



Current entrance to Sarsfield House.

## Retain, Refabricate, Repurpose

### Adaptive Reuse of Sarsfield House's facade panels

#### PANEL 1

Sarsfield House is considered by many to be one of Ireland's ugliest buildings. Its prefabricated structure was once considered a shining beacon of modernity for early 70s Limerick. Since then, due to the patenation of its facade and cost of it's upkeep, it has been slated for demolition in the Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan to make way for a stretch of maintained grass.

This proposal is to transform Sarsfield House from the Revenue Commissioners office to a Craft Centre, thus mitigating the environmental impacts of its demolition. It will reintroduce industry and fabrication to the site, and create spaces for artists, designers and makers thus bringing diversely skilled people to the city and providing them with good facilities and a community of like-minded people. This will contribute to Limerick's vision as a City of Culture, and help uplift the arts in the city.

Wood and metalworking shops, print-making studios and ceramic workshops to name a few will be run in a co-operative manner, artists in residence may lend their time out to the public, who in turn rent studio time and learn from the artists. This way, an exchange of ideas is encouraged, along with the promotion of material repair, reuse and fabrication and the education of people about the concepts of sustainability and the importance of craft.

Sarsfield House's current facade panels are made from precast concrete with granite aggregate. The panels have a texture due to the exposed aggregate, and a glint from the crystals in the granite stone. The site is located on reclaimed land right out onto the River Shannon in the heart of Limerick City and is therefore uniquely subjected to the elements on three different sides. In particular, the north facing facade forms habitats for the plant life that can sustain the exposed nature of the riverside site, and so an interesting effect is made on the facades from this growth. To mitigate waste created by their removal they are to be upcycled into a new cladding for the building again reiterating the proposal's focus on material repair, reuse and refabrication.

The concrete panels are to be retained and saved from landfill. They will then be crushed down into their constituent aggregates thus forming the basis for a new cement mix. This mix will then be reshaped using formwork to create various new pavers, tiles and cladding for the building. The new cladding hopes to patenate overtime similarly to its predecessor. The new concrete cladding becomes an architectural feature of the building's aesthetic.

The reused concrete panels extend their use beyond the cladding and into a feature of the building's program and help with water management on this flooding prone site. Permeable paving and swales with planting are introduced to help with on site water management. Some areas of the program are sunken and others raised to create new recreational areas including stages, seating and public spaces that are usable when dry. When wet, these create routes through the site and also deep pools to contain water. Small streams link these areas all together and will expel water out into the river once levels have dropped again.



Granite aggregate concrete, crushed and returned to its constituent aggregates.



Recast concrete using reconstituted aggregate, large gaps for mortar between.



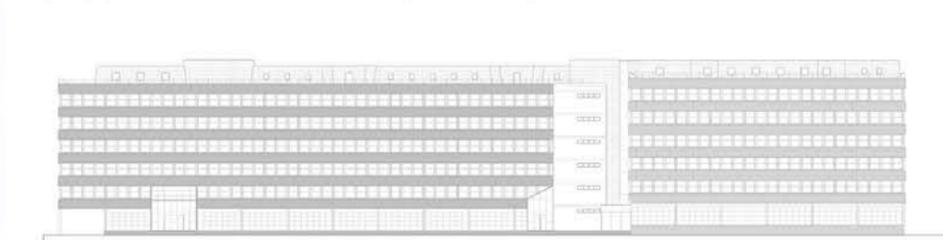
Recast concrete using reconstituted aggregate, Small gaps for mortar between.



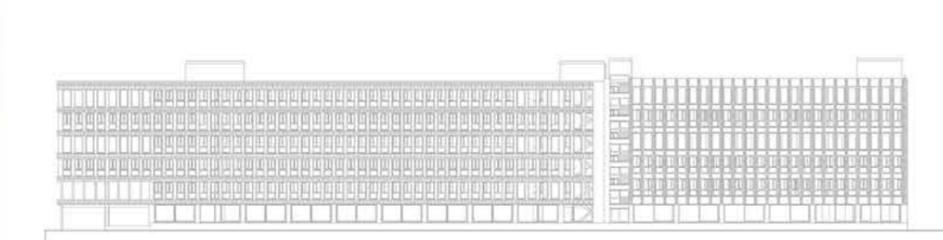
Recast concrete pot using reconstituted aggregate with layer of granite sand to finish.



Masterplan of proposed Craft Centre for Limerick with swales and retention ponds included. Proximity to River Shannon also shown.



Current Facade



Proposed Facade

Comparison between current facade of Sarsfield H

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View from Customs House Park looking back at Sarsfield House and The Hunt Museum, to River Shannon also shown.



Recycled cast concrete cladding for Sarsfield House, variety of colour and texture shown.

## Retain, Refabricate, Repurpose

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#### PANEL 2

Each different facade of Sarsfield House will patenate due to its orientation over time. For example, the north facade will accommodate much more growth than the south due to the colder and wetter climate, and also because it is largely sheltered from Ireland's south-westerly prevailing wind.

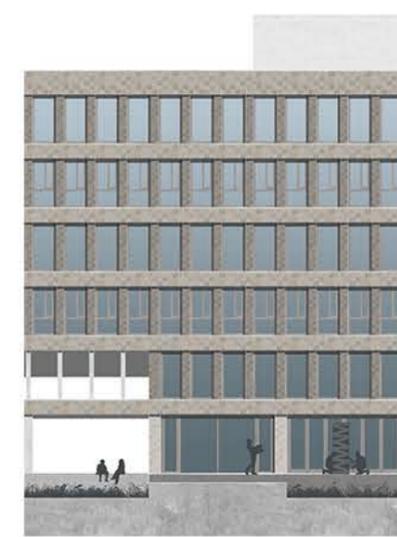
To encourage this bio-patenation, the more textured cast tiles will be mounted to the west and north facades and their smoother counterparts to the east and south.

The horizontal and vertical elements are to be extruded to visually differentiate between different parts of the building too. The newly recast concrete cladding provides the perfect opportunity to use this push and pull effect to create depth and relief to the facade.

One of the initial design intents for this building during its construction in the 70's was to have a fully open ground floor. On the ground floor at the human level, the lightest coloured recast concrete tiles are to be installed. This is to pay homage to this original civic gesture and to help lift the building off the ground as if it were floating.



East Facade, facing Rutland Street.



South Facade, facing Francis Street.



West Facade, facing River Shannon.



North Facade, facing Customs House Park.

Sarsfield House's original facade panels are made from precast concrete with granite aggregate. The panels have a texture due to the exposed aggregate, and a glint from the crystals in the granite stone. They also form a habitat for some plant life that can sustain the exposed nature of the riverside site and so an interesting effect is made on the facades from this growth.

This proposal intends to keep as many of the aforementioned architectural qualities and to create a new facade for Sarsfield House. The same glint to the facade will exist as well as the habitats to plant, bird and lichen. The granite aggregate facade panels are to be reused and repurposed in a multitude of ways throughout the project. These ways include cladding, permeable pavers, tiles and to create swales and retention ponds.

The new concrete becomes an architectural feature of the building's aesthetic and a discretionary feature of the building's program.

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