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|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Title of Report:</b>                        | <b>Planning Committee Report – LA01/2024/0737/F</b> |
| <b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>          | <b>Planning Committee</b>                           |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>                        | <b>23<sup>rd</sup> September 2026</b>               |
| <b>For Decision or<br/>For Information</b>     | <b>For Decision</b>                                 |
| <b>To be discussed In<br/>Committee YES/NO</b> | <b>No</b>                                           |

| <b>Linkage to Council Plan (2026-31)</b> |                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Strategic Theme                          | Governance, Quality & Continuous Improvement                                               |
| Outcome                                  | Governance arrangements that ensure compliance, transparency and effective decision-making |
| Lead Officer                             | Development Management Manager                                                             |

| <b>Budgetary Considerations</b>    |            |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| Cost of Proposal                   |            |
| Included in Current Year Estimates | <b>N/A</b> |
| Capital/Revenue                    |            |
| Code                               |            |
| Staffing Costs                     |            |

| <b>Legal Considerations</b>      |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Input of Legal Services Required | <b>NO</b>  |
| Legal Opinion Obtained           | <b>N/A</b> |

|                                          |                                                                                        |     |       |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| <b>Screening Requirements</b>            | Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals. |     |       |
| Section 75 Screening                     | Screening Completed:                                                                   | N/A | Date: |
|                                          | EQIA Required and Completed:                                                           | N/A | Date: |
| Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)             | Screening Completed                                                                    | N/A | Date: |
|                                          | RNA Required and Completed:                                                            | N/A | Date: |
| Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) | Screening Completed:                                                                   | N/A | Date: |
|                                          | DPIA Required and Completed:                                                           | N/A | Date: |

**No:** LA01/2024/0737/F

**Ward:** Drumsurn

**App Type:** Full Planning

**Address:** 297 Drumsurn Road, Drumsurn, Limavady

**Proposal:** Extension to existing Clubhouse. Extension and alterations to existing training pitch with provision of ball stops, goalposts and fencing. Construction of new covered terrace.  
Construction of new open terrace

**Con Area:** n/a

**Valid Date:** 18.09.2024

**Listed Building Grade:** n/a

**Target Date:** 16.04.2025

**Agent:** St Matthews GAC Drumsurn, 297 Drumsurn Road, Drumsurn, Limavady, BT49 0PX

**Applicant:** St Matthews GAC Drumsurn, 297 Drumsurn Road, Drumsurn, Limavady, BT49 0PX

**Objections:** 0      **Petitions of Objection:** 0

**Support:** 0      **Petitions of Support:** 0

## **Executive Summary**

- This is a major application for full planning permission for the extension and alterations to the existing clubhouse and training pitch, including the provision of ball stops, goalposts and fencing, together with the construction of new covered and open terraces.
- The northern section of the site is located within the development limit of Drumsurn and is designated as a Major Area of Open Space, while the southern section lies outside of the settlement limit and within the rural area. The site is not subject to any further specific zonings or designations as identified within the Northern Area Plan 2016.
- The site is located at St Matthews GAC Drumsurn, 297 Drumsurn Road, Drumsurn.
- The Access to the complex is via an existing gate and carpark that serves the existing pitch, training pitch and clubhouse.
- Information submitted with the application includes an Access Statement, Design and Access Statement, Community Consultation Report (and appendices), Drainage Assessment, Bio-Diversity Checklist, Flood Risk Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment, Drainage Assessment and Method Statement, along with a number of letters.
- Consultees have raised no objections subject to proposed conditions.
- The proposed development is acceptable under Policies NH 1, NH3 and NH 5 of PPS2, Policy AMP2 of PPS3, Policy OS1 of PPS8, Policy FLD 1, FLD 2 and FLD 3 of PPS15, and Policies CTY1, CTY13, CTY14 and CTY15 of PPS21.
- Approval is Recommended.

**Drawings and additional information are available to view on the Planning Portal-**<https://planningregister.planningsystemni.gov.uk>

## **1 Recommendation**

- 1.1 That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for the recommendation set out in section 9 and the policies and guidance in sections 7 and 8 and resolves to **APPROVE** planning permission subject to the conditions set out in section 10.

## **2 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION**

The northern section of the site is located within the development limit of Drumsurn and is designated as a Major Area of Open Space, while the southern section lies outside of the settlement limit and within the rural area. The site is not subject to any further specific zonings or designations as identified within the Northern Area Plan 2016. A Primary School and Church are located to the north-east, with predominantly residential development to the west, south and east. The application site extends to approximately 4.61 hectares.

- 2.1 Access to the complex is via an existing gate and carpark that serves the existing pitch, training pitch and clubhouse.
- 2.2 Planning permission has previously been granted under reference LA01/2021/0732/F for the refurbishment of the existing playing field. The approved works include replacement perimeter fencing and gates, a 3m-wide bitmac walking track, 10no. 18.3m-high floodlights, and a 5m-high concrete practice wall with associated synthetic playing surface and fencing/netting. The proposed development builds upon these previously approved works.

## **3 RELEVANT HISTORY**

Application Number: B/1978/0396  
Decision: Permission Granted  
Decision Date: 16 February 1979  
Proposal: TEMPORARY HALL FOR COMMUNITY  
RECREATION AND YOUTH CLUB

Application Number: B/1980/0292

Decision: Permission Granted

Decision Date: 12 February 1981

Proposal: PLAYING FIELDS

Application Number: B/1982/0257

Decision: Permission Granted

Decision Date: 22 November 1982

Proposal: ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY DWELLING

Application Number: B/1983/0095

Decision: Permission Granted

Decision Date: 22 April 1983

Proposal: CONTINUED DISPLAY OF ILLUMINATED  
PROJECTING SIGN

Application Number: B/1986/0124

Decision: Permission Granted

Decision Date: 01 July 1986

Proposal: ERECTION OF PAVILION

Application Number: B/1987/0271

Decision: Permission Granted

Decision Date: 08 November 1987

Proposal: Erection of sports pavilion

Application Number: B/1998/0280

Decision: Permission Granted

Decision Date: 05 October 1998

Proposal: Erection of rear extension to community hall

Application Number: LA01/2015/0034/F

Decision: Permission Granted

Decision Date: 09 September 2015

Proposal: Proposed Bar/Store Extension to Rear and  
Kitchen/Toilets Extensions to Front of Existing Community Hall.

Application Number: LA01/2017/0525/NMC

Decision: Consent Refused

Decision Date: 12 June 2017

Proposal: We propose to change 'Bar' to Minor Hall'. New Title: Proposed Minor Hall/Store extension to rear and kitchen/toilet extension to front of existing Community Hall

Application Number: LA01/2017/0837/F

Decision: Permission Granted

Decision Date: 22 September 2017

Proposal: Proposed kitchen and toilets extensions to front of existing premises. (Community Hall)

Application Number: LA01/2021/0732/F

Decision: Permission Granted

Decision Date: 21 June 2022

Proposal: Proposed refurbishment of existing playing field to include replacement of existing fence and gates around perimeter of pitch (1.2m high) and provision of 3m wide bitmac walking track around playing field (to replace ex. stone walkway/path) Provision of 10no. 18.3m high floodlights along perimeter of pitch (5no. along each side) Provision of concrete practice wall 5m high by 5m wide with associated synthetic playing surface (15m x 18m) with 5m high fencing/netting other 3 sides. Regrading of ex ground levels to facilitate practice wall/play surface.

Application Number: LA01/2024/0107/PAN

Decision: Proposal of Application Notice is Acceptable

Decision Date: 09 February 2024

Proposal: Extension to existing Clubhouse, Extension and alterations to existing training pitch, Construction of new covered terrace, Construction of new open terrace, no alteration to existing access. To be used for sporting and community activities.

## **4 THE APPLICATION**

- 4.1 The application is for full permission for extension to existing Clubhouse. Extension and alterations to existing training pitch with provision of ball stops, goalposts and fencing. Construction of new covered terrace. Construction of new open terrace.

## **Proposal of Application Notice**

- 4.2 As this application is a major application, it must comply with the Proposal of Application Notice and carry out community consultation at least 12 weeks prior to the submission of the application.
- 4.3 A Proposal of Application Notice was received on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2026 under application LA01/2024/0107/PAN. The Applicant advised that they intended to undertake the following forms of consultation:
- Newspaper Advertisement - A Pre-Application Community Consultation Notice will be published in a local newspaper the Derry Post and Coleraine Chronicle
  - Public Consultation Event - At least one public consultation event will be held at St Matthews GAC Clubhouse.
  - Letters sent to all households within a 1km radius posted on 26<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024 – list of addresses were enclosed.
  - Poster – advertising information evening in local post office, shop, primary school, play school, church and clubhouse.

## **Community Consultation Report**

- 4.4 The community consultation report was submitted as part of the planning application on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024 which is more than 12 weeks after the Proposal of Application Notice was received, as required by the legislation. The community consultation report demonstrates there was community engagement with the consultation process and no design amendments were sought to the scheme as a result. The report demonstrates that consultation was implemented as agreed in the Proposal of Application Notice.
- 4.5 A public consultation event was held on 3 March 2024 at St Matthew's GAC Clubhouse from 5.00pm to 7.00pm and was advertised in the Derry Post. The agent did not advertise the event in the Coleraine Chronicle. This was identified by the Council at a later stage in the application process, when it was

considered too late to require further advertising. However, given the wider community consultation and engagement undertaken within the area, the omission is considered acceptable.

- 4.6 There were 48 attendees as indicated within Appendix 5. Feedback forms given as part of the example in Appendix 4 were given out to attendees which show participants in favour of the proposal. No further written representations, comments, or objections were received. No feedback was submitted by email or other means to the Applicant or their planning Agent.

### **Design & Access Statement**

- 4.7 A Design & Access Statement is required under Article 6 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (NI) 2015 as the application is a major application. The Design & Access Statement provides details of the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development and how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.

- 4.8 A Planning Design and Access Statement was submitted on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024 in support of this application. The contents of this document include Introduction, Design Principals, Access and Conclusion. This Document explains the design considerations for the project such as:

- Site and landscape: Training pitch extension is located on poor-quality agricultural land.
- Visual impact: The clubhouse is set approximately 115m back from Drumsurn Road and the proposed rear extension will not be visible from the public road.
- Screening: Existing mature vegetation, hedgerows, topography and intervening buildings provide significant visual screening and will be retained.
- Integration: The development is considered capable of blending into the existing landscape and settlement pattern without adversely affecting the rural character or visual/residential amenity.
- Materials: External finishes to the clubhouse extension will match the existing building.

- Site entrance: The existing access is heavily vegetated, limiting views into the site.
  - Access: The existing access onto Drumsurn Road will be retained, with no changes or improvements proposed and no anticipated increase in traffic.
  - Accessibility: New facilities will provide appropriate accessible and wheelchair access, with handrails provided where required under Building Control requirements.
- 4.9 The Applicant has undertaken detailed consideration of the proposal in terms of the design principles and concepts, access requirements and the impact on the character of the immediate context.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment**

- 4.10 This proposal was subject to an environmental impact assessment screening as highlighted by, The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017.
- 4.11 As the development is within Category 10(B) of Schedule 2 of the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (NI) 2017 the Council is obliged under Regulation 12(1) of these Regulations to make a determination as to whether the application is for EIA development. The Council determined on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2025 that the proposal is not an EIA development and as such this planning application, did not need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

## **5 PUBLICITY & CONSULTATIONS**

### **5.1 External**

Seven (7) neighbouring dwelling was notified on the proposal. No letters of Representation were received.

### **5.2 Internal**

**DFI Rivers** – No objection

**DFI Roads** – No objection

**Environmental Health** – No objection

**Loughs Agency** - Content

**NI Water** – No objection

**NIEA (WMU) - No objection**  
**NIEA (NED) – Content (due to the removal of the floodlights)**  
**Shared Environmental Services - Content**

## **6 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that all applications must have regard to the local development plan, so far as material to the application, and all other material considerations. Section 6(4) states that in making any determination where regard is to be had to the local development plan, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 The development plan is:
- Northern Area Plan 2016
- 6.3 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a material consideration.
- 6.4 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) Edition 2 is a material consideration. As set out in the SPPS, until such times as a new local plan strategy is adopted, councils will apply specified retained operational policies.
- 6.5 Due weight should be given to the relevant policies in the development plan.
- 6.6 All material considerations and any policy conflicts are identified in the “Considerations and Assessment” section of the report.

## **7 RELEVANT POLICIES & GUIDANCE**

Northern Area Plan 2016  
Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) Edition 2  
Planning Policy Statement 2 (PPS 2) Natural Heritage  
Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS 3) Access, Movement and Parking  
Planning Policy Statement 8 (PPS 8) Open space, Sport and Outdoor recreation  
Planning policy Statement 15 (PPS 15) Planning and flood risk  
Planning Policy Statement 21 (PPS 21) Sustainable development in the Countryside

## **8 CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 The main consideration in the determination of this application relate to the principle of development, Integration, impact on rural character, Access, Movement and Parking, Natural Heritage, Wastewater Disposal, Flood Risk, Safeguarding residential and Work Environs, Habitat Regulation Assessment and Representations.

### **Planning Policy**

#### **Assessment of Planning Issues/Material Considerations**

- 8.2 Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that all applications must have regard to the local development plan, so far as material to the application, and all other material considerations. Section 6(4) states that in making any determination where regard is to be had to the local development plan, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 8.3 The development plan is:
- Northern Area Plan 2016
- 8.4 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a material consideration.
- 8.5 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) (Edition 2 2025) is a material consideration. As set out in the SPPS, until such times as a new local plan strategy is adopted, councils will apply specified retained operational policies.
- 8.6 Due weight should be given to the relevant policies in the development plan.

### **The Northern Area Plan (NAP) 2016**

- 8.7 The northern section of the site is within the development limit of Drumsurn and designated as a Major Area of Open Space. However, the southern section is located within the rural area

with no other designations. To the north east of the site is a Primary School and Church, while development to the west, south and east is primarily residential development.

### **The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (Edition 2 2025)**

8.8 Paragraph 4.8 of the SPPS states the protection of existing, and provision of new, quality open space within or close to settlements plays a vital role in promoting healthy living and tackling inequality through facilitating play, sporting activities, passive activity and interaction with others.

8.9 There is no conflict between the provisions of the SPPS and the retained policy contained in PPS 21. Therefore, the policy provisions of PPS 21 will continue to be applied.

### **PPS2: Natural Heritage**

8.10 Policy NH5 states planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal which is not likely to result in the unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to known:

- priority habitats;
- priority species;
- active peatland;
- ancient and long-established woodland;
- features of earth science conservation importance;
- features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna;
- rare or threatened native species;
- wetlands (includes river corridors); or
- other natural heritage features worthy of protection.

Policy NH 1 - European and Ramsar Sites – International states Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that, either individually or in combination with existing and/or proposed plans or projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on:

- a European Site (Special Protection Area, proposed Special Protection Area, Special Areas of Conservation, candidate Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Community Importance); or
- a listed or proposed Ramsar Site

- 8.11 A development proposal which is likely to result in an unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to, habitats, species or features may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the habitat, species or feature.
- 8.12 A bio-diversity checklist was submitted along with an accompanying Ecological Statement completed by Aspen. The closest ASSI to the Application Site is the Altmover Glen ASSI. The proposed training pitch runs parallel to a small watercourse which feeds into the River Roe and Tributaries SAC and ASSI. While the watercourse is outside the designated sites, appropriate measures will be required to prevent impacts on water quality during construction. Existing riparian trees will be retained.
- 8.13 The works would run parallel to a small stream that flows into the River Roe and Tributaries SAC/ASSI. However, existing riparian trees will be retained. Subject to appropriate mitigation, including additional native riparian tree planting, the proposal is not likely to result in significant adverse effects on ecological interests. The proposed stand and clubhouse extension works will not have a significant ecological impact.
- 8.14 Regarding assessments carried out on the potential impact on protected species, NIEA's NED team was consulted and raised issues with previously approved floodlighting and impact on bats. A bat survey would have been required. However, the floodlighting has been omitted from the proposal.
- 8.15 NED has considered the removal of the proposed floodlighting and is now content, subject to a condition preventing the installation of floodlighting. Any future proposal for floodlighting would require appropriate bat activity surveys and mitigation to ensure illumination levels at the adjacent watercourse remain below 1 lux.
- 8.16 NED also raised concerns regarding potential impacts on the adjacent watercourse. However, subject to full adherence to the pollution prevention and mitigation measures recommended by NIEA's Water Catchment Unit, NED is content that the proposal satisfies relevant planning policy in relation to the protection of watercourses.

- 8.17 A headwall is proposed to facilitate the discharge of surface water runoff to the river. At the time of assessment, SES had not yet responded to consultation. To ensure the water environment is protected during construction, it is considered necessary to require the submission and approval of a **Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)** prior to the commencement of development. Subject to this condition, the proposal is considered acceptable in respect of the water environment.
- 8.18 It is not envisaged that any priority habitats will be adversely impacted by the proposed development proposal, and no follow-up habitat surveys are deemed required. Furthermore, it is not envisaged that any priority species will be impacted by the proposed development. No follow-up species surveys are required.
- 8.19 The proposal would not have an adverse impact on, or damage to, habitats or species.

### **PPS 3: Policy AMP 2 - Access to Public Roads**

- 8.20 Planning Policy Statement 3 relates to vehicular and pedestrian access, transport assessment, and the protection of transport routes, and parking. Planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access, or the intensification of the use of an existing access, onto a public road where:
- a) such access will not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic; and
  - b) the proposal does not conflict with Policy AMP 3 Access to Protected Routes.
- 8.21 There is no proposed change to the existing access or carpark. DFI Roads was consulted on the proposal and responded with no concerns.

### **PPS 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside**

- 8.22 Taking into account the transitional arrangements of the SPPS, retained PPS 21 provides, in part, the relevant policy context for the proposal. Planning Policy Statement 21, Policy CTY 1 sets

out the range of types of development which in principle are considered to be acceptable in the countryside and that will contribute to the aims of sustainable development. Other types of development will only be permitted where there are overriding reasons why that development is essential and could not be located in a settlement, or it is otherwise allocated for development in a development plan. This proposal is partially within the existing settlement and with the new training pitch located outside of the settlement limit.

- 8.23 All proposals for development in the countryside must be sited and designed to integrate sympathetically with their surroundings and to meet other planning and environmental considerations.
- 8.24 There are a range of other types of non-residential development that may be acceptable in principle in the countryside, for example outdoor sport and recreational uses in accordance with PPS 8 and this is considered below.

### **PPS8: Open Space**

- 8.25 Planning Policy Statement 8 Open space Policy OS 1 for Protection of Open Space is a material consideration and states that it will not permit development of proposals that would result in the loss of existing open space or land zoned for the provision of open space. The proposal includes an increase in open space and an upgrade of facilities. The proposal complies with Policy OS 1 of PPS 8.
- 8.26 While majority for the site is within the settlement limit of Drumsurn, the proposed training pitch is located outside of this. Planning Policy Statement 8 Open space Policy OS 3 for outdoor recreation in the countryside is a material consideration and states that it will permit development of proposals for outdoor recreational use in the countryside where all the criteria is met.
- 8.27 The Department will permit the development of proposals for outdoor recreational use in the countryside where all the following criteria are met:

- (i) there is no adverse impact on features of importance to nature conservation, archaeology or built heritage;
- (ii) there is no permanent loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land and no unacceptable impact on nearby agricultural activities;
- (iii) there is no adverse impact on visual amenity or the character of the local landscape and the development can be readily absorbed into the landscape by taking advantage of existing vegetation and/or topography;
- (iv) there is no unacceptable impact on the amenities of people living nearby;
- (v) public safety is not prejudiced and the development is compatible with other countryside uses in terms of the nature, scale, extent and frequency or timing of the recreational activities proposed;
- (vi) any ancillary buildings or structures are designed to a high standard, are of a scale appropriate to the local area and are sympathetic to the surrounding environment in terms of their siting, layout and landscape treatment;
- (vii) the proposed facility takes into account the needs of people with disabilities and is, as far as possible, accessible by means of transport other than the private car; and
- (viii) the road network can safely handle the extra vehicular traffic the proposal will generate and satisfactory arrangements are provided for access, parking, drainage and waste disposal.

8.28 The proposal will not result in the removal of vegetation within or surrounding the site. The development is located within the grounds of the established GAA club, with the proposed training pitch positioned on unused grassland to the south. The site is not located within an area of archaeological significance and there are no listed buildings in the vicinity. The proposal therefore complies with criterion (i).

8.29 The proposal is not located on “best and most versatile” agricultural land. The proposal complies with criterion (ii).

8.30 The proposed clubhouse extension is a modest addition to the previously approved clubhouse under application LA01/2015/0034/F, infilling an existing gap to the north east (rear). The extension measures approximately 9.5metres by

4metres and will have a mono-pitched roof with a maximum height of 4.7metres, reflecting the scale and form of the existing clubhouse. It will be finished in off-white render and insulated cladding, matching the existing building.

- 8.31 The proposal includes a covered concrete terrace and an open terrace on the north eastern side of the existing main playing pitch. The covered terrace measures approximately 28.8metres by 8.5metres and will comprise tiered seating accessed from the existing walkways. It will have a shallow mono-pitched roof with a maximum height of 7.4metres. The upper level will accommodate a press box, commentary box, wheelchair viewing area and tuck shop, accessed from the rear via a ramp. The open terrace will comprise concrete stepped seating, with a maximum height of approximately 2.5metres, accessed via the existing pathway. Both terraces will be finished in off-white smooth plaster, with the roof of the covered terrace finished in olive-green cladding.
- 8.32 The development is mainly contained within the established GAA club site. The substantial vegetation along the north eastern roadside boundary will provide screening, while the proposed training pitch is positioned to the rear of the existing development. Therefore, the proposal will not adversely affect visual amenity or the character of the local landscape and can be satisfactorily absorbed into the existing setting, taking advantage of the established vegetation. The proposal complies with criteria (iii).
- 8.33 Environmental Health were consulted and raised no objection to the proposal, including in respect of noise. While the proposed floodlighting has been removed, the potential for evening use of the training pitch during the longer daylight hours of spring and summer has been considered. Having regard to the established GAA use of the site and EHD's consultation response, the proposal is not considered to result in a significant adverse impact on residential amenity. However, to ensure that the use of the facilities does not result in unacceptable disturbance to nearby residents, a condition restricting the hours of use is considered appropriate. No representations have been received from third parties. Subject to this condition, the proposal complies with criterion (iv).

- 8.34 The use on site is established, and the same proposal was approved in 2016. The proposal includes extension of existing facilities within an established club. The proposal complies with criteria (v).
- 8.35 The proposed ancillary structures are of an appropriate scale and design for the established GAA club setting. The clubhouse extension is modest in scale, infills an existing gap and incorporates materials and a roof form that reflect the existing clubhouse. The covered and open terraces are functional structures associated with the playing pitch and are appropriately sited within the established club grounds.
- 8.36 The proposed 14-metre-high ball stops behind the goals of the new training pitch are significant in height; however, given the pitch's location behind existing development and the established use of the wider GAA complex, there will be limited critical views. Existing boundary vegetation will provide additional screening and assist in integrating the development into the surrounding landscape. Overall, the proposal is considered sympathetic to the character and appearance of the area and complies with criterion (vi).
- 8.37 The proposal incorporates provision for accessibility, including a dedicated wheelchair viewing area within the covered terrace, which will be accessed via a ramp from the rear. The development is located within an established GAA facility and makes use of existing pedestrian walkways and access arrangements. Given the nature and location of the proposal, the needs of people with disabilities have been adequately considered and the proposal complies with criterion (vii).
- 8.38 The proposal will utilise the existing access arrangements serving the established GAA club. The development includes associated parking and pedestrian access within the existing site, with no alteration to the established access or parking. DFI Roads has no objections. NI Water and NIEA's WMU have been consulted and are content. The proposal therefore complies with criterion (viii).
- 8.39 The proposal complies with policy CTY 1 of PPS 21 and policies OS 1 and OS 3 of PPS 8. The principle of development is established.

### **Policy CTY 13**

- 8.40 Policy CTY 13 states that planning permission will be granted for a building in the countryside where it can be visually integrated into the surrounding landscape and it is of an appropriate design.
- 8.41 A new building will be unacceptable where:
- (a) it is a prominent feature in the landscape; or
  - (b) the site lacks long established natural boundaries or is unable to provide a suitable degree of enclosure for the building to integrate into the landscape; or
  - (c) it relies primarily on the use of new landscaping for integration; or
  - (d) ancillary works do not integrate with their surroundings; or
  - (e) the design of the building is inappropriate for the site and its locality; or
  - (f) it fails to blend with the landform, existing trees, buildings, slopes and other natural features which provide a backdrop; or
  - (g) in the case of a proposed dwelling on a farm (see Policy CTY 10) it is not visually linked or sited to cluster with an established group of buildings on a farm.

### **Policy CTY14**

- 8.42 Policy CTY14 of PPS21 states planning permission will be granted for a building in the countryside where it does not cause a detrimental change to or further erode the rural character of an area.
- 8.43 Planning permission will be granted for a building in the countryside where it does not cause a detrimental change to or further erode the rural character of an area. A new building will be unacceptable where:
- (a) it is unduly prominent in the landscape; or
  - (b) it results in a suburban style build-up of development when viewed with existing and approved buildings; or
  - (c) it does not respect the traditional pattern of settlement exhibited in that area; or
  - (d) it creates or adds to a ribbon of development (see Policy CTY 8); or
  - (e) the impact of ancillary works (with the exception of necessary visibility splays) would damage rural character.

- 8.44 The proposed clubhouse extension and spectator terraces are located within the established GAA club grounds and are visually read in association with the existing clubhouse and playing pitches. The clubhouse extension is modest in scale, infills an existing gap and reflects the form, roof profile and materials of the existing building. The covered terrace is larger in scale, but is a functional structure directly associated with the existing main playing pitch and is positioned alongside the existing development.
- 8.45 The mature vegetation along the north eastern boundary provides screening from the Drumsurn Road and will aid integration. The materials, including off-white finishes and olive-green cladding, are appropriate to the established recreational setting.
- 8.46 Having regard to the established GAA facilities, the siting and scale of the proposed structures, and the existing vegetation and development within the settlement of Drumsurn, the training pitch, clubhouse extension and terraces will integrate satisfactorily into their surroundings. The proposal will not result in a prominent feature or a detrimental change to the character of the area. The proposal therefore complies with Policies CTY 13 and CTY 14 of PPS 21.

### **Policy CTY15: The Setting of Settlements**

- 8.47 Planning permission will be refused for development that mars the distinction between a settlement and the surrounding countryside or that otherwise results in urban sprawl. The Justification and Amplification to the policy states that the principle of drawing a settlement limit is partly to promote and partly to contain new development within that limit and so maintain a clear distinction between the built-up area and surrounding countryside. Proposals that would mar this distinction will therefore be unacceptable.
- 8.48 The proposal is predominantly contained within the established GAA grounds within the settlement of Drumsurn, with the proposed training pitch extending into the rural area. No buildings or built structures are proposed within this rural section. The development is closely associated with the existing

GAA facilities and will be read in the context of the established built-up area, existing playing pitches and mature boundary vegetation. Given the siting, limited extent of the development outside the settlement and absence of built development within the rural element, the proposal will not result in urban sprawl or erode the distinction between the settlement and surrounding countryside. The proposal therefore complies with the relevant settlement strategy provisions.

### **PPS15: Planning and Flood Risk**

**FLD 1:** DfI Rivers is satisfied with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment, which confirms that all proposed development will be located outside the 1 in 100 year climate change fluvial floodplain, with a 600mm freeboard provided. DfI Rivers note the floodplain area should remain unobstructed which will be secured by planning condition. No development is proposed within this area.

**FLD 2:** The site is affected by the Castle River and an undesignated culverted watercourse. A recommended 5 metre maintenance strip must be retained along the watercourses and kept free from obstruction, with access maintained at all times. This will be secured by planning condition.

**FLD 3:** The submitted Drainage Assessment was assessed and DfI Rivers note that any proposed discharge to a watercourse will require Schedule 6 consent from DfI Rivers, with evidence that the proposed stormwater can be safely discharged. This requirement will be secured by planning condition.

## **9 CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 The proposed development adds to the long established sporting facilities at Drumsurn Road. It accords with the principle of development set out in PPS 8 Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation. The extension to the clubhouse is modest. The scheme is acceptable in terms of its integration into the surrounding area, rural character and design of buildings/ structures. No issues are presented regarding flood risk or residential amenity. Through revision to the scheme by

the removal of floodlighting, it will not cause harm to natural heritage interests. Approval is recommended.

## **10 Conditions**

1. As required by Section 61 the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Time Limit.

2. The existing vegetation indicated along the northeastern, roadside boundary, shall be permanently retained at a height not less than 2 metres for hedging and 4 metres for trees unless necessary to prevent danger to the public in which case a full explanation shall be given to the Council.

Reason: To ensure the development is adequately screened.

3. The instillation of floodlights on the site is not permitted without the grant of further planning permission.

Reason: To ensure the local bat population is protected from damage or disturbance.

4. Prior to the commencement of development, Schedule 6 consent from DfI Rivers for the discharge of stormwater to the watercourse at greenfield runoff rate shall be obtained and submitted to the Council.

Reason: To ensure that stormwater is appropriately managed and to minimise the risk of increased flood risk and adverse impacts on the watercourse.

5. The maintenance strip indicated on Drawing 02/2 shall be provided and retained alongside the watercourse within the site. The maintenance strip shall be kept clear of all buildings, structures, hardstanding and obstruction, and shall remain available for access and maintenance purposes.

Reason: To facilitate access for watercourse maintenance and reduce the risk of obstruction to the watercourse.

6. The area of floodplain identified on Drawing 02/3 shall not be raised, developed or otherwise altered in a manner that would reduce its flood storage capacity or impede flood conveyance. No unsuitable planting, structures, fencing or other obstructions shall be introduced within this area.

Reason: To maintain existing flood storage capacity and flood conveyance routes and minimise the risk of flooding.

7. Prior to the commencement of development, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The CEMP shall include details of measures to protect the natural environment during construction, including measures to prevent pollution and sediment runoff to nearby watercourses, and shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the natural environment and water quality during construction and to minimise potential adverse effects on nearby watercourses and habitats.

8. The hours of operation at the development proposal shall be limited to:
  - weekdays 9am-9pm, and
  - weekends 9am-6pm

Reason: To protect residential amenity.

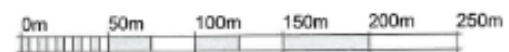
## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Site location Plan**

SITE OUTLINED IN RED

1 : 2500

MAP REF 03908NW



VISUAL SCALE 1:2500 @ A3

## **Appendix 2**

### **Block Plan**

