

Memo

To: John Moran, Mayor

From: Vincent Murray, Director of Services, Planning, Environment and Place Making

Date: 27/02/25


Re: Part 8 Proposal, Reference PT8LL180 – The development of a Design and Innovation Hub at Nos. 35 – 39 Nicholas Street (a Proposed Protected Structure (Ref. No.: P.P.S. 2024/A) to comprise artist studios, workspaces, retail area, exhibition space and café/restaurant with associated outdoor area adjoining St. Peter Street. The development will include the erection of new part two storey, part single storey building incorporating the upstanding walls of the medieval house and their associated fabric and features at Nos. 36-39 Nicholas Street, the change of use from residential, refurbishment and renovation of No. 35 Nicholas Street, the demolition of a two storey extension to the rear and its replacement with a three storey extension, the erection of a single storey workshop unit to the rear of No. 35 and all associated site works. This development is within the site of Recorded Monuments, LI005-017006 and LI005-017123, both classified as House-medieval.

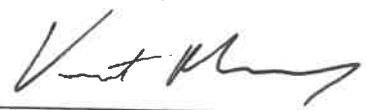
Dear Mayor,

Please find attached for your consideration report prepared in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in respect of the proposed Part 8 works at at Nos. 35 – 39 Nicholas Street, Limerick

The proposal prepared by the Forward Planning Section, Planning and Place-making Directorate, has been evaluated taking into consideration all submissions received. It is concluded that the proposed development is in accordance with the objectives of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

It is recommended that the proposed development be recommended to the Elected Members of the Metropolitan District of Limerick.

Signed: 
Carmel Brislane, A/Senior Executive Planner

Signed: 
Vincent Murray, Director of Services, Planning and Place Making

**PART 8 REPORT & RECOMMENDATION IN ACCORDANCE
WITH SECTION 179 3(a) OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED)**

Re: Part 8 Proposal for the following:

The development of a Design and Innovation Hub at Nos. 35 – 39 Nicholas Street (a Proposed Protected Structure (Ref. No.: P.P.S. 2024/A)) to comprise artist studios, workspaces, retail area, exhibition space and café/restaurant with associated outdoor area adjoining St. Peter Street. The development will include the erection of new part two storey, part single storey building incorporating the upstanding walls of the medieval house and their associated fabric and features at Nos. 36-39 Nicholas Street, the change of use from residential, refurbishment and renovation of No. 35 Nicholas Street, the demolition of a two storey extension to the rear and its replacement with a three storey extension, the erection of a single storey workshop unit to the rear of No. 35 and all associated site works. This development is within the site of Recorded Monuments, LI005-017006 and LI005-017123, both classified as House-medieval.

1.0 Introduction

This report is prepared pursuant to Section 179 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended), and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

2.0 Description of the nature and extent of the proposed development

Development of a Design and Innovation Hub at Nos 35 – 39 Nicholas Street (a Proposed Protected Structure (Ref. No.: P.P.S. 2024/A)) to comprise:

- artist studios,
- workspaces,
- retail area,
- exhibition space and
- café/restaurant with associated outdoor area adjoining St. Peter Street.

The development will include the erection of new part two storey, part single storey building incorporating the upstanding walls of the medieval house and their associated fabric and features at Nos. 36-39 Nicholas Street, the change of use from residential, refurbishment and renovation of No. 35 Nicholas Street, the demolition of a two storey extension to the rear and its replacement with a three storey extension, the erection of a single storey workshop unit to the rear of No. 35 and all associated site works.

This development is within the site of Recorded Monuments, LI005-017006 and LI005-017123, both classified as House-medieval.

2.1 Site Location:

The site is located on Nicholas Street on Kings Islands within the historical medieval core of Limerick City in close proximity to King Johns Castle and St Marys Cathedral. The location marks one of the oldest continuously inhabited areas of the City, with its

origins tracing back to the Viking Age. The site is bounded to the west by Nicholas St and to the south by St Peter St.

Site Location Map



2.2 Public Consultation:

The plans and particulars were placed on public display from the 13th January 2025 until the 10th February 2025. Submissions and observations were invited up to the 24th February 2025.

3.0 Submissions with respect to the proposed development

A total of 5 no. written submissions / observations were received and are listed hereafter:

No.	Name	Date Received
SUB 01	Uisce Éireann	19/02/2025
SUB 02	Fire and Emergency Services Limerick City and County Council	24/01/2025
SUB 03	Timothy O' Sullivan Glynn	20/01/2025
SUB 04	Eilis Walsh	21/02/2025

SUB 05	Farron Flaherty	24/02/2025
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SUB (0) – Uisce Éireann

Submission Summary:

Submission outlines that there is no objection in principle to this development subject to:

- The Council entering into a Connection Agreement with Uisce Éireann to provide for a service connection(s) to public water supply and /or wastewater collection network and adhere to the standards and conditions set out in that agreement.
- All developments shall be carried out in compliance with Uisce Éireann Standards Details and Codes of Practice
- Uisce Éireann does not permit Build Over of its assets. Where the applicant proposes to build over or divert existing water or wastewater services the applicant shall have received written Confirmation of Feasibility (COF) of Diversions(s) from Uisce Éireann prior to any works commencing.

Mayor's Response:

The contents of the submission are noted and will be complied with.

SUB (02) – Fire and Emergency Services, Limerick City and County Council

Submission Summary:

Submission outlines that there is no objection in principle to this development subject to:

- The escape stairs discharging directly to a final exit and not via a corridor.
- The provision of sanitary facilities, in particular wheelchair accessible WC, in compliance with the requirements of Section 1.4 of TGD M 2022.
- A Fire Safety Certificate and Disability Access Certificate applications is required.
- Works shall be designed and constructed in accordance with Building Regulations 1997-2024.
- The Building Control Regulations 1997-2024 apply to all applicable works.

Mayor's Response:

The contents of the submission are noted and will be complied.

SUB (03) – Timothy O' Sullivan Glynn

Submission Summary:

Submission outlines wholehearted support for this proposal identifying it as having enormous benefit for the area and will help to revitalise the street. The submission encourages pedestrianisation of the street where possible and seeks the compulsory purchase of the former Treacy's shop and its reuse potentially as a high quality co-work office space as there is a need for such facilities.

Submission concludes wishing success with the project and the funding application.

Mayor's Response:

The contents of the submission are noted and welcomed.

The Planning Authority will continue to work towards encouraging greater use and upgrades to Nicholas St area subject to proper planning and sustainable development and as funding opportunities arise.

SUB (04) – Eilis Walsh

Submission Summary:

Submission outlines how the observer would like to see the space laid out, function and operate. To include meetings spaces, hot desks for long and short term use, studio space, and artist run space, with equipment to create. The space should operate in an eco-friendly manner, and promote diversity, equity and inclusion.

Mayor's Response:

The contents of the submission are noted. The development is designed in such a way as to provide workspaces and studios which can function in isolation of each other or collectively, to allow for collaboration. The exhibition retail space and café will all provide additional opportunities for activity and collaboration.

SUB (05) – Farron Flaherty

Submission Summary:

Submission expresses strong support for the development as an excellent step towards revitalising Nicholas Street, and warmly welcomes its intended use as a creative space that will contribute to the vibrancy of the area.

- Appreciation expressed by the inclusion of the public realm improvements.
- Commends the careful integration of the sites medieval history into the design which insures the area will remain a valuable cultural and heritage asset.
- Pleased to see the provision of cycle parking in support of sustainable travel.
Request that the steps on St Peters Street include a bike ramp or an accessible ramp.

Mayor's Response:

The contents of the submission are noted and welcomed.

The comments are acknowledged in relation to ramping the St Peter Street steps however level access is provided to the bike storage/patio area from the corner of Nicholas Street/St Peter Street within close proximity to the aforementioned steps and therefore it is not deemed necessary.

4.0 Habitats Directive Project Screening Assessment

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been undertaken by the Heritage Officer of LCCC for the proposed development which examined the impacts the proposed development may have on any nearby European Designated Sites. The application site is located 220m from both the Lower River Shannon SAC and 1.080 km from the River Shannon and Fergus Estuary SPA. Having regard to:

- the scale and nature of the proposed development and the distance from the Natura 2000 sites,
- the location of the development as an infill site in a serviced urban environment,
- the consequent absence of a pathway to the two European sites identified,

The report considers that any effects on the ecology of both the Lower River Shannon SAC site and the River Shannon and Fergus Estuary SPA are unlikely.

Overall it sets out that having regard to the limited scale of the development and the distance of the development from any SAC and or SPA (Natura 2000 sites), the development as proposed based on the best available scientific evidence concludes beyond all reasonable doubt that the proposed works should not exercise a significant effect on the conservation status or conservation objectives of any SAC or SPA either individually or in combination with other plans or projects. A Stage 2 NIS is not necessary.

5.0 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

An EIA Screening Report has been prepared by the Heritage Officer, LCCC and submitted with the application which considered whether an EIA is required for the proposed development. The proposed scheme is subthreshold for the purposes of EIA screening it has therefore, been assessed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the criteria set out in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) for determining whether or not a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The report concludes that due to the nature, scale, location and design of the proposed development there is no real likelihood of significant effects arising as a result of the proposed scheme. Nor is there potential for cumulative or in combination effects to arise. Therefore, the overall conclusion is that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report is not required.

The development does not fall within any of the threshold requirements for a mandatory EIA as specified in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and having regard to the above assessment and the size of the development, located within a modified environment, the Executive is satisfied that the development as proposed does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

6.0 Key Policy Provisions

Limerick Development Plan, 2022-2028:

The Limerick Development Plan sets out the following policies and objectives with respect to acceptable development in the location in question:

Section 3.4.6.6 *St Marys Park and King's Island* of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, identifies a key challenge in this area being the

- Significant number of derelict sites in key locations, particularly along Mary Street and vacant properties, particularly along *Nicholas Street*;
- Presence of under-utilised historic assets, eg. Upstanding remains of Fanning's Castle and the remains of house with carved stone *fireplace on Nicholas Street*.

Objective MK O1 St Mary's Park and Kings Island

It is an objective of the Council to:

- k) Promote the development of *key strategic sites within Nicholas Street* and Bridge Street for potential enterprise development attracting further inward investment.

Objective CGR O4 Active Land Management CGR

It is an objective of the Council to

- b) Support and facilitate the reuse and revitalisation of derelict sites and disused buildings throughout Limerick for residential, economic, community and leisure purposes.

Objective ECON O32 Cultural and Creative Industries

It is an objective of the Council to promote the development of cultural and creative enterprises.

Objective SCSi O31 Art and Culture

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Support the objectives of Limerick Cultural Strategy 2016-2030, Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 and Limerick City and County Heritage Plan 2030;
- b) Ensure the capacity to stage public events is a factor in the provision and design of public spaces;
- c) Promote appropriate public art installations, including the 'Per Cent for Arts Scheme', as part of all major infrastructural projects and also renewal;
- d) Ensure that the potential for the accommodation of creative hubs and clusters is a key consideration in renewal programmes such as within the City Centre Innovation District; the Colbert Station Quarter; the Docklands and in historic Town Centres.
- e) Promote the provision of venues that are flexible spaces that are fit for purpose for theatre, music or dance performance and visual arts in locations that are accessible with respect to public transport, are inclusive in terms of accessibility and would contribute to creative clusters through their location, design and accessibility;
- f) Strengthen existing art and cultural infrastructure;
- g) Promote the provision of studios and specialised facilities for arts and music production, film and digital media, where they would help revitalise the City Centre, historic towns, areas earmarked for regeneration or renewal and as part of renewal programmes or projects;
- h) Consider the protection of spaces and facilities for the arts.

Section 5.7.1 Retail in the City Centre and Suburbs (in Limerick)

Section 5.7.2 Revitalising City Centre Retail

Policy CGR P3 - Level 1 Growing Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick) Mungret and Annacotty

It is a policy of the Council to strengthen and consolidate Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty as a key driver of social and economic growth in Limerick and become a vibrant living, retailing and working City. In accordance with national and regional policy it is a requirement that at least 50% of all new homes will be located within the existing built-up footprint of the settlement, in order to deliver compact growth and reduce unsustainable urban sprawl.

Policy ECON P5 Retail

It is a policy of the Council to support the sustainable long-term growth of the retail sector, in accordance with the Core and Retail Strategies of the Plan, including the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the accompanying Retail Design Manual published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in 2012 and the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick in determining planning applications for retail development.

Objective ECON O1 City Centre

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Ensure retail development complies with the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick as set out in Volume 6.
- b) Protect, promote, support and enhance the role of Limerick City Centre as the primary retail centre in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and Mid-West Region, in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.
- c) Enhance the vitality of the City Centre through a mixture of uses, reuse of vacant units, increased residential population and revitalisation. Retail is an integral part of the City's economy complementing its inherent strengths including innovation, enterprise, tourism, culture and services and has an important array of amenities, vibrancy, liveability/quality of life and quality-built environment. Development shall be designed so as to enhance the public realm and creation of a sense of place.

Objective ECON O15 Active Street Frontages

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Control the provision of nonretail uses at ground floor level in the principal shopping streets of Limerick City Centre, Town Centres and District Centres and within the shopping parades of mixed-use Local/ Neighbourhood Centres.
- b) Encourage the upgrade and refurbishment of existing retail units and the maintenance of original shopfronts, or the reinstatement of traditional shopfronts where poor replacements have been installed, discourage the use of external roller shutters, internally illuminated signs or inappropriate projecting signs.
- c) Prepare Shopfront Design Guidelines, within the lifetime of the Development Plan and ensure implementation of these guidelines on completion.
- d) Promote quality retail design which will be implemented through the development management process due to the dominant visual and use role it plays in a city, town or village streetscape in accordance with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities: Retail Planning (DoECLG, 2012) and the accompanying Retail Design Manual.

e) Promote the revitalisation and reuse of vacant or derelict properties and shop units. Where viable retail cannot be sustained then alternative uses for the property/unit will be considered.

Objective IN O12 Surface Water and SuDS

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Ensure the separation of foul and surface water discharges in new developments through the provision of separate networks within application site boundaries.
- b) Work in conjunction with other public bodies towards a sustainable programme of improvement for riverbanks, back drains, etc.
- c) Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater, including reducing the discharges of pollutants or contaminants to waters, in accordance with the National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021 (DHPLG) and the associated Programme of Measures and any subsequent River Basin Management Plan.
- d) Ensure adequate storm water infrastructure to accommodate the planned levels of growth within the Plan area and to ensure that appropriate flood management measures are implemented to protect property and infrastructure.
- e) Cater for the future developments through public and private driven initiatives where discharge capacity permits.
- f) Address the issue of disposal of surface water generated by existing development in the area, through improvements to surface water infrastructure, including for example attenuation ponds, the application of sustainable urban drainage techniques, or by minimising the amount of hard surfaced areas, or providing porous surfaces as the opportunity arises.
- g) Protect the surface water resources of the Plan area and in individual planning applications request the provision of sediment and grease traps and pollution control measures where deemed necessary.
- h) Require all planning applications to include surface-water design calculations to establish the suitability of drainage between the site and the outfall point and require all new developments to include SuDS, to control surface water outfall and protect water quality in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 11: Development Management Standards of the Plan.
- i) Promote SuDS and grey water recycling in developments and responsible use of water by the wider community, to reduce the demand for water supply.
- j) Require SuDS schemes to be designed to incorporate the four pillars of water quality, water quantity, biodiversity and amenity to the greatest extent possible within the constraints of a given site.
- k) Allow sufficient land take for SuDS when planning the site and consider the region as a whole, in association with adjoining lands and their requirements in designing SuDS. Developers may be required to set aside lands to cater for not only their own SuDS but also regional SuDS.
- l) Promote the provision of suitable blue and green infrastructure and Nature Based Solutions to the surface water disposal in new development, as a means to provide urban flood resilience. This approach capitalises on the potential of urban green spaces and natural water flows, subject to the other planning considerations such as amenity, maintenance, traffic safety, proper planning and sustainable development and environmental requirements.
- m) To prohibit the discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers in order to maximise the capacity of existing collection systems for foul

water. In areas where street scape enhancement or resurfacing is planned, seek to introduce NbSUDS to cater for rainfall run-off at source in order to maximize the capacity of existing collection systems for foul water.

n) Encourage green roofs for the following types of development:

- Apartment developments;
- Employment developments;
- Retail developments;
- Leisure facilities;
- Education facilities.

11.3.11 SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems)

The Council shall encourage green roofs for the following types of development:

- Apartment developments;
- Employment developments;
- Retail developments;
- Leisure facilities;
- Education facilities

Policy ECON P7 Tourism

It is a policy of the Council to:

- a) Promote and facilitate the growth of the tourism industry in Limerick and tourism employment opportunities, through the sustainable development of urban and rural visitor attractions, amenities, facilities, festivals and events.
- b) Support the Limerick Tourism Development Strategy 2019-2023, the Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick, the River Shannon Tourism Masterplan and the Limerick Wild Atlantic Way Gateway City Strategy, which inform the development of tourism in Limerick.

Objective ECON O49 Tourism Facilities and Environmental Sensitive Areas

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that tourism facilities, are not located or designed where they would be significantly detrimental to environmentally sensitive areas, such as designated ecological areas, areas of archaeological potential or historic landscapes either existing or which may arise in the future, as a result of any surveys.

Objective ECON O51 Clustering of Tourist Facilities

It is an objective of the Council to cluster niche tourist/ visitor services and infrastructure, including locations where the service or tourist attraction currently exists.

Kings Island Walled Town Framework (April 2024)

While non-statutory, the King's Island Walled Town Framework serves as a guidance for the transformation of this strategically significant area in Limerick City. Designed to guide and stimulate future investment, this document identifies priority projects and plans, key urban spaces, streetscape enhancements, and the public realm's role in emphasising a sense of place in King's Island, specifically focusing on Nicholas Street.

The Framework identifies both Nicholas Street and the Fireplace Site as key strategic sites within the study area.

7.0 Appraisal

Principle of Development

The site, 35-39 Nicholas Street is located in the King's Island area of Limerick City. The site (known as the Fireplace) comprises two upstanding side walls of a late medieval house, one of which is incorporated into a later c. 1930s/40 two storey house (No.35). The two upstanding walls incorporate a considerable amount of medieval fabric, and retain some key features including the late medieval fireplace at 1st Floor Level. The adjoining structure number 35 is a vacant dwelling in poor condition. In addition the site includes the rear garden areas and the side garden area along St Peter Street.

The archaeology elements were uncovered during the demolition of derelict buildings in the 1990s revealing the architectural and archaeological significance of the site. The Fireplace site is a protected monument (RMP Ref: LI 005-017123). In addition the site including the dwelling at No.35 is a Proposed Protected Structure. (Nos. 35 – 39 Nicholas Street -a Proposed Protected Structure (Ref. No.: P.P.S. 2024/A))

The site is zoned City Centre where it is an objective to consolidate and facilitate the development of the City Centre commercial, retail, educational, leisure, residential, social and community uses and facilities.

The proposed development is for a Design and Innovation Hub to include artist studios, workspaces, a retail area, exhibition space, and a café/restaurant with adjoining outdoor space.

As set out in the Limerick Development Plan (LDP) 2022-2028, a Community/Cultural/Tourism and an Education/Training facility and Restaurant/Café and Retail are all Generally Permitted as per Section 12.4 Land Use Zoning Matrix of the LDP 2022-2028.

In addition the proposals supports a number of specific Development Plan objectives as below, which seek to target investment and renewal on Nicholas Street and the Fireplace site itself.

Section 3.4.6.6 *St Mary's Park and King's Island* of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, identifies a key challenges in this area including;

- Significant number of derelict sites in key locations, particularly along Mary Street and vacant properties, particularly along *Nicholas Street*;
- Presence of under-utilised historic assets, eg. Upstanding remains of Fanning's Castle and the remains of house with carved stone *fireplace on Nicholas Street*.

In addition Objective MK O1 *St Mary's Park and King's Island* states;
It is an objective of the Council to:

k) Promote the development of *key strategic sites within Nicholas Street* and Bridge Street for potential enterprise development attracting further inward investment.

The proposal also supports general objectives of the Development Plan which encourages compact growth and sustainable development through the consolidation

and intensification of the built environment and the redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites within established settlements in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Framework. In addition the proposal promotes and facilitates the use and revitalisation of derelict, vacant and an underutilised sites and disused building in Limerick City for economic, community and leisure purposes.

The location of the subject development is situated between King Johns Castle and St Marys Cathedral, two of the main tourism attractions in the City. The proposed development supports the Development Plan objectives relating to cultural and creative industries and tourism. The proposed development is seen as a catalyst for renewal and regeneration of vacant buildings and will enhance the connection between the city centre, and its former medieval city centre leading towards King John's Castle.

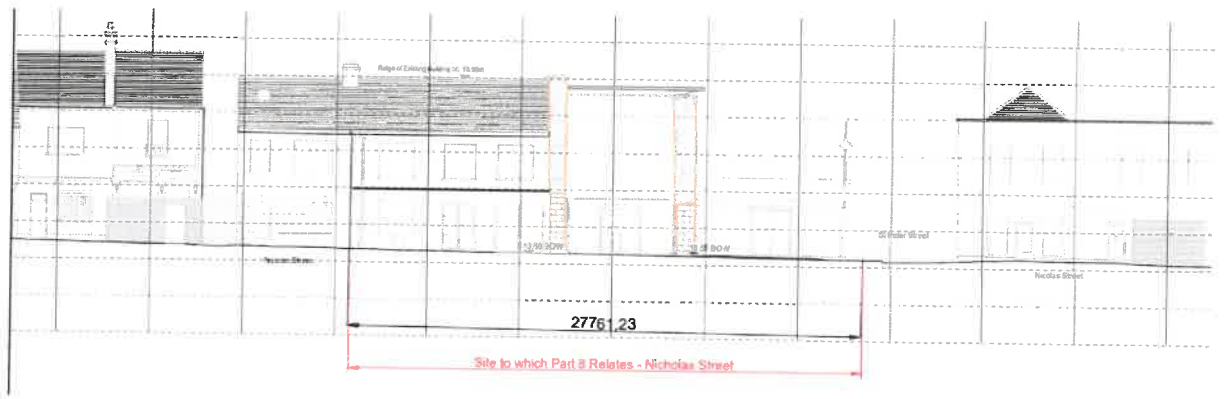
Having regard to the above the proposed development is acceptable in principle subject to normal planning and environmental criteria.

Design/Layout

The subject site is of architectural and archaeological significance. The Fireplace site is a protected monument (RMP Ref: LI 005-017123) and the entirety of the site 35-39 is a Proposed Protected Structure, the site is not located within an Architectural Conservation Area(ACA), however there is an ACA further north west along Nicholas Street, circa 70m from the site.

The proposed design is sympathetic to the historical significant of the site and its features. The design preserves the existing profile of the medieval house/wall and inserts a glass structure between the two upstanding walls with a flat green roof that over sails the southern wall and sits into the northern wall. This approach allows the medieval walls to remain as the main feature of the site/building and provides a 2 storey building within the wall. The flat roof preserves the ridge height of the terrace to which it forms part of and also the wider established ridge line of the existing buildings on the street.





In addition a single storey café/restaurant is proposed on St Peter Street recessed from Nicholas Street creating a small public green area on the corner of St Peter Street/Nicholas Street. This area provides an outdoor amenity space and will contribute to biodiversity of the site and places emphasis on the upstanding medieval wall, which can be observed and enjoyed from this public area. The design of the cafe will provide an active frontage and surveillance onto the green space and onto St Peters Street.

The proposal also renovates and extends No. 35. It is proposed to demolish the existing two storey stairwell return and replace with a two and a half storey accessible return which will house the stairwell lift and provide universal access, to an attic studio. The existing building will be converted into workshops/studios.

To the rear of no.35 a garden area is proposed, this will serve as a biodiversity area and produce plants that may be used for dyes in the creative process on site. A single storey work shop is also proposed to the rear of the site, with a viewing seat in the yard so the public may watch the proceedings inside the workshop.

All buildings to the rear of the site are single storey circa 4m in height so as not to create any undue impact on the adjacent property which sits on lower ground to the east.

An Architectural Design Statement is included with the proposal stating that *"In preserving the existing silhouette of the medieval house and integrating contemporary uses, the redevelopment of the Fireplace site offers a unique opportunity to celebrate Limerick's historical legacy while driving future growth and engagement in the area"*.

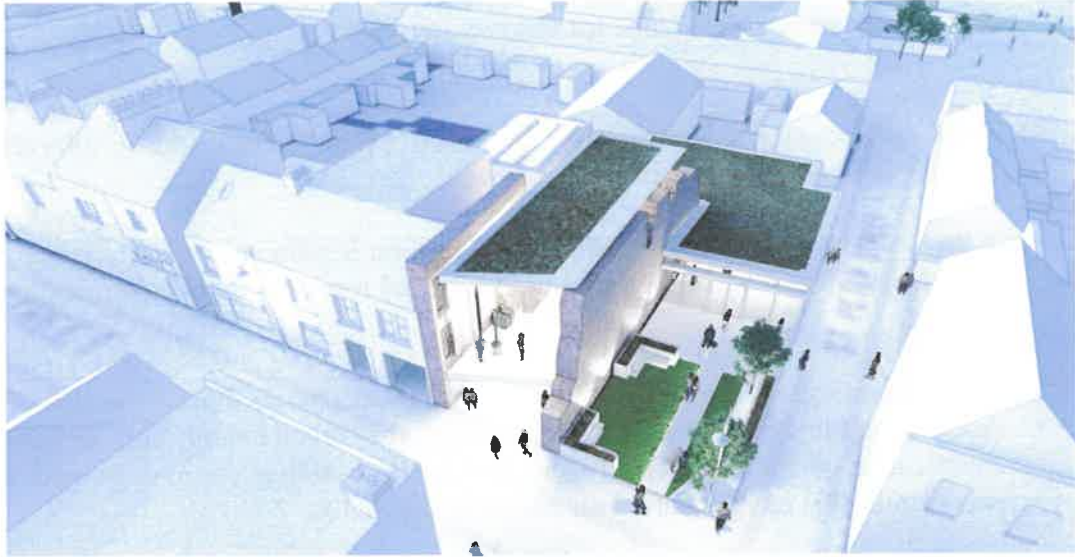
Having reviewed the drawings and layout the design is considered acceptable and sympathetic to the historical context of the site itself and the street.

Materials

Glass serves as the primary building material for the new structure within the existing walls, ensuring that the medieval walls remain the site's dominant feature while creating a modern space. The new structures are designed to incorporate the structural support to the walls and to protect the walls for the future.

Green roofs are planned for the café and central roofs, enhancing insulation and integrating green solutions with the built environment. These roofs help reduce urban heat, foster biodiversity, and comply with Development Plan Objective 11.3.11 SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems), which promotes the use of green roofs for such developments.

The original appearance of the front of No.35 will be maintained with timber doors and windows and plastered finish.



Sustainability, and circularity have informed material design for the proposal with historic materials salvaged from the site and beyond being repurposed in the building. Salvaged cobbles and other reused materials will form prominent features within the site.

Boundary Treatment

The rear boundary next to No.1 St. Peter Street will feature a block wall, 1.8 meters high, tapering down to 1.2 meters from the southern upstanding wall towards St. Peter Street. This design ensures maximum privacy for the adjacent dwelling without overwhelming their front garden area and will seamlessly integrate with St. Peter Street at an appropriate level.

Parking/Vehicular Access

The proposal does not provide any onsite parking, and it is noted that the site is zoned as City Centre and is an infill brownfield site measuring 0.09 hectares.

The Development Plan, Table DM 9(a), outlines car and bicycle parking standards for Limerick City and its suburbs (including Mungret and Annacotty), for infill development and building refurbishment is as follows;

“For building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on sites up to 0.25 hectares, car parking provision may be relaxed in part or whole, on a case-by-case basis, subject to overall design quality and location.”

It is noted that the site is well served by sustainable transport being a short walking distance from bus stops along Bridge Street, Athlunkard Street and Island Road. (Routes 301 & 305). Additionally there are a number of public car parks in the vicinity. Given the city centre location and zoning, the established development pattern, the site's character, being both a Recorded Monument and a Proposed Protected Structure, along with the small site size of 0.09 hectares, it is deemed inappropriate to require a car parking allocation.

Adequate bicycle parking is provided in the patio area in front of the café which will also offer passive surveillance for security purposes.

Archaeology

This development is within the site of Recorded Monuments, LI005-017006 and LI005-017123, both classified as House-medieval.

A Preliminary Archaeological Impact Assessment is submitted with the proposal which sets out the historical background of the walled town of Englishtown and of the site itself.

The archaeological elements of the site were uncovered during the demolition of derelict buildings in the 1990s revealing the architectural and archaeological significance of the site. The report details the building chronology and licenced excavations that have occurred on site since the 1990s.

The report identifies that the site will require additional archaeological assessment to the rear of no. 35, and additional works should be carried out to the remains of the barrel vaults. It further states that the new build will obscure the medieval walls/features in part, and points out that the recess in the street frontage between the two walls does not maintain the building line.

Mitigation is advised as follows.

- Further works should be carried out on the remains of the barrel vault in Nos 36/37. This needs to be recorded and secured

Any piled foundations will penetrate what is left of the barrel vault. The following should be carried out: a

- CCTV survey should be commissioned of the undercroft to ascertain the level of survival and the extent and nature of the backfill. This will inform future treatment and pile foundations
- If, the undercroft is compromised throughout, then, following consultation, it is proposed to backfill the cavity with sand or other agreed reversible or removable material. It is proposed to record, number and dismantle the isolated arch of the undercroft to protect it during site works.
- Advance archaeological testing may be considered for No. 35 Nicholas Street.
- Where possible and appropriate the masonry material stored on site can be re-used as part of the design.
- All elements of the design will require approval from the National Monuments Service, Department of Local Government, Housing & Local Government.
- Research on the history and archaeology of the site should be continued and should feed into future interpretation panels and displays.

The report is noted, and in order to bring the site back into use and preserve it for future generations the development interventions retain visibility externally and internally and only obscure the breached/damaged section of one wall. The design as proposed is seen as an appropriate balance between development and conservation and allows the walls to be the main feature of the design while providing access to the walls both internally and externally such that they can also be enjoyed by the building users and by the passer by. The street frontage recess honestly reflects the remaining profile of the two medieval walls and the ground floor recess aligns with the street.

The mitigation is acknowledged and prior to the preparation of construction drawings, on site archaeological testing will take place as advised to inform construction methods. It is also proposed to reuse the masonry material stored on site as part of the design, as is appropriate.

Conservation & Heritage

A Conservation Report and Heritage Impact Assessment is submitted with the proposal. The report acknowledges that little remains of the former buildings from 36-39 Nicholas Street, with the most significant remains being the two walls of the earlier medieval structures on site. A significant restoration project was carried out on remaining walls c2017. It is stated that the walls now remaining are in good sound structural condition, and the redevelopment of the site is certainly the best solution in terms of not just the streetscape and the local environment, but also in terms of protecting and preserving what remains of the medieval walls. The author believes that the proposed design intervention is appropriate to the principles set out for Recorded Monuments.

In relation to No. 35 Nicholas St which is vacant for many years, it is said to be generally in very poor condition, although does not appear to be a structural risk at the moment. It is stated that the addition of the rear building, and the extension to the rear of No.35 would have minimal heritage impact.

The report states

The new structures are being designed to incorporate the structural support to the walls and to protect the walls for the future, as well as enhance public access and engagement. Subject to final detail, it is believed that the proposal has been carefully designed to showcase the site's rich medieval heritage while incorporating contemporary elements that enhance visitor engagement. The layout reflects a thoughtful balance between historical preservation and modern functionality, offering a seamless visitor experience

Having reviewed the Conservation Report and Heritage Impact Assessment it is concluded that the design and layout proposed is appropriate for the scheme offering a balance between preservation of features of archaeological and architectural heritage with the creation of an aesthetically pleasing building. As previously stated prior to the preparation of construction drawings, on site archaeological testing will take place to inform construction methods, and any construction work on site will be overseen by suitably qualified conservation specialist.

Bat Survey

A bat survey accompanies the proposal and states that a bat roost inspection survey was completed in October 2024. It identified that there are a number of potential entry points for bats (slipped tiles, gaps between soffits/roof, open doors, broken windows etc). Some evidence of bats was recorded internally and externally in the form of deposited insect wings and bat droppings. It concludes that the dwelling may be a possible day roost for bats in summer and is considered to have low bat roost potential. Therefore prior to the commencement of any works onsite at least one bat emergence/entrance survey will be undertaken.

Flood Risk Assessment

The site is not located within Flood Zone A or B as set out in the Limerick Development Plan. The site is located in Flood Zone C, which has a low probability of flooding. Development in this zone is appropriate from a flood risk perspective subject to the normal range of other proper planning and sustainable development considerations.

Services

There is an existing water and waste water connection to No.35. Comments were received from Uisce Éireann stating that the Council shall enter into a Connection Agreement with Uisce Éireann to provide for a service connection(s) to public water supply and /or wastewater collection network and adhere to the standards and conditions set out in that agreement.

Do No Significant Harm (DNSH)

The concept of the “do no significant harm” is defined in terms of its effects on the six environmental objectives of Article 17 of the EU Taxonomy Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2020/852). This is a classification system which determines which activities are sustainable.

A DNSH report is submitted with the application and demonstrates that sustainability and circular economy are to the fore of this proposed project. The assessment has integrated DNSH environmental objectives with the headings of the EIA and AA screening ensuring that there are no gaps in the overall sustainability assessment and has further incorporated that relevant objectives of the Limerick Heritage Plan 2017-2030. It is concluded that the proposed development meets sustainable goals in a number of areas such as;

- development of infill brownfield serviced land thus avoiding dispersed, un-serviced, greenfield development.
- Re-use of on-site material and the circular economy.
- Ecological improvements with green roofs, and native planting and swift boxes.

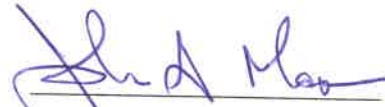
Summary

In conclusion, the proposed development at No. 35-39 Nicholas Street is acceptable and aligns with the policies and objectives of the Limerick Development Plan (2022-2028). The contemporary design approach complements the existing Recorded Monument and Proposed Protected Structure, preserving the site's character and

heritage while enhancing its functionality. The introduction of modern spaces provides versatile and inclusive areas, meeting the evolving needs of the community, workers, and visitors. This balance between heritage sensitivity, functionality, and modern design demonstrates a thoughtful integration that supports the principles of the New European Bauhaus, enhancing beauty, sustainability, and inclusivity. The proposal offers the opportunity for locals and visitors to gain a better understanding of the historical environment, and enhance the connection between the city centre, and its former medieval city centre leading towards King Johns Castle

8.0 Conclusion

Having regard to the foregoing evaluation and the reason and considerations as set out, the proposal is in accordance with the policies and objectives of the Limerick Development Plan, 2022 - 2028 and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Pursuant to Section 179(3)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) the proposed development is recommended to the Elected Members of Limerick City & County Council for their approval.



Mr John Moran

Mayor,

Limerick City & County Council

Date: 28 February 2025

Limerick City & County Council

Re: Part 8 Proposal for the following:

The development of a Design and Innovation Hub at Nos. 35 – 39 Nicholas Street (a Proposed Protected Structure (Ref. No.: P.P.S. 2024/A)) to comprise artist studios, workspaces, retail area, exhibition space and café/restaurant with associated outdoor area adjoining St. Peter Street. The development will include the erection of new part two storey, part single storey building incorporating the upstanding walls of the medieval house and their associated fabric and features at Nos. 36-39 Nicholas Street, the change of use from residential, refurbishment and renovation of No. 35 Nicholas Street, the demolition of a two storey extension to the rear and its replacement with a three storey extension, the erection of a single storey workshop unit to the rear of No. 35 and all associated site works. This development is within the site of Recorded Monuments, LI005-017006 and LI005-017123, both classified as House-medieval.

Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Determination

Pursuant to the requirements of the above Limerick City & County Council is proposing the development Part 8 Proposal, Reference PT8LL180 – The development of a Design and Innovation Hub at Nos. 35 – 39 Nicholas Street (a Proposed Protected Structure (Ref. No.: P.P.S. 2024/A)) to comprise artist studios, workspaces, retail area, exhibition space and café/restaurant with associated outdoor area adjoining St. Peter Street. The development will include the erection of new part two storey, part single storey building incorporating the upstanding walls of the medieval house and their associated fabric and features at Nos. 36-39 Nicholas Street, the change of use from residential, refurbishment and renovation of No. 35 Nicholas Street, the demolition of a two storey extension to the rear and its replacement with a three storey extension, the erection of a single storey workshop unit to the rear of No. 35 and all associated site works. This development is within the site of Recorded Monuments, LI005-017006 and LI005-017123, both classified as House-medieval.

The plans and particulars for the proposed development were placed on public display from 13th January 2025 until the 10th February 2025 in accordance with the requirements of the Part XI of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended).

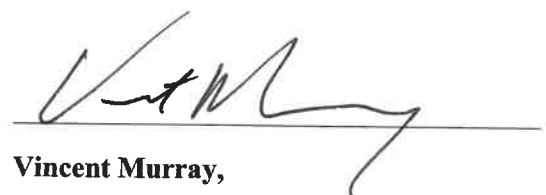
In accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) (“Habitats Directive”) and Regulation 42(1) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended (“Habitats Regulations”), and (inter alia) the Department of Housing Planning Community and Local Government's Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities (2010), screening of the development for Appropriate Assessment was carried out by the Heritage Officer of Limerick City and County Council.

An AA of the proposed development is not required as it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information provided in the Screening report, having regard to that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a

significant effect on any European sites. Therefore, this proposed project does not need to proceed to Stage II of the Appropriate Assessment Process. The Screening has determined that there is no potential for likely significant effects on any European sites.

For the reasons outlined above it is considered that the application for consent for the proposed development does not require an Appropriate Assessment or the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS)

Order: That Limerick City & County Council as the Competent Authority having considered the AA Screening Report prepared by the Heritage Officer/Ecologist of Limerick City and County Council makes a determination that, when considered either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment will not be required to accompany the proposal for the development of a Design and Innovation Hub at Nos. 35 – 39 Nicholas Street (a Proposed Protected Structure (Ref. No.: P.P.S. 2024/A)) to comprise artist studios, workspaces, retail area, exhibition space and café/restaurant with associated outdoor area adjoining St. Peter Street. The development will include the erection of new part two storey, part single storey building incorporating the upstanding walls of the medieval house and their associated fabric and features at Nos. 36-39 Nicholas Street, the change of use from residential, refurbishment and renovation of No. 35 Nicholas Street, the demolition of a two storey extension to the rear and its replacement with a three storey extension, the erection of a single storey workshop unit to the rear of No. 35 and all associated site works. This development is within the site of Recorded Monuments, LI005-017006 and LI005-017123, both classified as House-medieval.



Vincent Murray,

Director of Services,

Planning and Place Making

Date:

Limerick City & County Council

Re: Part 8 Proposal for the following:

The development of a Design and Innovation Hub at Nos. 35 – 39 Nicholas Street (a Proposed Protected Structure (Ref. No.: P.P.S. 2024/A)) to comprise artist studios, workspaces, retail area, exhibition space and café/restaurant with associated outdoor area adjoining St. Peter Street. The development will include the erection of new part two storey, part single storey building incorporating the upstanding walls of the medieval house and their associated fabric and features at Nos. 36-39 Nicholas Street, the change of use from residential, refurbishment and renovation of No. 35 Nicholas Street, the demolition of a two storey extension to the rear and its replacement with a three storey extension, the erection of a single storey workshop unit to the rear of No. 35 and all associated site works. This development is within the site of Recorded Monuments, LI005-017006 and LI005-017123, both classified as House-medieval.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Determination

Pursuant to the requirements of the above Limerick City & County Council is proposing the development of a Design and Innovation Hub at Nos. 35 – 39 Nicholas Street (a Proposed Protected Structure (Ref. No.: P.P.S. 2024/A)) to comprise artist studios, workspaces, retail area, exhibition space and café/restaurant with associated outdoor area adjoining St. Peter Street. The development will include the erection of new part two storey, part single storey building incorporating the upstanding walls of the medieval house and their associated fabric and features at Nos. 36-39 Nicholas Street, the change of use from residential, refurbishment and renovation of No. 35 Nicholas Street, the demolition of a two storey extension to the rear and its replacement with a three storey extension, the erection of a single storey workshop unit to the rear of No. 35 and all associated site works. This development is within the site of Recorded Monuments, LI005-017006 and LI005-017123, both classified as House-medieval.

The plans and particulars for the proposed development were placed on public display from 13th January 2025 until the 10th February 2025 in accordance with the requirements of the Part XI of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended).

Having regard to EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (the EIA Directive), the guidance contained in the Department of Housing Planning Community and Local Government's "Impact Assessment Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development" (2003), Screening of the development for Environmental Impact was carried out by the Heritage Officer of Limerick City and County Council.

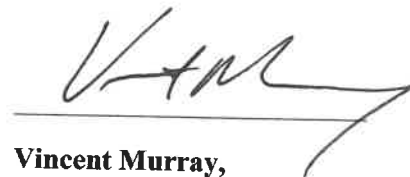
The Screening has been carried out in accordance with the EIA Directive and to Annex I, II and III of that Directive, which sets out requirements for mandatory and sub-threshold EIA. The proposal has been assessed in accordance with the criteria for sub-threshold development to determine the potential impact on the environment of the project.

The subsequent EIA Screening Report concludes that the development has been assessed under the environmental criteria outlined in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and an EIAR is not required. In conclusion, it is considered that the

proposed development will not have any likely significant impacts on the environment given the nature and scale, location and design of development. All recommended mitigation measures and standard practices will be employed throughout the construction phase of the development to ensure that the proposed development will not create any significant impacts on the quality of the surrounding environment.

For the reasons outlined above it is considered that the proposal will not present a risk to the environment. As such this screening exercise concludes that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required for this project.

Order: That Limerick City & County Council as the Competent Authority having considered the EIA Screening Report prepared by Heritage Officer/Ecologist of Limerick City and County Council, makes a determination that an Environmental Impact Assessment will not be required to inform the development of a Design and Innovation Hub at Nos. 35 – 39 Nicholas Street (a Proposed Protected Structure (Ref. No.: P.P.S. 2024/A)) to comprise artist studios, workspaces, retail area, exhibition space and café/restaurant with associated outdoor area adjoining St. Peter Street. The development will include the erection of new part two storey, part single storey building incorporating the upstanding walls of the medieval house and their associated fabric and features at Nos. 36-39 Nicholas Street, the change of use from residential, refurbishment and renovation of No. 35 Nicholas Street, the demolition of a two storey extension to the rear and its replacement with a three storey extension, the erection of a single storey workshop unit to the rear of No. 35 and all associated site works. This development is within the site of Recorded Monuments, LI005-017006 and LI005-017123, both classified as House-medieval.



Vincent Murray,

Director of Services,

Planning and Place Making

Date: