

Dear Minister,

I refer to your recent launch of the above new plan, backed by cabinet.

I am responding to your invitation to make a formal submission.

If your plan fails to gain traction, this recent article summarises the resulting damage that will be done to Ireland and its citizens:

<http://www.independent.ie/business/irish/how-dublin-is-eating-ireland-35417250.html>.

The author opines

- *"Obviously, the massive overcrowding in this baby belt was undermining the quality of lives for those on the East Coast, in particular, commuters. And with over 50% of the entire economic activity of the country, this swollen part of the country was draining potential commercial opportunities from the rest of the country."*
- *"If we do nothing and allow the market to determine the next 25 years, this part of Ireland will become unpleasant, angry and unstable. Now this is real dystopia."*
- *"In contrast, what was termed **"Rural Ireland"** will become **"Empty Ireland"**, pretty but desolate, a theme park for tourists trying to find the **"Real Ireland"**. It will be a bit like a giant famine village — an abandoned place, which used to be thriving but is now silent."*
- *It is forecasted that unless radical action is taken, some 75% of the projected population and new homes will be clustered around the capital city by 2040. Thus creating a potential community disaster for villages like Leixlip in North Kildare.*

*Based on our own experience we in Leixlip would agree that **"This will further exacerbate massive and increasingly unmanageable sprawl of housing areas, scattered employment and car-based commuting, presenting major challenges around lop-sided development, under-utilised potential, congestion and adverse impacts on people's lives and the environment."** In addition, efficiency and effectiveness of Irish development will regress and result in higher costs and poor value for taxpayer investment.*

*I am attaching to this letter my family submission to Kildare County Council in response to the recent Leixlip Local Area plan they are seeking to pass. Its rezoning proposals would mean a 66% increase in the number of houses in the town. Along with all the other LAP proposals for North Kildare (Celbridge, Maynooth & Kilcock) it flies in the face of your logical, sensible "**Ireland 2040 Plan**"*

*Speaking specifically on our local town issue, Leixlip should never have been designated a (large) "**development**" town by Kildare County Council planning.*

Its unique topography - a bowl in the Liffey/Rye River valley with a short narrow main Street in the basin, plays havoc in planning efficient and effective transport from all parts of the town (est west; west east; north south; & south north) to the other side on a regular daily basis.

We rest our case and hope that your proposed plan trumps KCC's misguided intent.

Mike & Angela Parle

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Proposed Rezoning of 12.8 hectares of land from Agricultural to new Residential at Leixlip Demesne - Draft Leixlip Local Area Plan 2017 - 2023,

I am seeking the retention for agricultural zoning of the lands above for the following reasons.

- 1. 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 should be fully retained. Should this land be rezoned 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."*
- 2. The proposals are not modest and when combined with that of the Wonderful Barn and the rest of the town are enormous in scale. For the Celbridge Road this will entail creating a busy new exit / entrance to a single lane road. In 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. To place incremental traffic on it would cause mayhem, particularly at peak travel time. Also, there are two schools, Coláiste Chiaráin (Secondary School) and Scoil Uí Dhálaigh Scoil (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. A highly*

dangerous 90° angle bend has never been improved and has been the cause of numerous motor accidents over the past decade. Increased traffic flow will inevitably cause an increase in accident rates and congestion. In addition six existing housing estates exit onto this very busy road.

- 3. 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.*
- 4. 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 Area.*
- 5. The impact of the proposed development on homes in the area will be very significant.*
- 6. We don't believe that existing services will cope with such rapid expansion. Citizens will be materially affected in terms of safety, security, education and health:*
 - Roads*
 - Sewage*
 - Water*
 - Services * Primary Schools * Secondary Schools * Leisure facilities * Medical*

Yes, new housing should be built but intelligently and in tandem with guaranteed supporting infrastructure. The healthy development philosophy should reflect this - "Build it right, not right now".

Sincerely,

Mike Parle

Angela Parle