

## CENTER PARCS LONGFORD

Computer Generated Image of the proposed development (Source; The Journal)



A new development of a 395-acre village named Center Parcs in Longford forest is proposed. The village is planned to be a tourist destination for holidays in Longford. This development proposal includes a wide range of attractions such as 470 lodges which will accommodate 2500 guests, 30 apartments, over 100 indoor and outdoor family activities, a range of restaurants and shops, a spa and a swimming pool.

The new village provides an exciting opportunity for Longford and will have a positive effect on the Irish economy on a local and national scale. There will be 750 new jobs created during the construction of the village and a further 1000 jobs when the village opens. The developer has committed to a dedicated team of woodland conservation rangers who will protect the woodland during construction and maintaining the forest when the park would open.

The developer submitted the planning application to Longford County Council who granted the development planning permission. Longford County Council has said the development will have a positive effect on tourism and the economy in the midlands.

There have been several third-party appeals made to An Bord Pleanála who is the third party appeals board in Ireland. The appeals questioned the sustainability of the development. Other concerns included the number of guests arriving in the area. Residents in the area are concerned about the traffic in the area and potential accidents that may arise from the increased traffic.

The developer has been notified of the appeals An Bord Pleanála received from the decision of Longford County Council to grant planning permission for the development. Center Parcs the developer has agreed to co-operate fully with An Bord Pleanála and members of the public on the next stage of the planning process. They want to emphasise the benefits of a new tourist destination in Longford that will attract tourists to Longford leading to growth in the economy for Longford.

An Bord Pleanála will consider the biodiversity of the forest, the third-party appeals, public infrastructure and facilities. A decision will soon be made by An Bord Pleanála following a meeting between the developer and local residents to share their views. This will enable An Bord Pleanála to decide the future of the park and ensure that any potential development is sustainable