

Thornton Hall Prison Development News



Issue 2 - February 2008

Environmental Impact Assessment is Published

I am pleased to have this opportunity to bring you a further update on the proposed prison development at Thornton. Since I last wrote to you the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), has just been published by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and is now available for public inspection. The objective of the EIA is to ensure that all potential impacts of the proposed prison development are considered and, where necessary, managed and mitigated. Members of the public have a six-week period, commencing on the day after the date of the issue of the public notice (29 February 2008), to submit a written observation to the Rapporteur.

The prison is designed to accommodate approximately 1,400 prisoners, based on single cell occupancy, over a range of facilities all housed behind the 7.2m high security wall. The design has the capacity, if needed in the future, to accommodate up to 2,200 prisoners in multiple occupancy arrangements. This design feature will future proof the prison in capacity terms for at least the next 50 years.

In the coming months we will continue to meet with the local community to develop liaison arrangements to provide a forum for discussion to address any issues that may arise during the construction stage of the project. Where necessary the local authority has undertaken to be involved in these discussions to aid resolution of any matters that might arise. I will bring you more details about these arrangements in the next newsletter.

I am pleased to announce that as part of the overall plan for the provision of services to the site the Irish Prison Service has agreed with Fingal County Council that it will facilitate existing residents on the boundary of the site with sewage connections. The provision of these connections, which arose in response to requests from the local community, is tangible evidence of our commitment to being a good neighbour.

Brian Purcell
Director General
Irish Prison Service

Feedback and Contact Point

The Irish Prison Service wishes to hear neighbour and community feedback in relation to its proposed development of the new prison at Thornton Hall, Co. Dublin. Submissions can be made to:

**Mr Jim Mitchell, Project Manager, Irish Prison Service, IDA Business Park, Ballinalee Road, Longford, Co. Longford
or by telephone at 043-35100**

Submissions, enquiries or observations can also be made by email: thorntonhall@irishprisons.ie

IPS listens to you

The IPS will act as a Good Neighbour in the construction and operation of the facility. This will include the development of a Thornton Hall Neighbour Liaison Policy with local resident groups.

The IPS, as part of the plan for the provision of services to the prison, has agreed with Fingal County Council that it will facilitate existing residents on the boundary of the site with sewage connections.

Access and egress on the prison site will be controlled by the Irish Prison Service (IPS). In addition, the IPS will provide a complementary shuttle bus from the entrance building to Dublin city.

In addition, following meetings with local groups the IPS has taken action to address local concerns as follows;

- New dedicated access road to be provided
- Provision of Garda station
- Preparation of EIA
- Enhanced landscaping

Where can I view the EIA

Members of the public may inspect a copy of the EIA document, including the non-technical summary, during normal office hours, at the following locations:

**Fingal County Council,
County Hall, Swords,
Fingal,
County Dublin.**

**Fingal County Council,
Grove Road,
Blanchardstown,
Dublin 15.**

**The Department of Justice,
Equality and Law Reform,
Pinebrook House,
71-74 Harcourt Street,
Dublin 2.**

**Irish Prison Service,
Estate Management,
IDA Business Park,
Ballinalee Road,
County Longford.**

Where can I get a copy of the EIA?

A copy of the EIA can be collected in electronic format from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Pinebrook House, 71-74 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 or from the Irish Prison Service, Estate Management, IDA Business Park, Ballinalee Road, Longford.

The Structure of the Environmental Impact Assessment



The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a very comprehensive document comprising four volumes. In general, EIA reports are quite technical in nature and in order to facilitate readers of the report, a separate non-technical summary has been prepared to explain in layman's language the likely and significant environmental effects arising from the development. A copy of this summary can be downloaded from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform website: www.justice.ie or the Irish Prison Service website: www.irishprisons.ie

The EIA includes:

- A description of the physical characteristics and land use requirements of the development.
- Individual assessments of the impacts of the construction works and subsequent operational activities.
- A description of any aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development including for example, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, cultural heritage, landscape and population.
- A description of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and where possible, offset any significant adverse effects on the environment.

The EIA has been prepared in a grouped format structure, which is consistent with the current guidelines prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency. This allows each environmental impact to be assessed individually.

Indicative view of main entrance

All visual images are for illustration only



Independent Rapporteur Appointed

The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform has appointed Mr. Jim Farrelly as independent Rapporteur to the Thornton Hall Project. The Rapporteur is a statutory appointment under Part 4 of the Prisons Act whose role is to receive submissions or observations relating to the development from the public. The Rapporteur will prepare a report for the Minister based on the submissions or observations received by him about the EIA. His report will identify the main issues or other points of substance raised and include a summary of the submissions or observations. The Rapporteur's report will be submitted to the Oireachtas and will also be published.

How to make a submission to the Rapporteur

The EIA will be available for public inspection for a period of six weeks from the day after the date of issue of the public notice (29 February 2008). Submissions or observations on the proposed development should be made in writing to Mr. Jim Farrelly, Office of the Rapporteur, Thornton Hall Project, Level 3, Block 2, Harcourt Centre, Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 within this six week period.

Environmental Management Systems Development in the Irish Prison Service

The environment and sustainability is an important consideration with any development. The Irish Prison Service (IPS), which has already developed an Environmental Management System (EMS) to address the environmental needs of the Service, has ensured that this policy is a priority consideration within the Thornton Hall development.

The IPS has invested heavily in recent years in the development of staff training, procedures and awareness packages for both staff and prisoners. This training covers environmental awareness, impact assessment, procedures, recording and documenting the system.

This EMS policy underpins the design and future operation of the proposed new prison facility at Thornton Hall by incorporating a number of features to assist in sustainable design and energy efficiency, for example, by providing for low energy lighting, solar thermal panelling, water conservation and biomass energy.

As part of this policy the IPS has already planted over 20,000 trees along the site boundary. It is intended that further landscaping will be undertaken as part of the development.

The IPS is committed to the further development of its EMS policy. The Service has recently appointed an Auditor for the internationally recognised ISO 14001 environmental standard certification process. The ISO 14001 is an international environmental management system for private and public sector organisations to promote continuous improvement in environmental performance. Organisations that wish to register under ISO 14001 must meet the regulations specified in the standard and be certified as having met these by an independent body.



Indicative view of main entrance area. All visual images are for illustration only.

Indicative Timeline for Development of this Project

EIA Published	Newsletter	EIA Public Consultation	Newsletter	Oireachtas Consideration	Contract Award	Prison Operational
February 2008	February 2008	February/March 2008	March/April 2008	May/June 2008	Mid-Summer 2008	Mid-Summer 2011

PUBLIC NOTICE OF DEVELOPMENT
issued by
THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND LAW REFORM
in accordance with
SECTIONS 20 AND 21 OF PART 4 OF THE PRISONS ACT 2007

- (a) I, the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, hereby give notice on this **29th day of February 2008** that the Irish Prison Service intends to construct a new prison development (the "**Development**") at Thornton Hall in and around the Townlands of Kilsallaghan, Dunmucky, Thorntown, Coolatrath West, Kilcoskan, Coolquoy Common, Rath, Glebe, Newtown Commons, Fingal, County Dublin.
- (b) The purpose of the Development is to accommodate approximately 1,400 prisoners based on single cell occupancy and with operational flexibility to accommodate up to 2,200 prisoners. The gross floor area of all buildings will be circa 140,000 square metres all within a site of circa 57 hectares (circa 140 acres). Access to the Development will be via a new access road off the R135, including an underpass below the existing R130. The secure facilities within the Development will be bounded by a circa 7.2m high perimeter wall which will be constructed behind the existing landscaped perimeter screen planting. The Development is located within an Architectural Conservation Area and there are three protected structures within the vicinity of the site of the Development. The buildings within the Development will be generally two-storeys high, apart from the control centre which will be three-storeys.
- The Development will comprise:-
- o Secure residential accommodation for prisoners in separate blocks
 - o Educational, workshops and training services and ancillary activities
 - o Healthcare and therapeutic facilities
 - o Catering and dining facilities
 - o Welfare/support services
 - o Visiting facilities
 - o Indoor and outdoor recreational facilities
 - o Control centre
 - o Circa 7.2m high perimeter wall and security fencing and security surveillance systems
 - o Circa 1,200 surface car parking spaces
 - o Access road, including new signalised junction at the R135 and an underpass of the R130
 - o Storage facilities
 - o Other ancillary facilities and supporting structures and services
- (c) The location of the Development is identified in paragraph (a) above.
- (d) An environmental impact assessment ("**EIA**") has been prepared in connection with the Development. Copies of the EIA and the visual representation of the exterior of the Development may be obtained from the offices of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Pinebrook House, 71-74 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 and the offices of the Irish Prison Service, Estate Management, IDA Business Park, Ballinalee Road, Longford, Co. Longford. The documentation is available for viewing during public opening hours at: (i) the offices of Fingal County Council, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15; (ii) the offices of Fingal County Council, County Hall, Swords, Fingal, Co Dublin; (iii) the offices of the Irish Prison Service, IDA Business Park, Ballinalee Road, Longford, Co. Longford; and (iv) the offices of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Pinebrook House, 71-74 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2. The Non Technical Summary of the EIA is also available on the Irish Prison Service website at www.irishprisons.ie and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform website at www.justice.ie.
- (e) Any interested party may, and is invited to, make written submissions or observations (accompanied by their name and address) on the Development to the appointed rapporteur, Mr. Jim Farrelly at Office of the Rapporteur, Thornton Hall Project, Level 3, Block 2, Harcourt Centre, Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 marked for the attention of "**MR JIM FARRELLY, THORNTON DEVELOPMENT RAPPOREUR**" within a period of 6 weeks commencing on the day after the day on which this notice was issued (such date of issue being the **29th day of February 2008**, as referred to in paragraph (a) above).
- (f) Any submissions or observations made by interested parties in accordance with paragraph (e) above must be accompanied by the name and address of the person or body making them.



Indicative images All visual images are for illustration only