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## LIT's new 350 seat theatre

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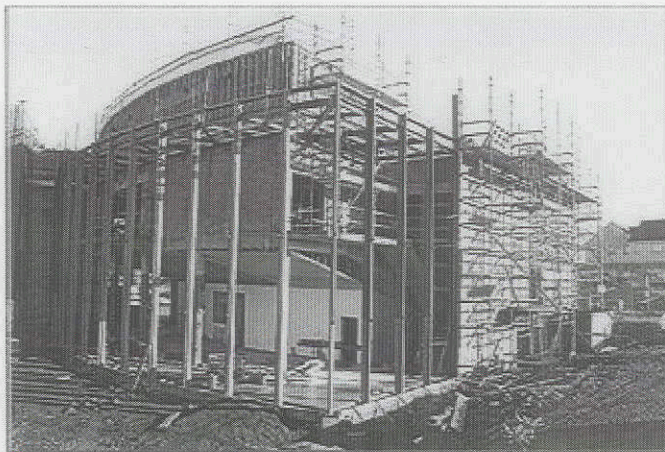
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*Development of the next phase of LIT at the Moylish complex*

IT was confirmed today that Limerick is to get a new 350 seat theatre.

The new theatre is to open in the Spring. The state of the art facility at the Limerick Institute of Technology will be the first place of artistic entertainment on the Northside of the city.

But the LIT auditorium will not replace the Belltable Arts Centre, whose lease on the credit union hall in The Crescent runs out next year.

Chairman of LIT's governing body Cllr Jack Bourke confirmed that the new theatre at the Institute will be firstly, for the use of the college, and secondly for the people of Limerick.

"The Belltable may look to use the new theatre at LIT, and of course, they will be able to use it. But it will certainly not be their new home, because it simply won't be available to them all of the time," Cllr Bourke who is also a director of the Belltable commented.

He said Limerick's newest theatre will be a very fine addition in the artistic development of the city.

"It will be a very good theatre, and it has a fine stage which is about 30 feet wide. Facilities in the theatre will be of the highest standard, and it will be

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equipped for all kinds of artistic productions. It will be used for a myriad of artistic events. This is very good news for the LIT, and for the city."

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During the daytime, the theatre will be used as an LIT lecture theatre. "It will be the college's largest lecture hall as well as a theatre. The Drama Society here in the college will also use it as its home. The theatre is just one part of LIT's development plan," the college's registrar Vincent McCarthy.

Farm Leader

He is optimistic that the theatre will be opened by the start of April.

"We have no plans yet for the opening night, but it will be an important event for the college," he added.

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Clr Bourke explained said LIT's theatre is a separate entity from other plans for the new civic centre, to include a theatre for the city centre. "Plans were afoot to build a civic centre near the Arthur's Quay Park. This would have been the answer to the Belltable's accommodation problems, but I think the plan will have to be postponed, because of the recent downturn in the economy. There is no indication yet whether or not the Belltable will have their lease extended."

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