



Ballinroad Football Club
St Laurence's Hall
Ballinroad
Dungarvan

The Planning Department,
Waterford City and County Council,
Menapia Building,
The Mall,
Waterford City
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7th March 2023

Draft Dungarvan and Ballinroad LAP 2023 – 2029

To whom it may concern,

We welcome the opportunity to have input into the 'Draft Dungarvan and Ballinroad LAP 2023 – 2029'. We are making a submission in relation to the provision of open space that can be utilised for field games and the need to secure the long-term future of more playing pitches across Dungarvan, and, in particular, the Ballinroad area.

There appears to be a shortfall in the provision of space for use by sports clubs that is realisable over the duration of the current plan. We would be hopeful the LAP will be informed by a full recreational space and amenity audit for the Dungarvan and Ballinroad areas.

The current spaces and pitches available to sports clubs cannot cater for the current demand, and will not be able to cater for the forecasted increase over the lifetime of the new plan.

The uptake of soccer by girls in the last number of years has accelerated, to the point where we now have as many girls as boys starting out in our academy. We currently struggle to accommodate the growing number of boys teams (currently 2 teams in all but 2 age groups), we expect to have two boys teams per age group, in some cases three, in the next couple of years. We now also have girls' teams for the first time this year. We will have two girls' teams per age group based on current numbers in the upcoming years. We need greater pitch and open space allocation for training and match purposes.

It is well documented, the fall off in participation of girls in teams sports as they pass through adolescence, and whilst there is great work being undertaken to try and reduce that, it will be fruitless if there is an under provision of usable space provided. An under-12 playing now will be an adult when the new LAP runs its course. Things need to happen now.

We welcome and support the zoning objectives, and Special Development Objectives in the Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022-2029:

DGDO9 ● DO9 It is an objective to facilitate future expansion of the soccer pitch.

DGDO13 ● DO13 To support the development of a public playground and sports facilities/playing pitches in Ballinroad

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We request support through the LAP to help clubs to pursue the means to obtain new spaces. We note that the previous CDP had Special Objective, DG09 (to facilitate future expansion of the soccer pitch), but it means nothing if we cannot realise the objective.

A key challenge as recognised by WCCC is the development of Community and Sports Facilities. These objectives should be achievable, supported by the local authority and the Waterford Sports Partnership. The wider benefits to the community of active participation by boys and girls in sport is well proven. We are requesting the LAP to include objectives to actively seek to secure the extra community spaces required.

Another Local Area Plan shouldn't come and go without some tangible change to the allocation of space for sports pitches.

We look forward to the Draft Local Area Plan to see if the ambitions and willingness of Waterford City & Council aligns with our own.

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The Committee

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