



Draft Blessington Local Area Plan Submission - Report

Who are you:	Private Individual
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Topic

Community Development (incl. sports facilities & schools, etc.)

Submission

I am writing to support the provision of sufficient lands to support an athletics campus, including a 400m running track, track and field facilities, and changing/ toilet facilities, and adequate parking in the Blessington Local Area Plan 2025.

I am a member of Lake Shore Striders. I joined the club in February of this year. The club is incredibly welcoming to all comers regardless of gender, age, and fitness, and works hard to encourage new runners. It is making a fantastic contribution to public health by encouraging people to run - including people like me who have never run before. I said I would do 5K by the time I was [REDACTED] and Striders made that happen.

As a recent resident of Blessington, Striders also does an excellent job of integrating new comers into the community. Striders members are the backbone of the local Parkrun at Russborough House and work with the Sanctuary Runners to welcome refugees and International Protection recipients into the local community.

Striders is an incredible volunteer run outfit that offers outsize benefit to the community. It desperately needs proper facilities. As a [REDACTED] something woman I know that we need to provide reliable toilet facilities to encourage more women to get involved - there are currently no toilets available at the track Blessington Community College allows us to use and this is a significant deterrent to some women and older men. Striders is soon opening a juvenile section which will even further benefit the community.

There are no permanent athletics facilities in West Wicklow. Indeed, West Wicklow is always overlooked when developments are considered. Lakeshore Striders is the athletics club in Wicklow with the largest catchment area. This new development will tap into an existing vibrant running community. it will be well used and offer a springboard for further expansion.

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