

Cllr. Marcia D'Alton writes ...

Port of Cork plans to move all port operations to Ringaskiddy

On Thursday, 21st June, the Port of Cork hosted an open day at the Ferry Terminal, Ringaskiddy, where the public had a final opportunity to view and comment on the Port's proposals for development of its facilities at Ringaskiddy before the plans are submitted to the planning authority for approval. The Port of Cork has been preparing this move of all its operations to the Lower Harbour for the past five years and more.

It is planned that the proposed new facilities at Ringaskiddy will be developed in two phases. Phase 1, about to be submitted to the planning authority, comprises the new Roll-On Roll-Off berth and the new container terminal at the Oyster Bank. Development at the ADM jetty to permit freeing up of the City Quays is included in Phase 2 and is anticipated to follow in due course.

This project is one of the largest that the Port of Cork is likely to undertake in our lifetime. It involves a mammoth 18 hectares of reclamation to accommodate the container terminal, a new 900 metres of quay wall, offices and landside storage. This will require 1.2 million tonnes of fill material, most of which will need to be imported from outside the Harbour. The new land mass will extend right out almost to the edge of the shipping channel. The four terminal cranes along the water's edge will be 70 metres high. It is planned to stack containers 5-high, or at least as high as a 3-storey building. The existing amenity slipway will be consumed by the development and so a new slipway is to be built on the Ringaskiddy side of the bridge to Rocky Island. To be usable, the area off the slipway will need regular dredging.

Passage West Town Council has discussed its proposals with the Port of Cork. While fully in support of shipping activities, I have grave concerns about the increase in road traffic arising from the development, the visual impact of the development and the potential impact of the development on the amenity value of Cork Harbour. I will be preparing a submission to be approved by Passage West Town Council to this effect to the Environmental Impact Statement which is currently in preparation by the Port of Cork's consultants, RPS. When complete, it will be available to view at www.passagewestmonkstown.ie.

Anyone wishing to make a comment in relation to the Port of Cork's proposed development at Ringaskiddy is invited to write to Ms Sophie Guilfoyle, RPS, Innishmore, Ballincollig, Co. Cork or by e-mail to info@cork.mcos.ie.

Cork County Council refuses planning permission for proposed Maple Rise development

Cork County Council has refused planning permission for the proposed development of a 5-storey block of 27 apartments and 10 townhouses at Maple Rise, Pembroke Wood.

The reasons outlined for the refusal of the development were:

- the potential effect of the development on land zone as public open space
- the inadequacies of the proposed development in relation to provision of public and private open space and access road
- the excessive proposed density of the development
- inadequate public water supply in Passage West to cater for a development of this size
- inability to site a wastewater treatment plant on the site to serve the proposed development.

Passage West Town Council had submitted an objection to the proposed development on the grounds of excessive density, destruction of public open space, tendency for the site to flood, inadequate apartment layout, inadequate public open space, inadequate private open space, overlooking of proposed townhouses by existing buildings, inadequate provision for parking and an oversaturation of Passage West with apartment-type developments.

South Western River Basin District Management Plan needs your input

The Water Framework Directive is regarded as one of the most powerful pieces of environmental legislation ever passed by the European Commission. It requires Member States to prevent the decline

in the quality status of all waters and to ensure all waters achieve “good quality” by 2015. This requirement covers rivers and streams, lakes, groundwaters, estuaries and coastal waters.

In Ireland, the Water Framework Directive is being implemented by catchment or River Basin District. The whole island of Ireland has been divided into eight River Basin Districts. A management plan is being produced for the waters within each River Basin District, the implementation of which will be the joint responsibility of the local authorities whose jurisdictions fall within that River Basin District.

This area of County Cork falls into the South Western River Basin District, the co-ordinating authority for which is Cork County Council. A management plan for the South Western River Basin District is currently in preparation by Cork County Council in association with a consortium of consultants. This management plan is expected to be published in 2008.

A consultative booklet, “*Water Matters*”, was published by Cork County Council at the end of June. The aim of the booklet is to get the opinion of the public on proposed plans for managing and improving the quality of local waters. Comments are necessary and welcome. In particular, our comments would relate to the quality of Cork Harbour and its feeder rivers. Further information and the booklet, “*Water Matters*”, may be obtained from: <http://www.swrbd.ie>.

Public meeting with ECAD

Passage West Town Council has invited ECAD (East Cork Area Development) to host a public meeting in Passage West to explain funding opportunities for groups and organisations in the Passage West Area. ECAD is the umbrella organisation for distribution of funds from both LEADER and the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme in this area of County Cork. All community and development groups are welcome. Sporting groups are also welcome; although core sporting activities cannot be funded by ECAD, any community initiatives being undertaken by the sporting group may qualify.

The public meeting will be held at 8pm in the PACE Centre on 19th July 2007 and will be hosted by Ryan Howard, Chief Executive Officer of ECAD.

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.