

Social  
Democrats

Holly  
**CAIRNS TD**  
*Representing West Cork*



## **Holly Cairns TD and Councillor Ross O’Connell repeat their opposition to the unsustainable East Cork outlet centre**

Holly Cairns TD and Councillor Ross O’Connell have repeated their opposition to the proposed retail outlet in East Cork. After Cork County Council sought to change the County Development plan in order to build a large retail outlet. Since then, the Office of the Planning Regulator made a recommendation against the proposal which now rests with Minister of State for Housing and Urban Development, Damien English. Cork County Council on Friday passed a proposal by the executive, to make a submission to the Minister. Holly and Ross will be making their own submission opposing the centre.

Holly explains:

“I am disappointed that Cork County Council are trying to continue with an ill-conceived proposal. From its inception it seems clear that it will support a large corporation rather than local retailers. Small businesses can’t compete with outlet stores like this. It enforces an unsustainable consumer model which is reliant on cars, that will draw more out of our towns, villages and city at a time when we need to be putting more in. The OPR has said that the decision to amend the County Development Plan was premature, inconsistent with the office of the OPR and should not be made prior to a joint retail strategy for the Cork Metropolitan Area. Our focus needs to be bringing back our vibrant highstreets. So I can't understand why Cork County Council is going against the advice of the planning regulator? And if they are allowed to, it begs the question, what authority or purpose does the office of the planning regulator actually have?”

Ross explained

“Town centres are at the heart of our communities and should be playing a key role in developing our County to its full potential. The company behind it has claimed that it will not adversely impact other retail services in the area, and it is abundantly clear that it will, it will take income from shops and cafés in surrounding towns and villages and the city. At a time

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when small businesses and local producers are on a cliffedge with Covid-19, it should be unimaginable to risk putting small business owner’s livelihoods in further risk.”

ENDS

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