

[REDACTED]

To: Senior Executive Officer
Planning Department
Kildare County Council
Aras Chill Dara
Devoy Park
Naas, Co Kildare

[REDACTED]

9th July 2019

Kildare County Council
Planning Department

11 JUL 2019

RECEIVED

Re: Draft Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are aware of the Minister's Draft Directive calling for land rezoning for the provision of circa 3,315 new housing units in relation to the Leixlip Draft Local Area Plan. More particularly a request to put back Celbridge Road East lands (in KDA 2) back into the LAP.

We wish to make the following submission as follows:

1. We are seeking the retention for agricultural zoning of the lands KDA2 for the following reasons.

The unique context of Leixlip does not appear to have been recognised and accepted by the senior executives and planners for Kildare County Council.

All who live here know that, unlike other North Kildare towns, the topography of Leixlip is unique. The village is geographically constrained, and is in effect land-locked. It rests in the Liffey/Rye River basin that resembles a pudding bowl. At the base of the bowl lies a short, narrow 18th century main street. With the proposed number of houses planned it will result in an enormous increase in population. The increases in motor vehicles reflecting such a move combined with the town's current congestion will make it impossible to travel efficiently and safely from:

1. North to south; from
2. South to north; from
3. East to west; and from
4. West to east of Leixlip Town.

This fact reduces the amount of land suitable for rezoning for development. Most of the house building over the past 60 years has been along the rim of the

bowling with no provision for a ring-road. This is a planning error and must have a constraining impact on sustainable future development.

It was an enormous mistake for planners drawing up the Regional Planning Guidelines (core strategy) to designate Leixlip as a "large growth town", in the first instance. Using the word "dynamic" is incongruous. With existing infrastructure under severe pressure it is too previous.

Already with an existing 5,100 houses in Leixlip, it's illogical for KCC to plan to zone for building an additional 66% houses (3,315). It is ginormous and will not make the town "a better place in which to live". The LAP fails to supply a Master Plan for the whole town as directed by Ministerial order. This omission is a huge error, and is the great flaw in this proposal. In order to achieve a good quality, reliable plan that can be welcomed it must provide improved roads and new services to meet the projected large increase in population.

The history of previous plans going back to the 1970's showed that infrastructure was provided far too late and only long after the houses were built. Infrastructure must be provided in parallel with house building. If not, it impairs the quality of life for all who live in Leixlip or who intend to purchase a house here. The LAP without a guaranteed funding stream is unfortunately not a plan that can deliver this infrastructure. It is simply a wish list. A pious

aspiration

- 2. Leixlip Castle and Demesne are both listed for protection in the Kildare County development Plan. Please refer to Kildare County Development Plan on Architectural Heritage (ref: See policy 12.4.1, 12.8(PS 2, 3 & 6), and 12.8.5). What remains of the Demesne should be fully retained. If this land is rezoned (in KDA 2) for new residential, it is inevitable that further lands will follow in a subsequent local Area Plan. Leixlip Castle is the historical Centre of Leixlip and should not be diminished by removing it from what remains of its natural setting.*

"Built on a rock at the confluence of the River Liffey and the Rye Water was granted to the de Hereford family and dates from the Norman Invasion of 1171 with the round tower added onto the square keep in the 14th Century. The castle was strategically placed at the confluence of the River Liffey and the River Rye. Over the following several hundred years Leixlip Castle was to be one of the strongholds of the Pale - an outpost. In 1732 the castle was acquired by William Connolly, nephew of Speaker William Connolly, who inherited Castletown House, the lands of which adjoin the Leixlip demesne to the west."

- 3. The LAP proposals are not modest and when combined with that of the KDA 1 Wonderful Barn (now building 450 houses) and the rest of the town, are enormous in scale. For the Celbridge Road (R404) this will entail creating a busy new exit / entrance to a single lane road. In*

Kildare County Council
Planning Department

11 JUL 2019

RECEIVED

addition, rezoning new land on the opposite side of the road will cause serious difficulties and should not be proceeded with. The junction at Maynooth Road at Galvan's Cross is below an acceptable standard for the level of traffic already using it. Last week it took me 15 minutes to exit onto the (R148) main road. To place incremental traffic on it would cause mayhem, particularly at peak travel time. Also, on the (R404) there are two schools, Coláiste Chiaráin (Secondary School) and Scoil Uí Dhálaigh (Primary School) located on the Celbridge Road. In addition there are large numbers of motorists and pedestrians using Our Lady's Nativity Church, the Parish Centre and neighbourhood Shops and Eurospar Supermarket at Barnhall Shopping Centre. At the northern end of this road a highly dangerous 90° angle bend has never been improved and has been the cause of numerous motor accidents over the past two decades. Increased traffic flow will inevitably cause an increase in accident rates and congestion, making it more dangerous. In addition, six existing housing estates and the former Hewlett Packard factory exit onto this extremely busy (R404) road.

- 4. Opening up the rear of existing houses to large numbers of pedestrians and cyclists in transit to Leixlip village centre would pose new and unacceptable security risks to existing residences. The plan is unacceptable.*
- 5. The proposed Plan would result in adverse visual impact, undermine the integrity and protected views and be out of character with development within the local protected Leixlip Castle and Demesne KDA 2 Area.*
- 6. The impact of the proposed development on homes in the neighbourhood will be very significant and negative. The enjoyment of existing views would be diminished.*
- 7. Based on our experience of living in the town since 1972 we believe that the following infrastructure should be provided:*
 - A Swimming Pool*
 - Primary Care Centre*
 - A 2nd Cemetery*
 - Open Spaces*
 - Parkland within the town*
 - Cycle-Paths throughout the town on or close to main roads*
 - Official Taxi Area*



8. *We don't believe that existing services will cope with such rapid expansion. Citizens will be materially affected in terms of safety, security, health and education from inferior:*

- ▣ *Roads*
- ▣ *Sewage*
- ▣ *Water*
- ▣ *Services * Primary Schools * Secondary Schools * Leisure facilities*
- ▣ *Medical*

We do favour new housing being built; but only on condition that it is done intelligently and in tandem with guaranteed supporting infrastructure. The healthy development philosophy should reflect this: "Build it right". It is never the wrong time to make the right decision to ensure sustainable planning.

We fully endorse the submission of the Celbridge Road Action Group.

In conclusion I am formally raising a most disturbing and important international planning ruling at this time as reported today by Dan Buckley of the Irish Examiner.

Ireland has recently been found to have breached its international obligations over to access to information on the environment.

()

A decision reached under the United Nations' Aarhus Convention has found that certain Irish planning regulations do not comply with the convention's provisions on public participation in planning.

This is the first decision on an Irish case by the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee since Ireland ratified the convention in 2012.

This matter must be addressed by the government.

Sincerely,

Mike Parle

Mike Parle



Angela Parle

Angela Parle