



An Taisce
The National Trust for Ireland

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
TIME	2.30PM BY hand
08 JAN 2018	
LTR DATED	FROM <i>[Signature]</i>
PL 065	JA0040

C/o Moret
Edmondstown Road
Dublin 16

08/01/2018

The Secretary
An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1

**Re:- Ref. PL 06S JA0040
Dublin Mountain Visitor Centre
Submission on behalf of An Taisce to Applicant's Reply to
Request for Additional Information**

Interpretive Centre

The Board in its letter of 9th October 2017 invited the Applicant to make a response to the submissions made. However it does not appear that the Applicant has made any substantive comment on the submission from Seamus Murphy, the owner of Killakee House (The Steward's House). The latter submission reinforces the reasons given in our original submission as to why the Steward's House has the potential to be used as the interpretive centre and restaurant rather than by building a new structure on the hillside, and therefore should be considered.

In fact the Applicant mentions again, in Section 15.1, that this premise and others were considered originally but rejected, neglecting to mention that they did not reconsider the position after the proposed development was halved in size to about 900 sq.m which is in fact the approximate size of the buildings at Killakee House inclusive of the outbuildings around the inner yard only. There is a much larger area if the outer yard buildings are included.

The Applicant also mentions in Section 15.1 that Killakee house was deemed not to present the same opportunity as afforded by the Hell Fire and Massy's Wood site. This ignores the fact that the Killakee House as restaurant and interpretive centre could become part of the Hell Fire site.

Transport and Access

The Applicant's reply mentions, on page 24 Section 11, that the Board did not raise any issues about transport and access to the site, this however does not imply that they agree with the original proposals.

An Taisce have consulted with cyclist.ie – The Irish Cycling Advocacy Network with regard to the cycling and road safety issues in relation to this proposal and their comments are as follows:-

“The R115 approach to the Proposed Dublin Mountains Visitor Centre is one of the main, and popular, approaches to the Wicklow Mountains for sport and leisure cyclists. The proposed Visitor Centre will undoubtedly lead to an increase in traffic in the area which will make it a more dangerous environment for cyclists.

While visitors will be encouraged to use shuttle buses for access the uptake may be less than anticipated so traffic volumes could be far in excess of the estimates, increasing the danger for cyclists.

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Directors: Karl Dowling (Secretary), Philip Kearney, Christopher Massi, Muiris O'Ceidigh, Patricia Oliver, Judy Osborne (British), John Pierce (Chair), Garrett Poynt
Charles Stanley-Smith (British), John Sweeney.

The proposed narrowing of the road is welcome as it may deliver some traffic calming for the benefit of cyclists.

We welcome the proposal to remove the existing road centreline marking on the two-way sections but consider that it needs to be reinforced by the placing of large bicycle logos in the centre of the downhill lane and in the centre of the roadway on the oneway section.

We welcome the proposal for an advisory cycle lane for ascending cyclists but are conscious that there is evidence that overtaking motorists allow less room to cyclists in the presence of advisory cycle lanes than in their absence.

The proposed arrangement for the oneway section is expected to "have a strong traffic calming effect to reduce traffic speeds in addition to sharing the limited road space appropriately". However the precedents quoted in the Boyne Valley and the Netherlands are not comparable as the steepness of the road could have unexpected consequences. It may be necessary to install traffic lights to control traffic movements.

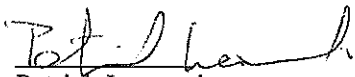
We welcome the proposal to install footpaths on the approach roads which are currently dangerous for pedestrians

We are concerned, however, that there appears to have been no consideration given to improving the safety and comfort of cyclists and pedestrians on the R115 south of the entrance to the proposed Visitor Centre. It is reasonable to anticipate that the proposed Visitor Centre will give rise to increased traffic on this alternative approach.

Overspill parking on the R115 just north of the entrance to the car park presents a danger to descending cyclists. It is not clear from any of the documentation whether the carpark will remain open outside of the Visitor Centre opening hours. If the carpark is not accessible to recreational users after 5 p.m. in winter and 8 p.m. in summer overspill parking will continue. People arriving during the day will park on the road for fear of the consequences of getting locked in later. The carpark should remain accessible when the Centre is closed to prevent this.

The proposed increase in bicycle parking is a welcome feature.

We do not believe that the proposal will improve access by bicycle; on the contrary, the increase in traffic will present a more dangerous environment for cyclists and the measures proposed do very little to improve cyclist safety."



Patrick Leonard

Member, Planning Committee

An Taisce South County Dublin Assoc.

