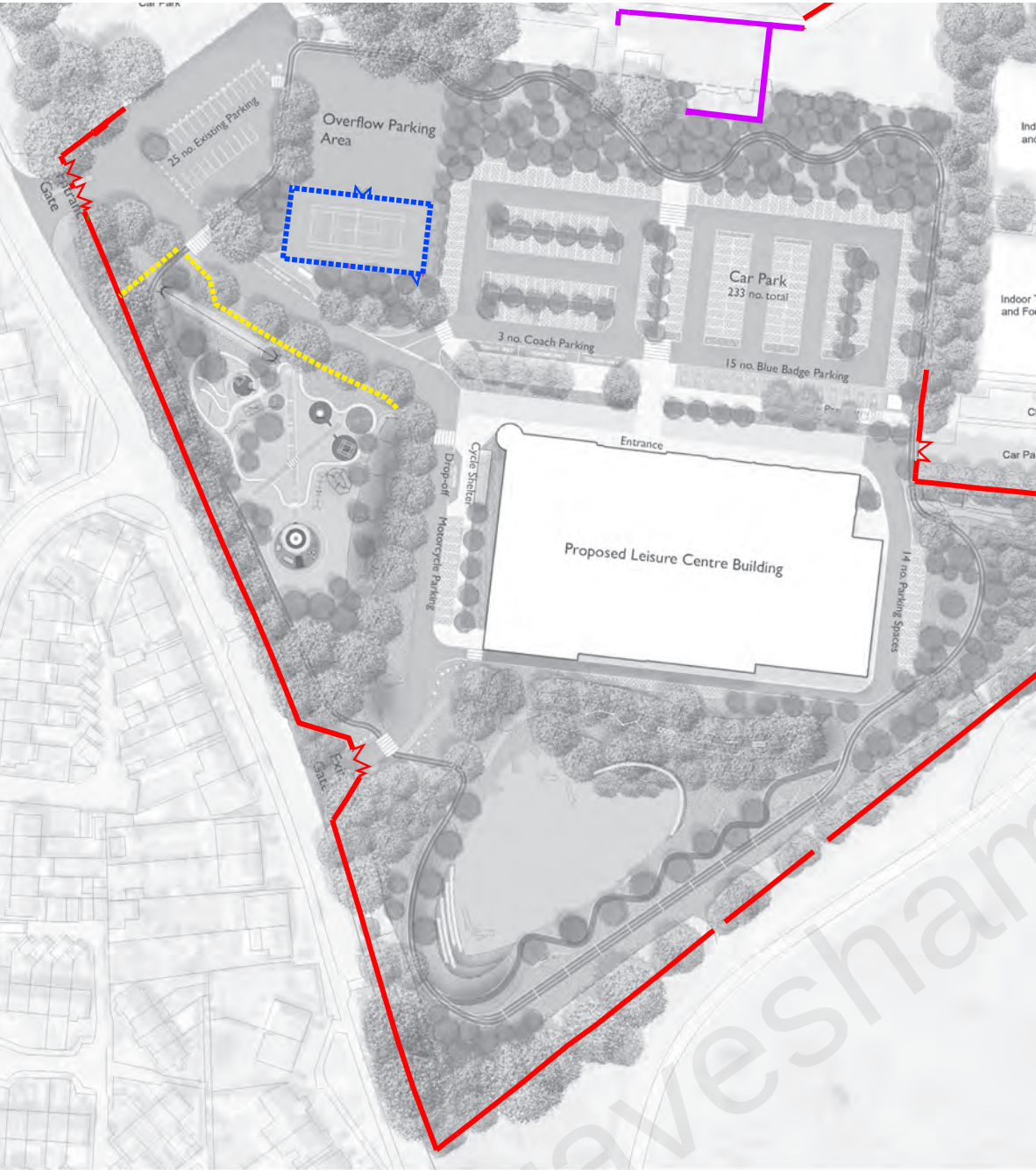
EM6F is a mixture containing 100% native wild flowers for sowing into existing grass or combining with a suitable grass seed mix. EG6 is the grass mix we recommend for sowing with these flowers. EM6F and EG6 are available premixed as a complete meadow mixture EG6: (%)
2.5 Achillea millefolium
10.0 Centaurea nigra
2.5 Centaurea scabiosa
0.5 Daucus carota
2.0 Galium album
3.5 Galium verum
1.5 Geranium pratense
1.0 Hippocrepis comosa
0.5 Knautia arvensis
0.5 Leontodon hispidus
10.0 Leucanthemum vulgare
0.5 Linum catharticum
1.0 Lotus corniculatus
10.0 Malva moschata
1.5 Medicago lupulina
11.5 Plantago lanceolata
15.0 Poterium sanguisorba
1.0 Primula veris
2.5 Ranunculus acris
5.0 Rhinanthus minor
0.5 Scabiosa columbaria

17. Materials strategy



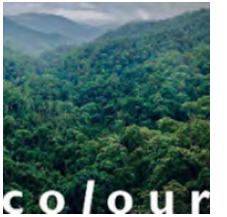
- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| ① Tarmac/Blacktop | ⑤ Colour-coated tarmac |
| ② Concrete block pavers | ⑥ Wet-pour safety surface |
| ③ Grasscrete pavers | ④ — Porous coloured tarmac |
| ④ Coloured tarmac | ⑦ — Self-binding gravel path with timber edge |

18. Boundary treatments



- ① 1.2 m high anti-trap bowtop fence
- ② 3 m high weldmesh fence with 1.2 and 3.0 m wide gate
- ③ existing fence to be retained
- existing wall to be retained

19. Summary of key issues



1. The existing Leisure Centre is set within a semi-mature to mature landscape framework which creates a largely contained green environment;
2. It is located at the eastern edge of Gravesham within Metropolitan Green Belt but with minimal outward visibility into the countryside or adjacent disused golf course;
3. A disused golf course adjacent to the site is the setting for the proposed Lower Thames Crossing southern approach;
4. The site general arrangement, facility location, layout and design has been landscape such that the majority of existing trees are to be retained;
5. The conclusion of Colour's supporting Landscape & Visual Impact Statement is that a betterment would be achieved with a sensitive new building designed that would work within the existing landscape structure of the site and with minimal outward views into the community or Green Belt;
6. Landscape proposals are founded in community, operator and stakeholder consultation and iteratively developed with Arboricultural Survey and Preliminary Ecological Assessment;
7. The proposed site landscape would offer considerable enhancement to :
 - a. The existing play provision,
 - b. Opportunities for outdoor exercise for all ages,
 - c. Interpretation of site history,
 - d. Local walking routes with the incorporation of a new loop and pedestrian connectivity to the new facility.
 - e. 200m of species rich native hedgerow connecting to existing hedge, to compensate for the disconnection and loss of 50m of hedgerow situated within the proposed building footprint.
8. A green approach to site management has been agreed and will be developed with Gravesham Council's Parks & Green Spaces Manager.