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11/07/2019

To whom it may concern,

This is my submission to the council in relation to the Draft Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020-2026.

I am appalled to see that the indicative line (indicative of the placement of a road) through St. Catherine's park which would connect the M3 with Junction 5 on the M4 has been reinstated in the new Local Area Plan. The protection that was proposed in the previous Local Area Plan (LAP) was as follows, 'To protect the amenity of St. Catherine's Park. No road proposal shall be considered by this Council through the park within the Council's ownership or jurisdiction'. I should not have to quote it, but I feel it necessary to remind the Council of its democratic duty to uphold its own decisions. There is no justification for the removal of this protection of the integrity of St. Catherine's Park and I object strongly to any road through St. Catherine's Park. The protection outlined above must be reinstated.

I have further objections in relation to the Urban Development Framework (UDF) proposed for the Confey area. These relate to the planned housing development in Confey and the relocation of Confey GAA

Firstly, the UDF acknowledges that the Confey lands are rural and insist that housing will be built to match its characteristics. Five storey tall buildings certainly do not conform to a rural setting. Such developments would look entirely out of place on the Confey lands and would destroy the rural aesthetic of the area. The height of the developments must be reconsidered and must fit in with the surrounding housing developments which are only single and two-storey houses.

Secondly, Confey, in its current capacity, and the new Confey development will be divided by a railway line and a canal. A shared amenity is essential to unite the two areas for them to blend seamlessly together. Confey GAA is well-suited and situated to do this. Therefore, the relocation of the GAA to the far side of the proposed new development would not only increase traffic congestion in the new area, it would also upset resident Confey families who founded and contributed to the establishment of Confey GAA. The contributions of these families should be respected and the GAA must remain at its current location.

Lastly, the infrastructure and amenities that currently exist in the Leixlip and Confey areas can barely accommodate the capacity of the town as it is, let alone thousands more. The electrification of the rail services to Leixlip must be expedited to accommodate commuters into Dublin. More pre-schools, primary and secondary schools should also be developed to cope with the increase in the number of new families in the area. More amenities for young people, as well as an aging population should also be considered in this plan. Accessible cycle routes through and around Leixlip should also be considered to reduce traffic congestion and to encourage people to cycle to bus/train stops. The village main street is in disrepair and is in desperate need of locally run stores, preferably ran by new or different business owners. Parking should also be considered for those with disabilities and young children, and the towns pathways should also be made more accessible for wheelchair users. Bins, narrow pathways and other obstacles block wheelchair users' way and this should be given serious thought.

Overall, I welcome further development of the Leixlip area however I am seriously concerned about the manner which it will be implemented in. I sincerely hope that you consider the points that I have outlined in my submission.

Yours sincerely,

Aoife Kirk.