

Ferrybank Community Development Residents Group

NPF Submissions
Forward Planning Section
DHPCLG
Custom House
Dublin
D01 W6X0

13-03-2017

Dear Sir (Madam),

Regarding: **Proposed Boundary Change to Waterford/Kilkenny.**

Our organisation represents the combined residents living in the Ferrybank area.

Ferrybank Shopping Centre

- We have heard conflicting information from representatives of Waterford City & County Council. They continually object to the fact that it ever received planning permission and we have heard it said that they would prefer to see it knocked?
Also on a recent current affairs program on WLRFM, Cllr John Cummins (FG) stated that "We would love to have that building and to be in a position to market it as offices."
The building has a lot of potential for the area in our view. Ferrybank needs more community space and a greater choice of retail and it would be a shame not to utilise at least part of the building for that purpose.

Ferrybank Library

- The Ferrybank Library has had a hugely positive impact on the area. The library itself is a fantastic asset, however the varied community activities which take place there have added great value for the residents and that applies to both children and adults alike.
Although Waterford City & County Council say they will allow the library to continue operating, we would have concerns in that regard.

Kilkenny County Council Local Office

- Having the local office located at the Shopping Centre has been a great benefit to the area. Our understanding is that Waterford City & County Council will not provide a local office for Ferrybank because of the 'close proximity' of the offices in Waterford City Centre on the Mall etc. Another backward step in our opinion

Both Councils Working Together

- In our opinion, things were starting to really happen for Ferrybank. Both councils were beginning to work together for the greater good of the residents living in the area. Just one example of this is where both Kilkenny County Council and Waterford City & County Council worked together to establish the Ferrybank Tidy Towns project. The logo we had designed recently sums up the 'working together' of the two councils concept. (Logo enclosed.)
Unfortunately the only thing that the 'Proposed Boundary Extension' has achieved so far is that it has created animosity and built an emotional wall between both counties. In our view this is a seriously backward step and has potentially set us back years.

No Specific Information

- We have had no specific information from Waterford City & County Council other than comments in the media from various councillors etc. We have heard that up to 30,000 houses will be built in Ferrybank over the coming years? Given that there are currently 1,900 homes in the area and an approximate population of 5,500 this is shocking growth increase and will dramatically change Ferrybank. Access over the bridge to Waterford City is bad enough at the moment, but what will it be like if the population grows to this extent?

We have heard it repeated many times from Waterford City & County Council that the 'Boundary Extension' will greatly benefit the quality of life for residents of Ferrybank but again we have 'no specifics'. Is it the case that Ferrybank will turn into a dormitory area with the focus on enticing as many people as possible to shop in the Waterford City Centre. Will Ferrybank end up devoid of shops, services and amenities?

No Allocated Community Development Officers

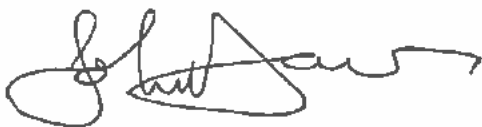
- Approximately a year ago, Waterford City & County Council abruptly stopped providing a Community Development Officer in Ferrybank. This had a hugely negative impact on the work of our group. A lot of time had been invested in developing a good working relationship with the council through the officer.

We were told repeatedly that we would have a replacement person 'soon'. This has not happened and we now understand that the council has permanently cut the role. This does not bode well for our area should the Boundary Extension proceed as recommended.

There appears to be a lot of misinformation regarding the proposed extension and there also certainly seems to be a lack of awareness of some of the very positive contributions from KKCoCo over the past few years. (EG: Opening of library and local office. Funding of the Christmas festive lights. Support towards the Ferrybank Tidy Towns. Locally placed community development officer via KLP. Support for the Hillsfield Community Centre etc. The proposed new park/playground (project cost €300,000) has been planned for many years and is now finally about to come to fruition.)

We are of the view that while there are problems and challenges in Ferrybank, the best way forward for all concerned is to work together. We do not agree that the proposed extension should go ahead. Regions can and do work together successfully without interfering with county boundaries. We would ask that an alternate legal structure for local authority cooperation would be the way forward and we refute the finding of the review committee that there needs to be a boundary change for both counties to progress.

Yours sincerely



John Hayes

Treasurer (F.C.D.R.G)

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FERRYBANK

AN TAIRBHE AS
TARRAINGT LE CHÉILE

TIDY TOWNS
COMMITTEE

