

y Elaine Edwards

HE Department of Finance is agreed in principle to develop a new building for the National Archives, the repository for State documents and historical files, after a four-year delay.

The Minister responsible for the National Archives, Ms Síle de Valera, warned the Minister for Finance, Mr McCreevy, earlier this year that the failure to update the unsuitable accommodation in Dublin would be-

come a source of "acute political embarrassment to the Government", according to documents released under the Freedom of Information Act.

The National Archives building at Bishop Street, Dublin, was originally to be refurbished within a budget of £13 million following proposals by the OPW in 1997.

However, a feasibility study by a design team in 1999 suggested the Bishop Street site be fully developed, with a new four-storey building, extra office

space and enhanced storage facilities at an estimated cost of almost £45.5 million.

A decision on the development, however, was put on hold pending Government discussions on the decentralisation of the Civil Service, which might have an impact on the State's use of office space.

Last year, Ms de Valera reached agreement with Mr McCreevy that the decentralisation plans would not affect the National Archives and the development of the site could pro-

ceed, subject to official clearance by his Department.

However, the Department of Arts again wrote to the Department of Finance in July 2000, saying it was a "cause of concern" that despite the agreement given by Mr McCreevy to proceed with this "long overdue" project, its implementation had again been delayed.

Ms de Valera wrote to Mr McCreevy on January 12th this year, urging him to give his approval, which she said had been "given the go-ahead" several

months previously and calling for "immediate decisions".

She told the Minister for Finance that at that stage the National Archives could be held to be in dereliction of its statutory obligation under the National Archives Act 1986 to provide acceptable storage for public records.

On May 24th last, the Department of Finance wrote to the OPW to say the Minister had agreed to pursue the development of the site to its full potential, subject to the

Young man dies in hospital after assault in Limerick

THE number of violent deaths in Limerick over the past three weeks has risen to five with the death of a young man in hospital in Cork yesterday.

Mr Jonathan Edwards (21), from Abbeyvale, Corbally, was assaulted with an iron bar at St Ita's Street, St Mary's Park, on August 28th. He was

removed to the Mid-Western Regional Hospital and then transferred to Cork University Hospital.

He was on life-support since the incident and died at 9.30 a.m. yesterday.

A 17-year-old youth has already been charged with assaulting him, causing him

serious harm. It is understood more serious charges are likely to be brought following his death.

Meanwhile, Supt Tony Kennelly, of Henry Street Garda station, said they were making good progress in relation to the other fatal incidents in the city and gardai were getting "very

good co-operation from the public".

Mr Brian Hanley (20) from Beechcourt House, Meelick, Co Clare, died from a single stab wound to the chest early on August 26th. The attack took place during a row which broke out in a pub and ended in tragedy at Cregan Avenue,

Killeely.

Mr Eric Leamy (19), St Munchin's Street, died from a single stab wound during a row at Lee Estate, Island Road, at 12.35 a.m. on August 28th. The national Bureau of Criminal Investigation is helping local gardai with their investigations.