


Planning Department
Kildare County Council
Áras Chill Dara
Devoy Park
Naas
Co.Kildare

John Slattery


Leixlip
Co.Kildare

8rd July 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to lodge our concerns about the Confey Urban Design Framework and the Draft Area Plan for Leixlip, specifically the proposed development in Confey. We acknowledge that there may be a housing crisis in the greater Dublin area but it is not in the best interest of Leixlip/Confey to develop housing on a rapid and large scale to meet the demands of national interest. Any development needs to be planned correctly with appropriate infrastructure in place and with the desired objective to be a model community development that other areas can aspire to.

The strategic transport assessment for Confey delivered a number of road infrastructural options. No decision has been made regarding any of these options despite the pivotal importance of them to the entire LAP. The proposed works to Cope Bridge will worsen traffic congestion for residential areas located east and west of Captain's Hill. It will negatively impact on the access for residents in and from their estates. The plan does not adequately factor in the impact of the major expansion of Intel on water, sewage or transport infrastructure. The draft plan does not reflect or acknowledge the complexity of towns the size of Celbridge, Maynooth and Leixlip lying in such close proximity to each other and sharing the same road networks and public transport systems. The scale of the plan does not harmonise with or enhance the existing built and natural environment of Confey.

Confey GAA Club see the benefits of development in Confey for our club's membership. We are experiencing problems with volunteering at coaching level and a loss of involvement of our senior players when they retire from playing. There is no affordable housing in Confey and they must move further away. We ask that the scale of this planning for Confey be altered to a level that matches the actual demand for our community. We ask that these homes are affordable for the younger residents of the community to put down roots and raise families.

Every club wants more players but Confey GAA Club is unique in that we compete at senior level in Hurling, Football and Ladies and we struggle for pitch space for these three senior teams. Added to that we have "B" teams and an excellent juvenile structure already in place. We have access to a pitch in St. Catherine's Park but this still does not alleviate the problem of lack of playing space. To add more housing to the area of Confey would pose a considerable difficulty for the club to cater for these new families and so it is important that more pitches are allocated to clubs servicing the new members of the community. Confey GAA would require additional playing fields adjacent to our current location to serve any growth in the existing community and playing numbers.

On the issue of the club's relocation in the plan we would like it noted that Confey GAA club members were disgusted and angered by the statement in the draft development plan stating that the land on which Confey GAA is built is underutilized, considering all the activity that takes place in Creighton Park, considering the success we have as a club, the amount of life skills we hand down to our juvenile and adult players, the use of the facility for many community groups and the efforts of the GAA community in coming together in Confey and establishing such a fine facility.

Confey GAA is a community club and we facilitate many community groups (basketball, old folks meeting, bridge club, winter cards, darts club, pool club, Irish dancing, set dancing). The club was founded in 1989 as people living in this community were spending far too much time stuck in their cars trying to make their way to play with Leixlip GAA. The traffic was very heavy at the time and we are experiencing similar traffic congestion now. The club was established in its current location so that our members, particularly our juvenile members, could walk in safety to training and games without having to negotiate the ever increasing traffic. The new proposal would bring more traffic. Practically all our members, playing members, mentors, social and juvenile live within walking distance from the club and we encourage them to walk or cycle.

Confey schools (San Carlo and Confey College) utilise our pitches and facilities for matches, sports days, active school week etc. The classes can walk to the club from the schools currently. Relocating the club to the proposed location makes our facilities inaccessible for the existing schools, teachers and school children of Confey. The existing schools do not have the use of or access to alternative pitches or green space within the existing Confey area.

The new proposal shifts the club 800 metres away to the periphery of the new developed community. It would be a minimum of 8-10 years before any children of new families from new homes would be playing members of our club. So why would we move further away from our established community?

With the development of a new neighbourhood hub and the potential commercial units that may be built we would be concerned for the commercial viability of our club bar, if units were identified as potential licensed premises. We have employees in Confey GAA and we are cognisant of our duty to keep them in paid employment.

The existing community of Confey, our GAA members and all our community groups who access the facility, are not in favour of the club moving. Confey GAA will be staying in its current location where it is best placed to serve the local and existing community and in time we can serve any members that new development may bring to the area.

Regards,

John Slattery