



Campaign To Re-Open



Reopen Killucan Train Station

Newsletter

Killucan Kinnegad Transport Lobby Group March 2008

www.ReOpenKillucanStation.org

Killucan Station

2008 Campaign

Saturday, 29th March 1p.m.

at Killucan station

Launch of postcard, website,
song and newsletter

Event to Launch 2008 Campaign

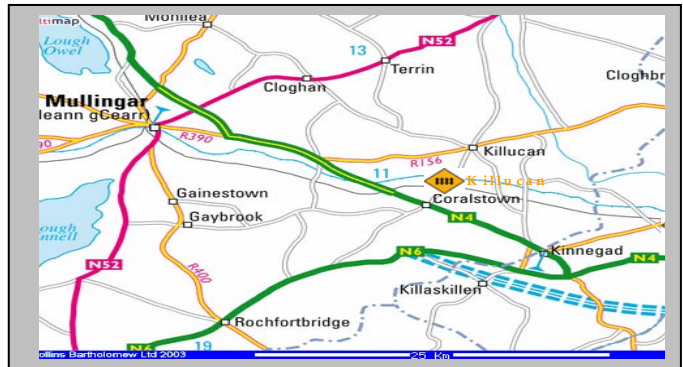
After a recent independent feasibility study has proved conclusively that more than enough commuters would use a station at Killucan to make it viable the action committee is now stepping up the campaign with a special launch. We are asking people to gather at Killucan Station at 1 pm on Saturday the 29th March at 1 pm to ask Irish Rail to let the train stop for us. At this time we will launch our new newsletter, song, post card campaign and website.

We have heard from scores of commuters from the Kinnegad and Rathwire areas and indeed surrounding areas like Raharney, Ballivor, Mullingar East, Rochfordbridge and Miltownpass who would welcome a service from Killucan to serve this vast commuter belt.

It is a perfect location. The Killucan station is located at a level crossing. It has two platforms and the line is double tracked through the station. There are a number of old buildings in the station, and the signal box has been maintained. The station would be the only stop between Mullingar and Enfield a distance of over 20 miles.

Post Card Campaign

We ask you to support our postcard campaign by putting your name and address on the card and posting it to Irish Rail. You should also write to local and national representatives (who are all supportive but who must continue to lobby the Minister and Irish Rail to open this much needed facility). Should you wish to write to the Minister directly and ask him to include Killucan in Transport 21: Minister Noel Dempsey, Transport House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.



Thank you to our sponsors

This newsletter is being printed by John Gildea Pharmacy of Kinnegad and Killucan. We are grateful to John for enabling us to get this information out into the community. We are also grateful to Mattie Holmes of Remax Kinnegad for printing the postcards.

Information on the Station

(More information www.reopenkillucanstation.org)

There is a potentially large customer base - Killucan & Rathwire (population 1,300) is 1.5km to the north and Kinnegad (population 2,500) is 7km to the east and there is a large catchment area, including east Mullingar, The Downs, Ballivor and Rochfordbridge. The old station infrastructure is already in place, including platform and signal box. It has been estimated that an unmanned facility could be implemented with a low capital cost (as little as €1m).

The station is located at a loop point in the line; this section of double tracks is used to allow oncoming trains to pass each other. It has been observed by locals that most passenger services stop there already to allow the other train by. Adding Killucan as an occasional additional scheduled stop will have a minimal impact on existing customers and timetables. Iarnród Éireann owns a significant amount of land around the station - the installation of a Park & Ride facility could be achieved without land procurement and with virtually no impact on existing customers during the upgrade

It has been stated recently that since Noel Dempsey became Minister the Hill of Down would have to be considered as well. Killucan has a larger catchment area, double track and existing infrastructure as well as a viable road network. Our campaign feel that in years to come there will be a commuter rail network between Longford and Dublin and both stations will be required.

Campaign so Far

2003

The campaign was originally started to help alleviate the 'sleeper' problem in Kinnegad, where cars are abandoned on the main street by workers commuting to Dublin city.

2004

In spring 2004, a development officer on the Sligo line came to meet with our action group and he agreed that for a small investment a park and ride facility at Killucan was a real possibility. The action group have since pursued this through three ministers, and a whole range of Iarnród Éireann directors. We have been told that when the capacity increases on the line and the population base is sufficient then a station is a real possibility. A grant of €5000 was approved by Westmeath County Council for a feasibility study .

2005

Reply from Minister Martin Cullen indicated that Irish rail was in discussion with Westmeath County Council to see if population projections would support Killucan.

2006

Meath County Council agreed to grant a further €5000 for the feasibility study on both Killucan and the Hill of Down. This study was subsequently commissioned and carried out by a representative of the Athlone Institute of Technology.

2007

The Minister for Transport responded in August 2007 that the location of stations on the rail network is a matter for Iarnród Éireann and that Iarnród Éireann are analysing the results of a study on the proposal that was submitted to them by Westmeath and Meath County Councils. He went on to say that Iarnród Éireann agree that there is the potential for a park and ride site west of Enfield, the viability of such a station being critically dependent on train capacity on the corridor which is currently at full capacity. He also said that from September 2007, the new high specification intercity railcars will gradually see a new timetable of increased services on the Dublin to Sligo line. He finally said that Iarnród Éireann has undertaken to keep the matter of re-opening the station under review over the next few years.

2008

Minister Noel Dempsey notes that while the project is not currently part of transport 21 it is being kept under review. In recent weeks Richard Fearn the CEO of Irish Rail has confirmed that he is going to ask his strategy and planning manager Michael Reidy to meet the campaign committee. The Committee organise a newsletter, new song, website as well as postcard campaign at the station on the 29th March.

Where to from here?

1).Continue to lobby County Council, politicians, Minister and Irish Rail; 2).Look for local investment in station; 3) Seek support from BMW fund and EU in general; 4). Get county council to look at commercial centre and parking at the Station as well as actively promoting station; 5). Get Irish Rail to do a cost analysis of building new station;6). Gather support for Kinnegad Community Council and Killucan Kinnegad Transport Lobby Group; 7).Get the new Westmeath Rural Transport involved with potential shuttle bus routes to meet the trains;

Results of the Feasibility Study

Following discussions with representatives of the Kinnegad Community Council, Westmeath County Council asked a representative of Athlone Institute of Technology to complete a study of the potential for re-opening the Killucan railway station. In a meeting with Iarnród Éireann in July 2006, it was recommended that the study should be broadened to consider other potential locations for a railway station between Mullingar and Enfield, such as Hill of Down in County Meath. The main finding of the study was that enough rail commuters to Dublin were identified to cover station refurbishment costs of at least €10m. Some details:

1. At minimum, approximately 232 commuters to Dublin from the housing developments in Ballivor, Killucan-Rathwire, and Kinnegad definitely would use a rail service from Killucan station, if it were to be provided.
2. Approximately, 79 additional commuters to Dublin probably would use a rail service from the Killucan station. (with preference for Hill of Down)
3. Only 19 commuters to Dublin would be required to cover the operational costs of an unmanned station, assuming that all commuters travelled on monthly tickets and purchased 12 tickets in a year.
4. Kinnegad's population grew by 65.6% from 1,429 in 2002 to 2,366 in 2006 which is an annual growth rate of 13.4% per year. The overall population of electoral districts contained within a 10km radius from Hill of Down and Killucan stations has grown by 28.9% and 26.6%, respectively, from 2002 to 2006.

More Information

If you require information about any of the items mentioned in this newsletter or would like to help in the campaign phone Denis Leonard at 087-643-0783 or James A Coroon 086-8968554