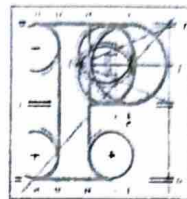


Our Case Number: ABP-319306-24



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

The Manager
Development Application Unit
Government Offices
Newtown Road
Wexford
Co. Wexford
Y35 AP90

Date: 30th April 2024

Re: Proposed development of Cavan Town Sports Campus
in the townlands of Kilnavara, Lurganboy (Loughtee Upper By), Creighan and Rosscolgan in Cavan
Town.

Dear Sir / Madam,

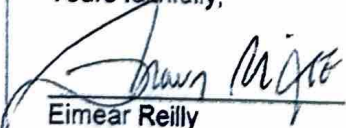
An Bord Pleanála has received your recent submission in relation to the above mentioned proposed development and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter.

Please note that the proposed development shall not be carried out unless the Board has approved it or approved it with conditions.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned officer of the Board at laps@pleanala.ie

Please quote the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Board.

Yours faithfully,


Eimear Reilly
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737184

JA03

Teil
Glao Áitiúil
Facs
Láithreán Gréasáin
Ríomhphost

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64 Sráid Maoilbhríde
Baile Átha Cliath 1
D01 V902

64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Shaun McGee

From: Shaun McGee
Sent: Tuesday 30 April 2024 12:54
To: Shaun McGee
Subject: FW: 177AE Cavan Sports Campus
Attachments: 177AE Cavan Sports Campus ABP-319306-24.pdf

From: Housing Manager DAU <Manager.DAU@npws.gov.ie>
Sent: Thursday, April 25, 2024 10:59 AM
To: LAPS <laps@pleanala.ie>
Cc: Bord <bord@pleanala.ie>
Subject: 177AE Cavan Sports Campus

Caution: This is an External Email and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

ABP Ref: ABP-319306-24

A Chara,

Please find attached Heritage Related recommendations for the above mentioned 177AE application.

Regards
Diarmuid

Diarmuid Buttimer
Executive Officer

An Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Aonad na nIarratas ar Fhorbairt
Development Applications Unit
Oifigi an Rialtais
Government Offices
Bóthar an Bhalle Nua, Loch Garman, Contae Loch Garman, Y35 AP90
Newtown Road, Wexford, County Wexford, Y35 AP90

—
Diarmuid.Buttimer@housing.gov.ie
Manager.DAU@housing.gov.ie

An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



Your Ref: ABP-319306-24
Our Ref: 177AE Cavan Sports Campus
(Please quote in all related correspondence)

25 April 2024

The Secretary
An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Via email to bord@pleanala.ie ; laps@pleanala.ie

177AE: Proposed development of Cavan Town Sports Campus: in the townlands of Kilnavara, Lurganboy (Loughtee Upper By), Creighan and Rosscolgan in Cavan Town.

A chara

I refer to correspondence received in connection with the above.

Outlined below are heritage-related observations/recommendations of the Department under the stated headings co-ordinated by the Development Applications Unit.

Archaeology

This Department notes that an Archaeological Assessment Report by Gahan and Long has been submitted with this application.

This Department concurs with the recommendation as outlined in Section 15.6 and recommends that a geophysical survey as a technique to elucidate archaeological test excavation be undertaken over the entire development site. The archaeologist shall submit the Archaeological Assessment to the National Monuments Section of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the relevant planning authority outlining all of the above. Should there be a significant archaeological impact, the National Monuments Section will advise on further mitigation.

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



Nature Conservation

Aquatic species

The application states:

- *"Further surveys for white clawed crayfish and freshwater pearl mussel are to be undertaken during early 2024."*
- *"Ecofact Environmental Consultants have been commissioned to undertake this survey work however as of February 2024 no results have been provided due to the river within the site having high water levels that has not allowed survey work to be completed at this current time. However, upon inspection of this water body and surrounding environment earlier in the season during 2023 when the water levels were lower, remains of White-clawed Crayfish were identified alongside observations of live freshwater pearl mussels, indicating that they are present within this habitat."*
- *Further surveys are to be undertaken in Spring/Summer 2024 when water levels have decreased."*

It is understood that subsequent to the application being made, that the pearl mussel was incorrectly identified and may be another mollusc species. Further information should be sought to clarify these specific fieldwork results and reviewed by a suitably qualified molluscan ecologist.

There is very little objective information regarding the works required to construct the proposed new outfalls, the bridge proposed across river and the culverting of the minor watercourse. It is recommended that further information is requested including description of these works, the potential impacts on habitats and species during both construction and operation and how these will be mitigated.

Bats

The application states "A total of six trees were categorised as having "low" roosting potential, three as having "moderate" and three as having "high". As no specific tree felling proposals were provided at the time of survey, further surveys are still required prior to felling of any high and medium valued trees."

Whilst it would appear that extensive bat surveys have been carried out and have revealed a diverse bat fauna, there is little description of the potential impact on bats due to loss of trees as suggested by the uncertainty in the statement above. The competent authority is obliged to ensure the protection of these species listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive and must be clearly demonstrated prior to a consent being granted. It is advised that additional information is presented to show the following:

- Specific tree felling proposals and impact on species- based on surveys of the trees scheduled for removal;
- Impact of light spill during construction and operation overlaid onto the pattern of bat activity for each species;



- Impact of works to watercourses (construction and operational).

It is also recommended that additional surveys are undertaken to determine presence/absence of bats roosting in the Royal School as the proposed development may have adverse effects on the viability of roosting bat populations, if present. Such surveys may require additional effort (i.e. repeated surveys) if carried out remotely from the School grounds.

Pine marten

It is noted that a detailed survey for pine marten was undertaken and that remote camera monitoring recorded a maximum of 1 adult and 4 kits foraging and commuting within the site. However, it is not clear what value has been placed on the site for this species. Protected under the Wildlife Act, it is highly likely that this species will be disturbed during construction works and will not use the site during this period. Measures that will allow the site to be used by pine marten during site clearance should be described and taken into account in the summary of mitigation measures. Such measures may include phased clearance to allow belts of brush and scrub to be present on site so that shelter is provided.

Measures have been proposed to protect against disturbance to potential den sites. It should be noted that checks for dens should apply to a variety of habitats, not just trees, and should include rabbit burrows and rock crevices. The applicant is advised to provide detailed measures as to how the ecologist will determine occupancy of such habitats.

Habitat compensation

It is stated that inclusion of the habitat compensation planting areas within Phase 1 will ensure a maximum chance of more mature established vegetation being present prior to full operational phase of the development and provide suitable screening habitat for disturbance sensitive species to acclimatise.

Additional detail should be provided to describe the expected growth of the vegetation between these phases. It cannot be concluded that effective screening habitat will be provided without a clear plan including drawings to show the location and nature of such vegetation and which species it is intended to protect.

Several environmental protection plans are referred to in the application but are not included as part of the application. These include a Construction Environmental Management Plan, Surface Water Management Plan, Habitat Management Plan and the proposed Woodland Enhancement strategy. As a result, the Department cannot comment on their content- much of which relates to the protection of habitats and species from adverse effects such as pollution, damage and disturbance. Details such as proposed planting mixes, layouts of different habitats and how they relate to the habitats and species being lost or otherwise affected need to be provided before consent can be granted.



Further detail regarding partial translocation of the central hedgerow is required, including drawings showing locations of sections to be translocated and location of receptor ditches. Any collaboration with the Royal School in this respect should be presented in advance of any consent being granted, or if this is not possible then such collaboration should not be relied upon in the application.

The Department would advise that the grass/wildflower mix to be sown in the habitat compensation area is only deemed necessary where slope stabilisation is required. The preferred approach is to allow natural recolonization, as advocated by the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and the National Biodiversity Data Centre. It is advised that the proposed habitat compensation measure is revised to reflect this approach. This also applies to planting in riparian buffer areas, which should be fenced off and allowed to recolonise rather than deliberately planted. It is also unlikely that any buffer could be created in the short-term by additional planting and that wooden hoarding may meet the requirements stated in the application on a temporary basis.

Breeding birds

The Department would support the applicant's recommendation that scrub clearance should be undertaken outside of the breeding season (1st March – 31st August) and furthermore that this should be made a condition of any consent given, due to the value of the site for breeding birds in the local context.

You are requested to send any further communications to the Development Applications Unit (DAU) at manager.dau@npws.gov.ie, or to the address below.

Is mise le meas,

Diarmuid Buttimer
Development Applications Unit
Administration