

LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

**SECTION 179 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000
(as amended)**

**PART 8 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 (as
amended)**

PROPOSAL TO CARRY OUT A DEVELOPMENT REFERRED TO AS –

**PART 8, NO. 84,
R198 BATTERY ROAD REHABILITATION SCHEME
AT BATTERY ROAD, LONGFORD**

**REPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH
SECTION 179 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED) AND
PART 8 OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED)**

To: The Cathaoirleach and Members of Longford Municipal District.

Being satisfied that the requirements of subsections (1) and (2) of Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, and Articles 79 to 85 inclusive of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) have been fully complied with in relation to the above proposed development, I have prepared the attached report in accordance with the requirements of subsection (3) of Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended and formally submit same to the Cathaoirleach and Members for consideration.

1. Introduction / Site Location of the proposed development.
2. The nature and extent of the proposed development and the principal features thereof are as set out in Section 2 of the Report.
3. Section 3 of the Report evaluates the consistency of the development with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the development relates, having regard to the provisions of the development plan.

I am satisfied that all issues have been fully considered in the evaluation and that the proposed development is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the development relates, having regard to the provisions of the development plan, for the reasons set out in the report.

4. The persons and bodies who made submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development in accordance with the provisions of the above Act and Regulations are listed at Section 4.
5. Section 5 sets out details in relation to S.E.A. and Appropriate Assessment.
6. Section 6 sets out the recommendation of the Planning Authority in relation to the proposed development regarding the planning considerations and submissions and observations received.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 179(3)(b)(v) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) I recommend that the proposed development should be proceeded with subject to the conditions listed in Section 6 of the attached report.

Dated this the 21st April, 2021


John Brannigan,
Director of Services.

Note:

Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) – Subsection 4 of Section 179.

- (4) (a) The members of the local authority shall, as soon as may be, consider the proposed development and the report of the Chief Executive under subsection (3).
- (b) Following consideration of the Chief Executive's Report under paragraph (a), the proposed development may be carried out as recommended in the Chief Executive's Report, unless the local authority, by resolution, decides to vary or modify the development, otherwise than as recommended in the Chief Executive's Report, or decides not to proceed with the development.
- (c) A resolution under paragraph (b) must be passed not later than 6 weeks after receipt of the Chief Executive's Report.

**LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

**PART 8, NO. 84,
R198 BATTERY ROAD REHABILITATION SCHEME
AT BATTERY ROAD, LONGFORD**

**REPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH
SECTION 179 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
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AND

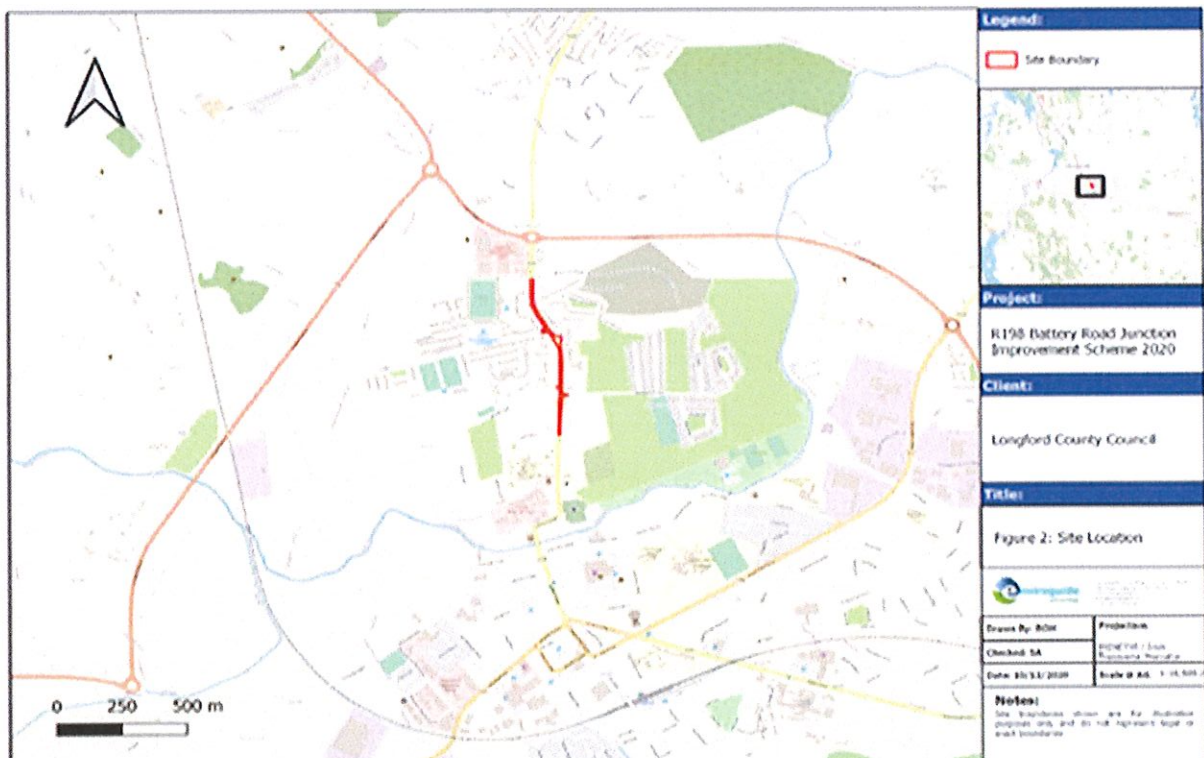
**PART 8 OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED)**

APRIL 2021

1 INTRODUCTION/ SITE LOCATION

The proposal site encompasses a 775m long section of the R198 Battery Road including the junctions with Abbeycartron Lane, Demense Lane and Lisbrack Avenue. The proposed development entails the upgrading of the junctions and the associated improvement of the section of road (R198/ Battery Rd) between them.

The proposal works area is indicated below. The proposed development will consist of a number of improvements works along a 775m section of the R198 Battery Road including improvement of facilities for cyclists and pedestrians the modification of existing staggered crossroads and mini roundabouts, the amendment of gully locations and accommodation works for properties that will be affected by the proposal.

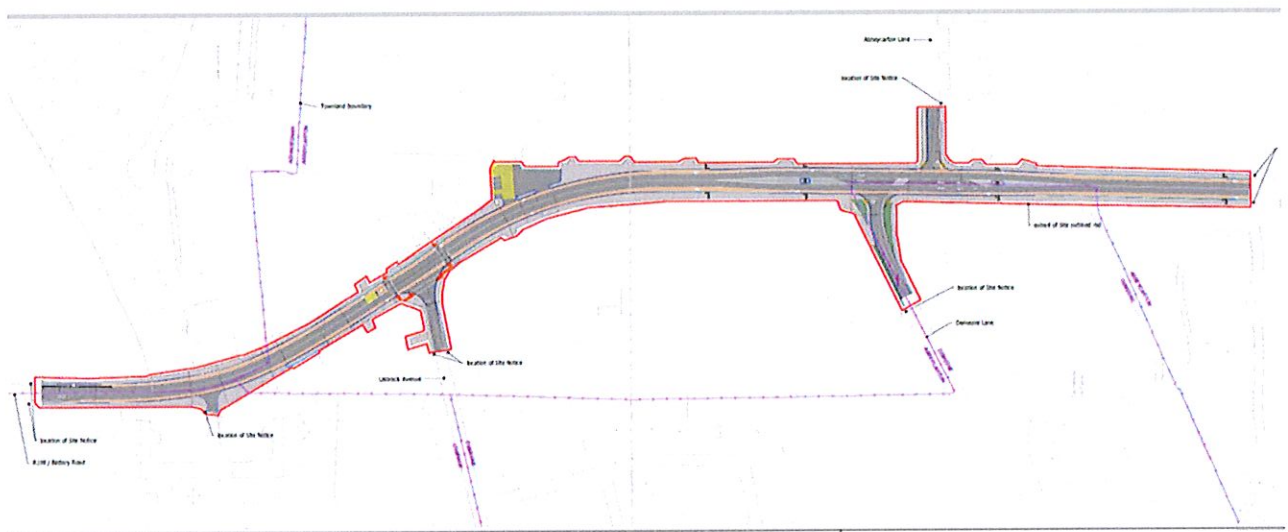


Extent of Proposal Works Outlined in Red

2 NATURE AND EXTENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed works, as outlined in the submitted Part 8 application plans and particulars, include the following:

- Rehabilitation of the R198 Batter Road surface
- The installation of a signalised Junction at the entrance to Lisbrack
- The construction of a right turning lane at the entrance to Abbeycartron Demense
- Realignment of the R198 Battery Road surface to facilitate the provision of cycle lanes and continuous pedestrian footpath on both sides of the road
- The construction of pedestrian crossing points at various locations along the R198 Battery Road



Proposed Scheme

3 PLANNING CONSIDERATION/ EVALUATION

The subject site is located within the functional area of Longford County Council and within the development envelope of the settlement of Longford Town, and therefore the provisions of the Longford County Development Plan (CDP) 2015-2021 and the Longford Town and Environs Local Area Plan apply. Despite its location within the centre of Longford Town, the majority of the subject site is not zoned as it comprises of the carriageway of the R198 Battery Road. It is noted that that Battery Road is an ACA so extra attention should be given to the proposed finished for the development with regard to the sensitive nature of the site location.

Notwithstanding the fact that the majority of the subject site is not zoned, there are a number of policies within the CDP which relate to urban centre, public realm, traffic and parking improvements which are as follows:

General Policy 9:

It will be Council policy to continue to improve the public realm of urban centres through the encouragement of high quality civic design, including but not limited to the provision of attractive street furniture, lighting and effective street cleaning. In addition, the introduction of business improvement district type initiatives to the principal settlements of County Longford will be evaluated to establish the contribution that such proposals could make to the viability and vitality of town centres within the County.

To facilitate this Longford Local Authority will;

- Prepare clear design guidelines for retail development in urban centres subject to resources in accordance with the provisions of the Retail Design Manual- A Good Practice Guide (2012).*
- Assess the potential of new retail developments with regards to existing traffic congestion problems.*
- Promote and facilitate improvements in the public realm.*
- To promote the targeted funding sourced from the Development Contribution Scheme to the regeneration and renewal of urban centres, in accordance with the ‘Development Contribution – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’ issued by the DECLG.*

General Policy 10:

It will be Council policy to undertake measures to improve the accessibility of town centres by developing a pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment, which improves safety and limits traffic congestion where possible. A particular focus of this policy will be the development of additional pedestrian crossings, where necessary, within Longford Town centre, as well as other settlements within the County where high volumes of vehicular traffic can be seen to inhibit pedestrian movement.

Roads 1:

To provide the highest quality road access and capacity on routes of economic importance to the County, thereby capitalising on the central location of Longford in a national context, increasing its attractiveness as a destination in itself and a location for settlement and industrial, commercial and business development.

Roads 2:

To provide a road network which is safe and efficient for all road users, cognisant of the requirements of all traffic, including motorized vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Roads 3:

Promote sustainability in road use and the reduction of negative impacts on the natural environment including carbon emissions where possible through good design practice.

Roads 4:

To maintain and improve the capacity of existing arterial routes of national importance within the County in the context of the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines, including the relief of bottlenecks at strategic locations.

Roads 5:

To maintain and improve the capacity of routes of strategic regional and local importance within the County and promote improved access between the major settlements of the County and to important centres in the Midlands region, particularly those identified in the Regional Planning Guidelines.

Roads 7:

To ensure that infrastructural policies and investments assist and enhance the economic and social development of County Longford, and preserve and improve the physical attractiveness of the County and minimise negative impacts on its background environment.

PKG 4:

Town and village character shall also be considered in terms of proposed road widening or traffic calming.

PED 1:

The Planning Authority aims to improve the attractiveness and usability of the pedestrian environment of the County, particularly in residential areas, designated settlements and in areas of high amenity.

PED 2:

The Council shall promote the use of alternative transport to the private car through encouraging enhanced pedestrian and cycling facilities in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

PED 4:

The Council shall promote the organisation of traffic in towns and villages in order to separate motor vehicular, bicycles and pedestrian traffic. This is to be carried out in accordance with the 'National Manual for the provision of Cycle Facilities in Urban Areas', 'The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets' and 'The National Cycle Manual'.

Upon examination of the proposal in the context of the above policies, it is considered that the proposed development is in keeping with the policies as outlined in the Longford County Development Plan 2015-2021.

4. PUBLIC/ STATUTORY BODIES CONSULTATION, SUBMISSIONS, REPORTS, ETC.

The proposed works were duly and properly notified as required by Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The plans and particulars for the proposed R198/Battery Rd road improvement works at Battery Rd., Co. Longford were made available for public inspection at the offices of Longford County Council, Áras an Chontae, Great Water Street, Longford during official public opening hours, excluding weekends and bank holidays, from 15th January 2021 up to and including 19th March 2021. Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the development would be situated, were invited to be made in writing to the Planning Section, Longford County Council, Áras an Chontae, Great Water Street, Longford, Co. Longford to arrive not later than 4pm on 5th March 2021.

Submissions

6 no. submissions were received in relation to the proposed development and which are summarised below:

- **Robert Hall & Sheevaun Cody**

General

The submission states its full agreement with the need for measures to reduce speed and increase safety for all users of Battery Road

Right-turn lane at Hall's Autospares to be provided

Synopsis of Submission

An average of 26 customers arrive at the shop daily. Currently, customers turning right off Battery Road can use the hatched central ghost island as a dwell area while waiting to turn or can use the mini-roundabout do a u-turn. Under the proposed development, this will not be available and traffic turning right off Battery Road will block northbound traffic.

Response

A right-turn lane would considerably increase the carriageway width, thus facilitating higher speeds whereas an objective of the Scheme is to encourage lower speeds. Furthermore, turning movements are relatively low and the right turn lane would be empty most of the time, inviting its use as an overtaking lane.

The volume of right-turning movements at the access are not sufficient to justify the undesirable effects associated with a ghost island / right-turn lane.

Heavy Goods Vehicles

Synopsis of Submission

The access is used by heavy goods vehicles delivering to the shop and by oil delivery and waste collection trucks serving the residential properties on Keeldra Avenue.

Response

The Proposed Development includes an access route for large vehicles.

Parking

Synopsis of Submission

The submission describes the current demand for parking at this location and points out that four houses in the immediate area are currently unoccupied, which will increase demand.

Response

The current flexibility is only available because of the absence of suitable facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and so impact on the parking area is unavoidable if these facilities are to be provided.

On-street parking on Battery Road

Synopsis of Submission

The Proposed Development will reduce parking capacity on Battery Road.

Response

The reduction in parking is necessary to allow pedestrian and cycle facilities complying with appropriate standards to be provided. This is consistent with the Design Manual for Roads and Streets (DMURS) which requires the prioritisation of vulnerable road users in the design of roads and streets

Drainage

Synopsis of Submission

Will the Proposed Development cause flooding?

Response

Surface water drainage for the Proposed Development will be subject to detailed design to ensure it will not increase flood risk or cause drainage problems.

School Bus

Synopsis of Submission

A school bus stops at this location every morning. Can provision for this be incorporated into the Proposed Development.

Response

Provision for the school bus will be incorporated into the detailed design

- **Joanne Sheil**

Signalisation of Lisbrack Avenue Junction not required

Synopsis of submission

There is no backing-up of traffic at the existing mini-roundabout junction. Signalisation of the junction will cause unnecessary traffic queues and affect the N4 roundabout.

Response

Pedestrian crossing facilities at the junction are sub-standard and there are no dedicated facilities for cyclists.

The existing mini-roundabout provides little or no entry deflection for cars approaching from either side of Battery Road. This increases the likelihood of Battery Road traffic failing to yield and also approaching at higher speeds. As a result it is difficult for traffic emerging from Lisbrack Avenue to accept gaps in traffic approaching from Longford Town and also there is an increased risk of conflict with traffic approaching from either side on Battery Road.

There is therefore a need to replace the existing junction.

Signalisation of the junction as proposed will address these safety issues. The traffic signal system will include detectors on the approach arms which can detect excessive queueing on any one arm and provide increased green time to this arm accordingly.

Access to Abbeycarton Housing Estate

Synopsis of submission

The entrance to Abbeycarton Housing Estate would benefit from improved direction / name signage.

Response

This is outside the scope of the Proposed Development.

- **Senator Michael Carrigy**

Synopsis of submission

The residents of Abbeycarton face delays turning right from Abbeycarton Lane on to Battery Road. This can be dangerous during peak flows on Battery Road and causes delay busy times traffic at the existing mini-roundabout junction. Signalisation of the junction will cause unnecessary traffic queues and affect the N4 roundabout.

Response

Turning movements at this junctions are relatively low and do not justify the installation of traffic signals. However, the Proposed Development provides.

- **Peter Leacy & Claire Durkin**

Synopsis of submission

The property to which this submission relates is at the southwest corner of the Lisbrack Road / Battery Road Junction. Vehicular access to this property is taken from Lisbrack Road. The access is not safe because of its proximity to the junction and the proposed signalisation of the junction will not deal with the hazards. Accordingly the submission requests that consideration be given to providing an alternative means of access.

Response

Given the location and extent of the property, there are no alternative locations for the access that would be a significant improvement on the existing location.

However, realignment of Battery Road will result in the western carriageway edge on Battery Road being further away from the access and the signalised junction will provide greater regulation of traffic flows through the junction. This is expected to bring a slight improvement to the operation of the access.

Regarding the difficulty caused by the narrowness of the access, the most appropriate mechanism for addressing this would be for the property owners to pursue the matter through a separate planning process.

- **Irish Water**

Synopsis of submission

Irish Water has no objection in principle to the Proposed Development but notes the Proposed Development will impact on Irish Water infrastructure and in order to ensure adequate wastewater and water supply facilities, stipulates a number of conditions regarding its infrastructure.

Response

Accepted.

- **Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)**

Synopsis of submission

TII has no specific observations regarding the Proposed Development.

Response

Noted.

5. APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The proposed development was screened for Appropriate Assessment, in which it is concluded by the authors of the report that, on the basis of objective information; the possibility may be excluded that the proposed development will have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site as listed. These complete, precise and definitive findings, based on the best available scientific evidence, remove all reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will have any significant effects on the Natura 2000 sites. It is also noted that, pursuant to the judgement in *C-323/17 People Over Wind and Peter Sweetman V Coillte*, no avoidance or preventative /mitigation measures have been taken into account in the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and its conclusions.

6. RECOMMENDATION

Having regard to the above mentioned planning considerations, it is considered that the proposed development would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. It is therefore recommended that the Council approve the proposed development by resolution, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the commencement of the development an architectural conservation report shall be carried out for the proposed development and all recommendations of same included in the final design. Particular attention shall be given to the surfaces finishes and proposed kerbs for the development, which shall reuse the existing cut stone and replace with similar where necessary. The exact finishes shall be agreed with the Planning Sections in advance.

Reason: In the interests of proper and sustainable development of the area



Dónall Mac an Bheatha

Senior Planner. 20/04/2021