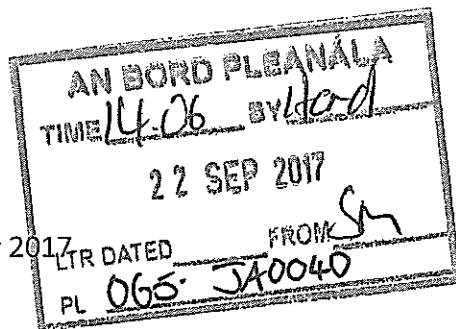
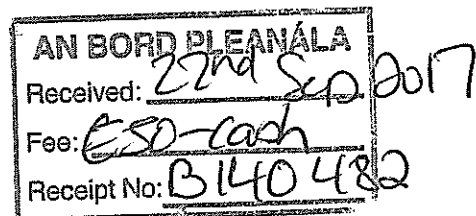


The Secretary
An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough St
Dublin 1
Date: 21st September 2017



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



To whom it may concern,

I would like to raise an objection to the above proposed development:

My Name is: Niamh Gleeson

My Address is: 'Bracken', Kilmashougue Lane, Rathfarnham Dublin 16

Email: niamhgleeson13@gmail.com

I have outlined below details of why I am very strongly opposed to the suggested plans regarding the 'Information Centre', 'Treetop' Bridge & Cafe put forward for The Hellfire & Massey's Woods sites.

I find it difficult to comprehend why these plans are deemed feasible considering they are affecting the forests where the protected red squirrel lives. The Red Squirrel is **protected** under the **Wildlife Act (1976) AND Wildlife (Amendment) Acts (2000 & 2010) & the Bern Convention (Appendix III)**. These Red Squirrels nest in dreys, which are round structures built against the trunks of trees. They feed primarily on tree seeds. These very trees would be impacted by the South Dublin County Council plan for the €19 million development.

I am under the impression that the responsibility of the forests are currently under Coillte however I personally have witnessed the destruction of the forest in return for timber without any regard or inspection of existing dreys. Who is policing this? Legally Coillte are obligated to be protecting these mammals and their habitats. Having observed this ongoing disregard for the red squirrel affirms my fears that the proposed plans by the SDCC will continue to break the protection laws. It is a privilege that the Dublin Mountains are home to a near extinct and protected mammal so I am unclear why this is being jeopardised?

These proposed developments provide severe concern to not only the red squirrel but all the wildlife that are currently residing in these forests. These animals will not survive the plans which suggest an average of 300,000 will have access and be exposed to their habitats. I find it difficult to understand the need to commercialise this natural beauty. Why can we not continue to enjoy this untouched sanctuary? It is a privilege to be able to wander in these untouched forests and to catch a glimpse of the gorgeous red squirrel on their travels. It is vital we continue to respect these beautiful creatures

and their habitats. These are protected by law and therefore there is an obligation to maintain these forests in their natural environment.

I personally partake in regular walks in both Massey's Woods and the Hellfire Forests. This has exposed me to the individuals who avail of these areas to relax and escape from the hustle & bustle of the city. They enjoy this environment due to its natural conditions despite the effects that have already occurred to the forest under Coillte. The beauty and appeal of these areas are that they are untouched by society. It is an invaluable occurrence to put on your wellies and immerse yourself in nature by wandering amongst the trees and see the animals thriving. No commercial investment or development can buy this experience. It is imperative that in this fast paced consumer era we maintain the hidden natural gems that our country has to offer. It is our duty to protect the wildlife and natural beauty and maintain its sacredness. There is no need for an information centre or a tree top bridge, if you walk up the mountains you have one of the best views of Dublin City. You can see out to the coast and catch a view of Bull Island on a clear day. This was all provided to us by the beautiful Mother Nature and it is our obligation to her to maintain this.

I would appreciate if you take the above points into serious consideration.

To further substantiate this objection I would like to request an oral hearing.

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
TIME _____	BY _____
22 SEP 2017	
LTR DATED _____	FROM _____
PL _____	

Yours Sincerely ,

