

BRIATHAR DÉ MO LÓCHRANN



# MIC

MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE  
COLÁISTE MHUIRE GAN SMÁL

## 2022-2042

### MASTERPLAN

Autumn 2022

## Limerick & Thurles Campuses

MIC's Masterplan seeks to look forward over a 20 year time horizon and set out a path whereby the College will grow and develop its physical infrastructure in a manner appropriate to its growing student population, the needs of its students and staff and also in a manner that takes due recognition of the local communities close to the College and the environment it seeks to protect and nurture.

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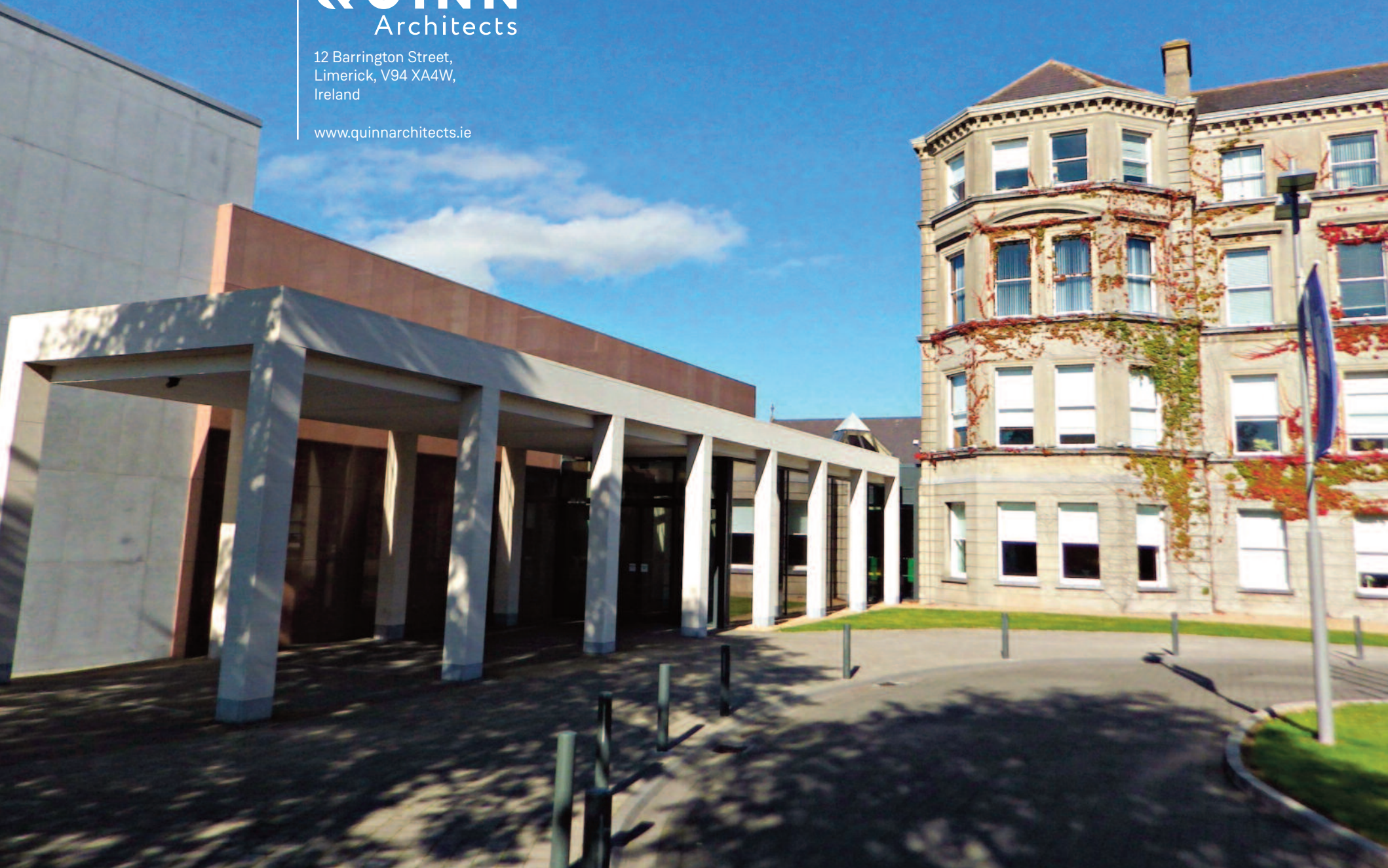


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# CONTENTS

<b>President's Statement</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Consultation Process</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Context of Masterplan 2020-2040</b>	<b>8</b>
Historical Development of Mary Immaculate College	8
National & Regional Development Policy	11
Local Development Policy	12
2000 Masterplan (Limerick)	13
2010-2016 Masterplan (Limerick)	14
2020-2042 Masterplan (Limerick & Thurles)	14
<b>Masterplan Objectives</b>	<b>17</b>
Masterplan Objective 01 – Revitalisation of Existing Buildings	18
Masterplan Objective 02 – Development of New Buildings and Facilities	22
Masterplan Objective 03 – Acquisition of Strategic Sites	48
Masterplan Objective 04 – Conservation of Architectural Heritage	50
Masterplan Objective 05 – Development of Sports Facilities Off-Campus	56
Masterplan Objective 06 – Promoting Sustainability	58
Masterplan Objective 07 – Nurturing Environment	66
Masterplan Objective 08 – Community & Connectivity	72
<b>Concluding Comments</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Appendix 1: 3D Views</b>	<b>80</b>



## LIST OF DRAWINGS & MAPS

MIC 1	Campus Development Phases 1899 - 2020 (Limerick)	15
MIC 2	Campus Development Phases 1899 - 2020 (Thurles)	16
MIC 3	Limerick Existing Campus Plan	20
MIC 4	Thurles Existing Campus Plan	21
MIC 5	Limerick Demolitions	25
MIC 6	Limerick Development Site Locations	26
MIC 7	Limerick Development Site L01	28
MIC 8	Limerick Development Site L02	29
MIC 9	Limerick Development Site L03	30
MIC 10	Limerick Development Site L04	31
MIC 11	Limerick Development Site L05	34
MIC 12	Limerick Development Site L06	35
MIC 13	Limerick Development Site L07	36
MIC 14	Limerick Development Site L08	37
MIC 15	Thurles Campus - Demolitions	39
MIC 16	Thurles Campus - Development Site Locations	40
MIC 17	Thurles Campus - Development Site T01	43
MIC 18	Thurles Campus - Development Site T02	44
MIC 19	Thurles Campus - Development Site T03	45
MIC 20	Limerick RPS & ACA (Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas)	52
MIC 21	Thurles RPS & ACA (Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas)	54
MIC 22	Limerick Mobility (Pedestrian and Cycle routes through Limerick Campus)	60
MIC 23	Thurles Mobility (Pedestrian and Cycle Routes through Thurles Campus)	62
MIC 24	Limerick Landscape Assets (Trees, Lawns and Green Areas)	67
MIC 25	Thurles Landscape Assets (Trees, Lawns and Green Areas)	70
MIC 26	Limerick Community (Existing Community Facilities)	73
MIC 27	Thurles Community (Existing Community Facilities)	74
MIC 28	Limerick Proposed Masterplan	78
MIC 29	Thurles Campus - Proposed Campus Development Plan	79





## PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Mary Immaculate College (MIC) estates development plan “**2022 – 2042 Masterplan Limerick & Thurles Campuses**”. This will be the first masterplan that the College has developed that encompasses our two main locations since the incorporation of, what was then known as, St Patrick's College in Thurles in 2016.

The Masterplan seeks to look forward over a 20 year time horizon and to set out a path whereby the College will grow and develop its physical infrastructure in a manner appropriate to its growing student population. It endeavours to address the projected needs of its students and staff over this time frame, whilst also according due recognition to the local communities close to the College and the environment it seeks to protect and nurture.

MIC campuses currently comprise a mixture of older and protected structures, as well as more modern buildings and attractive green spaces - much of which is also available for public enjoyment. Teaching spaces, technology-enabled spaces, public and private office spaces, sports facilities, religious practice spaces, public performance and exhibition spaces, accommodation and catering areas are all part of the broad panoply of infrastructure that make up MIC campuses. These facilities lie within very close proximity to Limerick city centre and Thurles town centre, so that College students, staff and members of the local community, through their interactions on and off campus, all contribute to the vital components of MIC's presence on the physical landscape.

You will see within this document the eight Masterplan Objectives which seek to address a broad range of considerations in putting this Masterplan together. There are buildings that will be refurbished and revitalised. There are buildings that need to be constructed from the ground up. There will be sites - typically in close proximity to the College - that will be considered for future acquisition,

so that further development may take place and allow the College to physically expand its footprint and facilities. At the same time, buildings of historical heritage will be treated appropriately and consideration will be given to sustainability and the environment at all stages of campus development. Finally, we will not develop the campus in isolation but as a living and contributing component of both the local community and the national higher education landscape.

This Plan has undergone a consultative process that sought out the views of our staff, the Students' Union, the City and County Councils, the Higher Education Authority, College Management and College Governing Authority. At each step, feedback was taken into consideration, and this document now represents a very broad range of key stakeholder views.

I think we can all look forward to exciting developments at MIC in the future as the College plays its part in an evolving higher education landscape.

**Professor Eugene Wall** | President | Mary Immaculate College  
Autumn 2022





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mary Immaculate College (MIC) has been in operation as a third-level institution since 1898 and is renowned for its world class teaching. This is hallmarked by the high calibre of MIC graduates that have progressed into a variety of further education, research and employment opportunities both in Ireland and abroad. The College is characterised by an informal atmosphere, friendly rapport between students and staff, concern for the individual student and a warm welcome for new students from Ireland and abroad. The College is located on two campuses, located in Limerick and Thurles.

The Limerick Campus is located on the periphery of the city centre in a location characterised by many period buildings. The campus extends across a large swathe of property forming a significant connection between O'Connell Avenue and the Dock Road. In addition to its educational offering, the College provides important leisure and cultural amenities that are enjoyed by the local community. The campus boasts impressive natural qualities with many native mature trees and open spaces. This area is steeped in history and was once home to a number of demesne residences with formal gardens.

The MIC Thurles Campus is on an equally historic property close to the town centre, yet located on the bank of the River Suir and with extensive undeveloped lands surrounding the existing building stock. The main building on the site dates back to the 1830's and although it has been modified and extended over the years it retains much of its original character. The campus is in a pivotal location in the context of the future development of Thurles.

The aim of the MIC 2022-2042 Masterplan is to provide a coordinated development strategy for the two campuses over the next twenty years. The Masterplan is a vision and strategy framework which outlines the proposed development of these campuses over the medium to long-term and builds

upon the academic, cultural, social and recreational vision of the College. At the core of this Masterplan are the following eight objectives:

**Masterplan Objective 01 – Revitalisation of Existing Buildings**

**Masterplan Objective 02 – Development of New Buildings and Facilities**

**Masterplan Objective 03 – Acquisition of Strategic Sites**

**Masterplan Objective 04 – Conservation of Architectural Heritage**

**Masterplan Objective 05 – Development of Sports Facilities Off-Campus**

**Masterplan Objective 06 – Promoting Sustainability**

**Masterplan Objective 07 – Nurturing Environment**

**Masterplan Objective 08 – Community & Connectivity**

This Plan presents the proposed evolution of the College campuses over the next twenty years which will support the continued importance of MIC as a first class teaching facility. MIC wishes to encourage and facilitate an academic, physical and social environment that will support the learner. These core values underpin this Masterplan which sets out proposals for the physical development of the College campuses.

# INTRODUCTION

Mary Immaculate College is a university-level College of Education and the Liberal Arts, academically linked with the University of Limerick. Founded in 1898, it is the oldest higher education institution in Limerick. Today the College is a multi-campus institution, with a student population of over 5,000 students enrolled in undergraduate programmes in Early Childhood, Primary and Post-Primary Education, as well as Liberal Arts and a range of postgraduate programmes at Diploma, MA, M Ed and PhD levels.

Following significant growth in the physical size of the Limerick campus over the past 20 years and the addition of the Thurles campus in 2016, the aim of this Masterplan is to set out a clear framework for the development and enhancement of the MIC campuses in Limerick and Thurles over a 20 year period up to 2042 so as to closely align with Project Ireland 2040, which is the government's long-term overarching strategy to make Ireland a better country for all of its people.

To better understand the ideas and strategies that underpin this Masterplan, it is important to understand the context in which the College operates. This document will give an overview of the historical development of the College campuses from the late 19th century to the present day. It will also set out the current context in terms of national and regional development policy and initiatives, Local Authority development proposals and planning policy and the positioning of the College in the context of the provision of third-level education.

This Masterplan has been developed to assist MIC to envisage the future development of its campuses over the next 20 years. This Masterplan takes a long-term view of the development of the College's existing campuses in Limerick and Thurles and will operate in tandem with the College's Strategic Plan to support the College's objectives.

To achieve this, the Masterplan sets out design principles that should govern any future campus development and then will set out the eight Masterplan Objectives that will underpin future works. This document will present those objectives and elaborate on the principles and concepts that should be followed to achieve them. Future development on the campuses should be measured against these objectives.



## CONSULTATION PROCESS

Work on the current Masterplan commenced in 2018 and has been an iterative process with the Masterplan evolving based on extensive consultation. The Masterplan has been prepared under the aegis of the College's Capital Projects Group of which the President is a member. Draft documentation and drawings were tabled and the Masterplan amended to reflect guidance and direction received from the members of the Group and the College Executive Team. A presentation was made to representatives of the Planning Department of Tipperary County Council in March 2019 and to representatives of the Forward Planning Department of Limerick City & County Council in July 2020.

A formal draft Masterplan was issued in February 2021 and following presentation to the College's Executive Team it was agreed to extend the consultation process to other key stakeholders. The draft Masterplan was made available to College Staff and the Students' Union and significant feedback was received and incorporated. The Draft Masterplan was issued to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) in June 2021 and considered feedback received in November 2021.

The feedback received from all parties was assimilated into a revised Draft Masterplan issued to the Executive Team and the final Masterplan issued to the Finance & Resource Committee and the Governing Authority for approval.



# CONTEXT OF MASTERPLAN 2022-2042

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE

Mary Immaculate College was established in 1898 by the Sisters of Mercy at the request of the then Bishop of Limerick, Edmund T O'Dwyer. Its original mission was to provide Teacher Training to women in order to advance the education of children. In its early years, the College operated from the Foundation Building which was constructed along the South Circular Road. The former Recreation Hall, located adjacent to the Foundation Building, was constructed at the time. Today, the Foundation Building houses both the primary administration offices of the College as well as continuing to accommodate teaching spaces on the upper floor levels while the old Recreation Hall, with its impressive, top lit, vaulted ceiling, is home to the Art Studio.

Additional College buildings and extensions were added to the side and rear of the Foundation Building in the following years, the most notable and significant of which is the Chapel which is connected back to the Foundation Building by the 'Lourdes Corridor'. At the same time, the grounds around the Foundation Building were adapted to provide external recreation space for College students, who were all female up until 1969.

The next major development and extension to the College was the addition of a new Residential Block, built to the north of the Foundation building in 1956. This six-storey building included 120 bedrooms, a dining hall, locker room, and music rooms. With the building of the Residential Block, a courtyard space was enclosed between this, the Foundation building and the Chapel, which was used for recreational purposes. Later a new Dining Hall was added to cater for the growing number of residents following the opening of the Residential Block and consequent increase in student numbers.

In 1952, the Sisters of Mercy acquired Summerville House, which was converted into a convent for the Sisters. MIC took ownership of Summerville

House in 1966 and it continues to be used to provide teaching space and staff offices. In 1964, a new auditorium, known as the 'Halla', was constructed at the front of the Foundation building on the south-eastern side. From this time onwards, the College buildings expanded organically with the incremental addition of single storey accommodation, largely pre-fabricated, extending parallel with the Lourdes Corridor along the southern boundary of the campus and eventually encircling the Chapel. These additions helped to accommodate growing student numbers, increased further by the enrolment of male students from the late 1960's.

However, the next large scale development occurred in the 1970's when MIC commissioned a new library building to cater for the now 750 students attending the College. The Library Building was constructed on a slightly elevated site to the west of the courtyard enclosure and provided the College with modern library facilities and a new 300 seat tiered lecture theatre. At the same time, the College amenities were enhanced with the construction of a new gymnasium and a sports pitch.

Development on campus, following completion of the Library Building, largely reverted to the piecemeal erection of pre-fabricated buildings to address urgent accommodation requirements as they arose. The need for a permanent building that properly met the growing needs of the College became increasingly evident and the College commissioned its first Campus Masterplan which was published in 2000. This document set out, for the first time, a formal strategic development plan for the College which was instrumental in attracting the funding the College required to develop modern facilities that greatly enhanced the College and would accommodate the expanding range of third level programmes in the Liberal Arts.

The consequent development was undertaken in phases with the first phase including a new entrance from Courtbrack Avenue and associated access road and parking located along the northern boundary of the campus. This





infrastructural work facilitated the construction of An Tailteann, a new sports building comprising three gymnasium spaces with changing room facilities located next to the main, pitch which was completed in 2007.

The second phase was completed three years later when the TARA Building, comprising four floors of dedicated teaching space as well as support and social space was opened. The other significant component of the TARA Building is the Lime Tree Theatre, a 510 capacity fully functioning theatre space that has become a central part of Limerick City's cultural offering.

These developments catered extensively to the needs of the growing undergraduate student numbers attending the College. Consequently, focus turned

to the needs of postgraduate and research students and the College was fortunate to acquire the former Mount St Vincent complex located across the South Circular Road from the Foundation Building. Fully renovated and refurbished and now known as the John Henry Newman Building, this addition increased the size of the Limerick campus from 10.4 hectares in 2016 to 11.5 hectares in 2017.

In addition to the expansion of educational facilities, in 2002 the College acquired the Courtbrack Student Residence, comprising three, three storey blocks of accommodation, situated on a 0.5 hectare site at the corner of the Dock Road and Courtbrack Avenue and in close proximity to College campus.





The College has also expanded in a second direction, following the incorporation of St. Patricks College in Thurles, Co. Tipperary in 2016. The MIC Thurles Campus has a range of high-quality facilities to support the equally high standard of teaching and learning at the facility. The campus also offers on-campus Student Residential Accommodation as well as a full-scale GAA pitch and other sports facilities on its 24.3 hectares of grounds.

In parallel with the continued physical expansion of College property and buildings, in the period 2010-2020, the College undertook sensitive refurbishment works to some of the older parts of the original College buildings, on

both campuses, to address deficiencies arising with the passing of time. Of particular note is the new Main Entrance to the College constructed in 2013 and the development of 'the Quad' to the rear of the Foundation Building in 2015, both on the Limerick campus as well as the redevelopment of the Residential Wing, on the Thurles campus, completed in 2016.

These works, along with the refurbishment and renovation of other offices and ancillary facilities, better represent the modern, inclusive educational institution that MIC is today.

## NATIONAL & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The development of this Masterplan must be seen in the context of current national and regional development policy towards Limerick and Thurles, as well as the greater Mid-West region. The overarching strategy, published by the Irish Government, is entitled *Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework (NPF)*.

The NPF will guide high-level strategic planning and development for the country over the next two decades. The NPF aims to guide the future development of Ireland, taking into account a projected population increase of one million people, 660,000 additional jobs and 550,000 homes by 2040. The NPF sets out 10 national strategy objectives as follows:

- Compact Growth
- Enhanced Regional Connectivity
- Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities
- Sustainable Mobility
- A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills
- High Quality International Connectivity
- Enhanced Amenity and Heritage
- Climate-Resilient Society
- Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources
- Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services

Within this framework, Project Ireland 2040 seeks to develop the country's regional towns and cities as viable urban centres of scale which can act as alternatives and a counterbalance to the continued growth of Dublin and its surrounding region. It is anticipated that by doing so these cities and regional towns will act as drivers of growth for their wider region and rural areas. For example, as part of this strategy, Project Ireland 2040 envisages the population

of Limerick City and Suburbs to grow by between 47,000 - 56,000 people (or 50-60%) by 2040. Some of the objectives and projects planned under the NPF for Limerick include:

- An additional 56,000 people in Limerick City and Suburbs by 2040
- 50% of new homes will be within the existing built-up area in Limerick City and suburbs and 30% in its towns and villages.
- City-wide public transport network
- Implementation of the Limerick 2030 economic strategy
- Sustainable greenfield development
- Regeneration of city's Georgian Quarter
- Expansion of third-level institutions

In addition to physical developments, the Project Ireland 2040 sets out initiatives that embrace technological developments and the 'digital revolution'. It also aligns with global and European targets for climate action.

In addition to the NDF, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region sets out a 12-year strategic development framework for the delivery of the objectives of the National Planning Framework within the Southern Region. The RSES includes a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan for the Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area. A key component of the RSES is to strengthen the settlement structure of the Southern Region. This aims to capitalise on the strength of the region's cities (Limerick, Cork & Waterford), metropolitan areas, key towns, towns and villages and key networks. The RSES also seeks a revitalised rural area to make it one of Europe's most creative, innovative, green and liveable regions.

All these initiatives provide the context of the development of the Limerick campus. As the oldest higher education institution in Limerick and boasting a City Centre campus located between two primary road arteries and adjacent





to the Limerick waterfront, the College is exceedingly well placed to play its part in meeting the objectives of the Project Ireland 2040. The opportunity exists to expand teaching programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels and to promote the further development of MIC Limerick as the location for sustainable development of teaching accommodation, support facilities and student residential accommodation.

The RSES also identifies Thurles as a Key Town and local authorities are supported in targeting growth of more than 30% for each Key Town subject to capacity analysis and sustainable criteria. The importance of Thurles within County Tipperary is evidenced by the commitment of Tipperary County Council to seek Central Government funding for the enhancement of Thurles under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund. The Council has engaged with the College in relation to a partnership approach on many areas of shared interest including the proposed Thurles Relief Road (which will cross the MIC Thurles Campus) and the Market Quarter development adjacent to the campus. The opportunity presented by the Thurles Relief Road to the College to develop the Thurles campus is illustrated in the plans supporting this document.

## LOCAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The College's Limerick Campus sits within the administrative area of Limerick City & County Council (Limerick City & County Council is the result of the merger in 2014 of the former Limerick City Council and Limerick County Council into one joint Local Authority). Limerick City & County Council sets out the development objectives for the City and County in their Development Plan. The Council is currently engaged in preparation of a new Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 that seeks to integrate the needs of the City, suburban areas and the County in an inclusive manner that supports balanced and sustainable development and which aligns with the objectives of both the NDF and the RSES.

MIC Thurles is located within the administrative area of Tipperary County Council. (Tipperary County Council is the result of the merger in 2014 of the former North Tipperary County Council and the South Tipperary County Council into one joint Local Authority). The current Local Area Plan for Thurles dates to 2009 and predates the merger. Tipperary County Council is currently engaged in the preparation of a new County Development Plan 2022-2028.

Therefore, the development of this 2022-2042 Masterplan coincides with the efforts of both Limerick City & County Council and Tipperary County Council, to envisage the future planning objectives of the locations of both the Limerick and Thurles Campuses. At this juncture, the College has an excellent opportunity to engage with the Local Authorities to ensure that its interests are both recognised and protected.

## 2000 MASTERPLAN (LIMERICK)

The 2000 Masterplan was the first formal Masterplan for the development of Mary Immaculate College and set the vision for the development of the Limerick campus that took place in the years following its publication. This included a substantial building programme to deliver projects identified as 1A and Phase 1B-C and now known as the Tailteann and TARA buildings.

The principles on which the original 2000 Masterplan was established were as follows:

- The creation of a memorable and satisfying environment for teaching, learning and socialising
- Enhancement of the public image of MIC while creating a system of access for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians that is safe, efficient and welcoming
- Safeguarding and enhancing the parkland character of the site, while making the optimum provision possible for car parking, consistent with the encouragement of alternative strategies to minimise demand.

The principal ordering device of the original Masterplan is the internal route, An tSlí, running from east to west, linking as it does teaching and ICT labs, lecture theatres, performance theatre visual arts rooms, public spaces, offices and the Chapel. The genesis of An tSlí is the Lourdes Corridor as it leads from the Main Entrance to the Chapel.

While it was the stated intention that An tSlí would vary in character, width, height and edges as it traverses the campus, the physical implementation of An tSlí remains largely undeveloped. The design of the TARA Building was developed on the axis of the Lourdes Corridor on the basis that it could eventually connect directly through to the Main Entrance in one continuous pedestrian route but this aspiration has yet to be realised.

Notwithstanding the history of the Lourdes Corridor, it is felt that the corridor itself is no longer suitable in the context of a primary access route and the high volume of foot traffic it receives. There is a strong desire to see An tSlí developed further in a manner that realises the vision of the 2000 Masterplan, which was to provide a protected link between buildings but also a social space suitable for exhibitions, performances and random encounters.



## 2010-2016 MASTERPLAN (LIMERICK)

The 2010-2016 Masterplan presented a development of the concepts set out in the 2000 Masterplan and was updated to reflect the completion of the Tailteann Building and developed design for the TARA Building as well as taking into account the acquisition of properties along Courtbrack Avenue and the presence by then established in the Mount St Vincent Buildings (since acquired by the College and redeveloped as the John Henry Newman Building).

The main thrust of the 2010-2016 Masterplan is the consolidation of the campus following the completion of the Tailteann and TARA buildings by means of demolition of sub-standard buildings and in-fill development as well as looking at landscaping across the campus to reinforce the 'parkland' character of the campus following the extensive building programme undertaken between 2000 and 2010.

See: [MIC 1 | Campus Development Phases 1899 - 2020 \(Limerick\) - P15](#)

## 2022-2042 MASTERPLAN (LIMERICK & THURLES)

Following the past two decades of tremendous expansion and development, MIC now sets out its vision for the next two decades. The 2022-2042 Masterplan is the roadmap for the future development of the campuses in Limerick and Thurles and sets out in detail these eight core objectives that will underpin future projects:

**Masterplan Objective 01** – Revitalisation of Existing Buildings

**Masterplan Objective 02** – Development of New Buildings and Facilities

**Masterplan Objective 03** – Acquisition of Strategic Sites

**Masterplan Objective 04** – Conservation of Architectural Heritage

**Masterplan Objective 05** – Development of Sports Facilities Off-Campus

**Masterplan Objective 06** – Promoting Sustainability

**Masterplan Objective 07** – Nurturing Environment

**Masterplan Objective 08** – Community & Connectivity



**MIC 1** | Campus Development Phases 1899 - 2020 (Limerick)



**MIC 2** | Campus Development Phases 1899 - 2020 (Thurles)

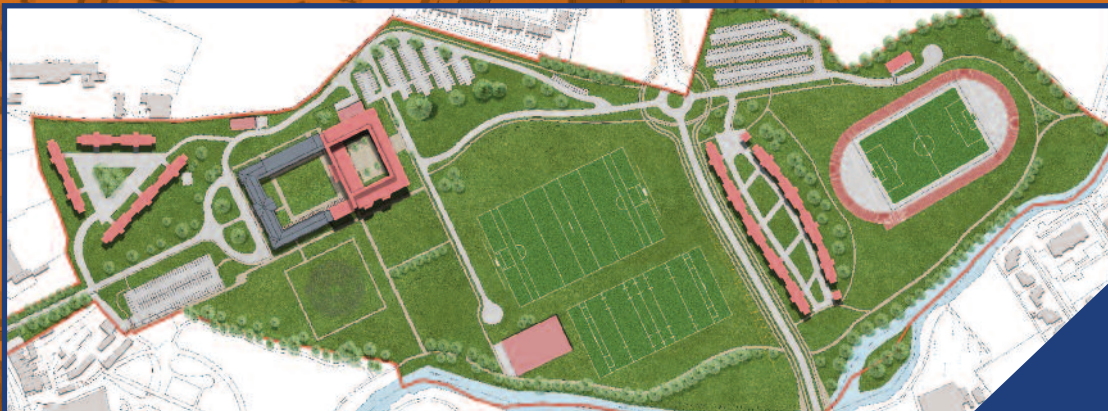




# MASTERPLAN OBJECTIVES



LIMERICK



THURLES



## Masterplan Objective 01 Revitalisation of Existing Buildings

Since the completion of the Foundation Building in 1899, the College building stock has continued to expand, sometimes little by little in response to immediate space needs and sometimes in large developments such as the Residential Block (1956), the Library (1980), Tailteann Sports Building (2007) and TARA (2010). In addition, the College has acquired other existing buildings and repurposed them for new uses, most recently the conversion of the former Mount St. Vincent Convent to the John Henry Newman Building (2016) and the redevelopment of the Residential Block at MIC, Thurles (2016).

See: MIC 3 | Limerick Existing Campus Plan - P20

See: MIC 4 | Thurles Existing Campus Plan - P21

As a consequence, the College has a varied mix of buildings from different time periods and in different architectural styles. At a minimum, every building requires ongoing routine maintenance but in addition to this, as time passes, it is inevitable that existing buildings will undergo change to respond to new needs that may not even have been envisaged at the time of their original construction. Set out below are some of the key drivers that instigate this change.

### Evolving Building Standards

On the one hand, buildings will always require modification to keep up with changing buildings standards. Over the past 20 years, this has been particularly evident in terms of evolving standards in thermal performance, fire safety, accessibility and Health & Safety. One of the challenges is that the standards change in different areas at different times and so one can find that one has only just brought a building up to standard in one area to discover that there are new standards emerging in another.

### Technological Advances

Similarly, buildings require modernisation to keep pace with new technological developments. This can relate to replacement of existing building services with newer fixtures and fittings, such as LED lighting or water conserving sanitaryware items. It can also apply to advances in information technology, which over the past decade has evolved from extensive cabling to increasing use of wireless technologies. Technological advances are also leading to changes in the way staff and students interact and in the way programmes are delivered leading to changes in the types and sizes of spaces within the College buildings.

### Increasing Occupancy

With success comes growth and this will generally result in space issues. A lecture theatre designed for a capacity of 50 students will not be suitable for 75. The office space with an allocation for 10 staff members will come under space pressure if the number of staff increases to 15. In some cases, it may be possible to expand into an adjacent space but in almost all cases, such expansion will lead to displacement and reconfiguration requirements.

### Expansion

A further force for change is related to growth but could be better termed expansion. If MIC develops a new course offering, a new set of needs may arise that will need to be accommodated. Such spaces may have particular services and equipment requirements necessitating the rerouting of existing services or indeed putting pressure on 'at capacity' infrastructure. Assuming that funding



is not forthcoming to construct additional accommodation, the focus is on reconfiguration of an existing space for new use.

### **Changes in Practice**

Another agent for reconfiguration are changes in practice. In terms of teaching spaces, there has been a change in the past decades from formal fixed and tiered seating arrangements towards flexible teaching spaces. It is conceivable that the practice of delivering lectures will change dramatically with developments in online teaching. With regard to office space, there has been a move from the traditional cellular office to open plan office environments and this is evolving further to incorporate hot-desking solutions. Such changes often require a change in culture and it is always important to fully debate the merits and demerits of such changes.

### **Reconfiguration to Facilitate New Uses**

A final generator of reconfiguration is a factor that is at the heart of the Masterplan, which is zoning. When the Foundation Building was originally constructed all the functions of the College were accommodated in it. As the College has grown across its expanded campus, those functions have spread out across the buildings on it. From time to time, an overview of how the campus is arranged and how services are delivered is required and frequently such a review will result in a decision to reorganise layouts so that services and facilities are more efficient.

An example of this is the Residential Block, originally designed to offer student residential accommodation adjacent to the teaching spaces in the Foundation Building. However, as the College has grown in the intervening years the Foundation Building has taken on a greater role as centre of administration, and the rationale for student residential accommodation directly attached to it has weakened considerably. It is now envisaged that the student residential facilities will be relocated and the Residential Block will be repurposed to provide office accommodation.

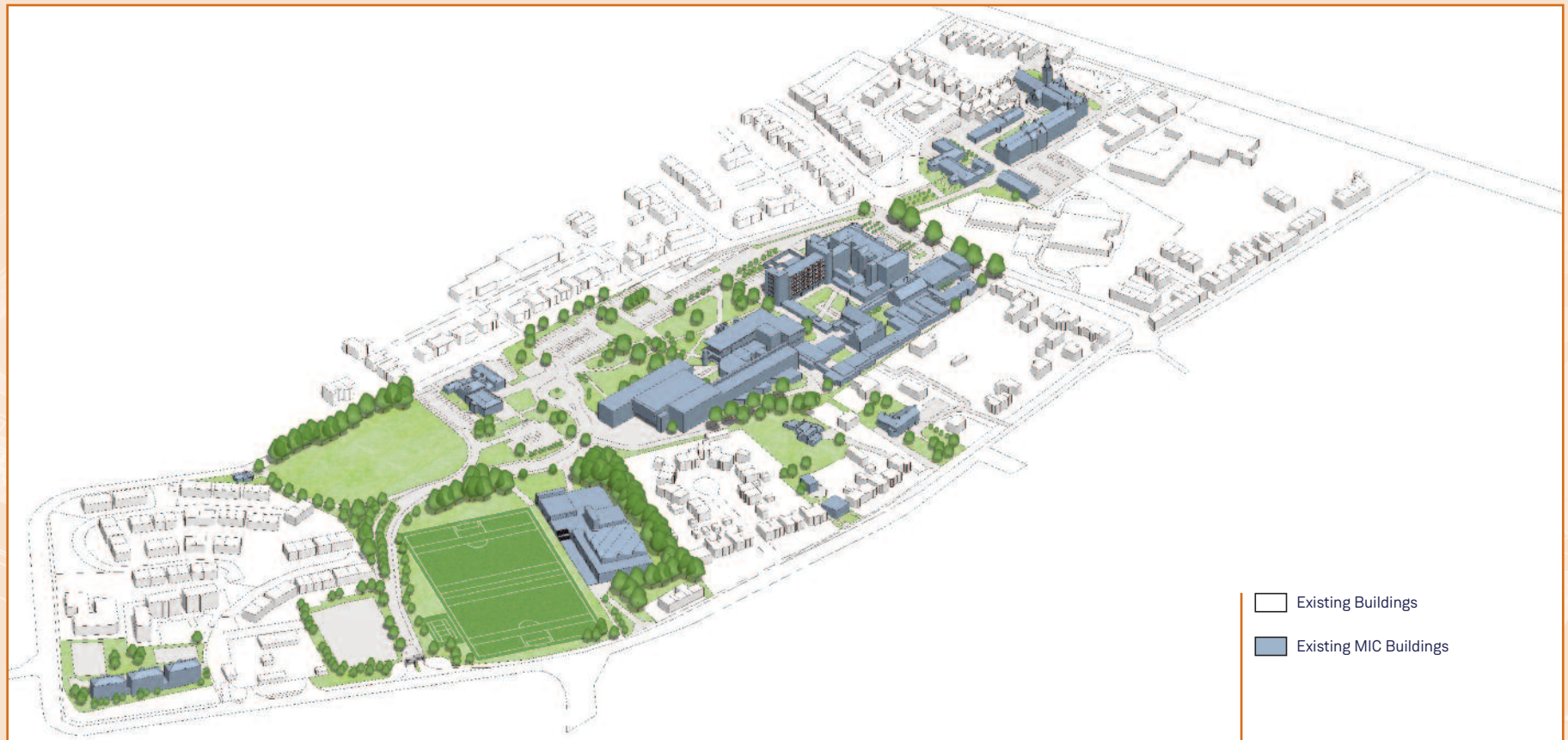
The Masterplan Objective therefore is the continued revitalisation of its existing building stock on both the Limerick and Thurles campuses to ensure that the buildings remain in good repair, are adapted to meet current standards, respond to technological developments and are reconfigured to meet the evolving needs of the College.



**Masterplan Objective 01**

Revitalisation of Existing Buildings

**MIC 3** | Limerick Existing Campus Plan





### MIC 4 | Thurles Existing Campus Plan



**Masterplan Objective 02****Development of New Buildings & Facilities**

Mary Immaculate College is a dynamic third-level educational institution with ambitions for growth. The College also recognises that meeting the changing needs of society also requires delivery of course in a more flexible manner. There is a stated need for additional buildings on both the Limerick and Thurles campuses in order for the College to continue to offer appropriate facilities and to expand the educational programmes offered.

**LIMERICK CAMPUS**

As part of its Strategic Review, the College has identified specific areas for growth on the Limerick campus.

**New Library & Learning Resource Centre**

The existing library building dates from 1980 and was designed to cater for a student population of 750. The present student population is circa 5,200 students with approx. 4,100 students based in MIC Limerick, and the need for a new Library that can accommodate these numbers and is more suited to current learning methods, has long been identified as a core requirement of the College. The new Library & Learning Resource Centre will be circa 5,000 sq.m. in floor area and provide approximately 675 formal and informal reading spaces. It was granted planning permission in 2017 and it is currently awaiting funding approval.

**ESSP Building**

The ESSP Building is of great importance to the academic quality of several specialised programmes in MIC, all of which are critical components of the early childhood years and primary education landscape nationally. These are:

- E – Early Childhood Education
- S – Special Education Needs
- S – Science
- P – Psychology

Nationally, Early Childhood Education is viewed as the period from birth to six years and therefore includes the years before school and the Infant classes in primary school. MIC has been, and continues to be, at the centre of developing the national capacity and expertise in these areas. At present, the relevant department lacks dedicated specialist facilities and resources and the ESSP Building is envisaged as a shared facility that will deliver specialist teaching spaces, laboratories, resource rooms and seminar rooms along with the offices and ancillary facilities required to support the College's specialist programmes. An early assessment of the space requirements for the ESSP Building identify a building area of circa 2.600 sq.m.

Given the central importance of the activities to be accommodated in the ESSP Building and the opportunity of the building to showcase the excellence in research and teaching of these components deemed critical to the provision of primary level education, the College would like the ESSP Building to be





located in a prominent location within the Campus and ideally situated so as to encourage public engagement.

### **Student Centre**

Given the current student numbers and anticipated growth, there is a need for a dedicated Student Centre that will support the student journey through MIC and provide a place where students can relax, connect with one another and be supported. Accommodation could include student common rooms, café/bar, contemplative space, retail units, a radio station, alumni offices, rooms for Clubs & Societies and administration Offices. The Student Centre would also provide accommodation to support the growing number of International Students now choosing to attend Mary Immaculate College.

### **Modern Teaching Spaces**

The construction of the TARA building in 2010 was a major milestone in the provision of modern lecture theatres, classrooms and tutorial teaching spaces. Notwithstanding this, there remains several teaching spaces on the second and third floors of the Foundation Building as well as other sub-standard teaching spaces spread across the campus. There remains a need to replace these sub-standard teaching spaces with new accommodation that better meets the needs of the College in the medium and long term. The College has also identified the need for more small and medium sized teaching spaces that are more conducive to meaningful tutorial engagement and team-work situations.

The Céim process, under the Teaching Council, looks set to make significant recommendations in this area including reduced staff to student ratios. This

will necessitate an enlarged number of flexible teaching spaces so as to accommodate a closer staff-student interaction.

### **Office Accommodation**

The continued success and growth of MIC over the past 20 years has put increasing pressure on office accommodation across the campus. It has been an on-going struggle to find appropriate office accommodation for academic, research and professional services staff. While a successful programme of refurbishment has been ongoing across existing office accommodation, the lack of space available for new offices needs to be addressed.

A form of blended or remote working – accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic measures – will alter staff attendance patterns in the workplace, but face-to-face meetings and interaction remains vitally important in the lifeblood of the institution and its ability to adapt, respond, thrive and leverage the knowledge and experience of its extensive workforce. As a result, office accommodation will continue to be a development consideration on an on-going basis.

### **Maintenance and Storage Facilities**

The expansion of the College over the past 20 years, both in terms of new buildings and the acquisition of adjacent properties along Courtbrack Avenue and Mount St Vincent, has resulted in an increased demand for greater support accommodation to allow for proper management and maintenance of the College grounds and buildings. A dedicated Maintenance Facility, to include office accommodation, workshops, equipment and parts storage, garages, waste disposal and external yard space is another pressing need to allow the

## Masterplan Objective 02

## Development of New Buildings & Facilities

College to sustain itself into the future. Book and artefact storage – replacing the rental of costly external providers – is a need that will also enter into development considerations here.

### Student Residential Accommodation

Another area in which the College has a desire to grow is in the provision of student residential accommodation. The current offering consists of 132 bed spaces at the Courtbrack, O'Dwyer House and Thurles Student Accommodation facilities. The College has further aspirations to offer an enhanced student residential accommodation offering either on-campus or adjacent to it.

### Sports Facilities

The provision of adequate sports facilities is another area in which the College seeks to expand. However, a significant expansion in this area will have to take place off-campus. The provision of off-campus sports facilities is discussed further under Masterplan Objective 05.

In summary, Mary Immaculate College has significant expansion needs over the short, medium and long term. A number of development sites have been identified on the Limerick campus to support and accommodate these expansion needs and these are discussed on the following pages.

See: [MIC 5 | Limerick Demolitions - P25](#)

See: [MIC 6 | Limerick Development Site Locations - p26](#)

### Development Site L01 - New Library & Learning Resource Centre

The site for the new Library & Learning Resource Centre has already been selected. The building has been designed and the proposed development was granted full planning permission in 2017. The site falls gentle from the level of An tSlí to the car park, which itself falls towards Summerville House. The development will consist of four storeys over basement and will contain various types of study spaces, compact and open shelving, a basement lecture theatre and recording studios, maker spaces, special collections' room, children's book/training library and administration offices totalling a gross floor area of 4,955 sq.m.

The new Library & Learning Resource Centre will form the northern edge of a new plaza and this will orientate the new library to maximise the benefits of a south facing location. The new library entrance will be located under the shelter of the upper library floors. The new plaza will gently rise up to this sheltered entrance and this will ensure that staff and students can utilise the new plaza in all weather conditions. The new entrance off the Library Plaza will provide opportunities for staff and students to meet under the library prior to moving onto a lecture, into the library for study or indeed to sit and relax overlooking the activity in the plaza below.

See: [MIC 7 | Limerick Development Site L01 - p28](#)

### Development Site L02 – ESSP Building

The ESSP building represents a new way of learning and a new way of teaching. The brief requirement is for a largely transparent building that is both



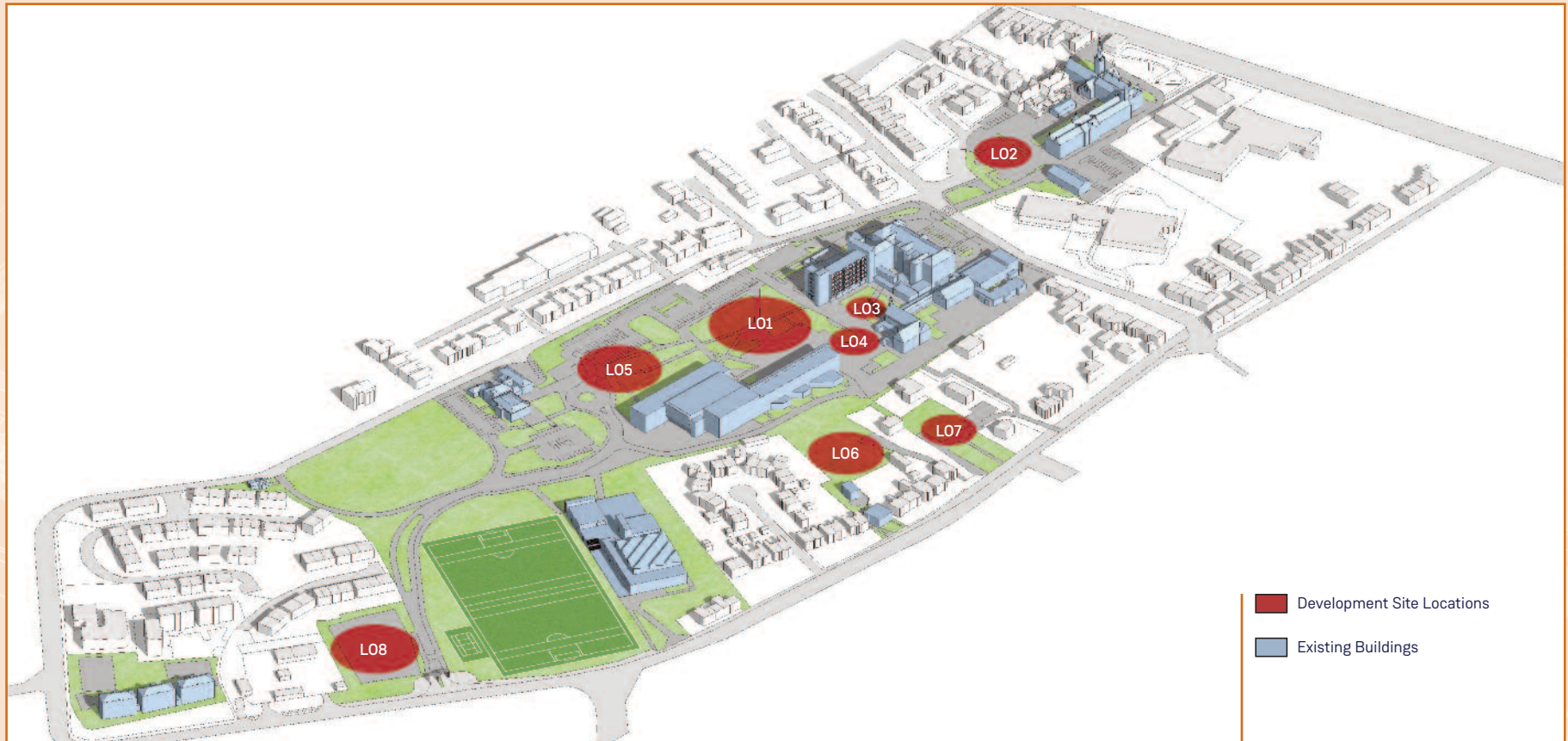
### MIC 5 | Limerick Demolitions



**Masterplan Objective 02**

**Development of New Buildings & Facilities**

**MIC 6 | Limerick Development Site Locations**







accessible and inviting – a building that will break down the traditional barriers between different disciplines and allow an integrated learning experience.

In terms of site selection, it is proposed to locate the ESSP Building on the site of the existing Gerard House Building, directly adjacent to the John Henry Newman Building. This site offers several advantages. Firstly, the Gerard House Building is single storey and is a converted Nursing Home. It makes poor use of a prime site. Secondly, the location places the ESSP Building in a very prominent location, with high visibility from the South Circular Road. Indeed, the site is in a pivotal position being situated close to the Main Entrance to the College and located off the pedestrian link between the Foundation Building and the John Henry Newman building. Thirdly, the site is directly adjacent to the Scoil Mháthair Dé Primary School, with which it could form strong links for the mutual benefit of both establishments.

In terms of massing, it is considered that the site can accommodate a building of three or four storeys and that the building form would complete the John Henry Newman Quad to the south-east while presenting a softer building form to the north-west. The ESSP Building has the potential to extend teaching

space beyond the traditional boundaries of the current campus allowing it to further raise consciousness of the College within Limerick City and to encourage meaningful engagement and dialogue with the public as well as staff and students.

See: **MIC 8 | Limerick Development Site L02 - p29**

#### **Development Site L03 – Student Centre**

The holistic education of students is at the core of Mary Immaculate College’s mission and fostering the development of students through social activities and support services is a fundamental part of the offering at the College.

The development of the Library & Learning Resource Centre and the creation of the Library Plaza implements a new formal structure around which to organise buildings at the heart of the Campus. A development site emerges positioned between the existing Quad and the new Library Plaza that is well suited to the location of a Student Centre. The site is local to administrative offices, connected into An tSlí, adjacent to the Chapel, the Library & Learning Resource Centre and the TARA Building. Such a location puts the Student Centre at the pulsing heart of the Campus.

A building in this location could extend to five stories adding definition to both the Quad and the Library Quad. It is envisaged that the building maybe largely transparent at ground-floor level where an internal social space (café/bar/restaurant) would open onto both external social spaces.

See: **MIC 9 | Limerick Development Site L03 - p30**



**Masterplan Objective 02**

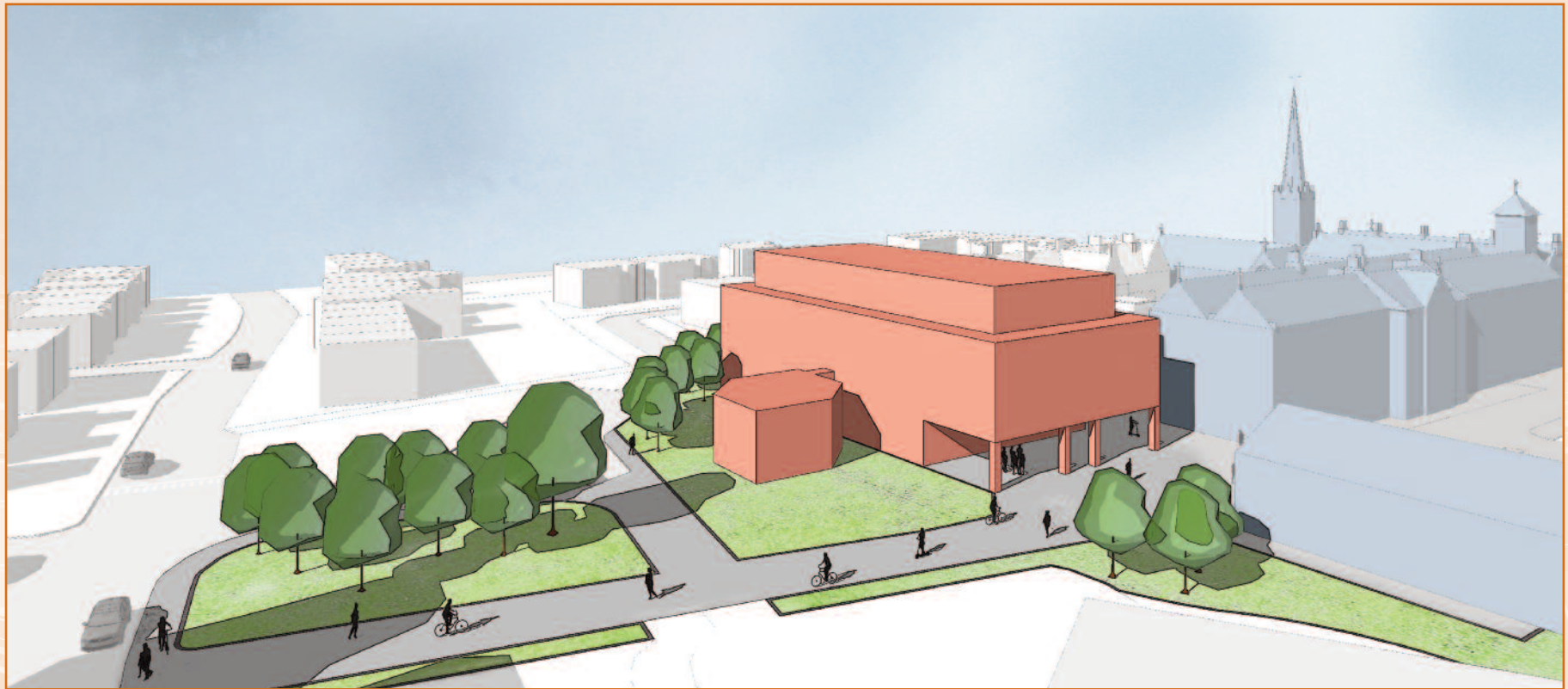
**Development of New Buildings and Facilities**

**MIC 7 | Limerick Development Site L01**





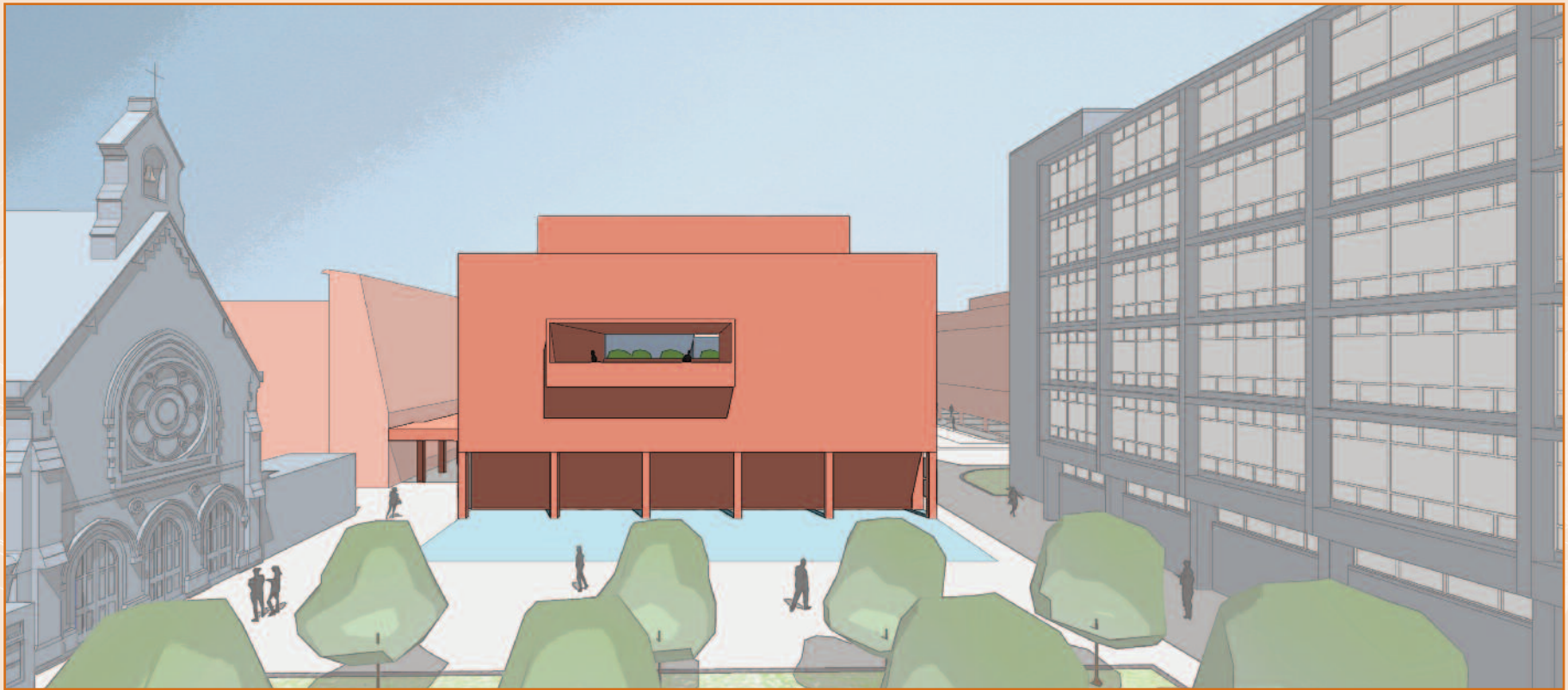
**MIC 8** | Limerick Development Site L02



## Masterplan Objective 02

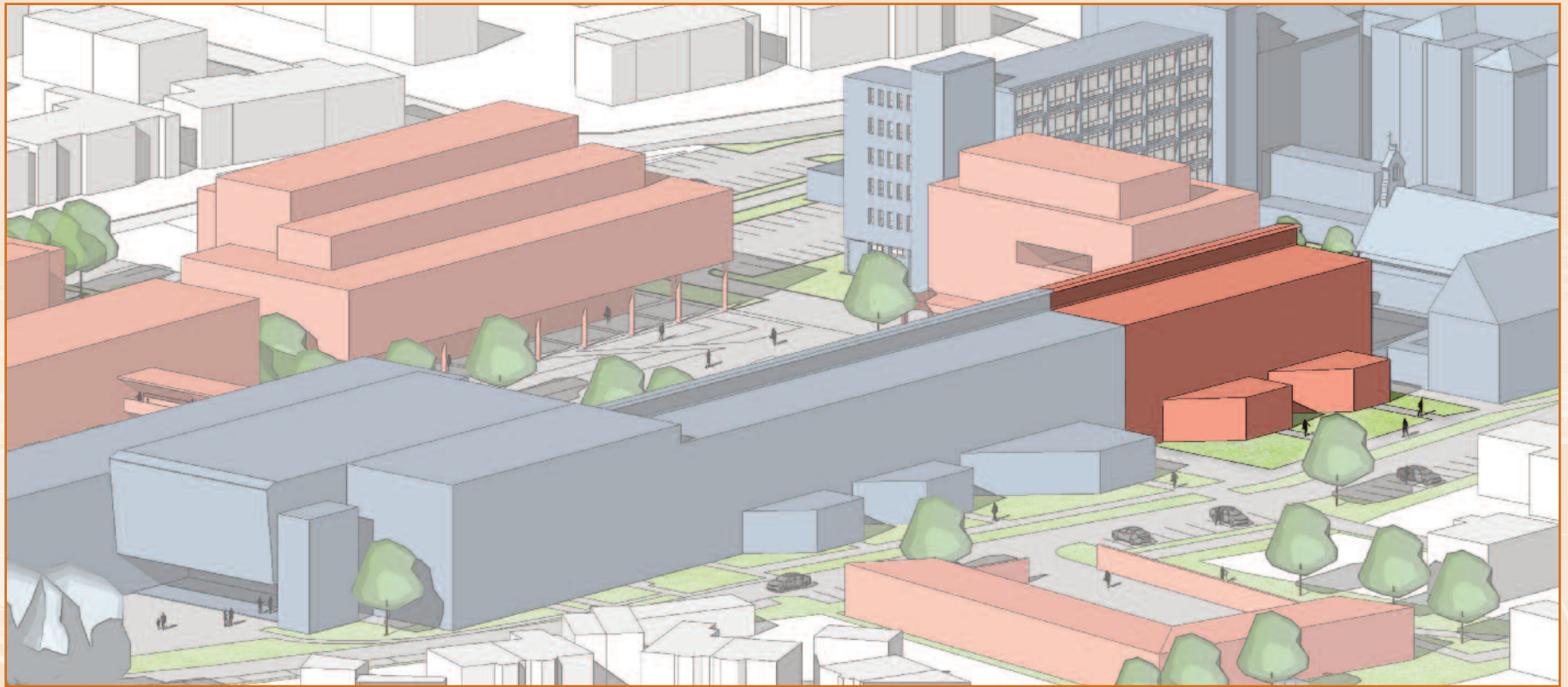
## Development of New Buildings and Facilities

### MIC 9 | Limerick Development Site L03





**MIC 10** | Limerick Development Site L04



## Masterplan Objective 02

## Development of New Buildings and Facilities

### **Development Site L04 – Teaching Space and Office Accommodation**

The first location identified for additional Teaching Space and Office Accommodation is a ‘brown field’ site between the Chapel and the TARA Building currently occupied by Áras McAuley and Breifne. These buildings are part single/part two-storey and have been identified for demolition since the 2000 Masterplan.

Once cleared, the development site will at last permit the extension of An tSlí from the Lourdes Corridor to the TARA Building and the construction of additional accommodation as an extension of the TARA Building. The extension of the TARA Building along An tSlí towards the Chapel would provide circa 1,500 sq.m. of additional floor area over three floors that could accommodate the relocation of the existing teaching accommodation on the second and third floors of the Foundation Building, facilitating the further development of the Foundation Building as the administrative hub of the College.

See: [MIC 10 | Limerick Development Site L04 - p31](#)

### **Development Site L05 – Teaching Space and Office Accommodation**

The second location identified for additional Teaching Space and Office Accommodation is to the north-east of the TARA Building, following the new building line that will be established by the construction of the Library & Learning Resource Centre. The site here falls considerably allowing for tiered floor plan layout similar to that of the TARA Building adjacent to it. There is space in this location for a significant expansion of teaching space and office accommodation which could be developed in phased blocks.

Early study of the potential of this site suggests that there is potential for 3,000 sq.m. of accommodation per floor in two blocks, that extend anywhere between three and five storeys tall, in whole or in part, depending on the permitted densities at the time of development.

See: [MIC 11 | Limerick Development Site L05 - p34](#)

### **Development Site L06 – Maintenance and Storage Facilities**

The acquisition of the Courtbrack properties in the period following the publication of the 2000 Masterplan have added to the College’s landholding. However, the development of the Courtbrack properties already in the College’s ownership is frustrated by the fact that the properties are dispersed and generally not connected to one another. The current configuration of the main college buildings and the internal road network cast those properties to the rear of the Campus. Indeed, both the 2000 and 2010 Masterplan documents show a service road (now constructed) running along the south-western boundary, parallel with An tSlí and located behind the TARA Building.

One of the Courtbrack properties known, as ‘Laurel Lodge’, abuts the boundary and connects easily into this service road and this development site is well placed to accommodate future Maintenance Facilities. The site, which is generally flat, has an area is circa 0.26 hectares (0.6 acres) and would accommodate both a building to accommodate office space, workshops, stores and garages as well as an external yard for waste storage, recycling segregation, compactor and maintenance vehicles and machinery.

See: [MIC 12 | Limerick Development Site L06 - p35](#)



**Development Site L07 – Residential Accommodation and Other Development**

Referring again to the Courtbrack properties, the College has already converted two dwellings to create O’Dwyer House, an eight-bed student residence catering for international students. Richmond House and Hillsborough House are a second pair of semi-detached former dwellings in the ownership of the College. The buildings are substantially derelict and fit for demolition. However, they are located on large sites with one site extending back to connect with the College campus.

This development site has an overall area of circa 0.27 hectares (0.67 acres) with a gentle gradient and is situated in a settled, residential area. The site is well suited to small scale, low density development, perhaps targeted towards accommodation or services orientated toward postgraduate students or visiting academics. Such a use would be consistent with existing land use around the site.

See: **MIC 13 | Limerick Development Site L07 - p36**

**Development Site L08 – Student Residential Accommodation**

A site with development potential for higher density student residential accommodation is located adjacent to Courtbrack entrance to the College. This development site is circa 0.38 hectares (0.95 acres) in size and generally flat. Located at the periphery of the Campus, it is close to the College’s existing student residential accommodation at the Courtbrack Apartments and also to the N69 on the National Road network, otherwise known as ‘the Dock Road’. An initial assessment of the development potential has been undertaken and it is anticipated that a student residential accommodation with 36 bedrooms

per floor, organised in 6 bed apartments, is feasible. While the final height of development is subject to review, the national trend is towards higher density development and building height of four to five storeys may be achieved.

Another advantage of this site is the potential to combine the site with the adjacent site in third party ownership and this is discussed further under ‘Masterplan Objective 03 – Acquisition of Strategic Sites’.

See: **MIC 14 | Limerick Development Site L08 - p37**

**Phasing Strategy & Prioritisation – Limerick Campus**

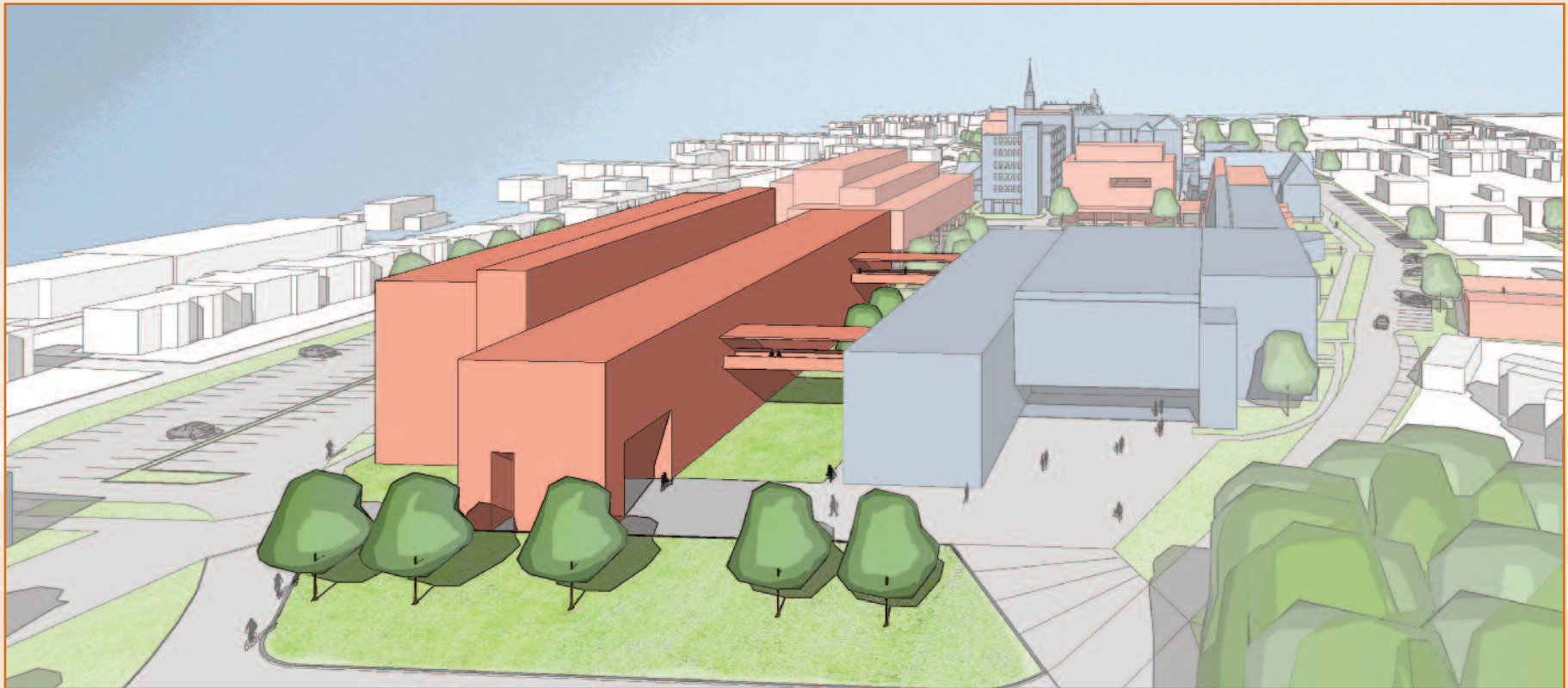
At the time of writing, the College’s immediate priority for development in Limerick remains the construction of the proposed Library & Learning Resource Centre, which was granted full planning permission in 2017 but remains unbuilt (reference Development Site L01).

Beyond the proposed Library & Learning Resource Centre, the subsequent priorities are threefold. Firstly, the College seeks to replace the sub-standard teaching spaces located in the Foundation Building and pre-fabricated buildings constructed in the 1960s with new purpose building accommodation, as an extension to the TARA Building (reference Development Site L04). In parallel, the College sees an urgent need for the ESSP Building to foster and support a new, integrated approach to Early Childhood and Primary-level education (reference Development Site L02). Lastly, the College is in urgent need of additional office accommodation to support its growing staff numbers. The solution to this need can largely be found within existing building stock but does require capital investment.

**Masterplan Objective 02**

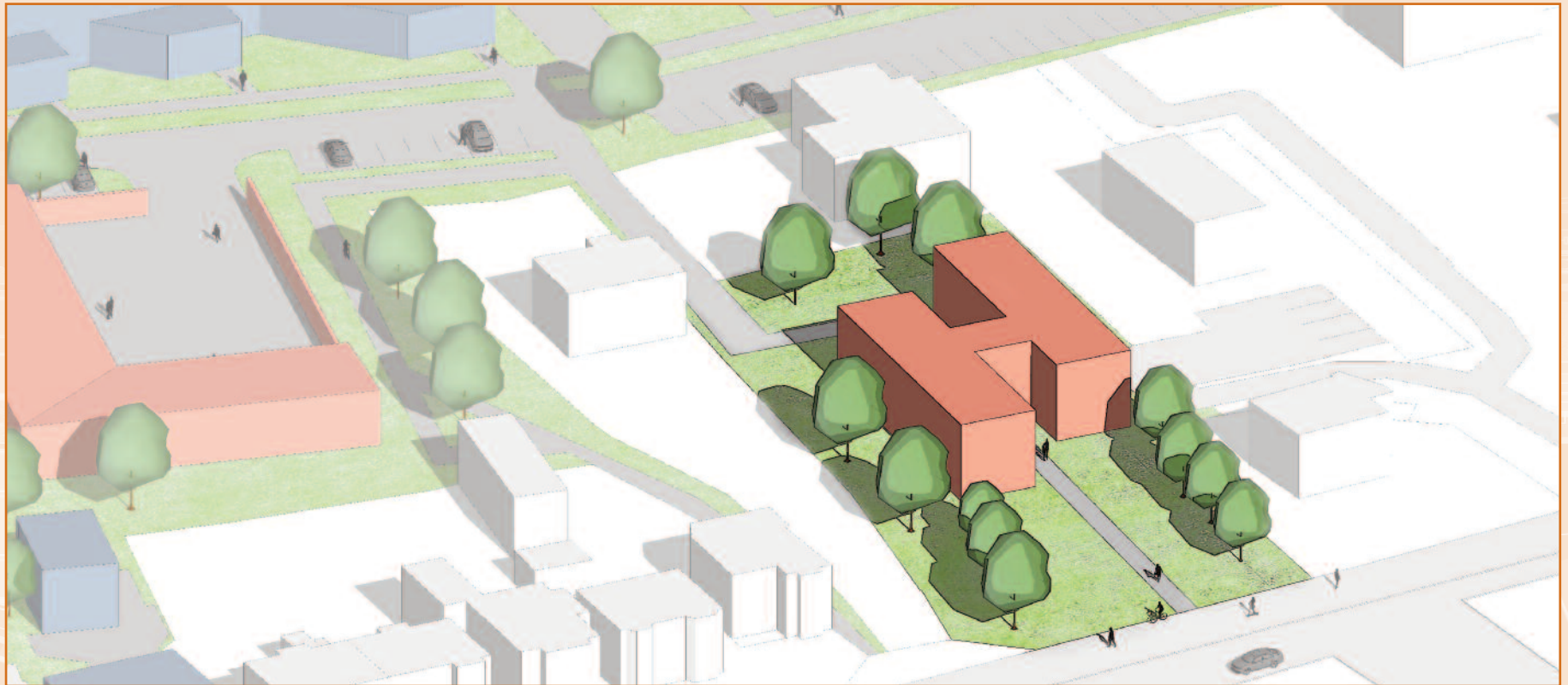
**Development of New Buildings and Facilities**

**MIC 11 | Limerick Development Site L05**





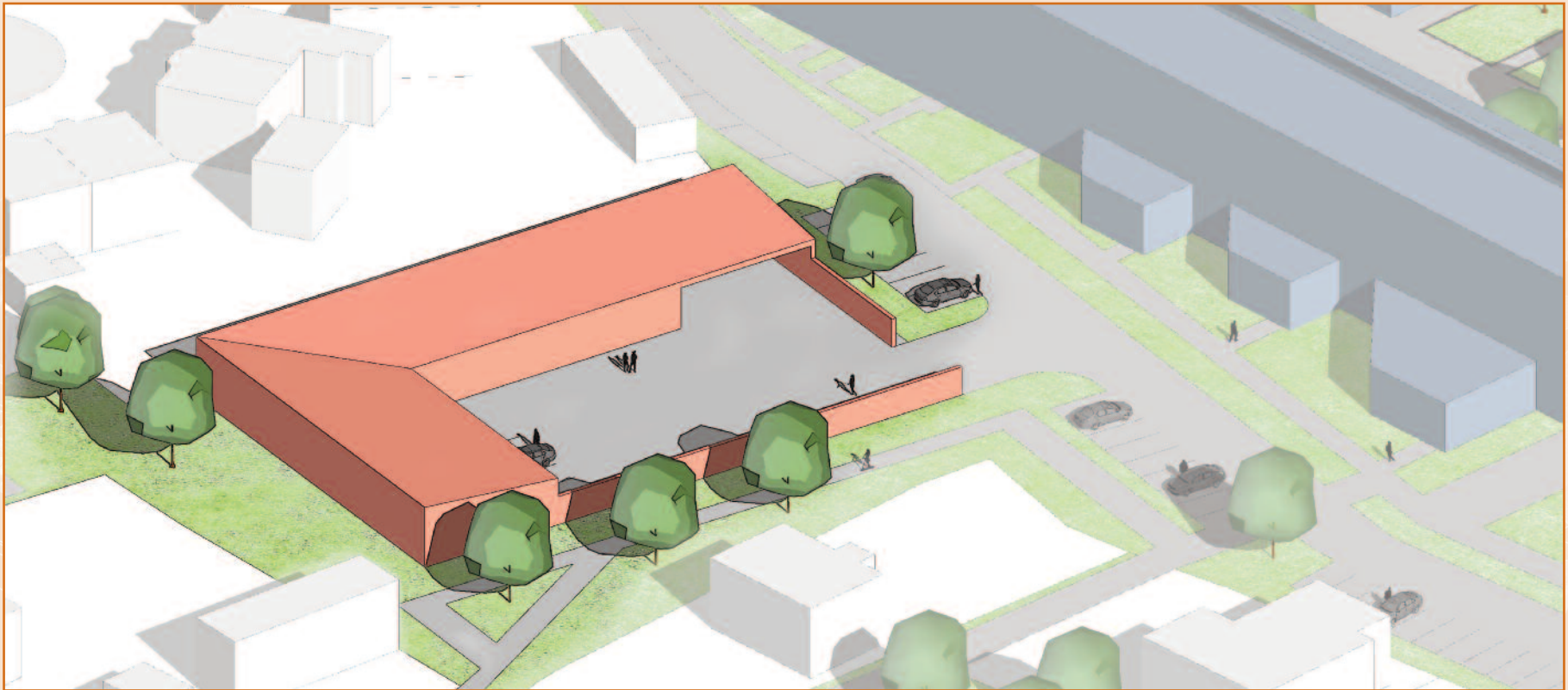
**MIC 12** | Limerick Development Site L06



**Masterplan Objective 02**

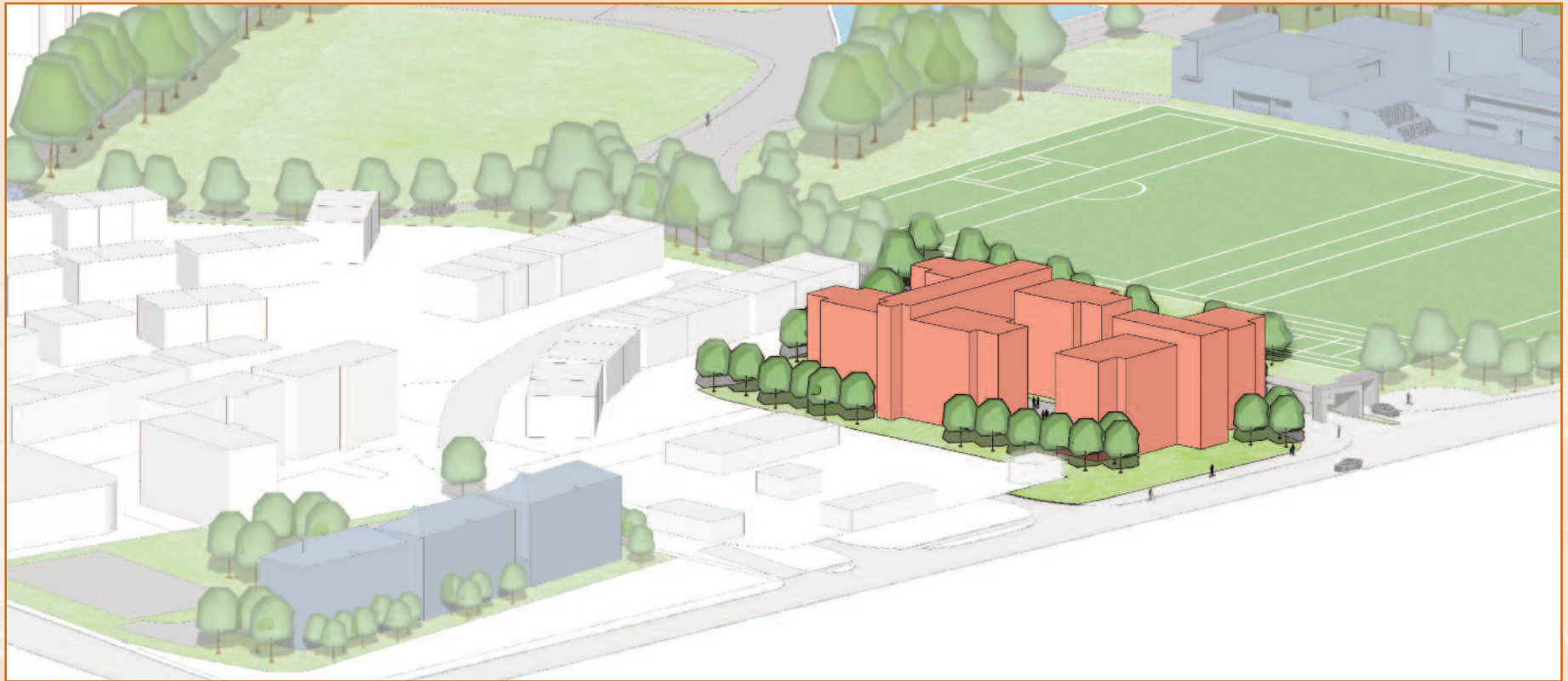
**Development of New Buildings and Facilities**

**MIC 13** | Limerick Development Site L07





**MIC 14** | Limerick Development Site L08



## Masterplan Objective 02

## Development of New Buildings and Facilities

### THURLES CAMPUS

The incorporation of what was formerly known as St Patrick's College Thurles, in 2016 marked a major new development direction for the MIC. Essentially, the building stock on the Thurles campus consists of the College building alone. Originally constructed in the 1830's and modified and extended throughout its lifetime, the College building stands majestically in the heart of expansive grounds totalling circa 24.5 hectares. MIC Thurles Campus, therefore, offers huge scope for development.

See: MIC 4 | Thurles Existing Campus Plan - p21

Following extensive internal consultation, the following key areas have been identified:

#### Modern Teaching Spaces

Teaching spaces within the main building are limited in terms of their flexibility and capacity. While works completed and planned will improve the facilities on a temporary basis, the College acknowledges that adequately equipped, purpose-built teaching accommodation is required to cater for larger cohorts.

#### Student Centre

Given the current student numbers and anticipated growth, there is a need for a dedicated Student Centre that will support the student journey through MIC and provide a place where students can relax, connect with one another and be supported. Accommodation could include student common rooms, café/bar,

contemplative space, retail units, radio station, alumni offices, rooms for Clubs & Societies and office spaces.

#### Canteen Accommodation

The growth of student numbers at MIC Thurles has put increasing pressure on the catering facilities. The current Canteen location is constrained in terms of physical expansion. It is also not best placed for kitchen facilities including deliveries and associated service yard.

#### Administration

The need for office accommodation to support an expanded offering at MIC Thurles is obvious. It is envisaged that the existing College building would provide much of this accommodation, with additional space being available as other facilities, currently accommodated within the College building, are relocated to purpose-built accommodation.

#### Student Residential Accommodation

The Residential Wing of the College building was extensively refurbished in 2016 creating 36 en-suite bedrooms with shared living accommodation organised across three floors.

In the context of growing student numbers, the College recognises the need to expand its offering and as such two locations have been identified on-campus for the development of Student Residential Accommodation in the short and long term.



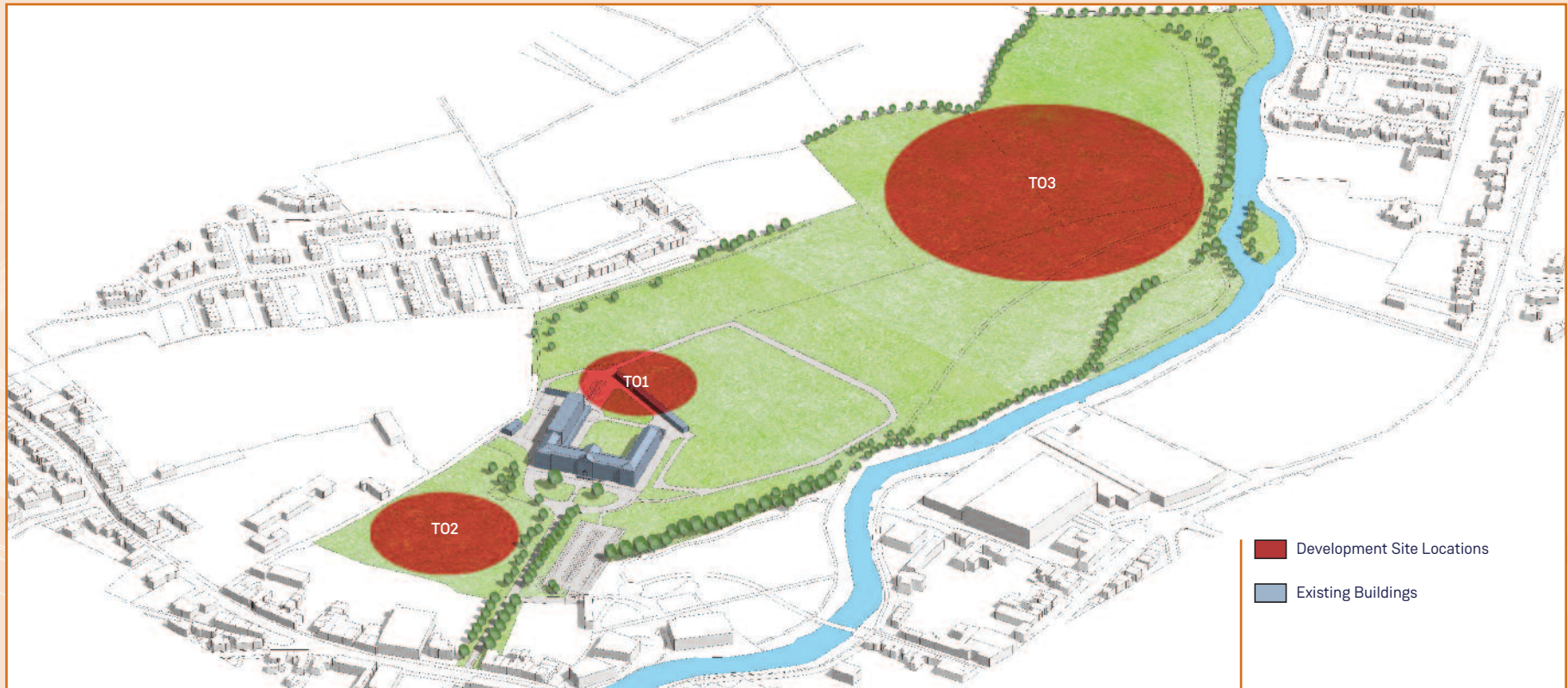
**MIC 15** | Thurles Campus – Demolitions



## Masterplan Objective 02

## Development of New Buildings and Facilities

### MIC 16 | Thurles Campus - Development Site Locations







In addition MIC welcomes engagement with third parties in the development of student accommodation off-campus. Such development would also serve to cement the role of the College in the life of the town and local community.

### **Sports Facilities**

The provision of adequate sports facilities is another area in which MIC seeks to expand. The provision of off-campus sports facilities is discussed further under Masterplan Objective 05.

### **Maintenance Facilities**

The development of the Thurles campus will result in dedicated facilities to support the proper management and maintenance of the grounds and buildings. A dedicated Maintenance Facility, to include office accommodation, workshops, equipment and parts storage, garages, waste disposal and external yard space, is another pressing need to allow the College to sustain itself into the future.

The following development sites have been identified on the Thurles campus to support and accommodate these expansion needs.

### **Development Site T01 – Teaching, Student Centre, Canteen, Administration & Maintenance**

As MIC Thurles develops and expands, the demand for additional, large capacity teaching spaces increases. The corollary of this growth is pressure on the full range of services that support activity at MIC Thurles, including Student Services, catering facilities, administrative functions and maintenance.

## Masterplan Objective 02

## Development of New Buildings and Facilities

The pattern of the existing building stock is very formal and presents in a u-shaped configuration that defines a generous quadrangle. The opportunity for future development is immense. However, one challenge may be piecemeal accretion in response to immediate needs, which risks resulting in small sized development that is out of scale with the massing of the existing building and difficult to develop further.

In particular, it is noted that the development site will support a building of at least three storeys. It is very difficult and disruptive to add additional floors to an existing building and so, for example, if the immediate need for teaching space results in a two-storey structure, due to limited funding, it will be difficult to realise the full development three storey potential of the site in the future.

For this reason, it is very important that the long-term needs of MIC Thurles are determined at an early stage and a building plan developed that permits the delivery of the plan in stages.

See: [MIC 17 | Thurles Campus - Development Site T01 - p43](#)

### **Development Site T02 – Student Residential Accommodation (Short Term)**

Following the successful conversion of the former dormitories into 36 single en-suite bedrooms across three storeys, the demand for on-campus student accommodation is clear. The site to the north of the main buildings, adjacent to the Avenue has identified the location for development. The location is close to town centre. The site will support two or three storey buildings and it is envisaged that the development will be designed to be delivered in phases in response to demand.

See: [MIC 18 | Thurles Campus - Development Site T02 - p45](#)

### **Development Site T03 – Student Residential Accommodation & Sports Facilities (Long Term)**

The Local Area Plan, published by Tipperary County Council, sets out plans for the future development of Thurles and one key objective is the delivery of the proposed Thurles Relief Road which will bisect the MIC Thurles campus to the south of the existing buildings and open up the lands behind the College. The construction of this road will transform the potential for development of the campus. This Masterplan envisages the development of additional student residential accommodation as well as greatly enhanced sports facilities to service a significantly expanded College building and infrastructure.

See: [MIC 19 | Thurles Campus - Development Site T03 - p46](#)

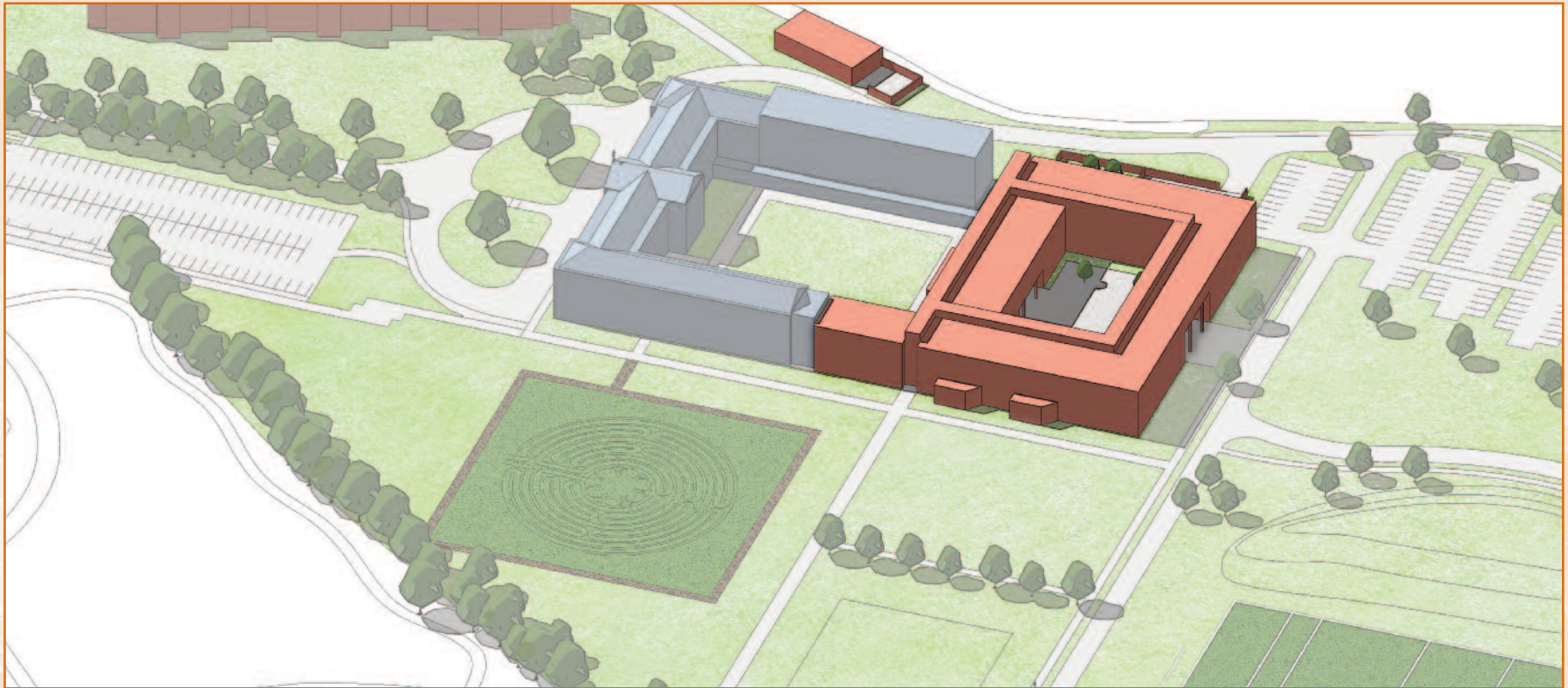
### **Phasing Strategy & Prioritisation – Thurles Campus**

The main building at MIC Thurles dates from 1837. The three-storey structure accommodates all aspects of the College functions. There is a particular need for purpose built teaching accommodation and the construction of this will allow for repurposing of much of the current sub-standard teaching space within the existing building.

In the medium term, as demand for courses at the MIC Thurles continues to expand, the need for improved support services and facilities (academic, social and residential) will grow and this Masterplan sets out a framework for the provision of this additional accommodation.



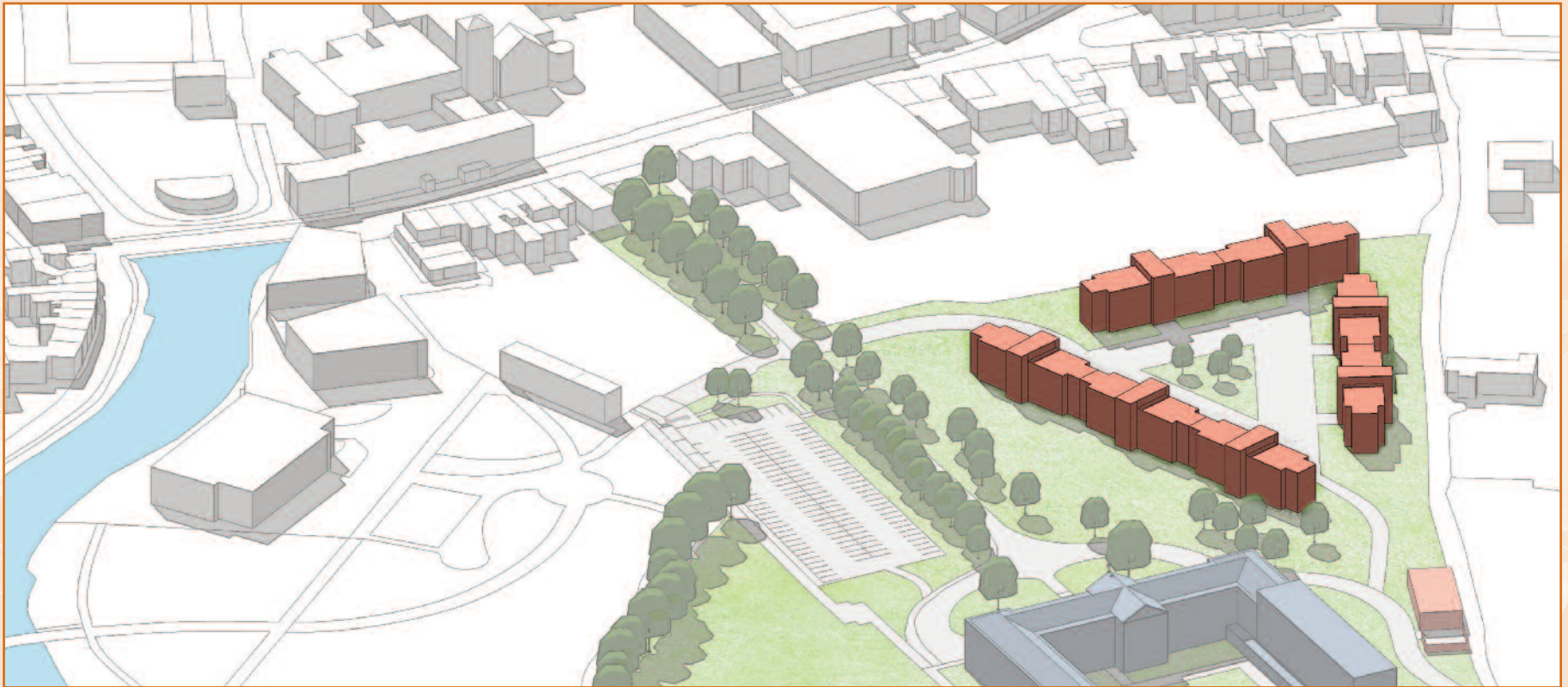
**MIC 17** | Thurles Campus - Development Site T01



**Masterplan Objective 02**

Development of New Buildings and Facilities

**MIC 18** | Thurles Campus - Development Site T02





**MIC 19** | Thurles Campus - Development Site T03



## Masterplan Objective 02

## Development of New Buildings and Facilities

### Design Principles

In considering the development of new buildings and modifications or extensions to existing structures, the following design principles are considered:

- Achieve architectural legibility: to make clear the relationships between important existing buildings such as the Foundation Building, Chapel and the Residential Block (Limerick Campus) or the main MIC Thurles Campus building and their respective settings
  - Carefully consider the selection of building materials in view of the architectural context, sustainability and maintenance
  - Promote the principles of conservation and sensitive interventions to the existing buildings and features of historical significance across both the Limerick and Thurles campuses
  - Promote and facilitate inclusivity by adhering to the Principles of Universal Design for living and learning which take cognisance of the physical and sensory needs of all building users, including the provision of gender-neutral facilities and a focus on good signage
  - Adhere to the Zoning Strategy for the Limerick and Thurles campuses
  - Provide a coherent movement network through the Campus to comprise pedestrian connections between building entrances and open spaces and the development of vehicular access around the perimeter of the Campus
  - Create a coherent network of open spaces that will in total comprise a landscape of learning. An important consideration in the evolution of both campuses is to ensure that buildings enclose and create space and that the quality of the space is properly revealed
- Assess boundary treatments to promote an open and welcoming campus while maintaining the privacy of adjacent landowners
  - Strengthen the relationship between MIC and the respective municipal area while recognising that the respective campuses are an entity unto itself. Clear gateways between the College and the municipal area should be established with particular emphasis placed on creating a sense of arrival and improving pedestrian and cycle connections between the campuses and the municipal area

### Zoning Strategy

The Limerick Campus has grown and evolved since its foundation at the turn of the 20th century. As buildings and facilities have been added, growing in stages to the north-west of the Foundation Building and increasing the building footprint of the College, the opportunity arises to assess how the various functions of the College are organised across the campus.

In particular, it is noted that the Foundation Building (1898) and the Residential Block (1956) lie at the heart of the campus. However, in many ways the accommodation within these buildings is not in tune with current requirements. The teaching spaces on the second and third floors of the Foundation Building generally do not serve as modern, technologically enhanced teaching spaces. In addition the student accommodation in the Residential Block was also sub-standard ahead of a College decision to close this use in 2018. As new teaching spaces are constructed and student accommodation developed either on-campus or off-campus, the opportunity arises to repurpose these buildings for administrative use.



This Masterplan presents a zoning strategy for the future development of the Limerick and Thurles Campuses. The primary aim of the zoning strategy is to direct at high level the placing of future development and the repurposing of existing buildings within the context of both campuses.

### **Infrastructure**

The Limerick campus underwent significant development in the period 2005-2010 with the construction of the Tailteann and TARA Buildings and associated developments. A key component of those developments was the implementation of a strategic services layout for the routing of building services. As a consequence, the Limerick campus has the services infrastructure in place to support the future development as outlined in this Masterplan.

The Thurles campus was acquired in 2016. The main building on the Thurles campus dates from 1837 and the infrastructure serving the campus has been installed incrementally. In advance of the future significant development of MIC Thurles, a detailed study of the adequacy of existing services to and from the campus should be undertaken and a strategic plan for the upgrade of services should be put in place.



**Masterplan Objective 03****Acquisition of Strategic Sites**

Mary Immaculate College has ambition to grow and develop into the future. This Masterplan has identified several development sites within the boundaries of the current Limerick Campus that can accommodate much of this development.

See: **MIC 6 | Limerick Development Site Locations** - p26

Notwithstanding this, the College is ever cognisant of its location within Limerick City Centre and the limitations that puts on the College for expansion beyond its current boundaries. Accordingly, it is incumbent on the College to identify strategic sites within the vicinity of the current campus in which the College may have an interest in acquiring if they were to become available.

In considering acquisition of strategic sites it is important to give due consideration of potential uses for those sites. While it is generally accepted that the development sites within the confines of the existing campus are adequate to meet the short, medium and long term growth needs of the College in terms of teaching, office and accommodation for the lifespan of this Masterplan, the College has associated space requirements for additional building accommodation – particularly in the areas of student residential accommodation and recreation facilities – that are best located on the periphery of the campus.

The strategic sites identified here refer to general land mass and not to specific properties per se, although in instances sites may be in sole ownership of one party.

**Strategic Site 01**

The first of these strategic sites is the land between the South Circular Road and O'Connell Avenue. This land mass has an overall site area of circa 1.1 hectares. This site is of strategic importance for the following reasons:

- Location of Strategic Site 01 is directly across the South Circular Road from the original Limerick campus
- Location directly adjacent to the John Henry Newman building
- Significant land area would safeguard the long term development and expansion of the College
- Excellent road frontage onto both O'Connell Avenue and the South Circular Road
- Existing 'Education' land zoning

**Strategic Site 02**

The College has a limited student residential accommodation offering at the corner of Courtbrack Avenue and the Dock Road. This existing development is close to the Courtbrack Avenue entrance to the Limerick campus but is separated from the campus by a site used as a fuel depot. This site is also directly adjacent to one of the development sites identified within the existing campus and the combined site area of the existing development site and Strategic Site 02 is circa 0.3 hectares. This site is of strategic importance for the following reasons:



- Location of Strategic Site 02 is directly adjacent to the Limerick campus and fronts onto Courtbrack Avenue at a location close to the Dock Road
- Amalgamation of the Strategic Site 02 with the development site on the existing campus unlocks greater potential for significant development
- Strategic Site 02 is directly adjacent to the College's existing student residential accommodation offering allowing consolidation of this use in one zone convenient to the existing campus

The lifespan of this Masterplan stretches to 2042. When one looks at the development that has taken place within the existing campus since the original 2000 Masterplan was published (including the expansion of the campus across the South Circular Road to incorporate the former Mount St Vincent property) it is clear that the College must continue to identify and evaluate the potential of strategic sites within the vicinity of the campus.

In terms of the MIC Thurles, it is considered that the extensive lands that comprise the College property are likely to meet the short, medium and long term needs of the College. Notwithstanding this, the College will continue to review opportunities that arise adjacent to the campus on a case by case basis.

This will also hold true for Limerick campus expansion considerations.





**Masterplan Objective 04****Conservation of Architectural Heritage**

Mary Immaculate College was founded in Limerick in 1898 and the Foundation Building dates from this year. The College campus has grown organically in the intervening years and several of the buildings on the campus have been included both on the Register of Protected Structures maintained by Limerick City & County Council and the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The acquisition of the former Mount St Vincent Convent complex, since developed as the John Henry Newman Building and an extension of the Limerick campus, has added to the number of Protected Structures in the ownership of the College. The current list of Protected Structures on the Limerick Campus are as follows:

- The Foundation Building
- The Recreation Hall
- The Chapel
- The Residential Block
- Summerville House
- Summerville Lodge
- John Henry Newman Building
- John Henry Newman Chapel
- St Vincent's Hall

In addition to protected structures, it is important to note that the Limerick campus falls partially within two Architectural Conservation Areas as set out in the Limerick City Development Plan.

See: MIC 20 | Limerick RPS & ACA (Protected Structures & Architectural Conservation Areas) - p52

In Thurles, the campus has an even longer history dating back to the 1830's. The current list of Protected Structures on the Thurles Campus are as follows:

- MIC Thurles main building
- Gated entrance to the campus

In accordance with the obligations set out in the Planning & Development Act 2000, MIC is committed to the protection of the Protected Structures in its ownership through conservation best practice including their preservation, repair, restoration and refurbishment as appropriate. Indeed, it is widely recognised that one of the best ways of ensuring that a Protected Structure does not fall into disrepair is to keep it in use.

Notwithstanding this, the continued use of protected structures does provide many challenges. This is particularly the case where the nature of the current use differs from the original use of the protected structure and where the new use has particular requirements that lead to impacts on the fabric, appearance or setting of the Protected Structure.

Therefore, in addition to physical interventions to building layout that may be required to suit new usages, the requirement to provide modern services, in



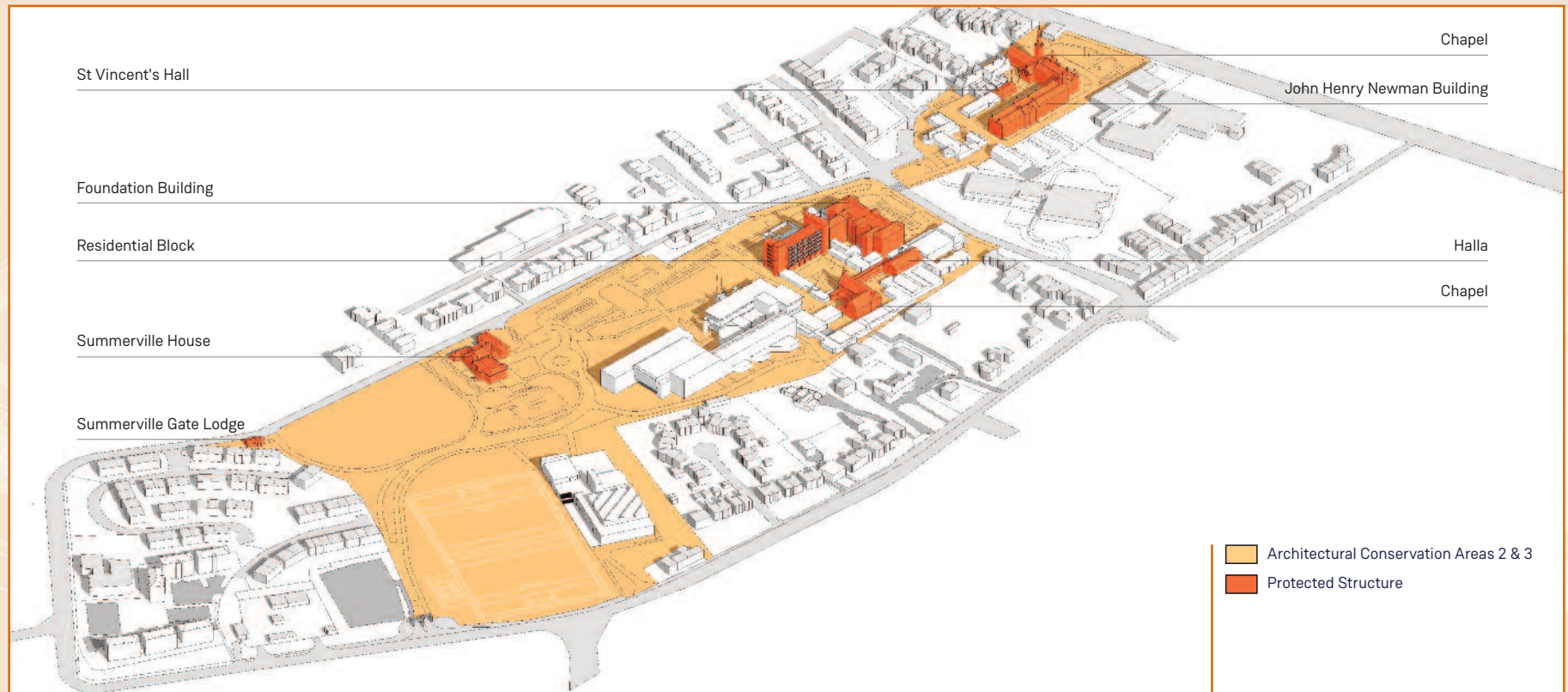




**Masterplan Objective 04**

**Conservation of Architectural Heritage**

**MIC 20 | Limerick RPS & ACA (Protected Structures & Architectural Conservation Areas)**





terms of lighting, space heating, ICT fit-out, fire detection and security fittings, are challenges that need careful consideration.

A further challenge is the thermal upgrade of these buildings. Notwithstanding the many dispensations permitted within the building regulations for protected structures, there remains a prerogative on the College to upgrade the thermal performance of its building stock to conserve energy and to ensure the thermal comfort of the building users.

The College has an excellent track record of sensitively redeveloping the protected structures on the campus and of repurposing these buildings for new uses. In the past 10 years, the College has committed to the extensive renovation of the former Mount St Vincent Convent and its redevelopment to become the John Henry Newman building. At a much smaller scale, Summerville Lodge underwent a careful restoration and is now back in use as a Franco-German Language Centre.

It is in recognition of its statutory obligation as a custodian of the protected structures in its ownership that the College has published a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) in 2020 to ensure the protection and careful management of those buildings located on the Limerick campus.

The CMP sets out the history of the development of the Limerick campus and the management principles to be applied to ensure the continued conservation of the historic buildings found there. In particular, the CMP sets out a careful

analysis of each of the protected structures on the Limerick campus and using a traffic light system identifies and grades the features of each building in order of importance. While the CMP does not negate the need to properly assess the impact of any new design proposal or physical intervention as they arise over during the continuing evolution of development of the campus, it does set out a framework against which such an impact assessment can be considered. The development of a CMP for the Thurles campus will be considered.

**See: MIC 21 | Thurles RPS & ACA (Protected Structures & Architectural Conservation Areas) - p54**

Mary Immaculate College values its built heritage and the proper conservation of that heritage is an Objective of this Masterplan. The publication of the CMP is a milestone for the College in putting in place a structure around the continued protection and conservation of the protected structures in its care. The College is committed to investing in its buildings and to their continued development in a manner that is sensitive to their character and historic interest to meet the changing needs of a growing campus.

**Masterplan Objective 04**

Conservation of Architectural Heritage

**MIC 21** | Thurles RPS & ACA (Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas)









**Masterplan Objective 05****Development of Sports Facilities Off-Campus**

Mary Immaculate College has a proud sporting history. Students and alumni have represented county and country in various sports including GAA, rugby, athletics, handball, soccer, rowing and more. In any given year, the College has various levels of teams participating in Gaelic games, rugby, soccer and basketball - competing in intervarsity leagues and tournaments.

The role of sport in fostering friendships and community as well as promoting health and well-being is an important consideration for the College and its students and staff. However, at MIC the need for proper sports facilities has an additional dimension. The College is one of the main educators of Primary Level school teachers and the teaching of Physical Education is a core requirement of that syllabus. It is imperative that the student teachers of today receive their learning at an institution that values sport and provides the facilities to allow as broad a learning experience as possible in the area of sport.

The existing Limerick campus offers some excellent indoor and outdoor sports facilities. The Tailteann Building, completed in 2007 comprises dedicated sports and recreation facilities including three flexible gym spaces (900 sq.m., 322 sq.m. and 299 sq.m. respectively), a weights room, changing rooms and table tennis facilities.

Directly outside and to the north of the Tailteann Building lies the main sports pitch which is a grass pitch sized to accommodate GAA games. The main sports pitch features artificial grass at the goal mouths and has goal netting behind each set of goals. A 460 metre all-weather running track traces the

perimeter of this pitch and there is an all-weather tennis court adjacent to it.

Across the road from the main sports pitch lies a grassed area which falls gently from Summerville House towards Summerville Lodge on the original front lawn of Summerville House. It is bounded by an old stone wall and mature trees along Summerville Avenue. Significant remedial works were carried out to the Training Area in 2013 to transform it from soil based to sand based to help the grassed area to endure the sustained use it gets throughout the academic year.

Notwithstanding the existence of these facilities, the overall sports offering on campus is inadequate given both existing student numbers and the future growth potential of the College. In effect, the College has one outdoor pitch which has to be shared for GAA games, soccer and rugby. The training area has been assessed from conversion to a dedicated sports pitch but the size, shape and levels do not meet the criteria of any of the main sports uses. The lack of a selection of outdoor grass pitches and full size, flood-lit all-weather pitches is severely limiting.

The College has investigated the feasibility of developing off-site sports facilities at a location somewhat adjacent to the Limerick campus. Options are limited due to the City Centre location of the campus, the amount of land required to develop significant facilities and the cost of property, again negatively impacted by the College's city centre location.





The College is also exploring the possibility of developing facilities in partnership with the Local Authority. In particular, the development of community amenities at Mungret Park and the education campus adjacent to it already comprising two primary level schools and one secondary level school presents an opportunity for partnership development. Access to such a facility would be greatly enhanced by the introduction of adequate cycle lanes between the College and Mungret, a distance of circa 5km.

MIC Thurles has far lower student numbers and limited on-campus provision which consists mainly of a full-size GAA pitch and hurling wall. The College recognises the importance of sports facilities in attracting students to Thurles and is committed to the development of improved amenities to be located on the College grounds.

At the same time, it is recognised that Thurles Town has its own sports offering and indeed the College has arrangements in place with the Thurles Leisure Centre located adjacent to the campus for use of their gym facilities by MIC staff and students. Cooperation and joint venture opportunities are likely to continue to underpin the provision and development of sports facilities in Thurles.

It is clear that the existing Limerick Campus does not have sufficient space to permit development of extensive sports facilities on site and therefore an off-site solution is required. The College remains committed to identifying and developing appropriate sports facilities to further enhance student life, promote health and wellbeing and to further contribute to teacher training which is at the core of the College's mission. Therefore, the development of off-site sports facilities in Limerick while exploring partnership solutions in Thurles is a core objective of this Masterplan.



## Masterplan Objective 06 Promoting Sustainability

Mary Immaculate College is committed to leadership in the area of climate change. The College is a partner of the An Taisce Green Campus initiative and is active in the promotion of sustainability initiatives across both the Limerick and Thurles campuses. In particular, the College recognises its role in the education of tomorrow's school teachers who themselves will influence future generations. The College aims to:

1. Minimise the impact of buildings on the global and local environment
2. Create buildings which are simple and cost-effective to operate
3. Create indoor environments that are flexible and responsive to user needs
4. Promote an active campus life for its students and staff whereby walking and cycling is encouraged
5. Protect and foster bio-diversity
6. Reduce waste and promote recycling

To assist in attaining these goals, the College has identified four key pillars in its approach to fostering a culture of sustainable action.

### Pillar 01 – Physical Development

Energy efficiency is a fundamental principle to be reflected in the development of all new proposed campus buildings. To this end, it is noted that building standards for the conservation of fuel and energy have improved considerably over the past decade and the standard today is for Near Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB). The following guidelines are descriptive rather than prescriptive but

set out the measures to be considered in the design and delivery of future building projects:

- Building form to be developed to promote natural ventilation and natural daylighting and to realise passive techniques for the control of solar gain in summer and the reduction of heat losses in winter
- Building materials to make maximum use of recycled material, to promote longevity and to avoid the use of hazardous materials inside the buildings
- Building fabric to achieve U values that exceed current building regulations and strive for passive standard
- Consideration of the embodied energy of products when preparing building specifications
- Mechanical and electrical services to be designed to achieve maximum points under the Building Research Establishment Environmental Analysis Method (BREEAM) Assessment
- Building sanitary flushing systems to make use of grey water systems from stored rainwater
- Minimise light pollution from the buildings and from external lighting
- Accessibility and maintainability of all parts of the buildings

In addition, MIC recognises that it has significant existing building stock with many of the buildings constructed in the 19th and early to mid-20th centuries. Many of these are Protected Structures and have exemptions from the need to comply with certain provisions of the building regulations. It is recognised





that the re-use of existing building stock is itself sustainable development and in many cases is preferable to demolition and replacement.

Notwithstanding this, there are many measures that can be considered to reduce the energy consumption of these buildings including:

- Thermal upgrade of building fabric and replacement windows and doors
- Replacement heating systems, use of seven-day timeclocks and appropriate zoning
- Smart metering and BMS systems
- Use of water conserving sanitaryware items
- Installation of heat recovery ventilation systems
- Replacement of electrical fittings with low energy items and use of LED lighting
- Integration of renewable energy sources to contribute to space heating, hot water provision and generation of electricity

In terms of external works, the impact of new buildings and infrastructure such as roads and parking area in generating increased rainwater run-off is recognised. The use of permeable surfaces where appropriate and the construction of swales and French drains to attenuate stormwater water should be considered as part of future external works development.

## **Pillar 02 - Mobility**

The movement of people and goods both to and from the campuses in Limerick and Thurles as well as across the campuses themselves will change over the next two decades as Government policy discourages the use of individual vehicles in favour of sustainable modes of transport. We consider mobility from the perspective of the pedestrian, cyclist and vehicle.

See: [MIC 22 | Limerick Mobility \(Pedestrian and Cycle routes through Limerick Campus\)](#) - p60

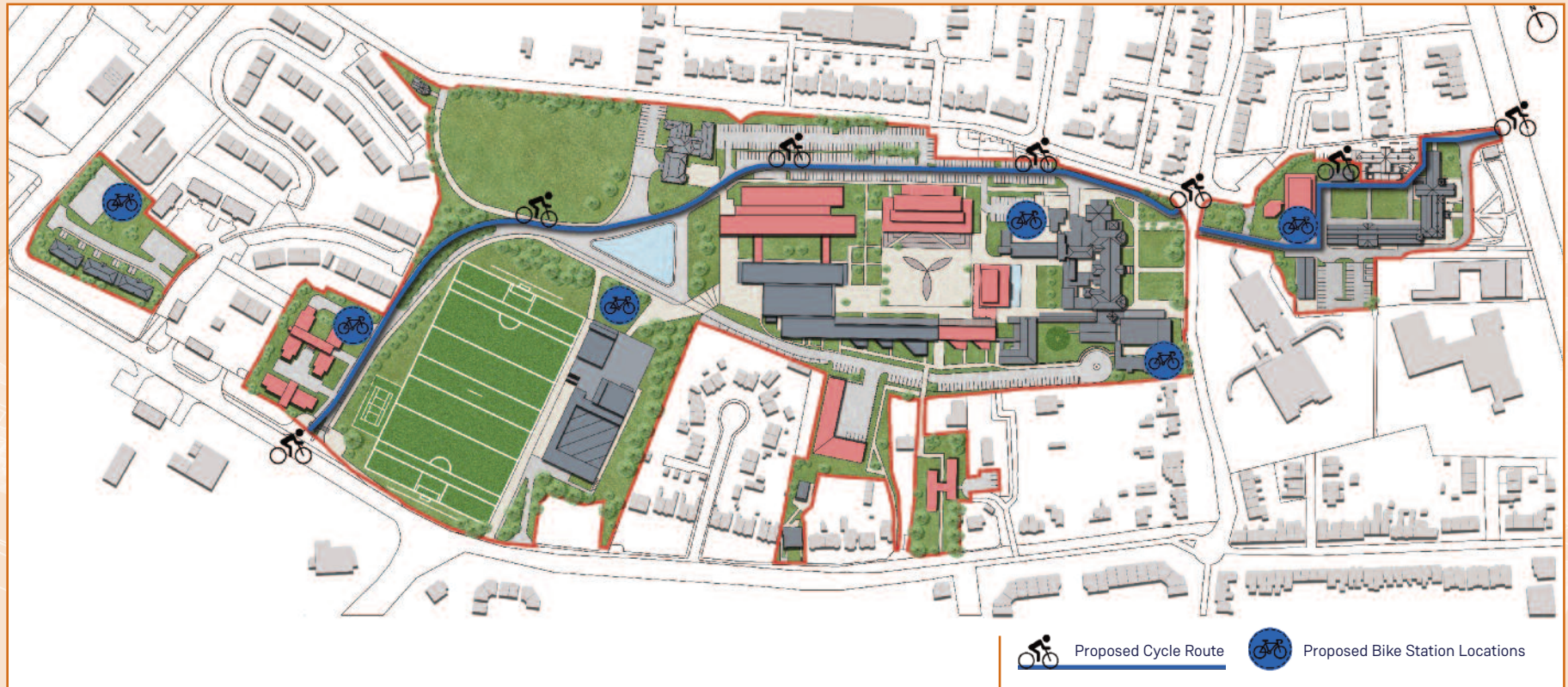
[MIC 23 | Thurles Mobility \(Pedestrian and Cycle routes through Thurles Campus\)](#) - p62

### **Pedestrians**

Since the publication of the first Campus Masterplan, the College has recognised the importance of pedestrian movement across campus as an organising principle in the development of the built environment. The 2000 Campus Masterplan first developed the concept An tSlí as the main internal pedestrian spine leading from the Main Entrance by the Foundation Building to the TARA Building and Tailteann Building beyond. In parallel, the quality of paving on pedestrian routes has been enhanced and today the Limerick campus provides a network of paths that link all the College buildings. Indeed, to this end significant development work was undertaken in 2017 to create a strong pedestrian link to the John Henry Newman Building and Gerard House. This link can be further enhanced with a 'raised table' pedestrian crossing and traffic calming at South Circular Road.

**Masterplan Objective 06** Promoting Sustainability

**MIC 22** | Limerick Mobility (Pedestrian and Cycle Routes through Limerick Campus)







The College is giving equal focus to the development of improved pedestrian facilities at the Thurles campus. Planning permission has been received for a new footpath along the avenue from the main College building to Cathedral Street as well as for a new pedestrian link to the Farmer's Market development adjacent to the campus which will provide more direct access from the campus to the Source Arts Centre and the Leisure Centre as well as Thurles Town Centre.

### **Cyclists**

MIC has been a strong supporter of the Limerick Smarter Travel initiative led by Limerick City & County Council. There are city bike stands located at the entrance to the Limerick campus on the South Circular Road and to the John Henry Newman Building on O'Connell Avenue.

As part of the development of the John Henry Newman Building, MIC constructed a shared Pedestrian/Cycle way through the building complex to promote connectivity and linkages across the campus. The College has also constructed dedicated covered cycle parking areas by the John Henry Newman Building and at the rear of the Staff Lounge.

MIC is further committed to enhancing facilities for cyclists to include:

- Secure cycle stands at strategic locations across both campuses
- Covered cycle storage areas
- Provision of lockers and shower accommodation

The College welcomes recent initiatives by Limerick City & County Council for the provision of dedicated cycle lanes along public road including the recent announcement of a cycle lane along the South Circular Road.

### **Vehicles**

It is clear that Government policy is to reduce the individual's reliance on the car as a mode of transport. In terms of car usage, the level of usage of existing on-campus car parking both in Limerick and Thurles indicates the high volume of vehicular traffic currently. The new development standards for car parking provision issued by the Local Authorities mean that future provision will be restricted.

In this context, the College will take the lead in promoting the reduction of car usage through the following initiatives:

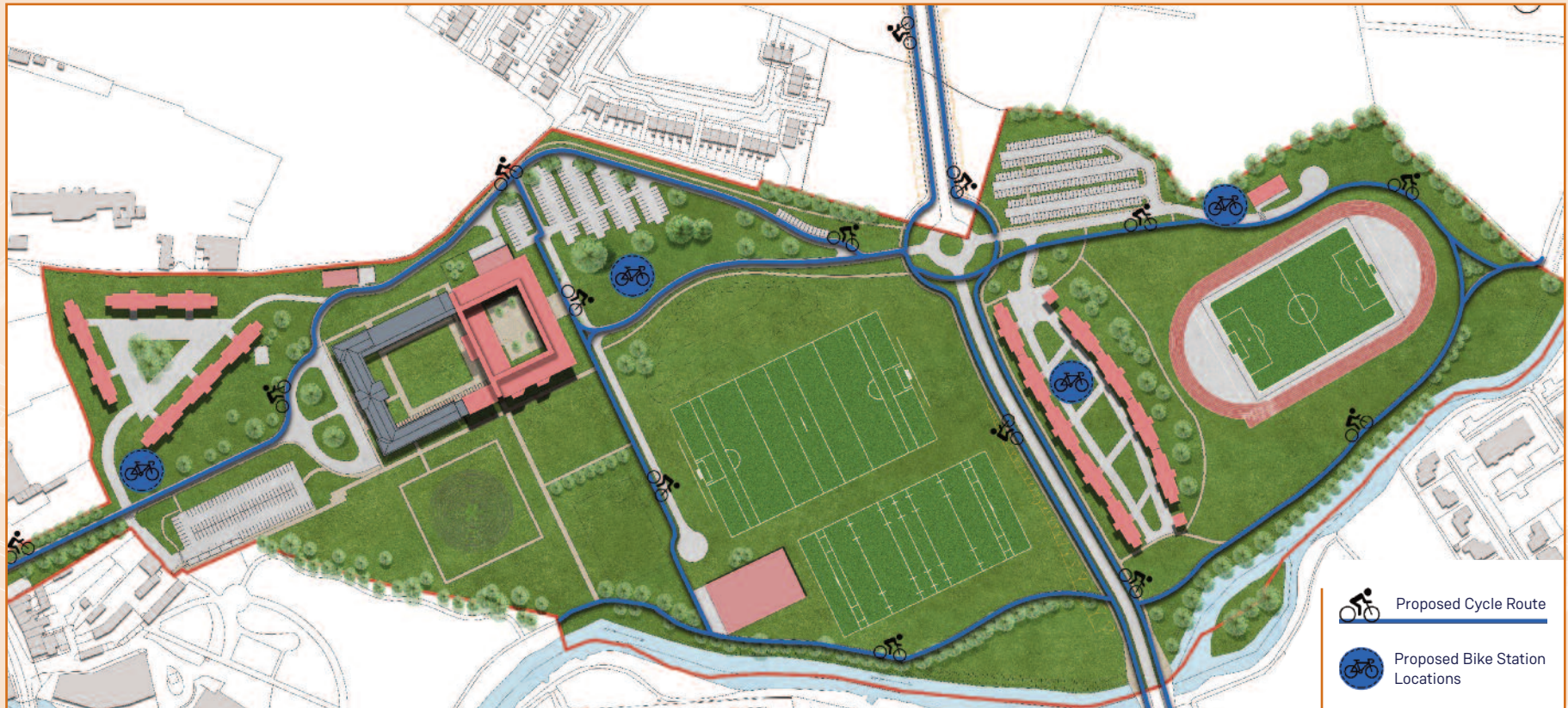
- Promotion and incentivise car-pooling for staff and students
- Promotion of 'park and ride' initiatives
- Promotion of shuttle bus transport to connect with public transport nodes
- Provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure across both campuses



## Masterplan Objective 06

## Promoting Sustainability

### MIC 23 | Thurles Mobility (Pedestrian and Cycle Routes through Thurles Campus)







## Masterplan Objective 06

## Promoting Sustainability

In addition to staff and students, MIC maintains a fleet of vehicles connected with the maintenance of MIC facilities and is committed to transitioning from internal combustion engine powered vehicles.

### **Pillar 03 - Ecology**

Both the Limerick and Thurles Campuses are set in natural, parkland settings that are home to a wide species of flora and fauna and the College is committed to the protection of the landscapes and habitats within its domain.

As a general principle, the College will seek to maintain and protect existing trees by way of tree survey and assessment before site works, including measures for tree protection in the specification and monitoring tree protection during site works. From time to time, mature trees will be lost due to weather events, decay or development and where trees are lost, the College is committed their replacement within the Campus.

The Campus is a natural habitat to a range of species both in its landscaped setting and buildings and the College is committed to supporting this biodiversity. Where appropriate, and in advance of development works, the College will commission an ecology report on the impact of the works and will implement the recommendations for mitigating measures to ensure that habitats are protected within the campus.

### **Pillar 04 - Waste Management**

MIC is committed to the reduction in waste generation at all levels of the organisation. It promotes a paperless work environment and the use of technology for communications between staff, students and outside organisations.

In order to reduce the production of waste, the College encourages the re-use of materials. Where the elimination of waste is not possible, the College promotes the recycling of waste.

The development of greater on-site recycling facilities is being considered and would form part of the brief requirements for the development of a future Maintenance Facility as envisaged







## Masterplan Objective 07 Nurturing Environment

Mary Immaculate College occupies two campuses, in Limerick and in Thurles, that benefit enormously from the fact that they were first established in the 19th century with the result that their landscape assets are very mature. In both locations, buildings site in a 'parkland' with many mature trees and landscape features.

See: **MIC 24 | Limerick Landscape Assets (Trees, Lawns and Green areas) - p67**

The Limerick campus is largely made up of an amalgamation of former demesnes set in what is known as 'villa landscape'. One of these, Summerville House, is now a college building as is its Gate Lodge – evidence of the sweeping drive survives and the former front lawn is now the training pitch. Richmond House is also in the ownership of the College and the names of the other old residences live on today in street names.

The Thurles campus sits on extensive grounds with a formal tree lined avenue stretching from Cathedral Street to the main building to the north and expansive fields with a distinctly rural character extending to the south and west.

The principle objectives around nurturing the environment will consist of:

- Maintenance and renewal of the existing landscape character of the campuses as a key component of the College's identity and image

- Development of a coherent and varied series of landscaped open spaces that are integrated with building use and movement
- Establishment of the relationships between key historic buildings and their respective landscape settings
- Identification and protective of habitats to be found on the campuses

In terms of landscaped assets, the Masterplan sets out four distinct types which align with these objectives as follows:

### Significant Tree Clusters

As mentioned above, the Limerick campus is predominantly an amalgamation of former demesnes, each of which would have consisted a fine residence and associated grounds. The trees planted when these demesnes were established are now mature tree-stands and are a significant feature of the parkland campus. Indeed, the pattern of natural landscaping recorded on the Ordnance Survey maps of the late 19th century can still be observed in aerial photography of the Campus taken today. The Thurles campus dates from the establishment of St. Patricks College in 1837 and is similarly endowed with mature tree-stands, particularly along the approach avenue from Cathedral Street and around the campus boundaries to the south.

Work has been undertaken to survey the significant trees on the Limerick campus and their on-going preservation should be at the centre of landscaping strategy for MIC. A similar survey should be carried out on the Thurles Campus.



**MIC 24** | Limerick Landscape Assets (Trees, Lawns and Green Areas)



## Masterplan Objective 07 Nurturing Environment

Where existing trees are lost, due to disease, damage or development, replacement trees should be planted to ensure that natural habitats are maintained. The campus-wide strategy is to maintain the character of buildings and open parkland and therefore the priority is to continue to upgrade and maintain the tree and woodland stock so as to ensure the future longevity of this parkland landscape.

### Open Greens

The Limerick campus retains two large open greens both used now as pitches. These open greens are an asset, not just in terms of sporting facilities but also as a relief to the denser development between the Foundation Building to the west leading to the TARA and Tailteann buildings to the east. These open green spaces along long vista back across the campus and provide a sense of space and place within the grounds of the College.

On the Thurles campus, there is no shortage of open space to the south and west of campus, as well as a generous open site adjacent to the approach avenue to the north. The full size GAA pitch leads onto open fields stretching back to the College boundary. It should be noted that the lands along the banks of the River Suir are prone to flooding and therefore are most suited to a wetlands landscape solution that adds diversity to the habitats to be found on the College Campus.



### Formal Landscaped Spaces

In addition to the mature tree-stands and open spaces which lend themselves to the 'parkland campus' characteristic that defines both the Limerick and Thurles campuses, both campuses also feature more formal landscaped spaces. The enclosed square or courtyard is an architectural archetype with a long historical pedigree, originating as the cloister in the medieval monastery and featuring as the enclosed university quadrangle or 'quad'. Existing spaces on the Limerick campus include the Quad behind the Foundation Building, the plaza between the existing Library and the TARA Building and the 'quad' to the rear of the John Henry Newman building.

This Masterplan envisages further development of such spaces, including the new Library Plaza, as envisaged as part of the developed design for the proposed Library & Learning Resource Centre Building and a 'Presidents Garden' to be located adjacent to the Chapel in line with An tSlí. It also proposes that the car park to the front of the Foundation Building should be redeveloped to present a more formal entrance forecourt extending from the Foundation Building to the South Circular Road.



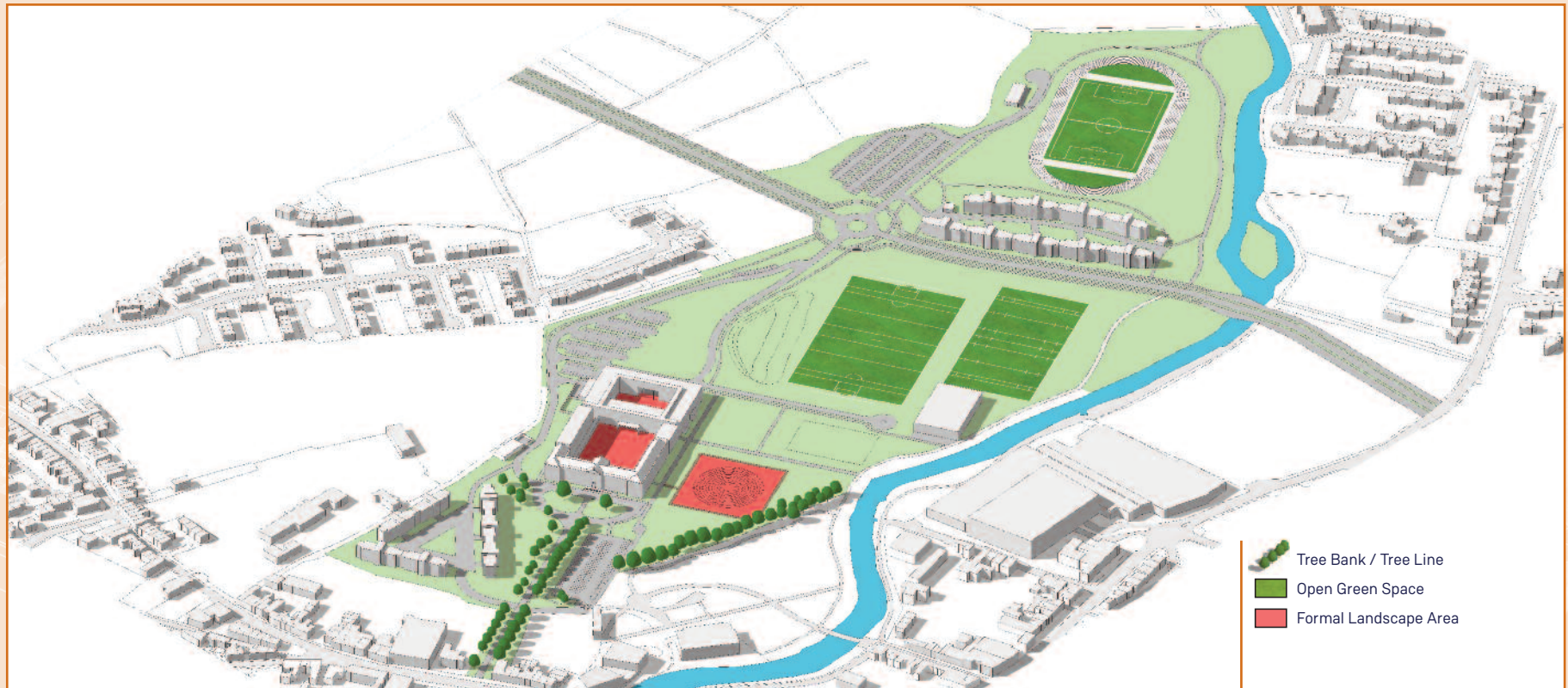




## Masterplan Objective 07

## Nurturing Environment

### MIC 25 | Thurles Landscape Assets (Trees, Lawns and Green Areas)







In Thurles, the College building sits formally within the grounds and the existing u-shaped configuration of the building frames a quadrangle. However, in its current configuration, it is rather devoid of features and it is anticipated that this quadrangle could be developed further as part of a larger future development of the campus extending south to meet the future ring-road planned by the Local Authority.

See: **MIC 25 | Thurles Landscape Assets (Trees, Lawns and Green Areas) - P70**

#### **Habitats**

In addition to formal and informal, hard and soft landscaped spaces, the natural habitats that the parkland campuses support should also be understood. Limited bat surveys have been carried out to facilitate the development of the John Henry Newman Building and the proposed Library & Learning Resource Centre Building and these surveys have confirmed the presence of bats. Further study of the natural habitats within the College grounds at both the Limerick and Thurles campuses should be undertaken so that these habitats can be protected.



## Masterplan Objective 08 Community & Connectivity

Mary Immaculate College is proud to be the longest established third-level educational institution based in the centre of Limerick City. While originally fronting onto the South Circular Road, the acquisition and development of the John Henry Newman building has extended the Limerick Campus onto the City's primary road artery on O'Connell Avenue which gives the College a reach and connection unmatched by others.

MIC Thurles is similarly well placed. Although the existing College building is set well back from the public road, the campus itself is within a short distance of the town centre and the proposed relief road that will traverse the campus east-west will also open up the College lands and create greater connectivity.



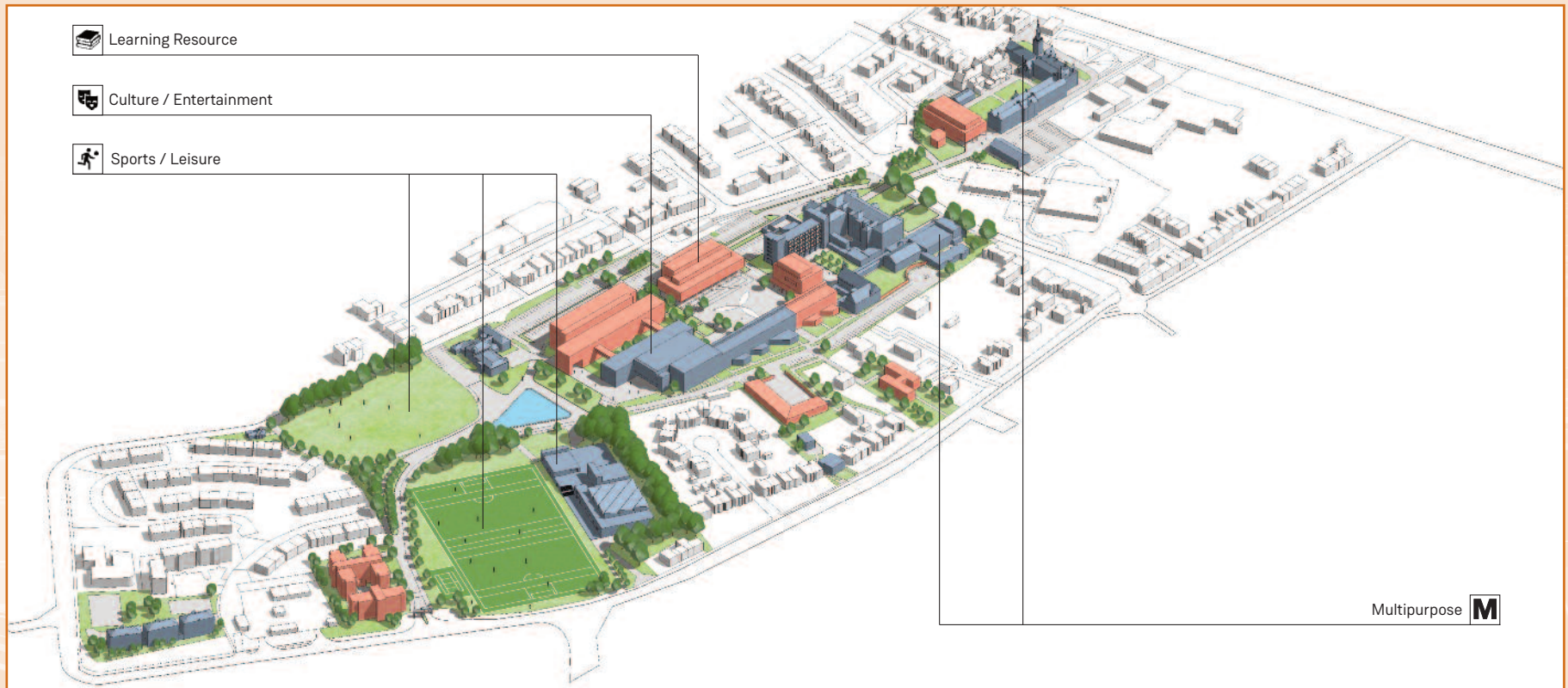
Over the past 20 years since the publication of the College's first Masterplan there has been an increasing focus on the development of facilities that benefit not only the College community but the city of Limerick as a whole. The Campus itself has developed significantly in the intervening period with the construction of Tailteann (2007) and TARA (2010) buildings and the associated site development works and including the Courtbrack entrance to the Campus, the Sports Pitch and Training Area and enhanced road network and car parking.

Works in and around the Foundation Building have also been significant in reinforcing the position of the College in Limerick City. The lowered boundary wall fronting onto the South Circular Road, reconfiguration of car parking and enhanced landscaping to the front of the Foundation Building have opened up a new vista into the College. The construction of the new Main Entrance and Foyer, refurbishment of the Halla, creation of the Quad and the gradual refurbishment of some of the older areas of the original College buildings have begun a gradual transformation of the original College buildings in line with the evolution of the College.

With these changes, the campus has become part of the fabric of the city and has been embraced by its citizens. The College grounds are an amenity enjoyed by the general public who have access also to its sports facilities. The opening of the Lime Tree Theatre, in the TARA Building, has heralded a new dawn in the provision of a state-of-the-art venue for the performing arts which has been embraced by both local groups as well as staging national and interna-

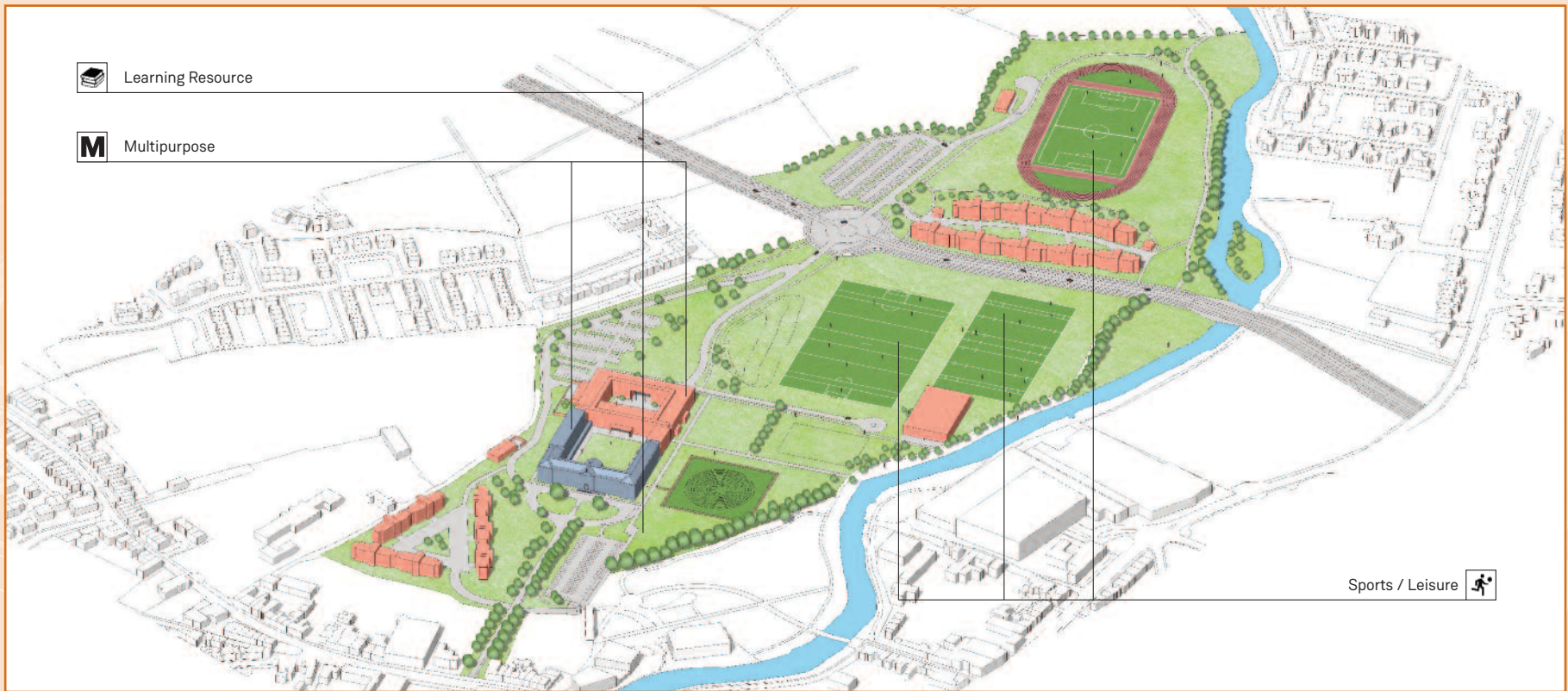


## MIC 26 | Limerick Community (Existing Community Facilities)



**Masterplan Objective 08** Community & Connectivity

**MIC 27** | Thurles Community (Existing Community Facilities)







tional performances. The College's teaching facilities are used by outside groups all year round and especially during the summer period when camps and courses are run for young and old.

Future developments include the development of a new Library & Learning Resource Centre to meet the current and projected the needs of the student body as well as the conversion of the former Chapel at the John Henry Newman building for use as a Learning Workshop space. MIC is committed to the Limerick Smarter Travel initiative and has made significant contributions to expanding the cycle path network.

The College is committed to working in partnership with Limerick City & County Council and playing its part in the sustainable growth and development of the city as well facilitating the enhancement of the city by offering its campus and facilities as an amenity to be shared with the wider community.

Similarly in Thurles, the College has established excellent links with Tipperary County Council and has cooperated with the Council on initiatives under the Rural Regeneration & Development Fund. Works are already underway to

create a new pedestrian link with the Thurles Market Quarter development to the north of the campus which give improved pedestrian access to The Source Arts Centre and the Thurles Leisure Centre as well as to the town centre and the newly revitalised Liberty Square.

The Thurles campus is already a significant amenity in Thurles Town and the Masterplan envisages an even greater opening up of the campus with the development of pedestrian and cycle pathways in partnership with the Council. The aforementioned relief road is a significant development for Thurles Town but the impact on the Thurles campus will be enormous as it has the potential to completely reorient the campus towards the expansive lands to the south of the existing College building.

The facilities on both campuses are available for use by the community and the College welcomes external groups to both its Limerick and Thurles campuses, particularly in the areas of education, sport and culture. The College is also committed to promoting the Irish language.

See: **MIC 26 | Limerick Community (Existing Community Facilities) - P73**  
**MIC 27 | Thurles Community (Existing Community Facilities) - P74**







## CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Mary Immaculate College has been a presence in Limerick City for over 120 years. In that time, the College has seen its campus grow so that today it extends from O'Connell Avenue to the Dock Road. The significant building development completed in the past 15 years and the exciting expansion of the College to integrate the John Henry Newman Building into the campus has transformed the facilities at the College.

The construction of the proposed new Library & Learning Resource Centre will be the next major milestone in the development of the Limerick campus. Meanwhile, the incorporation of the former St Patrick's College and the establishment of MIC Thurles opens an exciting new chapter in the development of Mary Immaculate College and offers tremendous potential for future expansion.

This Masterplan sets out eight strategic objectives that together map out a clear direction for the next stages of development across both the MIC Limerick and Thurles campuses. These objectives consolidate what has already been achieved over the past 30 years since the first College Masterplan was published. And they build on the successes of the College in championing the growth in student numbers and development of attractive campus settings with building facilities that support the essential functions of the College.

The Masterplan envisages the continued evolution and expansion of the College at both MIC Limerick and MIC Thurles. Through the revitalisation of existing building stock and the construction of additional modern facilities; through the development of recreational amenities for College and community; through the protection of architectural heritage with sustainability at the core of future decisions.

Through all eight objectives, the Masterplan lays a framework for the future development of Mary Immaculate College. The potential is clear and the future is filled with enormous opportunity.





**MIC 29** | Thurles Campus – Proposed Campus Development Plan





Appendix 1

# 3D Views



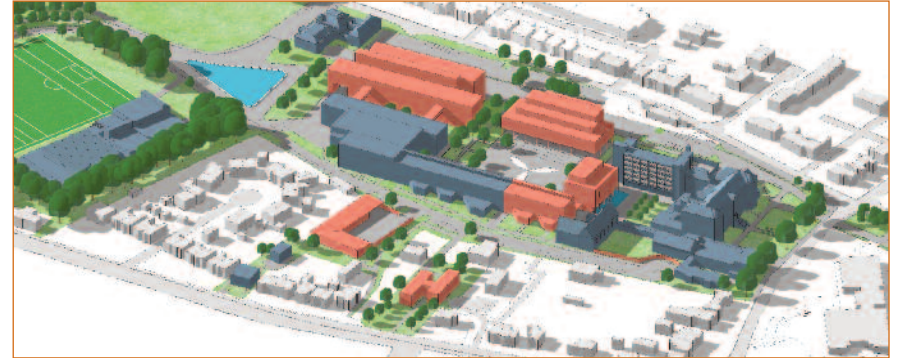


# MIC Limerick

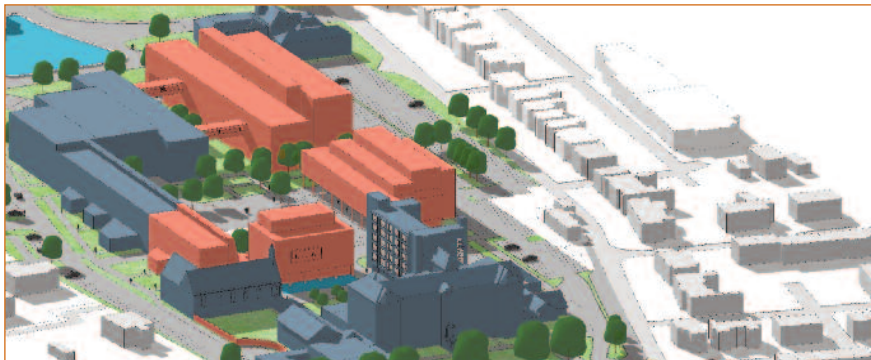
1: The Limerick Campus looking east



2: The Limerick Campus looking north



3: The Limerick Campus looking north from rear of Foundation Building



4: Limerick Campus looking south onto the plaza area in front of the new Library

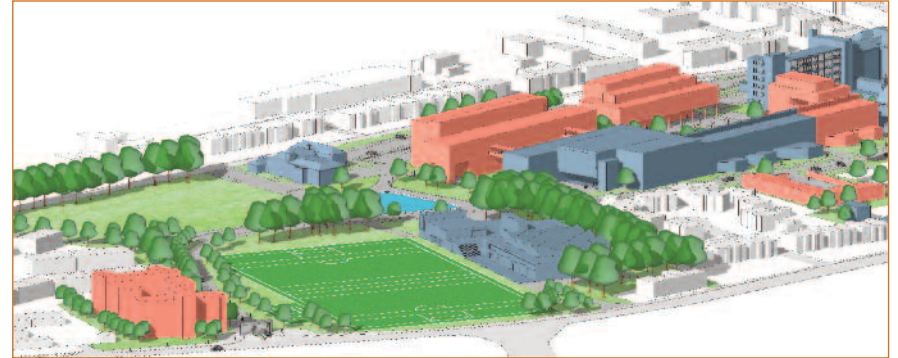


# MIC Limerick

5: Looking south onto the Tara Building, extension to same and water feature



6: The Limerick campus looking south/east from Courtbrack Entrance



7: Limerick JHN campus looking west onto redeveloped Gerard House





# MIC Thurles

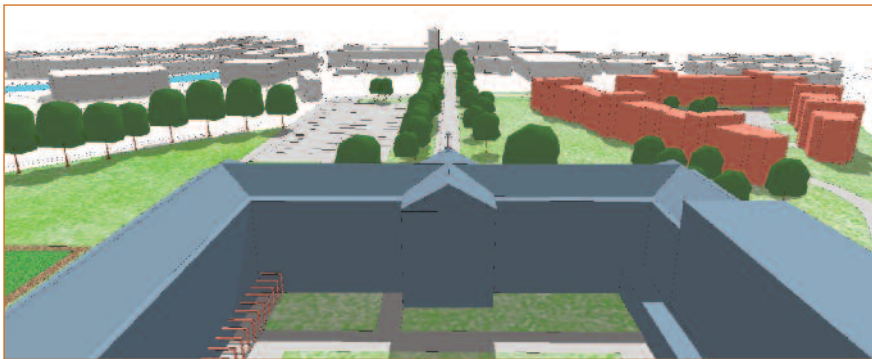
**8:** The Thurles campus looking east with all potential developments



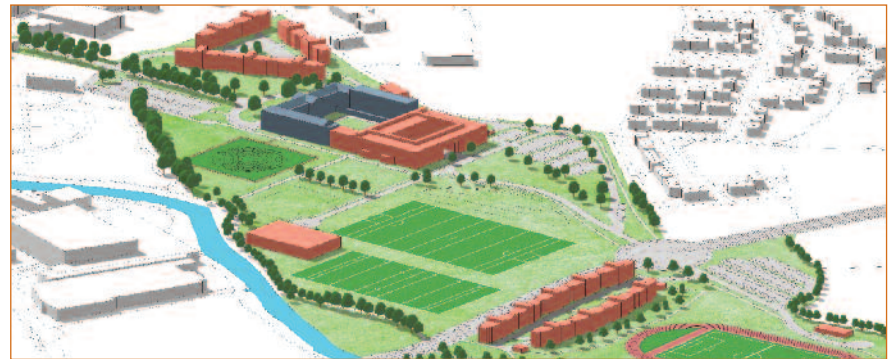
**9:** Thurles campus looking west with teaching block added completing the Quad



**10:** Thurles campus looking north with student accommodation village at right



**11:** Thurles campus looking east over new relief road bisecting College grounds



# MIC Thurles

12: Thurles campus looking east over new relief road bisecting College grounds









[www.mic.ie](http://www.mic.ie)

**QUINN**  
Architects