

SOUTHERN NOMADS R.U.F.C.

President : Michael Shimmin
Chairman : Graeme Cushnie
Captain : Ian Hargreaves
Secretary : Steve Callaghan
Treasurer : Martin Jones
Coach: Casey Davies
Fixtures Secretary : Rob Hirst
Social Secretary : Tom Davies
Public Relations: Mike Davies
Development Officer: Dave Parkes
Welfare Officer: Amy Wheeler



Registered Charity of the Isle of Man. No: 1001

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25th January 2010

To:

Planning Policy Team
Planning and Building Control Directorate
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Draft Area Plan for the South

Southern Nomads Rugby Club, together with “Southern Nomads SPort Erin”, are pleased that the Draft Area Plan for the South recognises that “these areas must accommodate a rugby pitch with associated training facilities” and that “a need for a rugby pitch was identified by a number of Local Authorities, and the general public. The site in Ballakilley was suggested by more than one LA as being suitable”.

You will be aware of our needs and desires from previous direct correspondences on the earlier strategic plan, and in particular, the Southern Area Development Plan correspondences with MHK’s, Ministers, Local Authorities and attending consultation events.

Meanwhile, as time has gone on, we continue to ask that you afford serious deliberation and maintain your utmost recognition to our causes and objectives, so that Southern Nomads Rugby Club can maintain and improve its development.

Ballakilley remains the ideal venue where we could centralise our activities as well as those of other local clubs and associations.

- Southern Nomads RUFC is an amateur rugby club formed in 1982. Founder members are still actively involved with the running of the club. The Nomads are ‘based’ in the Port Erin and Port St Mary area.

- We have played competitively in the Manx Shield and Manx Cup competitions every year since 1982. Nomads also compete in the Cheshire Plate competition. Nomads field two senior sides in the local league and cup competitions.
- Presently, we have about sixty senior players to represent us during this season and we have about seventy minors involved in our mini and youth rugby over the year.
- Whilst we strive to find a home, our efforts extend to the community to provide the younger generation with properly conducted rugby coaching and matches. This initiative has been very well received by the boys and girls who have attended, as well as their parents. The club successfully started up 'minis' rugby for primary school years 3, 4, 5 and 6 in 2001. In 2004, our youth rugby progressed to secondary school years 7, 8, 9 and 10. We have been providing quality coaching as part of our commitment to the Manx Youth Games since their inception.
- From September 2008 to date, we have not been able to provide coaching and matches as per our development plans, for secondary school years 11 and 12. This is a tremendous shame because many of the young men in those years began their love for rugby with our minis and continued through youth. They are now missing out on their preferred sport combined with its essential camaraderie in a very important time in their playing and social development. Unfortunately, the predominant reason for this is a lack of local facilities being available at appropriate times.
- The club has, and continues to perform every year since 1982 which is a credit to all those members who have been involved. All members have a deep desire for the club to continue.
- Not having playing facilities in the Port Erin area makes it difficult to establish any real identity for the club, which in turn makes it difficult for potential new players, either new to the game or new to the Isle of Man, to identify Nomads as a rugby club.
- Not having facilities also means that coordinating logistics of all related activities and inventory demands a lot of time from the responsible volunteers.
- As the cost of land has risen due to building potentials, it is all but impossible to initiate long term leases in these times. We at Nomads Rugby Club do all we can to strengthen our rugby standards. In addition to improving our current 'senior' team standards, we continue our 'open door' policy to welcome and introduce new players to the game and club alike, as well as providing a development platform and fixtures for those new players.
- As a rugby club, we have to, and have submitted strategic plans to the sport's governing bodies in order to comply with the Rugby Football Union membership criteria. Such plans have to centre on development. Details of our development plan and other governing body criteria can be supplied as required. As a club, we are able to provide the personnel to develop young, new and senior players, but it is now becoming more difficult to fulfill this obligation to the community if playing grounds are just not available locally.

- Based on the foregoing, we hope that you can understand our requirement for a permanent local facility where we can conduct all our activities (training, coaching and matches for up to 140 people a week) at a central location, thus providing a more definitive identity for Nomads RUFC. In addition, such a facility would enable those in the community, not already involved to become involved as they wish. They would actually be aware that a facility exists to which they could associate, rather than being made aware by word of mouth.
- *So as to avoid holding training and coaching sessions at all different times, days and locations for various age groups which would demand various personnel to give an awful lot of their spare time, and for practical purposes, we ideally envisage an area of 4 hectares / 10 acres for two pitches. As a minimum, we envisage one full size pitch (120 x 60 metres) to be used mainly for match purposes, and a near full size pitch for training purposes. The 'match' pitch would also be used for training purposes as necessary. **To put things into perspective:- there are up to 40 seniors training at least once per week, a seniors 'home' match more or less every week between September and end of April, up to sixty minis / youth training once per week and five (according to age groups) minis / youth matches taking place on a frequent basis. One pitch or one pitch with undersized associated training facilities just could not withstand such activity.***
- A lot of the younger players walk to the minis / youth training sessions presently held at Rushen Primary school, because it is 'local'. If such training was not 'local', we would not get the numbers and participation we do because of transportation issues.
- If we are to continue and expand our youth activities to give the younger generation a platform, we need a permanent local venue for logistical planning and organisational purposes. Furthermore, as new residential properties continue to be built in the area and the local population expands, it is not unreasonable that an objective sporting / recreational and in turn social facility should be available to them.
- As a commitment to our membership and local community alike, Southern Nomads have founded **“Southern Nomads SPort Erin”**, a registered charity (No. 1001).
- **“Southern Nomads SPort Erin”** objectives are to:
 - Raise funds to assist a permanent facility for Southern Nomads RUFC.
 - Raise funds to facilitate the provision of sporting facilities for the South of the Isle of Man.
 - Encourage the ongoing participation of rugby on the island.

There is a genuine need for greater facilities for sport and community recreational facilities as a whole in the South of the island. The benefits of an active lifestyle are well recognised and having sporting facilities "on the doorstep" will encourage this. Rugby is a well disciplined sport for all shapes, sizes, abilities and ages which promotes and develops fitness and teamwork, and provides a social life.

An area of approximately 4 hectares / 10 acres would be necessary to provide match and training pitches, clubhouse and parking. The facilities could also be used for other sports use and activities such as cricket, athletics and even camping in the summer, with the clubhouse

available for community purposes throughout the year. Such recreational facilities would offer wider potential for the local community. A clubhouse could also be used as a local function venue considering the decline in the number of alternative such facilities in the Port Erin and Port St Mary areas.

With our strong membership we are an organisation capable of and committed to managing such facilities were they available.

Should such a facility, particularly playing fields be made available at short notice, we are in a position as a Club to engage in whatever actions are necessary now.

Your acknowledgement of this letter would be appreciated.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

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Chairman
Southern Nomads RUFC

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cc Hon John Shimmin MHK, Minister of Department of Local Government and Environment
cc Hon Martyn Quayle MHK, Minister of Tourism & Leisure.
cc Mr Quintin Gill MHK
cc Hon Phil Gawne MHK
cc Mr Juan Watterson MHK
cc Rushen Parish Commissioners
cc Port Erin Commissioners
cc Port St Mary Commissioners
cc IOM Sport Council, Mrs Pauline Carr
cc Manx Rugby Football Union