

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

Thursday, 11 July 2019
[Online Submission]

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: SUBMISSION ON THE DRAFT LEIXLIP LOCAL AREA PLAN 2020-2026 IN RESPECT OF LANDS AT THE LIFFEY BUSINESS CAMPUS, BARNHALL ROAD, LEIXLIP, CO. KILDARE, W23 Y972

1.0 INTRODUCTION: SUBMISSION TO SECURE A MORE APPROPRIATE RANGE OF USES PERMISSIBLE UNDER THE ZONING OBJECTIVE FOR THE LANDS AND RATIONALISE TRANSPORT OBJECTIVES FOR THE AREA

1.1 Amendment to Plan Sought

O'Flynn Group¹ have instructed Tom Phillips + Associates Town Planning Consultants² to make a submission in respect of the *Draft Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020-2026* in relation to the Liffey Business Campus (the former Hewlett Packard Site), Barnhall Road, Leixlip, Co. Kildare, W23 Y972. (See Figure 1.1.) (For the purposes of this Submission, the Lands are identified as "Liffey Business Campus")

The subject lands (approximately 79 hectares / 195 acres in size³) are in the outskirts on Leixlip, approximately 21 km from Dublin City Centre and off the M4 (Junction 6).

1.2 Purpose of this Submission

The purpose of this submission is two-fold, namely to seek the:

1. Increase the array of uses permissible under the land's zoning objective to enable the provision of a modern business park in accordance with international standards and design; and
2. Re-asses the need for an Objective for a "Proposed Pedestrian/Cycle Overpass" given the existing infrastructure in the environs.

The Draft *LAP* states, in relation to the subject lands:

"Current occupiers include Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Celestica, MGS, and Global Entserv Solutions. While these existing businesses provide a high level of employment within the plan area the overall HP site is currently underutilised with a significant level of vacancy within the built area."

¹ Killorglin House, 41-43 Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.

² No. 80 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2, D02 F449.

³ According to Chapter 2.1 of the *Draft Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020-2026*.

The *Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan* included in the *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy* published in June 2019 by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly identifies the Hewlett Packard Site/Liffey Business Campus as a Strategic Employment Location.

Thus, the subject lands present an opportunity to provide a modern industrial and technological park with the right balance of balance of employment, and local facilities, services and amenities, thereby creating an attractive working environment, reducing the need to travel and creating a sense of place.

The 21st Century approach to industrial parks/employment centres seeks to create environments where the employees feel that, it is not just a place to work, but a place they will want to stay and relax, eat and exercise, for example. This has proven to be a successful approach in contributing to reduce stress levels and an increase employees' productivity.

Therefore, businesses now require to provide on-site facilities and amenities in order to attract and retain the best talent/workforce available.



Figure 1.1: Site Location Map. Subject Lands outlined in red. Source of base map: www.myplan.ie, cropped and annotated by Tom Phillips + Associates, 2019.

2.0 GROUNDS OF THE SUBMISSION

2.1 Increase Range of Uses Permissible

The Liffey Business Campus has the land use zoning objective 'H: Industry & Warehousing' according to the Land Use Zoning Objectives Map of the Draft LAP. (See Figure 2.1.)

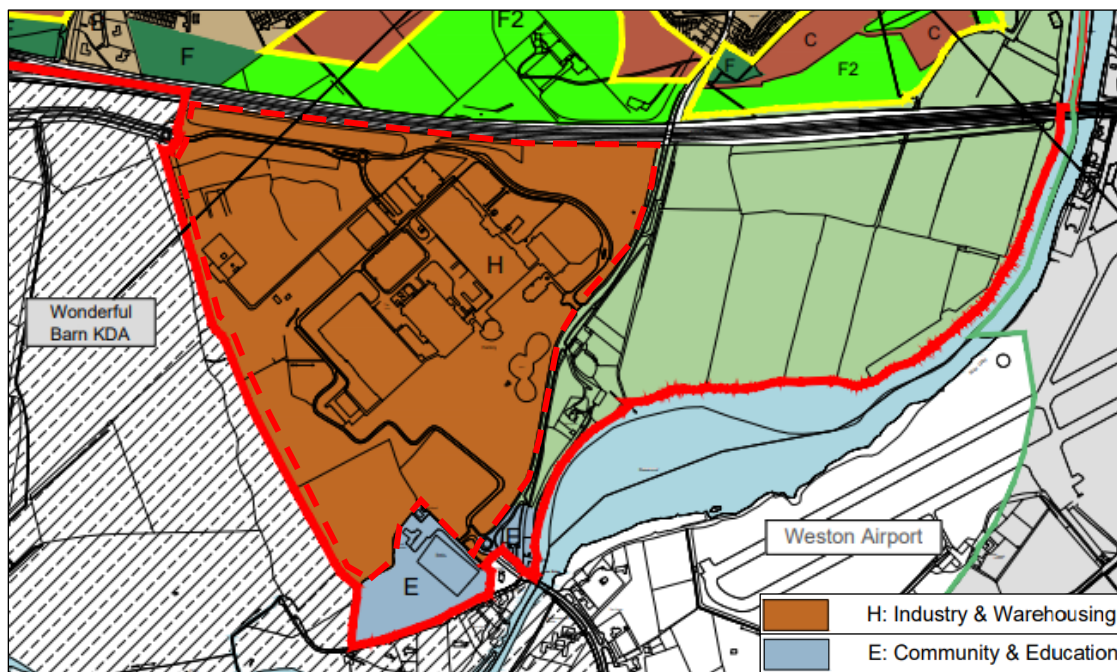


Figure 2.1: Extract of the *Land Use Zoning Objectives Map* of the Draft *Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020-2026*, with the HP Site outlined in dashed red. (Source: Draft *Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020-2026*, cropped and annotated by TPA 2019.)

According to the Land Use Zoning Matrix set out in Chapter 13.1 of the Draft *Local Area Plan* the following uses are 'Permitted in Principle' under the 'H: Industry & Warehousing' zoning objective:

"Garage/Car Repairs; Heavy Commercial Vehicle Park; Industry (light); Industry (general); Motor sales; Petrol Station; Warehouse (Wholesale)/Store/Depot."

Furthermore, the following uses are 'Open for Consideration':

"Agricultural buildings; Car Park (other than ancillary); Offices; Utility Structures."

In our opinion, the list of uses either 'Permitted in Principle' or 'Open for Consideration' is quite narrow.

Nowadays, companies seek to locate themselves in attractive environments that can offer a varied offer of amenity opportunities to their employees as part of a comprehensive strategy to attract and retain talent. That approach has also proven successful in reducing the number of travels for workers.

We submit that the current use zoning matrix for the zoning objective 'H' could compromise the provision of a modern technological campus that would attract a large number of national

or international companies. Thus, hindering its ability to function as a Strategic Employment Location, as identified in the RSES.

We seek the following uses to be include in the 'Permitted in Principle' list in order to create a high-quality working environment:

'Community Recreational/Sports Buildings; Hot Food Take Away; Medical Consultant/Health Centre; Offices; Restaurant; Shop (convenience); creche/playschool.'

Furthermore, we note that the lands immediately south of the Liffey Business Campus have the zoning objective 'E: Community & Education'. In our opinion, amending the zoning matrix as per our recommendation above would also assist in improving the transition and interrelationship between both areas.

2.2 Objective to Provide a Bridge not Sufficiently Justified

The Leixlip Transport Map included in the Draft *Leixlip LAP* shows an Objective for a 'Proposed Pedestrian/Cycle Overpass' above the M4 linking the Liffey Business Campus with the Strategic Open Space-zoned lands to the north. (See Figure 2.2 below.)

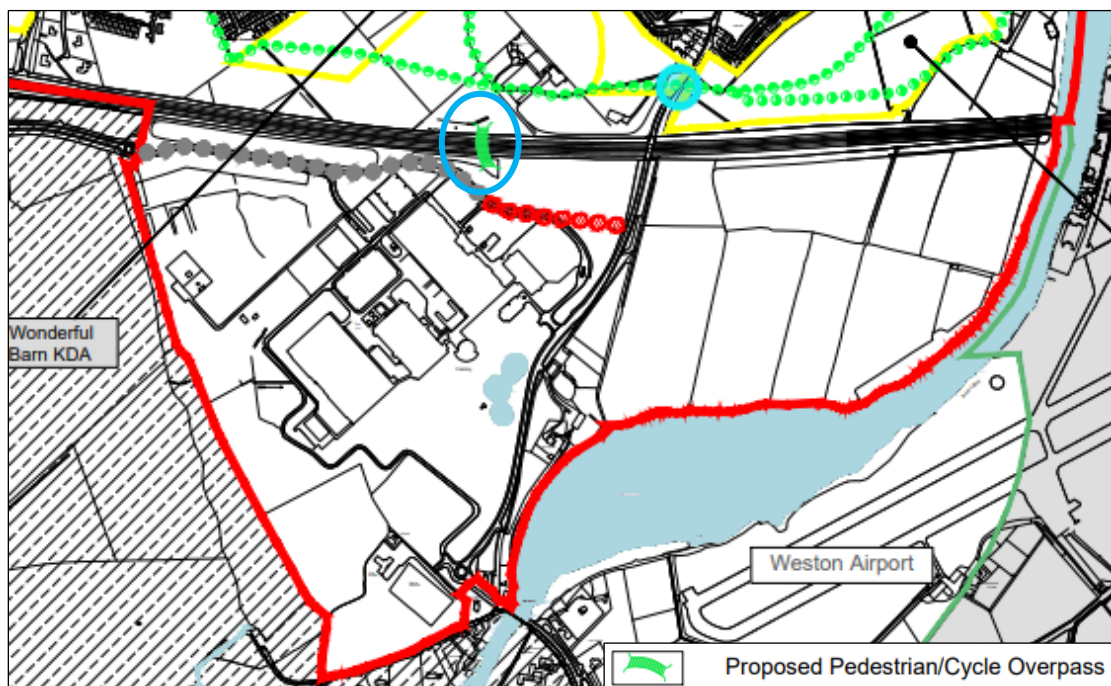


Figure 2.2: Extract of the *Leixlip transport Map* of the Draft *Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020-2026*, with the proposed overpass circled in blue. (Source: Draft *Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020-2026*, cropped and annotated by TPA 2019.)

The need for the provision of that bridge does not appear to be established in the *Leixlip Strategic Transportation Assessment Non-Technical Summary*, dated May 2019 and prepared by AECOM or the *Sustainable Planning and Infrastructural Assessment* of the Draft *Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020-2026* dated 30th May 2019 carried out by the Planning Department of Kildare County Council.

In our opinion, the existing infrastructure is sufficient to ensure good pedestrian and cycling accessibility and the provision of a new overpass is not required.

We note that there are two existing bridges that cross over the M4, one to the north west of the Liffey Business Campus, which currently provides pedestrian and segregated cycling infrastructure and one to the north east with pedestrian infrastructure. (See Figures 2.3; 2.4 and 2.5 below.)



Figure 2.3: Aerial view of the HP Site with the existing bridges over the M4 identified in red. (Source: Google Maps, cropped and annotated by TPA, 2019.)



Figure 2.4: Google Street View (Image date April 2017) of the existing bridge to the north west of the site, which currently provides pedestrian and segregated cycling infrastructure.



Figure 2.5: Google Street View (Image date April 2017) of the existing bridge to the north east of the site, which currently provides pedestrian and infrastructure.

In our opinion the existing infrastructure is sufficient to ensure a good accessibility between lands to the north and to the south of the M4. We believe that upgrading the existing infrastructure of the bridge located to the north east of the Liffey Business Campus to provide a segregated cycle lane would be a more efficient use of resources.

Accordingly, we request the need of the Objective to provide a 'Proposed Pedestrian/Cycle Overpass' to be re-assessed with a view to make a more efficient use of existing resources.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the purpose of this submission is two-fold, namely to seek the:

1. Increase the array of uses permissible under the land's zoning objective to enable the provision of a modern business park in accordance with international standards and design
2. Re-asses the need for an Objective for a "Proposed Pedestrian/Cycle Overpass" given the existing infrastructure in the environs.

We trust that this submission will be taken into consideration in the preparation of the *Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020-2026*, and would welcome receipt of submission.

I am happy to clarify any issues arising

Yours faithfully



Tom Phillips
Managing Director
Tom Phillips + Associates