

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 A Shared Vision For The Development Of Passage West/Glenbrook

In common with many other towns, Passage West/Glenbrook has been affected by particular problems: increasing competition from other centres; lack of investment; decline in the indigenous employment base; traffic and parking problems; vacant and run down premises, and a general deterioration in the quality of the built environment of the town.

These issues are of great concern and importance to businesses, residents, and visitors alike as Passage West/Glenbrook seeks to redress and reverse this decline. While there has been a growing realisation in the town of a need to take effective action, those initiatives which have taken place have failed to encourage significant investment in the town and initiate redevelopment.

The preparation of an Integrated Area Plan is viewed as opportunity to initiate a partnership between all of those people who have a direct interest in the future prosperity of the town, including retailers, commercial interests, recreational/leisure providers, residents associations, community support organisations, Cork County Council, and Passage West/Glenbrook Town Commission. Its aim is to make the town attractive, prosperous and successful for the benefit of all its users and to restore a sense of pride in the town.

1.2 The Need To Rekindle A Sense Of Pride

Cork County Council appointed *Frank L. Henson and Partners*, Planning and Development Consultants, to examine the various issues involved and to prepare a Integrated Area Plan to focus and guide the future development of Passage West/Glenbrook.

One of the most important tasks of the project has been to develop a clear vision of Passage West/Glenbrook in the future and a strategy for action, based upon a consensus view of what the problems and opportunities really are and how these could be tackled within the framework of a comprehensive Integrated Area Plan, supported by designation for urban renewal incentives.

The Integrated Area Plan initiative is a collective response to the special concerns of local people and business interests about the future of Passage West/Glenbrook, to the need to explore the problems and potential and to produce a shared vision and action plan for the future of Passage West/Glenbrook.

This Plan sets out a shared vision for Passage West/Glenbrook and a commitment on behalf of all the partners in the town. It is the earnest hope of Cork County Council and Passage West/Glenbrook Town Commission that all interests will commit to this Integrated Area Plan, and look forward to continuing to work together with local community interests to achieve it. Ultimately, everyone has a part to play in achieving the social, economic and physical renewal of Passage West/Glenbrook.

1.3 The Need For Intervention

A number of previous reports and studies have been prepared in relation to the town, namely:

- Report On Redevelopment Of Railway Quay, Passage West/Glenbrook (1986).
- Report On Development Finance (1987).
- Integrated Urban Policy For Housing And Income Generation At Railway Quay (1994).
- Social Feasibility Study (1994).

It is critical to note that the 1987 and 1994 studies concluded that the current state of dereliction and lack of private investment in the study area indicated that normal regeneration was not taking place. It further concluded that, in order to reverse this cycle of decline, public sector intervention would be required. In particular, these reports referred to the need for tax incentives schemes as a means of encouraging private sector investment in the town.

In order to overcome the barriers to investment arising from the negative perception of Passage West/Glenbrook and the level of risk involved in any prospective investment in the town, additional incentives will be required to leverage funding from the private sector, and to initiate programmes of redevelopment and re-investment. It is clear that, despite the best efforts of the Local Authority and local interest groups, the 'self-help' approach has not succeeded in bringing about the necessary renewal of Passage West/Glenbrook.

Cork County Council is confident that the inclusion of Passage West/Glenbrook in the proposed new Urban Renewal Scheme is the key to the realisation of the renewal of the town with joint co-operation between public and private sectors.

