



# Erin is backing Shell protesters

ERIN Brockovich, the campaigner immortalised in an Oscar-winning film, has urged oil giant Shell to reroute a controversial gas pipeline in the west of Ireland.

The former legal clerk, who famously took on a massive power company accused of toxic leaks, gave her wholehearted support to the campaigners opposing the development in Co Mayo.

Ms Brockovich said the pipeline must be relocated if it would negatively impact on residents' health or property.

"There is no compromise when it comes to health and safety," she said.

Ms Brockovich was portrayed by Julia Roberts in the 2000 movie after she won a multi-million dollar legal battle against energy firm PG&E for families affected by contaminated water in

California.

But she argued a 10-day hunger strike by campaigner Maura Harrington was not the most effective way to reach a resolution.

Ms Harrington, a retired school principal, called off her drastic action yesterday when a pipe-laying ship left Irish waters.

"I would want her to eat," said Ms Brockovich.

"I understand it's her way of making a very, very strong statement about something she feels strongly about, but I would want her to eat because we need to eat."

The Shell to Sea demonstrators oppose attempts to lay a pipeline that will transport untreated and odourless gas from the Corrib gas field to an inland refinery because of health and environmental fears.

"I completely understand their concerns," she said.



**Campaigner: Erin Brockovich**

"I deal with issues in the United States where pipelines have been put in and they've leaked and created health problems.

"That is always a family's concern, and they should be concerned, and I'm glad that they are.

"Many people are in favour of progress but they're not in favour of progress to the point where

you degrade our environment and jeopardise our public health and safety."

Ms Brockovich is in Dublin to speak about the benefits of eating organic food.

She will give a lecture at University College Dublin today as part of the Glenisk Organic Dairy's celebrations for National Organic Week.