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Comhairle Contae **Lú**
Louth County Council

Planning Report for Proposed Playground at Termonfeckin, County Louth

September 2023



1.0 Introduction

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

2.0 Description of the Works

Louth County Council has given notice of its intention to carry out works for Termonfeckin Playground at Baltray Road, Termonfeckin, Co. Louth. The proposed works involves the construction of a new playground facility consisting of the following:

- Installation of children's play equipment, perimeter fencing, safety surfacing.
- 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

Termonfeckin is a small village located 8km northeast from Drogheda. It is located close to the M1 economic corridor making it easily accessible for commuting to Dublin, Drogheda and Dundalk. The population has shown an enormous increase over the past 20 years with an increase from 653 persons in 2006 to 1443 in 2011 and 1580 in the 2016. It had a population of just over, 4000 in the 2022 Census and children make up at least 27% of that number. Currently, Termonfeckin village has no structured play facilities for children or teenagers within their immediate area.

Louth County Council want to provide exciting, inclusive play area at the identified site at Termonfeckin. The play areas 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

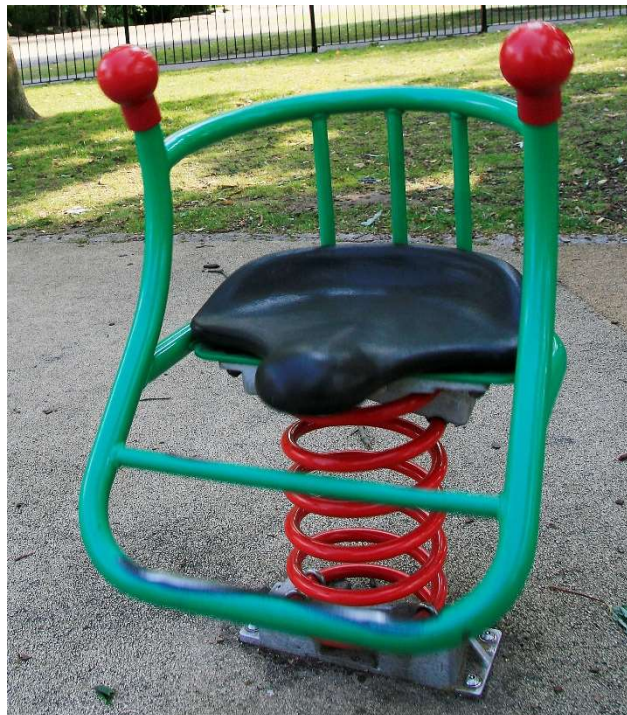


Figure 2: Inclusive springie



The proposed playground site is bounded to the north and east by Scoil Naomh Feichin, to the south by woodlands and to the west by Baltray Road (R167).

The proposed site is easily accessible by footpath to the local national school (Scoil Naomh Feichin), village centre and housing estates within the village. The footpath will be extended to connect the proposed playground into the existing footpath network to the north of the site.

The proposal will develop an underutilised site in the village centre, currently occupied by a disused water tower. The removal of the disused water tower will not form part of this application.

1 no. accessible car parking space is proposed as part of this development. It is noted that there is car parking available nearby at the school and church to the north of the proposed development.

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 and an Appropriate Assessment is not required*. Screening established that there is no potential for significant effects and the project/ plan can proceed as proposed.

No invasive alien plant species listed on the Third Schedule of the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations (S.I. No. 477/2011) are known to be present on the site. Some invasive species were identified on site and preventative measures will be put in place to conserve the biodiversity and prevent the spread of invasive species.

6.0 Bat & Bird Survey

A dusk and dawn bat survey was carried out on 11th and 13th July 2023. The findings of the dusk and dawn surveys indicate that there are no bat roosts within the boundaries of the site.

During the site assessment, no physical evidence of bird nests was observed within the boundary of the site. It is noted that there were no sightings of marine birds which are associated with the Boyne Estuary SPA.



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7.0 Planning Context

The Louth County Council Development Plan 2021 - 2027, identifies the land use zoning for the site as J2 Public Infrastructure and Utilities. The proposed playground is not listed as a generally permitted use or open for consideration. While the proposed development is not compatible with the zoning category it 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 consistent with the following policies of Louth County Council Development Plan 2021 – 2027.

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.

In addition, the following policy objective TER 10 for Termonfeckin supports the proposal.

TER 10 To support existing public, community and sporting facilities and the provision of any additional facilities, including provision of a play park.

8.0 Document Register

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

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