

## **MEETING OF DÚN LAOGHAIRE-RATHDOWN COUNTY COUNCIL**

**14<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

### **Item No. 9**

**Report submitted in accordance with Part XI, Section 179(3) of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 (as amended), Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended), and Section 138 of the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended).**

**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)**

#### **1. PC/PKS/01/24**

In accordance with Part 8, Article 81 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended (PDR)), Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council (the Council) gave notice of the proposed development, in the Irish Times on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2024. Plans and particulars of the proposed development were made available for inspection from the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2024 to the 24<sup>th</sup> August 2024 at the Planning Department, County Hall, Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire, and the Council Offices, Dundrum and on the DLR Consultation Hub, on the Council's website [www.dlrcoco.ie](http://www.dlrcoco.ie).

Submissions and observations with regards to the proposed development could be made up to and including the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

<https://dlrcoco.citizenspace.com/community/pc-pks-01-24-proposed-development-at-st-thomas-est/>

#### **2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION:**

The site is located to the south of Tibbradden Road, Rathfarnam, 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 1,517m<sup>2</sup> with 4.5m floor to ceiling clearance generally, (2) a single storey sprint track enclosure of c.858m<sup>2</sup> 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. ZONING AND OBJECTIVES IN THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028**

#### **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 AND EXTENT OF 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.

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 monogyna*) 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. 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 including the Wintering Bird Survey 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.

## **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

The proposed development does not trigger the threshold for mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The Council carried out a preliminary examination of the proposal in accordance with Article 120(1)(a) PDR. Based on the nature, size and location of the proposed development, the Council considered 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 PDR, 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 PDR to assist the Council to determine, taking account of the criteria set out under Schedule 7 of the Regulations, whether the proposed development can go ahead without the need for EIA.

Taking account of the findings of the EIA Screening Report, the Council 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 Screening Determination.

## **7. IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PROPER PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA**

It is considered that the proposed development will provide much improved facilities for the community and clubs with a wide range of benefits. It will improve quality of life and encourage an active lifestyle while being age friendly and inclusive.

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*". There are several policies within the County Development Plan 2022-2028 which support this project.

An EIA screening has been carried out and it has been determined that an EIAR is not required, as there is no real likelihood of significant environmental effects.

AA screening has been carried out and the Council has concluded that an AA is not required as the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any European site, individually or in combination with other plans or projects.

In conclusion, the proposed development is acceptable in principle and accords with the provisions of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022 – 2028, the objectives of the Woodbrook - Shanganagh Local Area Plan 2017-2023 and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.



## **8. INTERNAL REPORTS**

### **Architects Department**

In correspondence dated 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

### **Community and Cultural Development**

In correspondence dated 22<sup>th</sup> February 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

### **Forward Planning Infrastructure**

In correspondence dated 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

### **Infrastructure and Climate Change – Capital Projects & Transportation Planning**

In correspondence dated 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

### **Infrastructure and Climate Change – Environment Enforcement**

In correspondence dated 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

### **Infrastructure and Climate Change – Estates Officer**

In correspondence dated 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

### **Infrastructure and Climate Change – Transportation Planning**

No comments received

### **Infrastructure and Climate Change – Climate Action Officer**

In correspondence dated 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

### **Housing Department**

In correspondence dated 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

### **Community & Cultural Development – Biodiversity Officer**

In correspondence dated 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development subject to compliance with a number of conditions prior to, and following completion, of the works.

### **Finance – Drainage Planning**

In correspondence dated 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development with a multiple conditions.

### **Infrastructure and Climate Change – Road Maintenance**

In correspondence dated 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

### **Infrastructure and Climate Change – Traffic and Road Safety**

In correspondence dated 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

### **Planning Department**

In correspondence dated 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

### **Infrastructure and Climate Change – Active Travel**

In correspondence dated 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024, confirmed no objection to the proposed development.

## **9. STATUTORY BODIES/ORGANISATIONS**

The proposed development was notified to relevant prescribed statutory bodies in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended (PDR). One submission was received from Inland Fisheries Ireland. A summary of the issues raised in the submissions with the response of the Chief Executive thereto are set out below: -

<b>Statutory Body</b>	<b>Observations/issues</b>
1. Inland Fisheries Ireland	<p>The Whitechurch Stream is near the proposed development and would be considered a sensitive receptor as there is already a direct link between the existing drainage infrastructure servicing the phase 1 and the stream.</p> <p>In the absence of appropriate mitigation measures during the construction phase of the project there is a risk of deleterious matter entering the adjacent watercourse.</p> <p>IFI recommends that all the measures outlined in Table 5 Mitigation Measures specific to protecting the Whitechurch Stream &amp; River Dodder within the Ecological Impact Assessment are adopted in full.</p> <p>It is further recommended that dlr considers that Scheme Designers must submit a post-construction maintenance specification and schedule for the drainage system, including SuDS measures and attenuation system for their approval.</p>
Chief Executive Response	All of the requirements and recommendations from Inland Fisheries Ireland will be implemented in full.

## **10. SUBMISSIONS/OBSERVATIONS**

### **10.1 Submissions**

In accordance with Part 8, Article 81 of the PDR the Council gave notice of the proposed development in the Irish Times on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2024 indicating that submissions and observations would be accepted up to and including 7<sup>th</sup> September 2024. A site notice, in the prescribed format, was also erected on the site and maintained in place for the prescribed period.

A total of 174 submissions were received during the stipulated time period. 3 of these submissions were discounted as duplicates (i.e. where both the name and email address matched another submission and where duplicates occurred across an online survey and email submission, the contents of the email submission were used for data analysis). In consequence **171 submissions** were analysed from the online survey, 12 were analysed from email and none were analysed from postal submissions.

Of the 171 valid responses received, **166 (97%) support** the proposed development, 3 (2%) do not support the proposed development, 2 (1%) were neutral or undecided in their opinion.

The submissions (and the detail pertinent to the respective submissions) are duly noted and have been assessed. A summary of the issues raised by members of the public with the responses of the Chief Executive thereto are set out below: -

Observations/Comments/Issues	Chief Executive's Response
<b>Support the Proposed Development:</b>	
<p>166 submissions/observations support the proposed development. A summary/snapshot of the comments are outlined below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full support of the development of <b>high quality athletics and sporting facilities</b> in the DL RCC area to support the aspirations of our future heroes.</li> <li>• Super proposal which will provide <b>much needed facilities to community sports clubs</b> in the county. The <b>community is what the Council is there to serve</b> and there is absolutely no doubt that <b>this facility will do precisely that.</b></li> <li>• <b>Vital resource for disabled sports</b>, offering an environment where athletes with disabilities can train and compete in a space tailored to their needs.</li> <li>• Will provide much needed <b>indoor training and changing facilities</b> for the club and local community, and the <b>cafe</b> will be a welcome addition.</li> <li>• Looks fantastic. <b>Main entrance</b> looks <b>especially good</b>, height and glass appealing.</li> <li>• St. Thomas' is a wonderful facility. The 2nd phase will greatly <b>enhance the amenity and enrich the local community.</b></li> <li>• The increased sporting facilities (indoor sprint track, conditioning room, studio spaces) will benefit the <b>health and fitness</b> of the community.</li> </ul>	<p>The Chief Executive notes and welcomes the depth and breadth of observations and comments on the proposed development and acknowledges the high level of engagement and feedback from the community.</p>

Observations/Comments/Issues	Chief Executive's Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This facility would be a great addition to the area and allow <b>more children</b> to be involved in sports.</li> <li>• This is a much needed facility to support the <b>future of athletics and other minority sports</b> within the local and wider community.</li> <li>• The club will also benefit from this development and hopefully will produce more great athletes - the fact that it caters for <b>men and women of all ages and abilities</b> without great cost means it's the type of <b>inclusive</b> sport we should all be promoting.</li> <li>• This development is <b>well thought out</b> and has been <b>designed excellently</b>. The designs are <b>aesthetically pleasing</b> and take account of the <b>environment in which they are set</b>, including the old estate setting. It is a wonderful amenity to have on our doorstep.</li> <li>• Your <b>aims of inclusivity, performance and development</b> and of course <b>mental health</b> say it all for me - this will be a gem in the community <b>bringing everyone together in the name of sport</b>.</li> <li>• Huge addition to not only the existing club members, but <b>allow the club to expand</b>, allowing the kids in <b>nearby schools</b> to get access and allowing the <b>local community a social and sporting outlet</b>.</li> <li>• Will help get people interested in some sport or group activity that will <b>enhance their quality of life</b>, both physical and mental, so I therefore support this project and sincerely wish to see our DLR councillors supporting it too</li> <li>• The area <b>badly needs an indoor facility</b> of this nature to ensure all athletes (both able-bodied and disabled) achieve their potential. Also particularly critical during inclement weather.</li> <li>• A <b>gym</b> would be <b>hugely beneficial</b> for those coming back from an injury or perhaps those who prefer gym work to running and allow athletes to better their training onsite, offering a <b>holistic approach</b> in one area.</li> <li>• The <b>café</b> would act as a great <b>meeting point</b> for those in the <b>community</b> and changing rooms would certainly be beneficial for the cold winter months.</li> <li>• <b>Families</b> have experienced the impressive Phase 1 facilities first hand and seen how</li> </ul>	

Observations/Comments/Issues	Chief Executive's Response
<p>they can <b>deeply enrich lives, foster community spirit, and drive personal growth.</b> The proposed development promises to significantly enhance the recreational infrastructure of the area, <b>widen the user base</b> and provide a space that will <b>inspire</b> and <b>nurture</b> the next generation of athletes of all abilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With <b>every school over subscribed</b> we need a multi sport location in the area for our <b>growing population.</b></li> <li>• In a <b>world that is currently challenging to many of us</b> this type of sporting facility offers an outlet for some <b>respite</b> and to be involved in sport in a meaningful way. It is an <b>investment in the future of our country</b> together with the well being of our young people. Sport is a way of becoming involved in another community, offers a <b>social outlet</b> for many and a way forward in an individual's <b>personal development.</b></li> <li>• The contents of the building will provide <b>multi purpose usage,</b> giving it <b>long term viability</b> and an opportunity to potentially drive revenue streams from each elements.</li> <li>• <b>Fabulous extension to Marlay Park</b> and provides a space for both kids and adults that is not being saved for apartments but rather a <b>place for people to connect.</b></li> <li>• <b>Retention becomes so much harder as they get older</b> and this facility would make retaining children so much easier as they <b>wouldn't be training outdoors in the pouring rain.</b></li> <li>• For <b>aspiring athletes,</b> the track and gym will offer a professional-grade environment to <b>train and improve their skills.</b></li> <li>• The facility can be used for <b>educational programs focused on health, fitness, and nutrition,</b> promoting lifelong healthy habits.</li> <li>• <b>Collaboration with local schools and universities</b> can <b>enhance physical education curricula</b> and provide practical learning experiences for students.</li> <li>• <b>Hosting sports events</b> and fitness competitions <b>can attract visitors, boosting local businesses and tourism.</b></li> <li>• As someone who <b>moved to Ireland from the US,</b> I have found developments like the one proposed for St Thomas are vital because 1)</li> </ul>	

Observations/Comments/Issues	Chief Executive's Response
<p>they <b>build strong communities</b>, 2) they help <b>integrate people like me into said communities</b>, 3) they can be the <b>catalyst for living healthy lifestyles</b>, 4) they create <b>opportunities</b> for people of all ages to develop in sports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Special needs school</b> who caters for students between the ages of <b>4-18</b>. The students have <b>moderate, Severe/Profound intellectual disabilities and autism</b>. we are <b>situated in Dublin 18</b> and are very close to the proposed site (<b>Deputy Principal of St. Michael's House Grosvenor school</b>); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The proposed scheme will provide our school with another local facility for which <b>our students can gain incredible experiences</b> and have a <b>positive impact on their lives</b>. Making use of the proposed facility will not only impact the physical wellbeing of the students but through embracing their achievements <b>impact their whole wellbeing</b>.</li> <li>○ This proposed scheme <b>supports inclusion and promotes an opportunity</b> for our students to be included in the community.</li> <li>○ <b>Past pupils</b> of our school have been involved in the <b>special Olympics</b>. With further exposure to activities related to these sports, opportunities to take this further after they leave our school increase hugely.</li> <li>○ This proposed scheme has the <b>potential to impact not only our current cohort of students but for the future students to come</b>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There has been <b>good engagement with a broad range of stakeholders</b> to consider the <b>potential health and wellbeing needs</b> of surrounding communities. In line with the proposals and engagement to date the <b>development is well thought out</b> in terms of <b>accessibility, inclusion and as a facility for people of all ages (HSE)</b>.</li> <li>• It's developments like this that will help Ireland <b>capitalise on its recent Olympic success (Olympian Barcelona '92)</b>.</li> </ul>	

Observations/Comments/Issues	Chief Executive's Response
<b>Suggestions:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would consider options for solar and wind energy solutions reducing the operational carbon footprint of this development.</li> <li>• I hope it will be open to the general public to use such as joggers using the running trails.</li> <li>• I really do hope that alongside this project the active travel access to the site is looked at, the previous improvements on the road up to the center with the shared space is welcome but the wider cycling and pedestrian network to get here needs improvement, otherwise an opportunity to combine sport and active travel will be missed.</li> <li>• The Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence in Ballyhaunis is very impressive and very popular.</li> <li>• That a proper Shot Put Circle and proper shot put landing area is established. Throwing Shot Puts into grass is bad for the soil and can be confusing to officiate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PV panels and other initiatives are being included to reduce the operational carbon footprint of this development.</li> <li>• Running trails and footpaths will be open to the general public for use.</li> <li>• We are working with our Traffic &amp; Road Safety and Active Travel Sections to help improve walking, cycling and public transport options.</li> <li>• This will be reviewed – thank you for the submission.</li> <li>• We will work with the club to try improve this facility.</li> </ul>
<b>Do Not Support:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban planners recommend that sports, recreational and community facilities be accessible on foot and located within the community. The St Thomas campus is inaccessible except by car and located a good walk from any community. No public transport, no access by bike or (ironically) running, not in Dundrum, on the wrong side of the M50. From Dun Laoghaire it's 2 hours by public transport or an hour by bike.</li> <li>• The St Thomas track is built on the north side of the Dublin mountains, which means that it is subject to fierce and erratic winds, especially in winter. This means that an indoor facility at the location is almost essential although this will suffer from the same drawbacks as the track itself.</li> <li>• Why was the original plan to build a track in nearby Marlay Park abandoned? The funding for this was 'ring-fenced'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council has the highest rate of participation in sports and physical activity per capita nationally. The public land which may be available for developing a facility such as this is very limited and would likely present greater challenges than this site. It is located 500m from Marlay Park and we are working internally and external partners to try improve active travel and public transport.</li> <li>• Berms (mounds) have been developed in phase 1 and others will be developed as part of phase 2. Tree planting will also take place in time to help shelter the facilities.</li> <li>• As part of the Marlay Park masterplan, this option was explored but not considered the best use of the public park.</li> </ul>

Observations/Comments/Issues	Chief Executive's Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ideal location for an DLR indoors sports facility would have been Sandyford industrial Estate.</li> <li>• Fingal CC in the last few years has off-loaded the National Athletics Stadium in Santry to DCU quite simply because it could not afford to either maintain or staff the facility adequately. In Belfast, the local council claims to be unable to continue financing the track. As you well know, local councils in Ireland are starved of decent funding by over-centralised government. The considerable cost of repairing and maintaining such tracks is a considerable burden on these clubs.</li> <li>• Blackrock AC is one of the most successful clubs in the DLR region. It operates out of two Portacabins in Carysfort park. Children can walk, run or cycle to training. It rents the Belfield track for technical training. It needs nothing more.</li> <li>• Air pollution from the M50. No trees, no shelter from the sun, wind or rain.</li> <li>• Public facility but in collaboration with a private athletics club? Doubtful level of public access and amenity.</li> <li>• Why is there a separate planning process? We can't have joined-up planning on a site level, let alone for the area or county?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are plans to build a sports and leisure facility at the Samuel Beckett Civic Campus.</li> <li>• We have completed a very detailed needs analysis and economic appraisal and are satisfied that the business case is robust and the facilities will be sustainable. DLR will put in place a sinking fund to replace the surfacing and ensure the facilities are maintained to a high standard.</li> <li>• The club also use Kilbogget Park track and this facility will ensure these and other clubs have access to high quality facilities.</li> <li>• There is a strong shelterbelt of trees to the west of the site and additional trees will be planted throughout.</li> <li>• A legal agreement is in place to ensure a high level of public access to the facilities.</li> <li>• There was a previous Part 8 which approved a larger building which is not the right fit and unaffordable.</li> </ul>



## **11. RECOMMENDATION:**

The proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the provisions of the 2022 - 2028 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan and with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. In accordance with section 179(4)(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, the proposed development may be carried out as recommended in the Chief Executive's Report, unless the Elected Members, by resolution, decides to vary or modify the development otherwise than as recommended, or decides not to proceed with the development.

Subject to the above, Members are hereby notified in accordance with Section 138 of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, of the intention to proceed with the proposed development subject to the following conditions and variations:

1. that the measures and other recommendations set out in the Inland Fisheries Ireland correspondence are to be implemented.
2. that all relevant mitigation measures outlined in the Ecological Impact Assessment are to be implemented

and to any such minor alterations to the plans and particulars of the development.

**Therese Langan, Director of Community & Cultural Development Department**

**Appendices:**

**Appendix 1: List of Persons Who Put in Submissions/Observations**

**Appendix 2: Site Location Map and General Arrangement Plan**