

Planning and Development Acts 2000(as amended)
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amended)

***Development of a Sensory Garden at St.
Catherine's Park, Leixlip, Co. Kildare.***

Leixlip Sensory Garden and Carpark Part 8 Planning Application Report

1. Location

The sensory garden is proposed for a 0.63-hectare section of St. Catherine's Park in Leixlip. It is located next to the main car park and is designed to make the park more inclusive for people of all abilities. The area is currently managed as amenity grassland.

2. Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029

The proposed development of the project also supports a number of objectives that are set out in the **Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029**.

The site for the proposed Sensory Garden has been categorised the site under a single zoning objective zoned **F: Open Space and Amenity** in the Leixlip LAP 2020-2023 (extended to 2026)

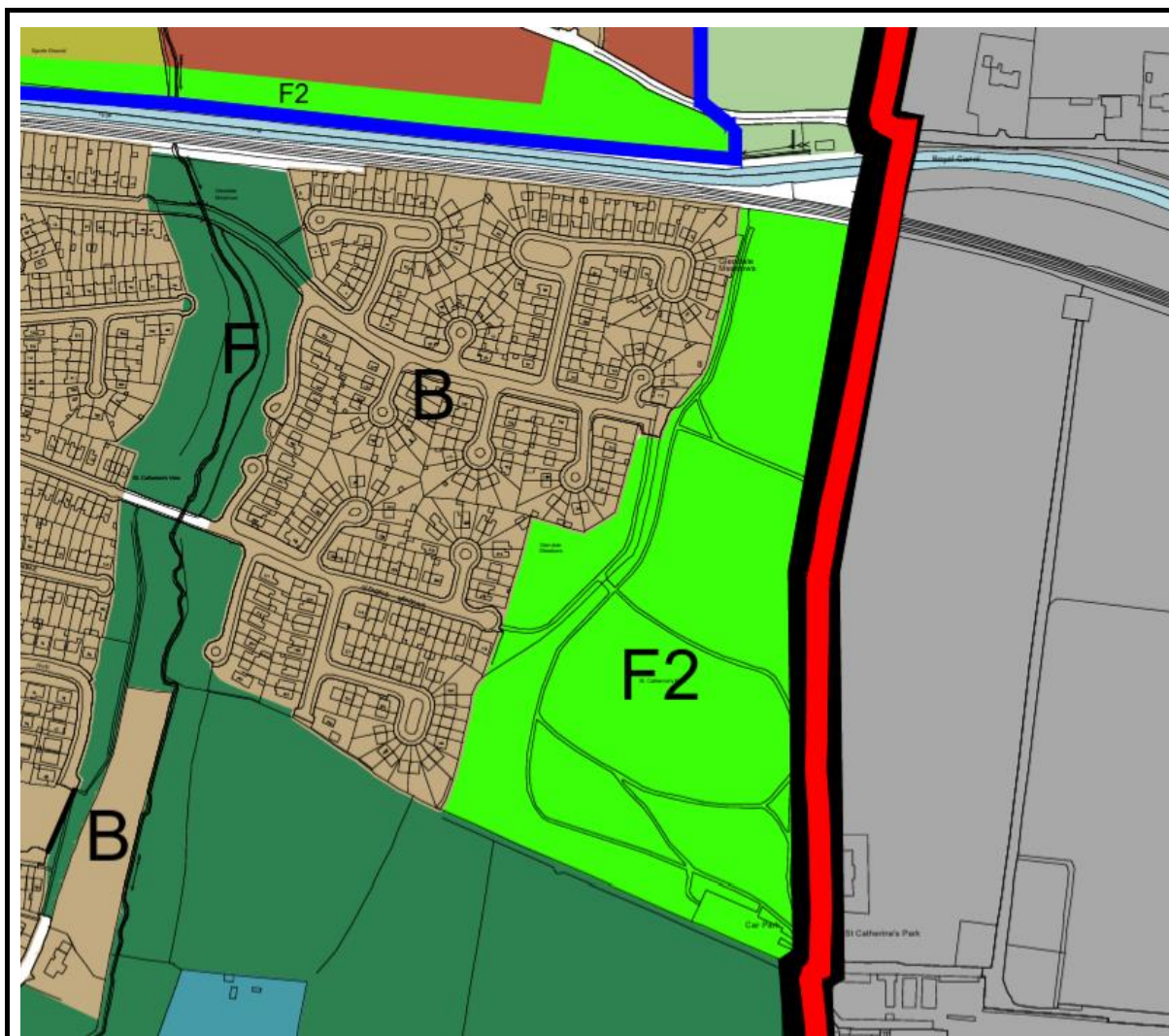


Figure 1; Leixlip LAP 2020-2023 (extended to 2026)-Land Use Zoning Objectives

The proposed development of the project also supports a number of objectives listed below that are set out in KCDDP 2017-2023. These are under Landscape, Recreation and Amenity and Community Infrastructure and Creative Places.

LR 073 Implement the Kildare Play Strategy (2018-2028) to address the play and recreational needs of children and young people growing up in County Kildare.

SC P4 Ensure the needs of children and young people, including those with disabilities and additional needs, in the provision of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities are provided for in the community in which they live.

SC O6 Protect and enhance existing social infrastructure/community facilities and increase the provision as required in accessible and sustainable locations including the development of new and expansion of existing facilities and services.

SC O18 Encourage and facilitate, where appropriate, the introduction of accessible amenities in parks and other suitable locations, which may include outdoor gyms and adult exercise equipment.

SC P5 Ensure all buildings, public and open spaces and recreational and amenity areas are accessible for people with disabilities, having regard to the Building Regulations, the objectives of 'Building for Everyone' (National Disability Authority), 'Access for the Disabled' (nos. 1 to 3) (National Rehabilitation Board), and the Irish Wheelchair Association Best Practice Guidelines: Designing Accessible Environments.

The **Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020-23** contains the objectives:

OS1.7 To support and facilitate the development of a sensory garden and other appropriate amenities within the grounds of St. Catherine's Park.

GI1.6 To seek to preserve, protect and enhance trees (including woodlands) of special amenity, nature conservation or landscape value within the plan area including at the following locations: • St. Catherine's Park

GI1.8 To promote appropriate tree planting within public open spaces along transport networks and in the public realm

GI1.9 (a) To seek to protect, preserve and develop St. Catherine's Park as a public amenity.

The **Kildare Play Strategy 2018-2028** contains the objectives:

12.1 Continue to develop public Sensory Gardens which comply with best practices in relation to European Safety Standards

- Ensure all Sensory Gardens meet European Safety Standards.
- To develop play with risk.

2.2 Continue to develop a network of Sensory Gardens throughout the county –

- Continue and develop partnerships with sporting and community organisations to deliver and promote play.

2.3 To provide best practice for the design of Sensory Gardens and play spaces –

- Facilitate where possible the inclusion of zip lines, and trees within Sensory Garden designs larger swing slides and monkey bars identified as the most popular play equipment in the consultation for this strategy.

The site of the Sensory Garden is zoned for Open Space and Amenity. Therefore, the location of a Sensory Garden on this site as well as its use for recreational activity is complementary to the zoning. The site is also connected by road and footpaths and is within walking distance of Leixlip village centre.

2. Access

Access to the sensory garden will utilize the existing access points in Catherine's Park, which include a route to Leixlip village via Black Avenue. Pedestrian access to the park is available from Glendale Meadows and is connected through existing vehicular and pedestrian links that provide access from the Fingal sector to the park to the L3005.

4. Sensory Garden Design

The proposed works will see the creation of a sensory garden designed to engage the senses, including new hedging, welcoming grassed amenity areas, comfortable seating, an engaging sculpture, thoughtful tree planting, and a dedicated recreation area. The sensory garden will span approximately 6330 sq.m, with an allocated budget of €250K.

- Planting of semi-mature trees such as Amelanchier sp.
- Planting of heavy standard trees such as Acer freemanii
- Planting of feathered trees such as Crataegus sp.
- Planting of various multi-stem/small trees such as Prunus avium and Sorbus spp.
- Planting of large shrub species such as Hamamelis x intermedia, Viburnum and Sambucus
- Creation of a new hedge of Fagus sylvatica
- Creation of new planting beds
- Creation of a wildflower meadow of 500m²
- Creation of grassed areas with seed
- Creation of amenity (grassed) areas
- Installation of timber lawn edging
- Creation of new tarmac surfaced footpaths
- Installation of 8 no. benches
- Installation of smoothed granite boulders
- Creation and seeding of earthen mounds
- Installation of paved areas
- Pathways will be a minimum width of 1.8m