

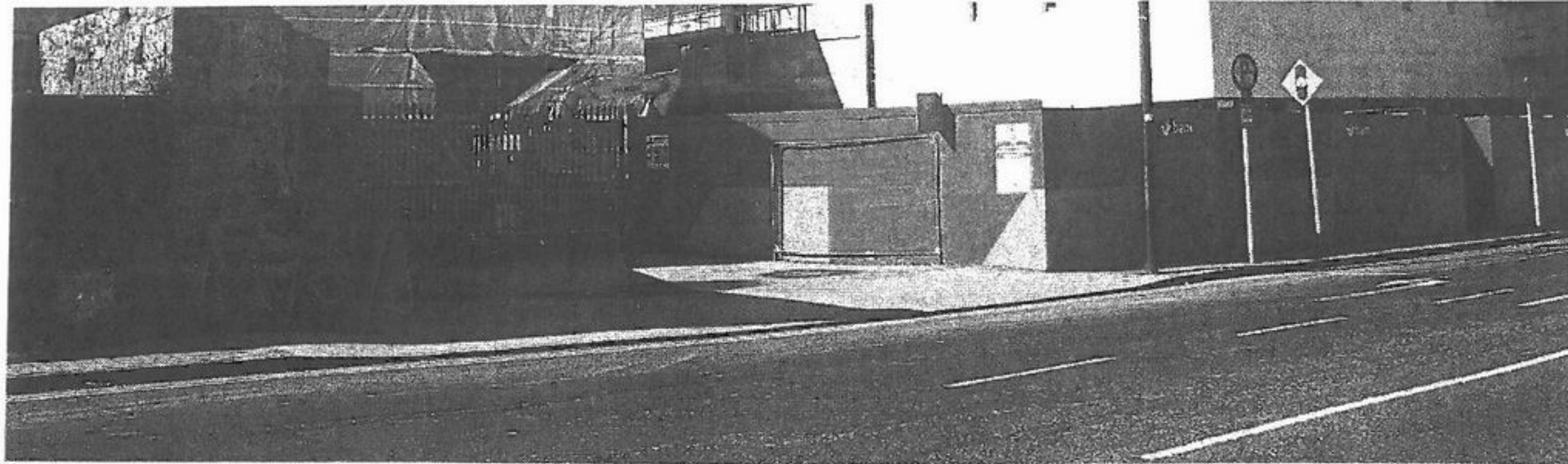
raised at a meeting of the Limerick Courts Users Group last month.

A request for a copy of the minutes of the meeting was refused by the Courts Service which stated that there were no formal minutes as it was a single issue meeting "where an update was given as to the progress of the new courthouse".

Minutes of a previous meeting held last November were furnished in response to a separate Freedom of Information request submitted by the Limerick Leader.

While the request relating to last month's meeting was refused, a "brief note" of the matters discussed was included in the response to the FOI request.

According to the documentation, members of the group which includes legal practitioners, gardai and Courts Service officials were told that while all six courtrooms will be wired for video conferencing facilities it will only be available in two courtrooms initially.



Construction of the new criminal courthouse at Mulgrave Street will be complete by November

The possibility of providing video link facilities in a third courtroom from the outset was raised at the meeting and officials undertook to look into this ahead of the next meeting.

Other matters raised included the proposed seating arrange-

ments in the courtrooms for practitioners, security arrangements at the complex and the number of the car parking spaces.

According to the notes, it has been confirmed there will be access controls "on most of the doors" and that the building will be

divided into different zones allowing card holders access to areas appropriate to them.

It was also confirmed that a room will be provided for state solicitors and secure interview rooms controlled by the Irish Prison Service will also be available.

When completed, all criminal cases before the district court, and circuit court will be held at the new complex. The Central Criminal Court is also expected to sit there regularly. All civil cases will continue to be heard at the County Courthouse, Merchant's Quay.

for Rathkeale company

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MORE jobs will come onstream in Rathkeale in the near future after it was announced that almost €2m in EU funding has been awarded to indigenous company DesignPro.

Their winning H2020 funded project will see them bring new, affordable and reliable hydrokinetic turbines that can exploit the huge potential of clean energy in the world's rivers, canals and estuaries to market.

The company is also in line to receive around half a million from Enterprise Ireland, which will mean even more jobs.

"The automation side of the company is booming, and it's where a lot of the jobs are at the moment," said managing director Paul Collins.

"But this whole new product for H2020 is the renewables product, and that is a complete separate side of the company that is going to thrive as well.

"Only last Friday, we got a nod from Enterprise Ireland for support of over half a million as well, to create

another 45 new jobs in the automation side of the company," added Mr Collins.

The machine-building company, started in a spare room of a rented Abbeyfeale house in 2004, employs around 50 people, and Mr Collins predicts that over 50 more jobs will be created over the next two to three years on the back of the EU funding.

The company was one of five Irish businesses to benefit from the €10m Horizon 2020 SME funding from the EU's scientific research fund.

"There was a lot of work put in to do the request for the H2020 funding for the turbine project, so it's great credit to everyone here.

The river turbine project, aided by the €1.9m EU windfall, will result in a total investment of €2.7m in the west Limerick economy.

The company's entry was the top scoring in Europe in the renewables category. The turbines use technology developed by Kinetic — another west Limerick company.

Black ties on for Drive Against Suicide

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THE ORGANISERS of the hugely popular Drive Against Suicide are proving that a motoring attitude to fundraising is not the only way to go.

The committee is preparing to host the Drive Against Suicide Ball, which will take place on Saturday, April 15, in Adare's plush Dunraven Arms Hotel.

The 8pm event is strictly black tie, and tickets for the four-course meal and entertainment are available for the reasonable price

of €50.

"We will have a special guest speaker on the night. Music will be by wedding band of the year Escapade, followed by a DJ," said organiser Cormac Hayes.

"There will also be fantastic prizes to be won. To order your tickets you can ring the committee number on 0877904679, or contact our Facebook page," added the Shanagolden man.

The committee, made up of Cormac, Aidan O'Keeffe from Adare, Geraldine and Christy Keyes from Clarina and Jason O'Grady from Rathkeale, were

responsible for the Drive Against Suicide in November.

The major event, which saw over a hundred cars travel together through west Limerick, had the important aim of raising awareness for suicide, also raising thousands for Pieta House.

This time, the proceeds from the ball will go towards the Marine Search and Rescue and Limerick Suicide Watch.

The organisers have thanked two big sponsors of the event DJ Daly Team Car Flag Ireland, Pallaskenry, and Brian Geary, Toyota main dealer in Raheen and

Rathkeale.

"We'd also like to thank Lena Culhane photography for taking the pictures for the launch of this fantastic event. Also to everyone who give us spot prizes for the night, thank you," said Cormac.

As well as raising awareness and much needed funds, the Drive Against Suicide organisers say that the main car event helps families and friends of those who died by suicide.

At last November's drive, 15 doves were released before the cars set off, in memory of those who have passed away.



Main sponsors for the ball DJ Daly and Brian Geary

'Significant collection' of Kate O'Brien's letters are purchased by UL

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UL has announced the purchase of a batch of a 'significant collection' of letters written by famous author Kate O'Brien.

The collection of 500 letters written by the Limerick author were discovered in the papers of Dr Lorna Reynolds (1911-2003) who was Professor Emeritus of Modern English at the National University of Ireland, Galway.

UL said it purchased the collection of Dr Reynold's papers at a public auction on International Women's Day and will be keeping them in the county - in-

deed the country - as a result.

The Limerick writer was in correspondence with Dr Reynolds from 1940 to 1969, with the largest portion of the letters written between 1946 and 1950. Dr Reynolds wrote a biography of the author, best known for work The Anteroom, in 1987 and the archive also contains some of her notes and papers related to this work.

Ken Bergin, Head of Special Collections, UL Glucksman Library, said O'Brien was "an important Irish and international writer and the Library is proud to host significant collections of her work. It was essential for UL

to acquire the papers of Dr Lorna Reynolds with their invaluable archive of personal letters from Kate O'Brien in order to secure their availability in an Irish research institution," he explained.

"There was a strong possibility that the collection would leave the country had it not been for the intervention of UL. This is a very significant addition to UL's major literary archive."

The discovery of the letters from O'Brien adds greatly to the archives of her life and work held at the UL Library. This represents the largest collection of personal correspondence from

this iconic Irish writer.

The letters between the lifelong friends reflect the literary, cultural and academic world of post-war Ireland. Interestingly, the archive also contains Dr Reynolds own letters to Kate O'Brien, written from 1946 to 1949. At some stage, Dr Reynolds' letters must have been returned to her.

Dr Reynolds' papers also contain more than 100 letters from Darina di Silone née Laracy.

UL said the papers would require conservation and that it may be some time before the collection can be made available to researchers.



Librarian Pattie Punch with Ken Bergin, special collections, examining the newly discovered collection of letters, written by Limerick author Kate O'Brien, which have now been acquired by UL PICTURE: SEAN CURTIN

EX: LIMERICK LEADER
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