

Opera Centre project - is seeking to amend the planning permission he holds with City and County Council - to reduce the size and scale of the development.

Currently, plans are in place for 73,142 square metres, but this will be knocked to 63,712 metres.

The height will fall by nine metres to 33 metres, with the development being two storeys of retail, as opposed to three.

Two anchor tenants will remain - one being Marks and Spencer's largest store outside Dublin - as well as 37 smaller outlets, down from 93 when the project was first mooted.

Mr Sharma has said the project will deliver 1,500 retail-related jobs and 500 construction jobs.

Girl is awarded €16,000 over fall

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told a fracture was initially suspected by doctors but that further tests showed the girl had sustained a ligament injury and had sprained her left wrist and elbow.

The girl was ordered to rest for a number of weeks afterwards and the court was told she has made a "very fulsome recovery" and has not suffered any long-term difficulties as a result of the fall.

Judge Moran was told by lawyers, representing the girl, who is now aged 11, that offer was a "very good offer" and that both she and her mother were happy to accept it.

In the circumstances, Judge Moran said he was happy to approve the offer of €16,000 in general damages, which will be paid the young girl, which she turns 18.

He ordered the immediate payment of €200 in special damages, relating to monies already paid out by the plaintiff associated with the personal injuries claim.

GRAINNE KEAYS

THE birth of quadruplets is a rare and wonderful event: so rare, in fact, that when the Peppard quads were born at St. Anthony's Nursing Home in Limerick on September 21, 1962, they were the first quads to be born in Ireland in half a century. Thus, this happy event attracted local, national and international press attention. The Limerick Leader gave the quads' arrival front-page coverage the following day.

Former nurse, Mrs. Nora Peppard 32, of Broad Street, gave birth a month prematurely to three

boys and one girl on that auspicious day. The girl, who was to be named Mary, was born first at 7.40am, weighing in at a very respectable 4lb 4oz.

Donald Peppard arrived next at 9.15am, weighing 2lb. Because of his worryingly small size, Donald was conditionally baptised that day. The two other boys arrived at 11.10am and 12.50pm weighing 3lb 12oz and 4lb respectively.

Their proud father, Tom Peppard, 41, a newsagent, was leaving it to his wife to choose the youngest boys' names and she had yet to make her choice when the

Limerick Leader went to press. All four children appeared to be healthy and doing well.

The births were attended by doctors John Holmes and Ann McMahon with nursing staff Vera Dinneen, Tess Wallnutt, Nurse McCoy, Frances O'Connor and Josephine O'Connell.

The Peppards already had three children, the eldest being five years old. Mrs Peppard seemed to have taken the births and the subsequent fuss in her stride.

Her local parish priest described her as "magnificent".



Left: how the Leader report the momentous birth of the Peppard quads almost 52 years ago. Right and above: the paper photographed the new babies, amid huge local interest. These images will appear in a superb book of Leader pictures taken in the second half of the 20th century. To be published by The Collins Press, Limerick Through The Lens - Pictures from the Limerick Leader Archive will be available in October and is part of our 125th anniversary celebrations



Tall tale: Diocese of Limerick 'shrinks' St John's Cathedral

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from the base of the tower to the top of the cross". This made it, according to Dr Irwin, the tallest church in Ireland.

And Dr Irwin dismissed Mr Wallace's figure of 258 feet as "grossly inaccurate".

This failed to placate Mr Wallace, however, and Dan Clery, South Circular Road, took up his case by writing to the diocese - as well as the Leader. Mr Clery had also examined drawings from city firm Healy & Partners relating to further works carried out at St John's over 10 years ago.

"I sourced the Healy drawings from 2001 in the

planning department. They showed a height of around 262 feet, which was a 2% error factor whereas there was a 20% error factor in the 308 feet claim," said Mr Clery.

Following representations to the diocese, a fresh survey of St John's was commissioned in recent weeks.

A spokesman for the diocese explained: "The reference point for the height of the spire at St John's Cathedral quoted in the The Diocese of Limerick - An Illustrated History was an architect's survey commissioned by Bishop Jeremiah Newman in the 1970s.

Following recent

communications to us questioning the veracity of this survey, we commissioned a new survey and it has concluded that the height difference from the top of the cross to the average ground level at main entrance is 81 metres or 265 feet and 9 inches.

"The original cross on the spire, which was circa 12ft, was removed in 2000 and replaced with a much smaller cross, c. 3 feet in height. Therefore, the height of the spire including the original cross was c. 274 feet 9 inches.

"Any future edition of the Diocese of Limerick or any other publications from the diocese referencing the

height of St John's Cathedral will take account of the most recent survey results and we will be amending this on our website as well," the spokesman stated.

Contacted this week, Dr Irwin said he "of course accepted the latest survey results.

"I took my information from Bishop John Fleming's book on St John's Cathedral and he based it on a survey done by Sheahan Architects for Bishop Newman.

"The diocese searched for that original survey by Sheahan's on which Bishop Newman and Fleming based their statements but couldn't find it so I think that was why they commissioned the new one

- and it is what it is," said Dr Irwin.

Mr Wallace said he had never doubted that the true height of the cathedral was closer to 258 than to 308 feet.

He also questioned the methodology whereby the new survey had seemingly taken the datum level from in front of the main entrance rather than closer to the spire itself, which he estimated could be 200 feet away.

"There could be two or three feet difference between the ground at the entrance door and the finished floor level nearer the spire," he said.

And talk of the height of the cross was "irrelevant"

to his contention about the spire itself.

"It's the spire that counts, the top of the stonework. You could have a bag of balloons on top of that but that wouldn't make the spire any higher," he said.

Mr Wallace said this year was not the first time he had taken pen to paper to the Limerick Leader on the subject. He had written in response to another publication in 2003 that claimed the height was 308 feet.

"I understood that the whole thing about the height of the spire was done and finished with in that letter. Then I got Liam Irwin's book. I was going through

it and the first page I went to was St John's Cathedral and here I see it again. I found it extraordinary to see this thing about 308 feet again," said Mr Wallace.

Mr Clery criticised the historian for seemingly dismissing Mr Wallace.

"I cannot understand how these historic documents could be overlooked and dismissed and cannot understand how he denied Mr Wallace could have evidence of such significance," he said.

A trailer which aired in recent weeks for the RTE series Building Ireland contended that - at 94 metres - St John's Cathedral

had the highest spire in Ireland. But the episode in question has not yet hit our screens.

The official information leaflet for St Colman's in Cork proclaims the height of that cathedral to be 300 feet, meaning Cork are not only closer to Liam McCarthy but also seemingly closer to God.

And the revision also means that St John's has been surpassed by St Mary's in Killarney and St Patrick's College Church in Maynooth.

But Mr Wallace said St John's remained an architectural treasure that did not need "any exaggeration or embellishment".

CE WITH DUNDON

THE DAY WAYNE
DUNDON STORMED
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TRIAL COVERAGE
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Property
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saw the killers of his son Roy jailed
w there are hopes his family can
city after being forced into exile

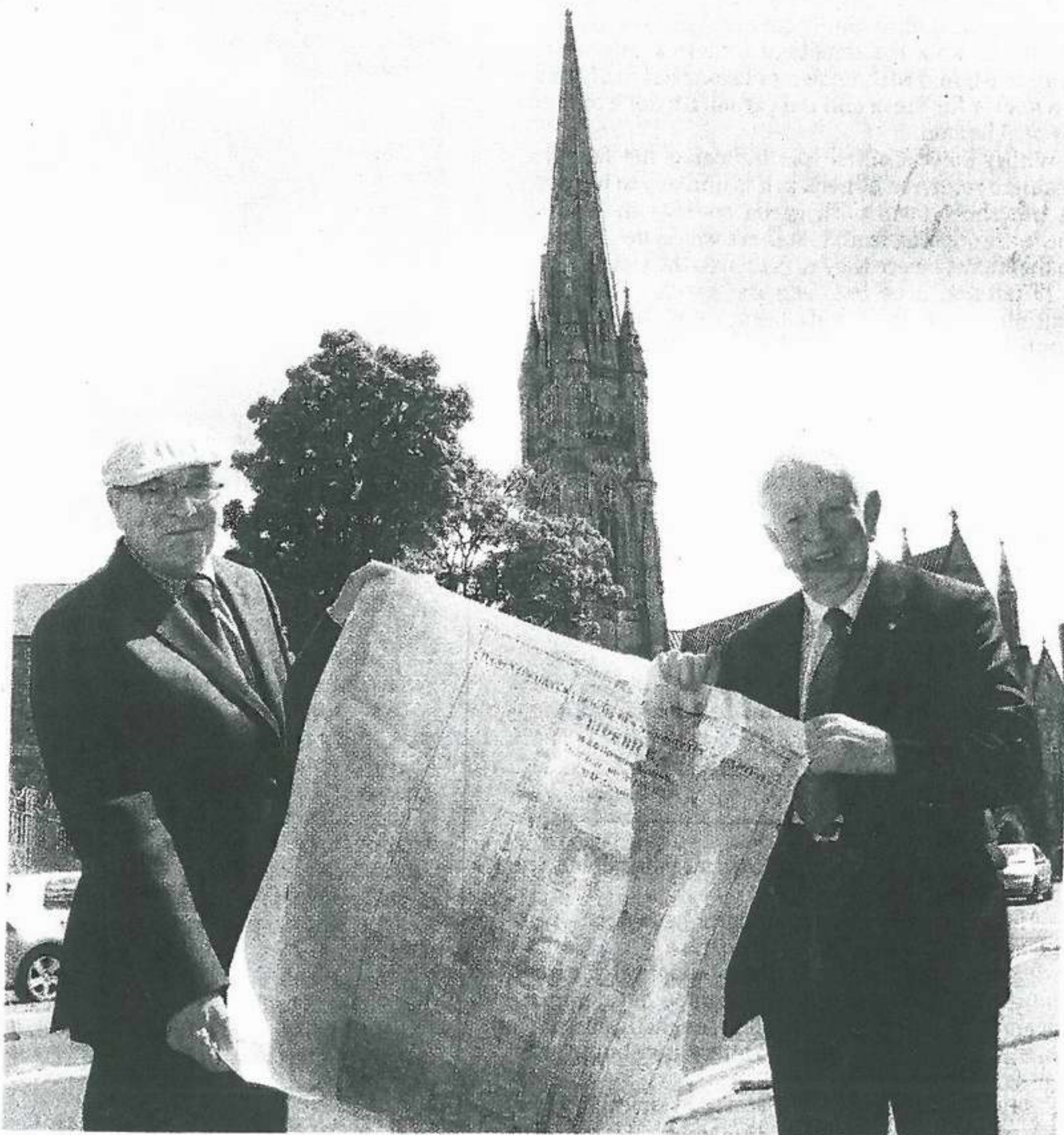
come to city

hreats and intimidation. In
his victim impact statement,
he said he and his family have
aid dearly for standing up to
riminal elements in the city.

"We have paid the ultimate
price for that. One child maimed,
another murdered. Our business
ruined, forced us to leave our
home, our family, our friends
and the country we love to live,
we have to live in exile in a place
where we know no one," he told
the packed courtroom.

While echoing Steve Collins'
hopes that he and his family
might be able to return to
Limerick in the future, Mayor

Tall tale: Diocese of Limerick 'shrinks' St John's Cathedral after new survey



QED: Dan Clery, South Circular Road, and Billy Wallace, Dooradoyle, with an original drawing from M&S
Hennessy Architects in 1878 showing the height of the spire at St John's was 258 feet Picture: Michael Cowhey

MIKE DWANE

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THE Diocese of Limerick has
revised down its estimate of the
height of St John's Cathedral by
almost 50 feet.

And in a week when Limerick
lost their Munster hurling
crown to Cork, the city has also
lost its claim to have Ireland's
tallest church building to St
Colman's in Cobh.

Wikipedia also lists St John's
as Ireland's tallest church, at
93.8 metres. And this figure
- 308 feet including the cross

atop the spire - was also the
one used in Limerick historian
Dr Liam Irwin's recent book
The Diocese of Limerick: An
Illustrated History.

But the tall tales about St
John's attracted the attention of
Billy Wallace from Dooradoyle.

Now retired, the 81-year-
old was clerk of works when
Bishop Jeremiah Newman
hired architects PJ Sheahan
& Partners to carry out
restoration works on the
cathedral in the 1970s.

Mr Wallace wrote to the
Limerick Leader in February

that the actual height of the
tower and spire at St John's
(not including the cross) was
258 feet. He also submitted
drawings and contract
documents from 1878 in
support of this, although these
were not published in this
newspaper at the time.

Dr Irwin responded in March
that it was none other than PJ
Sheahan & Partners who had
measured the height during
its restoration and found it to
be "308 feet and three inches

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