



# Timber environment for learning and research

## Project in brief

Constructed in 1939, this former Redemptorist Seminary was bought by GMIT to house its Arts/Sculpture/Media faculties on a second campus. Following master planning of the 7,500m<sup>2</sup> buildings, two phases of renovation/redevelopment have been completed and occupied. A final phase is now in Stage 4 DofED procedures. New Sculpture studios have been built to the rear of the building, and plans are in train to convert the former dining hall to a performance venue, and the former oratory to a cinema/lecture theatre.

## Challenges

The original buildings were solidly constructed from masonry, steel and concrete. Much of the upper floors were unsuitable for the desired accommodation - being cellular bedrooms with long corridors. We surveyed the buildings, carefully, to identify the main structure layout and beam sizes etc.

Following our survey, we reported in detail on the implications of various possible reconfigurations to facilitate value engineering.

As part of the project, vertical circulation arrangements were brought up to current standards (lift and stair shafts).

## Innovative Solutions

One of the many features of this project was the removal of a considerable number of load bearing walls to provide larger classroom or studio facilities, and extensions to accommodate specific academic uses.

The centre piece of the Architectural design is a five storey timber framed and floored library, inserted in the old three storey south corner tower building. Even the stairs accessing the stack floors is in Irish oak.

College activities continued throughout the construction works.



**LeeMcCullough**  
Consulting Engineers

*Project 2815: Education - Renovation*

**GMIT, Galway**

**Client:** Galway Mayo Institute of Technology

**Architects:** de Blacam & Meagher Architects

**Value:** €10m (2006, to date)

## LeeMcCullough team:

Gerry McCabe

Norman Irvine

## Project scope:

- *Master Plan Development*
- *Spatial expansion through wall removal*
- *Extensive renovation and refurbishment*

## Historical Renovation

At LeeMcCullough we have exceptional experience of revitalising existing buildings, which is often more complex than the structural engineering of new buildings.

Over many projects we have addressed and resolved a wide range of issues, including:

- Strengthening historical joists and beams to carry increased loading
- Masonry Decay/Delamination
- Threading modern services into old structures

At LeeMcCullough we always seek to identify and resolve issues early, innovatively address demanding building difficulties and deliver our solutions on time and cost efficiently.

When it comes to renovation and refurbishment, anticipating and resolving engineering issues effectively is the key to a successful outcome.