

Wogansfield Residents Association

Draft Leixlip Area Plan 2020-2026
C/O Senior Executive Officer
Planning Department,
Kildare County Council,
Aras Chill Dara,
Devoy Park,
Naas,
County Kildare.



10th.July 2019

**Proposed rezoning of 12.8 hectares of land from Agricultural to
New Residential at Celbridge Road East incorporating Leixlip Castle Demesne**

Dear Sirs,

We are seeking the retention for agricultural zoning of the lands above for the following reasons:

Traffic and access issues

Key Development Area 2 Celbridge Road (East)

This proposed rezoning will impact severely on existing roads and despite the provision for a proposed new link road to the Celbridge Leixlip East intersection the increase in population will lead to extra vehicular traffic on already oversubscribed roads. This new road should be complete before any extra housing is built. Existing roadways must be able to readily accommodate additional vehicular traffic created by the project. The Developer should be required to provide for roadway improvements. We contend that a prerequisite of any rezoning or planning decision be that relief roads should be provided and that the land owner should agree to provide for this. Much of the traffic from the proposed rezoning will route through Castleton estate and Leixlip Village to access the M4 which will make matters worse. Traffic congestion on the main street in Leixlip is currently a major problem at peak time's problem.

The original proposals included pedestrian and cycle access at Wogansfield, then the revise plan showed no access. Can we assume from the new draft plan that this is now off the agenda? There will be serious objections to this if it is brought back into any future development proposal. This proposal is of most concern to the residents of Wogansfield. Pedestrian and cyclist access to the Celbridge Road and services such as schools and shops, through existing neighbourhoods should not impact on small existing communities. Although there is vague mention in the new plan with regards to this we will vehemently oppose any effort or proposal to this proposal.

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Historical significance

Leixlip Castle and Demesne are listed for protection in the County Development Plan. What remains of the Demesne should be fully retained or developed as a park to be enjoyed by the Community in the areas.

Should this land be rezoned for new residential it is very probable 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. The lodges/gates and walls of Leixlip Demesne are a protected structure and are worthy of preservation. There are also tree protection orders and groups of trees of special amenity value at Leixlip Castle Demesne.

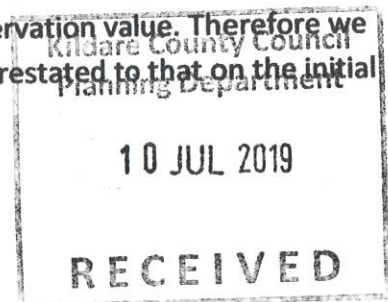
Education

The existing schools in the town have adequate capacity and potential for expansion. The requirement for new facilities should be monitored having regard to the take up on residential development land. Most of the schools are currently at full capacity and do not have adequate capacity to cater for future proposed housing developments. As we understand the Department of Education and Skills have no current proposals to extend existing schools or provide a new school in Leixlip. Additional facilities which may be required over the plan period should be based on the capacity of existing facilities and/or the needs arising from significant new residential development within the LAP area. This should be accommodated for in the LAP with the relevant zoning of lands for education to accommodate the additional requirements arising from the proposed new housing developments. The development on the lands at the Wonderful Barn which when completed will involve a busy new exit/entrance to the Celbridge Road, couple this with the proposed rezoning of the new land on the opposite side of the same road will cause serious difficulties and should NOT be proceeded with. The junction of the Celbridge Road on to the Maynooth Road at Galvan's Cross is currently under serious pressure to cope with the existing traffic. There are also two schools, Colaiste Ciarain and Scoil Ui Dhalaigh located on the Celbridge Road, add in to the mix a petrol station. In addition, there is a large volume of pedestrian traffic using the Church, the Parish Centre and the neighbourhood shops. Increasing traffic without serious upgrading to this roadway will inevitably lead to an increase in the accident rate. Planning should always put the safety of the community first.

Green Infrastructure

One of the core objectives of the old LAP included preserving, protecting and enhancing trees (including woodlands) of special amenity, nature conservation or landscaping value with particular reference to Leixlip Castle Demesne and ensuring they are actively managed to ensure their continued longevity. The new LAP revised this objective excluding the

reference to a number of various locations including Leixlip Castle Demesne and removing the latter part i.e. "to ensure they are actively managed to ensure their continued longevity". This is unacceptable and needs to be reinstated to ensure that our Green Infrastructure is protected. In addition, the initial LAP included "To prohibit development where it is likely that damage would be caused to trees protected by a Tree Protection Objective or to those which have a particular local amenity of nature conservation value. Development that requires the felling of mature trees of amenity value, conservation value or special interest notwithstanding the fact that they may not be listed in this plan will be discouraged ". The new LAP has revised this wording to just include "seeking to protect trees with a particular local amenity or conservation value". We need to protect the Green Infrastructure including trees that have local amenity or conservation value. Therefore we oppose the revised wording on the new LAP and wish it to be restated to that on the initial LAP



Waste/Water/Sewerage

The capacity of Leixlip Waste Water Treatment Plant has been upgraded to cater for an expanding population within the Lower Liffey Valley catchment and for the locally based commercial activities (including Intel). Irish Water indicates that this capacity will not be sufficient to cater for the needs of the Lower Liffey Valley catchment in the longer term. It clearly states that following the upgrade of the Leixlip Waste Water Treatment plan it will continue to have insufficient capacity to cater for the planned growth. This work will be progressed in line with Irish Water capital investment plans and the pumping station at Leixlip Water Treatment plant will be required to transfer excess water from the Lower Liffey catchment. This project is dependent on the delivery of major capital investment for the region. We would request than no commitment be given to further rezoning until such time that feasibility studies are completed and capital investment is in place.

We propose the Council undertake any rezoning in Leixlip Castle Demesne be postponed until such time as the upgrade of the water work network is completed. It is essential that any new developments be introduced on a phased basis in line with the proposed water work changes.

Public transport

Public transport will play a major role in transport movements. Currently the area is serviced by bus and rail. The upgrade of the Maynooth rail line is scheduled for 2023 and the present rail capacity is at breaking point and cannot cater for extra commuter load particularly at peak travel times. So essentially commuters will be depending on the services of Dublin Bus and private bus operators who are going to experience the same traffic congestion due to the proposed new developments. The present park and ride facility will need to be extended to cater for existing demand. The paid park and ride facility is at full capacity during the week. We propose the Council undertake any rezoning in Leixlip Castle Demesne be postponed until such time as the upgrade of the Transport rail and bus

corridor, (2023) is completed. It is essential that any new developments be introduced on a phased basis in line with the proposed transport changes as outlined in Transport for Ireland plans.

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Population needs

The regional planning guidelines set out on the 31st of July 2008 outlined a target population for Leixlip of 15,000 in 2010. As already stated above the LAP is proposing an additional 3,315 houses which on the plan converts to an additional population growth of 4,342 which represents an overall target population for Leixlip town of 19,794. However this population growth is grossly understated. The population of Leixlip in 2016 census is 15,452 people in 5,103 households in Leixlip, which are 3 people per household. If we apply the same basis per 2016 census i.e. 3 people per household, then the additional proposed 3,315 housing units will equate to 9,945 additional people, which is twice the expected population growth detailed in the Leixlip LAP 2017 to 2023.

Community facilities - Section 7.6 of the LAP in the County Development Plan 2017-2023 dealing with Open Spaces states that it is the policy of the council "to preserve, manage and maintain to a high standard the existing public parks and open spaces in the county". Included in the LAP in the above-mentioned table 7-3 as a Park is the lands around The Wonderful Barn. Instead amenity is now gone with the development of the area of the wonderful barn.

Sound Barriers

The plan makes no mention of Noise Pollution implications on the areas of the Wonderful Barn new development. We are recommending the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006 be insisted on during any planning application. Residents of the proposed sites are exposed to this excessive noise. KCC must provide conditions in relation to noise prevention and reduction as part of any application for development.

Conclusion

In conclusion we have examined the draft Plan in detail and we feel that the proposed rezoning and potential development shows complete disregard to the existing communities in Leixlip. It is our contention that prior to rezoning any lands the Authority should examine existing zoning in the Leixlip area prior to rezoning lands in Leixlip Demesne.

In the event of lands along the Rye being considered for housing development, the "Flooding Report" should be revisited and thoroughly evaluated. The problems experienced with flooding in 2000 and 2002 should not be repeated. Part of the then consultant's report identified the need for "sacrificial lands" between Maynooth and Leixlip. It is essential that nothing new is added to cause a return to flooding problems.

While first and second level schools are presently capable of catering for the current population there will be an obvious gap if the rezoning and development goes ahead resulting in a population spike.

Leixlip is developed primarily from a village infrastructure, and is designated as an architectural conservation zone in the last area plan, primarily because Leixlip Castle and Demesne are at the centre of the village. We feel this status should be maintained and will be undermined with the new proposed rezoning and development.
Let's not make the mistakes of the past where new housing developments were imposed on communities with any consideration to services and infrastructure requirements.

Kind regards


Declan Brogan
Chairperson

