

To whom it may concern,

I wish to make the following submission regarding the proposed LEIXLIP LOCAL AREA PLAN 2020-2026

According to the CONFHEY URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK (Appendix A), it states on p10 that:

“The location of Confey GAA centrally within the subject lands and within close proximity to Confey Railway Station has been identified as being an underutilisation of these strategic lands. It is proposed to relocate the existing GAA lands facility to a larger site further north and in close proximity to the proposed ‘Community Hub’ ensuring ease of access.”

Firstly, Confey GAA is an *already* existing amenity in the heart of the community. It is currently within walking distance for the residents of Riverforest, Glendale, Newtown and Avondale. Most importantly, it is within walking distance for both for young and old, for children attending training and for local primary school students to do PE. To state that the location of Confey GAA is “underutilised” is an insult to all the families involved in setting up the club, developing it, and running it for the past 30 years. The wording of “underutilisation” also shows the lack of regard for such amenities and places zero value on the voluntary time and effort given to campaigning and fundraising for the club. Kildare County Council did not put this facility here. The community did.

Furthermore, moving the GAA club further north takes this amenity not only out of our community but indeed out of its own county! The statement also ensures “ease of access”. But to whom? I welcome the proposal of a new “community hub” in the plan, but do not take away already existing ones.

Other Key issues relating to the LAP:

- The new development in Confey proposes **widening Cope Bridge** for two-way traffic. This would mean losing the green, recreational areas and hedgerows in Glendale, Newton and Avondale. It would also result in increased traffic coming into Leixlip Village, which is already seriously congested at peak times – a bottleneck from a newly-widened bridge to the village, making it even more difficult for the residents of Glendale, Riverforest and Avondale to exit their estates. Has a ‘Traffic Impact Assessment’ been conducted in relation to this?
- **The protection of St. Catherine’s Park.** In 2017, 1021 submissions were made and Kildare County Council aimed “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”. This appears to have been removed from the plan and in a complete U turn, the council is now proposing a road into the park to facilitate a major housing development at Black Avenue. The plan should seek to protect, preserve and develop St. Catherine’s park as a public amenity. NOT PRIVATE HOUSING.
- It is important to protect, enhance and further develop green areas in Leixlip, such as St. Catherine’s park, the Black Avenue and Leixlip Castle Demesne. These are shared spaces for amenity, recreation and biodiversity. The LAP should ensure that key trees, woodlands and high value hedgerows are maintained.

The LAP itself states the following issues:

- Rail transport system is already under pressure.
- Secondary schools are at full capacity. A primary school is proposed but no location is determined for this.
- Negative effects on air quality, noise and climate – due to increased emissions and pollution
- Negative effects on biodiversity, ecological land and soil
- Negative effects on human health and amenities.
- Negative effects on local services and utilities – water supply and electricity demand

In the LAP, provisions should also be made for the following:

- A swimming pool.
- A civil building with theatre or performance space.
- Homes for the elderly/retired – 25% of Leixlip population 55+
- Affordable homes.
- A Sensory Garden.
- Adequate additional parking in the village and train stations
- Maintaining existing green areas, hedgerows and woodlands for biodiversity and recreational use.
- Improving and maintaining the existing water, waste and power supply.
- Infrastructure which is aging and faulty before approving more houses.
- Maintain our natural heritage sites, high quality amenity areas and green spaces throughout Leixlip.

Some statistics

Population Growth: (using Census 2016 results and CDP Population forecast)

	Current Population	Forecasted Population
Leixlip	15,504	19,794 (+ 4290) + 27%
Celbridge	20,228	22,801
Maynooth	14,585	18,996
Total	50,317	61,591 + 11,272 or 22%

Low forecast metric used means numbers will probably be higher

Housing Unit growth: (using Census 2016 results and CDP Housing Allocation plan)

	Current Residential Homes	Planned Increase
Leixlip	5219	8534 (+3315) + 38%
Celbridge	6544	9794 (+3250)
Maynooth	4674	8216 (+3542)
Total	16,437	26,554 (+10,107) 39%

Projected increase in Commuters using Public Transport for work (using CSO and CDP Data)

Bus/Rail	Currently using Bus/Rail	Projected to use
Leixlip	1489	2321 (+ 55%)
Celbridge	1457	2071 (+ 42%)
Maynooth	1291	1676 (+ 30%)
Total	4237	6068 (+1831) +43%

Projected increase in Commuters using Road network (not Buses) for work

	Currently using Roads	Projected to use Roads
Leixlip	4790	7776 (+ 62%)
Celbridge	6906	9753 (+ 41%)
Maynooth	4005	5363 (+ 34%)
Total	15691	22892 (+ 7201) +54%

Note: Figures may be higher as census data did not differentiate between homes comprising of retired residents and those in work

Plan does not reflect or acknowledge complexity of towns the size of Celbridge, Maynooth and Leixlip lying in such the proximity to each other and sharing the same road networks and Public transport facilities.