

Kilkenny G.A.A. Supporters Club



(Sanctioned by Kilkenny County G.A.A. Board)



To: NPF Submissions,
Forward Planning Section,
Department of Housing, Planning,
Community and Local Government,
Custom House,
Dublin D01 W6X0

Name: John Mackey Chairman, Jim Freeman Secretary

Details of any organisation, community group or company you represent:
Kilkenny GAA Supporters Club

Address: Nowlan Park, Kilkenny

Submission on relevant planning issues:

As officers of the committee representing thousands of Kilkenny GAA Supporters we wish to express our strong views in relation to the proposed boundary changes between Kilkenny and Waterford which we are totally opposed to.

On many levels County Kilkenny has a proud heritage, to which its citizens identify on many levels, be it cultural, historical, sporting, county or provincial. A boundary change would result in thousands of people who identify with one county being forced to re-evaluate their personal identification, not only with their county, but their province.



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Kilkenny takes much pride in its sporting heroes, its success in Hurling, Camogie, and its provincial Rugby team, Leinster, are a joy to the County, but this issue is greater than the County and Provincial levels. It lies in the heart of every school child and resident of every parish that identifies with their local club name, every participant that has represented their community and county at any sport. It is the fabric on which many parishes in the rural south of County Kilkenny flourish. To strip them of this identity would be detrimental to the social capital and mutual understanding that creates one's sense of place in a community.

Kilkenny is an historical County with many unique heritage sites of which all citizens of Kilkenny feel a sense of pride and ownership. To expect any one person to hand back that sense of pride takes from their sense of belonging.

Minister you yourself summed up the feelings of the community in your message on Ireland 2040 stating that *"whilst we can predict that much will change, the values we share as a society will largely remain intact. Our sense of belonging to community and place, our unique artistic and cultural inheritance and the key value we place on social justice and fair place are key place making assets that set us apart"*.

It is unfair and unacceptable that the citizens of County Kilkenny be the only ones who lose their sense of belonging in this Plan? Should the current and past students of the Abbey College in Ferrybank lose the proud County heritage that it has associated with since 1870? And should generations of proud Kilkenny families be asked to re-imagine their futures?

The fact that 19,131 submissions were received by the deadline of 15th January 2016 and that only 29 submissions were in favour of a Boundary Extension while 6 submissions were in favour of Kilkenny County Boundary been extended to the River Suir its original location and the remaining 19,096 (99.85%) opposed to the proposed change to the existing Boundary was totally ignored which in our opinion is totally undemocratic.

The Waterford people who reside in the area under review do so by choice but should this Boundary Extension be approved the Kilkenny people who reside in the area will have no choice. In recent times a number of groups have fought to have their rights recognised and have been successful. We would ask the question; **What About The Rights Of The Kilkenny People Residing In The Affected Area?**



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It is ironic that the Government has signed up to the principle of consent for the people of Northern Ireland but if this extension is granted it will be seen as not willing to extend the same courtesy to the residents of County Kilkenny.

The Arbitrary Drafting of Boundaries is not the way forward. The interest of both communities would be best served by all concerned working together for the betterment of both areas and therefore Minister we urge you to reject the Boundary Committees recommendations and instead to implement alternative ways that can facilitate the progression of the region for the benefit of all its citizens without the need for any boundary change.

A coordinated legal structure which includes planning, from the region down to local authorities, as suggested in the National Planning Framework (Chapter 7 Issues and Choices), eliminates any need for a boundary change.

Signed:


John Mackey Chairman

Date:

13/3/17

Signed:


Jim Freeman Secretary

Date:

12/3/2017

