

# Opera Centre backers express concern at start-up delay

THERE is growing concern that the investors behind the proposed m200 euro Opera Shopping Centre at Patrick Street/Rutland Street, might be discouraged from proceeding because of the start-up delay imposed by a planning objection to the project.

Limerick auctioneer Pat Kearney, who spent three years putting the package together, this week told the Limerick Post that they were already running well behind time.

"One local person has cited objections to the proposed development in a lengthy submission to An Bord Pleanála, and a decision is not expected until late October, and even then

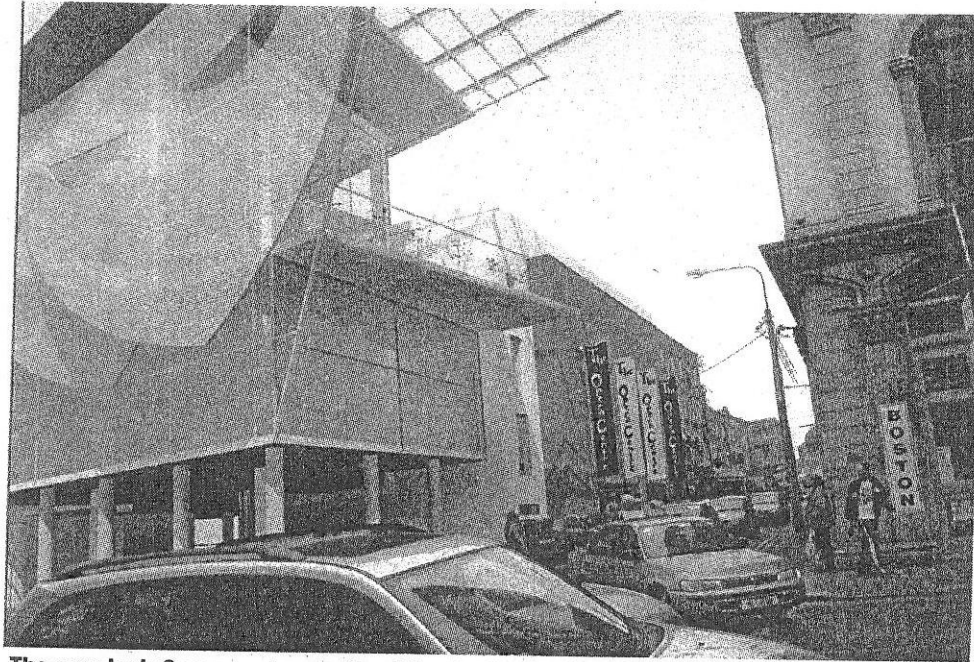
there are no guarantees.

"It is not for me to discuss the merits or otherwise of the objections raised, but what I will say is, that all connected with the project are becoming frustrated.

"The developers had set a timeline of 2007 for the grand opening, but now we are looking at well into 2008.

"We had to negotiate with something like 40 clients in putting the entire deal together and they are looking for their money. All is now in the lap of the gods. There are some crucial weeks ahead.

"The danger is that retailers who had expressed an interest in locating at the Opera



The new look Opera centre destined for the Patrick Street area of the city has been further delayed by planning objections. Fears as to its future loom.

Centre might be having second thoughts because of the delay. Take Debenhams, for example. It is known they had shown an interest in becoming an anchor tenant, but they have since leased the Roches Stores property.

Mr Kearney, in calling for a review of the planning process, pointed out that the developers were not in a position to

draw down finance until such time as the path had been cleared to commence demolition work on the existing buildings.

"We are talking in terms of a multi million euro investment-this will be the biggest inner city development of its type in Limerick and let's hope it will be resolved as soon as possible".

## RLO launches new website

PIRATE radio station, Radio Limerick One have launched a new look website.

The site includes a link for RLO's expression of interest to the BCI. The controversial radio station has continued broadcasting over the years.

In their statement, RLO states that the station aims itself at the 40 plus age group and has successfully captured and retained this audience since its inception in 1995 and reformatted itself to cater to an otherwise ignored audience."