



An  
Coimisiún  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report

### ABP-321439-24

#### Development

Demolition of existing driving range bays, indoor/outdoor soccer pitches and sheds for the construction of a GAA cluster facility including 3 floodlit GAA pitches, clubhouse, indoor training facility, spectator stand and all associated site works. Natura Impact Statement (NIS) submitted with application. An updated NIS was submitted with Further information.

#### Location

Townlands of Tymon North and Templeogue, Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre, Templeogue, Dublin 6W, D6W PY06

#### Planning Authority

South Dublin County Council

#### Planning Authority Reg. Ref.

SD23A/0304

#### Applicant

Dublin GAA County Board

#### Type of Application

Permission

#### Planning Authority Decision

Grant

#### Type of Appeal

Third Party

#### Appellants

1. Declan Devlin & Paul Bryan

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. Orwell Park (Templeogue) Residents Association</li><li>3. Michael Ryan</li></ol>
<b>Observers</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Thomas Davis GAA Club</li><li>2. Dublin Ladies Gaelic Football Assoc.</li><li>3. Ballyboden St. Enda's GAA Club</li><li>4. Faughs GAA Club</li><li>5. St. Jude's GAA Club</li><li>6. Crumlin GAA Club</li><li>7. Leinster Council GAA</li><li>8. St. Anne's GAA Club</li><li>9. Ken Sweeney</li></ol>
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2025
<b>Inspector</b>	Matthew O'Connor

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Appendix 2: Form 2 - EIA Preliminary Examination

Appendix 3: AA Screening Determination - Test for likely significant effects

Appendix 4: Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Appropriate Assessment Determination.

Appendix 5: Water Framework Directive Screening and Assessment.

## 1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site is 10.98ha and located on lands at Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre in Templeogue, Dublin 6W. The subject site is irregularly shaped and situated to the north of the Tallaght Road (R-137/N-81); to the east, southeast and south of Tymon Park and Faughs GAA club; and, to the west of Wellington Lane. Junction 11 of the M50 motorway is located approximately 250 metres to the west of the subject site. The site mainly comprises a former pitch & putt course, a driving range area and a recently developed GAA pitch (grassed only). The remainder of the site is occupied by a driving range building, a structure listed as a maintenance shed, an indoor soccer pitch and a portion of a 5-a-side pitch within the Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre complex. The topography is generally flat with the lands rising around the eastern and northern periphery of the driving range. There is established tree/hedge planting to the eastern, northern and western boundaries and there is a tree planted boundary within the site dividing the driving range and the former pitch & putt course. A block wall also forms the eastern edge of the site along Wellington Lane.
- 1.2. The subject site is currently accessed from an entrance proximate to the Spawell roundabout serving Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre which includes large car park area, a public house and restaurant named D'arcy McGee's, a garden centre, 5-a-side soccer pitches and the main sports & leisure complex building. The immediate locality is best described as a suburban area where the primary land use, particularly to the north and northwest, is residential with conventional two-storey houses and supporting community infrastructure such as schools, a church, cemetery and local shops.

## 2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The development relates to a GAA Cluster Facility comprising the following:
- 3 no. GAA pitches (two sand-based pitches and one synthetic all-weather pitch) with floodlighting, goalposts, ball stop netting, electronic scoreboards, dugouts and perimeter railing/fences.
  - new floodlighting to GAA Pitch No. 2 (presently developed on site).
  - a single storey Pavilion building (2050sq.m) with 10 no. team changing rooms, showers/toilets, officials changing rooms, kitchen and service area, dining/ multi-purpose room, team meeting area, gym, medical/physio/first aid rooms, storage/cleaning/plant rooms, tuck shop, reception and office.

- Indoor Training Facility.
- maintenance garage.
- construction of a covered 500-seater spectator stand at Pitch No. 1 with toilets, equipment store and plant room and two uncovered terraced spectator areas (to accommodate a total of 500 persons) adjacent to spectator stand.
- hurling wall with fence and floodlighting.
- synthetic sprint training area.
- walking/jogging trail (with outdoor exercise equipment).
- provision of a signalised road junction for access onto Wellington Lane at its junction with Rossmore Road.
- car, coach and bicycle parking.
- demolition of driving range and maintenance shed along with the part-demolition of indoor soccer pitch and outdoor soccer pitch at Spawell Leisure Centre.
- provision of an ESB substation and switch rooms.
- hard and soft landscaping.
- SuDS measures.
- connections to site services.
- signage, security fencing/boundary treatments and bin storage.
- all other associated site development works.

### **3.0 Planning Authority Decision**

#### **3.1. Decision**

3.1.1. The Planning Authority granted permission for the subject development, subject to 28 no. conditions. I note that a number conditions are generally standard in nature, however the following are of note:

- Condition 1: Development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted plans and particulars.
- Condition 2: Development shall be carried out in accordance with a phasing scheme.
- Condition 5: Submission of a Bat Protection Plan.
- Condition 6: Submission of a Bat Monitoring Schedule.
- Condition 7: Implementation of a Conservation and Management Plan for Badgers

- Condition 8: Revised lighting details.
- Condition 9: Preparation of a detailed play design plan.
- Condition 10: Submission of a SUDS Maintenance and Management Plan.
- Condition 11: Submission of a Water Quality Assessment.
- Condition 13: Submission of section drawing detailing boundary treatment along the northern boundary inclusive of additional screen planting.
- Condition 14: Tree protection and planting proposals shall be implemented.
- Condition 15: Appointment of a Landscape Architect as a Landscape Consultant.
- Condition 16: Submission of a Soil Management Plan.
- Condition 17: Submission of a modified Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) to include a modified Mobility Management Plan (MMP).
- Condition 18: Overflow carpark shall have gated access and only utilised during match-day events.
- Condition 19: Details of Recyclable Waste and Bin Storage Facilities.
- Condition 20: Archaeological monitoring.
- Condition 21: Submission of a revised Construction Management Plan.
- Condition 22: Development shall accord with a Construction and Waste Management Plan.
- Condition 23: Construction noise and hours of construction operations.
- Condition 26: Equipment noise levels/restrictions.
- Condition 27: Audible/impulsive tones at noise sensitive locations during evening and night shall be avoided.
- Condition 28: Operational noise levels/restrictions.

### 3.2. **Planning Authority Reports**

#### 3.2.1. Planning Report(s)

- The first Planner's Report had regard to the submitted documentation, locational context of the site, planning history, policy framework of relevant Development Plan; any inter departmental/referral reports; and, the submissions received.
- In terms of assessment, it was noted that the site is predominantly zoned objective 'OS' with the southern/southeastern site boundary overlapping an area zoned objective 'LC' and that there is a Specific Local Objective identified for area of land zoned 'Local Centre' (EDE14 SLO 1). The Planning Authority further acknowledged

the nature of the proposed sporting facility to serve the growing population in south Dublin and that a 10-year permission is sought given the nature of the organisation as an amateur body. The principle of the proposal was considered to be acceptable in terms of zoning and would align with a number of sporting/community objectives.

- The Planning Authority raised no concern with the structures to be demolished. The extent of works proposed were assessed and it was considered that the buildings/structures would not impact on character of the area or residential amenity. That said, further detail was required in terms of the boundary treatments, landscaping, scoreboards and lighting.
- In relation to traffic, access and parking, the Planning Authority required further information in respect of extent of car parking, mobility management, additional traffic survey, lighting and active travel considerations.
- With respect to lighting, the Planning Authority noted the response received from the Public Lighting Section which noted that the lighting design and report is comprehensive and appropriate to the intended use and that it is also in line with the recommendations of the environmental report and Bat Study. Additional information however is required in terms of the lighting to the Wellington Road Junction.
- The Planning Authority noted, with regard to heritage and biodiversity, that revised/amended reports are required in relation to birds, bats, badgers. In terms of Archaeology, the Planning Authority acknowledged the request from Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage- Archaeology Unit for an Archaeological Impact Assessment.
- In consideration of landscaping and green infrastructure, the Planning Authority deemed that further information is required on site drainage and SuDS measures, addressing concerns on microplastics pollution, tree impact/retention.
- No concerns were raised in respect of EIA.
- The findings of the NIS were noted however, additional mitigation and preventative measure in relation to microplastics and surface water was requested by internal departments of the Planning Authority.

- Further Information was sought in relation to 6 no. items - 1. Submission of revised proposals for the layout and Wellington Lane boundary including existing drawings of sports and leisure centre, retention of wall, embankment and green infrastructure along Wellington Lane, relocation/redesign of pavilion building, overflow carpark and ESB substation, and provide details of electronic scoreboards; 2. Submission of traffic, access and parking details including pedestrian/cycle access along north, south and east, provision of an active travel link between site and adjoining lands and other connections, details of pedestrian routes, a public lighting design, up-to-date Active Travel Plans for Wellington Road, relocation of bus stop on Wellington Road, revised car parking layout, a car parking strategy in line with the mobility management plan and an updated transport assessment accounting for spectators/team members/staff, a revised Transport Assessment and analysis of junctions; 3. Revised details of SUDS features and demonstrate compliance with SDCC policies, the carrying out of a hydrological survey of the site, submission of a Water Quality Assessment, landscape design proposals including landscape plan, tree protection/retention, demonstrate cut and fill, planting plans, micro plastic prevention, green infrastructure enhancement, boundary retention measures; 4. Provision of Heritage and Biodiversity details in relation to a revised bat survey, additional badger survey to determine extent of movement between site and Tymon Park and possibly across N81 to Dodder Valley and submissions of a Winter Birds Survey; 5. Submit surface water drainage details such as attenuation calculations, cross-sections of layout and SUDS, pitch surface design details and hydrological report showing current water flow on the site; and, 6. Provision of Archaeological Impact Assessment.
- The second Planner's Report provides an analysis of the applicant's Further Information response and forms the basis for the grant permission.
- The Planning Authority noted the applicants' response in relation to Item No. 1 in terms of the design/layout changes particularly in relation to the retention of boundary features and vegetation, revised parking arrangement, re-designed pavilion building, relocation of the ESB substation, specification of scoreboards and site lighting.

- With respect to Item No. 2 regarding traffic, access and parking, the Planning Authority accepted the applicant's response regarding pedestrian and cycling access and other connectivity. The Planning Authority noted that the applicant provided details of pedestrian routes throughout the site. sightlines in both directions were originally indicated and that revisions submitted to the siting and boundary treatments do not impact on the proposed access. It was indicated that the revised junction and active travel infrastructure is satisfactory along with the public lighting. The proposed car parking provision was considered to be satisfactory to the Roads Department. The Planning Authority considered the relocated overflow car park to be acceptable and that its use could be conditioned. The Mobility Management Plan was not satisfactory but the Roads Department indicated that this matter could be addressed by condition. The revised transport assessment was deemed satisfactory.
- In relation to Item No. 3, the Water Services Section indicated that confirmation is required in terms of attenuation calculations and capacity and illustration of these details in plan and cross-sectional view. However, such items can be addressed by condition. The details of the submitted Water Quality and Assessment and Monitoring Report were noted. The Planning Authority also noted the submitted landscaping/tree planting proposals including the boundary treatments and the limiting of vegetation removal. The Planning Authority also indicate that a Soil Management Plan regarding the management of cut and fill material could be conditioned. It was also noted that the artificial pitch will use natural coverage over SBR to remove risks of microplastic pollution.
- With respect to Item No. 4 relating to Heritage and Biodiversity, the Panning Authority noted the submission of an updated reports regarding bats, badgers and wintering birds. It was deemed that monitoring of bats could be conditioned and additional screening/planting can be incorporated into the development. An amended Badger Conservation Plan with stated measure/recommendations can be conditioned to ensure protection of Badgers. The details of the bird surveys was noted and deemed to address this element of the Additional Information Request.
- In terms of Item No. 5 which related to Surface Water Drainage, the Planning Authority acknowledged shortcomings in information but considered that details in

relation to attenuation calculations, capacity and detail/specifications could be addressed by way of condition.

- With regard to Item No. 6 which related to Archaeology, the Planning Authority noted the contents of the submitted Archaeological Assessment report and deemed the response to be acceptable, subject to an Archaeological condition.
- The Planning Authority was satisfied that the response to the Request for Further Information was acceptable, and permission was granted subject to 28 no. conditions.

### 3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

Water Services:

Additional Information requested in the initial report for surface water attenuation calculation for all areas of the site, drawings of same, ensure that pitch surface materials do not contain micro plastics, submission of a hydrological report for current surface water flows. The second report notes that some matters were not satisfactorily addressed but that items such as water attenuation calculations and alternative attenuation and SUDS measures could be conditioned in the event of a grant

Parks Department:

Planner's report indicates that 'Additional Information requested'. The second report received in respect of Additional Information received recommended a grant with conditions relating to tree protection, planting and appointment of a Landscape Architect

Roads Department:

Additional Information requested in relation to pedestrian/cycle access; public lighting; Active Travel Plans; alteration/relocation of bus stop on Wellington Road; revised car parking; a car parking strategy with mobility management plan and revised transport assessment. The second report deemed

the applicant's response to the 'satisfactory' for most items. A condition was recommended for the submission of a modified Mobility Management Plan and Traffic/Transport Assessment with the inclusion of specific TRICs data including exact RFC figures to analyse traffic trends.

Heritage Officer:

Planner's report indicates that 'Additional Information requested'. The updated report had no objection, subject to conditions relating to a 5-year monitoring of bats and an updated Bat Protection Plan.

Community:

No response received.

Community Sports & Recreation: No response received.

Economic Development:

No response received.

Public Lighting:

Planner's report indicates that a report received states that lighting design and report is comprehensive and appropriate to the intended use but that Additional Information is required on lighting for the proposed Wellington Lane Junction. The second report received has no objection subject to conditions on hours of operation of floodlighting and calculations for public lighting on luminous intensity on roads and neighbouring properties.

Waste Management:

No response received.

Environmental Health Officer:

Additional Information required regarding a revised construction management plan detailing hours of operation. Requests a condition be attached in relation to noise, vibration and dust control.

### 3.3. Prescribed Bodies

Uisce Eireann:

No objection, subject to conditions on foul and water relating to connection agreements.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland: Comments returned - the Planning Authority should have regard to proposals impacting national roads as outlined in DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012).

National Transport Authority: The initial report contains a number of recommendations in the event of a grant such as increased permeability and active travel, consideration of carparking on site, cycle facilities and parking. The second report recommends further consideration on reducing car parking spaces and a condition limiting the use of the overflow car parking area.

Inland Fisheries Ireland: Comments returned on surface water run-off, mitigation measures of NIS, submission of a CEMP, maintenance of SUDS and compliance with Water Regulations. The second report indicated that IFI were satisfied with the responses received and noted that a comprehensive SUDS Maintenance and Management Plan in addition to measures outlined in the "Water Assessment and Monitoring Report" being conditioned.

Dept of H.LG&H (Archaeology): Additional Information requested in relation to archaeological testing. The second report noted that no finds were recorded and recommends that a condition be attached for archaeological monitoring.

Dept of H.LG&H (Nature): Additional Information requested in relation to updated reports for bats, wintering birds and breeding birds. The second report recommends additional tree plating to screen/prevent light overspill; that vegetation be cleared outside of

nesting season; and that a condition be included regarding badger conservation.

Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly: No response received.

Office of Public Works: No response received.

### 3.4. Third Party Observations

3.4.1. According to the Planning Officer's Report, a total of 63 no. third party observations were originally submitted in relation to the subject development. It was noted that number of submissions expressed support for the proposed development. The issues of concern relating to the proposed development have been summarised by the Planning Authority as follows:

- Scale of development, with reference to spectator accommodation/capacity.
- Parking, with reference to proposed provision (including quantum and future EV provision) and implications on surrounding areas.
- Traffic generation and congestion, with reference to existing traffic volumes and existing roadway layouts/condition in the immediate area of the site; existing public transport provision; implications of public transport infrastructure upgrades (cycles lanes, Bus Corridors, etc. planned and undertaken to date); and implications on access for emergency/tender vehicles in the surrounding area.
- Site access, with reference to location of the proposed site entrance; possibility of access relocation to facilitate access from the M50 slip road and N81/R137 roadways; and existing and proposed public transport provision/services.
- Traffic hazard.
- Air pollution, with reference to increased traffic levels generated by the proposed development.
- Detail of bicycle stands/stores, and the need for bicycle and pedestrian crossings to be identifiable and raised.
- Carbon footprint of the facility.
- Impact on residential amenity, with reference to proposed operational hours.
- Visual impact.
- Design of proposed buildings.
- Location of proposed substations and switch rooms relative to existing residential properties.

- Extent of flood lighting proposed and resultant light pollution, with reference to impact on nearby residential developments and potential glare from floodlighting on vehicular traffic on surrounding roads.
- Noise generation and pollution, with reference to activities on site and removal of existing trees/planting.
- Antisocial behaviour concerns, with reference to match-attending crowd management.
- Litter management.
- Loss of existing mature trees and hedgerows on site.
- Impact on biodiversity, with reference to flora and fauna including bats and birds; and impact on existing waterways and pond.
- Loss of existing public amenity space/parkland.
- Loss of existing driving range, with reference to implications of same on golf facility provision at the Spawell complex; and previous loss of pitch and putt course.
- Impact on the existing Spawell Leisure Centre, including soccer training facilities.
- Need for the proposed facility, with reference to existing facility provision in the wider area.
- Potential for provision of golf facilities within the development of the facility.
- Details of application and particulars submitted including extent/detail of traffic studies undertaken; assertions regarding existing public transport service provision; timing of baseline noise survey undertaken; lack of shadowcast/sun analysis for the development; lack of detail regarding a masterplan or extent of potential future development adjoining the site subject to current application; and justification for 10-year permission sought.
- Implications of demolition and construction periods on surrounding area, with reference to lack of detail regarding timeframes for proposed demolition and construction; and impact on local businesses due to restricted access during construction periods.
- Lack of consultation with surrounding residents.
- Recommendation that equitable use of proposed facilities for men's and women's sports, and the sharing of facilities by Dublin GAA with local clubs, be required by condition of any grant, with reference to existing facility provision and environmental benefits of sharing facilities.

- Other items including reference to improved access to the National Basketball Arena.

3.4.2. According to the Planning Officer's Report, a further 20 no. third party observations were submitted in relation to the Additional Information. It was noted that number of submissions expressed support for the proposed GAA facility. The issues of concern were summarised by the Planning Authority as follows:

- Traffic generation and congestion, with reference to existing traffic volumes and existing roadway layouts/condition in the immediate area of the site; existing public transport provision; implications of public transport infrastructure upgrades; and implications on access for emergency/tender vehicles in the surrounding area.
- Inadequate parking provision.
- Site access, with reference to location of the proposed site entrance; possibility of access relocation to facilitate access from the M50 slip road and N81/R137 roadways.
- Pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- Capacity of existing infrastructure, with reference to calculations submitted.
- Extent of floor lighting proposed, with reference to light pollution/overspill on adjacent residential development.
- Noise pollution.
- Impact on residential amenity.
- Visual impact.
- Lack of consultation with local residents.
- Litter.
- Anti-social behaviour.
- Lack of access to proposed walking route outside of centre opening hours.
- Impact on ecology, with reference to flora and fauna.
- Need for the proposed development, with reference to existing GAA facilities in the wider area and requirements for alternative sporting facilities and loss of the existing driving range.
- Potential future use of pitches proposed.
- Potential future uses of the facility for non-sporting events.

- Detail of submission, with reference to detail of trip assessments, parking capacity assessment, traffic and transport assessment, and mobility management plans; accuracy of bat surveys undertaken; lack of clarity regarding medium/long-term plan for part of site used by retail units; lack of clarity regarding long term plans/layout for the overall site.

3.4.3. The Planning Officer's Reports state that the issues raised in the submissions/observations lodged were taken into consideration in the overall assessment of the proposed development.

## 4.0 Planning History

4.1. The following planning history is associated with the appeal site and is relevant in the context of the subject development:

**SD13A/0058:** Permission GRANTED for the installation of 4 no. 8 metre high floodlights adjacent to an existing outdoor sports pitch to be used for five-a-side soccer. Applicant: Powerleague Fives (Ireland) Ltd.

**SD12A/0227:** Permission GRANTED for a garden centre comprising of a wooden sales structure (115sq.m. area and 6.98m height), an outdoor canopy plant storage area (306sq.m. and 6m height), access way, one pedestrian road crossing, signage, landscaping and all associated and ancillary site works on a total site area of 0.1404 ha. Applicant: Uniplumo (Irl) Ltd.

**SD10A/0006:** Permission GRANTED for (a) the demolition of all existing structures on site (5268sq.m.); (b) the construction of a building of 21546sq.m. (gross floor space) approx. containing a two storey over basement leisure centre (principally comprising a swimming pool, squash courts, gym and aerobic facilities, a children's playroom, cafe, 2 no. retail units, shop, restaurant/carvery areas, lounge areas, bar areas, a multi-function room, a conference room, administration facilities, associated storage and ancillary facilities); a five storey over basement, 149no. bedroom hotel (ancillary having regard to local zoning objective no. 12 in the South Dublin County Development Plan 2004-2010) principally incorporating an entrance lobby/reception area, bar areas, a restaurant, lounge area, main conference hall, meeting rooms, and a range of leisure facilities including exercise rooms, sports therapy rooms, a gym room, snooker rooms/lounge, a games room and multi-function sports rooms, administration facilities, associated storage and ancillary facilities over a basement of 10204sq.m. principally

comprising 267no. underground car parking spaces and a service area which serves both the leisure centre and the hotel; (c) the relocation of the tennis courts (8 no.); (d) provision of a two storey driving range base unit (1710sq.m.); (e) provision of a pavilion (65sq.m.); (f) hard and soft landscaping and all other associated site development works above and below ground. The development provides 579 no. car parking spaces (267 no. underground car parking spaces, 246 no. surface car parking spaces and 66 no. surface overflow car parking spaces) and 6 no. surface bus parking spaces. A relocated entrance/exit will be provided on Wellington Lane (close to junction with Rossmore Road) all on a site of 5.025ha approx. Applicant: Wellington General Partner Ltd.

This application was granted an Extension of Duration (Reg. Ref. SD10A/0006/EP) on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

**SD05A/0703:** Retention GRANTED for two single-storey conservatory extensions. Applicant: Spawell Hospitality and Leisure Centre.

**SD04A/0976:** Permission GRANTED for (a) the demolition of all existing structures on site (5,268sq.m.); (b) the construction of a building of 21,546sq.m. (gross floor space), approximately, containing a two storey over basement leisure centre (principally comprising a swimming pool, squash courts, gym and aerobics facilities, a children's playroom, cafe, 2 no. retail units, shop, restaurant/carvery areas, lounge areas, bar areas, a multi-function room, a conference room, administration facilities, associated storage, and ancillary facilities); and a five storey over basement, 149 no. bedroom hotel (ancillary, having regard to local zoning objective no. 12 in the South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2004-2010) (principally incorporating an entrance lobby/reception area, bar areas, a restaurant, lounge area, main conference hall, meeting rooms, and a range of leisure facilities including exercise rooms, sports therapy rooms, a gym room, snooker rooms/lounge, a games room and multi-function sports rooms, administration facilities, associated storage and ancillary facilities) over a basement of 10,204sq.m. principally comprising 267 no. underground car parking spaces and a service area which serves both the leisure centre and hotel; (c) the relocation of the tennis courts ( 8 no.); (d) provision of a two storey driving range base unit (1,710sq.m.); (e) provision of a pavillion (65sq.m.); (f) hard and soft landscaping and all other associated site development works above and below ground. The development provides 579 no. car parking spaces (267 no. underground car parking

spaces, 246 no. surface car parking spaces and 66 no. surface overflow car parking spaces) and 6 no. surface bus parking spaces. A relocated entrance/exit will be provided on Wellington Lane (close to the junction with Rossmore Road). Applicant: John, Paul & Peter Kennedy.

**ABP. Ref. PL06S.130114 (S01A/0566):** Permission REFUSED by An Bord Pleanála who overturned the decision of South Dublin County Council for redevelopment comprising the demolition of the existing sports complex, and the construction of a two storey over basement Sports Centre, a 179 bedroom Sports Hotel (four storey plus penthouse over basement car parking and services area), two three storey staff apartments, relocation of the tennis courts, replacement of golf driving range bay units, revised access and road improvement works on Wellington Lane, site development, disposal of spoil, surface car parking, landscaping, and ancillary works. Applicant: Spawell Sports and Leisure Co. Ltd.

4.2. In addition, the following application for an exemption certificate is considered to be relevant in the context of the proposed development:

**ED19/0005:** The laying out of a pitch for the purpose of playing Gaelic games on part of an area of land currently in use as a pitch and putt course and the erection of ball nets at either end of the playing pitch behind the goal posts. Decision: Declared Exempt.

## 5.0 Policy Context

### 5.1. Development Plan

The South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 is the relevant Development Plan for the subject site. The following Development Plan chapters and associated policies (with supporting objectives) are considered to be most relevant:

#### **Chapter 3 – Natural, Cultural and Built Heritage**

- Policy NCBH1: Overarching

*“Protect, conserve and enhance the County’s natural, cultural and built heritage, supporting its sensitive integration into the development of the County for the benefit of present and future generations”.*

- Policy NCBH2: Biodiversity

*“Protect, conserve, and enhance the County’s biodiversity and ecological connectivity having regard to national and EU legislation and Strategies”.*

- Policy NCBH3: Natura 2000 Sites

*“Conserve and protect Natura 2000 sites and achieve and maintain favourable conservation status for habitats and species that are considered to be at risk through the protection of the Natura 2000 network from any plans or projects that are likely to have a significant effect on their coherence or integrity”.*

- Policy NCBH4: Proposed Natural Heritage Areas

*“Protect the ecological, visual, recreational, environmental and amenity value of the County’s proposed Natural Heritage Areas and associated habitats and species”.*

- Policy NCBH5: Proposed Natural Heritage Areas

*“Protect and promote the conservation of biodiversity outside of designated areas and ensure that species and habitats that are protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2018, the Birds Directive 1979 and the Habitats Directive 1992, the Flora (Protection) Order 2015, and wildlife corridors are adequately protected”.*

- Policy NCBH10: Invasive Species

*“Protect against and prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species within the County and require landowners and developers to adhere to best practice guidance in relation to the control of invasive species”.*

#### **Chapter 4 - Green Infrastructure**

- Policy GI1: Overarching

*“Protect, enhance and further develop a multifunctional GI network, using an ecosystem services approach, protecting, enhancing and further developing the identified interconnected network of parks, open spaces, natural features, protected areas, and rivers and streams that provide a shared space for amenity and recreation, biodiversity protection, water quality, flood management and adaptation to climate change”.*

GI1 Objective 1: To establish a coherent, integrated, and evolving GI Network across South Dublin County with parks, open spaces, hedgerows, trees including public street trees and native mini woodlands (Miyawaki-Style), grasslands, protected areas and rivers and streams and other green and blue assets forming strategic links and to integrate and incorporate the objectives of the GI Strategy throughout all relevant land use plans and development in the County.

- Policy GI2: Biodiversity

*“Strengthen the existing Green Infrastructure (GI) network and ensure all new developments contribute towards GI, in order to protect and enhance biodiversity across the County as part of South Dublin County Council’s commitment to the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025 and the South Dublin County Council Biodiversity Action Plan, 2020-2026, the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Eastern and Midlands Region Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). Policy GI3 Sustainable Water Management”.*

- Policy GI4: Sustainable Drainage Systems

*“Require the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in the County and maximise the amenity and biodiversity value of these systems”.*

GI4 Objective 1: To limit surface water run-off from new developments through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) using surface water and nature-based solutions and ensure that SuDS is integrated into all new development in the County and designed in accordance with South Dublin County Council’s Sustainable Drainage Explanatory Design and Evaluation Guide, 2022.

GI4 Objective 2: To incorporate a SuDS management train during the design stage whereby surface water is managed locally in small sub-catchments rather than being conveyed to and managed in large systems further down the catchment.

GI4 Objective 3: To require multifunctional open space provision within new developments to include provision for ecology and sustainable water management.

GI4 Objective 4: To require that all SuDS measures are completed to a taking in charge standard.

GI4 Objective 5: To promote SuDS features as part of the greening of urban and rural streets to restrict or delay runoff from streets entering the storm drainage network.

GI4 Objective 6: Maintain & enhance existing surface water drainage systems and promote and facilitate the development of SuDS, including integrated constructed wetlands, at a local, district and County level, to control surface water outfall and protect water quality.

- Policy GI5: Climate Resilience

*“Strengthen the County’s GI in both urban and rural areas to improve resilience against future shocks and disruptions arising from a changing climate”*

GI5 Objective 6: To provide more tree cover across the county, in particular to areas that are lacking trees, with an emphasis on planting native Irish trees as appropriate.

- Policy GI6: Human Health and Wellbeing

*“Improve the accessibility and recreational amenity of the County’s GI in order to enhance human health and wellbeing while protecting the natural environment within which the recreation occurs”.*

GI6 Objective 1: To support a hierarchy of accessible open spaces and recreational facilities, appropriate for neighbourhood size and catchment area, which are adaptable and capable of accommodating multiple uses (See Chapter 8: Community and Open Space)

GI6 Objective 9: To investigate the potential to plant hedgerows along roads to help mitigate noise and air pollution, and to increase visual amenity and enhance biodiversity.

- Policy GI7: Landscape, Natural, Cultural and Built Heritage

*“Protect, conserve and enhance landscape, natural, cultural and built heritage features, and support the objectives and actions of the County Heritage Plan”.*

Section 4.3.2 relates to ‘Strategic Corridor Objectives’ with Table 4.1 setting out Strategic Green Infrastructure Corridors. The River Dodder is listed a Strategic Corridor 1 and contains a number of objectives to protect, enhance and restore the river.

## **Chapter 5 Quality Design and Healthy Placemaking**

- Policy QDP1: Successful and Sustainable Neighbourhoods

*“Support the development of successful and sustainable neighbourhoods that are connected to and provide for a range of local services and facilities”.*

- *Policy QDP2: Overarching - Successful and Sustainable Neighbourhoods*

*“Promote the creation of successful and sustainable neighbourhoods through the application of the eight key design principles to ensure the delivery of attractive, connected, and well-functioning places to live, work, visit, socialise and invest in throughout the County”.*

*QDP2 Objective 1: To ensure that applications for new development are accompanied by a statement from a suitably qualified person detailing how ‘The Plan Approach’ has been taken into consideration and incorporated into the design of the development including the materials and finishes proposed and demonstrating how the overarching principles for the achievement of successful and sustainable neighbourhoods have been integrated as part of the design proposal.*

- Policy QDP3: Neighbourhood Context

*“Support and facilitate proposals which contribute in a positive manner to the character and setting of an area”.*

- Policy QDP7: High Quality Design – Development General

*“Promote and facilitate development which incorporates exemplary standards of high-quality, sustainable and inclusive urban design, urban form and architecture”.*

- Policy QDP11: Materials, Colours and Textures

*“Promote high-quality building finishes that are appropriate to context, durable and adhere to the principles of sustainability and energy efficiency”.*

## **Chapter 7 - Sustainable Movement**

- Policy SM1: Overarching – Transport and Movement

*“Promote ease of movement within, and access to South Dublin County, by integrating sustainable land-use planning with a high-quality sustainable transport and movement network for people and goods”.*

- Policy SM2: Walking and Cycling

*“Re-balance movement priorities towards sustainable modes of travel by prioritising the development of walking and cycling facilities and encouraging a shift to active travel for people of all ages and abilities, in line with the County targets”.*

- Policy SM3: Public Transport – General

*“Promote a significant shift from car-based travel to public transport in line with County targets and facilitate the sustainable development of the County by supporting and guiding national agencies in delivering major improvements to the public transport network”.*

SM3 Objective 2: To facilitate and secure the implementation of major public transport projects as identified within the NTA’s Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (2016-2035) as updated to 2042, or any superseding document, including BusConnects, the DART expansion programme along the Kildare route, the opening of the new rail station at Kishogue and the Luas to Lucan.

- Policy SM3: Public Transport – Bus

SM3 Objective 11: To facilitate the delivery of the BusConnects Core Bus Corridors and seek additional bus corridor and orbital routes to serve the County by securing and maintaining any required route reservations and to ensure the BusConnects Corridors do not adversely affect the village life and livelihoods of any of our County Villages.

Section 7.6.1 relates to BusConnects an Route 10 (Tallaght to Terenure) is adjacent to the appeal site.

- Policy SM5: Street and Road Design

*“Ensure that streets and roads within the County are designed to balance the needs of all road users and promote placemaking, sustainable movement and road safety providing a street environment that prioritises active travel and public transport”.*

- Policy SM6: Traffic and Transport Management

*“Effectively manage and minimise the impacts of traffic within the County having regard to the need to provide shared road space for different users”.*

SM6 Objective 3: To minimise the impact of new development on the County’s road and street network through prioritising active travel and public transport and implementing appropriate traffic and transport management measures.

SM6 Objective 4: To maintain and protect the safety, capacity and efficiency of National roads and associated junctions in accordance with the Spatial Planning and National Roads: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DECLG (2012), the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) Regulations and with regard to other policy documents such as the TII M50 Demand Management Report 2014 and the N4 and N7 Corridor Study 2017.

- Policy SM7: Car Parking and EV Charging

*“Implement a balanced approach to the provision of car parking with the aim of using parking as a demand management measure to promote a transition towards more sustainable forms of transportation, while meeting the needs of businesses and communities”.*

SM7 Objective 1: *To implement maximum car parking standards for a range of land-use types, where provision is based on the level of public transport accessibility.*

## **Chapter 8 - Community Infrastructure and Open Space**

- Policy COS1: Social Inclusion and Community Development

*“Promote social inclusion and community development and encourage active participation and social integration of minority and marginalised groups, consistent with RPO 9.1 and RPO 9.2 of the RSES”.*

COS1 Objective 1: To provide appropriate and accessible community facilities to meet the needs of all citizens of the County, comprising of a fast-growing young population and including an ageing population, consistent with NPOs 28 and 30 of the NPF COS2.

- Policy COS2: Social / Community Infrastructure

*“Support the planned provision of a range of universally accessible and well-connected social, community, cultural and recreational facilities, close to the communities they serve, consistent with RPO 9.14 of the RSES. (See also Chapter 5: Quality Design and Healthy Placemaking)”*

COS2 Objective 4: To support the clustering of community facilities such as community centres, sports and leisure facilities, schools, childcare facilities and open spaces to create multi-purpose community hubs without negatively restricting the range of services provided in any one centre.

- Policy COS4: Sports Facilities and Centres

*“Ensure that all communities are supported by a range of sporting facilities that are fit for purpose, accessible and adaptable”.*

COS4 Objective 1: To promote the provision and management of high-quality, multi-functional, sport and recreational infrastructure across the County, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, to meet existing and future needs, to include sports hubs and multi-sport astro-pitches, in accordance with the South Dublin County Council Sports Pitch Strategy (2020), the National Sports Policy (2018-2027) and the aims of the South Dublin County Sports Partnership, consistent with RPO 9.15 of the RSES.

COS4 Objective 4: To support and encourage the co-location and sharing of community and sporting facilities within the County where feasible.

COS4 Objective 8: To support the provision of permanent space for well-established sports and recreational activities at appropriate locations within the County, aspiring to the standards and conditions met for such playing areas by National Governing Bodies, where feasible and in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

COS4 Objective 9: To support and facilitate a framework for the improvement, maintenance, and enhancement of existing community-based sports facilities within the County.

## **Chapter 9 – Economic Development and Employment**

Section 9.5.6. relates to ‘Local Centres’. These areas are stated as being an important aspect of retail provision for the residents of South Dublin County providing services and facilities for day-to-day retail for the local catchment.

- Policy EDE14: Retail - Local Centres

*“Maintain and enhance the retailing function of Local Centres”*

*EDE14 SLO 1: To support the redevelopment of 3.27ha on lands zoned LC to the southeast corner of the Spawell Sports and Leisure Centre, Wellington Lane, Templeogue to provide for sports club/facility and for uses indicated as permitted in principle under the LC zoning other than residential and petrol station and limiting retail provision in the form of shop local or shop- neighbourhood to no more than 5 units which may include a supermarket of no larger than 800sqm gross retail floor area.*

## **Chapter 12 – Implementation and Monitoring**

This chapter sets out the land use zoning objectives and the various standards of development. The standards are to be considered in conjunction with the associated policies and objectives of the other chapters.

The site is covered by two zoned land-uses. The majority of the site is zoned Open Space (OS) which has an objective 'to preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities'. 'Recreational Facility' and 'Sports Club / Facility' is listed as being permitted in principle under this zoning designation. A small portion of the southern/southeastern extent of the site is zoned Local Centre (LC) which has an objective 'to protect, improve and provide for the future development of Local Centres'. 'Recreational Facility' is listed as being permitted in principle with 'Sports Club / Facility' being listed as being open for consideration.

## 5.2. National and Regional Plans

5.2.1. The following regional and national planning documents are relevant:

- *Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework (NPF), 2018-2040*
- *Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly: Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) 2019 to 2031.*

## 5.3. National Guidance

5.3.1. The following national planning guidance are relevant:

- *National Planning Framework - First Revision (2025)*
- *Development Management: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007).*
- *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019).*

## 5.4. Natural Heritage Designations

5.4.1. The appeal site is located within a built-up urban area and not within or in close proximity to any designated Natura 2000 sites. The nearest designated site being the Glenasmole Valley Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 001209) which is approximately 4.83km to the southwest. Other designated Natura 2000 sites include the Wicklow Mountains Special Protection Area (Site Code:004040) which is approximately 6.44km to the south; Wicklow Mountains Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 002122) located approximately 6.64km to the south; the South Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000210) located approximately 8.44km to the northeast; the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary Special Protection Area (Site Code:004024) located approximately 8.46km to the northeast; the Knocksink Wood Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000725) located approximately 11.76km to the southeast; the North Bull Island SPA (Site Code:004006) located

approximately 12.09km to the northeast; the North Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000206) located approximately 12.1km to the northeast; the North-west Irish Sea SPA (Site Code:004236) located approximately 13.03km to the northeast; the Rye Water Valley/Carton Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 001398) located approximately 13.33km to the northwest; and, the Ballyman Glen Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000713) located approximately 14.27km to the southeast.

5.4.2. The Dodder Valley pNHA (Code: 000991) is located approximately 0.4km to the southwest of the site and the Grand Canal pNHA (Code: 002104) is approximately 4.4km to the north of the site.

## **6.0 EIA Screening**

6.1. The subject development has been subject to preliminary examination for environmental impact assessment (refer to Form 1 and Form 2 in Appendices of this report). Having regard to the characteristics and location of the subject development and the types and characteristics of potential impacts, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The subject development, therefore, does not trigger a requirement for environmental impact assessment screening and an EIAR is not required.

## **7.0 The Appeal**

### **7.1. Grounds of Appeal**

7.1.1. There are 3 no. Third Party appeals which have been received in relation to the Planning Authority's decision to grant permission for the proposed development. I note that many of the concerns and issues raised by the respective appellants are similar in nature and so, for the purposes of clarity, the grounds of each appeal are collectively summarised as follows:

- Proposed development relates to a portion of the applicant's site and it is unclear as to future intentions on remaining lands.
- Traffic and Transportation concerns in terms of increased vehicles to/from site on Wellington Lane.
- Lack of public transportation in the locality and impacts from .

- New signal junction at Rossmore Road/Wellington Lane will further slow traffic in area and cause congestion.
- Alternative access away from Wellington Lane to the R-137 should be considered.
- Car parking provision on the site is not sufficient and will result in parking on surrounding road and streets.
- Residential amenity concerns in terms of lighting spillage and noise pollution.
- Environmental concerns with respect to bats, badgers, foxes and birds due to proposed development and tree/vegetation removal.
- Concerns of increased anti-social behaviour from the numbers of people attending the area for matches.
- Duration of the planning permission.
- Lack of public consultation/engagement.

## 7.2. Applicant Response

A response to the respective grounds of appeal has been received on behalf of the applicant. This response is summarised as follows:

- Centre of Excellence – The proposal is for the construction of a cluster facility, not a centre of excellence. It is an accessible resource for clubs, schools, institutions and community organisations.
- Aviation/Flight Paths – The Irish Aviation Authority nor Dept of Defence provided submissions/observations. Review of the Development Plan indicates that the site is not on any flight paths.
- Permission Duration – The 10 year permission is justified as the applicant is an amateur, volunteer-based sporting organisation and it is envisaged that the entire project may take considerable time to complete.
- Design and Visual Amenity – The applicant prioritised visual and residential amenity in the design. Considerable upgrades were made at Additional Information stage to SUDS, retention of boundary wall, embankment and trees along Wellington Lane, redesign of pavilion building and overflow parking area, and increased connectivity

throughout site. The purpose of the spectator area is to ensure safety and well-being to spectators attending games.

- Noise Pollution – Specialist Noise Assessments were submitted to the Planning Authority which were deemed to be acceptable. The nearest dwelling is 80 metres to the east of Pitch 1 which is already screened and subjected to noise sources (traffic/commercial activities). In addition, there are natural and physical barriers on the site which are beneficial to the proposal.
- Light Pollution/Overspill – Lighting is essential for the optimum use of the facility and has been designed to ensure it would not impact on any ecological receptor. The proposed level of 500 lux is appropriate for a Class 1 facility. Pitch 1 is situated 80 metres from the nearest dwelling and Wellington Lane is already illuminated by streetlighting. Natural barriers on this boundary will screen/shield spillage.
- Anti-Social Behaviour – The closing time of 23:00hrs is deemed to be appropriate. The development will have a positive impact on the area and provide a community asset. Dublin GAA have a strong track record in managing facilities and there will be no potential for anti-social behaviour.
- Road & Traffic Construction – Junction redesign for BusConnects is designed to enhance traffic flow and promote sustainable modes of transport. The claim that city-bound traffic will no longer have access along Terenure Road is inaccurate and there is no evidence to suggest traffic volumes will increase on Wellington Lane. The area is well-served by bus routes with frequent connections to surrounding areas. BusConnects will enhance and expand public transport in this area. Parking is in compliance with the Development Plan and its provision takes account of existing/projected modal splits. The site is ideally positioned to benefit from future sustainable transport schemes and reduce dependency on private vehicles. The proposed access from Wellington Road has been determined following examination of access options. The Traffic and Transport Assessment has been prepared in accordance with TII standards. The assumption that Wellington Lane will be the only route to the city from the Spawell junction is inaccurate and the suggested traffic flows increases on Wellington Road go against the outcomes of BusConnects. Traffic projections indicate that the junction has capacity and the traffic associated with the proposal is forecast to have a minimal impact on the operational capacity at the Rossmore Road junction. The replacement of the current

T-junction at Rossmore Road with signalised junction has been designed with all road users in mind and in accordance with latest design standards. Comparisons made with the current Spawell entrance do not account for the enhancements that a signal junction would bring such as controlled traffic movements. The proposed access onto Wellington Lane has been considered in terms of traffic volumes, safety and overall impact on surrounding area.

- Consultation with Public – The applicant has fulfilled all regulatory requirements. The planning process yielded significant public engagement with approx. 60 submissions at application stage and approx. 20 submissions at Additional Information stage. A number of amendments/changes were incorporated to address concerns raised by the public.
- Environmental Elements – A number of environmental/ecological assessments were carried out in accordance with best practice/guidance. There will be no impacts on protected species or habitats and appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented where necessary.
- Other Issues – The matters raised in appeal do not fall under the scope for an oral hearing. The applicant is exempt from paying financial contributions given the nature of works. The hours of operation are essentially for the optimum operation of the facility and the pavilion building is required for meetings and does not have a licensed area within it so 23:00hrs close time is considered to be reasonable.

## 7.2. Planning Authority Response

7.2.1 A response from the Planning Authority has been received on file and states that ‘the reasoning for the decision of the Planning Authority regarding the proposed development as detailed in plans and particulars submitted to the Planning Authority under SD23A/0304 and as clarified and modified by way of Additional Information received is set out in the planning report which comprehensively deals with the issues raised’.

## 7.3. Observations

7.3.1. A total of 9 no. observations were received in respect of the subject development. I note that eight of the observations received are from GAA Clubs/Organisations and express support for the proposed development in terms of the need for such a facility for training and matches, promotion of GAA in this area of Dublin and maximising

community involvement along with health and social benefits. One observation has been received outlining a number of concerns with the proposal. The issues raised are summarised as follows:

#### Traffic & Access Issues

- Wellington Lane is already congested, and the proposal will lead to more congestion. There are a number of users of the road and the applicant and local authority should work together to create a new common entrance/junction for all the users on Wellington Lane.

#### Tymon Park

- The development adjoins Tymon Park which is a community amenity with numerous pitches. In an ideal world, the applicant and local authority would work together to extract the maximum potential from the lands and this facility.

#### Loss of Spawell Golf Facility

- The proposed development will result in the loss of Spawell Golf facility which employs a number of people and is widely used by the community. No effort has been made to incorporate the facility into the new development, and it is urged that the applicant be instructed to incorporate a driving range as park of the new development.

## 8.0 **Assessment**

Having examined the application details and all other documentation on the appeal file, the third party appeals, the observations, having conducted an inspection of the site, and having regard to relevant local, regional and national policies and guidance, I consider that the main issues are those raised in the grounds of appeal and can be addressed under the following headings:

- Principle of Development
- Traffic & Transportation
- Parking
- Impact on Residential Amenities

- Site Services
- Other Matters
- Appropriate Assessment

## 8.1. Principle of Development

8.1.1. In assessing any development, I consider that a key consideration is the principle of development. The appeal site comprises two zoning designations under the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028. The vast majority of the site is zoned Open Space - 'OS' which has as objective *'to preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities'*. 'Open Space', 'Recreational Facility' and 'Sports Club/Facility' are listed as being 'Permitted in Principle' under this zoning category. In addition, 'Stadium' is listed as being 'Open for Consideration' under this zoning category. A small extent of the appeal site (to the south/southeast) is zoned Local Centre – 'LC' which has an objective *'to protect, improve and provide for the future development of Local Centres'*. 'Recreational Facility' is listed as being 'Permitted in Principle' under this zoning category whereas 'Sports Club/Facility' and 'Stadium' are listed as being 'Open for Consideration'. There is also a specific objective connected with this Local Centre – 'LC' zoned land (SLO Ref. EDE14) which seeks to support the redevelopment of 3.27ha on lands zoned LC to the southeast corner of the Spawell Sports and Leisure Centre, Wellington Lane, Templeogue to provide for sports club/facility and for uses indicated as permitted in principle under the LC zoning other than residential and petrol station and limiting retail provision in the form of shop local or shop- neighbourhood to no more than 5 units which may include a supermarket of no larger than 800sqm gross retail floor area.

8.1.2. The appeal site is part of the overall Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre which has been established at the subject location for a number of decades. The area subject to this application comprises an existing driving range area (and ancillary building) along with a former pitch & putt course in addition to part of an indoor soccer pitch, 5-a-side soccer pitch and maintenance building. The proposed development seeks to provide a new GAA Cluster Facility which would result in the demolition of the abovementioned buildings/structures and provide 3 no. new floodlit GAA pitches (2 no. sand-based pitches and 1 no. synthetic all-weather pitch); a pavilion building with changing facilities, meeting spaces, gym and dining room; a sprint area; hurling wall; indoor

training pitch; maintenance building and associated services and parking. The main pitch will also include a 500-seat spectator stand and two terraced areas accommodating 500-persons. The development will also include the provision of floodlighting to a recently constructed GAA pitch on the site (deemed to be Exempted Development).

8.1.3. I have had regard to the overall design and layout and I am of the view that it is well considered. In my opinion, the pitches are configured to maximise playing and training. The spectator provision is located close to the centre of the facility; car parking is sited adjacent to the site access so as to not conflict with personnel at the pitches. I also consider that the design of the pavilion building and indoor training area to be utilitarian in their design, layout and functional offering. As a point of clarity, I note that a kitchen/dining area is indicated within the pavilion building and I concur with the assessment of the Planning Authority that this element shall be used/operated strictly in association with the GAA Cluster Facility. Overall, I am of the view that the layout makes an appropriate use of the lands for a GAA Cluster Facility, and I note that the Planning Authority was satisfied in terms of the general layout and primary components of the scheme. Moreover, I note that the appellants/observer have not raised any specific concerns in relation to the design and that concerns regarding layout relate to possible future development in/around the site which are note for consideration in this appeal.

8.1.4. I consider that the proposal for a GAA Cluster Facility to be acceptable in principle and would be consistent with the land use zoning objectives. I also consider that the rationale provided by the applicant for the provision of such a facility in this area to be sufficient and is supported by a number of GAA clubs and bodies for the promotion of participation in sports and physical activity for all. To this end, the provision of a modern sporting facility to serve juvenile to adult levels for both male and female participants is not unreasonable. Additionally, I am also satisfied that the proposed development is supported by a number of objectives the Development Plan, notably CS02 Objective 4 which seeks to support the clustering of community facilities such as sports and leisure facilities; CS04 Objective 1 which seeks to promote the provision and management of high-quality, multi-functional sport and recreational infrastructure; COS4 Objective 4 which seeks to support and encourage the co-location and sharing of community and sporting facilities; and, COS4 Objective 8 which seeks to support

the provision of permanent space for well-established sports and recreational activities at appropriate locations which aspire to the standards and conditions for such playing areas. As such, I am satisfied that the principle of the proposed development would positively contribute to the enhancement of GAA facilities this area of Dublin and would also contribute to the health and well-being of all users.

8.1.5. Notwithstanding, it is imperative that such a proposal is assessed against the relevant parameters of the Development Plan and these matters will be assessed in the following sections.

## **8.2. Traffic & Transportation**

8.2.1. I have considered the third party appeals and an observation which raise a number of concerns with respect to traffic and transportation issues arising from players/supporting team management, spectators and other associated GAA personnel attending the proposed facility. In summary, the key concerns collectively raised by appellants and observer contend that Wellington Lane and the existing junction at Rossmore Road is already congested and the proposed development will result in higher traffic levels and further congestion; that the area is currently over-prescribed with sporting clubs and entrances along with schools and Tymon Park; that a signal junction will further slow traffic; that the need for a new entrance to serve the development is not required as the existing access to the Spawell facility has operated well for a number of decades; that there is a lack of public transport in the area with only the 150 and 54A buses serving Wellington Lane and the 65A bus serving the R-137 so public transport may not be an option for certain persons seeking to attend the facility; and, that there are flaws in the Traffic & Transport Assessment and DMURS Report in terms of baseflows, estimates and referencing to mixed modal transport. The Third Parties also recommended that the entrance to serve the development should be located on the R-137 as it would better accommodate higher traffic volumes and more efficient vehicular movements.

8.2.2. The proposed development seeks to provide a new signal junction onto Wellington Lane at its junction with Rossmore Road in order to provide a road and pedestrian/cycle entrance to the subject site. The application initially included a Mobility Management Plan (MMP) and a Traffic & Transport Assessment (TTA) however, on foot of comments returned from the Roads Department, additional

information was requested requiring revised reports/plans with the traffic survey accounting for weekend traffic and additional weekdays along with details of spectators/team members and staff movements to and from the subject development and demonstration of modal travel shares.

8.2.3. The TTA submitted at Further Information stage includes mid-week and weekend usage based on a vehicles-in/vehicles-out scenario aligned with the projected development trips provided by the applicant. The comparison relates to the approved Hollystown Park GAA Cluster Facility which comprises 4 no. pitches, a pavilion building, indoor pitch and training zones along with a 500-seat stand and hurling wall. The amended study is based on a traffic survey carried out in April 2024 which lists peak hours as 08:00hrs – 09:00hrs (AM) and 16:30hrs – 17:30hrs (PM) midweek and 11:00hrs – 12:00hrs (AM) and 13:00hrs – 14:00hrs (PM) at weekends. The TTA estimates that 0 trip generation for the AM peak at mid-week and 117 no. arrivals and departures in PM peak hours. The expected weekend Trip Generation for both AM and PM peak times are 177 no. arrivals and departures respectively. Additional estimates are also provided for the Local Centre zoned lands on the basis of an assumed Nursing Home, Retail area and Apartments being developed on the adjacent site.

8.2.4. In relation to the junction analysis, the capacity of the proposed access junction was modelled using a PICADY & ARCADY programmes for 2025 (the intended year of opening) and the design year 2040. These systems produce results based on a ratio of flow capacity (RFC), queue length, signal/stage sequences among other parameters. An RFC greater than 1.00 indicates that a junction is operating at or above capacity, with 0.85 considered to be the optimum RFC value. The analysis shows that all existing and proposed junctions are forecast to operate within capacity for the AM and PM peak hour scenarios for the Mid-week and Weekend AM and PM peak hours in the 2025 design year. It is acknowledged in the TTA that some traffic streams are predicted to marginally exceed capacity, generally, traffic generated from the proposal is forecasted to have a low impact existing road network. In addition, a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit contained in the TTA identified 16 problems with recommendations/solutions. The applicant has addressed these recommendations in the Road Safety Audit 'feedback form' and indicates the acceptance of problems and measures along with alternative measures/reasons accepted. Having considered the

problems identified in the appended Road Safety Audit, I am of the view that the issues outlined can be suitably addressed through various design, mitigation, and management measures.

8.2.5. The updated MMP submitted at Further Information stage seeks to identify measures which, when implemented, can encourage and support more sustainable travel patterns of the users (staff, players and spectators) of the proposed facility and to reduce their car dependency and utilise alternative travel options. The plan provides an outline of existing and planned transport infrastructure (walking/cycling/bus/vehicle) in the locality. In terms of future travel modal split target, it is indicated that walking, cycling and bus travel will increase and that car (driver) will reduce whilst car (passenger) will increase. The plan indicates that such targets will be reached on account of the parking strategy for the site along with the site's location close to communities, active travel measures and increased bus usage. The plan further states that awareness campaigns for facility users will be carried out to encourage sustainable travel modes.

8.2.6. In my assessment of the proposal from a traffic and transportation perspective, I note from the planning file that the applicant has informed that the site access on Wellington Lane had been determined and agreed following discussions and consultations with the Planning Authority. In this regard, I note that the assessment of the Planning Authority along with submissions returned from external bodies such as the NTA and TII do not make reference to provision of an alternative entrance/access arrangement. In my opinion, the provision of an access onto the R-137 (Tallaght/Tempelogue Road) would not be appropriate given the road classification, its carriageway layout with dual lanes, the merge lane and bus lane along with its general setting between the existing Spawell Roundabout and Junction 11 of the M50 motorway. Moreover, given that the subject development is to be operated separately from the adjacent Spawell complex, I consider that it is reasonable for the GAA Cluster Facility to benefit from its own direct entrance. Therefore, I consider that the location of the entrance on Wellington Lane to be appropriate for the subject development.

8.2.7. I conducted my site inspection at approximately noon on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October and experience what could be considered a 'normal use' scenario in terms of traffic and road usage, albeit during the mid-term break. During my inspection, Wellington Lane and Rossmore Road was lightly trafficked and noted the presence of the cycle lane

network with protective bollards separating same from the vehicle carriageway. I observed that the existing three-arm junction at Wellington Lane and Rossmore Road is not controlled by signal lighting, other than a set of pedestrian lights. I also observed that the existing arrangement of carriageway requires vehicles turning from Wellington Lane on Rossmore Lane to be clear of oncoming traffic prior to making a turning manoeuvre which can result in queuing of vehicles. I also observed that the Spawell car park to the southeast of the appeal site had ample car parking spaces available.

8.2.8. With respect to the design of the new vehicular access and signal junction on Wellington Lane, I am of the opinion that the layout has been appropriately configured with turning pockets on the public road and from the site. In addition, the junction has appropriate regard to active travel measures for cyclist and footpath/crossing areas for pedestrians and relocation of a bus stop. I consider that the proposed entrance and junction is capable of providing safe access/egress to and from the site without giving rise to traffic impacts on the road network. Moreover, whilst I acknowledge that the new signal junction will reduce the existing traffic flow in this section of Wellington Lane and Rossmore Road, it will introduce appropriate traffic controls. Additionally, with regard to internal circulation within the site, I have no concerns with the layout, as amended at Further Information stage, and I am of the view that the internal roads would enable sufficient and safe turnabout and manoeuvrability within the confines of the site in a manner that is compliant with DMURS standards and would not conflict with pedestrian permeability around the facility.

8.2.9. In relation to transportation and trip generation, I note that the amended TTA has indicated that the existing and proposed junctions are forecast to operate within capacity for the majority of the Mid-week and Weekend AM and PM peak hour scenarios. While it is indicated that some traffic streams are predicted to marginally exceed capacity, it is contended by the applicant that the traffic generated from the proposal is forecasted to have a low impact existing road network. I note that the Roads Department of the Planning Authority deemed the revised TTA submitted at Further Information stage to be satisfactory and I consider that there are difficulties in accurately estimating trip demands for a GAA Cluster Facility. I am of the opinion that whilst the approved Hollystown GAA Cluster Facility is somewhat comparable in terms of development scale and features, its locational context is not similar given its setting in a peripheral urban location rather than the suburban area of the subject proposal.

That said, I am of the view that the proposed development and its location proximate to established residential areas along with public bus transport links (including an approved BusConnects) in addition to pedestrian footpaths and a network of cycle lanes offers a number of alternative sustainable transport options which will reduce private car/vehicle trips to the site. As a matter of clarity, I note that appellants' have also referred to impacts from BusConnects and claim that traffic volumes will increase on account of the Templeogue Road being closed to general traffic thus resulting in Wellington Lane becoming part of the main highway into the city. I have reviewed the proposals for the Templeogue / Rathfarnham to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme, as available on the dedicated BusConnects online website, and note that there is no evidence to suggest that general traffic will be unable to continue along the R-137 towards Terenure.

8.2.10. Additionally, I do not consider that the applicant has adequately detailed the trip generation for spectators. In my view, the hosting of games/matches for 1,000 spectators would have the potential to intensify visitors attending the proposed GAA Cluster Facility and it is unclear as to how the applicant has factored attendees/spectators visiting the site. Notwithstanding, I note that the core use of this development is not that of a stadium but to accommodate clubs in the southern area of County Dublin with enhanced playing/training facilities for the GAA's playing population. To this end, I am satisfied that the hosting of matches would not be an everyday event and would occur infrequently, most likely at the weekends and/or late evenings outside of the peak times, and that it is unlikely that such matches would coincide with the regular uses of the facility. In this regard, the on-site parking along with the overflow parking area would be utilised for those spectators, who elect to travel by car, and Dublin GAA County Board would be required to manage access and parking for such sporting event scenarios to ensure that traffic congestion and the safety of all road users is not impacted. I have considered the specific matter of parking separately in section 8.3 of this report and on balance, I consider that the parking needs can be reasonably accommodated in line with the parking standards of the Development Plan.

8.2.11. I also acknowledge that the Roads Department of the Planning Authority raised concerns about the adequacy of the updated Mobility Management Plan on account of the information provided not being concise and that the information provided should

have been supported with TRICs data or RFC figures in order to demonstrate that traffic in the locality would not become congested. However, the recommendation of the Roads Department was that this matter could be addressed by way of condition by way of the submissions of a further modified MMP and TTA with the specific figures and data to analyse trends. Having reviewed the MMP, I accept that the applicant has outlined the range of transportation options available and modal patterns in addition to initiatives to encourage sustainable travel modes. That said, I concur with the Planning Authority that the basis for the figures provided is not fact-based on the subject site or the surrounding area. To this end, I do not consider that the information submitted to be deliberately imprecise or vague, but rather illustrative of the difficulty in carrying out a detailed analysis of traffic scenarios given the specific nature of the proposal had on account of future changes in terms of transportation in this area from projects such as BusConnects.

- 8.2.12. Therefore, given the nature of the proposed GAA Cluster Facility and its primary use for the provision of additional training/playing facilities which would occur outside of peak times, the limited and infrequent use of the facility for hosting matches or events with large numbers of visitors/spectators; I consider that any impacts on the road network are likely to be limited and infrequent, based on the TTA, the suburban location of the site in proximity the local population, existing and proposed public transport adjacent to the site and pedestrian and cycling connectivity. Furthermore, while the GAA Cluster Facility will result in increased vehicle movements at the new entrance on Wellington Lane, I am cognisant that the Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre is an existing facility where recreational visitors/patrons currently travel to and from the site. As such, I do not consider that the vehicular movements generated by the GAA Cluster Facility would be entirely new to the location so as to cause unacceptable impacts on the local and surrounding road network. Should the Commission be minded to grant permission, I consider the inclusion of a condition, similar to Condition No. 17 as included in the Planning Authority's schedule of conditions to be reasonable.

### **8.3. Parking**

- 8.3.1. The appellants and an observer outline that the parking provision is not adequate for the proposed development. It is contended in the grounds of appeal that a significant number of users would travel to the complex by car for training and matches along with up to 1,000 spectators. Concerns are also raised that the lack of parking will result

in illegal parking in the roads and streets surrounding the appeal site from visitors/spectators attending the complex which will cause inconvenience to residents and other road users.

8.3.2. From review of the submitted particulars, I note that the applicant initially proposed a total of 167 no. car parking spaces in the form of 84 no. conventional spaces, 5 no. universal access spaces, 23 no. EV spaces with associated charging docks, 4 no. coach parking spaces and bicycle stands for 161 no. bicycles. The development also included an overflow parking area with 55 no. car parking spaces and 3 no. coach parking spaces. The assessment of the Planning Authority noted that the overall parking was in fact 174 no. spaces and that the applicant's calculation for parking may be low as it related to the more restrictive Zone 2 parking area and did not cater for the spectator areas. Conversely, the referral response received from the National Transport Authority (NTA) at application stage expressed concern about the volume of proposed parking and deemed that the number of spaces would be in excess of the maximum standard set out in the Development Plan and would not promote sustainable travel.

8.3.3. In response to the request for Further Information, the applicant revised the proposal to include 155 no. car parking spaces (inclusive of 5 no. universal access spaces and 23 no. EV spaces with associated charging docks). In addition, 19 no. overflow car parking spaces are provided to in a location adjacent to the indoor training building which is away from the main parking area. I note that the Planning Authority deemed the revised parking to be satisfactory but the NTA's second referral report considered that the parking should be further reconsidered on the basis that the 174 no. car parking spaces would exceed the Development Plan's maximum standards and that the approach of the applicant may discourage walking, cycling and public transport thereby adding unnecessary private car traffic to the local road network.

8.3.4. In considering the car parking provision, I acknowledge the applicants rationale for corresponding to the 'Zone 2' (Non-Residential) car parking categorisation as the proposed development does not include any element of residential use; the site is in Templeogue which forms part of the "Dublin City & Suburbs" area; and, will be in proximity to anticipated improvements under BusConnects (Templeogue / Rathfarnham to City Centre). In this regard, I would accept the applicant's provision of 155 no. allocated car parking spaces as being under the maximum car parking

standards set out in Table 12.25: 'Maximum Parking Rates (Non-Residential)' of the Development Plan with respect to "Sports & Recreation" and "Venue" - excluding the 19 no. separate overflow spaces on the site. Notwithstanding, even if the proposed development was to be considered in the context of being a 'Zone 1' (General Rate), I would calculate the maximum car parking provision as ranging between 191 no. spaces and 224 no. spaces (depending on the 500-person terraced area being interpreted as 'seating' i.e. either 33 no. spaces or 66 no. spaces respectively). With this in mind, the overall total of 174 no. spaces, both allocated and over-flow, would fall below the maximum spaces standards of the Development Plan for 'Zone 1'. With respect to bicycle parking, I note that the proposed development indicates the provision of bicycle parking totalling 161 no. spaces on the appeal site. I am satisfied that the proposed bicycle parking will help to alleviate car parking demands while promoting sustainable transport modes and is consistent with the requirements for Sports Facilities and Venues as set out in Table 12.23 of the Development Plan and note that the Planning Authority had no objection to the extent of spaces/stands provided.

8.3.5. In light of the above, I acknowledge that the Development Plan car-parking standards are based on 'maximums' and I am of the view that such standards are applied with a view to limiting and constraining private car trip generation and to promote shifts to sustainable modes of transport. I note that a key concern of the third parties is that there is not enough car parking for the proposed development whereas on the other hand, the response received from the NTA, a national transportation body, is that the volume of car parking proposed should be reduced. I am satisfied that the proposed car parking provision is acceptable to cater for visitors/users of the proposal and would be in accordance with the Development Plan standards. Furthermore, I am of the view that the proposed 19 no. additional car parking spaces for use as an overflow car park in the area adjacent to the indoor training building constitutes a logical and pragmatic arrangement which offers designed-in flexibility away from the main car parking areas in the event of additional parking being required on the site from time to time. To this end, I consider that a condition, similar to that of Condition No. 18 of the Planning Authority's schedule of conditions to be sufficient should the Commission be minded to grant permission and would ensure a restriction on the use of these spaces for match day events.

8.3.6. In terms of potential spectators attending the site for matches, I have already outlined that the proposal includes a 500-seat stand and two terraced areas for 500 people. I am of the view that it is reasonable to accept that the car-parking demands for any matches with an attendance of 1,000 spectators on the Main Pitch could not be met by way of the on-site parking provision. However, it would not be reasonable to assume that all persons attending the GAA Cluster Facility would travel by private vehicle when the proposed development is served by alternative modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public bus. Furthermore, I consider that it is not likely that both training and matches on all of the pitch facilities would occur simultaneously or on a frequent basis. In this regard, I consider that the level of parking provided on the site would be balanced between the overall use of the facility between training and matches. Moreover, matches where there would be high spectator attendance should be appropriately planned and managed along with supporting services and facilities put in place. With this in mind, the Commission could consider the requirement for the applicant to submit an Event Traffic Management Plan for matchdays to assist with the updated MMP and TTA as referred in section 8.2 above which would clarify trip generation for spectators. As a further point, from my inspection of the subject site and surrounding area, I note that in addition to the overall on-site parking, the area surrounding the site contains alternative car parks such as a large paid car park at Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre and that at Faughs GAA Club, St. Judes GAA Club and St. Mac Daras Community College also have on-site parking provision. With this in mind, I consider that there is alternative parking in the locality and that appropriate management of parking could be facilitated in the event of large matches/gatherings being held from time to time to prevent any illegal off-site parking in the immediate locality area.

#### **8.4. Impact on Residential Amenity**

8.4.1. The grounds of appeal raise concern in respect of adverse residential amenity impacts from the subject development on account of noise pollution and light pollution. In the interests of clarity, I shall consider each topic under the following sub-headings:

##### Noise Impact

8.4.2. The appellants' raise concerns with regard to the proposed development which would give rise to noise impacts on neighbouring residences in the locality. Particular

objection is raised to the hours of operation at the facility which would impact on the quality of life of residents from shouting, clashes, kicking, whistles and spectator/crowd noise. It is further noted that residences are located to the northeast of the site and noise will be carried by prevailing winds. The accuracy of the submitted Noise Assessment Report is also queried. The applicant's appeal response informs that specialist Noise Assessments were submitted to the Planning Authority and were deemed to be acceptable. In addition, it is indicated that the nearest dwelling is some 80 metres to the east of Pitch 1 and presently screened by natural and physical barriers. It is further claimed by the applicant that this area is currently subjected to noise from traffic on the surrounding road network and other commercial activities.

8.4.3. In noting the grounds of appeal, I am of the view that the noise arising from the sporting activities at the GAA Cluster Facility is the primary dispute. I have had regard to the submitted Noise Impact Assessment which has indicated that the range of noise levels to be typical of a suburban location. Having regard to the noise survey conducted, I note that 3 no. Noise Sensitive Locations (NSLs) were sampled, one at the approximate location of the new signal junction on Wellington Lane to the east of the site; one adjacent to the existing school to the north of the site on Wellington Lane and one adjacent to the public house/restaurant on the southern boundary of the site. According to the report, the criteria deemed appropriate for external facades of the closest residences is indicated as 55 Db L for daytime (07:00hrs - 19:00hrs); 50 dB L for evening (19:00hrs - 23:00hrs); and, 45 dB L for nighttime (23:00hrs - 07:00hrs). The report also informs that change of 3 dB(A) is considered to be the smallest change in environmental noise that is perceptible to the human ear whilst a change of 10 dB(A) in noise represents a doubling or halving of the noise level which is deemed to be very significant or profound. The survey uses for recreational noise with comparisons of a league match with spectators and training at a college sports pitch for the operational phase of the development in terms of sporting activity. The predicted noise for a 1,000 capacity is expected to be 51 Db L (in the absence of any screening between the stand and the residences). It is indicated that when screening from the Pavillion and boundary screening is considered it would be reasonable to assume that the predicted noise levels will be at or below the proposed daytime and evening operational criteria of 55 dB L and 50 dB L. It is however, noted that the noise characteristics, such as raised voices, will differ to the existing noise environment (from traffic sources) and

may be audible intermittently at the closest NSLs in the immediate vicinity, which would be subject to variable levels and frequency depending on the usage of the pitches and number of spectators. It is stated that the source and noise level would be highly intermittent and infrequent depending on the activities ongoing at any one pitch.

8.4.4. The report acknowledges that pitch and crowd noise will be intermittently audible at the closest NSLs, particularly during later evening periods when the road traffic noise reduces. Mitigation measures outlined for voices from the Pitch and Spectator Areas include the initiation of a “Respect your Neighbours” campaign; erection of signage to inform users that the site is in a residential area and to minimise noise levels; briefing of staff on keeping noise levels to a minimum and discouraging of anti-social language; implementation of a specific policy to deal with any noise complaints. The report concludes on the matter of pitch and spectator noise by stating that the overall impact to the environment will not be significant given the intermittent and short-term nature of the crowd noise.

8.4.5. In considering noise impacts arising from the proposed development, I have calculated the nearest residential property as being approximately 70 metres to the northeast of the main pitch (Pitch 1) with the terrace area and spectator stand being approximately 90 metres and 140 metres respectively from the nearest residence. The synthetic pitch (Pitch 4), is located approximately 90 metres from the nearest dwelling. In addition, the hurling wall is some 225 metres from the nearest dwelling. From my review of the submitted Noise Impact Assessment, I would note that the survey did not include a Noise Measurement at the nearest location between a residence and playing area which in my view would be a logical area for sampling. That said, I consider that location N2 is appropriate given its proximity to both Pitch 1 and Pitch 4 in addition to the spectator facilities which are the most likely areas to generate noise and the existing residences along Wellington Lane. Overall, I note the findings of the Noise Impact Assessment anticipated noise levels. I also note that the main pitch and spectator areas are separated from the nearest residences the Pavillion building, car parking area, existing tree/hedge boundary and the public road of Wellington Lane. In my view, I am satisfied that there would be no significant noise impacts arising from the GAA Cluster Facility which would result in a detrimental impact on nearby residential amenity. I would further note from a locational context that the subject lands are in a suburban area which is proximate to a number of vehicular routes and

activity; the site is primarily zoned for open space where recreational and sporting activity is to be expected; and, the existing lands are presently in recreational use as a driving range along with adjoining 5-a-side soccer pitches which would give rise to an element of noise.

8.4.6. In the interests of clarity, I note that construction and operation (plant) noise has not been explicitly referred to in the appeals as a cause of concern and I am satisfied that should the Commission be minded to grant permission that conditions similar to those of the Planning Authority can be applied.

#### Light Spillage

8.4.7. The grounds of appeal have raised concern in relation to light spillage/pollution arising from the proposed floodlighting. An appeal received contends that the height of the floodlights and lighting will result in overspill that will negatively impact on the amenity of properties and that the timing of usage is too late and will affect the enjoyment of the sky at night. I also note that appeals have referred to the 500 LUX which is recommended by the GAA for inter-county hurling/camogie and have requested that lighting be reviewed and altered in terms of the facility as a Centre of Excellence rather than a stadium. According to the appeal response submitted by the applicant, lighting is essential for the optimum use of the proposed facility. The applicant states that the proposed level of 500 LUX is appropriate for a 'Class 1' facility and the lighting has been designed so as to not have any impacts on any ecological receptor. It has been outlined that Pitch 1 is located approximately 80 metres from the nearest dwelling and that the public road at Wellington Lane is already illuminated by streetlighting. It is further stated that the natural barriers along this boundary which are to be retained will screen and shield light spillage.

8.4.8. In my review of the proposed GAA Cluster Facility, I note that floodlighting is to serve all of the pitches and training areas. I also note that there will be ancillary lighting to the car park and internal roads, walking track and at the new vehicular entrance. According to the Exterior Lighting report and associated drawings in relation to floodlighting, the main pitch (No. 1) will include 7 no. 21.34 metre high lighting columns (500 Avg LUX) whilst the remaining training pitches and all-weather pitch will include 6 no. 21.34 metre high lighting columns (350 Avg LUX). The proposed hurling wall will include 4 no. 18 metre high lighting columns (300 Avg Lux). The report details the

aiming positions, angles, and alignments of lighting fixtures. The report also outlines three design criteria for obtrusive light, Sky Glow (direct upward waste light); Light Overspill – Intrusive; and, Glare (Light Source Intensity). It is indicated that lighting output would be downward with no upward component, modelling for the site indicates the illumination levels to neighbouring houses to the north, and design measures to eliminate lamp glare. It is indicated that in order to help mitigate light spill, luminaires can be dimmed or turned off as required and that the typical design of luminaires is to precisely focus the light beam to aid in keeping light from spilling into areas adjacent to the sports pitches.

- 8.4.9. In relation to the hours of operation, it is indicated on the submitted particulars that the proposed floodlighting will operate up to 22:00hrs at night from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> March with the synthetic pitch (Pitch 4) operating until 21:30hrs between April and September. In addition, the proposed walking route lighting would operate similarly to the floodlighting.
- 8.4.10. My assessment relates to the impacts of lighting in terms of residential amenity and in the interests of clarity, the impact on wildlife is considered separately in section 8.5 of this report. I note that the proposed lighting columns playing pitches are significant in scale, however, I am of the view that such features would nevertheless be consistent with a field sports facility and therefore would not out of character. With respect to the nature of illumination from the floodlighting, I note that the applicant's appeal response has outlined that this lighting is essential for the optimum use of the facility as a 'Class 1 Facility' (i.e. Intercounty Match). I am of the view that it would be reasonable for a new GAA Cluster Facility to aspire to have the best and highest standards for training and matches in terms of both hurling and football and therefore, I consider that the extent of lighting to be appropriate for this facility. I note that Planning Authority raised no objection to the proposed floodlighting and that the assessment from the Public Lighting section stated that the lighting design and report is comprehensive and appropriate to the intended use. Based on the submitted information, I am satisfied that the details provided are sufficient in allowing for a considered assessment on light spillage on neighbouring residences from the floodlighting. I am of the view that the floodlighting design and layout would minimise the incidence of light spillage into the surrounding environment and that it would be within acceptable parameters set out in relevant guidelines. Furthermore, I also note the location of the site within a suburban

location close to a number of roads and in proximity to the M50 motorway whereby street lighting is present lighting and there is presently lighting within the Spawell Golf and Leisure complex. Additionally, the retention of boundary trees/screening would in my who assist in the shielding of light overspill from the subject site.

8.4.11. In terms of the new junction lighting, I note that the Planning Authority indicated that a lighting design was not provided which considered light spill onto neighbouring properties or the impact on the traffic routes. However, a condition was applied to the grant of permission requiring appropriate calculations of vertical and horizontal light trespass onto neighbouring properties, roads and traffic; calculations demonstrating the luminous intensity towards neighbouring properties, roads and traffic; and, mitigations to protect flora and fauna. I consider this to be reasonable on the basis that Wellington Lane is currently illuminated by streetlighting, and I am of the view that an appropriate lighting arrangement could be delivered. In the interests of clarity, should the Commission be minded to grant permission, I recommend that a similarly worded condition be attached in relation to detailed lighting design and consideration at the new road junction.

## **8.5. Ecological Impacts and Tree Removal**

8.5.1. The grounds of appeal have raised concern with regard to the loss of trees and vegetation on the site in addition to potential impacts on bats, birds, foxes and badgers. It is indicated that the site serves as a critical link for species between Tymon Park and the Dodder Valley whilst the proposed lighting would negatively affect local biodiversity. The applicant's response to the appeal states that number of environmental/ecological assessments were carried out in accordance with best practice/guidance and is of the consideration that there will be no impacts on protected species or habitats and that appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented where necessary.

### *Vegetation and Tree Removal*

8.5.2. In relation to tree/vegetation removal, I note that the proposed development seeks to remove a number of tree groupings and individual trees across the site. The appeal site contains extensive boundary vegetation along the eastern, northern, western and southern boundaries. From my review of the submitted particulars, these boundary trees/hedging are to be retained and supplemented; in my opinion, this is welcome

from not only an environmental and biodiversity perspective, but it would also aid in the screening of the development from the surrounding area. However, within the site, there are a number of established stands and grouping of trees along with individual trees. Having inspected the lands and reviewed the submitted particulars, I would note that the central linear grouping of trees, comprising mainly Poplar and Leyland species were planted as part of the existing sporting complex (driving range and pitch & putt course). I would accept in this regard that such tree species are a practical screening measure for the golfing environments due to their fast growth and screening/buffer characteristics. The Arboricultural Assessment indicates that there are no 'Category A' (High Quality) trees on the site and that the majority of trees to be removed are 'Category B' (Moderate Quality) and 'Category C' (Low Quality) which are predominantly described as being in a Fair to Good condition. I am of the opinion that the proposed nature of the GAA Cluster Facility would not be conducive for the retention of these particular trees within the site.

8.5.3. I have reviewed the submitted Landscaping Plans and note the details of additional tree planting to enhance the existing boundary trees/vegetation. I further note that the additional planting, as indicated, will exceed the extent of trees/vegetation to be removed and would be arranged as such so as to compliment the ponds and features on the site to strengthen the hedge/boundaries to be retained. I also note that the applicant has sought to retain most of the boundary planting along Wellington Lane which is to be welcomed and will aid in the screening of the development. Furthermore, the development as approved by the Planning Authority includes a condition (No. 13) for additional tree planting along the northern boundary with a view to providing a buffer/screen with the adjacent Tymon Park to obstruct light overspill from the proposed floodlighting to limit potential affects on bats in this location. In addition, Condition No. 14 in the Planning Authority's schedule of conditions relates to the implementation of the landscaping proposals and tree protection measures. I consider that such conditions are appropriate and similarly worded conditions could be attached if the Commission are minded to grant permission. Overall, I consider that the loss of trees will not have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding suburban setting and that the proposed planting and landscaping would enhance the overall site.

### Ecological Impacts

- 8.5.4. The applicant submitted an updated Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) in response to a Request for Further Information. In addition, additional Breeding Bird Surveys, Wintering Bird Surveys, Bat Surveys and a Badger Management Plan have also been carried out. Having reviewed the EclAR, I note the assessment sets out the subject development; locational overview of the site; legislative context and relevant guidance; details of surveys carried out including desktop surveys and field surveys; and a summary and assessment of ecological features and any effects/mitigation required. The EclAR outlines the baseline ecological condition with the European sites identified within a 15km radius and has indicated the proximity of the site to the River Dodder which forms a hydrological connection to these European sites.
- 8.5.5. The existing use of the site is outlined and the habitat classification has been identified as being Treeline (WL2), man-made ponds (FL8), Scrub (WS1) and Amenity Grassland (GA2). In relation to Flora, the EclAR states that no plant species of conservation significance were identified on site. In terms of species, no signs of bat roosts were observed within or bounding the site or evidence of commuting routes between the proposed development site and the Dodder Valley. No significant disruption to commuting corridors is predicted due to flood lighting. In relation to Fauna, foxes, badgers and squirrels were identified on Trail Cameras. The assessment notes that additional badger surveys have taken place to determine the extent of current badger movements in the area and documented in a separate Badger Conservation Plan (submitted separately to the Planning Authority). In relation to birds, a number of surveys were conducted which noted that most of the bird activity observed was birds in flight across the site and that very few birds were observed perching/feeding on the site. It is further indicated that the proposal will result in the loss of some suitable breeding bird habitat within the site by way of tree removal which will result in a negative impact. That said, the report informs that such loss will be mitigated by the additional planting to the site boundaries. In relation to the man-made ponds, macroinvertebrates were identified and it was considered that the ponds to be retained could be enhanced to promote healthy ecosystems.
- 8.5.6. The EclAR notes that the impacts during construction will have a permanent slight negative impact to general fauna and floral habitat due to construction disturbance and the removal of existing vegetation. In terms of mitigation measures, the EclAR

outlines that fencing will accommodate movement of small mammals and during felling attention will be paid for bats. Mitigation outlined in the Bat Survey will be adhered to. Cutting/felling will occur outside of nesting season (March 1<sup>st</sup> – August 31<sup>st</sup> inclusive). Swift boxes will be installed on the new building. Best practice construction methods will be followed. Pollution of the wider area is assessed as temporary moderate negative impact with best practice construction methods followed to prevent run-off from pollutants. According to the report, controls will also be put in place to prevent potential spread of any invasive species. In addition, all measures set out in the Natura Impact Statement and Preliminary Construction & Demolition Environmental Management Plan are to be adhered to, in order to mitigate potential pathway for pollution. The EclAR concludes by stating that the removal of the treelines on site will result in a negative impact overall impact but that compensatory planting will create a more suitable and functional ecological corridor to the west of the site which will feed into Tymon Park. Furthermore, it is also stated that provided the proposed development is constructed and operated in accordance with the design, best practice and mitigation as described, significant effects on ecology are not anticipated.

8.5.7. I am satisfied that the Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EclAR) is adequate in its assessment of the site context. The appeal site is not located within a designated European Site or Natural Heritage Area. I note the subject site has a certain ecological value in terms of its predominantly grassed setting adjacent to Tymon Park and proximate to the Dodder Valley however, I am not of the opinion, giving the established use of the site that it is one that is especially sensitive from an ecological perspective and I would consider that the mitigation measures outlined in the EclAR, and other supporting documents is sufficient to protect various birds and other species so that there would be no significant residual effects. I note that an updated Wintering Birds Survey was submitted in response to a Request for Further Information and this report indicated that no species associated with a Special Protection Area (SPA), were recorded on site during surveying. It is further indicated that it is unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant negative impact on such bird species on account of both the distance and lack of intervisibility between the subject development site and the applicable European Sites in addition to the site characteristics of the site. I am satisfied with the findings of the Wintering Birds Survey and I am of the view that there would be no predicted impacts on such species in this

regard. As previously outlined, I also acknowledge the landscaping proposals on the site, particularly the planting of replacement trees in and around the site boundaries and I am of the view that such measures would strengthen the biodiversity and ecological value of the site.

8.5.8. Given the nature and scale of the proposed development for a GAA Cluster Facility on lands which are presently associated with sporting/recreational use, the extent of hedgerow/trees/vegetation to be retained and further supplemented; I am of the opinion that the proposal would not significantly impact on bat species, birds, mammals or amphibians and there is no likelihood of significant effects on the environment. In light of the above, I am satisfied that the proposal will mitigate against any loss of local biodiversity and ecological devaluation which may arise and will positively contribute to the efficacy of the wider ecological network at this location. In the interests of clarity, I recommend that should the Commission be minded to grant permission that condition(s), similar to that of the Planning Authority, with a requirement that specific measures for the protection of trees to be retained along with bats and badgers be attached. Further consideration of badgers and bats is contained in the following sections below.

8.5.9. In relation to Badgers, I note that a Badger Survey has been provided which indicates the presence of both active and inactive setts. Works as part of the development would result in the active badger sett being compromised. I acknowledge that a Badger Management proposal has been submitted, as confirmed by the Planning Authority, who have retained same due to sensitivities regarding protecting current known location of the active badger sett. The report received from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage (Nature Conservation) informs that the Badger Conservation Plan sets out the treatment of badger setts and badgers present on site in order to facilitate the proposed development in line with Departmental recommendations such as the relocation of the main sett with an artificial sett prior to the commencement of development and to monitor badgers. The report from the Department highlights weaknesses in the plan but has recommended that a condition be attached for the submission of an amended Conservation Badger Management Plan with details of badger numbers, camera/monitoring, design of the artificial sett in the relocated area and measures to protect outlier setts adjacent to the site. I further note that the report received from the Heritage Officer also notes the presence of

badgers on the site and the badger management proposals and has recommended that a condition be included for the exclusion/translocation of badgers through advice from the NPWS. Having regard to the submissions received from the Planning Authority and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, I am satisfied that appropriate Badger conservation and management proposals, carried out in accordance with expert advice from the Department will prevent any unacceptable effects on badgers in the site and therefore, should the Commission be minded to grant permission, I consider that a condition as similarly set out in Condition No. 7 of the Planning Authority's schedule of conditions would be acceptable.

8.5.10. With respect to bats, I note the content of the Bat Survey (and subsequent updated document received on foot of a Request for Additional Information). I would acknowledge from the findings that potential bat species living on the site is low but that bats commute across the appeal site and likely forage and feed in and around the site. I also note that the survey suggests that bat movements southwards from the site towards the River Dodder is not significant on account of the existing driving range. In terms of impacts on bats from the proposed floodlighting, I would recognise that poorly designed and sited floodlighting has the potential to negatively affect bats (and other mammals and bird species). I also acknowledge that the location of the subject site is a suburban location and that there is existing lighting within the site and other public lighting in the surrounding area such as streetlighting for the local road network.

8.5.11. The report from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage (Nature Conservation) notes the findings of the Bat Surveys and recommends the planting of additional trees along the northern boundary of the site in order to aid the screening of the area around the adjacent ponds in the neighbouring Tymon Park from light overspill from the proposed floodlighting. I also note the comments returned from the Heritage Officer who welcomes the efforts of the applicant to reduce lighting overspill but has referenced lighting affects on the normal behaviour of bats and potential knock-on effects from lighting through the drawing away of insects. In my view, the concern of the Planning Authority with respect bats relates to overall impacts on bats in the wider area as a result of the development rather than impacts on any bats on the site. The conditions attached by the Planning Authority to protect bats include the submission of a Bat Protection Plan in terms of the use of different lighting types and designs, and other bat protection measures such as planting/screening; and, a

schedule of monitoring of local bat populations implemented over a 5-year period (including an assessment of bat populations in the adjacent areas of Tymon Park) to determine the effectiveness or otherwise of the implemented design and mitigation measures on the bats foraging and commuting in Tymon Park. This condition indicates that after three years of monitoring if the effects on bat species and densities are noted then a review of mitigation measures shall be undertaken and adjustments agreed and implemented to reverse species impacts. I consider these conditions to be reasonable and will enable a modification or amendment to the on-site lighting should they be required. Therefore, I am satisfied that should the Commission be minded to grant permission for the subject development, that suitably worded planning condition(s) similar to Condition Nos. 6 and 7 in addition to Condition No 13 (additional planting) as set out in the Planning Authority's schedule of conditions would be acceptable to prevent any significant effects on local populations of bat species.

## **8.5. Site Services**

8.5.1. In relation to site services, I note that the third parties did not raise specific concerns with regard to the proposed site services. However, this assessment represents my *de novo* consideration of all planning matters relating to the proposed development in association with issues raised by the appellant(s) or observer(s). The proposed development is to connect to the existing water mains and foul sewer along whilst the surface water includes on-site SUDS measures and discharge to existing network. I note that Uisce Eireann raised non objection in terms of water and foul, subject to connection agreements and I consider that a connection to the existing foul and water infrastructure would be acceptable having regard to the scale of the development in an existing built-up area and would unlikely constrain the service network. In the event of a grant of permission, a condition requiring compliance with Uisce Eireann standards/best practice can be attached.

8.5.2. In relation to surface/storm water drainage, the applicant has indicated that there are drains, ponds and a culvert on the site and that surface water disposal will be by way of a series of SUDs measures comprising a combination of surface features, nature-based solutions and underground stone-fill 'tanks' for on-site attenuation before outflowing to an existing drainage network which discharges into the River Dodder away from the site. The Planning Authority requested Additional Information with respect to surface water drainage as it was deemed that the attenuation and SuDS

calculations were unclear and it was unclear as to how buildings and hard surfacing areas were to be attenuated. The Planning Authority also indicated that underground tanks are not permissible. The Additional Information Response included the submission of a 'SuDS Management & Maintenance Plan' and outlines features such as attenuated pitch sub-surface drainage, permeable paving to walkways/car parking bays, tree pits, detention basins, infiltration trenches, filter strips, linear swales with check walls, hydrobrake flow controls and hydrocarbon interceptors. This report also indicates how these measures work in terms of attenuating surface water and reducing run-off. The Planning Authority noted that the Water Services Department required confirmation relating to attenuation calculations and capacity, additional drawings and indication that SuDS measures be provided in accordance with the provisions of the South Dublin County Council. However, it was deemed that these items could be addressed by way of a pre-commencement condition.

8.5.3. Having regard to the information on file, I note the shortcomings in terms of technical details regarding the proposed surface water drainage. Notwithstanding, I consider that proposed drainage approach to be acceptable for the subject development and I am of the view that such details can be agreed with the requirements of the Planning Authority, who are responsible for surface water treatment/drainage. Therefore, I consider that a similarly worded pre-commencement condition, similar to that of Condition No. 10 of the Planning Authority's decision could be attached should the Commission be minded to grant permission. Therefore, I consider that there is no basis to conclude that the surface water arising from the subject development could not be satisfactorily managed on the site.

## 8.6. Other Matters

8.6.1. Having regard to the appeals and observations, I shall consider the following items under the sub-headings below.

### Consultation

8.6.2. The grounds of appeal have expressed disappointment that the applicant did not consult or engage with the local community regarding plans for the development of the site. I note that the applicant's appeal response indicates that all regulatory requirements were fulfilled and that the planning process resulted in numerous submissions from the public which resulted in changes/adaptions to the proposed

development. In consideration of the subject development, I note that there is no obligation on the applicant to engage with the local community. I am also satisfied that the public could appropriately engage with the planning process in accordance with planning legislation.

#### Anti-Social Behaviour

8.6.3. The grounds of appeal also claim that the proposed development will result in anti-social behaviour in the area as a result of the large numbers of people attending the area. It is claimed that matters such as littering may become an issue and further stated that a stand and terracing for 1,000 spectators is not an integral part of a sports training centre of excellence. According to the applicant's appeal response, the subject development will impact positively on the area and provide a community asset. It is further claimed that Dublin GAA have a strong track record in the management of facilities and that there would be no potential for anti-social behaviour.

8.6.4. In my consideration of the proposed development of a GAA Cluster Facility, I do not consider that such a land-use would result in anti-social behaviour and in my view, the matters raised by the appellants/observers are somewhat presumptive and not fact-based.

#### Duration of Permission

8.6.5. It has been queried as to why the application seeks a 10-year permission and reference has been made to the overall development of the lands along with an annotation on the submitted drawings to a 'proposed future access' in the southeast extent of the site. The applicant's response to the appeal(s) states that the 10-year permission is justified on the basis of Dublin GAA is an amateur, volunteer-based sporting organisation and that the project may take considerable time to complete due to requirements to fundraise/procure funding and other resourcing. I note that the Planning Authority were satisfied with the principle of a ten-year permission. In my assessment of the timeline/duration of the permission, I note that Section 7.4 of the Development Management Guidelines (2007) informs that planning authorities may grant permission for a duration longer than 5 years if they see fit for major developments but that it is the responsibility of the applicant to request longer durations. Having regard to the nature of the development and the amateur, community/volunteer status of the GAA as a sporting organisation, I am satisfied that

the applicant's request for a 10-year is appropriate in this instance. Furthermore, I also note that the subject development, as proposed, has been considered on its own merits and that potential future development proposals within or adjoining the redline boundary of the subject site fall outside of the Commission's remit in deciding this application and could only be considered by way of a separate planning application.

## 9.0 **Appropriate Assessment**

### 9.1. Screening Determination

#### *Finding of likely significant effects*

9.2. In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of objective information provided by the applicant, I conclude that it is not possible to exclude that the proposed development alone, or in combination with other plans and projects, will give rise to significant effects on the South Dublin Bay SAC; South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA in view of the sites conservation objectives. It is therefore determined that Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2) [under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended] for the proposed development is required.

### 9.3. Appropriate Assessment Conclusion: Integrity Test

9.4. In screening the need for Appropriate Assessment, it was determined that the proposed development could result in significant effects on South Dublin Bay SAC; South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA in view of the conservation objectives of those sites and that Appropriate Assessment under the provisions of S177U/ 177AE was required.

9.5. Following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the NIS, all associated material submitted and taking into account any observations/submissions received, I consider that adverse effects on site integrity of South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000210); South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA can be excluded in view of the conservation objectives of these sites and that no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects. My conclusion is based on the following:

- Detailed assessment of construction and operational impacts.
- The proposed development will not affect the attainment of conservation objectives for South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000210); South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA or prevent or delay the restoration of favourable conservation condition of species.
- Effectiveness of mitigation measures proposed.
- Application of planning condition in respect of the implementation of all mitigation measures set out in the NIS in the event of a grant of permission.

## 10.0 Water Framework Directive

10.1. The subject development comprises the construction of a GAA Cluster Facility. The impact of the proposed development in terms of the Water Framework Directive is set out in Appendix 5 of this report. The appeal site is located on lands at Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre in the townlands of Tymon North and Templeogue in Dublin 6W. The site is generally flat and there are no EPA designated watercourses on the site. The subject development is indicated as connecting to the public water mains and foul will be connected to the public sewer. Surface water will include on site SUDs measures along with connections to the public sewer.

10.3. In Appendix 5 of this report, I have outlined potential pathways to the relevant waterbodies and potential impacts at construction and operational stages. I have assessed the proposed development and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seek to protect and, where necessary, restore surface & ground water waterbodies in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project and the associated mitigation measures set out by the applicant, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no residual risk to any surface and/or groundwater water bodies, either qualitatively or quantitatively.

10.4. The reasons for this conclusion are as follows:

- The nature and scale of the proposed works on mainly 'Open Space' zoned lands;
- The distance between the proposed development and relevant waterbodies, and/or the hydrological connectivity to same;

- The mitigation measures included as part of the application to address surface water, wastewater and construction activity.

10.5. Therefore, I conclude on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal), either qualitatively or quantitatively, or on a temporary or permanent basis, or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives. Accordingly, the proposed development can be excluded from further assessment.

## 11.0 Recommendation

11.1. I recommend that the decision of the Planning Authority be upheld and that permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions, for the reasons and considerations below.

## 12.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the site and its established use for sport and recreational purposes and given the nature, extent and design of the proposed development, it is considered that subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, that the proposed development would provide a high-quality sports facility for the wider South County Dubin community, would not seriously injure the residential amenities of the area or have a detrimental impact on biodiversity, would be acceptable in terms of road and traffic safety and would be in keeping with the established character of the area. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

## 13.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and as amended by further information submitted on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

**Reason: In the interest of clarity.**

2. The period during which the development hereby permitted may be carried out shall be 10-years from the date of this Order.

**Reason: Having regard to the nature of the development, the Commission considers it appropriate to specify a period of validity of this permission in excess of five years.**

3. The development shall be carried out on a phased basis, in accordance with a phasing scheme which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of any development.

**Reason: In the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.**

4. The mitigation measures contained in the submitted Natura Impact Statement (NIS) shall be implemented.

**Reason: To protect the integrity of European Sites.**

5. The mitigation measures contained in the updated Ecological Impact Assessment (submitted to the Planning Authority at Additional Information Stage), shall be implemented.

**Reason: To protect the local biodiversity and habitats.**

6. Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant shall submit an updated/amended Conservation Badger Management Plan (in full accordance with any requirements of the National Parks and Wildlife Service) which shall be implemented by an experienced and suitably qualified badger expert. The details shall be submitted to the Planning Authority for written agreement prior to the commencement of any site development works (including any enabling works), and prior to the commencement of any works relating to any translocation of badgers at the subject site. The advice and input from National Parks and Wildlife Service shall be sought and shall be implemented with their approval.

**Reason: In the interest of ensuring the protection of existing badgers.**

7. (a) Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant shall submit details of the materials, colours and textures of all the external finishes to the proposed buildings (including bin stores and secure bicycle parking). In default of agreement the matter in dispute shall be referred to An Coimisiún Pleanála for determination.
- (b) The proposed kitchen/dining area within the pavilion building shall be used/operated strictly in association with the GAA Cluster Facility and shall not serve or function as a commercial eatery to visiting members of the public without prior consent of the planning authority and a subsequent planning permission.

**Reason: In the interest of visual amenity and to ensure an appropriate high standard of development.**

8. (a) The details of any external signage to buildings or structures shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to the operation of sporting activities on the site. Where agreement cannot be reached between the applicant/developer and the local authority the matter shall be referred to An Bord Pleanála for determination.
- (b) Advertising structures/ devices erected within the site shall not be visible when viewed from outside the curtilage of the site.

**Reason: In the interest of visual amenity**

9. The site shall be landscaped in accordance with updated particulars of landscaping, the details of which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. These particulars shall include the following:
- (a) A suitably qualified Landscape Architect shall be appointed as a Landscape Consultant for the duration of the construction project. A practical Certificate of Completion shall be provided to the Planning Authority upon the satisfactory completion of all landscape works.
- (b) The measures to be put in place during the construction period for the protection of all existing trees, hedgerows and shrubs which are indicated on the updated Landscape Masterplan for retention as features of the site landscaping.

(c) A section drawing showing the boundary treatment of the northern boundary of the subject site to include details of additional screen planting (mature trees of native species) in line with bat conservation.

(d) Specifications of a soil Management Plan in relation to the cut and fill material on the site.

(e) A timescale for implementation, including details of phasing. All planting shall be adequately protected from damage until established. Any plants which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, within a period of five years from the completion of the development or until the development is taken in charge by the local authority, whichever is the sooner, shall be replaced within the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.

**Reason: In the interest of residential and visual amenity, biodiversity and the proper planning and development of the area.**

10. (a) The floodlighting shall be in accordance with the lighting report submitted to the Planning Authority.

(b) Floodlighting shall only be directed onto the playing surface of the pitches and away from the adjacent housing, gardens and public roads.

(c) Floodlighting shall be directed and cowled such as to reduce, as far as possible, the light scatter over adjacent houses, gardens and public roads.

(d) Floodlighting shall be angled and constructed so that no light is emitted above a horizontal plane through the fitting. Positioning and design shall also ensure that no glare is caused to users of the adjoining public road.

(e) All lighting fixtures shall be designed, orientated, maintained and of a lighting level such that light spillage outside the site's boundary shall not exceed a maximum of 10 Lux, as measured at the boundaries of the nearest dwelling houses to the north/northeast of the subject site (along Wellington Lane).

(f) The operational hours of floodlighting on this site shall not extend beyond 22:00 hours with an automatic cut-off of floodlighting at this time.

**Reason: In the interest of protecting the residential amenities of the area, biodiversity and the proper planning and development of the area.**

11. Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant shall submit a revised Bat Protection Plan, prepared by a suitably qualified bat expert for the written agreement of the Planning Authority. This Plan shall present a 'best option' in terms of lighting types and designs, demonstrate low impact lighting features on both bats and on insect populations, recommended additional planting along the site boundary with Tymon Park (northern and western boundaries) in terms of enhancing a physical barrier of screening, and any other innovative measures to protect bats and their insect prey. The Plan shall fully detail mitigation measures proposed in the context of the overall site development, for a 10-year duration.

**Reason: To protect bats, their insect food prey and habitat from artificial light.**

12. Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant shall submit a schedule of monitoring of local bat populations over a 5-year period following the implementation of agreed bat mitigation measures. This monitoring shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced bat expert and shall include an assessment of bat populations in the adjacent areas of Tymon Park to determine effectiveness or otherwise of implemented design and other mitigation measures on the bats foraging and commuting in Tymon Park. The monitoring shall include surveys undertaken in Tymon Park when lights are in use, and when lights are switched off. Annual seasonal baseline surveys shall also to be taken (early and mid-season periods for bat activity) so as to provide baseline comparison data for those surveys undertaken during the periods when the lights are in use. The results of surveys shall be submitted for the review and written agreement of the Planning Authority. The applicant shall be advised that after a three year of monitoring period, if the planning authority considers significant effects on bat species and densities are evident, that a review of mitigation measures shall be undertaken and possible adjustments/restrictions agreed and implemented within a specified and agreed period to reverse species impacts during the operational phase of the development.

**Reason: To monitor and measure any possible impacts on bats in Tymon Park that may arise from the operation of artificial light.**

13. Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant shall submit revised public lighting details for the written agreement of the Planning Authority. The revised public lighting scheme shall contain all technical specifications for lights and columns along with appropriate calculations demonstrating vertical and horizontal light trespass onto neighbouring properties, bounding roads and traffic routes in the vicinity of the subject site; appropriate calculations demonstrating the luminous intensity towards neighbouring properties and road/traffic routes in the vicinity of the site; and, revised details considering light spillage onto neighbouring residential properties and roads/traffic in accordance with best practice guidance.

**Reason: In the interest of residential amenity and public safety.**

14. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall enter into a Connection Agreement with Uisce Éireann (Irish Water) to provide for a service connection to the public water supply and wastewater collection network. All works shall comply with Uisce Éireann's Connection and Developer Services Standard Details and Code of Practice.

**Reason: In the interest of public health and to ensure adequate water/wastewater facilities.**

15. Prior to commencement of works, the developer shall submit to, and agree in writing with the planning authority, an updated Construction and Demolition Environmental Management Plan. This Plan shall include but not be limited to construction phase controls for dust, noise and vibration, waste management, protection of soils, groundwaters, and surface waters, site housekeeping, hours of operation, emergency response planning, site environmental policy, and project roles and responsibilities.

**Reason: In the interest of environmental protection, residential amenities, public health and safety.**

16. Prior to commencement of development, a Resource Waste Management Plan (RWMP) as set out in the EPA's Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (2021) shall be prepared and submitted to the planning authority for written agreement. The RWMP shall include specific proposals as to how the RWMP will

be measured and monitored for effectiveness. All records (including for waste and all resources) pursuant to the agreed RWMP shall be made available for inspection at the site office at all times.

**Reason: In the interest of reducing waste and encouraging recycling.**

17. The demolition and construction works shall be carried out in such a manner as to ensure that the adjoining road network is kept clear of debris, soil and other material and if the need arises for cleaning works to be carried out on the adjoining public roads, the said cleaning works shall be carried out at the developer's expense.

**Reason: To ensure that the adjoining roadways are kept in a clean and safe condition during construction works, in the interest of orderly development.**

18. A plan containing details for the management of waste within the development, including the provision of facilities for the storage, separation and collection of the waste, and, in particular, recyclable materials and for the ongoing operation of the facility shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority not later than six months from the date of commencement of the development. Thereafter, the waste shall be managed in accordance with the agreed plan.

**Reason: In the interest of residential amenity, and to ensure the provision of adequate refuse storage.**

19. All water quality and drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the relevant section of the Council for such works and services. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall submit all drainage details to the Planning Authority for written agreement.

**Reason: In the interest of public health and surface water management.**

20. (a) The internal roads serving the proposed development, including turning bays, junctions, car parking and bicycle parking areas, footpaths, kerbs and finishes/materials/signs shall comply with the detailed standards of the Planning Authority for such road works, and shall comply, in all respects, with the standards set out in Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS). Details of same

shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development.

(b) The overflow carpark shall be gated and shall only be utilised during exceptional match day events with no access available outside of these match day events.

**Reason: In the interest of amenity and of traffic and pedestrian safety.**

21. Prior to the commencement of development on the site, the applicant shall submitted a modified Traffic and Transport Assessment along with a modified Mobility Management Plan shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Planning Authority. The modified documents shall include specific TRICs data including exact RFC figures to analyse traffic trends, modal split details and shall provide for additional mobility management measures for all users of the GAA Cluster Facility. The modified Traffic and Transport Assessment and modified Mobility Management Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed details unless or until it is superseded. The foregoing shall set out a schedule for the submission of annual traffic, transport and mobility management impact assessments to the Planning Authority for its written agreement for a 3-year period from the operation of the first playing pitch on site. Upon submission of the third Annual Report, the applicant shall seek written confirmation from the Planning Authority in relation to suitability or otherwise of the traffic arrangements within the site and mobility management measures. Where such confirmation is not forthcoming from the Planning Authority, the applicant shall prepare an updated Traffic Management Plan including an updated Mobility Management Plan for the written agreement of the Planning Authority for implementation thereafter. This may include but is not limited to revisions to details pertaining to an over/under supply of on-site car parking, ticketing of higher publicity/attended matches to monitor/cap attendance numbers, car park space booking arrangements, operation of transport-focused communication strategy to prospective spectators and locals for high publicity/attended matches.

**Reason: In the interest of traffic safety and sustainable transport.**

22. During the construction, demolition and operational phases, the proposed development shall comply with all appropriate noise control measures of the relevant section of the Council for such services. Noise levels from the proposed development shall not be so loud, so continuous, so repeated, of such duration or pitch or occurring at such times as to give reasonable cause for annoyance to a person in any premises in the neighbourhood or to a person lawfully using any public place. Procedures for the purpose of determining compliance with limits for construction and operational noise shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

**Reason: To protect the residential amenities of property in the vicinity of the site**

23. (a) The developer shall engage a suitably qualified archaeologist to monitor (licenced under the National Monuments Acts) all site topsoil stripping associated with the development. The use of appropriate machinery to ensure the preservation and recording of any surviving archaeological remains shall be necessary.

(b) Should archaeological remains be identified during the course of archaeological monitoring, all works shall cease in the area of archaeological interest pending a decision of the planning authority, in consultation with the responsible government Department, regarding appropriate mitigation (preservation in-situ/excavation).

(c) The developer shall facilitate the archaeologist in recording any remains identified. Any further archaeological mitigation requirements specified by the Planning Authority, following consultation with the responsible government Department, shall be complied with by the developer.

(d) Following the completion of all archaeological work on site and any necessary post excavation specialist analysis, the Planning Authority and the Department shall be furnished with a final archaeological report describing the results of the monitoring and any subsequent required archaeological investigative work/excavation required. All resulting and associated archaeological costs shall be borne by the developer.

**Reason: To ensure the continued preservation (either in situ or by record) of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest.**

23. All service cables associated with the proposed development (such as electrical and telecommunications) shall be located underground. Ducting shall be provided by the developer to facilitate the provision of broadband infrastructure within the proposed development. All existing over ground cables shall be relocated underground as part of the site development works.

**Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.**

24. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0700 to 1900 Mondays to Saturdays inclusive, and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where proposals have been submitted and agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

**Reason: In order to safeguard the residential amenities of property in the vicinity.**

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

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Matthew O'Connor  
Planning Inspector

8<sup>th</sup> January 2026

# Appendix 1

## Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

<b>Case Reference</b>	ABP-321439-24
<b>Proposed Development Summary</b>	GAA Cluster Facility
<b>Development Address</b>	Townlands of Tymon North And Templeogue, Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre, Templeogue, Dublin 6W, D6W PY06.
	<b>In all cases check box /or leave blank</b>
<b>1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA?</b>  (For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes,  - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No, No further action required.
<b>2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1.  <b>EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
<b>3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) OR a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of Roads Regulations 1994, AND does it meet/exceed the thresholds?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8	

of the Roads Regulations, 1994. <b>No Screening required.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold. <b>EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold. <b>Preliminary examination required. (Form 2)</b>	Class 13. Changes, extensions, development and testing.  The proposed development for a GAA Cluster Facility will change the established recreational/sporting use at Spawell Golf & Leisure Centre. The proposal will not increase the extent of lands associated with sporting/recreational use. The structures to be demolished are small/limited in footprint in the context of the overall site

<b>4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted AND is the development a Class of Development for the purposes of the EIA Directive (as identified in Q3)?</b>	
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)</b>
No <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)</b>

Inspector: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### Form 2 - EIA Preliminary Examination

<b>Case Reference</b>	ABP-321439-24
<b>Proposed Development Summary</b>	Gaa Cluster Facility
<b>Development Address</b>	Townlands of Tymon North And Templeogue, Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre, Templeogue, Dublin 6W, D6W PY06.
<b>This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.</b>	
<b>Characteristics of proposed development</b>  (In particular, the size, design, cumulation with existing/ proposed development, nature of demolition works, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents/disasters and to human health).	<p>The proposal comprises a GAA Cluster Facility in Templeogue.</p> <p>The development will predominantly include 3 no. floodlit GAA pitches, a pavilion building, hurling wall, sprint/training area, indoor training area and associated site works and infrastructure across a site of 10.98 ha.</p> <p>The existing lands, subject to this development predominantly comprise a golf driving range, former Pitch &amp; Putt course and synthetic soccer pitches. Therefore the lands are currently utilised for sporting/recreational use and the proposed use relates to GAA-related activities.</p> <p>It is not considered that this development would be described as exceptional in the context of the existing urban environment of Terenure or given the existing use of the site at Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre.</p> <p>The proposal will not produce significant waste, emissions or pollutants. By virtue of its development type, it does not pose a risk of major accident and/or disaster.</p>
<b>Location of development</b>  (The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the development in particular existing and approved land use, abundance/capacity of natural resources, absorption capacity of natural environment e.g. wetland, coastal zones, nature	<p>The proposed development is situated on lands zoned 'Open Space' and 'Local Centre' at the established Spawell Golf &amp; Leisure Centre in Templeogue.</p> <p>There are no significant environmental sensitivities in the vicinity – potential impacts on the Natura 2000 network is addressed under Appropriate Assessment.</p> <p>Archaeology monitoring/assessments have been carried out.</p>

reserves, European sites, densely populated areas, landscapes, sites of historic, cultural or archaeological significance).	
<b>Types and characteristics of potential impacts</b>  (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).	Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development (i.e. a GAA Cluster Facility on zoned lands), there is no potential for significant effects on the environmental factors listed in section 171A of the Act.
<b>Conclusion</b>	
<b>Likelihood of Significant Effects</b>	<b>Conclusion in respect of EIA</b>
<b>There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.</b>	<b>EIA is not required.</b>

**Inspector:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DP/ADP:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

(only where Schedule 7A information or EIAR required)

### Appendix 3: AA Screening Determination - Test for likely significant effects

Screening for Appropriate Assessment Test for likely significant effects	
<b>Step 1: Description of the project and local site characteristics</b>	
<b>Brief description of project</b>	Please refer to Section 2 of the Planning Report for a development description. In short, permission is sought for a GAA Cluster Facility and all associated site works.
<b>Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms</b>	<p>The proposal is briefly described as comprising the construction of 3 no. football pitches (one synthetic) with floodlights; pavilion building; indoor training area; spectator stand and terracing; hurling wall; car/coach/bicycle parking; new entrance; connections to services; and, demolition of driving range, indoor pitch and outdoor soccer pitch.</p> <p>The subject site has an indicated area of 10.98 hectares and is located on lands at Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre in Templeogue, Dublin 6W. This is a suburban area where the primary land use is residential with supporting community infrastructure. The site is to the west of Wellington Lane; to the north/northwest of the R-137 and to the east of the M50. and an existing facility comprising 5-a-side playing pitches, a public house car park and garden centre; to the east of the M50 and parkland associated with Tymon Park; and to the south of Faugh's GAA Club and Tymon Park to the north.</p> <p>The subject site is approximately 280 metres north of the River Dodder. This watercourse flows in a northeasterly direction before joining the River Liffey next to Dublin Bay. The South Dublin Bay SAC and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA are located approximately 8.5km from the appeal site whilst the North Dublin Bay SAC and North Bull Island SAC are located approximately 12km from the appeal site in Dublin Bay.</p> <p>Given the nature and scale of the proposal, there are potential impacts arising from development on these sites which cannot be ruled out without further analysis and assessment.</p>
<b>Screening report</b>	Yes
<b>Natura Impact Statement</b>	Yes
<b>Relevant submissions</b>	The submissions/referral from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Nature Conservation) requested Further Information in relation to the need for bat surveys to be undertaken when bats are most active, carrying out Winter Birds Survey when SCI/QI bird species would be

expected to use the site and carry out a Breeding Bird Survey for the site.

Updated Screening and Appropriate Assessment reports (and supporting environmental/ecological reports) were submitted. No further issues were raised and any matters could be reasonably conditioned in the event of a grant of permission.

**Step 2. Identification of relevant European sites using the Source-pathway-receptor model**

The European Sites potentially within a zone of influence of the proposed development are listed in the table below.

European Site (code)	Qualifying interests <sup>1</sup> Link to conservation objectives (NPWS, date)	Distance from proposed development (km)	Ecological connections <sup>2</sup>	Consider further in screening <sup>3</sup> Y/N
Glenasmole Valley SAC (Site Code: 001209)	<u>Glenasmole Valley SAC   National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</u>	Approx. 4.4km	No direct/ indirect connectivity between the proposal this SAC.	No
Wicklow Mountains SAC (Site Code: 002122)	<u>Wicklow Mountains SAC   National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</u>	Approx. 6.6m	No direct/ indirect connectivity between the proposal this SAC.	No
Wicklow Mountains SPA (Site Code: 004040)	<u>Wicklow Mountains SPA   National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</u>	Approx. 6.6m	No direct/ indirect connectivity between the proposal this SPA.	No
South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000210)	<u>South Dublin Bay SAC   National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</u>	Approx. 8.4km	No direct impacts/effects expected.  Indirect impacts/effects cannot be ruled out on a precautionary approach in relation to surface water run-off outfalling to River Dodder resulting in potential water quality deterioration in this SAC.	Yes
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary	<u>South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary</u>	Approx. 8.46km	No direct impacts/effects expected.	Yes

SPA (Site Code: 004042)	<u>SPA   National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</u>		Indirect impacts/effects cannot be ruled out on a precautionary approach in relation to surface water run-off outfalling to River Dodder resulting in potential water quality deterioration in this SPA.	
Knocksink Wood SAC (Site Code: 000725)	<u>Knocksink Wood SAC   National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</u>	Approx. 11.8km	No direct/ indirect connectivity between the proposal this SAC.	No
North Bull Island SPA (Site Code: 004006)	<u>North Bull Island SPA   National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</u>	Approx. 12.08km	No direct impacts/effects expected.  Indirect impacts/effects cannot be ruled out on a precautionary approach in relation to surface water run-off outfalling to River Dodder resulting in potential water quality deterioration in this SPA.	Yes
North Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000206)	<u>North Dublin Bay SAC   National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</u>	Approx. 12.1km	No direct impacts/effects expected.  Indirect impacts/effects cannot be ruled out on a precautionary approach in relation to surface water run-off outfalling to River Dodder resulting in potential water quality	Yes

			deterioration in this SAC.	
Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (Site Code: 001398)	<u>Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC   National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</u>	Approx. 13.33km	No direct/ indirect connectivity between the proposal this SAC.	No
Ballyman Glen SAC (Site Code: 000713)	<u>Ballyman Glen SAC   National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</u>	Approx. 14.3km	No direct/ indirect connectivity between the proposal this SAC.	No

**Step 3. Describe the likely effects of the project (if any, alone or in combination) on European Sites**

The proposed development is not located within a designated European Site but is in close proximity to South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000210); South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004042); North Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000206); and, North Bull Island SPA (Site Code: 004006) identified in *Step 2* above.

The applicant's Screening Assessment contained in the submitted report concludes that there is no potential for impacts on the QI habitats of the Glenasmole Valley SAC (Site Code: 001209); Wicklow Mountains SAC (Site Code: 002122); Wicklow Mountains SPA (Site Code: 004040); Knocksink Wood SAC (Site Code: 000725); Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (Site Code: 001398); and, Ballyman Glen SAC (Site Code: 000713) as there is no pathway for connectivity. I concur with the conclusions reached in this regard.

The applicant's screening assessment indicates that potential direct/indirect impacts generated by the construction and/or operational phases of the proposed development.

Sources of impact and likely significant effects are detailed in the table below:

**AA Screening Matrix**

Site name Qualifying interests	Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site*	
	Impacts	Effects
<b>Site 1: South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000210)</b>  Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide. Annual vegetation of drift lines.  Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand.	Deterioration of water quality of surface waters and ground waters from pollution.	The project is located on lands in proximity to the River Dodder which is hydrologically connected to the Natura 200 network.  There is potential for direct and indirect effects from pollution resulting in a deterioration in water quality and/or habitat degradation.

<p>Embryonic shifting dunes.</p>		<p>Potential release of silt, hydrocarbons and/or other chemicals during the construction and operational phases via spillage which may impact on water dependent habitats and species.</p> <p>There is potential for the development to result in water quality deterioration in the South Dublin Bay SAC.</p>
<p><b>Site 2: South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004042)</b></p> <p>Light-bellied Brent Goose (Branta bernicla hrota)</p> <p>Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus)</p> <p>Ringed Plover (Charadrius hiaticula)</p> <p>Grey Plover (Pluvialis squatarola)</p> <p>Knot (Calidris canutus)</p> <p>Sanderling (Calidris alba)</p> <p>Dunlin (Calidris alpina)</p> <p>Bar-tailed Godwit (Limosa lapponica)</p> <p>Redshank (Tringa totanus)</p> <p>Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus)</p>	<p>Deterioration of water quality of surface water and ground water from pollution.</p>	<p>The project is located on lands in proximity to the River Dodder which is hydrologically connected to the Natura 200 network.</p> <p>There is potential for direct and indirect effects from pollution resulting in a deterioration in water quality and/or habitat degradation.</p> <p>Potential release of silt, hydrocarbons and/or other chemicals during the construction and operational phases via spillage which may impact on water dependent habitats and species.</p> <p>There is potential for the development to result in water quality deterioration in the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.</p>

<p>Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>)</p> <p>Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)</p> <p>Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>)</p> <p>Wetland and Waterbirds</p>		
<p><b>Site 3: North Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000206)</b></p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>Annual vegetation of drift lines</p> <p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>)</p> <p>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)</p> <p>Embryonic shifting dunes</p> <p>Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)</p> <p>Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)</p>	<p>Deterioration of water quality of surface water and ground water from pollution.</p>	<p>The project is located on lands in proximity to the River Dodder which is hydrologically connected to the Natura 200 network.</p> <p>There is potential for direct and indirect effects from pollution resulting in a deterioration in water quality and/or habitat degradation.</p> <p>Potential release of silt, hydrocarbons and/or other chemicals during the construction and operational phases via spillage which may impact on water dependent habitats and species.</p> <p>There is potential for the development to result in water quality deterioration in the North Dublin Bay SAC.</p>

<p>Humid dune slacks</p> <p><i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort)</p>		
<p><b>Site 4: North Bull Island SPA (Site Code: 004006)</b></p> <p>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>)</p> <p>Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>)</p> <p>Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>)</p> <p>Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>)</p> <p>Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>)</p> <p>Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>)</p> <p>Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>)</p> <p>Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>)</p> <p>Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>)</p> <p>Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>)</p> <p>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>)</p> <p>Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>)</p> <p>Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>)</p> <p>Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>)</p>	<p>Deterioration of water quality of surface water and ground water from pollution.</p>	<p>The project is located on lands in proximity to the River Dodder which is hydrologically connected to the Natura 200 network.</p> <p>There is potential for direct and indirect effects from pollution resulting in a deterioration in water quality and/or habitat degradation.</p> <p>Potential release of silt, hydrocarbons and/or other chemicals during the construction and operational phases via spillage which may impact on water dependent habitats and species.</p> <p>There is potential for the development to result in water quality deterioration in the North Bull Island SPA.</p>

Redshank (Tringa totanus)		
Turnstone (Arenaria interpres)		
Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus)		
Wetland and Waterbirds		

**Step 4 Conclude if the proposed development could result in likely significant effects on a European site**

Based on the information provided with the appeal file, having conducted a site visit, having reviewed of the conservation objectives and supporting documents, I consider that in the absence of mitigation measures beyond best practice construction methods, the proposed development has the potential to result in significant effects on South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000210); South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004042); North Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000206); and, North Bull Island SPA (Site Code: 004006).

**Screening Determination**

In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of objective information provided by the applicant, I conclude that it is not possible to exclude that the proposed development alone, or in combination with other plans and projects, will give rise to significant effects on the South Dublin Bay SAC; South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, the North Bull Island SPA in view of the sites' conservation objectives. It is therefore determined that Appropriate Assessment is required.

This determination is based on:

- The nature and scale of the proposed works.
- The location of the appeal site in proximity to the River Dodder and the potential connectivity between the subject site and these European Sites.
- The nature and extent of the proposed mitigation measures, which may not be implemented in the absence of connectivity to a European Site.

## Appendix 4: Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Appropriate Assessment Determination

### Appropriate Assessment (ABP-321439-24)

The requirements of Article 6(3) as related to appropriate assessment of a project under part XAB, sections 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) are considered fully in this section.

Taking account of the preceding screening determination, the following is an appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposed development comprising a GAA Cluster Facility and all associated site works in view of the relevant conservation objectives of South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000210); South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004042); North Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000206); and, North Bull Island SPA (Site Code: 004006) based on scientific information provided by the applicant.

The information relied upon includes the following:

- Appropriate Assessment Screening & Natura Impact Statement (as updated) prepared by Enviroplan Consulting Limited; and,
- The other environmental/ecology reports and associated plans and particulars submitted with the application.

I am satisfied that the information provided is adequate to allow for Appropriate Assessment. It shall be noted that the proposed development was amended from its initial conception with revisions to the surface water management but that the applicant has provided an updated Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement which were considered by the Planning Authority at Further Information Stage. I am satisfied that all aspects of the project which could result in significant effects have been considered and assessed in the NIS and mitigation measures designed to avoid or reduce any adverse effects on site integrity can be reasonably assessed for effectiveness.

#### Submissions/Observations

- A referral response from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Nature Conservation) at planning application stage noted that the conclusions of the AA Screening Report and NIS that the proposed development would not be expected to have any adverse impacts on European sites and particularly on the North Bull Island SPA and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA could not be accepted as having been proven beyond doubt given the possibility of detrimental ex-situ effects on SCI/QI species which may be utilising the site. Therefore, Further Information was sought in respect of bats, wintering birds and breeding birds. The referral received in relation to Further Information recommended conditions with respect to bats and badgers. It was also concluded that it is unlikely Light-bellied Brent Goose or any other SCI species for the Dublin Bay SPAs utilise the development site for foraging.

- The Planning Authority's Screening for Appropriate Assessment noted the environmental documentation received with the application and the location of the site in the context of the Natura 2000 network. It was acknowledged that no direct impacts/effects are predicted during the construction or operational phases of development however, an existing storm culvert transects the site from the Tymon Park Ponds adjoining the site that tie-in with Wellington Lane. This culvert discharges into existing storm infrastructure outside the site which outfalls to the River Dodder. It is deemed that there is a weak hydrological connection between the application site and the Natura 2000 sites. Notwithstanding the conclusion of the NIS, the Planning Authority considered that additional mitigation and preventative measure in terms of microplastics and surface water. On foot of Further Information, the Planning Authority noted the receipt of an updated Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and an updated NIS insofar as it relates to the amended/revised proposal. The conclusion of the Planning Authority in this regard states *"it is considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect individually, or in-combination with other plans and projects, on the Natura 2000 network and appropriate assessment is not therefore required"*.
- An appeal received does not explicitly make reference to Appropriate Assessment but has stated that the serves as a critical link for bats, birds, foxes and badgers between Tymon Park and the Dodder Valley. The removal of trees/vegetation and proposed works (including floodlighting) will have a disastrous effect on local biodiversity.

**European Site**

**South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000210):**

**Summary of Key issues that could give rise to adverse effects:**

- (i) Water quality degradation (construction)
- (ii) Downstream Impacts

**See Section 6 of NIS**

<b>Qualifying Interest features likely to be affected</b>	<b>Conservation Objectives Targets and attributes</b>	<b>Potential adverse effects</b>	<b>Mitigation measures (summary) (Please see Section 6 of submitted NIS for full details of mitigation)</b>
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide in South Dublin Bay SAC	No direct impacts.  Potential for silt-laden surface water to exit the appeal site via existing culvert and enter the SAC via the River Dodder.	Erection of silt fences.  Placement of silt curtain at manholes  Installation of wheel wash at entry/exit point(s) of site during the construction phase to prevent
Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]	No conservation objectives published.		

Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]	No conservation objectives published.		sedimentation at Wellington Lane.
Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]	No conservation objectives published.		

**South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004042):**

**Summary of Key issues that could give rise to adverse effects:**

- (i) Water quality degradation (construction)
- (ii) Downstream Impacts

**See Section 6 of NIS**

<b>Qualifying Interest features likely to be affected</b>	<b>Conservation Objectives Targets and attributes</b>	<b>Potential adverse effects</b>	<b>Mitigation measures (summary)</b>
		No direct impacts.	
Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Light-bellied Brent Goose in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.	Potential for silt-laden surface water to exit the appeal site via existing culvert and enter the SPA via the River Dodder.	As outlined above – silt fences, silt curtains and wheel wash.
Oystercatcher ( <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Oystercatcher in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.	Proposed development could impact on Objectives I & II of this SPA which seek to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA	
Bar-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa lapponica</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Bar-tailed Godwit in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA		
Ringed Plover ( <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Ringed Plover in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.		

Grey Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> )	Grey Plover is proposed for removal from the list of Special Conservation Interests for South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA. As a result, a site-specific conservation objective has not been set for this species.		
Knot ( <i>Calidris canutus</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Knot in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.		
Sanderling ( <i>Calidris alba</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Sanderling in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.		
Dunlin ( <i>Calidris alpina</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Dunlin in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.		
Redshank ( <i>Tringa totanus</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Redshank in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.		
Black-headed Gull ( <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Black-headed Gull in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.		

Roseate Tern ( <i>Sterna dougallii</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Roseate Tern in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA,		
Common Tern ( <i>Sterna hirundo</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Common Tern in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.		
Arctic Tern ( <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Arctic Tern in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA.		
Wetland and Waterbirds	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat in South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA as a resource for the regularly occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it.		

**North Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000206):**  
**Summary of Key issues that could give rise to adverse effects:**  
 (i) Water quality degradation (construction)  
 (ii) Downstream Impacts  
 See Section 6 of NIS

<b>Qualifying Interest features likely to be affected</b>	<b>Conservation Objectives Targets and attributes</b>	<b>Potential adverse effects</b>	<b>Mitigation measures (summary)</b>
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater	No direct impacts.  Potential for silt-laden surface water to exit the appeal site via existing	As outlined above – silt fences, silt curtains and wheel wash.

	at low tide in North Dublin Bay SAC	culvert and enter the SAC via the River Dodder.
Annual vegetation of drift lines	To restore the favourable conservation condition of Annual vegetation of drift lines in North Dublin Bay SAC	
Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand	To restore the favourable conservation condition of Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand in North Dublin Bay SAC	
Atlantic salt meadows (Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Atlantic salt meadows (Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae) in North Dublin Bay SAC.	
Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) in North Dublin Bay SAC.	
Embryonic shifting dunes	To restore the favourable conservation condition of Embryonic shifting dunes in North Dublin Bay SAC.	
Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes)	To restore the favourable conservation condition of Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria ('white dunes') in North Dublin Bay SAC.	

Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)	To restore the favourable conservation condition of Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation ('grey dunes') in North Dublin Bay SAC		
Humid dune slacks	To restore the favourable conservation condition of Humid dune slacks in North Dublin Bay SAC.		
Petalophyllum ralfsii (Petalwort)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Petalwort in North Dublin Bay SAC.		

**North Bull Island SPA (Site Code: 004006):**

**Summary of Key issues that could give rise to adverse effects:**

- (i) Water quality degradation (construction)
- (ii) Downstream Impacts

**See Section 6 of NIS**

<b>Qualifying Interest features likely to be affected</b>	<b>Conservation Objectives Targets and attributes</b>	<b>Potential adverse effects</b>	<b>Mitigation measures (summary)</b>
Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Light-bellied Brent Goose in North Bull Island SPA.	No direct impacts.  Potential for silt-laden surface water to exit the appeal site via existing culvert and enter the SPA via the River Dodder.	As outlined above – silt fences, silt curtains and wheel wash.
Shelduck ( <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Shelduck in North Bull Island SPA.	Proposed development could impact on Objectives I & II of this SPA which seek to maintain the favourable	
Teal ( <i>Anas crecca</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Teal in North Bull Island SPA.		

Pintail ( <i>Anas acuta</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Pintail in North Bull Island SPA.	conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA
Shoveler ( <i>Anas clypeata</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Shoveler in North Bull Island SPA.	
Oystercatcher ( <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Oystercatcher in North Bull Island SPA.	
Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Golden Plover in North Bull Island SPA.	
Grey Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Grey Plover in North Bull Island SPA.	
Knot ( <i>Calidris canutus</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Knot in North Bull Island SPA.	
Sanderling ( <i>Calidris alba</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Sanderling in North Bull Island SPA.	
Dunlin ( <i>Calidris alpina</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Dunlin in North Bull Island SPA.	
Black-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa limosa</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Black-	

	tailed Godwit in North Bull Island SPA.		
Bar-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa lapponica</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Bar-tailed Godwit in North Bull Island SPA.		
Curlew ( <i>Numenius arquata</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Curlew in North Bull Island SPA.		
Redshank ( <i>Tringa totanus</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Redshank in North Bull Island SPA.		
Turnstone ( <i>Arenaria interpres</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Turnstone in North Bull Island SPA.		
Black-headed Gull ( <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> )	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Black-headed Gull in North Bull Island SPA.		
Wetland	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat in North Bull Island SPA.		

The above table is based on the documentation and information provided on the appeal file and I am satisfied that the submitted NIS has identified the relevant attributes and targets of the Qualifying Interests.

The mitigation measures are considered to be generally applicable in the protection of the above-named European Sites so as to ensure the conservation status of these habitats will remain unchanged.

I further note that the subject site, due to its setting, would be unlikely to result in significant impacts such as direct disturbance or damage to the habitat of the listed bird species but that measures in terms of construction works, noise/dust and emissions have been outlined as part of the mitigation measures in the NIS.

**Assessment of issues that could give rise to adverse effects view of conservation objectives of the abovenamed SACs and SPAs.**

**(i) Water quality degradation**

Water quality degradation could affect the habitats or species of the SACs and SPAs. A hydrological pathway exists between the development site and South Dublin Bay SAC ; South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA. The surface water network which is to discharge into the existing drainage network connects to the River Dodder which outflows to the River Liffey/ Dublin Bay. There is potential, in the absence of any mitigation, for surface waters run off containing pollutants such as silt to enter the abovementioned watercourse and the abovenamed European Sites during the construction and operational phases. This could arise from poor and/or inadequate management of site run-off could result in sediment and/or pollutants reaching the Qualifying Interest habitats within South Dublin Bay SAC; South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA.

**(ii) Downstream Impacts**

The proposed development is connected by way of a culvert to the River Dodder which outflows to South Dublin Bay SAC; South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA. Without the presence of mitigation measures, there is potential effects if quantities of pollution or silt entered the watercourse connecting these European Sites.

**Mitigation measures and conditions**

I note that the focus of proposed mitigation measures during construction phase are guided at preventing ingress of pollutants and silt into surface water on-site and the nearby receiving watercourse. The measures will be achieved via design, supervision by a project Ecologist, application of specific mitigation measures and monitoring effectiveness of said measures. Mitigation measures include the following:

- All works will be confined to the site.
- A silt curtain shall be placed in the last manhole (existing) before the culvert leaves the application site to the east to prevent any sedimentation that may have entered the culvert during the construction phase to discharge to the River Dodder. Another silt curtain shall be placed in the other existing manhole as an extra line of defence against potential silt laden surface water run-off that may enter the culvert during the construction phase.
- A silt fence shall be erected prior to any construction/groundwork/demolition and will remain in-situ for the construction phase.
- Wash water from on-site mixers/lorries shall be disposed of appropriately off-site.
- Water from excavations shall be pumped to land and allowed to settle, or passed through silt traps, before returning into the watercourse.
- Works with concrete shall be carried out during dry conditions for sufficient cure and concrete pouring to occur in contained areas.

- A project ecologist will to be appointed for duration of works to ensure that the mitigation measures are implemented and that best practice site management is adhered to.
- Soil excavation and stripping will not occur after periods of rainfall or storm warnings.
- Stockpiles of sand/soil/gravel will be stored on level terrain and covered during heavy rain to prohibit mobilisation of sediment and banks placed on the downstream side of stockpiles.
- No stockpiling or use of heavy machinery will occur in the area of the pond to avoid sediment this area of the exposed culvert.
- Any invasive species identified within the site shall be removed and treated by a licensed and trained specialist prior to construction works to prevent the spread of invasive species.
- Measures to suppress dust will include wheel-washing and road sweeping.
- No burning of materials.
- Fuelling will take place of site and spill kits for contaminants will be used. All petroleum products will be banded.
- Waste permits (where appropriate) will be provided to and retained by the supervising engineer for the completion of demolition / waste disposal file.
- Increased background noise will be unavoidable during demolition and construction however, machines will be turned off when not operational and noise will be dampened where possible.
- All personnel will be trained in good environmental practices.
- Systems will be constructed to collect, convey, treat, and attenuate the surface water runoff generated by the proposed development.
- To protect biodiversity and the landscape, vegetation disturbance will be kept to a minimum; trees, hedgerows, and green areas will be retained where possible.
- Care shall be taken when removing vegetation for mammals, such as hedgehogs, badgers, and foxes.
- During any felling and demolition works Special attention during tree felling/demolition for the potential presence of bats. If bats are discovered, said works shall halt immediately and advice will be sought from a bat worker or NPWS.
- Bat boxes will be placed and monitored within the application site (overseen by a qualified ecologist)
- Vegetation/tree clearance should not take place between 1st March and 31st August

At the operation phase, to ensure that the proposed development does not have any negative impact on bats in the area, ongoing monitoring will take place for three years from the commencement of the project by a licensed ecologist.

I note that there are a number of SuDS measures proposed as part of the scheme. I note the Planning Authority require details in relation to water drainage and I am of the view that surface water discharges have the potential to include hydrocarbons or sediment which would outfall from the site. That said, given the anticipated volumes of surface water-run off relative to the receiving environment and the associated potential for mixing, dilution and dispersion of any surface water run-off/ discharges in the receiving

River Dodder which flows to Dublin Bay, the effects on water quality from the operational phase of surface water discharge would not be significant.

I consider that there is no real likelihood of significant effects arising during the operational phase of the proposed development as a result of increased loading of foul waters as no capacity constraints have been identified by Irish Water.

It is my view that the above are best practice standard construction management and surface water management measures which have not been designed or intended to avoid or reduce any harmful effects of the project on a European Site. The measures are otherwise incorporated into the applicant's submitted reports including the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) and other elements of the documentation/drawings submitted with the file, and I do not consider that they include any specific measures that would be uncommon for a project of this nature.

I am also satisfied that preventative measures are aimed at interrupting the source-pathway-receptor are targeted at key threats to qualifying interests of South Dublin Bay SAC; South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA. Moreover, by arresting these pathways or reducing possible effects to a non-significant level, adverse effects can be prevented.

### **In-combination effects**

In terms of combination/cumulative effects of the proposed development with other known plans or developments in the vicinity of the site, I note the applications referred to by the applicant in the NIS and I have conducted a search on the South Dublin County Council planning website for other developments in the vicinity of the proposed development. It is my view that it is unlikely that there will be cumulative impacts or an in-combination effect on South Dublin Bay SAC; South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA as a result of the developments.

I am satisfied that in-combination effects have been assessed adequately in the NIS. Moreover, I am of the view that the applicant has demonstrated satisfactorily that no significant residual effects will remain post the application of mitigation measures and there is therefore no potential for in-combination effects.

### **Findings and conclusions**

The applicant determined that following the implementation of mitigation measures, the construction and operation of the proposed development alone, or in combination with other plans and projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of the above-mentioned European sites.

Based on the information provided with the appeal file, I am satisfied that adverse effects arising from aspects of the proposed development can be excluded for the European sites considered in the Appropriate Assessment. No direct impacts are predicted. Indirect impacts would be temporary in nature and mitigation measures are described to prevent

ingress of silt laden surface water to the drainage network out falling to the nearby watercourse. Monitoring measures are also proposed to ensure compliance and effective management of measures. I am satisfied that the mitigation measures proposed to prevent adverse effects have been assessed as effective and can be implemented.

### **Reasonable scientific doubt**

I am satisfied that no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of adverse effects.

### **Site Integrity**

The proposed development will not affect the attainment of the Conservation objectives of South Dublin Bay SAC; South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA. Adverse effects on site integrity can be excluded and no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects.

### **Appropriate Assessment Conclusion: Integrity Test**

In screening the need for Appropriate Assessment, it was determined that the proposed development could result in significant effects on South Dublin Bay SAC; South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA in view of the conservation objectives of those sites and that Appropriate Assessment under the provisions of S177U/ 177AE was required.

Following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the NIS, all associated material submitted and taking into account any observations/submissions received, I consider that adverse effects on site integrity of South Dublin Bay SAC; South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA can be excluded in view of the conservation objectives of these sites and that no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects. My conclusion is based on the following:

- Detailed assessment of construction and operational impacts.
- The proposed development will not affect the attainment of conservation objectives for South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000210); South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; North Dublin Bay SAC; and, North Bull Island SPA or prevent or delay the restoration of favourable conservation condition of species.
- Effectiveness of mitigation measures proposed.
- Application of planning condition in respect of the implementation of all mitigation measures set out in the NIS in the event of a grant of permission.

## Appendix 5: Water Framework Directive Screening and Assessment

WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING			
Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality			
<b>An Bord Pleanála Ref. No.</b>	321439	<b>Townland, address</b>	Townlands of Tymon North And Templeogue, Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre, Templeogue, Dublin 6W, D6W PY06
<b>Description of project</b>		Development of a new GAA Cluster Facility	
<b>Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening</b>		<p>The site is located within lands at Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre in Templeogue, Dublin 6W. The lands are zoned Open Space – ‘OS’ and Local Centre – ‘LC’ in the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The subject site is situated to the north of the Tallaght Road (R-137/N-81); to the east, southeast and south of Tymon Park and Faughs GAA club; and, to the west of Wellington Lane. The existing site contains a former pitch &amp; putt course and driving range and so the majority of the site is grassed and contains trees and other vegetation. Part of the site also includes a recently developed GAA pitch (grassed only) along with a driving range structure, indoor soccer pitch and a portion of a 5-a-side pitch in the Spawell Golf and Leisure Centre complex. The topography is generally flat with established tree/hedge planting to the eastern, northern and western boundaries. The subject site is approximately 280 metres north of the River Dodder, the nearest designated watercourse (Dodder_040). This surface waterbody is classified as being ‘At Risk’. The applicant notes a weak hydrological connection to this watercourse by way of existing pipe/culverts. The Dodder flows in a northeasterly direction through the built-up area of Dublin City’s southside before entering the River Liffey adjacent to Dublin Bay. The site is therefore approximately 8.5km from South Dublin Bay SAC and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, and approximately 12.1km from the North Dublin Bay SAC and, North Bull Island SPA (which are not the nearest European Sites in terms of distance but have a hydrological connection). The bedrock aquifer category is stated as being ‘Locally Important’ and is indicated as having a ‘Low’ groundwater vulnerability in this area. The underlying ground waterbody is the ‘Dublin’ waterbody and is indicated as being under Review.</p>	

<b>Proposed surface water details</b>	<p>Surface water will be managed by way of SUDs measures which include attenuation measures below pitches, permeable paving, tree pits, detention basins, retention ponds, strips/trenches and swales.</p> <p>The purpose of SuDs measures is essentially to mimic natural drainage, which is reduced due to the introduction of man-made surfaces such as buildings and footpaths/roads. Therefore, SuDs measures aim to assist with the slowing down of run-off which in turn reduces the potential for flooding and to also improve the water quality of surface waters and storm water run-off in line with the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>I note the Planning Authority raised concern in relation to attenuation calculations, capacity and detail/specifications; however, it was considered that these matters could be addressed by way of condition.</p>
<b>Proposed water supply source &amp; available capacity</b>	Mains water connection. Uisce Eireann has provided a report indicating no objection to the proposal (subject to the applicant entering into a water connection agreement). No capacity issues are identified, and no upgrade works are required.
<b>Proposed wastewater treatment system &amp; available capacity, other issues</b>	New connection to public sewer. Uisce Eireann provided a report stating not objection to the proposal (subject to entering into a wastewater connection agreement). No capacity constraints are indicated.
<b>Others?</b>	The site is not within a Flood Zone.

**Step 2: Identification of relevant water bodies and Step 3: S-P-R connection**

<b>Identified water body</b>	<b>Distance to (m)</b>	<b>Water body name(s) (code)</b>	<b>WFD Status</b>	<b>Risk of not achieving WFD Objective e.g. at risk, review, not at risk</b>	<b>Identified pressures on that water body</b>	<b>Pathway linkage to water feature (e.g. surface run-off, drainage, groundwater)</b>
River Waterbody	270m to the south	Dodder_040	At Risk	At Risk	Urban Run-Off; Diffuse Sources Run-Off	Yes – surface water discharge from appeal site
Groundwater Waterbody	Underlying site	Dublin IE_EA_G_008	Review	Review	Not Specified for location	Potential run-off from the surface water drainage into the ground.

**Step 4: Detailed description of any component of the development or activity that may cause a risk of not achieving the WFD Objectives having regard to the S-P-R linkage.**

**CONSTRUCTION PHASE**

No.	Component	Waterbody receptor (EPA Code)	Pathway (existing and new)	Potential for impact/ what is the possible impact	Screening Stage Mitigation Measure*	Residual Risk (yes/no) Detail	<b>Determination** to proceed to Stage 2. Is there a risk to the water environment? (if 'screened' in or 'uncertain' proceed to Stage 2.</b>
1.	Surface	Dodder_040	Existing piping/culverts from site which connect to River Dodder.	Run-off during site preparation works and construction.  This could result in a deterioration of surface water quality from pollution.	Mitigation proposed in NIS submitted with application.  Standard Construction Measures / Conditions	No. Having regard to the nature of the development and the requirement for appropriate construction management measures, I am satisfied that there would be no significant risk to this waterbody.	Screened out.
2.	Ground	Dublin	Pathway exists via drainage to soil/ground.	Spillages/Run Off which could reduce groundwater quality.	As above.	No	Screened out.

OPERATIONAL PHASE							
3.	Surface	Dodder_040	Surface water will be directed through on-site drainage measures before discharging to existing drainage network off-site.	Spillages. Failure of drainage and SUDS features.	Mitigation as proposed in the NIS submitted.  Standard Construction Measures / Conditions for the SUDS	No. I am satisfied that surface water drainage could be adequately managed on site and that there will be no significant pollution risks to surface waterbodies.	Screened out.
4.	Ground	Dublin	Pathway exists via drainage to ground	As above.	As above.	No	Screened out.
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE							
5.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A