

# / Abbotstown Sports Campus Study /



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# / Abbotstown Sports Campus Study /



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## Executive Summary

Objective No. 335 of the Fingal County Council Development Plan 2005-2011, which relates to the Abbotstown lands states the following:

*‘To undertake a study to determine a suitable mix of sporting and appropriate commercial, leisure and amenity uses in order to create a vibrant and sustainable sports campus. This study shall also investigate the possibility of opening up these lands for recreation use for the residents of the Greater Blanchardstown Area’.*

The Council’s decision to initiate a Study of these lands was taken in the context of the decision of Government to allocate a Capital amount of €119m for the development of the site at Abbotstown as a centre for sports. In November 2005 the Government approved the commencement of the development of Phase One of a National Sports Campus as set out in the Development Control Plan<sup>1</sup> prepared by Campus and Stadium Ireland Development Ltd (CSID). The DCP informed this Study’s consideration of the proposals for sports uses and their accompanying facilities.

On 1 January 2007 CSID was succeeded in role and function by the National Sports Campus Development Authority (NSCDA).

This Study was carried out under the direction of a Study Steering Group comprising OPW, the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, the Department of Finance, the Department of Agriculture & Food, NSCDA and Fingal County Council.

The lands on which it is intended to develop the National Sports Campus site are located in the townland of Abbotstown, approximately 1.5 km north-east of Blanchardstown Town Centre. The subject lands comprise approximately 477 acres of mainly open farmland which slopes gently from north to south, and which formerly accommodated the State Laboratory, Marine Institute and the Department of Agriculture and Food Laboratories and Farm.

The subject lands are bound to the north by the Ballycoolin Road, to the east by the M50 motorway, to the south-east by the lands of the Tolka Valley, to the south-west by the lands of the Connolly Hospital and to the west by the Snugborough Road.

Abbotstown House is situated in the centre of the subject lands, to the south of the main spine avenue. Abbotstown House comprises a two-storey house, added to at various times, but of predominantly early to mid-nineteenth century construction. The house is a Protected Structure under the Fingal Development Plan 2005-2011.

The Tolka River Valley is located to the south of the subject lands. Map-based local objective No. 327 of the Fingal Development Plan 2005-2011, provides for the development of a linear park along the Tolka River Valley at this location.

A publicly advertised call for submissions by Fingal County Council made at the outset of the Study process elicited 11 submissions. The principal issues raised were:

- Minority Sports Activities;
- Community access to facilities;
- Provision of a minor stadium facility;
- Transportation and access to the site;
- Protection of Abbotstown House;
- The provision of a Public Park;
- Opposition to the provision of any future Housing Development on the site;
- Miscellaneous land use requests including:
  - The extension of the Abbotstown graveyard;
  - School site reservation at Waterville;
  - Expanded site for St. Francis Hospice;
  - Science and technology centre/museum;
  - Outdoor events area for carnivals, circus, etc...

In relation to the treatment of the site, it is an objective of this Study to:

- Preserve and enhance existing amenity and woodland and ecological habitats on site for future use;
- Respect the Protected Structure designation of Abbotstown House and its curtilage;
- Direct future development away from sensitive areas from their designation in that respect; as ecologically and historically sensitive and due to factors of visual amenity;
- Direct development to those parts of the site which can readily absorb new structures.

The Planning Study supports the following key elements of a sustainable Sports Campus facility for the development of facilities and training areas for both professional (rugby and soccer) and amateur (Gaelic football, hurling and hockey) field games by providing:

- Facilities and pitches suitable for a wide range of sports and services that would be generally available for national sports bodies;
- A professional and amateur training area, proposed to be centred on a complex of buildings with associated pitches close-by;
- A central building complex with living accommodation, restaurant, fitness training, gym, sports medical and recovery areas;
- A cluster of changing/training facilities and pitches proposed in dedicated areas and catering for field sports;
- A range of pitches both natural turf and synthetic of which a number will be floodlit;
- A multi-functional National Indoor Training Centre which will provide world class facilities for indoor sports. It is intended that these facilities would be available to sports organisations, clubs and members of the public when not in use by the National Governing Bodies of Sport;
- Public all-weather floodlit synthetic pitches for general use.

The current zoning status of the lands in the Fingal County Development Plan 2005 is Objective ‘RU’ (Agricultural) and this zoning does not allow for any of the above uses. Therefore, in order to support the development of a

<sup>1</sup>The NSCDA Development Control Plan is available to view at [www.nscda.ie](http://www.nscda.ie)

sustainable Sports Campus at Abbotstown it is proposed that the County Development Plan be varied to provide for the majority of the lands to be zoned 'Open Space' appropriate to the variety of land uses associated with the optimum development of the sports facilities as per this Study.

The following land use/activities are proposed within the Abbotstown Sports Campus site (see figure 3.4 Landuse/Activity Map):

- Parkland and natural historic landscape zone;
- Abbotstown House and curtilage zone;
- Active Recreation Use zone;
- National Aquatic Centre zone;
- Core Sports Buildings and Ancillary uses zone;
- Future Phase zone.

The land use zones identified above will be simplified into a single recreational zoning which will allow for the land use activities identified above.

The Land Use/Activity Map also indicates the approximate location of the site of a hospice as provided for in the Government decision.

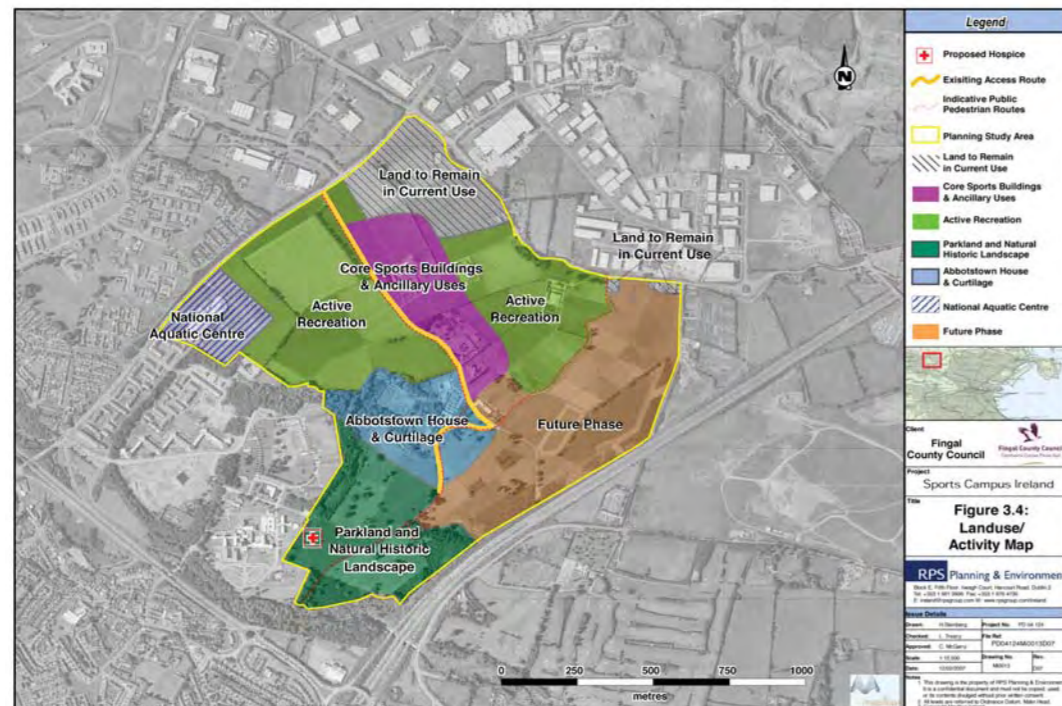
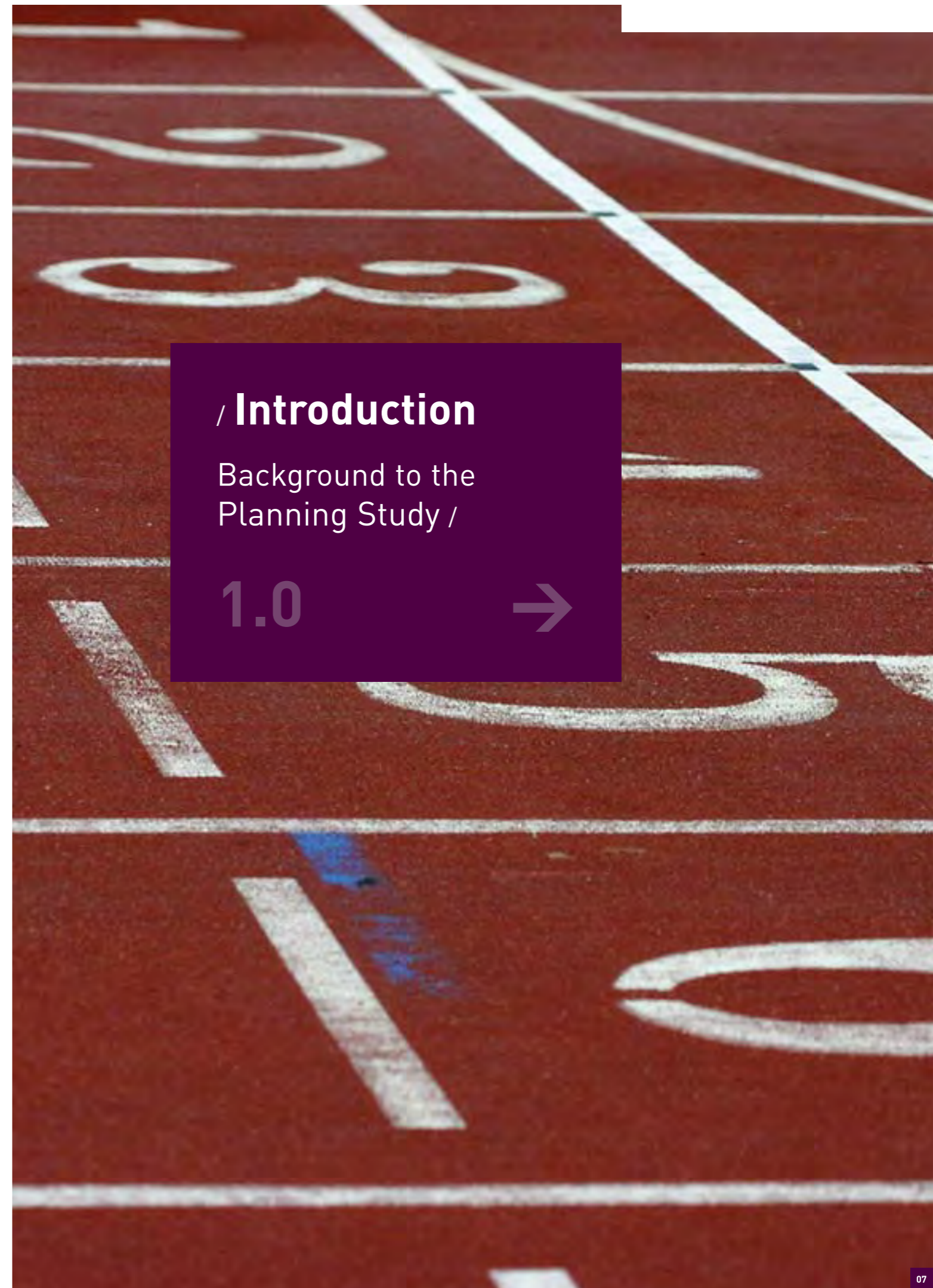


Figure 3.4 - Landuse/Activity Map



**/ Introduction**  
 Background to the  
 Planning Study /  
 1.0 →



- 1.1 This Planning Study aims to deliver on objective No. 335 of the Fingal Development Plan 2005- 2011, relating to the Abbotstown lands and which states the following:

*'To undertake a study to determine a suitable mix of sporting and appropriate commercial, leisure and amenity uses in order to create a vibrant and sustainable sports campus. This study shall also investigate the possibility of opening up these lands for recreation use for the residents of the Greater Blanchardstown Area'.*

- 1.2 The context of this statutory Development Plan objective is the progress made by the National Sports Campus Development Authority (NSCDA) to provide for the development of a National Sports Campus on these lands. This has particular regard to the production of a Development Control Plan for the lands in 2004, and the subsequent decision of the Government in 2005 to commence Phase 1 of the National Sports Campus (as per the Development Control Plan).
- 1.3 The National Sports Campus Development Authority Act was enacted in June 2006. The Act provides for the establishment of the National Sports Campus Development Authority (NSCDA), which succeeds in function and responsibility Campus and Stadium Ireland Development Limited (CSID), and continues the role of overseeing, planning and developing a National Sports Campus at Abbotstown. The NSCDA came into being with effect from 1 January 2007.

#### **Phase 1 of the Sports Campus**

- 1.4 This Phase of the National Sports Campus provides for the development of facilities and training areas for both professional (rugby and soccer) and amateur (Gaelic football, hurling and hockey) field games.
- 1.5 The professional and amateur training area proposed will be centred on a core building complex with associated pitches close-by. The central building will provide living accommodation, restaurant, fitness training, gym, sports medical and recovery areas. Clustered around this building, changing/training facilities and pitches are proposed in three dedicated areas to cater for the field sports. A range of pitches will be provided - there will be natural turf and synthetic pitches, and a number will be floodlit.
- 1.6 In the amateur sports zone, a multi-functional National Indoor Training Centre is proposed. It will have changing facilities, a sports hall with 1,500 spectator seats as well as an ancillary hall suitable for a wide range of indoor sports. This will provide specialist facilities for the National Governing Bodies of Sport as well as being available for use by the general public when not in use by the National Governing Bodies of Sport. Adjacent to this area there will be public all-weather floodlit synthetic pitches for general use.

#### **The Consultation Process**

- 1.7 Fingal County Council published a Notice in the national newspapers on 17th May 2006 informing the public

of its intention to prepare this Planning Study. This Notice invited interested parties to make submissions on the future development and use of these lands in order to inform the preparation of the Planning Study. A total of 11 submissions were received in this regard. These submissions have been taken into consideration in the preparation of the Planning Study and are reflected in its content, strategy and objectives.

A copy of the public Notice is included in Appendix 1 of this Planning Study, together with a list of the submissions which were received by Fingal County Council and a summary of the issues raised.

#### Structure of the Planning Study

- 1.8 Following on from the Introduction at 1.0, Section 2.0 of the Planning Study outlines the Planning context for the subject lands while Section 3.0 sets out the site context. Section 4.0 details the nature of what is proposed as part of the Phase 1 development of the site. The site analysis is detailed in Section 5.0. Public/community access to both the lands in general and to the sporting facilities which will be provided on the site as part of Phase 1 is detailed in Section 6.0.

#### The Study Team

- 1.9 This Planning Study has been prepared under the guidance of a Steering Group, comprised of representatives from OPW, the Departments of Arts, Sports & Tourism (DAST), Finance and Agriculture & Food, Fingal County Council, CSID/NSCDA, and RPS Planning and Environment (assisted by Clifton Scannel Emerson, Traffic Consultants). The Steering Group was chaired by OPW Commissioner Clare McGrath.



## / Planning Context

Strategic Planning  
Context /

2.0





- 2.1 The National Spatial Strategy is a twenty year Planning framework with the aim of achieving a greater balance of social, economic and physical development and population growth between regions, resulting in an improved quality of life for the island's inhabitants, a strong competitive economic position and a high quality environment.
- 2.2 The Regional Planning Guidelines provide a long-term strategic Planning framework for the development of the Greater Dublin Area over a 12-year period.
- 2.3 These documents do not specifically refer to the provision of a Sports Campus at this location. However, the subject lands are located within the Metropolitan area as identified in these documents and are easily accessible within the Greater Dublin area and to the rest of the country due to the proximity of the lands to national transport infrastructure such as the M50 and Dublin Airport. In addition, provision for a number of Metro West stations at Abbotstown has been included in the recently published discussion documentation on the suggested routes for the Metro West rail development.

#### Fingal Development Plan 2005-2011

- 2.4 The statutory Development Plan for the subject lands is the Fingal Development Plan 2005-2011. The subject lands are identified on the relevant land use zoning map as an 'Urban Centre Strategy/Study Area'.
- 2.5 Development Plan Objective No. 335 relates specifically to the subject site and states the following:
- 'To undertake a study to determine a suitable mix of sporting and appropriate commercial, leisure and amenity uses in order to create a vibrant and sustainable sports campus. This study shall also investigate the possibility of opening up these lands for recreation use for the residents of the Greater Blanchardstown Area'.***
- 2.6 The purpose of this Planning Study is to deliver on this Objective.

#### Zoning

- 2.7 The current zoning for the subject site under the 2005 Development Plan is 'RU' - Rural and Agriculture, which has the land use zoning Objective, 'to protect and provide for the development of agriculture and rural amenity'. See Fig. 2.1 for zoning details.
- 2.8 The stated vision for this land use zoning is as follows:
- 'This zoning Objective seeks to protect the agricultural areas of the county by ensuring that all new development is functionally related to agriculture and horticulture and to protecting the role and operational needs of agriculture and horticulture; while also seeking to preserve the rural amenity through ensuring new developments fit into the landscape sensitively'.***



- 2.9 It is the intention of the Planning Study to facilitate the re-zoning of the lands from 'RU' - Rural and Agriculture, to a more appropriate open space zoning with specific Local Objectives related to the development of a National Sports Campus.

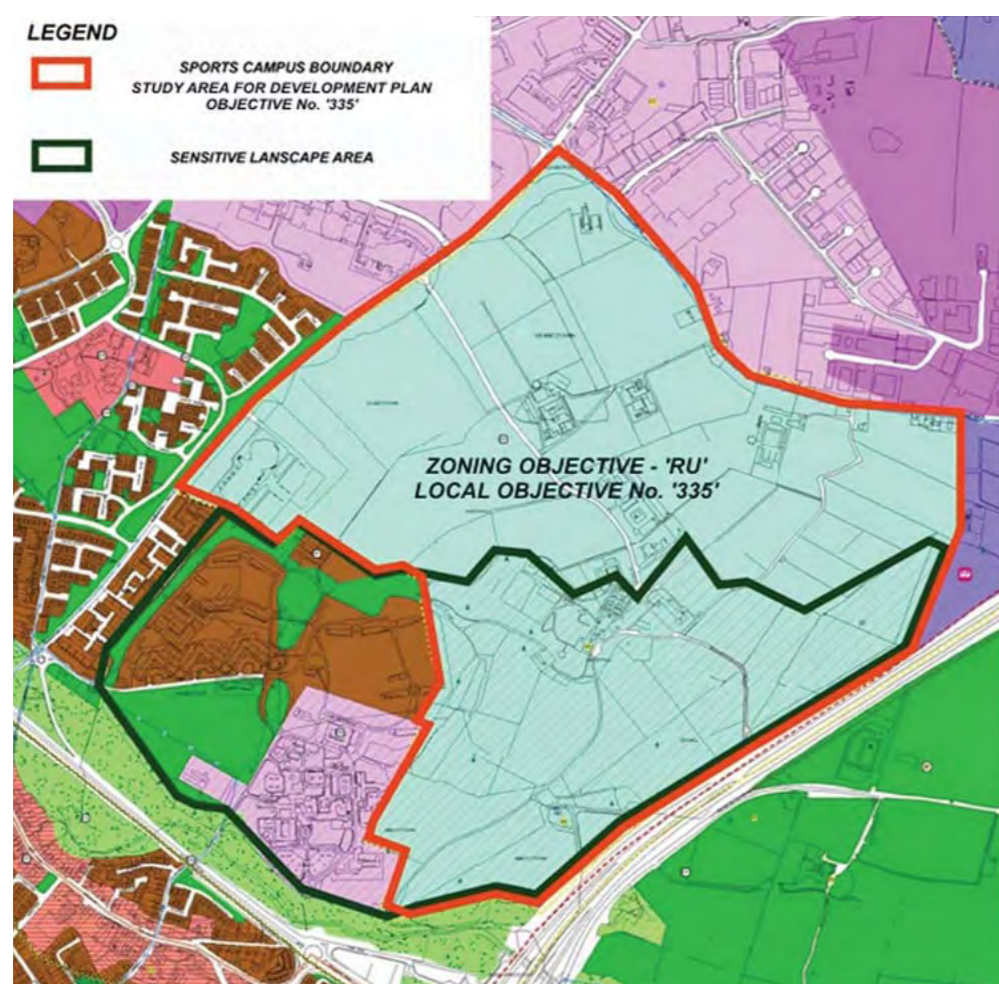


Fig. 2.1 - Land Use Zoning Map (Fingal County Development Plan 2005-2011)

#### Location of Leisure and Recreational Facilities

- 2.10 The 2005 Development Plan provides general guidelines for the development of recreational facilities. The link between tourism and economic benefits to Fingal County is recognised along with the need to ensure such development occurs in a sustainable manner. This is illustrated in policy objective GBP5

which states the following:

*'To harness the economic benefits of the leisure and tourism industry through sustainable means, including the conservation and protection of the built and natural heritage, the protection and enhancement of sensitive landscapes, and cultural and community environments, and the minimisation of any adverse impacts of leisure and tourism infrastructure provision.'*

#### Provision of Public Transport and Public Road Access

- 2.11 The Development Plan emphasises the importance of the integration of transportation and land use (transportation policies TP2 and TP6). Development schemes which facilitate the provision of local bus services and which support the use of public transport are encouraged (Transportation Policy TP 10 and TP 11).
- 2.12 Provision for a number of Metro West Stations at Abbotstown has been included in the recently published discussion documentation on the suggested routes for the Metro West rail development.
- 2.13 The Abbotstown lands are located adjacent to two Quality Bus Corridors (QBCs) as follows:
- QBC Snugborough Road
  - QBC Blanchardstown Road North & South
- 2.14 Policies regarding the integration of different modes of transport, the provision of park and ride facilities and inter-modal change between rail and bus within Blanchardstown Town Centre (and the provision of Metro West as identified under the provisions of Transport 21) will potentially enhance the transport context of the subject lands. The relevant transportation objectives, in this regard, are as follows:
- T011 - To secure the development of new Quality Bus Corridors and the extension and improvement of bus corridors.
- T012 - To provide bus priority measures on existing and planned road infrastructure where appropriate.
- T013 - To facilitate the provision of local bus services in Blanchardstown, Swords and Balbriggan and in other urban areas where appropriate.
- T014 - To facilitate the provision of feeder bus services to rail stations.
- T015 - To promote and facilitate the development of Public Transport Interchanges at Blanchardstown Centre, Porterstown, Swords, Howth Junction, Baldoyle and Balbriggan and at other locations which may be identified during the lifetime of the Plan.

#### Local Road Network and Public Road Access

**2.15** Table 6.1 of the 2005 Development Plan outlines proposed road construction and improvement measures. Those of direct relevance to the subject lands are as follows:

- Ballycoolin / Snugborough Road Junction Improvement
- Ballycoolin Road Realignment
- N2-N3 Link Ballycoolin Road to Cherryhound (N2)

#### Natural Environment Protection

**2.16** The southern part of the subject site adjacent to the Tolka Valley is designated as a Sensitive Landscape Area under the provisions of the 2005 Development Plan. The Tolka River Valley and its surroundings are distinguished as Landscape Group 15. The Valley is also protected as a habitat for natural species and for its landscape values.

**2.17** Policy HP45 is of relevance to the sensitive landscape area on the southern portion of the site and states the following:

***'To protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character, and to ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management, when undertaking, approving or authorising development'.***

**2.18** Objective H043 is also of relevance to the subject lands as follows:

***'To ensure that when undertaking, approving or authorising development that sufficient information is provided to enable an assessment of impacts to be made on habitats and biodiversity including woodlands, trees and hedgerows'.***

**2.19** There are no sites of national or international importance within the subject area.

#### Cultural Heritage

**2.20** A review of the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) of the 2005 Development Plan indicates that there are two Protected Structures located on the subject lands. The details of these Protected Structures are as follows:

- Abbotstown House/Demesne - RPS No: 683
- Church ruins and graveyard - RPS No: 684

**2.21** It is policy of Fingal County Council to protect all Structures within the RPS (Policy HP 9). Development proposals which impact on these Structures, their curtilage and their attendant grounds must be carefully considered.

**2.22** It is also the objective of the County Council to assess existing demesnes within Fingal County and to protect their built and natural environment, while allowing for re-use. (Objective H021).

#### **Existing/Future Transportation Network**

**2.23** The following Section outlines key infrastructural developments in the area of the Abbotstown lands.

#### **Major Road Infrastructure (Ref. Map 06\_070-010)**

##### **M50 Upgrade**

**2.24** The M50 Upgrade PPP Contract is intended to comprise the design, construction, operation, maintenance and financing of the upgrade of approximately 24 km of the existing two lane carriage-way to three lane standard, the provision of auxiliary lanes between the M1 and N3 junction and between the N7 and Scholarstown junctions, the major upgrade of the junctions at the M1, N2 and N3 from their current grade separated junction type to partially free/free flow interchanges; and upgrade works to the junctions at Ballymun, Ballymount, the N81, Scholarstown and Sandyford. This scheme was approved by An Bord Pleanála in May 2005. Construction work commenced in January 2007 with an expected completion date of 2010.

##### **M2**

**2.25** The N2 Ashbourne Bypass/M50 junction involved the construction of approximately 3.5 km of a new dual three-lane carriageway with hard shoulder from the M50 to Cherryhound, approximately 15km of a new dual two-lane carriageway to the north of Abbotstown. The scheme also includes 16 bridge structures, two grade separated interchanges, four at-grade roundabouts and approximately 6 km of minor road works. Following its completion, this scheme was officially opened on 25th May 2006.

##### **N2-N3 Link Road**

**2.26** The M2 scheme also involves the construction of an interchange at Cherryhound to the north of the Abbotstown lands. Fingal County Council is proposing a dual link carriageway from the Cherryhound Interchange, which, when complete will significantly improve access to Abbotstown from the M2 corridor. This link will extend to Tyrellstown and the route selection for this link has been finalised with an EIS being prepared. It is hoped that Planning Permission for the route will be obtained in 2007 and construction will commence in late 2007.

**2.27** The N2 - N3 link road consists of the construction of two main sections of road together with the use of some existing roads. The first new section of road consists of the construction of a dual carriageway from Cherryhound to Tyrellstown. This section of the route is expected to be completed by the end of 2008. The second section consists of a single carriageway from Damastown to Cruisreath, which is on site and is expected to be completed by Autumn 2007.

### Ballycoolin/Cappagh Road Realignment Scheme

- 2.28** The scheme provides for the upgrade and realignment of both Ballycoolin Road and Cappagh Road to provide a 10.5 metre carriageway (facilitating bus lanes), cycle lanes, footpaths, new services and public lighting is at tender stage. The Ballycoolin Road realignment and the Cappagh Road realignment will be constructed under the one contract in two separate phases. Construction work is anticipated to commence in early 2007.
- 2.29** The scheme provides for a new 60-metre inscribed circle diameter (ICD) high capacity roundabout access from Ballycoolin Road to the northeast corner of the Abbotstown lands. The scheme also includes the upgrade of the distribution watermain and other services in the area, which will facilitate the National Sports Campus.

### Snugborough Road

- 2.30** The Snugborough Road, which runs along the northwestern boundary of the subject site, is currently connected to the N3 via the Snugborough Interchange and will be connected to the N2 via the Ballycoolin Road and the Tyrellstown to Cherryhound dual carriageway. A QBC scheme on the Snugborough Road has recently been completed by Fingal County Council providing bus lane connections to the QBC on the N3.

### Connolly Hospital N3 Access

- 2.31** Connolly Hospital will have direct access to the N3 via a proposed new entrance and bridge over the River Tolka positioned at River Road. The construction of this new access route is expected to commence in 2007.

### Rail

#### Metro West

- 2.32** Metro West Phase 4 from Blanchardstown to Ballymun has an expected completion date of 2014. Two possible route options have been proposed (see drawing 06\_070/110). The RPA is currently in the route assessment stage of the Planning process. A final decision on the selected route is expected to be made by An Bord Pleanála in late 2008.
- 2.33** Both of the proposed route options would run along Ballycoolin Road. Route Option 1 will turn southwest off Ballycoolin Road at the entrance to IDA Ballycoolin Business Park and run along Snugborough Road, while Route Option 2 would run along Ballycoolin Road up to the Ballycoolin

Roundabout where it would turn southwest onto Blanchardstown Road North. If Route Option 1 is chosen then it is proposed to provide a Metro stop in close proximity to the National Aquatic Centre and the National Sports Campus.

#### Maynooth Line Upgrade

- 2.34** The capacity of the Maynooth Line was increased in December 2005 with the provision of increased services during the morning peak (inbound) and the evening peak (outbound). As a result of these improvements, the capacity on this Line has been increased by an additional 2,000 passengers in each direction during peak hours i.e. between 07.30-09.30 and 16.30-18.30.
- 2.35** In advance of the provision of the inter-connector between the Docklands and Heuston Station, a new station will be provided in the Docklands, which will be operational in 2007. This station will serve the Maynooth Line exclusively and will provide additional services.
- 2.36** The provision of the inter-connector between the Docklands and Heuston station, for which design and planning works are currently ongoing, will result in increased services on the Maynooth Line. The inter-connector is expected to be delivered by 2015. As part of this programme the Maynooth Line will be electrified, resulting in a DART type frequency of service with trains running every ten minutes during peak times and every 15-20 minutes at other times.
- 2.37** Bus facilities linking the Maynooth Line stations to Abbotstown could be provided. A local commuter bus service should be provided in the Blanchardstown catchment, which would include linkage between the Maynooth Line and the Abbotstown lands. The future Metro will interchange with the Maynooth Line at a new station at Porterstown.

#### Department of Transport Investment Programme - Transport 21

- 2.38** Transport 21 outlines proposals for an integrated transport system for Dublin with a budget of €34.4 billion, which provides for seven new LUAS projects, two Metro lines with a link to Dublin airport, and an underground station at St. Stephen's Green integrating all services and the Western Rail Corridor.
- 2.39** Metro West from Tallaght to Dublin Airport has an expected completion date of 2014. The route selection process for Metro West is well advanced and two route options are currently in public consultation phase by the RPA. Both options would serve the perimeter of the National Sports Campus site at the Ballycoolin Road frontage and/or the Snugborough Road frontage. This future infrastructure will greatly improve the public transport available to the Campus and vastly enhance accessibility.



**LEGEND:**

AREA BOUNDARY	
METRO OPTION 1	
METRO OPTION 2	
METRO SUB OPTION	
EXISTING ROADS	
PROPOSED ROADS	

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Author:			
Client:	FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL		
Project:	ABBOTSTOWN FARM		
Drawn:	OVERALL ROAD NETWORK		
Checked:	DA	Date:	23-JAN-07
Drawn by:	PL	Scale:	NTS
Drawn No.:	06_070_110		

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Map 06\_070-010



**/ Site Context**

Character of Adjacent  
Lands /

3.0





- 3.1 The lands encompassing the National Sports Campus site are located in the townland of Abbotstown, in the administrative area of Fingal County Council. Substantial new urban development has occurred within the vicinity of the subject lands including commercial, industrial and residential.
- 3.2 The subject lands are bound to the north by the Ballycoolin Road. The Rosemount Business Park is located north of the subject lands and is accessed off the Ballycoolin Road. The M50 motorway runs along the south-eastern boundary of the subject lands. The Tolka River Valley and Connolly Hospital are located to the south and south-west respectively. Map based local objective No., 327 of the Fingal Development Plan 2005 provides for the development of a linear park along the Tolka River Valley at this location. Access to the site is currently via the Snugborough Road which extends along the length of the western site boundary. The National Aquatic Centre, which forms an integral part of the development of the National Sports Campus at this location, is located adjacent and south-west of the subject lands on the eastern side of the Snugborough Road. Substantial residential development has occurred on the western side of the Snugborough Road at Corduff. There is also an area of residential development adjacent to Connolly Hospital on the eastern side of the Snugborough Road. See site context map (Fig. 3.1).

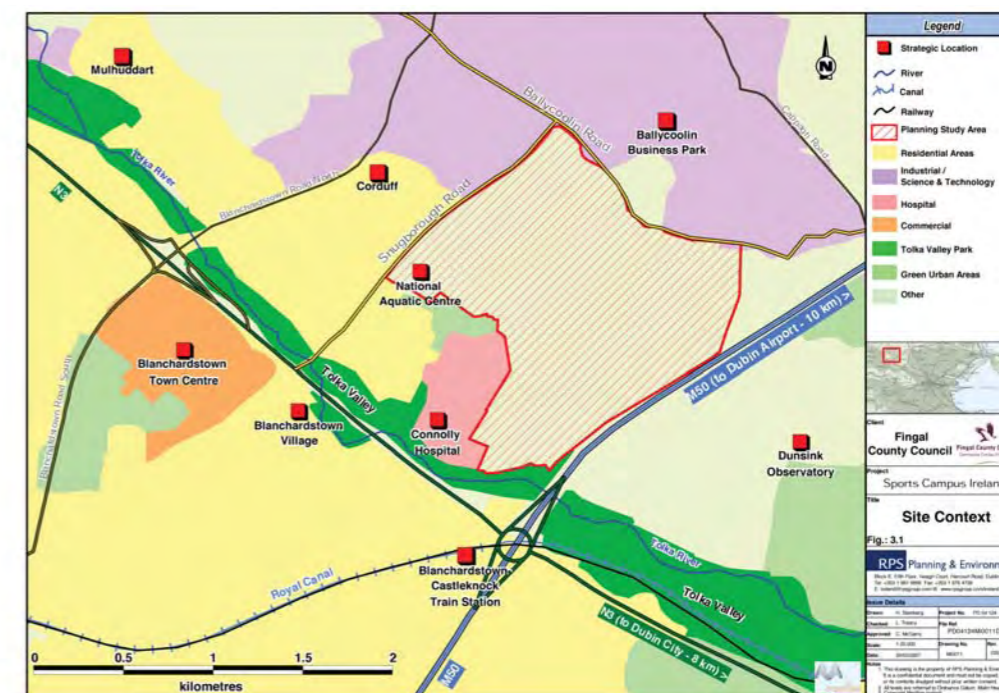


Figure 3.1 - Site Context Map

- 3.3 The subject lands are situated approximately 1.5 km north-east of Blanchardstown Town Centre. The results of the 2002 Census indicated a 17% population increase for Fingal, most of which was in the

Blanchardstown and Swords areas. Blanchardstown is designated as a Metropolitan Consolidation Town under the provisions of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area (2004) which advise that these towns should be developed to a relatively large scale as part of the strategy for the consolidation of the Metropolitan Area.

3.4 The lands are located 14 kilometres from Dublin City Centre and 14 kilometres from Dublin Airport.

**Site description**

3.5 The subject lands comprise approximately 477 acres of mainly open farmland which slope gently from north to south and which formerly accommodated the State Laboratory, Marine Institute and the Department of Agriculture and Food Laboratories and Farm (see Fig 3.2 for map of existing buildings/structures).

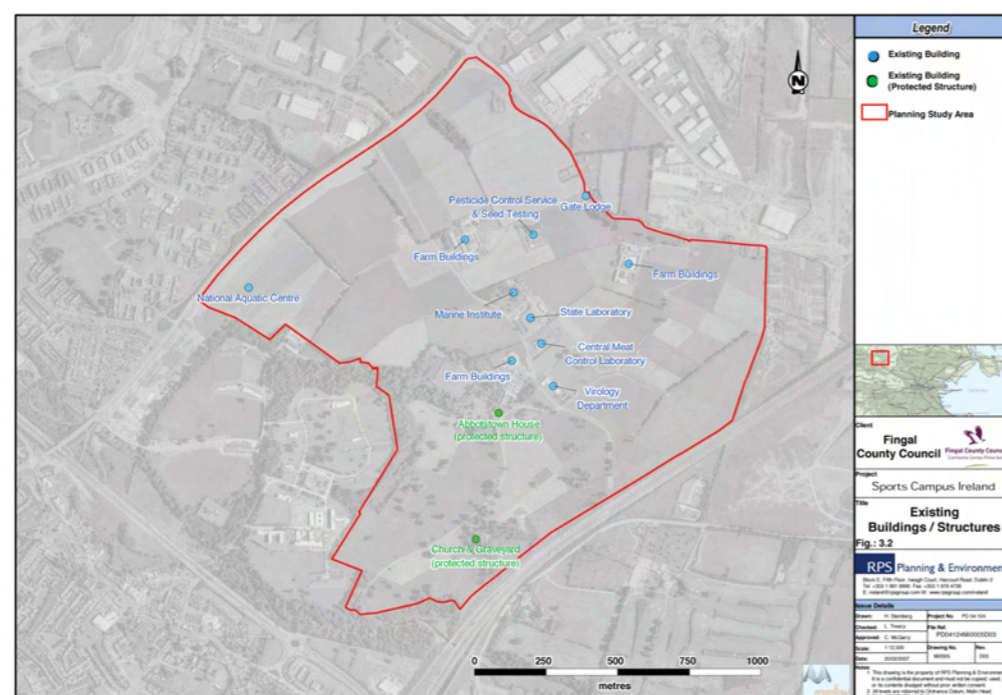


Figure 3.2 - Existing Buildings/Structures Map

3.6 Currently there is a single vehicular access to the site from the Snugborough Road. The National Aquatic Centre (see photograph 1 below), which was completed in 2003, is also accessed on the eastern side off the Snugborough Road.



Photograph 1 - View of the National Aquatic Centre from the Abbotstown lands

3.7 An existing spine avenue serving the subject lands runs from the Snugborough Road entrance in a north-west/south-east direction, and generally bisects the lands. Farm areas generally characterise the areas on either side of the western portion of the spine road, with fields separated by boundaries of mature hedgerows and semi-mature and mature trees. To the south, the rear buildings of Connolly Hospital and its northern boundary of dense mature trees can be seen while westwards towards Snugborough Road, the taller buildings of Blanchardstown Village and the residential neighbourhood of Corduff.

3.8 Within the western and central portions of the subject lands, the existing buildings are generally located on the north-eastern side of the entrance avenue. The western-most buildings comprise the former Central Meat Control Laboratory, accommodated in a cluster of single storey pebble-dashed concrete block structures, and surrounded by enclosed paddocks (see photograph 2 below). Further to the north-east is the former Pesticide Control Service and Seed Testing Station, in a cluster of two-storey brick buildings (see photograph 3 below). The access road serving these buildings (which is bound by mature hedging) continues north-eastwards to an existing vehicular entrance onto Ballycoolin Road, adjacent to which are attractive stone dwellings. The northern boundary of the subject lands, fronting onto Ballycoolin Road, is characterised by an attractive high stone wall and a line of mature trees.



Photograph 2 - Central Meat Control Laboratory



Photograph 3 - Pesticide Control Service and Seed Testing Station

3.9 The former State Laboratory (a single storey blockwork building) is located off the northern side of the spine avenue (see photograph 4 below). This avenue also serves the former Marine Institute Building, which also comprises single storey blockwork units, with some two-storey elements (see photograph 5 below).



Photograph 4 - State Laboratory



Photograph 5 - Marine Institute Building



- 3.10** The former Central Meat Control Laboratory is located off the northern side of the spine road, within the eastern central portion of the subject lands. Immediately to the south-east of this building and separated by an access road is the former Virology Department, primarily comprising a single storey building. The access road serving this building leads to the northern boundary of the subject lands. Views to the north are available from this access road to the large industrial units of the industrial estates on the northern side of Ballycoolin Road (see photograph 6 below). Views are also available to the east, towards the alignment of the M50 and the Dunsink Landfill site.



Photograph 6 - Views towards Industrial Estate - Ballycoolin Road

- 3.11** The northern portion of the subject lands is open in nature, and accommodates the Abbotstown farm complex. Adjacent to the existing disused northern entrance to the lands is a small gate lodge in semi-derelect condition (see photograph 7 below), and a modern bungalow, which is in good condition and currently occupied.



Photograph 7 - Entrance (disused) and gate lodge at Ballycoolin Road

- 3.12** The main spine avenue serving the subject lands extends eastwards to the existing boundary of the lands. This is currently an open area, with views across the subject lands to the north and east to Dunsink and the Elmgreen Municipal Golf Course. Views to the south-east are currently restricted by established and new tree planting along the eastern boundary of the lands. Views are available at some points to the N3 and beyond to Castleknock.

- 3.13** On the southern side of the main spine avenue, opposite the former Central Meat Control Laboratory is located a cluster of large agricultural barn structures, constructed primarily in corrugated iron (see photograph 8 below). These are accessed by a lane serving the farmyard area to the north-west of Abbotstown House. This access road also serves the stable complex, comprising a cluster of single and two-storey stone and block structures, including an attractive two-storey stable manager's house. The access road also leads to the existing large walled garden, to the north-west of the House. This is a very fine structure, intact for the most part and formerly in use for horticultural activities, as well as containing a small floodlit equestrian arena. Immediately to the north-west of the walled garden is a two-storey stone dwelling, currently in semi-derelect condition.



Photograph 8 - Farm Buildings

- 3.14** Abbotstown House is situated in the centre of the subject lands, to the south of the main spine avenue (see photograph 9 below). Abbotstown House comprises a 2 storey house, added to at various times, but of predominantly early to mid nineteenth century aspect. The House is included as a Protected Structure under the Fingal Development Plan 2005-2011. It contains a 5 bay entrance front, with the centre bay breaking forward with a triple window above a projecting pilastered porch. It has a similar side elevation, with single-storey pillared bow instead of porch; prolonged by a curved bow of full height. The

House also has a parapeted roof, as well as entablatures on console brackets over triple windows and other embellishments.

- 3.15 A poor quality extension has been constructed to the north side of the House. A small garden area has been developed to the front (south-east) of the House with a fine open aspect facing eastwards towards Dunsink. A mature garden, including a number of ornamental trees, is located to the side (south) of the House. There are good views to the south through the existing trees to the existing parkland area, and beyond, to the woodlands of the Tolka Valley, as well as to the pointed spire of Blanchardstown Village church.
- 3.16 Abbotstown House and the existing graveyard which originally served Abbotstown demesne, located towards the centre of the site, are included on the Record of Protected Structures of Fingal County Council. The NSCDA has consulted with Fingal County Council, to determine the appropriate curtilage of Abbotstown House and the nearby graveyard which is shown on the Potential Constraints Map (Fig 3.3).

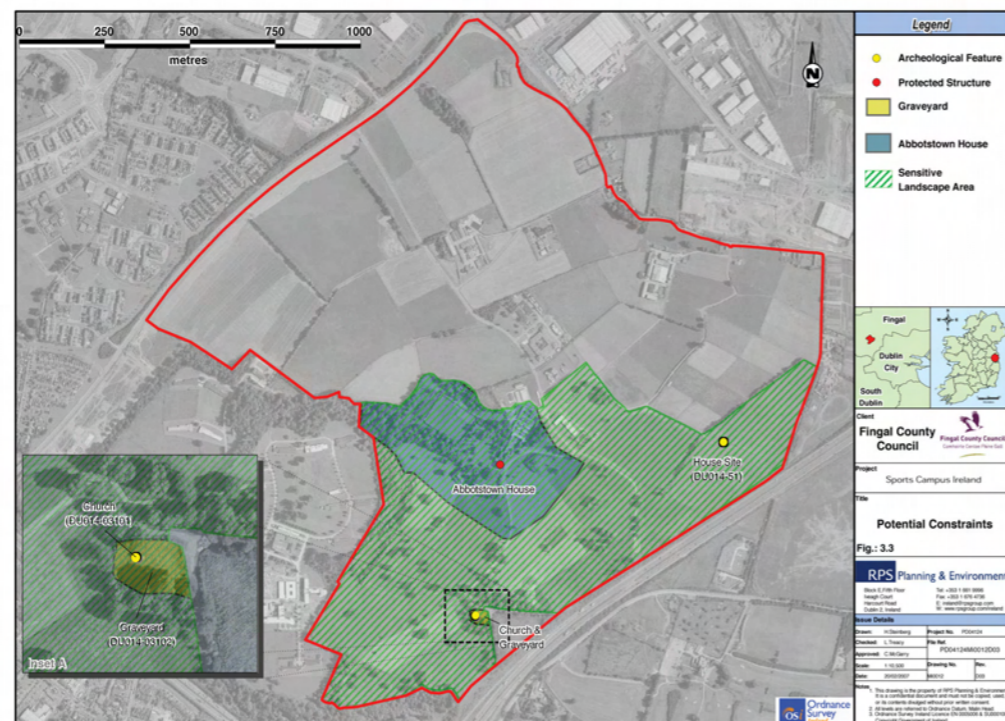


Figure 3.3 - Potential Constraints Map

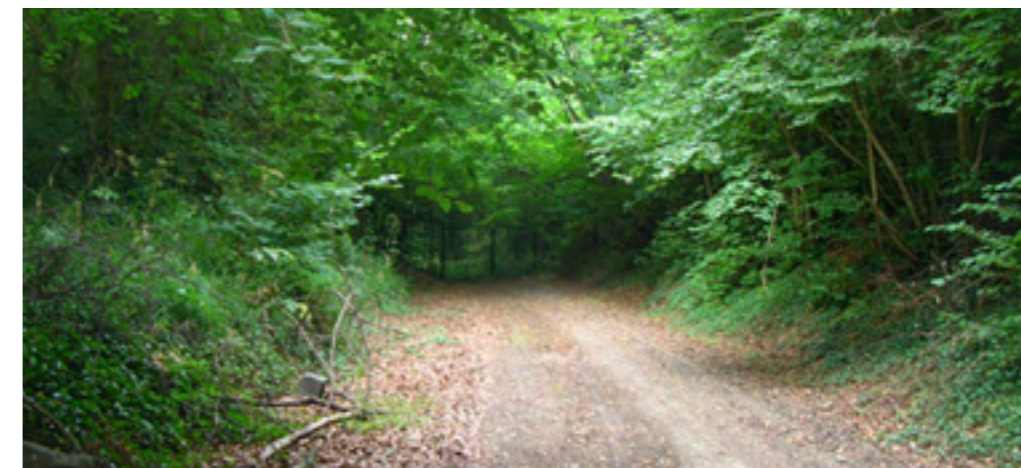
- 3.17 An avenue extends southwards from the House, and crosses the open parkland. A number of mature deciduous trees line this avenue. A number of other individual and small stands of trees are located within the parkland area. Extensive views are available across the parkland to the south and east. West of the

parkland, and adjoining the boundary between the subject lands and the lands of Connolly Hospital, is a lake, locally referred to as "the Swan Pond". The lake is adjacent to and incorporated into the dense boundary woodland. To the north-west of the Swan Pond and to the west of the walled garden, is a smaller water body, known as the "Fiddle Pond".

- 3.18 The avenue descends southwards towards the Tolka Valley, the northern extent of which comprises the southern boundary of the subject lands. This boundary is currently fenced off, (see photograph 10, page 20) thus preventing any access between the subject lands and the proposed park along the Tolka Valley.



Photograph 9 - Abbotstown House



Photograph 10 - Southern site boundary adjacent to the Tolka Valley



**/ Proposed Mix of  
Uses in Phase 1 of  
the Sports Campus /**

**4.0**





**4.1** The overall aims for the National Sports Campus at Abbotstown follow a strategy that:

- Preserves and enhances existing amenity and woodland and ecological habitats on site for future use;
- Respects the Protected Structure designation of Abbotstown House and its curtilage;
- Directs future development away from areas designated as ecologically and historically sensitive and due to factors of visual amenity;
- Direct development to those parts of the site which can readily absorb new structures.

**4.2** The uses proposed in Phase 1 of the National Sports Campus are listed below and are the result of extensive work which has already been undertaken by NSCDA in the preparation of a Development Control Plan (upon which Phase 1 is based) for the subject lands. This process also involved extensive consultation with prospective end users of these facilities.

**4.3** The following facilities are intended to be provided in Phase 1 of the Sports Campus development.

Core Facilities

- Core Facilities Buildings - the core building will contain all the elements necessary for a holistic training environment for world class athletes from accommodation to sports science and medical support to the changing needs which link to briefing rooms, recovery areas and team management offices.

Amateur Training Facilities

- Amateur Sports (GAA, IHA etc)
- GAA Pitches
- Hockey Pitches

Community Facilities

- Facilities available for community use will include the following:
  - A multi-purpose sports hall (when not required by high performance athletes);
  - 16 x 7-aside synthetic pitches;
  - A range of natural turf playing pitches;
  - 115 acres of natural parkland for passive recreation.

Professional Facilities

- Rugby (IRFU) Facilities
- Soccer (FA Ireland) Facilities
- Rugby Pitches
- Soccer pitches

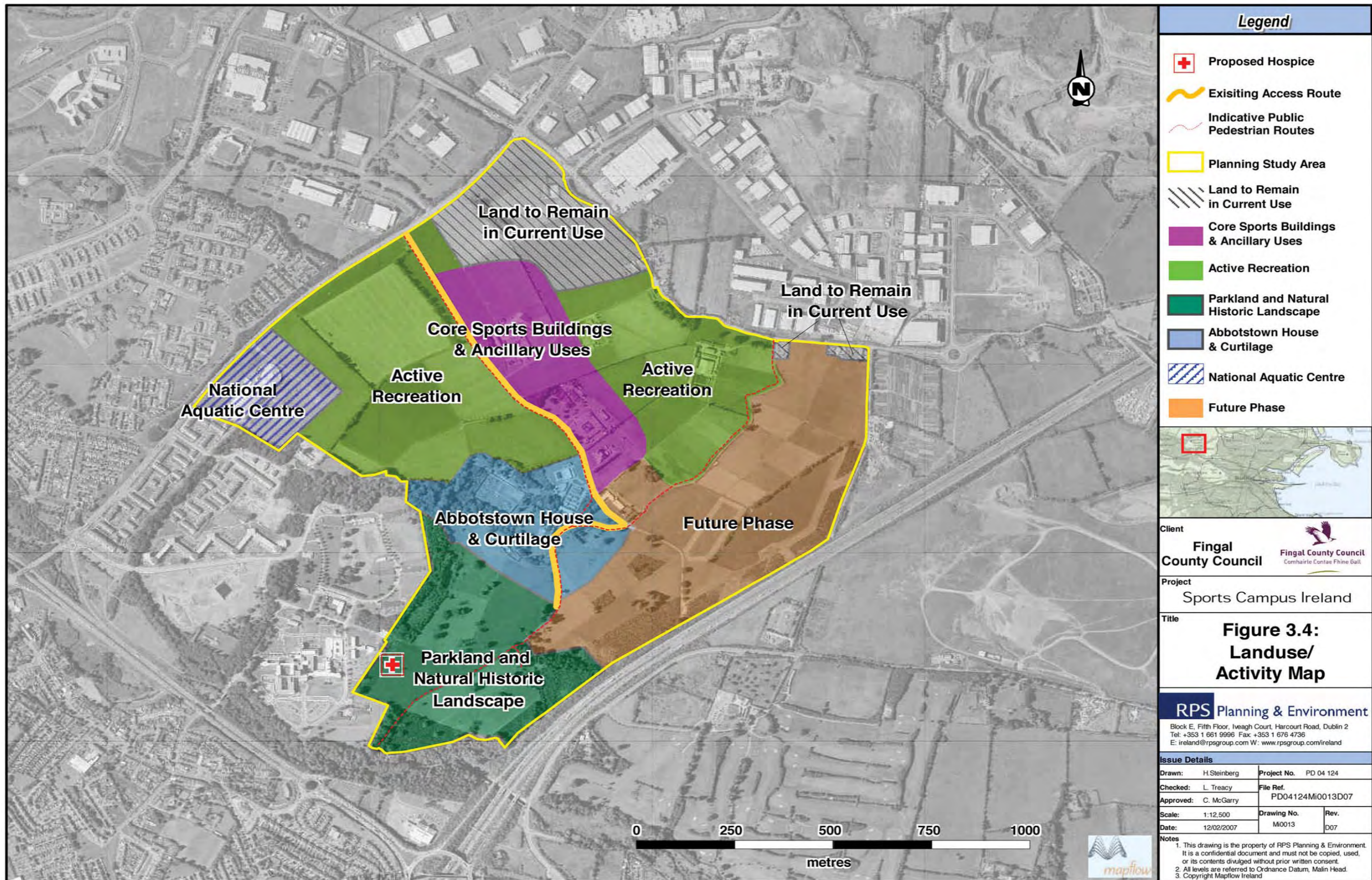


Figure 3.4 - Landuse/Activity Map

**4.4** These components of the National Sports Campus would be compatible with a future open space zoning and Sports Campus Objective proposed for these lands.

**4.5** The general layout of the site will provide for the following zones:

- A training zone for professional field sports;
- Training zones for indoor hall sports, amateur field sports and public recreation;
- A public park to enable passive recreation;
- A future development zone (see 4.13 below).

**4.6** These zones are detailed in figure 3.4 (landuse/activity map) included in this Study.

#### **Amateur Training Zone (110 acres approximately)**

**4.7** A zone is required to provide for both indoor and outdoor training facilities for elite athletes. The facilities will include playing pitches for Gaelic Football and Hockey together with multi-purpose pitches which can be marked out for a range of field sports.

**4.8** The initial Phase 1 indoor sports centre will have a large three-court hall (i.e. 3 basketball court size), which can be used for a range of sports. This hall can be used for training purposes and can be converted into a 1,000 to 1,500 capacity competition venue through the use of retractable seating.

**4.9** The facilities will be available for use by the local community, schools and sports clubs when not in use by The National Governing Bodies of Sport.

#### **Passive Recreation Zone (115 acres approximately)**

**4.10** A passive recreation zone of approximately 115 acres will be provided within the Abbotstown site which will be accessible to the greater Blanchardstown community and the public in general. This zone will allow for activities such as walking, cycling, picnicking and for informal sports activities and as such will provide a valuable public resource for the greater Blanchardstown area.

#### **Professional Field Sports Training Zone (95 acres approximately)**

**4.11** A professional training zone of approximately 95 acres will be provided for rugby and soccer.

**4.12** The training areas for both sports include a combination of top quality floodlit, artificial and natural turf pitches as well as covered training pitches for use in inclement weather. In addition to the regular pitches for training, each area will have an enclosed pitch where teams can prepare in private. These pitches will

be designed to replicate the characteristics of the national home venues for each sport insofar as is practical in terms of dimensions, surface, lighting, etc...

#### **Zone for Future Development (158 acres approximately)**

**4.13** The location of any future development within this zone, which is located to the east of the site, will have to have regard to a range of issues including:

- The possible need to expand the professional field sports zone;
- The need to maintain privacy and a quiet zone around the professional field sports area;
- The suitability of any proposal adjacent to the sensitive landscape and Abbotstown House;
- Traffic generation.

#### **Central Core Building**

**4.14** A central core building will be located in the heart of the Campus field sports training zones and will house all elements of accommodation required to provide a holistic training environment for world class athletes, from accommodation to sports science and medical support to the changing needs which link to the briefing rooms, recovery areas and team management offices.

**4.15** The main building will contain accommodation which can be shared by all sports teams. This, in turn, will link to the changing nodes for Rugby, Soccer and Amateur Sports.

#### **Proposed Hospice Site**

**4.16** In November 2005 the Government decided to provide a site of not more than 3 acres for the development of a Hospice within the Abbotstown lands, on the basis that it was a once-off allocation of land on the site for non-sporting activities and provided that a suitable site could be identified by agreement between the NSCDA and the voluntary group developing the Hospice initiative and Fingal County Council. Discussions to give effect to this decision are progressing. The approximate location of the future hospice is indicated on the Land Use/Activity Map (figure 3.4) to the south of Abbotstown House and adjoining the boundary with Connolly Hospital.

#### **Disability Strategy**

**4.17** The proposed development will demonstrate a commitment to involving individuals with differing needs and capabilities through the inclusive nature of its design. It is recommended that the whole of the built environment and infrastructure demonstrate an exemplary standard of accessibility and that monitoring be

carried out throughout the evolution of the design proposals. All buildings on the site will comply with Part M of the Building Regulations regarding Access for People with Disabilities.

#### **Sustainability Strategy**

- 4.18** As outlined in Section 3.3 of the Fingal Development Plan 2005-2011, it is an objective of Fingal County Council to improve qualitative standards of sustainable design in proposed developments.
- 4.19** The development of the National Sports Campus at Abbotstown will occur within the broad framework of the proper Planning and sustainable development of the area, including the protection and/or enhancement of the existing amenities thereof.
- 4.20** It is intended that the overall development of the National Sports Campus, and the individual buildings and structures of the Campus in particular will be designed and constructed in ways which make the most effective use of natural resources given other constraints such as the functioning and operation of the site and project costs. This will include especially:
  - Materials use;
  - Energy generation and use;
  - Water use.

#### **Public Consultation**

- 4.21** As stated elsewhere in this Study, a publicly advertised call for submissions made by Fingal County Council at the outset of the Study process elicited 11 submissions. The principal issues raised included minority sports activities, community access to facilities, transport and access to the site, protection of Abbotstown House, the provision of a public park on the subject lands, and opposition to the provisions of any future housing development on the site.
- 4.22** Regard has been had to the submissions received during the preparation of this Planning Study and this is reflected in the range of land use activities and facilities proposed on the site. No housing development is proposed on the subject lands as part of this Study. Details regarding community access to the site are outlined in Section 6.0 of this Study while issues relating to transport and access to the site are outlined in Sections 2 and 5. It is an objective of this Study to ensure the conservation and protection of Abbotstown House and its setting by requiring its re-use/refurbishment as part of the National Sports Campus facilities. A parkland and natural historic landscape zone is also proposed on the site which will be accessible by the public and which may allow for minority sports activities.





**5.1** This Section contains an analysis of the Abbotstown site and the optimum location/organisation of the facilities proposed in the given site context including:

- Relationships with existing land use and development within and adjoining the Abbotstown site;
- Use of existing structures and site features;
- Interaction between proposed buildings and land uses;
- Transportation organisation including internal circulation.

**5.2** For the purposes of this analysis a preliminary environmental constraints exercise was undertaken for the subject lands which identified potential development constraints and other factors which should be taken into consideration in the future development of the lands.

#### **Relationships with Existing Land Use and Development within and Adjoining the Abbotstown Site**

**5.3** The subject lands are self contained and formerly accommodated the State Laboratory, Marine Institute and the Department of Agriculture and Food Laboratories and Farm and as such, had no direct relationship with the adjacent industrial, commercial and residential developments.

**5.4** The National Aquatic Centre, which is located adjacent to the subject lands on the Snugborough Road forms a fundamental element of the overall National Sports Campus development. The subject lands will be accessible via a linear walkway along the Tolka Valley to the south.

**5.5** In order to develop the site in a sustainable manner, a thorough understanding of the receiving environment is required before the Planning and design process can advance. This Section summarises the extensive research and studies undertaken for the subject lands building up various layers of knowledge and analysis covering flora and fauna, soils, water, archaeology, architectural heritage, landscape, transport and energy. A series of objectives for the development of the site are also outlined in this Section.

#### **Flora and Fauna**

**5.6** The subject lands contain a diversity of habitats, including several areas of woodland and an artificial pond. However there are no areas designated for nature conservation with the site boundaries and none of the habitats present within the lands are of regional, national or international ecological importance.

**5.7** The most extensive habitat type within the site is improved agricultural grassland and this is of very low ecological importance due to its highly modified nature and low associated species diversity. The opportunistic and landscaped habitats are of low local ecological value while the woodland habitats are predominantly of moderate local ecological value. The areas of woodland at the western and south-western boundaries are of moderate to high local ecological value.

**5.8** The hedgerows on the lands vary in their ecological importance depending on their maturity, species composition, the number of standard trees and the presence or absence of associated features such as ditches and banks.



- 5.9** The freshwater habitat is an ecologically important component of the landscape as it creates diversity and enhances the value of adjacent habitats. The drainage ditches are of low ecological value when considered in isolation but increase the diversity of the hedgerow and woodland habitats. The artificial pond is of high local ecological importance due to the diversity of associated species and the presence of a reed and large sedge swamp at the margin. The pond also creates the necessary conditions for the occurrence of the native wet woodland species goat willow and grey willow, and for the wet grassland which occurs alongside the main drainage ditch from the pond. It is therefore a valuable feature of the landscape.
- 5.10** In summary, the predominant habitat type within the lands is of low local ecological value but the hedgerow, woodland, pond and wet grassland habitats are of moderate to high local ecological importance. The pond and wet grassland habitats are most sensitive to disturbance due to their comparatively small area and the fragile nature of the component species.
- 5.11** The subject lands have an open agricultural nature and consequently there is a variety of fauna species present on the subject site. Those species of note include the mountain hare, which is a protected species and the barn owl which is reported to roost within the trees contained in the landscaped gardens to the rear of Abbotstown House. The barn owl, together with its roosting site, is listed as an Annex 1 species in the European Bird's Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds), and is also afforded protection under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000.
- 5.12** There is also evidence of bats foraging and roosting within the Abbotstown lands. All nine species of bat known to breed in Ireland and their roost sites, are protected under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000 and the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997.
- 5.13** A broad species range is present in the woodland habitat therefore it is considered important to retain as much of this habitat as possible as part of the development of the site.

#### Flora and Fauna Objectives

**FF1** - To minimise impacts on the identified ecologically sensitive areas of woodland, wetland and hedgerows during construction works.

**FF2** - To implement measures to limit the impact of development outside of the working area during the construction phase to reduce construction impacts on existing habitats, particularly the Tolka Valley.

**FF3** - To secure the retention of the woodland habitat to the southeast, south and south-western border of the subject lands.

→...

→...

**FF4** - To ensure all construction and other development works undertaken on the land occur in accordance with the provisions of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000 and the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997.

**FF5** - To implement appropriate measures to ensure Annex 1 species present on site are protected during construction and operation of the National Sports Campus.

**FF6** - To ensure that proposed or ongoing scrub or canopy management and enhanced measures to the remaining and planted woodlands is not carried out between March and September in order to minimise disturbance to nesting birds.

#### Soils

- 5.14** The soil and geological setting of the site has undergone little modification from its natural state. The baseline situation for the soils and geology is essentially the natural ground environment.
- 5.15** The topsoil present at the site is of good quality and in earthworks terms is categorised as Class 5A material (topsoil, or turf, existing on site). Dublin Boulder Clay is the main subsoil unit and is of glacial origin.
- 5.16** Preliminary ground investigations indicate potential localised contamination in the vicinity of the fuel supply area at the existing dairy yard and at the farm dump. It is recommended that further investigations of this potential contamination and in addition radon levels on the site be undertaken prior to the commencement of development on the site.
- 5.17** Waulsortian Limestone is the main rock unit at the site. Historic maps show that there are two former quarry features at the site, indicating that the limestone outcropped or came very close to ground surface at these locations. The Geological Survey of Ireland classifies the Waulsortian Limestone as a locally important aquifer that is locally productive only in local zones.

#### Soils Objectives

**S01** - To ensure appropriate soil management practices are adhered to during construction works.

**S02** - To ensure a full investigation is undertaken of radon levels and potential contamination on the site prior to the commencement of development.

Water

## (i) Water Supply/Potable Water

- 5.18** Water conservation methods will be employed at the National Sports Campus to reduce the burden on existing infrastructure. Delivery of water supply will be from the 525 diameter main in the Snugborough Road or from the 600 diameter main located at the north end of the site. A new 400mm diameter ring main will be installed on Ballycoolin Road as part of the Ballycoolin/Cappagh Road Realignment Scheme. Fingal County Council has started construction of a new water tower in Ballycoolin. This will increase the head of water thus improving the delivery of water to the site.

Water Supply Objective

**WS01** - To apply water management and conservation techniques to all Campus related development on the site.

## (ii) Ground Water

- 5.19** The geology of the Abbotstown site is characterised by Dublin Boulder Clay overlying the solid geology of carboniferous limestone. Based on the information currently available there is good evidence to suggest that rainwater percolating into the Dublin Boulder Clay:

- flows downhill on the "impermeable" limestone horizon either entering the Tolka River as groundwater or issuing as springs on the slopes of the site. Or,
- Flows downhill on the "impermeable" limestone horizon before percolating vertically into the limestone via a fault or fracture in the limestone.

## (iii) Foul Water

- 5.20** To the south of the subject lands, there is an existing 1200 mm diameter foul sewer that crosses the Tolka River onto the south bank approximately 200m to the west of the corner of the lands. The sewer runs in the field adjacent to River Road. The existing buildings on the lands are serviced by a network of drains which discharge to the 1200 mm diameter foul sewer in the south.

Foul Water Objective

**FW1** - To develop a plan to expand in a sustainable manner and in accordance with Policy UTP5 and UTP7 of the Fingal Development Plan, the drainage system to cater for the development within the Abbotstown site.

## (iv) Surface Water

- 5.21** The subject site contains several water features, drains and watercourses. These include:

- A well on the boundary of Abbotstown House is shown on historical maps;
- Historical maps show various issues, springs and sources. None were identified on site;
- A small "depression" within the grounds and woods of Abbotstown House, known as the Fiddle Pond;
- A larger lake known as the Swan Pond;
- A stream connecting the above Ponds which flows south from the Swan Pond to the Tolka River;
- A redundant reservoir immediately proximate to Abbotstown House, although the purpose of this facility has not been established;
- Open ditch drains to field boundaries.

Although not recorded it is anticipated that there will also be land drains in the cultivated fields.

- 5.22** The surface water drainage on the site will connect to the main line drainage by means of attenuated connections. All surface water drainage will be designed to comply with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study.

Surface Water Objectives

**SW01** - To collect and utilise rainwater for pitch irrigation to reduce water consumption and site run-off.

**SW02** - To develop and implement a stormwater management system following the principle of Sustainable Urban Drainage and in compliance with the recommendations of the GreaterDublin Strategic Drainage Study.

ESB, Gas, Telecoms

- 5.23** New ESB and Telecoms ducts will be provided along Ballycoolin Road as part of the Ballycoolin/Cappagh Road Realignment Scheme. The Scheme also includes for the provision of a 180mm diameter gas main.

Landscape

- 5.24** The Abbotstown site is currently an area of undulating natural and cultivated landscape. The landscape therefore, shows a wide range of different habitats and landscape types which are the result of physical factors as well as human intervention. The predominant land-use is livestock grazing, which results in an improved pasture landscape with occasional mature planted trees.

**5.25** The southern portion of the subject site adjacent to the Tolka Valley is designated as a 'sensitive landscape area' under the Fingal Development Plan 2005-2011.

**5.26** Policy HP44 of the Fingal Development Plan 2005-2011 relates specifically to this part of the site and states the following:

***'To protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character, and to ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management, when undertaking, approving or authorising development'.***

**5.27** The protection of the existing woodland and trees is also enforced by objective HO42 which is as follows:

***To ensure that when undertaking, approving or authorising development that sufficient information is provided to enable an assessment of impacts to be made on habitats and biodiversity including woodlands, trees and hedgerows'.***

**5.28** In contrast, the surrounding context comprises an unstructured urban fringe with an agglomeration of different land uses. Connolly Hospital and the Tolka Valley lie to the south and south-west. However, apart from an existing connection with the Tolka Valley, which is currently closed, there is no physical linkage to the natural landscape.

**5.29** Distant views from the subject lands are limited both by topography and existing vegetation, offering only a minimal sense of connection to the surrounding landscape and wider environs of the subject lands.

**5.30** There are currently limited views onto the subject lands; due to topography and existing vegetation, views from any great distance are not available with the exception of the view from Dunsink Landfill, which is not accessible to the general public.

**5.31** Views from the major transport route, (the M50 motorway) are available only to southbound traffic as topography and vegetation obscures views onto the site northbound.

**5.32** In the immediate vicinity, views from the Ballycoolin Road are obscured by vegetation and the stone wall aligned to the Road. The site boundary along the Snugborough Road offers unobscured views onto the farmland area of the existing site. The single point of entry to the site as currently used is from the Snugborough Road and shares this view.

**5.33** Given the relatively even ground across the subject lands, no natural vantage point is currently available to get a clear view over the site for orientation. The existing farmland and parkland landscapes offer a number of vegetation features at local scale. Otherwise, only heritage features provide 'markers' on the site: Abbotstown House and its arboretum, the former Central Meat Control Laboratory and its characteristic roofline the treeline around the historical graveyard, woodland running from Abbotstown House environs south to the Tolka River Valley.

#### Landscape Objectives

**L01** - To protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character, and to ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management, when undertaking, approving or authorising development.

**L02** - To ensure that the use of the woodland habitat on the southern portion of the Abbotstown lands complements the provision of a public park along the Tolka Valley by Fingal County Council.

**L03** - To ensure that when undertaking, approving or authorising development that sufficient information is provided to enable an assessment of impacts to be made on habitats and biodiversity including woodlands, trees and hedgerows.

#### Archaeology

**5.34** There are some archaeological sites or features listed on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) which are contained within the boundary of the Abbotstown site. These are protected by the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004. The sites which are located within the subject lands are identified below.

**5.35** The most archaeologically sensitive area of Abbotstown will generally be excluded from the major development works. This includes the parkland to the south of Abbotstown House, currently listed as a 'sensitive landscape' within the Fingal Development Plan 2005-2011 and the area around the church and graveyard, a listed archaeological site (DU014-031) and Protected Structure.

**5.36** Historical and archaeological sources indicate that there are areas with potential subsurface archaeological remains within the lands north and east of Abbotstown House.

**5.37** The archaeological sites/features which have been identified within the subject lands are as follows:

<b>Site No</b>	DU014-03101	<b>NGR</b>	30924/23882
<b>Townland</b>	Abbotstown	<b>Site Type</b>	Church
<b>Description</b>	St Kevin's church and graveyard, known as 'Caeveen' or 'St Coemhin's graveyard'.		
	→...		

→...

Two walls of a small church in a subcircular burial ground. The site is partially walled and fenced in. Fragments of the north and west walls are all that survive of the church associated with St Coemhin. This is built of randomly coursed masonry (length 7.6m; width 5.5m; height 2.5m; wall width 0.97m). At the west end of the north wall is a door rebate; there are also bolt holes in this wall. The ground falls away steeply south of the church, where there is an enclosing stone-faced fosse (width 4.7m; diameter 1.6m). This is replaced by a wall along the west and north side of the site and appears to be built on an earlier earthwork (Healy 1974).

<b>Site No</b>	DU014-03102	<b>NGR</b>	30924/23882
<b>Townland</b>	Abbotstown	<b>Site Type</b>	Graveyard
<b>Description</b>	Dublin County Council has restored the graveyard and re-erected the remaining headstones. Within the graveyard are eighteenth- and nineteenth-century grave slabs (dimensions east-west 60m; north-south 40m). The graveyard contains no tombs of any consequence but those of the Troy family, relatives of an archbishop of Dublin, born at Annefield further to the southwest. There is no sign of Caeveen Well, mentioned by C. O Danachair as being '...visited for cures, closed many years ago by the landlord, Lord Holmpatrick' (Reportorium Novum Vol. 2 1958-60). The well is also referred to in D'Alton (1838, 588) as '...St Commegan's well, near Luttrells Town' in 1757.		
<b>Site No</b>	DU014-51	<b>NGR</b>	30999/23933
<b>Townland</b>	Sheephill	<b>Site Type</b>	House site
<b>Description</b>	Investigations in 1988 for Phase 2 of the Northeastern Gas Pipeline revealed a sub-rectangular soil mark with traces of mortar, located on a slight hill (Gowen 1989, 4).		

#### Archaeology Objectives

- AR01** - To ensure that the archaeologically sensitive lands, including the parkland to the south of Abbotstown House and the area around the church and graveyard, are excluded from major development works.
- AR02** - To undertake archaeological investigations in locations where substantial earthworks are proposed prior to the commencement of development.

#### Architectural Heritage

- 5.38** The architectural heritage of the subject lands relates to Abbotstown House, and the associated graveyard at the eastern boundary of the lands, both of which are included as Protected Structures under the Fingal Development Plan 2005-2011 as follows:

<b>RPS No.</b>	<b>Description</b>
683	Abbotstown House/Demesne
684	Church ruins and graveyard

Abbotstown House and outbuildings includes the following elements:

- The Main House;
- The Upper Yard;
- The Lower Yard;
- The Caretakers House;
- The Avenue to the Walled Garden;
- The Pigeon House;
- The Gardeners House;
- The Walled Garden;
- The Remains of Features on the Historic Landscape.

#### Architectural Heritage Objectives

- AH1** - To ensure the conservation and protection of Abbotstown House and its setting by requiring its re-use/refurbishment as part of the National Sports Campus facilities.
- AH2** - To retain the church ruins and graveyard located in the sensitive landscape area, which is included as a Protected Structure in the Fingal Development Plan 2005-2011 and to permit public access to this area.

### Interaction between Proposed Buildings and Land Uses

- 5.39** A core building will be provided in the heart of the Abbotstown lands centred on the future field sports zones which will facilitate equal access to the core building for all end users.
- 5.40** This building will house all elements of accommodation required to provide a holistic training environment for world class athletes, from accommodation to sports science and medical support to the changing needs which link to the briefing rooms, recovery areas and team management offices.
- 5.41** The main building will also house accommodation which can be shared by all sports teams and will link to the changing nodes for Rugby, Soccer and Amateur Sports. Full details of the uses which will be accommodated in the core building are outlined in Section 4.0 of this Planning Study.

### Use of Existing Structures and Site Features

- 5.42** As part of the development of Phase 1 of the National Sports Campus it is intended to retain and refurbish Abbotstown House, a Protected Structure, and reuse it for a purpose which will be complementary to the operation of the National Sports Campus.
- 5.43** As part of the Phase 1 development of the site, the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) Headquarters, currently located on Merrion Square, will relocate to the former State Laboratory Building which is situated on the northern side of the main east-west spine avenue. Work is currently ongoing on the redevelopment proposals for the former State Laboratory Building.

### Transportation Organisation

- 5.44** The transportation assessment of the study lands is based on Phase 1 of the National Sports Campus development only, as per the Development Control Plan (see Section 4 of this Study). Further development on the site would require further transportation analysis, including assessment of additional access capacity by public/private transport and including the impact of the future Metro.
- 5.45** The provision of Metro close to the proposed development will change the modal split characteristics in the catchment away from car-based travel.

#### Site Access

- 5.46** Vehicular access to Phase 1 of the National Sports Campus will be provided at entrances on Snugborough Road and Ballycoolin Road. The proposed 2 No., entrances will adequately cater for Phase 1 of the proposed Sports Campus (as per the Development Control Plan). The accesses will consist of high profile landscaped entrances.

- 5.47** The proposed main entrance to the National Sports Campus, which will be subject to detailed design, will be from Snugborough Road at the existing IDA Blanchardstown Industrial Park entrance. It is proposed that this junction be signalised with turning lanes from Snugborough Road and two lane entry and exit from the National Sports Campus. The National Sports Campus and the Industrial Park will have different peak traffic periods. The second road access will be from Ballycoolin Road at a new 60-metre inscribed circle diameter (ICD) high-capacity roundabout, which will be constructed as part of the Ballycoolin/Cappagh Road Realignment Scheme.

#### Internal Roads

- 5.48** The internal roads on the site are considered adequate to cater for the traffic levels predicted and provide access to all facilities on the Campus, to the future Metro stops and to the bus and car parking areas. The main internal roads will consist of high quality landscaped boulevard-type avenues, including segregated cycle tracks and footpaths.

#### Pedestrian and Cyclist Permeability

- 5.49** The proposed pedestrian and cyclist network will provide high quality, well-lit access to all facilities in the proposed sports campus and linkage to the future Metro stops and parking areas. Adequate, secure cycle parking areas will be provided in convenient locations to the facilities on the campus.

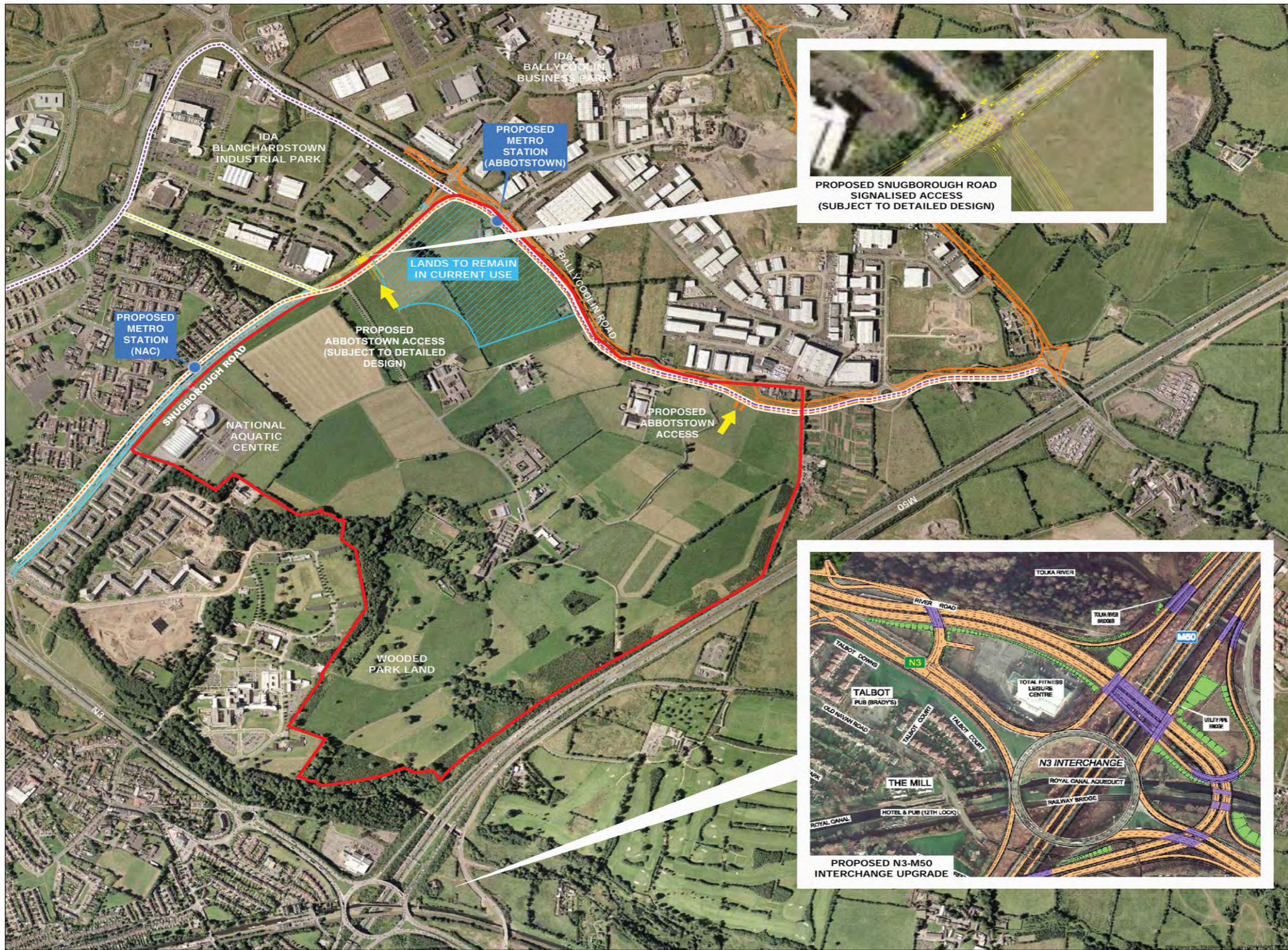
#### Public Transport

- 5.50** The RPA have proposed two possible route options for Metro West. Both of the proposed route options will have a Metro stop on Ballycoolin Road, providing direct access to the National Sports Campus. There could also be a Metro stop on Snugborough Road close to the National Aquatic Centre, depending on the route option chosen.
- 5.51** The Abbotstown lands are located adjacent to a Quality Bus Corridor (QBC) on Snugborough Road, which has recently been completed by Fingal County Council providing bus lane connections to the QBC on the N3. The proposed Ballycoolin/Cappagh Road Realignment Scheme will provide a 10.5 metre carriageway that could facilitate bus lanes.

- 5.52** The development of the lands will allow full penetration by a bus service and will incorporate bus stop facilities etc...

#### Parking

- 5.53** Adequate parking for cars (including disabled parking) and buses/coaches will be provided on the site based on a detailed assessment of the parking needs. All parking facilities necessary will be provided within the site.



**LEGEND:**

AREA BOUNDARY	[Red outline]
PROPOSED ABBOTSTOWN ACCESS	[Yellow line]
SNUGBOROUGH ROAD QBC UPGRADE	[Blue line]
BALLYCOLLIN ROAD UPGRADE	[Orange line]
METRO OPTION 1	[Orange dashed line]
METRO OPTION 2	[Purple dashed line]
METRO SUB OPTION	[Green dashed line]
PROPOSED METRO STATION	[Blue circle]



Revision	Description	Issues	Date

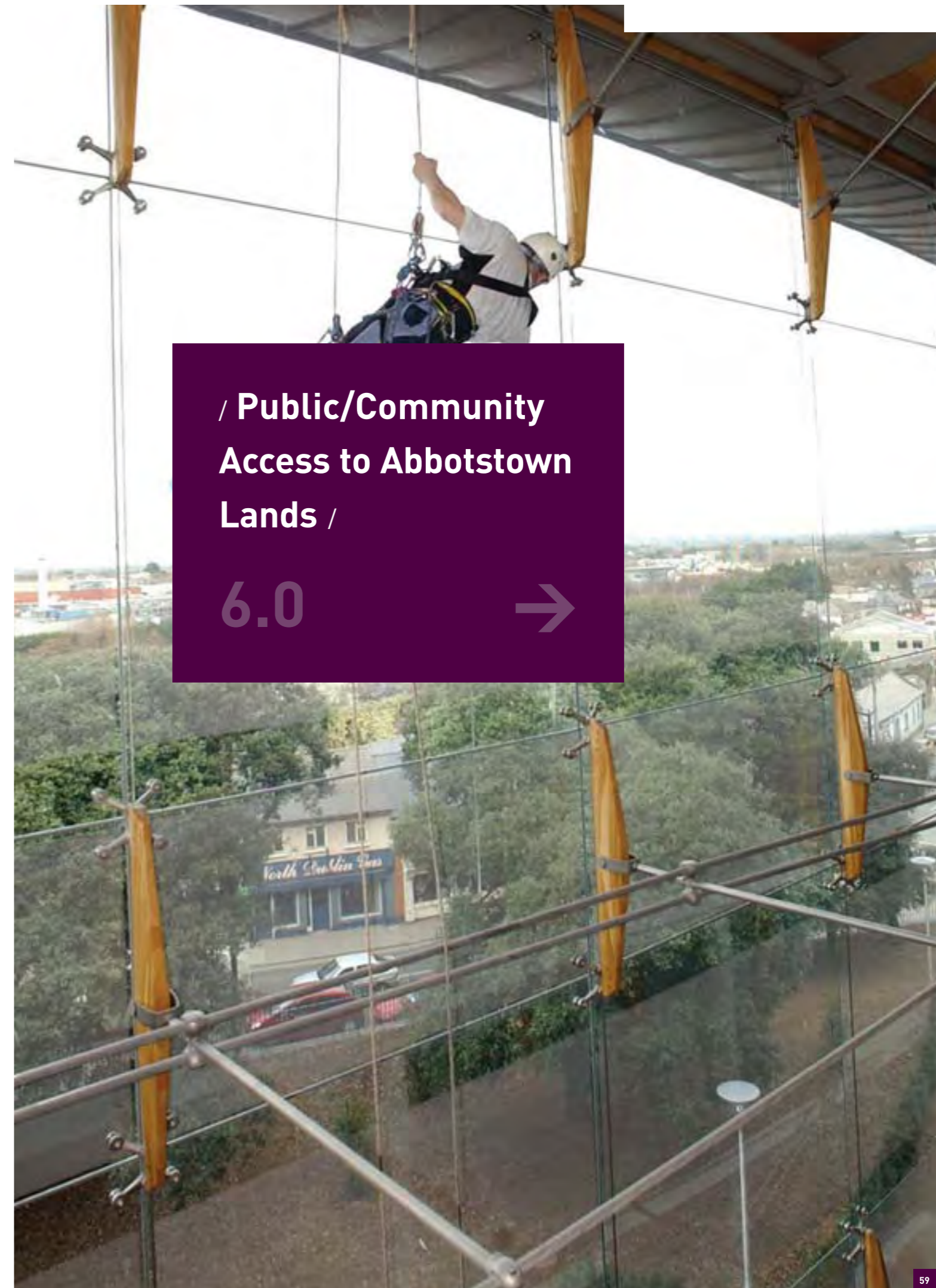
**CLIFTON SCANNELL EMERSON ASSOCIATES**  
 Consulting Engineers  
 10th Floor, 100 Waterloo Road, Dublin 8, Ireland  
 Tel: +353 (0)1 409 9000 Fax: +353 (0)1 409 9000 Email: info@cses.ie

Client: FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL  
 Project: ABBOTSTOWN FARM  
 Drawing: ABBOTSTOWN ACCESS  
 Drawn By: DA Date: 15-JAN-07  
 Checked By: PL Date: NTS  
 Draw No: 06\_070\_111

Map 06\_070-011

Transportation Objectives

- T01 - To encourage and facilitate the provision of an integrated public transport network to serve the Abbotstown site.
- T02 - To support and facilitate the provision of Metro West to Abbotstown as proposed under the Transport 21 Investment Programme.
- T03 - To provide safe, attractive pedestrian and cycle links between the passive recreation zone and the community facilities proposed adjacent to the Snugborough Road.
- T04 - To provide sufficient, suitably designed and managed disabled car parking arrangements and drop off points for taxis, coaches and public transport buses within the Campus.
- T05 - To ensure the parking needs of the interlinked Campus uses are met on site.





- 6.1** Investment in sport yields multiple returns and benefits for the community in terms of improved health, less demand on the health services by those of middle and older age, reduced anti-social behavior among young people and economic regeneration and improved employment opportunities.
- 6.2** Sport contributes to:
- Community regeneration;
  - Personal development;
  - Increased community safety;
  - Increased voluntary involvement;
  - Healthier lifestyles;
  - Young people & education;
  - Improved local economy through employment and sport tourism;
  - The environment.
- 6.3** Having a National Sports Campus, as envisaged by Government, in the community will allow these benefits to be developed further. These benefits can be developed by either formal or informal sport structures within the community.
- 6.4** The National Sports Campus will allow both structures to be developed:
- **Formal Structures**  
In the facilities planned for Abbotstown formal sports will be developed by organised activities through the National Governing Bodies of Sport in terms of development squads and structured competitions.
  - **Informal Structures**  
Informal Sports are non structured activities and are more recreational activities. These activities, including walking, jogging and playground activities, will take place in the large 115 acres parkland area of the Abbotstown site.
- 6.5** Although the primary focus of the National Sports Campus will be for elite sports - "Training-To-Win", a wide range of facilities will be available to the local community for community related sport activities both in formal and informal structures. This will be achieved by the introduction of community based programmes in the "down time", when the facilities are not required by elite sports.
- 6.6** Heretofore, the practice at high performance sports centres like that proposed for the National Sports Campus tended towards keeping the elite athletes separate from the participating/community user groups. That practice has radically changed in the last few years. This can be seen in the new centres for sporting excellence in England and Australia. The high performance centres now embrace the use of the facilities by both user groups making the centre feel alive and active.
- 6.7** An additional benefit of involving the community in participation programmes at the facilities is that it allows National Governing Bodies of Sport to run talent identification programmes for future potential athletes for their sport.



### Campus Sports Strategy

- 6.8 The Campus Sports Strategy derives from the policy of the Irish Sports Council. The Irish Sports Council is the statutory development agency for sport in Ireland.
- 6.9 Under Section 25 of the Irish Sports Council Act, 1999 the Council is required to prepare a three-year strategy statement for presentation to the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism
- 6.10 In the recently launched strategy the Irish Sports Council committed to two key strategic objectives, (i) increasing participation in sport and (ii) improving standards in elite sport. The National Sports Campus will help with the implementation of these strategies by providing facilities to allow both strategies to take place in consultation with the Irish Sports Council, the National Governing Bodies of Sport and the local community.

### Priority Community based Facilities

- 6.11 On the Campus site there will be dedicated sports facilities with priority usage for the community, sport and recreational activities. These include the 115 acres parkland and woodland area, and the sixteen 7-a-side synthetic pitches.
- 6.12 All facilities will operate an access community programme to encourage the community to use the facilities. Similar Programmes are envisaged for the National Aquatic Centre where the various community groups can use the facilities at off peak times at a reduced rate. This is similar to the active Retirement groups which have used the National Aquatic Centre under the auspices of programmes developed by the Fingal Sports Partnership. They have had major successes with very large numbers using the Centre.

### Programme

- 6.13 The success of the facility both for elite athletes and the community will be assisted by the high level of sports programming of the facilities. High occupancy rates for both user groups, elite and participation will only be achieved if the programmes are appropriate, to a suitable standard and implemented by qualified coaches.
- 6.14 The majority of the sports programmes will be developed through and with the assistance of the National Governing Bodies of Sport. They are the professionals with the experience and knowledge content of their particular sport. The formal sports will be greatly assisted in the excellent facilities planned for the National Sports Campus.
- 6.15 Programming in the informal sport areas will be less intense as these activities have more development potential when not formalised or structured. The open setting of a mixture of park and woodland will

intrinsically benefit the development of recreational activities such as walking groups. Ample space has been assigned to informal recreational activities and will be easily accessible.

### Conclusion

- 6.16 The facilities planned for the National Sports Campus will benefit both elite athletes nationally and participation/community groups in the Dublin 15 area. The aim of NSCDA will be to ensure facilities are used by both target groups, elite and participation, adding to the benefit and success of the facilities planned.
- 6.17 While the proposed facilities in Abbotstown are a national asset they will also serve as a local amenity for the community.

**/ Appendix 1 /**



### **Public Consultation Notice**

#### **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000 - 2004 FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2005 - 2011 Lands at Abbotstown, Dublin 15**

The Council, in the adoption of the County Development Plan in relation to the above lands, under Local Objective 335 resolved:

*“To undertake a study to determine a suitable mix of sporting and appropriate commercial, leisure and amenity uses in order to create a vibrant and sustainable sports campus. This study shall also investigate the possibility of opening up these lands for recreation use for the residents of the Greater Blanchardstown Area.”*

In light of the Government decision of November 2005 to proceed with development of a National Sports Campus at Abbotstown it is timely that the study envisaged be now commenced. The Council intends to assemble the planning study for these lands in co-operation with the Office of Public Works and Campus and stadium Ireland Development Ltd (C.S.I.D). The County Council hereby invites interested parties to make submissions on the future development and use of these lands in order to inform the preparation of the planning study. A map outlining the lands in question is available at the following locations:

#### **Fingal County Council Offices:**

- County Hall, Swords, Fingal, Co. Dublin  
Mon - Thurs 9.00 am - 5.00 pm & Fri 9.00 am to 4.30 pm
- Blanchardstown Offices, Grove Road, Fingal, Dublin 15  
Mon - Thurs 9.00 am - 5.00 pm & Fri 9.00 am - 4.30 pm

#### **Other locations:**

- Blanchardstown Public Library, Civic Centre, Blanchardstown Centre, Dublin 15  
Check locally for opening hours

Website: [www.fingalcoco.ie/planningitemsondisplay](http://www.fingalcoco.ie/planningitemsondisplay)

The County Council hereby invites any interested parties to make submissions on the future development and use of these lands in order to inform the preparation of the planning study.

Any submissions to the planning study, should be made in writing to, Senior Executive Officer, Planning Department, Fingal County Council, County Hall, Swords, Fingal, Co. Dublin, or they can be e-mailed to [devplan@fingalcoco.ie](mailto:devplan@fingalcoco.ie) **on or before 5.00 pm, Wednesday 14th June, 2006.**

**Dated: 17th May 2006**

## Study for Lands at Abbotstown

Public Display 17th May 2006 - 14th June 2006

No.	Title	First Name	Surname	Job Title	Company	On Behalf Of
01	Mr.	Cliff	Saunders	President	Irish Hockey Association	Irish Hockey Association
02	Mr	Michael	Fox	Chairman	South Dublin Allotments Association	South Dublin allotments Association
03	Cllr	Felix	Gallagher			
04	Mr	Roderick	O'Gorman		Green Party Candidate	
05	Mr	Kieran	O'Neill		Dublin 15 Community Council	
06	Ms	Ciara	Darcy		Burke Kennedy Doyle	St Francis Hospice (Dub West)
07	Ms	Joan	Burton	TD		
08	Cllr	Leo	Varadkar			
09	Mr	John	Henry		Dublin Transportation Office	
10	Ms	Tara	Choules		Dog Training Ireland	
11	Ms	Fiona	McManus		Dept of Environment Heritage & Local Government	

## Abbotstown Study

### Summary of submissions received in foot of public consultation

#### 1.0 Public Consultation

In order to inform the preparation of the Planning Study any interested parties were invited to make submissions on the future development and use of the lands at Abbotstown which are the subject of Local Objective 335 of the County Development Plan. Submissions were received between 17th May and 14th June 2006.

1.1 There were 11 submissions received from interested parties including several local elected representatives, a community group, interest groups and the Department of the Environment.

#### 2.0 Summary of Submissions

The main issues/concerns which were highlighted can be summarised as follows (in no particular order of importance):

##### 2.1 Minority Sports Activities

Several representations included a request for minority sports/activities to be represented/accommodated at the Sports Campus or within the Abbotstown lands. Submissions were received in relation to Ice-hockey, Motorcycling, Gymnastics and Skate-boarding as well as allotments and dog training.

##### 2.2 Community access to facilities

The residents of wider Blanchardstown require access to sporting/recreational facilities which are currently very deficient in comparison to the existing and future population of the area. Abbotstown is a large land bank where these facilities should be accommodated in conjunction with the more specialist/professional facilities of the Sports Campus/Institute.

Facilities required include outdoor playing pitches for field sports but also a sports/athletics track, changing rooms, etc. Consultation and co-ordination with the sports/community projects and strategies of Fingal County Council should be ensured to maximise benefit for the local area.

##### 2.3 Provision of minor stadium facility

Submissions referred to the proposed re-location of Bohemians from the city to Dublin 15. There is support for an opportunity to provide a stadium of modest size to facilitate a local football club for the population of 100,000 in the Dublin 15 area. This should be considered differently to the previous 80,000 - seater stadium proposal.

##### 2.4 Transportation

Existing and recognised congestion and traffic problems in Dublin 15 area were highlighted. The proposed

development should be analysed and assessed in light of these problems. Road access in particular was identified as an important area of concern. There should be a number of accesses into the site as the single existing access from the Snugsborough Road would be inadequate to serve facilities proposed.

Access to the lands currently is very limited and will need to be properly planned to avoid congestion and maximise benefit. Increased public transport is required to connect to local services and pedestrian and cyclist facilities provided for access by the public.

#### 2.5 Protection of Abbotstown House

Within the overall site any development of Abbotstown House should be dealt with sensitively and respect its Protected Structure status. New development and uses should be integrated into the house and its curtilage including any existing structures that are worthy to be retained. Emphasis should be placed on preserving architectural heritage and the setting of the complex.

#### 2.6 Public Park

There were repeated requests that the Abbotstown lands should make provision for a major public park for use by the people of Blanchardstown/Dublin 15. This would establish an urban amenity for the rapidly developing population similar to other large urban areas. This park should include planned walks, wooded areas, playground, picnic areas, etc. Facilities should be supervised with the required security, staffing and funding.

This future regional park would best be located in the south eastern quarter of landholding adjoin the Tolka Valley where links and connections to the Tolka and the Royal Canal can be formed and strengthened.

#### 2.7 Future Housing Development

The zoning/designation of part(s) of the site for housing was opposed. The Dublin 15 area is considered to have undergone rapid development and there are sufficient existing lands zoned to accommodate future housing for the area.

The state lands are needed to provide recreational and leisure opportunities for the existing population. This objective for the use of the Abbotstown Lands has been long established.

#### 2.8 Miscellaneous land use requests

- Lands adjacent to the graveyard at Abbotstown to be used as a graveyard for the Dublin 15 area
- Reservation of school sites adjacent to the residential development at Waterville (adjoining to the south of Abbotstown) for future local need.
- Expanded site for St. Francis Hospice
- Science and technology centre/museum
- Outdoor events area for carnivals, circus, etc

**4th July 2006**

## Notes

## Notes