



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

CONWAY PARK



Landscape and Reclamation Team

Nottinghamshire County Council

County Hall

Loughborough Road

Nottingham

NG2 7QP

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Scope of Report

1.1 Conway Park lies to the east of Carlton, and is located between the Nottingham-Lincoln railway line and Conway Road. Maintained by Gedling Borough Council, and containing formal sports facilities (tennis courts and bowling greens), as well as an imposing brick built pavilion building, the park is nonetheless rather dated and does not appear well-used. It also lacks the facilities now expected by a proportion of the park visiting public eg. toilets, refreshments, and a children's play area.

1.2 Nottinghamshire County Council's Landscape and Reclamation team has reviewed the existing amenities and proposed a development plan which retains the basic structure of the park but proposes options for refreshing the original amenities, encouraging increased use, and visits from a wider spectrum of the public whilst being mindful of ongoing maintenance costs in a constrained financial climate.

Existing Condition

1.2 The existing park shows clearly the original design concept; built in the inter-war years ?? to support the expansion of Carlton and provide local amenities, the layout and facilities reflect the planning and recreational aims of the time. A substantial brick pavilion is situated between two large bowling greens and six surfaced tennis courts; the remaining space is laid to lawn and occasional tree planting with a small and more formal paved sitting area to the south of the bowling greens. Maintenance is at a level that maintains the status quo, but is limited to grass cutting and general tidiness. The pavilion has ramped access but it is understood that finding regular users and associated revenue streams is difficult. Hardstanding is restricted to a large area of tarmac around the pavilion, and a small seating area to the east of the bowling greens; there is no all-weather route around the park, and seats are randomly located.

1.3 In the modern context the layout is not readily suited contemporary needs; the bowling greens and tennis court are still used, but in conjunction with the centrally placed pavilion, take up a large proportion of the central space. If the courts and greens are to be retained, future development or the installation of new amenities will have to be restricted to the narrow areas on the periphery of the park. However, one positive feature of the park is that the land is flat, so maintaining suitable gradients for access is not an issue.



View from main entrance towards pavilion



View of pavilion from south-west corner

Design Aims

- The outline design was developed with the following aims in mind:



- retention of existing features, and minimal disturbance to existing park infrastructure
- a continued imperative for low level maintenance, new features to be sustainable
- introduction of features to attract new age groups whilst still encouraging existing users
- anticipate loss of mature trees with new tree planting (e.g. Bowls club)
- rationalise hard-standing to optimise access and car parking areas
- improve ecological diversity
- rationalise space to create greater diversity of large and small spaces, secluded and more public
- introduction of all-weather path layout to optimise use of all spaces

- 2.2 The issue of raising a revenue stream for the pavilion has been discussed but is considered beyond the scope of this report, which focuses primarily on the physical dimensions of development; with improved amenities a user and revenue commitment will be easier to find.
- The outline proposals are discussed below:



Existing seating area with low maintenance conifers

- All-weather path, with associated activity (e.g. adult gym, dog walking)
- Facilities for young people e.g. children's playground
- Adult gym
- Dog walk
- Terrace, secluded and shaded seating area
- Meadow areas with tree planting
- Entrance/Avenue
- Designated parking

Outline Design

- 2.3 The design features

- All-weather path, with associated activity (e.g. adult gym, dog walking)
- Facilities for young people e.g. children's playground
- Adult gym
- Dog walk
- Terrace, secluded and shaded seating area
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- Grass and mature trees to north of tennis courts

All-Weather Path

2.4 An all-weather path running around the edge of the park would enable use of spaces that are otherwise incidental, and this proposal is considered essential to encouraging greater use of the park by all ages and mobilities. The park benefits from the key facilities of the bowling greens and tennis courts, but appears rarely used on a more casual basis. The area between the tennis courts and rear gardens of Conway Crescent is mown and contains mature specimen trees, but the approaches, through pinch points between the boundary fence and tennis courts, are uninviting. With walking for health encouraged for all ages, the simple provision of a path to provide a circuit, and with associated activities such as adult gym equipment or trim trail, and dog bins, would both open up less-used areas of the park and give greater opportunity for low key, informal recreation.

2.5 It is also suggested that a different maintenance regime is adopted here; Woodthorpe Park has had some success reducing the area of mown grass through the sowing of flower meadows. The proposed user groups would not require formality or exacting maintenance; ecological diversity would also be improved and a programme of additional tree planting should be undertaken to anticipate the loss of mature specimens and provide more screening to the neighbouring houses.

Facilities for Young People

2.6 Gedling's Green Space Strategy ¹ analysed the standard of play facilities and access across the borough, and concluded that there are large areas of the borough that do not meet national standards. The wards of Valley, Carlton and Carlton Hill (to the immediate north and west of Conway Road) were identified as being particularly deficient (at the time the study was carried out a large section of Conway Road fell into the Gedling ward which may have skewed results). The study concludes that where there is the highest deficiency of play facilities and a high proportion of young people, GBC should aim to place facilities within amenity green space or parks and gardens where there is currently none.

2.7 Conway Park currently caters largely for the older age groups and for more traditional forms of sport (tennis and bowling). Further analysis of census data and local need, and local consultation would be required to identify what types of formal play and/or activity are most suited to the locality. The outline design layout shows a children's playground; the site is located near housing and is fairly visible from the road. Activities for other age groups could be appropriate.



View from pavilion to entrance



Western corner

- 2.8 The outline proposals identify a location for play/teenage facilities between the tennis courts and the road, this being the only space in the park large enough to accommodate a new footway needs to be provided, especially as regeneration of the park is likely to increase traffic volumes. But it also has advantages of being away from the bowling greens, can be readily accessed from the main drive, and is fairly visible from the road which will control anti-social behaviour to some extent.
- 2.9 One of the prime design aims was to integrate the pavilion, currently standing in a sea of tarmac, into the overall function of the park. Whilst vehicular access is clearly important for continued use of the pavilion and access to the bowling greens, the outline design shows that there is sufficient space both for designated parking and the creation of a south-facing terrace linking the pavilion directly to the greens, and also to the existing seating area to the south-east. The proposals suggest a pedestrian-only paved area directly abutting the southern elevation of the pavilion, screened to some extent from the parking area, and linked to an enhanced and upgraded seating area to the south-east. Use of a pergola would provide relief from the sun on a warm day, and also an opportunity for climbing plants. It would also be a focal point linking the two sections of terrace.
- 2.10 The existing seating area is tidy, but comprises random bits of grass and path with no clear purpose. A redesign aims to replace grass with raised beds, and create more varied amenities and greater integration of existing facilities, would greatly increase recreational opportunity for the neighbourhood.
- 3.1 Being readily accessible from nearby residential streets, with no major roads to cross, the park lends itself to a facelift. Investment in access and circulation, as well more modern demographic, other recreational and play provision in the area, and subject to consultation. The proposals are readily broken down into identifiable elements and development lends itself to phasing as funding becomes available. The table in Appendix 1 gives indicative costs for each element.
- 3.2 The exact nature of development needs to be examined in the context of the local demographic, other recreational and play provision in the area, and subject to consultation. The creation of meadow areas is both to focus the grass mowing operations on areas that really need it, and to increase visual, sensory and ecological diversity. The land lying to the west of the bowling greens is another 'left-over' space that could contribute more to the overall park experience. Again, there are mature specimen trees, and sufficient space between the bowls of the green and site boundary to create a sinuous path making optimum use of the space.
- 2.11 The creation of meadow areas is both to focus the grass mowing operations on areas that really need it, and to increase visual, sensory and ecological diversity. The land lying to the west of the bowling greens is another 'left-over' space that could contribute more to the overall park experience. Again, there are mature specimen trees, and sufficient space between the bowls of the green and site boundary to create a sinuous path making optimum use of the space.
- 2.12 The outline plan of the park shows clearly the original layout, with the centrally located entrance and avenue leading straight to the pavilion. It is unclear whether the double entrance

3.0 CONCLUSION

2.14 Access to the pavilion has clearly been modified for users with mobility issues and consequently it is expected that there is a continued need for accessible parking adjacent to the building. The plan shows that there is space within the existing hard-standing for additional parking without compromising maintenance and council access. However, a decision might be taken to impose parking restrictions; casual parking might be difficult to limit and control once the principle has been established.

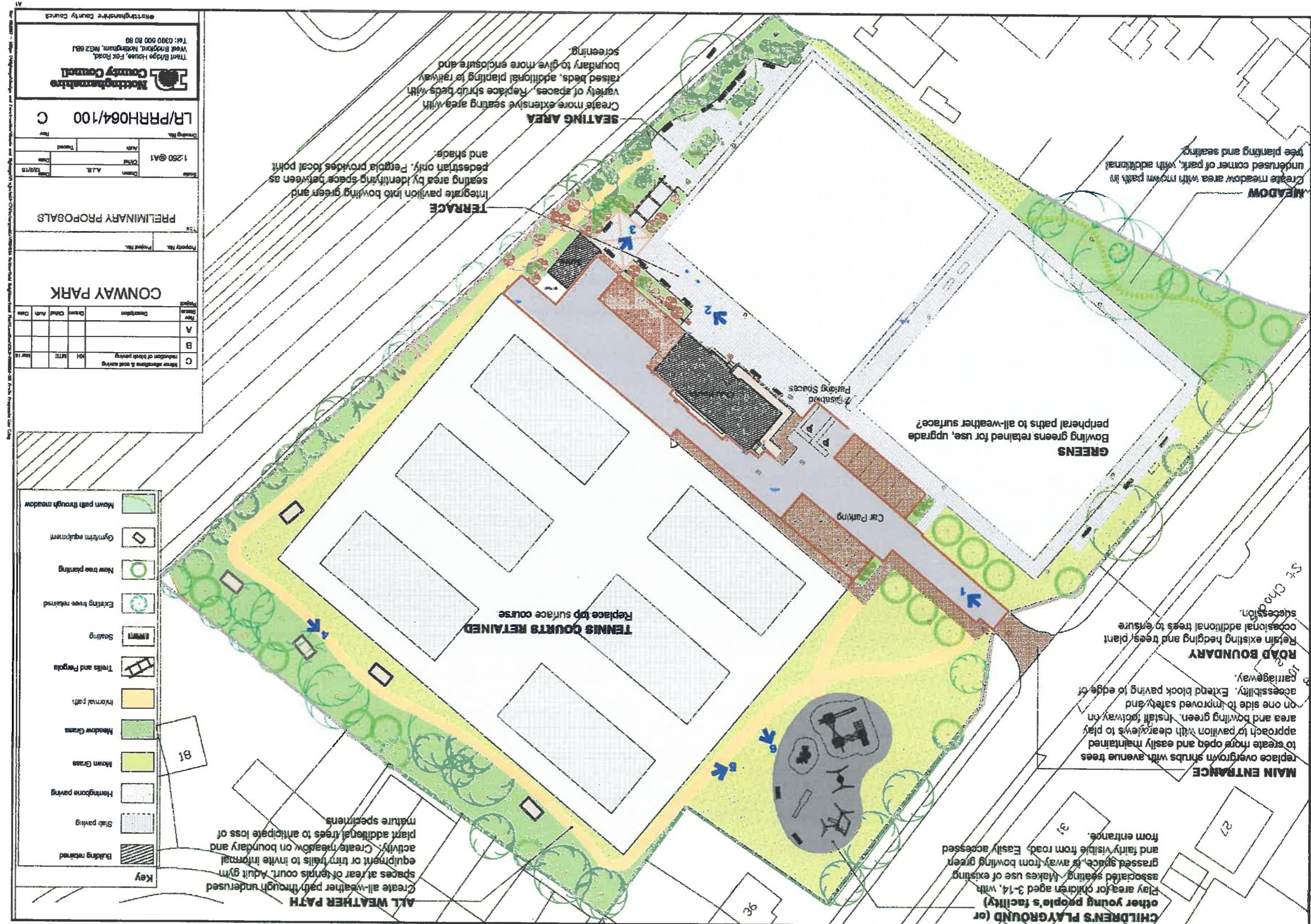
2.13 The proposals suggest removal of trees and shrubs, and replanting with taller avenue trees and reinstatement of grass on either side of the drive to give greater visibility.

Designated Parking

2.8 The outline proposals identify a location for play/teenage facilities between the tennis courts and the road, this being the only space in the park large enough to accommodate a new footway needs to be provided, especially as regeneration of the park is likely to increase traffic volumes. But it also has advantages of being away from the bowling greens, can be readily accessed from the main drive, and is fairly visible from the road which will control anti-social behaviour to some extent.

APPENDIX 1 - INDICATIVE COSTS

	CONWAY PARK	£
1	Clearance works including tree surgery, shrub removal	10,000.00
2	Play Area - groundworks, supply of equipment and installation	65,000.00
3	Safety surfacing, 375 m ² @ £75	28,125.00
4	Trim trail - equipment and installation, 5 items @ £2500	12,500.00
5	Terrace & Bowling green paths – slab paving 1125 m ² @ £65	73,125.00
6	Pergola	20,000.00
7	Seating - seats and installation 10 no @ £400	4,000.00
8	Tree planting - 25 no @ £400	10,000.00
9	Signage	3,000.00
10	Stone access paths 200 linm @ £55	11,000.00
11	Block paving to vehicular area 250 m ² @ £80	20,000.00
12	Block paving to pedestrian area 140 m ² @ £70	9,800.00
13	Resurfacing tarmac vehicle access 645m ² @ £40	25,800.00
14	Resurface top course tennis courts 3975 m ² @ £50	198,750.00
15	Refurbish Bowling Green's x 1.5 @ £35,000	52,500.00
16	Meadow seeding and preparation	4,000.00
	SUB-TOTAL	548,850.00
	10% project contingency	54,885.00
	Design fees, contract procurement and management (approx. 7.85%)	43,000.00
	GRAND TOTAL	646,735.00



APPENDIX 2 - IMAGES OF PROPOSALS

VIEWPOINT 1



ENTRANCE

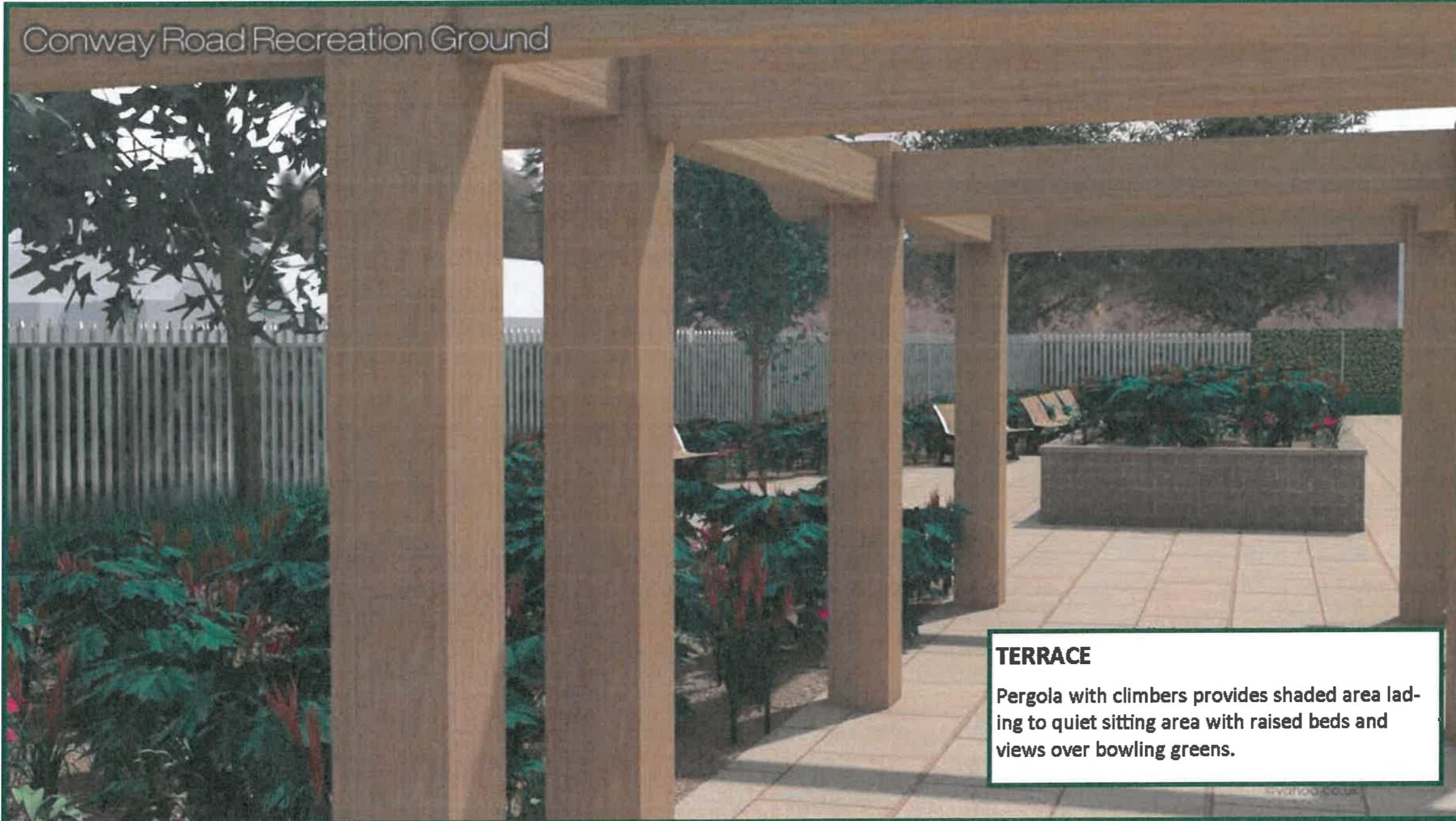
View into park from Conway Road, dedicated footway and parking spaces improve pedestrian safety and circulation. Block paving replaces tarmac.



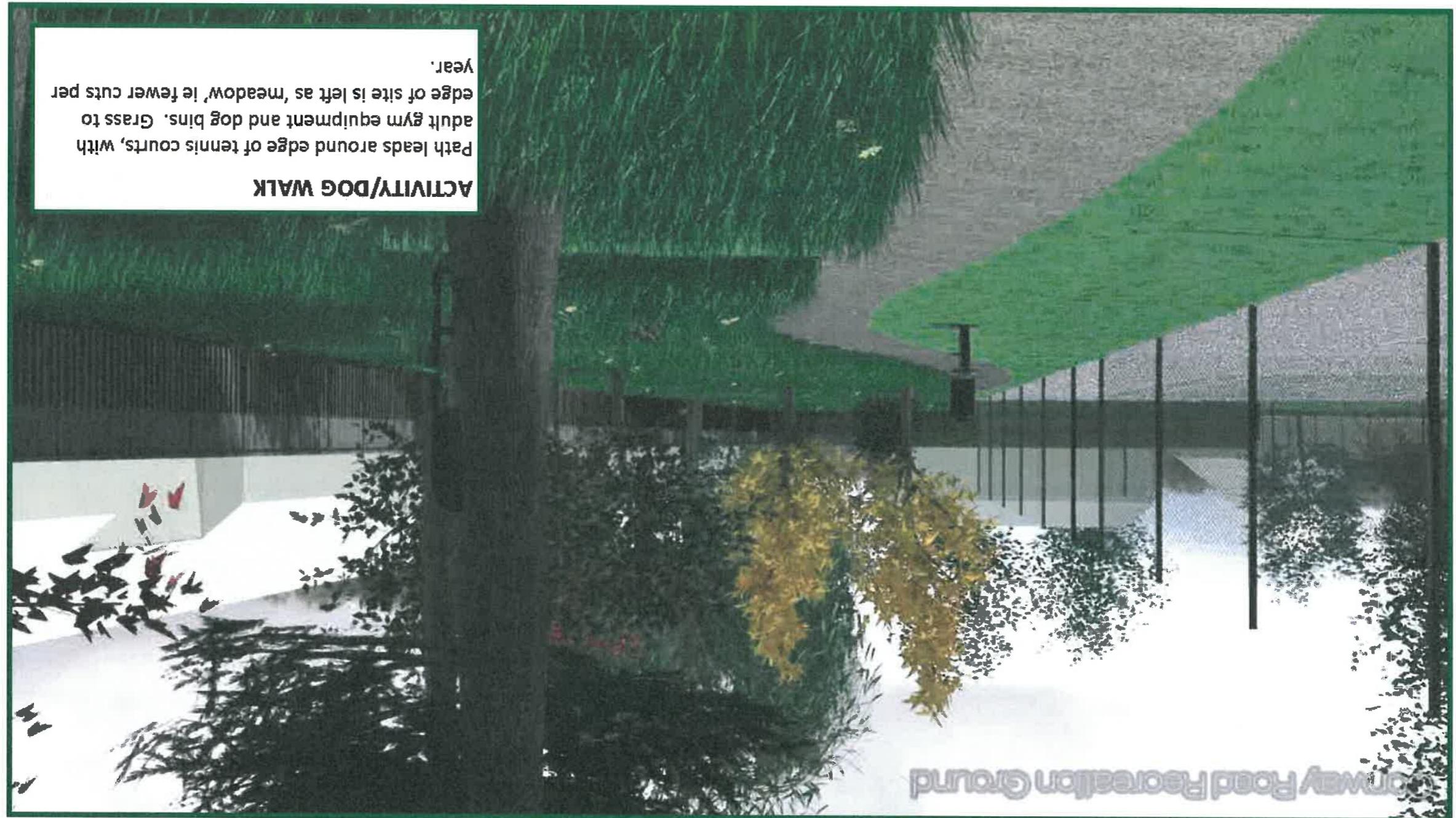
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VIEWPOINT 3



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VIEWPOINT 5



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4.0 REFERENCES

1. Gedling Borough Council, Green Space Strategy 2012 - 2017

