

Principal Planning Officer
Planning Department
Limerick City and County Council
7/8 Patrick Street
Limerick
V94 XF67

Monday, 4 January 2016

[By Hand]

Dear Sir

RE: PLANNING APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF USE AND WORKS AT A 3.15 HA SITE COMPRISING AN UNOCCUPIED PART OF THE COONAGH CROSS SHOPPING CENTRE, RETAIL AND ENTERTAINMENT PARK AND PART OF THE ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING AND ACCESS ROADS AT CLONDRINAGH AND CLONCONANE, ENNIS ROAD, LIMERICK.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Applicant and Project Team

Limerick Institute of Technology¹, has retained Tom Phillips + Associates², in association with BDP Architects³ to apply for planning permission for development of the unoccupied part of Coonagh Cross Shopping Centre, Ennis Road, Limerick. (For the avoidance of doubt, the application site excludes the adjoining Tesco unit and the parking associated with that unit, which is in separate ownership.)

The Application has also been prepared in association with:

- AECOM Consulting Engineers;
- BDP Consulting Engineers; and
- Ecology Ireland.

1.2 Overview of the Proposed Development

Proposed Lands Uses, Proposed Works and Phasing

Limerick Institute of Technology intend to apply for permission for development at a 3.15 ha site comprising an unoccupied part of the Coonagh Cross Shopping Centre, Retail and Entertainment Park and part of the associated car parking and access roads at Clondrinagh and Clonconane, Ennis Road, Limerick. (For the avoidance of doubt, the application site excludes the part of the shopping centre and car park occupied by Tesco, Eircode V94 TW71.)

The development will consist of: the demolition of 95 sq m of unoccupied floorspace and the demolition of entrance structures and canopies; the change of use of unoccupied floorspace (7,328 sq m) (in addition to part of existing car park) from retail and related uses to education and training use with related ancillary enterprise and innovation uses and ancillary café use (140 sq m). The development will also consist of the following: additional floorspace at ground floor level (100 sq m) and at first floor level,

¹ Limerick Institute of Technology, Moylish Park, Limerick.

² 80 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2, D02 F449.

³ BDP, Blackhall Green, Dublin 7.

within the existing building envelope (2,751 sq m) for education and training use with related ancillary enterprise and innovation uses; bike storage areas (58 sq m); storage area (44 sq m); elevational amendments, including new opes and signage; revised internal layouts; alterations to the existing roof profile (without increasing the maximum height of the building); provision of roof plant; new service yard to the south; bus shelter; all hard and soft landscaping; revisions to existing car park; external lighting; boundary treatments; changes to levels; and all associated development above and below ground. The gross floor space of the new educational facility (including ancillary café use and external storage areas) will be 10,281 sq m.

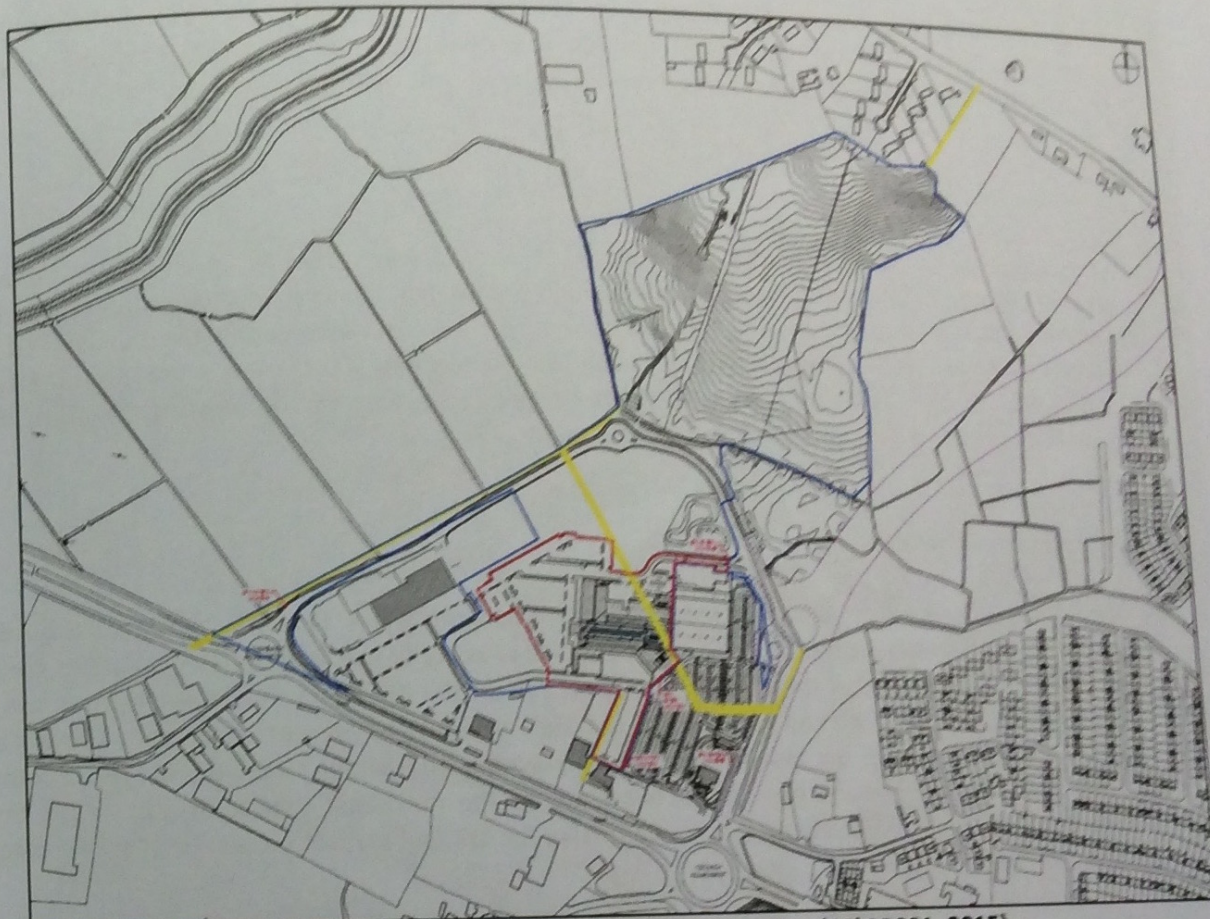


Figure 1.1: Site Location Plan. (Source: BDP Architects, Dwg No. (00)AP001, 2015)

Proposed Use

The principal proposed use on the subject site will be educational. LIT, as part of its established culture, works in partnership with industry in order to provide graduates with industry/workplace experience and necessary skills. Enterprise formation and innovation partnerships with external organisations are encouraged at LIT. Therefore, whilst the primary land use will remain educational, there may be commercial elements operating within the campus, albeit the extent of such activities will be ancillary to the primary educational use.

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The proposed departments which will be accommodated at the subject site will include elements of the Mechanical and Automobile Engineering faculty. This necessitates bringing vehicles into the building and leaving them in situ for extended periods of time (i.e. there will be very few traffic movements generated as a result). These uses are more closely related to precision engineering facilities, which operate out of clean settings, rather than the traditional-style auto garage. It is understood that there will be no 'bad neighbour' issues arising from these activities, such as noise or odours. These uses need to coexist with other more traditional learning spaces, such as lecture theatres, therefore no significant impacts will arise.

The proposed development will also include an ancillary café, the primary purpose of which will be to serve occupants of the LIT premises. It is not intended that there would be anything preventing members of the public using this facility, however no significant visitor numbers are anticipated.

Proposed Works

The proposed works include: the construction of an additional 100 sq m at ground level and construction of 2,751 sq m at first floor level (within the existing building envelope); alterations to the external fabric include the creation of new opes to increase daylight within the building; to allow vehicles to be installed in the building; and changes to the elevational materials in order to differentiate between LIT and the adjoining retail use. Other works include applying the wearing course to the car park and the introduction of revised hard and soft landscaping.

Phasing of Development

The proposed development allows for the phased development of the LIT facility in the unoccupied part of the Shopping Centre. Change of use is sought for the entirety of the unoccupied part of the shopping centre. The intention is that the entire unoccupied part of the building will eventually be in use by a number of faculties, each with an independent entrance and designated parking nearby. This will allow each faculty to establish an independent identity within the wider Coonagh Cross LIT campus. Furthermore, the longer term plan is that the lands to the northeast that form part of the overall landholding will provide playing pitches and facilities for LIT (subject to successful securing planning permission for that proposal).

Should the Planning Authority see fit to issue planning permission for the proposed development, the intention is that the first phase of development would be implemented immediately. This would comprise the fit out of 4,809 sq m of the existing floor space, and the ground and first floor extensions (2,951 sq m) in addition to the completion of the car parking area to the north of the site for staff to the south and west of the site for students (adjoining the existing Tesco car park) for the immediate use of Limerick Institute of Technology. The rest of the existing floor space (2,398 sq m) would be fitted out and occupied at a later date, subject to a separate planning application, if the proposed works required one. (See BDP Architects Dwg Proposed Site Layout Plan, Dwg No. (20)AP001 for the outline of Phase 1 of the scheme.)

For this initial development, it is proposed to access the student car parking to the south and west of the existing building via the Coonagh Cross roundabout to the southeast of the site and the adjoining Tesco car park. As detailed in the enclosed letter of consent, the landowner has rights of access to access the parking associated with the unoccupied retail space, via the Tesco car park, and those rights will transfer with the sale of the land. Eventually, as further parts of the unoccupied building are redeveloped and occupied, it is anticipated that there will be an opportunity to access the facility via the

Clondrinagh Roundabout, i.e. from the west, as well as the southeast from the Coonagh Cross roundabout as is currently proposed.

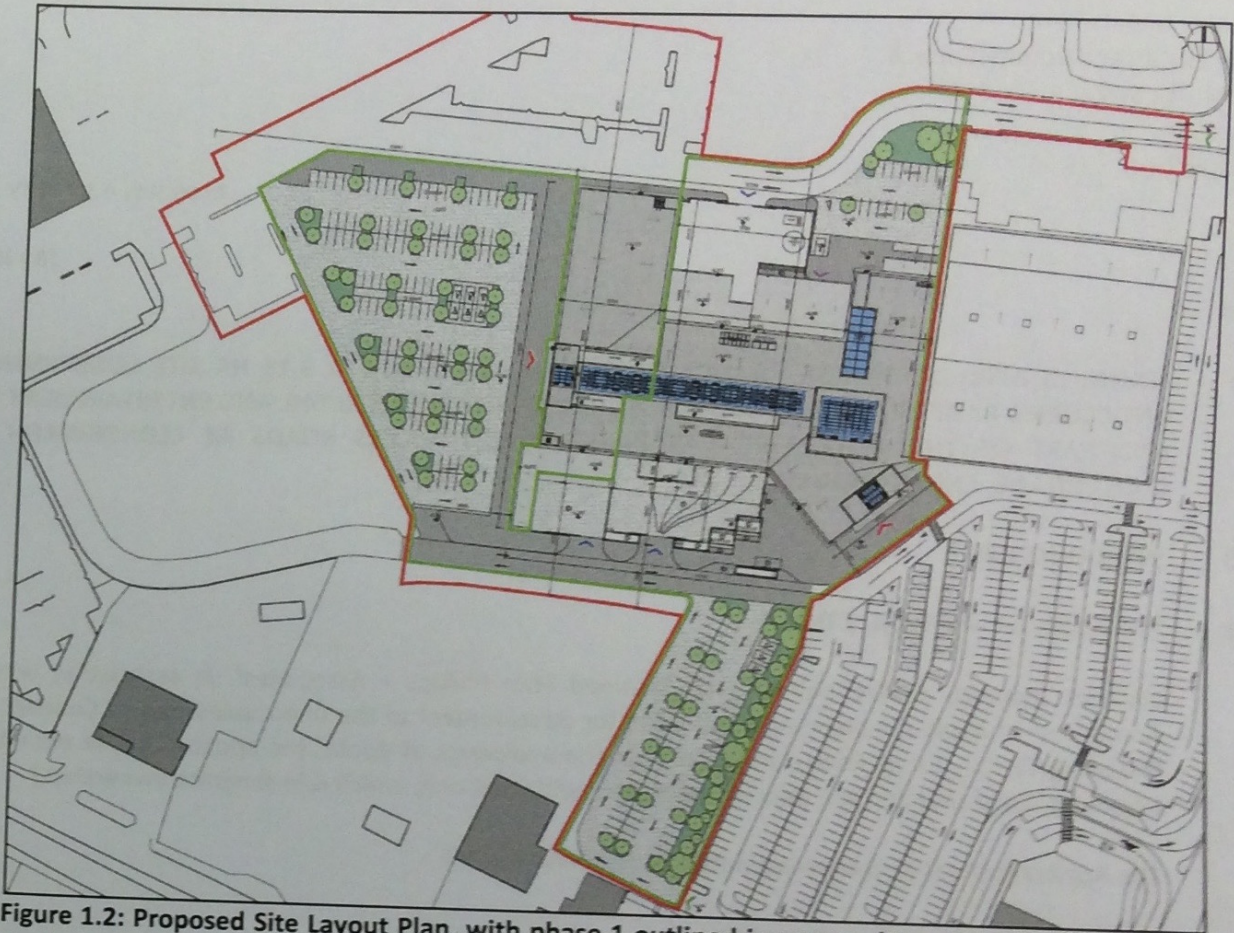


Figure 1.2: Proposed Site Layout Plan, with phase 1 outlined in green. (Source: BDP Architects, Dwg No. (20)AP001.)

1.3 Proposed Development in the Context of LIT's Strategic Plans

The proposed development is the first element of a longer term indicative strategic plan for the wider landholding. The proposals for the subject site have been considered in detail and have been subject to extensive preparatory works to ensure the proposal is sustainable in terms of LIT's requirements.

LIT Plans, Including Framework Plan: Our Places - Campus 2030

LIT has a number of layered plans, which guide and measure its ongoing growth and spatial development. The proposed development has been designed within the context of these plans and forms one element of a wider long term strategy for the application site area, which must remain flexible pending confirmation of funding and detailed design.

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LIT's strategic plan for its ongoing development is entitled *Vision 2020*. This strategy (along with plans prepared by external bodies, such as *Limerick 2030*, an economic and spatial plan seeking the regeneration of the City, which explicitly recognises the importance of the City's Higher Education Institutions, such as LIT) informed the preparation of a detailed framework plan *Campus 2030 – Our Places*. *Campus 2030 – Our Places* details the potential physical development of LIT's campuses up to 2030.

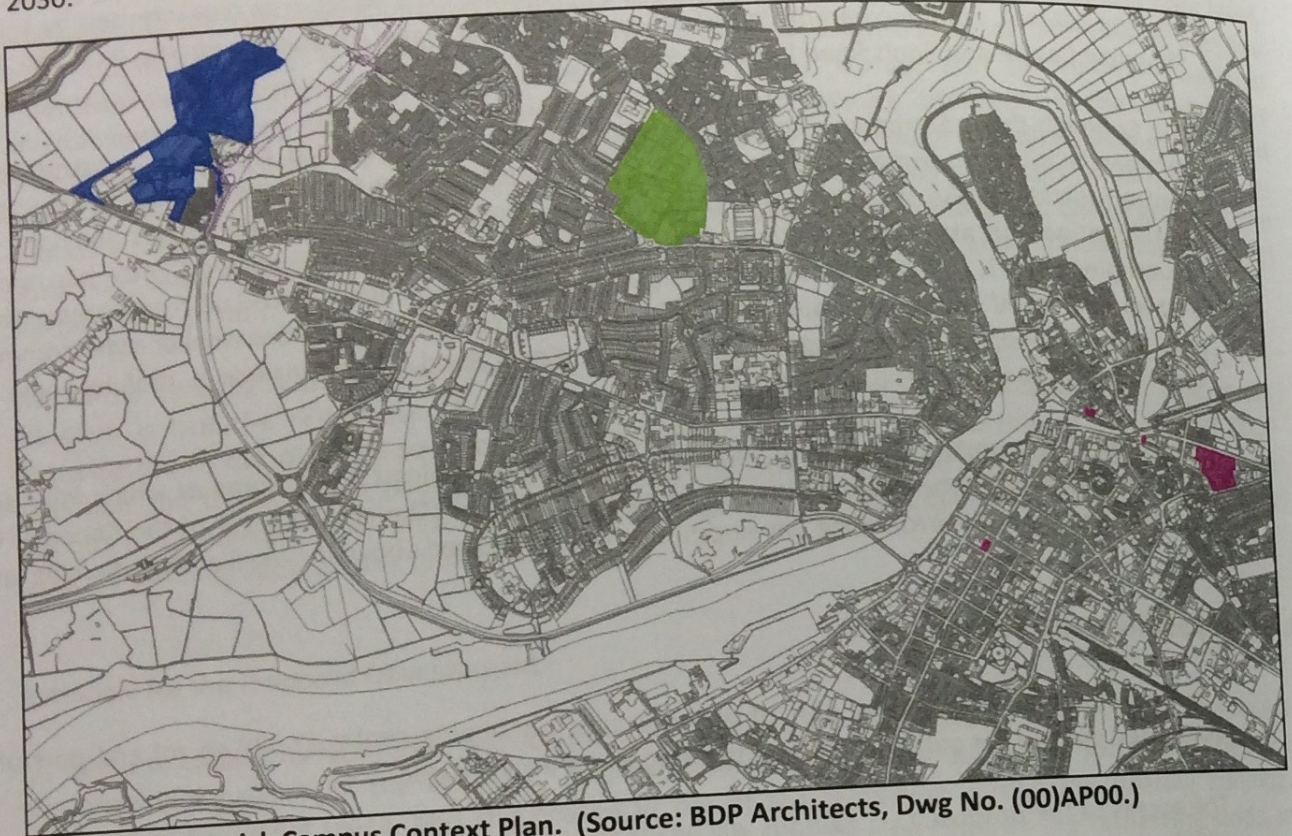


Figure 1.3: Limerick Campus Context Plan. (Source: BDP Architects, Dwg No. (00)AP00.)

Indicative Masterplan for Wider Landholding at Coonagh Cross

The framework plan, *Campus 2030 – Our Places*, includes an indicative layout for a LIT campus at Coonagh Cross. The wider landholding includes part of a unoccupied shopping centre on a key arterial route into Limerick City, in addition to undeveloped lands extending northeast towards Old Cratloe Road.

LIT has to expand to keep up with its projected growth in student numbers. The subject site was identified as an appropriate space for LIT to locate to for a number of reasons: availability and suitability, capacity for future expansion and a location in close proximity to the existing Moylish campus. There are no appropriate alternative structures with spans of the scale required, within the city centre or closer to the existing Moylish campus, which could be converted to appropriate educational spaces. The scale of the retail building is appropriate to the flexible requirements of a modern third level campus. The Coonagh Cross landholding also has capacity for the future expansion, including the potential to provide sports facilities.

The future development of the wider site is indicative only at this time, but the current long-term plan is that the wider Coonagh Cross landholding may accommodate further buildings and sports facilities as the campus is expanded. The site's location is within reach of the Moylish campus and there are road proposals that will improve linkages between the two campuses. The land ownership includes a

potential connection to Old Cratloe Road, and it will be possible to provide a cycle and pedestrian connection to Moylish via that route in time. There are also plans for the Council to extend the existing road network to connect the existing Coonagh Cross Roundabout to Old Cratloe Road, which would further improve on the connectivity between the proposed development and the Moylish campus.



Figure 1.4: Indicative masterplan for Coonagh Cross. (Source: LIT Our Places – Campus 2030.)

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1.4 Pre-Planning Consultation

Pre-planning meetings were held with various officials from the Planning Authority.

The Applicant and design team met with representatives of the Planning Department on 9 September 2015 to discuss the immediate planning application, in addition to the wider context. A further pre-planning meeting was held on 9 October 2015, this was attended by representative of the Planning, Transportation and Water Services Departments.

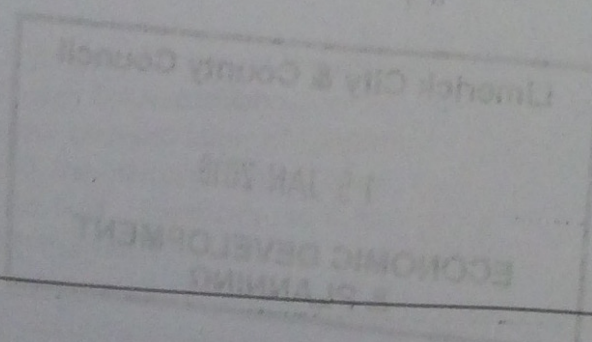
The BDP Civil Engineers also met with their counterparts the Local Authority to discuss the approach of the proposed Planning Application and to establish the extent of the information expected to be provided in the Planning Application documentation.

The feedback received at pre-planning stage informed the planning application for the proposed development.

1.5 Format of this Report

This Report is formatted as follows:

- **Section 1** sets out the **introduction and context** to the Scheme.
- **Section 2** provides details of the **Site's location and description**.
- **Section 3** sets out the details of the **proposed scheme**.
- **Section 4** addresses the planning context provided by the **Development Plan**.
- **Section 5** sets out a brief overview of the relevant **planning history**.
- **Section 6** provides a **list of inputs** to this Planning Application.
- **Section 7** **concludes** the *Planning Report*.





2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

2.1 Location in at Entrance to Limerick City

The subject site is located 3.5km to the northwest of the City on the Ennis Road at Coonagh Cross. It forms part of a large unfinished retail development, which is highly visible as the City is approached from Shannon Airport, Ennis and Galway to the northwest. The wider area characterised by suburban housing estates, commercial and industrial units, Pairc na Ngael stadium is nearby as is the Jetland Shopping Centre and Ennis Road Retail Park.

The Coonagh Cross Shopping Centre and its immediate surroundings is a partially constructed local commercial hub with surface parking, bounded by new roads. One part of the Coonagh Cross Shopping Centre (outside of the subject site) is occupied by a Tesco retail unit, an adjoining standalone Tesco petrol station and associated parking. The rest of the Coonagh Cross Shopping Centre has remained unoccupied since it was constructed, with large sections of the complex fenced off from access. There is also an unfinished commercial building within the wider complex. There are smaller older commercial buildings between the Shopping Centre and the Ennis Road, which include a mobile home sales business, furniture shop and nursery.

The lands to the north and west of the Coonagh Cross Shopping Centre, some of which fall into the same landholding as the subject site, are in agricultural use. The ground level of the Coonagh Cross Shopping Centre and surrounding developments has been raised above the level of the adjoining lands.

2.2 Application Site Description

The application site comprises part of an unoccupied shopping centre (7,328 sq m) and part of the associated surface car parking area and the associated access roads.

The access to the proposed LIT campus will be via the Coonagh Cross Shopping Centre to the south east, which also serves Tesco. The proposed development includes the completion of car parking to the south, north and west of the building. Through use of landscaping design and signage, the part of the car park associated with LIT will be differentiated from the existing adjoining Tesco car parking. In future as the LIT Coonagh Cross campus develops, there will potentially be opportunities to add further access routes and entrance points in order to further establish the identity of LIT at this site.

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3.0 DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The development will consist of: the demolition of 95 sq m of unoccupied floorspace and the demolition of entrance structures and canopies; the change of use of unoccupied floorspace (7,328 sq m) (in addition to part of existing car park) from retail and related uses to education and training use with related ancillary enterprise and innovation uses and ancillary café use (140 sq m). The development will also consist of the following: additional floorspace at ground floor level (100 sq m) and at first floor level, within the existing building envelope (2,751 sq m) for education and training use with related ancillary enterprise and innovation uses; bike storage areas (58 sq m); storage area (44 sq m); elevational amendments, including new opes and signage; revised internal layouts; alterations to the existing roof profile (without increasing the maximum height of the building); provision of roof plant; new service yard to the south; bus shelter; all hard and soft landscaping; revisions to existing car park; external lighting; boundary treatments; changes to levels; and all associated development above and below ground. The gross floor space of the new educational facility (including ancillary café use and external storage areas) will be 10,281 sq m.

Should the Planning Authority see fit to issue planning permission for the proposed development, the intention is that the first phase of development would be implemented immediately. This would comprise the fit out of 4,809 sq m of the existing floor space, the construction of the ground floor extension and the new first floor (2,951 sq m) and the other works for immediate use of Limerick Institute of Technology. The rest of the existing floor space to be fitted out at a later date, subject to a separate planning application if required.

3.1 Rationale for the Proposed Development

LIT needs to expand its facilities to provide improved services for the existing students and to allow for the ongoing expansion of the Institute. The proposed development will allow for the immediate provision of additional space, plus the phased fit out of the remaining part of the existing building. There is also a longer term plan to examine the provision of playing facilities on the remaining lands, in due course, thus meeting the needs and objectives of LIT.

3.2 Architectural Description and Rationale

Coonagh Cross is located on a key arterial route into Limerick on the site of an unfinished shopping centre. The existing building has been completed as a retail shell and with basic infrastructure in place. Part of the wider site has been occupied by a Tesco retail store and petrol filling station. LIT's proposal is to convert the remainder of Coonagh Cross to a third level education campus, as detailed in the enclosed drawings.

LIT's ambition is to improve the quality of accommodation for students in Limerick and provide facilities that exceed national and international benchmarks as set out in their masterplan vision 'Campus 2030 - Our Places'

LIT has significantly invested in education facilities in Limerick city core when appropriate space is available to suit the educational need. They require a range of spaces of different scales to accommodate particular educational activities that cannot always be accommodated within the historic urban centre.



The architectural approach to the creative re-use of this building is to increase the visibility of the education activity in the space. The retail box is to be infused with technology enabled teaching and learning spaces. The current activities envisaged include a new national precision engineering centre and an automobile learning hub. These programmes are being developed in partnership with industry encouraging and fulfilling local employment needs.

The scheme will be delivered in phases over a number of years to match funding and educational need. To maintain flexibility and to be able to respond to the changing educational requirements the planning drawings do not set out internal partitions etc.

The educational activity will be innovatively designed as learning clusters - with the ability to have their own entrance and identity around the building. The distributed entrances will have associated car-parking and facilities and will allow different faculties or departments to open independently or offer services to industry encouraging research and enterprise. Creating identifiable learning clusters will support the development of 'centres of excellence' to attract students and industry/enterprise to the region. A new public space will be created on the building entrance to the first phase of this reimagined development. The new public realm will incorporate intensified landscape around the car park with sheltered bus drop off and waiting zones. Ample covered cyclist facilities will be provided as part of the integrated 'smarter travel' plan of which LIT is a key partner.

Combined with the investment in the Northern distributor road the reimagined building will establish a renewed gateway to the community providing another vehicle for employment and increased opportunities for engagement.

Environmentally the building will be developed with a low energy fit out making the most out of the investment in the existing environmental footprint. It is proposed to be highly insulated and naturally ventilated where possible, the building is designed to have the ability to provide onsite renewables to make use of the large expanse of roof area.

Both the public realm and the internal fit out will use high-quality materials in order to justify the investment of this important chapter in a LITs history.

3.3 Operation of the Proposed Development Will Have No Materially Detrimental Impacts on Adjoining Uses

Hours of Operation

It is intended that the core hours of the campus will be between 8am – 6pm but the facility will have longer opening hours, as would be expected at an education third level facility.

Student Numbers

It is estimated that the proposed development would accommodate c. 800 students and c. 80 staff members on site at any given time. These numbers will rise and fall through the academic year.

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Noise Generation

The proposed uses will include standard education related uses – lectures, ancillary offices, etc. However, the proposed development will also include part of the mechanical and auto engineering department, which teaches practical courses in courses such as vehicle maintenance. However, these activities do not generate noise that would be unacceptable in the surrounding environment. These activities currently successfully coexist with more standard learning environments, such as lecture rooms, without undue negative effect in the Moylish campus and would coexist with other LIT uses on the Coonagh Cross site. Thus, it is not anticipated that any negative impacts will arise on adjoining users, such as the adjacent retail use.

Flood Risk

The existing development is located on infilled land, where the level was raised above the adjoining agricultural lands. The available flood risk maps indicate that with climate change the site is at risk of flooding in some events. This has been acknowledged by the Applicant in pre-planning meetings with the Local Authority. The subject planning application includes a Flood Risk Report, prepared by BDP Engineering. It is proposed that demountable flood barriers will be provided for openings and that pipes will be fitted with non-return valves.

Waste Storage Facilities

Waste handling will be managed in a similar way to at LIT's other facilities. General wastes and recyclables will be segregated and collected from site on a regular basis by a licenced operator to a licenced facility. Due to the mechanical and automobile department, LIT currently retain ENVA, a licensed recycling company, to dispose of waste oils/coolants. The frequency of collection is approximately once every two years as the outputs are low. These wastes will be stored in tanks in the external storage area within the service yard, to the south of the main building. This store will be a bunded structure which will be fitted with secondary flood barriers.

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4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 *Limerick City Council Development Plan, 2010-2016*

The following Section examines the planning and development context of the proposed development with specific reference to the *Limerick City Development Plan 2010-2016*. Whilst Limerick City Council and Limerick County Council are now a unified Planning Authority, there are two separate Development Plans for the City and County. The subject site was incorporated into Limerick City prior to the preparation of the *Limerick City Development Plan, 2010-2016* and it is this Plan which provides the planning framework for the development of the subject site.

This section of the Planning Report examines the proposed use in the context of the zoning of the subject site and Development Plan policy relating to education uses and retail. This section also examines the objectives for the Caherdavin area, which includes the subject site.

4.1.1 Proposed Use is a Permissible Use Under the Site's Zoning Objective

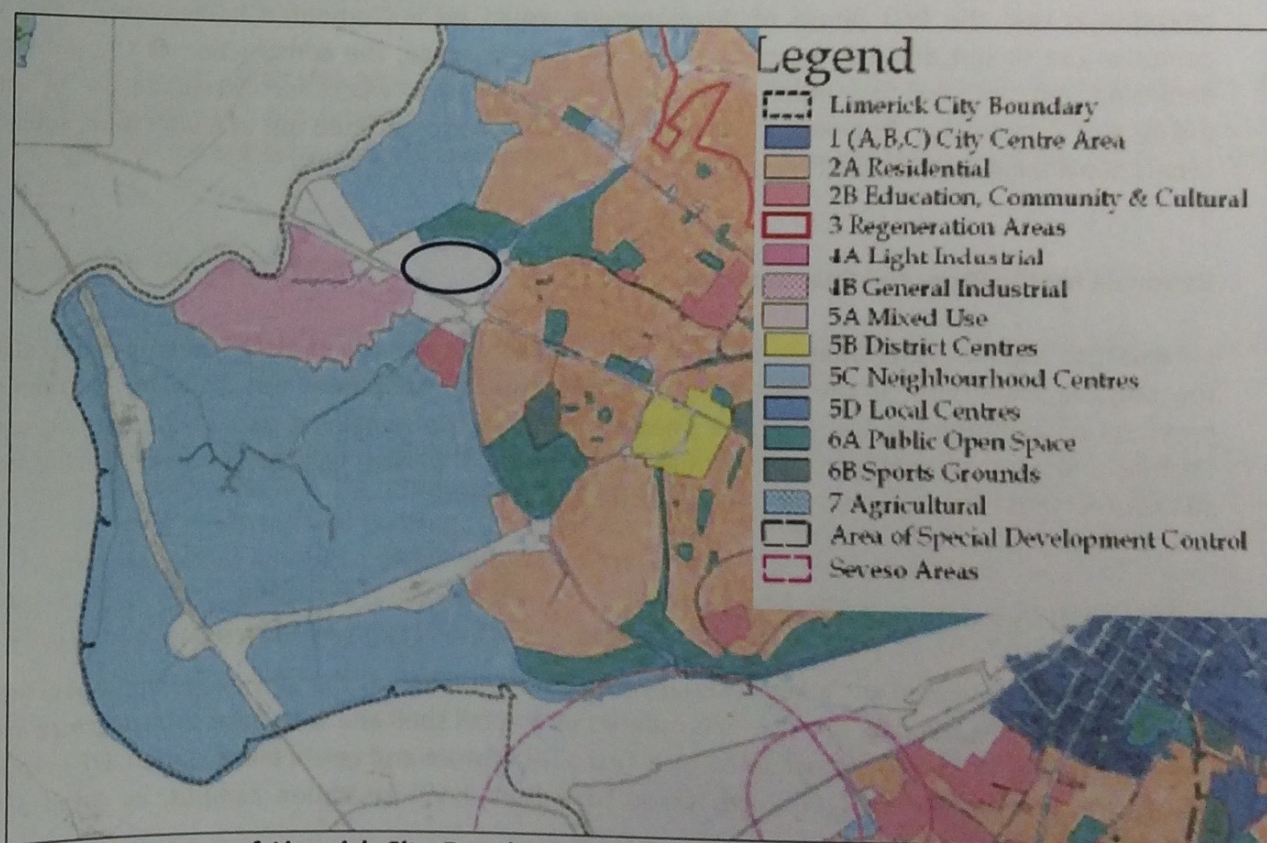


Figure 4.1: Extract of *Limerick City Development Plan Zoning Map 2010-2016*. (Source: Limerick City County, annotated by Tom Phillips + Associates, 2015.)

The subject site is zoned Objective 5A (Mixed Use Development). The Objective of this zoning is:

*"To promote the **development of mixed uses to ensure the creation of a vibrant urban area**, working in tandem with the principles of sustainable development, transportation and self-sufficiency. This zoning objective facilitates the development of a **dynamic mix of uses which will interact with each other creating a vibrant residential and employment area**. A vertical and horizontal mix of uses should occur where feasible, including active ground floor uses and a vibrant street frontage on principle streets."* (Section ZO.5 Mixed Use Development, pg. 150-151.)

Third Level Education is listed within the range of 'permissible uses' in such areas. In our opinion, the provision of a third level education institute at this location is appropriate, it will provide for a dynamic mix of uses, increase the activity in the area, and will better connect the internal uses with the public realm.

The other lands within the overall landholding, but outside of the application site, include lands zoned Objective 2A (residential) and 6A (Open Space). Whilst there is an indicative Masterplan for these lands, there is currently no proposal to develop these lands. Any such proposal will be the subject of a separate Planning Application, at a future date.

The proposed change of use complies with the Development Plan Zoning Objectives for the site.

4.1.2 Education in the City Development Plan

Education is noted in the *Limerick City Development Plan 2010-2016* as a major employer, source of training, innovation and research and contributor to the reputation and character of Limerick City:

"The vision of Limerick City Council is to establish Limerick as a City of learning, where all levels of ability are catered for. At a strategic level, Limerick City provides an important focal point for education with a high concentration of prestigious third level institutions within the urban area. The development of innovation in these institutions is critical for the prosperity and stability of the City and the employability of its citizens. Limerick City Council will in principle support the expansion of these institutions within the City Centre."

The Development Plan also recognises the importance of major health and education institutions in the City's employment profile and economy:

"Education and Health sectors are now two of the major employers in Limerick City. They have a major role to play in the further training of the workforce and also in further research. It is therefore important to support their appropriate expansion and operation. Medical services contribute significantly to the economy of the City. The retention of these health institutions in the City is supported by this plan."

The Development Plan includes policies to support the continued operation and, where appropriate, expansion of the major education institutions in Limerick, due to their importance to the City's economy:

"Policy EDS.18 - It is the policy of Limerick City Council to recognise the contribution of the major education and health institutions in Limerick City to the overall economy of the City and their role in training, innovation and research and to support their continued operation and, where appropriate, expansion."

"Policy SC.2 - It is the policy of Limerick City Council to support the provision of education and training facilities to serve the needs of the City and the Region."

"Policy SC.3 - It is the policy of Limerick City Council to support the sustainable development of third level institutions in the City."

In our opinion, the establishment of a third level institute at this high profile location is entirely appropriate. It will both improve the character of the immediate area, through reducing the extent of

high profile vacant commercial units at this location, but also by introducing further activity and vitality to the area. In our opinion, the above Development Plan policies relating to education use fully support the proposed development at this location.

1.3 Development Plan Confirms there is no Shortage of Retail Provision in Limerick

The proposed development will result in the reduction in existing unoccupied retail floorspace. In our opinion, this will not have a negative impact on the retail offer of the wider City. It is confirmed the City Development Plan that there is no need for any further retail floor space in the Mid-West to 2022:

*“Capacity for New Retail Floor Space - Critical to any retail planning study is the need to assess the potential demand for future retail floor space. Such assessments are complex and involves making many assumptions about the existing retail economy of the Mid-West, forecasts of population and expenditure growth. The revised assessment indicates **that the Region as a whole already has sufficient floor space, fuelled by a doubling of retail floor space supply over the past seven years and exacerbated by the severe economic downturn of the past 12 months.** However as already stated the **distribution of new retail floor space has not been uniform across the region, in particular the City Centre has seen its relative strength undermined.**”*

*The current retail development pipeline (permissions not completed) is substantial, and combined with the existing retail offer it is not altogether surprising that **there is no need for any further retail floor space in the Mid-West as a whole through to 2016 (the end date of the Retail Strategy) or indeed 2022.** The only exceptions are non-bulky and bulky comparison goods floor space at 2022, for which there is a modest level of need.” (pg. 29)*

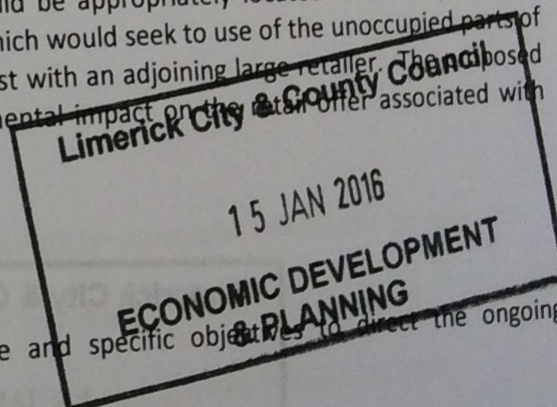
In our opinion, the above extract from the Development Plan demonstrates that the proposed change of use from the existing retail and associated uses to educational use, will not result in a negative impact on the retail provision of Limerick City, as there is sufficient retail provision in suburban areas. The subject building has been unused since its construction and, except for the adjoining Tesco, there is no evidence of any demand from any retailers to complete the development and move to this location. Furthermore, there are few alternative uses that could be appropriately located at this high profile location on one of the principal routes into the City, which would seek to use of the unoccupied parts of the existing building, and which can successfully coexist with an adjoining large retailer. The proposed development has, in our planning opinion, no detrimental impact on the retail offer associated with Limerick City and its suburbs.

4.1.4 Development Guidelines for the Caherdavin Area

The Development Plan provides detailed guidance and specific objectives to direct the ongoing development of individual areas within the City.

The subject site is located in the Caherdavin area. In our opinion, the proposed development complies with, and furthers the realisation of a number of relevant Key Objectives for the area, which are listed below:

- **“To develop Coonagh Cross and the adjacent commercial and industrial lands as an employment zone and as an appropriate gateway to Limerick City;**
- **To promote a high standard of urban design with a clear sense of place and architectural quality that respects the existing character of the area;**



- To ensure the provision of infrastructure appropriate to the needs of the area and the emerging intensification of use;
- To ensure that development proposals do not undermine the potential of the wider area;
- To ensure that the regeneration programmes do not adversely impact on the amenities of the area;
- To ensure an appropriate mix of uses in the area to support the primary residential function of the area;
- To ensure that an appropriate transportation system serves the area. Chapter 5 Transportation sets out the objectives to provide adequate pedestrian, cycling and public transport throughout the area;
- To seek the sustainable development of the existing under utilised lands in the area." (Pg 141.)

The proposal allows for the completion of a large undeveloped part of Coonagh Cross, thus significantly improving this gateway to Limerick City. The third level institute will of course include employees, but in addition it will also support the further education and training of students and thus, future employees for other locations across the City, Region and beyond. The proposed development will open up parts of the building to improve the relationship with the public realm, the facade will also be amended to differentiate between LIT and the adjoining retail use, thus both respecting and improving the architectural quality of the area. In future it is anticipated that the longer term development of LIT's facility at Coonagh Cross would improve the urban design and amenities in the immediate area. The proposed change of use does not intensify the use of the available infrastructure in any significant way and, therefore, the existing facilities can accommodate the proposed change of use without negative impact. The proposed development contributes to the potential of the wider area and does not adversely impact on the amenities of the area, the proposed use is entirely compatible with nearby residential uses. LIT are signatories to Smarter Travel and the proposed development will support means to connect their campuses within the City.

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5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

5.1 Planning History

A number of Planning Applications have been made in respect of the subject site and immediately adjoining lands. As the proposed development is principally the change of use of an existing structure which has been constructed on foot of the parent permission, a review of the site and surrounding areas planning history is of little relevance to the proposed development.

The principal planning permissions which relate to the subject site are the 2000 application which resulted in planning permission to raise the ground level of the site and surrounding lands and also the parent permission for the retail and entertainment park development, which was submitted in 2003 both applications were granted.

1. Permission to Raise the Ground Level

Limerick County Council Reg. Ref. 00/990; ABP Ref. PL.13. 120672

Description: Raise ground levels of an overall site of 48 acres from an existing level of 1.2 – 2.9 metres to a finished level of c. 4.2 m OD.

2. Parent Permission for the Shopping Centre, Retail and Entertainment Park

Limerick County Council Reg. Ref. 03/2050; ABP Ref. PL.13. 210562

Description: Shopping Centre, Retail and Entertainment Park (c. 50,000 sq m) at Clondrinagh Clonconane, Ennis Road, Limerick

There were a number of subsequent amendment permissions to the parent permission many of which were granted. Later permissions, which involved extensions of the retail floor area within the development, were refused by Limerick City Council (after the boundary between Limerick City and County Councils changed). It is not considered that the reasons for refusal in those cases would negatively impact the consideration of the proposed development.

6.0 LIST OF ITEMS INCLUDED IN PLANNING APPLICATION

Planning Fee

The Planning Fee is calculated to be **€ 37,330.00**, as follows:

Change of Use area	7,328 sq m
New Floor area in main building	2,851
External storage areas	44 sq m
<u>Bike storage rooms</u>	<u>58 sq m</u>
Total Class 4 development	10,281 sq m

10,281 sq m x €3.60/sq m = **€37,011.60 Class 4 Fee**

Class 13 (demolition, works to car park etc) at a rate of €10/0.1 ha
€10 x site area of 3.15ha = **€315 Class 13 fee**

Total Planning Application Fee:

	€37,011.60	Class 4
+	€315	Class 13
	<u>€37,326.60</u>	

Rounded up **€ 37,330.00**

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The contact details for the person in Limerick Institute of Technology who will arrange the payment of the Planning Application Fee, if it is considered applicable in this instance, is included with the Planning Application Form. However, we note that LIT has a charitable status and the Planning Authority may consider that an Application Fee is not due in this instance.

Planning Application Form

Completed Limerick City and County Council Planning Application form, signed and dated 22 December 2015.

Supplementary Planning Application Form

Completed Limerick City and County Council Planning Application form, signed and dated 22 December 2015.

Letter of Consent

A letter of consent from Gearoid Costelloe, Receiver over certain assets of Gerard O'Rourke and [unclear] Limited, dated December 2015, is enclosed.



Notices

One copy of the Newspaper Notice extracted from the *Irish Independent*, dated 14 December 2015.

One copy of the Site Notice, as erected on site, dated 4 January 2016. Some 5 No. copies have been posted at entrances to the site. (See the Site Location Plan).

Drawings

In compliance with article 22 of the *Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2015*, 6 No. sets of the requisite plans, sections and elevations are provided BDP Architects.

Doc No.		Scale	Size	Revision
(00)AP000	Limerick Campus Context Plan	1:7500	A1	- A
(00)AP001	Existing Site Location Plan	1:2000	A1	- A
(00)AP002	Existing Site Topographical Survey	1:2000	A1	- A
(00)AP003	Existing Site Services Survey	1:1000	A1	- A
(00)AP004	Existing Site Layout Plan	1:500	A1	- A
(00)AP005	Existing Ground Floor Plan	1:200	A1	- A
(00)AP006	Existing Roof Plan	1:200	A1	- A
(00)AE001	Existing Elevations	1:200	A0	- A
(00)AS001	Existing Sections	1:200	A1	- A
(20)AP001	Proposed Site Layout Plan	1:500	A1	- A
(20)AP002	Proposed Ground Floor Plan	1:200	A1	- A
(20)AP003	Proposed First Floor Plan	1:200	A1	- A
(20)AP004	Proposed Roof Plan	1:200	A0	- A
(20)AE001	Proposed Elevations	1:200	A1	- A
(20)AS001	Proposed Sections			

Reports

6 No. Copies of the following reports are provided:

- *Planning Report* (this report), prepared by Tom Phillips + Associates and dated 4 January 2016.
- *Drainage Assessment Report*, prepared by BDP Engineering, dated 23 October 2015.
- *Flood Risk Assessment Report*, prepared by BDP Engineering, dated 5 November 2015.
- *Traffic and Transport Assessment*, prepared by AECOM, dated December 2015.
- *Change in use of vacant part of Coonagh Cross Shopping Centre SCREENING STAGE ASSESSMENT Report in support of the Appropriate Assessment Process*, prepared by Ecology Ireland, dated December 2015.

7.0 CONCLUSION

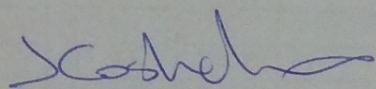
The proposed development of a new LIT campus at Coonagh Cross will provide for the upgrade and change of use of a large part of an existing, unfinished and unoccupied retail development. It will introduce an educational use, thereby, increasing the vibrancy and vitality of the area.

This Town Planning Report demonstrates *inter alia* that the proposed change of use is appropriate for this location as it:

- Proposes a land use that is 'permissible uses' under the subject site's Mixed Use 5A land use zoning;
- Is supported by *Development Plan* policy, which recognises the importance of educational institutes to Limerick's reputation and economy;
- The *Development Plan* policy also confirms there is no under provision of retail floor space, such that the alternative use of an unoccupied retail building would have a negative impact on the retail offer of Limerick City;
- Would have a positive impact on the attractiveness of this key route into the City, by contributing to the completion and occupation of the area and introducing a new active use;
- Proposes the upgrade of an existing unoccupied building, rather than its replacement, in keeping with sustainable practice.

We trust you will find this Planning Application in order and look forward to a favourable decision.

Yours faithfully



Julie Costello
Senior Planner
Tom Phillips + Associates

Encl.



Limerick City & County Council

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**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
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