



Parks & Landscape Services Section, Community & Cultural Development Department

**Proposed Development of Multi-Sport Buildings at St.
Thomas's Estate (Phase 2), Tibbradden Road, Rathfarnam,
Dublin 16 in Proximity to a Protected Structure (St. Thomas
House)
PC/PKS/01/24**

Part 8 Report

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Prepared by:

Eoin O'Brien, Senior Executive Parks Superintendent

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1. Introduction

The following report is a summary of the main features of the proposed development of multi-sport buildings at St. Thomas Fields. A previous Part 8 was approved in 2019 (PC/PKS/01/19) for the two fields comprising; new pedestrian entrances, a vehicular entrance with adequate sightlines, car parking, 8 lane synthetic running track including field events with floodlights, a multi-sport building including an indoor hall, running and walking routes, natural mounding and tree planting with all ancillary works in proximity to a Protected Structure (St. Thomas House). The proposed development is to replace the multi-sport building including the indoor hall. Much of the works for the original Part 8 are complete including the running track, running trails and paths, car parking, entrances, services, etc (phase 1).

2. Site Location and Scope

The site is located to the south of Tibbradden Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16. The site is in close proximity to College Road and Marlay Park. The developed design comprises (1) a single storey main building of 1,517m² with 4.5m floor to ceiling clearance generally, (2) a single storey sprint track enclosure of c.858m² with 3.5m rising to 5.0m floor to ceiling clearance and (3) site landscaping to settle the building into its immediate context and to tie in with existing facilities delivered in phase 1. The site outlined in red on the site location map is approximately 1.3 hectares.

In the Marlay Park Master Plan adopted in January 2019, the area known as the Sports Paddocks and the North West Field will be developed to provide enhanced sports facilities for public use. As both of these areas are at the western end of Marlay Park, the location of the multi-sport campus at St Thomas – 470 metres further to the west - is considered an extension to and enhancement of these public sports facilities. With a footpath and good road as a connection (with future cycle facilities), these three areas: the North West Field, the Sports Paddocks, and the St Thomas Fields, can be seen as one comprehensive sporting facility for the benefit of the public with tennis courts, a cricket crease, grass & astro playing pitches, track and field athletics facilities, multi-sport buildings, etc catering for a wide variation of sports and activities.

3. Planning Context:

3.1 Context:

The St. Thomas Estate is situated within the south western rural part of the County on the Tibbradden Road in close proximity to Marlay Park. A Part 8 was approved for the site in 2019 (ref: PC/PKS/01/19) and Dundrum South Dublin Athletics Clubs were granted planning for a change of use of part of the site to sports and recreation and associated works in 2015 (ref: D15A/0255).

3.2 Zoning:

The site lies within the area of Zoning Objective B '*To protect and improve rural amenity and to provide for the development of agriculture*'. The development of a multi-sports facility is open for consideration under this zoning. The St. Thomas Fields are subject to Specific Local

Objective 48, which seeks: “To support the development of a multi-sport complex at St. Thomas’s, Tibbradden Road”.

3.3 Policy:

The development of multi-sports buildings will tie in with the relevant national and regional policy as outlined in the County Development Plan 2022-2028 as well as the following specific policies;

Policy Objective CA5: Energy Performance in Buildings

It is a Policy Objective to support high levels of energy conservation, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources in existing and new buildings, including retro fitting of energy efficiency measures in the existing building stock.

Policy Objective CA7: Construction Materials

It is a Policy Objective to support the use of structural materials in the construction industry that have low to zero embodied energy and CO2 emissions. (Consistent with the RPO 7.41 of the RSES)

Policy Objective CA10: Renewable Energy

It is a Policy Objective to support County, Regional, National and International initiatives and pilot schemes to encourage the development and use of renewable energy sources, including the SEAI Sustainable Energy Community initiatives, as a means of transitioning to a low carbon climate resilient County in line with national renewable energy targets.

Policy Objective GIB2: Landscape Character Areas

It is a Policy Objective to continue to protect, manage and plan to conserve, maintain or enhance the distinctive characteristics of the County’s landscapes, townscapes and seascapes in accordance with the recommended strategies as originally outlined in the Landscape Character Assessment (2002 and since updated), in accordance with the ‘Draft Guidelines for Landscape and Landscape Assessment’ (2000) as issued by the Department of Environment and Local Government, in accordance with the European Landscape Convention (Florence Convention) and in accordance with ‘A National Landscape Strategy for Ireland – 2015-2025’. The Council shall implement any relevant recommendations contained in the Department of Arts, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht’s National Landscape Strategy for Ireland, 2015 - 2025.

Policy Objective GIB5: Historic Landscape Character Areas

In assessing development proposals and in the preparation of plans, it is a Policy Objective to have regard to the recommendations and findings of the Historic Landscape Character Assessments (HLCA), already undertaken for a number of the urban-rural fringe areas of the County most likely to come under development pressure.

Policy Objective GIB6: Views and Prospects

It is a Policy Objective to preserve, protect and encourage the enjoyment of views and prospects of special amenity value or special interests, and to prevent development, which would block or otherwise interfere with Views and/or Prospects.

Policy Objective GIB18: Protection of Natural Heritage and the Environment

It is a Policy Objective to protect and conserve the environment including, in particular, the natural heritage of the County and to conserve and manage Nationally and Internationally important and EU designated sites - such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservations (SACs), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) and Ramsar sites (wetlands) - as well as non-designated areas of high nature conservation value known as locally important areas which also serve as 'Stepping Stones' for the purposes of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.

Policy Objective GIB19: Habitats Directive

It is a Policy Objective to ensure the protection of natural heritage and biodiversity, including European Sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network, in accordance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legis

Policy Objective OSR5: Public Health, Open Space and Healthy Placemaking

It is a Policy Objective to support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP) 2016, to increase physical activity levels across the whole population thus creating a society, which facilities people whether at home, at work or at play to lead a more active way of life (consistent with RPO 9.16).

Policy Objective OSR9 – Sports and Recreational Facilities

It is a Policy Objective to promote the provision, and management of high quality sporting, and recreational infrastructure throughout the County, in accordance with the National Sports Policy 2018-2027, and dlr Space to Play: a new approach to Sports Facilities Strategy', 2017-2022, to ensure that the particular needs of different groups are incorporated into the planning and design of new facilities.

Policy AR1: Record of Protected Structures

"It is Council policy to:

- I. Include those structures that are considered in the opinion of the Planning Authority to be of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical or social interest in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).
- II. Protect Structures included on the RPS from any works that would negatively impact their special character and appearance.
- III. Ensure that any development proposals to Protected Structures, their curtilage and setting shall have regard to the Department of the Arts,

Heritage and the Gaeltacht 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2011).

- IV. Ensure that new and adapted uses are compatible with the character and special interest of the Protected Structure”.

Policy AR2: Protected Structures Applications and Documentation

“It is Council Policy to require all planning applications relating to Protected Structures to contain the appropriate level of documentation in accordance with Article 23 (2) Planning Regulations and Chapter 6 and Appendix B of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities, or any variation thereof”.

Policy Objective PHP5: Community Facilities

It is a Policy Objective to: Support the development, improvement and provision of a wide range of community facilities throughout the County where required.

Policy Objective PHP13: Equality, Social Inclusion and Participation

It is a Policy Objective to promote equality and progressively reduce all forms of social exclusion that can be experienced because of gender, gender identity, marital status, family status, age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, homelessness and membership of the Traveller Community and promote active participation consistent with RPO 9.1 and RPO 9.2 of the RSES.

Policy Objective PHP14: Age Friendly Strategy

It is a Policy Objective to support and facilitate the implementation of the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Age Friendly Strategy 2016-2020. The dlr Age-Friendly Strategy 2022-2026 was adopted by the Council in November 2022.

Policy Objective PHP15: Healthy County Plan

It is a Policy Objective to support and facilitate the creation of a healthy County in accordance with the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Healthy County Plan 2019-2022.

Policy Objective PHP17: Changing Places Bathrooms

It is a Policy Objective to support and facilitate the roll out of `changing places bathrooms` across the County consistent with RPO 9.12 of the RSES

Policy Objective T31: Accessibility

It is a Policy Objective to support suitable access for people with disabilities, including improvements to transport, streets and public spaces. Accessibility primarily concerns people with reduced mobility, persons with disabilities, older persons and children

Policy Objective EI6: Sustainable Drainage Systems

It is a Policy Objective to ensure that all development proposals incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

Policy E15: Rural Development

It is Council policy to facilitate the development of acceptable rural enterprises and to minimise pollution from agricultural and industrial sources by means of development management and water pollution legislation.

3.4 Strategy:

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council has adopted the following additional strategies that are pertinent to the proposed development:

Space to Play, dlr Sports Facilities Strategy 2017-2022:

The proposed development aligns with Space to Play, dlr Sports Facilities Strategy 2017-2022. The strategy sets out a logical, deliverable pathway for the optimum use of existing, and the development of new public sporting and physical activity facilities within the County. Section 5 of this strategy specifically identifies partnerships with sporting clubs to develop sporting facilities. Section 16 - Recommended Areas for Development - of this strategy specifically identifies Large Hall Scape Development which states the following; 'The shortage of large hall space is a gap in the provision of facilities owned and operated by the Council to be made available for clubs. Facility provision is generally geared more towards the larger field sports but greater encouragement of indoor sports appealing to a diverse but nonetheless large population should be a long-term goal. Existing expenditure by clubs on the hire or rental of hall space without sufficient or suitable storage is very substantial and there is an existing reasonable case to be made for development of a new Large Hall facility on one or more existing Council properties'.

The vision for this document is; "to provide facilities for sport and physical activity that are well maintained, sufficient in number and accessible to as many local people as possible. Our primary focus is to provide facilities that will enable participation by as wide a cross section of the population across a diverse range of sports. The Council will do this through the relationships we have with local sporting clubs, regional and national sporting organisation, schools, community groups and DLR Leisure."

The Strategy states that "collaboration and shared use must be a central part of future development of larger scale sporting facilities. This is the norm across Europe and has also been used to good effect locally throughout Ireland". It is acknowledged that this document has expired but is still relied upon until the new strategy/policy is in place.

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Age Friendly Strategy 2022 – 2026:

This strategy requires that design of outdoor spaces and buildings to be age friendly and inclusive.

4. Nature & Extent of the Proposed Development:

The footprint of the main building is 'star' shaped and its construction comprises (a) a substructure of concrete pad/strip footing with a concrete ground floor slab (b) a hybrid structural frame comprising glulam column and CLT panel walls in the public foyer area and steel framed structure for other areas and (c) a hybrid composite roof deck comprising CLT panel walls in the public foyer area and steel framed structure for other areas. The exterior frontages are comprised of Arcoplus polycarbonate rainscreen cladding panels with thermally broken aluminium double glazed curtain walling and doors. The main building is fully serviced throughout, naturally ventilated with air sourced variable refrigerant flow (VRF) heating and cooling units only where necessary.

The footprint of the indoor athletics enclosure is elongated and its construction comprises (a) a substructure of concrete pad/strip footing with a concrete ground floor slab and proprietary flooring and (b) a structural frame comprising a series of timber portal frames. The exterior frontages are comprised of Arcoplus polycarbonate rainscreen cladding panels with aluminium double glazed doors.

For further details, see the Architectural Design Statement (appendix 1) and associated drawings.

Landscape Design:

The landscape design proposals for the regional sports campus aim to achieve the following:

- Create an attractive, functional, space that ties the proposed recreational building to the surrounding landscape and the existing features on the site and provides appropriate seating, cycle parking and signage to facilitate visitors.
- Protect the existing ecology of the site and propose enhancements through planting and maintenance.
- Provide universal access to the facilities on the site.

The landscape proposals aim to provide an attractive, functional space that serves the users of this facility with appropriate seating, cycle parking, signage, and circulation space. The space will be an active zone and proposed materials will be durable and low maintenance. The site is located on the fringes of the Dublin mountains and provides a rural setting to these proposals. The site sits within the original grounds of St Thomas' Estate and is surrounded by mature woodland and fields of improved grassland. Beyond the southeast boundary of the site, the Whitechurch / Kilmashogue stream flows through a wooded valley with many mature broadleaf trees forming a linear corridor of up to 50 m in width which is of local ecological value.

There are several ecological enhancements proposed under the recommendations of the project ecologist. These include the planting of a native hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyma*) hedgerow to increase connectivity across the site, and to create a buffer from the carpark and the rural area to the rear of the site. The planting of native woodland will increase the existing tree canopy cover of the site and further protect the rural landscape beyond the site boundary. Areas of scented climbers have been proposed to attract insects and bats. Scrub

areas of native Blackthorn (*prunus spinosa*) and evergreen Pine trees (*Pinus sylvestris*) are proposed to reduce access and create a buffer between the proposed building and the attenuation area/tree line beyond. Wildflower meadow management will be undertaken of the existing grassland to increase pollinator species on the site. Most of the proposed planting will be native species with some suitable non-native species to be considered. The new planting will primarily consist of whips and standards but will also include some semi-mature trees to have immediate impact on the site.

Construction Management:

- The hours of construction associated with this proposed development will be 07:00 – 19:00 Monday to Saturday. There may be occasions that the hours need to be increased to ensure the efficient delivery of the project. At all times during the works, the public roadway will be maintained in a neat, tidy and safe condition. Any damage to the public road as a result of the proposed development will be made good. Any construction and demolition waste emanating from the building process on site shall be managed in accordance with best practice. All site construction activities and staff facilities (including car parking) will be accommodated within the proposed development site.
- No discharge during the construction period of cementous materials or residues thereof or of lime, sand, silt or other deleterious material shall be allowed to enter the watercourse. Stockpiles of construction materials such as sand, gravel or other erodible materials shall be covered with sheeting to prevent washout of fines during rainfall and that no storage of any construction materials will not take place within 15m of watercourse. All oils, lubricants and fuels used during the construction phase shall be securely stored in bunded areas. All earth moving activities shall be conducted carefully so as to avoid material entering surface water streams. Early seeding of areas of bare soil shall follow earth-moving works to prevent wind blow carrying sediment to waters.

5. Architectural Design:

The design of the building has been undertaken by DMOD Architects and LA Architects. An Architectural Design Statement has been developed which outlines the manner in which the team have responded to the site. The organic footprint of the building responds both to the internal functions of the distinct spaces and activities and to the surrounding landscape to create character areas with captured views from inside. The Architectural Design Statement is included as an appendix to the main Part 8 report (see appendix 1).

6. Engineering Design:

The engineering design has been undertaken by O'Connor Sutton Cronin Consulting Engineers and an engineering report (drainage) is included as an appendix to the main Part 8 report (see appendix 2).

7. Mechanical, Electrical & Energy Design:

The Mechanical, Electrical & Energy measures have been documented in a Report (see appendix 3), undertaken by Axiseng Consulting.

8. Conservation:

A Conservation Report has been undertaken in order to assess the impact of the proposed development on the site and immediate surroundings in the context of the attendant grounds to St. Thomas House, a protected structure. The Conservation Report is included as an appendix to the main Part 8 report (appendix 4).

9. Ecological Impact Assessment:

A full and comprehensive ecological impact assessment has been undertaken by Altemar Ltd – Consultant Ecologists and the report is included as an appendix to the main Part 8 report (see appendix 5). All recommendation as outlined in this report will be implemented as part of the proposed development.

10. Environmental Impact Assessment:

The Council carried out a preliminary examination of the proposal in accordance with Article 120(1)(a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Based on the nature, size and location of the development, the Council considered on the basis of that there was significant and realistic doubt regarding the likelihood of significant effects on the environment. Consequently, and in accordance with Article 120(1)(b)(ii) of the Regulations (as amended), the Council caused an EIA screening report to be prepared (by CAAS Ltd) based on the information that is specified in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended for the purposes of a screening determination.

Taking account of the findings of the EIA screening report, the Council has determined that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development for the reasons set out in the EIA Determination. As a result, the proposal does not need to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and no Environmental Impact Assessment Report needs to be prepared for it.

11. Appropriate Assessment:

In accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) and Regulation 42(1) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended the Council caused Altemar Ltd to undertake Appropriate Assessment screening to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of the European Sites, if the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on a European Site(s). As required under Regulation 42(7) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended, the County Council has made a determination following screening that an Appropriate Assessment is not required. The proposed development is not directly, connected with or necessary to the management of sites as European sites and it can be concluded, on the basis, of objective information, that the proposed development individually or in combination with other plans or projects is not likely to have a significant effect on the European sites identified and listed in the AA Screening Report prepared by Altemar Ltd. This determination is based on information supplied by Altemar Ltd as detailed in the Report. From this AA screening exercise, it has been determined that no

significant likely effects may arise on any European sites as a result of the proposed development in combination with other plans and projects, through surface water, land and air, and groundwater pathways. This assessment was undertaken in the absence of mitigation measures. The project screened out for Appropriate Assessment based on the location of the works, the nature and the scale of the works.

Drawings:

Architecture (DMOD Architects):

10001 - OS Map
10002 - Site Location Map
10003 - Site Layout Plan
10100 – Ground Floor Plan
10101 – Roof Plan
10102 – Ground Floor Plan (Building)
10103 – Roof Plan (Building)
10104 – Ground Floor Plan (Track Enclosure)
10105 – Roof Plan (Track Enclosure)
10202 – Section AA & BB
10203 – Section CC & DD
10204 – Section EE & FF & GG
10300 – Elevations North & West (Building)
10301 – Elevations South & East (Building)
10302 – Elevations West & South (Track Enclosure)
10303 – Elevations East & North (Track Enclosure)
10304 – Material Elevations

Engineering (O'Connor Sutton Cronin):

0500 - Proposed surface water layout sheet 1
0501 - Proposed surface water layout sheet 2
0502 - Proposed surface water layout sheet 3
0503 - Proposed surface water layout sheet 4
0505 - Proposed foul water layout sheet 1
0506 - Proposed foul water layout sheet 2
0507 - Proposed foul water layout sheet 3
0508 - Proposed foul water layout sheet 4
0550 - Proposed watermain layout sheet 1
0551 - Proposed watermain layout sheet 2
0552 - Proposed watermain layout sheet 3

Landscape Architecture (dlr Parks):

2434-01 Site Layout Plan
2434-02 Ecological Enhancement Measures
2434-03 Landscape Plan

Mechanical & Electrical (Axis Engineering):

60101 – Site Lighting

Reports:

Appendix 1: Architectural Design Statement

Appendix 2: Engineering Report

Appendix 3: Mechanical, Electrical & Energy Report

Appendix 4: Conservation Report

Appendix 5: Ecological Impact Assessment

Appendix 6: Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Appendix 7: Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Appendix 8: Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

Appendix 9: Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Determination