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Comhairle Contae **Lú**
Louth County Council

Planning Report for Proposed Playground at Collon, County Louth

July 2023



1.0 Introduction:

This report supports a Part VIII application for the installation of a new playground facility in Collon village. The nature and extent of the proposed development are described herein.

2.0 Description of the Works

Louth County Council gives notice of its intention to carry out works at Parish Hall, Ardee Street, Collon, Co. Louth. The proposed works involve the construction of a new playground facility consisting of the following:

- Installation of children's play equipment, perimeter fencing, safety surfacing.
- Upgrading of existing vehicular entrance to allow for two-way vehicular access/egress and new pedestrian entrance.
- Provision of footpaths, kerbing landscaping and 1 no accessible car parking space.
- All associated and ancillary site works.

Detailed drawings of the proposed works are included within the planning documentation.

3.0 Development Context

Collon is strategically placed on the N2 corridor between Dublin and Belfast. Though the population is just under one thousand the village serves the wider population of west Louth. It has attracted many new residents over the last decade, many of which commute daily to Dublin.

The many community groups in the village require amenities which will allow the village to grow. The provision of a playground will serve the needs of local families and make the village a more attractive place in which to live and visit. There is an existing Parish Hall in the centre of the village which is no longer in use. It is a large site which includes a car park. This proposal would see the construction of a playground on this site as there is a growing population and a demand for this amenity among local families.

Louth County Council want to provide an exciting, inclusive play area at the identified site at Collon. The play area will inspire imaginative play, adventure and movement. The playground will facilitate group play or individual play and provide a level of risk and challenge. The following is a list of requirements for the playground:

- The majority of the play equipment will cater for 0-12 years old.
- A minimum of 1 piece of play equipment will be provided for age group 12+.
- The play space will be inclusive for children of different abilities including wheelchair users.
- As a minimum 10% of the play equipment will be play inclusive.
- An accessible route will be provided to accessible equipment, any benches, bins etc.
- The play areas will be durable and limit opportunity for anti-social behaviour.
- There will be a 1.2m high boundary fence.

The following figures are examples of play equipment to be installed.



Figure 1: Modular Play System



Figure 2: Inclusive springie



Figure 3: Mungret inclusive park

The proposed playground is located within the grounds of the Parish Hall, Collon. The site is bounded to the north by the Parish Hall and carpark, to the east by Ardee Street, to the south by an access road to the Parochial House and to the west by vegetation/ Parochial House.

The proposed playground is located within walking distances of a number of residential developments and is well connected by an existing footpath network. The proposal will develop an underutilised site in the village centre. The Parish Hall is currently not in use. There are plans for a feasibility study to explore options for potential new uses for the Parish Hall.

There is existing on-street parking available on the eastern side of N2/ Ardee Street. There is a controlled pedestrian crossing located approximately 45m south of the existing vehicular entrance to the site.

The proposed works will involve the upgrading of the existing vehicular entrance to allow for safe two-way vehicular access/egress and a new pedestrian access. To facilitate the upgrade of the entrance a section of the existing stone boundary wall including railing and pillars will be removed. The Construction & Demolition waste will be disposed of by an approved contractor at a licensed disposal facility. Where possible the natural stone will be reused or recycled.

Public lighting is not proposed for the subject site as part of this application.

The proposed new Playground is supported by funding from the Town and Village Renewal Scheme.

4.0 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

The proposal is not a development as listed in Part 1 and 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended and through an examination of the proposal it is the opinion of the Planning Authority that the environmental impacts of the project given its nature, size and location are thought not to be significant and an environmental impact assessment report (EIAR) under current EIA legislation is not required in this instance.



5.0 Appropriate Assessment Screening

In accordance with the provisions of article 250 of the Planning and Development Regulations as amended, Louth County Council has carried out a screening of the proposed development to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have significant effect on a European site. Accordingly, Louth County Council has determined that the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

In conformance with the Habitats Directive an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (attached) was prepared by Mulroy Environmental engaged by Louth County Council. The conclusion states *no potential for significant effects/AA is not required*. Screening established that there is no potential for significant effects and the project/plan can proceed as proposed.

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report identifies invasive species within the application site. An invasive species management plan will be prepared to identify mitigation measures to address the invasive species identified within the application site.

6.0 Planning Context

The Louth County Council Development Plan 2021 - 2027, identifies the land use zoning for the site as B1 Town or Village Centre. The proposed playground is acceptable and is compatible with the overall policy objectives for the zoning category. The proposed playground does not conflict with other aspects of the Development Plan and would otherwise be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The proposed playground is also consistent with the following policies of Louth County Council Development Plan 2021 – 2027

COL 11 To support the progression and delivery of social and community projects including the identification of a suitable site for a play park, subject to availability of funding.

SC16 To support the provision of playgrounds in a variety of land use zoning categories where appropriate.

SC18 To maximise the range of public play opportunities available to all children.

7.0 Document Register

Collon Playground - Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) – Part 8

- Project brief
- Copy of advert
- Copy of site notice
- Site Location Plan
- Site Layout Plan – Existing & Proposed
- Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
- Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination