

Maris Kapostins



11 July 2019

Draft Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020 - 2026
Planning Department,
Kildare County Council,
Aras Chill Dara,
Devoy Park,
Naas,
Co. Kildare.

Re: Personal Submission of Maris Kapostins

Dear Sir/Madam,

Having read and considered the Kildare Development Plan 2017-2023 and the draft LAP – I am extremely worried with the inaccuracies, inconsistent and in places contradictory statements contained therein.

I also object in the strongest possible manner to the engagement process with the public. At all times submissions, consultations and input from the public has been disregarded and swept aside. Planners have failed to take on board legitimate concerns of the locals and their public representatives.

1. Spatial Strategy Ireland 2040

It has been accepted that the National Spatial Strategy has been an abject failure. Project Ireland 2040 is due to come on line within the next twelve months or so and depending on what that document forecasts the Kildare County Development Plan, i.e. the blueprint of each LAP, may be reviewed, revised or indeed rewritten depending on the concepts realised in Project Ireland 2040.

Leixlip has been without a LAP for the last three years - and this has not caused any issue one way or the other - as no new facilities have been to Leixlip and the developers are building in sites at Westfield, Wonderful Barn, and infill sites all over Leixlip so housing units are coming on line.

It would therefore make sense to put a stay on the Leixlip LAP until such a time that Project Ireland has been released and the Kildare County Development Plan has been reviewed following which it would then make sense to issue a draft Leixlip LAP which would reflect the current concepts.

2. HSE - Health Services for Children

Waiting lists are record waiting times in relation to services for Health Services for Children in North Kildare including Speech and Language Therapy; Assessment of Need, with only those with acute needs being prioritised (and seen to within two years). In relation to Assessment of Need - as the demand is so high the only services available are diagnostic services (and not a treatment). Therefore parents of children who may need Clinical Physiological Services, Occupational Therapy, etc have no option but to avail of these privately or through free organisations such as Middleton Autism Services. The population



increase as proposed would have a very negative impact on an already congested system with far-reaching social implications for the community in general.

3. Social and Recreational Services for Children in Leixlip

The draft LAP does not mention any concrete plans to create, extend or upgrade any of the existing services or facilities in Leixlip in line with the proposed population growth. What exactly do planners believe all these families are going to do for recreation? There is no public swimming pool in Leixlip, Celbridge, Maynooth or Kilkock. This is an important deficit felt by all the inhabitants of North Kildare.

The Leixlip Scouts group has a year's waiting list (for five year olds to join) and up to two years for older children - you are basically waiting/hoping for a child to drop out and you can take that place. They do not have the capacity to take more children.

Due to lack of resources - Leixlip Library is not open full time and does not open on any given day until 13:00 or 14:00 respectively making it completely inaccessible to some members of the community.

Leixlip Football Club (Leixlip FC) has had to implement a policy of cutting children from teams due to over demand and lack of resources to deal with the demand.

All of the above are current issues with lack of resources – that I and many your families have experienced - with the current population and strain on resources in Leixlip at the moment.

It is unbelievable that there is no acknowledgment in the draft LAP of the real situation on the ground.

4. Traffic Congestion / Noise Pollution

The draft LAP concedes that Leixlip is already congested yet makes no mention of any Action Plan or Traffic Assessment Plan to investigate the existing congestion and provide satisfactory provision for services to deal with the proposed increase in population which will lead to a natural increase in vehicles feeding into the congested road network. This will also increase noise pollution and a study should be carried out to see if the lands at Celbridge Road East are appropriate for housing considering the impact of noise from the M4.

5. Build Communities - Not Accommodation

The community of Lucan was destroyed with the influx of housing and bad planning decisions made during the last property boom/bubble. There is essential no marker between Lucan/Balgaddy/Clondalkin and the estates which meld into one another and is regularly referred to as “ghettoland” or “legoland”. The lack of green areas, rundown apartments complexes scattered throughout the estates only adds to this visual perception.

Building for the sake of building because there is a housing shortage is not the solution. This has been done many, many times in the past and the results have been disastrous (Ballymun / Lucan / Adamstown etc). It is also worth noting that Lucan/Adamstown/Foxborough/Balgaddy was in crisis a number of years ago and it was quoted in a national newspaper that those areas had the largest number of children aged below ten years of age in Europe.

Proper planning complete with infrastructure, facilities and services is essential to ensure that the integrity of Leixlip as a community is safeguarded.

Communities takes time to build, communities are built on relationships and it is essential that proper planning which seeks to enhance rather than negatively existing communities is the deciding factor for all decisions.

If it is the case that a new community needs to be built (as is the case with Confey) then built it from the ground up (where correct planning decisions can be made).

This is a far better solution than throwing extra pockets of housing here and there and risk tearing apart the very fabric of the existing communities in Leixlip.

6. Rezoning at Celbrige Road East

I am fundamentally opposed to the proposed rezoning at Celbridge Road East for a number of reasons:-

It is proposed to build in the region of 350 housing units in the Demesne lands with pedestrian access points cutting through Leixlip Park and Wogansfield.

Protection of Leixlip Castle and Leixlip Demesne:

First and foremost It is worth noting that the spot where the propose breach is to take place is the only part along the boundary wall that does not run beside a back lane and it is opportunistic in the extreme that perhaps the only place in Leixlip Park which does not back onto private property and therefore is not protected by that argument (i.e. private property) is being exploited in this manner. Therefore it is crucial that the Council protect the boundary wall in its own right having regard to the strong historical links to Leixlip Castle and Leixlip Demesne) and the policies as detailed in the Leixlip Park Residents Association Submission) wall and not allow any breach or destruction of same in line with its own objectives.

Leixlip Park – Planning

Furthermore when Leixlip Park was built - it was built of plans which were approved through proper and appropriate channels at that time - to retrospectively alter those plans (i.e. by knocking through part of a wall to allow for a pedestrian access) was never envisaged and should not be permitted as it defeats the success of the original design.

The fact that Planners have chosen to come through the boundary wall at a bend where there is a roadway demonstrates that this option is far from ideal.

Leixlip Park – Community

It must be borne in mind that the planned pedestrian access route through Leixlip Park is completely unacceptable and will have a detrimental impact on the existing community. The planned pedestrian point is at the furthest corner of the estate and it is likely that any of the residents from the 420 proposed units, i.e approximately 1,260 new residents (calculated at 3 person per unit) will transverse the entire estate Park to travel to the shops/facilities atc at Barnhall Shopping Centre/local schools etc.

Leixlip Park is one of Leixlip's oldest estates and enjoys a wonderful sense of community, security and above all safety. Leixip Park is a close-kit community where children play happily on the streets and neighbours know who is walking by their properties and we look out for one-another.

As a testimony to the community spirit - it's Residents Association (of which I am a proud member) has been active in the estate for over forty years. In the course of those forty years it

has continuously sought to improve the local environment for the residents of the estate and been a focus point of our community. By creating a pedestrian access through the estate it will negatively impact on the community spirit – particularly if there is a stream of strangers using the estate as a means to an end – to get to the shops/schools etc - but will have no emotional connection to the estate. Anti-social behaviour such as dog-fouling and littering at the very least will be a natural negative consequence if the footfall throughout the estate is increased with the numbers envisaged.

Leixlip Park – Safety

Leixlip Park is a fabulous place to raise children and the children happily play on the streets together, even on dark winter evenings. On Christmas Day many of the children were out showing off their Santa surprises. Neighbours are caring and strangers are noted which leaves parents with a feeling of security and safety. Introducing an access route will immediately erode this sense of safety and security and will negatively impact the existing estate.

Leixlip Park – Security

As mentioned above Leixlip Park enjoys use of back-lanes. If there is a pedestrian walkway through the estate there will be very real security issues with the back-lanes which may become avenues/shortcuts, crime issues, etc. This will have to be investigated in consultation with An Garda Síochána and a practical solution (such as electronic gates on the entrances of the back-lanes) agreed before any decision on granting pedestrian rights could be considered.

KDA Celbridge Road East - Health – Building Close to Motorways – Canadian Health Study – links to Dementia

A decade-long study of 6.6 million people, published in The Lancet, found that one in 10 dementia deaths in people living within 50 metres of a busy road was attributable to fumes and noise. A summary of the study is below – with the corresponding link. The study has gained international press – being reported in the Telegraph on 4 January 2017 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2017/01/04/living-near-busy-road-may-raise-risk-dementia-major-study-pollution/?WT.mc_id=tmg_share_em.

Whilst the study states that further research is needed – it stresses that building close to motorways (with noise and air pollution) has detrimental effects on residents. Any building in KDA Celbridge Road East would naturally bring its inhabitants very close to the M4. There are houses in Leixlip Park which are already less than 150 metres away from the motorway. It is unconscionable to consider building housing estates on the borders of the M4 motorway without conducting appropriate scientific research to ensure that they are not jeopardising peoples' health.

Leixlip Park – Demesne – Wildlife

As a resident of Leixlip Park – I can tell you that we enjoy an abundance of wildlife which inhabits the Demesne lands, from squirrels which inhabits the treeline to hedgehogs, rabbits, foxes - and the occasional bat. It is a wonderful source of education for the children and with green belt/protected areas constantly being under threat of rezoning it is the Council's duty to protect the Demense lands.

Leixlip Park – Demesne – Traffic issues on Celbridge Road

It is proposed that vehicle access for the Wonderful Barn and Celbridge Road East will both access the Celbridge Road at roughly the same point in the road on opposite sides – this is a fundamental health and safety issue and is completely insane and must be reconsidered

immediately. A Traffic Impact Assessment should be carried out prior to rezoning KDA Celbridge Road East

For the reasons outlined above I object to the rezoning of the lands at KDA Celbridge Road East and I am hopeful that planners, Councillors and the Council will consider carefully the future of Leixlip and the wider community when making any decisions.

Build it Right not .. Built It Right Now

Yours sincerely,

MARIS KAPOSTINS

The Lancet Study

LIVING NEAR MAJOR ROADS AND THE INCIDENCE OF DEMENTIA, PARKINSON'S DISEASE, AND MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS: A POPULATION-BASED COHORT STUDY

[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(16\)32399-6/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(16)32399-6/abstract)

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Summary

Background

Emerging evidence suggests that living near major roads might adversely affect cognition. However, little is known about its relationship with the incidence of dementia, Parkinson's disease, and multiple sclerosis. We aimed to investigate the association between residential proximity to major roadways and the incidence of these three neurological diseases in Ontario, Canada.

Methods

In this population-based cohort study, we assembled two population-based cohorts including all adults aged 20–50 years (about 4.4 million; multiple sclerosis cohort) and all adults aged 55–85 years (about 2.2 million; dementia or Parkinson's disease cohort) who resided in Ontario, Canada on April 1, 2001. Eligible patients were free of these neurological diseases, Ontario residents for 5 years or longer, and Canadian-born. We ascertained the individual's proximity to major roadways based on their residential postal-code address in 1996, 5 years before cohort inception. Incident diagnoses of dementia, Parkinson's disease, and multiple sclerosis were ascertained from provincial health administrative databases with validated algorithms. We assessed the associations between traffic proximity and incident dementia, Parkinson's disease, and multiple sclerosis using Cox proportional hazards models, adjusting for individual and contextual factors such as diabetes, brain injury, and neighborhood income. We did various sensitivity analyses, such as adjusting for access to neurologists and exposure to selected air pollutants, and restricting to never movers and urban dwellers.

Findings

Between 2001, and 2012, we identified 243 611 incident cases of dementia, 31 577 cases of Parkinson's disease, and 9247 cases of multiple sclerosis. The adjusted hazard ratio (HR) of incident dementia was 1.07 for people living less than 50 m from a major traffic road (95% CI 1.06–1.08), 1.04 (1.02–1.05) for 50–100 m, 1.02 (1.01–1.03) for 101–200 m, and 1.00 (0.99–1.01) for 201–300 m versus further than 300 m (p for trend=0.0349). The associations were robust to sensitivity analyses and seemed stronger among urban residents, especially those who lived in major cities (HR 1.12, 95% CI 1.10–1.14 for people living <50 m from a major traffic road), and who never

moved (1·12, 1·10–1·14 for people living <50 m from a major traffic road). No association was found with Parkinson's disease or multiple sclerosis.

Interpretation

In this large population-based cohort, living close to heavy traffic was associated with a higher incidence of dementia, but not with Parkinson's disease or multiple sclerosis. [emphasis added]

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