



21 December 2022

Draft Fingal County Development Plan 2023 - 2029
Development Plan Team,
Planning and Strategic Infrastructure Department,
Fingal County Council,
County Hall, Main Street,
Swords,
Co. Dublin,
K67 X8Y2

**Re: Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Fingal County Development Plan
2023-2029**

Dear Sir/Madam

I refer to the above. The Department of Education wishes to make the following submission to the proposed material alterations to the draft Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029.

PA CH 2.4: Section 2.2 Core Strategy

In terms of population projections, the Department notes the proposed changes to Table 2.14. Whereas, amendment PA CH 2.4 reduces the overall 2029 projected growth figure from 361,894 to 359,675, there are some considerable increases for certain settlement areas. The proposed amendment increases Balbriggan/ Balrothery by a further 1,985. It is expected that the school place requirement generated by this increase can be met from existing school capacity. The proposed amendment increases the Blanchardstown area and environs by a further 4,825. The Department notes that this increase will be spread over a wide area. Nevertheless, an increase of this size will add to the pressure for both primary and post-primary school place requirement already identified in the Department's submission to the draft CDP. In this regard, the Department re-iterates its requirement as outlined in that submission.

It is noted that the amendment proposes to increase the population in the Donabate settlement area by a further 1,364. An increase of this size will add to the pressure at both primary and post-primary school place requirement in the area. The Department's submission to the draft CDP noted that it was currently engaged in seeking a permanent site for Gaelscoil na Mara, which is currently accommodated in interim accommodation. It is important that the required site be of adequate size to cater for this new projected growth in population.



The Department notes that there are further increases projected for Lusk, Rush, Malahide and Portmarnock. In the case of the first three settlements, it is expected that current capacity will cater for the proposed increase. In the case of Portmarnock, it is noted that the further proposed increase will put pressure on existing school place requirements at primary level.

School place requirements for all areas will continue to be monitored actively. The proposed projections identified above will increase residential development, which in turn generates school place requirements. Therefore, there will need to be an ongoing liaison between the Department and the Council to ensure that there is adequate and appropriate provision of sites for future new school projects or future extensions at existing school facilities.

PA CH 2.5: Section 2.2 Core Strategy

The Department also notes amendment PA CH 2.5, which proposes to insert new text after Table 2.14, that outlines and explains the changes to that table resulting from amendment PA CH 2.4

PA CH 2.6: Section 2.2 Core Strategy

The Department notes the proposed amendment to replace Objective CSO2 and CSO3 with two new objectives for Monitoring Process for Housing Delivery and Delivery of Housing Units.

PA CH 3.17: Section 3.5.15.1 Rural Villages

The Department notes and welcomes the amended objective to work collaboratively with the Department of Education in identifying demand and meeting increased school place requirements in Rural Villages.

PA APP 5.2: Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

The Department notes the amendment to designate lands in Swords as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) including Old Borough National School.

Map Sheet 3: Fingal Central

The Department notes proposed amendment PA SH 3.7 to insert a local objective on lands at St Margaret's, Co Dublin to provide for the continuing provision of childcare facilities and education centre.

Map Sheet 5: Skerries

The Department acknowledges amendment PA SH 5.1, which proposes to insert a map-based school symbol on lands at Loughshinny following the recent purchase of those lands by the Department of Education. The Department welcomes the proposal and would request further that the zoning for this location be changed from RU-Rural to CI-Community Infrastructure.



Map Sheet 9: Malahide-Portmarnock

The Department notes the following proposed amendments at Broomfield, Malahide.

PA SH 9.2 proposes to amend zoning from GB-Greenbelt to CI-Community Infrastructure at Broomfield, Malahide. In addition, it proposes to insert new map-based local objective with a school symbol on these lands where a new primary school will be provided at this location, subject to provision of adequate access arrangements.

PA SH 9.12 proposes to insert new map-based local objective at Back Lane, Malahide, for the purpose of providing for a new primary school.

It is possible that due to future population growth and other related factors that the overall need for two schools in the Malahide-Portmarnock area may materialise. However, that projected future demand may not be best served by two primary schools in such close proximity off Back Rd. Malahide. The Department would like to state that in its efforts to address current school place requirements, its site preference for the provision of a new school in the immediate future is the site as identified in amendment PA SH 9.2. In this regard, the Department acknowledges the proposed new local objective for a school. In terms of the proposal to amend the zoning from GB-Greenbelt to CI-Community Infrastructure to support the development of this school, this is welcomed. The Department requests that the extent of this zoning be re-examined in line with the attached submission by Tom Phillips & Associates. That submission outlines in detail the reasons and rationale as to why an expansion of CI-Community zoning for the school site area should be provided. The Department supports this submission and requests that all lands inclusive of access roads that will facilitate the successful and timely delivery of a new school be zoned CI-Community Infrastructure. The Department would welcome further engagement on this matter.

Finally, the Department acknowledges the provision of local objectives for school sites within the development Plan but would like to re-iterate its preference that all such sites should be given the appropriate CI-Community Infrastructure zoning.

The Department wishes to thank Fingal Council for the consideration already given to its submission to the draft Development Plan. We look forward to continuing to work with you.

If you have any queries in respect of the above, please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mairead Garry
Statutory Plans
Forward Planning Section

Fingal County Council
Planning Department
County Hall
Swords
K67 X8Y2

Tuesday, 20th December 2022
[Via Online Portal]

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: DRAFT FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2029, MATERIAL ALTERATIONS SUBMISSION. ZONING OF LANDS AT BROOMFIELD, MALAHIDE, CO. DUBLIN TO SUPPORT PROVISION OF A SCHOOL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

On behalf of our Client, the Department of Education, we wish to make this submission in respect of the above referenced lands comprising a c.1.94 ha undeveloped greenfield landholding located at Broomfield, Malahide, Co. Dublin (see Figure 1.0 below). The submission is made on foot of the public display of the *Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 (Material Alterations)* and it supplements the Department's submission.

We note that the deadline for the Material Alterations consultation has been extended to Midday on 22nd December, 2022 and that this submission has been made within the noted consultation period.

Tom Phillips + Associates previously assisted the Department of Education with a *Draft Development Plan* submission in relation to the same site in May 2022. We note that the majority of the subject site has been subject of a supportive rezoning accordingly. Map Sheet 9 of the *Draft Development Plan* has been updated (refer overleaf) and the designation has been updated to note;

"PA SH 9.2: Amend zoning from GB-Greenbelt to CI-Community Infrastructure at Broomfield, Malahide. In addition, insert new map-based local objective with a school symbol on these lands, as follows: Provide for a new primary school at this location, subject to provision of adequate access arrangements." [Our Emphasis]

The pre-planning stage design development of the scheme has advanced since this submission. In tandem, a close inspection of the mapping published by Fingal County Council has identified a potential land use zoning issue with the wider revised access requirements for the site. We would, therefore, request the consideration of this submission, as a means of enabling greater certainty in land use zoning terms with regard to the provision of a new school on the site. This is outlined in greater detail below.

TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

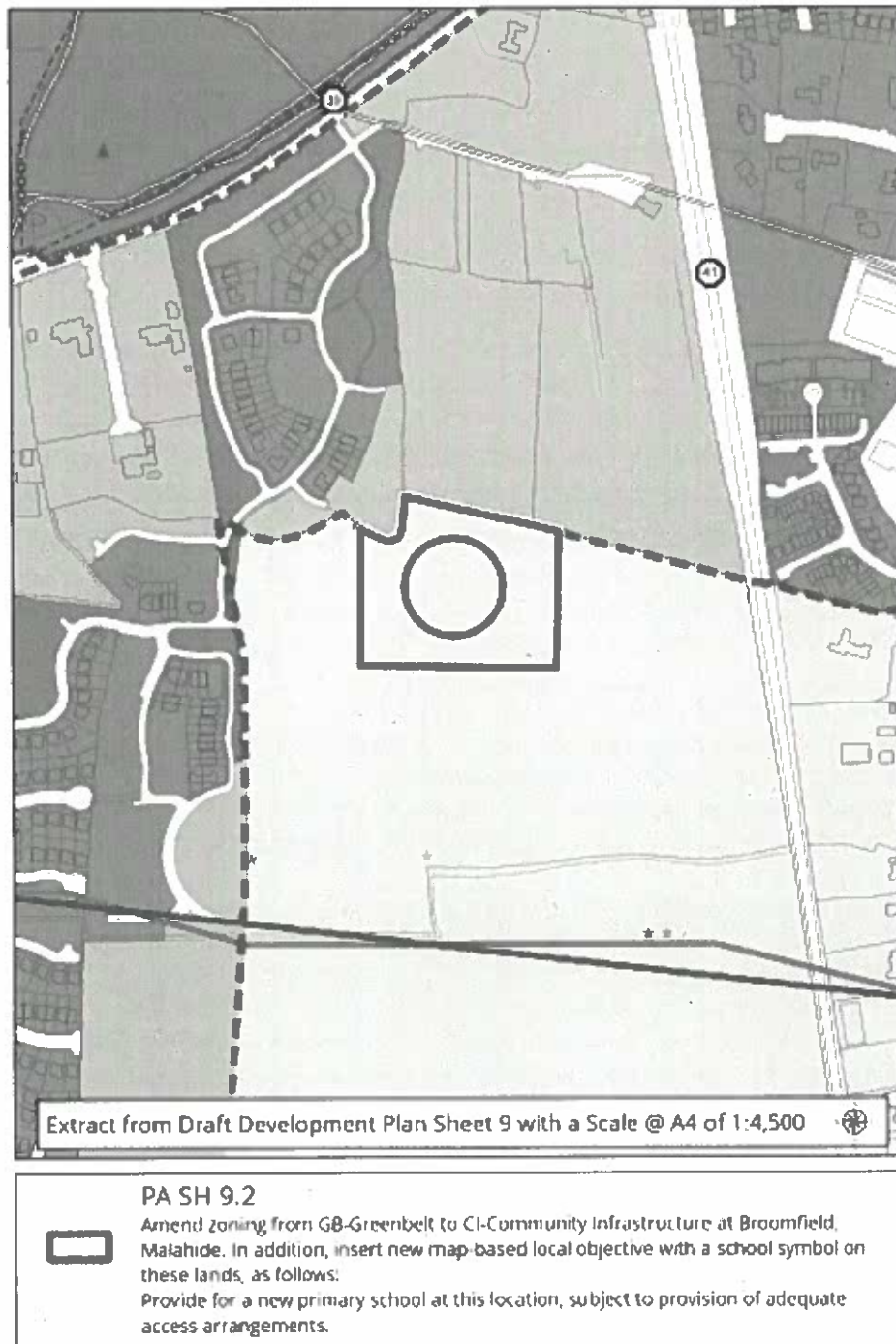


Figure 1.0 – Extract of Material Alterations changes to Map Sheet 9 – Malahide – Portmarnock, with the majority of the school site identified. [Source: Fingal County Council. Cropped by TPA, 2022]

2.0 REQUIREMENT FOR THE REQUESTED CHANGE

We note that the defined zoning change boundary is akin to the boundary provided in May 2022 submission. The purpose of this submission is to alter the boundary of this mapped objective (PA SH 9.2) further, to allow for the associated infrastructure to be included, and to avoid a Material Contravention scenario upon lodgement of the application. We note that revised access arrangements would traverse a number of different mapped objectives and that these may need to be altered to allow for a school to be established at this location.

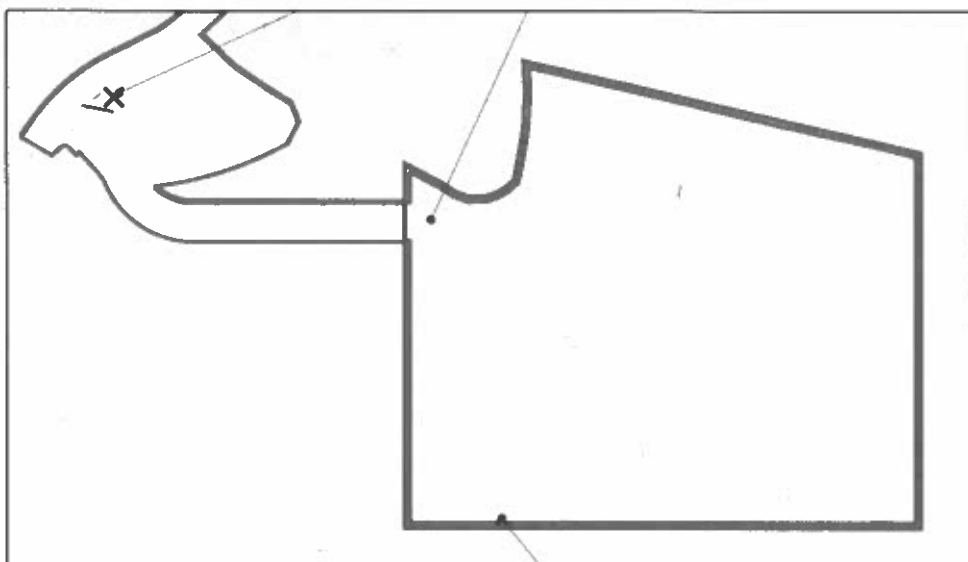


Figure 2.0 – Site location drawing extract, which includes the revised access arrangement and adjoining attenuation pond. [Prepared by Reddy A+U, cropped by TPA 2022]

The subject site is located outside, but immediately contiguous to, the development boundary of the urban area of Malahide. As per our *Draft Development Plan* Consultation Submission, we are of the opinion that the subject site is extremely well situated to accommodate Education use (likely in the form of a 16 classroom primary school with adequate space for expansion and all related services), given its location in the heart of a rapidly developing residential area and in proximity to public transportation services (Dublin Bus routes) serving the locality.

This site has been assessed in detail in respect of:

- potential vehicular access;
- impact on the local road network;
- drainage, surface water and flood risk assessment;
- cultural & architectural heritage;
- ecology
- and Appropriate Assessment.

In summary, all assessments conclude that the lands can be developed without giving rise to any significant impacts in respect of the above criteria. In addition, the Department's design team have demonstrated that the site can accommodate a building design that will not give rise to any adverse impacts on the existing residential amenities of adjoining residential lands in the form of overlooking, overshadowing or visual impact.



It is noted that no other planning or environmental designations or constraints are noted in the *Draft Plan* that would otherwise preclude the development of the lands for Education purposes. We also note the positive designation of the wider lands as part of the Material Alterations process, which clearly support the provision of a school at this location.

As noted in engagement with the *Development Plan* process to date, as well as wider engagement with Fingal County Council, the Department of Education is fully committed to delivering a contemporary educational school development on this site comprising a primary school with related facilities utilising a design that is appropriate to its urban context.

The Department and its design team and have been in discussions with Fingal County Council (FCC) regarding the future development of these lands over a number of years. The issues arising as part of this process have also informed this submission including a recent planning application pertaining to the site. It is envisaged that a Pre-Planning Consultation Request (S247 Request) will be submitted to Fingal early in 2023, to discuss the revised scheme in advance of submission of an application in 2023.

The site is located within a schools catchment area that is experiencing consistently high demand for schools provision that is likely to continue into the future and is considered an excellent site to meet this demand in locational and accessibility terms. However, the zoning proposed in the *Draft Plan* on lands that are to be included within the application (Green Belt (Objective GB) and Open Space (OS)) do not satisfactorily support the provision of a modern educational facility that is required to meet the needs of a growing urban population in this area.

The decision on the previous planning application for a school on the site demonstrates that the Objective GB zoning of the lands does not provide the required level of certainty in land use planning terms regarding Education provision. The primary purpose of Objective GB zoned lands is the protection and provision of a Green Belt, which results in an extremely limited range of uses deemed appropriate on such lands. In addition, we note that the proposed access road would traverse a small area of 'Open Space' designation, where education use is '*not permitted*' (as can be seen in Figure 3.0 overleaf.) Accordingly, we wish for this to be examined as a part of the Material Alterations process.

It is also worth noting that the proposed school would connect to an existing attenuation area associated with the adjoining residential development, as well as utilising an existing access road within the housing development. This land is noted as being zoned as *RA – Residential Area* under the *Draft Plan*. 'Education' use is *permitted in principle* under this land use zoning designation. Accordingly, it is envisaged that no change in zoning would be required for these lands. The Department are in discussion with the adjoining landowner in relation to this consent and this will be provided with the planning application upon lodgement.

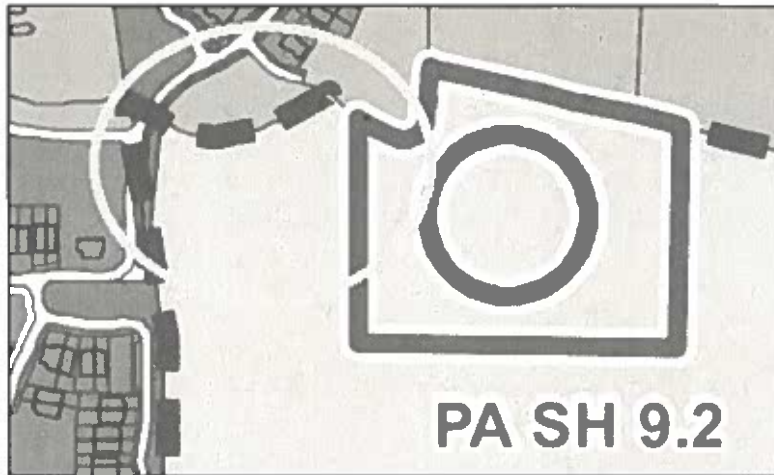


Figure 3.0 - Extract of Material Alterations changes to Map Sheet 9 – Malahide – Portmarnock, with the majority of the school site identified. Under close inspection, an area of 'Open Space' designated lands and 'Green Belt' lands would need to be included within the PA SH 9.2 lands to allow for access to be facilitated. This area is noted within the yellow circle. [Source: Fingal County Council. Cropped and annotated by TPA, 2022]

3.0 LACK OF CERTAINTY FOR EDUCATION USE

Under the proposed Objective GB zoning, the *Draft Plan* notes that Education is among the uses which are "neither "Permitted in Principle" nor "Not Permitted" and will be assessed in terms of their contribution towards the achievement of the Zoning Objective and Vision and their compliance and consistency with the policies and objectives of the Development Plan'.

We note that this was not changed in the Material Alterations process and is unlikely to be amended at this stage. Accordingly, an amendment to the mapped objectives is required and requested.

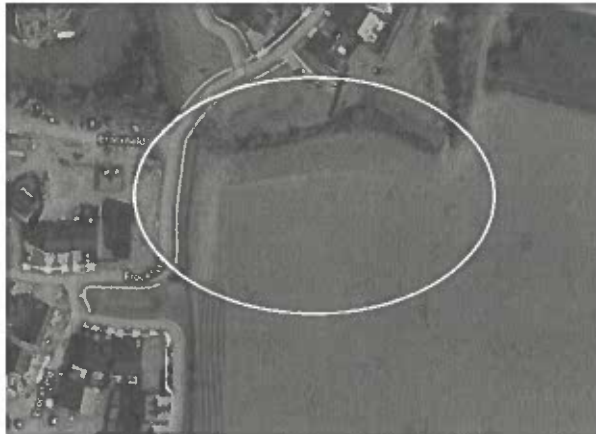


Figure 4.0 – Aerial photograph of requested rezoning area [Source: Google Maps, cropped and annotated by Tom Phillips + Associates, 2022]

As noted above, there also appears to be a designation of 'Open Space' along the existing access road. Education use is 'Not Permitted'. It is clear when inspecting the zoning map that the small area of lands included in this mapped objective would not amount to a significant loss of Open Space zoned lands. This is also evident when inspecting the site in situ, as the lands zoned as Open Space constitutes a grass verge along a site boundary of the Brookfield housing development.



We request that this mapping is amended accordingly, as it is clear that the portion of lands to be rezoned to facilitate school access would not amount to a significant loss of Open Space zoned lands. We also note that the school development itself will include landscaping proposals, in accordance with best practice. The development of the subject lands for educational purposes will not result in further encroachment into the countryside or facilitate the coalescence of settlements and would be more akin to an infill development in the context of other zoned land and the pattern of development in the vicinity.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Department of Education is committed to the delivery of new schools provision on the subject site, which is considered an excellent location for the delivery of same. As described above, however, the Objective GB and OS zoning categories, as currently constituted in the *Draft Development Plan – Material Alterations*, are not properly compatible with the delivery of a sustainable and appropriately designed contemporary primary school for the reasons outlined above.

The requirements to justify new educational development inherent in the zoning objectives renders these an inappropriate zoning for the successful delivery of new schools. The commitment from Fingal County Council is clear in the majority of the site being rezoned as *CI-Community Infrastructure* at the request of the Department. In addition, we note the clear intention further in the inclusion of a new map-based local objective with a school symbol on these lands, to “provide for a new primary school at this location, subject to provision of adequate access arrangements.”

The provision of new educational facilities would allow urgently required school places to be provided at an appropriate scale and quantum needed to serve the catchment, but also meet the policy requirements in terms of providing a multi-functional facility that would be a significant planning gain for the use of the wider community outside of school hours. We would, therefore, request the consideration of the following as a means of enabling greater certainty in land use zoning terms with regard to the provision of a new school on the site:

- The change in zoning of the access road lands to Objective Community Infrastructure (CI) from Objective GB and OS and the inclusion of the lands within the development boundary of Malahide.

We look forward to acknowledgement of receipt of this submission in due course. Please revert with any queries to the undersigned.

Regards

Órla Casey
Associate
Tom Phillips + Associates