



25-9-25

Re: Planning Application to Meath CC on behalf of Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland

Dear Colleagues,

The proposed building and development of a Wildlife Teaching Hospital and Nature Education Centre at Mornington, Co. Meath would represent a hugely impactful progression in addressing a major animal welfare issue that veterinary practitioners and the UCD School of Veterinary Medicine have faced for several decades.

Time and again, the Vet School in UCD receives urgent and emergent requests for help from public bodies and lay people when dealing with wildlife health/welfare concerns, but to which we cannot respond in a practical or ethical manner as we lack the necessary expertise and physical infrastructure. Despite a willingness to help, acceptance of such cases would result in sub-optimal care and we have continually relied on organisations such as Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland (WRI) to step into the breach.

The efforts to progress wildlife care and rehabilitation by WRI have been significant, meaningful and of huge benefit in attempting to address an unmet societal need. The organisation has provided expert handling/care input, dedication and leadership in this sphere and built up a huge level of corporate knowledge that it has provided freely to all stakeholders, including veterinarians in practice and undergraduate students here in UCD.

The need for the Centre to drive better wildlife healthcare and welfare, affiliated research and education for the public good is clearly evident. In addition, the Centre would provide the optimal environment to optimise successful treatment/rehabilitation with subsequent release of those cared for back into their natural habitat. As sustainability and biodiversity are key drivers in all matters veterinary, such initiatives deserve to be fully supported.

I am hugely supportive of this application as I feel it has the potential to make a real, sustained and demonstrable impact on the future of wildlife care in Ireland.

I would be delighted to provide any further detail if required.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Rory Breathnach – Dean, UCD School of Veterinary Medicine