



Laois County Council

Portarlinton Permeability Schemes 2023 Scheme 02 – St. Brigid's Square to Canal Road

Report of Particulars of Proposed Development

(In accordance with Section 179 3(b) of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 – 2017 and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2017)



Laois County Council			
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REVISION HISTORY

Client	Laois County Council
Project	Portarlinton Permeability Schemes 2023 Scheme 02 – St. Brigid’s Square to Canal Road
Title	Report of Particulars of Proposed Development

Date	Detail of Issue	Issue No.	Origin	Checked	Approved
20/10/2023	Initial Issue for Part 8	PL2	MK	PB	KP

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1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Part XI, Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, and Part 8, Articles 80 & 81 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, Laois County Council has given notice of its intention to carry out development comprising pathfinder improvement works and active travel measures in Portarlinton [the proposed development] between St. Brigid's Square and Canal Road.

This report is prepared for inclusion with the Plans and Particulars being made available for public inspection in accordance with the above Act and Regulations. It describes the need for and objectives of the Development and provides a detailed description of the Development.

This report is to be read in conjunction with the following drawings which show details of the proposed Development and which, along with this Report, will also be made available for public inspection:

Drawing Number	Title
22007-DR-PF02-200	Site Location Map
22007-DR-PF02-201	General Layout - Sheet 1 of 2 (St. Brigid's Square - Arlington)
22007-DR-PF02-202	General Layout - Sheet 2 of 2 (Arlington - Canal Road)

Table 1-1 Drawings

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The town of Portarlinton, which is identified in the Laois County Development Plan 2021~2027 as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town, is situated on the county boundary between Laois and Offaly. It has a railway station through which the Dublin-Cork and Dublin-Galway train lines run. Due in large part due to its proximity to the Greater Dublin Area and its location on the rail network, Portarlinton has experienced significant population growth from 4,001 persons in 2002 to 8,368 persons in 2016 and the latest 2022 census data shows a further increase to 10,450.

The results of Census 2016 provide the following breakdown of transport modes for Portarlinton:

- Private Transport 3,510 people (67.4%)
- Public Transport 774 persons (14.9%)
- Active Travel 632 persons (12.1%).

Most of the population reside within 1.5km of the town centre and so there is great potential for a modal shift from private modes of transport to walking and cycling in the town.

Portarlinton contains a number of key destinations that are critical to the success of measures to encourage a transition to active modes of travel:

- Presentation Primary School (548 Pupils) Station Road
- St. Patricks Primary School (569 Pupils) Canal Road
- Sandy Lane National School (88 Pupils) Sandy Lane
- Coláiste Íosagáin Secondary School (1092 Pupils) Kilmalogue, Co. Offaly
- McCann GAA Park Canal Road
- Portarlinton Train Station Station Road
- Portarlinton Leisure Centre Link Road.

The three Primary Schools are all situated in the southeast quadrant of the town in County Laois, while the only second level school is in Co. Offaly, located in the northwest quadrant of the town.

There are also a number of busy retail premises which would both benefit from and encourage a shift to active modes of travel.

3. NEED FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Policy Context

The National Planning Framework (NPF) includes a National Policy Objective to prepare a Joint Local Area Plan where a town and its environs, such as Portarlinton, lie within the combined functional area of more than one Local Authority.

The current Portarlinton Joint Local Area Plan 2018~2024 (Joint LAP) was therefore prepared by Laois County Council and Offaly County Council in accordance with the requirements and provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. It sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Portarlinton, in the context of the Laois County Development Plan 2017 – 2023, Offaly County Development Plan 2014 - 2020 and the Midland Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022.

The Strategic Aim of the Joint LAP is:

- To promote and facilitate a sustainable transport system that prioritises and provides for walking, cycling and public transport facilities while ensuring sufficient traffic management.

The Joint LAP contains the following objectives:

- TM O8: Develop a cycle network throughout the town linking population, town centre, schools, community facilities, green infrastructure and the train station in accordance with the principles set out in Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013) and the NTA National Cycling Manual principles and standards.
- TM O9: Provide a permeable pedestrian network within the plan area which links residential areas, the town centre, schools, community facilities, green infrastructure and the train station.

Portarlinton currently provides limited facilities for cyclists, and with many key locations such as schools and sports clubs situated at different areas of the town, there is a general need to provide appropriate active travel facilities throughout the town.

3.2 Specific Need

A large residential area, comprising St. Brigid's Square and Arlington Estate, relies entirely on a single access for all road users to the public road network, this being a simple priority junction on to Bracklone Street.

Although a busy road carrying regional road traffic through Portarlinton, development on Bracklone Street is primarily residential with most parking for these residences being on-street. Bracklone Street has no dedicated facilities for cyclists and facilities for pedestrians are not to a desirable standard. The available width between opposing building lines / property boundaries is limited and so there is currently no practicable means of providing appropriate active travel facilities on Bracklone Street while also maintaining existing traffic flows and parking arrangements.

As a result, there is effectively no scope for active travel between this residential area and the school on Canal Road.



Plate 3.1 – Bracklone Street

3.3 Conclusion

There is a need for an active travel network to connect St. Brigid's Square and Arlington Estate to St. Patrick's National School on Canal Road. This network would have the additional benefit of improving accessibility for active travel between these residential areas and Presentation Primary School.

4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Details of the proposed development are shown on the drawings listed in Table 1-1. The main elements of the proposed development are described below.

Facilities being provided will comprise footways and cycle-tracks, where pedestrians and cyclists are segregated from one another, or shared surfaces, where pedestrians and cyclists shares the same facility.

4.1 St. Brigid's Square to Arlington Estate

There are existing pedestrian links from St. Brigid's Square to Presentation Primary School and from St. Brigid's Square to Arlington Estate.

There is also an existing informal hardcore path through the former Avon site which connects Arlington Estate to Canal Road. A zebra crossing on Canal Road facilitates access to St. Patrick's Primary School.

At St. Brigid's Square and Arlington Estate there are currently footways on both sides, with many residents parking on the existing verge or on-street.



Plate 4.1 – St. Brigid's Square

Carriageway widths at St. Brigid's Square and Arlington Estate vary from 6m to 7.5m wide which are excessive for residential streets.



Plate 4.2 – Arlington Estate

Proposals

Provide a 30kmh / Children at Play sign at the entrance to St. Brigid's Square from Bracklone Street.

Upgrade the existing link from St. Brigid's Square to Presentation Primary School and existing walkway from Arlington Estate to Canal Road to provide a shared surface in each case.

Provide an active travel network through St. Brigid's Square and Arlington Estate. Carriageway widths will be reduced as required to allow sufficient width for this network

Provide parallel parking bays to regularise the on-street parking which occurs throughout both estates.

Encourage a low-speed traffic environment by installing speed ramps and raised tables at junctions and by reducing kerb radii at junctions.

Provide a shared surface on Canal Road to connect the shared surface emerging from the AVON lands to the existing zebra crossing on Canal Road.

5. LAND ACQUISITION AND RIGHTS- OF WAY

5.1 Land acquisition

The proposed development includes the following land-take or wayleave in respect of property that is not in public ownership:

- lands being part of the former AVON site are required to facilitate provision of the shared surface connecting Arlington Estate with Canal Road..

5.2 Rights of way

The proposed development does not require the extinguishment of any rights of way.