

Scotshouse Community Park

Introduction

EarthLink's Landscape Ltd. was awarded the contract to design Scotshouse Community Park by Monaghan County Council on the 16th December 2016 following a competitive tender process.

Project Background

Following on from the purchase by Monaghan County Council of a two-acre site in the centre of Scotshouse village, they sought to appoint a Landscape Consultancy practice to work with a small team, comprising of Monaghan County Council and community representatives to transform the site, in consultation with the local community, into an age-friendly space which will meet the recreational needs of all sectors of the community.

The location of this site is central to the development of the Village and is adjacent to both the community centre and the primary school, and benefits from being bounded by a small playing field and walking track, which increases the value of the amenity. Both Monaghan Council and community have collaborated successfully to provide a playground on one corner of the site, which was constructed in late 2016.

The site's rural location, combined with the Monaghan County Council and community's commitment to promoting biodiversity and engaging with wildlife led the design brief. The main brief ensured a focus on nature in lieu of manicured, formal park arrangement. The need for a recreational space where that people spend time visit regularly was also a key consideration

Key Consideration of the Design Process

- Monaghan County Council is a signatory of the Dublin Declaration. Accordingly, the space needs be Age Friendly.

- Any potential play areas to be built along natural play principles. There already is a structured play space which caters for toddlers.
- There are no facilities in the village for teens or young adults, so a hangout space was a key element required.
- A space to be used by families
- Planting to encourage wildlife
- To have high sustainability value
- Blend into the natural environment.
- Use of native style planting
- Creative play to be key element
- Linking existing elements i.e school and pitch together.

Design Process

A Public meeting was held in Scotshouse Community Centre on 20th of February 2017. Approximately 50 people attended. The public meeting, organised by Monaghan County Council, and was well attended by all sectors of the Local Community.

Three different proposals were prepared, put on display and the rationale behind each design was explained to the community in order for them to evaluate and express their opinion.

The three different designs put forward to the community included

- Scheme 1 - Informal /Biodiversity
- Scheme 2 - Formal park
- Scheme 3 - Biodiversity style.

Following considerable debate and analysis of each style, a vote was put to those in attendance. Design Nr.1 proved to be the most popular with the local community. All comments raised by the local community were taken on board and, where possible and practical was incorporated into the final design.

Community Feedback

During the course of the public Consultation meeting the following comments and observations listed below were made by the attendees.

- Include a skateboarding area in teen zone (inadequate space for this item)
- Plenty of seating near kid's area for parents, so they can supervise kids in the playground (seating to be provided)
- Provide some outdoor gym equipment near the playground, so parents have something to do while supervising children playing in the playground
- Incorporate a small maze – low hedge type
- Change the school veg garden to a flower garden
- Plenty of seating please in the park
- Toilets needed
- Curved willow entrance, to add some mystery
- In the teen zone, add a small goal, to allow penalty shootouts
- Have a parallel path, that kids can explore with parents
- More sensory feel in the plan
- Keep the river within earshot of the path.
- Stepping stones across the river encourages adventure
- The river can get quite high and fast – need to consider how it might be closed off from the public on days it is a safety risk
- Could a weir be used to control water flow? Needs to be secure from the road - Provide sitting areas to just chill
- Scotshouse in Irish is *Acadh na Habhla* – the fort of the apples. Appropriate to plant apple trees in the park, as well as other fruit trees, to encourage biodiversity.
- I would like to see us embrace our roots that are linked to the apple trees. Without our roots, we will fall over!
- The amphitheatre concept echoes the heritage of the nearby Black Pig's Dyke and the drumlin topography of the area

Following on from the successful public meeting a consultation took place *St. Enda's National School* to provide information on Monaghan County Councils intentions for the new local park.

Having viewed and examined the three diverse options, the following comments and observations listed below were made by the pupils

- The one thing wrong with this park is that you can't do anything in it bar walk and look at wildlife
- Tree house please
- Bird houses please
- Fairy houses please - Pets should be allowed
- Outdoor classroom please
- I like the creepy face plant
- I would like a playhouse
- Put a statue in it
- No football

- I don't like marshy ground
- It's good that young and old can enjoy the park

Outcome of the voting process:

Younger age groups overwhelmingly supported the biodiversity park. The oldest children were evenly split between the biodiversity park and the option which combined the biodiversity park with elements of a more open park. They felt it offered the best of both worlds.

Landscape Design Rationale of Favoured Design

Design Approach

The design intent is to create a high quality and appropriate landscape scheme, suitable for all users while maximising the existing landscape features of the site and the surrounding local landscape, especially the neighbouring woodland. The key principle of sustainable development is applied to ensure an inclusive and environmentally responsible landscape design solution. The fundamental principle for Scheme 1 was biodiversity. The informal and uncategorised layout of the scheme lends itself to the creation of both an attractive and functional space while at the same time allowing for the creation of different habitats.

Landscape Layout and Design

As part of the landscape proposals, the existing mature tree screens are supplemented with appropriate species which will aid in softening the proposed built structures into the landscape setting. All the proposed trees selected will be selected with their mature size, shape and form in mind, as well as their life expectancy as long term maintenance and pruning is kept to a minimum.

Most the existing trees present on the site are to be retained, with pruning carried out where required. These trees will be required to be protected for the duration of the construction works. Shrub planting including evergreens, grasses and flowering shrubs with biodiversity value and sensory qualities will lending a lush and visually attractive landscape. Fruit trees will provide a link back to the translation of Scotshouse *Acadh na Habhla* – the fort of the apples.

The proposed meadow of wild flower & grasses, carefully specified seed mix and will be a source of everchanging and seasonal interest. The marsh area will be separated by a simple timber post and rail fence which will define its boundaries. Soft gravel footpaths which sweep and curve through the site are functional while also minimising surface water runoff.

Existing boundary treatments are well established and are all to be maintained and augmented with additional planting where required.

The proposed layout of the landscape scheme, the planting of native trees, plants and bulbs to enhance local biodiversity and expected high standards of work as set out in the accompanying specification document will ensure the long-term sustainability of the site by creating an important local ecosystem in time.

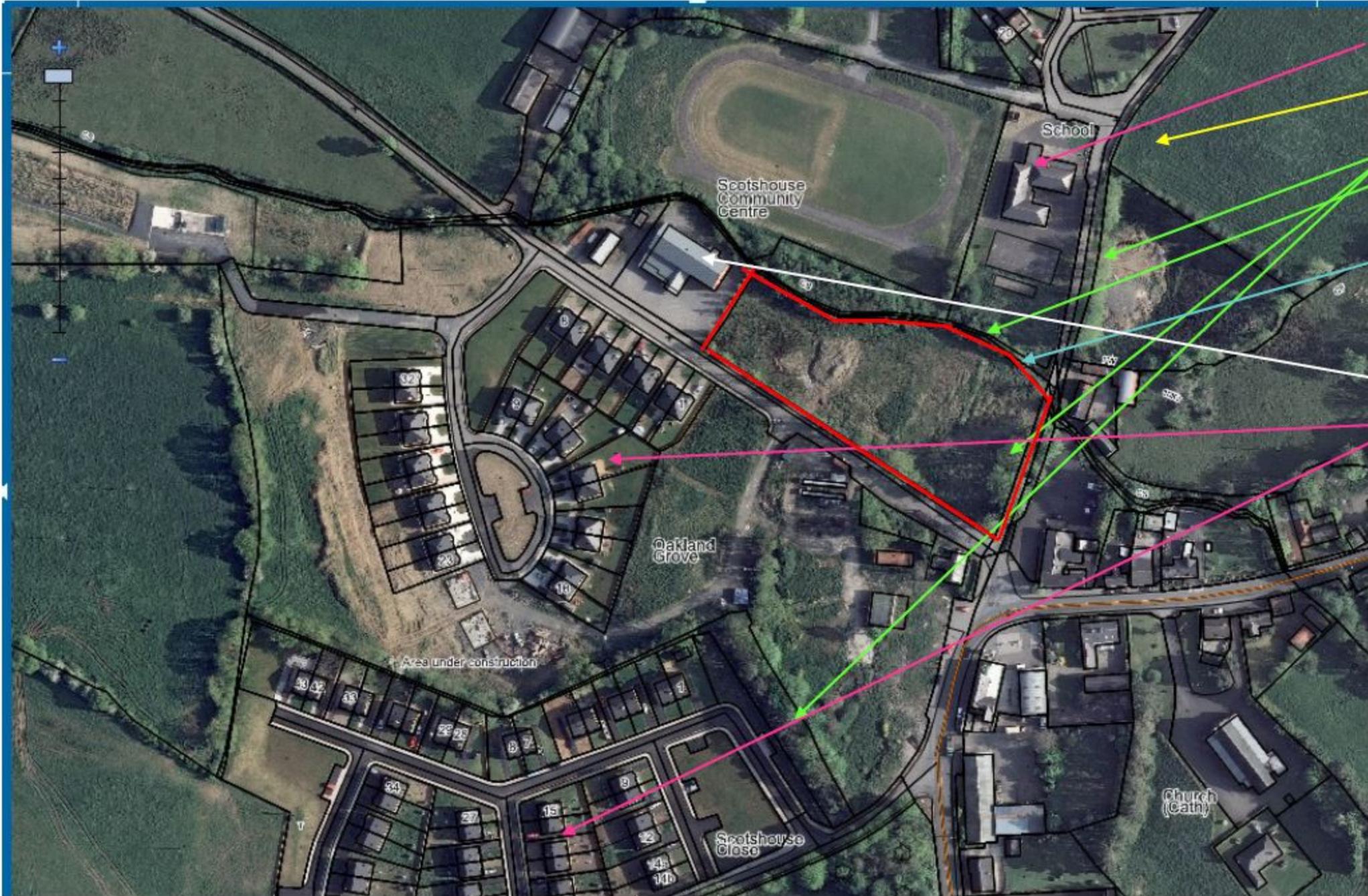
Proposed site features such as the spiral mound, the willow tunnel & the marsh areas will provide focal points for all users of the park. Children's imagine and creative play will be enhanced by such features. The construction of a simple amphitheatre echoes the heritage of the nearby Black Pig's Dyke and the drumlin topography of the county of Monaghan.

Public site lighting will generate a different landscape at night time and will allow for lighting of some of the key feature of the park such as the bride structures and spiral mounds. It will also illuminate the paths ensuring the safety needs of users.

All elements of the park aim to enhance the Village of Scotshouse and provide an amenity for all residents to be proud of. With careful selection of trees and shrubs and consideration of the intent behind the park when finalising the design of the built structures, there is an opportunity to ensure a well design and sustainable park is created for generation to come.

Appendix A

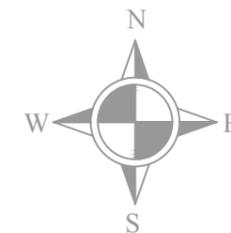
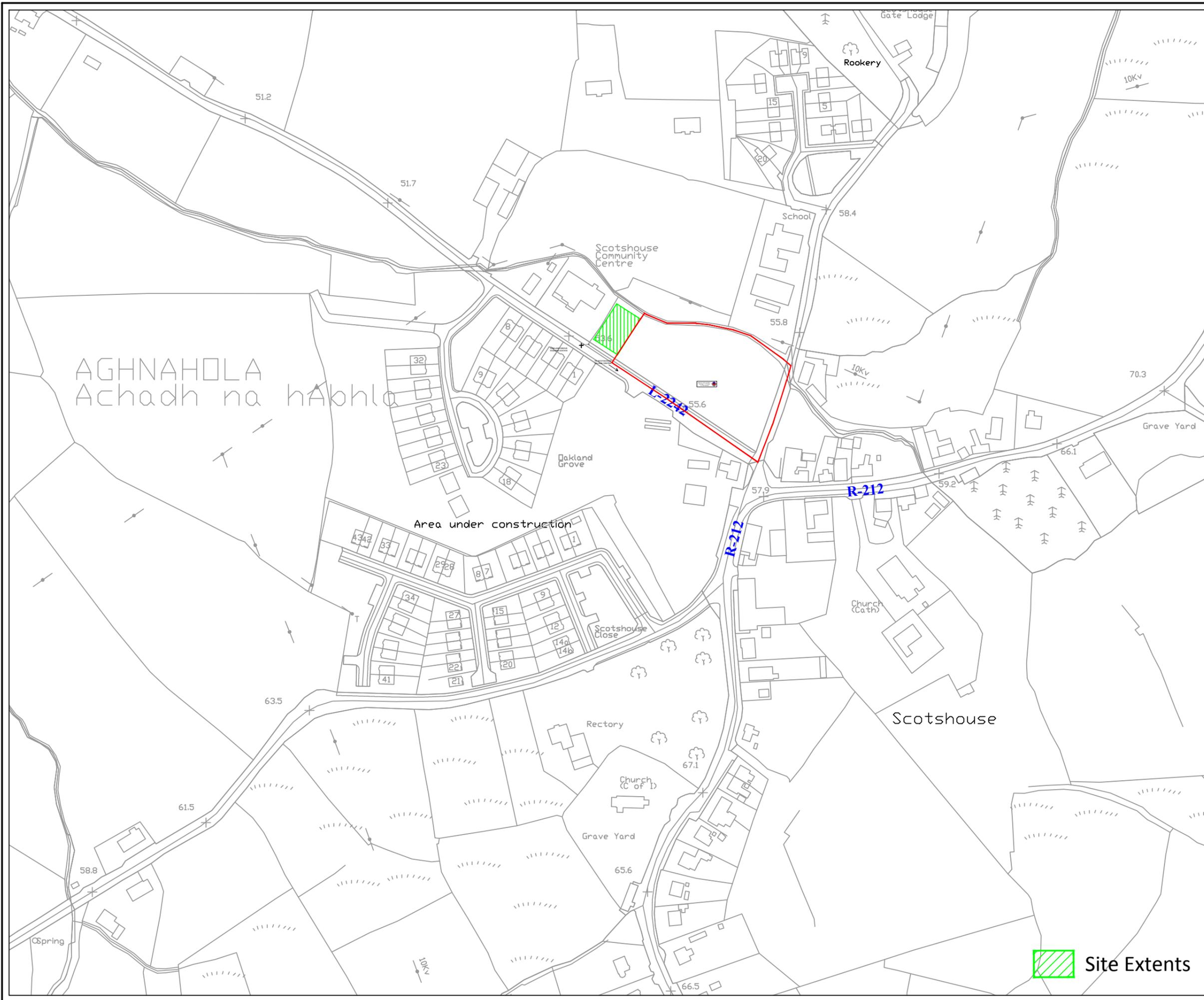
Site Location Map



- School
- Edge of Hilton Estate
- Mature tree lines
- Stream—gentle flow, can paddle in it
- Community Centre
- New housing developments

Site purchased by Monaghan County Council in Aghnahola townland
Coords: 249118, 319635

- Bounded by roads on two sides
- Car parking in place at community centre
- Land to north of site owned by parish. Available for development of additional amenities as the facility grows



Project
Scotshouse Playground

Drawing Title
Site Location

Ceantar Bardasach Bhéal Atha Beithe-Cluain Eois, Comhairle Contae Mhuineacháin, Sraid Mhuineacháin, Cluain Eois, Co. Muineacháin.
Guthán : 047 51018
The Municipal District of Ballybay-Clones, Monaghan County Council, Monaghan Street, Clones, Co. Monaghan.
Telephone : 047 51018

Director of Services Adge King		
Designed		Date
Drawn	D.M.	April 2016
Traced		Scale
Surveyed		1:2500 @ A3
Checked	K.Mc.N.	

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 **Site Extents**

Appendix B

Site Layout



MASTERPLAN
(OPTION 1)

Appendix C

Consultation Photographs



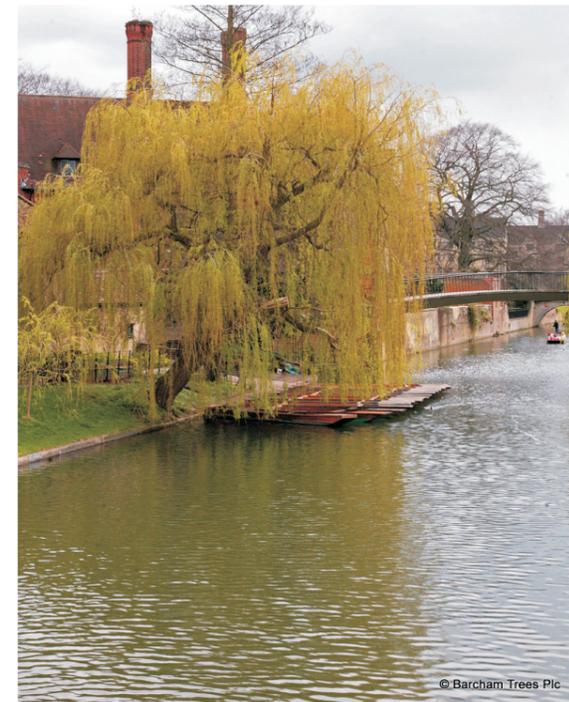
Images of Community meeting
& Schools Presentation.



Appendix D

Concept Images

Soft Landscaping Materials



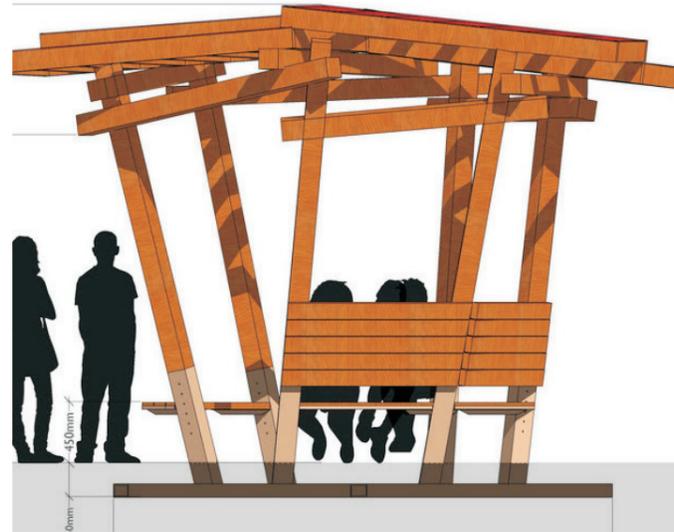
Scotshouse Park *Design Development*

Site Features



Scotshouse Park *Design Development*

Site Features



Scotshouse Park *Design Development*

Appendix E

Indicative Costs

Scotshouse Park

Proposed Village Park



Indictive Costs

General Contractor Preliminaries & Insurances	€10,000
Site Preparation	€30,000
Costruction of teen hangout shelter	€20,000
Cosntruction of Basketball area inc. fencing	€50,000
Willow Tunnel	€5,000
Marsh Area inc. bridge structure	€25,000
Bridge across river	€25,000
Pathways	€30,000
Constructon of the Spiral mound	€10,000
Public Lighting	€5,000
Tree Planting	€10,000
Specimen Shrubs	€10,000
Topsoiling & seeding	€15,000
Works to River	€5,000
Design Development @10%	€25,000
Indicitve Cost Estimate	€275,000

Exclusions

Value Added Tax

Professional and Legal Fees

Service Connections

Increased Costs of Labour and Materials beyond May 2017

Currency Fluctuations

Provision of storage facilities

Courtroom fittings, benches, desks etc.

Phasing implications

Erection of temporary hoarding and screens as a result of phasing requests

Costs arising from working outside normal working hours

Cost to be reviewed upon completion of Engineers design & requirements