

Extended city gallery will gain museum status

by Marie Hobbins

€1.4m development to create potential for ambitious exhibitions

WITH work on the expansion of the Limerick City Gallery of Art on Pery Square due for completion next May, there is unanimous approval to the work in progress from the city's elected representatives given an update by the acting director, Marian Lovett

The landmark Carnegie building has been closed since May to facilitate phase two of the redevelopment programme.

"When completed it will attract substantially more visitors and there will be an additional social focus to the gallery," said Ms Lovett, who recalled that the gallery first opened in 1948.

"The gallery will merit achieving full museum status by 2012, which will authorise it to show art works of prestigious historical value".

The gallery, which in the 1980s obtained art works of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, by leading Irish artists, including Jack Yeates, William Orpen and Sean Keating, will accommodate a cafe, social space, dedicated storage area, space for contemporary exhibitions, educational

worktop area, wet room and area for research purposes.

The work is being supervised by architect, Hugh Murray.

Electronic doors will replace the old push doors, there will be wheelchair access and a glass roof with new lighting.

"The result will be the creation of a social space that will link in with the existing gallery and give an enhanced experience to the visitor, with the cafe creating an additional incentive to visit the gallery," added Ms Lovett, who told the meeting that the €1.4million redevelopment will create the potential for more ambitious exhibitions.

Plans show the gallery building expanded on three sides, veering on to the People's Park.

Enthusiastic about the redevelopment, Cllr Tom Shortt said there is a "great balance between the new and old building.

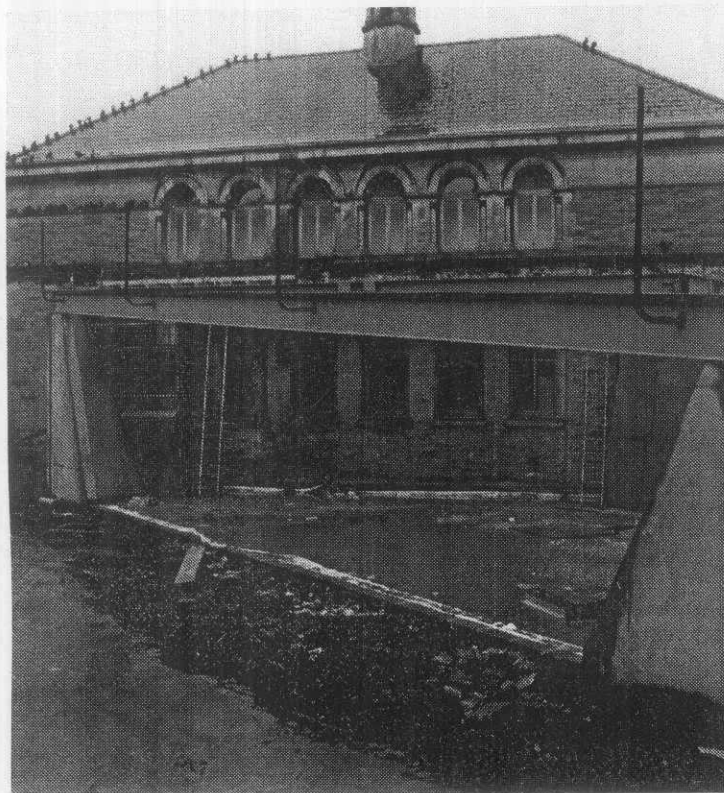
"This new architecture marries beautifully with the Georgian architecture and will contribute to our city's image - people will come here for rugby and sport from other parts of Ireland the the Continent, but will also sample the cultural life of the city - they will search out our galleries and it is great that they can visit them and enjoy the art works without any charge".

Cllr Michael Hourigan welcomed Shannon Development's move to

install new signage on O'Connell Street, directing people to the City Galley and to the Civic Trust Georgian House and Garden at 2, Pery Square.

A tribute to the former curator of

Limerick City Gallery of Art, Mike Fitzpatrick, was paid by Pat Dowling, who described Mr Fitzpatrick, now Head of Limerick School of Art and Design, as the "real architect" of the gallery's new extension.



Reds goodie bags on offer

THE all-action Reds is doing the business at local cinemas and to celebrate its success, the Limerick Post is this week giving away four goodie bags.

The film has a dream cast of Bruce Willis, Morgan Freeman, John Malkovich, Helen Mirren, Brian Cox, Richard Dreyfuss and Mary Louise Parker.

The plot has betrayals, conspiracies and assassinations, going back and forth between dialogue and stylised confrontations.

To enter, name at least one other movie in which Bruce Willis starred.

Entries to Reds competition, Limerick Post, 97 Henry Street, before next Wednesday.

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