

# PETITION OPPOSES MILK MARKET PLAN

■ Keep Milk Market open-air, objectors to €2 million development plan tell An Bord Pleanála

By ANNE SHERIDAN

A PETITION signed by over 100 people to maintain the Milk Market as an open-air market and save it from "becoming a shopping mall" has been submitted to An Bord Pleanála, along with numerous other objections to the €2million proposal to develop the historic site.

Planning permission was granted by Limerick City Council this June for the redevelopment of the Milk Market - a protected structure - which could see the market open six days a week, include a 120-seat restaurant and covered with a weatherproofed tensile.

However, the Thomond Archaeological and Historical Society believe the "whole proposal is unwanted by traders...and is totally unnecessary." The society also stated to An Bord Pleanála that they believe the proposed tensile roof is an "intrusive new structure" and would change the character of the market.

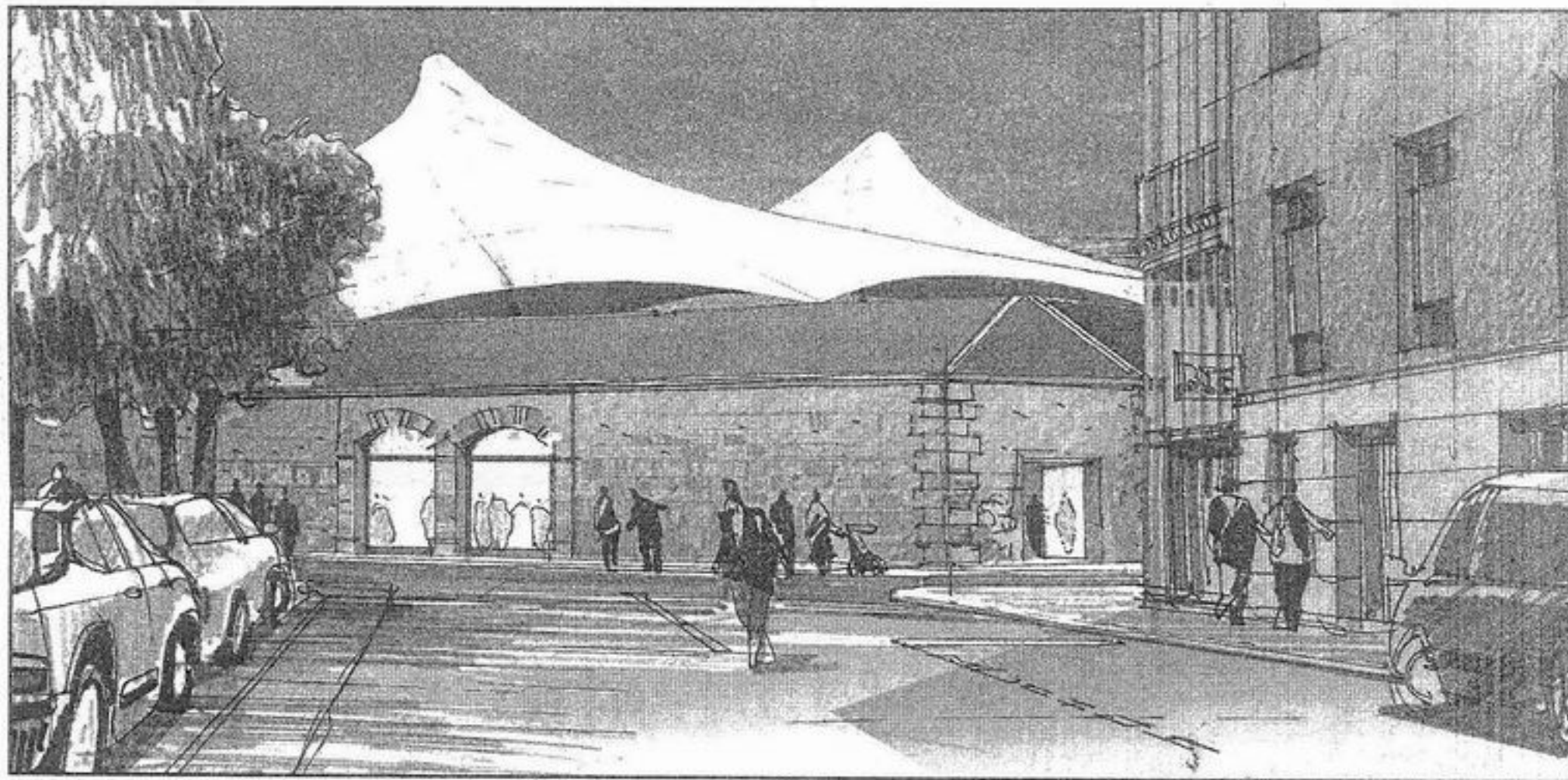
Trader Marie Hussey, who operates the Green Acres Cheese Shop at the Milk Market, said she believes that 70 per cent of her fellow traders are also concerned about the proposed changes to the market.

"Having traded in the Limerick market for 25 years my sense of my customers is that they are not in favour of roofing the centre of the market," stated Ms Hussey, and outlined to the national planning authority that previous attempts to widen the scope of the one-day market have failed.

She added that as the Milk Market's stallholders are also producers themselves, "the very nature of what they do, could not sustain a six day market. They work five days a week to sell their produce on the sixth."

A petition included with her objection, submitted to the An Bord Pleanála earlier this month, is titled "Save our open air market" and states: "an application submitted by the Limerick Market Trustees will have major implications for the quality of the market environment and the economic viability of current traders."

Among the changes noted are seven day trading, which they state will take away from the "special ambience generated by the Saturday market. Those who signed the petition are also reputed to believe that "the market enclosure will become a shopping mall" and



A projected image of how the Milk Market will look by September 2008, if plans are approved

that "a tradition dating from medieval times will be lost."

But Market Trustees chairman David O'Mahony previously told this newspaper that their proposal aims to rejuvenate the market.

"The whole idea is to present a space that will be attractive to a multiple of micro-businesses with other changeable attractions around them.

Local small business start-ups will have an opportunity to use this area as a showcase for their talent," said Mr O'Mahony. He said the new restaurant will provide the "financial

foundation" for the revitalised Milk Market and fellow market trustee, Fine Gael Cllr Kevin Kiely also welcomed the development, describing the plans as "long overdue".