

COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL DARA

KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL

Record of Executive Business and Chief Executive's Orders

**Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) – Part XAB**  
**Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) – Part 8**

**Community Park Sallins, Co. Kildare**

**Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Determination**

Pursuant to the requirements of the above, Kildare County Council is proposing a Community Park in Sallins, Co. Kildare. Due to the recent Sallins By-pass construction the site's former farmland habitat has been greatly modified to accommodate the By-pass road and additional service infrastructure. A steep embankment housing the new road now divides the site creating a largely flat expanse of land to the South between the Bypass and the Canal and a sloping site to the North from the Bypass to the River Liffey. The acquisition of these lands has provided Sallins with a prime recreational site to meet the needs of the area's rapidly expanding population. Sallins GAA and Sallins Celtic Football Club were granted use of the site prior to construction works and continued use of the site during these works. The design of the park will see the GAA and Football Clubs formally accommodated within the site with provision of 2 full size GAA pitches, 2 full size soccer pitches and one multi use pitch. Changing rooms, club facilities and parking for the clubs will all be provided within the larger park facilities. An online community survey was carried out to ascertain the larger community requirements and public aspirations for the site. The findings of this survey were analysed with the top rated elements drawn into the park design including a Kids Playground, a Teen area with Skatepark and basketball, Natural Play, Outdoor gym equipment, a loop path suitable for running and access to the River Liffey for water sports. Beyond play and sport other community facilities were desired such as a mixed use community building, allotments and outdoor space for occasional arts workshops, meetings and markets. In conjunction many comments relayed the desire for biodiversity and the creation of a park linked to nature with tree planting, wildflower and wetland creation.

With the criteria set the crux of the design layout was formed around fitting the required car parking and expansive pitches within the existing field layout in order to minimise hedge removal and habitat loss. This did mean the loss of one existing hedgerow and the rerouting of a central ditch. With these elements in place links to and from the park as well as internal routes were examined, roads and paths instated and suitable sites for desired facilities located. The position of the main entrance road was determined by site lines and levels from the by-pass allowing vehicular access to the car park, community building and allotments. Beyond this point the road narrows to allow controlled emergency access only through to the canal. This canal entrance is likely to be the main pedestrian/cyclist route allowing easy access from Sallins town along the canal towpath, indeed this route will soon be part of the Grand canal greenway and as such will bring increased visitor numbers to the area. 3 more entrances allow access to different sections of the path along the towpath. At the furthest end of the park a route links up to the by-pass footpath and another into meet the parks loop path. At a midway point along the canal a path leads into the new wetlands area and then a wider entrance forms a small plaza to the front of the existing historic farm courtyard, in turn this

path links through to the new community building and changing rooms. The existing farmyard with its large agricultural building and historic stone walls offer an ideal space for a mixed use community yard suitable for food stalls, markets, workshops or group meetings. This area may also be suitable for use by the adjoining allotments which have been placed between the courtyard and the canal. The historic stone walls will be repaired and stabilized with sections removed for access while the existing farm shed will be restored for use as an open sheltered space. These areas will largely be left open so future use can be determined by Kildare County Council. To the east the courtyard will be flanked by the new community building with integrated changing rooms. Although the building itself is not part of this project an architect was commissioned to prepare a room schedule allowing for the foreseen uses to determine the size of the building footprint and design entrance routes and civic space around the building.

A detailed description of the proposed development has been provided in the Section 4 of the Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report with drawings provided with the Part 8 application.

Having regard to Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the guidance contained in the document entitled *"Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities"* (published by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2009) and following an examination of the objective information provided in the Screening for Appropriate Assessment report (the Screening Report) prepared by prepared by Mary O'Connor on behalf of Kildare County Council, as the Competent Authority, determines that the proposed Community Park in Sallins, Co. Kildare, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, does not have the potential to give rise to likely significant effects on European sites, their conservation objectives or integrity, and therefore does not require an Appropriate Assessment.

Key points in the determination –

All potentially affected Natura 200 sites, numbering 6, withing a 15m radius of the proposed site are included as Appendix of the Screening Report.

The possible impacts that might arise from the proposed development were examined in the context of the factors that could potentially affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites. As part of the screening stage process the proximity and qualifying interests of the Natura 2000 sites in the wider hinterland of the proposed town park at Canal View, Sallins were considered. In assessing the sites that could potentially be impacted by the proposed development a source-pathway-receptor model was used. All sites potentially impacted were considered in relation to the size and nature of the proposed development and the sensitivity of the receptors in the wider locality. If a Natura 2000 site of particular significance/relevance exists beyond a nominal screening area this was also included in the screening appraisal. Accordingly, all potential pathways for impact on designated sites were included in this screening exercise both within and outside a nominal 15km zone which was chosen to display the location and discuss sites most proximate to the proposed development. It is therefore highly improbable that a project of this nature and scale will have any measurable impact on the qualifying interests of these Natura 2000 sites.

It is considered that the proposed development does not include any element that has the potential to significantly alter the favourable conservation objectives associated with the species and habitats, or, interfere with the key relationships that define the structure or function, either alone or in combination with other impacts, of the Natura 2000 sites considered in this document provided that the following is carried out:

The programme of measures consistent with best practice, standards, design and controls as outlined in section 4 are implemented

It has been objectively concluded during the screening process that none of these sites are likely to be significantly impacted by the proposed Sallins Town Park and these are:

- Pollardstown Fen SAC Site Code 000396
- Mouds Bog SAC Site Code 002331
- Ballynafagh Lake SAC Site Code 001387
- Ballynafagh Bog SAC Site Code 000391
- Red Bog SAC Site Code 000397
- Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA Site Code 004063

Therefore, it is concluded that a Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment will not be required to inform the project appraisal either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, with respect to any Natura 2000 sites and their Conservation Objectives.

Signed:

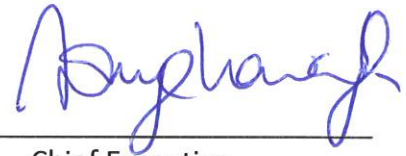


A/Senior Executive Planner

31/12/2021

**ORDER:** That Kildare County Council as the Competent Authority, having considered the Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report, by prepared by Mary O'Connor on behalf of Kildare County Council, makes a determination that a Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment will not be required to inform the Sallins Community Town Park project either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, with respect to any Natura 2000 sites and their Conservation Objectives.

Date: 10.1.2022.



Chief Executive