

Title of Report:	Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	15th December 2020
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, healthy & engaged communities
Outcome	Citizens will have access to Council recreational facilities and protected natural environments which help them to develop their physical, emotional and cognitive health.
Lead Officer	Head of Sport & Wellbeing

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£100,000
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	Capital
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of the paper is to update Members on progress to date with the development of a Play Park in Aghadowey and request Stage 1 approval of the Outline Business Case and permission to proceed to Stage 2 of Council's four step capital approval process.

2.0 Background

In 2017 Council agreed to prioritise a list of 10 capital projects. The 7th ranked project was Aghadowey Play Park. In compliance with Stage 1 of the Council's capital approval process the next stage is the development of an Outline Business Case (OBC).

Concurrent with this capital planning process, Council commissioned Playboard NI to undertake a Play Strategy for the Borough. This work was completed in 2018 with the research and analysis informing the Needs & Demand Assessment for this project.

The OBC has been developed on the basis of an extensive consultation process resourced by the Council and undertaken by Playboard NI. The consultation process set out to establish, at a local level, if need and demand existed through extensive consultation with young people, parent/carers and the wider public.

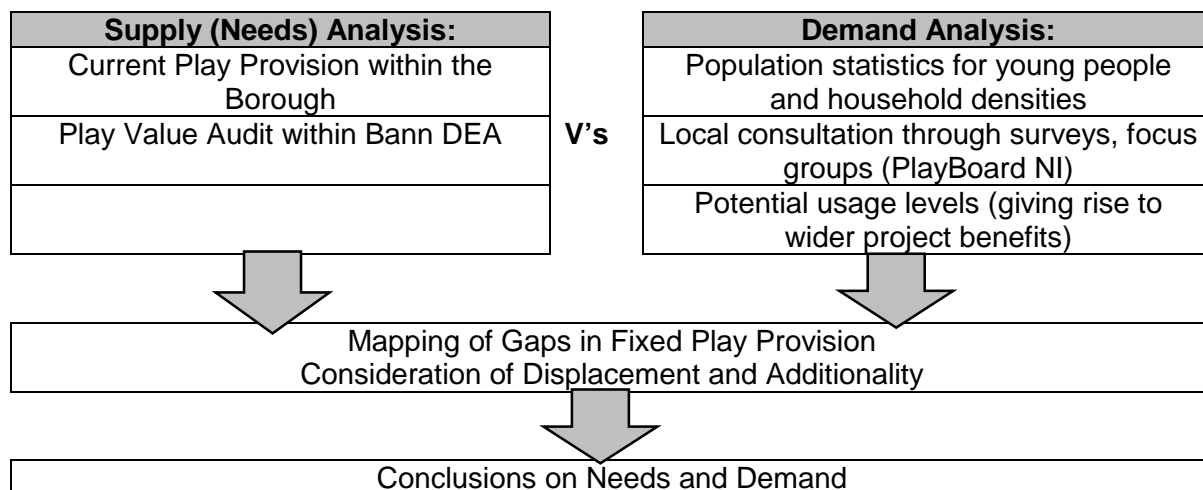
The appraisal process, carried out in line with the Northern Ireland Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation (NIGEAE, 2009) sets out to confirm:

- That need and demand exists for a play area in Aghadowey;
- The location, nature and scale of development; and
- The overall benefits and value for money from any investment proposed.

The OBC has been prepared by Strategic Investment Board and included as **Annexe A**.

3.0 Need and Demand Assessment

The following approach was used to determine need and demand for the project:



The following conclusions are drawn from the needs and demand assessment:

- There is a need for a fixed play area in Aghadowey that meets the requirements of a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP);
- The existing play parks in Bann DEA have been rated Low to Upper Mid in terms of Play Value and need ongoing monitoring and maintenance to meet local need in those neighbourhoods;

- Local and extensive consultation facilitated through Playboard NI with 126 respondents indicates that the majority (74%) of people are supportive of a new play area;
- Indicative usage levels of existing play areas from those consulted were high, although this was highly contingent on the play park offering, with 94% of people suggesting at least weekly usage (c.200 children and young people residing in the catchment area and pupils attending Culcrow Primary School);
- The identification of potential land options to meet the identified need and demand have also been consulted upon and are considered further in Section 5 of the OBC – Option identification and shortlisting;
- Displacement and additionality from any new play park developed has also been assessed with no displacement concerns identified and the potential for substantial additionality (wider benefits) to be realised; and
- In summary, there is a case in terms of both facility need and demand for a new play park to address the play needs in the rural catchment area of Aghadowey.

4.0 Objectives

The following objectives are identified for the project over the first five years:

- To develop a play park that achieves the upper-mid standard of ‘Play Value’ as independently audited by Playboard NI (play value of 481-600);
- To actively promote and monitor general usage of play park by local schools, playgroups and children using in the area; and
- To ensure that the capital project is well managed and delivered on time, to budget and high quality standards.

5.0 Options Analysis

Given that Council does not own land in Aghadowey, the Capital Delivery Team undertook Site Appraisal to determine up to 4 potential third party sites suitable within the area:

- Site 1 – Culcrow Primary School;
- Site 2 – Shop and Post Office;
- Site 3 – Clarehill Park; and
- Site 4 – Brown Trout Golf and Country Inn.



On completion of the site assessment, the highest scoring site is: Culcrow Primary School with a score of 61, followed by Clarehill Park with a score of 57 and Shop and Post Office 55. It should be noted that when assessing Site 1 Culcrow Primary School, the criteria were assessed including the proposals from the Education Authority.

The long list of options considered the proposed site options above and potential variations in terms of scale, content, location and timing of project delivery as follows:

Description of Options	Rationale for Selection or Rejection
Do Nothing: Maintain 'Status Quo'	Included in short list for comparative purposes.
Variations in Content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play park only. • Play park and car parking. 	Both project components are deemed essential to meet needs and objectives identified and ensure safe access and use of the new facility.
Variations in Scale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAP equipment provision (500m² area with 5-7 pieces of equipment). • NEAP equipment provision (1000m² area with 8+ pieces of equipment). 	Given that this project relates to a small play park in line with PlayboardNI's guidance for a LEAP, it is anticipated that 5-7 pieces of play equipment will be sufficient. The analysis above clearly indicates that investment of up to £100k is proportionate with the need and demand in the rural catchment of Aghadowey. Options for greater investment will not offer value for money and have not been shortlisted for full appraisal.
Variations in Location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site 1 – Culcrow Primary School; • Site 2 – Shop and Post Office; • Site 3 – Clarehill Park. 	3 sites were deemed technically feasible and ranked highest in the Feasibility Report. However, discussions with the Education Authority and Culcrow Primary School over the potential use of land (site 1) for a shared access play park is deemed to offer good value for money. All other sites involve land acquisition from third parties which not only reduce the capital available for investment in the play equipment but also potentially protract timescales. Given the time pressure and public expectation to deliver the project all other options have been discounted.
Variations in Timing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full development. • Phased Approach. 	Given the time pressure and public expectation to deliver this project a phased approach has not been selected for full economic appraisal.

On the basis that Culcrow Primary School is the only viable site option for development, initial site analysis was carried by Education Authority to include provision for a 500m² area for 5-7 pieces of equipment as illustrated below in the blue box adjacent to the new car park:



It should be noted that this proposal is subject to final assessment within the Business Case currently being developed by EA and it is anticipated that this will be completed in December 2020. It is also worth highlighting that the proposals will be subject to internal EA approvals together with DE approvals in relation to acquisition of additional lands, subject to statutory approvals and funding. The proposed community use facility will also be subject to agreements between EA and Council being in place.

6.0 Economic Appraisal & Preferred Option

In line with NIGEAE guidance, the full economic appraisal assessed costs, benefits and risks:

Costs (monetary factors)	Benefits (non-monetary factors)	Risks (project specific)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital costs (including construction costs, professional fees, statutory charges, opportunity costs and residual values). • Recurrent costs of project delivery (including any staffing, overheads, maintenance). • Income generation potential. • Net Present Cost calculations and results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment and contribution to Council's Strategic Priorities. • Addressing identified strategic need in the Borough. • Adherence to Principles of the Sport & Wellbeing 'Health and Wellbeing Mandate'. • Delivering better health and wellbeing outcomes for the local community. • Impact on statutory requirements (S75/RNA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital cost overruns. • Construction/Programming delays. • Delay or failure to obtain planning permission/statutory approvals. • Project funding risks. • Lack of clarity of roles/responsibilities for the project. • Failure to deliver address identified needs and deliver project objectives. • Low levels of community use. • Community resistance to facilities.

The table below summarises the results of the monetary, non-monetary and risk analyses:

Option	Capital Cost £'k	Net Present Cost		Non-monetary Benefits		Project Risk		Overall Rank
		£'k	Ran	Score	Rank	Score	Ran	
Option 1 – Do Nothing	0	0	1	100	2	14	2	5
Option 2 – New Play Park at Culcrow Primary School (LEAP Specification)	100	(129	2	730	1	11	1	4

Based on the OBC analysis, **Option 2 – New Play Park and car parking at Culcrow Primary School (LEAP Specification)** is the preferred option. The basis for this is outlined below:

- Capital costs of £100k with no land acquisition costs allowing for full expenditure on play equipment and experience;
- Opportunity for shared school and community use arrangements making better use of the new facility and sharing of recurrent costs through a new License Agreement;
- Highest non-monetary benefits from sustained participation in play by the local rural community of Aghadowey; and
- Lowest risk option reflecting the risk of the projects development at Culcrow Primary School and ability to address the needs and objectives.

7.0 Project Costs and Affordability

It should be noted that outline capital costs have been not yet been prepared by the Capital Delivery Team. The infrastructure and works costs associated with the option are subject to discussion with Education Authority and estimated in the table below:

CAPITAL COSTS	Option 2 £
Hard Surfacing	40,000
Play Equipment	50,000
Fencing and Furniture	10,000
TOTAL CAPITAL COST (incl. fees etc)	100,000

The Play Park elements above will be Council funded with the Education Authority's capital contribution in terms of site valuations and preliminary works is to be confirmed at Stage 2.

In terms of revenue funding, Council is committed to the annual forecasted subvention of £2k per annum (as detailed in Section 6.3 of the OBC) with financial arrangements to be developed at Stage 2 within a new License Agreement with the Education Authority.

8.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the preferred option, **Option 2 – New Play Park at Culcrow Primary School and car parking (LEAP Specification) at a cost of £100k** is progressed to Stage 2, detailed design and full business case for a final investment decision to be taken by Council.

Aghadowey Play Park

Outline Business Case

December 2020

Version	Date	Distribution
1.0 Draft to Needs/Demand	Jan 2019	WMCC
2.0 Complete draft with gaps highlighted	May 2020	WMCC
3.0 Final draft for L&D Committee	Dec 2020	WMCC/RB

Contents

	Executive Summary	Page
1.0	Introduction and Background	1
2.0	Strategic Context	3
3.0	Needs & Demand Assessment	8
4.0	Objectives & Constraints	24
5.0	Option Identification and Shortlisting	25
6.0	Monetary Appraisal	28
7.0	Non-Monetary Appraisal	30
8.0	Risk Appraisal	33
9.0	Results & Selection of Preferred Option	36
10.0	Affordability, Management, Monitoring & Evaluation	38

Appendices

I	Local Consultation Report, PlayBoard NI
II	Site Appraisal Report, Capital Delivery Team
III	Net Present Cost Calculations
IV	LEAP Design Brief

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

This Outline Business Case (OBC) has been prepared by the Strategic Investment Board for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council. The focus of the appraisal is a proposal by Council to invest in the development of a Play Park in Aghadowey. The key context for examining options is the Play Strategy 2018.

The OBC has been developed on the basis of an extensive consultation process resourced by the Council and undertaken by Playboard NI. The consultation process set out to establish, at a local level, if need and demand existed through extensive consultation with young people, parent/carers and wider stakeholders. Consultation has also involved potential partner organisations, including local schools.

The appraisal process, carried out in line with the Northern Ireland Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation (2009) sets out to confirm:

- That need and demand exists for the development of a Play Park in Aghadowey;
- The location, nature and scale of development; and
- The overall benefits and value for money from any investment proposed.

1.2 Background

In 2017 Council agreed to prioritise a list of 10 capital projects. In compliance with stage one of the Council's four-stage capital project management process the next stage for each project was the development of an OBC.

Two of these projects relate to play parks as follows:

- Priority 1: Limavady Accessible Play Park; and
- Priority 7 (shared): Aghadowey Play Park.

Concurrent with this capital planning process Council commissioned Playboard to undertake a Play Audit and Play Strategy (including investment priorities) for the Borough. This work was completed in 2018 with the research and analysis forming the basis of the Needs and Demand Assessment for the projects. Limavady Accessible Play Park has recently been approved by Council to progress to Stage 2. This OBC has been prepared for a Play Park in Aghadowey with proportionate effort applied in line with the lower level of investment required.

1.3 Overview of Current Situation in Aghadowey

Aghadowey is located in the Bann DEA which according to the 2011 Census had a population of 17,321 individuals, comprising 3,810 young people between age 0-15 residing within 6,379 households. At present the closest fixed play provision (c.4 miles) is located at Boleran, Metican and Lyttlesdale which are rated 'Lower Mid' in terms of play value.

1.4 Play Investment Strategy

The Play Investment Strategy establishes a strategic and operational framework within which decision making will be made as it relates to the provision and maintenance of fixed play areas and the future development of non-fixed approaches to meeting play need.

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

Central to the strategy is a recognition that play is one of the most, if not the most important activity that children and young people engage in as they grow and develop. The desire to play is a natural, fundamental part of children's lives. By supporting active engagement in play through the childhood years this strategy seeks to support children's development in a number of key ways by:

- Providing fun and enjoyable means of developing physical and mental health and wellbeing;
- Supporting the development of social connections and friendships through social play opportunities;
- Supporting intellectual growth and the development of practical skills through the provision of creative and more challenging play opportunities;
- Supporting children to develop their personal resilience through play; and
- Establishing a connection between children at play and the community in which they live.

In order to support the development of the strategy Council commissioned PlayBoard NI to undertake a number of key pieces of work including:

1. The completion of a play value audit of all fixed play areas maintained by the Council to identify those offering limited play value and those requiring remedial action;
2. Completion of an evaluation of demographic and settlement patterns to identify potential gap areas that may require the development of fixed play provision; and
3. An assessment of underlying demographic demand for fixed play to identify potentially redundant fixed play areas.

Underpinning the strategy are a number of key aims which, if successfully achieved will enhance the developmental value, scope and range of play opportunities available to children and young people across the Borough:

- To support children and young people to be able to engage in both fixed and non-fixed play opportunities that meet their developmental needs;
- To ensure that Fixed Play Areas are attractive, welcoming, safe but challenging, accessible and inclusive for all abilities offering a high level of play value through programmed capital upgrading, maintenance and renewal;
- To ensure effective targeting of capital investment in new fixed play development at those locations which are identified as being in most need through assessment of underlying demographic need;
- To ensure that children, young people, parents and communities have an integral role in decision making on play provision, both fixed and non-fixed;
- To enable communities to take an active role in the development and delivery of non-fixed play opportunities through dedicated support including volunteer training, mentoring and access to 'loose-parts' play pods;
- To highlight the benefits of play whilst encouraging adults within the wider community to recognise both the play needs and valuable contribution children make to community life; and
- Where local demographic circumstances preclude council intervention, to support communities to develop sustainable solutions to meeting local play need.

1.4 Remainder of this Report

This OBC takes the strategic case for investment outlined above and seeks to appraise the need, demand and feasible options to develop a Play Park in Aghadowey subject to land availability and in consultation with the local community.

2.0 Strategic Context

2.1 Introduction

In addition to the individual and societal benefits of play, Council operates within a wider International, Regional and Local strategic context which highlights the importance of meeting play need. The following strategies have been considered within this review:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Draft NI Programme for Government;
- NI Children and Young Peoples Strategy (2017 to 2027);
- DHSSPS Fitter Future for All Framework (2012 – 2022);
- Making Life Better (2013 – 2023);
- Strategic Planning Policy Statement;
- Community Planning; and
- Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Strategy (2015 to 2019).

2.2 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights.

The UNCRC was ratified by the UK government in 1991, committing all branches of government to ensuring that children are afforded the rights and protections contained within its articles. The child's Right to Play is specifically highlighted in Article 31 which states:

- *“That every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts”.*
- *“That governments shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity”.*

2.3 Draft NI Programme for Government

The draft Programme for Government acknowledged play as an important aspect of childhood noting its importance in terms of development, well-being and enjoyment of childhood. In 2009 the Executive published its Play and Leisure Policy Statement which highlighted its commitment to delivering against the play and leisure needs of children and young people. This was followed in March 2011 by the Executive's endorsement of the 'Play and Leisure Policy' and an associated implementation plan.

At the heart of the policy is a recognition that play is not only critical to the individual child in terms of their health and wellbeing; but also that play has a key role in creating cohesive communities and tackling a range of issues including anti-social behaviour, inter-generational issues and the legacy of community division left over by the troubles. The policy recognises and highlights the importance of risk in play to allow children to explore boundaries and test abilities in such cases where it can be shown that the benefits to the child outweigh the potential risks.

2.4 NI Children and Young Peoples Strategy (2017 to 2027)

The Department of Education have responsibility for the roll-out of the new ten-year Children and Young Peoples Strategy which will run from 2017 to 2027. The strategy is aligned to the eight parameters of children's well-being as identified within the Children's Services Co-operation Act (2015) and includes as one of its key outcome areas the enjoyment of play and leisure.

2.5 DHSSPS Fitter Future for All Framework (2012 – 2022)

The overarching aim of 'Fitter Future for All' is to support people to make healthy choices, reducing overall levels of obesity and improving health and wellbeing amongst the general population.

The Strategy recognises the critical role of play in reducing childhood obesity levels and highlights the importance of rural and natural landscapes as well as urban design and planning in delivering playable, green infrastructure (which encourages outdoor activity levels), accessible play areas and play activities, and active travel routes.

2.6 Making Life Better (2013 – 2023)

'Making Life Better' outlines the NI Executives objective of creating the conditions for individuals, families and communities to take greater control over their lives, enabling and supporting them to lead healthy lives.

The focus of 'Making Life Better' is on collaborative working between individuals, communities and partner organisations to address the range of factors that impact on health and wellbeing in Northern Ireland. Underpinning 'Making Life Better' are 6 key themes:

1. Giving Every Child the Best Start
2. Equipped Throughout Life
3. Empowering Healthy Living
4. Creating the Conditions
5. Empowering Communities
6. Developing Collaboration

The importance of play is outlined under outcome 2 of thematic area 1 entitled 'Healthy and confident children and young people' which gives a commitment to "Promote the benefits of play and leisure and increase opportunities for children and young people to enjoy it" on a cross-government basis including key Executive departments and local government.

2.7 Strategic Planning Policy Statement

The planning system has been reformed and restructured from a unitary system where planning powers rested with the Department to a two-tier model of delivery whereby Councils have responsibility for the implementation of key planning functions.

The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) was published on the 28th September 2015 and reduces 20 separate planning policy statements to one, setting out objectives for open space, recreation and leisure. The SPPS also states how the Local Development Plan plays a role in terms of open space i.e. adequate provision for green and blue infrastructure, identification and designation of areas of open space etc.

Under the SPSS the policy provision of PPS 7 (Quality Residential Environments) and PPS 8 (Open Space and Outdoor recreation), both of which have relevance to the provision of play space are retained.

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

PPS7 (Quality Residential Environments) highlights the need for developers to consider the play needs of future residents within development plans outlining that:

- Play facilities should be seen as part of local neighbourhood facilities and (where required) should be incorporated into design and layout, designed to high standard and located to provide focal points and landmark features;
- It is considered reasonable to expect developers to contribute to the cost of provision and/or to set land aside for use by local community; and
- Regard should be given to integrating pleasant, attractive and landscaped areas of open space, including children's play-spaces, as an intrinsic element of any new residential development.

PPS 8 (Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation) develops on the strategic guidelines included in PPS7 and states:

“For residential development of 100 units or more, or for development sites of 5 hectares or more, an equipped children’s play area will be required as an integral part of the development. The Department will consider an exception to this requirement where an equipped children’s play area exists within reasonable walking distance (generally around 400 metres) of the majority of the units within the development scheme.”

Paragraph 5.14 emphasises the importance of providing for children’s play stressing the need for play areas to be located within a reasonable walking distance of where they live whilst not being located so close to dwellings that they are likely to cause nuisance for residents.

2.8 Community Planning

Introduced under the Review of Public Administration, Community Planning is a new responsibility for Council requiring it *“...to initiate, maintain, facilitate and participate in community planning for its district.”*

Community planning aims to develop a long term vision and plan for the area based on an analysis of overarching needs, priorities and opportunities. The process involves a wide range of partners including, amongst others the PSNI, Tourism NI, Education Authority, Health and Social Care Trust and Housing Executive.

The Community Plan will act as a strategic planning tool and will be the over-arching process framework for partnerships and initiatives in the area and at a local and neighbourhood level.

As part of the community planning process Council undertook a series of public engagement meetings in June 2016 which identified a number of key issues for the partnership including:

- A lack of well-resourced and high value play areas;
- A lack of accessible play areas for children with disabilities; and
- A lack of green spaces within urban areas that lend themselves to play and recreation.

2.9 Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Strategy (2015 to 2019)

The Council’s strategy sets the direction and standards for Council to take over the period 2015 to 2019. Within the strategy Council identifies its mission as being to:

Improve the quality of life and well-being for all of our citizens and visitors by:

- Providing effective and sustainable local public services;

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

- Accelerating our economy and improving our economic prosperity;
- Placing local communities at the heart of decision making;
- Protecting and enhancing our unique natural environment and assets; and
- Advocating for the area and our citizens in both local and international arenas.

In seeking to achieve this mission the strategy identifies five key strategic themes, of most relevance is Theme 4:

Strategic Theme	We Will Achieve These Outcomes by 2019
Resilient, healthy and engaged communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will work to support healthy lifestyle choices for all citizens; • Citizens will have access to Council recreational facilities and protected natural environments which help them to develop their physical, emotional and cognitive health; and • Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough.

Strategic theme 4 focuses on supporting citizens to make healthy lifestyle choices and the provision of recreational facilities. As previously noted, the opportunity for children to engage in regular, active physical play from birth and throughout childhood has been shown to be one of the most effective ways of improving health and wellbeing. Physical play encourages children to be more active, helping to reduce childhood obesity; improving self-confidence and impacting positively on mental health.

Furthermore, research has shown that patterns of physical activity established through childhood play impact on activity levels in later life. By enabling children to be more active through play it is possible to introduce healthy lifestyle and exercise patterns which persist into adulthood.

In their report 'Start Active, Stay Active' (2011) the 4 UK Chief Medical Officers highlight the importance of active play opportunities in improving health and wellbeing noting:

- “Younger children begin their active lives through play“;
- “Children of pre-school age who can stand and walk need opportunities to play that allow them to develop their fundamental movement skills and master their physical environment“;
- “Physical activity, especially in the form of play, is a basic and essential behaviour that must be fostered and encouraged during the first five years of life“; and
- “Young children also need the freedom to create their own opportunities for active play, lead their own activities, direct their own play and engage in imaginative play“.

Ensuring that children and young people are afforded opportunities to engage in both formal and non-formal play opportunities within the community will be critical in supporting Council as it seeks to meet strategic theme 4.

The final piece of the Council’s strategic context is the service level mandate set for the Council’s Sport and Wellbeing service which is tasked with creating:

- Increased levels of participation in physical activity;
- Improved health and wellbeing; and
- An enhanced quality of life;

By providing:

- High quality leisure and sports services;
- Accessible to all via needs-based programmes;
- Sustainable facility provision, enhanced by;
- Effective partnership working

The 'Council Strategy 2015-2019' emphasises the importance of focusing on people and communities, of getting people more physically active, of communities working together, of sustainability in the provision of facilities and of improved health, both mental and physical, all contributing to an enhanced quality of life for everyone. All these are key 'drivers' for the Council's Play Strategy.

2.10 Summary

Over recent year's acknowledgement of play's critical role in shaping the lives' of children, young people and its positive impact on wider society has become more explicit at policy level regionally, nationally and internationally. It is clear that the wider policy environment both recognises the importance of play in relation to children's health and wellbeing, welfare and development and is supportive of Council decision to establish a play investment strategy.

Critically, whilst recognising the role of Councils in meeting play need, policies consistently acknowledge that no single organisation has within its remit the capacity to address all of the issues that impact on or restrict children's play opportunities.

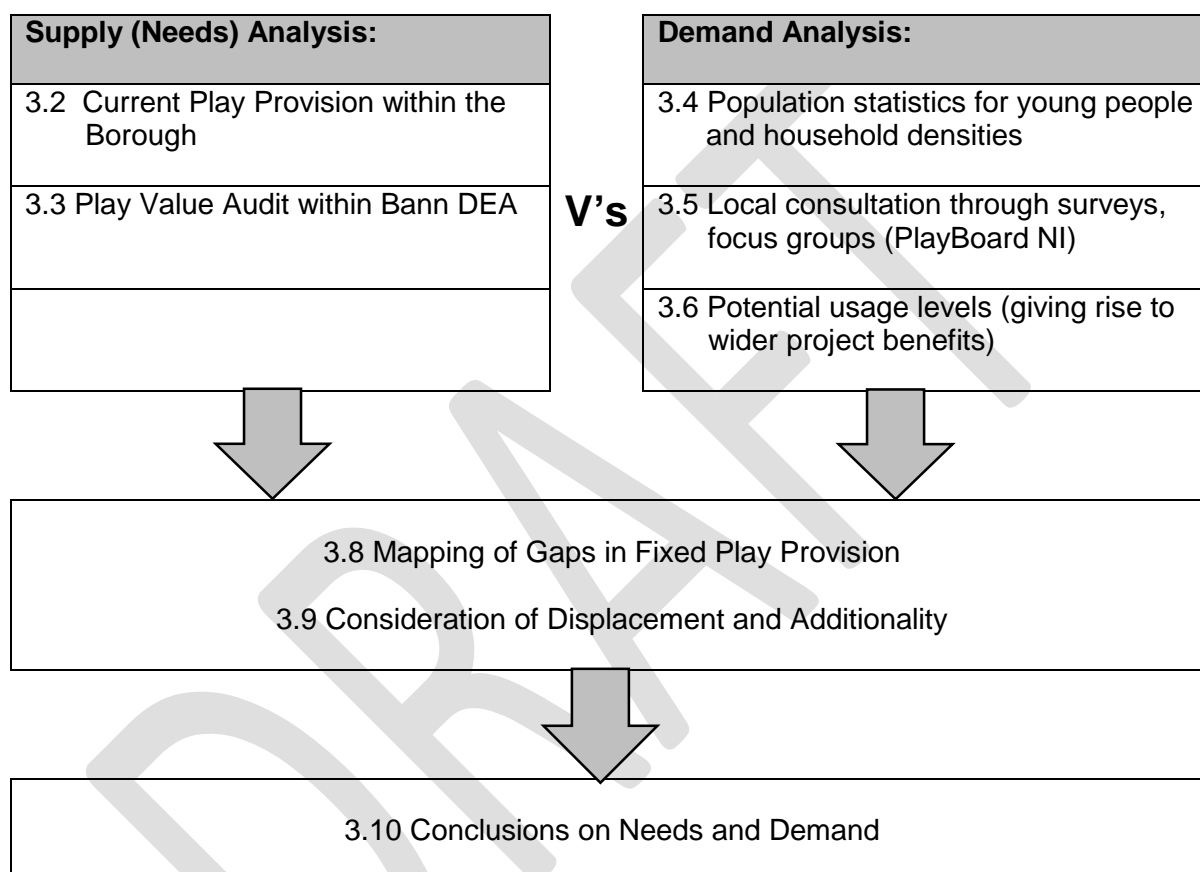
Responsibility for delivering play opportunities that meet the needs of children and young people lies across all policy arenas, hence the critical importance of the Community Planning Partnership in the roll-out the play investment strategy.

3.0 Needs & Demand Assessment

3.1 Introduction

The strategic case for investment and wider strategic fit has been established in the previous sections. This section now seeks to establish local need and demand for fixed play provision in Aghadowey and reviews the supply of play provision and associated needs against both existing and potential demand within the community.

The section concludes with mapping potential gaps and drawing conclusions on the project requirements that can satisfy both needs and demand illustrated as follows:



3.2 Current Play Provision within the Borough

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is currently responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of 99 fixed play areas. These typically consist of a range of fixed play equipment (for example swings, slides, roundabouts etc.) located within a designated, often fenced off area.

The fixed play areas vary in size and scope depending on their location and the number of households they are designed to provide for. Smaller play areas often consist of 3 or less pieces of play equipment with larger sites offering 15 plus pieces of play equipment, often alongside wider parkland or recreational activities.

The development, installation and upkeep of fixed play areas represents a significant financial commitment for Council, both in terms of the initial capital outlay, ongoing renewal of equipment and long-term maintenance costs. It is therefore critical that our play areas offer a high level of play value, meeting the needs of children and parents/carers alike.

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

There are at present 99 fixed play areas across the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area (see location map overleaf). The majority of play areas (97) are classified as Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP's). LEAP's are open spaces which have been specifically designed and laid out with features and equipment aimed at children who are beginning to go out and play independently close to where they live.

A Local Equipped Area for Play (often referred to as a LEAP) is an area of open space specifically designated and laid out with playable features including equipment for children who are beginning to play independently close to their home.

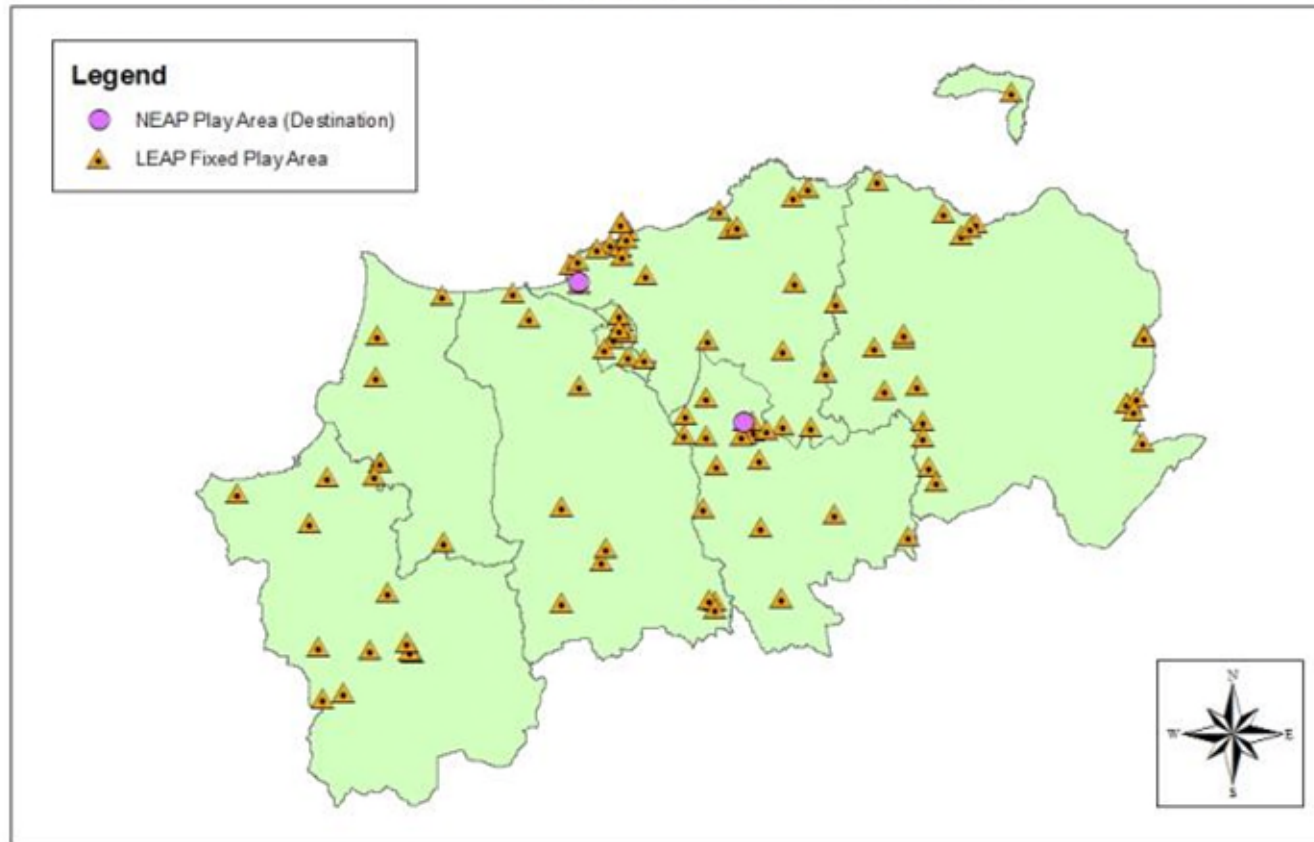
Generally designed for use by children aged between 4 and 12 years, but with due consideration to the needs of other age ranges and user profiles as required, LEAPs should offer a minimum activity zone of 400m².

Traditionally LEAPs were defined by having a minimum of 5 types of play equipment available; in recognition of the merits of non-fixed play this has recently been amended by Fields in Trust to the provision of at least six play experiences from the table below:

Fields in Trust Identified Play Experiences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balancing• Rocking• Climbing• Overhead activity• Sliding• Swing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jumping• Crawling• Rotating• Imaginative play• Social play• Play with natural materials

The design brief and example LEAP designs are referenced in the Play Strategy and have informed the option constraints and costing of feasible options.

Map showing the Location of Fixed Play Areas across Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Area



Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

3.3 Play Value Audit within Bann DEA

As part of the strategy development process PlayBoard NI undertook an assessment of the play value of all fixed play areas. Play value is a critical consideration in assessing the degree to which play areas meet the needs of children. By way of example, a play area with a low level of play value will provide little appeal to children and young people, is likely to have low levels of usage and will not enhance children’s play experiences or support their development.

The play value of a site is impacted on by a range of factors including:

1. The variety, range and age span provided for by the fixed play equipment within the play area;
2. The condition of the play equipment;
3. The range of play types supported by the play area including the availability of all ability play opportunities;
4. Wider locational and site factors including the attractiveness of the site for play, overall condition, indicative level of usage, damage to equipment through vandalism, environmental factors etc; and
5. Accessibility of the play area for those who would wish to use it.

Play value audits were undertaken by PlayBoard NI and gave consideration to a number of key areas including:

Areas Assessed	Description
Locational factors	Attractiveness and welcoming nature of the play setting; level of community oversight; vandalism and cleanliness of site; level of perimeter fencing etc.
Accessibility factors	Condition of pathway surfaces; condition of play surfaces; entrance and layout accessibility etc. (inclusive play opportunities assessed separately)
Environmental factors	Presence or not of natural vegetation e.g. trees, bushes, shrubs etc.; grass levels; presence of sunny, shaded and sheltered areas; ground modelling; presence of natural play opportunities e.g. rocks, logs etc.; water play opportunities.
Physical play opportunities	Review of physical play opportunities afforded by the play area; range of play equipment available.
Creative play opportunities	Presence of sand, soil or mud play; water play opportunities; presence of loose play parts; opportunities for pretend play (e.g. natural spaces and places that stimulate the imagination, materials which can be manipulated etc.).
Inclusive play opportunities	Presence, scope and scale of inclusive and accessible play opportunities for children with disabilities.
Social play opportunities	Presence of quiet places to sit/chat/think; places to hide; opportunities to interact with a children of different ages and abilities; focused recognition of the social aspect of play for older children e.g. teen shelter.

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

Under the scoring system the maximum play value score possible for a play area was 800 with 4 underlying categories:

1. **Play Areas offering Low Play Value (399 and under)** - Play areas falling within this category (providing that continued demographic need can be demonstrated) are generally in need of upgrade or remedial actions aimed at enhancing play value during the lifetime of the strategy.
2. **Play Areas offering Lower Mid Play Value (400 to 479)** - Play areas scoring between 400 and 479, whilst of slightly higher play value still a limited of play opportunities are likely to require some immediate remedial action above regular maintenance in order to address underlying issues that reduce their play value.
3. **Play Areas offering Upper Mid Play Value (480 to 599)** - Play areas scoring 480 to 599 represent an adequate level of play value for present, however Council should continue to maintain and monitor such sites for reduction in play value on a regular basis to ensure that there is no degradation.
4. **Play Areas offering High Level of Play Value (600+)** - Sites scoring above 600 are deemed to have a high play value and do not require any immediate action beyond ongoing maintenance and regular monitoring of play value.

Bann District Electoral Area (DEA) is located to the Centre West of the overall Council area and comprises five wards – Castlerock, Macosquin, Aghadowey, Garvagh and Kilrea. The precise location of Aghadowey Townland within the Bann DEA is shown below:



Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

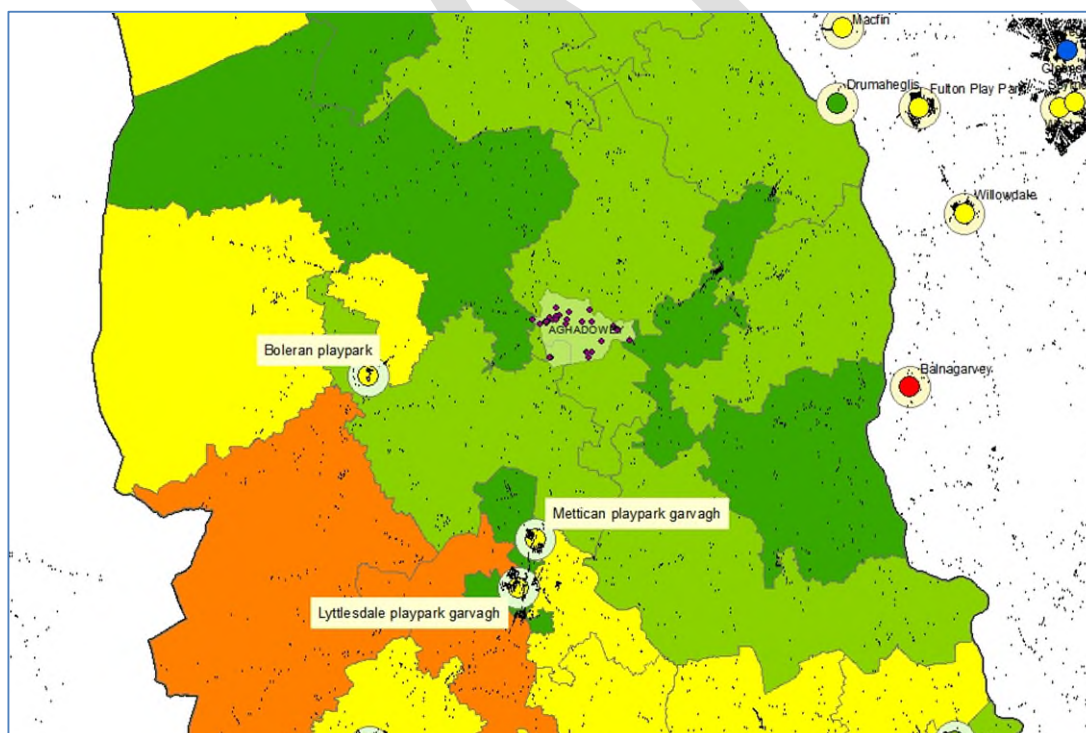
There are at present 9 fixed play areas located within Bann DEA. Following completion of the play value audits:

- 0 are rated as having a high play value (scoring above 601 out of 800);
- 2 within the upper mid category (481 to 600);
- 4 within the lower mid category (scoring between 401 and 480); and
- 3 within the lowest play value category (400 or less).

PV Category	Play Area	Play Value
Low Play Value	Larchfield Gardens	-*
	Lisnagrot	300
	Glenullin	335
	Macosquin	390
Lower Mid Play Value	Mettican	415
	Boleran	440
	Lyttlesdale	450
	Castlerock	475
Upper Mid Play Value	Craiglea	525
	Articlave	540

* Larchfield Gardens closed due to poor condition on health and safety grounds

The play parks located on closest proximity to Aghadowey Townland are Mettican, Boleran and Lyttlesdale as shown on the map below:



Based on the play value audit a number of recommendations have been made regarding immediate and future action required by Council for each fixed play area within the Bann DEA. Actions range from possible removal/transformation of site in cases of low demand/low play value; refurbishment/enhancement for those with continued demand but low play value to maintain and monitor for those with adequate current play value. The full list of recommendations for the Bann DEA area can be found in the table below.

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

Play Area	Play Value Score	Observations	Actions
Lisnagrot	300	Equipment and site in very poor condition offering a very low level of play value. Site is located adjacent to Kilrea Primary School enhancing the level of demand beyond solely residential. Site offers dual development potential with the Primary School.	Council to engage with Primary School to explore partnership potential prior to considering the site for refurbishment.
Glenullin	335	Equipment in poor condition with equipment/safety surfacing missing. Play value is very poor and the site is in need of renewal, however demand appears to be low and should be tested prior to refurbishment.	Consultation to assess demand with site transformation as an option.
Macosquin	390	Equipment shows signs of deterioration alongside surfacing issues (including uneven tiles, moss covered surfaces). Low play value is reflected by the condition of the equipment. Residential demand appears to remain for the site.	Remedial action to address equipment/surfacing issues. Maintain and Monitor within renewal cycle.
Mettican	415	Equipment in good condition with site offering a lower mid-level of play value albeit mainly for younger children.	Maintain and Monitor within renewal cycle. Test demand prior to future renewal.
Boleran	440	Equipment showing signs of deterioration and is aimed mainly at younger children. Demand appears to be relatively low.	Maintain and Monitor. Possible transformation at next renewal.
Lyttlesdale	450	Equipment is in good condition and offers a lower mid-level of play value. Demand appears to remain for the site.	Maintain and Monitor within renewal cycle.
Castlerock	475	Equipment generally in good condition with a fair level of play value. Residential demand appears relatively low, however coastal location suggests seasonal demand for the site.	Maintain and Monitor within renewal cycle.
Craiglea Play Park	525	Equipment generally in good condition with a good level of play value. Demand appears to remain for the site.	Maintain and Monitor within renewal cycle.
Articlave	540	Equipment is of recent installation, is in good condition and offers a good level of play value. Demand appears to remain.	Maintain and Monitor within renewal cycle.

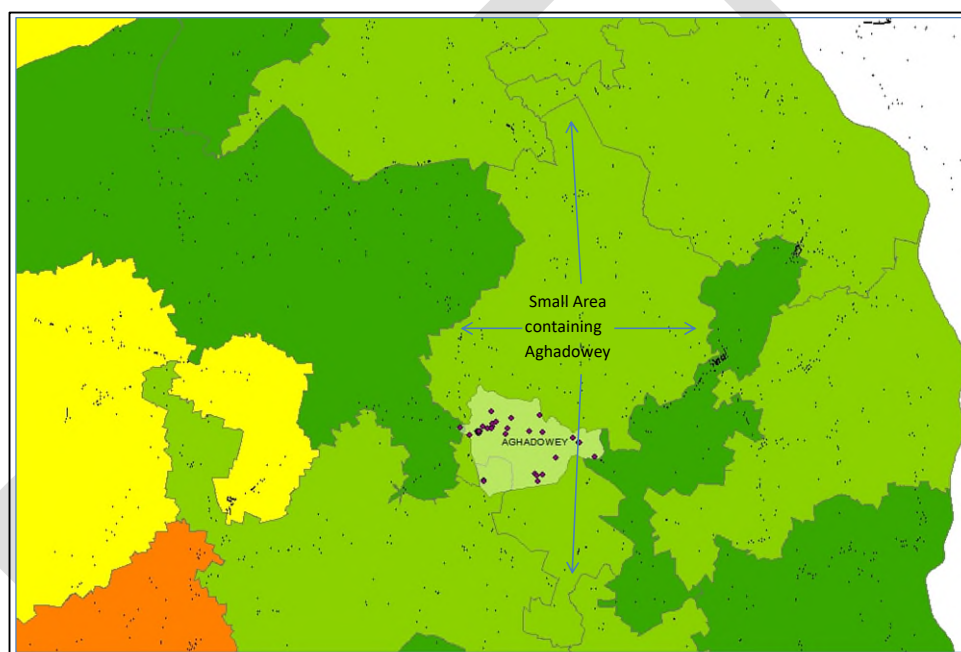
Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

3.4 Population Statistics

According to the 2011 Census Bann DEA had a population of 17,321 individuals, comprising 3,810 young people between age 0-15 residing within 6,379 households. In assessing the level of coverage provided by existing fixed play areas, and to support the identification of potential areas of need two key pieces of statistical and geographical information are used:

- Population estimates and the geographical distribution of 0 to 14 year old's living within the District Electoral Area; and
- Household location data to facilitate household density analysis in line with Accessibility Benchmark Standards (ABS) which identify types of play area and establishes a set of distance thresholds.

In terms of underlying demographics the overall small area which contains Aghadowey has 99 children and young people aged 0 to 14, however a significant proportion reside outside of the townland area as shown in the area marked out below:



Analysis of this specific population data is included under Section 3.7 Mapping of Gaps.

3.5 Local Consultation

PlayBoard NI was commissioned by Council to undertake a review of the level of demand from children/young people, parents/carers and the wider community for the development of a new play park in Aghadowey. The consultation was based on a mixed methods approach with two key methods used to gather the views of those living within the area:

- Online Surveys - An online survey was undertaken using the online Survey Monkey platform with surveys aimed at parents/carers and wider community organisations operating within the Aghadowey area.
- Focus Groups - In order to capture the views of children and young people within the area a focus group was undertaken at Culcrow Primary School.

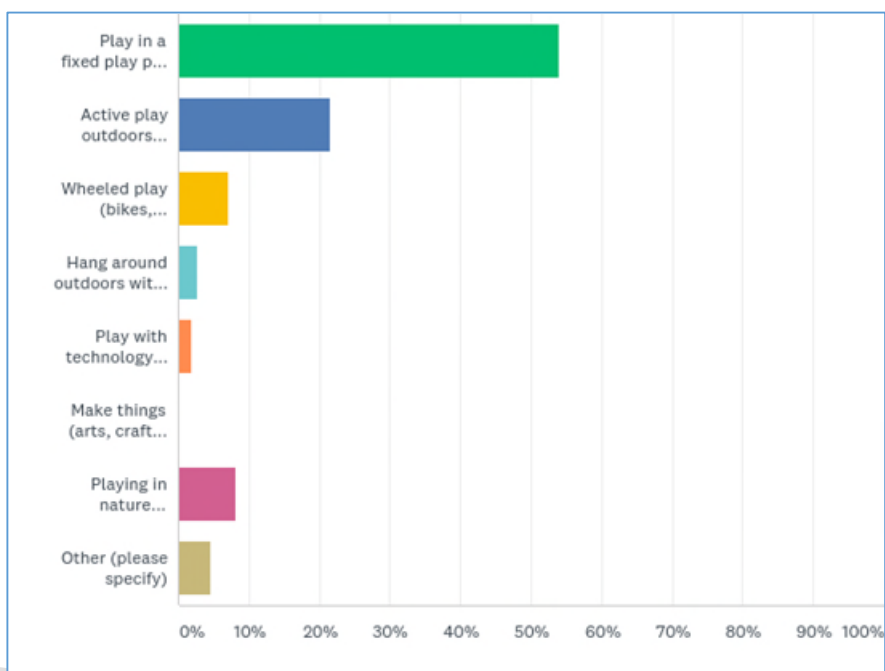
Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

In total 126 parents, carers and community providers participated giving their views through online questionnaires. The survey was divided into a number of sections:

- a) Main play activities engaged in by children in the area;
- b) Level of Play Need/Usage; and
- c) Current Use of fixed play areas and views on their enhancement.

The key findings are presented below with the full consultation report included as Appendix I.

Q. Respondents were asked to indicate what type of play activities their children typically engaged in:



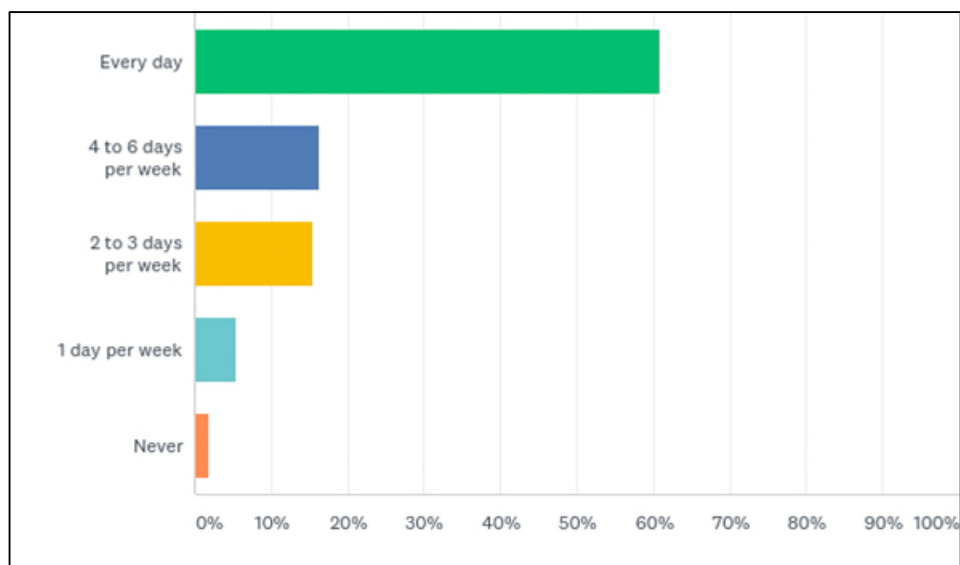
The largest proportion, 54% of respondents indicated that their children engaged in play regularly within a fixed play area; 22% said that their children primarily engaged in active play outdoors (e.g. running, jumping, playing ball games etc.) while 8% said their children enjoy playing in more natural locations (e.g. playing in fields, climbing trees etc.).

Wheeled play activities (e.g. bikes, skateboards etc.) accounted for 7% whilst 3% said that their children's primary play activity was hanging around outdoors with friends. Technology play (e.g. X-Box, PlayStation, Smart Phone etc.) accounted for 2%. The remaining 4.5% of respondents specified "other" which included:

- Play inside primarily due to young age
- Visiting and playing in parks in nearby towns

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

Q. Respondents were asked how often their children played outdoors within the 4 weeks prior to the survey being completed:



The majority of respondents (61%) indicated that their children had played outdoors every day; 16% said that their children had played 4 to 6 days per week; 15% said 2 to 3 days per week; 5% said their children only play outdoors once a week whilst 2% said that their children had not played outdoors during the previous 4 weeks.

Q. Respondents were asked how play opportunities could be enhanced within the Aghadowey area (multiple response question):

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Nothing - no action is required at present	3.81% 4
More open spaces for children to play on	21.90% 23
Provide Fixed Play Park (if suitable and accessible land was available)	88.57% 93
Provide mobile outdoor play support (e.g. a Playworker who would visit the area and set up play activities)	9.52% 10
Improve road safety measures to allow more street play	16.19% 17
Other (please specify)	13.33% 14
Total Respondents: 105	

The largest proportion of respondents (n=93) supported the provision of a fixed play area providing suitable accessible land was available. Other approaches to improving play noted by respondents included provision of more open spaces for children to play on (n=23); improving road safety measures to allow for more street play (n=17); Providing mobile play support (n=10).

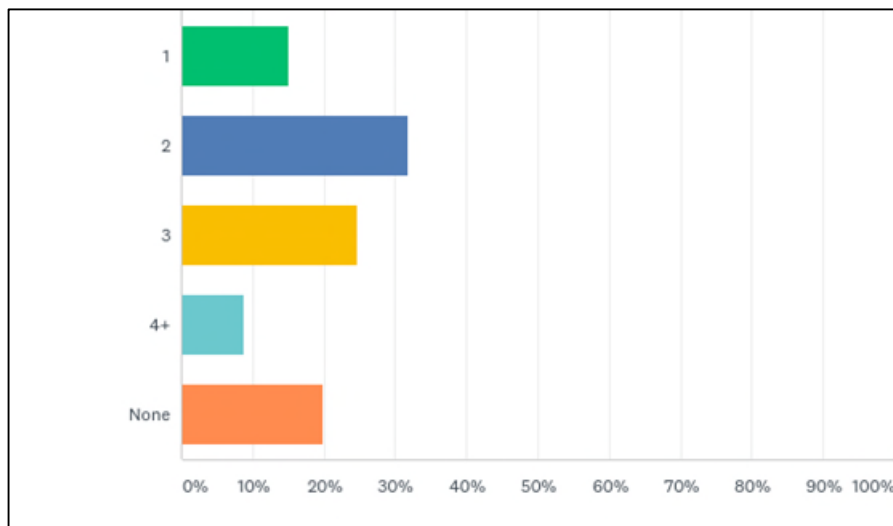
3.6 Potential Usage Levels

Potential usage levels have been taken from both the survey of parents, carers and community providers; and the focus group with children and young people.

3.6.1 Survey of Parents, Carers and Community Providers

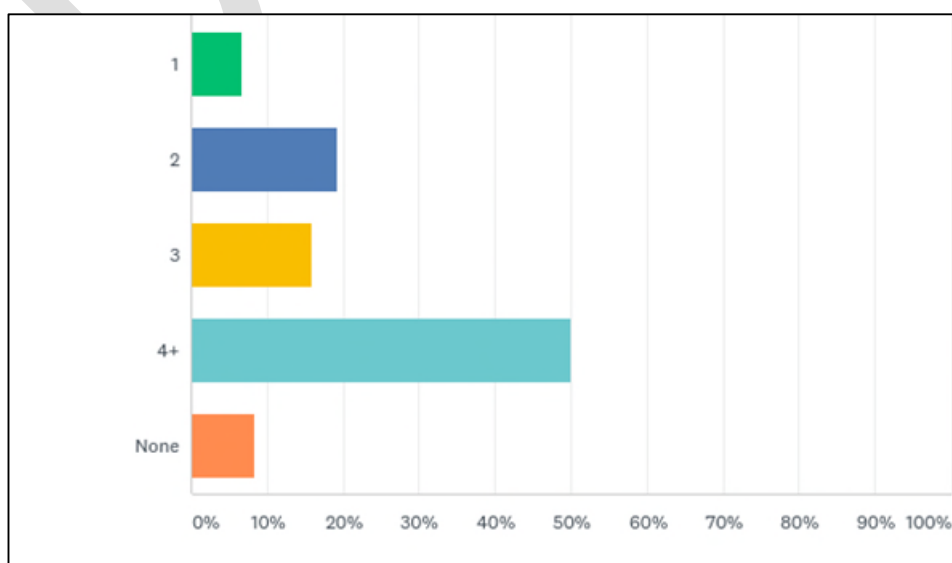
The purpose this section is to provide an overview of the number of potential users of fixed play who reside in, or visit Aghadowey on a regular basis. This section also seeks to identify the number of children with an illness or disability that restricts their play.

Q. Respondents were asked to indicate how many children aged 0 to 14 years lived within their household and whether they had a disability/illness that restricts their play.



The majority of respondents (31%) indicated that they have two children living in their household; 25% of respondents have three children resident in their household; 20% have no children; 15% have one child and 9% said they had four or more children living in their household. Based on the survey the approximate number of 0 to 14 year olds residing within respondent households is 236. Respondents were asked to indicate if any of the resident children had a disability or illness that restricted their play. In total 9% (11n) of respondents reported that a child with a disability or illness that restricts their play lived within their home.

Q. With a view to determining the level of visiting need to the area (for example grandchildren) respondents were asked to indicate the number of children and young people who the household on a regular basis.



Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

The majority of respondents (50%) indicated that four or more children visit their household on a regular basis; 19% have two children visiting on a regular basis with 16% having three children visiting their household on a regular basis. Of the remainder, 8% of respondents have no children who visit their household and 7% have one child who visits their household on a regular basis. 10% of children visiting these households have a disability or illness that restricts their play.

3.7.2 Focus Group with Children and Young People

There was 1 focus group that took place in Culcrow Primary School in Aghadowey. 12 young people took place in the focus group; 6 female and 6 male.

Respondents were asked a range of questions ranging from their favourite play activities and favourite places to play, to what restricts them from playing and what type of things make a good place to play.

When asked where their favourite place to play was, responses included: *“my garden”*, *“Megaw Park”* and *“at school”*. Megaw Park was the most popular answer with 10 respondents when asked *“Which play parks do you currently go to?”* with Coleraine, Ballysally and Drumahegiles also being listed with 1 response each.

“Distance” and *“weather”* were two things that stopped the children and young people from playing outside most often. When asked what could the Council do to improve the play park, *“making it big with lots of things to play on”*, *“adding a football pitch”*, and *“making it fun with big slides”* were among the responses.

The vast majority of respondents of children and young people felt that an inclusive play park with a mix of traditional, modern and natural style would be best suited. A range of equipment was stated; ground level roundabouts, monkey bars, slides, a zip line, junior equipment best suited for toddlers, sensory play and a basket swing were among the most popular pieces of equipment.

The children and young people stated that they would like somewhere to run and play, as well as a space to play football. They stated that gates that were self-locking would be preferable in order to keep young children safe. There was a concern that teenagers would destroy the play park so perhaps a sheltered area for teenagers would be suitable. The children and young people also talked about including benches for parents/grandparents to sit on, as well as a range of bins to encourage people to recycle and not litter.

3.7.3 Culcrow Primary School

Culcrow Primary School is a rural school with just over 100 pupils situated in Aghadowey near Coleraine, Ballymoney and Garvagh. The school's aim is for every child to reach their full potential within a caring and stimulating learning environment. The school is proud of their facilities and links with the local community. Facilities include 4 classrooms, secluded woodland imaginative play area and all-weather pitch for PE and after school activities.

The use of Ballylaggan Church Hall for PE classes from P1 to P7 provides a safe space for games, dance and gymnastics. A qualified sports development officer leads these weekly sessions, ensuring all pupils are given every opportunity to learn a wide variety of sporting activities. Their aim is to instil sport as an integral part of lifestyle and healthy living, and the afterschool's clubs promote involvement in a wide range of further sports, as does the daily use of the outdoor play equipment. Links with the Crow's Nest Playgroup involves sharing resources, sharing staff expertise, sharing training, joint play days and supporting events.

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

In recent years, the school has embarked on a development plan to modernise the school buildings and in partial to find a traffic management solution given the schools close proximity to the main road. The Education Authority (EA) has been working with the school on this project which also provides an opportunity for a partnership project with the Council in the provision of a play park for both school and community use.

The EA has recently prepared outline plans for the schools development and has made land provision for a play park of c.500m². It should be noted that this proposal is subject to final assessment within the Business Case currently being developed by EA and it is anticipated that this will be completed in December 2020. It is also worth highlighting that the proposals will be subject to internal EA approvals together with DE approvals in relation to acquisition of additional lands, subject to statutory approvals and funding. The proposed community use facility will also be subject to agreements between EA and Council being in place.

3.7 Mapping of Gaps

Fixed play areas are classified according to the Fields in Trust 'Accessibility Benchmark Standards for Outdoor Play' (also known as the Six Acre Standards) which have been used across the UK to provide a means of determining the geographical catchment served by/or to be served by a fixed play area based on its size and scope.

The Accessibility Benchmark Standard (ABS) is based around 3 identified types of play area and establishes a set of distance thresholds which set the catchment area for each 'type' of play space.

TYPE OF PLAY	CRITERIA (METRES)
	WALKING DISTANCE
Local Areas for Play (LAPs): designated for very young children (<5 years) with the aim of providing somewhere to play close to home.	100
Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs): areas laid out with features and equipment for children beginning to play independently close to home.	400
Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAP): areas designated, laid out and equipped for a range of ages (0 to 14 years).	1000

In reviewing current fixed play areas Council have formally agreed to apply the ABS distance standard to the radial assessment of play area household coverage. The standard has therefore been applied to the review of all existing, and in the identification of new play areas.

In assessing the level of coverage provided by existing fixed play areas, and to support the identification of potential areas of need two key pieces of statistical and geographical information have been used:

- Population estimates and the geographical distribution of 0 to 14 year old's living within each District Electoral Area; and
- Household location data to facilitate household density analysis in line with ABS distance standards as previously outlined.

By combining both data sources those areas with a higher number of resident 0 to 14 year olds and a level of household density capable of supporting fixed play can be identified. To support the identification of areas that may require new fixed play development (both now and over the duration of the strategy), at its meeting on 14th November 2017 Council have adopted three criteria, one for urban, one for rural areas and one to guide development in support of tourist need. The relevant criterion for urban areas is highlighted below:

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

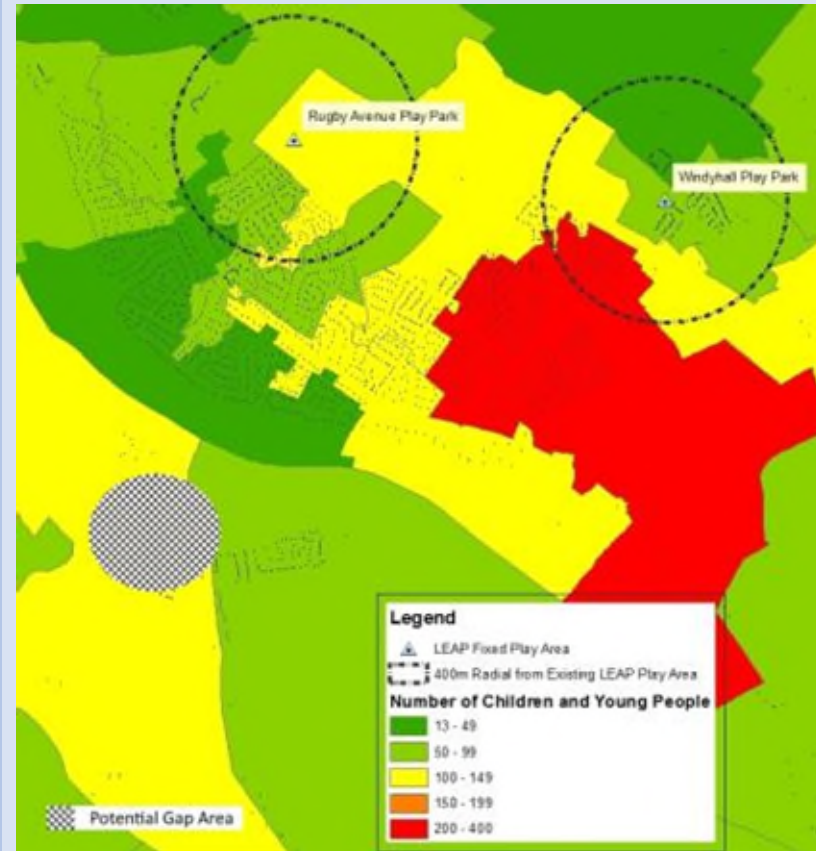
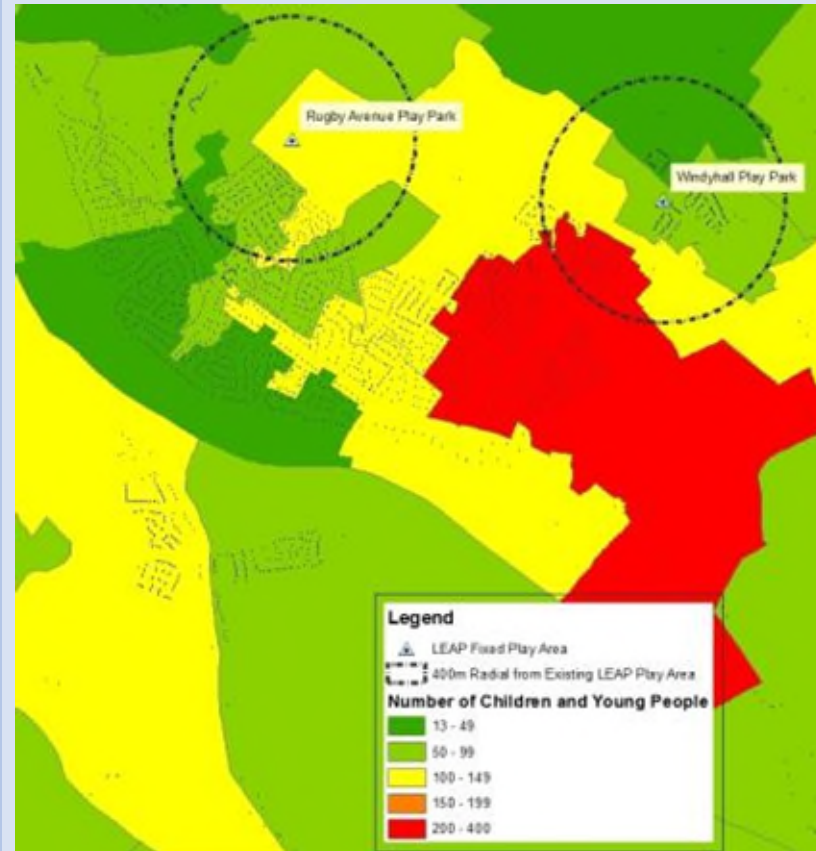
- **Criteria 2 – Rural Areas:** In recognition of lower population density levels, the minimum population criterion has been reduced to 50 children or young people (0 to 14 years) or more.

It should be noted that the identification of a gap does not indicate a definite need for new fixed play development, rather it highlights that based on underlying demographic and household distribution a potential gap exists. In considering how a gap could be met Council will also give consideration to the expansion of existing fixed play areas in the wider location.

On the basis of this agreed approach the results of the mapping exercise are included below:

Location	Area Review	Action
Castleroe	<p>Potential gap area is located at the border between Bann and Coleraine DEA's.</p> <p>There is 1 defined settlement within the area, Castleroe which, based on 2015 population estimates, had 179 households with the number of children aged 0 to 14 residing within the identified yellow area identified as 104. The nearest fixed play provision is at Windy Hall in Coleraine DEA.</p> <p>Based on underlying demographics and settlement formation a potential gap in fixed play provision exists within the area.</p>	<p>Council to assess demand for fixed play provision through community consultation and review land possibilities in line with neighbouring Coleraine DEA proposals.</p>

Map showing Potential Gap Area



Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

Prior to initiating the development of play area, Council requested a further two stage process:

Stage	Completed (Y/N)
1. A review of actual need (as opposed to statistical need) in order to determine the level of demand for fixed play area development through community engagement and consultation processes.	Yes - completed with support of Playboard NI, (full report at Appendix I)
2. The identification of potential land options that lend themselves to meeting fixed play development should demand be confirmed. This will include consideration of Council owned land, other land in ownership of public bodies that could be transferred/accessed on a partnership basis (e.g. schools) etc.	Yes - completed with support of Playboard NI and Council's Capital Team (see Option Identification, Section 5)

3.8 Displacement and Additionality

In considering the case for the development of a new play area, it is important to ensure that there is indeed a need for an additional and greatly enhanced facility in the immediate catchment area and that the project will not merely result in the displacement of demand from other housing areas and communities.

The preceding sections of this business case have therefore carefully considered the existing play park provision (three in the catchment area) and the potential impact of the proposed project on their usage levels. Given both the low play value of existing play provision and demand from the local community the project will not cause significant displacement.

Additionality in terms of financial need is clear in that the project will not proceed on the scale and timeframe required without the Council's full financial commitment. Depending upon on overall affordability within the Council there is a need to explore all other funding sources and partnerships with other public bodies to maximise the development opportunity offered by the various sites under consideration for wider community benefit. The extent of Additionality will be considered further through the Non-Monetary Assessment (Section 7) of shortlisted options and quantified against the Status Quo baseline.

3.9 Conclusions on Needs and Demand

The following conclusions can be drawn from the assessment above:

- There is a need for a fixed play area in Aghadowey that meets the requirements of a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP);
- The existing play parks in Bann DEA have been rated Low to Upper Mid in terms of Play Value and need ongoing monitoring and maintenance to meet local need in those neighbourhoods;
- Local and extensive consultation facilitated through Playboard NI with 126 respondents indicates that the majority (74%) of people are supportive of a new play area;
- Indicative usage levels of existing play areas from those consulted were high, although this was highly contingent on the play park offering, with 94% of people suggesting at least weekly usage (c.200 children and young people residing in the catchment area and pupils attending Culcrow Primary School);
- The identification of potential land options to meet the identified need and demand have also been consulted upon and will be considered further in Section 5 – Option identification and shortlisting;
- Displacement and additionality from any new play park developed has also been assessed with no displacement concerns identified and the potential for substantial additionality (wider benefits) to be realised; and
- In summary, there is a case in terms of both facility need and demand for a new play park to address the play needs in the rural catchment area of Aghadowey.

4.0 Objectives & Constraints

4.1 Introduction

This section sets out the aims, objectives and constraints of the proposed project. It details the objectives to ensure compliance with NIGEAE requirements for SMART objectives, that is, specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-dependent.

These objectives will also be key to measuring the overall success of the project in delivering benefits for the residents of the Borough. To inform feasible options that meet these objectives a number of project constraints have been identified, these may include financial, legal, technical, planning and management issues pertinent to the projects development.

4.2 Objectives

The following objectives have been identified for the project over the first five years of operation:

- To develop a play park that achieves the upper-mid standard of 'Play Value' as independently audited by Playboard NI (play value of 481-600);
- To actively promote and monitor general usage of play park by local schools, playgroups and children using in the area; and
- To ensure that the capital project is well managed and delivered on time, to budget and high quality standards.

4.3 Constraints

The following constraints have been identified for the project:

- **Financial** – affordability within Council's Capital Programme and determination of loan financing and revenue budget allocation for repayments. The indicative budget for this project set within the Play Investment Strategy is £100k;
- **Policy** – project delivery in line with Council's four stage capital process and procedures for capital funding;
- **Technical** – site selection subject to Feasibility Study recommendations from the Capital Delivery Team and adherence to facility design guidance for a Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) set by Playboard NI.

5.0 Option Identification and Shortlisting

5.1 Introduction

This section provides further detail on the proposed development options and takes account of the needs, objectives and constraints identified in the previous sections. The option analysis in the table below assesses the proposal against a "do nothing" option, which is consistent with NIGEAE guidance on Economic Appraisal.

5.2 Long list of Options under consideration

The key variable for consideration in the long list of options is the site options. This analysis has been informed a Feasibility Report undertaken by the Capital Delivery Team included as Appendix II.

(i) Site Options

Given that Council does not own land in Aghadowey, the Capital Delivery Team undertook Site Appraisal to determine up to 4 potential third party sites suitable within the area:

- Site 1 – Culcrow Primary School;
- Site 2 – Shop and Post Office;
- Site 3 – Clarehill Park; and
- Site 4 – Brown Trout Golf and Country Inn.



Following site inspections the advantages and disadvantages of Sites 1 to 3 were considered feasible. On completion of this process each site was then assessed against seven different criteria as listed below. 1. Locality & Proximity to Housing 2. Construction Potential/Availability of Land and Ability to Purchase 3. Anticipated Timescale for Completion of Works 4. Planning Potential 5. Access & Car Parking 6. Land Available (Size) 7. Play Provision Potential / Budget Available.

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

Each criteria had a maximum score of 10 with a maximum total of 70 available. The site that ranked the highest in each criteria was awarded 10, second awarded 7 and third awarded 5. Where two sites were assessed as equal they were awarded the same score with the third site awarded the next available score.

On completion of the assessment and scoring the highest scoring site is: Culcrow Primary School with a score of 61, followed by Clarehill Park with a score of 57 and Shop and Post Office 55. It should be noted that when assessing Site 1 Culcrow Primary School the criteria were assessed including the proposals from the Education Authority.

(ii) Long List of Options

The long list of options considers the proposed site options above and potential variations in terms of scale, content, location and timing of project delivery as follows:

Description of Options	Rationale for Selection or Rejection
Do Nothing: Maintain 'Status Quo'	Included in short list for comparative purposes.
Variations in Content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play park only Play park and car parking 	Both project components are deemed essential to meet needs and objectives identified and ensure safe access and use of the new facility.
Variations in Scale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAP equipment provision (500m² area with 5-7 pieces of equipment) NEAP equipment provision (1000m² area with 8+ pieces of equipment) 	Given that this project relates to a small play park in line with PlayboardNI's guidance for a LEAP, it is anticipated that 5-7 pieces of play equipment will be sufficient. The analysis above clearly indicates that investment of up to £100k is proportionate with the need and demand in the rural catchment of Aghadowey. Options for greater investment will not offer value for money and have not been shortlisted for full appraisal.
Variations in Location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site 1 – Culcrow Primary School; Site 2 – Shop and Post Office; Site 3 – Clarehill Park 	3 sites were deemed technically feasible and ranked highest in the Feasibility Report. However, discussions with the Education Authority and Culcrow Primary School over the potential use of land (site 1) for a shared access play park is deemed to offer good value for money. All other sites involve land acquisition from third parties which not only reduce the capital available for investment in the play equipment but also potentially protract timescales. Given the time pressure and public expectation to deliver the project all other options have been discounted.
Variations in Timing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full development Phased Approach 	Given the time pressure and public expectation to deliver this project a phased approach has not been selected for full economic appraisal.

On the basis that Culcrow Primary School is the only viable site option for development, initial site analysis was carried by Education Authority to include provision for a 500m² area for 5-7 pieces of equipment as illustrated below in the blue box adjacent to the new car park:

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case



It should be noted that this proposal is subject to final assessment within the Business Case currently being developed by EA and it is anticipated that this will be completed in December 2020. It is also worth highlighting that the proposals will be subject to internal EA approvals together with DE approvals in relation to acquisition of additional lands, subject to statutory approvals and funding. The proposed community use facility will also be subject to agreements between EA and Council being in place.

5.3 Options Shortlisted

The following options will be progressed for full economic appraisal:

- **Option 1** – Do Nothing; and
- **Option 2** – New Play Park (LEAP Specification) and car parking at Culcrow Primary School.

6.0 Monetary Appraisal

6.1 Introduction

This section sets out the monetary costs and benefits of each option and details:

- Capital costs (including construction costs, professional fees, statutory charges, opportunity costs and residual values);
- Recurrent costs of project delivery (including any staffing, overheads, maintenance);
- Income generation potential; and
- Net Present Value Calculations and summary results.

6.2 Capital Costs

It should be noted that outline capital costs have been not yet been prepared by the Capital Delivery Team. The infrastructure and works costs associated with the option are subject to discussion with Education Authority and estimated in the table below:

CAPITAL COSTS	Option 2 £
Hard Surfacing	40,000
Play Equipment	50,000
Fencing and Furniture	10,000
TOTAL CAPITAL COST (incl. fees etc)	100,000

6.3 Recurrent Costs

The recurrent costs associated with each option are set out below:

RECURRENT COSTS	Option 2 £
Staffing on-site	-
Overheads incl. electricity and insurance	1,000
Estates maintenance and repair	1,000
TOTAL RECURRENT COST	2,000

The annual operating costs are based on costs for running comparable facilities and do not include any staffing or programme expenditure given the nature of the development. It is assumed that Education Authority and Council will share the recurrent costs in line with 50/50 usage with a formal License Agreement or equivalent agreement to be agreed at Stage 2.

6.4 Income

As with all of Council's Play Park provision, there is no income associated with all options.

6.5 Calculation of Net Present Costs

The costs and the benefits associated with the proposed project are discounted. The purpose of the discounting process is to arrive at Net Present Values (NPVs) for each of the options.

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

Net Present Costs (NPCs) are calculated using a 3.5% discount rate over the project duration (of 15 years) as shown below. Other assumptions informing the NPC analysis include:

- No sunk costs have been incurred;
- Optimism bias has been included at 10% on capital costs;
- Life cycle costs have not been included to reflect Play Strategy guidance on case-by-case review following annual inspections; and
- Play Parks assumed to have economic life of 15 years as per Play Strategy and no requirement for residual value.

The Net Present Cost (NPC) calculations excluding taxation, inflation and any project financing is summarised the table below:

Net Present Cost Results (OB adjusted)	£
Option 1 - Do Nothing	0
Option 2 - New Accessible Play Park at Roe Mill (stan. spec.)	(128,978)

From a quantitative perspective, Option 2 emerges as the highest ranked option having the lowest NPC of the 'do something' options.

The detailed Net Present Cost calculations are presented at Appendix III.

7.0 Non-Monetary Appraisal

7.1 Introduction

It is the case that not all costs and benefits can be measured in monetary terms, as no market value exists for them. In this section non-monetary costs and benefits associated with each of the short-listed options are assessed. A weighting and scoring exercise has been adopted to illustrate in quantitative terms how each option performs against identified non-monetary criteria.

7.2 Criteria and Weightings

In order to critically assess the case for the proposed project evaluation criteria have been developed. To allow for the comparison of options, each criterion has been allocated a weighting out of 100% to reflect its relative importance as follows:

No.	Criteria	Factors being Assessed	Weighting
1.	Alignment and contribution to Council's Strategic Priorities	An assessment of the options ability to realise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Plan Outcomes and Actions; • Corporate Strategy Priorities; and • Business Plan objectives and work streams. 	10
2.	Addressing identified strategic need across the Borough	An assessment of the options ability to realise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pitch Strategy recommendations; • Play Strategy recommendations; and • Facilities Strategy deficits and gaps in provision. 	20
3.	Adherence to the Principles of the Sport & Wellbeing 'Health and Wellbeing Mandate'	An assessment of the options ability to realise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality leisure and sports services, • Accessible need based programmes; and • Sustainable facility provision via effective partnership working. 	30
4.	Delivering better health and wellbeing outcomes for the local community	An assessment of the options ability to realise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased levels of participation in physical activity; • Improved health and well-being; and • An enhanced quality of life. 	30
5.	Impact on broader statutory requirements	An assessment of the options ability to realise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Equality/Section 75 outcomes; and • Positive Rural Proofing outcomes. 	10
Total Weighting			100

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

7.3 Scoring System

Each option has been given a score between 1 and 10 against the criteria with an option scoring 10 having the maximum positive impact as summarised in the table below.

Scoring	Assessment	Descriptor / Indicator
0	Nil Response	Option failed to address the criterion.
1-2	Very Poor	A very poor option with limited evidence of capacity to deliver against the criterion.
3-4	Poor	A poor option with some evidence of capacity to deliver against the criterion, but overall it is below the standard expected.
5-6	Satisfactory	A satisfactory option with evidence of capacity to deliver to an acceptable standard against the criterion.
7-8	Very Good	A very good option with strong evidence of capacity to deliver above the minimum standard expected against the criterion.
9-10	Excellent	An excellent option with very strong evidence of capacity to deliver well above the minimum standard expected the criterion.

7.4 Non-Monetary Scoring Rationale

The rationale for the non-monetary scoring of each option out of 10 is provided in table below:

Criteria	Option 1 Score & Rationale	Option 2 Score & Rationale
1. Alignment and contribution to Council's Strategic Priorities	2 – this option relates to the 'status quo' provision of play parks in Aghadowey and presents limited evidence of any additional strategic benefit.	7 – this option relates to a new play park at Culcrow Primary School (to a LEAP specification) with strong evidence of additional strategic benefit.
2. Addressing identified strategic need across the Borough	2 - this option relates to the 'status quo' provision of play parks in Aghadowey and presents limited evidence of any addressing strategic need.	7 - this option relates to a new play park at Culcrow Primary School (to a LEAP specification) with strong evidence of addressing strategic need.
3. Adherence to the Principles of the Sport & Wellbeing 'Health and Wellbeing Mandate'	2 - this option relates to the 'status quo' provision of play parks in Aghadowey and presents limited evidence of additional health benefit.	8 - this option relates to a new play park at Culcrow Primary School (to a LEAP specification) with strong evidence of additional health benefit.
4. Delivering better health and wellbeing outcomes for the local community	2 - this option relates to the 'status quo' provision of play parks in Aghadowey and presents limited evidence of any additional community benefit.	7 - this option relates to a new play park at Culcrow Primary School (to a LEAP specification) with strong evidence of additional community benefit.
5. Impact on broader statutory requirements	2 - this option relates to the 'status quo' provision of play parks in Aghadowey and presents limited evidence of additional equality benefit.	7 - this option relates to a new play park at Culcrow Primary School (to a LEAP specification) with strong evidence of additional equality benefit.

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

7.5 Non-Monetary Scoring Results

The results and ranking of each option in terms of non-monetary weighted score are summarised as follows:

Criterion	Criteria	Weight %	Option 1		Option 2	
			S	WS	S	WS
1	Alignment and contribution to Council's Strategic Priorities	10	2	20	7	70
2	Addressing identified strategic need across the Borough	20	2	20	7	140
3	Adherence to the SWB Health and Wellbeing Mandate	30	2	20	8	240
4	Delivering better health and wellbeing outcomes for the community	30	2	20	7	210
5	Impact on broader statutory requirements	10	2	20	7	70
TOTAL		100	10	100	36	730
RANK			2		1	

From a qualitative perspective, Option 2 emerges as the highest ranked option having the highest non-monetary score of 730 (73%) of the 'do something' options.

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8.0 RISK APPRAISAL

8.1 Introduction

Since an appraisal involves making assumptions about the behaviour of various elements of the project there is a degree of risk and uncertainty involved. The treatment of any potential risk and uncertainty is generally best dealt with using sensitivity analysis which involves varying the value / number of key project inputs which are likely to be subject to the greatest degree of uncertainty i.e. monetary variations and consideration of non-monetary risks.

Section 6 Monetary Appraisal has applied an Optimism Bias adjustment of 10% to the capital costs and NPC's for each option. Given the limited recurrent costs and income generation from this project there is limited benefit in conducting any further financial sensitivity analysis. This Section therefore focuses on the non-monetary assessment of project risks below.

8.2 Non-Monetary Risk Assessment

The issue of project risk has been assessed by the identification of project risks/risk mitigation strategies and the profiling of risks in terms of impact and probability. Key areas of risk and uncertainty are outlined within the table below.

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Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

Risk	Option 1 (H/M/L)	Option 2 (H/M/L)	Comment / Mitigation plans
1. Capital cost overruns	L (1)	L (1)	Option 1 poses least risk as no capital cost involved. Options 2 poses small risk with investment in play equipment however this can be managed. Capital cost overruns to be managed by proposed management structures and design contingencies/optimism bias allowances.
2. Construction / Programming delays	L (1)	M (2)	Option 1 poses least risk as no construction works involved. Options 2 poses higher risk given scale of wider school development project and reliance on Education Authority as the lead body. Time delays to be managed by proposed management structures and site investigations.
3. Delay or failure to obtain planning permission / other statutory approvals	L (1)	M (2)	Option 1 poses least risk as no development. Options 2 poses higher risk given scale of development and wider planning implications for the schools redevelopment. Although the traffic management elements of the project should be welcomed by the local community and tested further in pre-application community consultation processes. Statutory approval risks to be managed through the proposed management structures.
4. Project Funding Risks	L (1)	L (1)	Option 1 poses least risk as no funding required. Options 2 poses small risk given increased cost of play equipment and partnership funding requirements and approval processes. Council's funding risks to be management within Council's Capital Programme affordability.
5. Lack of clarity of roles/ responsibilities for project / facility management	L (1)	M (2)	Option 1 poses least risk as no development. Option 2 poses higher risk given scale and complexity of school development project and reliance on the Education Authority as lead body. Project management structures and a License Agreement or equivalent with Council will mitigate this risk.
6. Failure to deliver address identified needs and deliver project objectives	H (3)	L (1)	Option 1 involves no development and poses highest risk. Option 2 poses low risk given LEAP specification of works proposed. The aims and objectives of this OBC will be managed by the Project Sponsor through the proposed management structures.
7. Low levels of community use	H (3)	L (1)	Option 1 poses highest risk of low usage and no opportunity for increased income generation. Option 3 provides opportunity for shared school and community use and poses least risk. A deterrent to community use would be potential access issues and car parking on the site, however plans are already in place to mitigate this risk through separate access gates adjacent to new car park.
8. Community resistance to facilities	H (3)	L (1)	Option 1 poses highest risk of low usage. Option 2 provides opportunity for broader inclusive community use in Aghadowey and surrounding areas and poses least risk.
Total Risk (Score out of 24)	14	11	
RANK	2	1	

8.3 Conclusion

Given the scale of the proposed development within a local community setting, the overall level of risk is considered as **Low-Medium**. Although this risk can be mitigated significantly as the project progresses through the Council's four stage capital process and robust project management structures are put in place.

On balance, the risk assessment identifies Option 2 as the least risk option with a risk score of 11 (46%).

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9.0 Results & Selection of Preferred Option

9.1 Introduction

This section of the appraisal combines the monetary assessment (NPC), qualitative assessment (non-monetary benefits) and risk assessment in order to select the preferred development option. For each individual assessment a ranking of 1 = the highest ranked option and 2 = the lowest ranked option. The option rankings are then combined to provide an 'Overall Rank'. The lowest figure in this column equals the highest ranked and therefore the most suitable option for development.

9.2 Results from Economic Appraisal

The table below summarises the results of the monetary, non-monetary and risk analyses:

Option	Capital Cost £'k	Net Present Cost		Non-monetary Benefits		Project Risk		Overall Rank
		£'k	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	
Option 1 – Do Nothing	0	0	1	100	2	14	2	5
Option 2 – New Play Park at Culcrow Primary School (LEAP Specification)	100	(129)	2	730	1	11	1	4

9.3 Preferred Option

Based on the preceding analysis and balance of advantage, **Option 2 – New Play Park and car parking at Culcrow Primary School (LEAP Specification)** is the Preferred Option. The basis for this recommendation is outlined below:

- Capital costs of £100k with no land acquisition costs allowing for full expenditure on play equipment and experience;
- Opportunity for shared school and community use arrangements making better use of the new facility and sharing of recurrent costs through a new License Agreement;
- Highest non-monetary benefits from sustained participation in play by the local rural community of Aghadowey; and
- Lowest risk option reflecting the risk of the projects development at Culcrow Primary School and ability to address the needs and objectives.

9.4 Need, Demand, Additionality and Displacement

Evidence of need and demand for the preferred option has been demonstrated through:

- There is a need for a fixed play area in Aghadowey that meets the requirements of a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP);
- The existing play parks in Bann DEA have been rated Low to Upper Mid in terms of Play Value and need ongoing monitoring and maintenance to meet local need in those neighbourhoods;
- Local and extensive consultation facilitated through Playboard NI with 126 respondents indicates that the majority (74%) of people are supportive of the development of a play area in Aghadowey;
- Indicative usage levels of existing play areas from those consulted were high, although this was highly contingent on the play park offering, with 94% of people suggesting at

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

least weekly usage (c.200 children and young people residing in the catchment area and pupils attending Culcrow Primary School);

- Displacement and additionality from any new play park developed has also been assessed with no displacement concerns identified and the potential for substantial additionality (wider benefits) to be realised; and
- In summary, there is a case in terms of both facility need and demand for a new play park to address the play needs in the rural catchment area of Aghadowey.

9.5 Risk Analysis

The appraisal considers that the level of associated risk with the preferred option is considered as **Low-Medium**. This risk level, including the planning risk can however be managed and mitigated further as the project progresses through the four step capital process.

9.6 Viability Analysis

The Council is committed to the annual forecasted subvention of £2k per annum with financial arrangements to be developed at Stage 2 within a new License Agreement with the Education Authority.

9.7 Value for Money

The preferred option and the modest provision of a LEAP specification on land owned by the Education Authority represents the best value for money within the context of addressing the rural needs identified. Community usage will be promoted and monitored to inform review and development of the Play Strategy.

9.8 Recommendation

It is recommended that the preferred option, **Option 2 – New Play Park at Culcrow Primary School and car parking (LEAP Specification) at a cost of £100k** is progressed to Stage 2, detailed design and full business case for a final investment decision to be taken by Council.

For more detail on the outline layouts and equipment examples refer to Appendix IV – LEAP Design Brief.

Subject to Council decision on the preferred option, the indicative delivery timeframe to progress the project to detailed design and investment decision is to be aligned with Culcrow Primary School's redevelopment plans and agreed with the Education Authority in due course.

To expedite project delivery and meet Council's capital approval processes a governance structure proportionate with the investment will be established (see Section 10).

10. Affordability, Management, Monitoring & Evaluation

10.1 Introduction

Effective implementation of the preferred project option will require the following addressed:

- Costs and Affordability;
- Governance and Management; and
- Monitoring and Evaluation.

10.2 Project Costs and Affordability

It should be noted that outline capital costs have been not yet been prepared by the Capital Delivery Team. The infrastructure and works costs associated with the option are subject to discussion with Education Authority and estimated in the table below:

CAPITAL COSTS	Option 2 £
Hard Surfacing	40,000
Play Equipment	50,000
Fencing and Furniture	10,000
TOTAL CAPITAL COST (incl. fees etc)	100,000

The table below summarises how the proposed project will be funded and current status:

Source	Funding £'k	% of Total	Status
Capital:			
Council	100	100%	Subject to Stage 2 approval
TOTAL	100	100%	

It is noted that the above tables exclude optimism bias allowance of 10% (£10k). This allowance should be retained with Council's planning figures for the capital programme, however it is anticipated that this allowance will reduce significantly as the project progresses through Stage 2 and before the final investment decision is taken.

10.3 Project Governance and Management

The Council will be responsible for the procurement, co-ordination and implementation of the design and build of the project and will implement the following governance arrangements for projects under £1m investment:

(i) Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)

Overall responsibility for successfully delivering the business objectives and benefits of any programme or project must be vested in responsible and visible individuals, the SRO. The SROs will be responsible for ensuring that the project meets its objectives and delivers the projected benefits.

Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

(ii) Project Board

A Project Board has been established to provide immediate support to the SRO and Project Sponsor in their respective roles of responsibility for ensuring that the project meets its objectives and delivers the projected benefits. Project Sponsor is the interface between a client and the external bodies, such as consultants, contractors, and suppliers. The Project Sponsor is responsible for ongoing management on behalf of the SRO to ensure that the project objectives are delivered within agreed time, quality and cost constraints.

Member	Name	Department and Role
Investment Decision Maker (IDM)	Full Council	Final Investment Decision
Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)	Richard Baker	Director for Leisure and Development
Project Sponsor	Wendy McCullough	Head of Service: Sport and Wellbeing
Project Sponsor Support	John Beggs	Project Manager, SIB
Project Manager	Paul Caldwell	Manager, Capital Delivery Team
Project Officer	Graham Miller	Officer, Capital Delivery Team
Senior Stakeholder(s)	Education Authority	Project Sponsor as conduit between Culcrow Redevelopment Project

(iii) Steering Group

The Steering Group has a delegated responsibility and is directly responsible to the Project Board. It provides direction, guidance and decision making to support the successful delivery of the project for the Sponsor.

The Steering Group represents the three primary interest groups; the enterprise as a whole, those who are seeking the outcomes to be delivered by the project, and those who will deliver the project's outcomes. The Steering Group members are the project decision-makers and are responsible for the commitment of resources to the projects. There are core members of the Steering Group as well as members /roles which can be added as and when required which are invited to Project Team.



Aghadowey Play Park – Outline Business Case

The Project Board and Steering Group meet by agreement to fulfil its objectives. The Project Board will meet quarterly and the Steering Group and Technical Group will meet monthly and/or if required ad-hoc meetings, as agreed.

Documents for Project Assurance will be submitted to the Project Sponsor at least seven days in advance of the scheduled meeting to enable review and recommendation to the Board.

Where practicable, the Agenda together with reports and documents that relate to the Board will be forwarded to members in sufficient time prior to meetings. Accurate minutes will be kept of each meeting. These minutes will be submitted to the Board members for ratification at the next subsequent meeting.

10.4 Project Monitoring, Evaluation and Benefits Realisation

(i) Monitoring

The Council will commission an independent review of the performance monitoring of the project against its aims and objectives. This will result in an annual report from which Council will be in a position to understand the progress towards its objectives using a Red, Amber and Green (RAG) system.

By using this monitoring process Council will have clear visibility of progress against objectives. The Project will be in a position to identify any risks of underperformance and undertake timely corrective actions to maximise the likelihood of achieving all objectives.

The Council will be responsible for a Project Implementation Review that will assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the project procurement and management arrangements. Any lessons learned will be shared with other funders and departments.

(ii) Evaluation

This annual monitoring information will be collated and provided to an independent body to conduct a Post Project Evaluation (PPE) at the end of the five years' benefits realisation period with a view to assessing the level of achievement of the SMART objectives, the value for money, the lessons to be learnt for future projects and the benefits realised from the investment.

Evaluation is a core part of the project. Council is keen to measure the impact of its activities and has established a baseline for participating levels and will monitor this against targets. The Council will collate the information and submit quarterly and annual reports to other funders on the progress against the targets.