Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh | **Kilkenny County Council**

Halla an Chontae, Sráid Eoin, Cill Chainnigh, R95 A39T. | County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny, R95 A39T.

Fónamh don Phobal - Caomhnú don Oidhreacht | Serving People – Preserving Heritage

TO: AN CATHAOIRLEACH
& EACH MEMBER OF KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

RE: PART VIII – Renovation and Restructuring of the Tholsel Building

Planning & Development Acts 2000 – 2018

Planning & Development Regulations 2001 – 2018

Date : 8th May 2019

Dear Councillor,

In accordance with Section 179 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended, please find attached Report of the Director of Services, including the Planning Report, in relation to the public consultation process undertaken for the proposed Renovation and Restructuring of the Tholsel Building, which was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Part VIII of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

I am satisfied that the proposed development is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and is consistent with the provisions of the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan 2014 – 2020.

I recommend that Kilkenny County Council proceed with the proposed development in accordance with the plans made available for public inspection and taking into account the commitments and recommendations as outlined in the attached report.

Colette Byrne,
Chief Executive.

Guthán/Telephone: 056 7794000 Faics/Fax: 056 7794004
R-post/Email: info@kilkennycoco.ie Gréasán/Webpage: www.kilkennycoco.ie

Recycled

KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh

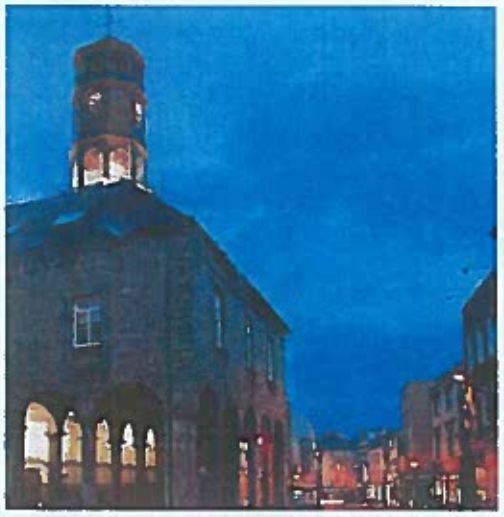
Chief Executives Report on the Consultation process

for the proposed

for the restructuring and renovation of

The Tholsel (City Hall)

High Street, Kilkenny.



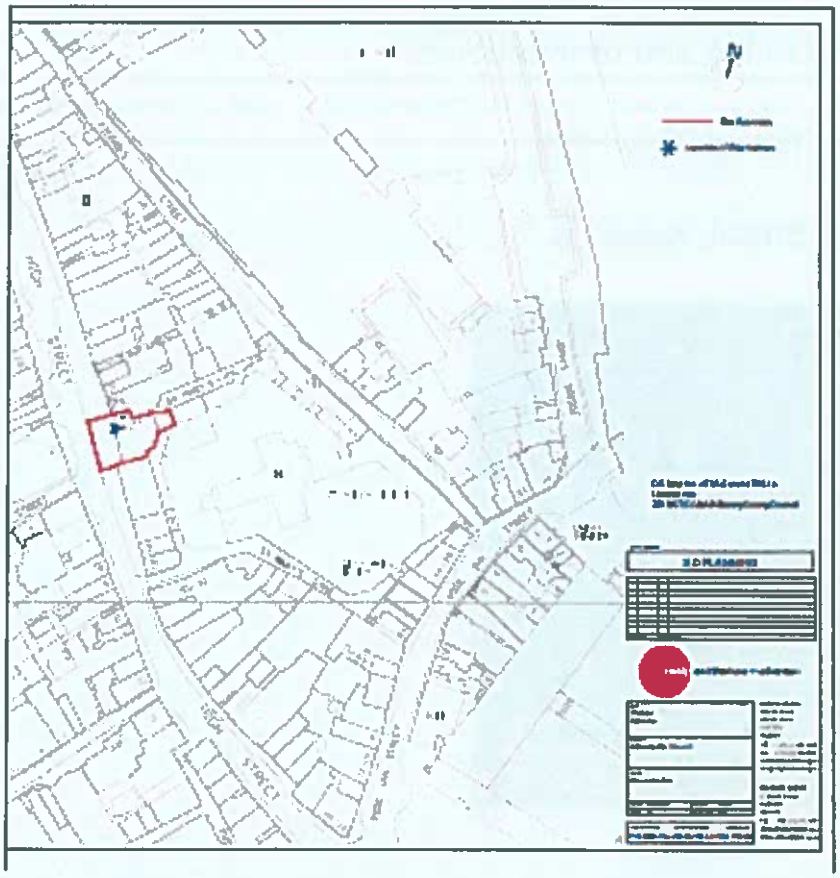
May 2019

This document has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Part XI of the Planning & Development Act 2000 – 2018 and Part VIII of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 -2018.
The proposed development will involve the restructuring and renovation of the Tholsel (Town Hall) building on High Street for office use and Tourism / Exhibition use. The building will continue to house a Council Chamber, Mayor's Parlour and Offices. It will also house an exhibition area in the basement and second floor, with limited visitor access to be provided to the roof structure and cupola.

1.1 Public Consultation

Notice of the proposed development was advertised by Notice in the Kilkenny People newspaper on the week ending Friday 1st February 2019.

Notices were also erected on the Tholsel Building:



A copy of the notice is provided in Appendix 'A'.

Details of the proposed scheme were also advertised via the Kilkenny County Council Public Consultation Portal http://consult.kilkenny.ie/

Plans and particulars for the proposed Scheme were available for inspection from Wednesday 30th January 2019 to Wednesday 27th February 2019 at the following locations:

- Planning Dept., County Hall, John St., Kilkenny.
- Town Hall, High Street, Kilkenny
- Carnegie Library, Johns Quay, Kilkenny.

- www.kilkennycoco.ie
- https://consult.kilkenny.ie/

In addition, non statutory public information days were held in the Town hall on Saturday 26th January 2019 and Wednesday 30th January 2019. These information days allowed members of the public to tour the building, view details of the proposed development and to discuss details of the proposed development with members of the design team and Kilkenny County Council.

Submissions and observations were invited with respect to the proposed development dealing with the proper planning and development of the area in which the proposed development will be carried out, with a final date for receipt of submissions on Wednesday 13th March 2019.

The documents on public display were as follows:

- Project Drawings
- Architectural Report
- Conservation Architect Report
- Archaeological Impact Assessment
- Civil & Structural Engineering Report
- Mechanical & Electrical Engineering Report
- Appropriate Assessment Screening
- Environmental Impact Assessment Screening
- DRAFT Exhibition Proposal (For information purposes only)

2.0 Brief description of the proposed works

2.1 Existing site

The Tholsel Building or Town Hall is located on High Street in Kilkenny City. The Building is the most prominent feature on the streetscape of High Street, projecting forward of the established building line on the east side of the street. The building is also a significant feature on the skyline, with a three stage copper clad central bell tower.

The word Tholsel is derived from two old English words: "toll", meaning tax; and "sael", or hall - the place where tolls were paid. The original Tholsel on the site was built in 1579, with the present building constructed in 1759 in a T shaped plan. Further extensions and restructuring of the building were undertaken in 1829 and 1951, with the building refurbished again in 1986 following a fire in September 1985.

The Tholsel is a protected structure in the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan 2014– 2020, and is cited as being of architectural, artistic, historical and social interest and of National Importance in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The building is located within the City Centre Architectural Conservation Area and the Zone of Notification of Recorded Monuments for Kilkenny City.

The building is currently used to house offices for Kilkenny County Council (formerly Kilkenny Borough Council).The dissolution of Kilkenny Borough Council in June 2014 has resulted in a reduced requirement for office space in the Tholsel, presenting an opportunity to consider options for the future use of the Tholsel building.

The reasons for the proposed development are summarised as

- Building is in need to refurbishment works.
- Building does not comply with the requirements of the Disabilities Act or Part M of the Building Regulations.
- Building does not comply with the Building Regulations in relation to Fire Safety.
- Some of the historical interventions to the building were not sympathetic to the building.
- Basement structure is very significant, yet it is not used – opportunity to open up and provide access to the basement.
- The reduced requirement for office space in the building presents an opportunity to enhance the civic function of the building, while facilitating greater public access to the building through tourism.

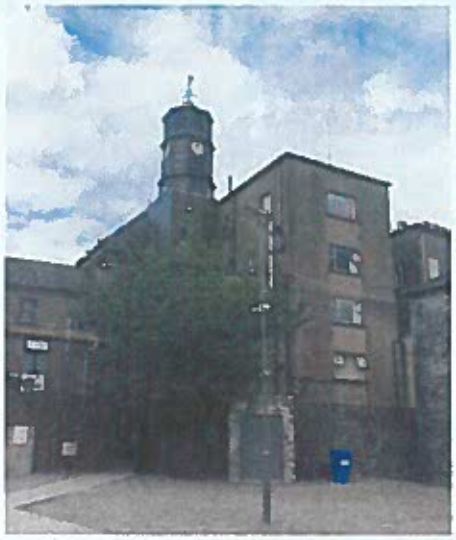
2.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.

The details of the proposed development as presented in the Planning Notice for the development are as follows:

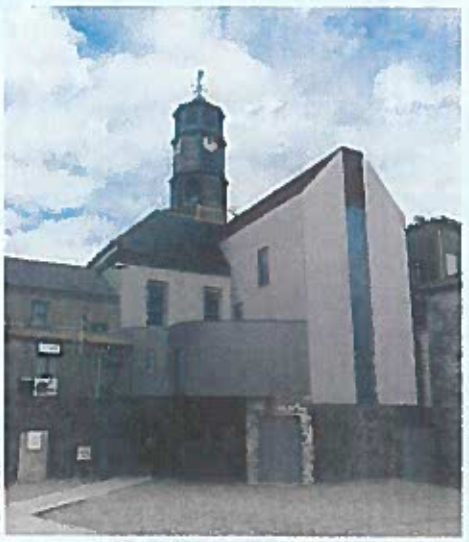
- Provision of lift and fire escape stairs to serve all floors within the existing structure (including the basement area).

- Modifications to the rear (eastern elevation) of the building to facilitate the reinstatement of the pitched roof in the area of the proposed lift and stairs and the insertion of new window openings and glazing.

Photo from The Crawford Collection, 1947



Existing building photographed in 2018



View of the proposed rear elevation

- Removal of railings to the porch area at ground floor level and provision of a new 51sq.m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure, to house a Visitor Reception area.

- Removal of existing 77sq.m mezzanine level at 3rd floor level over Mayor's Parlour and Corporate Affairs office. Removal of internal walls to corporate affairs office to create reception/exhibition space.

- Removal of existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of the second storey of this curved annex to allow for the reinstatement of windows to Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building. This will also facilitate the provision of a reception area at ground floor level for the civic function of the building and an office at first floor level.

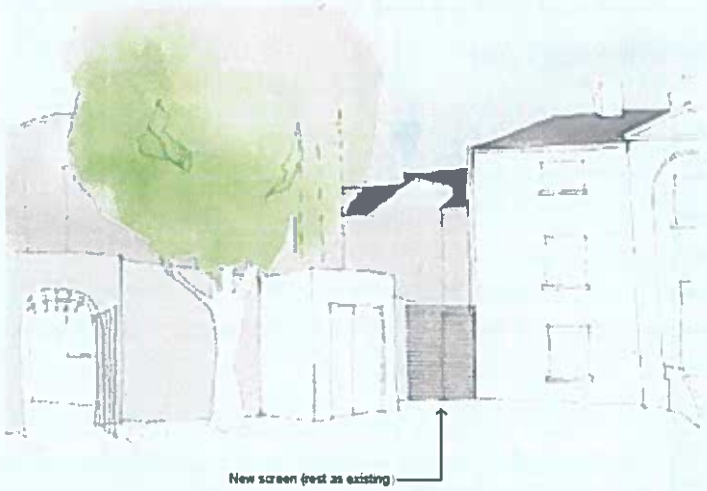
- Refurbishment of existing building, including repairs to masonry and windows, replacement of existing roof lights, re-dressing of lead linings, replacement of railings at roof level, and repairs to roof.

- Renovation of the basement area for the purposes of providing an exhibition space.

- Complete internal redecoration and new internal openings to allow improved circulation within the building.

- Provision of plant in the grounds of St. Marys Church & Graveyard (Recorded Monument (KK019-026115 & KK019-026156) and a Protected Structure in the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City, Ref. RPS B192 (NIAH Ref. 12000130/KK) and adjacent to the Alms Houses (Protected Structures, Ref RPS B193 (NIAH Ref. 12000128/KK and 12000129/KK)).This will include associated below ground pipe work connection to the Tholsel.

Sketch showing the screen to the plant area beside the Alms House in St. Marys



- Site works associated with formation of connections to existing public foul and surface water drainage and existing utilities as required.

2.2 DESIGN CRITERIA

The design of the proposed works to the Tholsel Building has taken into consideration the requirements of the following Regulations and Policy Documents:

- Building Regulations.
- Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended.
- Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 as amended.
- National Monuments Acts 1930-2012 (as amended)
- Heritage Act 2000
- Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1999
- Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan 2014-2020
- 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities', DAHG 2001,
- ICOMOS Burra Charter (ICOMOS 2013)
- 'Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage', DAHGI 1999
- European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage

3.0 SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

The submissions received are summarised in the following Table.

No.	Name
1	Andrew Lewis
2	Gabriel Murray
3	Kilkenny Archaeological Society
4	Kilkenny Comhairle na nOg
5	Irish Georgian Society
6	Lucy Glendinning
7	Mary T. Brennan, An Taisce
8	Patrick Comerford
9	Pauline Cass
10	Pat Cass
11	Gladys Bowles
12	Paul Brophy
13	Aine Murphy
14	Susan Collins
15	Malcolm Noonan
16	Des Doyle
17	Enya Kennedy
18	Simon Bourke
19	Margaret O'Brien (petition-300 names)
20	Margaret O'Brien
21	Paddy O'Ceallaigh
22	Gabriel Murray
23	Christopher O'Keeffe
24	Kevin Flaherty

25	DCHG - Archaeology
26	DCHG - Architecture
27	Conservation Officer, KCC

Full copies of the submissions received are provided in Appendix 4. The particular issues raised in the submissions are outlined and considered in the Senior Planners Report, presented in Appendix 2.

Planning and Development Act 2000- 2018

Planning and Development Regulations 2001- 2018

NOTICE OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BY A LOCAL AUTHORITY

Renovation and restructuring of the Tholsel (Town Hall), High Street, Kilkenny

In accordance with Part 8, Article 81, of the above regulations, Kilkenny County Council hereby gives notice of its intention to alter and renovate the Tholsel, High Street, Kilkenny for office use and Tourism / Exhibition use. The building will continue to house a Council Chamber, Mayor's Parlour, and Offices. It will also house an exhibition area in the basement and second floor, with limited visitor access to be provided to the roof.

The Tholsel (Town Hall) is a Recorded Monument (KK019-026061) and a Protected Structure included in the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City, Ref. RPS B43 (NIAH Ref.12000061) It is located within the Kilkenny City Centre Architectural Conservation Area and within a zone of Archaeological Potential (KK019-026 'City')

The proposed development will consist of:

- Provision of lift and fire escape stairs to serve all floors within the existing structure (including the basement area).
- Modifications to the rear (eastern elevation) of the building to facilitate the reinstatement of the pitched roof in the area of the proposed lift and stairs and the insertion of new window openings and glazing.
- Removal of railings to the porch area at ground floor level and provision of a new 51sq.m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure, to house a Visitor Reception area.
- Removal of existing 77sq.m mezzanine level at 3rd floor level over Mayor's Parlour and Corporate Affairs office. Removal of internal walls to corporate affairs office to create reception/exhibition space.
- Removal of existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of the second storey of this curved annex to allow for the reinstatement of windows to Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building. This will also facilitate the provision of a reception area at ground floor level for the civic function of the building and an office at first floor level.
- Refurbishment of existing building, including repairs to masonry and windows, replacement of existing rooflights, re-dressing of lead linings, replacement of railings at roof level, and repairs to roof.
- Renovation of the basement area for the purposes of providing an exhibition space.
- Complete internal redecoration and new internal openings to allow improved circulation within the building.
- Provision of plant in the grounds of St. Marys Church & Graveyard (Recorded Monument (KK019-026115 & KK019-026156) and a Protected Structure in the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City, Ref. RPS B192 (NIAH Ref. 12000130/KK) and adjacent to the Alms Houses (Protected Structures, Ref RPS B193 (NIAH Ref. 12000128/KK and 12000129/KK)).This will include associated below ground pipework connection to the Tholsel.
- Site works associated with formation of connections to existing public foul and surface water drainage, and existing utilities as required.

In accordance with the requirements of Article 120(1)(a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) the local authority has made a preliminary examination of the nature, size and location of the proposed development. The authority has concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and a determination has been made that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required.

As per Article 120(3) where any person considers that the development proposed to be carried out would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, he or she may, at any time before the expiration of 4 weeks beginning on the date of the publication of this notice apply to An Bord Pleanála for a screening determination as to whether the development would be likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

Plans and particulars of the proposed development will be available for inspection or purchase for a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy during office hours from Wednesday 30th January 2019 until Wednesday 27th February 2019 inclusive, at the following Kilkenny County Council offices:

- Planning Dept., Kilkenny County Council, County Hall, John St., Kilkenny City
  from 9am to 1pm & 2pm to 4pm Monday to Friday.

- Kilkenny City Engineering Office, Kilkenny County Council, Town Hall, High Street, Kilkenny from 9am to 1pm & 2pm to 5pm Monday to Friday.

- Carnegie Library, Johns Quay, Kilkenny from 10am to 8pm Tuesdays, 10am to 5pm Wednesday to Friday, and 10am to 1:30pm Saturdays (except Bank Holiday weekends).

Details of the proposed development can also be viewed at https://consult.kilkenny.ie/ and www.kilkennycoco.ie
Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the development will be carried out, may be made online at https://consult.kilkenny.ie/, in writing to the Planning Section, Kilkenny County Council, County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny or sent to the following e-mail address Tholselplanning@kilkennycoco.ie . **The latest time and date for receipt of submissions on the development is 5.00pm on Wednesday 13th March, 2019.** Submissions should be clearly marked "*Tholsel Project – Planning Submission*"

Tim Butler, Director of Services.

Appendix 2

Senior Planner's Report

Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh

Kilkenny County Council

Planning Report

To : Tim Butler, Director of Services

From: Arlene O' Connor, Senior Executive Planner

Date: 2/5/2019 Part VIII Ref:P.8/2/19

Re: Alterations and renovations of the Tholsel, High Street, Kilkenny.

Part VIII Proposal

Under this Part 8 proposal, Kilkenny County Council are proposing to alter and renovate the Tholsel building on High Street in Kilkenny city centre for both office and tourism / exhibition use. The building will however continue to house a Council Chamber, Mayor's Parlour and offices. Limited visitor access is also being provided to the roof.

The proposed development will consist of the following works:

- Provision of lift and fire escape stairs to serve all floors within the existing structure (including the basement area).
- Modifications to the rear (eastern elevation) of the building to facilitate the reinstatement of the pitched roof in the area of the proposed lift and stairs and the insertion of new window openings and glazing.
- Removal of railings to the porch area at ground floor level and provision of a new 51m2 glazed structures, incorporating timber frame structure, to house a Visitor Reception area.
- Removal of existing 77m2 mezzanine levels at 3rd floor level over Mayor's Parlour and Corporate Affairs office. Removal of internal walls to corporate affairs office to create a reception/exhibition space.
- Removal of existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of the second storey of this curved annex to allow for the reinstatement of windows to Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building. This will also facilitate the provision of a reception area at ground floor level for the civic function of the building and an office at first floor level.
- Refurbishment of existing building, including repairs to masonry and windows, replacement of existing rooflights, re-dressing of lead linings, replacement of railings at roof level and repairs to roof.
- Renovation of the basement area for the purposes of providing an exhibition space.

- Complete internal redecoration and new internal openings to allow improved circulation within the building.
- Provision of plant in the grounds of St. Marys Church & Graveyard (Recorded Monument (KK019-026115 & KK019-026156) and a Protected Structure in the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City, Ref. RPS B192 (NIAH Ref. 12000130/KK) and adjacent to the Alms Houses (Protected Structures, Ref RPS B193 (NIAH Ref. 12000128/KK and 12000129/KK)).This will include associated below ground pipework connection to the Tholsel.
- Site works associated with formation of connections to existing public foul and surface water drainage and existing utilities as required.

Site Location

The building is located in Kilkenny city centre occupying a central location on High Street.

The building fronts onto High Street and backs onto St. Mary's Lane, which in turn leads to St.

Kieran Street.

Zoning

The site falls within a zoning of '*General Business*', within the Kilkenny City and EnvironsDevelopment Plan 2014 – 2020. Thus the proposed usage of the building for offices and Tourism facilities are acceptable within this zoning.

Heritage

Protected Structure –The Tholsel is a protected structure included in the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City, RPS reference B43 (NIAH Ref.12000061)

Recorded Monument –The Tholsel (Town Hall) is a Recorded Monument (KK019-026061).

ACA – The site falls within the city centre Architectural Conservation Area.

SAC – The site falls beyond the River Notecase.

SPA – The site falls beyond the River Nora SPA.

pNHA – The site is not within any pNHA.

Zone of Archaeological Potential - The site falls within the zone of Archaeological Potential in Kilkenny city reference KK019-026 'City'.

Appropriate Assessment

The site has been screened in relation to the Habitats Directive Project Screening Assessment and there are no impacts determined on any Natura 2000 site.

Environmental Impact Assessment

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is not required for this development as Defined under Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2018.

Consideration was also given to the environmental sensitivities of the area and the Potential effects of the development with regards a multitude of environmental factors and it was determined that no EIAR was required.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidelines

Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan 2014 – 2020

Planning History
There are no previous planning histories or Part VIII files relevant to this building.

Internal Departmental Reports
Conservation Officer – Has no objections to the proposed works to the Tholsel, however does request that several aspects of the proposal be addressed. These include the following;

- Further investigation of the stone at first floor level, window surrounds and quoins on the front façade along with the visual impacts of the mechanical vents and extractors proposed.
- A detailed architectural survey of the staircase should be undertaken prior to its removal and a salvage and storage methodology be complied for its removal.
- A methodology for recording, numbering, lifting and resetting flagstones should be compiled along with a method statement for the removal of the wrought iron railings.
- No chasing of historic fabric is advised.
- A Clerk of Works should be appointed for the project.

It is also stated that this is an opportunity to highlight the limestone finish visible from St. Mary's Lane.

External Body Reports
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Architectural Division)– Overall the Department has no objection in principle to the proposed works and supports the adaption of the protected structure for reuse, especially in light of a new or enhanced civic amenity. The department have broken down the development in several sub-headings with their comments there under. These are summarised as follows;

Glazed Entrance Reception

- A detailed assessment should be made of the visual impact the proposed glulam framework may have on the protected structure including when the space is lit from within during the day and in the evening. A detailed assessment may inform revisions to the proposed glulam framework with, for instance, a reduced number of simple square-profile transverse arches with good quality lighting suspended from the mid points.
- The entrance into the glazed exhibition reception should be via double doors on the High Street front in order to preserve the sense of symmetry of the façade and the central axis of the plan. The Department suggests that an artistic treatment of the double doors, for instance acid-etched branding, may further enhance the sense of symmetry and central axis.
- The proposed method for ventilating the glazed exhibition reception should be submitted and assessed for visual impact on the protected structure. The submitted Mechanical and Engineering (M&E) report suggests that ventilation may be provided either at the bottom or top of the glazed panels, or via glazed mullions, without recommending a preferred proposed method.
- Detailed drawings for the proposed doors from the glazed exhibition reception and into the council reception should be submitted for agreement in writing prior to any work commencing on site.

Interior

- The orientation of the proposed new staircase to use an anti-clockwise rise allowing for a ceremonial route so the visitor ascends the staircase on the central axis should be considered. The staircase should combine high quality contemporary design and finishes with low risers and broad treads in the eighteenth-century manner. Detailed drawings and specifications, including finishes, should be submitted for agreement in writing prior to any work commencing on site.
- The potential of the half-landings and landings of the staircase return to display contemporary art work, exhibitions and/or historical items should be considered and the design amended to accommodate display requirements.
- As the reconstruction of the upper floor is likely to be conjectural, consideration should be given to inserting a glazed screen between the proposed exhibition/gallery space and mayor's parlour in lieu of a partition wall in order to allow for the double-height space to be visible in its entirety. A glazed screen will be clearly interpretable as a new intervention matching the proposed glazed exhibition reception; will allow the proposed exhibition/gallery space to obtain borrowed light from the mayor's parlour; and will allow both rooms to interconnect for civic functions and/or exhibition opening nights. An artistic treatment of the double doors, for instance an acid-etched city/mayoral arms, may add visual interest to the reconstructed upper floor.
- Detailed drawings for the internal fit-out of the mayor's parlour should be submitted demonstrating the form and finish of the proposed wainscoting and the form and finish of the proposed window linings.
- Detailed drawings in respect of the modified east-facing opening in the proposed exhibition space/gallery should be submitted demonstrating the form and finish of the proposed window linings.
- The proposed works will require the removal of a mid twentieth-century terrazzo staircase contributing to the character of the protected structure. The existing terrazzo should be retained at ground floor level and an impression of the curved plan indicated by a floor finish of brass-framed wedges of similarly-coloured terrazzo following the treads of the staircase. Detailed drawings should be submitted demonstrating how evidence of the staircase will be incorporated into the proposed shelving per Section 7.1 of the Conservation Report.
- A new opening is to be formed at the junction of the staircase return and mayor's parlour. However, there are inconsistencies between Drawing P16-336K-RAU-00- ZZ-DR-A-31002 where a section of masonry between the opening and junction is absent and the visualisation on p.22 of the Architectural Design Statement where a section of masonry is present. The form of the proposed new opening should be assessed and finalised. A section of masonry should be retained in order to prevent a visually unsatisfactory junction.
- Detailed drawings for the proposed lift and lift shaft should be submitted. The proposal was presented as a pit-based platform lift requiring no external lift shaft at pre-planning but is described in the Mechanical and Engineering (M&E) Report as requiring a permanent open vent. A vent is not included on Drawing P16-3336K-RAU-00-ZZ-DR-A-31005 or in the visualisation in the

Architectural Design Statement. Any external lift shaft should be assessed for its potential impact on the character of the protected structure.

Building Fabric

- A method statement, as mentioned in Section 7.1 of the Conservation Report, should cover the repointing of the stone work. The repointing should be carried out using a suitable lime mortar based on analysis of surviving mortar which may lie undisturbed behind fixtures and/or rainwater goods. The method statement should also describe refinishing the east-facing elevations of the protected structure. The work should be based on analysis of surviving substrate mortar, should include the repair, where necessary, of limestone dressings contributing to the special interest of the protected structure (chamfered cushion course; date stone), and should consider a range of coloured finishes to assist with the interpretation of phasing.
- Detailed drawings and specifications, including finishes, for the new and reformed openings on the east-facing elevation should be submitted. The fittings for the reformed openings should be period-appropriate, based on the analysis of a range of archival sources, while the fittings for the new openings should employ high quality modern materials clearly reading as new interventions.
- Samples of the proposed slate recommended in Section 7.2 of the Conservation Report should be submitted.
- Detailed drawings and specifications for the proposed railings encircling the cupola should be submitted. The swan neck detail visible in archival photography should be investigated as it may have significance to the protected structure via a well-known local family as suggested by a similar swan neck detail present on a number of mural tablets in the adjacent Saint Mary's Church.
- A detailed Mechanical and Engineering (M&E) Report should submitted addressing the removal and upgrading of electrical and sanitary services, the lighting and ventilation of the basement, the lighting and ventilation of the glazed entrance vestibule with scope for a reduced glulam framework, &c. The M&E Report should be accompanied by assessments, method statements and specifications, as necessary, mitigating any impacts on the fabric of the protected structure.

General

- All works to the protected structure should be carried out to best conservation practice as set out in Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines For Planning Authorities (2011) and the General Directions to Contractor in Section 7.3 of the Conservation Report.
- The applicant should engage appropriately qualified and competent conservation professionals, as necessary, to specify the works and oversee their correct completion on site.
- The works should be undertaken by skilled and experienced conservation contractors and specialists with relevant experience of historic materials and techniques.

Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Archaeological Division)

The Department recommends that the Archaeological Mitigation Strategy outlined in Section 9.0 of the Archaeological Impact Assessment be implemented in full by way of conditions to this Part 8 application.

Third Party Submissions

This Part VIII proposal was placed on public display from the 30th Jan to 27th Feb., with submissions invited up to 13th March, 2019 and in total during this timeframe, 24 submissions were received from the public and are summarised in the table below for the purpose of this report.

The summary table also includes details of the statutory submissions.

Submission Details	Response
1. Andrew Lewis	
a) Welcomes the proposal to use the Tholsel as a visitor attraction, while retaining local government activities on site.	a) Noted.
b) Glass cube is an acceptable solution to the entrance provided no anchoring is done to the stone columns.	b) Noted. It is not intended to anchor the "Glass cube" to the stone columns
c) Proposed rear elevation is "*..abhorrent*" for reasons outlined in the submission. Suggests that architect looks to the image from 1947 in the Crawford Collection for inspiration for the redesign of the rear elevation. Suggests that the 2 missing sash windows will be discovered during archaeological investigation.	c) The 1947 picture from the Crawford Collection has been used as the inspiration for the rear elevation as suggested in the submission. Unfortunately, during the renovation works to the building in the 1950's, a large part of this rear elevation was demolished and rebuilt, meaning that a lot of the original stone fabric of the building was demolished. This was confirmed during investigative works undertaken to inform the current project. The proposed intervention to the rear elevation will include the reintroduction of a pitched roof in the elevation and the reinstatement of the windows into the Mayors Parlour, which were removed during the works in the 1950's. It is not possible to return the building to its 1947 form, but the proposed revisions to the elevation are considered to be more sympathetic to the original form of the building than the current elevation.
d) Refers to copying and pasting in the Architectural Report, with reference to Athy Library and Kildare County Council.	d) On page 4 of the Architectural Report, the architect introduces the members of the design team. A number of the design team members working on the Tholsel Project also worked with the Architect on a project in Athy Library. In copying over the details of the design team members from the report for the Athy Library, the references to Athy Library and Kildare County Council were, in error, not removed. This error does not affect the content of the Planning Reports and is not a reflection on the professional and very comprehensive nature of the reports included in this public consultation.

2& 22 Gabriel Murray Has referred the matter of the staircase removal to An Taisce and has asked them to investigate the breach of : a) The National Monuments Acts, the Planning Acts as the Tholsel is a Recorded Monument, a protected structure and is located within the Kilkenny City Centre Architectural Conservation area and Zone of Archaeological potential. b) Removal of the existing curved stairway. c) Removal of the John Banim statue. d) Asked them to investigate the Councils claim that no-planning approval is required to remove the stairs, statue etc.	a) In the assessment of the Part 8 documents by the Planning Department it has been found that all regulatory matters relating to procedures under the Planning Acts and the National Monuments Acts have been complied with in full. b)The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade(Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building. c) The existing statue to John Banim will be incorporated into the revised building layout. d) The proposed development constitutes Development by a Local Authority and the Planning Requirements in respect of such development are clearly set out in the Planning & Development Act 2000 – 2018 and the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 – 2018. The Part 8 proposal complies fully with the requirements of the relevant planning legislation in respect of the project.
2& 22 Gabriel Murray Objects to a)The removal of the "*...250 year old staircase.*" b)The removal of the statue of John Banim "*...that was installed in 1854.* c) This is in contravention of heritage act" and he has "...contacted An Taisce, the Dept of Heritage and Culture and the Royal Institute of Architects."	See comments above.

3. **Kilkenny Archaeological Society**	
a) Recognise that the building urgently requires renovation and alteration and the commitment to follow best conservation practice.	a) Recognition of the necessity of the work noted.
b) Do not agree with the proposal to erect a new glazed reception and ticket office in the ground floor arcade, which at present forms part of the pedestrian public realm. It is in nearly daily use by charity collectors, street musicians, singers, sellers of small craft items, choirs at Christmas etc. It is the only outdoor covered area of High Street – there is no alternative to its present vibrant street culture.	b)& c) The proposed development will not affect the pedestrian route along High Street, with this area continuing to be available for the current uses. The area of the proposed glazed reception, is located in the inner arcade area, which is separated from the public thoroughfare by the steel railings that were erected in the early 1950s. There is no plan to alter the existing area in front of the railings etc, and the existing users can continue to use the shelter provided by the Tholsel. It is noted that Condolence books have traditionally been signed in the area of the outer arcade and thus this practice will be unaffected by the current proposal. The importance of the Christmas Crib is acknowledged and the future location for the crib will be identified and agreed prior to development works commencing.
c) Glazed reception and ticket office, along with the removal of the railings, will probably have a negative impact on the gregarious street life of the arcade. Christmas Crib is a traditional and very popular attraction and will be affected negatively, along with activities such as signing condolence books.	
d) Glazed and wood reception is incongruous inside an 18th c. Medieval building on a busy street. The metal railings, constructed in the 1950's, are popular possibly because they form a boundary to the raw street life from the quieter activities inside the rails.	d)The introduction of the glazed area will not interfere with the existing range of activities which take place (busking, charity collections etc). No works are planned to be undertaken in the outer arcade area. The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The timber and glazing are viewed as reversible intervention to the building. The railings to the front of the building were introduced in 1951 – it is recorded in the minute books of Kilkenny Corporation that they were erected to deal "*...with the abuses of the day*" The proposed development is aimed at providing better access for members of the public to the building. The presence of the railings conveys a message of "Keep Out". The proposed removal of the railings will make the building more accessible and will open up access to the adjoining St Marys lane.
e) The proposal to remove the clutter of disfiguring extensions at the rear of the building is very welcome. However, the proposed facade appears austere and obtrusive. Strongly recommend that windows similar to the old windows (reference Crawford Collection photo 1947) be installed. Recommends that the wall is painted in a colour that harmonises with the colour of the stone walls and slate roof. On balance feel that the copper roof will age elegantly.	e) Whilst the original windows on this facade were removed during the work to the building in the 1950's, the design of the proposed new windows will be reviewed in the detailed design. As per the requirements of the Dept. of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, "...fittings for new openings." will "...employ high quality modern fittings, clearly reading as new interventions."

f) Unclear where the public will access the general reception office for the Local Government function of the building.	f) The proposed development includes the provision of separate entrances to the building for the Local Government function and the proposed Tourism function of the building. The proposed formal civic reception desk area at Ground Floor Level will significantly enhance and improve the civic entrance to the building. It is noted that the function of paying rent as noted in the submission, no longer takes place in the Town Hall, with this and other functions such as the Traffic Dept. having been relocated to County Hall on John Street. 
g) Commends the level of expertise and work that has gone into the proposal.	g) Noted.
h) Suggests that the consultation process might have been improved by holding a public forum type of meeting in advance.	h) The Public Consultation process for the proposed development included two Public Open Days on Saturday 26th Jan and Wednesday 30th Jan. This allowed members of the public to visit the building, view the proposals for the building and to meet with the design team and representatives from Kilkenny Co. Co. to discuss details of the proposed development.

4. <u>Kilkenny Comhairle na nOg</u>	
a) Concern in relation to the potential impact that the ticket office may have on the space in front of it.	a) The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs.
b) Ticket booth may be an eye-sore and take away from medieval look"	b) The proposed visitor reception, which has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. In the detailed design the structure will be detailed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness.
c) "Use one area as a museum but use the rest of the building for other things too, to get the most out of the space."	c) The proposed development is intended to open the building up to more visitors and uses, whilst retaining its civic function as the primary function of the building. For example, the exhibition area outside the Council Chamber will be capable of holding civic receptions and other public events..
d) The staircase is part of the history of the building / "No need to knock out the stairs – unnecessary cost"	d) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade(Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.

e) Its a public place, should be kept a public space.	e) It is intended that the proposed development will increase public access to the building. In addition to the proposed tourism use of the building, the proposed development also includes the provision of a reception / exhibition space outside the Council Chamber, which will allow functions to be held within the building. The existing public uses that take place in the outer loggia will not be affected.
f) Potential for injuries if glass walls of ticket office breaks.	f) The design of the glass structure will be such that it will not be a hazard.
g) If it becomes a business they may not allow fundraising outside / If people can still busk then now problem with the ticket office. When people busk there it adds a nice vibe and personality to the town	g) The proposed development will not prevent the continued use of the area currently used for fundraising / busking.
h) There's already a Medieval Mile Museum.	h) It is proposed that the tourist facility in the Tholsel will tell the story of the historic development of Kilkenny through the Mayors of Kilkenny. It is appropriate that this story should be told in the Tholsel or Town Hall. This will be a very different story to that presented in the Medieval Mile Museum.
i) Use smaller/ indoor area for ticket office"	i) There is insufficient space within the existing ground floor area to accommodate the tourist entrance to the building along with the Building Regulations compliant stairway and the proposed civic entrance to the building.
j) A queue of people for the ticket office could ruin aesthetics and photography opportunities / People queuing could impact on foot traffic through and around the town hall. Also people might be at risk of traffic accidents if footpaths are busier around the town hall."	j) It is not envisaged that there will be issues with people queuing to visit the building. This is an operational issue which can be addressed in the day to day management of the building.
k) It is also suggested that the ticket office be combined with the Medieval Mile Museum Ticket Office. This will save the cost of constructing it, avert the competition for space and subsequent negative impact on the general public and be more cost effective to run as there will only be a need for one set of staff to man it.	k)It is proposed that the Reception Area and Ticket office at the Tholsel will serve as a Reception area and Ticket office to both the Tholsel and the Medieval Mile Museum.
5. Irish Georgian Society Notes that the impact of the proposed works on the architectural heritage value and special interest of the Tholsel must be fully assessed. Key issues are : a) Notes that the contents of the detailed conservation report should be aligned with the other reports. States that the engineers report refers to the stabilising of the brick basement vaults and suggests a methodology that includes shotcrete, which would not be an acceptable conservation approach.	a) All works to the proposed building will need to follow conservation best practice. The design team includes a Grade 1 Conservation Architect who will provide specialist advice to the other design team members. It is noted that the engineers report does not propose the use of shotcrete, but simply states that this is one alternative to the replacement and repair of damaged section of brick – the engineers report suggests that specialist advice will need to be sought from "*...a masonry arch brick specialist to advise on further options such as the removal of the damaged portion of the bricks by paring ..*"
b) It is noted that the extent to which works such as cleaning, repair and repointing of existing stone masonry will be carried out depends on the funding available. It would be usual on a project of this scale to include full facade conservation and repair of such a landmark building.	b) It is noted that the existing pointing of the stone masonry is in good condition, albeit that the pointing is cementitious in nature. In accordance with best Conservation practice, the cementitious pointing will be removed and replaced with a suitable lime based pointing – this will increase the project costs.

c) It is unclear whether investigative works or opening up works were carried out in advance of formulating the current proposals noting that the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines provide that "*Opening-up works may be needed to allow a full understanding of the structure prior to making development proposals*"	c) As noted on page 11 of the Conservation Architects Report, opening up works have been undertaken to inform the current proposals.
d) Very little details are provided on the extent to which the proposals will alter historic material or on the provision of plumbed and wired services. It is essential that the extent of installation of new services proposed is clearly set out if the architectural heritage impact of proposals are to be comprehensively assessed.	d) The design and location of the proposed services within the building will be considered at detailed design stage. Proposed services will be located in such a way as to minimise the impact of such services on the structure. The Conservation Architect on the design team will be required to advise the other members of the design team on best practice for such works. A detailed M & E report will be prepared at Detailed Design Stage, which will include assessments, method statements and specifications, mitigating any impacts on the fabric of the protected structure.
e) Queries the proposal of the new glazed structure, noting that the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines provide that "The Plan Form of a Building is one of its most important characteristics. Where the original plan-form remains or is readily discernible, it should be identified and respected"	e)The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness.
f) Queries whether or not consideration was given to returning the ground floor arcade to use a covered market place and whether consideration was given to the location of the Tourist Information Services in other redundant buildings rather than in the Tholsel, noting that the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines provide that "Usually the original use for which a structure was built will be the most appropriate, and to maintain that use will involve the least disruption to its character."	f) The primary historical function of the Tholsel Building has been as the seat of Local Government in the City and this function will be retained in the proposed development. The Tourist Information Services to be provided in the building will relate to the Tholsel Building – it will not be a General Tourist Information office"
6. <u>Lucy Glendinning</u>	
a) Notes that the proposal to change the nature of this protected building through the removal of the railings and the introduction of a glass "room" is a contradiction and is very impractical, also citing issues with poor ventilation, poor lighting, cold, draughty and generally an uncomfortable space.	The proposed glazed structure, with lightweight timber framing is a reversible modern intervention to the building, which will facilitate the proposed exhibition/tourism use of part of the building. The structure will be subservient to the existing building structure. The issues of ventilation, lighting and heating of the proposed glazed structure will be comprehensively addressed at Detailed Design Stage.
b) Notes that the Tholsel in Kilkenny is not there, "to provide impressive and functional tourist experiences in the heart of the Medieval Mile." Notes that the porch space requires some sensitive restoration work. . Notes that St Mary's Church is a standalone museum and Kilkenny does not require its Town Hall to be turned into a ticket office for selling "the medieval mile" It is a civic space and should be used as such.	b) The primary function of the Tholsel Building will continue to be as a Town Hall / seat of local government in the city. The building has a very rich history that is of interest to both the citizens of the city and visitors alike and the proposed tourism / exhibition use of part of the building provides the opportunity to tell the story of both the building and the story of Kilkenny through the Mayors of Kilkenny who were associated with the Tholsel. The story to be told in the Tholsel will be very different to that presented in the Medieval Mile Museum.
c) Cannot see any justification for the removal of what is a fine	

staircase inside the building.	c) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade (Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building.
d) Asks who will be managing our Town Hall, if the proposals for this building include use of it for promotion of tourism, noting that is it important that this building remains under the stewardship of the citizens of Kilkenny, to be used for a variety of events/functions by its citizens when required.	d) The Town Hall will continue to be the seat of Local Government in the city and will be run by Kilkenny County Council. The Town Hall will continue to be available for the running of events and functions as it does today.

7. An Taisce	
a) Welcomes the proposed renovation and restructuring of the Tholsel, noting that building has undergone several reconstructions and alterations since it was originally built.	a) Noted.
b) Queries the need to put so much emphasis on visitor attraction, noting that continuous tourist traffic up through the building invites unnecessary wear and tear and may pose a distraction to Council staff. Suggests that access to the upper floors, roof and Cupula is not essential, as views of Kilkenny are available from other elevated points such as St Canice's round tower, the Castle and the proposed viewing platform on the Brewery building. Development of the Tholsel for tourism should be limited to the basement and the ground floor, leaving the upper floors for civic functions of the Council.	b) The proposed development is intended to protect and enhance the local government function of the building, while providing greater public access to the building. While access to the roof and cupola are not essential, those that have visited the cupola have found it to be a unique vantage point from which to view the city, providing views that are very different to those provided in St Canices and the Castle. The new stairway and lift through the building will be designed to accommodate the increased number of visitors to the building.
c) Basement: Concerned that moisture ingress into the basement may be a problem. Apart from improving ventilation it is not clear how or if it is intended to damp-proof the basement.	c) These issues will be considered and addressed at detailed design stage, but it is not intended to damp proof the basement.
d) Ground Floor: Concerned that the arcade forms part of the main pedestrian route along High Street and as a sheltered space it is daily used by citizens who sit and stand against the railings while engaged as collectors, singers, musicians and small craft sellers. These activities are not compatible with a glazed façade as background. To maximize the external public space here the entrance door to the glazed area could be moved to the south side.	d) The proposed development will not affect the pedestrian route along High Street, with this area continuing to be available for the current uses. The suggestion to relocate the entrance door to the southern side of the structure is noted – however, it is noted that the Dept. of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht (DCHG) have specifically required that the entrance open onto High Street "*...to preserve the sense of symmetry and central axis*" This will be reviewed in consultation with the DCHG.
e) Suggests that the proposed glazed enclosure is wasted as a reception area, much better interaction between the public and the building would be achieved by moving the exhibition space from the second floor to this level and having both it and the basement open to the public.	e) The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness. One of the key areas of visitor interest in the Tholsel Building is the Council Chamber and Mayors Parlour. One of the principle ideas of the project is to improve visitor access to these areas of the building. The proposed exhibition area to be located outside the Council Chamber will be capable of hosting civic receptions and other events and this is best located in the area immediately adjoining the Council Chamber.
f) Rear extension: Welcomes the proposal to improve the visual impact of the eastern facade, however questions the addition of a modern white façade with frameless glazing and copper roofing is questionable, noting that many modern pale façades e.g. the east and north facades of the Court House, quickly stain with algae and age badly. An Taisce favours reinstatement of a rubble stone façade, the original roof profile covered with slates, and the window proportions and design shown in the photograph of the 'East facing elevation of rear of Tholsel, 1947' from the Crawford Collection. Such a façade would be entirely in keeping with the aesthetics of the building and would age well. We accept the practicalities of placing the stairs and lift at the rear and we hope a new home can be found for the ceremonial staircase in a public building.	f) During the renovation works in the 1950's, a large part of the original stone fabric of the rear elevation of the building was demolished. This was confirmed during investigative works undertaken to inform the current project. The proposed intervention will include the reintroduction of a pitched roof in the elevation and the reinstatement of the windows into the Mayors Parlour, It is not possible to return the building to its 1947 form, but the proposed revisions to the elevation are considered to be significantly more sympathetic to the original form of the building than the current elevation. As per the requirements of the DCHG, the fittings for new

	openings will "....*employ modern materials, clearly reading as new interventions*" The suggested use of stonework on this facade is not considered suitable as such a material would not read as a new intervention.

g) Cost: Suggests that the overall cost could be very high and believe that it is unnecessary to spend heavily where little extra accommodation will be provided. h) In conclusion An Taisce commends the expertise that has gone into drawing up this proposal. However they recommend less emphasis on tourism and a more traditional approach to the reconstruction.	g) This is a Financial issue rather than a planning issue. h) Noted
8. <u>Patrick Comerford</u> **Objects to** a) Removal of railings to the porch area at ground floor level and provision of a new 51sq.m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure, to house a Visitor Reception area. b) Removal of existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of the second storey of this curved annex to allow for the reinstatement of windows to Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building.	The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. a) The proposed visitor reception has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness. The railings to the front of the building were introduced in 1951 – it is recorded in the minute books of Kilkenny Corporation that they were erected to deal "...*with the abuses of the day*" The proposed development is aimed at providing better access for members of the public to the building b) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade (Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.

9. <u>Pauline Cass</u>	
a) Objects to any glass walls at front of Tholsel. It should be kept open as a public space.	a) The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness. It should be noted that this space is currently inaccessible outside office hours. The proposed development will facilitate greater public access to this space and will facilitate access to St Marys Lane.
b) Objects to the removal of the ceremonial stairs.	b) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade (Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.
c) Objects to the Tholsel ever being used as a tourist office.	c) The proposed use is not as a tourist office. The proposed development will incorporate a tourist visitor attraction in addition to the primary local government function of the building. This is considered an acceptable re use of the building maintaining its civic importance while making greater access available to the public

10. Pat Cass	
a) Objects to any glass walls at front of Tholsel. It should be kept open as a public space.	a) The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness. It should be noted that this space is currently inaccessible outside office hours. The proposed development will facilitate greater public access to this space and will facilitate access to St Marys Lane.
b) Objects to the removal of the ceremonial stairs.	b) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade (Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.
c) Objects to the Tholsel ever being used as a tourist office.	c) The proposed use is not as a tourist office. T he proposed development will incorporate a tourist visitor attraction in addition to the primary local government function of the building. This is considered an acceptable re use of the building maintaining its civic importance while making greater access available to the public
11. Gladys Bowles	
Objects to the project. a) Does not want to see a Glass Box in or around the Tholsel.	a) The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception, which has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance

	with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness.
b) Does not want to see the Ceremonial Stairs ripped out.	b) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade (Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.
12. <u>Paul Brophy</u> a) Opposed to the glass box or any extension into the portico of this protected structure.	a) The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception, which has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness.
b) Does not agree with the Tholsel being used as a shop, ticket office, and reception area for any business or attraction other than its public function as Town Hall.	b) The primary function of the Tholsel Building will continue to be as a Town Hall / seat of local government in the city. The proposed development will provide for greater public access to this historic building The building has a very rich history that is of interest to both the citizens of the city and visitors alike and the proposed tourism / exhibition use of part of the building provides the opportunity to tell the story of both the building and the story of Kilkenny through the Mayors of Kilkenny who were associated with the Tholsel.
c) Does not consider the removal of the Mayoral stairs to be a good idea.	c) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade (Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.

13. <u>Aine Murphy</u>	
a) Thinks that the building should be repaired.	a) While the project does contain modern interventions a substantial portion of the project will be repair and restoration.
b) Opposed to the glazing or any extension into the portico.	b) The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness.
c) Disagrees with the removal of the Mayoral stairs.	c) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade (Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.
d) Opposed to the building being used as a shop, ticket office, reception area for any business or attraction other than its public function as Town Hall.	d) The primary function of the Tholsel Building will continue to be as a Town Hall / seat of local government in the city. The proposed development will provide for greater public access to this historic building The building has a very rich history that is of interest to both the citizens of the city and visitors alike and the proposed tourism / exhibition use of part of the building provides the opportunity to tell the story of both the building and the story of Kilkenny through the Mayors of Kilkenny who were associated with the Tholsel.
e) Suggests that in France every city had a "family room" with seats, tea/coffee/bottle making facilities, baby changing areas, toys etc so that parents could come in, away from the business of the city and shopping and take time out. Suggests that KCC needs to "... *think outside the money making, city destroying box...*"	e) This is not an issue that can be addressed as part of this Part 8 directly.
14. <u>Susan Collins</u> Opposes the proposed works at the Tholsel stating that it is a historic building, should be preserved as is and should not have parts	To preserve the Tholsel as is would not be in accordance with the general ethos of making historic public buildings (in this case with

removed from it.	an existing functional use) as open and accessible to the public as possible. The proposed development will retain the important civic function of the building as part of the administration of Local Government and in doing so making it compliant with modern day accessibility and fire requirements. The proposal also seeks to make historical features accessible to the public such as the dungeons, the Mayor's Parlour and the roof top. This considered in line with best conservation practice.
15. <u>Malcolm Noonan</u>	
a) Welcome the long awaited proposed development of the town hall, particularly from an access point of view.	a) Noted.
b) Suggests that the glass intervention on the arcade be removed from the design noting that in his view, it is out of keeping with the character of the building.	b) The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception, which has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness
c) Agrees with the removal of the 'gates' and suggests that a new reception area be located at the base of the ceremonial staircase.	c) Noted. It is intended that a new reception area will be provided in this location to serve as the reception area for the civic function of the building. This will provide an enhanced civic entrance to the building, with the reception to be staffed.
d) Suggests that the staircase be retained and extended into the basement as recommended in the previous Neary report. Suggests that by leaving the ceremonial staircase in place will result in the loss of one of the proposed window openings into the Mayors parlour.	d) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade (Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.
e) Suggests that the arcade area is an important civic space. Designing in temporary exhibition lighting and temporary board units will improve its availability for public use.	e) Noted.
f) Welcomes the introduction of a fully functioning lift into the building.	f) Noted.
g) Suggests that a space be dedicated to the late John Bradley; a study centre perhaps on the evolution of Irish towns, given his immense contribution to our understanding of the heritage of Kilkenny.	g) The proposed Interpretive or Exhibition element in the building will tell the story of the historic development of Kilkenny City through the Mayors of the City. The work of the late John Bradley is widely acknowledged, but the proposed nature of the exhibition is not part of this planning assessment.

16. <u>Des Doyle</u> Objects to the proposed development for the following reasons : a) Suggests that just because the Tholsel is comprised of 20th Century and earlier building structures does not make a case for the removal of the 20th Century elements and that a particularly subjective and ad hoc approach is being applied when deciding what elements of buildings to protect or remove, referring to other recent projects in the city.	a) From examination of the documents on file it is clear that a well researched approach has been taken to the development of the proposed development. This is demonstrated by the background research carried out as illustrated by the archaeological investigations and report and the conservation architects report. The rationale behind the decision is clearly outlined. The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade (Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.
b) There is no clear budget or costing supplied for the works in the proposal.	b) The issue of the overall costs is not part of the Planning assessment for this Part 8
c) Suggests that the 'improvements' to the rear elevation of the building should be informed by historical photographs, allowing the building to be redeveloped sensitively. Suggests that the opposite is being proposed describing the proposed rear or eastern elevation as "*...A large, obtrusive and brutalist extension....., extremely wearing on the eye, visually obtrusive from nearly all viewpoints ...*" Suggests that this will not date well and that "*..No other country would allow such insensitive interference with their built heritage.*"	c) The 1947 picture of this elevation from the Crawford Collection has been used as the inspiration for the rear elevation. Unfortunately, during the renovation works to the building in the 1950's, a large part of this rear elevation was demolished and rebuilt, meaning that a lot of the original stone fabric of the building was demolished. This was confirmed during investigative works undertaken to inform the current project. The proposed intervention to the rear elevation will include the reintroduction of a pitched roof in the elevation and the reinstatement of the windows into the Mayors Parlour, which were removed during the works in the 1950's. It is not possible to return the building to its 1947 form, but the proposed revisions to the elevation are considered to be significantly more sympathetic to the original form of the building than the current elevation. The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs.
d) Considers that the proposed glass front to the building is completely unacceptable – not only does it compete with the visual structure of the building it also serves no purpose.	d) The proposed visitor reception, which has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness
e) The rationale for the building is never truly explained or costed anywhere in the building documents provided.	e) In relation to the costing of the project, refer to point b) above. The rationale for the project is sect out in the reports which form part of the Part 8 application. In summary they are restated here :

	Building is in need to refurbishment works. Building does not comply with the requirements of the Disabilities Act or Part M of the Building Regulations. Building does not comply with the Building Regulations in relation to Fire Safety. Some of the historical interventions to the building were not sympathetic to the building. Basement structure is very significant, yet it is not used – opportunity to open up. The reduced requirements for office space in the building presents an opportunity to enhance the civic function of the building, while facilitating greater public access to the building through tourism.
f) Suggests that a location for a 'boiler' could have been found in the Tholsel Building rather than "*..destroying further the grounds of St Marys..*"	f) The 'boiler' referred to in the submission is in fact an air source heat pump (ASHP), which will provide a renewable heat source for the building, resulting in a reduced carbon footprint for the heating of the building and significant economic savings on energy bills in the long term. This unit must be located outside in the open air. The alternative would be to use a non renewable heat source, with higher energy costs. (this would include options such as the existing electrical storage heaters) The proposed ASHP will be located in the area immediately adjoining the Alms House and will be sensitively screened from view.
g) Suggests leaving the Tholsel as it is	g) To preserve the Tholsel as is would not be in accordance with the general ethos of making historic public buildings (in this case with an existing functional use) as open and accessible to the public as possible. The proposed development will retain the important civic function of the building as part of the administration of Local Government and in doing so making it compliant with modern day accessibility and fire requirements. The proposal also seeks to make historical features accessible to the public such as the dungeons, the Mayor's Parlour and the roof top. This considered in line with best conservation practice.

17. Enya Kennedy	
a) Objects to the glass box at the front of the Tholsel. This box being used as a shop/office is not appropriate for a Civic space; this will also result in buskers being moved as no one will want to work there with buskers out front. It would be too noisy.	a) The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception, which, has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness The proposed development does not propose any work in the area of the arcade outside the railings. Buskers currently use this area, and whilst they can be heard very clearly in the current Tholsel offices, the practice continues.
b) Objects to the removal of the barriers. They are a part of the social fabric of the civic space of the building and used regularly by festivals, Artists, different charities fundraising, memorials, awareness campaigns etc.	b) The railings to the front of the building were introduced in 1951 – it is recorded in the minute books of Kilkenny Corporation that they were erected to deal "*...with the abuses of the day*" The proposed development is aimed at providing better access for members of the public to the building. The presence of the railings conveys a message of "Keep Out". The proposed removal of the railings will make the building more accessible and will open up access to the adjoining St Marys lane.
c) Objects to any part of the building being used by the Medieval Mile Museum or the civic Trust. The drawings clearly show the medieval Mile logo on the glass of the box. It is inappropriate.	c) Noted. Given the significant civic and Local Government use being retained in the building and the tourism element of the proposed development it is considered that the day to day operator is not a Planning issue for this Part 8 report.
d) Could not find an AA screening report and submits that this should be completed.	d) An AA Screening was prepared for the proposed development and was included in the documents on public display during the public consultation period.
e) Notes that the documents state that this has been prepared for Kildare County Council, this is unacceptable. A copy and paste is not good enough for our civic building.	e) On page 4 of the Architectural Report, the architect introduces the members of the design team. A number of the design team members working on the Tholsel Project also worked with the Architect on a project in Athy Library. In copying over the details of the design team members from the report for the Athy Library, the references to Athy Library and Kildare County Council were, in error, not removed. This error does not materially affect the content of the Planning Reports and is not a reflection on the professional and very comprehensive nature of the reports included in this public consultation.
f) Objects to the removal of the ceremonial stairs	f) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade(Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway.

g)Supports access for all to the building and that the proposed lift at the back is a good idea.	The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building. g) Noted
h) Suggests that finish of the back of the building is terrible and that there are enough ugly boxes stuck on the sides and backs of buildings in the city.	h) During the renovation works to the building in the 1950's, a large part of this rear elevation was demolished and rebuilt, meaning that a lot of the original stone fabric of the building was demolished. This was confirmed during investigative works undertaken to inform the current project. The proposed intervention to the rear elevation will include the reintroduction of a pitched roof in the elevation and the reinstatement of the windows into the Mayors Parlour, which were removed during the works in the 1950's. It is not possible to return the building to its 1947 form, but the proposed revisions to the elevation are considered to be significantly more sympathetic to the original form of the building than the current elevation.

18. <u>Simon Bourke</u>	
a)Objects to the removal of railings to the portico of the Tholsel and the provision of a new 51sq.m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure, to house a Visitor Reception area, as the proposed addition significantly changes, defaces and interferes with the historic front of this iconic and unique protected building and the medieval mile on which it stands.	a) The railings to the front of the building were introduced in 1951 deal "...*with the abuses of the day*" The proposed development is aimed at providing better access for members of the public to the building. The presence of the railings conveys a message of "Keep Out". The proposed removal of the railings will make the building more accessible and will open up access to the adjoining St Marys lane. The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception, which has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness
b) Object to modifications to the rear (eastern elevation).	b)The existing rear or eastern elevation is very unattractive and is not sympathetic to the historic Tholsel building. The 1947 picture of this elevation from the Crawford Collection (presented in the public consultation documents) has been used as the inspiration for the rear elevation. Unfortunately, during the renovation works to the building in the 1950's, a large part of this rear elevation was demolished and rebuilt, meaning that a lot of the original stone fabric of the building was demolished. This was confirmed during investigative works undertaken to inform the current project. The proposed intervention to the rear elevation will include the reintroduction of a pitched roof in the elevation and the reinstatement of the windows into the Mayors Parlour, which were removed during the works in the 1950's. It is not possible to return the building to its 1947 form, but the proposed revisions to the elevation are considered to be significantly more sympathetic to the original form of the building than the current elevation.
c) Objects to the removal of the existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of the second storey of this curved annex to allow for the reinstatement of windows to the Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building.	c) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade(Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.
d) Objects to the placement of plant in the grounds of St. Marys Church & Graveyard stating that "...*It's beyond extraordinary that*	d) The plant referred to in the submission is an air source heat pump (ASHP), which will provide a renewable heat source for the

such 'plant' will not be contained in the Tholsel."	building, resulting in a reduced carbon footprint for the heating of the building and significant economic savings on energy bills in the long term. This unit must be located outside in the open air. The alternative would be to use a non renewable heat source, with higher energy costs. (this would include options such as the existing electrical storage heaters) The proposed ASHP will be located in the area immediately adjoining the Alms House and will be sensitively screened from view.
e) Strongly opposes the Tholsel being set up for use as a shop, ticket office, reception area for any business or attraction or anything other than its public function as Town Hall stating that "*The Town Hall belongs to the people of Kilkenny*"	e) The primary function of the Tholsel Building will continue to be as a Town Hall / seat of local government in the city. The proposed development will provide for greater public access to this historic building. The building has a very rich history that is of interest to both the citizens of the city and visitors alike and the proposed tourism / exhibition use of part of the building provides the opportunity to tell the story of both the building and the story of Kilkenny through the Mayors of Kilkenny who were associated with the Tholsel.

19. <u>Margaret O'Brien</u>	
a) Objects to the removal of railings to the portico of the Tholsel and the provision of a new 51sq.m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure, to house a Visitor Reception area, as the proposed addition significantly changes, defaces and interferes with the historic front of this iconic and unique protected building and the medieval mile on which it stands.	a) The railings to the front of the building were introduced in 1951 deal "*...with the abuses of the day*" The proposed development is aimed at providing better access for members of the public to the building. The presence of the railings conveys a message of "Keep Out". The proposed removal of the railings will make the building more accessible and will open up access to the adjoining St Marys lane. The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception, which, has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness
b) Objects to modifications to the rear (eastern elevation), making the suggestion to "*...work with what's there*"	b) The existing rear or eastern elevation is very unattractive and is not sympathetic to the historic Tholsel building. The 1947 picture of this elevation from the Crawford Collection (presented in the public consultation documents) has been used as the inspiration for the rear elevation. Unfortunately, during the renovation works to the building in the 1950's, a large part of this rear elevation was demolished and rebuilt, meaning that a lot of the original stone fabric of the building was demolished. This was confirmed during investigative works undertaken to inform the current project. The proposed intervention to the rear elevation will include the reintroduction of a pitched roof in the elevation and the reinstatement of the windows into the Mayors Parlour, which were removed during the works in the 1950's. The proposed revisions to the elevation are considered to be more sympathetic to the original form of the building than the current elevation and roof profile.
c) Objects to the removal of the existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of the second storey of this curved annex to allow for the reinstatement of windows to the Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building.	c) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade(Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is

	proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.
d) Objects to the placement of plant in the grounds of St. Marys Church & Graveyard stating that "*...It's beyond extraordinary that such 'plant' will not be contained in the Tholsel.*"	d) The plant referred to in the submission is an air source heat pump (ASHP), which will provide a renewable heat source for the building, resulting in a reduced carbon footprint for the heating of the building and significant economic savings on energy bills in the long term. This unit must be located outside in the open air. The alternative would be to use a non renewable heat source, with higher energy costs. (this would include options such as the existing electrical storage heaters) The proposed ASHP will be located in the area immediately adjoining the Alms House and will be sensitively screened from view.
e) Strongly opposes the Tholsel being set up for use as a shop, ticket office, reception area for any business or attraction or anything other than its public function as Town Hall. Suggests that if there is space available in the Town Hall, "*....the people, should discuss, debate, propose and decide how such space could best be used.*"	e) The primary function of the Tholsel Building will continue to be as a Town Hall / seat of local government in the city. The proposed development will provide for greater public access to this historic building. The building has a very rich history that is of interest to both the citizens of the city and visitors alike and the proposed tourism / exhibition use of part of the building provides the opportunity to tell the story of both the building and the story of Kilkenny through the Mayors of Kilkenny who were associated with the Tholsel.
20. <u>Margaret O'Brien (petition – approx. 300 signatures)</u> **<u>Petition reads as follows</u>** *a) "We petition and submit to the Council and Councillors to reject proposals for the imposition of a glazed or other type of enclosure in the Tholsel's classical Arcade.*	a) The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. The proposed visitor reception, which has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness
b) We petition and submit to the Council and Councillors to reject the removal of the beautiful ceremonial staircase from the body of the building.	b) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade(Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is

c) ***Why is this important?*** *The Tholsel or Town Hall in Kilkenny city is a public building and a protected structure, classified as 'a substantial edifice of national significance, forming an imposing centre piece in High Street'.* *We love it. We love its public Arcade that welcomes musicians, artists, craftspeople, jugglers, carol singers and the Crib at Christmas, art exhibitions in the summer and meetings, remembrances, public gatherings and community fundraising events all year round.* *This is Kilkenny's public space, our Agora. We don't want it enclosed, reduced in size, or glassed in for use as a ticket office, or anything else.* *We're also proud of the ceremonial staircase within the building. We don't want to lose this either.* *It's part of who we are, part of the Tholsel that we love. Leave it alone."*	proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building. c) The Tholsel is a protected structure in the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan 2014– 2020, and is cited as being of architectural, artistic, historical and social interest and of National Importance in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The building is in need to refurbishment works. It does not comply with the requirements of the Disabilities Act or Part M of the Building Regulations. Some of the historical interventions to the building were not sympathetic to the building. The basement structure is very significant, and is not of any beneficial use in its current form. The proposed development is a considered proposal to adapt the protected structure for reuse, while providing for new and enhanced civic amenity." The proposal does not diminish the historical and cultural value of the structure as suggested.

21. <u>Paddy O'Ceallaigh</u>	
a) Objects to the project in its entirety	a)Noted.
b) Objects to the removal of the railings currently in situ.	b) The railings to the front of the building were introduced in 1951 deal "*...with the abuses of the day*" The proposed development is aimed at providing better access for members of the public to the building. The presence of the railings conveys a message of "Keep Out". The proposed removal of the railings will make the building more accessible and will open up access to the adjoining St Marys lane.
c) Objects to the partial encasement of the outside public space with glass walls. Suggests that the current Public use of this space (behind the railings) could become more encompassing with other less invasive structural interventions.	The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs. c) The proposed visitor reception, which has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness While suggesting a more encompassing use there is no evidence or alternative suggested.
d) Suggests that the nature of a public space like this lends itself to an air of spontaneity and a place where a passing chat or appreciation for Buskers or groups collecting for charity can gather comfortably without feeling hemmed up against an internal office glass wall. Any glass encasement of this space will destroy the acoustic of this public space and render it useless for spontaneous gathering of groups, musicians etc.	d) The proposed development does not include any work in the area of the outer arcade where the public thoroughfare of High Street passes and which is used by buskers, collecting for charity groups etc. These activities will not be prevented by the proposed development. Such activities will not be "hemmed up" against a glass wall as suggested – the outer arcade will continue to be an outdoor sheltered space.
e) Refers to other buildings such as the Tholsel in Carrick on Suir and the Loggia del Lanzi in Florence, suggesting that the 'look' of these buildings has not "....been undermined by modern invasive, unnecessary works."	e) Having reviewed the proposed works it is considered that the proposals to adapt the Tholsel for reuse, particularly when the objective is to provide a new and enhanced civic amenity are acceptable and are an acceptable design response based on an evidential approach following extensive investigation."
f) Suggests that the current project is one of a number of plans "*...hatched with Failte Ireland*" and submits an argument that these plans should have been subject to one planning application – submits that this is an attempt at project splitting. Projects referred to include the "*Mediaeval Mile museum works, the public realm works on high street, the Parade works, the Tholsel plans and the Medieval Garden walk beside old brewery.*"	f) The projects listed in the submission are clearly supported by the Kilkenny City Development Plan and are listed as separate discreet projects . (ref Section 4.4.4 of the City Plan)
g) Suggests that the costings are of concern.	g) The issue of the overall costs is not part of the Planning assessment for this Part 8
h) Suggests that the planned City scape views platform is a gimmick and pointless and that the plans for a Dungeon experience is further gimmickry and adds no value to the enjoyment of our City or an understanding to its complex history.	h) Independent research undertaken in relation to the proposed development has demonstrated a very high interest in the project proposal as a visitor attraction. The proposed development and in particular the visitor exhibition element allows the opportunity to further explain the historical development of Kilkenny City.

23. <u>Christopher O'Keefe</u>	
a) Submits that the Appropriate Assessment Screening is flawed in particular in relation to the issue of potential indirect impacts affecting Natura 2000sites "*....as there is a potential pathway relating to the treatment of wastewater from the operational phase of the development which are reasonably foreseeable. Suggests that there is no assessment of which sewerage system and what waste water treatment plant (WWTP)will be used and it is not possible to conclude that the proposed development will not add significantly to the loading or to whether the plant is operating above capacity.* *Therefore the potential for indirect impacts affecting water quality in the River Nore has not been assessed."*	a) A screening report was prepared and placed on public display with the documents. Following the public consultation a further appropriate assessment determination has been made and is attached at the end of this planning report. That determination identifies that there will be no significant impact on Natura 2000 sites.
b) Submits that the "*...railings are one of the last examples of this type of workmanship. Other examples of the type have been previous removed by Kilkenny Council as part of other projects and plans."*	b) The railings to the front of the building were introduced in 1951 deal "*...with the abuses of the day*" The proposed development is aimed at providing better access for members of the public to the building. The presence of the railings conveys a message of "Keep Out". The proposed removal of the railings will make the building more accessible and will open up access to the adjoining St Marys lane. As noted in the Conservation Architects Report, "the railings are not original to the building but are late 20th century interventions. Their removal does not represent a loss of fabric "
c) Submits that ".. This protected structure should retain the existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level	c) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade(Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.
d) Objects to the Information Display Units as they will block pedestrians and take away from the medieval character of the buildings.	d) The information Display units are located inside the proposed visitor reception area and will not block pedestrians as suggested. The design of such units will be considered in the detailed design stage.
e) Objects to the Moveable Sign / Sculptural Interpretation as they will block pedestrians and take away from the medieval character of the building.	e) A moveable sign is indicated in the DRAFT Exhibition proposal. The proposed sign can be omitted.
f) Objects to the use of the building as a shop or sales area as this will take away from the character of the building.	f) The primary function of the Tholsel Building will continue to be as a Town Hall / seat of local government in the city. The proposed development will provide for greater public access to this historic building. The building has a very rich history that is of interest to both the citizens of the city and visitors alike and the proposed tourism / exhibition use of part of the building provides the opportunity to tell the story of both the building and the story of Kilkenny through the Mayors of Kilkenny who were associated with the Tholsel.
g) Notes that the "narrative framework full document" is not available. Submits that all documents which are part of public consultations should be available in all public libraries during the consultation period.	g) Details of the DRAFT Exhibition proposal have been included in the documents on public display for information purposes only. The details and content of the proposed exhibition are not relevant to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in

	which the proposed development is to be carried out. There is reference in the Exhibition proposal to the Narrative Framework – this document expands on the text of the Exhibition proposal and is not necessary for the Planning Public consultation.
h) Submits that the purpose of this development would seem to be a give away to the Civic Trust, then they as the developer should pay for the costs associated with this proposed development of this important element of our city.	h) The primary function of the Tholsel Building will continue to be as a Town Hall / seat of local government in the city. The building will be retained in the ownership of Kilkenny Co. Co.. However, it is intended that the Civic Trust will be responsible for the operation of the tourism element of the proposed development as they have expertise in the running and operation of other tourist facilities in heritage buildings in the city. It is intended to make application to Failte Ireland for part funding of the project through its Large Capital Grants Scheme.

24. <u>Kevin Flaherty</u> **a) Objects to** the proposed works to be carried out on the Tholsel.	a) Noted. The proposed glass and wood reception is required to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists. The civic reception to the building is to be located at the base of the current ceremonial stairs.
b) Objects "*....to a big glass box separating the public space from the public and its proposed use as a shop/ticket office.*"	b) The proposed visitor reception, which has been designed as a lightweight, modern, reversible intervention to the building. The reception will be subservient to the existing building and will act as a foil to the 18th century original building. This is in accordance with recognised Best Practice. The structure will be designed to a very high quality to ensure optimum transparency and brightness The suggestion that a lift could be located in the lane is not feasible. This would block the public thoroughfare along St Marys Lane and would have a very significant negative visual impact on the Tholsel and adjoining buildings.
c) Objects to the "*....proposed removal of the staircase to facilitate a window as a lift can be fitted to bring it up to accessibility standards can be fitted in the lane behind without any recourse to the removal of the beautiful staircase*"	c) The staircase was constructed in the 1950'sand is constructed of concrete with a Terrazzo finish. The removal of the staircase and lowering of this section allows for the reinstatement of the Mayor's Parlour windows and the Eastern façade(Mary's Lane). This is considered a worthy objective. It was also a requirement of the brief to separate out the formal civic /ceremonial from the tourist aspects of the proposal. This required two separate entrances at ground floor level. It is proposed that the civic /ceremonial reception area will be located in the area of the existing curved stairway. The existing curved stairway cannot meet current accessibility and fire standards for the building. The removal of the staircase also allows for the compliance with accessibility and fire requirements which are required for universal access to the building. A single staircase in the building optimises the functionality of the building.
25. Department of Culture, Heritage & Gaeltacht **Archaeology** a) Dept. "*....concurs with the detailed archaeological mitigation strategy as outlined in Kilkenny Archaeology's report, comprising full archaeological excavations within the basement and the footprint of the proposed lift shaft, archaeological monitoring and possible excavation of the service trench across St Marys Lane and the survey/recording of newly exposed masonry where breaches are to be made and opes to be re-opened.*"	a) It is noted that a pre planning meeting took place on site with the archaeological representatives from the DCHG
b) Department recommends that the Archaeological Mitigation Strategy is implemented in full by way of condition.	b) Noted – the archaeological mitigation strategy will be implemented.

26. Department of Culture, Heritage & Gaeltacht **Architecture** a) Department has "*.....no objection in principle to the proposed development and supports any considered proposals to adapt protected structures for reuse, particularly when the objective is to provide a new or enhanced civic amenity.*"	a) It is noted that a pre planning meeting took place on site with the architectural representatives from the DCHG and amendments were made to the draft design to take into consideration the views and comments of the DCHG. It is further noted that all works will be undertaken by way of a Ministerial license from the National Monuments Service / DCHG in accordance with the provisions of the National Monuments Act, with details of the proposed works to be to the agreement of the DCHG.
Glazed Reception Area b) Detailed assessment should be made of the visual impact of the proposed glulam framework may have on the protected structure including when the space is lit from within during the day and in the evening.	b) The DCHG supports any considered proposals to adapt protected structures for reuse particularly when the objective is to provide a new or enhanced civic amenity. The DCHG accepts that the glulam framework may contribute to the architectural fabric but is seeking a detailed assessment which may inform revisions. This can be carried out before detail design is carried out. A Visual Impact Assessment of the proposed glulam structure is recommended to be undertaken and the details of any required revisions to glulam structure to be agreed with the DCHG.
c) The entrance into the glazed exhibition reception should be via double doors on the High Street front in order to preserve the sense of symmetry of the façade. Suggests that an artistic treatment of the double doors, for example acid etched branding, may further enhance the sense of symmetry and central axis.	c) Noted. It is noted that the submission of An Taisce recommended the relocation of the entrance to the southern side of the reception structure. The location of the proposed entrance to be agreed with the DCHG following visual impact assessment referred to in b).
d) The proposed method for ventilating the glazed exhibition reception should be submitted and assess for visual impact on the protected structure.	d) The details of the ventilation will be submitted and agreed with the DCHG.
e) Detailed drawings for the proposed doors from the glazed exhibition reception and into the council reception should be submitted for agreement in writing prior to any work commencing on site.	e) Noted and agreed.
Interior f) Suggests that the orientation of the proposed new staircase should use an anti clockwise rise, allowing for a ceremonial route so the visitor ascends the staircase on the central axis.	f) This suggestion has been reviewed and unfortunately it will not be possible to change the orientation of the stairs due to the requirements for complying with the Building Regulations in respect of Fire and Accessibility.
g)Detailed drawings and specifications for the stairs to be submitted for agreement prior to any work commencing on site.	g) Noted and agreed.
h) Suggests that the half landings and landings of the staircase could be used to display artwork, exhibitions and/or historical items.	h) Noted and agreed.
i) Suggests that a glazed wall be used rather than a partition wall between the Mayors Parlour and the adjoining exhibition space.	i) The design of this wall will be revised to provide a more modern wall than the currently proposed partition wall. There may be issues with the suggested glazed wall due to the double height nature of the space. It should be noted that the Mayor's Office is a working office and some degree of privacy will be required. Details of the wall will be agreed with the DCHG.
k) Detailed drawings of the internal fit out of the mayor's parlour to be submitted.	k)Noted and agreed.
l)Detailed drawings in respect of the modified east facing opening in the proposed exhibition space / gallery to be submitted.	l) Noted and agreed. As noted elsewhere in this submission, the fittings in this existing opening will be period appropriate.

m) Notes the proposed removal of the mid twentieth century terrazzo staircase. Suggests that the terrazzo should be retained at ground floor level and an impression of the curved plan indicated by a floor finish of brass-framed wedges of similarly coloured terrazzo following the treads of the staircase.	m) Noted and agreed. The existing terrazzo will be retained at ground floor level where possible. It is noted that the floor in this area is currently covered with carpeting.
n) Detailed drawings to be submitted demonstrating how evidence of the staircase will be incorporated into the proposed shelving.	n) Noted and agreed.
o) Notes that a new opening is to be formed at the junction of the staircase return and the Mayors Parlour, suggesting that there is an inconsistency between the drawings where a section of masonry is absent between the opening and the junction and the visualization in the Architectural Design Statement.	o) There is an existing opening at this location, where a new window is to be inserted. The drawings indicate a proposed short length of masonry to be inserted beside the existing ope, thus creating the section of masonry shown in the Architectural Design Statement. The drawings and the design statement are consistent in this regard.
p) Detailed drawings to be submitted for the proposed lift / lift shaft. Notes that a vent is referred to in the M & E Report but there is no vent shown on the drawings.	p) A vent will be required at the top of the lift shaft and this will be incorporated into the pitch of the roof structure. The vent will not protrude above the roof structure and will be flush with the pitch of the roof. Details will be submitted for agreement.
Building Fabric.	
q) Notes that a method statement should cover the repointing of the stone work. Notes that the repointing should be carried out with a suitable lime mortar based on analysis of surviving mortar.	q) It is noted that the existing pointing of the stone masonry is in good condition, albeit that the pointing is cementitious in nature. In accordance with best Conservation practice, the cementitious pointing will be removed and replaced with a suitable lime based pointing – this will increase the project costs.
r) Detailed drawings and specifications should be submitted for the new and reformed openings on the east facing elevation, noting that fittings for reformed openings should be period appropriate while the fittings for new openings should employ high quality modern materials.	r) Noted and agreed.
s) Samples of the proposed slate should be submitted.	s) Noted and agreed.
t) Detailed drawings and specifications should be submitted for the proposed railings encircling the cupola.	t) Noted and agreed.
u) Detailed M & E report should be submitted addressing the removal and upgrading of electrical and sanitary fittings. The report should be accompanied by assessments, method statements and specifications as necessary, mitigating any impacts on the fabric of the protected structure.	u) Noted and agreed.
27. Conservation Officer KCC **No objection to the proposed works, with the following recommendations:**	
a) Notes that historical images and sketches indicate that the Tholsel was rendered. Suggests that the conservation architect and architect investigate this further.	a) The proposed development does not propose to render the stone finish to the structure, but the conservation architect will research this further.
b) The replacement of the cementitious pointing with a natural hydraulic lime or hot lime mix is advised.	b) It is noted that the existing pointing of the stone masonry is in good condition, albeit that the pointing is cementitious in nature. In accordance with best Conservation practice, the cementitious pointing will be removed and replaced with a suitable lime based

	pointing – this will increase the project costs. (see 25q above)
c) Further details are required to be submitted in order to allow a full assessment of the potential visual impact of all mechanical vents and extractors proposed. All services runs shall avoid direct impact on the historic fabric and shall utilize the current service runs, disused shafts and new limecrete floors where possible. There shall be no chasing of historic fabric.	c) As per the requirements of the DCHG, "*...a detailed M & E report.." shall "...be submitted addressing the removal and upgrading of electrical and sanitary fittings. The report should be accompanied by assessments, method statements and specifications as necessary, mitigating any impacts on the fabric of the protected structure*"
d) A detailed architectural survey of the staircase shall be undertaken prior to its removal, and where possible presented elsewhere as an important civic feature of local politics in Kilkenny.	d) A detailed architectural survey of the staircase will be undertaken. However, due to the manner in which the concrete staircase was constructed it will not be possible to remove the staircase without breaking it and thus it will not be possible to relocate the staircase. The existing terrazzo will be retained at ground floor level where possible. It is noted that the floor in this area is currently covered with carpeting.(see 25m above)
e) To ensure the proposed first floor to top floor frameless glazing in the return does not result in further loss of 19th century fabric, further opening up is required here. Consideration shall also be given to presenting the stonework in this return.	e) During the renovation works to the building in the 1950's, a large part of this elevation was demolished and rebuilt, with the result that a significant portion of the original stone fabric of the building was demolished, including the openings for the original sash windows. This was confirmed during investigative works undertaken to inform the current project. Accordingly, it is not considered practicable or desirable in design terms to present the stonework in this return as suggested.
f) Where flagstones in the building are to be lifted, a methodology for recording, numbering, lifting and re-setting is to be compiled by the conservation architect for the project. The removal of the wrought iron railings will also require a method statement.	f) Noted and agreed.
g) Due to the national importance of the Tholsel Building, and its acknowledgement as a landmark building in Kilkenny City, the presence of a Clerk of Works for the project is required.	g) The project will be supervised on site by appropriately experienced and qualified staff.
h) The replacement of the inappropriate fibre cement slate with Blue Bangor slate is recommended.	h) Noted – details of proposed slate will be submitted for agreement.
i) It is recommended that conservation roof lights replace the current roof lights.	i) Noted and agreed.
j) The rich array of artefacts uncovered during test excavations clearly highlight the value of ensuring archaeological spoil is metal detected.	j) Noted – the archaeological test excavations undertaken to date on the project have been undertaken in accordance with recognised best practice.

Assessment

The Tholsel is located along High Street and is a significant public building in the City. It has performed civic functions associated with the former Corporation and Borough Council over the centuries.

With the dissolution of Kilkenny Borough Council in June 2014 there has been a reduced requirement for office space in the Tholsel, presenting an opportunity to consider options for the future use of the Tholsel building.

The Tholsel is a protected structure in the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan 2014– 2020, and is cited as being of architectural, artistic, historical and social interest and of National Importance in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The building is located within the City Centre Architectural Conservation Area and the Zone of Notification of Recorded Monuments for Kilkenny City.

The reasons for the proposed development are set out in the documentation as

- Building is in need to refurbishment works.
- Building does not comply with the requirements of the Disabilities Act or Part M of the Building Regulations.
- Building does not comply with the Building Regulations in relation to Fire Safety.
- Some of the historical interventions to the building were not sympathetic to the building.
- Basement structure is very significant, yet it is not used – opportunity to open up and provide access to the basement.
- The reduced requirements for office space in the building presents an opportunity to enhance the civic function of the building, while facilitating greater public access to the building through tourism.

In terms of the proposed usage of the building for offices and tourism facilities, as well as maintaining the council administration and town hall function, all these uses are acceptable within the general business zoning within this building.

The majority of the works proposed, relate to modifications, alterations or refurbishment works which have an implication on the fabric of the building and thus the protected status of this building is emphasised. The works were assessed by the Conservation Officer of Kilkenny County Council and the architectural and archaeological divisions of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, whom have submitted an assessment of this proposal.

The documents submitted with the application clearly indicate that the proposed development has been designed having regard to best conservation practice. This is evidenced by the level of detail provided , the pre planning consultations with the Council's conservation officer , the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and other stakeholders. There has also been input from various other bodies, through the public consultation period, along with submissions from the general public.

The general response from the statutory consultees is that the project is supported subject to design changes to address some concerns relating to the impact of elements of the project.

It is considered that these details can be accommodated at the detailed design stage of the project.

The overriding concerns from the general public were the removal of the railings from

the public space to the fore, the enclosure of part of the façade with glazing, which could have a negative impact on the use of the portico to the fore as a public space. Also the removal of the ceremonial stairwell was not felt to be necessary or justified in the proposal, as well as the proposed works to the rear of the building not being in any way coherent with the original building.
Concerns were also raised from the public regarding the use of the building as a ticket office and tourism facility, with most wanting the town hall use to stay as such.
Other bodies such as AnTaisce and the Georgian Society of Ireland contributed to this process with similar concerns as the general public but with also objections to certain works which would detract from the historic fabric of the building.

The railings to the front of the building were introduced in 1951 – it is recorded in the minute books of Kilkenny Corporation that they were erected to deal "*...with the abuses of the day*" The proposed development is aimed at providing better access for members of the public to the building. The presence of the railings conveys a message of "Keep Out". The proposed removal of the railings will make the building more accessible and will open up access to the adjoining St Marys lane. There is no plan to alter the existing area in front of the railings etc, and the public can continue to use the shelter provided by the Tholsel.

The proposed glass and wood reception area is designed to provide a visitor entrance to the Exhibition / Tourism element of the proposed development. That requirement is reasonable given the dual function of the building as proposed i.e. a major civic building and a tourist destination. The need for a separate and dedicated entrance for the civic function of the building was a primary consideration in the design, with a separate entrance / reception to be provided for visitors/tourists.

Recommendation
Having regard to the details submitted with the Part 8 application, the proposal to adapt and reuse the protected structure, the new and enhanced civic amenity, it is considered that in principle, the Planning Authority can recommend approval of Part 8 application subject to the commitments outlined in the response to the issues raised and outlined in the table in the body of this report.

Signed: _____ Date: 2/5/2019
Senior Executive Planner

Signed: _____ Date: 7/5/2019
Senior Planner

Habitats Directive Project Screening Assessment

Table 1: Project Details

Development Consent Type	*Part 8 project*
Development Location	*The Tholsel High Street Kilkenny*
Planning File Ref	P.8:02/19
Description of the project	Alterations and Renovations to the Tholsel, High st, Kilkenny

Table 2: Identification of Natura 2000 sites (SACs and SPAs) which may be impacted by the proposed development

Please answer the following five questions in order to determine whether there are any Natura 2000 sites which could potentially be impacted by the proposed development. If the answer to all of these questions is no, significant impacts can be ruled out for habitats and bird species. No further assessment is required. Please refer to tables 3 and 4 where the answer to any of these questions is yes.

		Y/N
1	**ONE- OFF HOUSE /SMALL EXTENSION/ ALTERATION TO EXISTING BUILDING**	Y
1a	Is the development a one- off house/small extension/alternation to existing building within an SAC/SPA or within 100m of an SAC/SPA and likely to discharge pollutants or nutrients of a significant nature and amount to surface water within catchments of and SAC/ SPA as part of its construction or operational phase (including the installation of waste water treatment systems, percolation areas, septic tanks within SAC/SPA or very close proximity)?. **If the answer to the above question is:** **- no, then no appropriate assessment required** **- yes, then an appropriate assessment is required** **- not sure, then an appropriate assessment is required in accordance with the precautionary principle**	N
2	**DEVELOPMENTS OTHER THAN THOSE DESCRIBED IN 1 ABOVE**	N/A
2a	**Impacts On Freshwater Habitats** *Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include freshwater habitats, or in the catchment of same and does the development propose to discharge water to or abstract water from the habitat?* **Sites to consider:** Lower River Suir, River Barrow, River Nore **Habitats to consider:** Alluvial Wet Woodland, (Lower River Suir), Dry Heath (some steep slopes along River Barrow and its tributaries) Rivers, Streams, Lakes and Lagoons, Old Oak Woodland, floating river vegetation **Species to consider:** River Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, Freshwater Pearls Mussel, Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Crayfish, Twaite Shad, Atlantic Salmon, Otter, Vertigo Moulinsiana,	N/A
2b	**Impacts On Wetland Habitats** *Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include wetland habitats, or likely to discharge water to or abstract water from the wetland?* **Sites to consider:** Hugginstown Fen, Galmoy Fen, The Loughans, Flood Plain wetlands **Habitats to consider:** Bogs, Alkaline Fens (Hugginstown and Galmoy), Turloughs (The Loughans)	N/A

		Y/N
2c	**Impacts on Intertidal and Marine Habitats** *Is the development located within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include intertidal and marine habitats and species, or within the catchment of same and likely to discharge water to or abstract water from the habitats.* **Sites to consider:** Lower River Suir **Habitats to consider:** *Atlantic Salt meadows, Mudflats sandflats saltmarsh, estuary* **Species to consider:** Sea Lamprey, River Lamprey, Brook Lamprey. Freshwater Pearl Mussel. Crayfish. Twaite Shad. Atlantic Salmon, Otter.	N/A
2d	**Impacts On Woodlands And Grasslands** *Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying habitats include terrestrial habitats, or in close proximity to same with a likely ecological impact?.* **Sites to consider:** Spa hill and Clomantagh Hill, Cullahil Mountain, River Barrow, River Nore, Lower River Suir **Habitats to consider:** *Alluvial Wet Woodlands* (River Nore below Inistioge and River Suir at Fiddown Island and Carrick on Suir), Eutropic tall herb vegetation (River Suir at Fiddown Island and Carrick on Suir), and grasslands (Spa hill and Clomantagh Hill, Cullahil Mountain) Oak Woodlands in old estates next to the Nore and Barrow **Species to consider:** Greenwinged, Frog and Bee Orchids (Cullahil and Clomantagh Hill), Nettle Leaved Bellflower and Autumn Crocus	N/A
2e	**Impacts On Birds** *Is the development within a Special Protection Area, or likely to discharge water to same or likely to have another significant impact on the habitats of Birds in same?.* ***Sites to consider:*** *River Nore* **Species to consider:** **River Nore:** Kingfisher (Alcedo Atthis) – Nesting in river banks	N/A

Table 3: Determination of possible impacts on Natura 2000 sites.
Where it has been identified in table 2 that there is a Natura 2000 site within the potential impact zone of the proposed development, it is necessary to try to determine the nature of the possible impacts. Please answer the following questions as appropriate.

1.	**Impacts on designated freshwater habitats (rivers, lakes streams and lagoons).** *Please answer the following if the answer to question 2e in table 2 was yes* *Does the development involve any of the following:*	
1.1	Impacts on watercourses (tributaries, streams, drains) which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge	N/A
1.2	Abstraction from surfacewater or groundwater within 1km of SAC/SPA.	N/A
1.3	Removal of topsoil within 100 m of watercourses with potential for surface water runoff.	N/A
1.4	Infilling or raising of ground levels within 100m of watercourses with potential for surface water runoff.	N/A
1.5	Construction of drainage ditches within 1km of SAC/SPA.	N/A
1.6	Construction within a floodplain or within an area liable to flood.	N/A

1.7	Crossing or culverting of rivers or streams within 1km of SAC/SPA.	N/A
1.8	Storage of chemicals hydrocarbons or organic wastes within 100 m of a watercourse.	N/A
1.9	Development of a large scale which involves the production of an EIS.	N/A
1.10	Development of quarries, particularly where abstraction is below water table	N/A
1.11	Development of windfarms within 1km of an SAC or with the risk of runoff to an SAC/SPA, particularly during construction.	N/A
1.12	Development of pumped hydro electric stations	N/A
2	**Impacts on designated wetland habitats (bog, heath, marsh, fen).** *Please answer the following if the answer to question 2b in table 2 was yes* *Does the development involve any of the following:*	
2.1	Impacts on watercourses (tributaries, streams, drains) which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge.	N/A
2.2	Construction of roads or other infrastructure on peat habitats within 1km of a Natura 2000 site of which qualifying interests include peat, fen or marsh. (Only Peat habitat at Bruckana – consider Galmoy fen – impact unlikely	N/A
2.3	Development of a large scale within 1km within a Natura 2000 site, whose qualifying features include fen or marsh, which involves the production of an EIS.	N/A
3	**Impacts on designated intertidal and marine habitats (mudflats, sandflats, estuaries, reefs and sea cliffs).** *Please answer the following if the answer to question 2c in table 2 was yes.* *Does the development involve any of the following.*	
3.1	Impacts on intertidal and marine habitats from potential development which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge	N/A
3.2	Development of piers, slipways, marinas, pontoons or any other infrastructure within 5km of a Natura 2000 site whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats.	N/A
3.3	Dredging within 5km of a Natura 2000 site whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats.	N/A
3.4	Impacts on watercourses (tributaries, streams, drains) which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge.	N/A
3.5	Removal of topsoil or infilling within 100m of Natura 2000 sites whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats where potential for surface water runoff exists.	N/A
3.6	Development of a large scale within 1km of Natura 2000 sites whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats, which involves the production of an EIS.	N/A
4	**Impacts on other designated woodlands and grasslands** (woodland, upland grassland, lowland grassland, coastal grassland including dunes). *Please answer the following if the answer to question 2d in table 2 was yes.* *Does the development involve any of the following:*	
4.1	Works within the boundary of a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include woodland or grassland habitat types.	N/A
4.2	Development within 200m of Natura 2000 site with woodland or grassland habitats.	N/A

4.3	Development of a large scale within 1km of Natura 2000 site with woodland, grassland or coastal habitats which involves the production of an EIS	N/A
5	**Impacts on birds in SPAs** *Please answer the following if the answer to question 2e in table 2 was yes.* *Does the development involve any of the following:*	
5.2	Erection of wind turbines within 1km of an SPA.	N/A
5.3	All construction works within 100m of SPA (River Nore), including the development of cycle ways or walking routes	N/A
5.4	Infilling of coastal habitats within 500m of intertidal SPA.	N/A
5.5	Works within 1km of coastal SPA which will result in discharges to rivers or streams that are directly connected to designated sites.	N/A
5.6	.	N/A

Conclusion: If the answer to question 1 and 2a-e are no or n/a, significant impacts on habitats within Natura 2000 sites and on SPAs can be ruled out. No further assessment is required in relation to habitats or birds. If the answer to any question in table 2 is yes, you may require further information, unless you are satisfied that the project proponents have incorporated adequate mitigation into their design to avoid impacts on the Natura 2000 site (eg water pollution protection measures). Such information should be provided in the form of a Natura Impact Statement which should address the particular issues of concern as identified through the above.

Table 4: Consideration of potential impacts on protected species

Many of our Special Areas of Conservation are designated for species as well as for habitats. These are listed below, alongside the sites for which they are designated. Included is a short list of the types of activities which could have an impact on these species. Please tick if you are concerned that the proposed development could have an impact on these species.

Species	Relevant Sites	Activites which could have impacts on species	Possible Impacts Identified? Y/N
Otter	River Nore River Barrow Lower River Suir Note: Otters are a strictly protected species. All breeding sites and resting places are protected regardless of whether or not they are within or external to Special Areas of Conservation.	Activities that interfere with river banks.	N/A
Atlantic Salmon	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed;	N/A
River Lamprey	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed;	N/A
Brook Lamprey	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed;	N/A
Sea Lamprey	River Barrow River Nore	Activities that interfere with water quality or the river bed – estuarine areas;	N/A

Species	Relevant Sites	Activites which could have impacts on species	Possible impacts identified? Y/N
	Lower River Suir		
Twaite Shad	Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality or the river bed – estuarine areas;	N/A
Crayfish	Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality or the river bed;	N/A
Freshwater Pearl Mussel	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed ;	N/A
Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel	River Nore	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed ;	N/A

Conclusion: If the answer to all of the above is no, significant impacts on species can be ruled out. If the answer to any of the above is yes, then further information is likely to be required in relation to potential for impact on that particular species. Where potential impacts are identified on Otters or on Bats outside designated sites, then further information should be sought in the form of a species specific survey. In these cases, appropriate assessment is not required.

Habitats Directive Screening Conclusion Statement

Development Type	*Part 8 Development*
Development Location	*The Tholsel High Street Kilkenny*
Natura 2000 sites within impact zone	*The River Nore SAC and SPA runs approximately 145 meters to the east of this building at its closest point*
Planning File Ref	**Part 8 : 02/19**

Description of the project

- Provision of 1 no. lift and fire escape stairs to serve all floors with existing structure (including the basement)
- Modifications, including the associated demolitions, to the rear (eastern elevation) of the building to facilitate the reinstatement of the pitched roof in the area of the proposed lift and stairs
- Removal of railings at ground floor level and provision of a new 51 sq m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure to house a Visitor Reception area.
- Removal of existing 77 sq m. mezzanine level at 3rd floor level over Mayor's Parlour and Corporate Affairs office to provide double height spaces within these rooms.
- Removal of 1 No. existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of second storey of curved extension to allow reinstatement of windows to Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building. This will also facilitate the provision of a reception area at ground floor level for the civic function of the building and
- Refurbishment of existing building, including repointing and cleaning of masonry as necessary, repairs to windows and replacement where necessary, replacement of existing roof lights, re-dressing of elad linings, replacement of railings at roof level, and repairs to roof
- Complete internal redecoration and internal openings to allow improved circulation within the building.
- Provision of a plant in the grounds of St. Mary's Church & Graveyard (Recorded Monument KK019-026115 & KK019-026156 and a protected structure in the Record of Protected Structure for Kilkenny City, ref RPS B193 (NIAH Ref 12000128/KK and 12000129/KK). This will include associated below ground pipe work connection to the Tholsel.
- Site works associated with formation of connections to existing public foul and surface water drainage and exting utilities as required

Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) could affect Natura 2000 site(s).

Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, to the fact that the proposed development does not directly impact on any Natura 2000 site and to the existing spare capacity of the Kilkenny City Waste Water Treatment Plan to which the proposed development is connected it is concluded that there are no impacts either directly, indirectly or cumulatively, thus having no significant impact on River Nore SAC.

If there are potential impacts, explain whether you consider if these are likely to be significant.

N/A

Conclusion of assessment

Having regard to the precautionary principle it is considered that.

☑ Significant impacts can be ruled out or AA not required (if project is directly connected or necessary to Management of Natura 2000 site (determined in consultation with NPWS)).

or

☐ Significant impacts are certain, likely or uncertain (cannot be ruled out), Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is required

Project must be subject to appropriate assessment.

Documentation reviewed for making of this statement.

Appropriate Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan, The plans and particulars lodged with the application The submissions made to the proposed development during the statutory public consultation.

Completed By	*Arlene O'Connor Senior Executive Planner* *Denis Malone Senior Planner*
Date	*7th May 2019*

SEP

To: **Tony Lauhoff, Senior Engineer**

From: **Denis Malone, Senior Planner**

Proposal: **Part VIII proposal - Alterations and Renovation to the Tholsel, High Street, Kilkenny.**

Re: **Environmental Impact Assessment – Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).**

Planning Legislation:
Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018, Schedule 5, Part 1 and 2
European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018
Article 75 which amends Article 120 of the Regulations 2001
Planning and Development Act 2000 – 2018

Characteristics of Project

- Provision of 1 No. lift and fire escape stairs to serve all floors within existing structure (including the basement area).

- Modifications, including the associated demolitions, to the rear (eastern elevation) of the building to facilitate the reinstatement of the pitched roof in the area of the proposed lift and stairs.

- Removal of railings at ground floor level and provision of a new 51sq.m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure, to house a Visitor Reception area.

- Removal of existing 77sq m mezzanine level at 3rd floor level over Mayor's Parlour and Corporate Affairs office, to provide double height spaces within these rooms.

- Removal of 1 No. existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of second storey of curved extension to allow for reinstatement of windows to Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building. This will also facilitate the provision of a reception area at ground floor level for the civic function of the building and

- Refurbishment of existing building, including repointing and cleaning of masonry as necessary, repairs to windows and replacement where necessary, replacement of existing rooflights, re-dressing of lead linings, replacement of railings at roof level, and repairs to roof.

- Complete internal redecoration and new internal openings to allow improved circulation within the building.

- Provision of plant in the grounds of St Marys Church & Graveyard (Recorded Monument (KK019-026115 & KK019-026156) and a Protected Structure in the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City, Ref. RPS B192 (NIAH Ref. 12000130/KK) and adjacent to the Alms Houses (Protected Structures, Ref RPS B193 (NIAH Ref. 12000128/KK and 12000129/KK)).This will include associatedbelow ground pipework connection to the Tholsel.

- Site works associated with formation of connections to existing public foul and surface water drainage and existing utilities as required.

Location
The Tholsel is located along High Street in the centre of Kilkenny city

Type and characteristics of potential impact
From assessing the documentation associated with the proposed alteration and renovation works at the Tholsel on High Street in the city, it is considered that the proposed development is significantly below sub threshold Part 2 activities and having regard to the environmental sensitivities of the area and the potential effects of the development based on the following environmental factors;

- Population and human health
- Biodiversity, with particular attention to special and habitats protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives
- Land, soil, water, air and the landscape
- Climate
- Interaction between above
- Expected effects from relevant major accidents and / or disasters

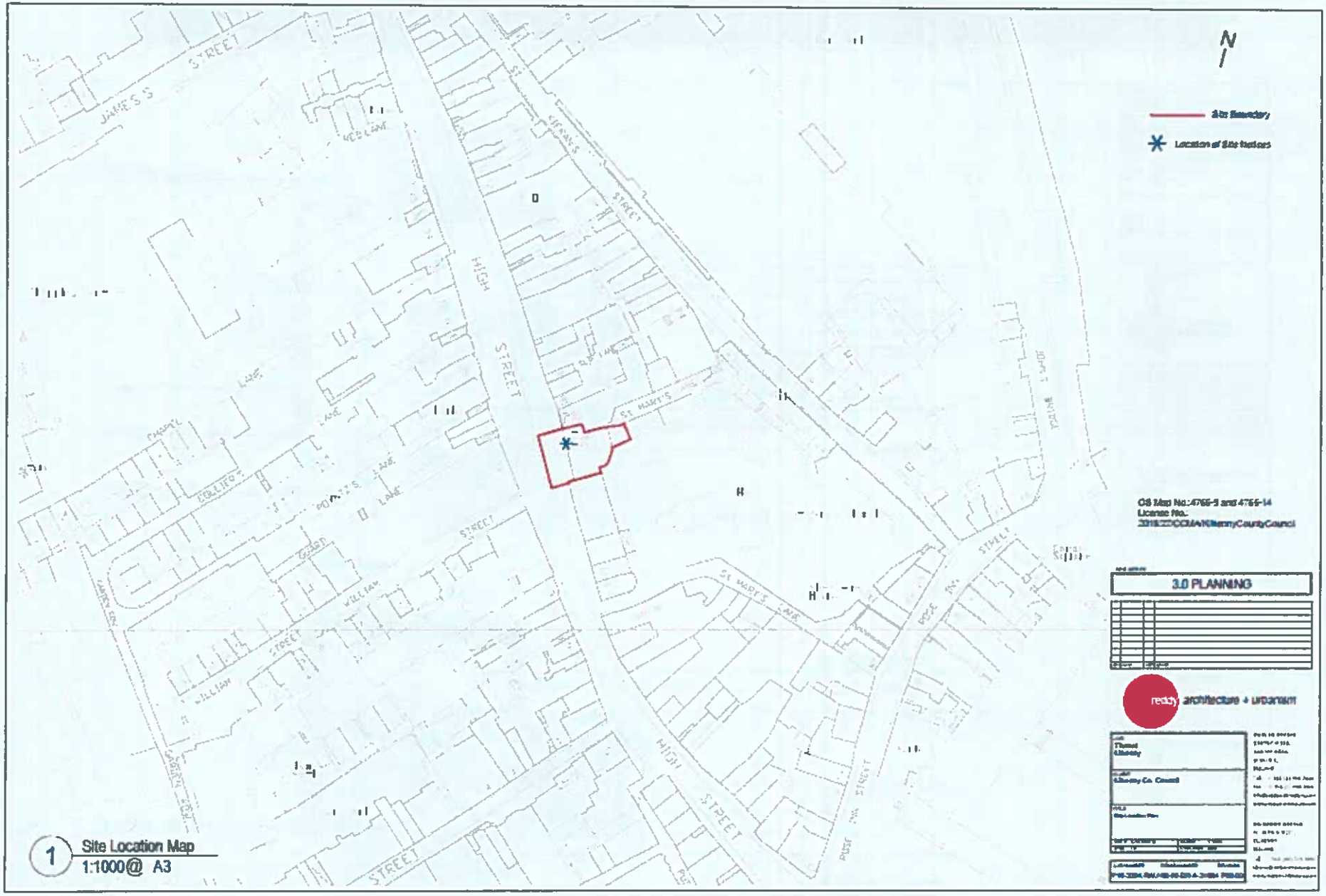
It is determined that based on the above that no EIA is required.

Conclusion
The development can proceed without the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment

Signed: Denis Malone,
Senior Planner,
Kilkenny County Council.
28/1/2019

Appendix 3

Part 8 Scheme Drawing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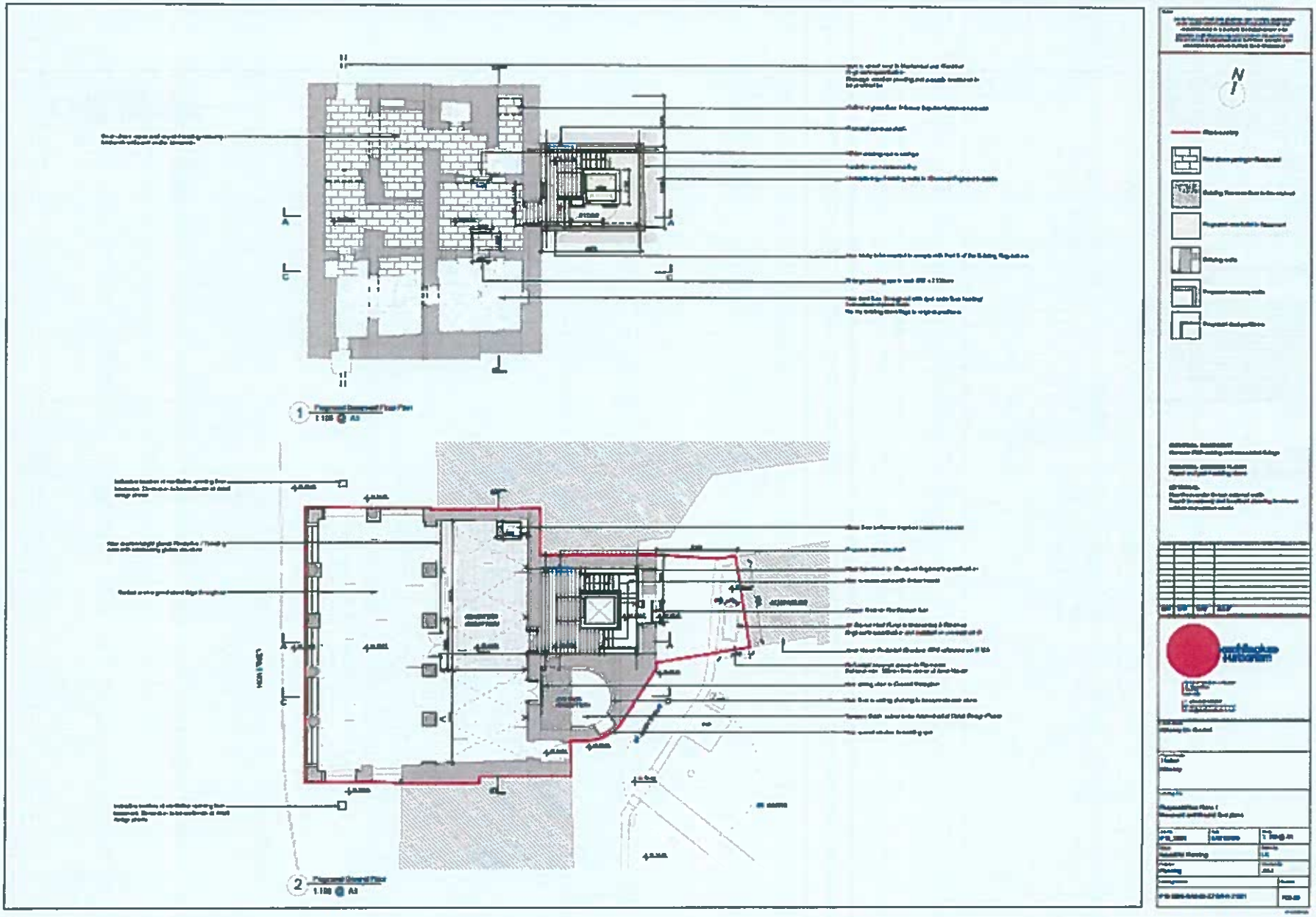
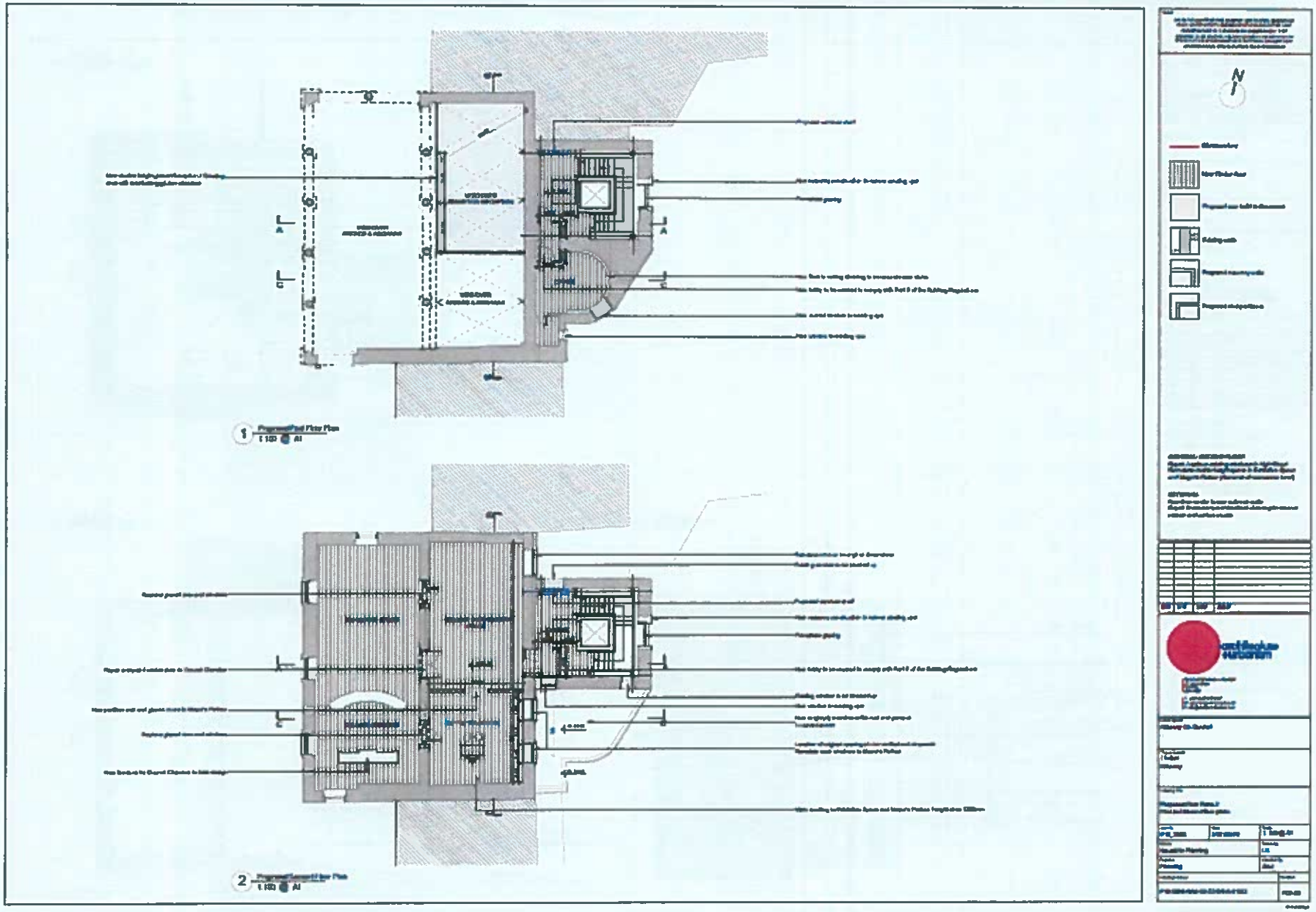
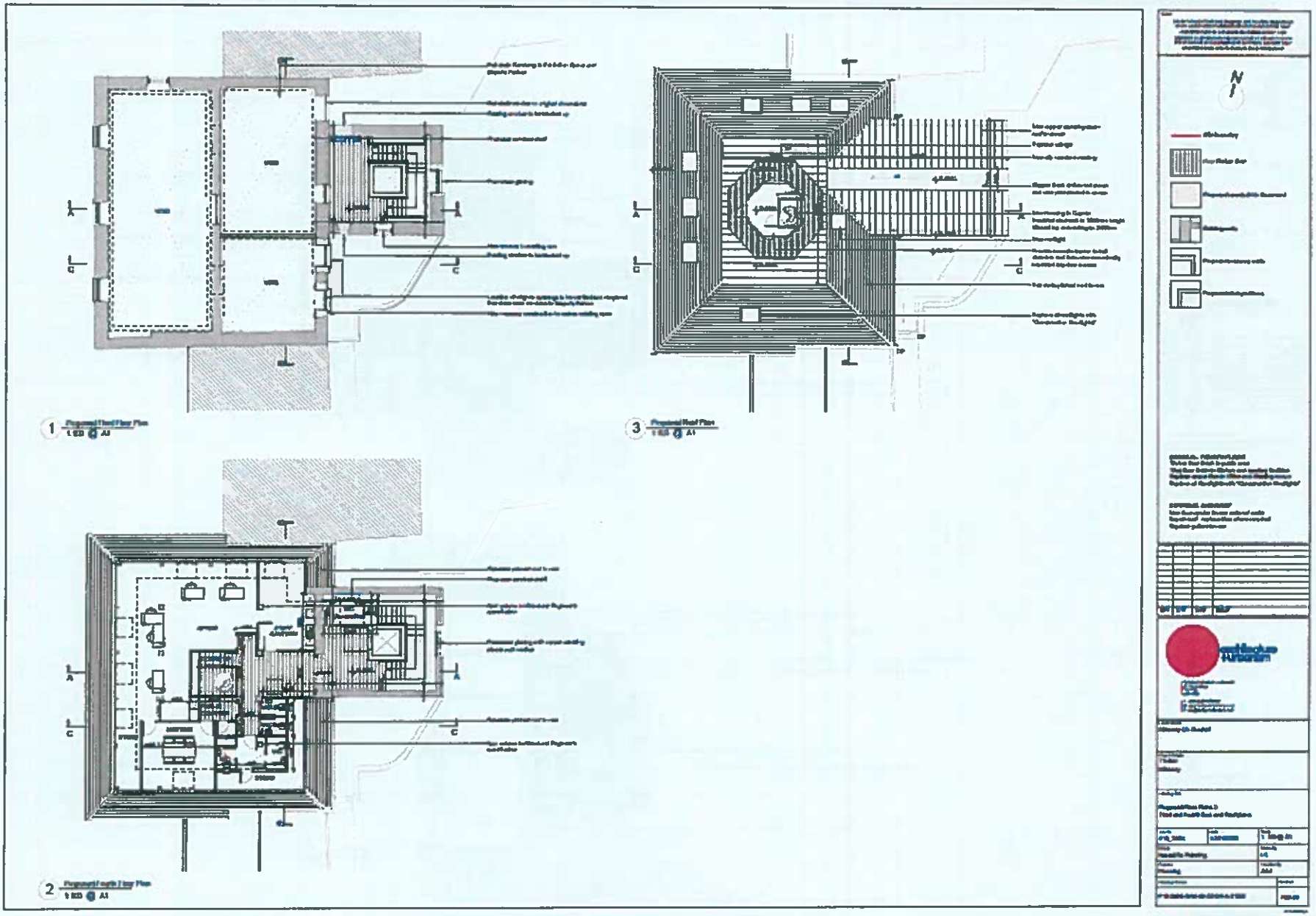
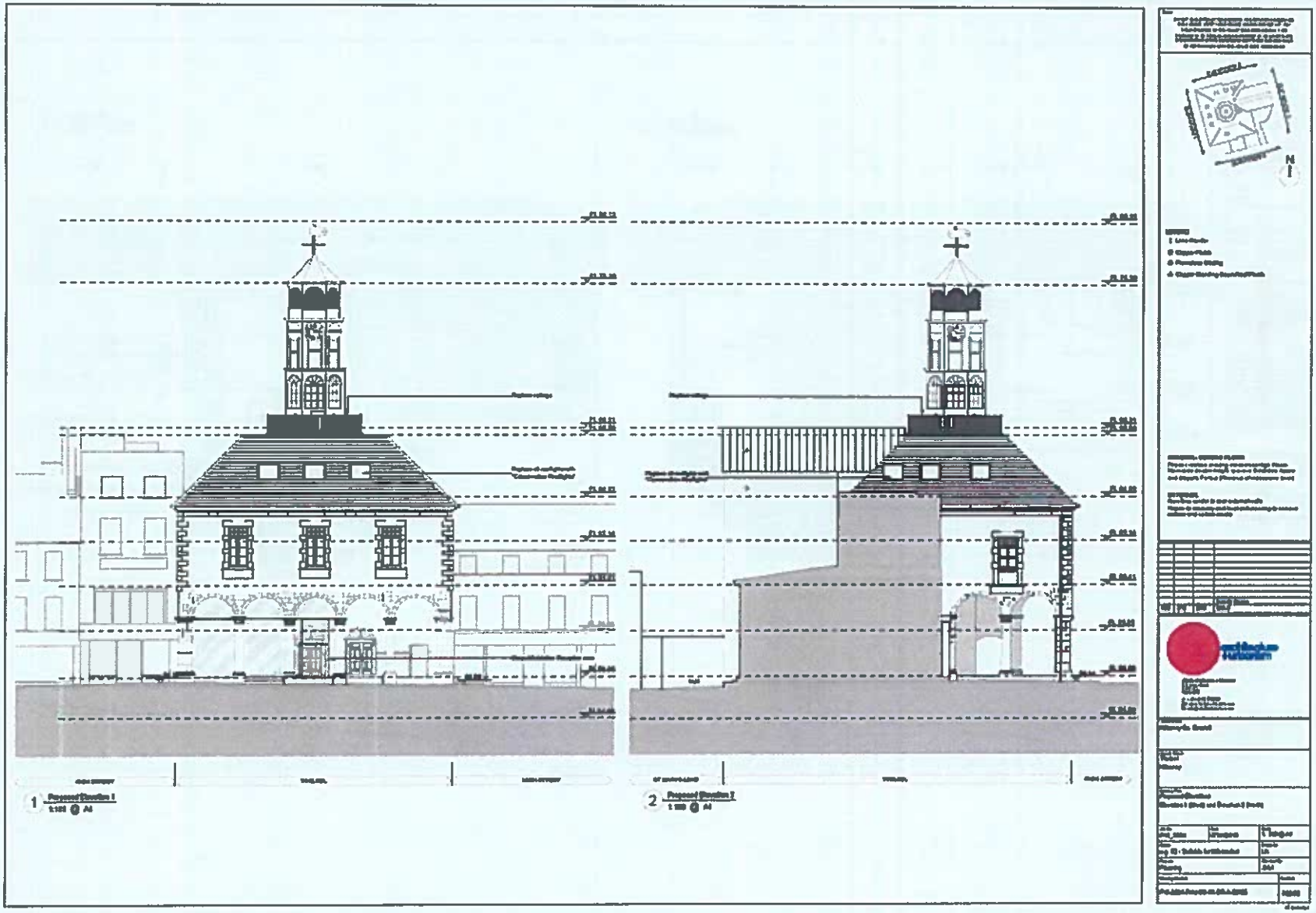
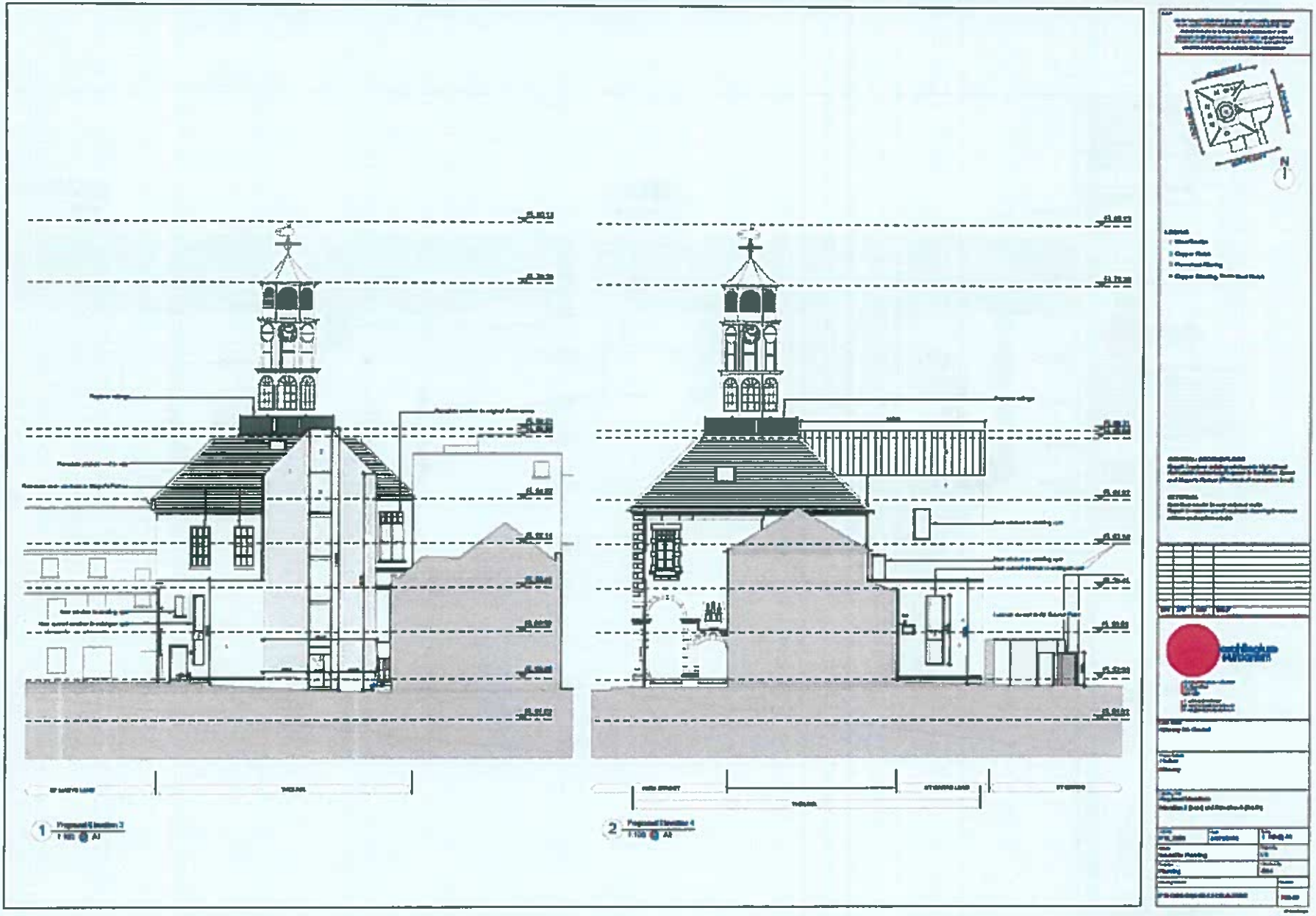
Site Boundary
Location of Site Visitors
OS Map No.: 4765-9 and 4765-14
License No.:
3.0 PLANNING
redq architecture + urbanism
1
Site Location Map
1:1000@ A3











Appendix 4

Submissions received

From: Andrew Lewis
Sent: 20 January 2019 21:51
To: tholselplanning
Subject: Tholsel Project – Planning Submission

To whom it may concern,

It not currently possible to make this submission on the relevant consult.kilkenny.ie page so I am making it via email. Please find it below.

The proposal to turn the Thosel into a visitor attraction is welcome; and the idea to retain some form of local government activities on site is also welcome. However, the execution is haphazard. Are we looking at a modern office block or a 200 year old building? The glass cube is an acceptable solution to the entrance problem provided no anchoring is done to the stone columns. On the other hand; the proposed rear elevation is abhorrent. It is insult enough that people have been subjected to the 'restoration' attempt that has been present since the last fire. An attempt whose windows make the rear elevation look like a sanatorium. Now to add insult to injury we must be subjected to a flimsy attempt to modernise a structure that was partially built in 1761. The modern approach to the windows will date just as terribly as the last attempt. It is dishonest to pretend that the rear part of the building is modern and dressing it up as such fools no one. If any architect needed inspiration for what the rear should look like then the Crawford Collection (c.1947) holds the key; sensitive reinstatement of the 2 missing sash windows on the rear gable, whose position will no doubt be discovered during archaeological investigation.

I note that Reddy Architecture have been chosen to write the architectural report. It is a shame that a generally respected architectural practice has resorted to 'copying and pasting' material from their work on the Athy Heritage Centre into this proposal. At one point in the report Reddy has forgotten to change the words 'Athy Heritage Centre' to 'Thosel'. Also, I note with interest from the architectural report that; *"In response to the location ... of the Athy Heritage Centre, ... the applicant, Kildare County Council, have assembled a design team with a strong record in successfully delivering conservation projects"*. Presumably, this lack of effort indicates a slap-dash approach to planning this project. Perhaps this also goes some way to explaining the bizarre design approaches made in regards to trying to make an old building look 'modern'. Maybe Reddy have forgotten what building they are meant to be designing and have just stuck some windows from their latest supermarket project onto the Thosel.

Reconsider the modern parts of the proposal and instead reinstate what was lost. This is not a new building trying to look old. It is an old building getting swamped under the new. Respect this.

Thanks,

Andrew Lewis.

From: gabriel murray
Sent: 09 February 2019 21:10
To: Tim Butler
Subject: Cultural Destruction; City Hall. 1741 Staircase;

cc.Denis Malone';Planning.

Minister Madigan;

Dear Tim

I have reported the matter of the removal of the staircase in City Hall. to an Taisce;

I have asked them to investigate the breach of;

1. The Tholsel (Town Hall) is a Recorded Monument (KK019-026061) and a Protected Structure included in the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City, Ref. RPS B43 (NIAH Ref. 12000061) It is located within the Kilkenny City Centre Architectural Conservation Area and within a zone of Archaeological Potential (KK019-026 'City')

2. Removal of existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of the curved stairway. This will also facilitate the provision of a reception area for the torture chamber exhibition.

3. Removal of the John Banin Statute; and alcove; (3 April 1798 – 30 August 1842), was an Irish novelist, short story writer, dramatist, poet and essayist, sometimes called the "Scott of Ireland." He also studied art, working as a painter of miniatures and portraits, and as a drawing teacher, before dedicating himself to literature.

4.I have also asked them to investigate the legality under the Planning Act; as to the councils claim that no-planning approval is required to remove stairs, statute etc.

5.I note that I did not receive a replay to my last e mail;. I paid out E3000 to desim a book and school brochure. The book is 500 pages long. Mary Butler has not answered any of my e mails to her. As Arts Officer its is breach of her duties. Deabhara Ledgwidge, stated that she had not ten minutes in any given day over the next month to see me as she was 'bust'! Minister Madiga is concerned about the situation that I am in with KCC and has asked to keep her updated. Are we living in a city where civil servants -are not doing their jobs and ignoring concerned citizens. I will be meeting ministers to discuss same after 14th of Feb.

6. As a civil servant you get paid to respond to public public complaints . I do not. Even on a personal level of good manners I would expect the courtesy of a reply from you as you have informed me in the past - that you have read my e mails!

Regards

Gabriel Murray. Dip FA. HDip. Ed.

Kilkenny Archaeological Society,
Rothe House,
Parliament Street,
Kilkenny.
R95 P89C.

Planning Section,
Kilkenny County Council,
County Hall,
John Street,
Kilkenny.
R95 A39T.

...UNCIL
18 FEB 2019
...CEIVED

18 February 2019.

Ref: Kilkenny County Council Part 8 Proposal at the Tholsel, High Street, Kilkenny.

Dear Sir or Madam,

The submission from Kilkenny Archaeological Society to the above proposal previously forwarded to your office on 14 February contains a few small errors. I will be obliged if that submission can be withdrawn, and the attached (corrected) submission dated 18 February substituted in its place.

Yours Sincerely,

Declan Murphy.
Chair, Conservation Committee.

KILKENNY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Submission to Kilkenny County Council's notice of a proposed Part 8 development at the Tholsel.

Kilkenny Archaeological Society welcomes the opportunity to make a submission regarding the proposed development at the Tholsel. The architectural report states that the following objectives ...'were paramount ...to protect and enhance the building...to improve public access...in accordance with the Disability Act...' as well as creating a visitor attraction and improving the presentation of the rear of the building. The Tholsel is an 18th c. registered monument of national importance, and is protected under the National Monuments Act.

We recognize that the building urgently requires renovation and alteration in order to comply with Fire Regulations and also the Disability Act. We welcome the commitment to follow best conservation practice as well as to restore the visual and aesthetic qualities as fully as practical, and we accept the changes involved for this outcome. However a big part of the development is related to a revised vision of the role of the building as a visitor attraction, and also as a conduit to attract more visitors to the St. Mary's Church Medieval Mile Museum. These are optional and non-urgent items, and we make the following observations in this regard.

1. We do not agree with the proposal to erect a new glazed reception and ticket office in the ground floor arcade, which at present forms part of the High Street pedestrian public realm. The proposal will have both an aesthetic and a cultural impact. It is a prominent visible, distinctive, and accessible part of High Street. It is in nearly daily use by charity collectors, street musicians and singers, sellers of small craft items, choirs at Christmas, and similar informal activities especially by teenage and young adult citizens. It is the only outdoor covered area on High Street and there is no alternative place that would be comparable to its present vibrant street culture.
2. The construction of a formal glazed reception and ticket office, together with the removal of the present metal railing will probably have a negative impact on the usual gregarious street life in the arcade. It may become intimidating to those who have a sense of belonging in that space. There is nowhere else on High Street that is relatively sheltered from wind and rain and that could be used in a similar manner, especially for teenagers and young adults who have a sense of belonging there. In addition the Christmas crib is a traditional and very popular attraction but will be affected negatively, along with certain other activities such as signing condolence books.
3. The glazed-and-wood reception and ticket office is incongruous inside an 18th c. medieval building on a busy street. The metal railings are a 1950s construct to counteract anti-social activities, but are surprisingly popular. This could be because the form a boundary to the raw street life from the quieter activities inside the rails.

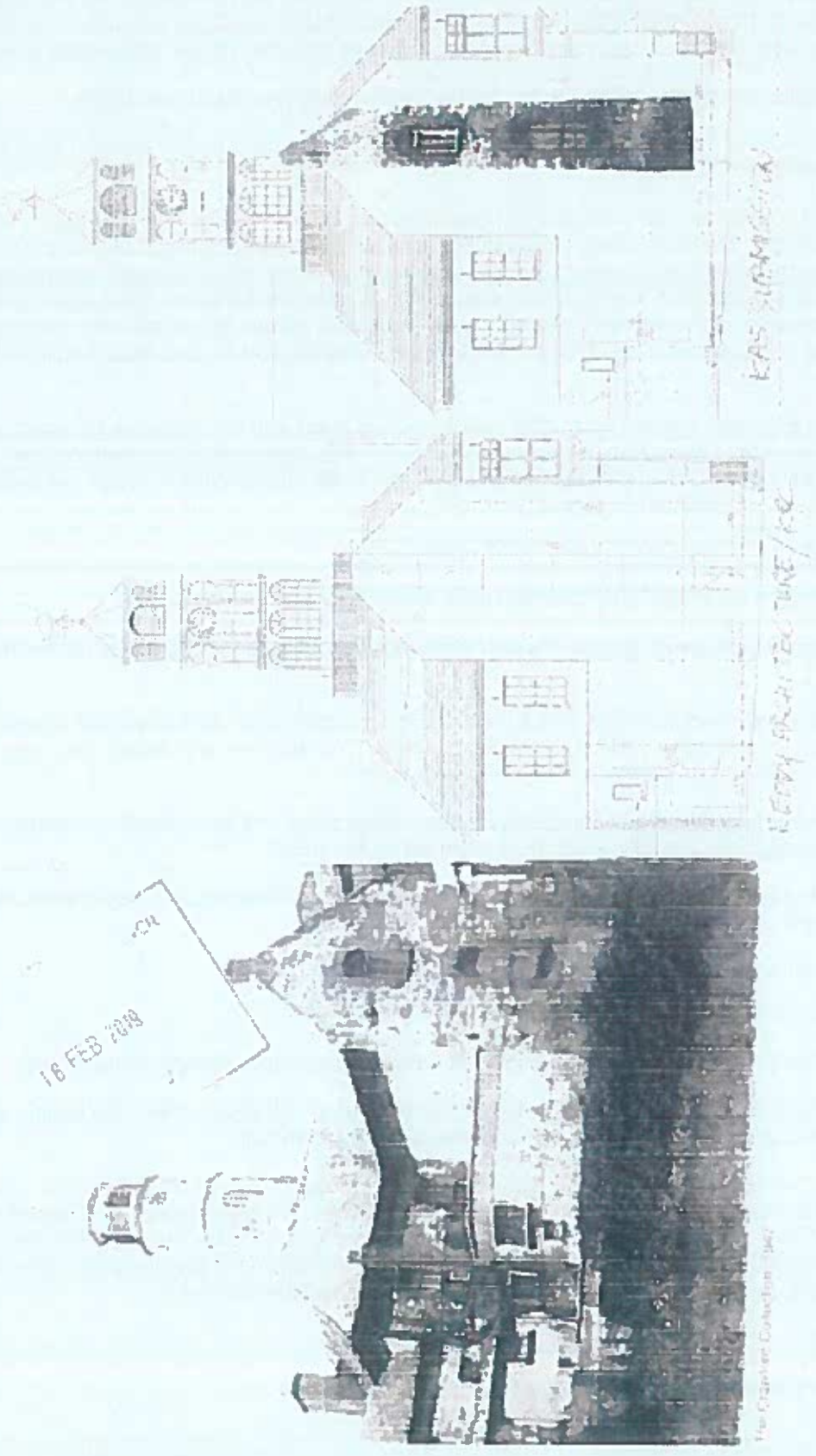
18 FEB 2019

4. The proposal to remove the clutter of disfiguring extensions at the rear of the building is very welcome. However the proposed large new east (rear) façade appears austere and obtrusive, especially as viewed from a distance such as Johns Quay and the new Butler Gallery. We strongly recommend that windows similar to the old windows (seen in the Crawford Collection photograph) be installed rather than the long continuous glazing proposed. Attached to this submission is an example of how it would look, using a superimposed clipped portion of the photograph. It restores the original elegant style to the façade. We also recommend that the wall be painted in a colour that harmonizes with the colour of the stone walls and slate roof. On balance we feel that the copper roof will age elegantly, rather like Rathmines Town Hall in Dublin, but there are mixed views on this.
5. We are uncertain where the public will access a general reception office, such as to pay council rent. It is not clear if the ground floor 'reception area' is simply a walk-through area on the way to the Medieval Mile Museum, or will it have a staffed desk and receptionist?

We commend the level of expertise and work that has gone into the proposal. This submission is the formal KAS response, but it is open to all individuals or groups to make their own submission and express alternative views.

In conclusion we respectfully suggest that the consultation process with the general public might have been improved by holding a public forum type of meeting in advance, such as the Town Hall meeting held to discuss the Abbey Quarter Master Plan, or the local meetings held by planners in preparation for compiling a Village Design Statement.

18 February 2019.



Dear Kilkenny County Council,

We are Kilkenny Comhairle na nÓg, one of 31 youth councils across the country. As young people under the age of 18 have no other voting mechanism, Comhairle na nÓg is designed to enable young people to have a voice on the services, policies and issues that affect them in their local area.

We have studied the plans for The Tholsel and would like to outline our observations.

Our primary concern is the potential impact the ticket office may have on the space in front of it being used by members of the public.

Our town hall is used for many things on a daily basis with many of these activities adding to the vibe of the town centre. The front space hosts adverts, buskers and market stalls. It provides a meeting point for friends, tourists and shelter from the weather. It is a landmark and great for photography and keeping an eye on the time. It provides access to Mary's Lane and for some, it is a place to sleep at night when they've nowhere else. It is an important venue for groups to fundraise for charity e.g. carol-singing in December. During Arts Week there are displays and at Christmas it is home to the crib.

We see from the plans that the ticket office will be built of glass and that there will be a sign out front. This we feel may lead to competition for space i.e. would the above mentioned activities be unwelcome as they may block the sign or access to the ticket office? Will this mean the people of Kilkenny cannot use their public space?

Comments from members of Kilkenny Comhairle na nÓg:

"Ticket booth may be an eye-sore and take away from medieval look"

"Use one area as a museum but use the rest of the building for other things too, to get the most out of the space."

"The staircase is part of the history of the building / It's a public place, should be kept a public space. / Potential for injuries if glass walls of ticket office breaks. / If it becomes a business they may not allow fundraising outside. / Likely disturbance to the politicians."

"There's already a Medieval Mile Museum. / If glass ticket office was vandalised or cracked it would become a hazard. / It's a public building...it's owned by the pubic"

"If people can still busk then now problem with the ticket office. When people busk there it adds a nice vibe and personality to the town"

"No need to knock out the stairs – unnecessary cost"

"Use smaller/ indoor area for ticket office"

"A queue of people for the ticket office could ruin aesthetics and photography opportunities"

"People queuing could impact on foot traffic through and around the town hall. Also people might be at risk of traffic accidents if footpaths are busier around the town hall."

To conclude, we would welcome feedback regarding any impact the development would have on members of the public using the outdoor space of the Tholsel. We also suggest that the ticket office be combined with the Medieval Mile Museum Ticket Office. This will save the cost of constructing it, avert the competition for space and subsequent negative impact on the general public and be more cost effective to run as there will only be a need for one set of staff to man it.

Best regards,

Kilkenny Comhairle na nÓg

Conserving Ireland's Architectural Heritage

Irish Georgian Society

Planning Section
Kilkenny County Council
County Hall
John Street
Kilkenny

(By email to Tholselplanning@kilkennycoco.ie)

6th March 2018

Re: *Tholsel Project - Planning Submission*: **Proposal by Kilkenny County Council to alter and renovate the Tholsel, High Street, Kilkenny for office use and Tourism / Exhibition use.**

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Irish Georgian Society (of City Assembly House, 58 South William Street, Dublin 2) wishes to make this submission on Kilkenny County Council's proposal to alter and renovate the Tholsel, High Street, Kilkenny, for office use and tourism / exhibition use.

Built in 1761, the Tholsel is recognized by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage of being of 'National' significance. The NIAH appraisal of the building states that the substantial edifice *'forms an imposing centrepiece to High Street as identified by the position projecting forward from the established line of the street: an octagonal clock and bell turret further distinguishes the composition in the townscape on account of the articulation of the roofline in the street scene. Limestone ashlar dressings - particularly the arcade forming a graceful feature in the street - contribute significantly to the elegant Classical theme of the composition while exhibiting very high quality stone masonry: a carved shield bearing the coat-of-arms of Kilkenny City introduces an element of artistic importance to the site.'*

In consideration of the Tholsel's significance to both the architectural heritage of Kilkenny City, and nationally, the Irish Georgian Society wishes to make the following observations.

The plans for the Tholsel which are the subject of this consultation propose substantial "renovation & restructuring" works with the objectives of (a) protecting and enhancing the civic function of the building; (b) improving public access; (c) creating a tourist attraction; and (d) improving the presentation of the rear of the building. While these objectives are worthy, it is essential that the nature and extent of the work proposed is clearly set out and that the impacts of those works on the architectural heritage value and special interest of the Tholsel are fully assessed. Key issues in this regard are as follows:

- While a detailed conservation report is provided as part of the package of documents, which are the subject of this public consultation, the conservation report does not appear to be fully aligned with other reports included in the package. To give just one example, the engineers' report refers to stabilising the brick basement vaults and suggests a methodology that includes shotcrete, which would not be considered an acceptable conservation approach.

[illegible]

The Irish Georgian Foundation, operating as the Irish Georgian Society, is a charitable organisation which encourages the appreciation and conservation of Ireland's architecture and decorative arts

[illegible]

- It is suggested that the extent to which works such as cleaning, repair and repointing of existing stone masonry of the building facades will be carried out depends on the funding available. It would be usual on a project of this scale to include full façade conservation and repair of such a landmark building. The extent of façade conservation now proposed is a material factor in the assessment of the impact of the proposal on the architectural heritage.

- Other than some archaeological testing and a trial pit in the basement connected with lowering the floor, it is unclear whether investigative works or opening-up work within the Tholsel has been carried out in advance of formulating the current proposals. The *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines* provide that *"Opening-up works may be needed to allow a full understanding of the structure prior to making development proposals"*. Given the complex history of the Tholsel, it is likely that appropriate opening-up works would inform the detailed proposals and could avoid delays when construction of the proposal is underway.

- Very little detail is provided on the extent to which the proposals will alter historic material or on the provision of plumbed and wired services either in the effectively re-built return or in the existing building. The *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines* provide that: *"Many old buildings suffer from minor structural defects but will continue to perform satisfactorily providing they are not subject to major disturbance. Alterations such as the creation of new openings, changes to the interior spaces or the installation of new services and equipment could overload an existing structural system and, where this is a possibility, the proposals should be reconsidered."* It is essential that the extent of installation of new services proposed is clearly set out if the architectural heritage impact of proposals are to be comprehensively assessed.

In addition to this, the Society wishes to query the proposal for the provision of a new 51 sq m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure within the ground floor arcade of the Tholsel. The *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines* provides that: *"The plan-form of a building is one of its most important characteristics. Where the original plan-form remains, or is readily discernible, it should be identified and respected"* [Emphasis added]. The erection of the new glass structure now proposed is likely to result in a considerable change to the plan form and character of the ground floor arcade and it is unclear what alternatives (i.e. alternatives that do not involve the erection of new structures) have been considered as part of the design process. For example, has consideration been given to returning the ground floor arcade to use as a covered market place? Has consideration been given to using other redundant buildings nearby for the tourist information services instead of the Tholsel? In this regard, it is noted that the *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines* provide that *"Usually the original use for which a structure was built will be the most appropriate, and to maintain that use will involve the least disruption to its character."*

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any further assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Donough Cahill

Donough Cahill (dcahill@igs.ie)
IGS Executive Director

I would like to make the following submission/comments on the proposed development of The Tholsel, the town hall on Kilkenny's High Street.

a. The proposal to change the nature of this fine protected building by making fundamental structural alternations ie removing the railings, and creating a glass "room" with a timber structure is a contradiction in itself and a very impractical one at that. As noted in the Council's own documents: " The proposed public entrance is a large glass room which may create issues with comfort for the occupants and present ventilation challenges." It absolutely will create issues. As this glassed in space would be open at the top, a room seems a very inaccurate description. It is an area that gets no sun, and very little light, it is actually a natural wind tunnel. Apart from fundamentally altering the porch area which no one has ever suggested needed altering, would create a cold, draughty and uncomfortable space, for anyone to work in, not to mind the cleaning of the amount of glass being proposed. I would consider this alteration a piece of fashionable vandalism which will date.

2. Altering an historic building, a civic space, the Town Hall, for the sake of turning it into a space for selling the "medieval mile" is not acceptable. The Tholsel in Kilkenny is not there, as the report seems to think "to provide impressive and functional tourist experiences in the heart of the Medieval Mile." The sooner the current fashion of turning everything into an "experience" goes out of date, the better. Currently the porch space is in need of some sensitive restoration with the removal of the awful lights and even worse the massive plastic hording with its lurid pink and purple signs tacked to the walls, advertising the medieval mile. Such work has been done to similar buildings and I would suggest the Council investigate these without resorting to the current glassed in options.

3. St Mary's Church is a stand alone museum. Kilkenny does not require its Town Hall, a place for the citizens of the town, to be turned into a ticket office for selling "the medieval mile" or its accompanying paraphernelia. It is a civic space and should be used as such.

4. I cannot see any justification for the removal of what is a fine staircase inside the building. It is attractive, solid and functional. In an era where we should be saving and utilising assets that serve us well rather than tearing them out for the sake of reinstating a window, I would suggest this particular aspect of the demolition an unnecessary expense which will create unnecessary waste. The reasoning that the staircase is a relatively modern addition does not warrant its removal. Suggesting its demolition while vandalising a fine stone porch with the addition of a modern fashion is very questionable.

5. Finally I would like to know, if the proposals for this building include use of it for promotion of tourism, who will be managing our Town Hall? It is very important that this building remains under the stewardship of the citizens of Kilkenny, to be used for a variety of events/functions by its citizens when required. It must not become a part of the Bord Failte brand, intended to maximise profit from tourism.

Yours sincerely

Lucy Glendinning

An Taisce's submission
An Taisce, Kilkenny Association, welcomes the proposed renovation and restructuring of the Tholsel. Since the original erection of a Tholsel on this site in 1579 the building has undergone several reconstructions and alterations, and we acknowledge the need to upgrade the building now in order to comply with building regulations, carry out necessary conservation work, improve internal circulation and restore the visual and aesthetic qualities particularly of the rear/east façade.
Tholsel Architectural Report
Title:
An Taisce's comments on the proposed use of the tholel and its restructuring
Tourist attraction: We question the need to put so much emphasis on visitor attraction. The Tholsel is a relatively small building and encouragement of continuous tourist traffic up through the full height invites unnecessary wear and tear and may pose a distraction to Council staff. Ideally, access to the upper floors should not be increased over present usage. Visitor access to the roof and Cupula is not essential, as views of Kilkenny are available from other elevated points such as St Canice's round tower, the Castle and the proposed viewing platform on the Brewery building. Development of the Tholsel for tourism should be limited to the basement and the ground floor, leaving the upper floors for civic functions of the Council.

Basement: the proposed renovation if done with respect for the archaeological recommendations is welcome but we are concerned that moisture ingress may be a problem - note the excessive build up of moisture in the crypts under the floor of the Medieval Mile Museum. Apart from improving ventilation it is not clear how or if it is intended to damp-proof the basement. Also, careful consideration needs to be given to how the building's history is interpreted and presented. The vision of using mannequins is dated and may clutter the space.

Ground Floor: We have concerns with the proposed development at this level. The arcade here forms part of the main pedestrian route along High Street. Being a sheltered space it is daily used by citizens who sit and stand against the railings while engaged as collectors, singers, musicians and small craft sellers. These activities are not compatible with a glazed façade as background. The comparison (in the Tholsel_Architectural Report) of the proposed glazed structure with the Leinster House Siopa and the Mandarino Caffé Bistrot does not take such usage into account. Provision of seating outside the glazed area might provide a space similar in function to the steps outside the Caffé. To maximize the external public space here the entrance door to the glazed area could be moved to the south side. We believe that the proposed glazed enclosure is wasted as a reception area, much better interaction between the public and the building would be achieved by moving the exhibition space from the second floor to this level and having both it and the basement open to the public.

Rear extension: The proposal to improve the visual impact of the ugly extensions to the east façade is very welcome, however the addition of a modern white façade with frameless glazing and copper roofing is questionable. The fact that the existing 1950's extension is now regarded as very incongruous and ugly is reason to hesitate about replacing it with what is currently perceived as modern. Many modern pale façades e.g. the east and north facades of the Court House, quickly stain with algae and age badly. An Taisce favours reinstatement of a rubble stone façade, the original roof profile covered with slates, and the window proportions and design shown in the photograph of the 'East facing elevation of rear of Tholsel, 1947' from the Crawford Collection. Such a façade would be entirely in keeping with the aesthetics of the building and would age well. We accept the practicalities of placing the stairs and lift at the rear and we hope a new home can be found for the ceremonial staircase in a public building.

Cost: We fear that the overall cost could be very high and believe that it is unnecessary to spend heavily where little extra accommodation will be provided.

In conclusion An Taisce commends the expertise that has gone into drawing up this proposal. However we recommend less emphasis on tourism and a more traditional approach to the reconstruction.

I wish to object to the following changes to the Tholsel (Town Hall) in the consultation document.

Removal of railings to the porch area at ground floor level and provision of a new 51sq.m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure, to house a Visitor Reception area

Removal of existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of the second storey of this curved annex to allow for the reinstatement of windows to Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building. This will also facilitate the provision of a reception area at ground floor level for the civic function of the building and an office at first floor level.

Patrick Comerford

Tholsel project , planning submission

1. I object to any glass walls at front of Tholsel. It should be kept open as a public space.

2. I object to the removing of the ceremonial stairs.

3. I object to the Tholsel ever being used as a tourist office.

Pauline Cass.

Tholsel planning submission

1. I object to glass walls being placed in the Tholsel and it should remain a public space.

2. I object to the removal of the ceremonial stairs.

3. I object to a tourist office being located in the Tholsel.

Pat Cass.

I do NOT want to see a glass box in or around the Tholsel and certainly don,t want to see the Ceremonial Stairs ripped out totally unnecessary Who,s idea is it and for what? for whom.? I OBJECT TO THIS PROJECT

Regards

Gladys Bowles

To Whom it may concern

Having studied the plans for the Tholsel I would like to make the following changes

I would be opposed to the glass box or any extension into the portico of this protected structure. The Tholsel being used as a shop, ticket office, reception area for any business or attraction other than its public function as Town Halls not sit well with me either.

I also believe that the removal of the Mayoral stairs is not a good idea

Thank you

Paul Brophy

Hi All,

Just reading the proposed works to our fabulous Tholsel City Hall.

I do think that the building should be repaired, windows, etc

However, I'm opposed completely to the glazing or any extension into the portico. It's an amazing feature in our city, please stop destroying them!

I also disagree with the removal of the Mayoral stairs. Yes, by all means put a lift in but not at the cost of one of the most beautiful little stairs in the building.

Also, there's are rumours that our beautiful building is going to be pimped out??? I'm completely opposed to the building being used as a shop, ticket office, reception area for any business or attraction other than its public function as Town Hall.

When I lived in France every city had a "family room", some more than one, with seats, tea/coffee/bottle making facilities, baby changing areas, toys, etc so that parents could come in, away from the busyness of the city and shopping and take time out. You need to think outside the money making, city destroying box...

They say that hindsight is a great thing, don't become known as the council that destroyed our city (more than you have already!!!)

Thanks,

Áine Murphy

To whom it may concern,

This is to express my opposition to the proposed works at the Tholsel. It is a historic building and as such should not have parts removed from it. It is part if our heritage and should be preserved as is.

Susan Collins

Title:

General design issues

Overall I welcome the long awaited proposed development of the town hall, particularly from an access point of view.

I would propose that the glass intervention on the arcade be removed from the design. In my view it is out of keeping with the character of the building. I think that the gates should be removed and a new reception area located at the base of the ceremonial staircase.

It is my view that this staircase be retained and extended into the basement as recommended in the previous Neary report. Leaving the ceremonial staircase in place will require losing one of the proposed window openings into the Mayors parlour but I think that aedtethically this will work.

The arcade area is an important civic space. Designing in temporary exhibition lighting and temporary board units will improve its availability for public use.

I welcome the introduction of a fully functioning lift into the building.

I would propose also that a space be dedicated to the late John Bradley; a study centre perhaps on the evolution of Irish towns, given his immense contribution to our understanding of the heritage of Kilkenny

Malcolm Noonan.

Ds Doyle
Lavistown
Kilkenny

March 11th 2019

SUBMISION ON PROPOSED WORKS TO THE THOLSEL, HIGH STREET, KILKENNY

I have read each of the supporting documents provided by Kilkenny County Council for the purposes of assessing and making observations on the proposed renovations to the Tholsel on High Street, Kilkenny.

As a citizen of Kilkenny and a long time admirer of the heritage of my city I am not in favour of the works proposed and my observations and rationale for reaching this opinion follow:

1. Just because the Tholsel is comprised of 20th Century and earlier building structures does not make a case for the removal of the 20th Century elements. There are many buildings with additional elements from the 19th and 20th century where these elements comprise an important part of the history of the building. It seems particularly perverse to me that the proposal suggests to remove the elements of the 20th Century buildings works as they are not original. Compare this to the lack of efforts to protect the Bridge House on Johns Bridge (destroyed by fire recently) and the nearly complete destruction of the houses on Vicar Street in the past number of years. It seems a particularly subjective and ad hoc approach is being applied when deciding what elements of buildings to protect or remove.

2. There is no clear budget or costing supplied for the works in the proposal. There should be, given the scale of the works it would be highly appropriate for taxpayers locally to know the costs as an important part of the decision making process. Given the overrun in budget spend on the KCAS Bridge it troubles me that we are entering into another potential scenario with no clear outlined scope or budget for costs.

3. The argument that I outlined above (1) also apply to the proposed 'improvements' for the rear of the building. It is proposed to remove the 20th Century elements and instead (as most developed countries would do) of working with the historical photographs to redevelop the building sensitively, the opposite is proposed. A large, obtrusive and brutalist extension is sought, extremely wearing on the eye, visually obtrusive from nearly all viewpoints and similar in style the extension tacked onto St Mary's recently. Neither of these structures will date particularly well and it is my guess that they too will be the focus of 'redevelopment' to remove them from the beautiful buildings they are

attached to. Words fail me when I see proposals like these being made for buildings with such charm and history. No other country would allow such insensitive interference with their built heritage. It is particularly telling that there were scant references provided as examples of successful interventions with buildings of this kind. The reason there are few examples is because most cities do not allow any sort of 'improvement' on their buildings in their care hence the lack of successful examples.

4. The proposed glass front to the building is completely unacceptable – not only does it compete with the visual structure of the building it also serves no purpose; a part of the proposal is that the building will be used as a ticket office and exhibition area. The inclusion of the glass panels is foolhardy as it will not support the purpose for which you have proposed the building is to be used for. Can the Council really be proposing that someone will sit or work in a building with an incomplete glass façade? Did the design team really thin that was the best conclusion?

5. The rationale for the building is never truly explained or costed anywhere in the building documents provided. It is hinted at in the Reddy Architecture document and in the Exhibition document. Given the descriptions in the exhibition document in particular one would be led to believe that there are 'spectacular' view from the Tholsel tower. Of what exactly? Ormonde Street Car Park? Supermacs? Dunnes Stores? Carrolls Gift Shop on the Medieval Mile? McDonagh Junction? The aforementioned 'extension' to St. Marys? Each of those sites began like this project did – 'improvement' but was never proposed, designed or properly thought through.

6. I had to double check (several times) that the proposal was seriously including the proposed provision of a metal 2.1m high screen covering the plant for the Tholsel within the grounds of St Mary's which has similarly been 'developed'. Surely, in a building with so many 'non original elements' a place could have been found to house a boiler without destroying further the grounds of St Mary's. You have a medieval graveyard and you think putting a boiler into it is appropriate?

Conclusion:
I am sure that my thoughts above will be discounted as someone who is anti development, wants things to stay as they are etc. The truth is, I am all for development, having lived abroad, studied design and restored my own historical home I am passionate about Kilkenny and realise the importance of the tourism market to Kilkenny City. What I find really unattractive about processes such as this is that we are always offered the lowest common denominator under the guise of 'consultation'. The public events are always short and difficult for people to attend, there is always a nagging sense that your views never really make it to the decision makers and that the whole consulting process never makes sense. The end result is nearly always that we, the public, the taxpayers get something we didn't really want because we started with an option that was never in our favour to begin with, defined by Failte Ireland, made a little more glossy and palatable by architects and managed onto the stage by the Council at

the behest of 'stakeholders'. We get small thinking, not best practice, ad hoc information, carefully edited to keep out any detail that will derail the onward progress of the 'development' of Kilkenny.

I'll leave you with an option that was never proposed; to leave the Tholsel as it is, to leave it with all its bits, scars and the rest and avoid the seemingly obsessive desire to make it the latest 'star' in the misguided quest by the Civic Trust and Kilkenny County Council to present a sanitized, redeveloped and carefully narrated view of Kilkenny that it alien to those who live here.

Des Doyle

I wish to submit that I object to the glass box at the front of the Tholsel. This box being used as a shop/office is not appropriate for a Civic space, this will also result in buskers being moved as no one will want to work there with buskers out front. It would be too noisy.

I object to the removal of the barriers. They are a part of the social fabric of the civic space of the building and used regularly by festivals, Artists, different charities fundraising, memorials, awareness campaigns etc.

I object to any part of the building being used by the Medieval Mile Museum or the civic Trust. The drawings clearly show the medieval Mile logo on the glass of the box. It is inappropriate

I could not find an AA screening report, I submit that this should be completed.

The documents state that this has been prepared for Kildare County Council, this is unacceptable. A copy and paste is not good enough for our civic building.

I object to the removal of the ceremonial stairs.

I submit that I support access for all to the building and that the proposed lift at the back is a good idea, however the finish of the building is terrible, we have enough ugly boxes stuck on the sides and backs of buildings in the city.

Regards

Enya Kennedy

To: Tholselplanning@kilkennycoco.ie .

From: Dr Simon Bourke, Kilkenny.

Subject: "*Tholsel Project – Planning Submission*"

I, the undersigned, hereby object to the removal of railings to the portico of the Tholsel and the provision of a new 51sq.m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure, to house a Visitor Reception area, as the proposed additionsignificantly changes, defaces and interferes with the historic front of this iconic and unique protected building and the medieval mile on which it stands.

I object to modifications to the rear (eastern elevation).

I object to the removal of the existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of the second storey of this curved annex to allow for the reinstatement of windows to the Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building.

I object to the placement of plant in the grounds of St. Marys Church & Graveyard, a Recorded Monument (KK019-026115 & KK019-026156) and a Protected Structure in the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City, Ref. RPS B192 (NIAH Ref. 12000130/KK) and adjacent to the Alms Houses (Protected Structures, Ref RPS B193 (NIAH Ref. 12000128/KK and 12000129/KK)). This will include associatedbelow-ground pipework connection to the Tholsel. It's beyond extraordinary that such 'plant' will not be contained in the Tholsel.

I strongly oppose the Tholsel being set up for use as a shop, ticket office, reception area for any business or attraction or anything other than its public function as Town Hall.The Town Hall belongs to the people of Kilkenny.

The current proposal amounts to vandalism, pure and simple.

Dr Simon Bourke, Kilkenny

Tholsel Project – Planning Submission

Submission Petition to : Kilkenny County Council.

We petition and submit to the Council and Councillors to reject proposals for the imposition of a glazed or other type of enclosure in the Tholsel's classical Arcade.

We petition and submit to the Council and Councillors to reject the removal of the beautiful ceremonial staircase from the body of the building.

Why is this important?

The Tholsel or Town Hall in Kilkenny city is a public building and a protected structure, classified

as 'a substantial edifice of national significance, forming an imposing centre piece in High Street'.

Welove it.We love its public Arcade that welcomes musicians, artists, craftspeople, jugglers, carol singersand the Crib at Christmas, art exhibitions in the summer and meetings, remembrances, publicgatherings and community fundraising events all year round.

This is Kilkenny's public space, our Agora. We don't want it enclosed, reduced in size, or glassed in

for use as a ticket office, or anything else.

We're also proud of the ceremonial staircase within the building. We don't want to lose this either.

It's part of who we are, part of the Tholsel that we love. Leave it alone.

Signed by 300 local people (in just a few days):

Name

Margaret O Brien
Donal Coyne
Gladys Bowles
liz O'Brien
Simon Bourke
Enya Kennedy
Paddy O Ceallaigh
Elizabeth OBrien
Sarah Moore
Helena Dunne
Pauline Cass

Evan Cass
Cautlin No
Cheallaigh
Johanne Murphy
Name
Sue Carey
Sarah Kennedy
Patricia Cahill
Clara ffrench
Davis
Kevin Flaherty
Luke Parsons
BARBARA LE GALL
Christopher O'Keeffe
Helen Murray
Julie Young
Pat Cass
Evan Barry
Bill Murtagh W.
Darran Guilfoyle
Una O Leary
catherine sheehy
kieran lynch
Anuska Gutierrez
Peter Geoghegan
Ali O'Halloran
Mary Howley
Raymond Leahy
Sharon Barcoe
Aine Murphy
Trina Phelan
Anna O'Connor
Alecia Buturla
Aine Gannon
Teresa Maher
Monica Murray
Kathleen Phelan
Name
liam Heffernan
danny lahart
Ailbhe Coulter
Dan Dillon
Andrea Walsh
Sandra Mc Garry
Sean Nolan
Jillian Doherty
Grainne Murphy
Emmet Lynch
Spaghetti Hoop
Maura Mc Inerney
Joanna Dunne
Jenna Cass
Gertrude Dowling
AnneMariePrizeman

Teresita Beehan
Diarmuid Griffin
L. M.
Aileen Kennedy
Clare McGuinness
Becky Hanton
Alma Pegg
Larry Flanagan
Eric Dignan
Eugene Prizeman
Geraldine Gannon
Michelle Fox
Susan Garrett
Danny Holland
Neil Foley
dig dis
Name
Frank Kavanagh
Ellen Coyle
James Lalor
Janet Kelly
Brenda Murphy
Amy Fitzgerald
Ryan Cass
Noreen Folan
Shane Cass
Brian Phelan
Mark Stewart
Sharon Cafferkey
Cathy Wheatley
Tom C
Terence Kelly
Eleanor Murphy
Matthew Seaver
Deirdre W
Monica Duggan
Beth O Donoghue
Cathy M
Deirdre Cahill
Austin L
Sandra Homan
Kim Rice
Margaret
McDermott
Sheila deLoughry
anne barry
Kersty Evans
Amanda
O'Driscoll
Lucy Glendinning
Name
Brendan Cahill
Andy Sheridan
Marie Best

Trisha Kiersey
Sean Geoghegan
Eithne Moran
selina fullam
Sebastian Cole
Adrienne Hickey
Miriam Maher
Mary Campion
Patsy Costello
Rosemarie kelly
Marion O 'Neill
Dr James O'Brien
Moran
Kieran Kelly
Claire M
Noah M
Tara Gill
Anita Cullen
Rose Power
Margaret Sherwin
Colin Shaw
Brendan Maher
Ann Nix
Martin Doheny
Rebecca Harold
Margo Holden
Sean Fitzpatrick
Annette Fahey
B Manton
David Day
Name
Nicky Butler
Bernard Mullan
William Barrett
Siobhan Gannon
Corey Rigley
Roisin McQuillan
Michael Tyrrell
Margaret Rigley
Michael Foley
Mark Foley
David Stacey
Po KELLY
Chris Esther
Romey Moriarty
Niamh Moroney
Rory Kavanagh
Linda Comerford
Tim Bergin
Deirdre Aherne
Darragh O Shaughnessy
Pedrito Nocciolino
Labhaoise C
Terry Reid

Sheila Hennessy
Helen Heffernan
Ailbhe Flaherty
Adam Kearns
mick kenny
Geraldine Conway
Louis Spooks
Richie Prendergast
Name
Sean Mcphillips
Conor Mac Gabhann
Frances Micklem
Brendan Comerford
P Sheridan
Carol Bradley
Michelle O'Broin
Siobhan Armstrong
Margaret Stapleton
Anne-Marie Swift
Helena Duggan
Kate Carroll
Eilis Eagers
Cliona Walsj
M J Reade
Frances Theloke
Paula Dunne
Brid Kavanagh
Eimear F
Sandra Cuddihy
Mella Tejani
Claire Gogarty
John Doran
Kevin Spratt
Ciara Ryan
Conall Kennedy
Joan Lanigan
Billy Heffernan
Kathy Norris
Jacinta Power
Name
Geraldine Fahey
David Byrne
John Bourke
Phyllis O Neill
Maria Dollard
John Dixon
Jimmy Hayes
Jean Casey
Grainne Kelly
Colette Cummins
Nash
Gerard Teehan
Finola Somers
Isobel Moore

Joseph Fox
Rob Cross
Maurice Murphy
annw o neill
Julie Bourke
Frank McDonald
Daniel Sheppard
David Byrne
Maire Downey
Michelle Dwyer
Gargan
mary russell
Conor Hourigan
Karina Tynan
Mairead Carey
David OBrien
Christine Riggs
Miriam Tynan
Patrick Walsh
Name
Sadhbh O Neill
Emer Lawn
Jean Kavanagh
Caroline Casey
Josephine Bowles
Iosua O Braonain
Mac Aodha
Nigel O'Connor
Alice Kyteler
Robert McHugh
Ryan Connolly
Marion Delaney
Majella Reith
Tommy Msrtin
Aine McDonald
Stephanie Hanlon
Patricia Brennan
Gavin Grace
Geraldine Fahy
Anne Kyle
Ana Simoes
Karen Kelly
Winn Dunne
John C
Joe Flynn
Jackie Horgam
Miriam Bourke
Pat Murphy
Breda Maher
Marlyn Roebuck
Yvonne Moriarty
Andrew Ryan
Ann McMullan

Name
Diane Purcell
eadaoun cullen
Clare McDonough
Bernie Beehan
Etain Dowling
Breda Power
Pat Boyd
Mick Kavanagh
Eric Comerford
Mary Brennan
Siobhan Young
Colette Arthurson
pat delaney
Angela H
Maria Sherman
Sarah Millea
Linda Hayes
L Flanagan
Cathy Rafter
Shoshana Dunne
Breda O Neill
Philip Ryan
Anuska Gutierrez
Dan Kelleher
Stephen O'Brien
siobhan mairead
bridson
Lydia Noonan
Rowena Bluett
palmer
Amy Mcgourty
Alan Phelan
David Bayley
Name
Anne-Karoline
Distel
Nancy Metzger
Makayla Metzger
Edel Holmes
Paul McGrath

To: Tholselplanning@kilkennycoco.ie.

From: Margaret O' Brien. Kilkenny.

Subject: "*Tholsel Project – Planning Submission*"

I object to the removal of railings to the porch area at ground floor level and provision of a new 51sq.m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure, to house a Visitor Reception area, as any such 'addition' significantly changes, defaces and interferes with the historic front of this iconic, and unique protected building and the medieval mile on which it stands.

I object to modifications to the rear (eastern elevation). Work with what's there.

I object to the removal of existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of the second storey of this curved annex to allow for the reinstatement of windows to Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building.

I object to the placement 'of plant in the grounds of St. Marys Church & Graveyard (Recorded Monument (KK019-026115 & KK019-026156) and a Protected Structure in the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City, Ref. RPS B192 (NIAH Ref. 12000130/KK) and adjacent to the Alms Houses (Protected Structures, Ref RPS B193 (NIAH Ref. 12000128/KK and 12000129/KK)).This will include associatedbelow ground pipework connection to the Tholsel'. It's beyond extraordinary that such 'plant' will not be contained in the Tholsel space.

I strongly oppose the Tholsel being set up for use as a shop, ticket office, reception area for any business or attraction or anything other than its public function as Town Hall.

The Town Hall is so called, because it is exactly that... our Town Hall. It's the people's building. If there's space going abegging in the building, we, the people, should discuss, debate, propose and decide how such space could best be used. We could consider it to be used as a venue for information/advice sessions between citizens and councillors: for use by craft, art, community groups, for public meetings. It could house a citizen's forum, book groups, Comhairle na nOg and so much more.

The current proposal is simply unacceptable. It's several steps too far by the Executive. The Town Hall is the Town Hall.

To whom it Concerns,

I wish to register my objection to this project in it's entirety.

This plan is ill-conceived, tawdry and, frankly- tacky.

I object to the removal of railings currently in situ.

I object to the partial encasement of this outside public space with glass walls - or any walls for that matter.

The current Public use of this space could become (behind the railings) could become more encompassing with other less invasive structural interventions.

The nature of a public space like this lends itself to an air of spontaneity and a place where a passing chat or appreciation for Buskers or groups collecting for charity can gather comfortably without feeling hemmed up against an internal office glass wall.

Any glass encasement of this space will destroy the acoustic of this public space and render it useless for spontaneous gathering of groups, musicians etc.

I would point to the Tholsel in Carrick On Suir where this open space remains untouched, and all the better for it.

I would point to an international example of the Loggia dei Lanzi in Florence where a similar public space is used for the exhibition of sculptures - many of which are priceless works of renaissance era greats- the space remains fully accessible to the public both night and day, with no glazed, tasteless ticket office in sight. Obviously these buildings have different uses but the point remains, the 'look' has not been undermined by modern invasive, unnecessary works. Any city attempting to accentuate and highlight their old buildings should not attempt such an intervention.

This plan is but one of a number of plans hatched with Failte Ireland; I point you to the Kilkenny Tourism document presented to the CEO of Failte Ireland some time ago with CEO of KKCOCO Ms. Colette Byrne in attendance, wherein their is a heavy inference that the Kilkenny Trust may take on board the responsibilities of running a tourist facility at the Tholsel in concert with their managing of the Medieval Mile Museum. I submit an argument could be made that these plans in unison should have sought planning permission (I am referring to the mediaeval Mile museum works, the public realm works on hight street, the Parade works, the tholsel plans and the Medieval Garden walk beside old brewery. I submit it could be argued this is an attempt at project splitting as the plans were conceived together.

I also submit that the costings are of concern; and appear to have inflated significantly since mooted in this Kilkenny Tourism Document.

I submit that the planned City scape views platform is a gimmick and pointless, I also submit that the plans for a Dungeon experience documenting the 'other Kilkenny' of, and I quote directly form the Kilkenny Tourism document (which incidentally I had to refer to the Office of the Information Commissioner in order to get such redactions released!) - **'thieves, whores, and Knaves'**. This is further gimmickry and and ads no value to the enjoyment of our City or an understanding to it's complex history. This attempt at a 'chamber of horrors' stunt is just that, a stunt and not worthy of such an August building.

I respectfully submit the above for consideration.

Kind regards,

Paddy Ó Ceallaigh

From: gabriel murray
Sent: 13 March 2019 15:53
To: Tim Butler
Subject: Fwd:Objection to Town Hall Development. Tim Butler.

Dear Tim

I wish to object to .

1"he removal of the 250 year old staircase.city hall.
2'Removal of the statue of John Banim that was installed in 1854.
3.This is in contravention of hertiage act.
4'I have contacted on Taisce on Dept of Heritage and Culture and Royal Institute of Architects.
5',I have attached John Banims bio etc.
6.Please confirm receipt of this objection.Paper copy in post.

Regards

Gabriel Murray

5 Greenfields,
Freshford Road,
Kilkenny
13/03/2019

Planning Section,
Kilkenny County Council,
County Buildings,
John Street,
Kilkenny City.
by e-mail to Tholselplanning@kilkennycoco.ie

RE: *"Tholsel Project – Planning Submission"*

To whom it may concern,

Please see my submissions below.

- Submission: Appropriate Assessment Screening
- Submission: Removal of railings
- Submission: Removal of existing curved stairway
- Submission: Information Display Units
- Submission: Moveable Sign
- Submission: Selling and Shop
- Submission: Availability of documents.
- Submission: Civic Trust

Regards,

Christopher O'Keeffe

Submission: Appropriate Assessment Screening

It is my submission that - the purported Screening is flawed.

As part of the screening assessment of potential indirect impacts affecting Natura 2000 sites there is a potential pathway relating to the treatment of wastewater from the operational phase of the development which are reasonably foreseeable. There is no assessment of which sewerage system and what waste water treatment plant (WwTP) will be used. It not possible to conclude that the proposed development will not add significantly to the loading or to whether the plant is operating above capacity. Therefore the potential for indirect impacts affecting water quality in the River Nore has not been assessed. Given the recent release of 2 million litres of waste into the River Nore SAC there seems to be potential cumulative impacts affecting the Natura 2000.

Submission: Removal of railings

It is my submission that - the railings are one of the last examples of this type of workmanship. Other examples of the type have been previous removed by Kilkenny Council Council as part of other projects and plans.

Submission: Removal of existing curved stairway

It is my submission that - This protected structure should retain the existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level

Submission: Information Display Units

It is my submission that - I object to the Information Display Units as they will block pedestrians and take away from the medieval character of the buildings.

Submission: Moveable Sign

It is my submission that - I object to the Moveable Sign / Sculptural Interpretation as they will block pedestrians and take away from the medieval character of the building.

Submission: Selling and Shop

It is my submission that - I object to the use of the building as a shop or sales area as this will take away from the character of the building.

Submission: Availability of documents.

I note that the "narrative framework full document" is not available.

It is my submission that - all documents which are part of public consultations should be available in all public libraries during the consultation period.

Submission: Civic Trust

It is my submission that - Given that the purpose of this development would seem to be a give away to the Civic Trust, then they as the developer should pay for the costs associated with this proposed development of this important element of our city.

My name is Kevin Flaherty. I livery on John St Kilkenny and I object to the proposed works to be carried out on the Tholsel. I object to a big glass box separating the public space from the public and it's proposed use as a shop/ticket office. I object to the proposed removal of the staircase to facilitate a window as a lift can be fitted to bring it up to accessibility standards can be fitted in the lane behind without any recourse to the removal of the beautiful staircase

An Roinn Cultúir,
Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Department of Culture,
Heritage and the Gaeltacht

Planning Ref: Part 8 Tholsel (Town Hall)
(Please quote in all related correspondence)

1 March 2019

Director of Services - Planning
Kilkenny County Council
County Hall
John Street
Kilkenny

Re: Notification to the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under Article 28 (Part 4) or Article 82 (Part 8) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

Proposed Development: Part 8: Kilkenny County Council, Renovation and restructuring of the Tholsel (Town Hall)

A chara

On behalf of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, I refer to correspondence received in relation to the above.

Outlined below are heritage-related observations/recommendations of the Department under the stated heading(s).

Archaeology

The Department refers to the Council's notification in relation to the above-proposed development and the submission of an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) in support of this Part 8 application (Mr Colin O Drisceoil, (Kilkenny Archaeology Ltd), Licence Nos 18E0413 and 18R0140). On review of the results of archaeological testing outlined in the AIA submitted, and further to an on-site meeting with representatives of Kilkenny County Council, Reddy Architects and Kilkenny Archaeology (October 2018), please find outlined below the archaeological recommendations of the National Monuments Service (NMS) of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG).

As noted in the AIA the groundworks required for the development will impact on subsurface archaeological remains (and possibly in-situ burials) associated with the earlier development of the Tholsel site and the precinct of St Mary's Abbey - within the zone of archaeological potential established around the historic town of Kilkenny.

On review of the AIA, the Department concurs with the detailed archaeological mitigation strategy as outlined in Kilkenny Archaeology's report (Section 9.0 – pages 107-110) which comprises full archaeological excavations within the basement and the footprint of the proposed lift shaft, archaeological monitoring and possible excavation of the service trench

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Development Applications Unit, Newtown Road, Wexford, Y35 AP90
[illegible]
www.chg.gov.ie

across St Mary's Lane and the survey/recording of newly exposed masonry where breaches are to be made and opes to be re-opened.

Therefore the Department recommends that the Archaeological Mitigation Strategy outlined in Section 9.0 of the Archaeological Impact Assessment be implemented in full by way of conditions to this Part 8 application.

Reason: To ensure the continued preservation (either in situ or by record) of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest.

You are requested to send further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) via *eReferral*, where used, or to the following address:

The Manager
Development Applications Unit (DAU)
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Newtown Road
Wexford
Y35 AP90

Is mise, le meas

Diarmuid Buttimer
Development Applications Unit

An Roinn Cultúir,
Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Department of Culture,
Heritage and the Gaeltacht

Planning Ref: Part 8 Tholsel (Town Hall)
(Please quote in all related correspondence)

6 March 2019

Director of Services - Planning
Kilkenny County Council
County Hall
John Street
Kilkenny

Re: Notification to the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under Article 28 (Part 4) or Article 82 (Part 8) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended.

Proposed Development: Part 8: Kilkenny County Council, Renovation and restructuring of the Tholsel (Town Hall)

A chara

On behalf of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, I refer to correspondence received in relation to the above.

Outlined below are heritage-related observations/recommendations of the Department under the stated heading(s).

Architecture

The Tholsel, High Street, Kilkenny, County Kilkenny, is included on the Record of Protected Structures in the Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan 2014-2020 [RPS B43] and is within the scheduled City Centre Architectural Conservation Area. The Tholsel was recorded by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage [NIAH 12000061] with a National Rating Value supported by Architectural, Artistic, Historical and Social Categories of Special Interest.

The Department has no objection in principle to the proposed development and supports any considered proposals to adapt protected structures for reuse, particularly when the objective is to provide a new or enhanced civic amenity.

Prior to discussing the proposal in detail the Department would like to note that there are inconsistencies between the drawings included in Appendix 1 and Appendix 7 of the supporting documentation and, for the purposes of the following observations and recommendations, refers to the drawings in Appendix 1 as the proposed development.

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Development Applications Unit, Newtown Road, Wexford, Y35 AP90
manager.dau@chg.gov.ie
www.chg.gov.ie

The Department recommends that some aspects of the proposal, described below, should be considered in the planning authority's assessment of the Part 8 Application and should be revised in order to mitigate the impact on the character of the protected structure. The Department is willing to review and discuss any revised plans and particulars prior to a decision being made on the Part 8 Application.

GLAZED ENTRANCE RECEPTION

- A detailed assessment should made of the visual impact the proposed glulam framework may have on the protected structure including when the space is lit from within during the day and in the evening. The Department accepts that a glulam framework may contribute to the architectural value of a new structure within the curtilage of a protected structure, as in the cited example of the slopa at the entrance to Leinster House, but a similar glulam framework as a new intervention set within a protected structure may not have a comparable impact on the character of the protected structure. A detailed assessment may inform revisions to the proposed glulam framework with, for instance, a reduced number of simple square-profile transverse arches with good quality lighting suspended from the mid points.
- The entrance into the glazed exhibition reception should be via double doors on the High Street front in order to preserve the sense of symmetry of the façade and the central axis of the plan. The Department suggests that an artistic treatment of the double doors, for instance acid-etched branding, may further enhance the sense of symmetry and central axis.
- The proposed method for ventilating the glazed exhibition reception should be submitted and assessed for visual impact on the protected structure. The Mechanical and Engineering (M&E) report suggests that ventilation may be provided either at the bottom or top of the glazed panels, or via glazed mullions, without recommending a preferred proposed method.
- Detailed drawings for the proposed doors from the glazed exhibition reception and into the council reception should be submitted for agreement in writing prior to any work commencing on site.

INTERIOR

- The applicant should reconsider the orientation of the proposed new staircase to use an anti-clockwise rise allowing for a ceremonial route so the visitor ascends the staircase on the central axis. The staircase should combine high quality contemporary design and finishes with low risers and broad treads in the eighteenth-century manner. Detailed drawings and specifications, including finishes, should be submitted for agreement in writing prior to any work commencing on site.
- The potential of the half-landings and landings of the staircase return to display contemporary art work, exhibitions and/or historical items should be considered and the design amended to accommodate display requirements.

- As the reconstruction of the upper floor is likely to be conjectural, the applicant should consider inserting a glazed screen between the proposed exhibition/gallery space and mayor's parlour in lieu of a partition wall in order to allow for the double-height space to be visible in its entirety. A glazed screen will be clearly interpretable as a new intervention matching the proposed glazed exhibition reception; will allow the proposed exhibition/gallery space to obtain borrowed light from the mayor's parlour; and will allow both rooms to interconnect for civic functions and/or exhibition opening nights. An artistic treatment of the double doors, for instance an acid-etched city/mayoral arms, may add visual interest to the reconstructed upper floor.
- Detailed drawings for the internal fit-out of the mayor's parlour should be submitted demonstrating the form and finish of the proposed wainscoting and the form and finish of the proposed window linings.
- Detailed drawings in respect of the modified east-facing opening in the proposed exhibition space/gallery should be submitted demonstrating the form and finish of the proposed window linings.
- The proposed works will require the removal of a mid twentieth-century terrazzo staircase contributing to the character of the protected structure. The existing terrazzo should be retained at ground floor level and an impression of the curved plan indicated by a floor finish of brass-framed wedges of similarly-coloured terrazzo following the treads of the staircase. Detailed drawings should be submitted demonstrating how evidence of the staircase will be incorporated into the proposed shelving per Section 7.1 of the Conservation Report.
- A new opening is to be formed at the junction of the staircase return and mayor's parlour. However, there are inconsistencies between Drawing P16-336K-RAU-00-ZZ-DR-A-31002 where a section of masonry between the opening and junction is absent and the visualisation on p.22 of the Architectural Design Statement where a section of masonry is present. The form of the proposed new opening should be assessed and finalised. A section of masonry should be retained in order to prevent a visually unsatisfactory junction.
- Detailed drawings for the proposed lift and lift shaft should be submitted. The proposal was presented as a pit-based platform lift requiring no external lift shaft at pre-planning but is described in the Mechanical and Engineering (M&E) Report as requiring a permanent open vent. A vent is not included on Drawing P16-3336K-RAU-00-ZZ-DR-A-31005 or in the visualisation in the Architectural Design Statement. Any external lift shaft should be assessed for its potential impact on the character of the protected structure.

BUILDING FABRIC

- A method statement, as mentioned in Section 7.1 of the Conservation Report, should cover the repointing of the stone work. The repointing should be carried out using a suitable lime mortar based on analysis of surviving mortar which may lie undisturbed behind fixtures and/or rainwater goods. The method statement should

also describe refinishing the east-facing elevations of the protected structure. The work should be based on analysis of surviving substrate mortar, should include the repair, where necessary, of limestone dressings contributing to the special interest of the protected structure (chamfered cushion course; date stone), and should consider a range of coloured finishes to assist with the interpretation of phasing.

- Detailed drawings and specifications, including finishes, for the new and reformed openings on the east-facing elevation should be submitted. The fittings for the reformed openings should be period-appropriate, based on the analysis of a range of archival sources, while the fittings for the new openings should employ high quality modern materials clearly reading as new interventions.
- Samples of the proposed slate recommended in Section 7.2 of the Conservation Report should be submitted.
- Detailed drawings and specifications for the proposed railings encircling the cupola should be submitted. The swan neck detail visible in archival photography should be investigated as it may have significance to the protected structure via a well-known local family as suggested by a similar swan neck detail present on a number of mural tablets in the adjacent Saint Mary's Church.
- A detailed Mechanical and Engineering (M&E) Report should submitted addressing the removal and upgrading of electrical and sanitary services, the lighting and ventilation of the basement, the lighting and ventilation of the glazed entrance vestibule with scope for a reduced glulam framework, &c. The M&E Report should be accompanied by assessments, method statements and specifications, as necessary, mitigating any impacts on the fabric of the protected structure.

GENERAL

- All works to the protected structure should be carried out to best conservation practice as set out in Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines For Planning Authorities (2011) [https://www.chg.gov.ie/app/uploads/2015/07/Architectural-Heritage-Protection-Guidelines-2011.pdf]; the relevant volumes of the Department's Advice Series publications [https://www.chg.gov.ie/heritage/built-heritage/architectural-heritage-advisory-service/advice-for-owners/]; and the General Directions to Contractor in Section 7.3 of the Conservation Report.
- The applicant should engage appropriately qualified and competent conservation professionals, as necessary, to specify the works and oversee their correct completion on site.
- The works should be undertaken by skilled and experienced conservation contractors and specialists with relevant experience of historic materials and techniques.

You are requested to send further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) via *eReferral*, where used, or to the following address:

The Manager
Development Applications Unit (DAU)
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Newtown Road
Wexford
Y35 AP90

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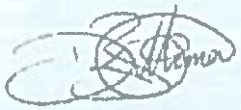

Diarmuid Buttimer
Development Applications Unit

KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

Planning Department, Conservation Section

PLANNING REF: Part 8 02/19

ADDRESS: Tholsel, High Street, Kilkenny

APPLICANT: Finance Department, Kilkenny Local Authorities

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Renovation and restructuring of the Tholsel (Town Hall), High Street, Kilkenny.

In accordance with Part 8, Article 81, of the above regulations, Kilkenny County Council hereby gives notice of its intention to alter and renovate the Tholsel, High Street, Kilkenny for office use and Tourism / Exhibition use. The building will continue to house a Council Chamber, Mayor's Parlour, and Offices. It will also house an exhibition area in the basement and second floor, with limited visitor access to be provided to the roof. The Tholsel (Town Hall) is a Recorded Monument (KK019-026061) and a Protected Structure included in the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City, Ref. RPS B43 (NIAH Ref.12000061) It is located within the Kilkenny City Centre Architectural Conservation Area and within a zone of Archaeological Potential (KK019-026 'City'

STATUTORY PROTECTION:

RPS: B43

NIAH: 12000061

ACA: High Street

ARCHAEOLOGY: Market House KK019-026061, Historic Town KK019-026

APPLICATION RECEIVED ON: 14th January 2019

DATE OF REPORT: 27thFebruary 2019

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

The proposed development will consist of:

- Provision of lift and fire escape stairs to serve all floors within the existing structure (including the basement area).
- Modifications to the rear (eastern elevation) of the building to facilitate the reinstatement of the pitched roof in the area of the proposed lift and stairs and the insertion of new window openings and glazing.
- Removal of railings to the porch area at ground floor level and provision of a new 51sq.m glazed structure, incorporating timber frame structure, to house a Visitor Reception area.
- Removal of existing 77sq.m mezzanine level at 3rd floor level over Mayor's Parlour and Corporate Affairs office. Removal of internal walls to corporate affairs office to create reception/exhibition space.
- Removal of existing curved stairway from ground floor to second floor level, and removal of the second storey of this curved annex to allow for the reinstatement of windows to Mayor's Parlour at the rear of the building. This will also facilitate the provision of a reception area at ground floor level for the civic function of the building and an office at first floor level.
- Refurbishment of existing building, including repairs to masonry and windows, replacement of existing rooflights, re-dressing of lead linings, replacement of railings at roof level, and repairs to roof.
- Renovation of the basement area for the purposes of providing an exhibition space.
- Complete internal redecoration and new internal openings to allow improved circulation within the building.
- Provision of plant in the grounds of St. Marys Church & Graveyard (Recorded Monument (KK019-026115 & KK019-026156) and a Protected Structure in the Record of Protected Structures for Kilkenny City, Ref. RPS B192 (NIAH Ref. 12000130/KK) and adjacent to the Alms Houses (Protected Structures, Ref RPS B193 (NIAH Ref. 12000128/KK and 12000129/KK)). This will include associated below ground pipework connection to the Tholsel.
- Site works associated with formation of connections to existing public foul and surface water drainage and existing utilities as required.

COMMENTS

The current Part 8 application concerns the redevelopment of the Tholsel, also known as the Town Hall on High Street, Kilkenny City. It is proposed to modify the building, by providing exhibition areas in the former Mayor's Parlour and basement, reception area for the MMM at ground floor in the current under croft, while also retaining the first floor chamber for the Municipal district and the top floor for office usage.

The building has gone though many functions since first constructed, namely a toll houses, market house, court house, and as a seat of local government. As a result of a fire in the 1980s, extensive repair work was undertaken: the new mezzanine floors are dated to his time. The building is recognised as a landmark building in Kilkenny County Council's *Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan 2014 - 2020*

The Building

The building will retain its civic function as the chamber for the municipal district, while also now functioning as an exhibition space for the public: The Mayor's Parlour, Municipal District Chamber, and top floor offices will be retained.

The current Tholsel building was constructed in 1761, and is positioned on the site of two previous Tholsel building, the earlier buildings dating to 1579 and 1695. The building is a mid terrace five bay two storey over basement, with large hipped roof and notable soffit overhang at eave level located in the centre of Kilkenny City. The rear of the building contains a single bay return and small three storey curved building, and while both of these buildings date to the 19th century in date, they were modified in the 20th century and now consists of a flat roofed five storey single bay return and a three storey curved section respectively.

The Tholsel building projects into High Street, forcing the public to walk around it or through it. The High Street fronted facade contains a nine bay arcade (five to the front and two on the both north and south facade) of monolith limestone Doric style columns topped with moulded capitals, all which support a series of arches over. Currently there is wrought ironwork with lantern style lights fixed at the arch springing points. The same true arches supported on the Doric columns are found on the north elevation, while the south elevation contains one true arch supported on a square masonry pier and also a much a lower segmental arch, which springs from a square masonry pier between the two arches. This front loggia is entered by steps on all side except for the eastern half of the northern elevation which is sloped, creating an impressive thoroughfare in the under croft of the Thosel first floor. The facade of the building contains Gibbsian style window surround and timber casement windows at first floor level, and a Kilkenny City's Coat of Arms on the south elevation. A strong cornice detail is found at eave level. This loggia also has five round-headed arches forming an arcade from limestone Roman Doric columns with capitals supporting limestone ashlar voussoirs, and wrought iron railings and gate on its eastern side. This covered area contains limestone flagstones.

External Works

It is proposed to replace the current wrought iron railing currently located between the Doric columns on the eastern side of the loggia with a glazed screen in three of the five openings. Such works are to be carefully approached so as to avoid potential damage on the 18th century limestone columns and shall only be undertaken once a methodology has been compiled and under the supervision of the conservation architect. The internal timbers located in this Tourist information section are not viewed as having any major impact on the appreciation of the structure, and both the timber and the glazing are viewed as reversible elements which may be removed in the future.

The works will provide an opportunity to remove the inappropriate banner which has been installed on both the south and north facades of the Tholsel: as St. Mary's precinct is a tourist attraction, containing medieval and post medieval architecture, it is recommended that a signage strategy for the area be compiled which acknowledges its importance. Therefore careful consideration and further discussion concerning lighting and signage is required in order to avoid impact on the character of the building.

The west, north and south facades of the building contain lavishly applied sand cement pointing. As per conservation report the heavy strap pointing should be removed and re-pointed with a suitable lime mortar, samples of which to be approved by the conservation architect. It is interesting to note the poor stone work at first floor level on the High Street elevations, this coupled with the projecting quoin stones, Gibbs style window surrounds and various images of the building being rendered would signify that the building was rendered at first floor level. Images showing the building rendered are as follows:

- "Kilkenny It s architecture and History"by Lanigan, K. And Tyler, G. The sketch of the building is dated 1861 and was sourced from St. Kieran's College
- Archaeological Report,Figure 16 Image titled "14th century market cross (taken down 1771) and Tholsel in 1770" would indicate the building was rendered.
- Archaeological Report, Figure 30, Titled "Tholsel from the south 1860-90" – again the building appears to be rendered at first floor, with wall slates also present.

In addition, the Archaeological Report, Section 5.6 references William Colless ledger

"*to do. By John Blunt for plastering Tholsole windows without*" pg 29

It is also worth noting images from the Exchange buildings in both Waterford and Limerick as per same report: both buildings are rendered at first floor level.

The current roof lights on the Tholsel building are visually intrusive, and shall be replaced with more appropriated detailed equivalents which match the plane of the roof. As per conservation report, the replacement of the inappropriate fibre cement with a Blue Bangor slate will enhance the streetscape and the standing of this centrally located civic building, and is welcome.

Where flagstones in the building are to be lifted, a methodology for recording, numbering, lifting, and re-setting is to be compiled by the conservation architect for the project.

Works to the rear of the building involve proposals to

- Reduce the height of the curved section of the building (located in the south east corner) on St. Mary's lane. This involves returning this section to the height of the original 19th century building. Such work will allow for the re-instatement of the original height timber sash window incurrent Mayor's Parlour. This is discussed further below.

- The five storey single bay return is to be remodelled to accommodate vertical circulation in order to make the building accessible to all. The remodelling here involves removal of a number of floors, and the construction of a central lift shaft with staircase extending from ground to top floor around its perimeter. The submission shows this part of the building was used as a stairwell in 1872, and considering the current office arrangements are later modifications of the space, their removal and the inserting off the lift shaft and stairs are deemed acceptable. Externally the gable of this return contains five, horizontal emphasis windows, these windows are the result of modifying the original 19th century layout: the 19th century construction contained at least two red brick rounded arched windows, which originally lit the stairwell. The current proposal includes a frameless window from fist floor to the top floor. Such a proposal has the potential for further loss of 19th century fabric. Opening up of further works would greatly enhance our knowledge around the potential for encountering the presence of original fabric.

  The current finish detail of the glass, render and copper, while an impressive architectural detail, is viewed as a modern presentation of an older structure: it appears as a new extension to the Tholsel building. There is an opportunity here to present the historic fabric of the return by highlighting the limestone finish (historical images shows this part of the building was not rendered) visible from St. Marys Lane.

As a consequence of reinstating the pitched roof on this return, the hipped roof of the Tholsel building will be reinstated, while, the current square flat unsightly top section of the five storey return will be removed, both are welcomed.

Mechanical ventilation is proposed on the footpath of High Street, this ventilation will be positioned north and south of the Tholsel, and will be positioned where there once was steps leading to the the basement. This detail has to be considered carefully, as it has the potential to set a dangerous precedent for a proliferation of mechanical vents and extractor fans from basement level onto City Centre footpaths, further details of

same are required for this. There may also be an opportunity to delineate these access steps to the basement in the footpath, this should be considered.

Mechanical ventilation and extractor ducts are also proposed for the basement, kitchen and toilets: it is unclear from the submission where these outlets will be positioned, such information is necessary in order to assess the visual impact of such installation on the Tholsel building. Note there must be no cutting of the deep stone cornice and fascia detail at eave level.

The presence of graves, cobbled lanes, possible ditch and possible medieval floors and wall foundation are indicative of a rich archaeological environment. The rich array of artefacts uncovered during test excavation, including coins (one of which is possibly a James II half penny), pins, finger ring and religious medals clearly highlight the value in ensuring archaeological spoil be metal detected.

Internal Works

The interior of the building has been modified over time, largely due its former office use and the devastating fire of the 1980s. Proposals include the removal of the non original mezzanine floor, reinstating original double height spaces where previous lost, the insertion of a lift and stairwell, toilets on the upper floor, and continued use of office space on the top floor.

The curved section of the building located in the south east corner and on St. Marys Lane, was constructed in 1829; in the mid 20th century this section was heightened to accommodate a ceremonial staircase for local public representatives accessing the Chamber. This additional height resulted in the removal of the Mayor's Parlour timber sash windows and blocking-up the opes in the eastern facade of the building. The proposed lowering of this curved section of the building will allow for the reinstatement of these windows, once again allowing natural light into the Mayor's Parlour. Unfortunately one of the negative impacts of this is the removal of the important mid 20th century ceremonial staircase. The staircase is of terrazzo construction and is recognised for its social and technical importance. Given the potential to reinstate the eastern facade window and return this elevation to it former appearance, the removal of the staircase is viewed as a necessary part of achieving this. A detailed architectural survey of the staircase shall be undertaken prior to its removal. It is advised that a salvage and storage methodology be complied for the staircase, and, where possible and presented elsewhere as an important civic feature of local politics in Kilkenny.

The Conservation Architect has recommended that the removal of the stairs leaving approximately 150mm of the stub in situ, and to use copper / brass strips to indicate the presence of the removed stairs. These stubs should be visible upon completion of works and should not be concealed behind stud work. Both are viewed as acceptable, with all work on the stairs being supervised directly by the conservation architect. On the top landing of the stairs, and positioned in the eastern facade wall of the Tholsel (this will be returned an external wall with the current proposals) there is currently a statue of Kilkenny writer John Banim, it is unclear what is proposed for this.

The Mayor's Parlour will have its double height space return, this is welcome.

The frequency for different window styles and design details in the building is to be assessed in detail. In order to retain the appropriate visual appearance of the windows, the glazing shall be single glazing, with shutters being installed where necessary. All historic timber joinery shall be retained, and repaired with suitable matching timber as necessary, such works are to be designed and detailed by the conservation architect.

I agree with the conservation report that dry lining in the building is to be avoided, such details are a short term solution to moisture within historic building and ultimately lead to fabric deterioration. .

RECOMMENDATION

I have no objection to the proposed works to the Tholsel, however I recommend the following comments be addressed

- Historical images and sketches indicate that Tholsel was rendered. The quality of the stone at first floor level, the proud Gibbsian window surrounds and the quoins would also appear to accommodate the rendering of the front facade. The architect and conservation architect are now advised to investigate this further.

- Notwithstanding the likelihood of rendering the front facade of the building, the replacement of cementitious pointing with a Natural Hydraulic Lime or Hot lime mix is advised. The conservation architects report is welcome in this regard.

- Further details are required to be submitted in order to allow a full assessment of the potential visual impact of all mechanical vents and extractors proposed this shall include location on same.

- A detailed architectural survey of the staircase shall be undertaken prior to its removal. It is advised that a salvage and storage methodology be complied for its removal, and, where possible and presented elsewhere as an important civic feature of local politics in Kilkenny

- To ensure the proposed first floor to top floor frameless glazing in the return does not result in further loss of 19th century fabric, further opening ope is required here. Consideration shall also be given to presenting the stonework in this return. The current finish detail of the glass, render and copper, while an impressive architectural detail, is viewed as a modern presentation of an older structure: it presents itself as a new extension to the Tholsel. There is an opportunity here to present the historic fabric of the return by highlighting the limestone finish (historical images shows this part of the building was not rendered) visible from St. Marys Lane.

- Where flagstones in the building are to be lifted, a methodology for recording, numbering, lifting, and re-setting is to be compiled by the conservation architect for the project, the removal of the wrought iron railings also require a method statement.

- All service runs shall avoid direct impact on the historic fabric and shall utilise the current service runs, disused shafts and new limecrete floors where possible. There shall be no chasing of historic fabric

- Due to the national importance of the Tholsel building, and its acknowledgement as a landmark building in Kilkenny City, the presence of a Clerk of Works for the project is required.

- The replacement of the inappropriate fibre cement slate with Blue Bangor slate is recommended. The building is of national significance, and the reinstatement of natural Blue Bangor slate will enhance the buildings standing as a landmark building. Given there is an opportunity to match the hipped roof plane of the Tholsel, it is recommended that conservation rooflights replace the current rooflights. The conservation architects report is welcome in both regards.

- The rich array of artefacts uncovered during test excavation, including coins (one of which is possibly a James II half penny), pins, finger ring and religious medals clearly highlight the value in ensuring archaeological spoil is metal detected.

27th February 2019

Francis Coady

Architectural Conservation Officer