



Doyle &
O'Troithigh
Landscape
Architecture

Landscape Design Report

Circular Road, Ballymacaula, Drumbiggle, Ennis, Co. Clare

Landscape Design Report

Circular Road, Ballymacaula, Drumbiggle, Ennis, Co. Clare

Contents

- 1.0 - Location, Heritage, Landscape
- 2.0 - Vision: A Work in Harmony
- 2.1 - Landscape Proposals and Green Infrastructure
- 2.2 - Key Objectives and Landscape Proposals
- 3.0 - Open Space Locations
- 3.1 - Locations
- 3.2 - The Oak
- 3.3 - The Southwest
- 3.4 - The Oval
- 3.5 - The Active
- 3.6 - The Snug
- 3.7 - The Wild
- 4.0 - Other Relevant Information
- 4.1 - Response to An Bord Pleanála Opinion (**ABP-312194-21**)



Co. Clare Concept Image.

1.0 - Location, Heritage, Landscape

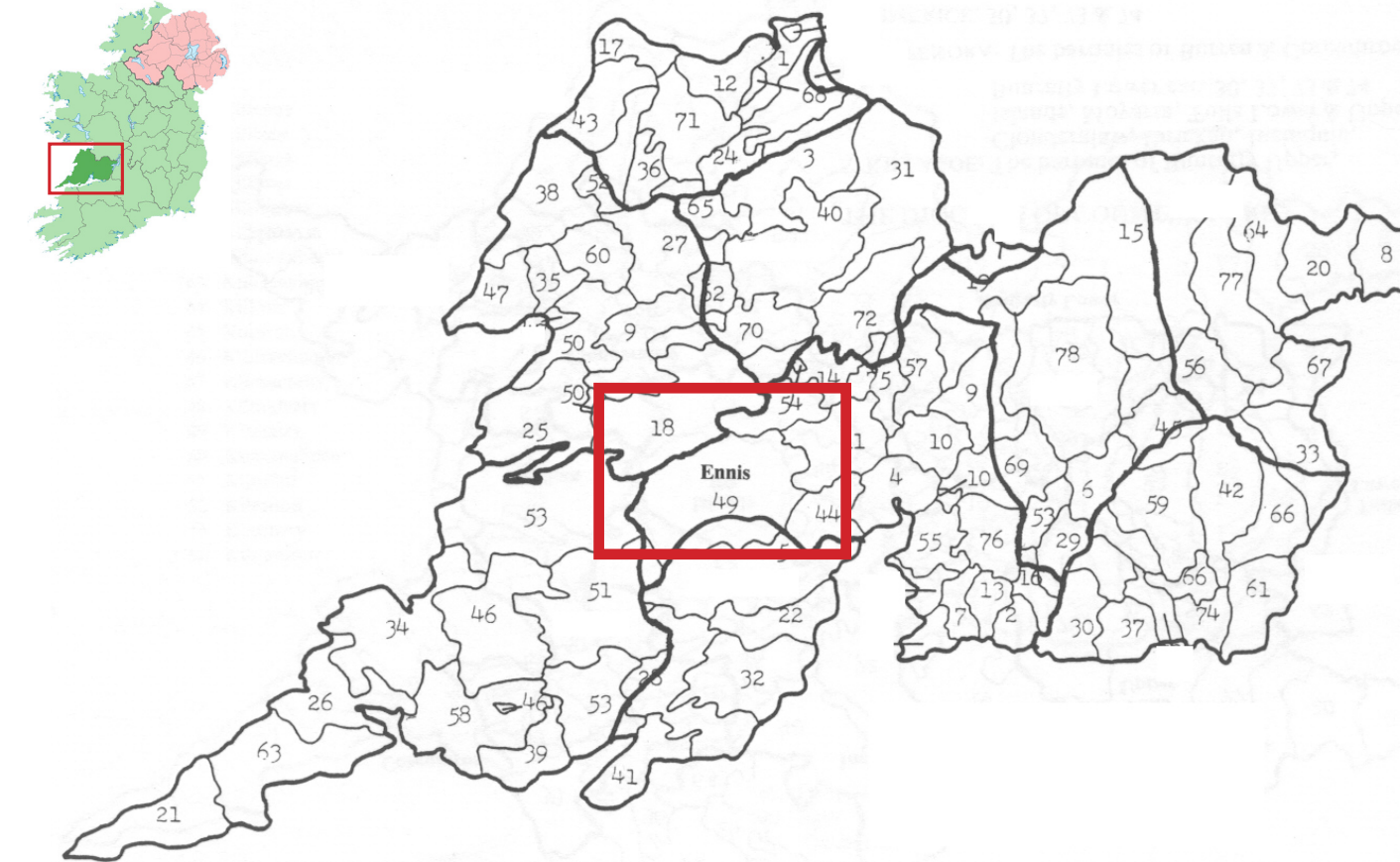


Fig.1 - Location of Ennis, Co. Clare.



Fig.2 - Location of Drumbiggle, Ennis, Co. Clare.

The Drumbiggle site is located in Ennis, Co. Clare on the west coast of Ireland (Fig 2). The county is rich in history and geology with limestone of the Burren and the rugged coastal cliffs its main attractions. As of 2016, Ennis was the 6th largest town and 12th largest urban settlement in Ireland with a population of circa 25,000.

Drumbiggle sits southwest of the town centre and south of the river Fergus which runs horizontally through Ennis. These characterful elements and topography within the landscape will be an important precedent to the landscape design. Planting and colour palettes within the proposed scheme will mirror the natural elements found locally in Clare's diverse and beautiful landscape.

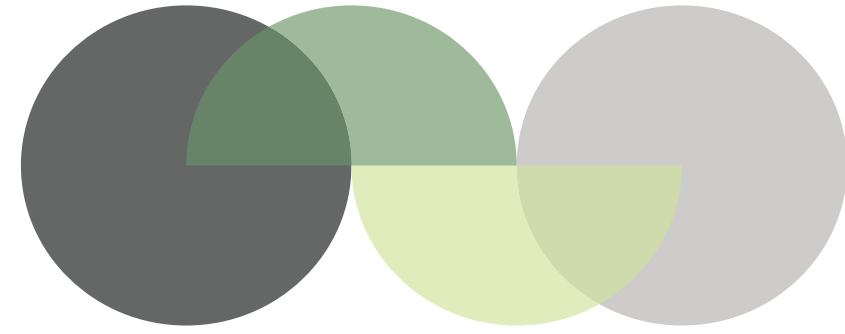


Fig.3 - Selected Co. Clare topographies and historic influence.

Landscape Design Report

Landscape Design development for the proposed residential scheme on lands at Circular Road, Drumbiggle, Ennis, Co. Clare.

Prospective Applicant Name: Glenveagh Homes Ltd.



Concept Harmony Image.

2.0 - Vision: Work in Harmony

The layout and design for the scheme focuses on the importance of linking new landscape amenity areas, landscape mitigation with the protection and enhancement of existing hedgerows and trees within the site, where possible. Working with existing landscape is a very important aspect of the design process.

Creating the balance between existing and proposed is central to ensure the longterm success of the design and establishing this Strategic Housing Development (SHD) at Circular Road, Drumbiggle, Ennis, Co. Clare.

The development of the landscape has been guided and influenced by the existing topography and the ecological and arboricultural appraisals of the site. See (Fig 4). In addition, the surrounding environment also play a large part in the design process.



Fig.4 - Core influences in Landscape Design Development.

The design and layout of the open space is essential in creating a visually appealing built environment for the scheme. The design for the scheme has been developed to offer its own character. A sense of place with the use of comprehensive, cohesive and complimentary external finishes. Below (Fig 5.) highlights a series of images that make reference to some typical examples of finishes proposed for the scheme.

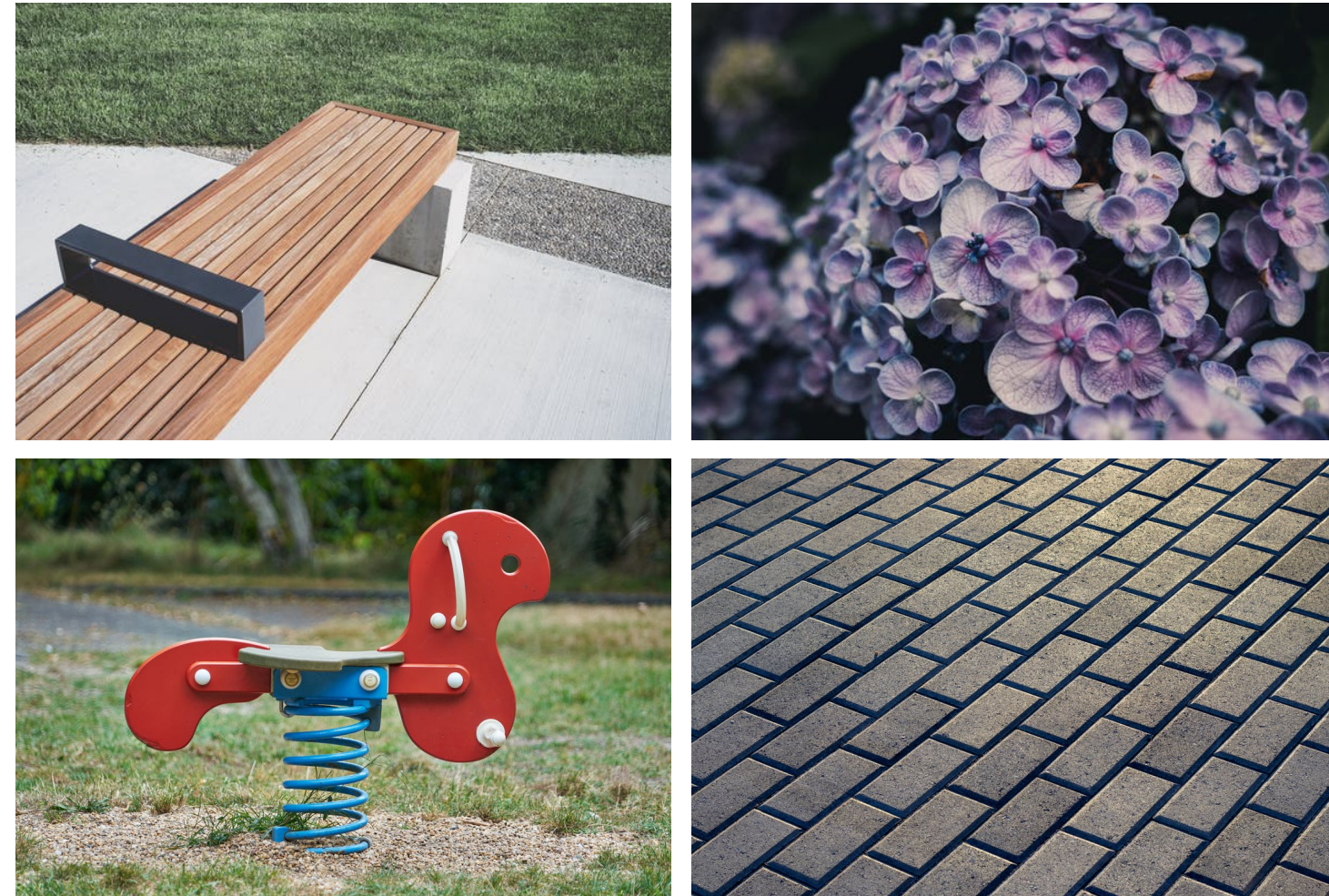


Fig.5 - Palette of external hard and soft materials (Concept Images)

The use and mix of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants has been considered in detail in order to be robust enough to establish, whilst still offering seasonal colour, interest and movement with a focused expression. Native plant material is proposed for the scheme to improve the overall biodiversity of the site. Including pollinating plants as part of the scheme is an important feature of the proposed planting palette. Much of the herbaceous perennials shall be under-planted with bulb species to offer 'flurries' of colour from early to late spring.

Leaf colour, bark tone and berries shall all be considered for the scheme which will ensure good contrast and seasonal variation. The grass amenity areas, in particular the areas of grass which are sloped will host large swathes of bulbs through the open spaces which will provide colour in early, mid and late spring while still reducing site maintenance. Detailed planting plans have been provided within the submission. For proposed planting plans, refer to the drawing package.

The designed landscape must be comfortable, passively supervised, accessible and welcoming. Shelter within the site and safety are also paramount. The passive and active recreational open space areas must provide a high level of visual amenity while allowing for a seamless connection between this development and existing pedestrian routes; largely associated with the local road network.

The provision of permeability and improved overall pedestrian movement is one of the core principals of the site layout design. The image below (Fig 6.) shows the proposed links and movement lines between the different open spaces within the site. This core principal is coupled with the design objective to provide designed landscape amenity areas which offer an ease of access in terms of the varying age groups and levels of mobility and a safe amenity space for all end users.



Fig.6 - Permeability and connections of open space areas within the site.

The second main objective to the core principles of design is the development of a palette of materials for both hard and soft landscaping for both amenity lands and the streetscape. A check list of both hard (Fig 7.) and soft landscape materials (Fig 8.) has been drawn up to make sure all aspects of living with these materials is met.

Hard works materials must;

- Allow for ease of movement for all users
- Enhance the space and not conflict with the building finishes
- Work and look attractive in both wet and dry conditions
- Have a long time-line appeal

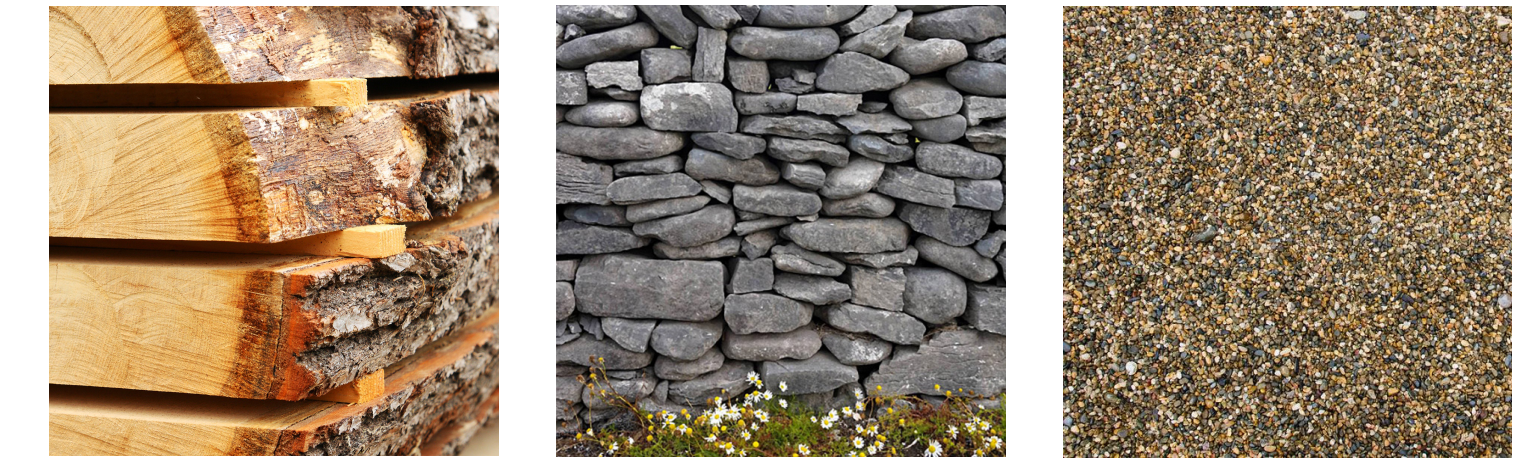


Fig.7 - Hard materials proposed for introduction and retention on site Concept Images).

Soft works plant materials must;

- Be suitable for the Irish climate
- Be non-invasive
- Collectively provide visual interest all year round
- Enhance biodiversity and habitat creation
- Be disease resistant

By approaching the overall landscape design of the scheme at both macro and micro levels, the proposed scheme seeks to provide a higher level of amenity value to the user.



Fig.8 - Proposed shrubs and native trees to be incorporated with existing vegetation (Concept Images).

2.1 - Landscape Proposals and Green Infrastructure

It is intended that both the streetscape and landscape amenity areas will receive a landscape treatment of the highest standard in terms of materials and specification.

The existing trees and hedgerows pertaining to the site lands have been surveyed and reviewed in accordance with BS 5837:2012 by the Project Arborist (Arborcare). The completed Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Survey and all associated drawings have been included as part of this submission to An Bord Pleanála.

As part of the design development, a coherent group approach was undertaken by the design team to facilitate retention of a select number (where appropriate) of trees and hedgerows on site. Based on some design proposals for the Drumbiggle site, it is inevitable that there will be some tree and hedgerow loss. Despite this, a site wide strategy and appropriate compensatory planting has been considered (Fig 9.).

It is proposed that peripheral hedgerows/vegetation to the north, east and west of the site, are retained and enhanced as part of the overall scheme. This will aim to create a strong and reinforced boundary edge and will mitigate in part against the loss of hedgerows and vegetation through on site.

The retention (Fig 10.) and associated infill/augmentation of select boundary plants will provide opportunity to increase the site's local biodiversity. It will help improve the link between green infrastructure in terms of wildlife corridors connecting habitats from the site to other habitats beyond.

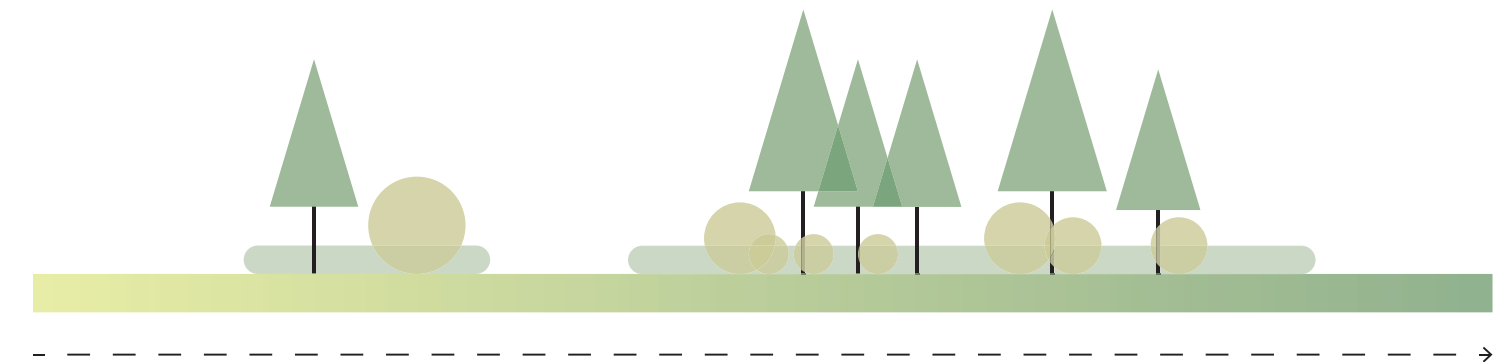


Fig.9 - Developing new compensatory woodlands.

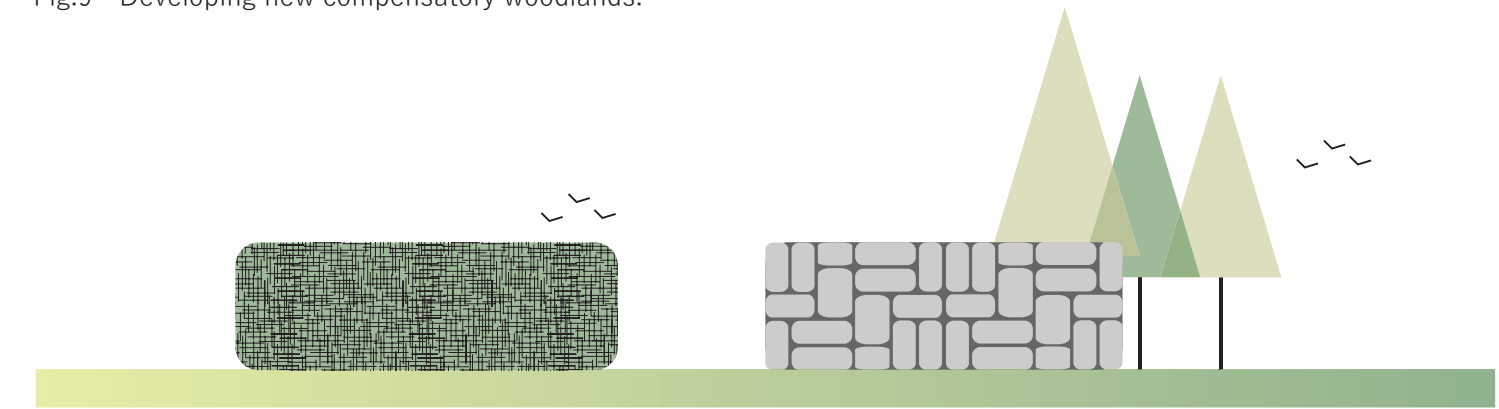


Fig.10 - Retention of selected hedgerows and stone walls.

In order to ameliorate the potential loss of green infrastructure, further ecological compensatory measures are proposed as part of the scheme. These measures include developing new compensatory woodlands where space allows, planting of new native hedgerows, planting of flowering trees which are beneficial to the site as pollinators, introduction of diverse meadow mixes in sections of open space where appropriate, incorporating woodland edge planting/herb layer beneath the canopies of retained trees/hedgerows where appropriate and the retention of a selection of stone walls/hedgerows which offer support and nesting potential for birds and bats.

As part of the hedgerow removal works, topsoil from the ditch line shall be salvaged and stored separately. It is proposed that the material shall be reused in the forming of berms for the new woodland/herb layer zones (Fig 11.) It is felt that the seed stock within the salvaged soil will include hedgerow species (such as Viola sp.); which could potentially flourish as part of the new planting arrangement. Where stone is gleaned from the site as part of development works, it is envisaged, where appropriate, this material shall be re-used to facilitate the construction of new walling, provide natural play features and retaining elements to support and add interesting planted slopes.

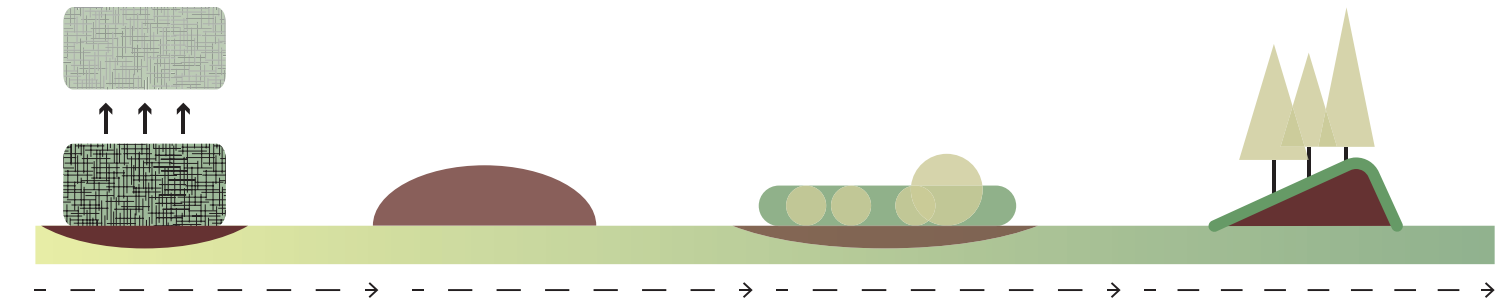


Fig.11 - Site soil retention to benefit new herb layers and woodland berm sites.

Key objectives of the landscape proposals:

- To provide a landscape scheme which delivers a high level of visual amenity and passive recreation for the residents all year round.
- To create an attractive, high quality landscape for the residents and their lifestyles. Well-designed landscapes, contribute to an overall sense of well-being providing places for people to meet up for a walk, interaction with the landscape in many forms or just to chat. **People places are successful places.**
- To ensure that proposed plant material is suitable in terms of scale, species type, on-going maintenance and the health and longevity of the plant.
- To adopt a repetition and rhythm of plant species to ensure a cohesive style and an overall consistency throughout the entire design.
- To adopt ecological compensatory measures for the scheme by retaining boundary vegetation where possible, which will provide shelter, a positive aesthetic and offer very significant ecological advantages.
- Maximizing usable 'level' open space where possible. Address the topographical constraints on site by incorporating planting resulting in easier maintenance in the long term. Play elements integrated into the slope terrain should excite and also maximize usage of unlevel areas.
- Retention and protection of portions of the site's stone walling and existing native hedgerows where viable.

2.2 - Key objectives of the landscape proposals:

The location and positioning of all open spaces has been considered in detail as part design development stage. They have been considered in terms of proximity to end users as well as being positioned to provide passive surveillance and a quality aspect.

As a general note, the following key elements shall be considered as part of the open space detailed design and the protection and overall reinforcement of the sites 'Green Infrastructure': (**refer to supporting landscape plan LP-01-PP prepared**)

- Pathways linking to surrounding pedestrian routes and open space areas.
- Structural tree planting and meadow grass mixes with a diverse seed range.
- New part native compensatory woodland with appealing ground flora.
- Side slopes to open spaces to provide form and visual interest; and offer a sense of enclosure/demarcation to the spaces.
- Informal multi-functional recreation spaces,.
- A variety of seating zones with good aspect and direct views to play areas allowing for passive supervision.
- Natural play opportunities throughout the scheme; particularly in association with planted slopes/sloping aspects of the site and new woodland play areas.
- Opportunity for active and passive recreation. (Fig. 12)
- Inclusion of formal playgrounds on multiple open spaces within the site.
- Alternative play elements/facilities including natural play, table tennis unit.
- Incidental play (boulders/mounding/stepping features),
- Biodiversity walking trails
- Stationary exercise points throughout site, particularly on western linear walkway.



Fig.12 - Concept sketch of introduction and retention working together to build the design.

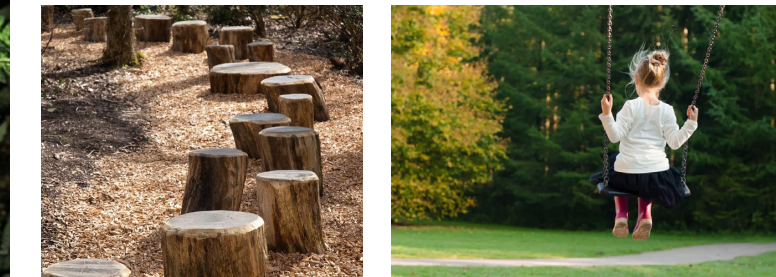
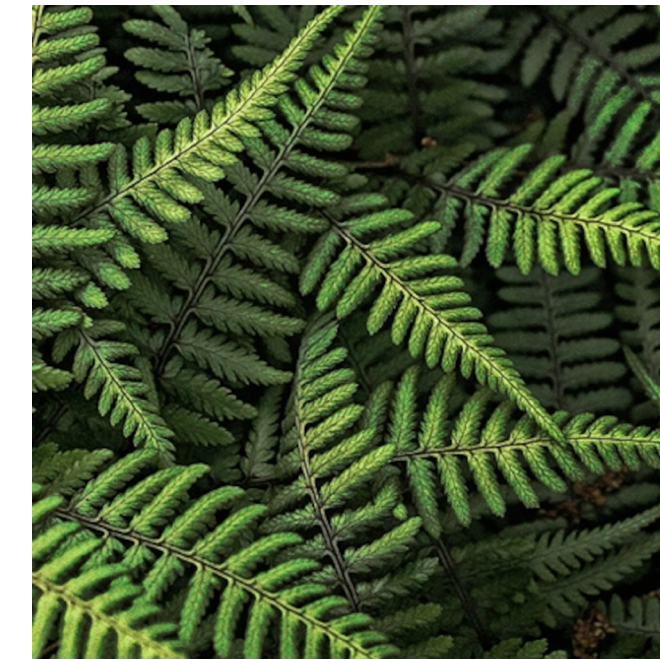
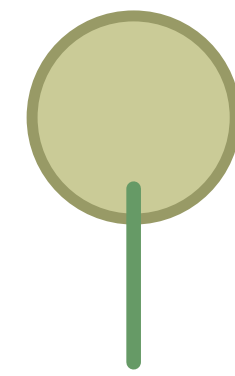
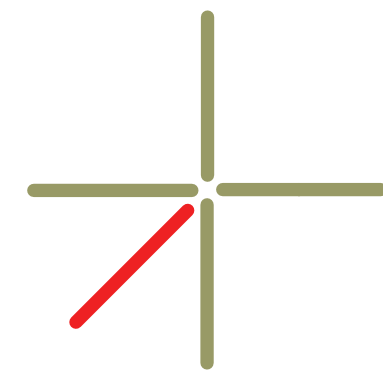


Fig.13 - Palette of movement and atmosphere and connection to the landscape (Concept Images)

3.0 - Open Space Zones



The Oak



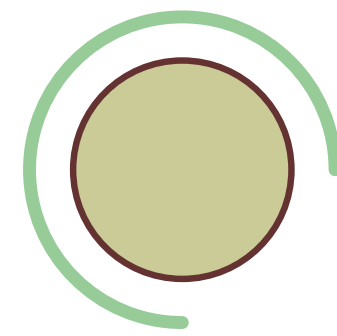
The Southwest



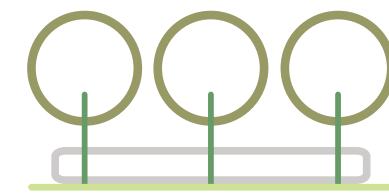
The Oval



The Active



The Snug



The Wild



3.1 - Locations

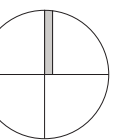


Locations for Open space Design



Masterplan of Site

Open Space Theme



3.2 - The Oak

'The Oak' is located in close proximity to the entrance and is positioned within the eastern portion of the site. It is the primary 'arrival space' to the scheme so it is very important to deliver a strong overall impression to the user/visitor. Feature walling, both existing and proposed, along with complimentary ornamental planting are the key landscape elements which will characterise this space.

This open space will feature a section of retained hedgerow and a mature Sessile Oak tree which will be retained in the design and will characterise the space. The dry stone wall and retained hedgerow arrangement highlights a sensitive approach with regard to the site's biodiversity and the overarching aim to retain suitable vegetation where possible. It is intended that the hedgerow will be reduced in size and width which will encourage basal growth and it shall be augmented where possible. New retaining walls and curved stone walls are proposed also within this entrance scheme, which further lend to the heritage of the site.

A timber post and rail fence shall be erected around the hedge and walling feature to further protect as well as offering a protected space for a supporting herb layer rich with diverse species. Framing the hedgerows and stone walls creates an atmosphere and an importance to these retained features. Pathway links, feature seats and new specimen trees shall also feature within this open space arrangement.



Fig.14 - Attributes within 'The Oak' open space. Planting, Retention of walls, boundary fencing.

It is proposed that new and existing varieties of native planting (Fig.15) be introduced and mirrored within the site. The site would benefit by gaining more native trees to accompany the existing trees to create a broader range of species. The proposed area will also receive formalised planting areas to portray a clean finish to the entrance.

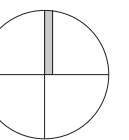
There are also meadow areas proposed for 'The Oak' scheme that help maintenance costs, encourage bees and biodiversity to the area as well as bringing a new, colorful aesthetic to different areas within the site.

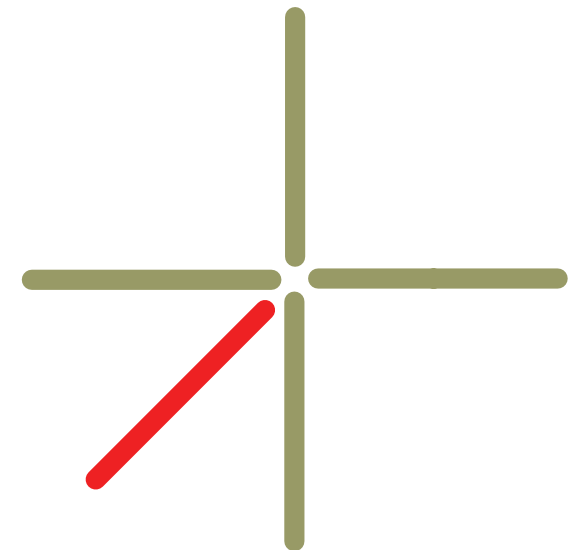


Fig.15 - Proposed native planting will help encourage a warm welcome to the estate.



Fig.16 - Concept of path, grass with meadow and retained stone wall feature.





3.3 - The Southwest

The 'Southwest' is located to the western end of the site and similar to 'The Oak', it also includes a network of stone walling and hedgerows with a large feature Beech tree (*Fagus sylvatica*) scheduled for retention. (Fig. 19)

The hedgerow/walling arrangement help to form the layout of this space and offer the opportunity and the shelter for a proposed, formalised play-space to the east with opportunity for a more informal recreation space to the northern portion of the space.

The space includes circuitous path links and inter-connecting links to pedestrian and cycle routes beyond the space; as well as including seating spaces with good aspect and opportunities for natural play to add interest and appeal.

Limestone 'boulders' from the site be re-used where considered appropriate and will act as retention for the natural play areas as well as seating options. This is seen where reclaimed limestone works as an edging option along the pathway that meanders from the centre of the design westwards towards the linear walkway.(Fig. 18)



Fig.17 - Informal play, playgrounds and seating areas all proposed for 'The Southwest' scheme.



Fig.18 - Concept sketch retained boulders.

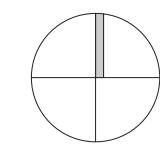


Fig.19 - Retention of Beech tree, Selection of proposed shrub and tree options.

Similar to other schemes within the site, it is proposed 'The Southwest' retains more of the existing hedging and dry stone walls. Formalised specimen trees as well as more naturalised mixed woodland elements are proposed to further enhance and bring character to this space.

The site consists of two main spaces with an arching pathway that hugs both the open space and the playground zones and connects to the western linear walkway with ease. A pathway and a woodland edge layer incorporating informal play are the main features that break these two spaces as well as the dry stone wall/retained hedging section.

A thoughtful selection of semi-mature trees are proposed within the open space. Native or visually appropriate 'options' such as Alder, Birch and Hornbeam are included within the species mix. Refer to supporting plantings for reference.



The Southwest



3.4 - The Oval

'The Oval' is located centrally within the site, and it is the largest of the proposed open spaces. The path links form an 'oval' edge to the multi-functional space; where the layout offers a seamless permeability both within and beyond the space. The challenge was to integrate the usable open space within the slope of the site whilst ensuring the space is overlooked, accessible and offers opportunities for the recreational needs of a range of users. The space has a strong link with the western green-way combining footpath (buff macadam) (Fig.20) through the space. Integration of lighting, services and the incorporation of SUDS has been addressed also.

A focused side slope along the pathway edge offers the opportunity to create a largely level upper zone. As well as formal protected play, 'natural play' is a very important factor of this scheme using elements such as steppers, ladders, slides and boulders for climbing added to planted slopes. This will bring a different interest, excitement and approach to the topography. Side slopes are to be planted making maintenance easier also.

A full range of options such in terms of accessibility and varied play are pivotal to 'The Oval' scheme given its setting and prominence within the neighbourhood zone.

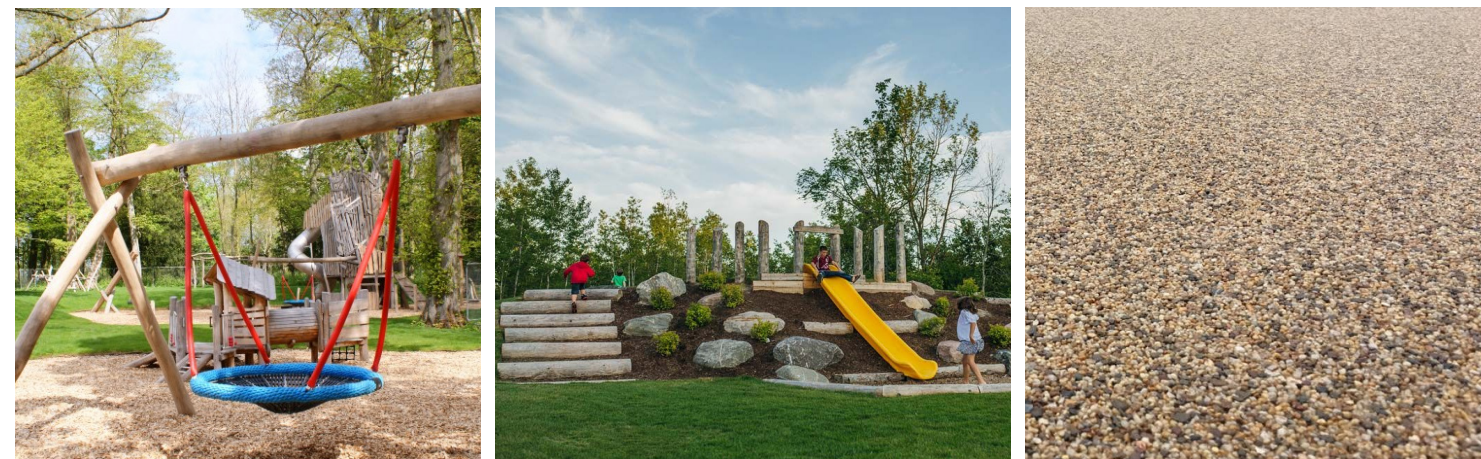


Fig.20 - Playground, active play on planted slopes. Buff macadam (walking/cycling path material) .



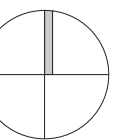
Fig.21 - Concept sketch of parkland recreation and the built development.



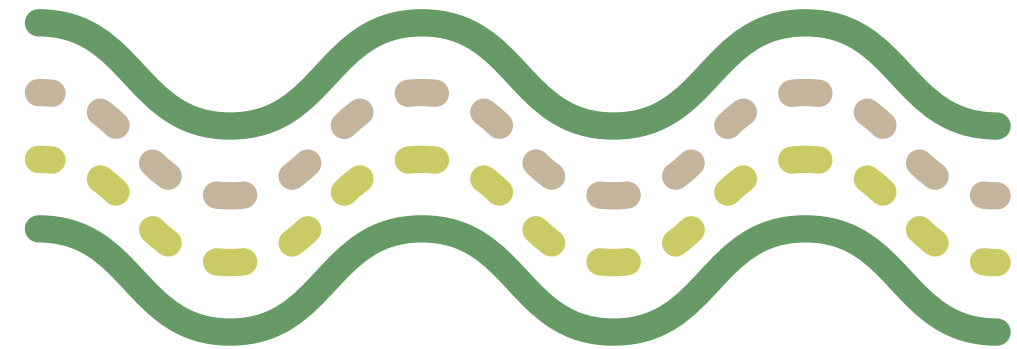
Fig. 22 - Reclaimed stone set in planting, Introduction of specimen trees, alternative play set in planting.

Key elements within the 'The Oval' (Fig.22)

- Seating with good aspect
- Informal seating in the form of rounded boulders gleaned from site
- Timber posts at a variety of locations
- Formalised playground and informal play areas
- Biodiversity enhanced spaces including feature specimen trees
- Use of planted slopes incorporating play whilst rationalising site levels
- Introduction of new native trees and shrubs
- Path way and connections to fully encompass the main grass amenity area(Fig.21)



The Oval



3.5 - The Active

'The Active' is a proposed linear space edging the Western portion of the site. This space forms close connection with a tree established roadside embankment planting and there is further opportunity to bolster further with additional tree planting species. The design aims to borrow the roadside embankment as a buffer; it is proposed to add new native hedgerow along the existing NRA timber fencing. (Fig. 23)

This linear space offers the opportunity for a combined cycle/path arrangement which links the entire length of the site in an east/west fashion.(Fig.25). Outward linkages to the N85 existing roadside pathways have been incorporated to create a seamless permeability beyond the scheme for future users/visitors alike.



Fig.23 - Section showing cycle path and boulders retaining slope and new native hedgerow.

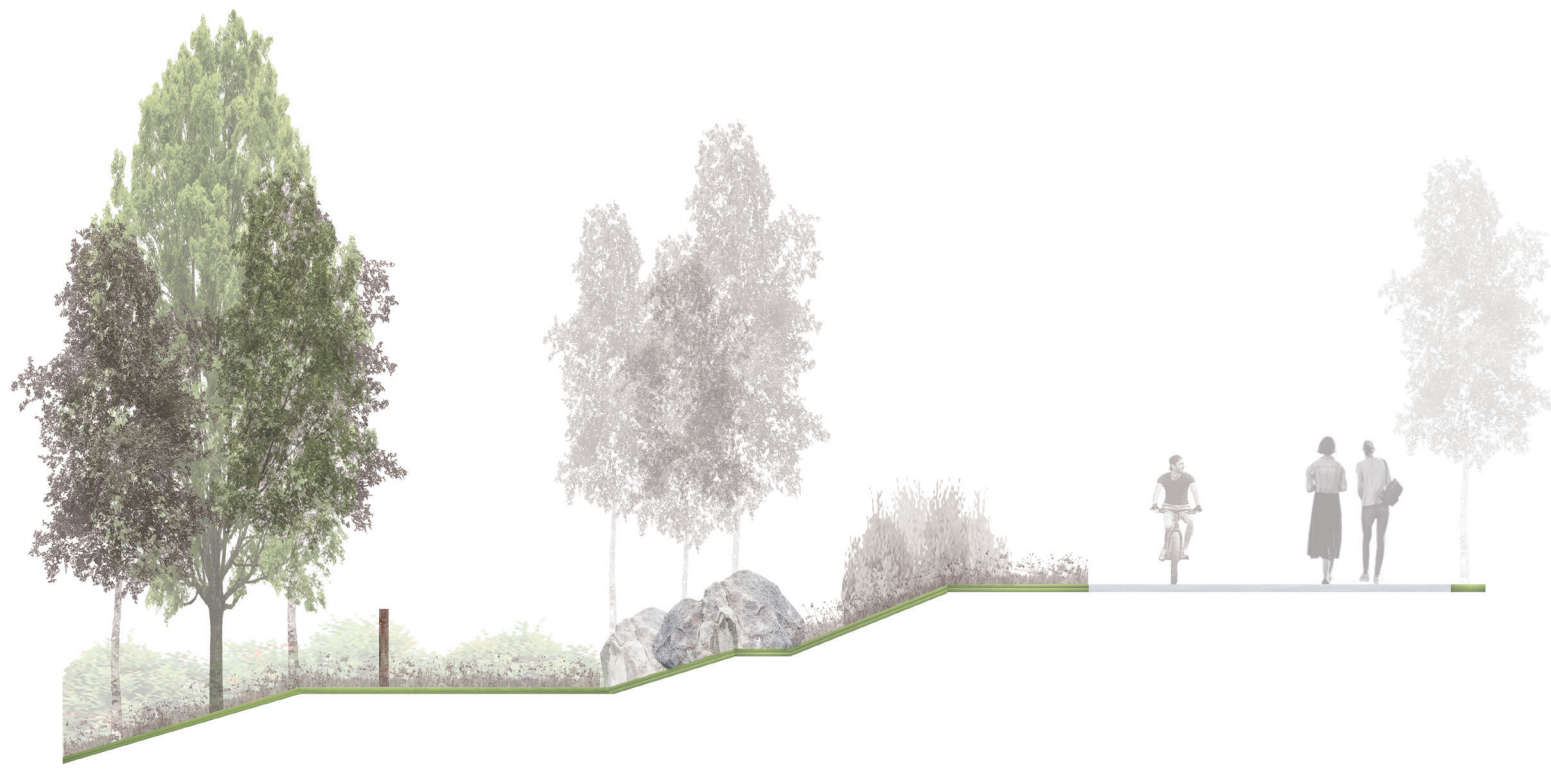


Fig.24 - Section showing sloped land below walkway/cycle path level

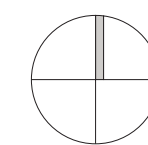
Multiple stationary exercise points are proposed along this route which will provide and promote 'healthy living opportunities' for the end user. Walking, cycling, running and the added aerobic stations (Fig.26) will be a hugely important aspect to the entire scheme, in that it will offer multiple connections throughout the scheme including the positive connections to the characterful open spaces.

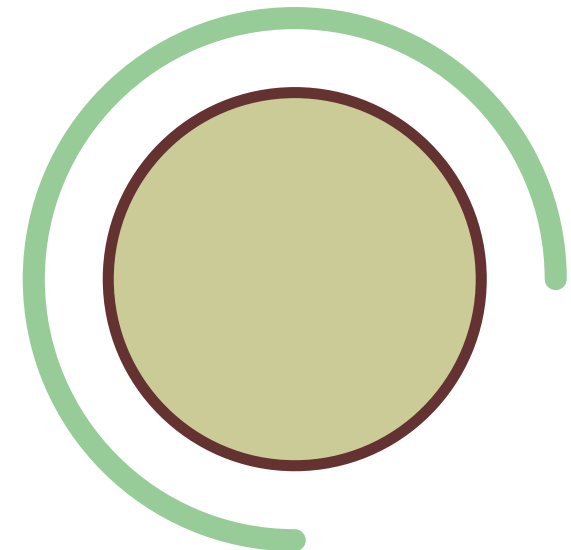


Fig.25 - Circulation and Connection



Fig.26 - Different exercise options along 'The Active' trail scheme.





3.6 - The Snug

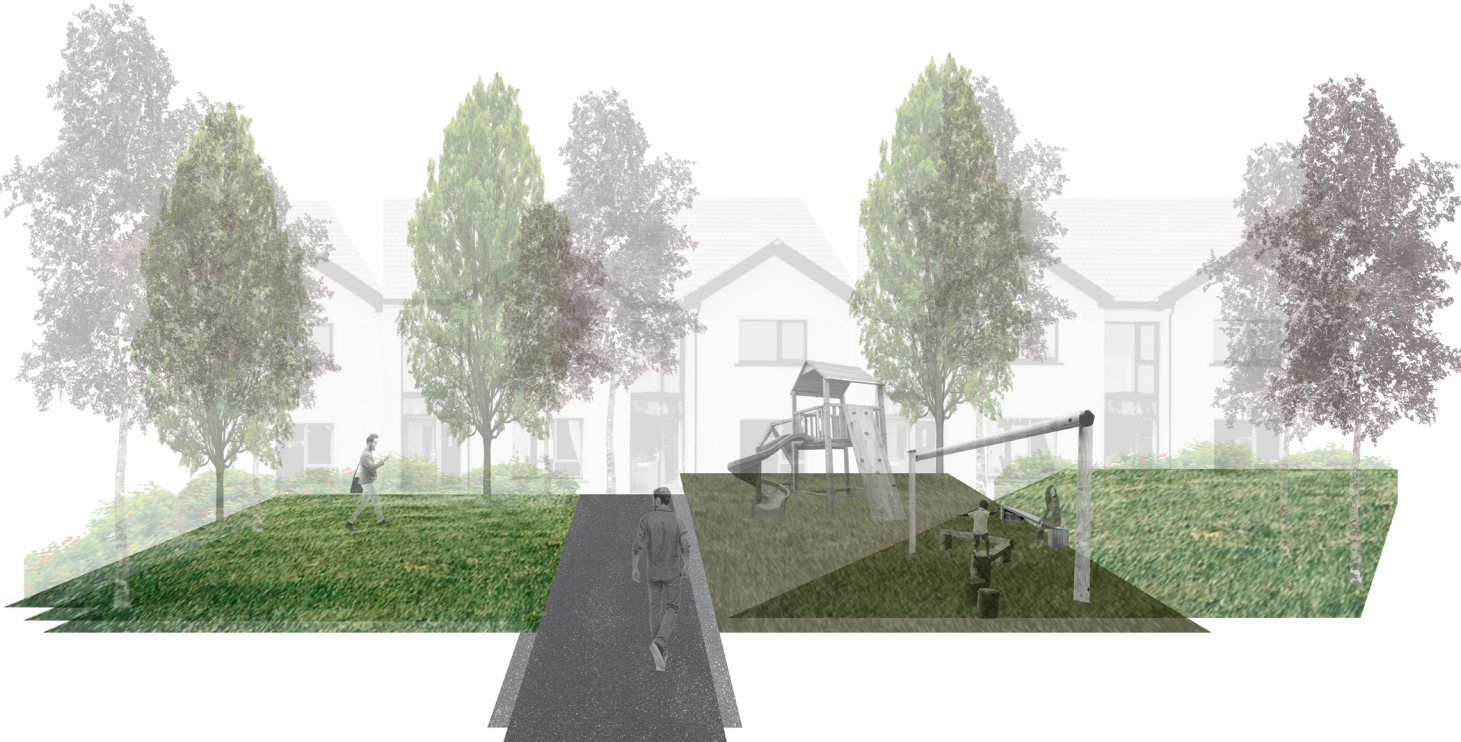


Fig.27 - Section showing cycle path and sloping land incorporating boulders and new native hedging.

'The Snug' is an intimate open space that is located north of the oval and is set in closer proximity to the surrounding houses than other open spaces within the site. (Fig.27) With this closeness, and varied amenity positive neighbourhoods form offering an overlooked and 'protected' place for play.

This scheme is in close proximity to the western green-way, which acts as another positive link to the N85. The proposed scheme including planting, wildflower meadows and grass mounded areas bring variety in the topography of the space.

At either side of the formal lawn, play elements are proposed which are enclosed in the landscape setting (Fig.29) These areas of play have ample seating provided for closer observation and user management.

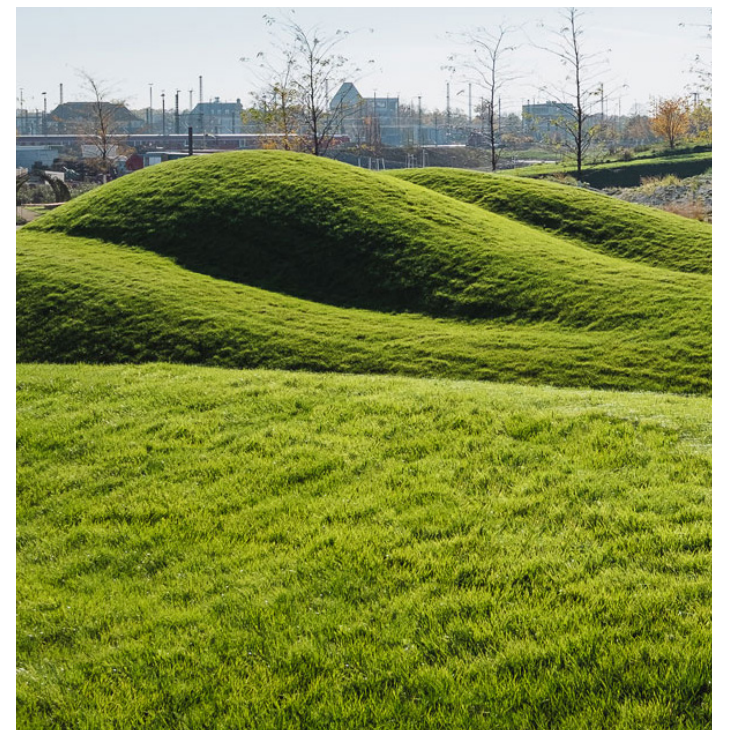


Fig.28 - Undulating ground and seating (Concept Images)

Multiple feature trees, many native along with formal shrub planting are proposed. The topography of the grass areas will have undulation (Fig 28) in parts bringing a different dynamic to the open space.

'The Snug' is connected to all other spaces within the overall site. It is just a short walk to the western pathway so users can come and go to the area depending on whether it be a parent with a younger child who wants a slightly more controlled play environment or whether the user wants to venture from this space and experience a different space. This proposed space along side 'The Oval' are the two central open spaces within the scheme.

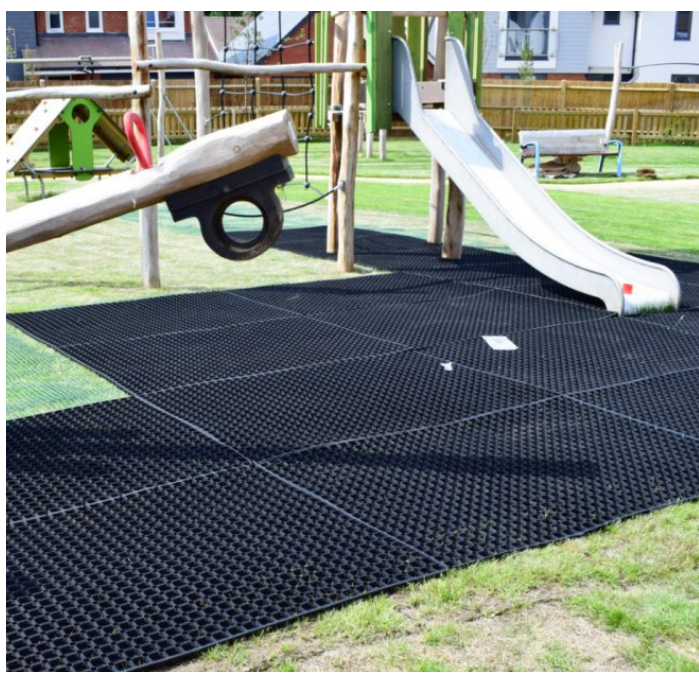
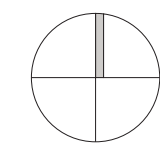
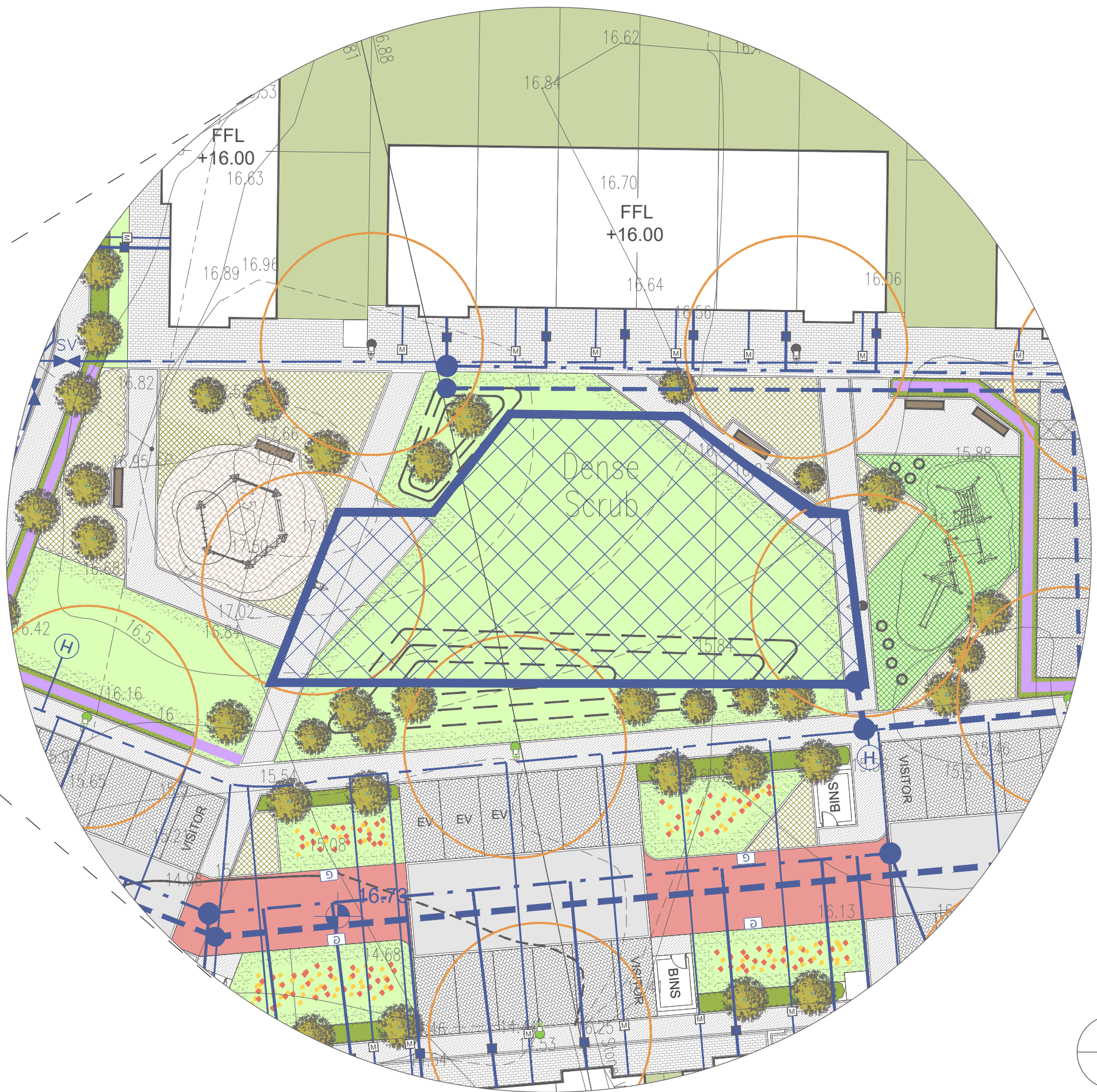
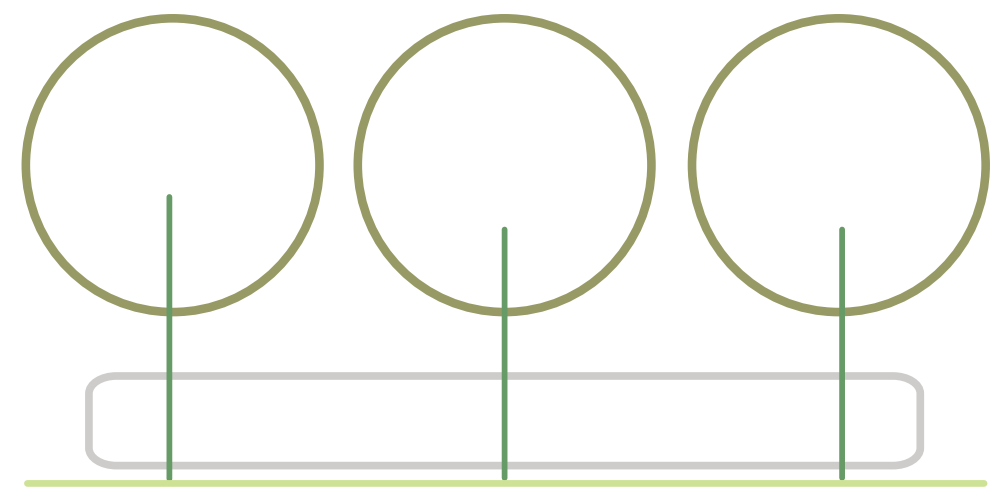


Fig.29 - Tiger Mulch / Rubber Mat Flooring. Different ground materials (Concept Images)



The Snug



3.7 - The Wild

'The Wild' is located on the north-eastern boundary of the scheme. This open space links seamlessly with the linear open space (The Active) along the western edge. This space borrows the roadside vegetation which will act as a welcomed perimeter 'buffer' to the scheme.

It is proposed that hedgerows are retained where possible and other areas have more native hedgerows introduced to maximize biodiversity and to respond to the landscapes green infrastructure.

The pathway linking route adjoins the attenuation zone proposed for the site which can be viewed from the walking/cycle track. The dry detention basin shall receive a suitable meadow mix with part-native low scrub layer mix. The plant material selected for this zone shall tolerate periods of water as well as dry. A pumping station is proposed to the south of the aforementioned attenuation basin, which shall be fenced and screened with part-native hedging (with an evergreen element) along with semi-mature trees.

A termination point to the walking/cycle route shall include a rest stop. It is important to note there is potential in the future to extend this linkage beyond.



Fig.30 - Connecting with nature, new species introduced, multi-functional space.



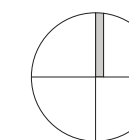
Fig.31 - Existing boundary vegetation and dry stone walls.

It is intended that boundary walling, hedgerows and vegetation shall be retained where possible and protected at this location. See typical examples of the conformation of the hedgerows/walling above (Fig.31)

The meandering green-way provides the opportunity to introduce wildflower meadows using local native species inspired by the existing flora seen on site (Fig.32)



Fig.32 - Existing wild flowers on site.



4.0 - Other Relevant Information

2.2 Front of Dwellings / Internal Access Roads

It is proposed that the internal access roads will receive specimen trees, suited to streetscape development. Size, seasonal interest, colour and variation have been considered in choosing specific trees for these locations. Supporting shrub planting will be included along these routes to ensure an overall unified approach is adopted.

Tree planting has been coordinated with site lighting in accordance with requirements set out by Clare County Council. Currently, in the plans provided tree planting does not occur within 7m of a proposed light pole. Planting to the front of the dwellings shall comprise of a mix of shrub, hedging and amenity lawns. The shrub planting shall be structural in nature; whilst herbaceous planting shall provide seasonal interest and colour.

2.3 Planting Program

Planting on site will commence with the completion of each stage of the works and as a result the program is closely tied to construction operations. Ground prep will precede planting and will include weed clearance and soil amelioration where necessary.

Planting will largely be carried out during the dormant period from November – March, with grass seeding carried out from April – September. An 18 month defects liability and landscape maintenance period will be set in place for all plant material with plant failures being replaced in the following planting season. Plant materials selected for this residential scheme will largely follow the planting plan to be prepared.

4.1 - Response to Key Landscape Issues raised in the An Bord Pleanála Opinion (Ref: ABP-32194-21)

12.0 - Recommended Opinion

12.3

- **2. A detailed landscaping plan clearly illustrating the quantum and functionality of all areas designated for public open space. The landscaping details shall include, inter alia, the inclusion of useable space for play provision, a detailed trees survey and proposed tree planting scheme and shall clearly indicate the quantum and designated areas of useable for differing age categories.**

The Drumbiggle site has been holistically considered and designed to maximise the potential of all aspects. From the start, there has been an analytical approach taken towards the existing topography and features on site. With this in mind, as well as the proposed future users of the site, different forms of play, circulation, connectivity and an ecological approach have been the core principals to the proposed design.

Drawing LP_01_PP shows the entire of the proposed landscape, highlighting all the positions of the open spaces and the connectivity between them, particularly through the linear walkway to the west of the site. LP_02_PP to LP_09_PP all describe in detail the functionality of these different areas designed for public open space. Retention of material and trees on site as well as proposed new material and vegetation on site are all included in the drawings. A tree survey, including a full Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been prepared by ArborCare Ltd. which addresses the detailed tree survey request. All tree survey information has been coordinated with the landscape proposals.

The different play areas are shown in further detail in drawings PG_01_PP to PG_03_PP. These drawings include materials, stationary exercise units and playground structures proposed for the open spaces. Boundary details, BD_01_PP to BD_03_PP highlight the perimeter design details in section format. Section drawings (LS-01-PP to LS-03-PP) further illustrate the profiling through various locations throughout the scheme.

- **Additional Computer-Generated Images (CGIs) and visualisation/cross section drawings should elaborate on the visual impact of the proposed development in the context of the impact of the residential area to the south and east of the site and the N85 to the west of the site.**

A series of CGI's and visualisations have been prepared by G-NET 3D and are included in the application. A series of detailed sections have been prepared (LS-01-PP to LS-03-PP inclusive) within the landscape package, with the relevant sections referenced in the 'Landscape and Visual Assessment' of the supporting EIAR enclosed.

Doyle &
O'Troithigh
Landscape
Architecture

