

# Construction of a New Artificial Pitch at Knocklyon Park

EIA Screening Report

April 2023

Project number: 2022s0657

South Dublin County Council

Final

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## Contract

This report describes work commissioned by Jed McDermott of South Dublin County Council, by an email dated 16th of May 2022. Conor O'Neill of JBA Consulting carried out this work.

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## Purpose

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## Abbreviations

AA - Appropriate Assessment
CEMP - Construction Environmental Management Plan
EIAR - Environmental Impact Assessment Report
LAP - Local Area Plan
NIAH - National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
NMS - National Monuments Service
SDCC - South Dublin County Council
SFRA - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
WFD - Water Framework Directive

# 1 Introduction

JBA Consulting Engineers and Scientists Ltd. (hereafter JBA) has been commissioned by South Dublin County Council to prepare an EIA Screening Report for a proposed artificial pitch at Knocklyon GAA pitches, Co. Dublin (the 'proposed development'). The proposed development, which will be submitted under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Act (2000) as amended, consists of an 11,433m<sup>2</sup> artificial pitch with 3G Synthetic Turf and all ancillary works.

## 1.1 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to identify whether there is a need under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, for an EIAR for the proposed development.

Schedule 5 (Parts 1 and 2) of the Act lists the groups of development projects which are subject to EIA screening under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU. Part 1 lists those projects which are automatically subject to an EIAR due to the scale and nature of the project. Part 2 lists projects which are also likely to have significant environmental effects based on the nature and size of the development set out by threshold criteria.

An additional group of projects, which are considered sub-threshold developments under Part 2, may fall below the thresholds set but may, under further analysis, be deemed to have significant effects due to their location within a catchment, size, or proximity to sensitive areas.

This report documents the methodology employed to determine whether the proposed development falls under any of these groups, and therefore will have significant environmental impacts. Rationale has been given for the decision made in reference to the relevant legislation, and additional documents have been referenced where required.

This report is intended for the project as described below. Any significant changes to the project description or location would require preparation of a new EIA screening report.

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report has been prepared by JBA Consulting and has identified any potential impacts to Natura 2000 sites and protected landscapes. This EIA Screening document, along with the AA Screening Report, will be submitted as part of the Part 8 planning process for the proposed development.

## 2 Description of Proposed Works

### 2.1 Site Location

The proposed project is located in Knocklyon Park, adjacent to Woodstown Green housing estate, and approximately 90m south-west of the M50 in Knocklyon, Co. Dublin (Figure 2-1). The Woodstown Stream is located approximately 65m south-east of the site, along the boundary of the parkland. This stream flows east into the River Owenadoher before flowing north towards the main body of the River Dodder. Nearby, to the west of the site, is a culverted section of the Orlagh River (Dodder\_040).

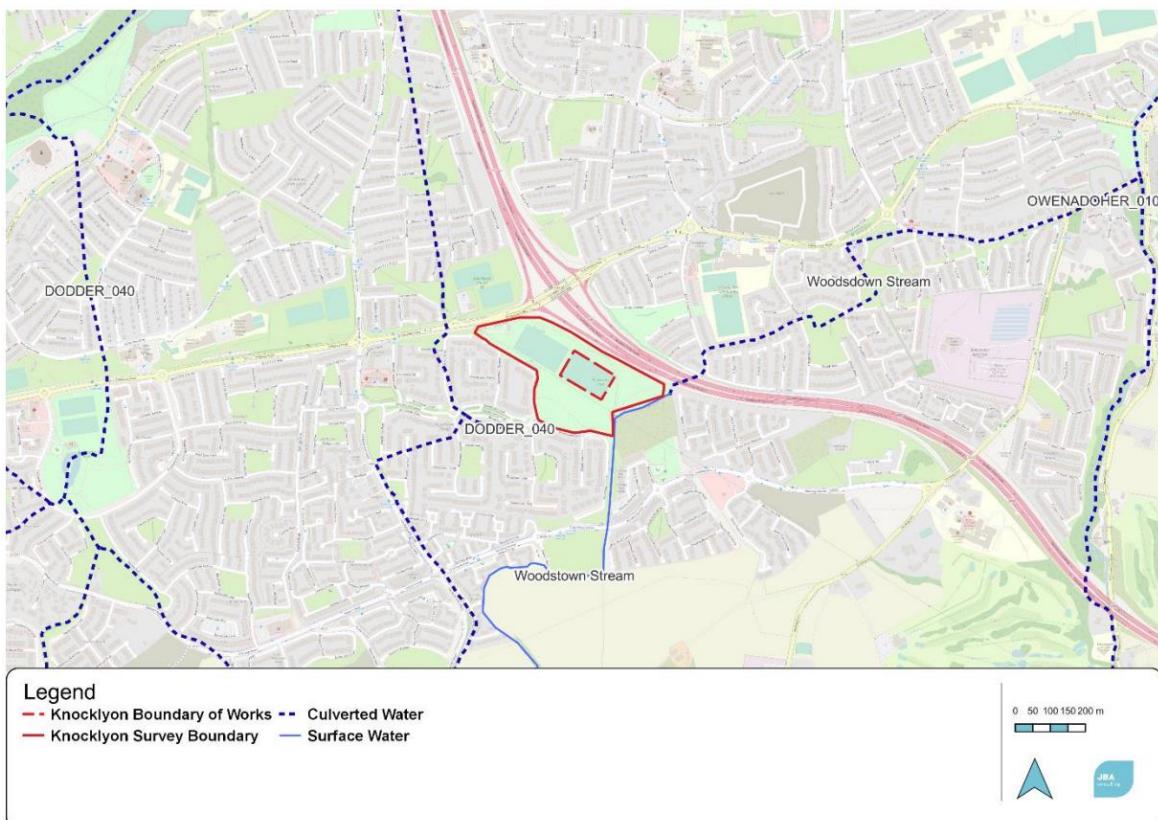


Figure 2.1: Site Location

### 2.2 Proposed Development

South Dublin County Council (SDCC) intend to apply for permission for the proposed construction of an artificial pitch in Knocklyon GAA Pitches, Co. Dublin.

The development will consist of the construction of an 11,433m<sup>2</sup> artificial pitch with 3G Synthetic Turf, to be primarily used for full sized soccer, GAA and Rugby with line markings for cross-field play as an option in the future. The facility would be completed with an access route, spectator area, fencing and netting, floodlighting and equipment. The artificial pitch will be surrounded by a kickboard of approximately 2.5cm height, a fence height of 640cm that will each be embedded into 300mm<sup>3</sup> of concrete, and six floodlighting columns.

The additional scope of the works include:

- Apply fertiliser to proposed grass development area.
- Excavate and remove all topsoil's over the grassed development area (thickness TBC conjectured at 250mm)
- Earthworks cut and fill to new formation
- Apply separator membrane and geogrid system on formation.
- Installation of parallel drainage network completion with carrier drainage and cut off drain as required, to form a new outfall or attenuation tank as necessary.

- Install new internal perimeter kerbing
- Installation of crushed stone sub-base including any blinding layer 300 mm.
- Installation of engineered base layer (porous 40mm minimum)
- Installation of new 5m high perimeter fencing with an increased 10m minimum ball stop nets behind both GAA goals.
- Installation of new 6-column floodlighting system
- Installation of new spectator area including new 1.2m spectator guard rail.
- Installation of new prefabricated shockpad.
- Installation of detox area including a brush-down station
- New 60mm 3G synthetic turf, complete with infill and line markings cut in/in laid.
- Landscaping and reinstatement of surrounding area

Surface water that accumulates on the pitches will be fed through a lateral drainage system that will feed into a carrier drainage section before entering a silt trap chamber and a soakaway. The lateral drain and carrier drain sections will both consist of a 6-10mm gravel backfill and a 10-20mm Type B gravel bedding, while the drains will be made of a 150mm Ø and 80mm Ø perforated twin wall uPVC pipe respectively, while the carrier drain will also contain a geotextile membrane.

The Proposed Project is scheduled to last for approximately 6 months.

## 3 Purpose of Screening

### 3.1 Legislative Context for EIAR in Ireland

The EU has set out mandatory requirements for Environmental Impact Assessments under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU). The Directive identifies certain project types, described under Annex I, that will always have significant environmental effects due to their nature and size. These projects are required to undergo an EIAR in every Member State.

For projects listed under Annex II, the EIA Directive gives Member States discretion to decide the limits of projects requiring an EIAR. In Ireland, mandatory thresholds have been set for projects that would otherwise fall under Annex II, which are described in Schedule 5 of The Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended. These thresholds are based on project characteristics including size and location. Projects within these thresholds are always subject to an EIAR. In some circumstances, projects considered below the thresholds set under Schedule 5 Part 2 may still be considered by the Planning Authority to have significant effects on the environment, such as in cases where the projects are in a location of particular environmental sensitivity and may also be subject to an EIAR. These sub-threshold projects are reviewed by the Planning Authority on a case-by-case basis.

The principal piece of legislation under which an EIAR may be undertaken for various developments is The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Further regulations are explained in The Planning and Development (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2001-2018.

Legislation is examined below as to whether an EIAR will be required for this project.

### 3.2 The Planning and Development Act 2000 - Mandatory EIAR

The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, Section 172 sets out the types of projects that require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR):

An environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by the planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, in respect of an application for consent for proposed development where either:

a. the proposed development would be of a class specified in

- i. Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and either-
  - I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or
  - II. no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned, or
  - ii. Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and either-
    - I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or
    - II. no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned, or

b.

- i. the proposed development would be of a class specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 but does not exceed the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, and
- ii. the planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, determines that the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

#### 3.2.1 Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended

Projects which fall under Schedule 5, Part 1 are typically large infrastructure and energy projects and by their nature will always have significant environmental effects. The proposed development does not fall under Schedule 5, Part 1.

### 3.2.2 Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended

With regards to Part 2 projects, the categories and thresholds were examined for the following category:

#### 10. Infrastructure projects

(b) (iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.

(In this paragraph, “business district” means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)

The proposed development does not fall under any of the categories Part 2 of Schedule 5, being a playing pitch approx. 1 hectare in size. Therefore, an EIAR has not been automatically triggered for this proposed development.

However, it is necessary to consider if this development could result in significant environmental effects under the category of sub-threshold developments.

### 3.3 Sub-threshold EIAR

In accordance with the requirement to submit an EIAR with sub-threshold planning application (Article 103 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018), where a planning application for sub-threshold development is not accompanied by an EIAR, and the Planning Authority considers that the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment it shall, by notice in writing, require the applicant to submit an EIAR. This process therefore occurs after submission of an application, if that application is not accompanied by an EIAR.

The decision as to whether a development is likely to have ‘significant effects’ on the environment must be taken with reference to the criteria set out in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018. Schedule 7A requires that the following information be provided for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for EIAR:

1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular—

- a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and
- b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.

2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.

3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—

- a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and
- b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.
- c) The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018 (DHPLG 2018).

In order to assist planning and other consenting authorities in deciding if significant effects on the environment are likely to arise in the case of development below the national mandatory EIAR thresholds, the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government published a Guidance document in August 2003, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development and the Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (DHPLG 2018b)

The criteria, as transposed in Irish legislation, are grouped under three headings:

- i. Characteristics of Proposed Development
- ii. Location of Proposed Development
- iii. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

For the purposes of assessing if the development is likely to have significant effects on the environment in reference to these three parameters, the project is examined below in further detail.

## 4 Overview of Environmental Impacts

An overview of the potential environmental impacts of the development, according to theme presented in an EIAR, is provided below.

### 4.1 Population and Human Health

Once operational, the development will provide a positive impact to population and human health, by providing an attractive amenity for recreation for the local area. The proposed development will provide a high quality all weather sporting facility, for use by local clubs in the community.

During construction, there is a risk to the health and safety of workers on the development, as with any construction project. This will be mitigated against by the operational plans devised by the contractor and will not be significant.

Residences in the vicinity of the proposed development will experience some negative impacts during the construction phase of the development. These will be temporary and will be mitigated against by the operational plans devised by the contractor and adherence to standard best practice regarding control of noise and vibration, dust, and limitations on working hours.

### 4.2 Biodiversity

Ecological receptors that must be examined include protected Natura 2000 sites under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), as well as species protected under the Wildlife Act (1976), and any ecological receptors which may be negatively impacted by the proposed development, both directly and indirectly.

#### 4.2.1 Proximity to Protected Sites

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been completed by JBA Consulting for this project to determine whether there is a potential for impacts on nearby Natura 2000 sites.

Those sites within 5km of the proposed development, plus a 15km hydrological connection extension, are shown in Table 4.1.

The AA Screening determined that there are no likely significant impacts on any Natura 2000 sites as a result of the proposed development.

Table 4.1: Natura 2000 sites within 5km of the proposed development, plus 15km hydrological extension

Natura 2000 site	Site Code	Approximate Distance from Site	Hydrological Distance from Site
Glenasmole Valley SAC	001209	3.5km	n/a
Wicklow Mountains SAC	002122	4.7km	n/a
Wicklow Mountains SPA	004040	4.4km	n/a
South Dublin Bay SAC	000210	9km	16.8km
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA	004024	9km	15.8km
North Dublin Bay SAC	000206	13.8km	18.5km
North Bull Island SPA	004006	13.8km	18.5km

#### 4.2.2 Other Ecological Receptors

The site currently contains amenity sports pitches, with a boundary of woodlands and sections of meadow grassland south of the pitches. The site is located approximately 65m northwest of the closest surface waterbody, Woodstown Stream.

An Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA) was completed for this development by JBA. The EIA found potential for low-level impacts on several ecological receptors, including local habitats, and fauna such as Otter, Fish species, amphibians, ground-dwelling mammals, bats, and breeding birds.

The EcIA outlines mitigation measures to be put in place for the development, which if strictly adhered to will reduce the potential impacts identified in that report to neutral. These measures, which are outlined in full in the EcIA, are summarised as follows:

- General construction stage mitigation, such as the preparation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), adherence to best practice environmental guidance, and preparation of construction method statements to be submitted to SDCC prior to site works commencing;
- Measures pertaining to the location and setup of the site compound. The site compound is to be situated in the amenity grassland directly to the northwest of the area between the proposed pitch boundary and the car park;
- Water quality measures for the prevention of watercourse pollution, spill prevention, and safe concrete management;
- General avoidance measures and noise and vibration limits;
- Construction site lighting design, including for the protection of bats using the area;
- Remedial grassland sowing in areas damaged by machinery crossing post-construction.

With these mitigation measures put in place, the residual impacts of the proposed development on ecology will be neutral.

The operational lighting design has been assessed for potential impacts on bats and breeding birds. The EcIA included mitigation measures for the operational phase lighting. The lighting plan (including light intensity, timing of lighting during operation and height of lighting column) will be assessed by a professional Ecologist with bat expertise prior to the signing off of lighting plans. Lighting will minimise vertical light spill onto woodland, hedgerow, scrub, and areas of meadow. A warm white spectrum of light will be used to minimise blue light. In order to reduce potential light spillage further, the height of lamp columns will be restricted to 6m or less.

#### 4.3 Soils and Geology

The underlying bedrock of the site is composed of dark slate-schist, quartzite & coticule.

The subsoils underlying the site are limestone till.

Excavations will be shallow, with 250mm of topsoil removal required for the pitch, and excavations of 2-7m for the soakaway. Excavated material will be reused as fill where appropriate. Material not required for fill will be exported from the site and disposed of at appropriate licensed facilities. The expected amount of material to be exported as waste is not significant.

#### 4.4 Hydrology and Hydrogeology

##### 4.4.1 Surface Water

The proposed site lies within the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Liffey and Dublin Bay catchment and Dodder\_SC\_010 sub-catchment (EPA, 2020). There are surface waterbodies in the area of the project, however the closest, the Woodstown Stream, is located approximately 65m south-east of the site. This stream is culverted, and flows east, under the M50 before joining with the River Owenadoher, (Owenadoher\_010) before flowing north before reaching the main body of the River Dodder. The current WFD status (2013-2018) of the Dodder\_040 watercourse is 'Moderate'; and it is also considered to be 'At Risk'.

The proposed development is outside the CFRAM Flood Zones A and B.

Significant impacts on surface waterbodies are not expected due to the proposed development. This is due to the nature of the proposed works, the distance to any surface waterbodies, and mitigation measures for the protection of water quality and silt and pollution control which are outlined in the EcIA and summarised above in Section 4.2.2. These will be put in place by the appointed contractor and will ensure that risks of watercourse pollution and sedimentation are minimised.

##### 4.4.2 Groundwater

The site is underlain by the Kilcullen groundwater body, which is at Good WFD status and At Risk.

Groundwater vulnerability, a measure of the likelihood of groundwater contamination occurring, is Low across the site. The site is therefore at a low risk of groundwater contamination.

There are no Groundwater Zone of Contribution sites listed by the EPA near the development site, nor any drinking water sites with groundwater abstraction that are not on the groundwater quality monitoring network.

The risk of groundwater contamination will only be present during the construction phase of the development, and will be slight due to the low vulnerability and nature of the proposed works; once operational, the development is unlikely to result in groundwater impacts.

#### 4.5 Cultural Heritage

There are no archaeological features or protected structures within or directly bordering the proposed artificial pitch or car park, and therefore no likely impacts on recorded cultural heritage features. During construction, there is the potential for undiscovered archaeological features to be uncovered. However, due to the lack of deep excavations and the development history of the proposed route, this is unlikely.

One recorded archaeological feature, a ringfort (DU022-020) is to the north of the site on the other side of the R133. Its Zone of Notification is partially within the overall site boundary however no works will be taking place in or adjacent to the Zone. The feature was excavated prior to motorway construction in 1985. Given the lack of deep excavations, especially in the area of the feature, and the previous excavation of the site, no impacts are expected.

#### 4.6 Air and Climate

There is potential for impacts to air quality through emissions during the construction phase of the development, due to the operation of machinery on site and transport of materials to and from the site. These impacts will be mitigated against with measures outlined in the contractor's operating plans.

The proposed development will have no impact on air and climate once operational.

#### 4.7 Noise and Vibration

There is potential for localised noise and vibration impacts in the vicinity of the proposed development during the construction phase due to operation of machinery on site. These impacts would be temporary and only during the construction phase. Mitigation measures against such impacts will be outlined in the operating plans to be devised by the contractor.

The proposed development will not lead to any significant noise or vibration impacts during operational period.

#### 4.8 Landscape and Visual

The proposed development will give rise to temporary landscape or visual impacts to residents living in proximity to the development during the construction phase.

The view southwest from the existing footpath in the park, adjacent to the M50 slip road, is designated for "Protect and Preserve Significant Views" in the SDCC Development Plan 2022-2028. This view is towards the mountains to the southwest, and will not be impacted significantly by the proposed development.

When constructed, the proposed development will be low in landscape and visual impact for surrounding landowners and will be in character with the surrounding urban landscape.

#### 4.9 Material Assets including Traffic, Utilities, and Waste

##### 4.9.1 Traffic

During construction, there will be temporary disruptions on local roads during deliveries or due to machinery operating. Alternative routes are available in the area, and it is expected that such disruptions will be temporary and limited.

Once operational, the proposed development will not have a significant effect on traffic. Existing car parking is available at the entrance to the park off the R113.

#### 4.9.2 Utilities

Impacts to utilities are not anticipated due to the nature of works and lack of deep excavations needed for the proposed development. An existing ESB powerline runs through the site from northwest to southeast. The line is southwest of the proposed pitch and will not be impacted by the proposed development.

#### 4.9.3 Waste

Excavated material generated from site clearance will be inert and or organic material and is expected to be redistributed or re-used within the site extents, and exported as a waste when not needed. Significant amounts of construction waste are not anticipated.

Once operational, the proposed development will not generate waste.

### 4.10 Cumulative Impacts

#### 4.10.1 Plans

##### South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028

The proposed development is in line with the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028. The land is zoned as Objective OS, to preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities. The proposed development is in keeping with the land use zoning objective.

#### 4.10.2 Projects

There are no other projects dating back three years, which are not retention applications, home extensions, and/or internal alterations that have the potential for cumulative impacts with the proposed development.

## 5 Screening Assessment

### 5.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

To determine whether the characteristics of the proposed development are likely to have significant impacts on the environment, the following questions are answered in Table 5.1, following guidelines set out in Guidance for Consenting Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development (DoEHLG 2003).

Table 5.1: Characteristics of the proposed development

Characteristics of the Proposed Development - Screening Questions	Comment
<b>Could the scale (size or design) of the proposed development be considered significant?</b>	The proposed development is an artificial grass pitch approx. 1 hectare in size, at a site with existing sports pitches. The scale and design of the proposed development are appropriate for the site and are not considered to be significant.
<b>Considered cumulatively with other adjacent proposed developments, would the size of the proposed development be considered significant?</b>	The development is small. No other proposed developments in the area are expected to interact with the proposed development or cause cumulative impacts.
<b>Will the proposed development utilise a significant quantity of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water or biodiversity?</b>	In terms of land area, the proposed development is small, with the area already in use as a sports pitch. Excavated material will be reused as fill where appropriate. No water is required for the development. Therefore, there will not be a significant quantity of natural resources used.
<b>Will the proposed development produce a significant quantity of waste?</b>	No. Significant excavations are not required. Debris or rubbish generated during construction will be disposed of at appropriately licenced agents.
<b>Will the proposed development create a significant amount or type of pollution?</b>	No. Temporary air and noise pollution may occur during the construction phase, but the amount will not be significant and will be mitigated against by operational plans devised by the contractor. Once operational, the proposed development will not cause pollution.
<b>Will the proposed development create a significant amount of nuisance?</b>	<p>No. During construction, some noise will be created, however this will be temporary and short-term. Construction works will be limited to certain times of day to avoid nuisance to local residences.</p> <p>Once operational, some noise typical of playing areas will be created. The development is located in an existing park which is zoned for open space and amenity and has existing playing pitches already. Therefore, there will not be significant nuisance created.</p> <p>Floodlighting has the potential to create nuisance via light pollution and light spill. To prevent impacts on wildlife (birds, bats) and nearby residents, the floodlights should be fitted with hoods, shields, or cowls. This will ensure the light is directed to the playing area and avoids light spill elsewhere.</p>

<b>Will there be a risk of major accidents having regard to substances or technologies used?</b>	No. The risks of this development will be those typically associated with normal construction practices.  Construction machinery will be used during the construction phase and will be operated by licensed contractors, and following best practice guidance.
<b>Will there be a risk of natural disasters which are relevant to the project, including those caused by climate change?</b>	The proposed development is outside the Flood Zone A and B extents as described in the SDCC SFRA. Risk of natural disasters to the project is therefore low.
<b>Will there be a risk to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)?</b>	No. Any potential risk to human health will be as a result of the construction phase of this project. All contractors will be subject to best practice methodologies and risk assessments in order to minimize any risk to human health.
<b>Would any combination of the above factors be considered likely to have significant effects on the environment?</b>	No. The development is relatively small scale. The environmental impacts are predictable and easily mitigated through the use of best practice guidelines during the construction phase. As such, significant impacts on the environment are not expected as a result of the proposed development.

**Conclusion:** The characteristics of the proposed development are not considered likely to result in a significant impact on the environment by virtue of its size, nature or operational activities.

**Reasoning:** The proposed development is relatively small in extent, and will replace an existing grass playing pitch. Most environmental or noise impacts will be during the construction phase and not during operation of the development. Construction will not require significant use of natural resources, nor will it generate significant amounts of waste.

## 5.2 Location of the Proposed Development

The following questions are answered below in Table 5.2 to determine whether the geographical location of the proposed development can be considered ecologically or environmentally sensitive.

Table 5.2: Location of the proposed development

Location of the Proposed Development - Screening Questions	Comment
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any site designated for conservation interest (e.g., SAC, SPA, pNHA)?	No. The AA Screening for the site concluded that there are no Natura 2000 sites likely to be directly or indirectly impacted by the development.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any habitats listed as Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The AA Screening for the site found no potential impacts on habitats listed as Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any habitats listed as Priority Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The AA Screening for the site found no potential impacts on habitats listed as Priority Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any species listed as Annex II in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The AA Screening for the site found no potential impacts on species listed as Annex II in the EU Habitats Directive.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on the breeding places of any species protected under the Wildlife Act?	No. With mitigation measures in place as described in the EclA, the impacts of the proposed development on ecological receptors are expected to be not significant and neutral.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on the existing or approved land use?	No. The proposed development is in line with the approved land use under the SDCC CDP; Objective OS: To preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities.  Existing land use is open green space with playing pitches. The proposed development will improve this land use by ensuring one pitch is playable throughout the year.
Has the proposed development the potential to significantly impact directly or indirectly the relative abundance, availability, quality or regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground?	No. The proposed development will not impact the relative abundance, availability, or regenerative capacity of natural resources.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any protected structures or Recorded Monuments and Places of Archaeological Interest?	No. There are no recorded archaeological or architectural features on site or in the near vicinity of the proposed development which will be impacted. One archaeological record has a Zone of Notification which is partially within the boundary of the park, but no works are taking place in or adjacent to it and the feature was

	previously excavated prior to motorway construction in 1985.
<b>Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on listed or scenic views or protected landscapes as outlined in the County Development Plan?</b>	No. A protected view is in the park looking southwest towards the mountains. This view will not be impacted by the proposed development.

Conclusion: The location of the proposed development is not considered likely to result in a significant impact on the environment.

Reasoning: The proposed development is situated in an existing park with playing pitches. The location is appropriate for an artificial playing pitch. There are no Natura 2000 sites or designated ecological sites which will be impacted by the proposed development.

### 5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts

The following questions were answered in Table 5.3, in line with Guidance on EIA Screening - June 2001, prepared for the European Commission by ERM (UK), to determine whether the environmental impacts of the development can be considered significant.

Table 5.3: Characteristics of potential impacts

Characteristics of Potential Impacts - Screening Questions	Comment
<b>Will there be a large change in environmental conditions?</b>	No. The proposed development will be similar in appearance to the existing pitch and identical in use. The EclA for the development found the impact on ecology would be neutral.
<b>Will new features be out of scale with the existing environment?</b>	No. The proposed development will be similar in scale to other facilities. The proposed floodlights will be similar or lower than existing lights on the M50 immediately east, and the powerlines running through the park.
<b>Will the effect be particularly complex?</b>	No. The primary environmental impacts are expected to occur during the construction phase, and will be mitigated by operational plans devised by the on-site contractor. These include temporary impacts to surface water quality, air quality, noise and vibration, and through the generation of waste.
<b>Will the effect extend over a large area?</b>	No. Given the small scale and nature of the proposed development this is highly unlikely.
<b>Will there be any potential for trans-frontier impacts?</b>	No.
<b>Will many people be affected?</b>	Only residents and business owners in the local vicinity will be affected by the construction phase, however such impacts will be temporary.
<b>Will many receptors of other types (fauna and flora, businesses, facilities) be affected?</b>	No. Impacts on other receptors are expected to be temporary and limited to the construction phase. Once operational, impacts to receptors are expected to be negligible and typical of those expected in a park or playing pitch.
<b>Will valuable or scarce features or resources be affected?</b>	No. There will be no effect on scarce features or resources.
<b>Is there a risk that environmental standards will be breached?</b>	No. The appointed contractor will be contractually obligated to follow environmental guidance and standards, which will be outlined in the contract documents and operating plans devised for construction.
<b>Is there a risk that protected sites, areas, features will be affected?</b>	No.
<b>Is there a high probability of the effect occurring?</b>	No.
<b>Will the effect continue for a long time?</b>	No. Potential impacts would be brief to temporary, only occurring occasionally within the construction phase of the development or in the case of a breach of environmental standards.
<b>Will the effect be permanent rather than temporary?</b>	No. Potential impacts would be temporary.

<b>Will the impact be continuous rather than intermittent?</b>	No. Potential impacts would be intermittent.
<b>If it is intermittent will it be frequent rather than rare?</b>	No. Potential impacts would be rare, occurring only in the case of accidental breach of environmental standards during the construction phase.
<b>Will the impacts be irreversible?</b>	No.
<b>Will it be difficult to avoid, or reduce or repair or compensate for the effect?</b>	No. Mitigation measures to be put in place during construction will be sufficient to avoid or reduce potential impacts.

**Conclusions:** The characteristics of the potential impacts as a result of the proposed development are unlikely to be significant and are easily mitigated.

**Reasoning:** The potential impacts from this development would be primarily during the construction phase. It is easy to predict these impacts and mitigate them through the use of standard environmental procedures.

## 6 Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this report was to identify whether there is a need under The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, for an EIAR for the proposed artificial grass playing pitch at Knocklyon GAA pitches, Co. Dublin.

It was determined that the proposed development does not fall under Schedule 5 (Parts 1 and 2) of the Act. As such, an EIAR has not been automatically triggered. To determine whether the development may fall under the category of Sub-threshold development, with the potential to give rise to significant environmental effects, a screening exercise was undertaken.

During construction, typical impacts such as noise, dust, traffic disruption, and the generation of small amounts of waste are to be expected. These are typical construction phase impacts, and will be mitigated against by environmental operating plans devised by the on-site contractor, following best practice guidance.

An AA Screening Report completed by JBA for the proposed development determined that no likely significant impacts are expected as a result of the proposed development. This is due to the small size of the development and the distance and lack of pathways to Natura 2000 sites.

An EcIA completed by JBA found that, with mitigation measures put in place by the appointed contractor, no significant effects on ecology will result from the proposed development.

Once operational, the proposed development will be low in environmental impact. The site is zoned for open space and amenity in the SDCC CDP, and is situated in the park beside other existing playing pitches and the dedicated car park. The development will provide an important sports amenity for the local residents and sports clubs.

It has been concluded that the proposed development does not fall under the category of sub-threshold development, and thus an EIAR is not required.

The overall conclusion is based on the details of the scheme available at the time of preparation of this report. If the extent of the scheme or the construction methods for the scheme are changed then the EIA Screening assessment should be reviewed.



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