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Development	Dublin Mountains Visitor Centre-Strategic Development Initiative
Location	Hellfire Club/Montpelier Hill/Massey's Wood
Planning Authority	South Dublin County Council
Reference Number	JA0040

AN BORD PLEANÁLA

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TIME 16:50 BY [Signature]

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FOR DATED FROM [Signature]

PL

Dear Planning team,

I would like to voice my objection to the development of the proposed visitor centre at Hellfire Club/Montpelier Hill/Massey's Wood

I have been a regular visitor since childhood to this beautiful and unspoilt area within reach of Dublin. I do not believe that developing a visitor centre will enhance this space, as what is actually valuable to the citizens of Dublin is its unspoilt nature.

I would like to highlight the following issues:

Zoning Issues

1. The area is a position of great natural beauty, as indicated by its high amenity area. Building permanent structures in what is a natural area is not consistent with the nature of the amenity type,
2. The site planning request refers to its necessity for "Wow factor". This is not a factor in planning law
3. Given that the EIAR readily admits that all proposed changes will be permanent and primarily will be moderate or greater in terms of severity of impact. This level of impact in this type of area is not appropriate

Ecology

4. The EIAR is generally deficient in respect of ecology. The mapping of bird and mammal life generally is either non-existent (birds) or vague/incomplete (mammals). It is also note-worthy that in relation to bio-diversity there is no real sense of Massey as being fully separate from HFC
5. The clear commercial case for this coffee shop restaurant will result in an over-intensification of use, which will impact on the amenity value of the natural space

Architecture/Archaeology

6. The EIAR makes it clear that the site has significant potential (page 196). In addition, the site at Montpelier Hill is considered comparable to some world heritage sites—Stonehenge is mentioned at page 200. Despite all of this, it is intended that stairways be put in the middle of this archaeological material. The commercial development of the archaeological site is not to be supported

7. It should be noted that at places like Newgrange and Mullaghmore, interpretative centres are placed some distance away from the actual site that is being interpreted. Further note the general comments below in relation to the actual centre in any event. The site has no real public good/interpretative value. It is primarily a restaurant. All of the public spaces are seen as being of commercial value.

Sustainability/Amenity

8. A large part of the funding is coming from Failte Ireland funds which are aimed at large scale commercial activities. Sustainable in that sense is clearly linked to financial sustainability. The Business Plan and Planning Statement make conflicting references as to the importance of commercial activity.

9. The reality is that a threefold increase in visitors will be sought. There is no woodland management plan or other ongoing control/monitor to ensure the sustainability of the existing environment. The precise references to the types of tourist sought (Naturally curious and Social Energiser) in the business plan contrasts markedly with the issues with the EIAR in relation to Bio-Diversity etc.

11. Also SDCC has consistently limited development in this area because of road infrastructure and the overall environment and now plans a 3 fold increase in footfall—most of which will be casual tourism with no real vision for real education and sustainable development.

Conclusion

This is a currently beautiful natural amenity within reach of the citizens of Dublin. When one reaches this area, one is now in the mountains. The clear commercial development of this natural and archaeologically significant area clearly for commercial benefit, will destroy its intrinsic amenity value.

This area does not need a café. It does not need an interpretive centre. It needs to be left alone as a natural space for Dubliners to enjoy as it is. Once destroyed with buildings, there is no going back

Kind regards

Roisin Kelly

