

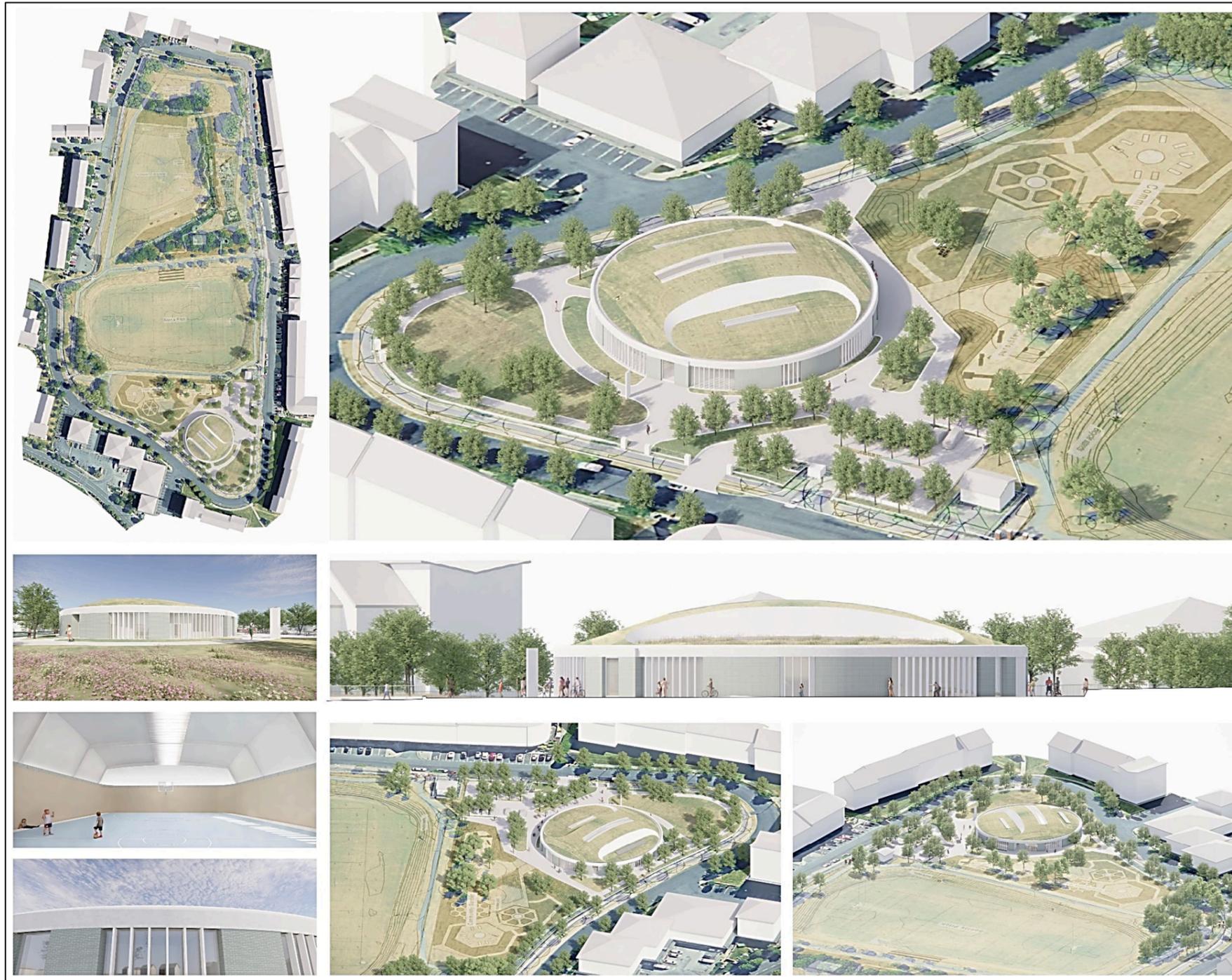
**PLANNING STATEMENT**

**PROPOSED MEAKSTOWN COMMUNITY CENTRE:  
LANESBOROUGH PARK, LANESBOROUGH ROAD,  
MEAKSTOWN, DUBLIN 11**

October 2021

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION AND DOCUMENT PURPOSE**

The Planning Partnership, The Coach House, Dundanion, Blackrock, Cork, T12 T6YC, has been retained by Fingal County Council as part of a multi-disciplinary consultancy team to deliver a new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown at an urban public parkland site located at Lanesborough Park, to maximise the potential of the subject site by providing a new purpose-built Sports Facility and Community Centre to cater for a wide range of community, recreational, educational and sporting activities in the area.

**1.1 Local Authority Development (Part 8 Planning Process)**

The basic concept underpinning the planning code is that permission is required in respect of the development of land. The planning code further identifies that development by a local authority within its own administrative area is undertaken in the interests of the common good and, therefore, need not be subject to the same level of public scrutiny as development proposed for private benefit. A local authority is prohibited from effecting any development in its functional area which contravenes materially its development plan.

The proposed new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown is of a class of development identified under Article 80(1)(k) of Part 8 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001* (as amended) and as such prescribed to be subject to the permission procedure as outlined under section 179 *Local Authority Development* of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended).

**1.2 Limitations on Local Authority Development**

Section 179 *Local Authority Development* of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended) provides for public notification of certain developments that do not require an Environmental Impact Assessment under Section 175 *Environmental impact assessment of certain development carried out by or on behalf of local authorities* of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended)<sup>1</sup>.

Section 175(2) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended) details that where an Environmental Impact Assessment Report has been prepared, the local authority development shall not be carried out unless An Bord Pleanála has approved it with or without modifications.

Section 179 *Local Authority Development* of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended) provides for public notification of certain developments that do not require an Appropriate Assessment under Section 177AE *Appropriate Assessment of certain development carried out by or on behalf of local authorities* of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended)<sup>2</sup>.

**1.3 Site Location and Context**

The subject site is located in the southern part of the Lanesborough Park, Meakstown, Co. Dublin. It comprises a 'triangular space' of approximately 0.4644 ha bounded by Lanesborough Road on east, south and west, and the extended existing urban public parkland on the north. Part of the Lanesborough Park immediately north of the subject site performs a stormwater attenuation function for surrounding built environment surface water catchment area.

The subject site is surrounded mostly by residential estates with 3 and 4 storey blocks addressing the new Community/Sports Centre location and providing excellent passive surveillance at this location.

<sup>1</sup> Section 179(3)(d) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended)

The Meakstown Local Centre backs onto the Lanesborough Road on the south western end of the Lanesborough Park, presenting rather blank facades with minimal passive surveillance onto this section of Lanesborough Road and the urban public parkland.

**Figure 1.1: Site Location and Context**



Source: ESRI ArcGIS, Annotated and Reproduced under Licence by The Planning Partnership September 2021

<sup>2</sup> Section 179(3)(e) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended)

### 1.4 Community Driven Demand within a 10 minute Walking Catchment

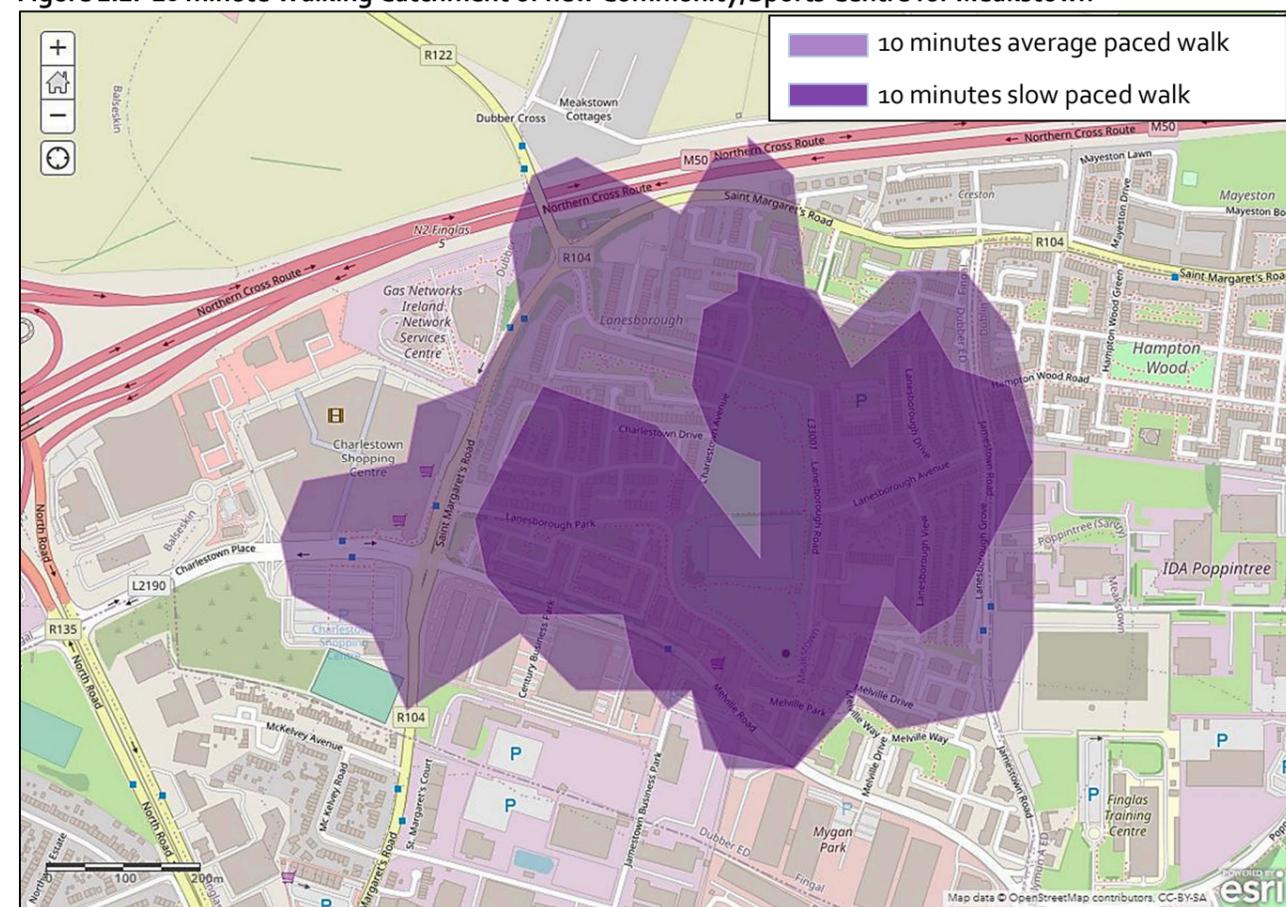
The surrounding built environment is characterised by individual housing areas delivered by independent landowners, a typical suburban development pattern seen in recent decades within many Irish towns. This has often led to poor connectivity between these residential areas and *inter alia* key community facilities such as schools, shops, leisure, sports, recreation and healthcare facilities.

The trend towards suburban development has hollowed out urban centres and created sprawl, which has in turn reduced the attractiveness of towns and villages. It is noted that infrastructure and amenities have tended to play catch-up with new housing and employment.

In recent times, there has been much more focus on core policy objectives for support of improved quality of the environment in newer developments. *Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework* (NPF) published in February 2018 set out National Strategic Outcomes including the provisions of enhanced amenities by investing in well-designed public realm, extensive amenities and recreational infrastructure, and integration with *inter alia* our built environment.

Figure 1.2 below presents graphically two Walking Catchment areas, i.e. a 10 minute slow paced walk and a 10 minute average speed walk, which will be served by the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, providing enhanced amenity and recreational infrastructure thereby enhancing the neighbourhood by increasing social interactions that improve the quality of life.

**Figure 1.2: 10 minute Walking Catchment of new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown**



Source: ESRI ArcGIS, Annotated and Reproduced under Licence by The Planning Partnership September 2021

### 1.5 Executive Summary

The objective of the project is to provide a new purpose-built Sports Facility and Community Centre Building with ancillary infrastructure and associated site development works (all totalling 1,279 sq m Gross Floor Space and ranging in height equivalent from 1 to 2 storeys), located within the heart of the community, to cater for a wide range of community, recreational, educational and sporting activities in the area.

After exploring a number of strategies, a building with a circular plan form was identified as best facilitating the spatial flow of the Lanesborough Park landscaping around a new building. The circular building plan does not have any blank gable conditions to the building, minimising the potential loss of residential amenity for surrounding residences which currently have an uninterrupted view of the urban park.

The main sports hall is positioned central to the plan with secondary rooms wrapped around this on all sides. The building therefore has a continuous single storey façade expression on all sides - thereby substantially reducing its volumetric presence within the park.

To increase the ecological potential of the park, the creation of a rain-garden to the south east of the new Community/Sports Centre is proposed to encourage wildlife and biodiversity in parallel with decreased human activity at this location. The rain-garden also forms an integral part of the new surface water drainage system for the development, to include a mixture of underground storage attenuation, permeable paving, oversized piping and a featured green roof on part of the building.

Development similar to that as proposed is **not** listed in Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001* (as amended), and as such the requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment, or even Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment, does **not** apply in this instance.

An *Appropriate Assessment (Screening)* dated September 2021, was undertaken and considered that the park has low potential as a foraging, commuting or roosting area for geese or bats due to the large number of active park users and their dogs.

The proposed new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown is in pursuance of National Strategic Outcomes and National Policy Objectives as outlined in *Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework*, including three key principles of Healthy Placemaking, Climate Action and Economic Opportunity as outlined within the *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Regional Area*.

The proposed new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown is further presented in compliance with the Policies and Objectives of the *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*.

Having regard to the Specific **Objective CHARLESTOWN AND MEAKSTOWN 2** facilitating the delivery of the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, the zoning designation of the subject site for the purposes of *OS - Open Space* which *inter alia* confirms that a *Community Facility and Recreational Facility/Sports Club* are permitted in principle, Statutory Guidelines for Planning Authorities on urban development prepared by Government in response to *Project Ireland 2040*, honouring the commitment to put into practice key National Policy Objectives contained within the *National Planning Framework*, as well as the availability of public services, amenities and facilities, it is considered that the proposed development of a new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown at the urban public parkland site located at Lanesborough Park, will enhance both the character and amenity of the area.

Accordingly, the proposed development as presented would not detract from the character of the area, would not seriously injure the amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity, would not be prejudicial to public health and would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety and convenience. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

**2.0 THE PROPOSED MEAKSTOWN DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PROPOSAL**

The objective of the project is to provide a new purpose-built Sports Facility and Community Centre to cater for a wide range of community, recreational, educational and sporting activities in the area.

This much needed facility will be in the heart of the community and serve the needs of the local people by playing a vital role in bringing people together and encouraging people to take part, network thus helping to build inclusive, engaged and safe communities.

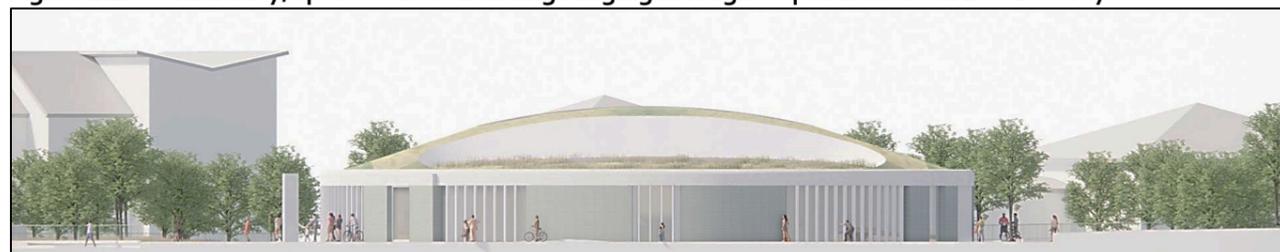
**2.1 Development Description the subject of this Planning Application**

Fingal County Council as Local Authority intends to develop a new Meakstown Community/Sports Centre at a site of approximately 0.4644 ha at Lanesborough Park, Lanesborough Road, Meakstown, Dublin 11, under the provisions of Part XI of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended) and Part 8 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001* (as amended).

The construction of the Community/Sports Centre Building with ancillary infrastructure and associated site development works (all totalling 1,279 sq m Gross Floor Space and ranging in height equivalent from 1 to 2 storeys), comprises of:

- Entrance lobby and reception area, reception station and IT/CCTV facility room;
- Central sports hall with associated storage;
- Changing room/space and toilets facilities;
- 4 no. community/training/studio/meeting rooms with associated storage and kitchen/serving facilities;
- Externally accessible public toilet facilities and plant/storage rooms;
- External plant for air to water heat pumps and rooftop photovoltaic solar panel array (36 sqm);
- 40 no. bicycle parking spaces (10 no electric bicycle, 4 no. cargo bicycle/scooters, and 26 no. regular) and a Surface car park providing a total of 12 no. car parking spaces (2 no. accessible/disabled, 2 no. electric vehicle, and 8 no. regular);
- Boundary treatments, hard and soft landscaping, external site lighting, building signage, 3 no. flagpoles, services (including underground surface water attenuation storage) and all other ancillary and associated site development works above and below ground level;
- Primary vehicular access to the proposed new Community/Sports Centre will be via a new vehicle site entrance from the Lanesborough Road and the most southern existing pedestrian access to Lanesborough Park will be relocated proximate to the main entrance of the new Community/Sports Centre, upgraded and enhanced to function as the primary pedestrian access.

**Figure 2.1: Community/Sports Centre Building ranging in height equivalent from 1 to 2 storeys**



Source: Henchion + Reuter Architects September 2021

<sup>3</sup> Page 80, *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*

<sup>4</sup> Page 81, *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*

**2.2 Key Figures of Proposed Development**

|     |  |               |
|-----|--|---------------|
| 1.  | Site Area  | 0.4644 ha     |
| 2.  | Total Gross Floor Space  | 1,279 sq m    |
| 3.  | Public entrance lobby and reception area, reception station and IT/CCTV facility room                | 69 sq m       |
| 4.  | Central sports hall with associated storage  | 511 sq m      |
| 5.  | Changing room/space and toilets facilities   | 57 sq m       |
| 6.  | 4 no. community/training/studio/meeting rooms with associated storage and kitchen/serving facilities | 357 sq m      |
| 7.  | Externally accessible public toilet facilities and plant/storage rooms                               | 82 sq m       |
| 8.  | Rooftop photovoltaic solar panel array   | 36 sq m       |
| 9.  | Surface Vehicle Parking  | 12 no spaces  |
| 10. | Accessible/disabled Parking  | 2 no spaces   |
| 11. | Electric Vehicle Parking   | 2 no spaces   |
| 12. | Regular Vehicle Parking  | 8 no. spaces  |
| 13. | Bicycle Parking  | 40 no. spaces |
| 14. | Electric Bicycle Parking   | 10 no. spaces |
| 15. | Cargo bicycle/scooters   | 4 no. spaces  |
| 16. | Regular Bicycle Parking  | 26 no. spaces |

**2.3 Concept evolution**

Fingal has a well-defined network of open spaces and recreational facilities that are accessible to significant numbers of the County’s population. The provision of good community facilities and services, such as education, training, libraries, childcare facilities, places of worship, health and community centres, in appropriate accessible locations is important as they contribute positively to an enhanced quality of life.<sup>3</sup>

Community buildings give their local community the ability to hold a range of events that are appropriate to their area, whether these be sporting events, cultural or community/voluntary/ social events. Such centres are important in fostering and developing a sense of community and are an important focal point for the area that they serve.<sup>4</sup>

Chapter 4 Urban Fingal of the *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023* provides in more detail a description of the individual settlements that make up Urban Fingal, and where applicable gives associated Specific Objectives to develop communities through enhanced Placemaking, incl.:

**“Objective CHARLESTOWN AND MEAKSTOWN 2:** Continue to improve and deliver enhanced community and recreational amenities to the area with particular emphasis on a community centre to provide for the community and sporting needs of the area including the provision of changing rooms if required and improvements to the quality of open space.”<sup>5</sup>

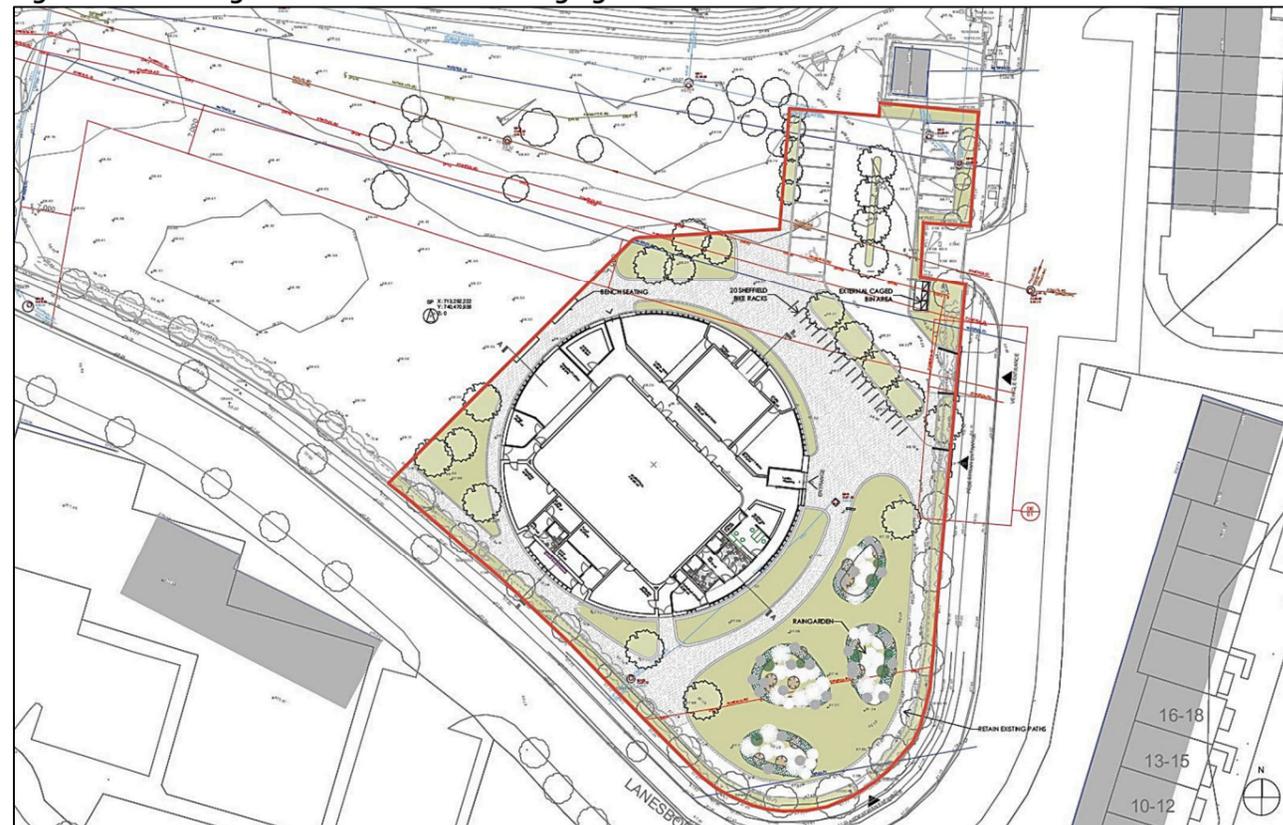
The site which is the focus for delivery of the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, is subject to the OS - Open Space land use zoning designation in terms of the *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*. A Community Facility and Recreational Facility/Sports Club are permitted in principle on the OS - Open Space zoned lands.

<sup>5</sup> Page 122, *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*

Lanesborough Park is a relatively recent creation and coincided with the development of the surrounding housing estates in the early 2000's. The urban public parkland is entirely surrounded by streetscapes. Lanesborough Road encloses roughly 75% of the perimeter, breaking away towards Charlestown Shopping Centre roughly mid-way along the western boundary.

An existing footpath network provides access around the park perimeter and traverses it either side of the playing pitch. The urban public parkland is fully enclosed by a bow-top railing mounted on a low plinth wall. There are seven entrance points around the perimeter defined consistently by brick piers.

Figure 2.2: Building Form Location acknowledging Constraints



Source: Henchion + Reuter Architects September 2021

Henchion Reuter Architects in their Part XI Design report details that the following Key Design Objectives identified:

**Continuity of the Park Landscape:** The potential for the Community Centre to effectively 'cut off' a corner of the park from the main body of the park was identified early in the design process as something that the building design could mitigate.

After exploring a number of strategies, a building with a circular plan form was identified as best facilitating the spatial flow of the park landscaping around the new building.

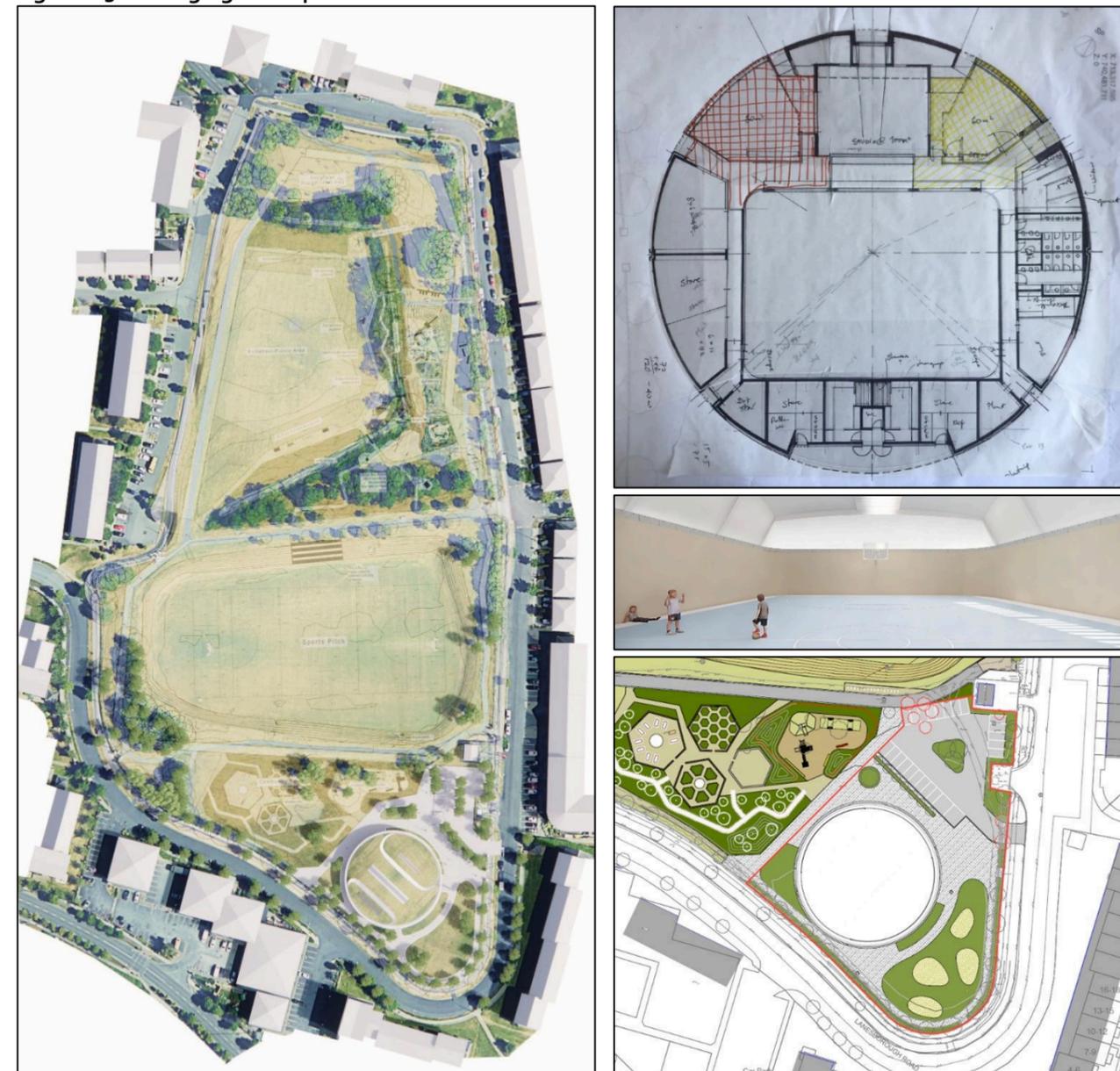
**Avoidance of Opportunity for Antisocial Activity:** The circular building plan has the advantage of creating no building corners, thereby minimising the opportunity for unsupervised corners which might be prone to anti-social behaviour.

**Optimisation of Residential Amenity for the Neighbouring Residents:** The circular building plan has the further advantage of not creating any blank gable conditions to the building. This will minimise the loss of residential amenity for apartments located to the south-east of the site that currently have an uninterrupted view of the park.

To further mitigate the visual disruption for these neighbours the roof form has been 'softened' with the volume of the sports hall (the tallest volume) subsumed into a contoured roof-scape finished with a mixture of intensive and extensive green roof.

**Building Form:** The circular plan form has the least external façade possible for the building area provided, meaning this is an efficient building as regards the amount of building materials required for its construction as well as having the least area of façade that is subject to heat-loss.

Figure 2.3: Emerging Concept



Source: Henchion + Reuter Architects September 2021

The position of the building has been set to avoid an Irish Watermain to the north of the site and retain as much as possible of the sunken area to the south east to create a raingarden.

The building is single storey throughout. The main sports hall is positioned central to the plan with secondary rooms wrapped around this on all sides. The building therefore has a continuous single storey façade expression on all sides - thereby substantially reducing its volumetric presence within the park.

Figure 2.4: Emerging Concept 3d



Source: Henschion + Reuter Architects September 2021

**Building Façade Materials:** The external form of the building is completed in glazed green bricks with a precast concrete parapet. A green roof is draped over the building.

**Entrances and Arrival:** The most southern existing pedestrian access to Lanesborough Park has been relocated proximate to the main entrance of the new Community/Sports Centre to function as the primary pedestrian access. Adjacent to the dedicated pedestrian entrance is a new carpark access gate with controlled gated access.

**Rain Garden:** To increase the ecological potential of the park, the creation of a rain-garden to the south east of the new Community/Sports Centre is proposed to encourage wildlife and biodiversity in parallel with decreased human activity at this location.

### 3.0 THE ISSUE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

#### 3.1 Need for Environmental Impact Assessment and Legislative Requirements

Schedule 5 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001* (as amended) details the prescribed classes of development which are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment. Those listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5 are automatically subject to Environmental Impact Assessment. Those listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 are also likely to have significant environmental effects based on the nature and size of the development set out by threshold criteria.

Development not listed under Schedule 5 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001* (as amended), is not subject to any Environmental Impact Assessment in terms of Part X of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended).

Development similar to that as proposed as part of the development, i.e. the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, is **not** listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001* (as amended), and as such Part 1 is not relevant in this instance.

Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001* (as amended) detail the following *Infrastructure Projects* which could be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment:

- "(a) Industrial estate development projects, where the area would exceed 15 hectares.
- (b)
  - (i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units.
  - (ii) Construction of a car-park providing more than 400 spaces, other than a car-park provided as part of, and incidental to the primary purpose of, a development.
  - (iii) Construction of a shopping centre with a gross floor space exceeding 10,000 square metres.
  - (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.**)"

[Our **Emphasis**]

The development, i.e. the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, is not an industrial estate, neither comprise 500 dwelling units or more. The proposed development does not comprise a shopping centre exceeding 10,000 sq m.

In relation to Urban Development under Infrastructure Projects, the proposed development does not involve an area in excess of 10 ha in a built-up area, or 20 ha elsewhere. It should further be noted that the entire Lanesborough Park is only approximately 5 ha in extent, and the new Community/Sports Centre development site approximately 0.4644 ha.

As presented in Figure 1.1 above, the proposed the new Community/Sports Centre site is located in the southern part of the overall Lanesborough Park, surrounded mostly by residential estates with 3 and 4 storey blocks addressing the new Community/Sports Centre location. The extended existing urban public parkland is immediately bounding the new Community/Sports Centre location to the north. To the south west of the new Community/Sports Centre site, Meakstown Local Centre backs onto the Lanesborough Road which separates the urban public parkland from the Local Centre. The surround predominant land use is not considered to be retail or commercial use.

Development similar to that as proposed as part of the development, i.e. the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, is **not** listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001* (as amended), and as such Part 2 is not relevant in this instance.

Development similar to that as proposed as part of the development, i.e. the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, is **not** listed in Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001* (as amended), and as such the requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment, or even Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment, does **not** apply in this instance.

The new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown is therefor not subject to any Environmental Impact Assessment in terms of Part X of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended).

### 3.2 Need for Appropriate Assessment and Legislative Requirements

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas for birds (SPAs) are sites that form part of a network, known as Natura 2000 sites, to be designated across Europe in order to protect biodiversity within the EU. SACs are designated under the *EU Habitats Directive* (92/43/EEC), as transcribed into Irish law by the *European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997*, while SPAs are designated under the *EU Birds Directive* (79/4089/EEC, as amended and codified in 2009/147/EC). The *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011* (S.I. 477/2011) revoked the 1997 Regulations (and amendments) as well as the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Control of Recreational Activities) Regulations 2010*. The purpose of the 2011 Regulations was to address transposition failures identified in the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) judgements. Following additional amendments in 2013 (S.I. 499/2013) and 2015 (S.I. 355/2015) the regulations are now cited as the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015*.

Article 6(3) of the *EU Habitats Directive* states that: “Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives.” Such an assessment is known as an Appropriate Assessment (AA).

This provision is transposed into Irish legislation by Part XAB of the *Planning and Development Act 2000* (as amended), Section 177U(4) of which provides for AA screening as follows: “The competent authority shall determine that an appropriate assessment of [...] a proposed development [...] is required if it cannot be excluded, on

*the basis of objective information, that the [...] development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.”*

Further guidance on AA is provided by the European Commission (2000) and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) (2009).

If there is a source-pathway-receptor connection between the proposed development and the qualifying interests of a European site and potential harmful effects have been identified, measures to avoid or reduce those effects must be excluded from the screening analysis. If there is no source – pathway – receptor connection, the potential for harmful effects can be excluded.

An *Appropriate Assessment (Screening)* dated September 2021, was undertaken by Dr Mary Tubridy of Mary Tubridy and Associates, and details that a “review of qualifying interests in the context of connectivity with Lanesborough suggests that the QI species, Light-bellied Brent goose could use Lanesborough Park as a feeding site as this species is known to graze on park grasslands once its food sources have been exhausted near the coast”.

The *Appropriate Assessment (Screening)* further outlined that consultations with “the Irish Brent Goose Study Group based in Exeter University (Dr. Stu Bearhop, lecturer and Tess Handby research student) in September 2021 confirmed that the group did not hold any records of goose activity at the site. The email response from Tess Handby was as follows “I have looked at the GPS data we collected in 2018/19 and 2019/20 (n=36 birds) and there is no evidence that this site or any in the immediate vicinity are being used by the Brent geese. Obviously this only represents a small subset of the population so does not rule out the site being used”.

It was further considered that the park has low potential as a foraging, commuting or roosting area for geese or bats due to the large number of active park users and their dogs.

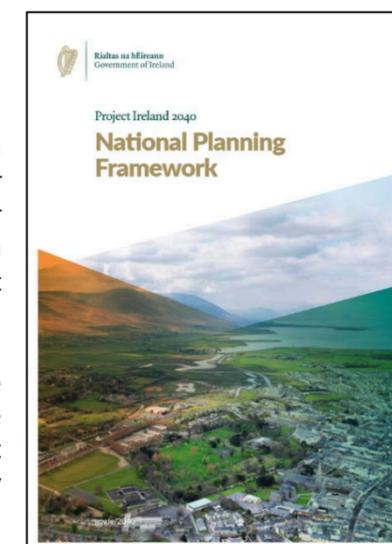
## 4.0 SPATIAL PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT

The Statutory Development Planning Context is a constant fluid environment. Any proposals associated with the for delivery of the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, will be informed by a wide range of development planning policy documents. The importance of the *Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework*, the *Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031*, and the *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*, is acknowledged and of particular relevance in guiding the nature and extent of development proposals.

### 4.1 Delivering Project Ireland 2040

*Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework* (NPF) was published in February 2018 and constitutes the primary strategic planning document for the country as a whole. This document has established a singular vision for development and investment in Ireland which is intended to guide population growth, infrastructure delivery, social and economic development throughout Ireland through to 2040.

The NPF acknowledges the within the Eastern and Midland Region, more emphasis on consolidating the development of places that grew rapidly in the past decade or so with large scale commuter driven housing development with a particular focus on addressing local community and amenity facility



provision in many of the larger commuter towns through targeted investment under relevant NPF National Strategic Outcomes..

The NPF sets out 10 National Strategic Outcomes and 75 National Policy Objectives, to enable all parts of Ireland, whether rural or urban, to successfully accommodate growth and change.

The proposed new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown is in pursuance of the following National Strategic Outcomes as providing enhanced amenities by investing in well-designed public realm, extensive amenity and recreational infrastructure, and integrating with *inter alia* the current Meakstown/Lanesborough built environment

**National Strategic Outcome No. 1 Compact Growth** which outlines that:

*"Carefully managing the sustainable growth of compact cities, towns and villages will add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work. All our urban settlements contain many potential development areas, centrally located and frequently publicly owned, that are suitable and capable of re-use to provide housing, jobs, amenities and services, but which need a streamlined and co-ordinated approach to their development, with investment in enabling infrastructure and supporting amenities, to realise their potential. Activating these strategic areas and achieving effective density and consolidation, rather than more sprawl of urban development, is a top priority."*

**National Strategic Outcome No. 4 Sustainable Mobility** which outlines that:

*"In line with Ireland's Climate Change mitigation plan, we need to progressively electrify our mobility systems moving away from polluting and carbon intensive propulsion systems to new technologies such as electric vehicles and introduction of electric and hybrid traction systems for public transport fleets, such that by 2040 our cities and towns will enjoy a cleaner quieter environment free of combustion engine driven transport systems."*

**National Strategic Outcome No. 5 A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills** which outlines that:

*"This will depend on creating places that can foster enterprise and innovation and attract investment and talent. It can be achieved by building regional economic drivers and by supporting opportunities to diversify and strengthen the rural economy, to leverage the potential of places. Delivering this outcome will require the coordination of growth and place making with investment in world class infrastructure, including digital connectivity, and in skills and talent to support economic competitiveness and enterprise growth."*

**National Strategic Outcome No. 7 Enhanced Amenity and Heritage** which outlines that:

*"This will ensure that our cities, towns and villages are attractive and can offer a good quality of life. It will require investment in well-designed public realm, which includes public spaces, parks and streets, as well as recreational infrastructure. It also includes amenities in rural areas, such as national and forest parks, activity-based tourism and trails such as greenways, blueways and peatways. This is linked to and must integrate with our built, cultural and natural heritage, which has intrinsic value in defining the character of urban and rural areas and adding to their attractiveness and sense of place."*

**National Strategic Outcome No. 8 Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society** which outlines that:

*"The National Climate Policy Position establishes the national objective of achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. This objective will shape investment choices over the coming decades in line with the National Mitigation Plan and the National Adaptation Framework. New energy systems and transmission grids will be necessary for a more distributed, renewables-focused energy generation system, harnessing both the considerable on-shore and off-shore potential from energy sources such as wind, wave and solar and connecting the richest sources of that energy to the major sources of demand."*

**National Strategic Outcome No. 9 Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources** which acknowledges that:

*"Ireland has abundant natural and environmental resources such as our water sources that are critical to our environmental and economic wellbeing into the future. Conserving and enhancing the quality of these resources will also become more important in a crowded and competitive world as well as our capacity to create beneficial uses from products previously considered as waste, creating circular economic benefits."*

**National Strategic Outcome No. 10 Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services** which details that:

*"Good access to a range of quality education and health services, relative to the scale of a region, city, town, neighbourhood or community is a defining characteristic of attractive, successful and competitive places. Compact, smart growth in urban areas and strong and stable rural communities will enable the enhanced and effective provision of a range of accessible services."*

Figure 4.1: Strategic Investment Priorities in response to National Strategic Outcomes



Source: Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework

The proposed new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown is in pursuance of the following National Policy Objectives as providing enhanced amenities by investing in well-designed public realm, extensive amenity and recreational infrastructure, and integrating with *inter alia* the current Meakstown/Lanesborough built environment

#### National Policy Objectives 6

*"Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality, in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area."*

#### National Policy Objectives 13

*"In urban areas, planning and related standards, including in particular building height and car parking will be based on performance criteria that seek to achieve well-designed high quality outcomes in order to achieve targeted growth. These standards will be subject to a range of tolerance that enables alternative solutions to be proposed to achieve stated outcomes, provided public safety is not compromised and the environment is suitably protected."*

#### National Policy Objectives 27

*"Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments, and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages."*

#### National Policy Objectives 28

*"Plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services."*

#### National Policy Objectives 30

*"Local planning, housing, transport/accessibility and leisure policies will be developed with a focus on meeting the needs and opportunities of an ageing population along with the inclusion of specific projections, supported by clear proposals in respect of ageing communities as part of the core strategy of city and county development plans."*

#### 4.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Regional Area

The principal statutory purpose of the *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Regional Area* (RSES) is to support the implementation of Project Ireland 2040 and the economic policies and objectives of the Government by providing a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the development of the Region. The RSES is required under the Planning and Development Act 2000 to address employment, retail,

housing, transport, water services, energy and communications, waste management, education, health, sports and community facilities, environment and heritage, landscape, sustainable development and climate change.

The Strategy is underpinned by three key principles:

- Healthy Placemaking;
- Climate Action; and
- Economic Opportunity.

The current RSES also identifies the need to co-ordinate the sources of funding of infrastructure, including community facilities that will be located within joint urban area plans.

The Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) to be prepared for Dublin as part of RSES, supports ongoing collaboration with regional stakeholders to ensure that social infrastructure such as education, health and community facilities are provided in tandem with the development of strategic development areas, and in particular to ensure that opportunities for social as well as physical regeneration are realised.

RSES outlines the following to be guiding principles to healthy placemaking:

- Facilitate a sufficient supply of good quality sports and recreation facilities, including networks for walking, cycling and other activities and shall maximise the multiple use of such facilities by encouraging the co-location of services between sports providers, schools, colleges and other community facilities.
- Support play policies to address the play and recreation needs of children and young people and ensure the integration of play provision and child-friendly neighbourhoods.
- Provide for the development of dedicated youth spaces in key urban areas and the development of multifunction spaces in smaller communities / rural areas.

The proposed new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown is in pursuance of the following RSES **Regional Policy Objectives** associated with **Recreation and Open Space** as providing enhanced amenities by investing in well-designed public realm, extensive amenity and recreational infrastructure, and integrating with *inter alia* the current Meakstown/Lanesborough built environment.

**RPO 9.14:** Local authorities shall seek to support the planned provision of easily accessible social, community, cultural and recreational facilities and ensure that all communities have access to a range of facilities that meet the needs of the communities they serve.

**RPO 9.15:** Local authorities shall support the vision and objectives of the National Sports Policy, including working with local sports partnerships, clubs, communities and partnerships within and beyond sport, to increase sport and physical activity participation levels locally.

**RPO 9.16:** Local authorities shall support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan, through integrating such policies, where appropriate and at the applicable scale, with planning policies contained in development plans.

**RPO 9.17:** To support local authorities in the development of regional scale Open Space and Recreational facilities particularly those close to large or growing population centres in the Region.



**4.3 Adhering to the Policies and Objectives of the *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023***

The proposed new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown is in pursuance of the following policy associated with Placemaking, and specifically Community Infrastructure, Facilities and Services, as outlined in Chapter 3 under Section 3.6 of the *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*.

**Objective PM55:** Ensure coherent clustering of recreational and open space facilities into a recreational hub arrangement unless a more practicable solution is demonstrated.

**Objective PM66:** Ensure provision of accessible, adequate and diverse community facilities and services in new and established areas to provide for the well-being of residents.

**Objective PM67:** Ensure community facilities are flexible in their design and promote optimum usage.

**Objective PM68:** Promote the clustering of community, recreational and open space facilities, with community facilities being located in local centres or combined with school facilities as appropriate.

**Objective PM69:** Ensure that proposals do not have a detrimental effect on local amenity by way of traffic, parking, noise or loss of privacy of adjacent residents.



**Objective PM71:** Support the provision of new community centres and facilitate the refurbishment and extension of facilities where there is a need for such works. Such facilities shall be accessible by a range of travel modes with an emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport use, while providing limited car parking facilities to meet anticipated demand of non-local visitors to the centre.

**Objective PM73:** Encourage the development of multi-functional buildings which are not used exclusively by any one group.

The site which is the focus for delivery of the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, is subject to the *OS - Open Space* land use zoning designation in terms of the *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*, the stated objective of which is to:

*"Preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities".*

As illustrated within Figure 4.2, below, the character of this area is primarily urban in nature, with the Lanesborough Park providing key Open Space Amenity.

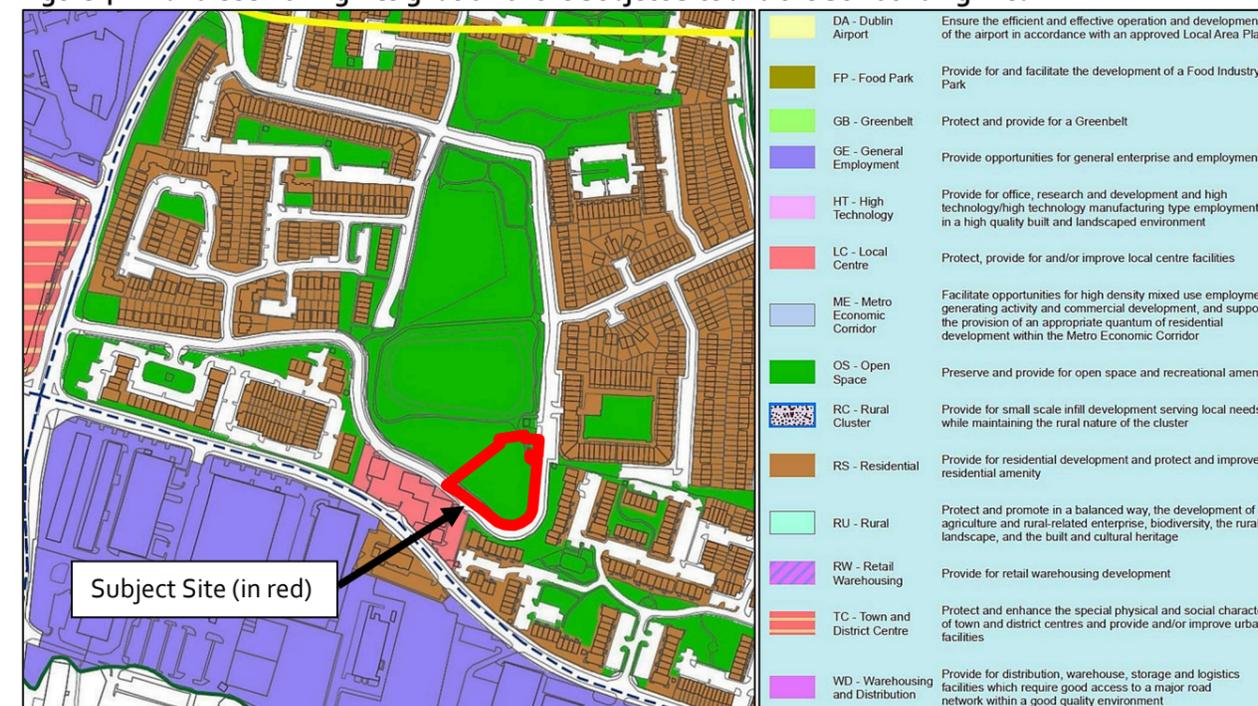
The Development Plan states that the vision for lands subject to this land use zoning designation is to:

*"Provide recreational and amenity resources for urban and rural populations subject to strict development controls. Only community facilities and other recreational uses will be considered and encouraged by the Planning Authority."*

The following uses on site that are permitted in principle on the *OS - Open Space* lands:

*Community Facility, Golf Course, Open Space, and Recreational Facility/Sports Club.*

**Figure 4.2: Land Use Zoning Designation of the Subject Site and the Surrounding Area**



Source: Sheet 11 - Fingal South, *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*, extracted, reproduced and annotated by The Planning Partnership under OS Licence No. AR0114721.

The foregoing list of uses demonstrates a clear emphasis on the delivery of *recreational amenities* or other complimentary uses on lands which are subject to the *OS - Open Space* land use zoning objective. The principle of the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, is compliant with the *OS - Open Space* land use zoning and has been designed to be consistent with the stated vision for such lands.

The relevant development management standards relating to residential development within the functional area of Fingal County Council is set out within Chapter 12 and specifically within Section 12.4 of the *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*.

The proposed new Meakstown Community/Sports Centre's layout and building design conform to the highest possible standards of energy efficiency. The building has been designed to minimise resource consumption, reducing waste, water and energy use. The design optimise natural ventilation and minimise glare and excess solar gain, avoids large areas of glazing, and provides an appropriate balance between solid and void elements.

The proposed new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown is in pursuance of the following development management standards.

**Objective DMS16:** Promote and encourage the use of green walls and roofs for new developments that demonstrate benefits in terms of SuDS as part of an integrated approach to green infrastructure provision.

**Objective DMS17:** Promote and encourage the use of green walls and roofs as part of an integrated approach to green infrastructure provision.

**Objective DMS44:** Protect areas with a unique, identified residential character which provides a sense of place to an area through design, character, density and/or height and ensure any new development in such areas respects this distinctive character.

**Objective DMS73:** Ensure as far as practical that the design of SuDS enhances the quality of open spaces. SuDS do not form part of the public open space provision, except where it contributes in a significant and positive way to the design and quality of open space. In instances where the Council determines that SuDS make a significant and positive contribution to open space, a maximum 10% of open space provision shall be taken up by SuDS. The Council will give consideration to the provision of SuDS on existing open space, where appropriate.

Surface water associated with the proposed new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown will be attenuated on site for the 1-in-100 year event and will discharge through a series of green roofs, an attenuation tank, permeable paving and an oversized pipe. The surface water system has been modelled in accordance with the Greater Dublin Area Strategic Drainage Study, with self-cleaning and discharge capacity is achieved based.

A portion of the building will incorporate a green roof as a form of water treatment and to help slow the rate of surface water discharge from the site.

The proposed new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown will complement the general principle that the location and provision of community facilities is a pre-requisite to the creation and enhancement of viable, sustainable and successful local communities.

The potential flood basin on the site has been examined and evaluated in terms of available storage in the attenuation system to the north in the pitches. The system will be rerouted to this location where there is adequate storage for this volume of water.

**Objective DMS93:** Any application for community facilities such as leisure facilities, sports grounds, playing fields, play areas, community halls, organisational meeting facilities, medical facilities, childcare facilities, new school provision and other community orientated developments, shall have regard to the following:

- Overall need in terms of necessity, deficiency, and opportunity to enhance or develop local or County facilities.
- Practicalities of site in terms of site location relating to uses, impact on local amenities, desirability, and accessibility.
- Conformity with the requirements of appropriate legislative guidelines.

Walking and cycling are the most efficient modes of travel in terms of use of road-space, and the most sustainable in terms of environmental impacts. However, walking is only practical for short-distance trips and cycling for short- to medium-distance trips. Figure 1.2 above presents graphically two Walking Catchment areas, i.e. a 10 minute slow paced walk and a 10 minute average speed walk, which will be served by the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, providing enhanced amenity and recreational infrastructure thereby enhancing the neighbourhood by increasing social interactions that improve the quality of life.

Cycle parking facilities have been conveniently located within a secure, easy to use, adequately lit and well signposted area within proximate to the primary pedestrian access and main entrance to the proposed new Community/Sports Centre. Weather protected facilities should be considered, where appropriate. In addition, the cycle parking facilities are placed within a populated, well-supervised area, and monitored by CCTV where possible.

Sports Club, Gymnasium, Fitness Centre, Institution, Community Centres all details the requirement to provide 1 no. bicycle space per 100 sq m Gross Floor Space. The proposed new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown totals 1,279 sq m Gross Floor Space, requiring only 13 no. bicycle space.

The provision of 40 no. bicycle parking spaces (10 no electric bicycle, 4 no. cargo bicycle/scooters, and 26 no. regular) is significantly in excess of the minimum bicycle spaces required.

An off street surface car park providing a total of 12 no. car parking spaces (2 no. accessible/disabled, 2 no. electric vehicle, and 8 no. regular) is proposed as part of the new Community/Sports Centre development for Meakstown, being a reduced provision well below the maximum of car parking spaces permissible as detailed within Table 12.8 of the *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*.

Acknowledging the significant population located within the 10 minute Walking Catchment Areas which will be served by the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, and the excess in provision of bicycle parking spaces, the reduced provision of car parking spaces well below the maximum cap permissible, is justifiable and considered acceptable.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

Having regard to the Specific **Objective CHARLESTOWN AND MEAKSTOWN 2** facilitating the delivery of the new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown, the zoning designation of the subject site for the purposes of *OS - Open Space* which *inter alia* confirms that a *Community Facility* and *Recreational Facility/Sports Club* are permitted in principle, Statutory Guidelines for Planning Authorities on urban development prepared by Government in response to *Project Ireland 2040*, honouring the commitment to put into practice key National Policy Objectives contained within the *National Planning Framework*, as well as the availability of public services, amenities and facilities, it is considered that the proposed development of a new Community/Sports Centre for Meakstown at the urban public parkland site located at Lanesborough Park, will enhance both the character and amenity of the area.

Accordingly, the proposed development as presented would not detract from the character of the area, would not seriously injure the amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity, would not be prejudicial to public health and would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety and convenience. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Yours faithfully



**Wessel Vosloo**  
Principal  
The Planning Partnership

