

Unusual Design, Good Mix Of Shops In New Centre

SINCE the doors of Limerick's attractive new £15 million shopping/office/residential/parking complex on Arthur's Quay opened a couple of weeks ago, the place has been thronged. Sightseeing is to be expected of course, but by all accounts people have been spending much more than had been expected.

"In the first five days of opening, from Tuesday morning to close of business on Saturday night, the restaurant served 13,000 covers, and Quinnsworth dealt with 20,000 customers," Pat Chesser, one of the auctioneers responsible for handling letting and selling of the complex, told the *Sunday Tribune*.

The Arthur's Quay Centre is in a prime city centre location and is the biggest property development ever to have taken place in Limerick city. It also introduces multi-storey car-parking to the city.

It has 26 retail outlets with Quinnsworth being the biggest, at 30,000 sq ft. The other shops together account for about 25,000 sq ft.

All but two of the shops are let, and these two are under active negotiation at time of writing. Shops open for business apart from Quinnsworth include a natural health shop, the Sock Store, Ralph Dillon Menswear, the Arthur's Quay Pharmacy, Lifestyle, fashion shops and the restaurant.

The multi-storey car park provides 600 places on five levels and its opening means that the adjoining Arthur's Quay Corporation-owned car park can now be redeveloped

as a civic park, giving yet another lift to the area.

There are offices on the first, second and third floors, with some let and some still available for rent.

There are ten apartments, mainly two-bedroomed, but with one three-bedroomed and one one-bedroomed. The design is modern, and the view across the river eye-catching. All the apartments have been sold, but some of them are being let through Pat Chesser Auctioneers or Jones Lang Wootton.

On the outside, the centre has simple lines but inside the decoration is lively, with a glass atrium lending a modern character.



The complex is triangular in shape, on a site previously occupied by shops, houses, and a filling station. Not all the previous shops were purchased for redevelopment, so some remain in business on the Patrick Street side of the triangle.

Demolition work was finished in June last year, with the car park completed in February this year, apartments and offices in August, and finally the shopping mall



●The Arthurs Quay: Limerick's new shopping hub

section this autumn, ahead of schedule.

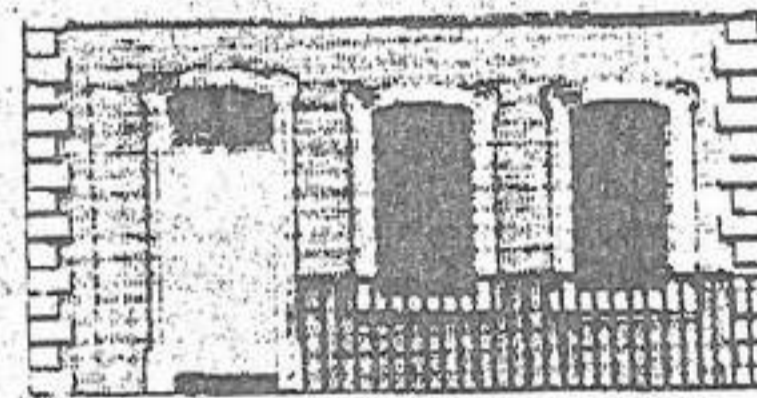
At peak, 250 people were working on the building site. For contractors John Sisk & Son, it was mostly a straightforward task, despite the size of the development, and having to build around the half-dozen existing shops on Patrick Street, according to their regional director, Tom Costello. The car park did represent a challenge, though.

"The car park was the most interesting in terms of building because it was a fairly vast area of pure concrete," Mr Costello told the *Sunday Tribune*. "We were delighted it was done so fast, as it involved 12,000 cubic metres of concrete."

John Sisk & Son worked from their regional offices in Limerick. Sisk has also worked on the Parkway shopping centre on the Dublin side of Limerick and the Crescent shopping centre on the Cork side - where it is currently involved in extension work. The company has also worked on the Shannon Town shopping centre, which was recently extended, refurbished and roofed.

The Arthur's Quay project developers were Michael Tiernan of Tiernan Civil Engineering in Limerick and Owen O'Callaghan, who has major property interests in Cork. Also working on the development were Kerin Contract Management, John Thompson & Partners, Michael Punch & Partners, PS McCool & Co, all from Limerick and JJ Casey Quantity Surveyors, Cork.

The development lies within the designated area with all the usual tax incentives.



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