

Leixlip Draft Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026,

Planning Department,

Kildare County Council,

Aras Chill Dara,

Devoy Park,

Naas,

County Kildare.

County Kildare.

Submission regarding the Leixlip Draft Local Area Plan 2020-2026

I, Stephen Dredge of [REDACTED] submit the following concerns to Kildare County Council, Planning Department regarding the Draft Leixlip Local Area Plan 2020 - 2026.

BLACK AVENUE KEY DEVELOPMENT AREA

In relation to St. Catherine's Park I am at a loss to understand why the following protection which was included in the previous Local Area Plan has been removed:

'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.'

There is no justification for removing this protection of St. Catherine's Park from the Local Area Plan and the council should reinstate it and withdraw their proposal for a road through St. Catherine's Park to facilitate a major housing development at Black Avenue.

How can the council talk of providing a new linear park. The beautiful existing linear park which starts at the entrance from Mill Lane would be hard to improve upon and would in fact be partially destroyed by removing trees and hedgerow with the grasslands disappearing beneath a housing development while many existing habitats would disappear with a loss of biodiversity.

The proposal will also have a negative impact on safe access to the park for cyclists and pedestrians due to the increased traffic flow.

Unanimously backed Material Alterations removed this Key Development Area from the last Local Area Plan so there is no reason for it being reinstated.

Contrary to what is stated in the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan this development does not deliver the following: "The integration of transport and land use planning with significant new housing development to be focused at locations proximate to high quality public transport, especially rail access, that is easily accessible to existing local infrastructure such as schools, and local services such as neighborhood centers, in the interest of a sustainable pattern of urban development."

CONFHEY URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

The Confey Urban Design Framework does not contain a Master Plan as directed by Minister Damien English. This Key Development Area is a major urban expansion into the adjacent grasslands on the Northern perimeter of our town that is being justified on the basis of regional figures and proximity to a rail line. Without the existence of a Master Plan you are effectively asking the residents of Confey to accept whatever development takes place without their prior consultation. This is unacceptable as any proposed development in Leixlip should be presented to the residents in an open and transparent manner. This can only be achieved by the compilation of a Master Plan which would then be presented to all stakeholders with adequate time to lodge any possible objections, this time frame being months rather than weeks.

Section 2.2 of the National Planning Framework states that development will be achieved through infill and Brownfield development rather than an over-reliance on Greenfield, edge of town development. The LAP as proposed does the opposite. We have a large Brownfield option at the HP site that should be used to resolve the current and future housing requirements of the town. This site already has access to the motorway system whereas Confey does not.

The proposed works to Cope Bridge to provide two-way traffic will lead to further congestion for residential areas located east and west of Captain's Hill during peak times. In particular it will have a negative impact on accessibility from the existing estates and lead to more congestion at the bottom of Captain Hill. It will also result in the loss of Hedgerows and green areas at Glendale including a row of mature oak trees. Connectivity via Captains Hill to schools and local shopping will be a nightmare for residents in existing estates due to increased volumes of traffic.

The Draft Plan fails to 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 facilities. Any development of Celbridge and Maynooth has a negative knock on impact on Leixlip as our road, bus and rail infrastructure as designed results in passengers and motorists being already in the system before the vehicles reach or pass through our town. The ability of Leixlip residents to access the N4, bus and rail system is already affected by the scale of the exiting populations in Celbridge and Maynooth without any further development of these towns.

It is more than likely that once the developers get planning permission they will look to increase the house densities to the maximum which means that the total numbers are underestimated. In reality the combined new build will double the size of the residential areas in north Kildare. The numbers in the plan are very misleading in regard to the actual size of the development. The current situation at Wonderful barn is a live example of this type of developer opportunism.

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 Local Area Plan.

The Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan, within which Leixlip is located, identifies a number of strategic development areas. It includes Leixlip/Confey in recognition of the area's location and proximity to the Dublin-Maynooth railway line. The mere proximity of a rail line is no basis for any decision to be made.

CELBRIDGE ROAD EAST KEY DEVELOPMENT AREA

Unanimously backed Material Alterations removed this Key Development Area from the last Local Area Plan so there is no reason for it being reinstated.

Contrary to what is stated in the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan this development does not deliver the following: "The integration of transport and land use planning with significant new housing development to be focused at locations proximate to high quality public transport, especially rail access, that is easily accessible to existing local infrastructure such as schools, and local services such as neighborhood centers, in the interest of a sustainable pattern of urban development; "

OTHER POINTS COMMON TO THE ABOVE KEY DEVELOPMENT AREAS

These proposed developments are contrary to Strategic Objective S6 – “To phase significant future growth in line with the capacity and delivery of supporting physical infrastructure”. The existing water, waste & power supply which is aging and faulty are unable to support developments of this scale. The town's infrastructure is already strained and is evidenced by power cuts, water leaks and the ongoing stench in the middle of our town from the existing houses. There is limited capacity at the water treatment works. Improvement works earliest will take place is Q4 - 2022. (True also for the other 2 Subs)

Strategic Objective S8 is “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 LAP is in fact threatening or destroying natural heritage, high quality amenity areas and other green spaces throughout Leixlip.

Leixlip is a town of historical importance which is also a very beautiful location to live. The scale of any development should match the communities' natural expansion requirements rather than select a number to match a strategic policy developed far from the town. Those requirements, as listed below, should be included in the Draft LAP.

- Homes for the elderly/retired – 25% of Leixlip population 55+
- Affordable homes and Social Housing
- A swimming pool site.
- A civil building with theatre or performance space.
- A Sensory Garden.
- Adequate parking in the village and at the train stations.
- Maintaining existing estates, green areas or new developments.
- Improving and maintaining the existing water, waste & power supply infrastructure which is aging and faulty.
- Crèche facilities.

Signed: Stephen Dredge

Date: 09/07/2019