

President Declan Counihan Honorary Secretary Seán Kirby Honorary Treasurer Francis O Kennedy

Draft Leixlip Local Area Plan
2020-2026
The Planning Department,
Kildare County Council,
Aras Chill Dara,
Devoy Park,
Naas,
Co Kildare

Re: Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020-2026

Dear Sirs,

The executive committee of MU Barnhall Rugby Football Club propose that Kildare County Council should include a 'feasibility study regarding the provision of communal sports fields for the utilisation of sports clubs in the area and to support this submission MU Barnhall Rugby Football Club regard the following points as noteworthy;

At present, with our existing population in Leixlip, MU Barnhall RFC had been using adjoining land, kindly provided by HP for additional playing grounds. However following HP's recent sale the rugby club now understands that the new owners of the adjacent land will no longer be in a position to accommodate us in this regard.

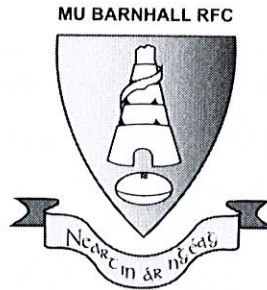
We enthusiastically support the provision of new housing in Leixlip and the associated benefits that a younger age profile will bring to an ageing town. To this end a recent analysis of the addresses of our Mini Section players which runs from under 7's to under 12's boys and girls shows that only 24% of the children now come from Leixlip, 36% from Celbridge and the remaining 40% coming from other towns in North Kildare.

We field 39 teams each week of which 7 teams cater for women's/girls rugby and one team caters for intellectual disability rugby. We have 850 players in total across all age groups, male and female. We have only got 3 pitches.

We have invested €750k on grounds upkeep/drainage since 1999.

As rugby is predominantly a winter sport and current traffic levels take a huge toll on the ground surface our pitches are regularly deemed to be unplayable at times before the end of each season.

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We are apprehensive about the viability of these pitches going forward due to the huge demands seven days a week during the rugby season. Our pitches catered for 200 players in 1987 and are now catering for 850 players and many more teams. We anticipate having over 1,000 players by the end of 2023.

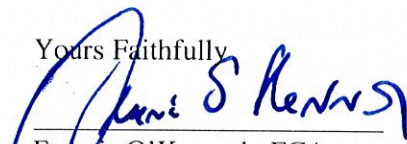
We urgently need three more pitches in an area as near as possible to the present club in order to keep pace with current demand and the anticipated extra demand in the future for rugby/sports facilities.

We would request that some of the amenity land at the Wonderful Barn, KDA1, be allocated for the provision of rugby pitches. MU Barnhall RFC has great historical connections with the Wonderful Barn. The club was founded in 1969 by the employees of Irish Meat Packers (IMP) who at that time owned all of the lands at the Wonderful Barn. In fact the house at the Wonderful Barn was used by the directors of IMP as both living quarters and for meetings with customers. We would have held a number of functions in the Wonderful Barn many years ago. Our club crest has as its centrepiece the Wonderful Barn. We believe these historical reasons allied to the needs to provide for the extra children who play rugby in an expanding area would be a great solution for the community's rugby club now and into the future.

The Wonderful Barn is a truly historic amenity and MU Barnhall RFC has been part of that history since 1969 and would seek to be part of that history going forward.

Further details can be provided as required.

Yours Faithfully



Francis O'Kennedy FCA
Honorary Treasurer