

Magee Barracks

Landscape Design Rationale Report

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**Built.
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Landscape Design **Built Environment**

Client:

Ballymount Properties Ltd

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1 Introduction

Magee Barracks is located to the east of Kildare town’s historic core located off Hospital Street. The overall site comprises c.20.7hectares (51.36acres) while the subject of Phase 1 planning application extends to c.11.3 ha (27.96ac.).

The proposed Phase 1 application includes a neighbourhood centre fronting Hospital Street which comprises 3 retail units, a café/gallery and creche with an associated play area while the remainder of the lands will comprise residential development totalling 375 units. These will be a mix of duplexes, apartments, terraced housing, semi-detached and detached properties. A neighbourhood park, a local park and a number of pocket parks are also included with the scheme.

Phase 1 application lands are set within an overall masterplan which includes a proposed Cancer Treatment Clinic (Proton Hospital) to the east of the site, a Lidl store and car park to the west and Phase 2 residential development to the north of Phase 1.

The landscape design strategy and design principles that inform the masterplan are described in this report. This report should be read in association with the following drawings;

Drawing No	Name	Scale
6362-300	Tree and Hedgerow Survey	1: 1000
6362-301	Tree Removal, Retention and Protection Plan	Varies
6362-302	Overall Landscape Masterplan	1: 1250
6362-303	Landscape Masterplan Phase 1 (Sheet 1 of 2)	1: 500
6362-304	Landscape Masterplan Phase 1 (Sheet 2 of 2)	1: 500
6362-305	Ruanbeg Drive Interface	Varies
6362-306	Parade Park	1: 200
6362-307	Magee Square	Varies
6362-308	Magee Terrace Interface	Varies
6362-309	Educate Together School Interface	Varies
6362-310	Landscape Sections	Varies
6362-311	Boundary Treatment Plan	Varies
6362-312	Permanent Boundary Treatment to Adjoining Application Lands	1:1250
6362-313	Hospital Street Boundary Treatment	Varies
6362-314	Open Space Magee Barracks Lands	1:1250
6362-315	Public Open Space Wider Context	1:2000
6362-316	Eastern Boundary Existing Condition and Proposed Treatment	1:500

2 Site Context

The site was formally a military barracks, built on the site of the Lock Hospital in 1900 and closed in 1998. It is primarily surrounded by residential development. Ruanbeg estate and Rowanville occur to the east, Melitta Park and Melitta Road are to the north and the Campion Crescent residential estate and Magee Terrace bound the site

to the west. Two recently completed schools also adjoin the western boundary. To the south is Hospital Street, characterised by commercial development with a Maxol garage, Lidl Store and Medical Centre and residential dwellings. Hospital Street provides a direct link to the M7 motorway which runs approximately 0.5km to the south of the site.

3 Site Character

The site is open in character and gently slopes to the north and east while the southern portion is quite flat. The most notable features reflecting the barracks previous military use are the abandoned military buildings and Officer's Mess, located to the south and centred on the parade grounds. The redundant Officer's Quarters building is the only remaining feature of heritage importance although it is not a protected structure. The existing water tower which is currently structurally unsound is also a feature and contains a clock which is of heritage interest.

The southern portion of the site is not particularly visible and is screened by mature trees from Hospital Road. However the site lands are more open to the north comprising agricultural lands, divided by field boundaries, and there are long views across the site from adjoining residential housing.

There are a number of mature trees which have been surveyed and are detailed in a separate Arboricultural Tree Survey Report (Refer to 6362_RP01) Most are located on the southern edge of the site, within Phase 1 lands, and comprise a mix of mature deciduous and coniferous trees. A line of Plane trees just north and east of the site entrance, off Hospital Street, form attractive specimens and are set within in a small grassed area. North of the parade grounds there are few mature trees and these occur mostly within hedgerows.



Photo 1 Parade Ground

Magee Barracks

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Photo 2 View of Barracks



*Photo 3 Existing Entrance from Hospital Street.
Former gates have been removed*

4 Design Principles

The design and layout of the masterplan has regard to the sites former history. While a contemporary design and layout caters for the sites new uses and activities, the proposed masterplan character areas, open spaces and landscape design treatment trace an historic past through a series of design interventions. These are described in Section 4.1.1 and highlighted on the Landscape Masterplan drawing (Refer to 6362-302).

The key design principles are:

- To reflect the historic and military character throughout the landscape treatment
- To provide a sense of place through different character areas
- To use names for each open space/ character area relevant to Magee Barracks.
- Provide cultural and amenity uses.
- Increase site permeability and provide links to the surrounding urban/ suburban fabric through linkage of open spaces, addition of pathways, cycle tracks new pedestrian entrances.
- Provide for a range of both active and passive uses, community facilities and amenities and natural & formal play areas for future and existing residents of the area.
- To complement the architectural design with appropriate materials robust for current uses and also to enhance the streetscape character.
- To provide an appropriate site entrance that openly addresses Hospital Street while also reflects and acknowledges the sites history and former uses interpreted in a contemporary manner.

4.1 Design Considerations

The design principles interpreted within the Phase 1 Landscape Masterplan comprise of eight character areas with open spaces that are formal in style and reflective of a military past.

Within the overall masterplan there are thirteen open spaces, characterised by a formal treatment of trees and ornamental grasses containing pedestrian links to enhance permeability. The masterplan has considered the following elements in the design described below;

4.1.1 Heritage/ Sense of Place

The sites history and heritage are embedded into the scheme through a series of design interventions including;

- The masterplan has a grid formation which fits with the building footprints and formal style of the former barracks layout.
- The overall formal treatment and geometry of the open spaces with axial paths terminating in features, tree lined avenues and formal lines of planting that define spaces.
- The inclusion of a public square fronting Hospital Street named “Magee Square”, defined by a colonnade to frame the space but also allow views and movement through. The internal walls of the colonnade will have etched panels containing the history of the barracks and these will be lit at night. The public square reminiscent of the former parade ground will provide a flexible space with integrated seating. The existing Plane trees will be retained on the western side of the space adding maturity and character.
- The former clock located on the water tower will be salvaged and placed in Magee Square.
- The site of the water tower will be retained as a small pocket park and the footprint of the tower marked by a paved and planted area containing seating.
- While the former gates to the barracks are not available for reuse on the site they had a distinct and original design. It is proposed to fabricate new metal railing panels similar in design to the gates and place them at the southern entrance to Parade Park. This is shown on drawing 6362-306.
- A memorial Fin wall is to be placed at the end of the central axis to Parade Park which will incorporate a motif. The wall will act as the backdrop to a small square defined by stone banding and seating.

- The materials from demolition of the barracks buildings will be salvaged if feasible for reuse on the site. There is potential to use the concrete block walls of the Officer's Mess building to construct a seat base finished with a timber top and use within Parade Park.
- The buildings of the former barracks have a strong banding patterns in the façade treatment and use brick and concrete. These banding patterns have been reflected in the paving design for Magee Square and Parade Park. A larger unit stone is used to define a space inset with a smaller unit paving or resin material.

4.1.2 Character Areas

There are nine character zones defined within Phase 1 lands.

a) **Character Area 1 – Magee Square** (refer to Drg No 6362_307)

Magee Square is designed to provide frontage to Hospital Street and generate life and activity centred on a public amenity square. The urban form reflects the former parade ground with a new L-shaped building configuration centred on a sunken square (as a result of existing level changes). It features a multi-use flexible space that could be used for outdoor markets and a public gathering/ events/ performance area. The square is set 1m below the adjoining retail units thus allowing seating to be integrated on the slope and providing a natural amphitheatre which is south facing. The existing Plane trees (Tree Tag Nos 428, 429 and 430) will be retained and protected within a soft planted zone, under planted with perennials and integrated seating set along the walled perimeter. The coffee shop will have the flexibility to move tables outdoor onto a higher terrace overlooking the space.

An open colonnade will frame the southern and eastern side forming a distinct architectural feature. The walls of the colonnade offer an opportunity to provide a wall inlay/ motif with the barracks history and this will be explored at the detail design stage.

The clock salvaged from the water tower will be placed in the square and refurbished as a heritage feature.

Materials will be selected from a palette of granite, resin surface and brick to reflect the materiality of the buildings and brick used in the former barracks. The materials selected will evoke past memories of the formality of the parade ground.

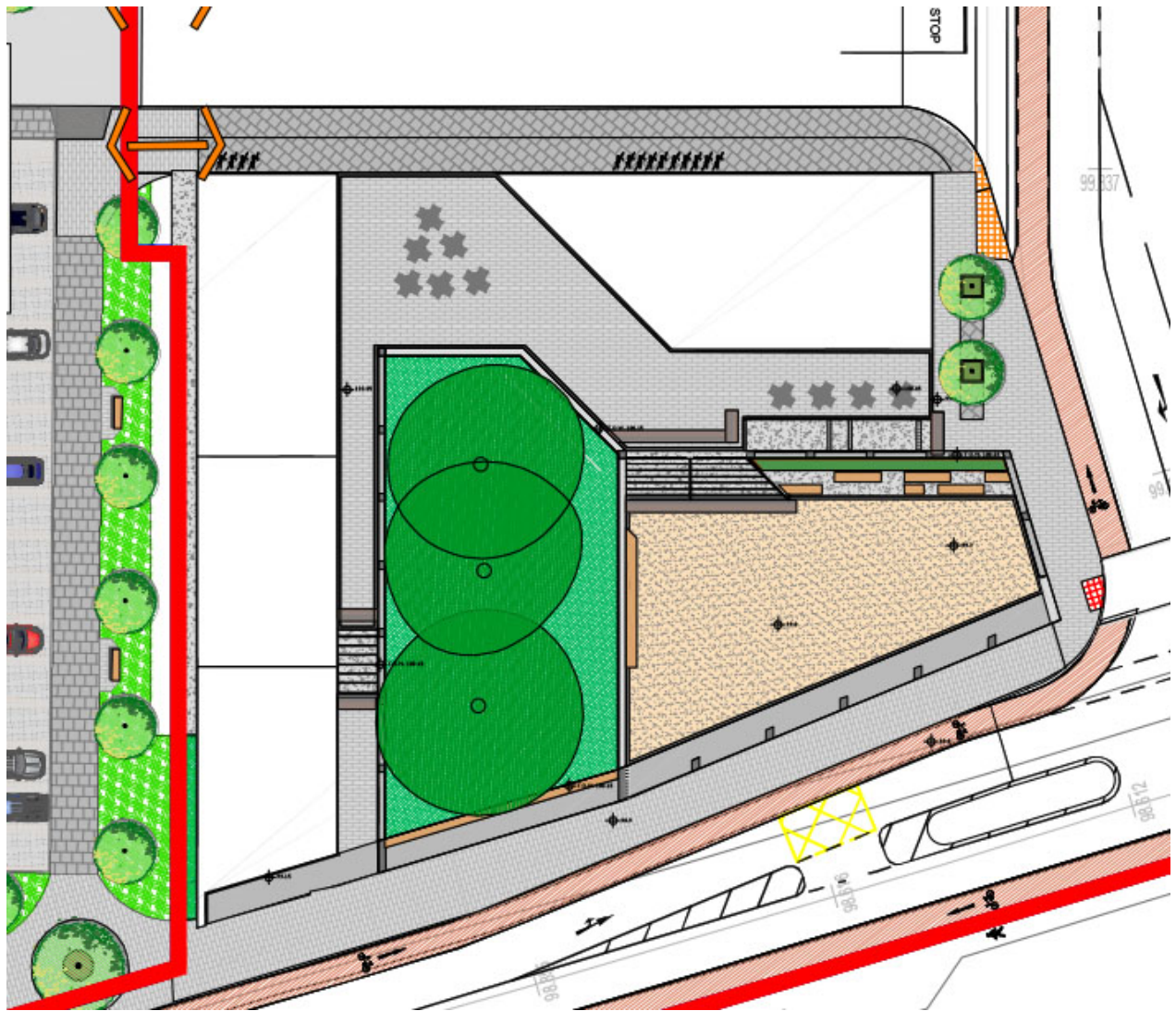


Figure 1 Magee Square

b) **Character Area 2 – Parade Park** (Neighbourhood Park- refer to Drg No 6362-306)

The neighbourhood park which measures c.0.5113ha and functions as a destination is laid out formally and focussed on a central spine that approximately 20m wide and serves as the main activity zone of the park and principal feature (refer to Figure 4). This combines a central shared cycle/ pedestrian path with multi-generational activity zones either side separated by hedges, seating or paving bands (refer to Image of Neighbourhood Park).

- Either side of a central spine are zones for outdoor table tennis, boules, fitness zone, seating, toddler play.
- An informal play area to cater for ages 4-12 is located on the east side of the park.
- A natural play area has been provided to encourage children to get outdoors and interact with nature.
- A large grass area provides for informal kick-about space.
- A vista along the spine terminates in a formal square containing a dry fountain plaza enclosed with a feature fin wall which will be etched with some of the history of the barracks and will serve as a cultural amenity.
- A planted amenity area will feature to either side of the square and include seating for passive recreation.

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The design of Parade Park reflects the geometry of the military parade ground. This is referenced in the formal axial pathway leading to a plaza with historical references. While the past is evoked in the formal style the contemporary layout of the park caters for new uses and activities.



Figure 2 Image of Main Spine Parade Park



Figure 3 Image of Memory Bench with abstract military references



Figure 4 Parade Park

Character Area 3 – Magee Gardens

This comprises an area of c.0.3722 hectares (refer to Figure 5). The open space is configured to include 3no. existing trees labelled T378 *Pinus sylvestris*, T379 *Tilia platyphyllos*, T380 *Pinus sylvestris*. This local park provides a pedestrian link to Parade Park. A central pedestrian spine path separates the zone containing mature trees from the adjoining kick about space. Mature trees edge the park to break up direct views from houses overlooking the space. Linear bands of grasses provide visual interest and formality in line with the design concept for the open spaces. The southern perimeter of the park is overlooked by apartments, providing passive surveillance, while generating generous green views for the apartment's residents.



Figure 5 Magee Gardens

Character Area 4 – Coolmoney Square

Coolmoney Square occurs to the west of Phase 1 land and comprises 0.1947 hectares. The space is designed with passive surveillance from adjoining, dual frontage housing and to encourage ownership of the park. It is laid out to form a break in housing along the western boundary of the site. The pocket park is formal in style with a central seating area and bands of planting. It provides for toddler play and incorporates spring rockers, while a natural play area has been provided for older kids. The park's materials palette will be selected to complement the architectural palette.

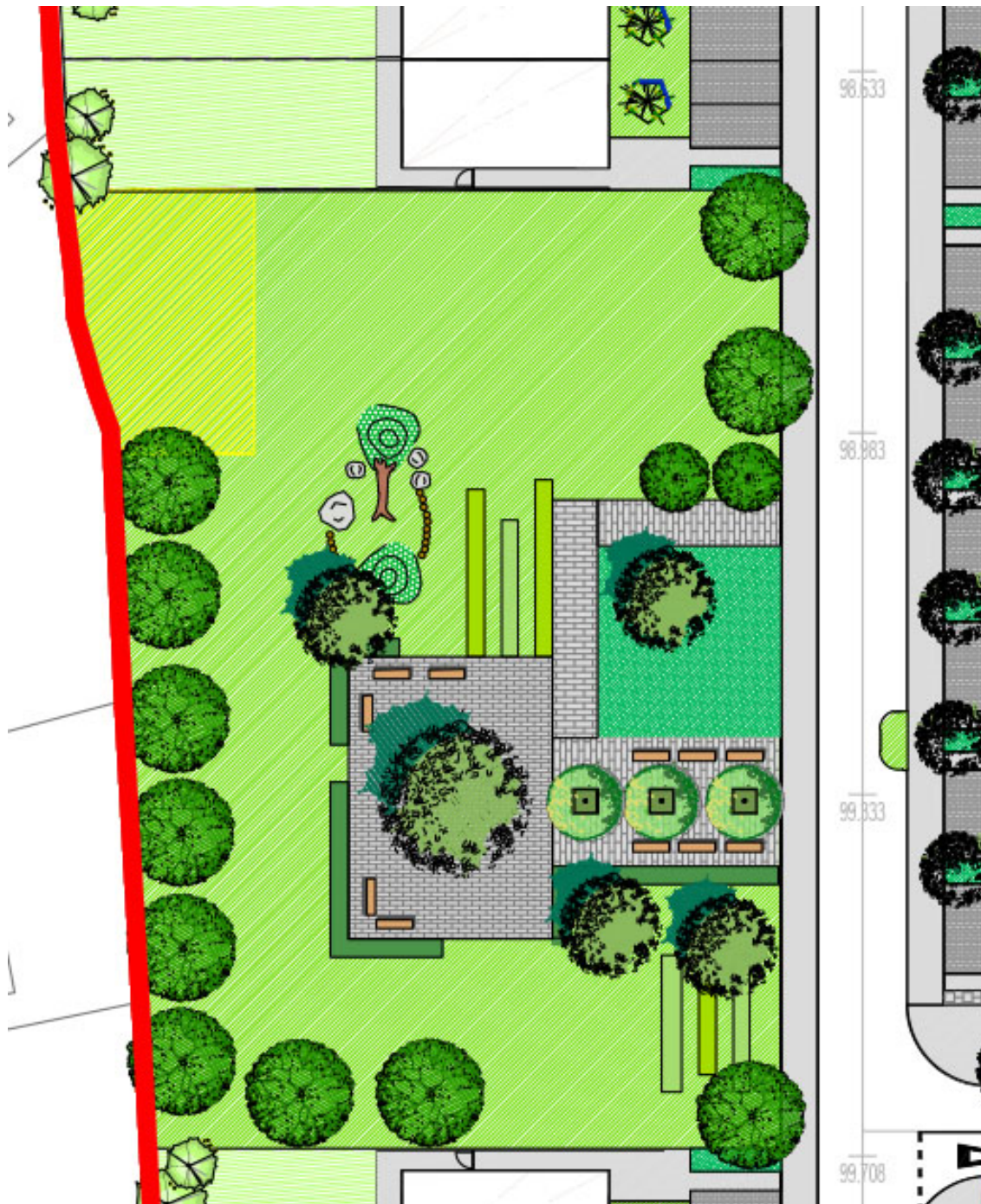


Figure 6 Coolmoney Square

c) Character Area 5 – Henry Howard Gardens

Henry Howard was the architect of Magee Barracks. The park, shown in Figure 7, was named after him and is located to the north of Phase 1 lands. It measures 0.2675 hectares. In addition to providing a pocket park, the open space forms part of a pedestrian/ cycle link from the proposed development to the two schools on the western boundary. It also forms part of an important chain of green spaces. In front of the entrance to the school a small seating area is proposed for parents to gather/collect children. The space is also enhanced by a bespoke railing design that marks the pedestrian entrance to the schools (refer to Drg No 6362-309).

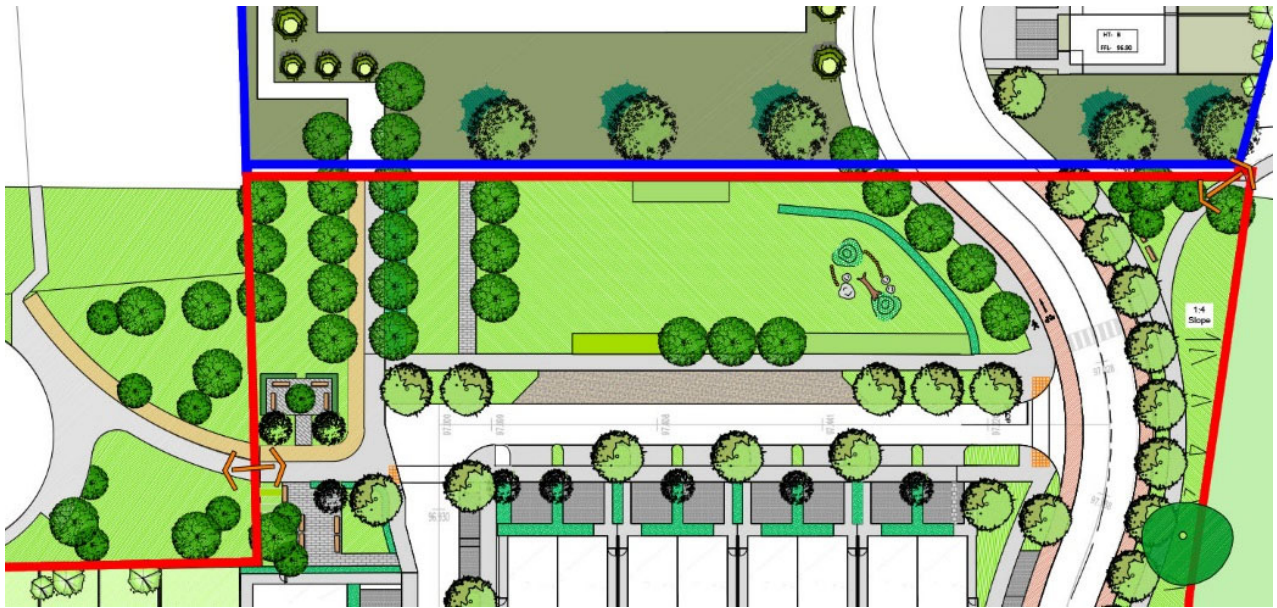
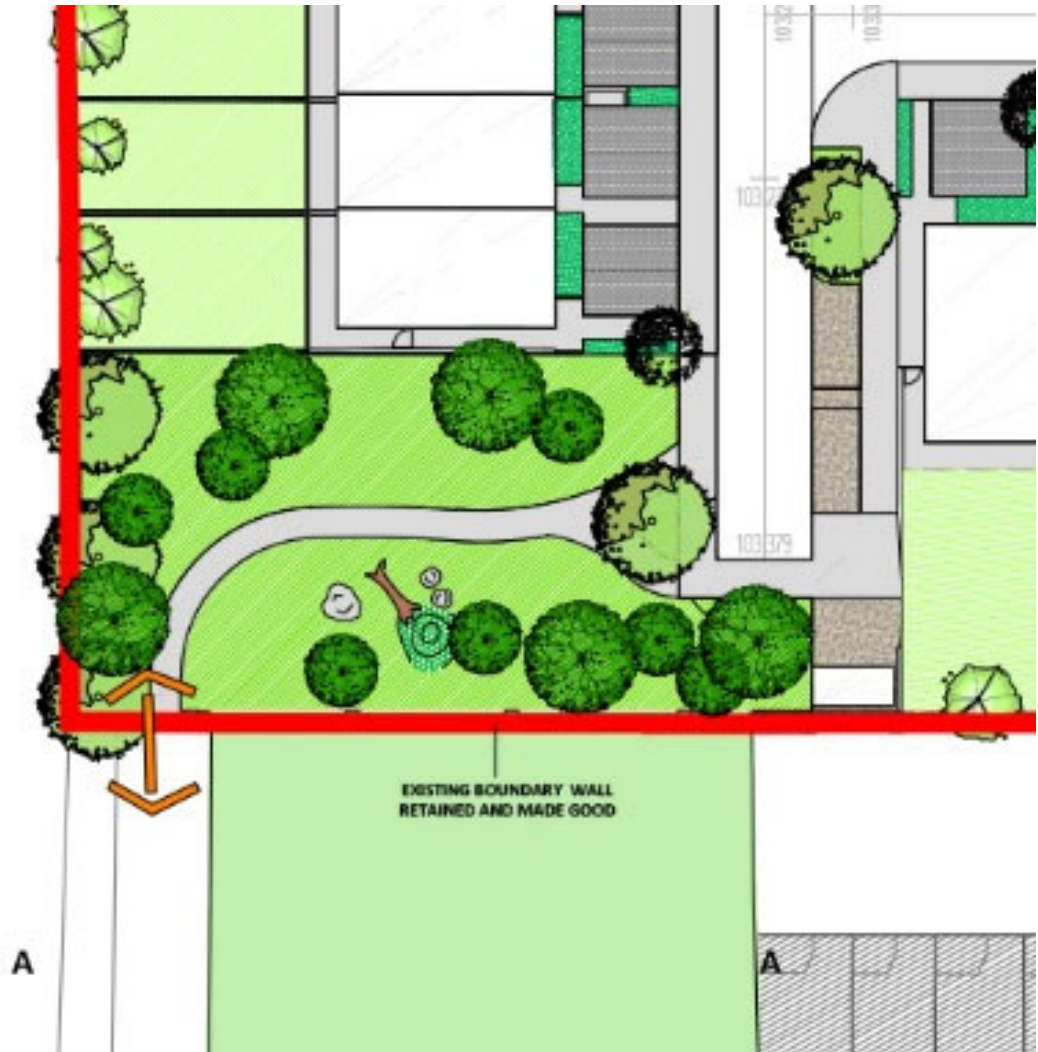


Figure 7 Henry Howard Gardens

d) **Character Area 6 – Wickham Park** (Pocket Park- refer to Drg No 6362-308)

Wickham Park is a pocket park located in the south west corner of the site, and is adjoining an existing green space at Magee Terrace. The design of this open space has taken account of the potential for KCC to create a permeable link through this part of the site, which could potentially merge the two open spaces. This could create a larger and more useable open space for residents of the new development and adjoining residents. A small informal, natural play area has been incorporated into the parks design.



e) **Character Area 7 – Ruanbeg Linear Park** (Pocket Park- refer to Drg No 6362-305)

Ruanbeg Linear Park is located on the north eastern boundary, alongside Ruanbeg Drive. The design of this open space has taken account of the potential for KCC to remove this existing boundary wall, which would merge the Linear Park and the existing open space at Ruanbeg drive. The proposed Linear Park provides for a meandering wooded walk and seating areas, along this boundary,



f) **Character Area 8 – Water Tower Park**

The Water Tower Pocket Park, is located just south of the proposed apartments and sits on the boundary between the Lidl Development (Permitted by KCC, subject to First Party Appeal to ABP). The former Water Tower was located here, and the design of this pocket park has incorporated this historic element, through the use of ground treatments to reflect the position of the water tower footings. This pocket park, is nestled amongst lots of greenery and will provide for a relaxing seating area. A strong

pedestrian green corridor connects the Water Tower Park with Gannon Plaza and an entrance into the Proposed Lidl Development, helping permeability through the site and between adjoining lands.



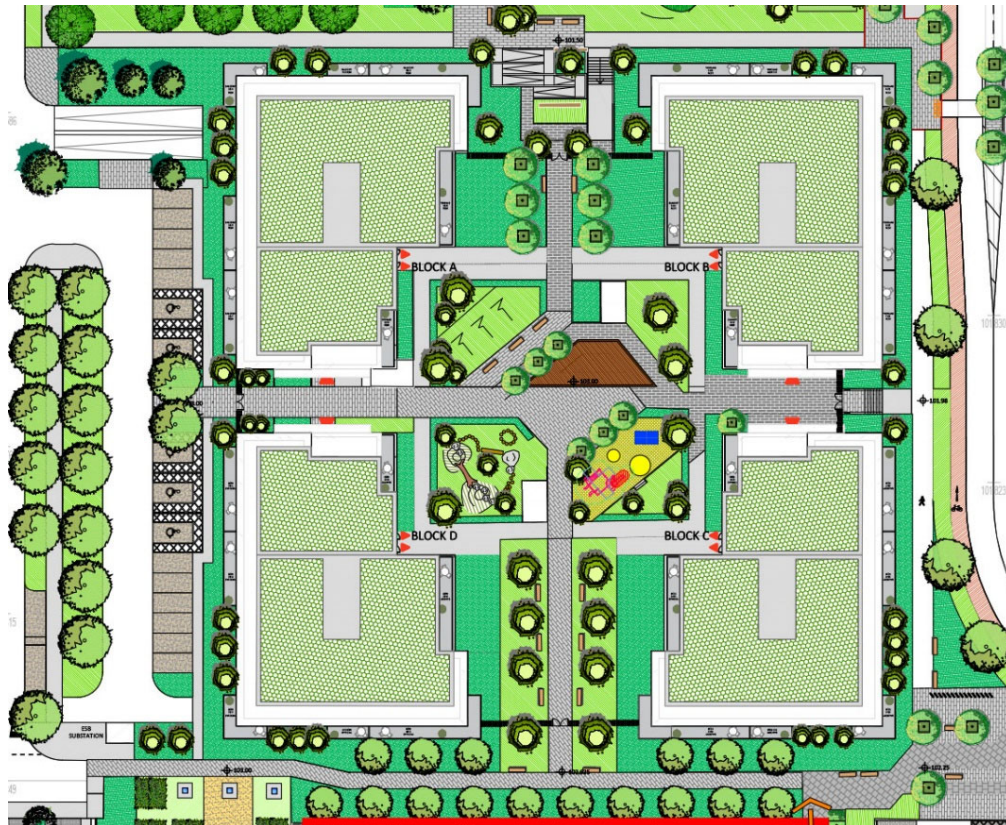
g) Character Area 9 – Gannon Plaza

Gannon Plaza is a small public plaza, located at a key node within the development. From Gannon Plaza, the Neighbourhood Centre is located to the south, Parade Park (Neighbourhood Park) to the north east, the apartments to the north-west. A green link and entrance to the proposed Lidl Development is situated to the west. It has been designed as a meeting point, with seating, landscaping and a feature fin wall included within the space.

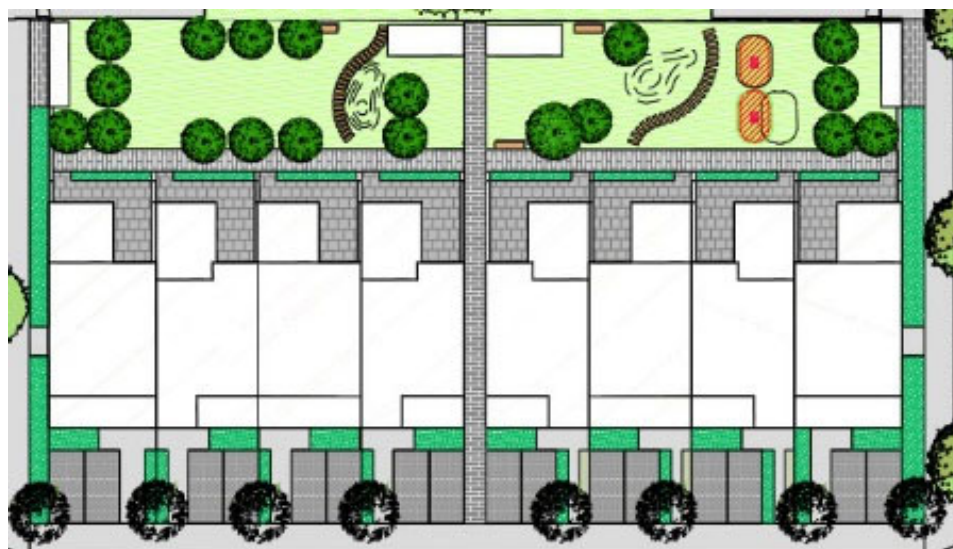


h) Character Area 10 – Communal Open Spaces (Camara Gardens & Leitrim Gardens)

Semi-Private Communal Open Spaces will be provided as part of the Apartment Block and the Duplex Units to the west of the site. These spaces will consist of natural play elements, formal toddler play, and seating/gathering areas. The Apartments ‘Camara Gardens’ will overlook Magee Gardens providing pleasant views to the north. Both the communal open spaces have been named to identify with the sites military history, with further design interventions tracing the sites historic past. Access to these spaces will be restricted to residents of the units only.



Camara Gardens – Apartment Communal Open Space



Leitrim Gardens – Duplex Communal Open Space

4.1.3 Hierarchy of Open Spaces

A hierarchy of open spaces is proposed from a public square (Magee Square), Neighbourhood Park (Parade Park) to a local park (Magee Gardens) and a number of smaller pocket parks (Coolmoney Square, Henry Howard Gardens, Wickham Park, Ruanbeg Linear Park, Water Tower Park, Gannon Plaza) designed to link communities and provide active and passive uses. The design provides for the key themes to run through these spaces with each having a separate character but a common identity. Passive supervision will be provided with houses fronting the open spaces.

4.1.4 Connections

The proposed scheme is designed to integrate with the surrounding urban/ suburban fabric through a series of new pedestrian/ cycle connections and by tying into adjoining residential distributor roads. Connections are also proposed with the future adjoining Lidl development and the Cancer Treatment Clinic, which are subject to separate planning applications. The proposed development will provide the following links:

- Road link from Hospital Street to Melitta Road.
- Road link to Ruanbeg Drive and Ruanbeg Crescent
- Pedestrian link to Magee Terrace, Ruanbeg Drive, Ruanbeg Crescent, and Melitta Road
- A link to the future town park 'Cherry Avenue' on the southern side of Hospital Road is also envisaged as part of the overall masterplan.
- There is also the possibility to integrate proposed open spaces with existing adjoining open spaces within the established residential areas for the benefit of existing and new residents. Ruanbeg Drive could be linked to Henry Howard Gardens and Ruanbeg Gardens to Ruanbeg Crescent. This was discussed with Kildare County Council at a pre-planning meeting. The integration of the open spaces would need to be facilitated by the council in consultation with local residents as these areas are currently taken in charge.
- The north and western gardens of the proposed Cancer Treatment Clinic will be open to Parade Park with no formal boundary and thus allow the two spaces to interconnect. This will increase activity and use. It also increases the perception of open parkland near the Hospital Road entrance and forms an attractive gateway into the development.

Connecting open spaces and communities will be a positive benefit to existing and future residents.

4.1.5 Amenity

Each character area is designed to enhance the visual amenity of the proposed scheme, provide community gathering space centred on the pocket parks, children's play opportunities and an attractive streetscape.

4.1.6 Boundary Treatment

The boundary treatment is shown on drawing No 6362_311 & 6362_312 for Phase 1 planning application. A temporary boundary solution is proposed for the Cancer Treatment Clinic (Proton Hospital) and the proposed Lidl Store until these developments are constructed and the permanent boundary treatment is in place. The design intention is to provide an open frontage to Hospital Street that encourages pedestrians into the square. Garden boundaries dividing plots will comprise 2m high blockwork walls and 2m high brick walls will be used at the end curtilages. At corner units a 1.2m high metal railing will be used to define private gardens.

The blue line boundary, i.e. lands within the applicant's / owners control, includes the wayleave to the east / south east of the application site as per the folio map for this property. The applicant acknowledges that this land has been the subject of encroachment over a period of time and that the wayleave is redundant as it has never been used as a right of way and does not include any services. The application proposes to provide a new boundary wall along the existing fence line and does not propose any works within the wayleave area. Accordingly the existing encroachment / possession by third parties will not be effected by the proposed development. The applicant will enter into separate discussions with the adjoining landowners in Rowanville / Hospital Street in respect to the

transfer of the subject lands into their ownership. This will ensure an appropriate planning solution in respect to this boundary of the development site.

4.1.7 Biodiversity

The proposed planting mix will contain species that encourage biodiversity in addition to ornamental planting within the parks. It is also proposed to place Bat boxes on completion of the development within a number of areas to be determined by the ecological consultant on completion of the development.

4.1.8 Planting

The planting mixes for the scheme have been designed to provide visual interest, variety and to be easily maintained. A native woodland mix is proposed along the boundary of Ruanbeg Drive where screening is required. Street trees will be planted as semi-mature for impact which the parks will contain a mix of extra heavy standard trees and multi-stemmed trees. Most of the planting within the parks will comprise ornamental grasses planted in lines and taking up the formal geometry of the space. Perennials and ground cover will be planted below trees to aid visibility and surveillance of the parks.

A typical planting list is shown on Drg No 6362_302.

4.1.9 Materials

The materials selected for the hard landscape will complement the architectural materials and also take reference from the former barracks site. Public squares will be paved in a resin bonded material defined by a stone band to emphasise the formality of the space. Granite, brick and flag paviors will be used within the pockets parks and larger local and Neighbourhood Park for path ways. Salvaged concrete from the demolition works may be used as fill material for pathways if it meets the required standards. Concrete blocks may also be used for low walls and seat bases within the open spaces.

4.1.10 Connections to Adjoining Residential Development



Figure 8 Open Space Connected to Ruanbeg Drive

Ruanbeg Drive and Ruanbeg Crescent have a direct relationship with Phase 1 lands. The linear open space adjoining Ruanbeg Drive on the eastern side of Phase One lands is slightly higher with a level change which varies from 0.5 to 2m approximately. Drawing 6362- 305 illustrates how the open spaces can be integrated by removing the existing wall and grading out the bank. However Ruanbeg Drive is currently taken in charge by Kildare County Council and while it is rational to integrate the spaces Kildare County Council would have to facilitate this as the adjoining lands are not within the control of the developer. In the absence of agreement with Kildare County Council and local residents if it is decided that the two areas should remain separate, the proposed open space is designed to provide recreation opportunities with a cycle and pedestrian connection linking Henry Howard Gardens. The pedestrian walk is located on the site of former buildings which were set out on a grid. The path is designed to weave through a grid of planting which takes up the former buildings footprint.

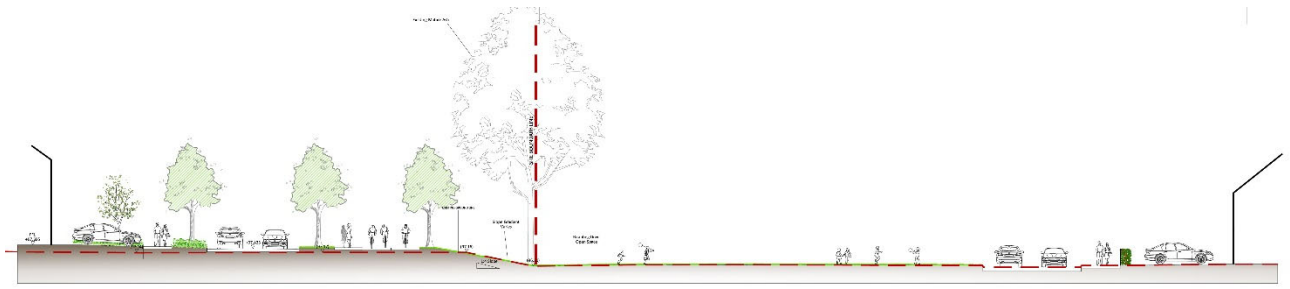


Figure 9 Integration of Open Space with Ruanbeg Drive



Figure 10 Open Space Not Integrated with Ruanbeg Drive

Similarly Phase Two Ruanbeg Gardens is designed to link with Ruanbeg Crescent, subject to Kildare County Council facilitating the arrangement and agreeing with local residents. The proposed road in Phase 2 is designed to tie into Ruanbeg Crescent also.

A pedestrian link will be provided to Magee Terrace shown on Drawing No 6362_308. There is an opening in the existing wall boundary and this will be used to form a new pedestrian entrance and a new path will connect with an existing open space in Magee Terrace. This path will need to be agreed with the adjoining landowner.

Usability of Open Space

The open spaces provide for both passive and active recreation. The key recreational provision is located within Parade Park (0.5113 hectares), which includes a natural play area and a series of activity areas located either side of the central pedestrian spine route, such as toddler play, boules and table tennis. The western portion of the park is grassed for kick-about activities.

The Magee Gardens is designed to connect residents and provide passive recreation although given its area (0.3722 hectares) it can also accommodate informal kick-about space.

The pocket parks provide passive recreation and provide a sense of place to the development. The landscape treatment is designed to reflect the historic and military character and provide a local amenity. Coolmoney Square incorporates toddler & natural play, with seating areas. The linear open space on the east boundary provide a walking/ jogging trail.

A small public amenity area is located at the entrance to the school with a space for parents to gather incorporating seating.

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5 Reference Images: Parade Park

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Plate 1: Multi-use Spine Path with Activity Zones



Plate 2/3 Dry Fountain Plaza and Parade Ground Surface Detailing



Plate 3: Typical Fin Wall to Enclose Plaza in Neighbourhood Park

Typical Planting



Plate 4 Formal Layout of Paving and Planting in Linear Bands



Plate 5 Typical Planting with Trees set in Ornamental Grasses

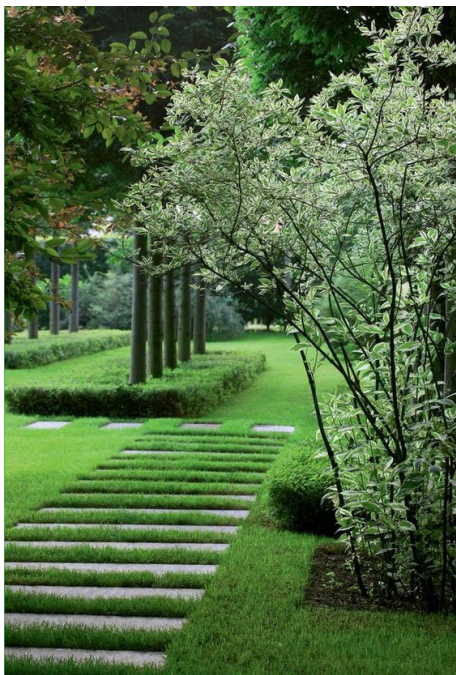


Plate 7 Formal Planting Linear Paving



Plate 6 Ornamental Grasses

Passive / Active Recreation

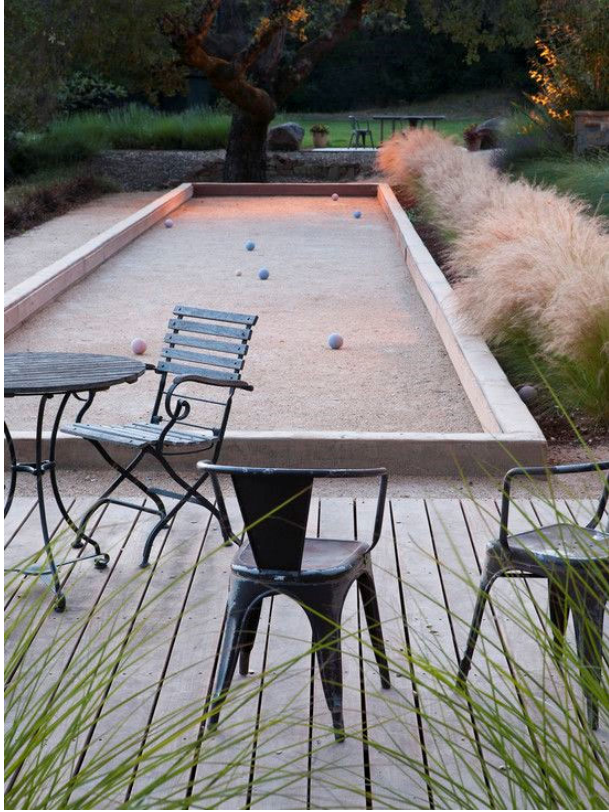


Plate 8 Boules

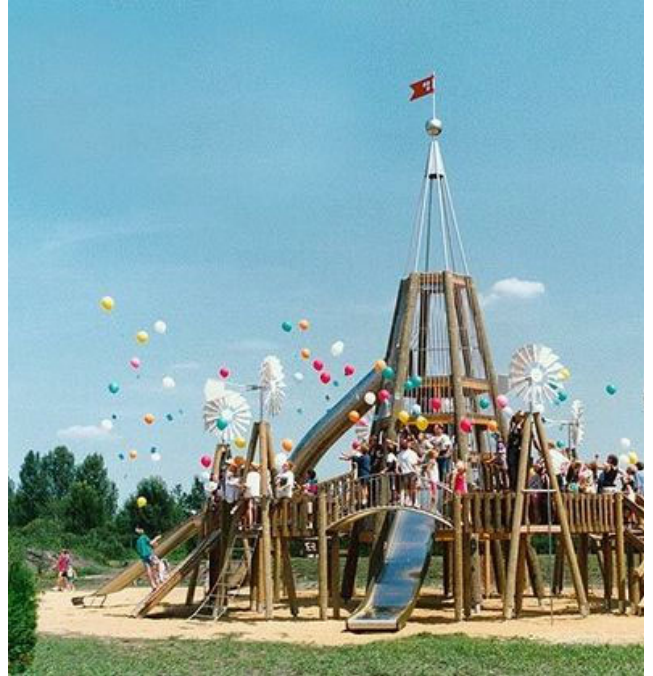


Plate 10 Play Structure

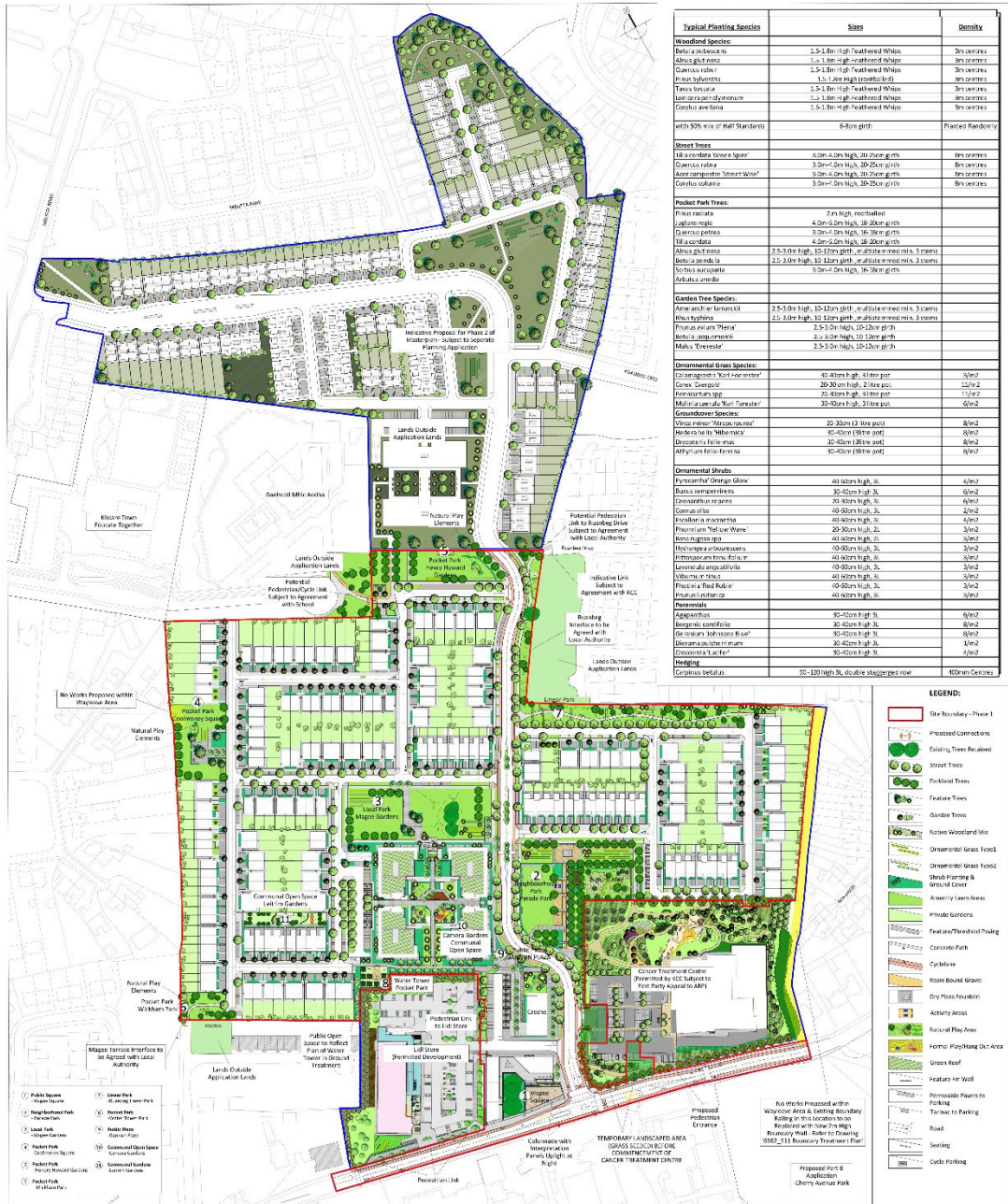


Plate 9 Outdoor Seating in Landscape



Plate 11 Outdoor Table Tennis

6 Landscape Masterplan (Overall with Phase 1 outlined in Red)



Typical Parking Layout



Traffic Calming



Cycle-lane Through Green Space Network



Ornamental Grasses

Revision table and project details:

No.	Date	Description	Author

Project Title: **MAGEE BARRACKS SHD, KILDARE TOWN**

Overall Landscape Masterplan

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