

Conservation    Research    Analysis

## Grain Store, John Street, New Ross, Co. Wexford

Architectural Heritage Assessment

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### **IMPORTANT**

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## 1. Introduction and Purpose of the Report

This report was undertaken at the request of ODKM Architects on behalf of Wexford County Council. The purpose of the report is to evaluate the potential impact of proposed development work on the special architectural heritage interest of the Grain Store, John Street, New Ross, County Wexford which is a Protected Structure (Ref. No.NR0143 'Nolan and Cooney, 8 John Street, New Ross, NIAH Ref No.15605016).



Fig.1: GoogleMaps view of New Ross showing the location of the Grain Store development site.

**1.1 Methodology and Limitations of Inspection:** This report is limited to an assessment of the architectural heritage significance of two buildings on John Street, New Ross forming The Grain Store, a Protected Structure. This site was inspected by the report author in 2023 comprising visual assessment and recording of the two buildings together with a digital photographic record of representative features. The assessment of historical significance followed NIAH guidelines, together with standard survey methodologies for historic places and relevant published and publicly available work as referenced in the main body of the report, while also considering the requirements of current planning guidelines<sup>1</sup>.

## 2. Legislative Framework

The Grain Store is a **Protected Structure (Ref. No.NR0143)** in the 2022-2028 Wexford County Development Plan (Fig.2). The building lies at the northern end of the **New Ross Architectural Conservation Area<sup>2</sup>** (ACA) (Fig.3). The building lies within the historic town and zone of archaeological potential of New Ross<sup>3</sup>. The building was rated by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) as of 'regional' architectural heritage significance due to its architectural and technical categories of special interest (see Section 4). The Grain Store is one of thirteen Protected Structures on John Street and Bridge Street (Table 1).

<sup>1</sup> Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. (2004) *Architectural Heritage Protection: guidelines for planning authorities – guidance on Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000*. Dublin. Stationery Office.

<sup>2</sup> An architectural conservation area (ACA) is defined as a place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights, that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or that contributes to the appreciation of a protected structure, and whose character it is an objective of a development plan to preserve. It should be noted that ACA designation is distinct from designation as a protected structure, although protected structures may be located within an ACA area. Protected structures are subject to separate procedures and requirements under the 2000 Planning and Development Act (as amended).

<sup>3</sup> Archaeological matters are considered in the accompanying Archaeological Impact Assessment.

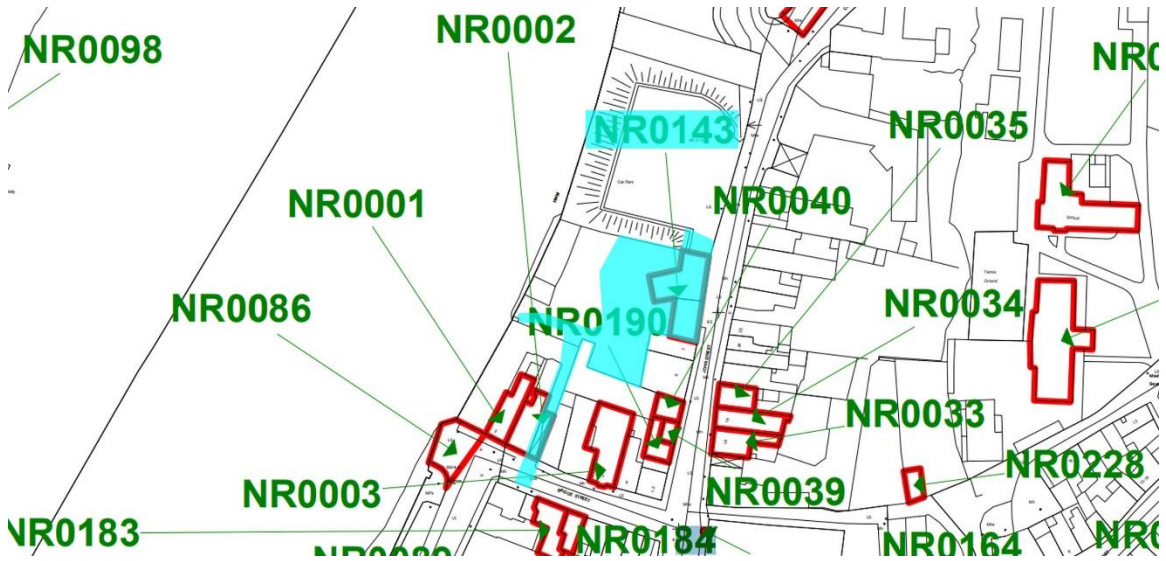


Fig.2: Extract from the 2022-2018 Wexford County Development Plan showing the Grain Store (Protected Structure No. NR0143) and other Protected Structures in the immediate area. See Table 1.

RPS No.	NIAH No.	Name	No.	Street
NR0001	15605009	K.R.M. Rogers/K.J. Rogers	2	Bridge Street
NR0002	15605010		3	Bridge Street
NR0003			7	Bridge Street
NR0033	15605029	Cleary	18	John Street
NR0034	15605028	Maurice G. Quirke/Ursula M. Quirke	19	John Street
NR0035	15605027	Harney	20	John Street
NR0039	15605014	Barrowside Glass/ Wexford Injury Clinic	4	John Street
NR0040	15605015	J. Gladney	5	John Street
NR0086	15605007	New Ross Bridge (Old) & Quay Wall		North Quay
NR0143	15605015	Nolan and Cooney	8	John Street
NR0183	15605011	John Murphy		Bridge Street
NR0184	15605012			Bridge Street
NR0190	15605013		3	John Street

Table 1: Protected Structures on John Street & Bridge Street, New Ross (see Fig.2). The Grain Store is highlighted.

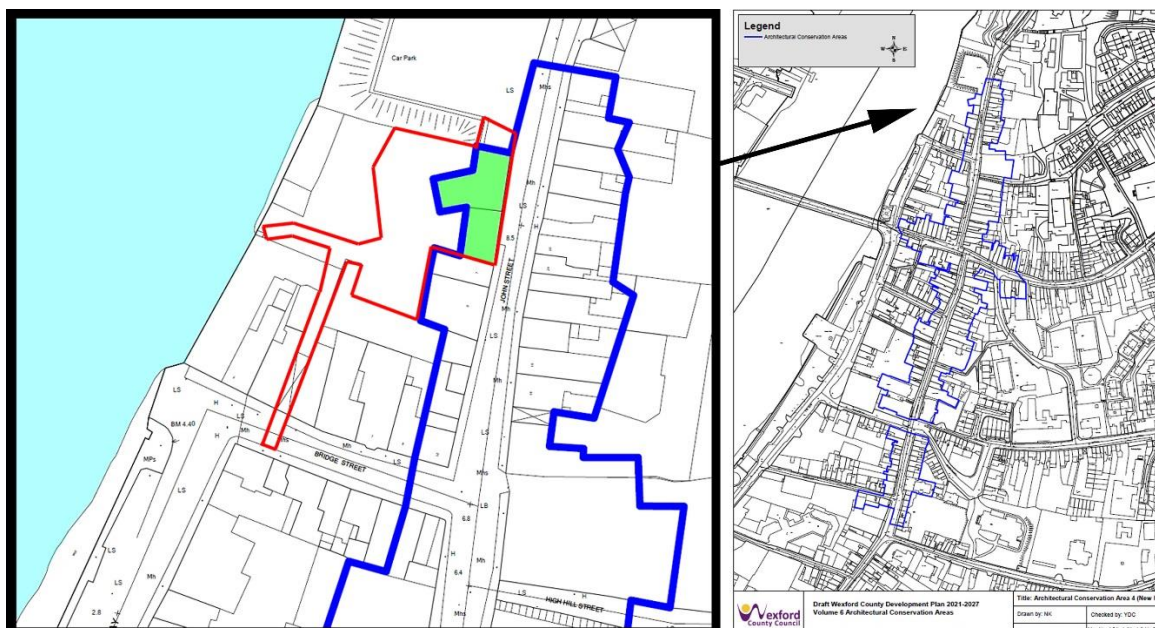


Fig.3: New Ross Architectural Conservation Area with the proposed development site (RED) and Grain Store (GREEN).

**3. National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Record:** The Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1999 placed the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) on a statutory basis to identify, record and evaluate the Architectural Heritage of Ireland. The NIAH recorded 303 buildings and structures in New Ross in 2005 considered of special architectural heritage value including the Grain Store at New Ross. The Grain Store was rated by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) as of ‘regional’ architectural heritage significance due to its architectural and technical categories of special interest (Table 2).

The 2005 NIAH description referred to the two buildings as a single building: “Attached eight-bay three-storey over double basement grain store or warehouse, extant 1840,” and was not aware that the existing building was a later nineteenth century replacement of the terraced buildings shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (see Section 5) or that the Grain Store is, in essence, two conjoined buildings (see Section 6). Notwithstanding the misinterpretation in fabric, the NIAH appraisal rightly identified the building as “an important component of the industrial heritage of New Ross”.

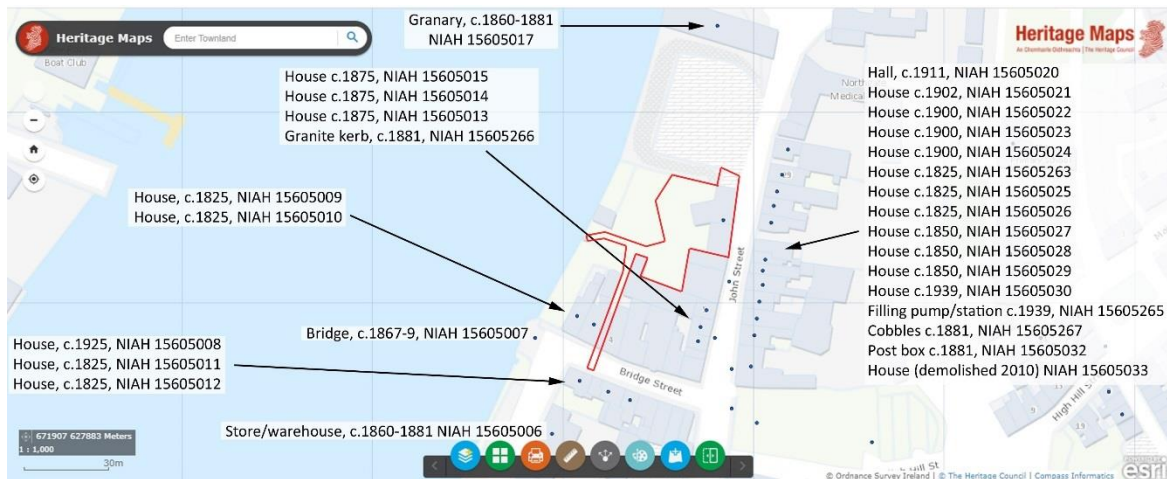


Fig.4: Screenshot from heritagemaps.ie showing the proposed development site (in red) with nearby buildings recorded by the NIAH survey in 2005 (all dating to 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> century)

John Street, New Ross, Wexford (NIAH Ref. 15605016)	
<b>Rating -</b> Regional	<b>Categories of Special Interest -</b> Architectural, Technical
<p><b>Description -</b> Attached eight-bay three-storey over double basement grain store or warehouse, extant 1840, on a T-shaped plan; single-bay (two-bay deep) five-storey central return (west) on a cranked plan. For sale, 2005. Pitched slate roof on a T-shaped plan centred on pitched slate roof on a cranked plan (west), clay ridge tiles, coping to gables, and cast-iron rainwater goods on eaves retaining cast-iron octagonal or ogee hoppers and downpipes. Part creeper- or ivy-covered coursed rubble stone wall to front (east) elevation with red brick flush quoins to corners; rendered surface (side elevations); part creeper- or ivy-covered coursed rubble stone walls (west) with hammered limestone flush quoins to corners. Pair of square-headed door openings in camber- or segmental-headed recesses with rendered red brick voussoirs framing timber boarded double doors. Square-headed window openings in camber- or segmental-headed recesses (upper floors) with red brick block-and-start surrounds framing timber boarded fittings behind cast-iron bars. Street fronted with concrete footpath to front.</p> <p><b>Appraisal -</b> A grain store or warehouse representing an important component of the industrial heritage of New Ross with the architectural value of the composition confirmed by such attributes as the elongated plan form; the construction in unrefined local fieldstone offset by red brick dressings producing a pleasing two-tone palette; the uniform or near-uniform proportions of the openings on each floor; and the high pitched roofline. A prolonged period of neglect notwithstanding, the elementary form and massing survive intact together with substantial quantities of the original fabric, both to the exterior and to the interior, including a partial slate hung surface finish, thus upholding the character or integrity of a grain store or warehouse making a pleasing, if increasingly forlorn visual statement in John Street. NOTE: A weathered name plate remembers the steam mills operated by William Howlett (d. 1892), 'Corn Flour Seed and Artificial Manure Merchant' (Bassett 1885, 206).</p>	

Table 2: NIAH description and appraisal of the Grain Store on John Street, New Ross, 21 June 2005.

#### 4. Architectural and Historical Context

New Ross was settled on the eastern bank of the River Barrow between 1190 and c.1207 and acted as a thriving walled port town in the thirteenth century but gradually declining in the later medieval period. The town was described 'desolate of inhabitants' in the sixteenth century, and suffering sieges during the Confederate Wars of the seventeenth century which included the destruction of the bridge in 1643<sup>4</sup>. The earliest maps are schematics from the seventeenth century and a D-shaped walled town enclosure with streets running parallel to the river, linked by cross-streets. However, there is little detail and the general impression is of a town in decline. The dissolution of the monasteries<sup>5</sup> also had an impact on New Ross with the closure of numerous religious houses including a Franciscan friary, St. Saviours Priory, and the conversion of the site of St. Michael's chapel to a cavalry barracks. From the seventeenth century onwards, much of the town was held by a few landowning families including the Tottenham's who had purchased much of New Ross from the Earl of Anglesey.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the medieval town was gradually overlain by the modern town. Lacking a bridge, New Ross appears to have limited trading opportunities and development was slow and haphazard in the town. A free school was endowed in 1713 on an ecclesiastical site north-west of John Street. Linda Doran has noted:

*"During the eighteenth century a shambles and a meat market were located in the northern half of the town. The tholsel ... was located on the site of the earlier market cross. The present building was erected in 1749 and extensively refurbished in 1806. It served as a town hall, a market house and, from time to time, a court house"*<sup>6</sup>.

The town wall was identifiable in the 1780s<sup>7</sup>, but much had been pulled down by the first edition Ordnance Survey mapping c.1840. Philip Luckombe's described New Ross in the 1780s:

*"This place is one of the stable ports for exporting wools; but it looks as if it had but a very little trade; and though it is called New Ross, its countenance has the marks of venerable age ... The quay is but small; but, as well as the custom-house, large enough for its trade. Some of the buildings are like those of Chester, with shops ascended by steps, which renders them close and dark ... The ruins of the walls of Ross are still remaining"*.

The fortunes of the town were to rise in the nineteenth century after construction of a new wooden bridge in 1796 once again crossing the Barrow to Rosbercon in Kilkenny; but not before significant damage during the 1798 Rebellion:

*"New Ross's history is intimately linked to the 1798 Rebellion as the site of one of its bloodiest and most notorious battles. Fought on June 5<sup>th</sup> 1798 between a large force of Society of United Irishmen rebels and government forces garrisoning the town, it was a thwarted attempt by the rebels to spread the rebellion beyond Wexford. Though the rebels succeeded in driving the defending Crown forces across the bridge and repulsed a counter attack, ill-discipline and poor leadership led ultimately to failure. It resulted in c.3000 rebels and 230 garrison members being killed, wounded or going missing, just as vast tracts of the town were destroyed by fire"*<sup>8</sup>.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, New Ross appears to have been in poor condition. Bartlett's drawing of 1830 (Fig.5) shows mill or grain storage buildings adjacent to the quays indicating economic activity, and was described by topographer Samuel Lewis, in his *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* published in 1837:

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<sup>4</sup> The early history of New Ross is considered in the accompanying *Archaeological Impact Assessment*.

<sup>5</sup> Immediately after the 1534 Act of Supremacy placed Henry VIII as the head of the Church in England, an audit of religious houses (*Valor Ecclesiasticus* or church valuation) across England, Wales and Ireland in 1535 assessed the value of church properties and their annual revenues. In 1536, religious houses valued at less than £200p.a. were forced to close, the head cleric offered a pension, and all other residents forced to leave. The 1539 Act for the Dissolution of the Greater Monasteries effectively closed all monastic houses in England, Wales and Ireland, though the process a protracted one. Ireland had c.400 religious houses across urban and rural areas, and while a minority were protected by local patrons, most religious houses passed to Crown and private hands.

<sup>6</sup> Doran, L. (2007) *New Ross c.1200 to c.1900 Seven hundred years in the making*. Dublin. Royal Irish Academy. P.13.

<sup>7</sup> Luckombe, P. (1780) *A tour through Ireland*. London. PP.39-40

<sup>8</sup> Coon P.7

*'Ross (New), an inland port, borough and market-town ... The town is beautifully situated on the side of a hill declining so precipitously to the Ross river (formed by the Nore and Barrow, which unite about one mile to the north of it) as to render the communication between the upper and lower parts extremely inconvenient. Some of the principle streets run nearly parallel with the river, and are intersected by others at right angles; minor streets and lanes diverge from these in several directions: the total number of houses, in 1831, was 1040. The general appearance of the town for some years did not indicate an increase in prosperity; a circumstance attributed to the difficulty of obtaining land on leases of sufficient duration to encourage building; but within the last two years there has been a visible improvement, several new houses having been built...*

*...There are three extensive breweries in the town, and a distillery in Rossbercon ... Ross was an independent port until about twelve years since, when it was made a branch port to Waterford; but, though independent, it was closed against all foreign produce from 1786 to 1832, when the port was re-opened ...The principal trade is in grain, flour, live stock, bacon, and butter ...There is transit trade to Waterford; and Kilkenny coal is brought to Ross in barges, where it is shipped to other parts. There is a boat-building establishment in the town".*

Grain stores were:

*"Essentially buildings for the temporary storage of goods, warehouses range from the banaisic architecture of granaries attached to large-scale food industries, to the monumental palazzo-style warehouses built in Belfast during the textile boom and the impeccably functional grain silos of the early twentieth century. They belong to the larger order of commercial system which included linen halls, market buildings and department stores, all symbols of a progressive mercantile power"<sup>9</sup>.*

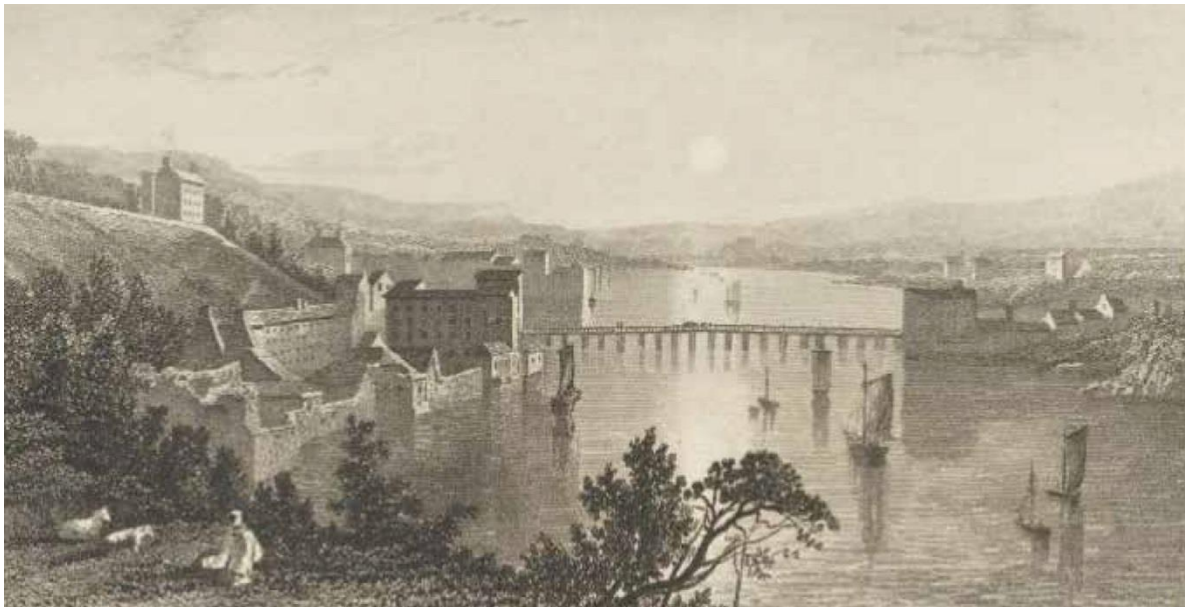


Fig.5: New Ross by W.H.Bartlett c.1830 showing riverfront walls, wooden bridge and multi-storey mill buildings.

**4.1 Historical Cartography & Illustrations:** Samuel Lewis paints a picture of a town overcoming a long period of decline, with much of its trade restricted until 1832. Nineteenth century maps<sup>10</sup> show a growing confidence in building new houses, and new granary buildings associated with developing trade. The 1827 Tottenham Estate Map (Fig.6) shows much of the town laid out in empty plots functioning as gardens or simply waste land. The first edition Ordnance Survey map c.1840 (Fig.7) shows a terrace along the west side of John Street, with a passageway between two buildings at the position of the Grain Store. The more detailed town plan of New Ross which formed part of the mid-nineteenth century Griffith's valuation shows the Grain Store site as two separate building (each numbered '19'), with a rear extension to the southern building, with a courtyard to rear and passageway to Bridge Street to the south<sup>11</sup>. The 1881 25-inch Ordnance Survey map shows the site developed, with a large grain store

<sup>9</sup> Hurley, L. & Montague, J. (2014) "Warehouses" in Loeber, R. et al [eds] *Art and Architecture of Ireland Vol.IV Architecture 1600-2000*. Dublin, New Haven, London. Yale University Press. Pp.261-263

<sup>10</sup> Earlier maps are considered in the accompanying *Archaeological Impact Assessment*.

<sup>11</sup> Also labelled '19' indicating it was in the same ownership.

overlooking a coal yard with lime kilns built against the north wall, and with crane in a separate enclosure beside the river, and with a passage to a watergate and a separate passage to Bridge Street (Fig.9). Historic photographs held by the National Library of Ireland (Figs.10-11) show the west (river-facing) elevation of the Grain Store appearing very similar to how it appears today.



Fig.6: 1827 Tottenham Estate rent-map of New Ross showing the John Street site with a line of buildings on John Street, overlooking an open courtyard and river wall. The map shows quite a number of plots in use as gardens or waste land, with relatively dense settlement in the built-up areas.



Fig.7: First edition Ordnance Survey map c.1840 showing the layout of the site, with terraced buildings with a passage on John Street, an open courtyard lined by walls and other buildings between the site and the River Barrow; and with a passageway to Bridge Street.



Fig.8: Mid-nineteenth century Griffith's Valuation (1847-64) map of New Ross showing the layout of the site; with two narrow buildings on John Street, overlooking an enclosed courtyard below and the river frontage.



Fig.9: 1881 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map showing redevelopment with a new large grain store with off-set return to rear.

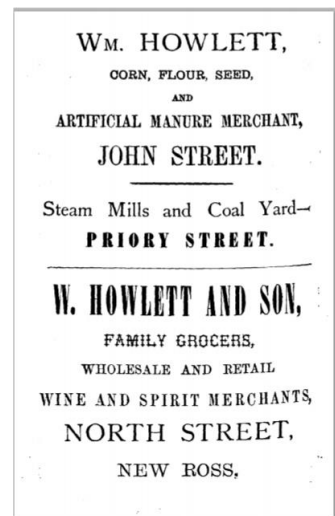


Fig.10: Photograph of New Ross by Robert French, c.1936 showing the Grain Store. Source: National Library of Ireland.



Fig.11: Photograph of the Grain Store by A.H. Poole c.1906. Source: National Library of Ireland.

**4.2 William Howlett:** The Howlett family were key figures in the brewing industry of New Ross. The 1837-8 Schools collection of the Irish Folklore Commission notes that “*The Howlett family were the princes of the commercial life of New Ross about 90 or 100 years ago. They owned fleets of sailing boats and exported the products of the brewery, and imported raw material*”<sup>12</sup>. The NIAH refer to William Howlett on a weathered name plate (Table 2) and Slater’s directory of New Ross in 1894 records “HOWLETT, Wm., corn mcht., John st”. Slater’s 1881 directory noted William Howlett as both at ‘Agent for Manure’ and a ‘Corn Merchant’. The vast majority of quicklime burnt in Ireland in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century was intended as a fertilizer (or ‘manure’) to improve soil fertility. Lime was central to writings on land improvement, with Dease (1783)<sup>13</sup> considering it more important than any other work (such as draining, ditching or ploughing) in tillage operations on barren land; and lime usage mentioned regularly in the Ordnance Survey Memoirs. George Wilkinson noted that lime for New Ross was supplied from “*Granny and Dunkit above Waterford, and from Kilmacow*” priced at  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$ d per barrel for dark lime,  $\frac{1}{6}$ d –  $\frac{1}{8}$ d per barrel for white lime<sup>14</sup>.



**4.3 Summary:** The Grain Store appears to have been built sometime c.1864-1881, replacing two earlier buildings on the site. The grain store was operated by William Howlett, a corn merchant, who also burnt lime as agricultural manure in the courtyard (Fig.9). The Grain Store formed part of a commercial property dedicated to bulk commodities, and the link to the quayside and the River Barrow (Fig.11) was essential for the functioning of the building. The rear elevation of the building appears little changed since the opening decade of the twentieth century, and the site appears to have maintained its overall character as a working element of New Ross’s industrial heritage.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes/5009220/4999234/5123345>

<sup>13</sup> Dease, M. (1783) *Observations on Linen manufacture, Particularly Bleaching ... to which is added Notes on Agricultural Knowledge*. Dublin.

<sup>14</sup> Wilkinson, G. (1845) *Practical Geology and Ancient Architecture of Ireland*. Dublin. P.193

## 5. The Grain Store - Description

The Grain Store consists of an attached pair of matching gable-ended eight-bay three-storey over basement building with an off-set four-storey return to rear. The building is built of random rubble consisting of locally obtained slates, siltstones and greywackes<sup>15</sup>. The John Street façade shows door and window openings in a hand-made clamp-fired brick, with granite used for window cills and the lower jambs and cills of the two doors. The replacement slate roof is served by cast iron rainwater goods, and the north gable has a street-level lean-to section, with the upper and lower sections of the gable rendered and painted with wall murals (Figs.12-13).



*Fig.12: General view of the façade and north gable of the Grain Store.*



*Fig.13: North elevation showing off-set return, mural on the north gable and slated roof and rainwater goods.*

<sup>15</sup> The bedrock below the site lies at the interface between the green to grey slate and siltstone of the Ballylane Formation, and the green, red-purple and buff slate and siltstone and greywackes from the Oaklands Formation which was historically quarried on the east side of John Street.

The fabric and design of the grain store is utilitarian, comprised of random rubble masonry using stone types from local quarry faces, bedded in a lime-based mortar with no indications that the building was ever finished with a lime-based rendering mortar. The walls are punctuated by handmade clamp-fired brick forming door and window openings, with granite restricted to cills, and the lowermost jambs of the two street-level doors (Figs.15-16). The rear elevation of the same character, though has a series of projecting rough corbels which illustrate the past routing of chutes (Figs.20-21). The courtyard level has a fine granite ashlar doorway (Fig.24), with a simpler doorway in the west gable of the return (Fig.22).



*Fig.14: View of the northern part of the façade showing limestone quoins at ground floor level marking the separation between the two buildings, with matching treatment of masonry and detail in both parts.*



*Fig.15: Ground floor window and doorway at the south end of the façade with signage plate above.*



Fig.16: Detail of the external and internal faces of a typical window.



Fig.17: Detail of hand-made clamp-fired brick used to form door and window openings (left) and a detail of the locally obtained rubble stone used for the bulk of the masonry fabric (right) all bedded in a lime-based mortar.



Fig.18: General view of the five-storey rear elevation (three floors at John Street level, and two basement levels) composed of random rubble masonry walls punctuated by camber- and segmental-headed brick windows, with granite used for the quoins of the return and for the arched doorway. The elevation shows a number of small repairs and alterations, but is largely unchanged from its appearance at the beginning of the twentieth century (compare Figs.10 & 11).



Fig.19: The north elevation of the off-set return and adjacent west elevation of the main building is again composed of random rubble masonry punctuated by brick window openings, but with projecting rough stone corbels arranged in a diagonal pattern (probably to support chutes) which are a distinctive feature of the elevation.



Fig.20: North elevation of the off-set return showing projecting rough corbels.



Fig.21: Details of the northern end of the west elevation showing the overhanging eaves course supporting the cast iron rainwater goods, brick window surrounds, and projecting rough corbels from the random rubble masonry walls.



Fig.22: The courtyard level door of the return has a massive timber lintel and rubble masonry infill beneath a brick arch, with brick quoins. The elevation has limestone quoins (see Fig.14 also) and past repairs.



Fig.23: View of the junction between the north elevation and the offset return showing a granite ashlar doorway at ground floor level, with brick windows and rubble masonry mirroring that seen elsewhere on the building.

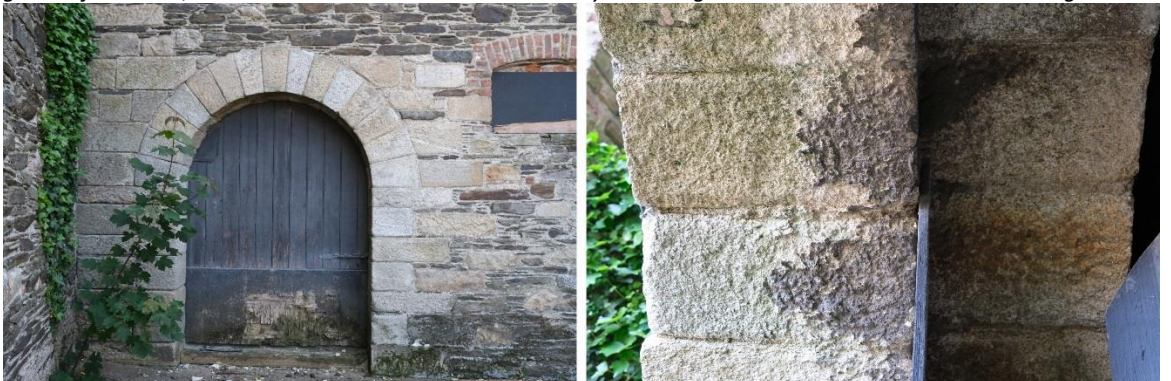


Fig.24: Granite arched doorway in the rear (west) elevation at courtyard level (see Fig.18).

Internally, the Grain Store is plainly finished as a functional storage space without embellishment or office or reception. wall finishes. At each floor level, the open spaces show exposed random rubble masonry, plain window reveals (sometimes retaining simple internal timber shutters) with a timber lintel above, exposed timber floor joists, roof timbers and ceiling joists, and with plain floorboards. The stairs between each floor level are narrow and steep rising through relatively small as the functional priority was to maximise floor space. The timber floors are supported by steel columns at courtyard level (Level -2), with timber columns at all other levels except second floor level. A series of rough stone corbels protrude from the east wall at courtyard (Level -2) and upper basement (Level -1) level. Two timber winches survive at second floor level, mounted against the south wall of the two parts of the building (Figs.25-26 & 28). The roof covering appears to have been significantly repaired in the past with new lining and new roof timbers (Fig.30), and the roof features a three rooflights (Figs.25-26).



Fig.25: Top floor showing bare rubble masonry walls, roof timbers, and timber floorboards. Note blocked-up south window to rear of the winch. The window reveals have timber lintels, and some internal timber shutters survive.



Fig.26: Detail showing replacement roof cover (left) and winch.



Fig.27: John Street level interior showing the southern doorway (left) which is a plain panelled timber door. The roof has been replaced, including replacement of roof timbers and the addition of bracing to existing timbers (right).



Fig.28: View of the winch shaft (left) and internal staircase (right).



Fig.29: The interior is plain and unfurnished without wall or ceiling finishes, with plain rubble walls and window reveals throughout, sometimes retaining timber shutters.



Fig.30: General view of the interior showing floor covering, plain walls and window reveals, and floor joists supported by structural timbers with steel bracing and timber columns.

## 6. Assessment of Significance

This assessment of the architectural heritage significance of the Grain Store is based on the criteria set out by the NIAH<sup>16</sup>. The Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1999 placed the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) on a statutory basis to identify, record and evaluate the Architectural Heritage of Ireland. The categories of special interest used by the NIAH are Architectural, Historical, Archaeological, Artistic, Cultural, Scientific, Technical and Social.

<b>Architectural</b>	The c.1864-81 grain store is an attached eight-bay three-storey over double-basement T-plan granary building built of local stone with brick window surrounds and with some granite and limestone quoins, and is similar in design and character to a series of other mid- to late nineteenth century granary buildings found in New Ross <sup>17</sup> . The grain store had a functional relationship with the yard and riverfront, where a lime kiln, coal yard, quay wall and crane were in operation. Internally, the building is laid out in open-plan, with bare rubble masonry walls, exposed ceiling and roof timbers, and retaining timber shutters in the window reveals. The Grain Store retains a timber winch which is a notable example of industrial heritage.
<b>Historic</b>	The grain store was operated by William Howlett, a corn merchant and agent of manure in the late nineteenth century, and a member of a local family involved in brewing and the importation of raw materials into New Ross. The family also held 'Howlett's Brewery' on Priory Street.
<b>Artistic</b>	The site has no examples of special artistic values
<b>Archaeological</b>	This report does not consider archaeological issues.
<b>Cultural, Social, Technical, Scientific</b>	The grain store is an example of New Rosses industrial heritage with clear links to the quayside and the River Barrow.
<b>Significance</b>	<b>The building is a good example of a nineteenth century commercial grain store, and one of a number of similar multi-storey granaries erected adjacent to the River Barrow in the mid- to late nineteenth century in New Ross. The grain store has retained its spatial and functional relationship with the working yards and quay at the riverside; and the use of locally quarried stone and hand-made brick in its construction emphasizes regional diversity. The building was rated by the NIAH in 2005 as of Regional architectural heritage interest due to its architectural and technical special categories of interest, which is reflected in its status as a Protected Structure.</b>

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<sup>16</sup> The categories of special interest used by the NIAH are Architectural, Historical, Archaeological, Artistic, Cultural, Scientific, Technical and Social. The importance rating value codes used by the NIAH are International, National, Regional, Local and Record Only. Local Authorities are asked to consider International, National and Regional structures for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

<sup>17</sup> E.g. NIAH 15605017, John St, <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/buildings-search/building/15605017/john-street-new-ross-new-ross-wexford>; NIAH 15605005, North Quay, <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/buildings-search/building/15605005/north-quay-new-ross-new-ross-wexford>; & <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/buildings-search/building/15605006/north-quay-new-ross-new-ross-wexford>





Fig.32: View of the grain store from the bridge. The external lift will be visible. The café/restaurant will be marginally visible.

**7.1 Proposed Demolitions & Alterations:** The proposed demolitions and alterations to the external envelope and the interior at each floor level is set out in the tables below (see ODKM drawings also).

**Façade:** The proposed development intends to retain the overall character and appearance of the façade, but to provide modern plain fenestration, and two modern doors to provide access to the interior. Overall, the impact on the character of the façade should be negligible.

Façade	
Remove window treatment & insert 22 new windows	The grain store does not retain historic windows and is generally boarded up with iron bars on some lower windows on the John Street façade <sup>22</sup> .
Remove existing 2 no. external Doors and timber frames to be replaced with new Door (2 no.)	The existing doors are plain and their replacement with modern doors should not detract from the character of the Protected Structure.
Remove Section of existing wall under door and granite base quoin stones, to allow for Level access into the building	The walls should be repaired using salvaged stone <sup>23</sup> to provide a seamless repair. The lower granite jambs could be reset in the new door surround.

Table 3: Proposed alterations to the façade.

**Roof:** The proposed development intends to remove the existing (replacement) roof and (later) rooflights entirely, and to replace this with a new roof structure.

Roof	
Removal of Existing Roof finish to accommodate new structural roof members. New roof to be slate to replicate the original roof slates of the building	Negligible impact on the character of the building; the roof cover has already been replaced in the past.
Remove Section of Existing roof to provide AOV to protected stairwell at north end of the main block.	Negligible impact on the character of the building; & makes use of an existing opening for a rooflight.
Remove 2 no. Rooflights from rear (west) slope of roof & reinstate roof.	Beneficial impact

Table 4: Proposed alterations to the roof.

<sup>22</sup> Timber shutters do survive within the reveals of some window openings.

<sup>23</sup> There should be sufficient stone from the creation of the new openings to allow small-scale repairs where needed.

**North (Gable) & Side Elevation:** The provision of a new external lift shaft has a significant impact on the appearance of the building, and will clearly be a modern intervention. The provision of a universal access lift shaft will also necessitate the creation of new openings involving the removal of original windows on the north side of the return. The proposed lift shaft is set back from the building to minimise intervention with the historic masonry envelope. If carried out to a high standard of craftsmanship and undertaken with high quality materials, the benefits of providing access should mitigate the impact of the loss of 3 no. original windows (of a total of 68 buildings at the Grain Store). The gable has a painted Portland Cement render coating (Figs.12-13), and the insertion of a narrow doorway should have negligible impact on the Protected Structure.

North (Gable) & Side Elevation	
New External lift shaft	Significant impact on appearance of building, including the creation of new openings.
Remove section of existing wall to allow emergency exit for the protected stairwell	Negligible impact on the character of the building
Remove section of existing wall to allow entry to external lift shaft.	Negligible impact on the character of the building
Remove window treatment	The provision of new modern plain glazing inserted into the existing brick openings should have negligible impact on the building.
Insert new entrance door at Level 0 in the rendered wall.	The addition of this new narrow door opening in the Portland Cement render coating should have negligible impact on the structure.

*Table 5: Proposed alterations to the North (Gable) Side Elevation.*

**Rear Elevation:** The proposed works intend to reopen blocked-up windows, and insert new windows and doors in the existing openings. The works also intend to insert two new windows, matching the historic windows at the north end of the building at basement level. Given the repetitive nature of the fenestration, this should have negligible impact on the character of the building.

Rear Elevation	
North End, Courtyard Level: Remove section of existing flatwork rubble masonry wall to allow new window, to replicate windows opes on floors above (2x)	The creation of new matching window openings, if matching the style and materials of the historic windows, should have negligible impact on the character of the Protected Structure.
Remove window treatment	The provision of new modern plain glazing inserted into the existing brick openings should have negligible impact on the building.
Remove Brick Infill to Window ope (4x)	Beneficial impact.
Granite Arch: Remove existing external door to be replaced with new double door	The existing door is plain and replacement with a modern door should not detract from the character of the Protected Structure.
Return External Door: Remove existing external door to be replaced with new door	Existing door has brick reveal and timber lintel above, which are to remain in situ. The new door consists of a steel-clad door frame & fire door system which allows the historic entrance to remain readable.

*Table 6: Proposed alterations to the Rear Elevation.*

**Interior – Level -2 & Level -1 Basement:** The courtyard level (Level -2) and upper basement (Level -1) are intended to be redeveloped and partly amalgamated as a double-height area. The southern part is to contain a new double-height multi-purpose community room accessed by a platform lift inserted into a new opening in the flatwork masonry wall between the two parts of the building. The northern part is to contain this platform lift, a new staircase leading to the upper floors and new partition walling to form an office, staff canteen and unisex and universal access W.C.s. The return is proposed as an entrance hall containing the main flight of stairs to the upper floor, alteration of the existing double-doorway at the west end of the return to give access to the

café/restaurant; and the creation of two new doorways in the flatwork of the north and south walls to access the external lift shaft and for fire escape respectively.

<b>Interior – Level -2 &amp; Level -1 Basement</b>	
<b>Level -2:</b> Remove existing external doors (2 no.)	No impact
<b>Level -2:</b> Remove brick infill to 2 no. window & temporary block-up to 1 no. window opes & reinstate window	Beneficial impact
<b>Level -2:</b> Return (south elev) - Remove section of existing wall to allow new escape door	Negligible impact on the character of the building
<b>Level -2:</b> Return (north elev) - Remove section of existing wall to allow entrance to Lift Shaft	Negligible impact on the character of the building
<b>Level -2:</b> Create 2 no. replica windows	Negligible impact on the character of the building
<b>Level -2:</b> Remove 11 no. steel columns & remove concrete floor and existing ceiling. Retain 9 no. stone corbels	This alters the character of the space and has a significant impact on the interior of the building.
<b>Level -2:</b> Create new opening between two parts of the building	The wall in this location has a relieving arch with infill of two styles of masonry, and may have previously acted as a passageway between the two parts of the building.
<b>Level -1:</b> Remove brick infill to 2 no. window & temporary block-up to 8 no. window opes & reinstate window	Beneficial impact
<b>Level -1:</b> Return (north elev) - Remove section of existing wall to allow entrance to Lift Shaft	Negligible impact on the character of the building
<b>Level -1:</b> Remove 11 no. timber columns & remove 1 no. circular column & remove existing floor & ceiling. Retain 9 no. stone corbels	This alters the character of the space and has a significant impact on the interior of the building.

*Table 7: Proposed alterations to the Interior – Level -2 & Level -1 Basement*

**Interior – Level 0 – John Street Level:** The John Street level ground floor (Level 0) is to act as the main reception and exhibition space, with stairs providing communication to the upper floors and the basement. The main John Street floor level is separated into two parts – exhibition space in the southern section with access to John Street via the original external door, and a new opening in the flatwork masonry wall separating the northern and southern parts of the building. The northern part is to contain a reception area with coffee dock, and new principal stairs housed in the northern end of the main block. The return is to house a landing for the stairs giving access to the external lift shaft positioned on the north side of the return. A new fire escape door is intended to be inserted into the north gable wall.

<b>Interior – Level 0 – John Street Level</b>	
Remove temporary block-up to 15 no. window opes & reinstate window	Beneficial impact
Replace existing external doors with new doors	Negligible impact
Return (north elev) - Remove existing window to allow entrance to Lift Shaft	Negligible impact on the character of the building
Remove 11 no. timber columns & remove 1 no. circular column & remove existing floor, timber joists, structural beams & ceiling.	This alters the character of the space and has a significant impact on the interior of the building.
Create new opening between two parts of the building. The new doorway is to have a 50mm steel door threshold	Negligible impact

*Table 8: Proposed alterations to the Interior – Level -2 & Level -1 Basement*

**Interior – Level 1 – First Floor:** The first floor is to house 12 no. office desks in the southern part, with two communicating doors cut through the flatwork rubble masonry into the northern part; which is to be provided with partition walls to great a meeting are, a main stairwell at the northern end of the building, and a landing giving access to the external lift shaft in the return. Much of the return is given over to a void space looking down to the ground floor (Level 0).

Interior – Level 1 – First Floor	
Remove temporary block-up to 17 no. window opes & reinstate window	Beneficial impact
Return (north elev) - Remove existing window to allow entrance to Lift Shaft	Negligible impact on the character of the building
Remove 3 no. timber columns & remove existing floor, timber joists, structural beams & ceiling.	This alters the character of the space and has a significant impact on the interior of the building.
Create 1 no. new opening between two parts of the building	The new doorway is to have a 20mm steel door reveal

*Table 9: Proposed alterations to the Interior – First Floor*

**Interior – Level 2 – Second Floor:** The second floor is to house 12 no. office desks in the southern part, with a doorway cut through the flatwork rubble masonry into the northern part. The northern part and the return are to be partitioned, into a main stairwell at the northern end of the building, and a landing giving access to W.C.s and the external lift shaft in the return; and a meeting room and meeting booths.

Interior – Level 2 – Second Floor	
Remove temporary block-up to 17 no. window opes & reinstate window	Beneficial impact
Return (north elev) - Remove existing window to allow entrance to Lift Shaft	Negligible impact on the character of the building
Remove 11 no. timber columns & remove 1 no. circular column & remove existing floor, timber joists, structural beams & ceiling.	This alters the character of the space and has a significant impact on the interior of the building.
Create 2 no. new opening between two parts of the building	Negligible impact on the character of the building
Remove southern timber hoist	This alters the character of the space and has a significant impact on the interior of the building.
Remove, refurbish & replace northern timber hoist	Beneficial impact

*Table 10: Proposed alterations to the Interior – Second Floor*

**7.2 Discussion & Conclusion:** The proposed development, as set out on the drawings and site notice prepared by ODKM Architects, intends to entirely repair and refurbish the Grain Store building. The building is a Protected Structure and was identified by the NIAH in 2005 as “an important component of the industrial heritage of New Ross” while citing its plan form, surviving original fabric and its contribution to the character of John Street in its appraisal (Table 2). The overall aim of the proposed development is to repurpose a mid-nineteenth century grain warehouse into a modern multi-functional facility while retaining its character and special architectural heritage values. To enable this, the internal works have been focused on re-using the existing spaces as far as is practicable while providing appropriate access and facilities, revealing much of the historic fabric, and retaining the ‘look and feel’ of the space.

This has necessitated a number of compromises, including the loss of the timber floors, ceilings and structural beams to allow for modern flooring and services to be installed, though the floor levels have been retained. It

has also been necessary to reconfigure parts of the interior to provide for internal stairs<sup>24</sup>; and a design decision was made to open up the return from basement level to first floor to reveal the internal structure. Part of this access design is the use of an external lift shaft with access at each level through the alteration of existing window openings (a practice which is well established in the refurbishment of Protected Structures<sup>25</sup>). The existing window and door openings are to be retained, and the rear courtyard door openings are retained as feature entrances of the new building<sup>26</sup>. Similarly, the northern winch and pulley system at second floor level is to be retained and re-used as a feature visible from the ground floor reception of the building, providing a strong visual reminder of the industrial heritage character and history of the Grain Store. Alteration of the fenestration is unavoidable, as the building does not retain original windows, only plain timber shutters and boarded up openings. New modern plain glazing is proposed to be set into 68 original brick window openings (which includes the re-opening of previously infilled windows). A small series of new openings are proposed to allow for communication between the two parts of the building<sup>27</sup>, and fire and emergency egress at basement level of the return, and in the north end of the north elevation. Externally, the appearance of the building will remain largely unchanged, and the proposed new external lift shaft and single-storey café/restaurant structures to the rear have been carefully positioned and scaled to be subservient to the historic building, and to complement rather than detract from the character of the Protected Structure. The Grain Store should remain readable, and continue as a strong visual element on both the historic streetscape of John Street, and the historic industrial river frontage when viewed from across the Barrow and on the approach to the town over the bridge.

In summary, the proposed development offers considerable conservation gain for the Grain Store by providing for a new sustainable use for a building which has long been left empty; accompanied by a complete refurbishment of the Protected Structure. These changes should not have a significant detrimental impact on the and special architectural heritage values and character of the Protected Structure. The change to multi-functional use by Wexford County Council should be of particular benefit for the future long-term sustainable use and conservation of the Protected Structure.

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<sup>24</sup> The original stairs are steep, narrow and were functional at the time for a single person only moving from floor to floor within grain store use, but do not allow reasonable or practical access.

<sup>25</sup> E.g. The external lift shaft to the rear of the Custom House, Dublin. Shaffrey Associates Architects & Fionnuala Rogerson Architects (2011) Access – improving the accessibility of historic buildings and places. Architectural Heritage Advisory Unit Advice Series, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Dublin. Stationery Office. P.109

<sup>26</sup> The return door has corrugated iron sheets acting as a door; while the granite arch has a plain timber panelled double door. The replacement of these doors with modern doors seated into the existing openings should not detract from the character of the building.

<sup>27</sup> A blocked-up arch at basement (Level -2) suggests that the buildings historically had communication.