



# Draft Blessington Local Area Plan Submission - Report

Who are you:	Private Individual
Name:	Deirdre McCormack
Reference:	DBLESSLAP-210236
Submission Made	December 11, 2024 9:04 PM

## Topic

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

## Submission

As the founding member and Chairperson of the volunteer community group, Community Pool for West Wicklow, who have been campaigning for the development of a swimming pool in the West Wicklow/Blessington area since July 2018 I welcome the numerous references to and recognition of the need to develop a swimming pool in the local area, made in the draft Blessington Local Area Plan.

I also welcome the reference to developing any such swimming pool and or leisure centre in close proximity to other sporting facilities such as football or rugby pitches and a running track so that there can be a shared use of facilities across a number of sports, clubs and community groups.

I believe that the following amendment to the wording of the Social Infrastructure Objective BLESS30 is required,

From:

To facilitate and support the development of a swimming pool/leisure centre within Blessington.

To:

To prioritise, facilitate and support the development of a swimming pool/leisure centre within Blessington.

My reasoning and rationale behind this is as follows:

1) The lack of a public swimming pool was in the top 2 issues identified by respondents in the original public consultation (the top item being a deficit of community facilities in general):

[https://www.wicklow.ie/Portals/0/adam/Documents/8ywoivQbSk2PnAbDGIFD1g/Link/3.%20Blessington\\_Social%20Infrastructure%20Audit.pdf](https://www.wicklow.ie/Portals/0/adam/Documents/8ywoivQbSk2PnAbDGIFD1g/Link/3.%20Blessington_Social%20Infrastructure%20Audit.pdf)

2) In Table 2.2 Extract of Community Facilities Hierarchy Model in the Blessington Social Infrastructure Audit, a swimming pool/leisure centre is the only category without any existing Blessington Community Infrastructure.

3) The wording "to prioritise, facilitate and support" aligns with the approved Wicklow County Development Plan action CPO 7.43:

CPO 7.43 To prioritise, facilitate and support the development of a community swimming pool facility and a sports complex within the western region of the County, so located to achieve maximum accessibility to the residents of West Wicklow.

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Portals/0/adam/Documents/NZy04adS4UupjOnDVMmH9g/Link/Volume%201%20-%20FULL%20Written%20Statement%20CDP%202022-2028%20as%20altered.pdf>

4) The previous two submissions made by Wicklow County Council to the Large Scale Sports and Infrastructure Fund did not prioritise a swimming pool for West Wicklow accordingly. It is therefore imperative that the Blessington Local Area Plan includes a specific action to prioritise the provision of a swimming pool.

There is a clear need for the development of a swimming pool and multi-use sports facility in the West Wicklow/Blessington area. The demand for local swimming facilities was demonstrated with the popularity of the Swim Ireland Pop-Up Pool when it was located in Blessington for 3 months in 2022. In order for this project to progress and successfully secure funding and ultimately become a reality for our community here, there needs to be a commitment from Wicklow County Council that the development of this much-needed swimming pool and multi-use sports facility is a priority, a site must be identified and all stake holders from the community, relevant sports clubs and Council must work together to achieve this. The inclusion of the prioritisation of the development of a swimming pool and multi-use sports facility in the Blessington Local Area Plan is a step closer to delivering this long-awaited amenity for our community.

## Topic

Social Infrastructure Audit

## Submission

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## Topic

Land Use Zoning / Specific Local Objectives / Land Use Zoning Map

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