

**Environmental Impact Assessment
Screening Report
for Phase 1 of Proposed Sporting Facilities
at Shanganagh Park, Co. Dublin**

for: Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council

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1. Introduction

CAAS Ltd. has been appointed by Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council to prepare this Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report for phase 1 of proposed sporting facilities at Shanganagh park, Co. Dublin (the proposed development).

This report has been prepared to form an opinion as to whether or not the proposed development should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and if so, whether an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be prepared in respect of it.

This report was originally prepared in November 2021 and found that the proposed development did not need to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and no Environmental Impact Assessment Report was required for it. This conclusion was contested to An Bord Pleanála by a third-party request for an EIA screening determination, made under article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. In April 2022 the Board issued its EIA screening determination which confirmed that EIA was not required.

This report was updated in January 2023 to take account of design changes and the Board's EIA Screening Determination. It has been updated again in March 2023 to take account of further design changes.

This updated report provides a full assessment of the revised design of the final Part 8 design of the proposed development with reference to the relevant EIA screening legislation¹ including the EIA Directive, and Planning and Development legislation. It also has regard to relevant parts of *EIA Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding sub-threshold development*, 2003, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, *OPR Practice Note PNO2 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening*, 2021, OPR and *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*, 2018, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and relevant EU Guidance including *Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive*, 2015, EU and *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects - Guidance on Screening*, 2017, EU.

This report includes consideration the legislation and of EIA project type. The first step of the screening *per se* is a preliminary examination (s6) to find out if: (i) there is any likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development; (ii) there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment; or (iii) there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. In instance (i) no EIA will be required, in instance (ii) the project need to be screened for EIA using prescribed screening criteria and in instance (iii) an EIA is required and no further screening is necessary.

¹ see section 3 for details

The consideration of potential impacts which follows covers all significant direct, indirect and secondary impacts as relevant, with reference to the guidance and in compliance with the legislation, including the criteria for determining whether certain development types should be subject to EIA, and which are grouped into these categories in the Directive:

- (i) Characteristics of the proposal
- (ii) Location of the proposal
- (iii) Characteristics of potential impacts

Where used, descriptions of effects follow the statutory EPA *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022)*. For ease of reference, these standardised descriptions are reproduced in Appendix I of this report.

Information on the development has been obtained from Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, including a brief written description and relevant drawings.

The following sections of this report cover:

- The proposed development (s2)
- The legislative basis for EIA (s3)
- Project type (s4)
- Sub-threshold development (s5)
- Preliminary Examination (s6)
- Review against Schedule 7 criteria (s7)
- Conclusion (s8)

An overview of the author's competency is provided in Appendix II.

2. The proposed development

2.1 Overview of the development

The proposed development represents Phase 1 of the Shanganagh Park masterplan and mainly involves the construction and rearrangement of sporting facilities. The total area of the site is approx. 8.7 ha.

The whole masterplan for Shanganagh Park includes plans for a range of other facilities as shown on Figure 3. These include a car park extension, a wetland pond for stormwater attenuation, enlargement and relocation of a playground, tea rooms in Shanganagh Castle, a formal herbaceous garden, the renovation of a multi-sport complex and a potential greenway route through the site. These other masterplan elements are not included in the current Part 8 proposal and are referred to in relation to consideration of cumulative effects in this report but are not otherwise considered. They will be subject to separate planning and environmental assessment compliance requirements in due course.

The proposed development involves the construction of a sand based GAA pitch with floodlights, an amalgamation of a cricket and baseball pitch and a 6-lane sprint track with floodlights, tree planting and pollinator areas, improvements to the perimeter path and access over DART line and ancillary works and netting facilities as detailed below and in the Pt. 8 report and drawings.

2.2 Project details

- The development of one grass pitch with floodlights
- The amalgamation and upgrade of the baseball and cricket facilities
- A 100 m sprint track with floodlights
- A basketball area and calisthenics workout zone
- Upgrades to entrances, street furniture, upgrades at the railway crossing to include new paths and ramps/steps with lighting and natural play
- All earthworks, drainage, fencing and netting, tree planting and new areas of meadow

The total proposed site area is approximately 8.7 ha.

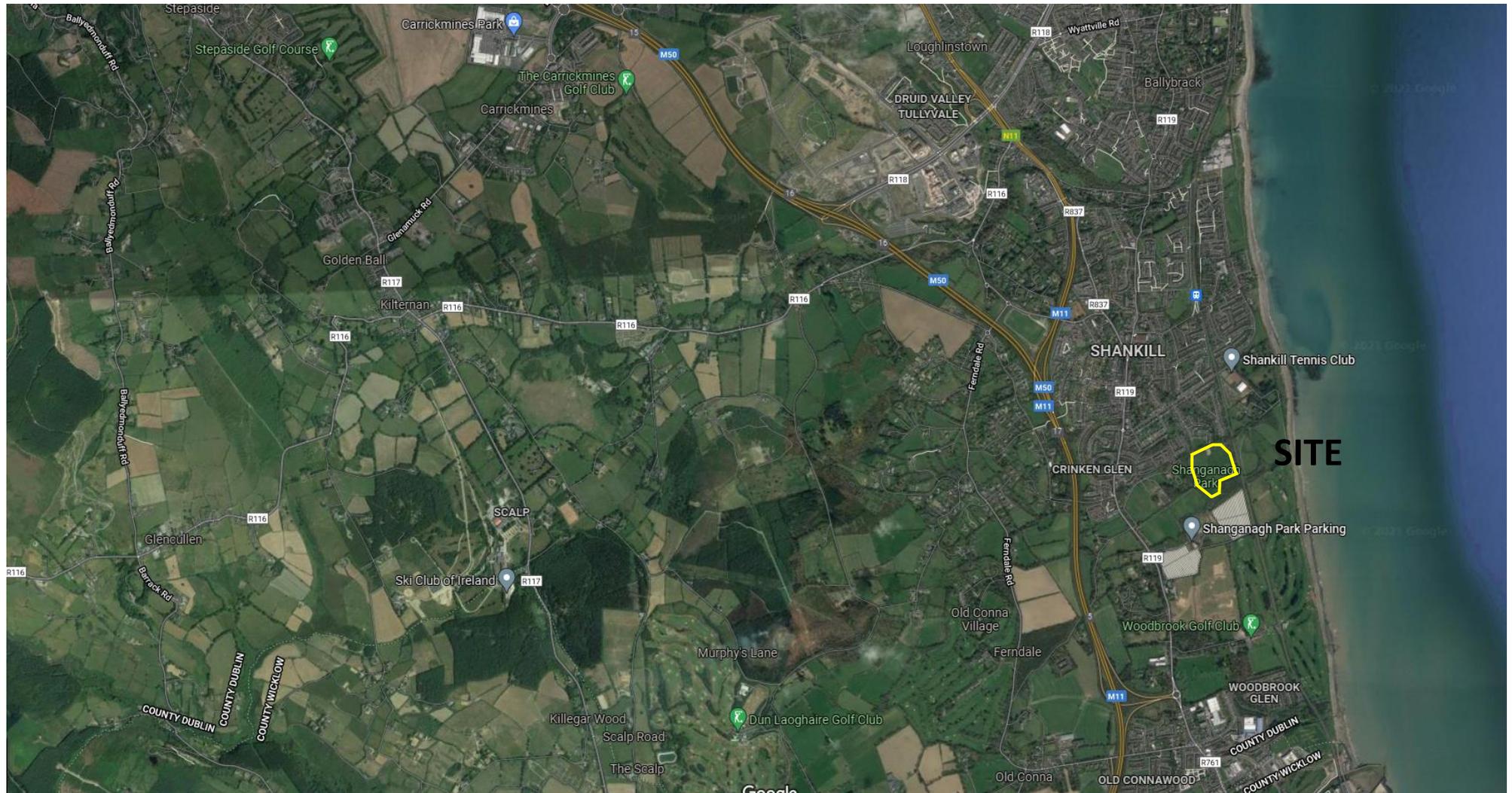


Figure 1 Site location map

Source: Google maps, the perimeter of the site is approximate

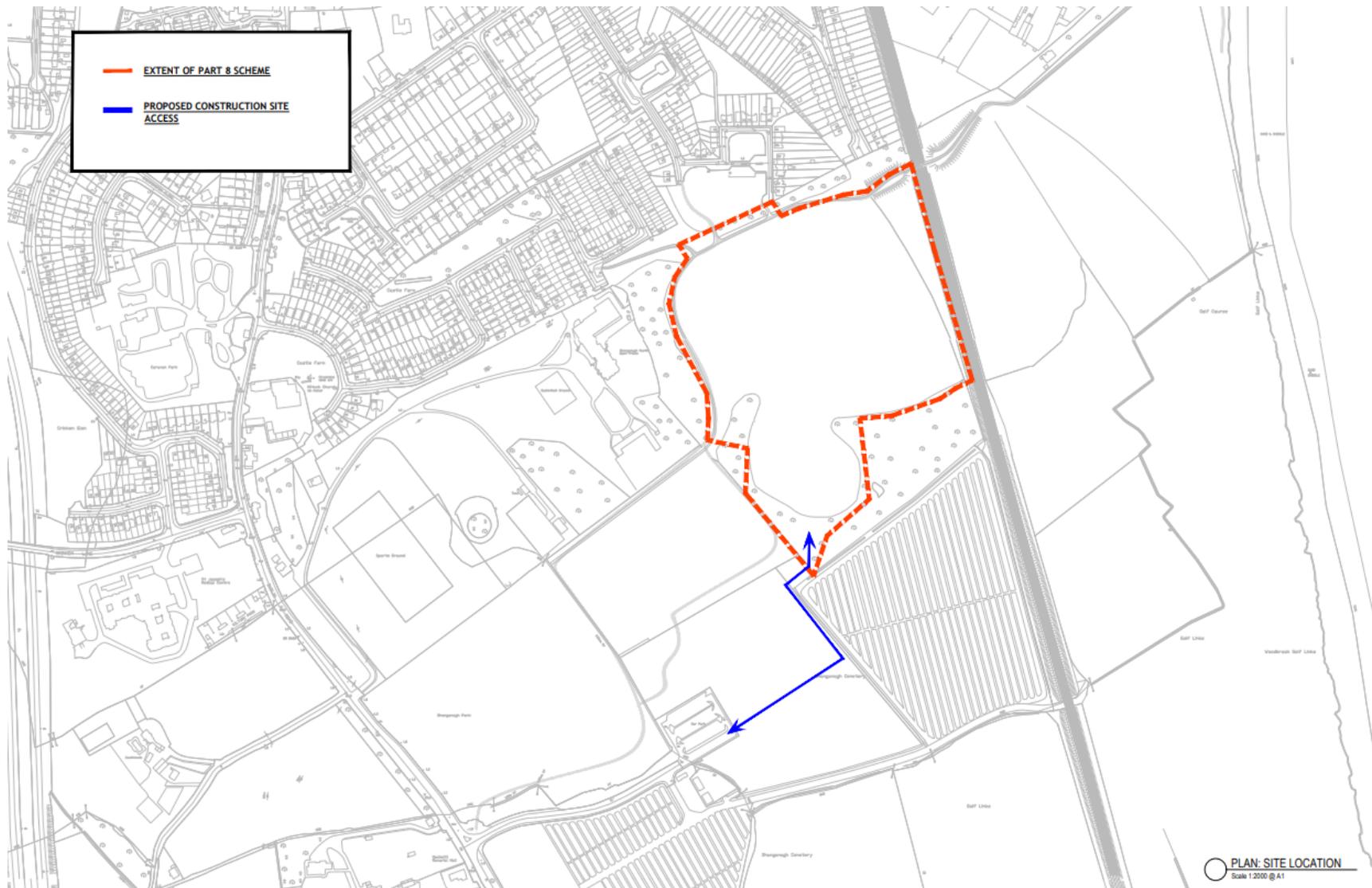


Figure 2 Site environs map

Source: DLRC (a full size version of this drawing is contained in the Part VIII drawing set)



Figure 3 Proposed general arrangement

Source: DLRCC (a full size version of this drawing is contained in the Part VIII drawing set)



Figure 4 Proposed Baseball & Cricket layout

Source: DLRCC (a full size version of this drawing is contained in the Part VIII drawing set)

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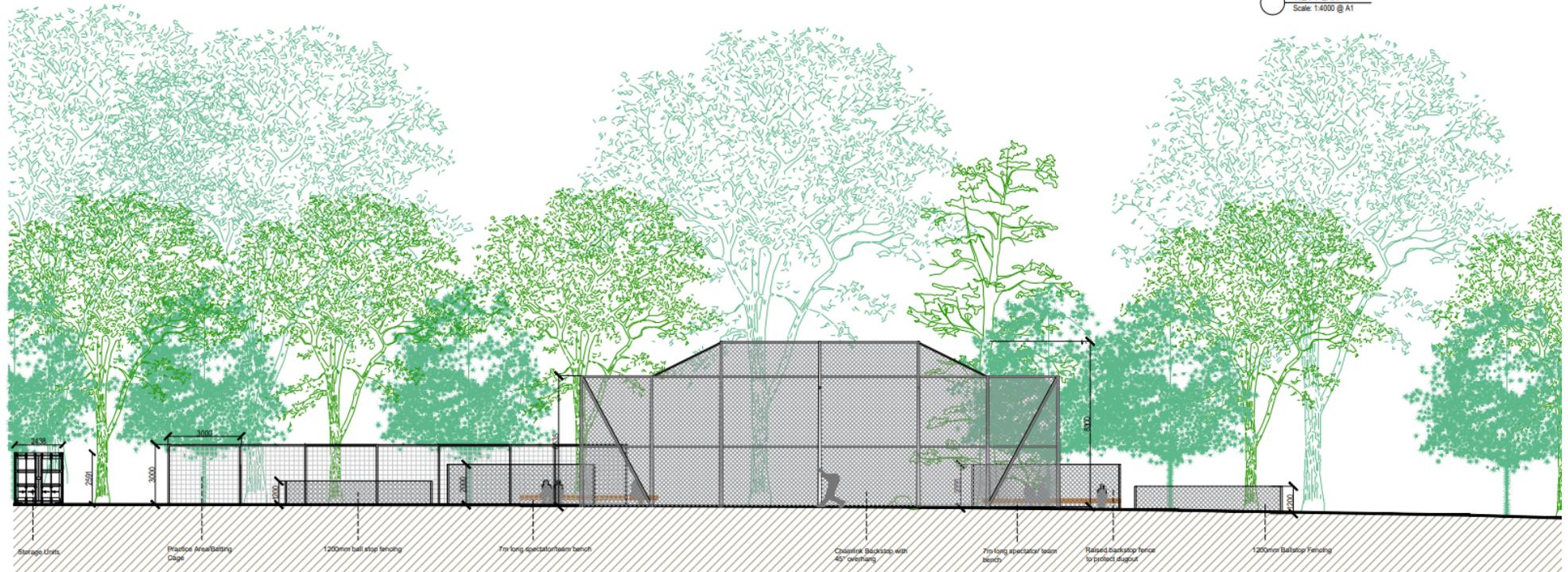
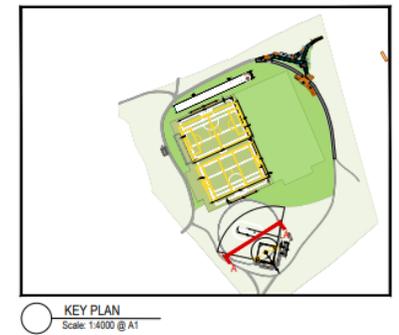


Figure 5 Baseball & Cricket section

Source: DLRCC (a full size version of this drawing is contained in the Part VIII drawing set)

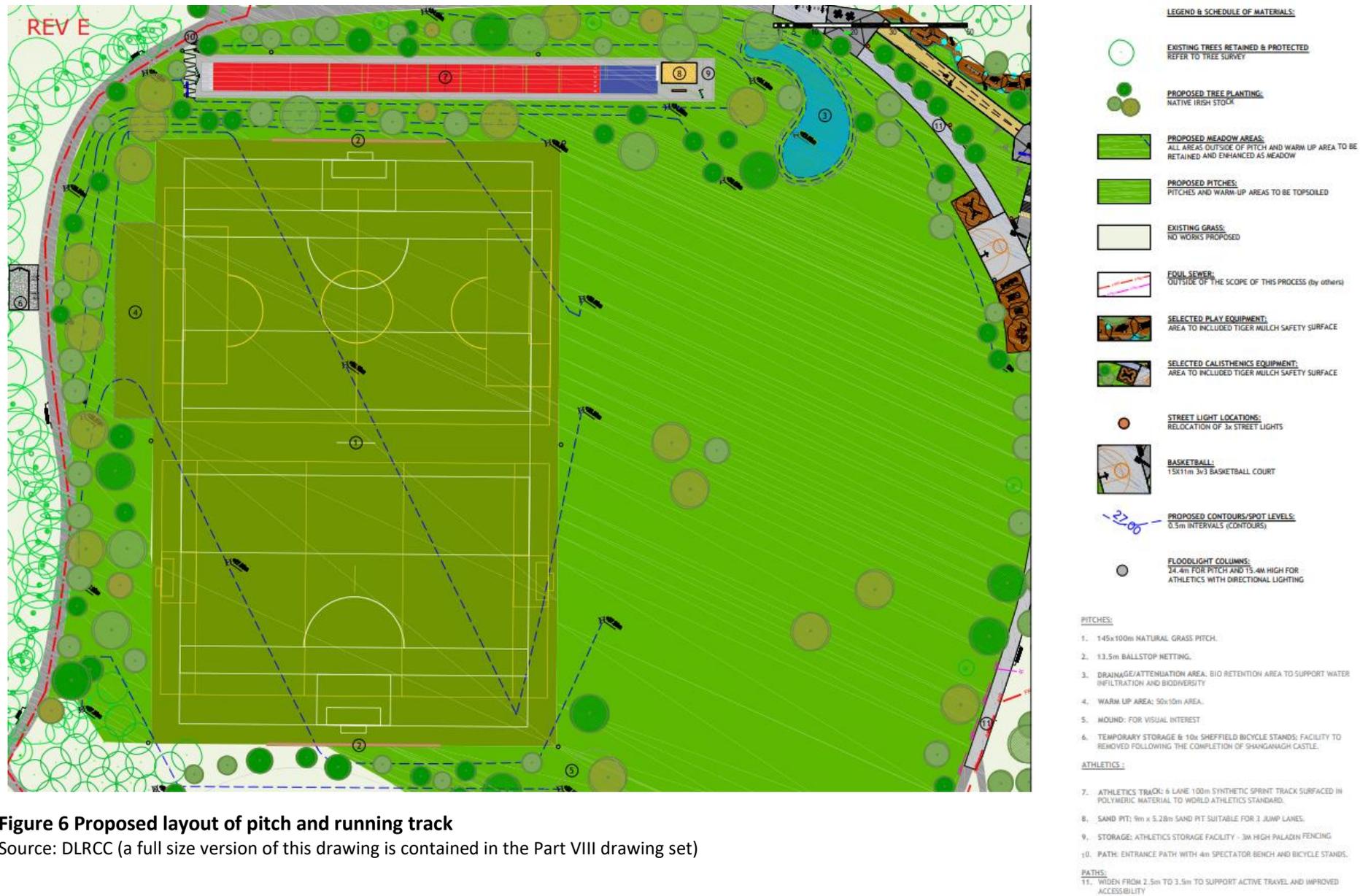


Figure 6 Proposed layout of pitch and running track

Source: DLRCC (a full size version of this drawing is contained in the Part VIII drawing set)



Figure 7 DART crossing and Callisthenics Area

Source: DLCC (a full size version of this drawing is contained in the Part VIII drawing set)

**LEGEND:**

1. PITCH PRIMARY DRAINAGE SYSTEM CONSISTING OF 225MM PERFORATED PIPES (APPROX AREA 7200 SQ. M)
2. TRACK PRIMARY DRAINAGE SYSTEM CONSISTING OF 150MM PERFORATED PIPE (APPROX AREA 1300 SQ. M)
3. BIO-RETENTION AREA (VOLUME APPROX.500 CU. M)
4. OUTFALL FROM ATTENUATION AREA WITH HYDRO-BREAK

NOTE:

Slit drains and perforated lateral drains will be installed across the pitches and directed to a bio-retention area via collector drains (primary drainage system) that will be installed around the perimeter of the pitch. Further minor drainage will take place at the cricket/baseball field as required, the sprint track and at the bottom of any steep slopes. The attenuation system will be an above ground bio-retention pond is to be located along the northern boundary of the pitches and will be designed so that attenuation will be provided for the 1.0% AEP (1:100 year) storm event. The attenuation system outflow will be controlled by a hydrobrake connected to the existing surface water drainage system with the outflow restricted to 2l/s/ha or Qbar, whichever is the greater, in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy

(GDSDS). The exact size of attenuation system will be determined by a drainage engineer following further geotechnical site investigation and will be subject to the agreement of the Water & Drainage Section.

Figure 8 Drainage Layout

Source: DLRCC (a full size version of this drawing is contained in the Part VIII drawing set)

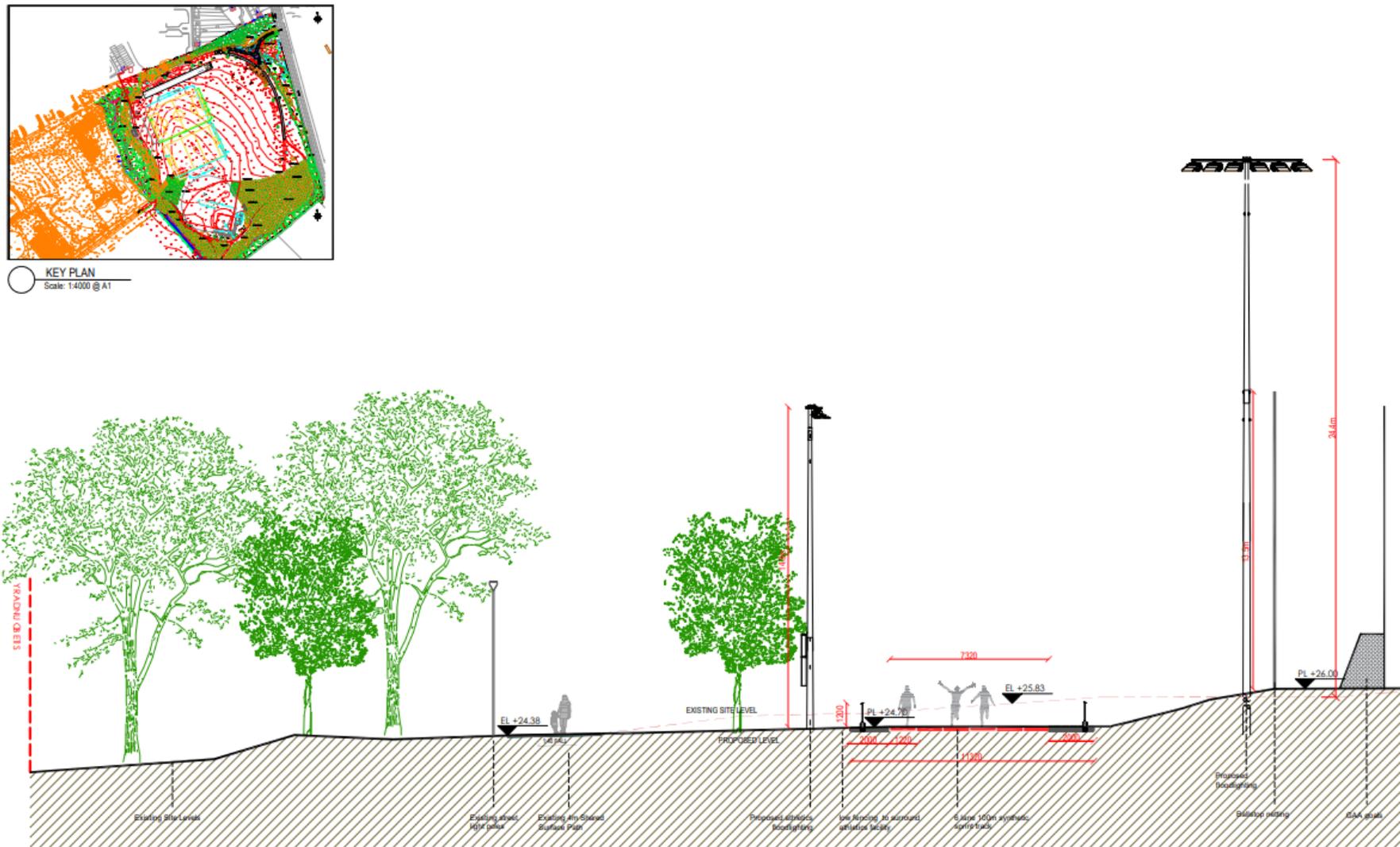


Figure 9 Grass Pitch and Athletics Track D-D

Source: DLRCC (a full size version of this drawing is contained in the Part VIII drawing set)

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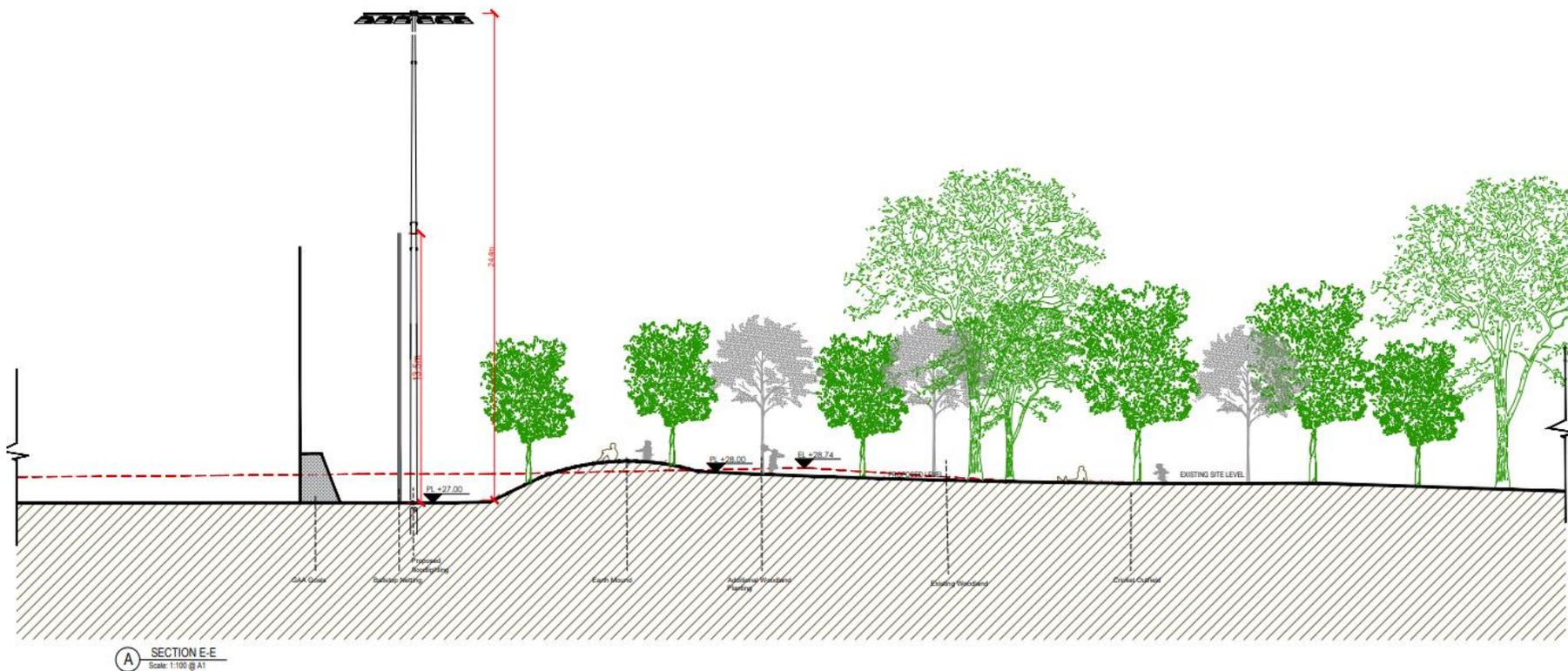


Figure 10 Grass Pitch Section E-E

Source: DLRCC (a full size version of this drawing is contained in the Part VIII drawing set)

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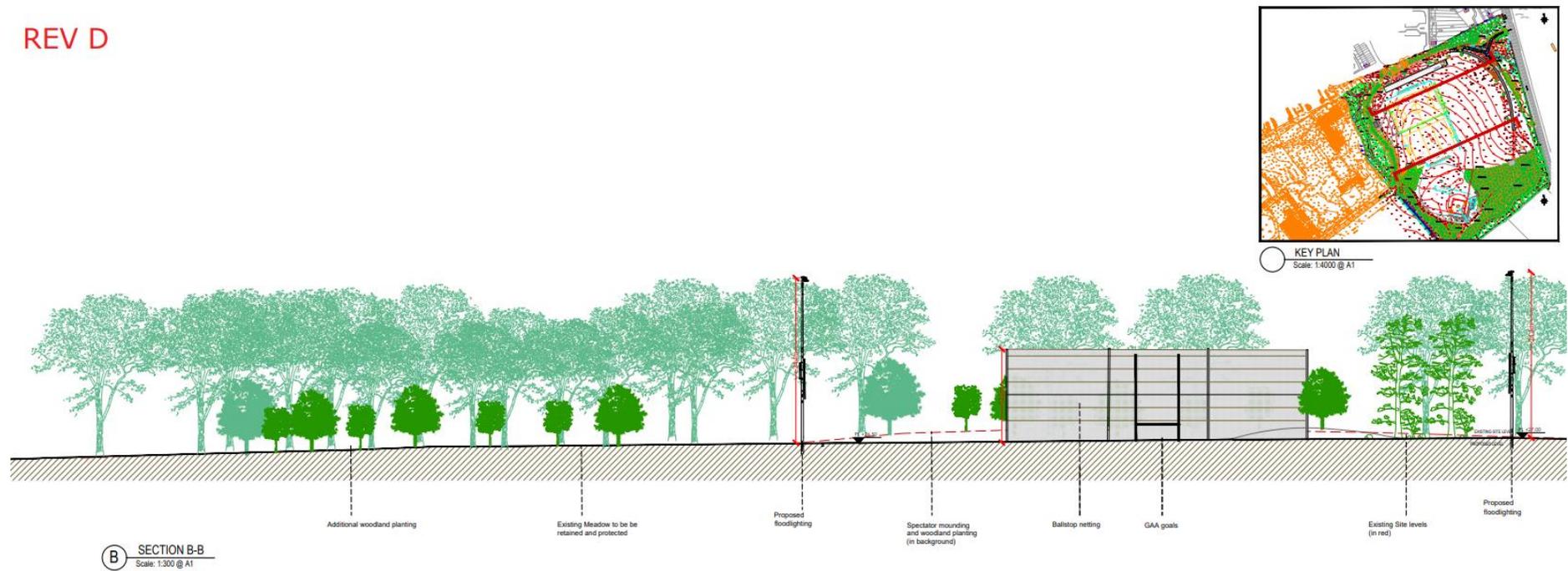


Figure 11 Grass Pitch Section B-B

Source: DLRC (a full size version of this drawing is contained in the Part VIII drawing set)

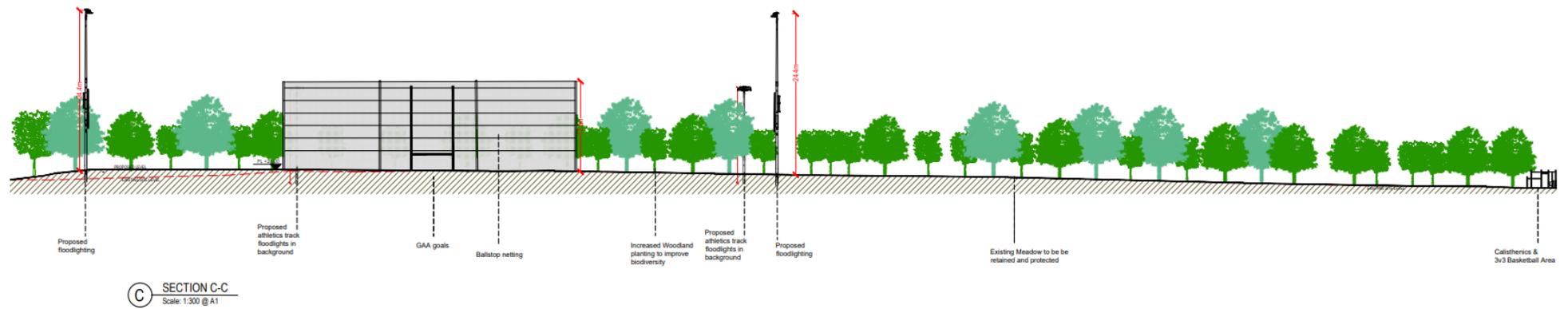


Figure 12 Grass Pitch Section C-C

Source: DLRCC (a full size version of this drawing is contained in the Part VIII drawing set)

3. Legislative basis for EIA

EIA requirements derive from EU Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. The Directive has been transposed into various Irish legislation of which the following are the most relevant to this development.

- Planning and Development Acts 2000-2020 (Part X)
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. 600/2001) (as amended)
- European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. 296/2018)

Part 1 of Schedule 5 of these regulations lists projects included in Annex I of the Directive which automatically require EIA.

For projects included in Annex II of the Directive, Part 2 of Schedule 5 provides thresholds above which EIA is required.

4. Project type

In the first instance it is necessary to determine whether the project is of a type that requires EIA.

The prescribed classes of development for the purpose of Section 176 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 are set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended. The proposed development is not a prescribed class of development within Schedule 5, Part 1 and so it is necessary to consider whether the proposed development comes within Schedule 5, Part 2. The potentially relevant project types within Schedule 5, Part 2 are listed in the table below with commentaries of their applicability to the proposed development. Criteria prescribed in the legislation for changes or extensions are included.

The proposed development does not correspond to any specific project type listed under the regulations. However, for the purpose of providing a robust assessment, the proposed development has been considered under classes which it may correspond to most.

Project type / criteria	Comment	Is EIA required on this basis?
Planning and Development legislation S.I. 600/2001, Schedule 5, Pt 2		
Project type 10. <i>Infrastructure projects (b) (iv)</i>		
<p><i>Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.</i></p> <p><i>(In this paragraph, “business district” means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)</i></p>	<p>Commission guidance² lists a range of projects, stating that these or other projects with similar characteristics can be considered to be ‘urban development’. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shopping centres • Bus garages • Train depots • Hospitals • Universities • Sports stadiums • Cinemas • Theatres • Concert halls • Other cultural centres • Sewerage or water supply networks <p>The closest of these to the subject proposal is ‘sports stadiums’. While the proposed project includes a sports pitch, it does not include other characteristics of sports stadiums such as a grandstand, indoor facilities, public address systems or new car parking space. The development of new leisure and amenity facilities and rearrangement of existing amenity facilities in a public park are in keeping with the normal park management functions of the Council. The proposed project can therefore be considered as not corresponding to or having similar characteristics to a sports stadium or any of the other projects listed in the Commission guidance.</p> <p>It is considered that this proposal does not fall into the ‘urban development’ project type (type 10(b)(iv)).</p>	No

² Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive, 2015, EU

Project type / criteria	Comment	Is EIA required on this basis?
Project type 12. <i>Tourism and leisure projects (e)</i>		
<i>Theme parks occupying an area greater than 5 hectares.</i>	<p>Regarding interpretation of the meaning of this project type, Commission guidance³ states: -</p> <p><i>(ii) Sports stadiums would in principle be covered by Annex II(10)(b) ‘urban development projects’. However, certain Member States can decide in their national environmental impact assessment systems that sports stadiums fall within the ‘theme parks’ category. Compliance with the Directive will be ensured, irrespective of which Annex II category is considered applicable, provided that such projects do not escape from the scope of application of the Directive.</i></p> <p>As discussed in relation to project type 10(b)(iv) above it is considered that this proposal does not correspond to or have similar characteristics to a sports stadium. It can thus be considered that this proposal also does not fall into the ‘Theme parks’ project type (type 12(e)).</p>	No
Project type 13. <i>Changes, extensions, development and testing</i>		
<p><i>(a) Any change or extension of development which would:-</i></p> <p><i>(i) result in the development being of a class listed in Part 1 or paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of this Schedule, and</i></p> <p><i>(ii) result in an increase in size greater than-</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 25 per cent, or - an amount equal to 50 per cent of the appropriate threshold, whichever is the greater 	As the changes covered by the proposal will not result in the development being of a listed class, criterion (i) is not met. Therefore, project type 13(a) is not applicable.	No

³ Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive, 2015, EU

5. Sub-threshold development

Article 92 of the Regulations of 2001 as amended define: ‘sub-threshold development’ as:

development of a type set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5 which does not equal or exceed, as the case may be, a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development.

Annex III of the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended) as transposed into Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended - sets out criteria for review of sub-threshold projects to determine if they should be subject to EIA. These criteria include characteristics, location and potential impacts.

The proposed development does not fall into a project type prescribed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 and can be considered, on the one hand, not to be ‘sub-threshold development’. On the other hand, if project type 10(b)(iv) or 12(e) are taken to have a wider meaning, it may be considered that the development does correspond to this project type. For the avoidance of any doubt, section 7 of this report contains a review of the characteristics, location and potential impacts of the proposal against the Schedule 7 criteria to determine if it should be subject to EIA.

6. Preliminary Examination

Article 120(a)(1)(a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, requires that prior to screening a project for EIA: -

Where a local authority proposes to carry out a sub-threshold development, the authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.

In the case of the subject development, as the proposal involves groundworks on a large site of 8.7 ha and because it is in a public park which is of significant amenity value it can be considered that there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. Thus, in accordance with Article 120(b)(ii) of the Regulations of 2001 as amended, it is required to screen the proposal to form an opinion as to whether or not the proposed development should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

7. Review against Schedule 7 criteria

These criteria cover:

1. Characteristics of the proposed development
2. Location of the proposed development
3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts

The criteria are listed in the table below. The comments provided in relation to the category 1 and 2 criteria are factual and do not comment on the types or characteristics of impacts. In keeping with the intent of Schedule 7, commentary on impacts is provided in response to the items covered by category 3 (the third part of the table below). All comments, particularly regarding 'significance', are made in the context of the Directive and guidance. The review against the Schedule 7 criteria takes account of the environmental factors set out in Schedule 6, paragraph 2(d) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended by the 2018 Regulations, as relevant.

Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended by the 2018 Regulations, sets out 'Information to be provided by the Applicant or Developer for the Purposes of Screening Sub-threshold Development for Environmental Impact Assessment'. This information includes:

1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular-
 - (a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and
 - (b) description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.
2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.
3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from-
 - (a) the expected residues and emissions and the production waste, where relevant, and
 - (b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.
4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

Regard is had in this report to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 for determining whether development listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 should be subject to EIA and to the information required by Schedule 7A for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for EIA as set out in the commentary provided in and below the table which follows.

Schedule 7 Criteria	Commentary
<p>1. Characteristics of Proposed Development</p> <p>The characteristics of proposed development, in particular:</p>	
(a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development	The project area is given as approx. 8.7 ha. The area of works within this is not given but can be seen to be significantly less than this.
(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment	<p>The context of the site is largely in amenity usage. Other parts of the Park are in amenity and sporting use. The lands surrounding the Park are in various uses including residential, transportation (road and rail) and amenity use. There is a large cemetery to the south.</p> <p>The project is Phase 1 of a Masterplan that indicates that it is currently intended that other alterations will be introduced in the Park at later stages. Prior to their development, any such changes will be subject to compliance with their own planning and environmental assessment requirements, as applicable. As they are at masterplan stage, they do not affect this screening.</p>
(c) the nature of any associated demolition works	No demolition works are required.
(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity	No significant natural resources will be used.
(e) the production of waste,	Waste generated during construction and operation can be anticipated to be typical for a small scale works project. No significant waste streams will be generated.
(f) pollution and nuisances,	During construction, the proposal is likely to generate localised and short-term noise and dust. It will also generate minor traffic. Post-construction, it can be anticipated to have negligible potential to cause any pollution or nuisance.
(g) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge	There is no significant potential for the proposed development to give rise to significant adverse effects on the environment due to accidents and/or disasters. This applies to accidents/disasters arising from external factors as well as accidents arising from the development.
(h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution)	The project characteristics pose no significant risks to human health.

<p>2. Location of proposed development</p> <p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to—</p>	
<p>(a) the existing and approved land use</p>	<p>The site is currently in amenity usage. The surrounding lands are in various uses including residential, transportation (road and rail) and amenity use. There is a cemetery to the south of the Park.</p>
<p>(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground</p>	<p>Due to the scale of the proposed development and its location in a developed residential and suburban context, the impact on natural resources in the area will be minimal.</p>
<p>(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:</p>	
<p>(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths</p>	<p>A seasonal pond is located in the south east of the site.</p>
<p>(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment</p>	<p>The site is approximately 400 m from the coast with the main Dublin-Wexford railway lies in between.</p>
<p>(iii) mountain and forest areas</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>(iv) nature reserves and parks</p>	<p>The existing site is a park containing sports facilities.</p>
<p>(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure.</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>(vii) densely populated areas</p>	<p>The northern environs of the development are predominantly low-density suburban residential.</p>

<p>(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance</p>	<p>A number of protected structures are located in the vicinity of the proposed development. These include a castle, country house, monument, gates, railings and walls and gate lodge.</p> <p>The castle's registration number is DU026-054001. It is approx. 110 m from the proposed development.</p> <p>The country house registration number is 60260146. It is located approx. 110 m from the site.</p> <p>The monument's registration number is 60260147. It is situated approx. 160 m from the proposed development.</p> <p>The gates, railings and wall registration number is 60260149. They are located approx. 495 m from the proposed development.</p> <p>The gate lodge registration number is 60260148. It is located approx. 520 m from the site.</p> <p>The registration numbers for these sites was obtained from the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Historic Environment Map Viewer</p>
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<p>3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts</p> <p>The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of the definition of 'environmental impact assessment report' in section 171A of the Act, taking into account—</p>	
<p>(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)</p>	<p>The site covers 8.7 ha. No significant effects are likely to extend beyond the site boundary.</p>
<p>(b) the nature of the impact</p>	<p>Temporary to short term localised construction phase impacts are likely. These are likely to be small scale and localised. These are not likely to be significant within the meaning of the Directive.</p> <p>The scheme has potential to cause effects on: soprano pipistrelle bats which roost nearby and feed in the Eastern section of Shanganagh Park; smooth newts which use a seasonal pond south east of where it is intended to develop</p>

	the combined cricket and baseball pitch; pygmy shrew and bird nesting habitat in vicinity of proposed ramp to railway crossing (ref NPWS Part VIII submission of 01.02.2002). These ecological sensitivities are addressed in the accompanying EclA report.
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact	-
(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact	Taking account of (h) below, the effects outlined at (b) above are likely to be low in intensity and complexity. This statement takes account <i>inter alia</i> of the findings of the accompanying EclA report.
(e) the probability of the impact	The effects outlined at (b) above are likely to occur but also to be mitigated as indicated at (h) below.
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	Construction phase impacts will commence at start of construction, be of varying frequency and can be anticipated to be insignificant to slight and temporary to short term. Once completed, effects will be insignificant and permanent.
(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment	On the basis of their nature and scale, when considered in-combination with the proposed development, potential for other existing and/or permitted development to cause significant cumulative impacts can be considered to be negligible.
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact	The design of the proposed scheme has taken account of the ecological sensitivities noted in the NPWS submission of 01.02.22. It has addressed these sensitivities by adjustment of the railway crossing to avoid adverse habitat effects and amphibian management proposals. The separate EclA provides details of proposed mitigation measures and concludes that residual biodiversity effects will not be significant.

Based on review against the Schedule 7 criteria, the environmental impacts of the proposed project can be anticipated to be localised, temporary (during construction) and permanent (after construction) and not likely to be significant within the meaning of the Directive.

Article 120 of the Regulations of 2001 as amended, states that the Schedule 7A information:

- a) 'shall be accompanied by any further relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects on the environment, including, where

- relevant, information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been taken into account' and
- b) 'may be accompanied by a description of the features, if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.'

There is no further relevant information arising from other assessments as described at (a) that needs to be taken into account.

In relation to (b) the separate EclA provides details of features that are proposed to avoid or prevent potential adverse effects on biodiversity.

8 Conclusions

It is considered that phase 1 of the proposed sporting facilities at Shanganagh Park, Co. Dublin does not need to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and no Environmental Impact Assessment Report is required for it.

This conclusion is based on an objective review of the proposed development, including its characteristics, location and the likelihood of it causing significant environmental impacts. The screening has followed the relevant legislation and has had regard to the relevant guidance.

Appendix I – Standard Descriptions of Effects

(from *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, 2022, EPA)

<p>Quality of Effects</p> <p>It is important to inform the non-specialist reader whether an effect is positive, negative or neutral</p>	<p>Positive Effects</p> <p>A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by increasing species diversity; or the improving reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or by removing nuisances or improving amenities).</p>
	<p>Neutral Effects</p> <p>No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.</p>
	<p>Negative/adverse Effects</p> <p>A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, lessening species diversity or diminishing the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem; or damaging health or property or by causing nuisance).</p>
<p>Describing the Significance of Effects</p> <p>“Significance” is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful (also see <i>Determining Significance</i> below.).</p>	<p>Imperceptible</p> <p>An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.</p>
	<p>Not significant</p> <p>An effect which causes noticeable² changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.</p>
	<p>Slight Effects</p> <p>An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.</p>
	<p>Moderate Effects</p> <p>An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.</p>
	<p>Significant Effects</p> <p>An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.</p>
	<p>Very Significant</p> <p>An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.</p>
	<p>Profound Effects</p> <p>An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics</p>
<p>Describing the Extent and Context of Effects</p> <p>Context can affect the perception of significance. It is important to establish if the effect is unique or, perhaps, commonly or increasingly experienced.</p>	<p>Extent</p> <p>Describe the size of the area, the number of sites, and the proportion of a population affected by an effect.</p>
	<p>Context</p> <p>Describe whether the extent, duration, or frequency will conform or contrast with established (baseline) conditions (is it the biggest, longest effect ever?)</p>

<p>Describing the Probability of Effects</p> <p>Descriptions of effects should establish how likely it is that the predicted effects will occur – so that the CA can take a view of the balance of risk over advantage when making a decision.</p>	<p>Likely Effects</p> <p>The effects that can reasonably be expected to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.</p> <p>Unlikely Effects</p> <p>The effects that can reasonably be expected not to occur because of the planned project if all mitigation measures are properly implemented.</p>
<p>Describing the Duration and Frequency of Effects</p> <p>'Duration' is a concept that can have different meanings for different topics – in the absence of specific definitions for different topics the following definitions may be useful.</p>	<p>Momentary Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting from seconds to minutes</p> <p>Brief Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting less than a day</p> <p>Temporary Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting less than a year</p> <p>Short-term Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting one to seven years.</p> <p>Medium-term Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting seven to fifteen years.</p> <p>Long-term Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years.</p> <p>Permanent Effects</p> <p>Effects lasting over sixty years</p> <p>Reversible Effects</p> <p>Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration</p> <p>Frequency of Effects</p> <p>Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, annually)</p>
<p>Describing the Types of Effects</p>	<p>Indirect Effects (a.k.a. Secondary Effects)</p> <p>Impacts on the environment, which are not a direct result of the project, often produced away from the project site or because of a complex pathway.</p> <p>Cumulative Effects</p> <p>The addition of many minor or significant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects.</p> <p>'Do-Nothing Effects'</p> <p>The environment as it would be in the future should the subject project not be carried out.</p> <p>'Worst case' Effects</p> <p>The effects arising from a project in the case where mitigation measures substantially fail.</p> <p>Indeterminable Effects</p> <p>When the full consequences of a change in the environment cannot be described.</p>

	Irreversible Effects When the character, distinctiveness, diversity or reproductive capacity of an environment is permanently lost.
	Residual Effects The degree of environmental change that will occur after the proposed mitigation measures have taken effect.
	Synergistic Effects Where the resultant effect is of greater significance than the sum of its constituents, (e.g. combination of SO _x and NO _x to produce smog).

Appendix II - Competency of Authors

Paul Fingleton, the lead author, has an MSc in Rural and Regional Resources Planning (with specialisation in EIA) from the University of Aberdeen. Paul is a member of the International Association for Impact Assessment as well as the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. He has over twenty-five years' experience working in the area of Environmental Assessment. Over this period, he has been involved in a diverse range of projects including contributions to, and co-ordination of, numerous complex EIARs and EIA screening reports. He has also contributed to and supervised the preparation of numerous AAs and AA screenings.

Paul is the lead author of the EPA Guidelines⁴ and accompanying Advice Notes⁵ on EIARs. He has been involved in all previous editions of these statutory guidelines. He also provides a range of other EIA related consultancy services to the EPA. Paul is regularly engaged by various planning authorities and other consent authorities to provide specialised EIA advice.

Clodagh Ryan, Environmental Assistant has a BSc in Environmental Management, Dublin Institute of Technology, 2021. Clodagh liaises with various government agencies and local authorities in order to assimilate the environmental baseline information that is used in EIAs and AAs and assists in the preparation of the various EIA and AA related documentation.

⁴ *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, EPA, 2022

⁵ *Advice notes on current practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, EPA, 2003