The Secretary,
An Bord Pleanala
64 Marlborough St
Dublin 1

AN BORD PLEANÁLA
TIME 16:41 BY Hand
25 SEP 2017
LTR DATED ____ FROM SM

AN BORD PLEANÁLA
Received: 25/9/2017
Fee: €50 - cash
Receipt No: 3140533

20th September, 2017

Re:

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to you to seriously object to the above proposed development.

Our names are Margaret Richardson and Brian Richardson and on behalf of our children Josh Kyle and Nathan Richardson.

Our address is 23 Ballyroan Heights, Rathfarnham, Dublin16.

I submit that this development is contrary to sustainable development, principles of proper planning. I also contend it is contrary to the SDCC's Development Plan, including its objectives and policies. I believe that it is a development which is both contrary to the current land-use /zoning of the area and which is also unsustainable/detrimental to the overall ecology/environment of the area.

We enclose a list of additional reasons why I think An Bord Pleanala should refuse planning permission for the above development

We enclosed a payment of **fifty euros** in respect of the Objection Fee.

Yours faithfully.

Sustainability/Amenity

- **"Cafe/restaurants are only to be considered in the context of existing premises".**

The reference to this site being necessary for a "wow" factor is something which **is not recognised in planning law**. It is subjective and there are a number of sites in the surrounding areas with equally beautiful views of Dublin such as Ticknock/Orlagh/Glencree (which was approved as a visitor centre in 2007/2008. There are existing buildings/developments in situ already which could be utilised.

We believe funding will be provided by Failte Ireland which is known for funding large scale commercial activities. Obviously this development is for financial gain only and no regard to the severe impact on the Wildlife etc and this begs the question what else will be proposed in the future for financial sustainability.

The Business plan and Planning statement make conflicting references as to the importance of commercial activity.

There is **no Woodland Management Plan** which is vital to ensure the ongoing control and monitoring of the sustainability of the existing environment.

The reference to the type of tourist sought ("Cultural Curious and Social Energisers") in the Business plan contrasts to the issues within the EIAR in relation to Biodivesity.

There is no Biodiversity Plan. A Biodiversity officer has not been appointment.

There is no sense of partnership with other local authorities.

AN BORD PLEANÁLA
TIME ____ BY ____
26 SEP 2017
LTR DATED ____ FROM ____
PL

The road infrastructure is not adequate for the huge amount of proposed traffic to this area. It will be extremely dangerous for coaches to travel on and basically a danger to hillwalkers/cyclists etc in the future.

The nearby country roads in this area are presently extensively overloaded with the traffic from the newly built surrounding housing estates such as Hunterwood/Airpark/Stocking Lane/Woodstown/Ballycullen developments and the Scholarstown road housing development will already add to this in the future.

The increased traffic (the proposed two hundred thousand visitors) will add further traffic chaos and potential danger.

Ecology

- The EIAR is generally deficient in respect of ecology. The mapping of bird and mammal life generally is either non-existent (in the case of birds) or vague/incomplete (mammals). In relation to biodiversity there is no real sense of Massy's Woods as being fully separate from the Hellfire.

- The serious impact upon the ecology. The SDCC are obviously prepared to sacrifice protected species (the actual inhabitants of the proposed development area) and their habitats such as the Red Squirrels, Badgers, foxes for commercial use – a coffee shop/restaurant.

  These animals have been subjective to losing their habitats and food sources for many years with all the housing development in the Ballycullen/Knocklyon/Scholarstown area and the SDCC are prepared once again to disregard this and subject the Wildlife to more interference and upheaval from their natural habitat **(the one area where they should feel safe and protected**) for commercial reasons.

Architecture/Archaeology

- The EIAR makes it clear that the site has significant potential (page 196) and that the site at Montpelier Hill is considered comparable to some world heritage sites - Stonehenge is mentioned at page 200. If that is the case why is it planned to erect stairways in the middle of this archaeological material.

  The Newgrange and Mullaghmore interpretative centres are situated some distance away from the actual site that is being interpreted or are situated in a nearby town/village so as to maximise the economic potential such as Rathfarnham Village or Tallaght Village where public transport is already provided for. Glenveigh National Park have a park and ride approach to their National park. The Total Fitness site in Tick Knock is ideal for this.

- References to preserving the landscape and fauna/flora sit beside the reality of the severe impact on the overall environment and visual panorama and the planned destruction of habitats of protected animals - red squirrel and badger. Archaeology that is compared to Stonehenge and World Heritage Sites will be intersected/overridden by stairs for the purposes of tourism.

- SDCC has consistently limited development in this area because of the limitations of the road infrastructure and the overall environment yet ironically are planning an onslaught of casual "tourists" in the same area with no real vision for real education and sustainable development.

AN BORD PLEANÁLA
TIME
BY
25 SEP 2017
FROM
LTR DATED
PL

Personal Note

On a personal note many people object to this development but in fairness the fee of fifty euros may prevent them in submitting an objection.

People have enjoyed going to the Hellfire Club and all the woods for years and if they wanted a "cup of tea", they bring a flask which is more in line with the whole scene of hillwalking.

Many people go to the mountains to get away from the day to day stresses of life, a place of refuge and solace and the last thing they need is to come face to face with "casual tourists". We have a child with autism and love to bring him there where we don't have to be "on guard". It is our safe haven where he can run and be himself without having to have hoards of people staring at him. Life is hard enough without now having to have our "safe" havens overrun with hoards of "casual tourists" trailing the hills. We know there are many people in our position who go there for the very same reason.

We are very disappointed in the SDCC that they have no regard in protecting the Wildlife and their habitats all for a quick buck. Let's face it the café will be run by casual uninterested staff and the visitor centre will end up being a "souvenir" shop.

We hope you will protect the Wildlife who have no voice but rely on the goodness of "human kind".

Yours faithfully,

Brian Richards

Margaret Richards

AN BORD PLEANÁLA
TIME_____ BY_____
25 SEP 2017
LTR DATED_____ FROM_____
PL