

St John's restoration appeal

By JESSICA QUINN

AN appeal has been made to the people of Limerick to dig deep in their pockets to support the conservation of one of the city's oldest landmarks.

St John's Cathedral is currently undergoing major restoration at a cost of €8.4 million.

The Cathedral conservation project started last Autumn with the replacement of the copper roof at a cost of €2.1 million as well as the repairing of structural damage caused by rain leaking through the roof over the years.

In order to complete the second phase of the project, which involves repairs to the tower, spire, masonry and grounds, donations are urgently required.

The appeal for funds was made as Bishop Donal Murray launched a new brochure outlining plans for the Cathedral, which will be delivered to homes,

businesses and associations throughout the Diocese of Limerick.

It is hoped that one third of the money needed will come from individual and corporate donations. With another third from selling Diocesan assets and the final third from the parishes.

At the launch Bishop Murray described the Cathedral as "a symbol of the faith and commitment of earlier generations. It is a landmark and a symbol of our city."

People can contribute to the fund through their local parish, through a once off donation or by setting up a direct debit from their bank account.

"The most important thing, however, is that a commitment is made by every adult in the Diocese and action is taken immediately to ensure that funding is forthcoming for the completion of the two year conservation project. We now need the money to ensure the success of the project."

Submissions have been made to Limerick City Council, Limerick County

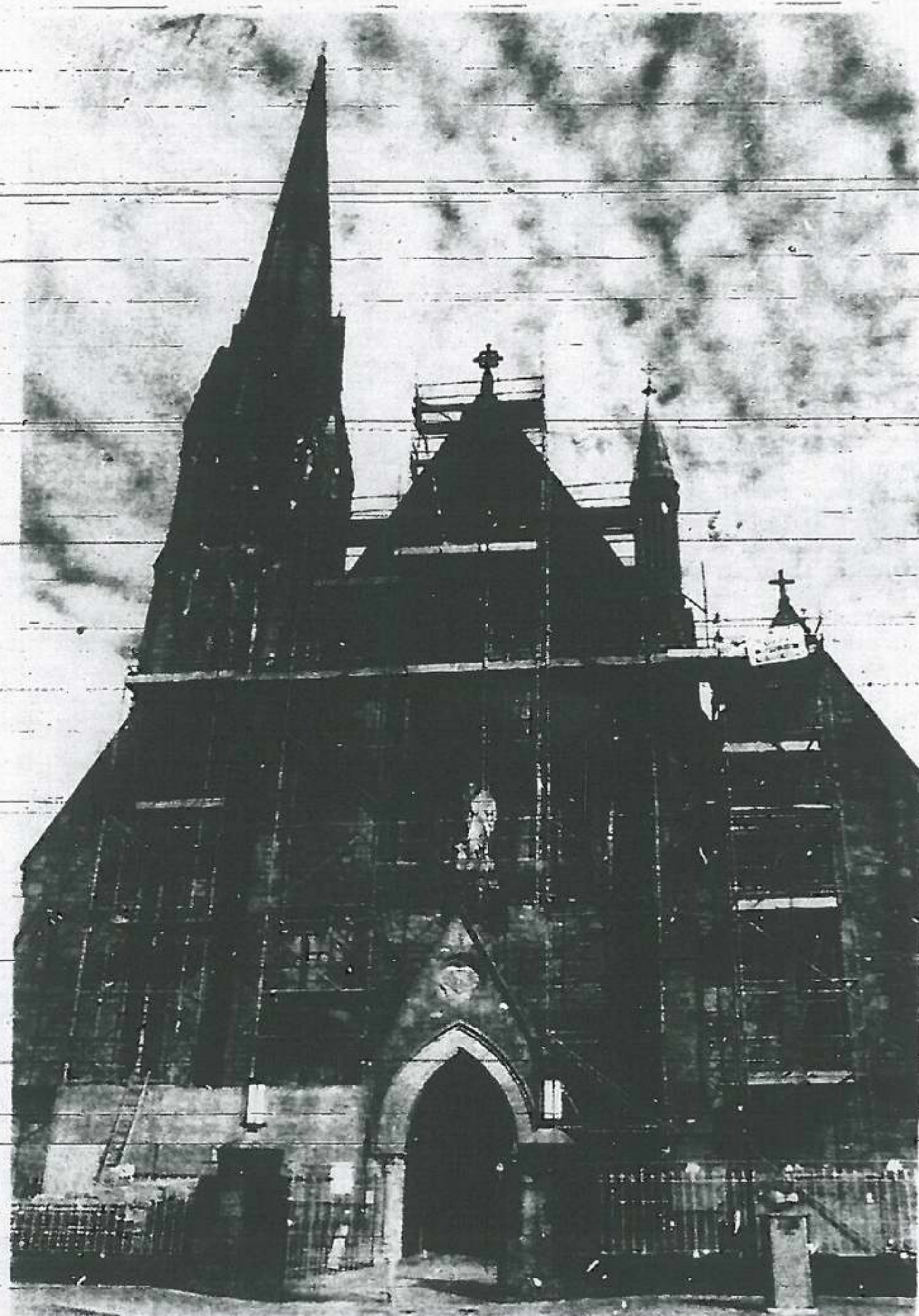
Council, the Heritage Council and the Urban Village Renewal Programme.

These submissions have succeeded in securing €300,000 in grant aid for the project.

"A concerted effort is now being made to raise awareness of the Project and to encourage donations from individuals and corporate entities, which can be in the form of weekly, monthly, or once off donations made directly or through special parish collections throughout the Diocese," said Bishop Murray.

"We are also interested in hearing from anyone who would be prepared to host a special event or provide some other form of sponsorship, which would bring much needed funds to the project."

A special bank account has been set up for the St John's Cathedral Restoration project at the Bank of Ireland, 94 O'Connell Street. The account number is 38877529 and the bank sorting code is 90 43 17.



St John's Cathedral is undergoing an €8.4 million restoration