

### 3.0 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The growing awareness of the need for positive action to address the physical, social and economic problems of the town, coupled with developing community leadership, led Passage West/Glenbrook Town Commissioners to initiate discussions with representatives of Cork County Council on the possible inclusion of Passage West/Glenbrook in the scheme for Urban Renewal Incentives.

Passage West/Glenbrook was unequivocally identified as a town which could benefit significantly from designation for urban renewal incentives. As noted above, despite the best efforts of Cork County Council and the Town Commission via a number of plans and development initiatives, only limited re-investment in the town had been encouraged. The absence of a Development Plan for Passage West/Glenbrook is an oft cited criticism. The new scheme for Urban Renewal Incentives and the requirement to prepare an Integrated Area Plan has provided an opportunity to address this deficiency.

In order to create an awareness of the nature and scope of the Integrated Area Plan a process of meetings / consultations was initiated. As a starting point, discussions took place between the Consultants and representatives of Cork County Council and Passage West/Glenbrook Town Commission, which identified key players in the town, including community and business interests. In addition, the owners of key sites in the town were identified. These groups/individuals were contacted directly and invited to attend a meeting with the Consultants and representatives of the Town Commission.

In addition to this targeted approach, and in order to ensure that the widest possible consultation process took place, advertisements were placed in the local newspapers which invited individuals and groups to attend the series of public meetings to be held and/or to make written submissions to the Consultants. These meetings were successful in bringing together, for the first time, a broad and representative range of interests in the area. They provided a forum for local residents, business people, community groups and landowners to express their concerns. A list of the groups and individuals consulted during the preparation of the Integrated Area Plan is set out in Appendix I. In addition, copies of letters of support from members of the local community are attached as Appendix II.

The consultation process had the dual advantage of permitting the Consultants to 'gather information' on the problems, strengths and needs of the town, and informing local interest groups of the nature and purpose of Integrated Area Plans. Discussions with local interest groups on the nature and advantages of tax-based incentives sought to engender interest in the possibility of joint venture schemes as a means of stimulating investment and achieving community development objectives. This was particularly relevant where community organisations/interest groups were identified as the owners of strategically located sites, or had development proposals which have the potential to act as Flagship projects.

A significant number of written submissions were received from local community groups and business interests. These written submissions are based on an intimate knowledge of the study area, and allow for the identification of general problems, needs and strengths of the area. Some submissions also elaborated on more specific requirements, identifying key opportunity sites and possible development proposals.

Following preparation of the Integrated Area Plan, a draft was submitted for the consideration of the representatives of the County Council and a presentation of the main findings and recommendations of the IAP was made to members of the Town Commission. This permitted local representatives to have a further input into the Integrated Area Plan.