NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

DUBLIN CITY RETAIL DEVELOPMENTS: A Study

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By

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INTRODUCTION

'He passes, dallying, the Windows of Brown Thomas, Silk Mercers. Cascades of ribbons; Flimsy China Silks'.

Joyce, Ulysses.

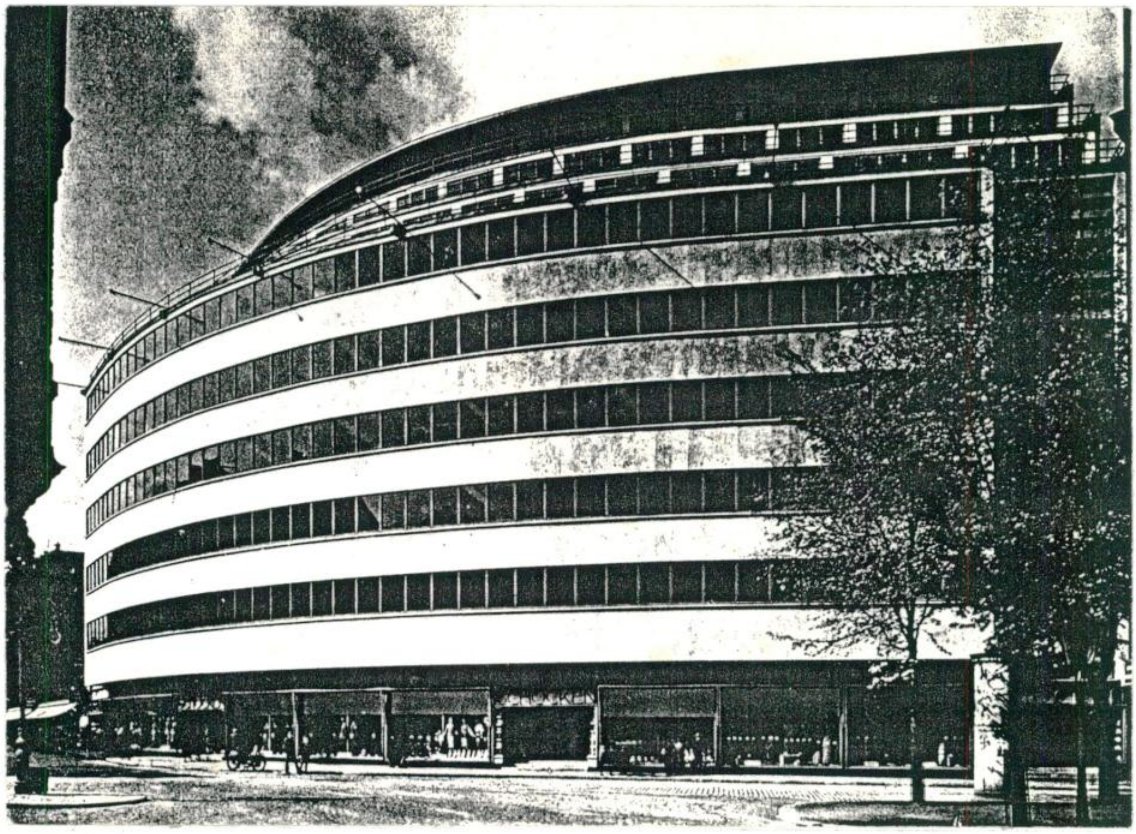
A recent report prepared by the Dublin Chamber of Commerce describes Dublin's retail environment as being 'Cosmopolitan in outlook yet distinctively individual in character'. [1] The City's evolution in terms of retailing has been an interesting aspect of Dublin's town planning history.

The earliest mediaeval street names of the city identified the trade of that area. Skinner's Row beside Christchurch provided the leather for the shoemakers in Shoemaker's Lane, and Fishamble Street was the early fishmongers' equivalent of the butcher's shambles.[2] Sadly, none of the original buildings survive but the line of many of the streets is still relatively the same. In terms of architecture, the first significant shopfronts began to appear in the late eighteenth century. Earlier shops had been openfronted to the street and consequently of little architectural significance. Glazing is thought to have started in Holland during the late seventeenth century and many of the buildings, particularly along Grafton Street and Henry Street were modest Dutch style gabled houses.

Henry Street and Grafton Street, the city's two prime retail areas today were laid out in the early eighteenth century. Although initially intended as residential streets, the trend towards commercialisation began early. In 1763, the first edition of the Freeman's Journal was published by Alexander MacCullough, a bookseller in Henry Street.[3] It is interesting that the designed shopping street in Dublin preceded similar developments in London, as Edward McParland noted in an Irish Georgian Society bulletin, 'Shopping streets were being designed and executed in Dublin from 1799 onwards, a period when nothing similar was being attempted in England'.[4]

Henry Street was a natural extension of O'Connell Street and was also close to the food markets around Moore Street. In the mid 1850s the street was filled with traditional drapers, booksellers, tailors, etc., but the turn of the century saw the advent of stores such as Arnott's and Woolworth's who had commissioned their own purpose built premises. Grafton Street and its domain was always a fashionable area catering for the wealthy residential St. Stephen's Green and Merrion and Fitzwilliam Squares. The main stores were drapers and haberdashers such as Brown Thomas and Switzers, which were established in the early nineteenth century and gradually expanded to become department stores.

It is significant that the modern movement made very little impact on Dublin's store architecture. A good deal of wood fronted Edwardian and Victorian shopfronts were replaced by specialist shopfitting firms, such as Squire's of Dublin, in favour of Art Nouveau inspired glass and chrome exteriors but nothing was attempted on a large scale. Revolutionary developments such as Eric
0.1 Mendelssohn's Schocken store in Stuttgart (1926) and the work of Le Corbusier, which explored new theories of organic architecture and form, had no influence on a city which up until then had kept abreast with European trends.
0.2 Unfortunately the destruction of the 1916 rising and the Civil War of 1922 dulled the excitement of what was happening on the continent.

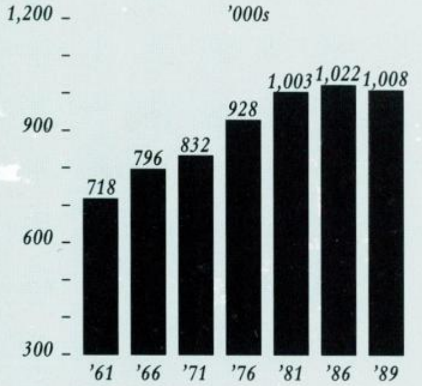


0.1 Schocken Departmental Store, Stuttgart. 1928.

0.2 "The Ruins of O'Connell Street, 1916"

1 Population Density

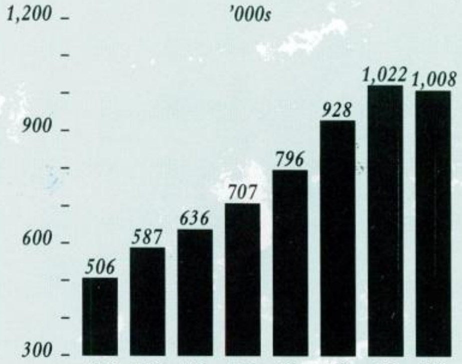
In 1989 Dublin's population as a percentage of the total national population rose to 29%



Source: Central Statistics Office

** Dublin refers to Dublin City and County*

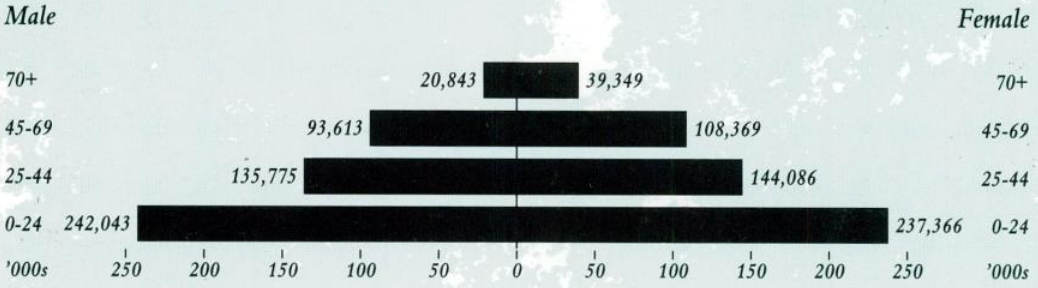
2 Population Growth



Source: Central Statistics Office

3 Population by Age and Sex Distribution

28% of national male and 30% of national female population reside in Dublin. Dublin's population contains a higher proportion of 15-64 year olds than does the national population



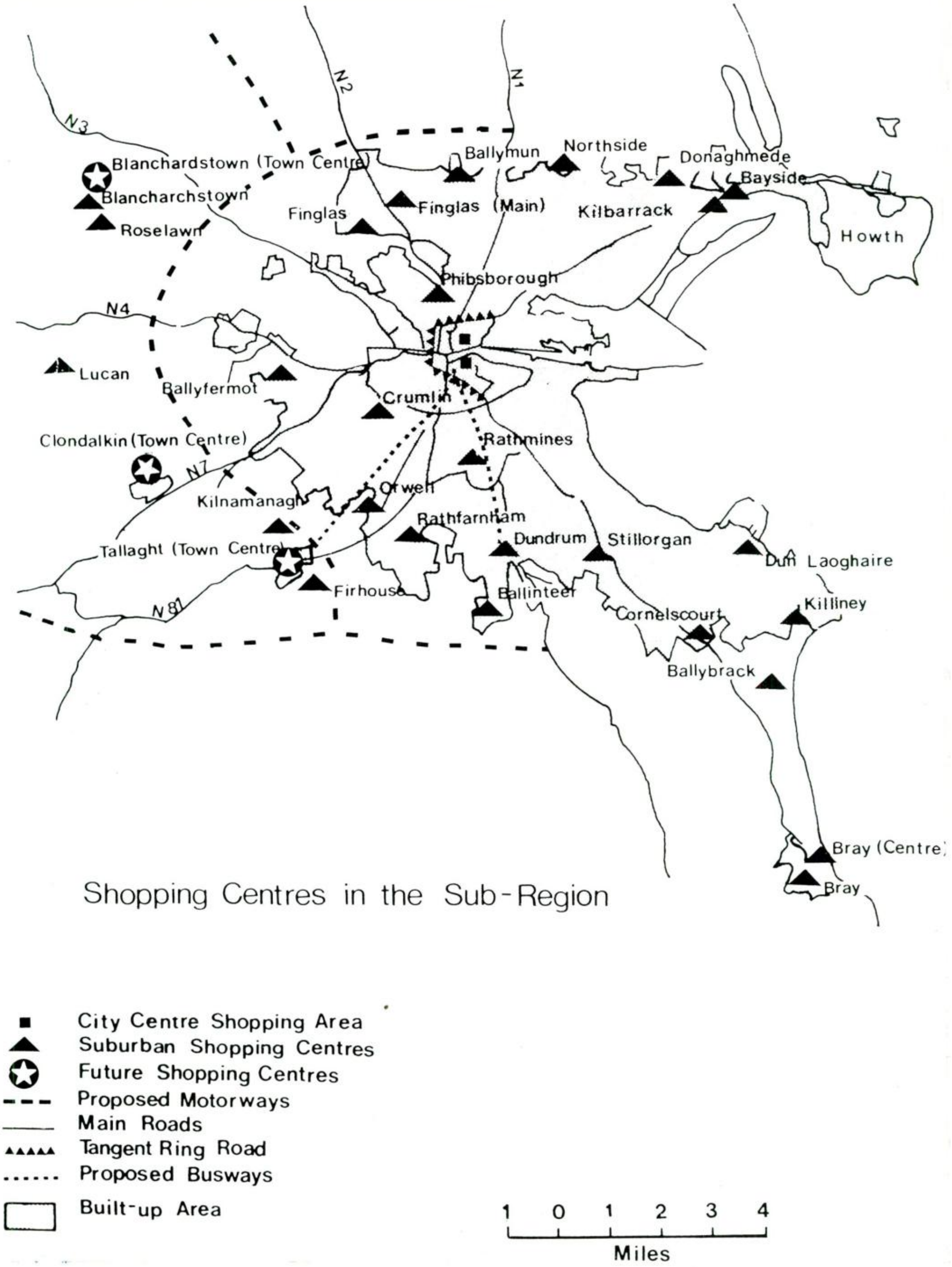
Source: Central Statistics Office

0.3 Population Chart 1991

As a result, today's retail landscape is an eclectic mix of Victorian shopfronts, monumental department stores, Art Nouveau inspired metal facades, sixties and seventies functionalism and eighties 'style conscious' exteriors.

This thesis takes three different examples of city centre retail developments, Clery's, O'Connell Street, designed to be a model department store, the ILAC Centre off Moore Street, the first inner city shopping centre and the St. Stephen's Green Shopping Centre, a luxurious eighties development designed to capitalise on the wealthy catchment area of nearby Grafton Street. The aim of this thesis is to assess the quality of these developments as retail centres and how successfully they integrate into the cityscape as a whole.

0.3 The growth and dispersal of the city in the last thirty years has caused the city centre to become denuded and to lose its role as the pivotal centre of Dublin society. Increase in car ownership and the resulting traffic congestion in and out of the city led to the demand for suburban retail centres. Hence, the decline in the relative shopping importance of the city centre. The first shopping centre opened in Stillorgan in 1966 and lead to the rapid development of over thirty
0.4 suburban centres since 1966. The recently opened Tallaght Town Centre is designed to incorporate an entire village under one roof. The development has
0.5,6 car parking for two thousand cars and includes comprehensive leisure and restaurant facilities. Because the growth in traffic has not been matched by improvements in public transport and sufficient in-city car parking, centres like Tallaght and similar developments planned for Blanchardstown and Clondalkin are aimed at creating new self-sufficient towns, hence, undermining the inner city as the heart of Dublin.



0.4 Shopping Centres in the sub-region

0.5,6 Tallaght Town Centre, exterior and interior

Therefore, the subject of inner city developments discussed here raises basic problems as to the future of Dublin city as a retailing environment. The problems facing the city can be roughly divided into two categories.

Firstly, the dilemma of style in architecture. The latter half of the twentieth century has seen architecture 'sinking into a quagmire of progressive eclecticism'.[5] Like the Victorians, we cannot decide on a style of our own. Due to the ephemeral nature of shops in comparison to other buildings, they are often the victims of passing whims and trends. Will the Stephen's Green Centre for example, be admired by future Dubliners if 'Victoriana' goes out of fashion? The ILAC Centre, an example of seventies functionalism, has already been discarded by the public from an aesthetic point of view, in favour of the more picturesque St. Stephen's Green Centre. Similarly, Clery's, the traditional 'cornerstone of city centre retailing'[6] has suffered from criticism of it being boring in the light of modern, hi-tech shopping.

Although development is necessary and healthy in terms of the socio-economic climate, it often fails to consider the cityscape as a whole. The sheer size of most shopping developments makes them a dominant feature of the city. In Dublin, the developers have been given free rein on some of the city's most historic sites. The increasing number of derelict sites, particularly along the quays, have become eyesores to their surrounding environment. These tax-free sites are all privately owned but remain derelict because it is not financially viable to develop them at present. Because retail developments are built in a series of phases, the underdeveloped phase stands empty until the climate is favourable to build on it.

0.7 North Elevation, St. Stephen's Green Centre

1.1 The Eucharistic Congress, 1932. (Clery's Calendar 1991)

1.2 1966, Nelson Pillar blown up.

1.3 Dublin in the heyday of the empire,

In the case of the St. Stephen's Green Centre, for example, the previous Green Cinema site has been empty for the past three years. No consideration has been 0.7 given to the aesthetic effect of the metal-clad facade awaiting completion or similarly, to the overflow ILAC carpark on Parnell Street, which sits like a giant wasteland opposite the centre.

The apparent lack of civic awareness on the part of the developer raises the second problem facing Dublin retailing, the human element. How do retail developments contribute to the social and psychological atmosphere of the city centre? Alison Adburgham in 'Shops and Shopping'[7] establishes the fact that shopping is a primary human function and that buildings and services for shopping are as closely related to housing as those for education, health, administration and entertainment. The desired objective for most city centres today is to redefine the nucleus of the city. Over rigid zoning in the past has separated the place of work from housing and hence broken up the continuity of life. The closing down of Dublin's exclusively retail environments at night, results in non-user friendly streets which breed violence and crime.

Finally, how will the environment-conscious nineties affect inner city shopping? As the consumer demanded high standards of design in the 1980s, will they expect the same of the environment in the 1990s? Increasingly sophisticated marketing techniques being developed for the nineties will provide an opportunity for Dublin city to rise above the suburbs. Given its advantageous cultural and historical background, how will the city meet this challenge?

A word may be added on the presentation of the material. The following chapters are essentially case studies establishing the chosen developments in their historical environments and charting their conception. It was necessary to describe the historical pattern of each development in detail to gain an understanding of the climate which led to their appearance and their design features, in order to appreciate how the finished products relate to their respective surroundings. To sum up, the aim of this thesis is primarily to present existing retail centres within Dublin city and then attempt to assess their potential for the future in terms of their architectural contribution to the city and their quality as living environments for people.

NOTES

1. Dublin Chamber of Commerce, Dublin.
   Marketing Image Group, Dublin, 1991. p.5

2. Sean Rothery - The Shops of Ireland.
   Gill and Macmillan, 1978. p.8, C.1

3. Pat Liddy, Dublin Today - Henry Street.
   Irish Times. 11-02-1987.

4. Edward McParland, 'The Wide Streets Commissioners'.
   Irish Georgian Society Bulletin, 1972.

5. J. Mordaunt Crook, The Dilemma of Style.
   Architectural ideas from the picturesque to the Post Modern.
   John Murray Ltd., 1987. p. 189.

6. Dr. A. J. Parker, "The Pace of Change in Retailing", The Centre for Retail Studies, Conference Paper C.90/1, 1990, p.2.

7. Alison Adburgham, Shops and Shopping, 1800-1914,
   George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1964. p.5

CHAPTER 1

CLERY'S DEPARTMENT STORE

CHAPTER 1

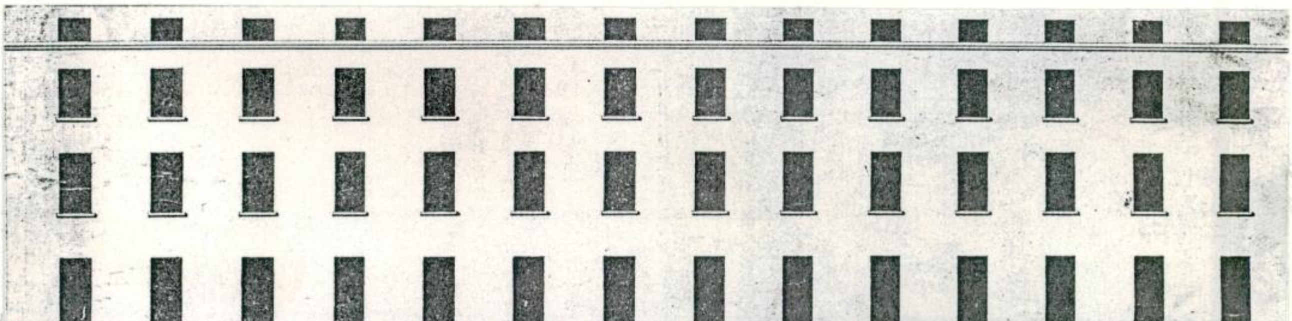
'Clery's is more than a shop, it is an institution. The Clery's legend is larger than the shop itself'.[1] For many years it has been part of the very fabric of Dubliner's lives and the object of many an excursion from the country for a day's shopping.

Clery's has also been part of history and has stood silent witness to many of the
1.1 significant events in the building of the State - the 1916 Rising, The Eucharistic
1.2 Congress (1932) and the blowing up of Nelson's Pillar in 1966. It has also witnessed the gradual but inevitable downgrading of O'Connell Street as a shopping street of any significance, quite a different proposition to the style and elegance of Dublin's main thoroughfare when Clery's was first founded.

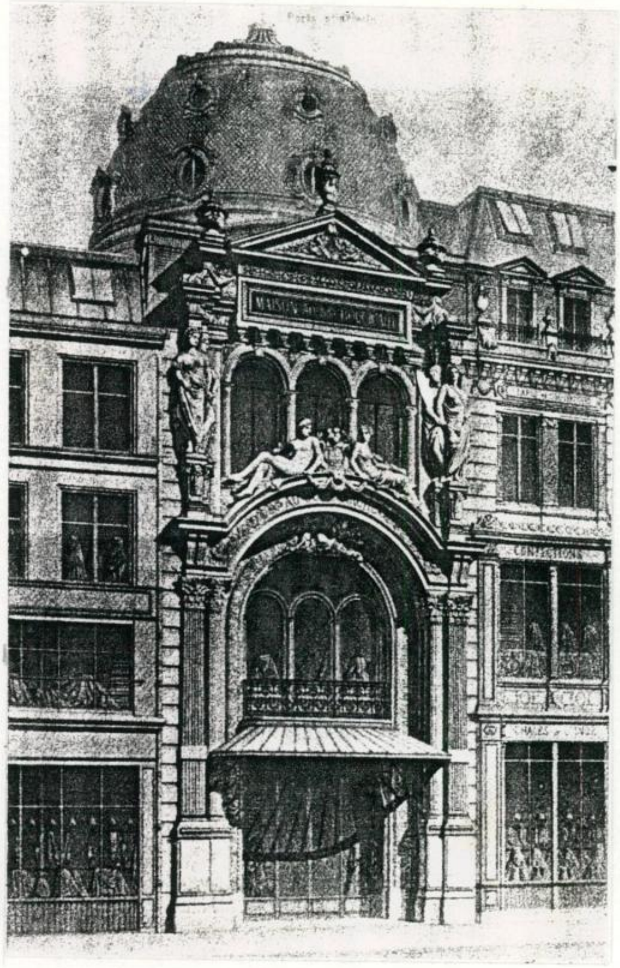
When it was laid out by Luke Gardiner I in 1750, Sackville Street as O'Connell Street was then called was 'intended as a sort of elongated, residential square'[2] but gradually the street was 'vulgarised', as Maurice Craig indicates by the development of Lower Sackville Street from 1784 onwards and further by the erection of Carlisle Bridge in 1790. Dublin, the second city of the British Empire,
1.3 achieved a period of perfection in the late nineteenth century, 'but the combined destruction of the 1916 rising and the Civil War in 1922 left much of the city and O'Connell Street in particular, in need of total rebuilding'[3]

During the nineteenth century, Sackville Street had gradually progressed from being a residential street to a commercial one. 'By mid-century, virtually every building had a commercial use, with hotels, wine merchants, tobacconists, grocers, bootmakers, linen drapers, hosiers, glovers and military outfitters flourishing, the

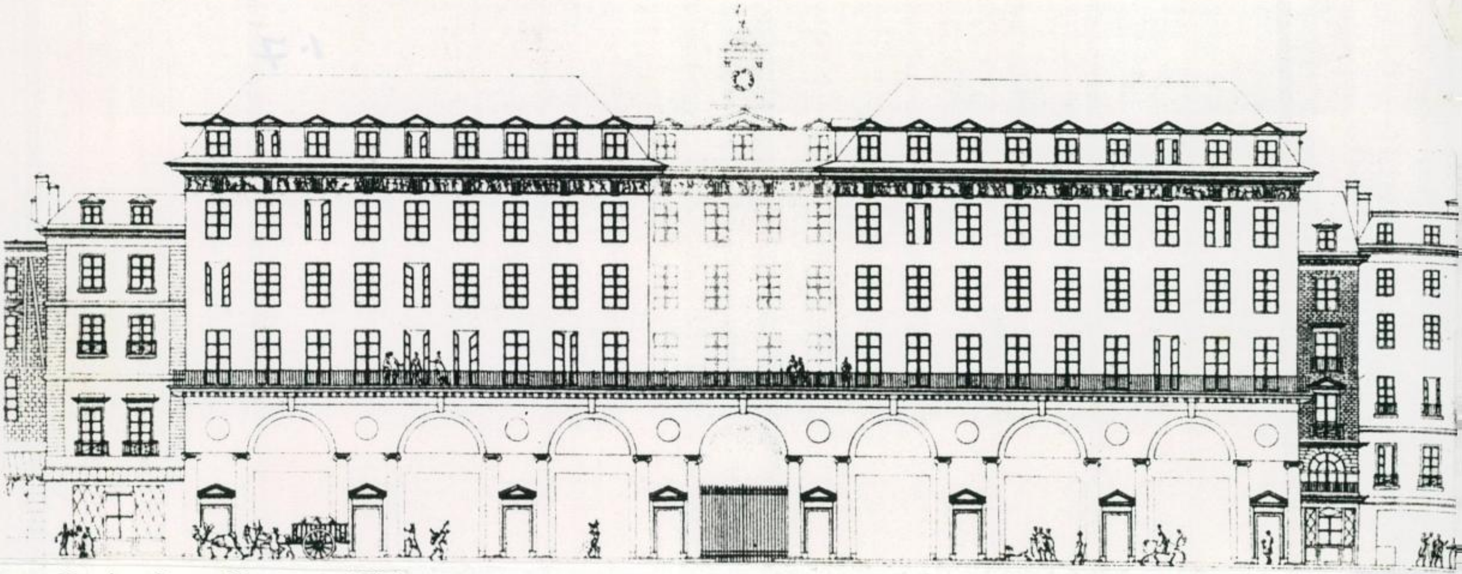
1.4 "Sackville Street", (by Michelangelo Hayes, National Gallery of Ireland).



1.5 New Shopfronts for Westmoreland Street, 1799. Dublin Corporation archives, Doc. No. WSC/195/1



1.6 Paris, Bon Marché, 1869



1.7 Paris, Cour Batave, 1791

1.4 street was a lively place'[4] Businesses such as Findlaters, The McSwiney Mart and The Metropole Cinema were established.

The description of Clery's involves two separate buildings, as the original store was burnt down in 1916 and today's store was re-built on the site in 1922. The original store (McSwiney's Mart), however, is an intrinsic part of Clery's history and development. The New Mart McSwiney opened on Saturday, 28th May, 1853. Its founder, Peter Paul McSwiney was in partnership with George Delaney and Company who purchased the leases for the site in 1852.

The store or mart occupied the ground floor of the building while the remaining floors were The Imperial Hotel, which also had an entrance on Sackville Street. The mart, which was designed by William Caldbeck, was situated on the lower east side of Sackville Street occupying numbers 18-27 and covering approximately eighty-three thousand square feet.

The concept of using the ground floor of buildings as a retail or commercial premises and the upper floors as residential, was typical of the early nineteenth century. Earlier developments on Westmoreland Street in 1782 had consisted of
1.5 colonnaded buildings whose ground floors had wide, glazed openings for shops.[5]
1.6 The first store, custom-made for an entire building, was The Bon Marché in Paris built by Boucicaut in 1852.[6] The McSwiney Mart, as previously indicated, occupied only the ground floor of the building and although very little information exists about its interior, it is probable that the store was divided into sections in a market type environment rather than a cohesive unit. The Mart reflected

1.7 European developments such as the earlier Cour Batave (1791) in Paris which combined shopping and residential elements in one. The granite building was constructed on four levels. It was flanked originally on either side by late eighteenth century red brick houses. The style was Victorian with typical neo-classical influences and detailing. The Greek or Classical revival in Victorian architecture was a strong contributer towards nineteenth century store architecture. Georgian glazing, however would have made nonsense of the Greek style, so its development was only made possible by the arrival of plate glass in large sizes around 1840.[7] Shop windows such as the ground floor windows of the Mart McSwiney were enabled to have a more dramatic height and presence than the smaller less imposing Georgian shopfronts.

The New Mart McSwiney was constructed along eight bays supported by flat structural columns. The second floor consisted of nine round-arched windows and a balcony running along the entire length of the facade, while the third floor windows were curved and decorated with blind, ornamental window box railings. Much use was made of ornamental plasterwork and like the General Post Office building opposite, it was crowned with a colonnade in classical style with the addition of Grecian urns repeated along each bay. The store was re-named The Palatial Mart in 1854.

The latter half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century was a particularly turbulent time in Irish history. From its beginning in 1853, the McSwiney Store had strong associations with The Fenian Society and other political activist groups at the time. The Fenians were active among drapers and other store owners in Dublin. Peter Paul McSwiney, the founder of

McSwiney's Mart was made Lord Mayor of the city in 1864 and acquired an influential position in Dublin society. In October, 1872, McSwiney's partner, George Delaney died and the store was converted into a public company, the first of its kind in Dublin with, McSwiney as Chairman.

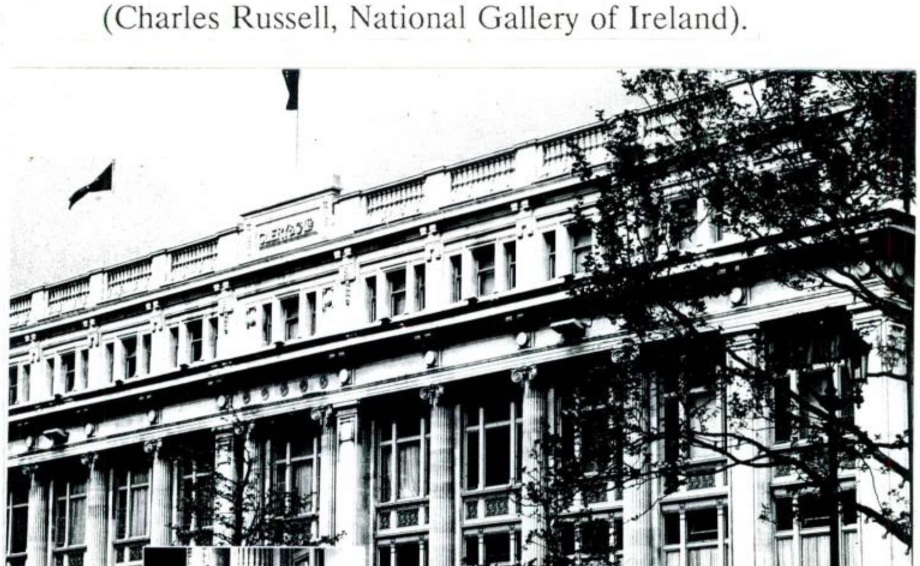
Because of its central position on Sackville Street, the store inevitably witnessed most major Dublin events. In 1875, the centenary of Daniel O'Connell's birth was
1.8 celebrated by a massive rally outside McSwiney's store. The procession comprised all the various trades and bodies of the city and demonstrates the importance the store held as a central representative for trades in the city.

In 1878, the store and Imperial Hotel building was enlarged from twenty-one to twenty-eight Sackville Street and the facade was rebuilt from eight to eleven bays at a cost of fifty thousand pounds. At the same time, Carlisle Bridge was being widened and rebuilt as O'Connell Bridge, which reached completion in 1880.

After Peter Paul McSwiney's retirement in 1880, the store began to report heavy losses and was re-named The Dublin Drapery warehouse. In 1883, it was sold to Michael J. Clery of Limerick for thirty-two thousand pounds. Peter Paul McSwiney died aged seventy-four on the twenty-seventh of February, 1884.

The Imperial Hotel property was acquired by Clery's in 1902. The early years of the twentieth century saw the struggle of Jim Larkin and his followers to establish trade unions in Ireland. The Imperial Hotel above Clery's was the scene of the lockout in 1913 where Larkin was arrested. The arrest caused serious rioting outside the store and along Sackville Street.

1.8 "The O'Connell Centenary Celebrations" 1875. (Charles Russell, National Gallery of Ireland).



1.9 Clerys, front elevation,

1.10 Selfridges, exterior view

On Easter Monday, 1916, Padraig Pearse and his followers held part of Dublin for a week against British forces by occupying the General Post Office opposite Clerys. On the twenty sixth of April, the Plough and the Stars flag was hoisted over Clery's buildings. The shelling of Sackville Street during Easter Monday and the following day caused fires which spread from Eden Quay to Earl Street. Clery's building's were destroyed just after ten o'clock on the twenty seventh of April. Temporary premises were opened in the Metropolitan Buildings at twelve, Lower Abbey Street.

See 0.2 The effect of the rising and Civil War in 1922 left Sackville Street in a state of devastation. 'Many traders lost everything they posessed'.[8] The subsequent re-building of Sackville Street afforded much speculation, many saw it as the chance to put true town planning into action. The Irish Builder and Engineer pointed out the great possibilities afforded by the disaster to rebuild a beautiful street and the 'unique and unexpected opportunity for putting into practise the true principles of town planning - to give Dublin a piece of architecture worthy of this still beautiful and historic street'. [9]

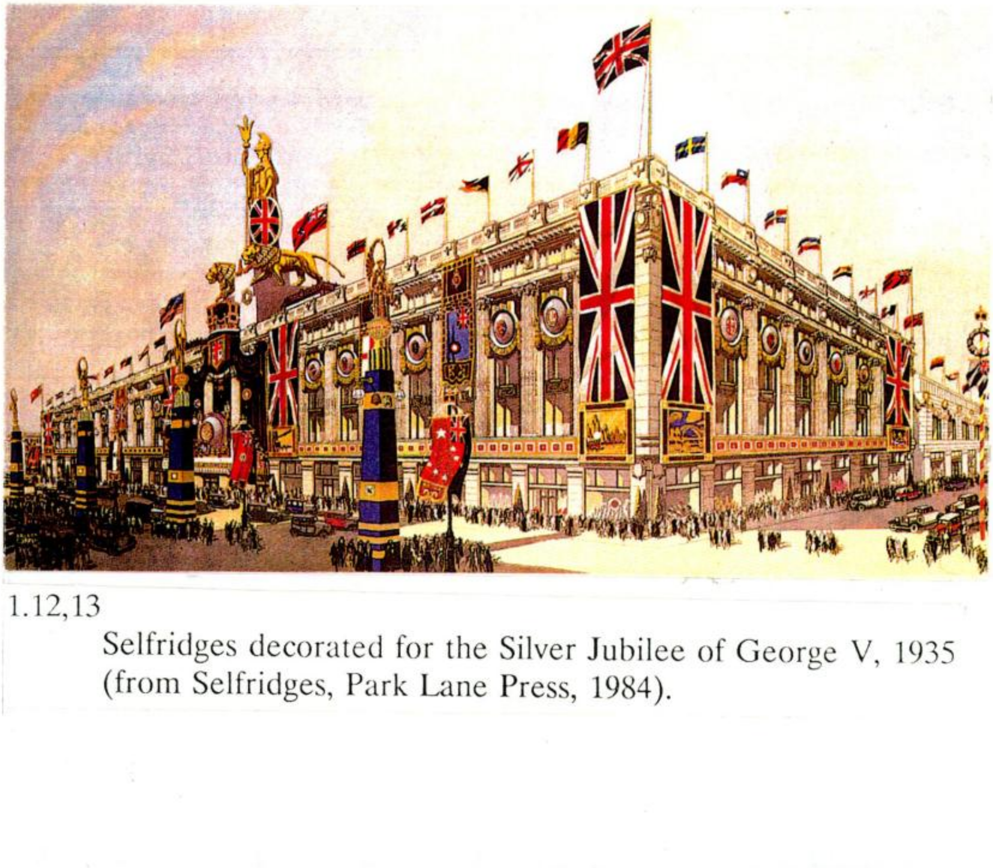
A committee was set up by Dublin Corporation to supervise the rebuilding of Sackville Street. The architectural style recommended for re-construction pointed to the characteristic classical tradition and recommended taking this as a guide and basis for treatment of elevations. The city architect would fix the main heights of buildings, cornice lines and the number of storeys. It suggested that the ground floors and piers should be of Irish granite, the upper floors of dressed stone. [10] Rebuilding schemes were carried out and completed by 1923.

WE HAVE EVERY PLEASURE IN ANNOUNCING THAT THE FORMAL OPENING OF OUR PREMISES—LONDON'S NEWEST SHOPPING CENTRE—BEGINS TO-DAY AND CONTINUES THROUGHOUT THE WEEK.

WE WISH IT TO BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT OUR INVITATION IS TO THE WHOLE BRITISH PUBLIC AND TO VISITORS FROM OVERSEAS—THAT NO CARDS OF ADMISSION ARE REQUIRED—THAT ALL ARE WELCOME—AND THAT THE PLEASURES OF SHOPPING AS WELL AS THOSE OF SIGHT-SEEING BEGIN FROM THE OPENING HOUR

SELFRIDGE & CO.
OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.

1.11 Selfridges opening advertisement



1.12,13

Selfridges decorated for the Silver Jubilee of George V, 1935 (from Selfridges, Park Lane Press, 1984).

Clery's was rebuilt between 1920 and 1922. The new store was designed by
Thomas Coleman of Ashline and Coleman. Construction cost £400,000.
1.19 The building now covered No's 18-28 O'Connell Street. 'The store was an
interesting and advanced design concept in department store architecture,
1.10 influenced by Selfridges, London, which in turn had American roots'.[11]
Clery's was modelled on Selfridges not only in architecture but on principles also.
1.11 Selfridges opened on the fifteenth March 1909. It had eight floors, three below
the street, six acres of floor space, nine passenger lifts and one hundred
departments, not to mention a library, first-aide-ward, Bureau de Change, Post
and Telegraph office, luncheon hall and roof top tea-garden.[12]

Selfridges founder, American millionaire Gordon Selfridge, believed that shopping should be a luxury. The Selfridge store was compared to a hotel rather than a shop. In the same way that Clerys had become a part of Dublins history, Selfridges was to witness some of the most historic events in London during the early twentieth century. 'Its opening that icy morning gave a new name to history, to London and its inhabitants, which would be part of their lives from that time onwards'. [13] Like the Bon Marché before it, Selfridges was custom built to be a great department store, unlike other stores such as Harrods which grew out of an amalgam of small shops. 'It was conceived as an entity from the start'.[14] The other important principle of Selfridge was that the store should be a social centre, not just a place for shopping. A department store should be, 'a meeting place for friends, for women especially, where they can show themselves and entertain'. [15] The imposing pillared facade of Selfridges was adventurous and excessive, designed to become an important and unforgettable landmark. National occasions such as the coronation of George VI in 1937 and the Queen's

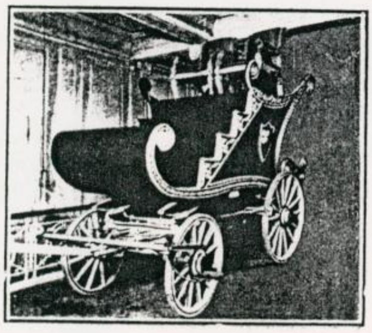
1.12, coronation in 1953 were celebrated by extravagant decorations to the store's
13 exterior. In 1909, people queued to see Bleriot's aeroplane, the first to cross the Atlantic, which was exhibited on the lower ground floor.

The relevance of describing Selfridges in relation to Clery's is not only its architectural similarity but its tradition as a model department store. The department store has been described as 'a magnificent nineteenth century animal',[16] in the 19th shopping centre which up until then had been a necessity, became a pastime for an indulgent society. Impressive emporiums such as Harrods and Selfridges used the building as an advertisement for the store, 'architecture was as much a part of the company house style as graphics are today'.[17]

It was inevitable that a new department store in Dublin, like much of Irish architecture, would be influenced by what was happening in Britain.

Clery's became the social centre conceived by Gordon Selfridge. The store included bars and restaurants on every floor. In 1928, a ballroom extension was built which featured live music every night of the week. Meeting under Clery's clock became a famous rendezvous for young lovers. Clery's offered special one day excursions from country destinations to Dublin to shop in their store. Special
1.14 events such as Grace Kelly's visit to Dublin in 1958 featured Clery's, which was decorated in honour of the event. Historic attractions such as Daniel O'Connell's
1.15, triumphal chariot were exhibited in the store. In summary, Clery's became a true
16 living centre in Dublin society.

1.14 Clerys decorated for visit of Grace Kelly.



Daniel O'Connell's Triumphal Chariot

This is the actual car presented to DANIEL O'CONNELL by the Citizens of Dublin on his release from Richmond Prison in 1844. The Liberator was met at the Prison Gates by this extraordinary Carriage, which was harnessed to six splendid grey horses with outriders. It was driven slowly to his home at 58 Merrion Square at the head of a procession of 200,000 people, which included all the principal Irishmen of that time, and extended for six miles through the Streets of Dublin. Since then the Dublin Society of Coach Builders has preserved this carriage, and Mr. FANAGAN, of Aungier Street, has stored it free of all charge.

ALL VISITORS ARE INVITED TO COME TO CLERYS TO SEE THIS GREAT HISTORIC ATTRACTION.

ADMISSION FREE

1929

1.15, 16
Daniel O'Connell Centenary brochure

CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

SOUVENIR OF VISIT TO

DANIEL O'CONNELL'S TRIUMPHAL CHARIOT

ON SHOW AT

CLERYS

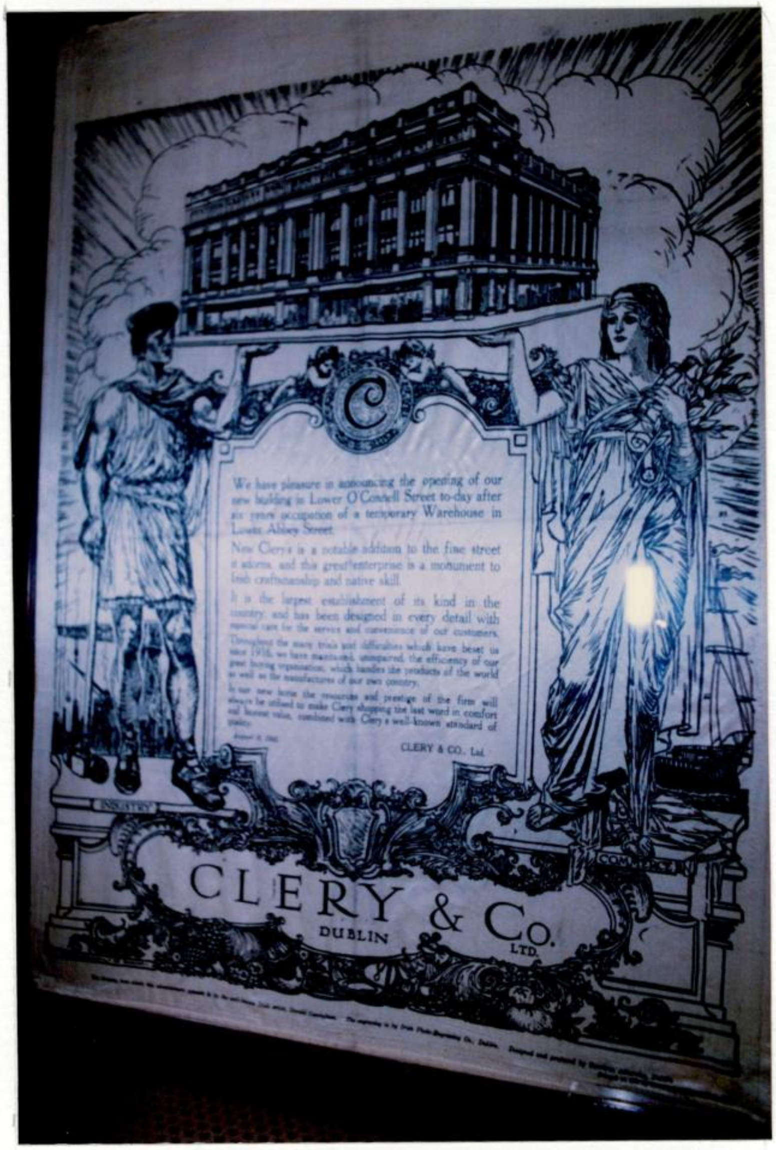
CLERY & CO., LTD. O'CONNELL ST., DUBLIN

1.17 The store opened on the ninth of August, 1922 under the management of John Maguire. The facade is classical in style. The portland store frontage is
See constructed along eleven bays supported by ionic columns. The ground floor
1.9 windows are slightly recessed. The second and third floor windows are joined edge to edge and are separated from the fourth floor by a wide cornice decorated with a frieze of circular motifs. The fourth floor is crowned with a colonnade similar to the original Clery's building of 1853.

There are three entrances along the O'Connell Street facade. These are recessed forming entrance halls which are decorated with mirror and marble fittings. Applied art and sculptural embellishment was executed by Charles Harrison and Sons who carried out much of the restoration work on O'Connell Street following the Civil War. Their work can also be seen on No's 3-4, the Ulster Bank and No's 6-7, the Bank of Ireland.

The building extends back along Sackville Place to Earl Place, and the company also own a warehouse property opposite the rear of the store on Earl Place. In the early 1970's, Clerys took over the Old Downes Bakery premises on North Earl Street. The extension covers all four floors and is the site of the Clerys rooftop restaurant at fourth floor level. The famous Clery's clock, which is situated over the main entrance was replaced in 1990 as part of a restoration project. (See restoration).

1.18 The original 1922 interior is basically the same layout that can be seen today. There is an extraordinary lack of original architectural information about the store considering its significance in the re-building of Sackville Street. Such



We have pleasure in announcing the opening of our new building in Lower O'Connell Street to-day after six years occupation of a temporary Warehouse in Lower Abbey Street.

New Clery's is a notable addition to the fine street it adorns, and this great enterprise is a monument to Irish craftsmanship and native skill.

It is the largest establishment of its kind in the country and has been designed in every detail with special care for the service and convenience of our customers.

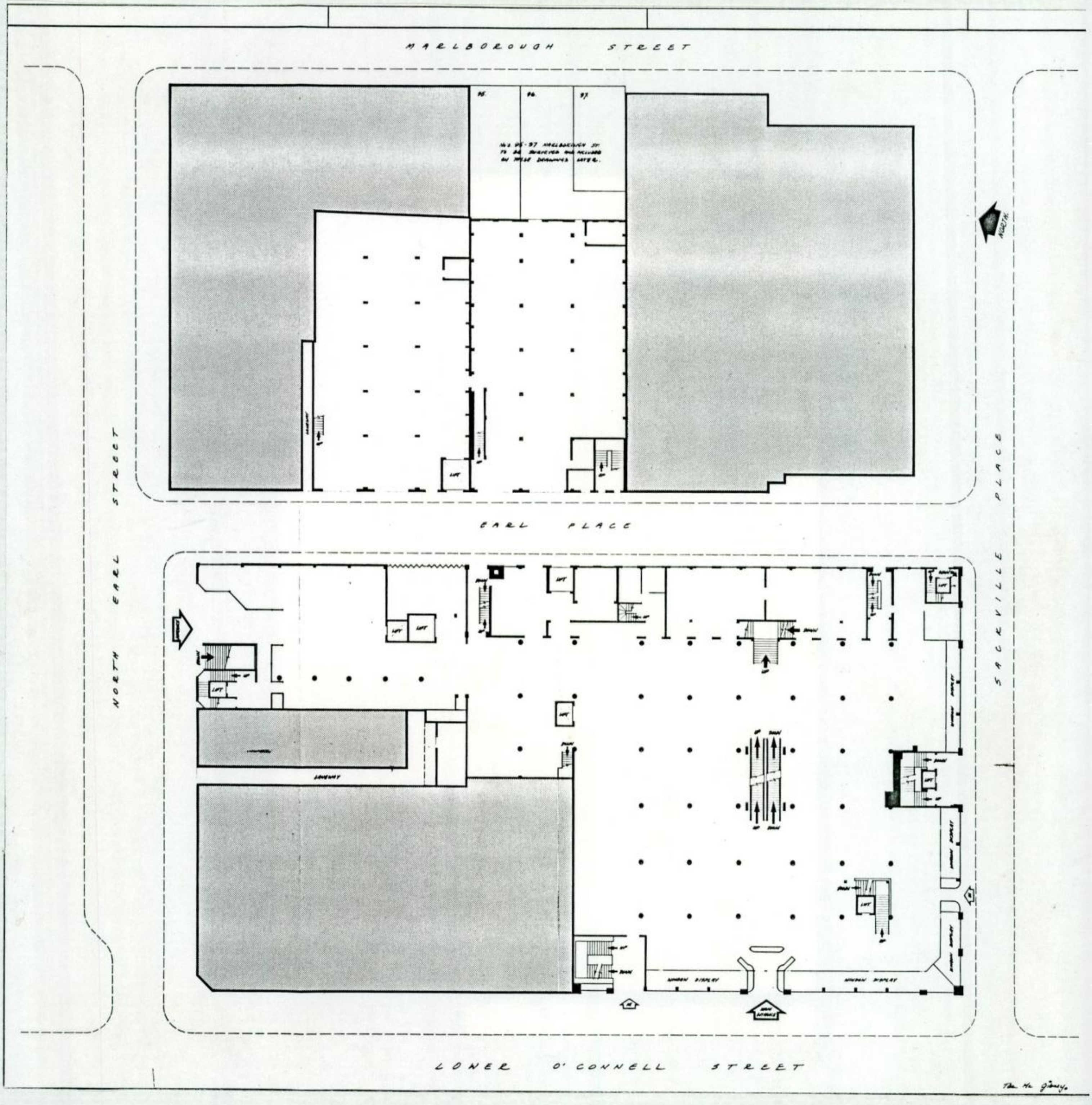
Throughout the many trials and difficulties which have beset us since 1916, we have maintained, unimpaired, the efficiency of our great buying organisation, which handles the products of the world as well as the manufactures of our own country.

In our new home the resources and prestige of the firm will always be utilised to make Clery shopping the last word in comfort and honest value, combined with Clery's well-known standard of quality.

[illegible]

CLERY & CO., Ltd.

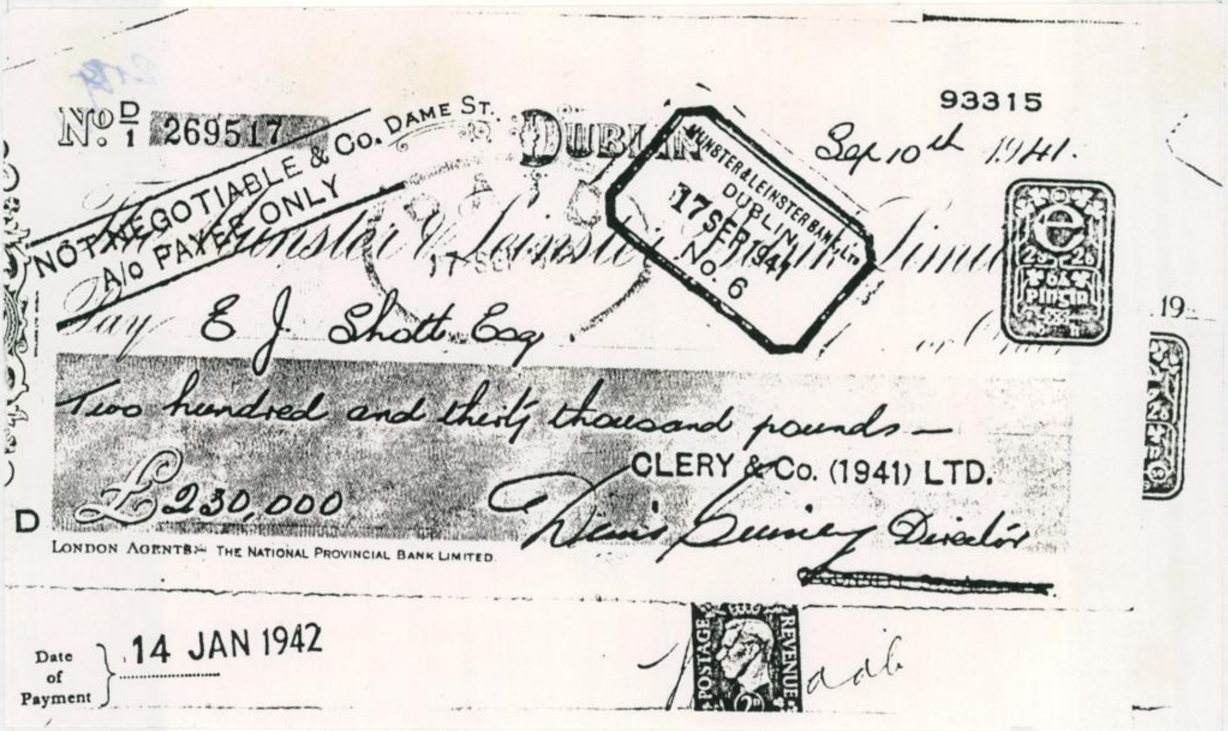
1.17 Opening day advertisement



1.18 Clerys Floor Plan.

1.19 The 1922 Store interior

1.20 The 1922 store interior



No. D/1 269517 & Co. DAME ST. DUBLIN

93315

Sep 10th 1941.

NOT NEGOTIABLE
A/o PAYEE ONLY

MUNSTER & LEINSTER BANK LTD.
DUBLIN
17 SEP 1941
No. 6

Pay E J Shott Esq

Two hundred and thirty thousand pounds —

CLERY & Co. (1941) LTD.

£230,000

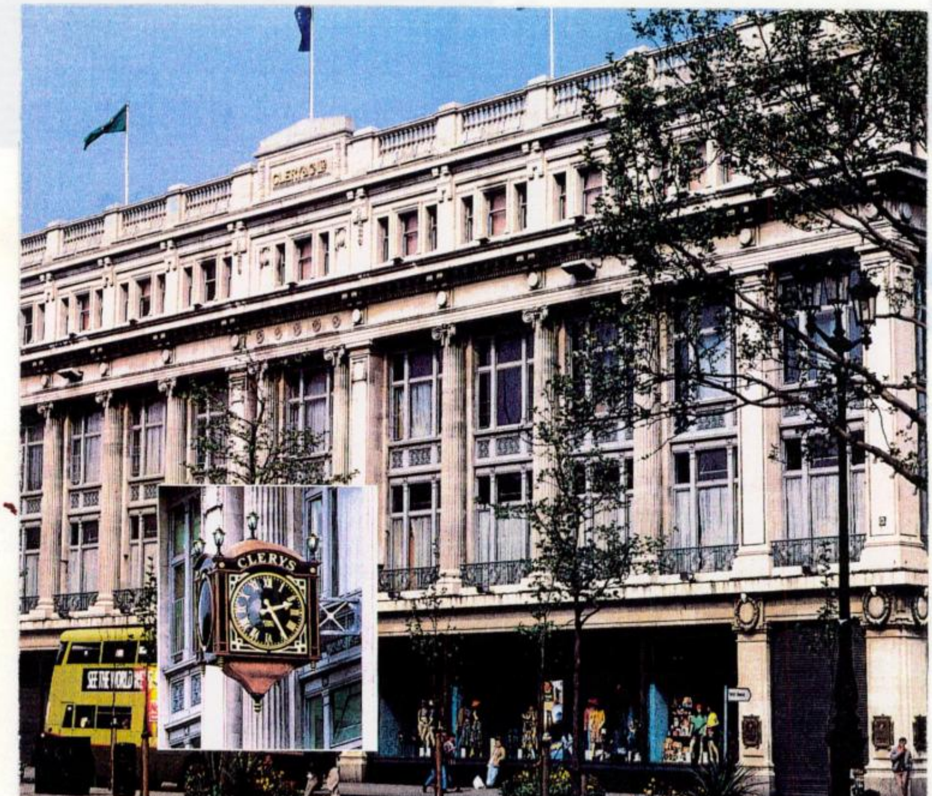
Denis Guiney Director

D

LONDON AGENTS:- THE NATIONAL PROVINCIAL BANK LIMITED

Date of Payment 14 JAN 1942

1.21 Cheque signed by Denis Guiney



1.22 Clerys after Renovation

drawings, if they existed, would be of great value, according to Don Keogan, a
Structural Engineer, whose floor plans of the store were constructed entirely from
scratch. The original interior featured a mezzanine first floor and balcony,
1.19 supported by classical columns. The staircase was situated at the rear of the
1.20 store. Its main feature being the white wrought iron balustrading which was also
used on the balcony. Donal Keane, who worked for Clery's since 1935,
remembers the store as being 'spacious and elegant'. The mahogany display
cabinets, fiche, visite and foot stands were beautifully made along with the
bentwood chairs which were traditional in Draper's shops.

Depression in the thirties caused the near closure of Clery's in 1940 and a
receiver was appointed to seek buyers for the property. The property was
eventually sold to Kerry businessman Denis Guiney for £230,000 by the receiver,
1.21 Edward Shott of Craig and Gardner accountants. The present company, Clerys
(1941) Ltd., was set up by Denis Guiney on the tenth of September, 1941. Under
the management of Denis Guiney, Clerys became a watchword for good value.
Guiney followed the Boucicaut principle of 'fixed prices, clearly displayed,
permission to exchange purchases and small profits to secure quick turnover'. [18]

In the past twenty years, O'Connell Street has had difficulties in maintaining its image as the city's major thoroughfare. The number of first floor restaurants, amusement arcades and discount stores have multiplied rapidly due to the guaranteed high footfall of pedestrians daily. The traffic levels on the street make it an unattractive site for quality retail developments due to increased noise and dust levels. Clery's has borne the brunt of the poor press given to O'Connell Street in recent years. The 1987/88 renovation of the store's exterior was carried

1.23 Gent's room, Clerys.

1.24 Ceiling plasterwork, Clerys

1.25 The select Tea Rooms, Clerys

1.26 Fashion Floor, Clerys.

out as part of a corporation plan to remove plastics from O'Connell Street and to generally upgrade its image. The restoration involved the renewal of the original 1920's stone and metal work and the re-design of the entrances which
1.22 were wind-tunnels. The new Clery's clock designed by Stokes of Cork was unveiled on October 15th 1990. Back in 1975 when Brian Shiels became a Director of the company and subsequently Managing Director in 1977, he undertook the complete re-design and modernisation of the premises. Because of various legal actions within the company at that time, a lot of decisions with regard to the refurbishment were left entirely up to him. The mahogany display systems and fittings, along with the original opalescent lighting globes and parquet flooring, were removed and replaced with modern chrome and plastic units, tiled floors and fluorescent strip lighting. Some of the wooden doors, mouldings and
1.23, panelling still remain.
24

At ground floor level today, the 1922 staircase still exists but an escalator bank is now situated opposite the main entrance. The main improvements to the interior have been an attempt to attract the youth market through the concession store 'Miss Selfridge' and a new department, selling casual menswear in a
1.25 sensitively designed environment. The select tea rooms which recently opened on the first floor is an interesting concept which has an oriental influence and incorporates decorative features such as Mondrian inspired windows and Art
1.26 Deco style lighting. The first floor stocks mainly ladies fashions and is reasonably well laid out, while the lower ground and second floors suffer from overcrowing of merchandise and poor decor. The dominant colour scheme throughout is grey
1.27 and white.

1.27 Clery's, 2nd floor.

CITY SPECIAL

I SEND THE LOT—TO Prescotts

Cycles PEDAL POWER! McHUGH HIMSELF DUBLIN

Irish Independent
IRELAND'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

Clerys Fur Week

Magnificent Collection of
FUR COATS and FURS
at Ireland's
lowest prices

Whatever the Fur Coat or Fur you choose, it will cost you far less at Clerys

LEOPARD LAMB JACKET 12 Gns.

SQUIRREL JACKET 59 Gns.

PERSIAN LAMB 229 Gns.

ERMINE 299 Gns.

FITCH CAPE STOLE 25 Gns.

BEAVER LAMB JACKET 8 Gns.

SQUIRREL CAPE STOLE 29 Gns.

KOLINSKY TIES 10 Gns.

MINK TIES 29 Gns.

OCELOT 239 Gns.

STRANDED BLACK MUSQUASH 149 Gns.

Not Sketched

BLACK FLANK MUSQUASH 59 Gns.

NATURAL BLACK MUSQUASH 69 Gns.

SILVER MUSQUASH 29 Gns.

BEAVER CONEY 8 Gns.

MINK STRIPED CONEY 12 Gns.

PONYSKIN 10 Gns.

WHITE CONEY CAPE

MINK MARMOT TIES 6 Gns.

BLENDED MUSQUASH 49 Gns.

BEAVER LAMB 15 Gns.

SOUTHERN MUSQUASH 29 Gns.

SILVER BLUE MUSQUASH 29 Gns.

MINK MARMOT 49 Gns.

PESHANIKI COAT 29 Gns.

CANADIAN SQUIRREL 79 Gns.

INDIAN LAMB

CLERY & CO. (1941) LTD. DUBLIN

1.28 Fur sale advertisement

p.28

1.28

The future of Clery's in the nineties rests on how receptive the company is to change. Tom Rea, Clery's General Manager is aware of the need to update the image of Clery's but feels that change has to be gradual. The main problem is 'staffing culture'. The merchandise could be easily changed but not the 1.28 established Clery's staff. Some changes have been involuntary, the famous Clery's fur department was forced to close down in 1989 due to a total lack of sales. Suburban shopping centres are proving tough competitors to stores such as Clery's due to their convenience and accessibility. Niche targetted stores such as Next and the Body Shop have also had a dramatic effect on department stores.

In the nineties, quality of environment and merchandise will be taken for granted, as Tony Parker points out in a recent paper on retailing. The days of pile it high and sell it cheap are numbered'. [19] Stores selling, as William Whiteley is alleged to have said, 'everything from a hatpin to an elephant' are simply not sought after shopping environments anymore. Clery's was traditionally recognised as having an extremely faithful clientele. This myth has been shattered in the nineties as customer loyalty is a thing of the past. The consumer today gives each purchase its own satisfaction rating and the quality of merchandise determines whether they will shop in the same place again.

Tom Rea, however, is confident about the store's future. The major Georges Quay development will improve the area considerably as office developments always add retailing life to an area. The city centre will always be superior to suburban retailing because it offers variety and depth of merchandise. The new buzz word in Clery's is taste and the belief that effective design and marketing shouldn't necessarily mean high price. Other new ideas include plans for in-store banking facilities and services such as opticians and dentists. A new chargecard is presently being marketed for the regular Clery's customer!

NOTES

1. Marianne Heron, 'Whats in Store for Clerys'
Irish Press, February 19th, 1987, P.11.

2. Maurice Craig - Dublin 1660-1860,
3rd edition, Dublin, Allen Figgis Ltd; 1980, P.104.

3. Maura Shaffrey - "Sackville Street/O'Connell Street".
Irish Arts Review. 1988, P. 149.

4. Henry Shaw, New Pictorial Director 1850.
"To which is added a retrospective review of the past year". Dublin 1850.

5. Maura Shaffrey - "Sackville Street/O'Connell Street"
Irish Arts Review, 1988 P. 48.

6,7 Nikolaus Pevsner - A History of Building Types.
Thames & Hudson Ltd. London, 1976, Ch. 16, P. 267, P. 258.

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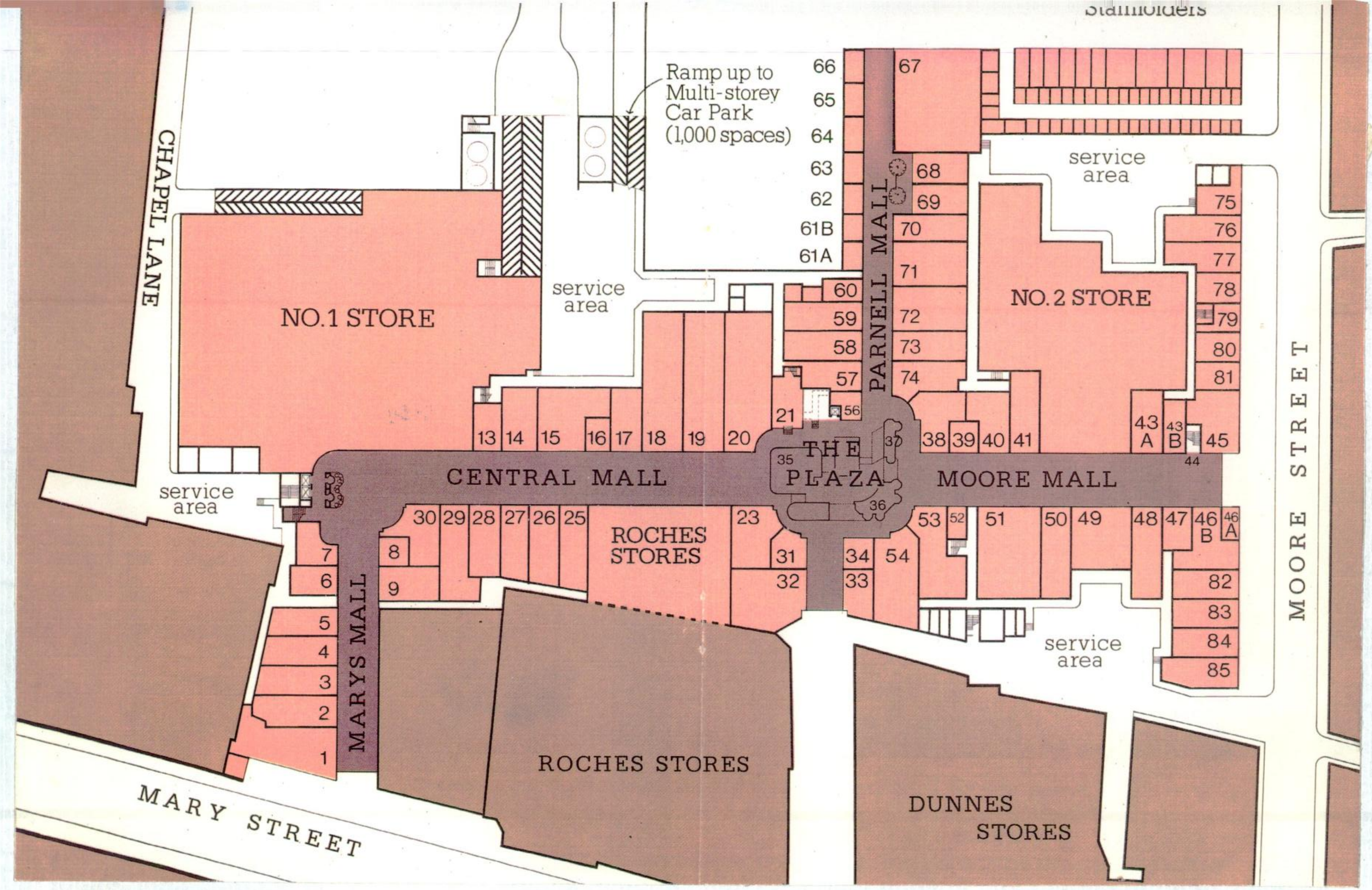
CHAPTER 2

THE ILAC CENTRE



2.1 Plan of ILAC Centre

2.2 Construction on site

2.3 Moore Street Stall

The ILAC Centre opened for business in October, 1980. It was the first tailormade shopping centre planned for the heart of Dublin and was located close by the busy shopping precinct which includes Henry Street, Moore Street and Parnell Street.

In the eleven years since its opening the ILAC Centre has settled quickly into the area and the initial process of integrating a modern shopping complex with a more traditional high-street style shopping approach has been achieved with relative success.

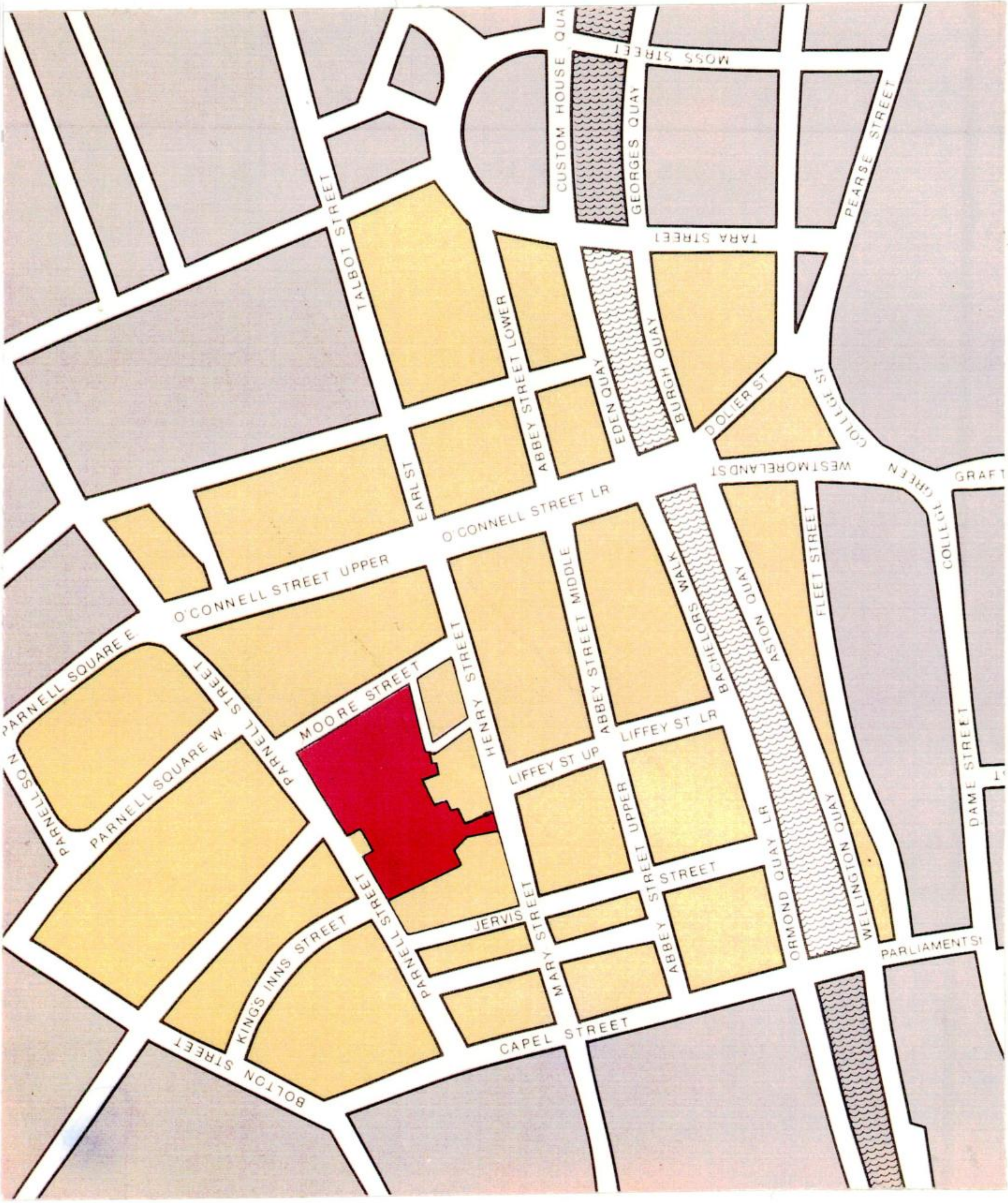
Originally the area surrounding Moore Street was a high class residential area established in the early 18th century by the Earls of Drogheda. On the site where the ILAC centre now stands street-trading gradually began to develop beginning with markets centred in Coles Lane. Before the end of the century, these markets had spread through the nearby Rotunda market into Little Denmark Street on the West, through Taaffe's market and Norfolk market to Great Britain Street (later Parnell Street) on the north and through Mason's Market, Anglesea Market and Moore Street market to Moore Street itself on the east.

2.3 Into the nineteen hundreds, Moore Street was firmly established as a food market. The main change since that time has been the clearance of the old stalls and workshops around Coles Lane. The various trades, which were a feature of the area, have also declined.

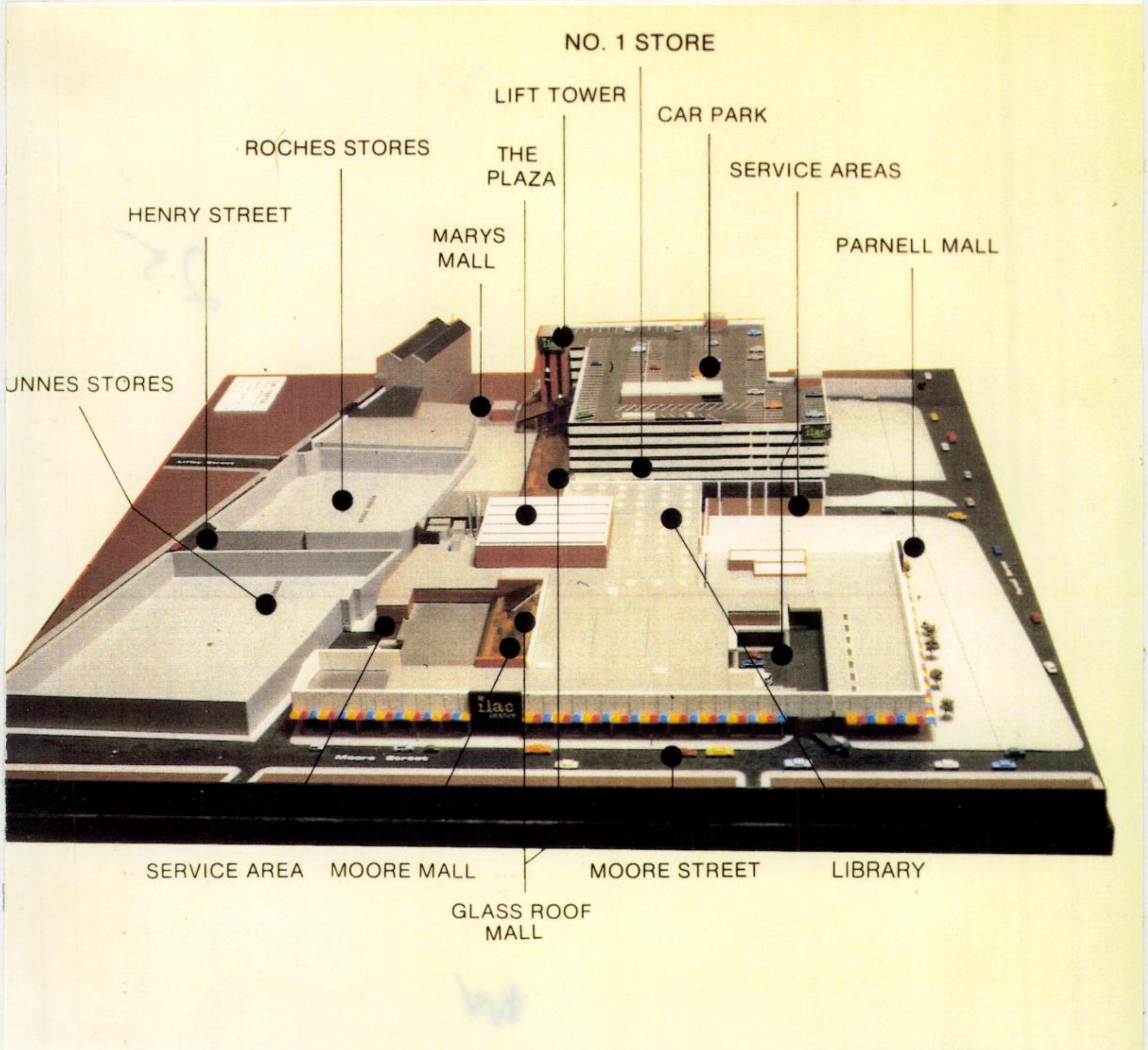
Dublin Corporation purchased the ILAC Centre site in 1935 having recognised the need for re-development. Throughout the following thirty five years the site was the subject of a series of feasability studies as to its future development. Dr. Nathaniel Lichfield's interim report in 1964 was in favour of re-development by Dublin Corporation in partnership with a property developer. The Corporation served compulsory purchase orders on the eight acre site, leading to a public outcry and an enquiry, but in 1969, the compulsory purchase orders were confirmed by the Minister for Local Government and negotiations began with property developers to redevelop the site.

The contract was awarded to the Irish Life Assurance Co. in 1974 by Cois de Pleanàla agus Forbairte and demolition began in 1975. The first phase proposal was reduced in 1977 from 400,000 to 160,000 square feet and the financial investment was reduced from twenty million to five million. The revised single storey development, with car parking facilities on the roof was submitted for planning approval on April 30th, 1977.

Economic experts employed by Dublin Corporation described the ILAC site as
2.4 the "number one site for commercial development in Ireland". Certainly, the site was in an extremely attractive position with Henry Street often described as Dublin's busiest and most commercially successful shopping street. Shops consistently commanded exorbitant rents and reported good profits. In 1989, a survey quoted it as being one of the top twelve streets anywhere, having the twelfth highest retail rent in the world. Although the survey "Streets Across The World" [1] was published only two years ago, the commercial viability of the streets surrounding their new site was evident to the Irish Life Assurance Co. years



2.4 ILAC site location



2.5 Architectural model of ILAC Centre

earlier when they were making their first plans. The ILAC site was also attractive because the location was readily accessible to all cross city bus routes, railway stations, offices and tourist attractions.

Architects, Keane Murphy Duff, succeeded in winning the commission for the site. They had already been employed by Irish Life and consequently were fairly confident of winning the business. From the beginning they were faced with a high level of planning and design problems due to the challenge of placing a new development in the heart of an already established area.

A number of existing factors had first to be considered. There were for example apparent advantages, in that the adjacent Henry Street guaranteed a high level of pedestrian traffic being drawn to the area. The bustle of Moore Street and its street traders were also a major draw for shoppers. However, what should have been an advantage to creating the right kind of atmosphere in the centre turned out to be a nightmare for both the architects and the developers.

One of the chief architects involved in the centre, Noel Murphy, remembers weeks of conflict with the Moore Street traders. Feeling was already hostile following the compulsory purchase orders and subsequent demolition in 1975. The street traders were divided into two groups - traders and stall holders, who would not come together as a unit to meet with the developers. The stallholders considered themselves superior to the street traders; the meetings were often confusing because the traders refused to elect a leader and their exact demands could never be pinpointed. The general consensus seemed to be that the new rents in the area would be too high for existing tenants and that their needs would not be catered for because of the sheer size of the development. It could be argued that the completed ILAC centre did not successfully integrate the traditional and colourful Moore Street atmosphere but it did offer the street traders storage facilities, and low rents for those with stalls along the Moore Street facade. The stall holders also benefitted from the modern facades offered by the centre and from general improvements to facilities. It is interesting to note that at present a large number of the stalls provided at the time have ceased to be used by the traders.

The street traders were not the only problem confronting Keane Murphy Duff. Roches Stores, one of the largest multiple stores in the area, backs onto the South West side of the centre. A well accepted marketing strength for a new shopping centre is to have an anchor tenant such as Dunnes Stores or Roches Stores, which would guarantee a strong pedestrian flow and generate business for the smaller traders. In the case of the ILAC centre the plan was to expand Roches Stores into the centre, creating another entrance from Henry Street, through the store to the ILAC's Central Mall. Roches Stores were not very enthusiastic about the plan unless they were given a goods inwards/outwards delivery route. The developers considered that the Roches Stores tenancy was vital to the Centre's success so they acceded to the request and built an underpass from Parnell Street at a cost of £2 million for the store's exclusive use for their services and deliveries!

The lack of public amenities in the area was another issue which had to be considered at the design stage. The most significant of these was the need for car parking facilities. If the centre was to compete with similar style suburban

2.6 ILAC entrance

2.7 Moore Street,

2.8 Moore Street,

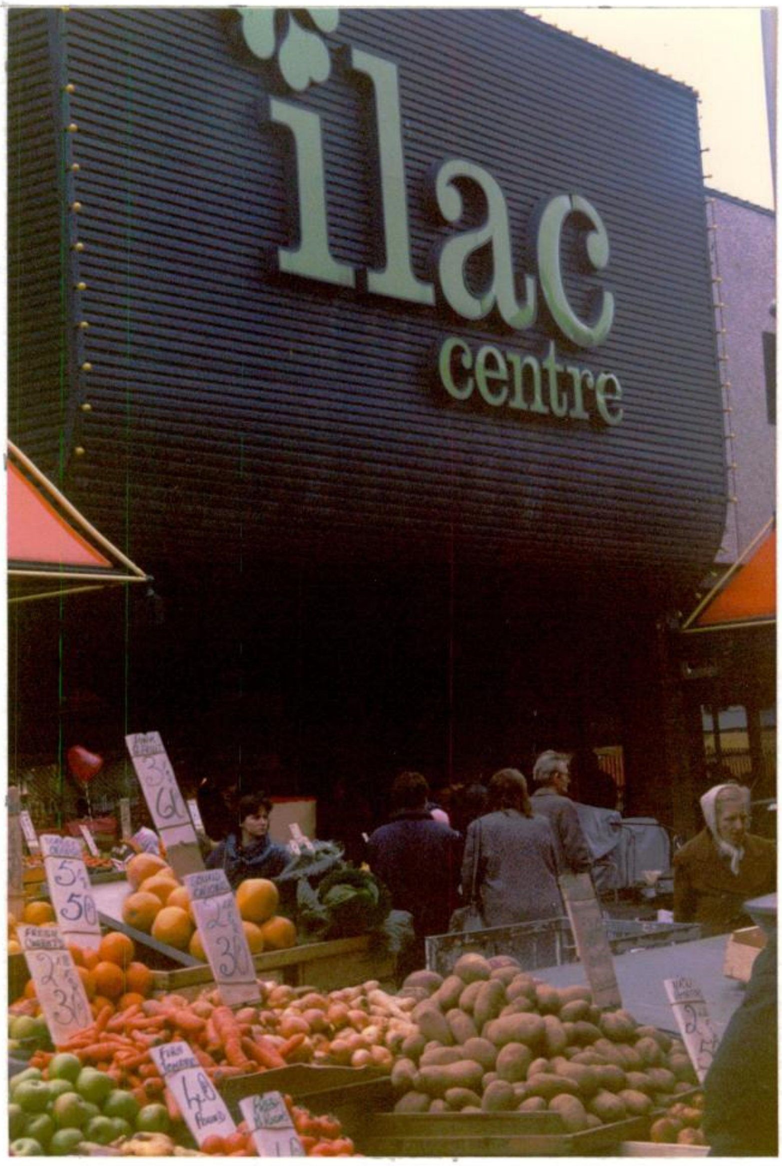
2.9 Canopies along Moore Street Facade,

developments in any serious way it had to offer accessible and convenient parking. The architects consulted with Swedish car parking experts, (an expensive exercise), to ascertain the best way of maximising the car parking space available. Together, they came up with a plan to build a multi-storey car park, the Swedes recommending a circular system which they advised would ease the flow of traffic. Owing to the expense involved, however, the developers opted for a square multi-level system. Although the car park can hold 1,000 cars, the congestion remains considerable. The growth in car ownership since the ILAC centre opened means that car parking in the area is still a major problem.

Aside from the special arrangements for Roches Stores, servicing and deliveries to the centre was another problem and because of the complexity of the streets around the centre and the fact that Henry Street itself was already pedestrianised, four servicing areas had to be incorporated into the plans. Four accesses were incorporated - one in Parnell Street, two in Moore Street and another in Chapel Lane. (see plan)

One of the main problems with modern architecture, according to architect Noel Murphy, are the limitations imposed by the client and budgetary considerations. Both had an effect on the original concept for the ILAC centre. The original plan called for a complete two storey building with a circular multi-level car parking structure. Both had to be revised due to budget cut-backs. 2.5

2.6 The centre has four entrances from the surrounding streets - all are designed in a similar fashion to ensure that one wouldn't take precedence over another. The frontage onto Moore Street is sizeable and every effort has been made to recreate



2.10 Moore Street entrance

2.11 Mary Street entrance

2.12 Mary's Mall

2.13 Central Mall

2.7,8 the colourful atmosphere of the street by using modular, triangular coloured
2.9 canopies along the length of the street. The rest of the exterior is red brick,
2.10 which the architects felt was warm and in keeping with the surroundings. The
2.11 recessed entrances consisting of curved, ribbed grey roofs are unimposing, the
idea being to integrate the centre with the surrounding trading area as quickly as
possible.

The interior of the centre consists of four main malls which meet in a central core
2.12 or plaza. Mary's Mall on the west leads off Mary Street and joins the Central
2.13 Mall, which runs right through the centre of the site to the plaza and continues
eastward as the Moore Mall onto Moore Street on the east side. The Parnell
2.14 Mall joins the plaza and runs northward towards Parnell Street. The plaza is also
2.15 accessible from the entrance on Coles Lane off Henry Street.

The centre provides space for seventy nine shop units and two department stores. The first store is occupied by Dunnes Stores and is situated off the Central Mall on the Parnell Street side. The second is on the Moore Mall, also on the Parnell Street side. This store, in the eleven year life span of the centre, has never been let. According to Anne Lawlor, the centre manageress, a tenant is speculating the unit at the moment but no deal has been confirmed as yet. The smaller shop units are situated continuously along the remaining spaces between the larger stores. The Roches Stores extension backs onto the Central Mall on the Henry Street side. The car parks are multi-storey and situated on the Parnell Street side. The car park is accessed by a series of lift and stairs off the Central Mall. Two wallside bubble lifts also lead to the car park but these are more of a visual attraction than a convenient one, being small and slower than other access routes.

2.14 Parnell Mall

2.15 Coles Lane entrance

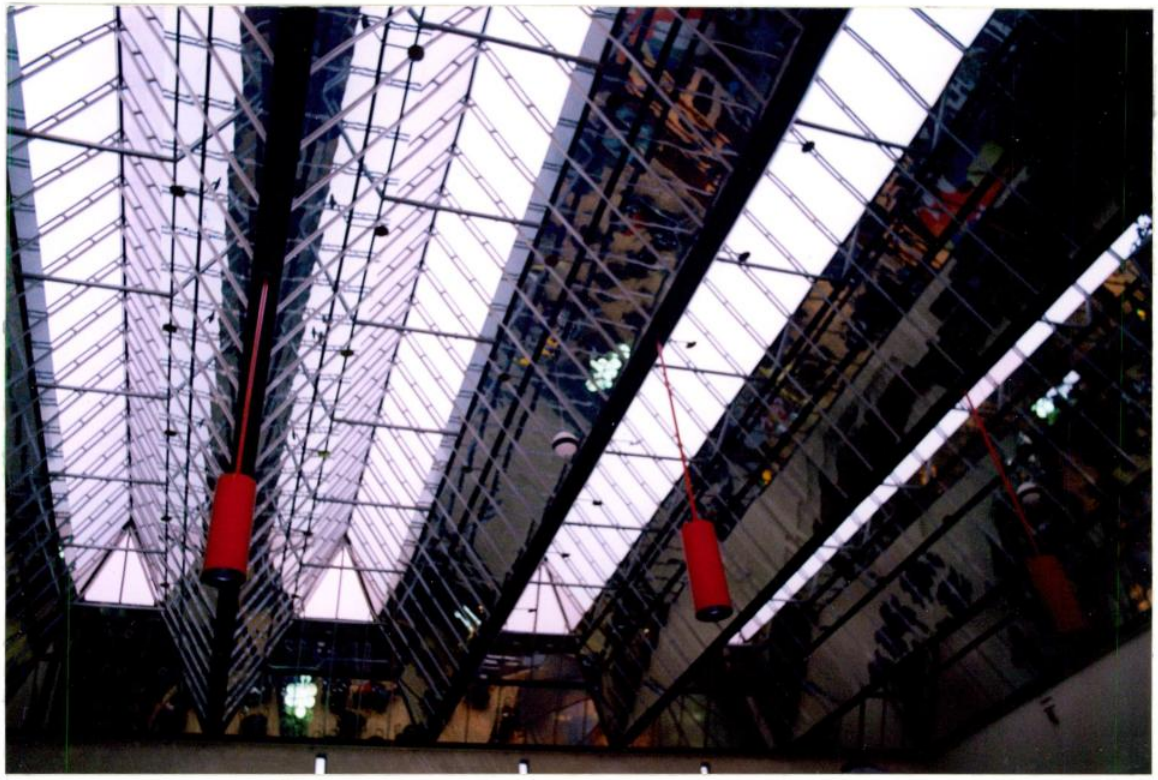
2.16,17
Central Plaza

Some of the Moore Street stallholders were given units on the Parnell Street facade which runs perpendicular to Moore Street. Most of these units sell shoes and clothes and are open to the street. The first floor comprises the Corporation public library, the Plaza Restaurant and the upper floors of the two main department stores (see plan).

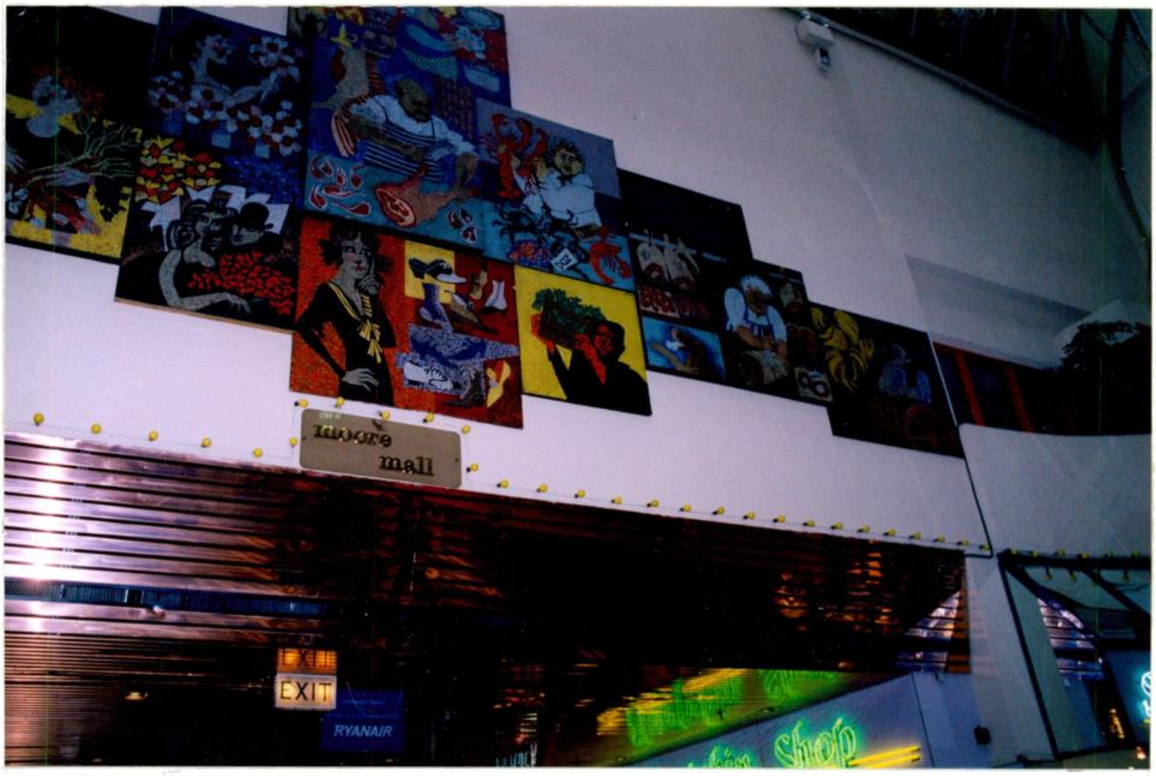
The building is a functional rather than decorative development. It is essentially a roofing in of streets and this was the intention of Keane Murphy Duff. The underlying design concept for the interior was to treat the four malls as indoor thoroughfares. An open air effect was achieved along the central and Moore
See Malls by the use of glazed roofs and trees which are placed at intervals along the
2.13 malls. Within certain guidelines the tenants were allowed to introduce their own character to interiors and shopfronts, the objective being to achieve individuality along the malls in terms of signs, frontages and interiors.

The Plaza was designed to be the hub of the centre intended to capitalize on the psychological benefit of a central atrium where all parts of a structure converge. It was advertised in the sales blurb as containing exciting visual attractions. The area was to be surrounded by specialist shops such as ice-cream parlours, coffee shops and florists. The inclusion of a waterfall running down a wall of boulders and under the floor to a cascading pool containing a hot air balloon were incorporated to create 'an exciting and cosmopolitan environment'.[2]

2.16, The Plaza, however has been considerably cleared from it's original format. A



2.18 Roof Structure



2.19 Mosaic Wall Treatment

2.20 Moore Street,

2.21 Litter on Moore Street,

17 staircase on the Parnell Mall side leads to a Mall restaurant and onto the Public Library, which is a comprehensive library, featuring audio/visual information centres as well as the usual facilities. On the opposite side a spiral staircase leads
2.18 to an open coffee shop which looks out over the plaza. The roof is comprised of glass and mirror in pyramidal structure. The facades of both the Moore and
2.19 Central Malls are decorated with mosaic illustrations of markets and stallholders.

In the eleven years since the ILAC Centre opened, the trend for functional shopping centres has changed in favour of a more decorative approach, i.e. St. Stephen's Green Centre. The problems with street traders in and around
2.20 Henry Street and the downgrading of Moore Street have had a negative effect on
2.21 the ILAC centre on the whole. The Corporation have failed as originally planned to elect a street manager for Moore Street in order to monitor illegal trading and help reduce litter levels. The presence of a street manager would also be
2.22 effective in controlling vandalism. The Moore Street facade of the ILAC centre has generally become rundown and many of the original stalls are vacant. Within the centre itself, there is a definite need for refurbishment. The Mary's Mall and
See facade was recently renovated but its classical style is out of keeping with the rest
2.12 of the centre. The centre is currently reporting good trading levels but many are sceptical about its future.

Tom Coffey, the Secretary of the Dublin City Business Organisation, believes that the ILAC Centre has become outdated in relation to other developments, due to a lack of vision on the part of the Corporation. More money has been pumped into the Grafton Street area because its scale is relatively easier to manage than the northside area in general.

2.22 Grafitti off Moore Street,

1-21

However, the future of the area is not entirely bleak. Tom Coffey envisages the upgrading of Moore Street taking place in the next year as part of a scheme to bring life back to the area. Plans include cobbling the road, cleaning up the buildings and introducing sculptures to the street. The other aims for the future are to make the entire Henry Street area more user-friendly at night. The possibilities for improving Mary Street as an extension of the Temple Bar area will help to achieve this goal.

NOTES

1. Tara Buckley; 'Henry Street at No. Twelve'.
   Irish Press, December 12th, 1989.

2. Keane Murphy Duff. 'The ILAC Centre'.
   Presentation Report, 1980, P.4.

CHAPTER 3

ST. STEPHENS GREEN CENTRE

The St. Stephen's Green Shopping Centre opened in November, 1988. The site at the top of Grafton Street and facing one of the Green's most prominent corner entrances was developed amidst controversy and speculation as to its suitability. A considerable body of opinion considered the site too significant for a modern shopping centre development, but as was the case with many of the buildings around the Green, the conservationists were defeated by 'progress'. In itself however, the siting of a shopping centre near to Grafton Street has enhanced the whole area from a retailing point of view and because of the vacant space still undeveloped at it's side, it is obvious that an extension of the concept is a distinct possibility, effectively changing the whole atmosphere of this corner of one of Dublin's most famous landmarks.

St. Stephen's Green was laid out in 1663. The land was acquired in 1702 by the Earl of Meath and reverted to the city after his death in 1709. The park was landscaped in 1880 by Sir Arthur Edward Guinness and administered on his behalf by the Board of Works. The square contains some fine examples of both Georgian and Victorian architecture and is noted as being, 'one of the most attractive of Dublin's open spaces'. [1]

Yet, St. Stephens Green has long been a victim of poor planning in terms of preservation and re-development. The 1963 Local Government Act, which stood as the principal legislative document, was too timidly drafted and it required no special planning permission to demolish a building. As a result the Green has

3.1 been likened to, 'a mouth of teeth, some decayed, many badly crowned and the remaining good ones obscured'.[2] At the turn of the century the northwest section of the Green had consisted mainly of shops, pubs and houses. The area directly behind the street facade was occupied by the Cantrell and Cochrane Mineral Water Factory. The South King Street area was the home of the Gaiety Theatre

3.2 built in 1871, but was also a traditional shopping street.

The Slazenger family, who own the Powerscourt Estate in Co. Wicklow, began to buy houses on the site covering approximately four and a half acres on the northwest corner of the Green in the late 1960's with the intention of developing an office and retailing complex. A design proposal by Michael Scott and Partners received planning permission in 1974, but the financing of the development along with other planning factors, caused the project to fall through. In the same year the Cantrell and Cochrane factory moved out and the Gaiety Green/Dandelion

3.3 markets were set up.

The intention of Lisney & Son Ltd. in constructing the Gaiety Green Markets was to find a temporary solution to dealing with a potentially derelict site. The space was let to tenants on the condition that they would vacate their premises as they

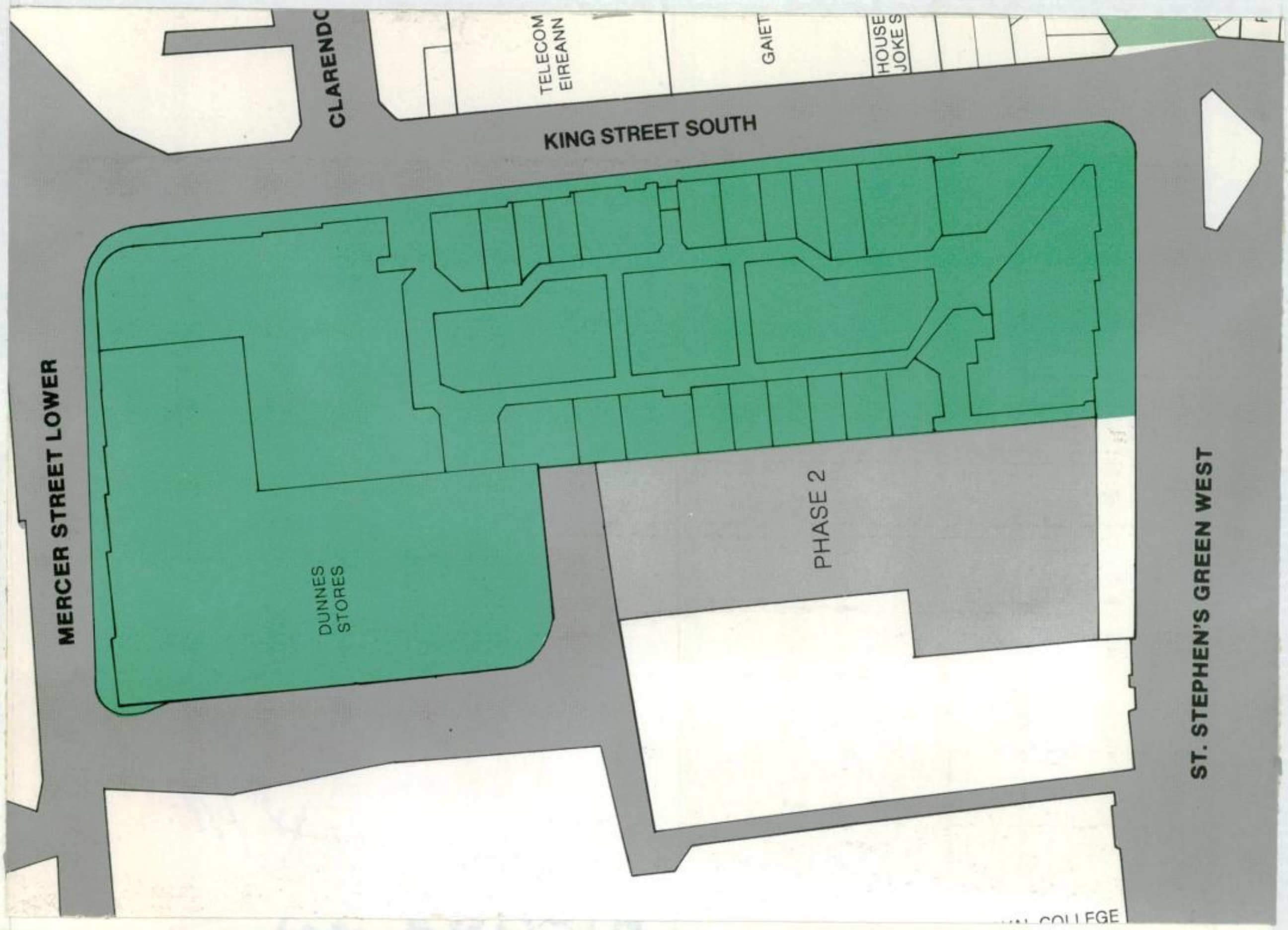
3.1 Nos. 137-41, St. Stephen's Green

3.2 No. 39, South King Street

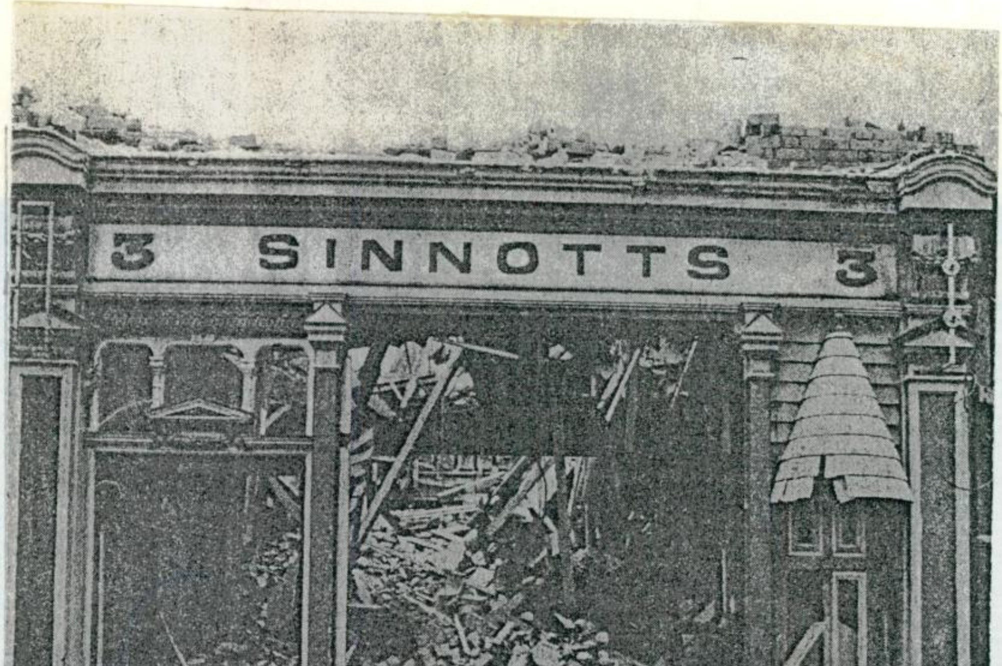
3.3 124-137, St. Stephen's Green.

3.4 No. 25, South King Street

3.5 South King Street



3.6 Site position



3.7 Demolition along South King Street.

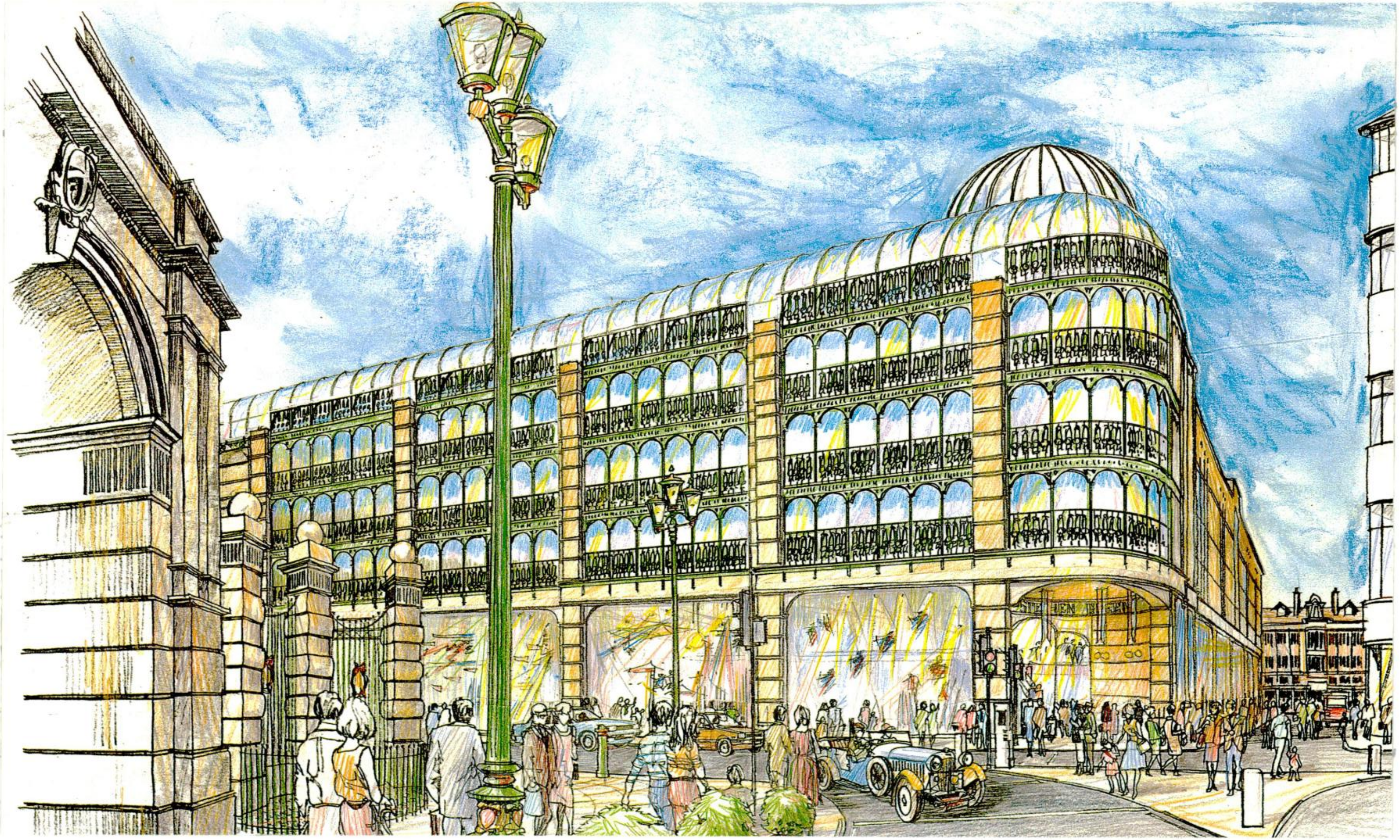
were required to do so. Shop units were also let at reduced rents along St. Stephens Green and South King Street. Because of the rather defective state of the buildings at the time, the resulting tenants formed an eclectic mix, most of whom could not have afforded similar space elsewhere. This combination of
tenants 'restored some social and cultural diversity to life in the City Centre'. [3]
3.4 Frank McDonald summed up the area recently as being 'full of interest, lined as
3.5 it was with bookshops and junkshops, public houses and purveyors of antiques'.[4]
The Gaiety Green Market was closed down in 1981 following the decision of the Slazengers to sell the site for re-development. However, in the light of economic recession in the early eighties, the site proved extremely difficult to sell as one piece.

The first significant offer of ten million pounds was made by the property tycoon Patrick Gallagher, but the sale failed to go through and the Gallagher Group subsequently went into receivership with debts of over thirty million pounds. The
3.6 site was then sold to a joint consortium of British Land and Power Securities for
'the bargain basement price' of five million.

The buildings subsequently demolished along South King's Street included some
3.7 traditional pub and shopfronts, including Sinnotts Pub and Brown's Chemist,
which were not as originally expected, salvaged by the developers. The 1930's style Green Cinema, which had stood alone since demolition began on the rest of the site, was knocked down in 1987. Construction on site began in June, 1985.

3.8 'A Striking Presence on the Green'

3.10 Decorative ironwork,



3.9 Architectural elevation

An article in the Irish Architect in November, 1988 described the completed centre as being, 'great in size and in a great location, moored like a giant flagship of commerce at the Southernmost of Dublin's business district'. [5] The article acknowledged the development to be the greatest thing to ever happen in Irish retailing, but expressed some doubts about its architectural integrity. The centre, which provides up to 370,000 square feet of retail space at ground, first and
3.8 second floor levels over a basement servicing area, however, is undoubtedly a
3.9 dramatic presence on the Green.

Initially, the development posed some major design problems for the architect's and engineer's involved. The presence of a 38 KV ESB Substation serving the whole Grafton Street area on the site was a major influence in the development of the design. Agreement was reached with the ESB at the initial stages of development to relocate their two transformers along Glovers Alley to the north side of the site. The remaining switching stations were completely encapsulated after satisfying strict fire, access and ventilation requirements. Another factor which required nogotiation at the initial stages of planning were the rights of light of the adjoining owners, in particular The College of Surgeons. Agreements were made with them on building setbacks, screening, noise insulation and elevational treatment.

Due to the large interest in St. Stephens Green as an area for preservation, the planning of the site was carefully monitored by environmental groups such as An

3.11 Second floor, St. Stephen's Green

3.13

3.12 Main entrance, St. Stephen's Green

3.13 The St. Stephen's Green Centre through the trees,

3.14 The South King Street elevation

Taisce. The original architectural scheme submitted by the Gallagher Group was dubbed " an extremely dull and unimaginative pastiche of the Georgian style". [6] An Taisce felt that development of the site should 'reflect the vibrancy of the original buldings'.[7] When Power Corporation acquired the site in 1984, the task of choosing a suitable architectural style was handed over to Jim Toomey, the company's chief architect. "There were many initial design influences," recalls Jim Toomey. Much speculation has been made about the source of inspiration for the St. Stephens Green development. It has been compared with the Eaton Centre in Toronto, The Bayswater Centre, London and even 'a Missisippi riverboat', [8] but the real source for Mr. Toomey was a centre he came across in Washington called 'George Town Park'. The George Town Park development is a luxurious
3.10 development, which like St. Stephens Green is strongly influenced by 'Victoriana',
3.11 the cast iron railings, glass dome and patterned tile floors etc. are obviously
3.12 borrowed ideas for the Green development. Jim Toomey cites, 'the attention to
detail, the ambiance and character of George Town as his main influences'.

The other obvious source of inspiration was the style and historical character of the surrounding area. Jim Toomey wanted the St. Stephens Green frontage to be reminiscent of a Victorian conservatory. The view of the centre through the trees
3.13 from within the park is particularly effective in demonstrating this. The
glasshouse designer, Richard Turner, was born at number four St. Stephens Green, his work in the Botanical Gardens was one of the sources for the
3.14 conservatory style steelwork and dome facing onto the Green. The facades along

3.15 South King Street and Mercer Street were influenced by the 'faintly gothic', [9] style of the Gaiety Theatre and the car park exterior was designed to look like a

3.16 nineteenth century industrial building.

Mr. Toomey is not a newcomer to the specific planning problems of developing historical areas, his work on the Powerscourt Townhouse Centre in 1981 was closely co-ordinated with An Taisce, and similarly his current work on the Trocadero Centre in London is being developed in co-ordination with the Soho Conservation Society, The National Trust and The Royal Fine Arts Commission. He believes that the St. Stephens Green Centre has been extremely successful in fitting into the area, "the facades have all blended into their respective areas and will improve rather than deteriorate with time". Both Michael Stokes, who manages the centre (formely managed ILAC Centre), and Jim Toomey, share the view that the design of the centre is so classic that it will never need to be updated, in contrast to the ILAC Centre which is presently in need of refurbishment.

The elevational treatments of the Green Centre have excited interest in the eyes of the public, and harsh criticism from architectural critics. The previously mentioned Irish Architect article sees the St. Stephens Green Facade as being 'reminiscent of a Chirstmas-time television advertisement for Súicre', [10] while the South King Street facade is an unsuccessful attempt to "Harmonise" the building with its surroundings.

3.15 South King Street entrance

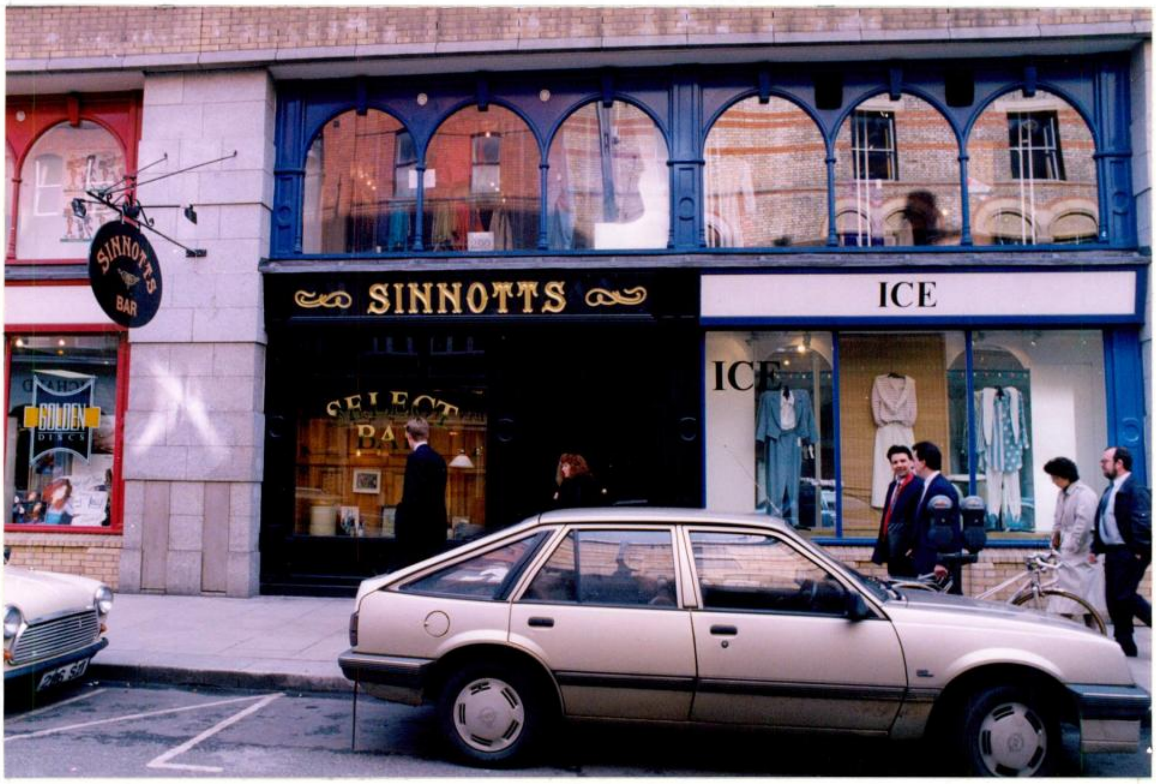
3.16 Car park elevation,

3.17 St. Stephen's Green frontage

3.18 South King Street elevation

3.17 The St. Stephens Green Frontage of the centre is a reproduction of Victorian style conservatory steelwork. It is the most dynamic and adventurous elevation of the development. The cast aluminium three storey facade has four structural bays, each containing six modules or round arched windows. The roof is raised and glazed at front and rear. Over the main entrance at the corner of South King Street there is a glazed dome 'which flagposts the location throughout the southside of the city', [11] and forms a dominant corner feature. The recessed main entrance is intended to resemble the arch opposite, leading into St. Stephens Green. The filligree mock balcony panels along the facade are derived from a number of sources, obviously they echo similar wrought iron work used throughout St. Stephens Green, but Jim Toomey cites his main source as being the various balconies on Georgian houses throughout the city. Power Corporation's own offices in Merrion Square boasts one of these. The entire facade is undeniably an imposing presence on St. Stephens Green. Its intention was to harmonise with, but stand out clearly, from the Georgian and Victorian facades of the surrounding areas and 'a desire to exploit the vistas across St. Stephens Green, making a visual connection with the shopping atrium' [12]. The elevation onto the future phase two development where the Green Cinema used to stand, is temporarily clad with metal decking.

Both the King Street and Mercer Street elevations of the building are treated in brickwork, with bands of coloured and corbelled features patterned to reflect the Gaiety Theatre elevation on the opposite side of the street. The Gaiety Theatre,



3.19 Sinnotts Pub

3.20 Car park elevation

3.21 The Clock, St. Stephens Green Centre

3.22 The Clock, (courtesy of Power Corporation)

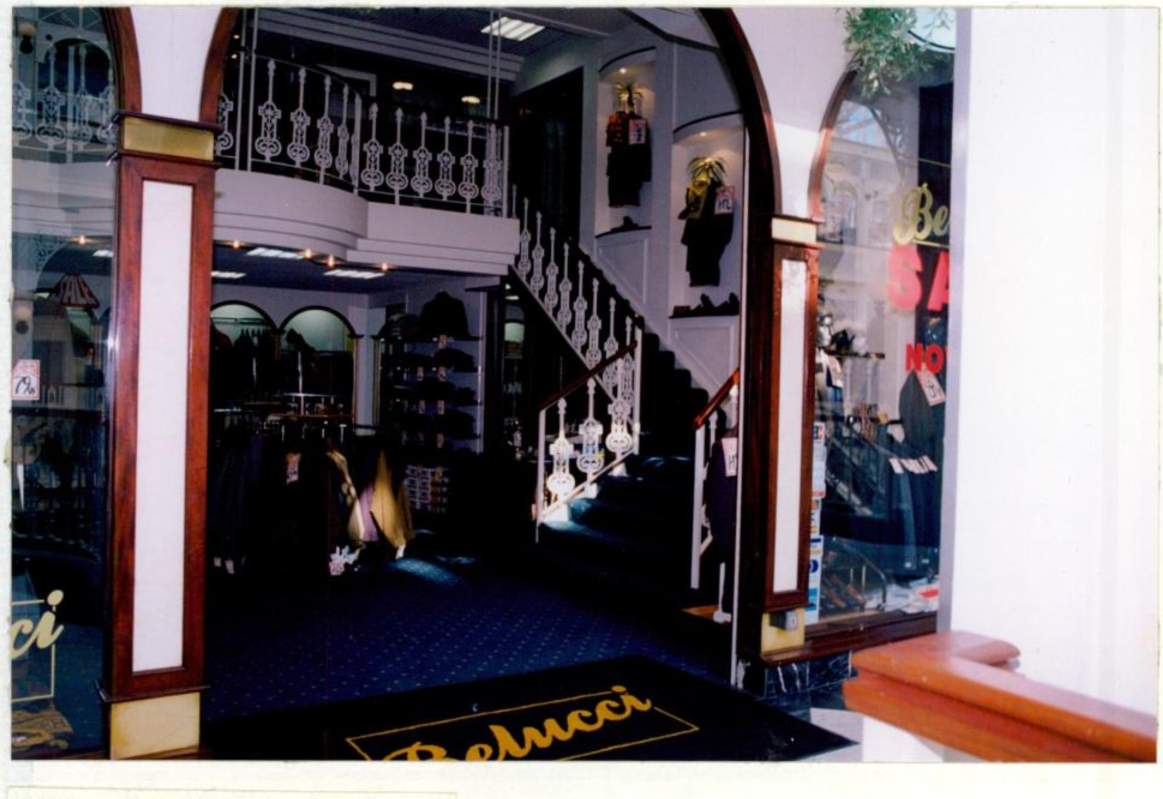
which opened in 1871, was an innovative 'thespian temple' created by C.J. Phipps
and commissioned by the nineteenth century theatre impressarios, Michael and
John Gunn. The gothic style facade is yellow brick with red brick sanding and
stone dressing. Hence the similar treatment on the centre's elevations. At
ground floor level, the rear end of the shops backing onto South King Street
3.18 appear as mock shopfronts, as their only means of entry is through the shopping
3.19 centre. The ground floor entrances to Sinnotts Pub and Bennigans Restaurant are
situated on South King Street. The streetfronts are traditional in style. Sinnotts
pub trys to recreate the original pub which was demolished in 1986. The upper
levels of the elevation feature round-arched windows in groups of three supported
on stone columns, again an imitation of the Gaiety Theatre opposite. The car
park section of the building which has facilities for six hundred and fifty vehicles,
3.20 is influenced by nineteenth century industrial buildings, which used to habitate the
area.

3.21 The interior treatment is dominated by a huge circular clock which is a major
3.22 architectural feature in the central atrium of the centre. The clock is essentially
a smokescreen. The basic design of the interior can be described as palatial. The
central atrium of 300,000 square feet runs parallel to South King Street, from
3.23 Stephens Green to Mercer Street. The layout consists of three floors with shops
on both sides. The centre of the mall features a mezzanine platform, which is
intended to be a stage for live music, fashion shows etc. The glass roof runs the
entire length of the mall and is unlimited to let daylight filter through. The

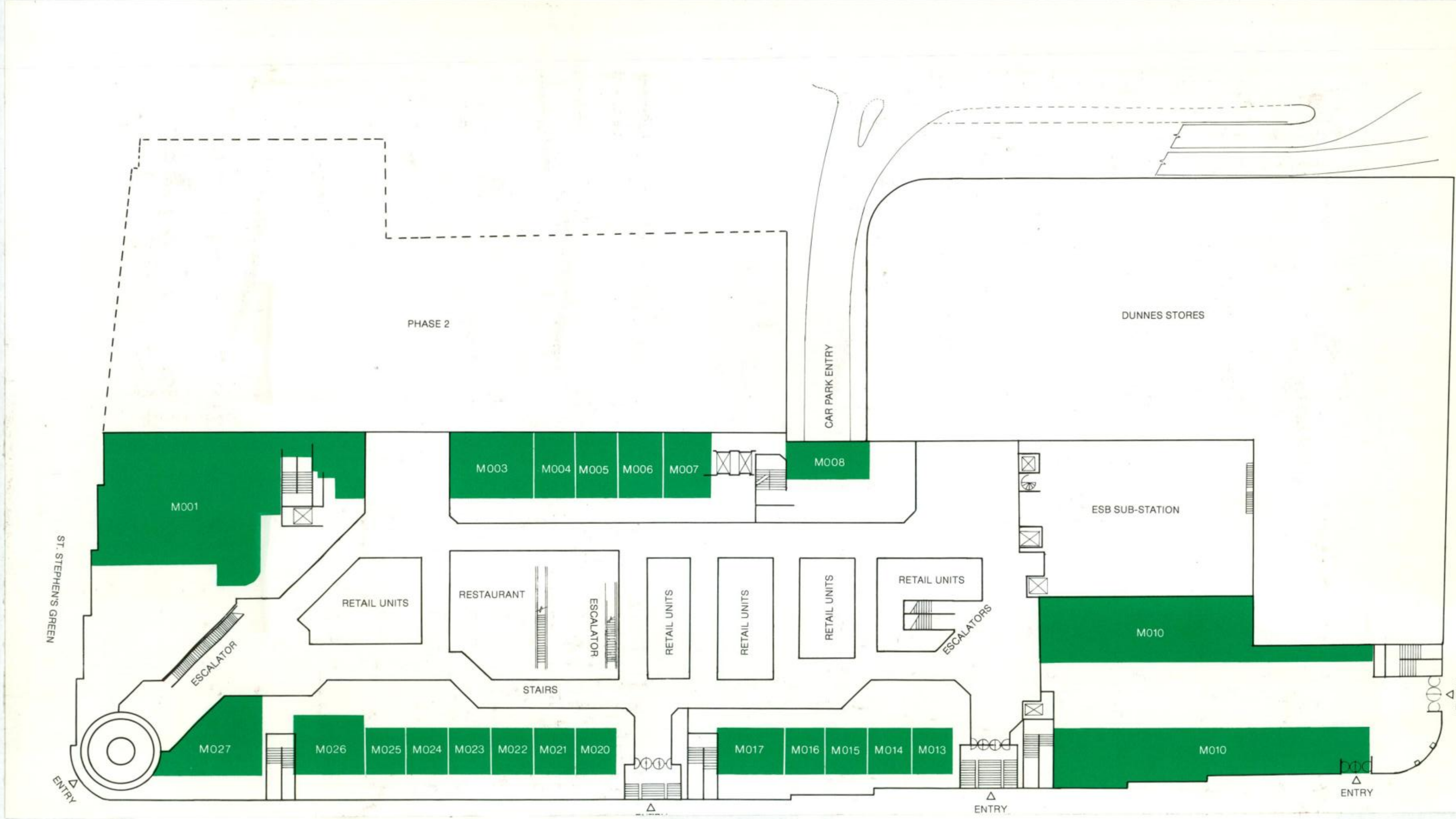
3.23 The Central Atrium

3.24 Architectural drawing of interior

3.26 Shopfront in the Centre



3.27 Shopfront in the Centre



3.25 Ground Floor Plan

Stephen's Green character is imitated by the use of traditional street lamps and ironwork balustrading the upper malls and staircases. The lighting atmosphere is achieved by hanging spheres surrounded by artificial foliage. One of the
3.24 criticisms of the interior is that the architecture is too dominant. The spectacular main hall is more of an advertisement for itself than for the retail elements of the centre.

Continued criticism of the centre is received with contempt by Jim Toomey, the chief architect of the development, who considers the public to be his main critics. "The centre was not designed for architects, but for people". The centre has had a positive effect on retailing in the Grafton Street area and commercially is a success. However, as Paul Goldberger writes in an article about George Town Park, Washington, the centre is 'an event in the evolution of popular taste', [13] and one wonders how the St. Stephen's Green Centre will survive if popular taste evolves in a different direction in the future.

NOTES

1. Frank McDonald. St. 'Stephens Green Shopping Complex Plan' Irish Times, August 10th, 1984, p. 10

2. Helen Connolly. 'The Spoiling of Stephens Green'. Source unknown.

3. Brian Trench. 'Slazenger Site Proving Difficult to Sell as one piece'. <u>Construction</u> Jul/Aug 1980, p. 7.

4. Frank McDonald. 'Shop till you Drop'. Irish Times/Weekend, February 9th, 1991, p. 1.

5. John E. O'Reilly. 'St. Stephen's Green Shopping Centre'. <u>Irish Architect</u>, Nov/Dec 1988 p. 9

6-7 Frank McDonald. St. 'Stephen's Green Shopping Complex Plan'. Irish Times, August 10th, 1984, p. 10

8. Frank McDonald. 'Shop till you Drop'. Irish Times/Weekend, February 9th, 1991, p.1.

9. Hugh F.B. Maguire. 'Tattered splendours of the Gaiety'. Irish Times, August 30th, 1983.

10. John E. O'Reilly. 'St. Stephen's Green Shopping Centre'. <u>Irish Architect</u>, Nov/Dec 1988, p. 10

11. 'Building Review, St. Stephen's Green Shopping Centre'. <u>Plan Magazine</u>. November, 1988, P. 6

12. 'A New Landmark for Dublin'. <u>Build Magazine</u>. January, 1989, p. 2

13. Paul Goldberger. 'George Town Park: The stage set as retail environment'. On the Rise, p. 143 - 145

CONCLUSIONS

The retail element of Dublin has been noted already as being an intrinsic part of the life, culture and architecture of the city. It is necessary therefore to observe the city as a whole. The aim of Dublin for the future is to bring life back to the nucleus of the city, to try and stop inner city decay. Essentially, a wish exists to maintain the city as a social centre, i.e. to integrate neighbourhoods and preserve historical continuity. The growth and dispersal of the city in the last three decades has brought to a head the need to re-define the central core of Dublin.

From a retailing point of view, the central city area has great advantage and potential over the suburbs. It is firstly the capital of the country, and secondly has a historic and cultural atmosphere which cannot be matched in suburbia. (Will Tallaght centre, for example, ever become a town centre in the real sense?). The thread of history is an important part of the framework for our twentieth century lives. Without history an environment can feel alien and unharmonious. Surveys conducted by the City Centre Business Organisation indicated that the consumer is becoming increasingly bored with suburban shoppng centres. The convenience shopping expedition, which was a novelty when supermarkets began to arrive on the scene, is now a tedious chore in the leisure orientated nineties. The consumer now expects quality of environment. 'There is a direct association of the quality of the shopping environment and the quality of the merchandise in the consumer's psyche'. [1]. Shopping expeditions must provide bustle, excitement and variety, but they also must have a sense of familiarity and inspire confidence in where to go and what to look for.

Considering the advantages of the city centre, how do the respective case studies contribute to the city in general. Clery's had traditionally been a social centre as well as a shop in the forties and fifties but suffered with the rise of suburbia in the sixties. Improvements in store design and modern trends left Clery's behind on the retailing scene, even in the light of a revival in traditional shopping environments (Powerscourt Townhouse etc.,). Clery's hasn't adapted to change.

The ILAC Centre, built in 1979, was a functional type of building which was fashionable in the seventies but like most functional buildings, it neglected the human element. The message seems clear today, no amount of applied decoration in the form of fountains, streams, mosaics etc., can take from the fact that a building is essentially a box. The mind requires a purity of form and a sense of space. Shop design must be seen as 'Architecture', considering, as already mentioned that it forms such an important part of the cityscape.

In this respect, the St. Stephen's Green Centre, it can be argued, has rivalled the other two developments in considering the public's reaction to the building as well as its contents. The problem with the development, however, is tht the decoration has been applied with a lack of integrity, as John O'Reilly indicates in the Irish Architect - 'A Layer of Style' [2], has been applied to both the interior and the exterior. Like George Town Park/Washington, which inspired the centre, the Green is a celebration in 'Victoriana', and does not cut any corners with regard to design features. The architecture, however, is in some way self-consious and overpowring. The decorative effect designed to reflect St. Stephen's Green has none of the latter's character and subtlety.

Architecturally speaking, the problem with designing shopping centres is, as previously mentioned, the ephemeral nature of retailing. The pace of change is so rapid that commercial buildings have a life span of less than five years. The result is often the use of tacky materials which can be changed quickly according to trends. The ILAC Centre's seventies style plastic canopies look shoddy and out of date today but at least they can be quickly replaced, whereas the 'ironwork' on the St. Stephen's Green Centre is definitely a permanent fixture, the 'existing gimmickry' [3] looks like it is here to stay. The centre was described in Build Magazine as being ' a fine new emporium for the eighties'[4], but what about the nineties?

Considering the changes in retailing in the past fifteen years or so, the predictions for the future are not really as incredible as they seem. Tom Coffey, the Secretary of the Dublin City Centre Business Organisation, is fairly confident that the inner city will never die. The advent of advanced homeshopping systems such as 'Minitel', will mean that future convenience shopping will be conducted entirely by television. The possibilities of suburban shopping centres surviving in such an environment would we minimal. The main draw in a suburban centre is the presence of a magnet or anchor store such as Quinnsworth, Dunnes etc. If supermarkets are replaced with telecom delivery systems, the need for suburban shopping centres will have diminished. Tom Coffey predicts that shopping centres will eventually become giant warehouse facilities to service the suburbs. This trend will be further enhanced by sophisticated marketing techniques being developed for the nineties. American marketing plans such as 'micromarketing' will revolutionise advertising, in that the customer won't have to do any work anymore. The marketeers of the future will find out who their potential customer is, where they live and how to produce positive purchase decisions from them. The sophisticated nineties consumer will know what product is best for them and will have the information to make that choice.[5]

Taking these changes into consideration, my conclusion for the future is that Clery's Department Store has the most potential to survive. It has a sense of history and belonging that the other two developments can never achieve. Future improvements to O'Connell Street such as the re-introduction of trams etc., indicate the possibility of an exciting new retail environment. Because Clery's was built in co-ordination with the other buildings on the street, it fulfills the brief of being striking without being obtrusive. The future of ILAC Centre will be helped by the upgrading of Moore Street but many feel the building will be replaced by the end of the decade. St. Stephen's Green, on the other hand, will be there for a long time and only time will tell what future generations will make of it.

The implications are that shopping will become a leisure pursuit. The city, therefore, will be a centre where all forms of entertainment will converge. The consumer will demand a quality environment and attractive urban space. Retail environments will accordingly have to be spacious, entertaining and interesting.

This thesis was intended as a sample of what's in store for the future!

NOTES

1. Dr. A.J. Parker. "Retailing, The Rocky Road to Ruin". The Centre for Retail Studies. U.C.D. 1990, P.11

2. John E. O'Reilly. "The St. Stephen's Green Shopping Centre". Irish Architect. Nov/Dec 1988 P.10

3. John E. O'Reilly. "The St. Stephen's Green Shopping Centre". Irish Architect. Nov/Dec 1988 P.9.

4. 'A New Landmark for Dublin' Build Magazine, January 1989, p. 25.

5. Danny L. Moore. "Enter the Era of Micromarketing". Irish Marketing Journal, February 1991 P.11.

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28, South William Street, Dublin 2. February 14th, 1991.

2. **Donal Keane,** Former Manager of Clery's.
20 Lower Kilmacud Road, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin. February 9th, 1991.

3. **Anne Lawlor,** Manager, The ILAC Centre.
February 27th, 1991.

4. **Noel Murphy** - Keane Murphy Duff, Architects,
4, Princes Street, Dublin 2. October 25th, 1990.

5. **Tony Parker,** Director, Centre for Retail Studies,
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6. **Tom Roe,** Manager, Clery's Department Store.
Clery's, O'Connell Street. February 5th, 1991.

7. **Michael Stokes,** Manager, St. Stephens Green Centre.
St. Stephens Green, Dublin 2. February 18th, 1991.

8. **Jim Toomey,** Chief Architect, Power Corporation Ltd.
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2. Clery's
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