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**Cobalt Plot 4 - External Landscape  
Cobalt Business Park  
Design and Access Statement**

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## 1.0 Introduction

This document has been prepared to support the application for a temporary change of use from the currently approved hotel, to an enhanced external amenity space for use by tenants of the park.

### 1.1 Vision

The vision is to create a high quality external environment to support external business functions as businesses return to their office premises with the wider Cobalt Business Park.

The approach to adapt the existing amenity space which currently focus on supporting the local retail units and office, with events including 'Tasty Thursdays'. The area is also the location of the Bike Hub and Security Hut and is used for recreation, when weather permits.

The proposed vision looks to maintain the existing functions whilst incorporating business focused elements externally providing added value to existing tenants.

In addition to the work in this area the parks management team are developing strategies to encourage users back to the park, with initiatives such as the development of timed routes to suit walking meetings.

The holistic approach to the design intends to attract a wide variety of existing and new users, providing additional high quality facilities support which support the move toward flexible working and focus on collaboration and wellbeing.

The global pandemic has created a marked shift in the way that we live and work which has made the populous more aware of their external environment and the benefits it can bring.

## 2.0 Site Location And Description

### 2.1 Site Location

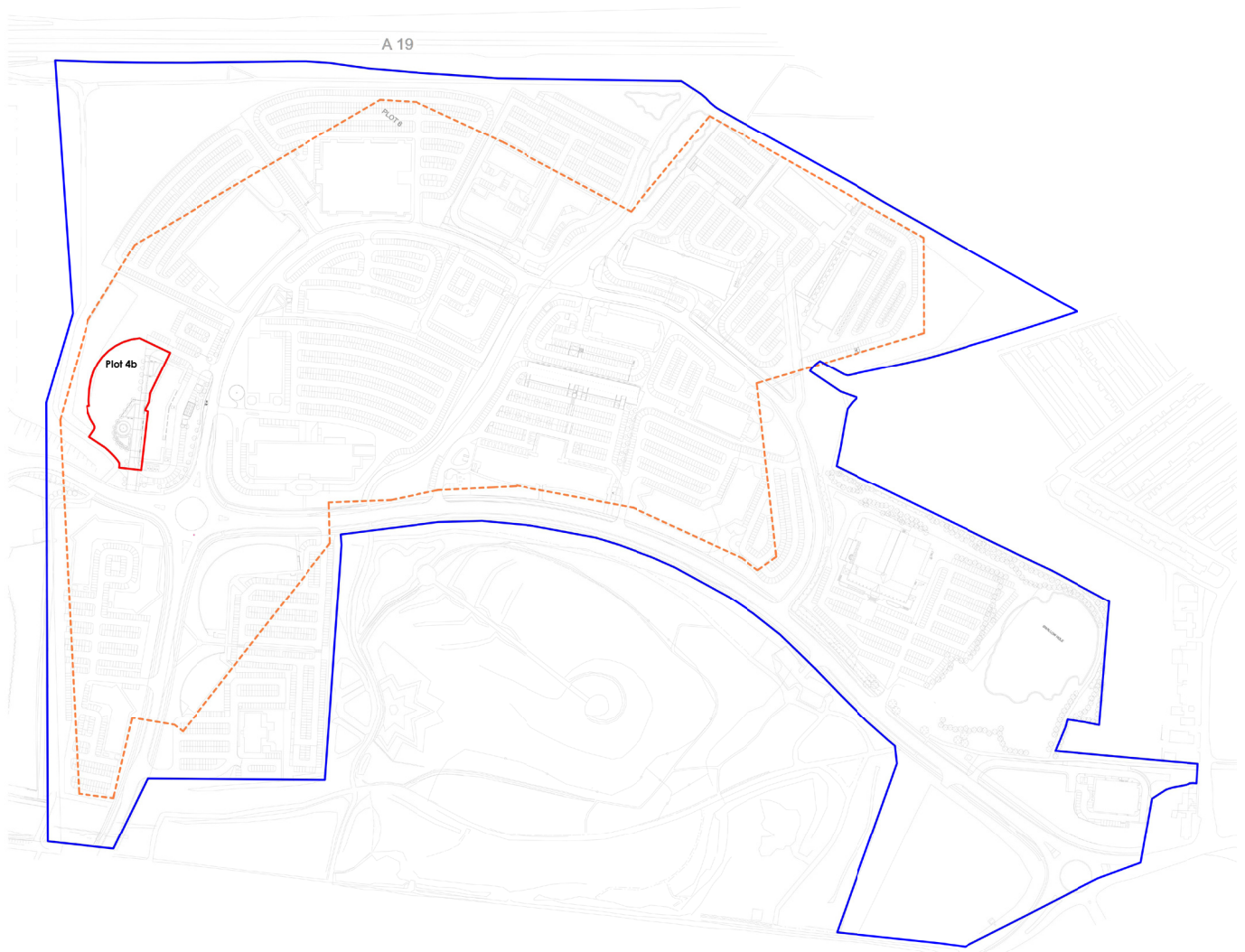
The site is located at Plot 4 in the centre of Cobalt Business Park, it is part of a mix used development including office and retail units. The area which is the subject of this application was granted permission to be developed as a hotel (C1 Use Class) as part of the planning approval 10/01510/FUL granted in August 2011.

### 2.2 Site Context

The site is connected with the wider park via Cobalt Park Way and Silver Fox Way, with on site public and service parking, the parks marketing suite, security hut and bike hub.

### 2.3 Site Description

The site is currently mown grass with elements of hard landscaping, the southern boundary consists of a mixture of planting, which provides strong biodiversity.



### 3.0 Existing Use

#### 3.1 Recreation

The existing external amenity area provides a key resource to tenants of the park, however the existing uses focus on social aspects and well being including 'Tasty Thursday's' where external street food vendors are invited to the site as well as social events including sports.

The below images illustrate the current uses, which are all serviced by temporary, demountable set-ups including gazebos and deck chairs.



## 4.0 Proposed Development

### 4.1 Future of Work

Work is no longer just a destination to go but a task to do. However, now more than ever, it is the workplace; its design and ethos of that working environment that are at the forefront of discussion.

Words such as agile, task-based and collaborative are now common vocabulary, but workplace understanding is evolving much further to an appreciation of how our working environments impact the people that use them. This 'human factor' of improved wellbeing and increased productivity is now a critical consideration.

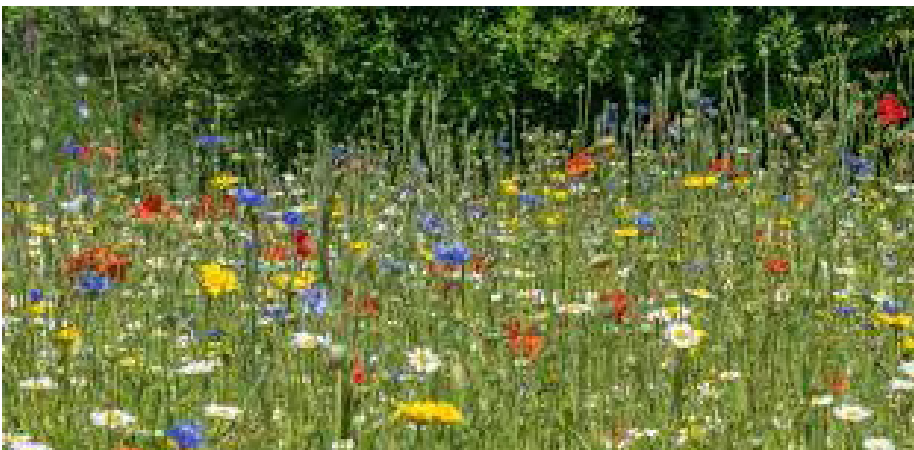
The Covid-19 pandemic has forced home working for many, offering proof to employers that staff remain productive when working outside the office, this has accelerated the shift away from traditional office based working.

This proposal looks to offer an external environment to meet, work and collaborate, whilst still enabling socialisation and recreation in the same environment. Enabling existing tenants to embrace new ways of working without the need for investment in the current economic climate. The approach is to add value to the existing park environment.

The external environment provides many positives for health and wellbeing, exercise and fresh air have obvious benefits, however the ability to combine them into the working day is of significant benefit.

With external environments developed specifically to provide areas with access to good wifi and an element of cover allow the majority of typical tasks to be viable outdoors.

Distributed across an area they can provide semi private spaces to meet and collaborate in open 'soft green' spaces



## 4.0 Proposed Development

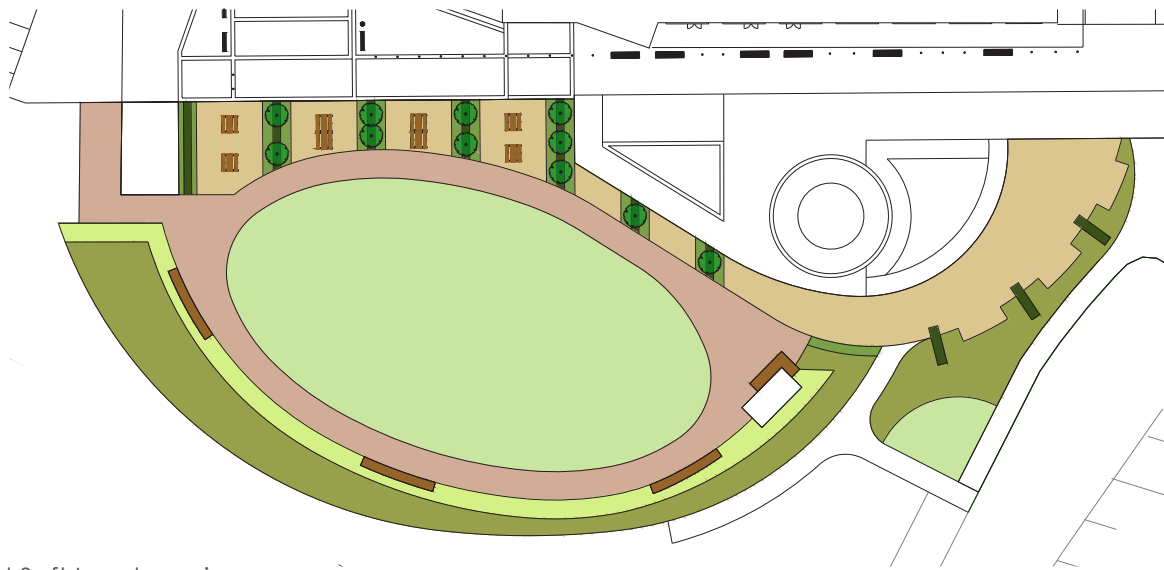
### 4.2 Landscaping Proposal

The landscape proposals are designed to create a user friendly public amenity area for tenants of the Business Park and the wider community.

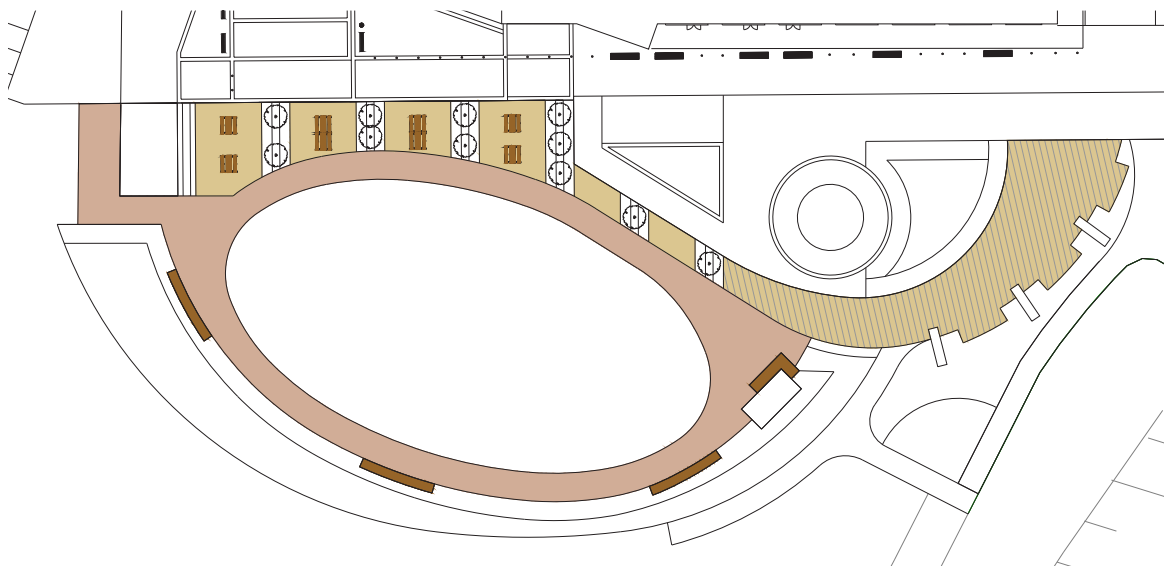
The proposals have been designed to be sympathetic to the site with the introduction of woodland screen mounding to create a shelter belt from prevailing winds/ with formal lawn areas and pockets of ornamental planting and wild flower turf adding to the biodiversity of the site.

Hard Landscape materials have been carefully considered to tie in with the existing materials of the adjacent public realm with link seamlessly to the wider bridleway network footpath connections.

Semi Mature tree planting is proposed to give an instant impact and to link seamlessly with the adjacent parade of retail units.



Proposed Soft Landscaping



Proposed Hard Landscaping