

Chief Executive's Report

LAC2401

Report to the Members of Wexford County Council

Prepared in accordance with:

Part XI of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)
and
Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended)

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Alterations, Extensions & External Works to

The Grain Store,

(A PROTECTED STRUCTURE - RPS No. NR0143 - NIAH No. 15605016)

At

John Street, New Ross, Co Wexford

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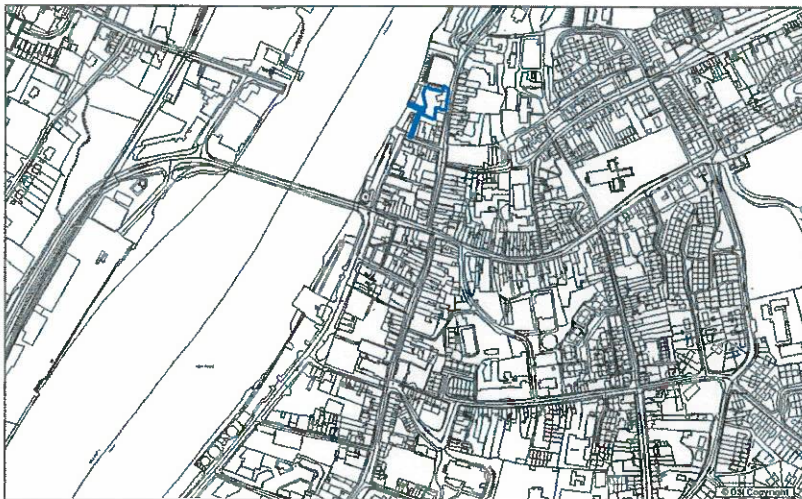
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This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Part XI of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended).

Nature and Extent of the Development

- Alterations to the existing building (including elements of the existing fabric) to bring the building into use as Enterprise & Offices, Community Room, Exhibition Space, Ancillary circulation, and staff/visitor facilities.
- Extensions to the building to provide new café/restaurant, kitchen & services, and new lift shaft to connect all floors.
- Modest public realm improvement works to enhance the usability of the vacant yard and to provide connectivity and external facilities for the café/restaurant.

Site Location Map



Location of Grain Store in New Ross



Site (edged red) on John Street, New Ross

Proposed Works

Alterations

General

- All redundant above ground and below ground services
- Upgrading services, fixtures, fittings etc. as required
- Demolition of Ground finishes (Part tarmac, part concrete) to the plaza area to facilitate new Extension and Plaza landscaping

Level -2 (Plaza) Floor

- Removal of existing entrance arched door to the rear (west) and replacing with a new door & frame
- Removal of existing large main entrance door to the rear (west) and replacing with fire doors to the new café / restaurant
- Removal of existing concrete sub-floor to facilitate new concrete ground floor
- Removal of existing steel columns
- Removal of existing brick infilled windows to the rear (west) and to be replaced with new windows
- Corbel stones to retaining basement walls to the front (East) to be retained
- Partial demolition of Existing External stone wall to north side of return in Room -2/02, to facilitate the entrance to the Lift Shaft
- Partial demolition of Existing External stone wall to south side of return in Room -2/02, to facilitate a new fire escape door
- Partial demolition of Existing External stone wall to the rear (west) in Room -2/02, to facilitate a new window to the staff office
- Partial demolition of Existing External stone wall to the rear (west) in Room -2/02, to facilitate a new door to the staff canteen
- Partial demolition of Existing internal stone wall to facilitate a new threshold between the 2 buildings to allow for access from the proposed circulation to the proposed multi-purpose community room
- Existing exposed stone walls internally and externally to be cleaned and treated, re-pointed with a lime-based mortar and left unrendered, therefore left exposed in the proposed building
- Retaining basement walls to be lined internally with an internal water management protection system
- All existing window treatment to be removed and replaced with new windows
- Existing areas to provide circulation area, new community room, disabled WC, staff facilities such as a staff office, staff canteen and staff toilets

Level -1 (Basement) Floor

- Removal of existing brick infilled windows to the rear (west) and to be replaced with new windows
- Removal of existing timber floor, including timber joists and structural beams, to facilitate new concrete intermediate floor
- Removal of existing timber columns and posts
- Corbel stones to retaining basement walls to the front (East) to be retained
- Partial demolition of Existing External stone wall to north side of return in Room -1/02, to facilitate the entrance to the Lift Shaft

- Existing exposed stone walls internally and externally to be cleaned and treated, re-pointed with a lime-based mortar and left unrendered, therefore left exposed in the proposed building
- Retaining basement walls to be lined internally with an internal water management protection system
- All existing window treatment to be removed and replaced with new windows
- Existing areas to provide a fire protected stair well, circulation areas and unisex public toilets

Level 0 (John Street) Floor

- Removal of existing main entrance arched door & frame to the front (east) and into the new Entrance Hall. Replacing with a new door & frame. To include partial demolition of the external wall under the existing door ope to facilitate a level access into the building
- Removal of existing entrance door & frame to the front (east) to new Exhibition space and replacing with a new door & frame
- Removal of existing timber floor, including timber joists and structural beams, to facilitate new concrete intermediate floor
- Removal of existing timber columns and posts
- Partial demolition of Existing External stone wall to north side of return in Room 0/02, to facilitate the entrance to the Lift Shaft and access onto the External roof terrace of the new extension
- Partial demolition of Existing External stone wall in Room 0/02 to facilitate a new fire escape door from the protected stairwell
- Partial demolition of Existing Internal stone wall to facilitate a new threshold between the 2 buildings to allow for access from the proposed Entrance Hall to the proposed Exhibition space
- Existing exposed stone walls internally and externally to be cleaned and treated, re-pointed with a lime-based mortar and left unrendered, therefore left exposed in the proposed building
- All existing window treatment to be removed and replaced with new windows
- Existing areas to provide a fire protected stair well, circulation areas, Entrance Hall & reception, coffee dock and Exhibition space

Level +1 (First) Floor

- Removal of existing timber floor, including timber joists and structural beams, to facilitate new concrete intermediate floor
- Removal of existing timber columns and posts
- Partial demolition of Existing External stone wall to north side of return in Room +1/02, to facilitate the entrance to the Lift Shaft
- 2no. Partial demolition of Existing Internal stone wall to facilitate new thresholds between the 2 buildings to allow for access from the proposed circulation to the proposed 12no. offices space and meeting areas
- Existing exposed stone walls internally and externally to be cleaned and treated, re-pointed with a lime-based mortar and left unrendered, therefore left exposed in the proposed building
- All existing window treatment to be removed and replaced with new windows
- Existing areas to provide a fire protected stair well, circulation areas, 12no. desk office space, meeting pods

Level +2 (Second) Floor

- **Removal of existing timber floor, including timber joists and structural beams, to facilitate new concrete intermediate floor**
- **Removal of existing timber columns and posts**
- **Partial demolition of Existing External stone wall to north side of return in Room +2/02, to facilitate the entrance to the Lift Shaft**
- **1no. Partial demolition of Existing Internal stone wall to facilitate new thresholds between the 2 buildings to allow for access from the proposed circulation to the proposed 12no. offices space and meeting areas**
- **Existing exposed stone walls internally and externally to be cleaned and treated, re-pointed with a lime-based mortar and left unrendered, therefore left exposed in the proposed building**
- **All existing window treatment to be removed and replaced with new windows**
- **Removal of existing Timber Hoist in Room +2/01, and refurbishment and reinstatement of Timber Hoist in Room +2/02**
- **Existing areas to provide fire protected stair well, circulation areas, 12no. desk office space, formal meeting room, meeting booths, Disabled WC and Unisex toilets.**

Roof

- **Removal of existing slate roof finish, to facilitate works to the roof structure**
- **Removal of existing timber roof structure and 2no. rooflights, to allow for a new roof structure to include a new AOV rooflight to the protected stairwell**
- **Removal and replacement of existing rainwater goods**

Extensions

Construction of a 179 sq.m. new part single storey / part single (double height) storey extension to the rear (west) to comprise of the following;

Level -2 (Plaza) Floor

- **New entrance link between the existing building and extension**
- **New café / restaurant with service counter and coffee dock (externally accessible)**
- **New kitchen to include cold store, dry store and wet areas**
- **New or upgraded services to extended and altered areas**

Level 0 (Street) Floor

- **New external roof terrace above café/ restaurant, accessed from floor level 0 (Street)**

New vertical passenger lift and link to existing building at each floor level

External Works

- **New hard landscaped external area to provide external seating area and enhancement to existing pedestrian connection to Bridge Street**
- **New soft planted areas**
- **Associated landscaping works**
- **Signage**
- **External lighting**
- **All associated site works and services**

Archaeology

An Architectural Heritage Assessment was also carried out by Dr. Jason Bolton which includes the following

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 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.

Traffic

The proposed site is well served by carparking with the John Street Public Carpark located directly north of the site. There is approximately 45 No. carparking spaces within this carpark and it rarely is at full occupancy, thus it provided ample space for users and visitors of the building. There is also significant amount of on street parking on Bridge Street & North Quay so the proposed works are well situated to avail of these spaces.

Access for All

The design team is keenly aware of the requirements of the mobility and visually impaired and has used this knowledge to develop a scheme that is accessible to all. The design of the enhancements seeks to adopt best practice and promote a high quality and Inclusive environment for all. High-quality design recognises the importance and diversity of its users and seeks to create an attractive, open, and user-friendly environment for the building and how it is experienced.

Appropriate Assessment

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report was carried out by Fehily Timoney and accompanies this application.

The assessment comes to the following conclusion;

The results of the s-p-r modelling process identified that - given the scale and nature of the potential sources identified in Table 2.1 - there are no likely significant effects identified to any European sites.

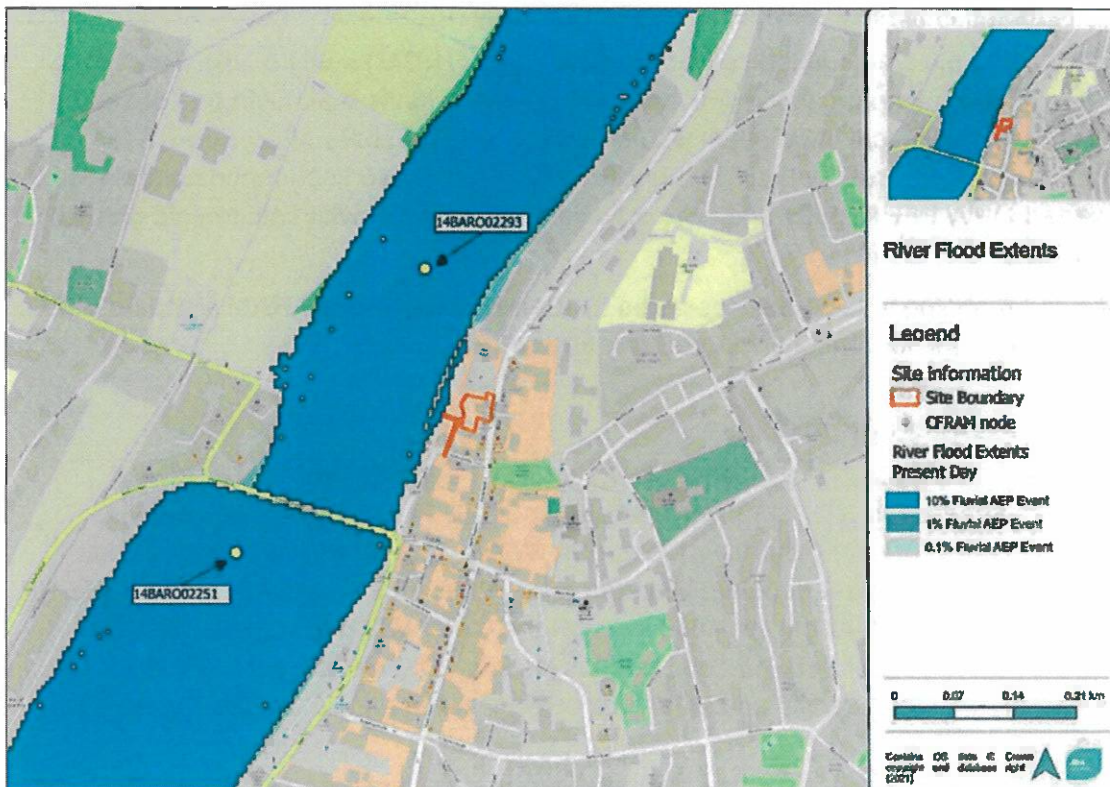
The AA screening process has considered potential effects which may arise during all phases of the proposed project.

Through an assessment of the pathways for effects and an evaluation of the sources for impacts, taking account of the processes involved and the distance of separation from European sites, it has been evaluated that there are no likely significant effects on the qualifying interests, special conservation interest or the conservation objectives of any designated European site.

Flood Risk Assessment

JBA Consulting have undertaken a detailed Flood Risk Assessment, the report acknowledges that the site has previously flooded

The available sources of flooding outlined in Section 3.1 indicate that part of the site has flooded previously in September 2022, February 2014 and October 2004. Section 3.3 of this report confirms that the site is predominantly at risk of tidal flooding and is located partially within Flood Zone A and B.



As the development is partly within Flood Zones A and B, a justification Test has been undertaken, the test concludes that the proposed development is acceptable at this location and compliant with 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines'.

The report finds that the dominant source of flood risk to the site is from the River Barrow which is located adjacent to the site.

Elevations and Floor Plans



Figure 1 Proposed alteration to the exterior of the Grain Store

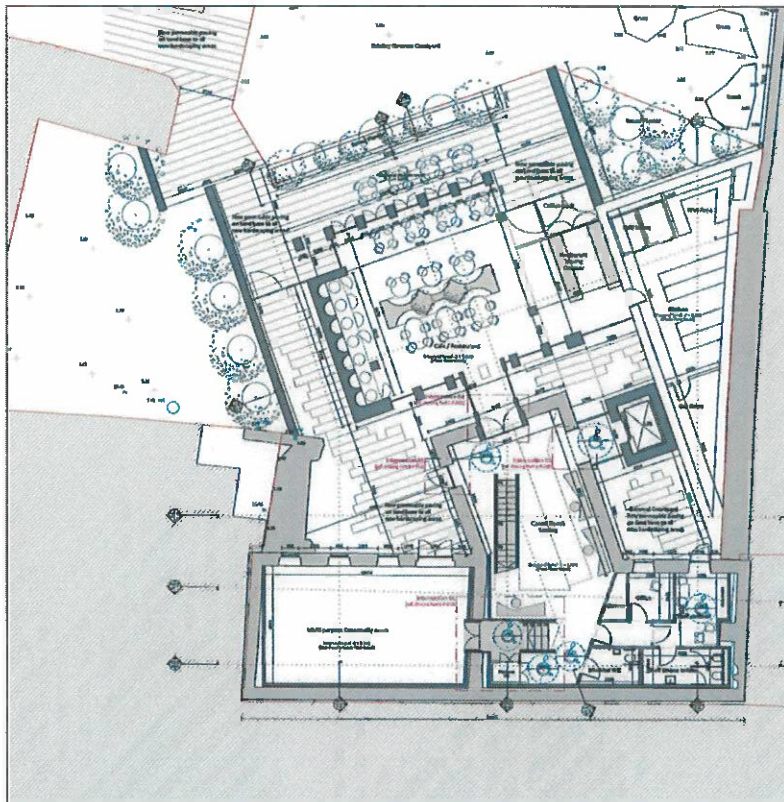


Figure 2: Floor Plan

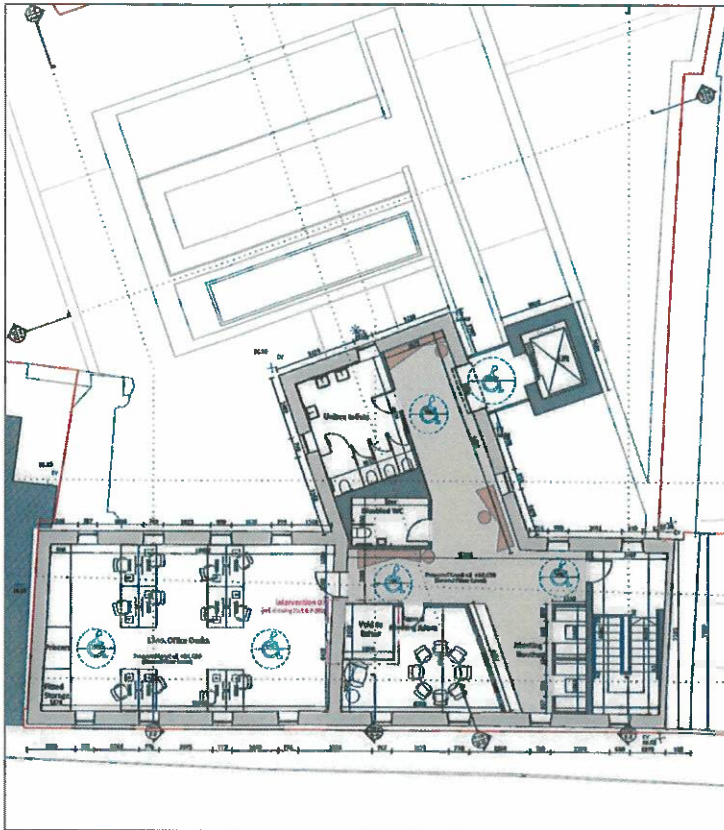


Figure 3: First Floor Plan

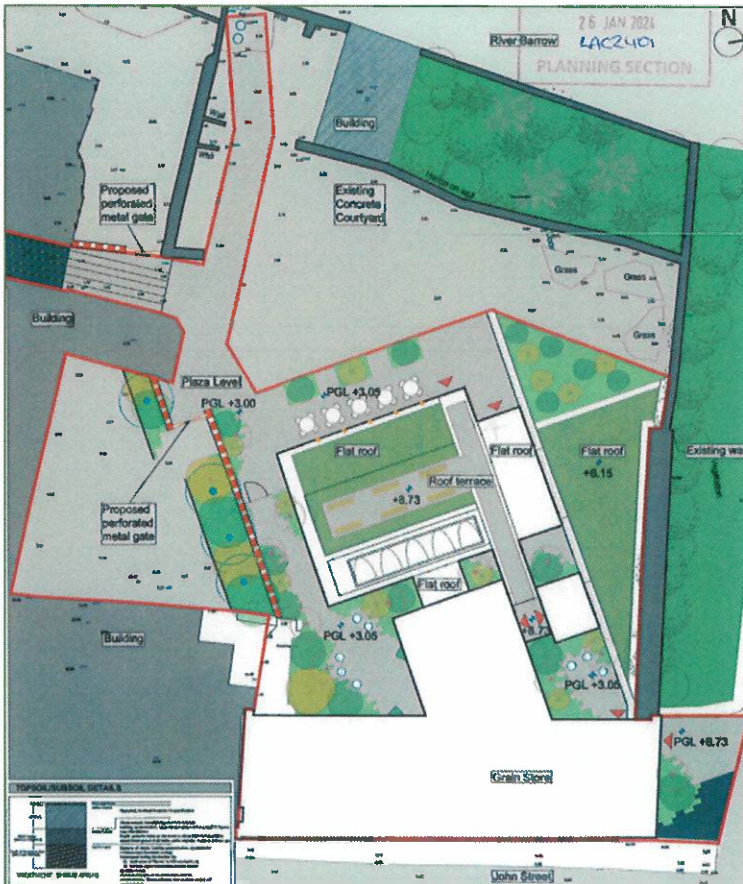


Figure 4: Proposed site layout

Proposed Development

Alterations, Extensions & External Works to The Grain Store, John Street, New Ross

Pre-Planning including Appropriate Assessment Screening

A preplanning assessment (PLAC 2209) was carried out on 23rd February 2023 for the development.

Requirement for EIAR

Based on a preliminary examination of the nature, size and location of the development, there is no likelihood of significant effects on the environment and an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is not required.

Appropriate Assessment

The development has been screened for appropriate assessment. There is no requirement for a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment.

County Development Plan / New Ross Town Plan (expired)

The New Ross Town and Environs Plan is now expired however the previous plan zoned this area as being 'Town Centre'.

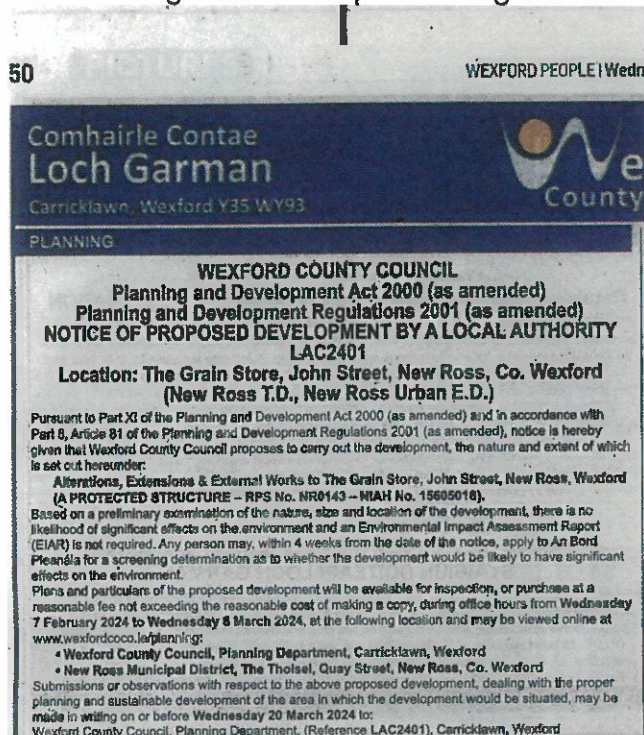


Red dot marks location of the Grain Store

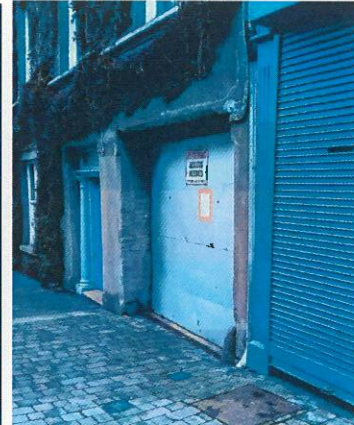
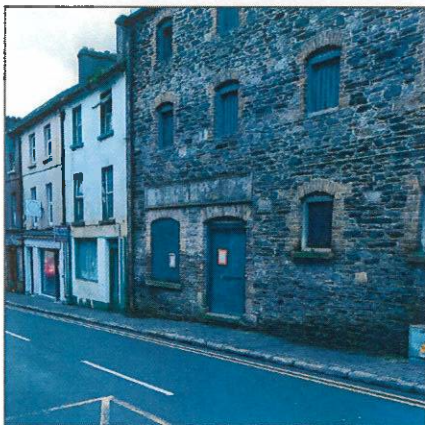
Figure 6: Expired Town Plan Zoning, New Ross

Public Notices

The development was advertised, and a site notice was placed in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations.



Newspaper Notice dated 07/02/2024



Site inspection on the 07/02/2024 and all the site notices were erected in position and in satisfactory legible positions.

Submissions

No submissions were received

External Consultations

Irish Water, The Heritage Council and Dept of Housing, Local Gov. & Heritage were consulted on the application. No reports were received on the plans.

New Ross is a historical town with a rich and diverse architectural and archaeological heritage. It was one of the first Irish towns to be developed by the Normans in the 12th century. The town's identity, character and sense of place are largely a result of the distinct heritage and historical development. The warehouse, that is the subject of the proposal, is a Protected Structure (RPS Ref. NR0143) dating from 1850. The structure represents an important element of the commercial and industrial legacy of New Ross having traditionally supported much of the local agricultural economy since the mid-nineteenth century. The proposal represents an important opportunity to repair and refurbish a Protected Structure and bring it back into use. The proposed development includes public realm improvement works which will transform and revitalise this part of the town centre. The proposal is an excellent example of amalgamating heritage conservation and economic renewal for the long-term sustainable development of New Ross.

The project will also contribute to the delivery of the following NPOs:

NPO 4: Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.

NPO 6: Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality, in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area.

NPO 7: Apply a tailored approach to urban development, that will be linked to the Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, with a particular focus on:-
[...] Reversing the stagnation or decline of many smaller urban centres, by identifying and establishing new roles and functions and enhancement of local infrastructure and amenities.

NPO 11: In meeting urban development requirements there will be a presumption in favour of development that can encourage more people and generate more jobs and activity within existing cities, towns and villages subject to development meeting appropriate planning standards and achieving targeted growth.

NPO 15: Support the sustainable development of rural areas by encouraging growth and arresting decline in areas that have experienced low population growth or decline in recent decades, and by managing the growth of areas that are under strong urban influence to avoid over-development, while sustaining vibrant rural communities.

NPO 17: Enhance, integrate and protect the special physical, social, economic and cultural value of built heritage assets through appropriate and sensitive use now and for future generations.

NPO 18a: To support the proportionate growth of and appropriately designed development in rural towns that will contribute to their regeneration and renewal, including interventions in the public realm, the provision of amenities, the acquisition of sites and the provision of services.

NPO 22: Facilitate tourism development, and in particular a National Greenways, Blueways and Peatways Strategy, which prioritises projects on the basis of achieving maximum impact and connectivity at national and regional level.

NPO 60: Conserve and enhance the rich qualities of natural and cultural heritage of Ireland in a manner appropriate to their significance.

The Grain store is a highly visible and historic building in New Ross, the building has been vacant for a number of years and while some minor remedial works were carried out in 2010, the building has fallen into decay. The aim of these works is to create a multifunctional space which it is anticipated will act as a catalyst for further development in the area which will bring this part of New Ross back to life.

The proposed development offers considerable conservation gain for the Grain Store by providing a complete refurbishment of this protected structure and a new sustainable use for a building that has been empty for a long period. The changes to the building are well thought out and should not have a significant impact on the special architectural heritage and character of the protected structure. The change of use of the building to a multifunctional space will be beneficial to the long-term sustainable use and conservation of this important building.

As the proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the policies and objectives of the Wexford County Development Plan 2022-2028, it is therefore recommended the development proceed as proposed and in accordance with appropriate archaeological monitoring.



Eddie Taffe
A/Chief Executive

Date: 3/4/24.