

To whom it may concern I wish to make the following submission on behalf of Save St. Catherine's Park Group in regard to the proposed BLACK AVENUE KEY DEVELOPMENT AREA (KDA)

1. The council should reinstate the previous objective removed from plan - 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.' In a complete "U" turn the council is now in fact proposing a road into the park to facilitate a major housing development at Black Avenue. In 2017 - 1021 submissions regarding protection of St. Catherine's Park from road development.
2. The groundwater in this area described in the Lap as highly vulnerable with sections of extreme vulnerability.
3. MT1.4 No ecological analysis has been completed on the effects of this proposal.
4. No commitment to on-site flood risk analysis.
5. This proposed development is contrary to S8, which commits the council to protect, enhance, create and connect natural heritage, high quality amenity areas and other green spaces throughout Leixlip for both biodiversity and recreational use. The KDA is in fact threatening and destroying natural heritage, high quality amenity areas and other green spaces in St Catherine's Park.
6. This proposed development is inside the environment of an existing park and can have no positive impact on the park.
7. The proposal provides a significant negative impact on a green and safe access for pedestrian and cyclists using St. Catherine's Park through increased traffic volumes.

8. The existing car park facilities will be reduced as the proposed egress route is via the car park for vehicular traffic from the development.
9. This proposed development does not respect the setting of the subject lands and or the adjoining parklands.
10. This proposed development opens up the possibility of further encroachment into the existing park for future development.
11. This proposed development is contrary to the Environmental Report, which clearly states the loss of open space, and amenity use could also be considered to have the potential to give rise to **negative effect on population and human health**.
12. The development will destroy a Strategic Open Space, which is right in the middle of proposed Black Avenue housing development in St Catherine's.
13. This proposed development will destroy areas of St. Catherine's Park which is considered to be one of the most important or 'Key' Green Infrastructure areas (as well as their associated habitats) in our town.

No new linear park is being provided along Black Avenue. The existing linear park which starts at the entrance from the Mill Lane is in affect being reduced and many of its original features – trees, hedgerows and grasslands being removed contrary to the council's own policies.

1-Social, Health, Ecological, impacts of development near St. Catherine's park

An independent Environmental Assessment body to assess the possible impacts to flora, fauna and water quality should complete an Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

The zoning and development of apartments and housing near St. Catherine's park will negatively impact a Strategic Open Space that forms part of the green corridor between Leixlip, Lucan and Dunboyne. The presence of several protected plants in this area has been almost completely neglected by planners and developers in the

LAP. Strategic Environmental Assessment must be carried out before any land is zoned to fully assess impacts on native and protected biota.

The proposed development of the Black Avenue in St. Catherine's park will cause massive increases in pollution and increased noise levels, which will be detrimental for human park users and animal's habitants. Such disruption may even have a negative impact on migratory birds that use the area periodically. The development will destroy hedgerows, existing trees and grasslands and have a negative impact on biodiversity.

The impact of any development on the scenic value of St. Catherine's park and the Lucan Demesne is a great cause for concern among residents. Any overpass visible from the park of surrounding forests will severely impact the quality of the environment. It is imperative that Appropriate Assessment is carried out in the park and surrounding area so that such structures can be restricted near this area. The Black avenue provides a scenic tour along one of Leixlip's oldest buildings and it is important that this area be included in the assessment. St. Catherine's well is located halfway down the Black avenue and provides a rare religious experience facilitating visitor's spiritual aspects and once held significance as a place of pilgrimage. The proposed residential road should not tarnish this area.

This plan does not enhance the existing built and natural environment of Confey but rather reduces its quality. The Black avenue currently provides a link between the recreational parkland and natural woodland. The existing natural environment in the park and surrounding area offers pristine access to nature and relaxation. Thousands of people regularly use the park for recreational sports and walking/jogging. Any development whether residential or infrastructural in this must be strategically situated a safe distance away so as to effectively avoid both direct and indirect impacts to ecology, green space and human health. The massive (and rising) yearly footfall alone through St. Catherine's park warrants protection from air pollution. A public road or (possible future transport authority target) major bypass on either side of this area may threaten air quality and have detrimental effects on park engagement, reducing the overall quality of life for locals.

Very little attention or consideration has been paid in the LAP to the protection of Heritage buildings and Protected structures. Several buildings such as St. Catherine's well and Castle have been mentioned in development with no concrete plan as to how they will actually be protected. Funding must also be allocated to continue or speed up the restoration and protection of such buildings before any development takes place.

The new LAP includes plans for a new Public park. A new park will be welcomed but we already have issues with the maintenance and upkeep of St. Catherine's Park. If we cannot get the issues resolved with our existing park after almost 20yrs where is funding for the upkeep of this new park. The upkeep and grass cutting is left with the local Confey Soccer and GAA to maintain.

