

Cllr. Marcia D'Alton writes ...

Proposed biodiesel processing plant in Ringaskiddy

A partnership of Bioverda and South Coast Transport proposes to construct a biodiesel processing plant at the former ADM site in Ringaskiddy. It is anticipated that the planning application will be lodged in the next two weeks.

Bioverda, is the bioenergy subsidiary of NTR. It has two core divisions, one dealing with biofuels (biodiesel and bioethanol) and the other dealing with bioenergy (biomass, landfill gas and anaerobic digestion). Bioverda already operates two large biodiesel facilities in Germany.

South Coast Transport is based in Corrin, Fermoy. It specialises in the transport of hazardous materials and chemicals. In looking to diversify, the company purchased the former ADM site and has been responsible for the dismantling of all disused equipment on the site.

The proposed manufacturing facility will use rapeseed oil for the manufacture of 200,000 tonnes of biodiesel per annum. At least initially, most of the rapeseed will be imported. Similarly, most of the biodiesel produced will leave the site by ship. Consequently, the ADM site is ideally suited as it is beside the Ringskiddy deepwater berth. Although several new buildings will be constructed on site to house the refining process, the existing ADM tank farm will also be incorporated into the new development. These tanks will be used to store both unrefined oil and final biodiesel product. It is anticipated that some of the biodiesel will be used by the Whitegate refinery, while more will be exported to refineries on the west coast of the UK. The project represents a €50 million investment and is anticipated to employ 30 people post construction.

A planning application for the proposed plant is currently being prepared by the consortium's consultants, RPS. An Environmental Report will accompany the planning application and will be publicly available at County Hall once the planning application is submitted. The plant will also be licensed and monitored by the Environmental Protection Agency. Representatives of Bioverda, South Coast Transport and RPS met with the Monkstown District Residents Association last week and will be meeting with Passage West Town Council in the very near future. The project brochure is available on the Passage West/Monkstown website at www.passagewestmonkstown.ie.

An Bord Pleanala refuses planning application for Church Hill

An Bord Pleanala has supported Cork County Council's refusal to grant planning permission to Kerricurrihy Ltd. for the demolition of a house on Church Hill and the construction of four new houses in its place.

The planning application was particularly of note because the four proposed houses would have been sited on the green sloping ground between the back of Pembroke Wood and Church Hill. This hill forms an attractive backdrop to the northern entrance to Passage West. Although virtually all of the hill is already designated as green space, the proposed houses were to be built on one small area just under Church Hill which had remained unzoned.

In refusing the planning application, An Bord Pleanala upheld the advice of its Planning Inspector, which was that the proposed development would seriously dominate and detract from the adjacent open space and would seriously injure the visual and scenic amenities of the area and of properties in the vicinity. An Bord Pleanala also expressed concerns in relation to the civil works associated with the proposed development, ground stability and ground retention, proximity to adjacent property boundaries and loss of existing trees.

Redevelopment of Monkstown Castle

Monkstown Castle has been purchased and is on the cusp of redevelopment. The purchaser has informed me that he has spent some time during the summer clearing it of debris and overgrowth, both inside and outside. An archaeologist is to assess the historical significance of the Castle in the very near future. It is expected that a planning application will be lodged within the coming weeks for its conversion into either one dwelling house or two dwelling houses. The developer has offered to

display the plans to both the residents of Monkstown Demesne and to Passage West Town Council prior to their submission to Cork County Council.

Civic works being undertaken in the area by Cork County Council

The County Council Area Office in Carrigaline has recently undertaken a resurfacing of Castle Terrace in Monkstown. This is most welcome and was fast-tracked to facilitate relining of the road. Many requests had been made to me from local residents who suffer from extreme parking of cars on both sides of the road, causing a narrow funnel for both motorists and pedestrians at the Castle Terrace/Alta Terrace junction. The new road surfacing and relining will greatly enhance safety, particularly for pedestrians.

New footpaths are being laid around the central block in Passage West town centre. This is part of the annual footpath renewal programme funded by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

St. Peter's Community School Secretarial Studies and Office Information Systems

A FETAC Level 5 course in Secretarial Studies and Office Information Systems is offered through St. Peter's Community School. This course is designed for post-Leaving Cert and mature students and is ideally suited for those wishing to acquire top-class secretarial skills or those who wish to return to the workplace.

This FETAC course is an intensive course delivered over one year. High level equipment is offered through the school, including two state-of-the-art information and communication technology laboratories. Course content includes word processing, computer applications, manual and computerised payroll (SAGE), text production, business calculations, practical administration and communications. Participants are placed in various offices every Wednesday so as to gather practical work experience.

This course offers enhanced employment opportunities, contact with prospective employers and a close relationship between teacher and student. It has an excellent employment record. Places are currently available for the September 2007 – June 2008 year. Further information and application forms can be obtained from St. Peter's Community School, tel: 021 – 4841599.

With you and your support, I am working through the Passage West/Monkstown Town Council to help our community realise its potential as a place to live, work and play. Please contact me by e-mail at info@marciadalton.net, by mail at 22, Hillcrest, Pembroke Wood, Passage West or by telephone 4863293 / 085-7333852.