

New era for city's urban forest

by Marie Hobbins

Makeover for Baggot Estate

DESPITE the downturn in the economy, the Baggot Estate in Ballinacurra, can look forward to a complete refurbishment, thanks to a government allocation of euro 450,000 for the project.

One of the more ambitious plans for the "urban forest" is the development of a new 1.8 acre wetland on an existing grassland area in the estate, for which an ecological impact assessment was undertaken by Ecofact Environmental Consultants, at the request of the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Limerick City Council has confirmed that the report shows that there is no risk to the protected plant meadow barley, and that the new wetlands will include impermeable embankments as part of the flood plain of the Ballynacloy River.

Delighted that the council will shortly start the

tender process and that work is expected to commence by early summer, local councillor Joe Leddin, describes the estate as "a natural environmental jewel in the city".

He told the Post: "As part of the proposed works, I have requested that appropriate lighting be installed along with the creation and installation of new nature walkways, and also, that litter bins be provided to encourage people to visit the area and appreciate what will be a wonderful city amenity for all to enjoy".

During December, the council carried out thinning of the trees.

"All non viable trees with twin leaders have been removed and other trees pruned two meters from the base. This is necessary for the long term success of this woodland area and similar maintenance programmes will not be required until 2016," informs the environment department of City Hall.

Acknowledging the recent work carried out to the trees, Cllr Leddin said that while the estate has suffered due to vandalism, especially to some trees in recent years, the recent remedial work carried out will ensure the plantation's survival and protection.

"Once the proposed works are completed the people both in the Ballinacurra area and indeed the wider city community, will be able to enjoy once again the tremendous natural heritage that the Baggot Estate has to offer," he concluded.

Jim has his ear to the ground



LIMERICK'S Jim Flavin, one of Ireland's top farmer and beef producers, will appear on this Thursday's Ear to the Ground programme on RTE.

With only one fifth of the 60,000 beef farms in the county economically viable, the beef industry is under pressure but as journalist Helen Carroll finds out it's not all doom and gloom.

Jim Flavin took the bull by the horns and cut out the middle man when he set up his own beef farm near Kilmallock in 1996, and he hasn't looked back since.

Originally, Jim only needed to kill one heifer a week to supply his customers' needs in Castletroy but now that number is up to 15 heifers a week, he has 500 cattle and his customer base has quadrupled.

Voted one of the top beef producers in the country by Bord Bia, Jim has created an efficient farm that offers his customers a consistent supply of quality product.

Baggott Estate Limerick.



Nursing staff allocated to high dependency unit

Mother had appealed to Post to have

died in 2004, because the lifesaving equipment had been left idle at the Dooradoyle hospital.

bishment".

The Clare T.D. continued, "Additional staffing in the form of

very near future. It is unacceptable that expensive lifesaving medical equipment should be lying idle,