



Kiltimagh Emigrant Park

Design Rationale

Part 8 Application Feb2021

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LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS**

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Introduction

Kiltimagh Emigrant Park is located at the centre of Kiltimagh and this proposal is the culmination of the vision and hard work of Kiltimagh Amenity Park Committee in collaboration with its citizens and in consultation with Mayo County Council.

The 6 acre site has the potential to transform Kiltimagh, not only for its citizens, but also for the wider community and to draw in visitors from at home and abroad.

The purpose of this document is to describe the site, the design response to the site, as well as the design proposals for new landscape works for the park.

The following drawings, prepared by Patricia Tyrrell Landscape Architects, accompany this document:

Drawing No.	Title	Scale
	Landscape Plan	1:500
	Landscape Sections	1:200

SITE CONTEXT

The park is located in the centre of Kiltimagh, bounded by the main street to the North west, James Street to the North, Thomas Street to the South and the Sculpture Park, Museum and disused railine to the East. It is close to Saint Aidens National School on the southern boundary, for which it has the potential to become a major learning resource.

There is a lot of scope here for the park to become a connecting hub within the town, improving pedestrian connectivity and community.

It also has the potential to be integrated into the many lovely walks around the environs of Kiltimagh and a link to Kiltimagh Museum.



Figure.1.

Proposed park with boundary marked in red

SITE CONDITIONS

SOIL

The site slopes gently from Northwest to Southeast. Some exploratory trial holes were dug to get a better idea of soil profiles and underlying drainage and geology.

The upper end consists of a gravelly loam and the southern end of peaty bog alluvium with a high water table.

UPPER END OF SITE - North



Image.1



Image.2

LOWER END OF SITE - South



Image.3



Image.4



Image.5

SOIL TYPES

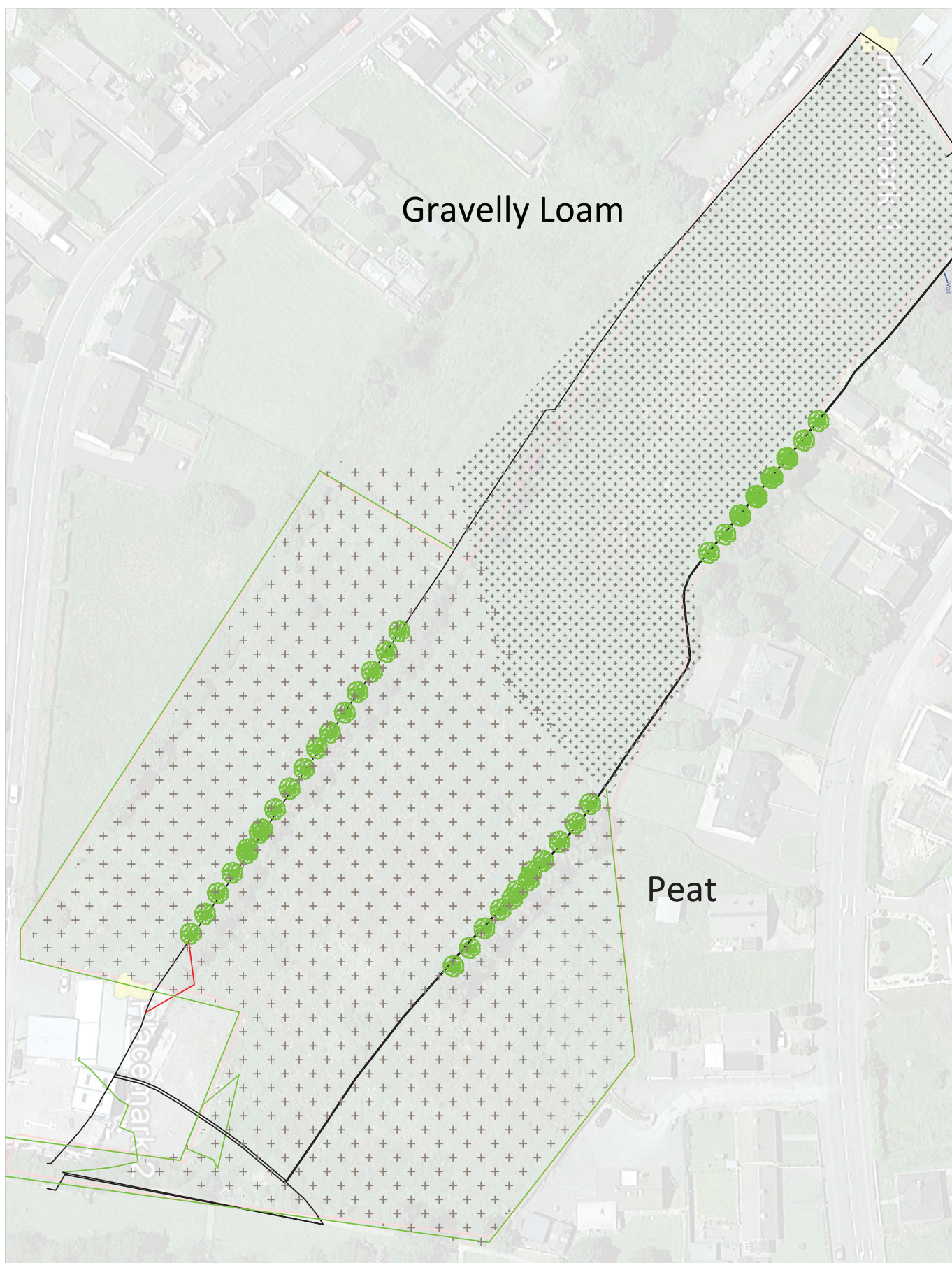


Figure.2

EXISTING SITE VEGETATION TYPES

The park would in recent history have been used for grazing but in the last couple of years has been fallow with regeneration of willow and birch at the lower end of the site. Overall the feeling is of an area being taken back by nature.



Image.6



Image.7

Line of Alders and damp meadow



Image.8



Image.9

Upper end of park looking towards Kiltimagh. Rough meadow with rushes and bramble.



Image.10

Looking down the park from the upper end.

Image.11



Line of Spruce



Image.12

View to and from Sculpture Park showing Birch, Willow and Alder regeneration

Image.13



PATRICIA TYRRELL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND MATERIALS



Image.14



Image.15



Image.16



Image.17



Image.18



Image.19



Image.20



Image.21



Image.22

Image.23



Disused railway station and Line



Image.24



Image.25

Urban fabric- local stone walls and traditional signage

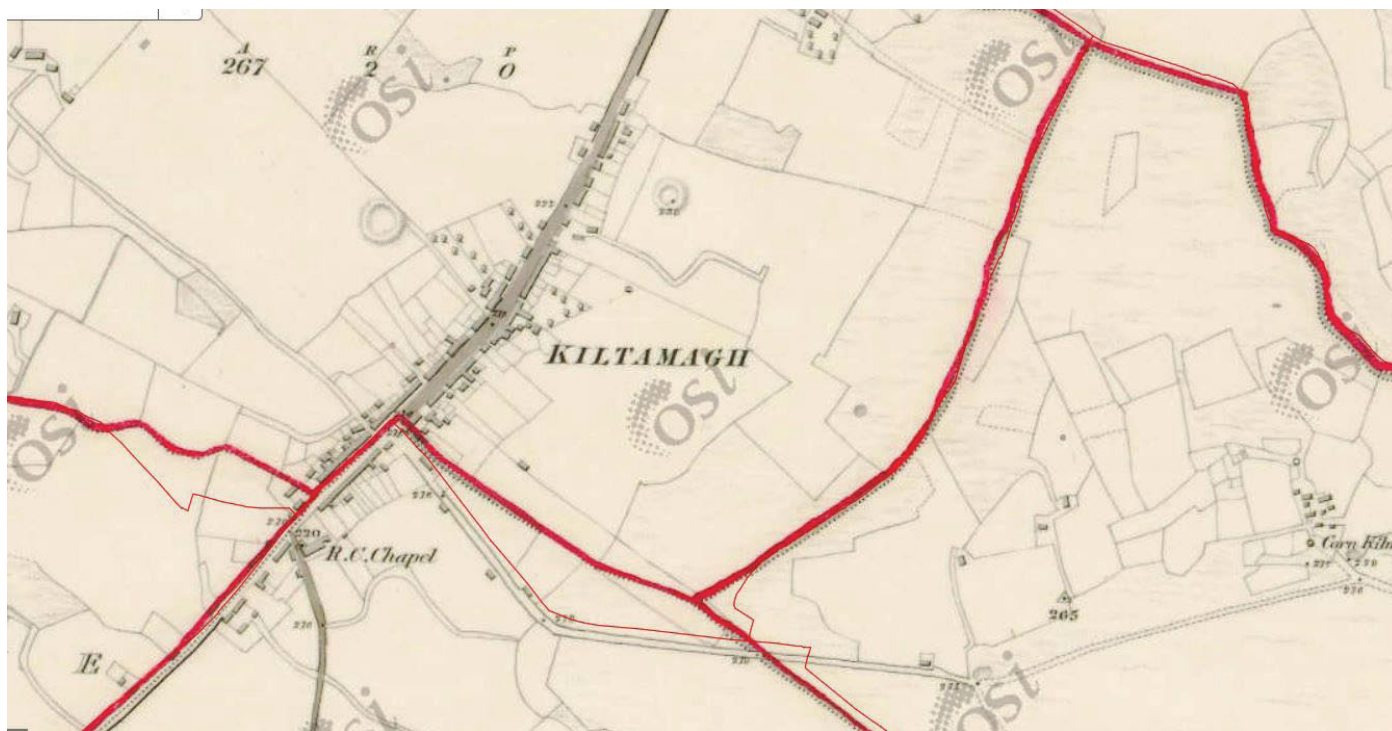


Figure 3

Ordnance survey map from 1846 showing the multitude of ringforts (Image 27) and Corn kilns for drying corn. (Image 26)



Image.27



Circulation & Access

In consultation with Mayo County Council we have looked at the potential points of access to the park in order to identify those which would be optimum in the context of the town and its facilities. Also maximising the connectivity through the park to integrate it into the everyday use of its citizens for walking or as a short cut, which in turn would create a passive surveillance so crucial to it's use by all. Connection from the school is of particular importance as it is intended as a vital resource for outdoor education. As a result of this consultation the points as indicated in Fig.2 were identified. Consultation with the Integrated Resource Development (IRD) resulted in a reduction in the connection between the Sculpture Park and the Emigrant Park as the Board of Directors feel that any integration of the parks would not be positive.

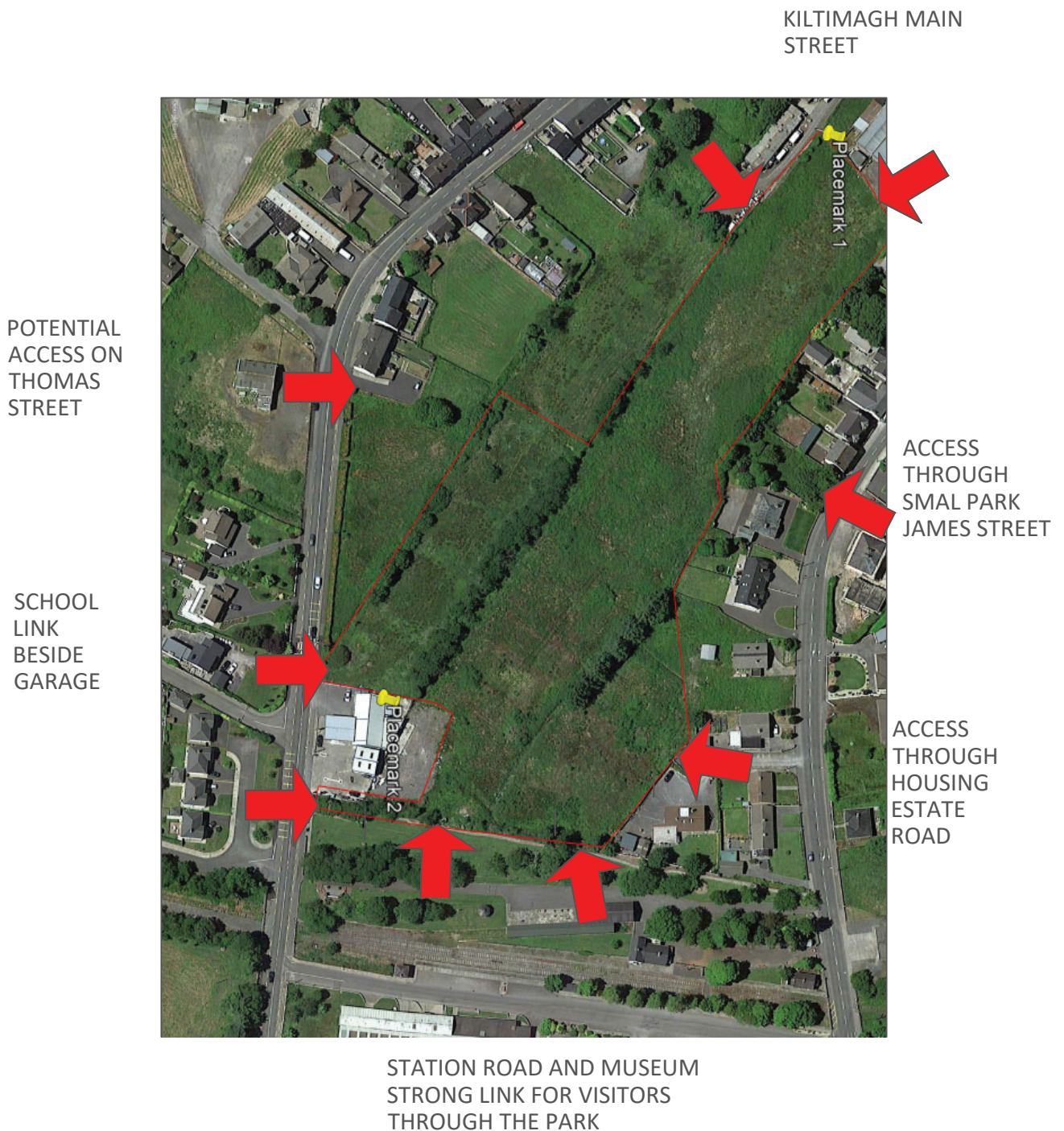
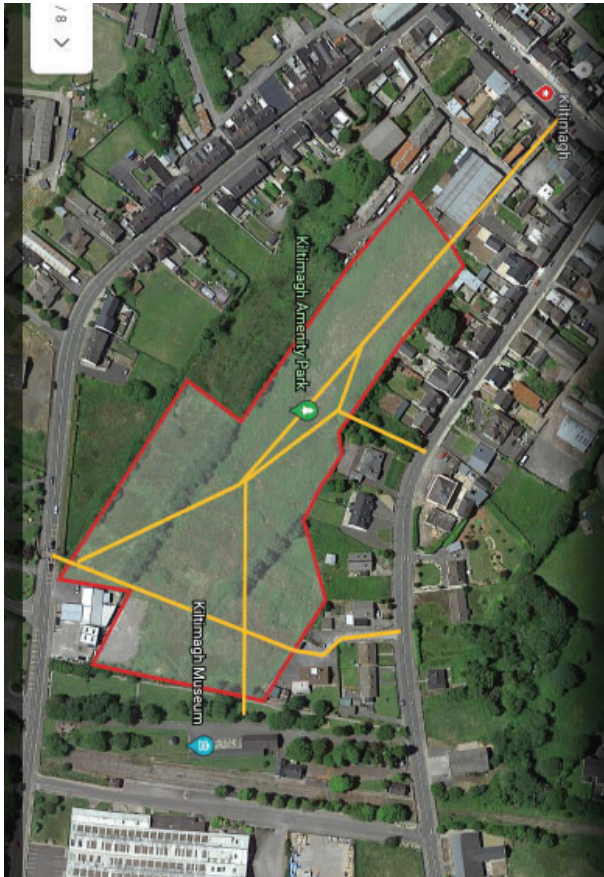


Figure 4



Revised access points and links

KILTIMAGH MAIN STREET

POTENTIAL ACCESS ON THOMAS STREET

SCHOOL LINK BESIDE GARAGE



ACCESS THROUGH SMAL PARK JAMES STREET

ACCESS THROUGH HOUSING ESTATE ROAD

STATION ROAD AND MUSEUM SINGLE ACCESS

Figure 5

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT



SKETCH PLANS AND CONCEPTS PRODUCED DURING THE DESIGN PROCESS



LANDSCAPE DESIGN PROPOSALS

THE CONCEPT

At the heart and history of Kiltimagh is a town and environs heavily affected by emigration. Those that have had to leave have retained a deep love for their homeland and many have returned for visits and in their retirement to live here. At the heart of this affection and feeling of identity is the strength of the local community and the memory of growing up in that community close to the land and close to nature.

Beyond the recent history of emigration there were previous farming communities who set up home in the area, as illustrated by the many ring forts and corn kilns marked on historic maps which date from the 7th to the 10th century. Dotted all over Ireland, these are particularly prevalent around Mayo. These ring forts were also home and part of a previous ebb and flow of agricultural cycles and cycles of immigration and emigration.

The concept behind this park is inspired by that simple idea of memory, and of natural cycles. Memories of childhood, of home, of walks to school, through the fine grained roadways, fields and lanes of the locality gives a sense of belonging and of home. The pathways through the park will trace what is familiar in the fabric of the locality; boreens, stone walls, light woodland, damp meadows, bogs and pools. Beyond childhood people may move on and take the emigration route which is represented so strongly by the old railway station. People leave but they look back and return when they can, taking various paths and newly acquired perspectives on home. The proposed network of paths reflects this.

The endless cycle of migration and arrivals has a parallel in the natural migration of wildlife particularly birds. Our view of bird migrations is a positive and uplifting one. The arrival of the swallow or the cuckoo reaffirms that another year has come around and that life goes on. The winter sees the arrival of flocks of geese and swans who will overwinter here in our relatively mild climate.

Many of these birds require marginal land to thrive. Reclamation, drainage, clearance and intensive farming and forestry have left few wild places for them to return to.

An increased concern for nature makes natural spaces such as this of particular value, drawing people to them to visit and to enjoy nature in all its forms. At the lower end of the park an area of water will be opened up with islands only accessible to wildlife. An area for peaceful reflection. By preserving and enhancing nature within the park, we can create a rich habitat for wildlife and we offer a space not just for the community, but to visitors from further afield including returning immigrants. Children can learn about the natural world that surrounds them and become custodians of it.

The park is to be called Emigrant Park which offers us potential for a reflective space on what that means in both positive and negative terms.



LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND HABITAT TYPES

The objective is to preserve the natural character of the park . This has been of particular importance during the design process and consultation. The variation in soil types between the top and bottom of the site will allow for a wide variety of ecotypes. In the upper end of the park close to the town the ground is dryer and more free draining the habitat types will be as follows:

- **Habitat Types**
- Community Garden
- Ornamental planting
- Birch woodland
- Hedgerow
- Stone walls
- Open meadow
- Holly thickets
- Specimen hardwoods
- Scrub/bramble

On the lower end of the site regenerated willow,birch and alder will create a damp woodland. The pond and margins will provide reed beds and islands with maximum opportunities for wildlife.

The current line of Alder which provide a division and a lot of character to the damp meadows will be preserved.

Also on the site are a line of Spruce. Most of these will be removed as they are of limited wildlife value, but as they provide a roosting spot for Corvids some at the upper end will be retained on the advise of our ecologist Dr. Karina Dingerkus.

Habitat Types

- Water
- Island
- Reed beds
- Iris beds
- Damp woodland
- Damp meadow
- Mature Alder
- Mature Spruce remnants

HARD LANDSCAPE

Pathways & Boardwalks

Inspired by the natural paths and roadways of the area the paths will be formed from natural materials of water bound macadam. These will be created with universal accessibility to the forefront.

The boardwalks from sustainable timber.

Lighting

The focus here is on having a park that is accessible and safe for people, but also wildlife friendly. Light pollution is increasingly an issue and the lighting will be designed in detail and to minimise its impact on nature and on the night skies.

In order to achieve this the park will be broken down into zones to create specific lighting for each area.

Priorities:

Only be on when needed

Only light the area that needs it

Be no brighter than necessary

Minimize blue/white light emissions

Be fully shielded (pointing downward)





Pump Track

It is proposed to install a mobile pump track on the hard surface behind the garage as indicated on the landscape plan. As it is mobile it has the potential to be rearranged or relocated to other sites. It will be accessible to all age groups and abilities.

Furniture

Universal accessibility includes comfortable seating at regular intervals. The aim is to have high grade, durable but eco friendly seating in timber and steel that will add character to the park.



RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EDUCATION

A multi-use space for all age groups.

The new park will be a space for wildlife and for people. It will have ecological benefits, climate benefits and benefits to the local community. In our current climate green spaces need to integrate all these and not just be a pretty view or an intensively mown lawn.

PEOPLE BENEFITS

Community Gardens

Close to the main street there will be a community garden where people can come together to grow their own food, to socialise and to learn. This will be a hub where people can be active or just sit and watch the comings and goings.

Exercise and Fitness

For all age groups the benefits of exercise are fully recognised.

Within the park there will be a running track integrated into the pathways....length

The pathways will also be of immense benefit for walkers both adults and children providing a wide variety of experiences and atmospheres within the park.

Outdoor gym stations will be placed at intervals along the route.

Natural Play & Education

Though no playground is planned for the park, the park will provide natural play for children with an outdoor classroom, woodlands, and the scope for creating their own play within the park.

The 'Meadow' closest to the school will have an outdoor classroom built in collaboration with Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)

Teenagers

It is proposed to install a mobile pump track on the hard surface behind the garage as indicated on the landscape plan.

Events

The circular 'fort' will work both as a quiet space or as an arena for small events, concerts or outdoor theatre. It would also be an ideal space for community exercise, fitness groups, yoga or pilates.

It would also form a hub for community celebrations.

Hobbies

Birdwatching

Photography

Art



NATURE BENEFITS

Multiple habitats for birds, insects and other invertebrates, mammals and reptiles.
A protected area to nest and feed without excessive threat of human disturbance.
Connection to other green areas.

WIDER GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

- Refuge and support for biodiversity
- Carbon sequestration in the wetland areas.
- Imbuing a greater appreciation of nature and therefore motivation to care for it.

Construction

In order to preserve the natural character of the site a well thought through and systematic work programme will be developed in conjunction with the detail design stages, along with a health and Safety Plan for all stages of construction.