



12 Barrington Street
Limerick
Ireland
V94 XA4W
Office - 061 590 001
Web - www.drla.ie

Kingston Park and Millers Lane Public Park and Urban Realm Project

MILLERS LANE LANDSCAPE DESIGN
STATEMENT



Project Title Kingston Park and Millers Lane Public Park and Urban Realm Project

Document Subject Millers Lane Landscape Design Statement

Client Galway City Council

Location Knocknacarra and Ragoon, Galway

Document Number P612-MIL-LD-DS-001

Rev	Status	Author	Reviewer	Approver	Approver Signature	Date
01	Planning	LF	DR	DR	<i>Dave Ryan</i>	11/11/2025



1 FORWARD

This Landscape Design Report has been produced to describe the design intentions of the proposed landscape design for Millers Lane, as part of the Kingston Park and Millers Lane Public Park and Urban Realm Project in Knocknacarra and Ragoon, Galway. This document is to be read in conjunction with the following drawings and other submitted design proposals:

Doc No.	Document Title	Sheet Size
P612-XXX-LD-DI-001	Document Issue Register	A3
P612-XXX-LD-SU-001	Kingston Park & Millers Lane - Site Location Map	A0
P612-KIN-LD-SU-001	Kingston Park - Site Location Map	A0
P612-MIL-LD-SU-001	Millers Lane - Site Location Map	A0
P613-KIN-LD-SU-002	Kingston Park - Existing Site Layout Plan	A0
P612-MIL-LD-SU-002	Millers Lane - Existing Site Layout Plan	A0
P612-KIN-LD-GA-101	Kingston Park - Proposed Site Layout Plan	A0
P612-KIN-LD-GA-102	Kingston Park - Proposed Site Sections	A0
P612-MIL-LD-GA-101	Millers Lane - Proposed Site Layout Plan	A0
P612-MIL-LD-GA-102	Millers Lane - Proposed Site Sections	A0
P612-KIN-LD-PL-201	Kingston Park - Planting Plan – Area A	A0
P612-KIN-LD-PL-202	Kingston Park - Planting Plan – Area B	A0
P612-KIN-LD-PL-203	Kingston Park - Planting Details	A0
P612-MIL-LD-PL-201	Millers Lane - Planting Plan – Area A	A0
P612-MIL-LD-PL-202	Millers Lane - Planting Plan – Area B	A0
P612-MIL-LD-PL-203	Millers Lane - Planting Details	A0
P612-KIN-LD-HL-301	Kingston Park - Surfaces & Soils Plan – Area A	A0
P612-KIN-LD-HL-302	Kingston Park - Surfaces & Soils Plan – Area B	A0
P612-KIN-LD-HL-303	Kingston Park - Hard Landscape Details	A0
P612-MIL-LD-HL-301	Millers Lane - Hard Landscape Plan – Area A	A0
P612-MIL-LD-HL-302	Millers Lane - Hard Landscape Plan – Area B	A0
P612-MIL-LD-HL-303	Millers Lane - Hard Landscape Details	A0
P612-KIN-LD-BD-401	Kingston Park - Boundaries & Site Furniture – Area A	A0
P612-KIN-LD-BD-402	Kingston Park - Boundaries & Site Furniture – Area B	A0
P612-KIN-LD-BD-403	Kingston Park - Boundary Details	A0
P612-MIL-LD-BD-401	Millers Lane - Boundaries & Gates – Area A	A0
P612-MIL-LD-BD-402	Millers Lane - Boundaries & Gates – Area B	A0
P612-MIL-LD-BD-403	Millers Lane - Boundary Details	A0
P612-KIN-LD-DS-001	Kingston Park Landscape Design Statement	A3
P612-MIL-LD-DS-001	Miller's Lane Landscape Design Statement	A3
P612-KIN-LD-MP-001	Kingston Park Landscape Management Plan	A4
P612-MIL-LD-MP-001	Miller's Lane Landscape Management Plan	A4
P612-KIN-LD-MP-501	Kingston Park Landscape Management Zones	A0



P612-MIL-LD-MP-501	Millers Lane Landscape Management Zones	A0
P613-XXX-LD-VI-001	Park Visualisations	A3



Contents

1	FORWARD	3
2	PROJECT INTRODUCTION	7
2.1	PROJECT OVERVIEW	7
2.2	PROJECT SITES	8
3	MILLERS LANE SITE	10
3.1	SUBJECT SITE AND MASTERPLAN SITE	10
3.2	URBAN CONTEXT	11
3.3	FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE VICINITY	11
3.4	SITE TOPOGRAPHY	11
3.5	EXISTING SITE BOUNDARIES	12
3.6	EXISTING VEGETATION & HYDROLOGY	12
4	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	14
4.1	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION	14
5	LANDSCAPE DESIGN—VISION AND OBJECTIVES	16
5.1	SUSTAINABLE SITE DESIGN	16
5.2	SUPPORT BIODIVERSITY	17
5.3	PROVIDE FACILITIES TO ENCOURAGE ACTIVE TRAVEL	21
5.4	PROVIDE FACILITIES TO PROMOTE PUBLIC TRANSPORT	22
5.5	PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE PUBLIC REALM	24
5.6	PASSIVE SURVEILLANCE AND SPACE ACTIVATION	26
5.7	PROVIDE FACILITIES FOR ACTIVE RECREATION	26
5.8	PROVIDE FACILITIES FOR PASSIVE RECREATION	27
5.9	CLIMATE CHANGE	28
5.10	END-USER NEEDS AND INCLUSION	28
6	PROPOSED PARK CHARACTER AREAS	31
6.1	CHARACTER AREAS INTRODUCTION	31



6.2	CHARACTER AREAS (MAP KEY)	31
6.3	ZONE 1—HABITAT PRIORITY AND LOW ACTIVITY AREAS	32
6.4	ZONE 2 - SUDS ASSET AREA	33
6.5	ZONE 3—MAIN AVENUE AND SOCIAL AREAS	33
6.6	ZONE 4—ACTIVE TRAVEL CORRIDOR	33
6.7	ZONE 5 PROGRAMMED SPORT AND GAMING AREA	34
6.8	ZONE 6—PLAYGROUND AND INFORMAL ACTIVE RECREATION AREAS	34
6.9	ZONE 7—PLAZA AREA	34
7	HARD LANDSCAPE MATERIAL SELECTION	36
7.1	SURFACES	36
7.2	SITE FURNITURE & FIXINGS	38
7.3	SITE BOUNDARIES	39
8	PLANTING	42
8.1	PLANTING STRATEGY – OVERVIEW	42



2 PROJECT INTRODUCTION

2.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Galway City Council (GCC) recognise the need for recreational amenity development for areas believed to be underserved in this regard, predominantly in Knocknacarra but also adjoining neighbourhoods in the West of Galway City. These amenities would cater for both organised sporting activities and informal leisure activities for use by a wide range of sports clubs located within the catchment area as well as to individuals within the community.

To this end, GCC engaged a multi-disciplinary consultant-led team in 2024 to develop the design for these sites through 5 stages to handover. Now at Stage II, Galway City Council seeks planning permission for a development comprising construction of a new Public Park at Kingston, Knocknacarra and improvement of Millers Lane (an existing public park) in Rahoon under the Galway City Capital Programme. The brief comprises design for the provision of new multi-functional buildings with changing rooms, play facilities for a range of users, sports equipment storage areas, trees and planted areas, sports playing fields and all associated development works including access and circulation, parking, drainage, public lighting, earthworks, site furniture and wayfinding and planting. A location map showing the context of the proposed project in relation to Galway City is included in Figure 1.

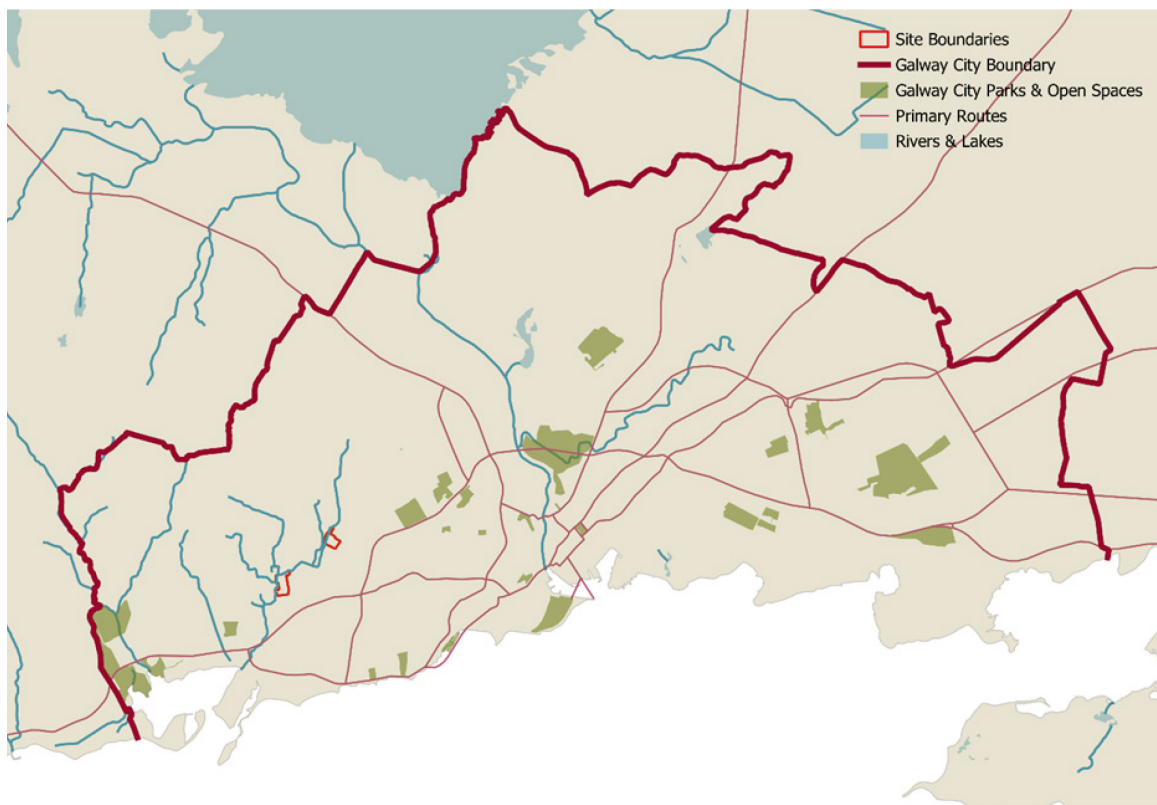


Figure 1 Location Map of Kingston Park and Millers Lane project sites



2.2 PROJECT SITES

There are two sites associated with this project. A new park and public realm associated with a multi-functional building is to be provided on the first site, Kingston Park at Kingston, south of the Western Distributor Road, east of the Clybaun Road and directly adjacent to St John the Apostle NS, Knocknacarra on the Altan Road. This site is the subject of a masterplan that is divided into two phases. Kingston Park Phase I is the subject of this Part X planning application.

The second site consists of the existing playing fields at Miller's Lane which are to be improved and developed into a public park with a multi-functional building.

This design report relates to the second of these sites, Millers Lane.



Figure 2 Location Map of Kingston Park and Millers Lane project sites



3 MILLERS LANE SITE

3.1 SUBJECT SITE AND MASTERPLAN SITE

The Millers Lane site is described as the site outlined in red in Fig 3.



Figure 3 Location Map of Millers Lane site



3.2 URBAN CONTEXT

Galway City Neighbourhoods

Millers Lane lies within the **Rahoon** neighbourhood of west Galway City, positioned between the Western Distributor Road and Rahoon Road. The Galway City Development Plan identifies Rahoon and the adjoining Knocknacarra area as key suburban growth zones west of the River Corrib, targeted for compact, mixed-use neighbourhoods with strong active-travel networks and accessible green infrastructure. The park site forms part of a local cluster of schools, housing, and community facilities including Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh and the Gateway Shopping Park. It therefore plays an important role in providing high-quality public open space and recreation facilities that enhance the liveability, identity, and social cohesion of this western suburban district.

3.3 FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE VICINITY

Western Distributor Road Cycle Scheme

Galway City Council's approved active travel scheme for the Western Distributor Road provides continuous two-way cycle tracks and upgraded footpaths directly adjoining the eastern boundary of Millers Lane. This scheme will create a safe and continuous north-south route linking Rahoon and Knocknacarra with schools, retail centres, and the wider city network. The park design integrates with these improvements through coordinated entrances, complementary planting, and sustainable drainage features, reinforcing the city's sustainable mobility and climate adaptation objectives.

3.4 SITE TOPOGRAPHY

The site is an approximately rectangular in shape with an additional spur to its north west totalling 2.44 hectares in area. The site is accessed from the L-5000 Road which connects to the Western Distributor Road at the roundabout with Bothar Stiofain and is bounded by the Millers Lane Greenway to its east. Its southern boundary adjoins Gort na Bro residential units and a link to the greenway follows this boundary.

The site's elevation has significant differentials from east to west, falling westward from approximately 37.6m to approximately 29.3 m A in the east. Topography steps up from the existing soccer pitch on the lower part of the site to the existing soccer pitch on the higher part of the site, before an embankment approximately 6m wide makes up the remaining 4 m rise.



3.5 EXISTING SITE BOUNDARIES

Starting at the north-western corner, the site adjoins existing residential properties within Gort Gréine, defined by a blockwork wall. Moving eastwards, the boundary continues behind Cruachan Park, where a mix of block walls and fencing separates private rear gardens from the park lands.

At the north-eastern edge, the site meets a small green space recently planted for the Millers Lane Greenway. This edge is formed by a retaining wall at the top of the embankment, lighting bollards and small groups of existing trees.

Continuing south-east, the boundary aligns with blockwork boundary walls to the rear gardens of residential units at Gort na Bro. These boundaries step down significantly as the path falls in elevation from east to west.

Turning south-west, the boundary runs along the L-5000 Road opposite Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh and its playing fields. This boundary is currently formed by a low masonry wall, fencing and gates.

3.6 EXISTING VEGETATION & HYDROLOGY

The site is dominated by close-mown Amenity Grassland (improved) – Fossitt code GA2, associated with two active soccer sports pitches. Around the margins, a simple mosaic of early-successional and edge habitats occurs. Scrub (transitional) – Fossitt code WS1 is most evident on the sloped bank along the north-eastern boundary and in patches north of the pitches, where bramble and willow form low thickets with scattered ruderal species.

To the south, a planted linear feature of immature birch and willow functions as a Linear Woodland (treeline) – Fossitt code WL1, running parallel to internal paths and providing limited edge structure for invertebrates and bats.

Narrow Dry Meadows and Grassy Verges – Fossitt code GS2 and Flower Beds and Borders – Fossitt code BC4 appear intermittently along paths and seating areas, reflecting historic piecemeal landscaping and local maintenance regimes.

Trees are generally young to semi-mature with low ecological complexity; no potential bat-roost features were identified in trees or in two onsite storage containers during survey.

Overall, habitat diversity is modest and fragmented, with the highest ecological function occurring along the southern treeline and scrubby edges that offer limited foraging and commuting value—primarily for soprano and common pipistrelles. These linear features present clear opportunities for enhancement through native woodland edge planting,



meadow diversification, and nature-based sustainable drainage interventions to strengthen ecological connectivity and seasonal resources.

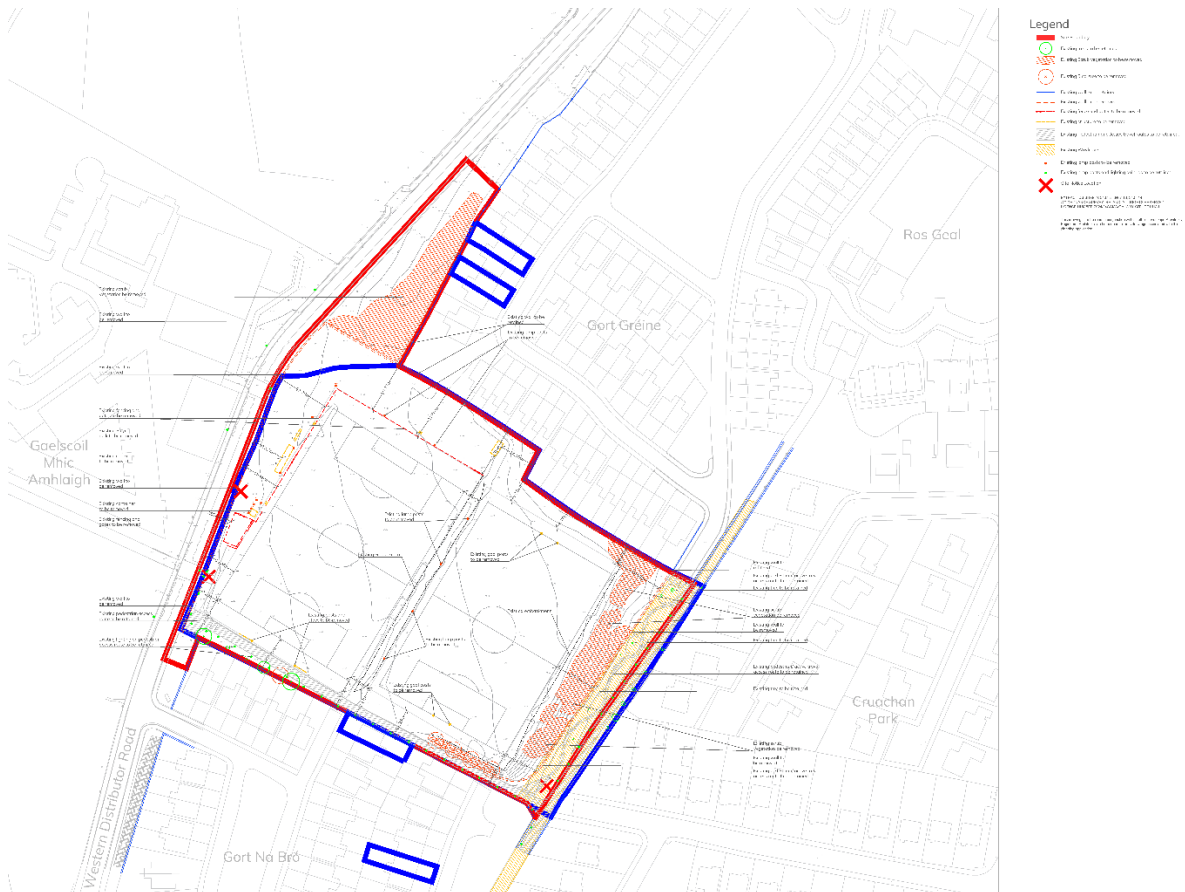


Figure 4 Existing Site Layout Plan of Millers Lane (Detail of Drawing P612-MIL-LD-SU-002)



4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

The refurbishment and expansion of the existing park (site area 2.44Ha) located on **Millers Lane**, including:

- I. Relocation and replacement of the 2 no. existing football pitches with: 1 no. new 4G synthetic turf multi-sport pitch (designed to soccer pitch dimensions) with associated fencing and 6 no. floodlights; and 1 no. new 2G sand-filled synthetic multi-sport pitch (designed to hockey pitch dimensions) with associated fencing and 6 no. floodlights.
- II. New two-storey, multi-functional building which includes public and sports team changing rooms, showers and toilets; multi-purpose sports hall; multi-purpose activity rooms; kitchenette; 2 no. viewing terraces; first-aid room; store rooms; plant rooms; reception area; and roof-mounted solar panels.
- III. New public spaces and amenities including fenced children's play areas; internal paths; multi-sport rebound wall / court; climbing wall; calisthenics area; public plaza; pitch spectator areas; equipment storage shed; green space for passive recreation; public lighting; and public seating.
- IV. Extensive landscape planting (including native genus and species) and nature-based drainage measures including pollinator-friendly raingarden/ bioretention areas and reinforced grass paving, as well as planting areas with typologies including native and naturalised wooded areas, avenue tree planting, clipped hedges, short-flowering meadow, and pollinator-friendly perennials.
- V. Relocated vehicular access on the L-5000 Road; 2 no. new active travel accesses from the L-5000 Road; and enhanced pedestrian / cyclist access from Millers Lane.
- VI. 27 no. car parking spaces (2 no. standard EV charging spaces, 1 no. accessible space, 1 no. combined EV and accessible space, 1 no. family space, and 1 no. age-friendly space), 2 no. coach drop-off spaces with automated access control, 3 no. motorcycle spaces, and 64 no. cycle spaces (40 no. standard short-term spaces, 2 no. short term cargo-bike spaces, and a secure bike shed with 20 no. standard and 2 no. cargo-bike spaces).

All other associated and ancillary works.

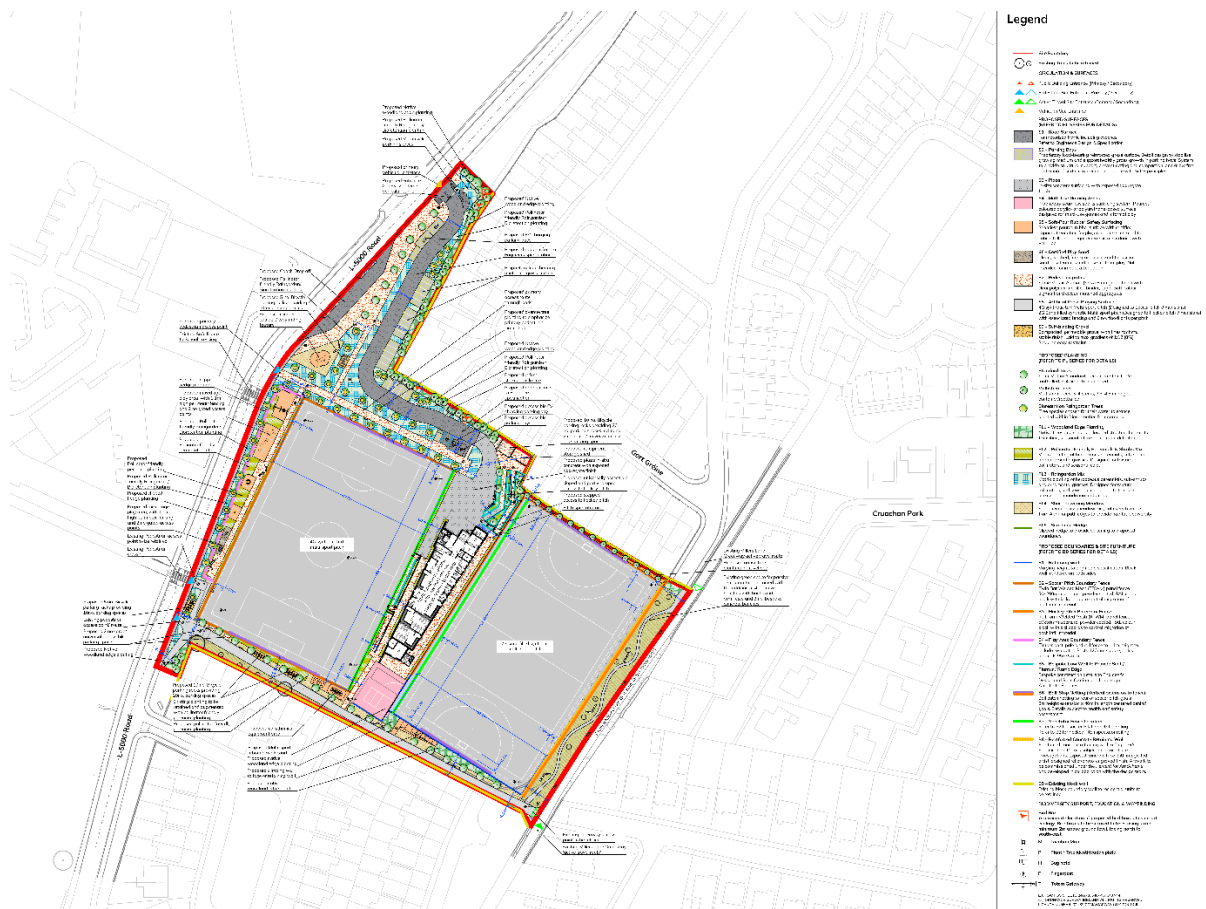


Figure 5 Proposed Site Layout Plan of Millers Lane (Drawing P612-MIL-LD-GA-101)



5 LANDSCAPE DESIGN—VISION AND OBJECTIVES

This section states the overarching vision for Millers Lane and the site-wide objectives that guide design. It explains the intended character, user experience, and environmental outcomes. The objectives draw on adopted policy and recognised frameworks, including the Green Flag Award criteria, the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, Sustainable Drainage Systems guidance, and the client's Environmental, Social and Governance commitments. They address inclusive access, health and safety, public realm cleanliness, biodiversity and habitat quality, climate resilience and resource efficiency, and clear communication with users.

5.1 SUSTAINABLE SITE DESIGN

The design of Millers Lane park has been informed by the sustainability principles of LEED v4 (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), an internationally recognised framework developed by the U.S. Green Building Council for evaluating environmental performance and sustainable site development.

LEED emphasises integrated site design, ecosystem services, water efficiency, materials reuse, and human well-being. Under LEED v4, the *Site Design and Development* credits encourage an iterative design process in which environmental performance goals—such as stormwater management, habitat connectivity, heat-island reduction, and pedestrian connectivity—are evaluated from the earliest concept stages. These principles have directly influenced the design of Millers Lane from the early stage layout design, where permeability and connection to local active travel networks was prioritised along with retaining and connecting habitats and minimising hard landscape areas.

The site's material design and specification was then refined through the adoption of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), extensive SuDS measures, and a planting palette aligned with local ecology and the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. The park prioritises permeable surfaces, habitat creation, and low-maintenance native vegetation, contributing to stormwater management and biodiversity enhancement. Social sustainability is also embedded through universal accessibility, passive surveillance, and gender-responsive design. Collectively, the design approach seeks to exemplify the LEED v4 goals of resilience, resource efficiency, and inclusive open space for Galway's communities.



5.2 SUPPORT BIODIVERSITY

The landscape design aims to retain where possible areas of existing vegetation of value for biodiversity and to increase the extent and connectivity of habitats across the site. The planting palette is designed to support pollinators, taking guidance from the *All-Ireland Pollinator Plan*. Planting design for hedges is based on recommendations in *Irish Hedgerows: Networks for Nature and Conserving Hedgerows*. Woodland planting design is informed by *Management Guidelines for Ireland's Native Woodlands*.



Figure 6 Conceptual Plan Diagram of Millers Lane Biodiversity and Habitat Strategy

Provide and Connect Diverse Habitats

The scheme at Millers Lane aims to strengthen existing ecological networks and establish new, high-value habitat types to increase biodiversity within the Ragoon area. The proposed landscape design links new habitat corridors to the existing planted edges of neighbouring residential areas at Gort na Bro, Gort Gréine and Cruachan Park, to the existing green



space associated with the recently completed Millers Lane Greenway to the east, and to the densely planted perimeter of the school grounds of Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh across the L-500 road to the west. This continuous green infrastructure forms a coherent habitat network across the suburban landscape.

The principal habitat corridor is composed of a native hedgerow forming the structural boundary, complemented by bands of native woodland-edge planting where space permits. Inside this, long-flowering meadow areas transition into short-flowering verges, providing a graded ecotone between tree cover and open grassland. These layered habitats support pollinators and small fauna while softening the park's visual edge. Selective semi-mature tree planting within open zones provides canopy diversity and vertical structure, accelerating the development of age variety in the new habitats. Together, these measures reinforce the park's ecological function, enhance connectivity, and deliver a resilient urban green space within Galway's western suburbs.

Integrate Nature Based Solutions and SuDS

Soft landscape areas are designed as multifunctional green infrastructure components that deliver Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), biodiversity enhancement, and climate resilience.

Nature-Based Solutions are measures that work with and enhance natural processes to address environmental, social, and economic challenges, delivering benefits for both people and nature. While often vegetated, NBS also encompass permeable mineral systems that mimic natural hydrological functions such as infiltration, filtration, and evaporation.

At Millers Lane Park, NBS are integrated throughout the public realm, combining vegetated SuDS features—such as bioretention rain gardens, pollinator planting, and reinforced grass parking bays—with permeable gravelled areas that support local attenuation and infiltration. The self-binding gravel surfacing used in cycle parking areas and secondary pedestrian routes provides a stable, low-maintenance, and permeable surface layer that allows stormwater to percolate gradually into the subgrade, supplementing the capacity of adjacent vegetated SuDS zones.

The bioretention planting employs herbaceous and shrubby species tolerant of alternating drought and inundation, including *Alchemilla mollis*, *Iris siberica*, *Calamagrostis brachytricha*, *Carex pendula*, and *Cornus kousa*, supported by bioretention trees such as *Alnus glutinosa*, *Betula pubescens*, *Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Worplesdon' and *Ulmus* 'Columnella'. These are complemented by pollinator-friendly perennial and shrub mixes based on the All-Ireland



Pollinator Plan (AIPP), and short-flowering meadows that provide extended seasonal nectar sources, visual variety, and reduced mowing frequency.

Together, these systems form an interconnected green and permeable infrastructure that moderates surface water flows, promotes infiltration, enhances biodiversity, mitigates the urban heat-island effect, and contributes to LEED v4 sustainable site and water efficiency objectives. For detailed hydraulic design, refer to the engineer's drainage proposals.

General Planting Design

The planting selection has been designed to provide pleasant amenity space for park visitors as well as adding new planting to support biodiversity and to counter the loss of existing vegetation. The park is designed with a mix of native and naturalised tree, native hedgerow, native and naturalised woodland edge planting throughout the site as well as perennial and shrub planting to add visual interest and biodiversity value in smaller areas close to buildings and high-intensity activity.

The emphasis in the plant selection is on using species that support biodiversity and on grouping them in plant communities that provide a diverse range of habitats on the site. The planting palette is designed to support pollinators, taking guidance from the *All-Ireland Pollinator Plan*. Planting design for hedges is based on recommendations in *Irish Hedgerows: Networks for Nature and Conserving Hedgerows*. Woodland planting design is informed by *Management Guidelines for Ireland's Native Woodlands*.

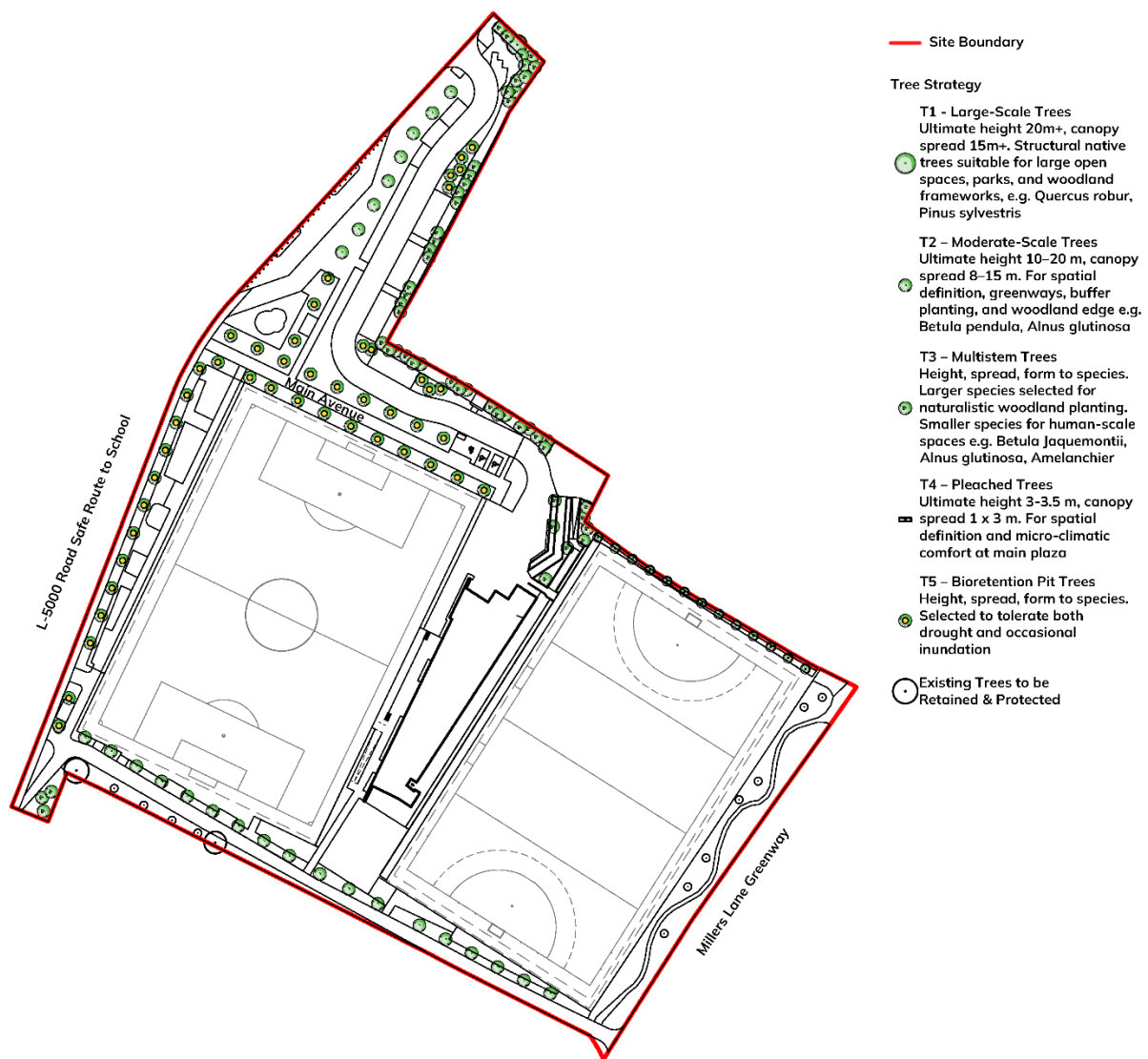


Figure 7 Conceptual Plan Diagram of Millers Lane Trees and Woodland Strategy

Trees and Woodlands

Tree species selections prioritise native and naturalised genus as well as robust, low-maintenance performance in urban coastal conditions. Across the Millers Lane site, approximately 138 new trees are proposed, comprising 40 semi-mature clear-stem trees (*Acer campestre* 'Elsrijk' 8, *Prunus avium* 'Plena' 18, *Quercus robur* 1, *Sorbus aucuparia* 'Autumn Spire' 13), 52 multistem trees (*Amelanchier lamarckii* 2, *Betula pendula* 26, *Betula jacquemontii* 2, *Malus 'Rudolph'* 2, *Sorbus aucuparia* 20), and 46 bioretention-pit trees (from the scheduled tolerant species list). These are distributed across soft landscape, raingardens, paved areas and woodland margins, with fastigate (narrow, columnar) forms used at the northern boundary of the eastern pitch to soften the scheme as it interfaces with adjacent residential units.



A woodland-edge mix including native and naturalised genus and species is proposed across an area of 614 m² (planted at 1/m²) extending habitat provision. Feathered and multi-stem material within these bands will diversify the age structure and accelerate canopy development, while raingarden and perennial matrices deliver seasonal nectar and structure for pollinators.

Tree placement has been coordinated with pedestrian and anticipated vehicular movements to protect turning radii and visibility at entrances and junctions. A cyclical arboricultural inspection regime is recommended—light formative pruning, periodic crown-lifting and clear-stemming where required—to sustain tree health, clearance and safety through establishment and maturity. Woodland planting may require periodic thinning to enhance habitat diversity.

Shrubs and Perennials

The proposed shrub and perennial planting palette has been selected to provide delight in the social spaces of the park and is in accordance with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan plant list. Shrub and perennial planting will be supplied in 2-3 litre pots and planted at a density of 5no/ m². Planting beds in public facing areas will be finished with a 50mm layer of bark mulch. Plant species have been selected to enhance biodiversity and create habitat on the site.

5.3 PROVIDE FACILITIES TO ENCOURAGE ACTIVE TRAVEL

The site layout at Millers Lane establishes an Active Travel Corridor to its southern boundary that integrates with the Millers Lane Greenway and adjoining pedestrian and cycle networks. This circulation route links the greenway on the west side to a controlled crossing on the L-5000 Road that serves as part of the Safe Route to School associated with Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh. The crossing also links to an existing pedestrian link to the Gateway Shopping District and neighbouring residential areas creating a continuous, safe, and legible connection between homes, schools, and recreation spaces. The design ensures that everyday mobility within and across the park remains friction-free and welcoming, promoting active travel as the natural choice for local journeys and school commutes throughout the year.

Cycle parking facilities are distributed at key access points, providing bays for short-stay users, long-term storage, and cargo or universal-access cycles. These are located for natural surveillance and ease of maintenance, reinforcing the park's role as a fully connected, inclusive, and climate-resilient urban green space.

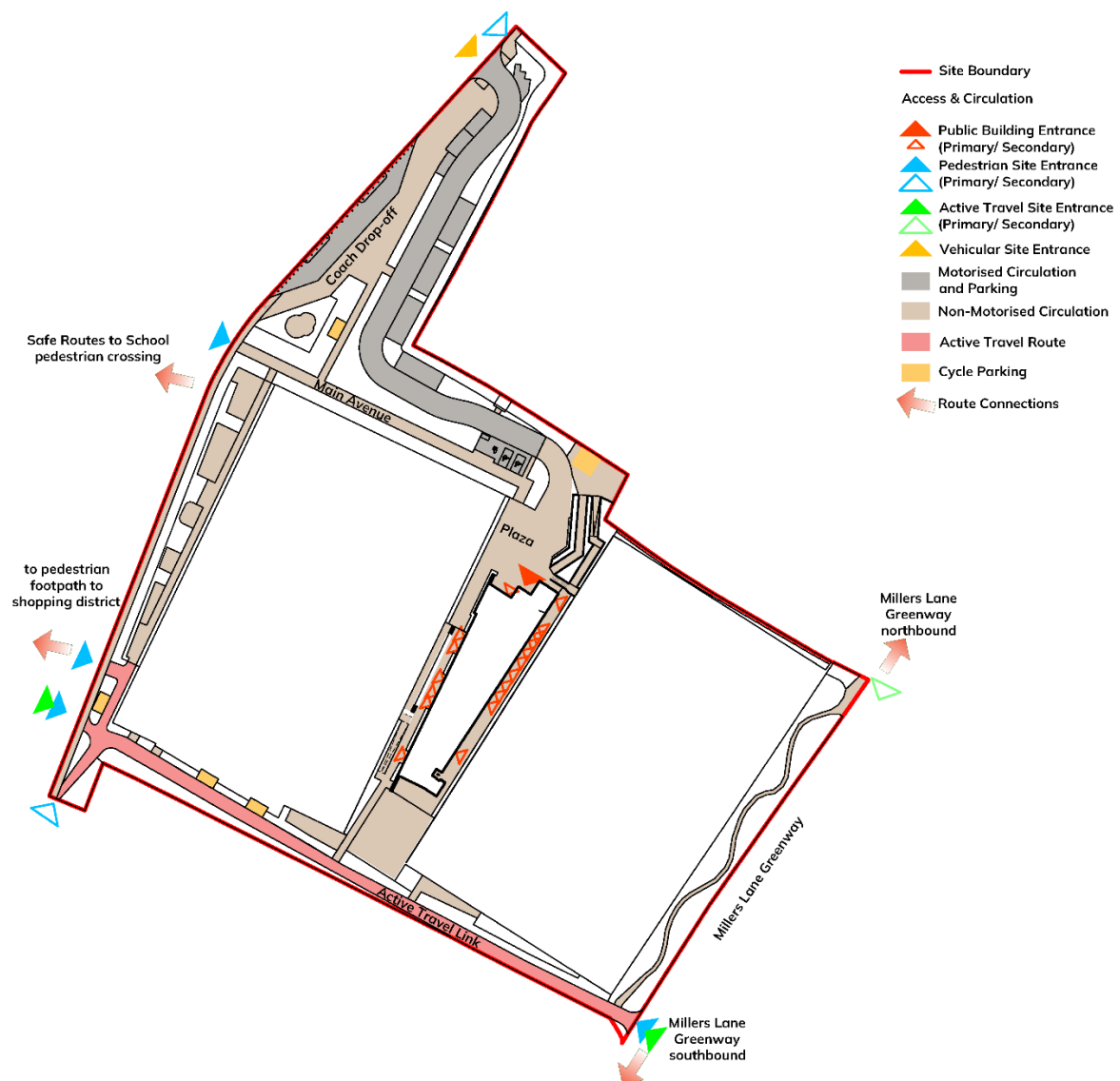


Figure 8 Conceptual Plan Diagram of Millers Lane Circulation and Access Strategy

5.4 PROVIDE FACILITIES TO PROMOTE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The layout of Millers Lane Park has been planned to prioritise access by public and semi-public transport, reinforcing Galway City Council's objectives for sustainable mobility. Coach access for visiting teams is accommodated through a dedicated drop-off area that connects directly to the park's primary pedestrian circulation route, ensuring safe and efficient movement between the transport arrival point and the main facilities. The site is bounded to the east by the Millers Lane Greenway, a key active travel corridor linking surrounding



residential areas, schools, and the wider Knocknacarra–Rahoon neighbourhoods to the park and to existing bus stops located north and south of the site.

The park layout retains the pedestrian link from the Greenway to the controlled crossing on the L-5000 Road, which in turn connects to the Gateway Shopping District and to multiple bus routes, both existing and proposed. With the implementation of additional routes and increased service frequencies under Bus Connects Galway 2023, Millers Lane will be comprehensively served by public transport. The integration of safe, step-free walking and cycling connections with public transport nodes supports multi-modal travel, reduces car dependency, and contributes to Galway City Council's climate action and low-carbon mobility goals for accessible, inclusive community infrastructure.

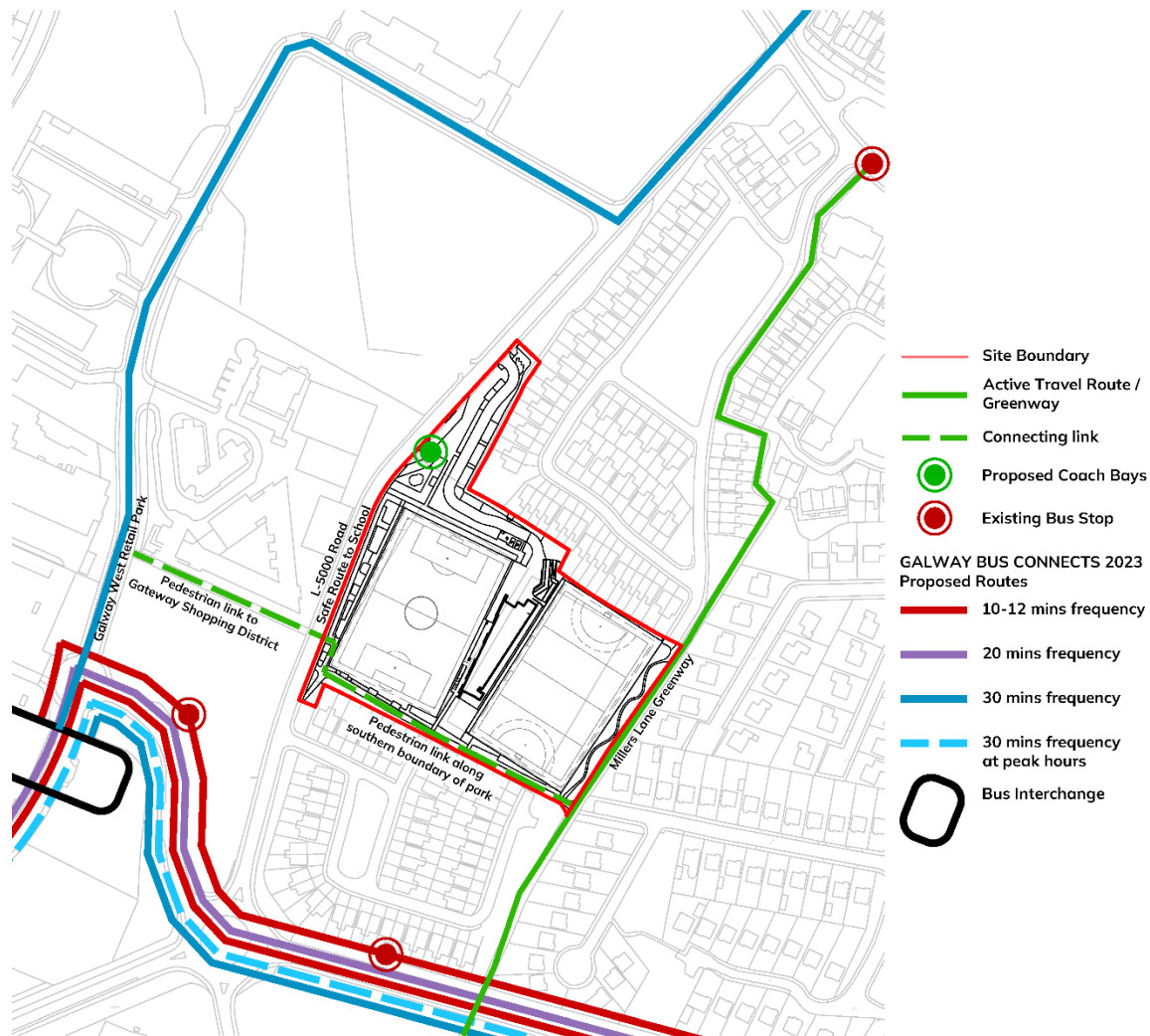


Figure 9 Conceptual Plan Diagram of Millers Lane Public Transport Access



5.5 PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE PUBLIC REALM

Primary Circulation and Desire Lines

Primary circulation and access at Millers Lane are designed to serve a diversity of visitors and the full range of activities within the park and its surrounding public realm. The central tree-lined Main Avenue forms the spine of this network, linking the controlled pedestrian crossing on the L-5000 Road (that forms part of the Safe Route to School associated with Scoil Mhic Amhlaigh) to the plaza outside the multi-functional building. This route establishes a clear and legible movement corridor between the school, park facilities, and wider community spaces, promoting safe and independent access for pupils and everyday park users alike. The Main Avenue is lined with Sweet Gum trees planted in raingardens, giving the route a distinctive autumn canopy and planting with a diversity of pollinator-friendly flowering perennials along its axis.

A tree-lined path connects from the dedicated coach drop-off area and the car park south to the main avenue, animated by a landmark climbing structure to aide wayfinding, raingardens, a bug hotel and cycle parking. A compact form of Elm tree is selected for this route to provide a directional quality to the space while tolerating the raingarden and paved surfacing conditions.

To the south of the pitches, the park layout retains an existing active travel link from the Millers Lane Greenway east of the park, to a second controlled pedestrian crossing (also forming part of the Safe Route to School associated with Scoil Mhic Amhlaigh) on the L-5000 Road, west of the park. This link is currently approximately 3-3.5m wide with illuminated bollards and planting to its southern edge. New planting is introduced to the north of the path to softens the edges of the pitches and add biodiversity value and visual interest. The active travel link is lined with Double Gean Cherry trees, and animated by a calisthenics area and a traverse-climbing wall, and served by cycle parking for regular and cargo / universal access cycles.

Linking the Main Avenue and the Active Travel Link are two secondary routes. One path connects the two primary routes through the playground on the western side of the 4G pitch, serving as the playground's main circulation, with gated access at either end. The second route connects the Main Avenue with the Active Travel Link on the eastern side of the 4G pitch, serving as an informal spectator area, with direct access to changing rooms and ramped and stepped access to the 4G pitch. This route also connects to the route east of the multi-functional building and west of the 2G pitch serving as access to the external changing areas on the east façade.



The site plan illustrates the layout of the proposed 4G synthetic turf soccer pitch and its associated facilities. The pitch itself is a large rectangular area, 67.0m long and 30.30m wide. To the north of the pitch is a parking area with several bays, including a designated accessible parking bay. Adjacent to the parking is a proposed refuse storage enclosure and a rain garden. The rain garden is a green area with a circular feature, surrounded by a blue hatched area representing a rainwater management system. The entire site is bordered by a red line, likely representing a boundary or road. The plan includes various dimensions and labels for different areas and features.

Proposed Pollinat
friendly Raingard
Bioretention plant

Proposed refuse
storage enclosure

Proposed road su
to Engineers
specification

Proposed accessil
charging parking

Proposed accessil
parking bays

4G synthetic turf
soccer pitch

Main Plaza

The formal plaza at the main building entrance is defined by a bench-seat wall that softens the sloped footpath, ramp and steps required to access the 2G sand-filled synthetic multi-sport pitch. This plaza space will allow groups to gather and potentially enjoy refreshments on match and training days. This space is designed to optimise natural surveillance. It is bordered on the south by the entrance façade of the multi-functional building, overlooked by the entrance lobby and overhang. On the east side it is animated by the bench and raised planters and the sloped and stepped access to the 2G pitch. To its west, the plaza overlooks the 4G synthetic turf multi-sport pitch and the Main Avenue to the park entrance.



Figure 11 Visualisation of the Main Avenue, viewed from the L-5000 Road

5.6 PASSIVE SURVEILLANCE AND SPACE ACTIVATION

Passive surveillance refers to the natural observation of public spaces by people using them or moving through them, which increases safety and deters antisocial behaviour without the need for overt security measures. The park's design prioritises passive surveillance along the primary circulation routes as a safety and security strategy by clustering activities along the east-west axis formed by the Active Travel Link, by introducing bench seating to the formal plaza and by activating the main avenue and bus set-down link with raingardens, a bug hotel and a landmark climbing structure. The connecting paths are animated in turn by the playground, the spectator area and by the changing room doorways.

5.7 PROVIDE FACILITIES FOR ACTIVE RECREATION

Millers Lane park provides spaces for a range of active recreations, both formal and informal. The new 4G synthetic turf multi-sport pitch with associated fencing and the 2G sand-filled synthetic multi-sport pitch with associated fencing form the principle assets for formal active recreation. Semi-formal active recreation is served by the multi-sport rebound wall / court to the south of the multi-use building. There is an area dedicated to calisthenic equipment located on the active travel route to the west of the site and an area for traverse-climbing to the southern side of the 2G pitch retaining wall.

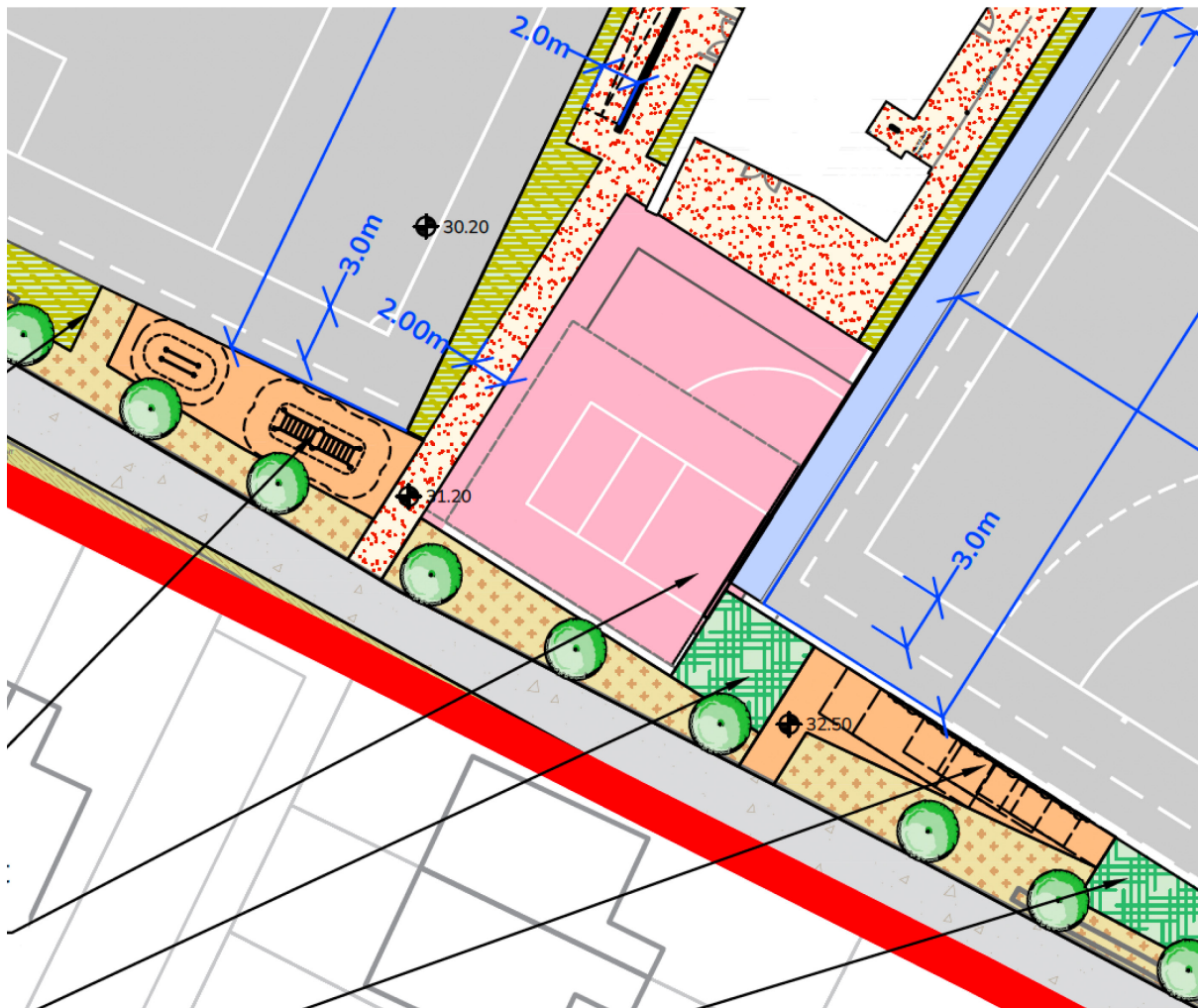


Figure 12 Sample of active recreation facilities, detail of proposed Site Layout Plan of Millers Lane (Drawing P612-MIL-LD-GA-101)

5.8 PROVIDE FACILITIES FOR PASSIVE RECREATION

Passive recreation is provided for in a number of ways across Millers Lane. Circulation is designed to accommodate looped walking and wheeling routes for casual use with the Main Avenue providing an axis from which secondary footpaths and the Active Travel Link are accessed.

Seating to accommodate sitting for socialising, reading, contemplating or observing nature and surrounding activities is provided at intervals of 50m minimum and more frequently where space allows. A range of seating heights is provided to accommodate different seating needs. Seating is clustered in sociopetal configurations where appropriate to facilitate conviviality. Seating is provided for in different formats, including benches with back-rests and arm-rests for universal access along circulation routes, informal monolith benches set in



grassed areas to activate green spaces and raised planters with integrated benches to activate paved spaces.

The existing green space associated with the recently completed Millers Lane Greenway, to the east of the 2G pitch is dedicated to passive enjoyment of the wildflower meadow and trees planted there, with the panoramic views to the west from the elevated position. Additional seating is provided here in the form of benches with back and arm rests to the edge of the greenway path, along with informal monolith benches set within the wildflower meadow.

5.9 CLIMATE CHANGE

Millers Lane is designed to reduce climate risk and support adaptation and mitigation. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) intercept, store and slowly release rainfall to limit flood peaks and protect infrastructure; bioretention raingarden areas and permeable surfaces manage intense storms and speed post-event recovery. Rainwater harvesting supplies appropriate non-potable uses to lessen demand on potable water during dry spells. Planting and soils are selected for drought tolerance and rapid recovery after saturation. Planting is also selected to allow for heat- and moisture-triggered responses rather than fixed watering schedules.

Surface finishes are light in colour and high-albedo to limit heat gain and lower urban heat-island risk, with texture and layout selected to control glare and maintain visual comfort. Shade and wind moderation are increased through a resilient tree canopy and carefully oriented structures, improving thermal comfort on key routes and gathering spaces.

5.10 END-USER NEEDS AND INCLUSION

Millers Lane is designed to be welcoming and usable for people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds. The approach follows recognised universal design guidance and Irish accessibility policy so that movement, rest, socialising and informal activity are comfortable, predictable and safe. Lighting, seating, route design and planned operational practices work together to deliver inclusive everyday use.

Universal access and wayfinding.

Primary routes provide step-free access to all destinations. Gradients and crossfalls support independent movement for wheelchair users, people pushing prams and those with limited mobility. Surfaces are even and slip-resistant with clear tonal contrast at edges and at any change in level. Tactile paving defines crossings and decision points. A consistent family of



maps, fingerposts and noticeboards uses plain language and high-contrast lettering. These measures accord with National Disability Authority universal design guidance and accepted external-environment standards.

Seating and resting

Seating is provided from the project's detailed furniture suite. Seating to accommodate sitting for socialising, reading, contemplating or observing nature and surrounding activities is provided at intervals of 50m minimum and more frequently where space allows. A range of seating heights is provided to accommodate different seating needs. Seating is clustered in sociopetal configurations where appropriate to facilitate conviviality. Seating is provided for in different formats, including benches with back-rests and arm-rests for universal access along circulation routes, informal monolith benches set in grassed areas to activate green spaces and raised planters with integrated benches to activate paved spaces. Locations and specifications follow the issued hard-works details.

Children, Play and Education

Millers Lane delivers a coherent network of child-friendly spaces centred on a mixed-ability playground for mixed ages. The playground provides graduated challenge and inclusive opportunities, with sand pits for loose-materials play. Step-free routes link directly to principal paths and the plaza. Equipment and impact-attenuating surfacing are inspected and maintained to European Standard EN 1176 and European Standard EN 1177. Seating with backs and armrests is positioned for passive supervision; sociopetal bench arrangements on and plaza edges encourage small-group interaction and oversight.

Lighting and personal safety

Movement corridors and principal approaches are lit to provide uniform, glare-controlled illumination suitable for recognition and obstacle detection after dark. The strategy uses a warm spectrum of approximately 3000 kelvin. Lighting levels and uniformity targets are as set out in the Millers Lane Lighting Simulation Report; maintenance and timing profiles follow that report's route categories. Planting to the edge of circulation routes remains low to maintain long sightlines and natural surveillance, and emergency contact information is posted at entrances and principal nodes.

Inclusive activity and gender-responsive layout.

The playground, multi-sport rebound wall / court, traverse-climbing wall and calisthenics zone are arranged for mixed-ability, inter-generational use. Approaches are step-free, fall zones are unobstructed, and passive surveillance is maintained from adjacent paths and



benches. In line with recognised gender-inclusive park guidance, including Make Space for Girls and contemporary public-realm safety handbooks, activity is distributed across several smaller, clearly visible pockets rather than concentrated in a single dominant court. Each pocket provides more than one exit choice and nearby places to sit with friends. The plaza edges employ sociopetal seating and open sightlines to encourage confident use by girls and by teens. Programming and site communications explicitly welcome these users and reinforce the intended culture of inclusive participation.

Quieter places and sensory comfort

Within Millers Lane park, calmer seating moments are provided along sections of the Millers Lane Greenway where benches sit within or beside the meadows and slightly away from the highest pedestrian flows. These locations offer a lower-stimulus option without leaving the legible footpath network. Where shelter from wind and sun is feasible, seating is oriented to improve comfort; otherwise, benches are placed to maximise natural surveillance and ease of approach.

Cyclists

Connections to the existing cycle network and cycle parking accommodates standard, cargo and adapted cycles at principal destinations. The Active Travel Link provides a legible, lit and unobstructed route, and crossing design and surface transitions are designed to reduce conflict between people walking and wheeling.

Dogs and Dog-Owners

Millers Lane is dog-friendly on a leash basis. Clear messaging sets expectations for control and fouling. Planting and meadow management avoid concealed corners near primary paths so that shared use remains safe and predictable. Waste bins are positioned at logical entry and exit points.



6 PROPOSED PARK CHARACTER AREAS

6.1 CHARACTER AREAS INTRODUCTION

The design of Millers Lane is organised into seven distinct character areas, each defined by its function, spatial qualities, and future management priorities. Together they form a coherent park framework that balances active recreation, ecological resilience, and community use. The Sports and Games Areas take up the largest area and are centrally located providing year-round access for the neighbourhood's residents, schools and clubs, including two all-weather multi-sport pitches, a multi-sport rebound wall / court and spectator infrastructure. The Plaza Area acts as the park's civic heart, accommodating events, informal gathering and day-to-day activity at the centre of the park. A complementary Circulation and Social Area of paths serves daily movement between the multi-functional building, carpark, active-travel routes and neighbourhood's street network. This area affords universal enjoyment of the park with seating clustered along its routes and planting to add delight. The Play and Fitness areas offer inclusive and intergenerational play opportunities in a safe settings. The Active Travel Corridor, linking the Millers Lane Greenway to the Safe Routes to School pedestrian crossing to Gaelscoil Mhic Amhlaigh, anchors permeability and connects the park to surrounding neighbourhood. In the vicinity of the carpark and along the park's edges SuDS Asset Areas and Habitat Priority Zones integrate stormwater management, native and naturalised woodland, and meadow planting to support pollinators and biodiversity. Collectively, these character areas ensure Millers Lane functions as an inclusive, resilient, and ecologically integrated public park for Galway's western suburban neighbourhoods.

6.2 CHARACTER AREAS (MAP KEY)



Figure 13 Conceptual Plan Diagram of Millers Lane Landscape Character Areas (based on Drawing P612-MIL-LD-MP-501)

6.3 ZONE 1—HABITAT PRIORITY AND LOW ACTIVITY AREAS

These zones prioritise biodiversity outcomes and ecological function over amenity, encompassing habitat corridors and quieter areas along the edges of more active zones of the park. Planting categories include native hedgerows, woodland edge planting and species-rich meadows. This zone also includes Bird and Bat Boxes within the planted areas to support biodiversity. Lastly, there is an educational aspect to this zone, with both permanent and temporary signage explaining the intent of the habitat plantings.



6.4 ZONE 2 - SUDS ASSET AREA

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are an integrated, nature-based approach to managing rainfall at source—slowing, storing, cleaning, using, and safely releasing runoff to mimic natural hydrology. SuDS features (e.g., raingardens, swales, permeable paving, detention areas, and rainwater harvesting) deliver multiple benefits: flood attenuation, water-quality treatment, biodiversity, amenity, and climate resilience—while animating the public realm and everyday spaces of the park.

This zone includes infrastructure that is designed to manage water quality and attenuation. Together these assets intercept, treat and attenuate runoff close to source, protect receiving waters in Galway City, support biodiversity and climate resilience, and reduce potable-water demand where reuse is feasible—key aims set out in the engineering strategy and SuDS design for Millers Lane.

In Millers Lane park, SuDS shape the public realm at the car park, coach set-down and pedestrian plaza and include bioretention raingardens with trees and pollinator-friendly planting, and permeable reinforced-grass parking bays. These SuDS assets manage quality and quantity while presenting a tidy, legible area from which to access the park. Rainwater harvesting (RWH) tanks proposed for the development collect water and provide a non-potable source for building needs and under specific conditions, watering of planting outdoors.

6.5 ZONE 3—MAIN AVENUE AND SOCIAL AREAS

This zone covers the Main Avenue, the green space associated with the Millers Lane Greenway and the park's everyday social pockets—integrated benches and free-standing seating, hang-out spots. The purpose of this zone is to provide a year-round welcoming, legible, usable core to the park.

6.6 ZONE 4—ACTIVE TRAVEL CORRIDOR

Zone 4 encompasses an Active Travel Corridor that connects the recently completed Millers Lane Greenway to the east of the park to the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) on the L-5000 Road at Scoil Mhic Amhlaidh National School. The purpose of this zone is to keep everyday mobility friction-free and welcoming, so that active travel is the default choice to and through the park—and to school—year-round.

Zone 4 forms a legible movement spine for people walking, wheeling and cycling and is open to the public 24 hours a day, 365 days a year outside any of the park's restricted-



access boundaries. It links the park to the neighbourhood's street network and key park destinations.

6.7 ZONE 5 PROGRAMMED SPORT AND GAMING AREA

Zone 5 covers the new 4G synthetic turf multi-sport pitch (designed to soccer pitch dimensions) with associated fencing and 6 no. floodlights and the new 2G sand-filled synthetic multi-sport pitch (designed to hockey pitch dimensions) with associated fencing and 6 no. floodlights and immediate environs only, including playing surface, run-offs, spectator rail, coach/officials' access, and ball-stop netting at goal ends.

Its purpose is to provide bookable, competition-ready resources that are all weather with consistent footing, line visibility and safe approach routes, distinct from passive recreation. The zone is laid out to separate players, officials and spectators, guide crowd flows onto hard routes, and protect adjacent habitats and residential amenity.

6.8 ZONE 6—PLAYGROUND AND INFORMAL ACTIVE RECREATION AREAS

Zone 6 comprises the outdoor play and informal active recreation areas, bringing together the children's playground, the calisthenics/fitness zone, traverse-climbing wall, landmark climbing structure and the multi-sport rebound wall / court each with surfacing specific to requirements. The intent is a series of welcoming, everyday activity spaces that support self-directed play, climbing, casual games, and body-weight fitness without bookings.

Layout prioritises clear sightlines, short desire-line connections to the circulation routes, and short-flowering verges where these spaces meet meadows or planting so they read as intentional and safe. The climbing wall, landmark climbing structure and playground's impact-attenuating surfacing, edges, and equipment zones are arranged for age-appropriate challenge; the multi-sport rebound wall / court encloses ball play and rebounds to minimise conflicts with the active travel route to the south, while remaining open to casual use along its western edge; calisthenics apparatus is located for supervision and accessible approaches along the active travel route. Wayfinding, nearby seating, bins and drinking water complete a compact, legible cluster that feels lively on busy days and comfortable for passive recreation at quieter times.

6.9 ZONE 7—PLAZA AREA

Zone 7 at Millers Lane comprises a formal plaza at the main building entrance is defined by a bench-seat wall that softens the sloped footpath, ramp and steps required to access the



2G pitch. This plaza space will allow groups to gather and potentially enjoy refreshments on match and training days. It includes a smoking shelter, lockable cycle parking (including accessible/cargo stands), lockable equipment storage and planters with integrated bench seating. The space is laid out for clear pedestrian desire lines on match and training days. Edges read crisp against the Main Avenue and building thresholds; wayfinding and noticeboards make the plaza the park's "front door," performing as a lively social node on busy days and a comfortable, legible place to pause at all other times.



7 HARD LANDSCAPE MATERIAL SELECTION

The materials and fixtures proposed for the hard landscape at Millers Lane park are selected to complement the architectural proposals for the multi-functional buildings in the scheme.

The hard landscape design for Millers Lane is also guided by the *LEED v4 Materials and Resources* framework, which sets out principles for sustainable procurement, embodied-carbon reduction, and life-cycle efficiency in urban infrastructure. Under this framework, every material element—from paving and edging to seating, railings, and lighting—was reviewed for durability, recyclability, local sourcing, and capacity for disassembly and reuse.

LEED v4 encourages a circular-economy approach that values long-life products, low-VOC finishes, and transparent supply chains verified through Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs). In response, the Millers Lane scheme specifies high-recycled-content aggregates and steel, locally quarried stone, and certified sustainably harvested timber. Concrete mixes target reduced cement content through supplementary cementitious materials, while modular paving systems allow future lifting and relaying without waste.

Surface treatments, fixings, and coatings were selected for robustness and ease of maintenance, reducing replacement frequency and operational emissions. Drainage details integrate permeable joints, infiltration layers, and rain-garden interfaces to support the site's SuDS strategy. Collectively, these specifications advance LEED v4 objectives for life-cycle optimisation, resource stewardship, and indoor/outdoor environmental quality, ensuring the park's hard landscape achieves both functional resilience and aesthetic longevity in Galway's temperate coastal climate.

7.1 SURFACES

The approach to hard landscape surface selection is informed by the principle firstly of 'Pave Less,' whereby the minimum areas required for circulation are provided to reduce soil coverage and stormwater runoff, in turn reducing the water management burden of the site. Site circulation footway widths are kept to a minimum required for universal access and are constructed in materials suited to their route hierarchy. Parking bays are treated as a SuDS opportunity.

The surface materials strategy for Millers Lane follows a coherent and sustainable design approach, balancing functional diversity with visual unity. The palette is defined by warm natural tones—buff, and exposed granite aggregate—chosen to sit comfortably within the surrounding landscape. Finishes prioritise durability, permeability, and low maintenance,



aligning with LEED v4 principles for sustainable sites, stormwater management, and heat island reduction.

Vehicular surfaces (S1) are limited to key access and service areas, delivered to the Engineer's design and specification. Their restrained extent ensures that harder finishes do not visually dominate. Permeable parking bays (S2) use reinforced grass systems that allow infiltration, reduce runoff, and soften the visual impact of hardstanding. These surfaces blend seamlessly with adjacent meadow planting, supporting rainwater management and reducing local heat gain.

The plaza (S3) is defined by its surface of in-situ exposed aggregate concrete with locally sourced granite and limestone. This tactile, regionally grounded surface expresses a civic identity while maintaining high reflectance and durability. The muted colour variation complements the buff asphalt paths and gravel areas, giving a sense of continuity throughout the park.

The multi-sport rebound wall / court (S5) employ a seamless proprietary surface in subtle playful tones to be defined at tender stage. Its robust, slip-resistant finish offers longevity with minimal maintenance, while colour zoning retains harmony across the recreational palette.

Soft-pour rubber surfacing (S6) in the play areas introduces texture and safety with muted playful colour blends derived from recycled rubber materials, supporting circular economy goals under LEED's low-emitting materials criteria. Certified play sand (S7) adds a natural tactile element for sensory play, echoing the light tones of gravel and concrete and promoting permeability and non-toxic performance.

Self-binding gravel (S8) is used for cycle parking areas, offering a robust, low-carbon alternative to sealed surfaces. Its buff quartzite fines align chromatically with the asphalt and concrete elements, maintaining a unified character.

General pedestrian circulation paths (S4) in light buff SMA provide a smooth, accessible surface with consistent tone and reflectivity that ties the park's circulation together, balancing formality with warmth. Finally, the artificial playing pitch surfaces (S9) offer year-round playing surfaces that conserve water and fertiliser inputs while visually integrating with the park's green structure.

Together, these materials achieve a harmonious and climate-responsive palette, embodying Millers Lane's ethos as a sustainable community landscape.



7.2 SITE FURNITURE & FIXINGS

Bespoke In-situ Concrete Seating / Planter Walls / Ramp-retaining structures

These seating walls combine durability and material integrity, and are grounded by the local material in their composition. Using locally sourced granite and limestone aggregate, the finish visually ties to the park's main hardscape palette, maintaining cohesion between the plaza and circulation areas. The exposed aggregate concrete reduces the need for imported materials and surface treatments, contributing to LEED v4 credits for regional sourcing, low maintenance, and reduced finishes. The continuous seating edges also double as low retaining elements, supporting accessibility and flexible social use.

Proprietary Bench Seating

Timber benches with weathered steel-coloured accents complement the natural tones of the paving and planting palette. Designed with back and armrests for universal access, these benches use sustainably sourced hardwood and powder-coated recyclable metals. Their spacing along key routes enhances walkability and passive recreation. Under LEED v4, their materials and finishes support indoor and outdoor environmental quality through non-toxic, low-VOC coatings and long service life.

Bespoke Accessible Picnic Tables

These picnic sets balance inclusivity and aesthetics, providing wheelchair-accessible seating integrated with warm timber finishes and weathered steel-coloured frames. The robust, modular design ensures longevity, while the recyclable metal base and sustainably sourced timber reduce embodied carbon. Their neutral palette harmonises with surrounding furniture and paving, reinforcing the park's cohesive visual identity and contributing to LEED credits for social equity and universal design.

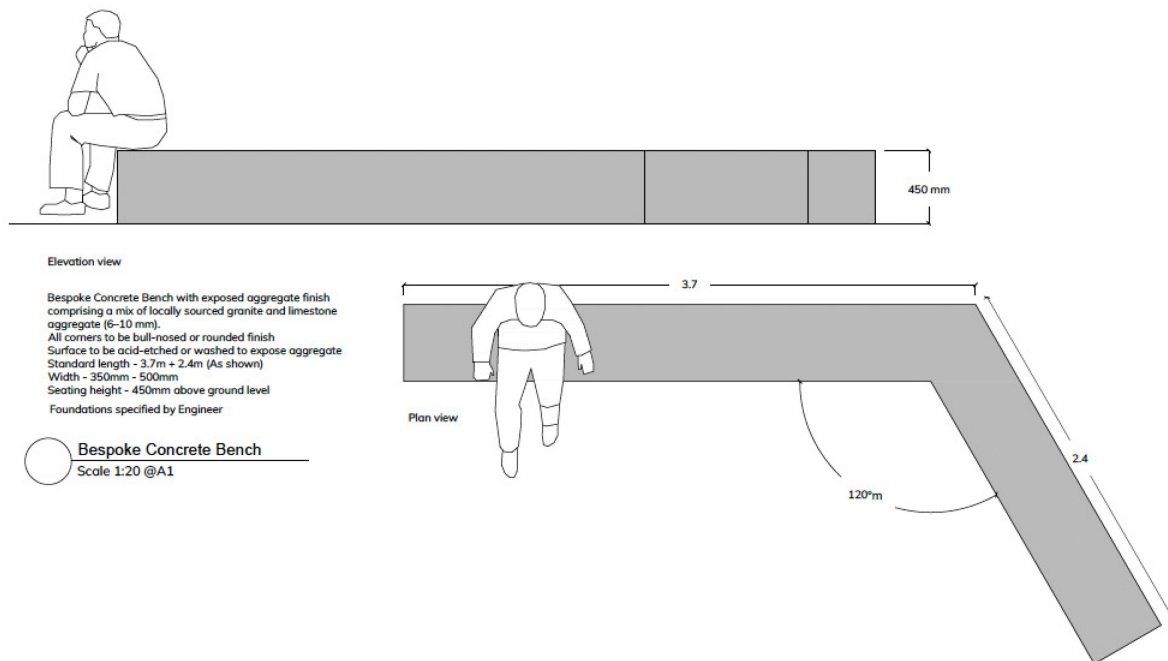


Figure 14 Detail of Hard Landscape Details for bespoke seating with integrated planter proposed Site Layout Plan of Millers Lane (Drawing P612-MIL-LD-HL-303)

Cycle Parking Stands

Weathered steel-coloured steel stands echo the site's warm metal tones while providing functional infrastructure for sustainable transport. The simple, durable form supports LEED *Alternative Transportation* credits and encourages active travel. Their discreet integration beside main paths maintains aesthetic order without visual clutter, reinforcing both mobility and material continuity.

7.3 SITE BOUNDARIES

Fencing and Spectator Rail to 4G Synthetic Turf Multi-Sport Pitch

Twin-bar welded mesh fencing and low spectator rails in black powder-coated steel provide secure yet transparent boundaries around the 4G pitch. The dark neutral tone allows these structures to recess visually into the landscape, maintaining openness while ensuring functionality. Timber kickboards, fixed to the inner base, control the migration of pitch infill material and absorb impact. Modular fabrication and a high recycled content support LEED's construction waste reduction and materials reuse principles. The fine detailing and limited colour variation keep the visual language consistent with other metallic elements in the park such as cycle stands and planter edging.



Fencing and Spectator Rail to 2G Sand-Filled Synthetic Multi-Sport Pitch

Roll-form welded-mesh fencing in black powder-coated steel encloses the 2G pitch, combining 3 m-high perimeter panels with 4.5 m-high sections centred behind the goals and 1.1 m spectator rails along the sidelines. The fine 50 × 50 mm mesh aperture provides a secure yet visually transparent boundary, maintaining sightlines across the site while preventing ball escape. Timber kickboards, fixed to the inner base, control the migration of pitch's artificial infill material and absorb impact. The dark neutral tone and slender post spacing allow the structure to recess into its setting, harmonising with adjacent fencing around the 4G pitch. Fabrication in modular components with a high recycled-steel content supports LEED v4 Material Re-use and Waste Reduction credits. The consistent palette of black metalwork reinforces the unified visual language of the park's hard landscape elements, including lighting columns, bollards and cycle stands.

Children's Playground Fence

A 1.1 m-high timber post, pale-and-rail fence defines the children's playground, providing a tactile and visually warm boundary suited to its family-oriented character. Constructed from kiln-dried, pressure-treated softwood, the fence incorporates 120 mm-square posts and 95 × 35 mm pales and rails, with pales sandwiched between twin horizontal rails for strength and safety. Two matching timber gates include self-closing mechanisms and pad-lockable latches for controlled access. The natural timber finish complements the adjacent play equipment and seating, offering a softer contrast to the steel fencing used elsewhere in the park. Its low height preserves openness and visual supervision, while sustainable sourcing and modular assembly align with LEED's responsible-materials criteria. The simplicity of detailing and consistent proportions integrate this boundary seamlessly within the wider park's design language.

Reinforced Concrete Retaining Wall with Fall Protection Fence

A reinforced concrete retaining wall forms the structural boundary to the western edge of the 2G pitch, combining engineering performance with a strong placemaking element. The wall is designed to Engineer's specification and is subject to detailed site investigations appropriate to the project tender stage.

Assuming that reinforced concrete remains the appropriate solution, the wall will be finished with an exposed concrete face incorporating photo-engraved relief artwork commissioned under the Irish statutory Percent for Art Scheme. This bespoke finish transforms a necessary retaining structure into a civic landmark, reflecting local identity and contributing to the cultural narrative of the park.



Above the wall, a 2.4-metre-high fall-protection fence continues the visual language of the 2G pitch's welded-mesh fencing, providing safety while maintaining transparency. Both wall and fence adopt a restrained, dark neutral palette to unify with the park's wider metalwork and minimise visual intrusion.

The combined assembly demonstrates the project's commitment to integrated design, where structural, artistic and safety requirements are addressed through coordinated detailing and high-quality, durable materials compliant with LEED v4 objectives for longevity and material efficiency.

Existing Boundary Walls and Fences

Where feasible, existing boundaries are to be retained and repaired, preserving the established residential character along the site edges. Selective reinstatement uses locally sourced materials to match existing fabric, reducing embodied carbon and construction waste. This approach supports LEED's materials reuse and site stewardship objectives while maintaining the park's contextual authenticity. The strategy ensures a balance between new interventions and the inherited landscape framework, reinforcing the park's integration into its suburban setting.



8 PLANTING

8.1 PLANTING STRATEGY – OVERVIEW

The planting design for Millers Lane establishes a resilient, climate-adaptive landscape framework that enhances biodiversity, manages stormwater naturally, and delivers year-round amenity. The layout layers native hedgerows, woodland edges, pollinator-rich beds, bioretention rain gardens, and seasonal meadows to form a connected green network around the park's paths and spaces. All planting aligns with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and prioritises native Irish provenance where feasible, with wildflower seed sourced from Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine-registered suppliers. The palette has been developed to complement the park's material and colour scheme while meeting the objectives of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Version 4 rating system for habitat creation, reduced heat-island effect, and sustainable water management.

Woodland Edge

Woodland edge planting reinforces the park's perimeters, buffering recreational spaces and providing ecological connection to adjoining and nearby habitats. The composition includes hazel, birch, holly, willow, rowan, and guelder rose with ferns beneath. This layered structure provides habitat and shelter for birds, bats, and pollinators, improving biodiversity while visually softening the park boundaries. The mix is designed for low maintenance and resilience in Galway's coastal climate. Under LEED Version 4, this planting contributes to on-site biodiversity, natural shading, and improved microclimate regulation. The subdued green tones and seasonal berry colours integrate naturally with the surrounding hard materials and weathered steel-coloured detailing, reinforcing the park's biophilic identity.

Avenue and Feature Trees

Tree planting defines key routes, entrances, and gathering spaces, using a mix of native and carefully selected non-native species suited to the coastal environment. Oak, field maple, cherries, alder, apple, elm, birch, rowan and Amelanchier establish hierarchy, orientation, and shade. The trees reinforce wayfinding and comfort, providing canopy structure that contributes to the reduction of local surface heat and enhances visual unity across the park. The selection of hardy, low-water-demand species aligns with LEED objectives for reduced potable water use and the creation of long-term canopy cover. Clear-stemmed trees maintain open sightlines, while multi-stemmed forms introduce texture and scale variation appropriate to the woodland edge planting and to the plaza area.



Trees in Paving and Plazas

In paved areas trees are established in tree pits with engineered soils with irrigation and aeration systems, root barriers, and protective grilles. This ensures adequate rooting volume and long-term stability without surface heave. Species are selected for tolerance to urban conditions and seasonal expression, bringing light shade and visual relief to mineral-dominated spaces. These trees contribute to LEED Version 4 credits for heat-island reduction and long-term landscape performance. Their foliage and form provide a natural counterpoint to the surrounding concrete and asphalt, reinforcing comfort, identity, and environmental quality within the public realm.

Bioretention Rain Gardens

Rain gardens are located along paths and parking bays to intercept, filter, and attenuate stormwater in line with Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) principles. They contain moisture-tolerant trees such as alder, birch, liquidambar, and columnar elm, underplanted with robust perennials and ornamental grasses adapted to fluctuating wet and dry conditions. Engineered soils, gravel mulches, and controlled overflow systems ensure reliable performance. The rain gardens contribute to LEED Version 4 Rainwater Management credits by promoting infiltration, pollutant removal, and natural cooling. Their textured foliage and muted flowering colours harmonise with buff asphalt, gravel and exposed aggregate surfaces, expressing sustainable infrastructure as an integral part of the park's design language.

Short-Flowering Meadow

The short-flowering meadow provides a soft visual transition between paved spaces and taller planted areas, offering a neat appearance that still supports pollinators. It contains a significant proportion of native wildflower content in a seed mix sourced from a Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine-registered supplier, combining low-growing herbs and grasses suited to frequent cutting. This approach balances recreational usability with ecological function. The reduced fertiliser and irrigation requirements align with LEED criteria for sustainable landscape management, while regular maintenance retains a tidy, intentional appearance that supports public perception of naturalised planting as designed space.

Pollinator-Friendly Shrub and Perennial Beds

The park's planting beds are designed to deliver ecological value alongside visual structure. Species such as *Helenium*, *Echinacea*, *Salvia*, *Stachys*, *Geranium*, and low-growing roses ensure extended flowering from spring through autumn. This sequence supports bees, butterflies, and other pollinators in accordance with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. The



planting is arranged in bold, legible swathes that define entrances, seating areas, and key sightlines. From a LEED perspective, drought-tolerant perennials minimise the need for irrigation, and organic mulching reduces maintenance inputs. The palette of cool blues and violets, balanced with warm golds and greens, complements the buff tones of the paving and self-binding gravel, maintaining harmony across the park.