

Dear Delgany Residents,

We would like to publicly address the matter of the Delgany Village Accessibility/ Road Safety Scheme that some public officials have recently commented upon, without proper context or complimentary information.

The Executive Committee of Delgany Community Council (DCC) has been working with local County Councillors, Wicklow County Council (WCC), residents and businesses over the course of the past fifteen months to discuss, consider and apply the best safety measures that suit Delgany village, given its heritage and history, and yet allow for reasonable levels of traffic to pass through our village. The application of tonnage limits, safe pedestrian access, and adequate footpaths are all part of this scheme, as are speed reductions and traffic calming measures.

In 2014 Delgany Community Council held two public meetings on the issue of traffic management in Delgany – one to facilitate a meeting with businesses and local Councilors, at which nineteen people were present; the second meeting was with residents, the general public and local Councilors where in excess of sixty people were in attendance on the night. At this moment in time the main issues relating to traffic that cause concern for villagers are:

- I. Volume of through-traffic (recent AECOM traffic survey identified, in just a two-hour period 7.30 a.m. – 8.30 a.m. & 5.30 p.m. – 6.30 p.m. in excess of 1,400 vehicles passed through the junction at the Wicklow Arms).
- II. Speed of through-traffic.
- III. Driver behaviour – lack of courtesy to other road users and dangerous driving.
- IV. Delgany is a heritage village, the 17th & 18th century roads and adjacent walls cause pinch-points that mean often two vehicles cannot pass each other requiring one to give way to the other. Currently this is unregulated and a hazard.
- V. Parking – illegal parking and lack of parking facilities.
- VI. Poor road maintenance.
- VII. Lack of road markings.
- VIII. HGVs using Delgany as a short cut to access super-markets in Greystones and building sites.

At the two public meetings, already mentioned, there was unanimous support from those present, to put the safety of local pedestrians, school children and visitors ahead of a few seconds delay to through-traffic.

The comments and suggestions, that were agreed at these two meetings,

were compiled and submitted to Wicklow County Council at a meeting with a WCC Senior Engineer from the Roads Dept, local County Councilors and ourselves, Delgany Community Council, in early Autumn 2014, to inform the draft-plans for what is known as the 'Delgany Village Accessibility Scheme'.

We have provided public access to our compiled comments on our website, www.delgany.ie since the beginning of these conversations in 2014. Following contact by the Chair of Delgany Community Council with WCC, a meeting was held on 27th April between DCC, WCC Engineers, local Councilors and Political Representatives, to consider draft plans for the proposed 'Delgany Village Accessibility Scheme' in order to determine whether if any or all of the items of concern that were raised at the two meetings of 2014 had been addressed in these draft plans. In total about 95% of the issues had been addressed. However, some needed minor re-working and a number the points that had been omitted were revisited and some of these re-inserted. The plans have to be worked on again to reflect these amendments. The next step in the process is a formal 'Part viii' publication of plans and a consultation period where the scheme is open for public viewing and comment. At such time as and when the plans go on public display, this opportunity will be advertised in the local press. However, Delgany Community Council will make it our business to notify our members on our mailing list and the community-at-large through our website and Facebook page as well as other media outlets, of the 'Part viii' publication and viewing/comment period.

We feel we have to comment on the manner in which Cllr. Derek Mitchell saw fit to publicise what is, in fact, but one element of a much larger Road Safety initiative. We find it regrettable that Cllr. Mitchell, should use such alarmist terminology as "...cause traffic chaos" and "inconvenience people in Delgany Woods, Delgany Hills and those going to the National School." when referring to one set of traffic lights! We find it hard to understand his strident opposition to a set of traffic lights in Delgany when, but a mile down the road there is a set in the middle of Killincarrig. Is the safety of the residents and users of Delgany somehow less important than those of Killincarrig? It has to be stated here that the elements contained in the draft plans for the Delgany Village Accessibility Scheme are all in line with the policy as set out in the Department of Transport / Department of Environment, Community and Local Government 2013 publication "Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets". This policy states, interalia, 2.2.2 *User Priorities*

To encourage more sustainable travel patterns and safer streets, designers must

place pedestrians at the top of the user hierarchy (see Figure 2.21). Walking is the most sustainable form of transport. Furthermore, all journeys begin and end on foot. By prioritising design for pedestrians first, the number of short journeys taken by car can be reduced and public transport made more accessible.

But we're confident that Cllr Mitchell is naturally very well aware of this, due to his involvement in WCC hence our dismay that he should seek to cause unnecessary controversy and concern amongst residents in a village and to what end!

To clarify for everyone, lest there be any doubt, what Cllr Mitchell refers to is a single set of traffic lights to regulate the traffic flow at the very bad bend between Forkin's Estate Agents and the Bus Stop at Priory Gate. For residents in and around the traffic lights who may have concern that it will impede access to their properties, we addressed this with WCC Engineers and they have reassured us that the lights will be installed so that it will actually be safer for residents exiting their properties after the lights are installed as the speed with which traffic approaches will be slower and people will be able to determine the direction from which traffic will approach due to the sequencing of the lights. This was clarified for Cllr Mitchell when he attended one of the meetings on the 27th. April and we believed he had understood the concerns of people at this meeting. Therefore it was disappointing for us to read his comments in the media last Sunday.

Many public representatives such as Grainne McLoughlin and Jennifer Whitmore and Tom Fortune have been actively part of this process and with WCC, have attended these meetings, made themselves aware of public pre-submission input and dialog that are in the nature of such progress and negotiation. We have had too many first hand accounts from pedestrians of close calls with trucks taking the bend too quickly and side swiping them with overhanging wing mirrors, to mothers with push chairs and elderly pedestrians being confronted by oncoming lorries or 4x4s that had mounted the pavement to pass other vehicles coming from the opposite direction and we've seen pets injured and killed to not push forward a safety scheme that is reasonable and can be effected in a timely manner. With more development, more residents and more cars coming into the area it is the responsible thing to do.

Finally, we see our role as facilitators of your feedback and as a concentrated point of contact for entities who want to approach the Delgany residential and business community and as a credible source of information for all of the residents and businesses of Delgany as well. We take these responsibilities very seriously, and are eager to engage with all of you for your input and comments. We invite you to review our website www.delgany.ie where we have posted (under Delgany Community Council's menu) the original comments forwarded to the WCC after the first round of safety improvements were presented.

We promise you that once the plans are formally published we will notify the public, on our website and as soon as we are furnished with them, to have at least one if not more sessions of feedback meetings with you to compile and submit your comments to WCC, as well as make you aware of the process on how you can also do it as an individual. We appreciate and value your role in the decisions that are part of Delgany's future.

We, as the DCC, continue progress on building credibility with the residents and businesses of Delgany, and we invite all of you to join us as part of the Delgany Community Council to share in our collective future. Please reach out to any member of the Executive Committee with feedback in person or in email -- we welcome your participation.

On behalf of the Executive Committee,

T. W. Scott Golden
Chairman
Delgany Community Council
09/05/2015