



14.2.2022

Re: Part 8. Sallins Amenity Lands P82022.01

I refer to our submission of 16 December 2020, copy attached, where we outlined at length the status of Naas Rugby Club and its engagement as a Community Club in the greater Naas Area and our interest in the development of Sallins Amenity Park.

I am now enclosing updated material which regarding the further successes at the Club. In particular, you will note the further expansion of our “social inclusion” (Special Needs) and women/girls programme.

You will note that the provision of Rugby is somewhat different that that of other field sports in that the Club services a wider catchment area than the PARISH.

Indeed, in the recent All-Ireland League games and the Provincial Towns Cup fixtures the club fielded players from a wide catchment across County Kildare. Recently Jamie Osborne, a member of our Senior Squad who has played all his rugby at the club was awarded a Leinster Professional Contract.

In addition, our Women’s side have this week won their Division of the Leinster Women’s League and will now participate in Division 2 next season. Two members of this side won their first caps for Leinster Women this season and were selected for the Ireland Women’s training squad in preparation for the upcoming Women’s 6 Nations.

In our original submission we indicated our availability to meet with those preparing the Plan prior to the introduction of the Part 8, and despite the issues with Covid etc were disappointed that this did not happen.

The draft drawings circulated as part of this consultation make specific reference to the provision of playing pitches for specific sports. While this may only be indicative of potential uses it does provide an indication, indeed an expectation, on behalf of those sports that these are the only sports being considered for these spaces. The spaces proposed, particularly those smaller pitches, all weather/light

are also ideal for rugby. Our understanding from communications from elected representatives were that they had been assured the pitches being developed on the site would be multipurpose. In an environment where there are limited spaces available to develop field sports, the failure to address multipurpose pitches is indeed disappointing. Equally the overall proposal for the management and supervision of the playing areas is another significant failure. While we recognise that the Part 8 is a specific legal document which does not require such a proposal the lack of an indication is worrying in the light of the draft now being considered.

The indication in the original consultation process that there would be a number of pitches, particularly the smaller ones, available for multi-use was no doubt intended to gain wider public support for the proposal. The language now used in the Part 8 and the attached drawings are of concern. These changes would be an act of bad faith by the Council and bring into question in the Councils interest in meaningful public participation in the process.

We remain available for consultation in the event that the consultants wish to have further clarification of the points raised.

Yours in Rugby

John Walsh,

President Leinster Rugby and member of Naas RFC Executive Committee.



To whom it may concern.

14.12.2020

Re: Sallins Amenity Lands Masterplan - Sallins Town Park

As Head of Rugby Development for Leinster Rugby I want to support Naas Rugby Football Club in their submission for the inclusion of Rugby playing and changing room facilities in the New Recreational facility proposed for Sallins Park consequential on the completion of the new Sallins bye-pass.

Naas Rugby Club has been part of the fabric of Naas and the greater Naas environs for near to 100 years as the club will celebrate its centenary in 2022. Over that time and very evidently in the last ten years Naas RFC has transformed itself into one of the premier sporting organisations in Kildare and top Rugby Clubs in Ireland.

Naas Rugby activity in the communities of its hinterland has provided opportunities for young boys and girls to experience rugby in their local schools but also in Naas club at Forenaughts. The success of its community Rugby programme supported by Leinster Rugby and Kildare County Council has created a greater demand for facilities to enable a greater scope to provide rugby for all in the community.

Leinster Rugby has currently 16 Clubs that deliver mixed ability programme. Naas RFC have recently joined this programme offering "Mixed Ability Rugby" as Forenaughts" on Saturday mornings.

Over recent seasons Naas RFC has expanded its relationship with schools in the area through the Club and Community Rugby Officer Programme (CCRO). The Naas CCRO is now actively engaged in all National Schools and most second level schools in the greater Naas area. Recently the Leinster CCRO Programme in conjunction with Kildare Sports Partnership introduced "Rugby on the Green" after school in Castlesize, Sallins. These are some of the innovative opportunities Naas RFC has brought to its community. Having access to facilities such as those earmarked for Sallins will enable Naas RFC to deliver on their stated aims as outlined in their presentation document.

The forward thinking approach of Kildare County Council to establish such community based facilities that cater for multi-sport usage is one that Leinster Rugby have experienced especially when our age grade sides tour in France. They allow clubs such as Naas RFC to expend their energies on the things that matter to allow boys and girls play and experience the joy and camaraderie of rugby.

So on behalf of Naas RFC and Leinster we look forward to enhancing our current relationship with Kildare Co. Co. with the addition of rugby playing facilities attached to the Sallins Project.

Yours in Rugby

Philip Lawlor
Head of Rugby Development Leinster

16 December 2020

Re: Sallins Amenity Lands Masterplan - Sallins Town Park

General Comments

On behalf of **Naas Rugby Football Club**, I enclose a brief on the Club along with a letter of support from the Rugby Development Department at Leinster Rugby. These documents are submitted in support of our comments and observations with regard to the development of the ***"Sallins Amenity Lands Masterplan - Sallins Town Park"***.

Naas RFC has over almost **100 years** been part of the fabric of the local community providing recreational opportunities for adults, youths and children in the greater Naas Area. The depth of our engagement is set out in the brief on the Club.

Naas has worked with the ***IRFU, Leinster Rugby and Kildare County Council*** in meeting the demands for sporting facilities in the Area. In recent years, the Community and Club Rugby Officer (CCRO) at the Club, with the support of Leinster Rugby and Kildare County Council has worked to expand the Rugby Programme into most first and second level schools in the area. In addition, with the expansion of the game to Women and Girls over the last 10 years, the Club has broadened its participation and coaching base and now we field teams at Leinster League and Cup Competitions - Women and Girls Underage.

Rugby has often been termed as a "Winter Sport", however due to many innovations the sport is now played throughout the year. We at Naas RFC have an active "Social Rugby" programme incorporating TAG and TIP (both non-contact and played by mixed teams) running over the summer months. In addition to providing fitness programmes for members it also expands the social integration in the area. Summer Camps, for boys and girls as well as dedicated Fitness and Conditioning Camps, open to members, schools players and those interested in experience rugby now form a critical part of our summer season activity.

With the development of *"Inclusive Rugby"* across the Province, Naas Rugby Club has over the last two seasons developed our "Mixed Ability" programme which is proving very popular on Saturday mornings. This programme has not only required specialist training for the coaches, but enable the Transition Year students at Naas Community College and St Marys College to become active in the local community assisting the coaches each week.

Recently, the Leinster CCRO Programme, in conjunction with Kildare Sports Partnership introduced **"Rugby on the Green"** after school in Castlesize, Sallins. These are some of the innovative opportunities Naas RFC has brought to its community.

Comments on Masterplan

Naas Rugby Club, through its many engagements both in Ireland and across Europe, has experienced many playing facilities under the auspices of the Municipal Authorities. While this approach is on a small scale in Ireland, it is the norm in France and Belgium, where many sports organisations work collectively with the Municipal Authorities to provide a local sports campus in the area. We have noted in particular the experience at **St Catherine's Park in Lucan**, which is under the auspices of Fingal County Council. Here we found that all the main field sports are included (GAA, Soccer and Rugby) but also include provisions for Cricket, Children's Playgrounds, Walking. Dressing rooms (2 allocated to each pitch with a Referee Room attached) are included in the arrangements. There are specific conditions applying to the use of the pitches and penalties for failure to comply with the conditions applying.

Naas Rugby Club consider that this type of arrangement is particularly suitable for the development of this new facility at **Sallins**. In addition to the provision of facilities for field sports, including dressing rooms as described above, we would see the Park as an ideal opportunity to integrate other activities. The ongoing work on the **"Naas Sallins Greenway"** along the canal could be integrated into the Park development. We would also see the opportunity to expand the usage of the canal itself with the provision of a **"Blue Way"** allowing for the development of Kayaking, Canoeing, Canoe Polo. etc. Indeed the extension of the Blue Way to include the River Liffey would ultimately provide an excellent regional facility for sports enthusiasts and tourists alike.

As a Club working outside the "Parish Structure" bringing sport to the wider community, in line with National policy - aimed at encouraging exercise whether passive (walking etc) or active (team sports etc) for all ages, we consider it essential

that the greatest possible consideration be given to the inclusion of a Rugby Pitch and related facilities be provided at part of the programme.

The playing requirements for rugby are similar to those of several other sports with an **on-pitch playing area of approx 120m x 80m**, with an area for supporters, management and substitutes outside the playing area. As with St Catherine's, the provision of dressing rooms which could also be used as a storage area for "Goal Protection Pads", flagpoles etc should be included in the overall layout.

In supporting the development of the Sallins Town Park, we would again request that in designing the Active Sports Area that favourable consideration be given to the allocation of a pitch for the playing of rugby. We recognise that there will be a financial levy towards the use of these facilities, however this should be at a reasonable level. Finally, the provision of facilities should be done in a manner which protects these playing areas for the purposes of the allocation. Overuse can and will seriously damage the playing area allocated for that sport. As in Fingal these provisions should ensure that all users are aware of the conditions applying and also of the consequences, including penalties if appropriate,.

We at Naas Rugby Club would be available to meet with you or the Consultants, should you wish.

Yours sincerely

Robert Brickell

Robert Brickell
Honorary Secretary, Naas Rugby Club.

Mr Simon Wallace
Parks Superintendent
Kildare County Council
Aras Chill Dara
Naas
Co Kildare

CC Eoghan Ryan, Director of Services and Manager of Naas Municipal
District
Syl Merrins, Kildare Sports Partnership