

**Lismore Boutique Hostel,
Main Street,
Lismore,
Co. Waterford.
P51 KP38**

Part 8 Pre-planning Report

October 2024



Former Bank of Ireland Building West Street, Lismore

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Overview

Lismore is in the West of County Waterford located where the N72 crosses the River Blackwater at the foot of the Knockmealdown mountains. Dungarvan is 21km to the east and Fermoy is 24km to the west. The 2022 census puts the population of Lismore at 1,347.

The town was designated as a Heritage Town in 1991 by the then Bord Failte which has assisted in the promotion of Lismore both nationally and internationally. Historically Lismore in existence since the 7th century. In 653 St. Carthage founded a monastery in Lismore and helped establish the town as seat of learning. As a University Town Lismore had a reputation as a European seat of learning on a par with Oxford, Cambridge or the Sorbonne.

The former Bank of Ireland Site in Lismore Co. Waterford was acquired by Waterford City and County Council in 2022. While it remained a bank until 2021, the living accommodation has not been in use since 1999. In April 2024 part 8 planning was granted to construct 5 glamping pods to the rear of this site as a short stay accommodation facility (R2024/14). This was the first phase of the overall proposal which has been successful in its application for funding under the Leader Programme and has also received funding from the community recognition fund. Construction works will commence towards the end of 2024 for opening in Q2 2025.

Phase 2 of the overall project involves the regeneration of the main building itself to provide a short stay hostel accommodation facility. This will complement the Glamping pods to the rear of the main building (see site location below)



Fig 1.1 – OSI Map of Site Location and Red Line Boundary.

The front of the building is parallel to the N72 (West Street) and wraps around onto New Street. The proposed development will be focused on the main building.

The overall project must be completed in this sequence due to the available funding streams as well as the levels of investment required in order to achieve optimum regeneration of the site and the building. There is also a need to create early financial viability and business sustainability for the new venture. The Glamping Pods have recently been granted funding by the Leader Programme and these are expected to be operational in Q2 of 2025. It is intended that the final product will be operated as a social enterprise and as a collaborative endeavour between WCCC the newly formed local community partner Lismore Town Association.

1. Scheme Proposal

The proposal is to redevelop the former Bank of Ireland building into a boutique style short stay tourist accommodation facility with a mixture of guest bedrooms and guest suites to accommodate up to 12 people. Also included will be a dining area, a kitchen and storage space which will also service the glamping pods in the rear garden. While the primary function of this facility in particular during the summer season is for short stay tourist accommodation, where demand arises longer stay letting will be considered. This scheme is in line with National Policy aimed at reducing vacancy and dereliction in towns and villages around Ireland, giving historic and protected structures a new and valuable purpose. Lismore is a heritage town and has for a number of years suffered from a lack of tourist accommodation in the town. There is also a significantly high portion of vacant buildings in the town. This proposal will deliver much need tourist accommodation and also act as a catalyst to stimulate further regeneration in the town.

Waterford City and County Council have a strong track record of driving successful heritage-led regeneration projects. The acquisition and redevelopment of strategically important derelict buildings and vacant sites at Cathedral Square and Chairman's Arch in the City have provided social housing, a new and improved public space, and the creation of a new and improved pedestrian link connecting the quays and the Museum offerings to the City's main retail shopping streets to the west. The refurbishment of The Alms-houses in Tallow, and Waterford Gallery of Art and the works ongoing in Cappoquin under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund are exemplars of heritage led regeneration.

2. Development Policy

Within the current WCCC Development Plan 2022-2028, Lismore is recognised as an architectural conservation area. The town has long been associated with cultural and ecclesiastical development and has established itself as a heritage town. The Castle and associated gardens continue to attract large numbers of visitors annually and the Tourist Information office which is housed in the Heritage Centre provides a wealth of local information to visitors.

A number of festivals are held in Lismore each year including Lismore Music Festival, Immrama Festival of Travel Writers. The scientist Robert Boyle was born in Lismore and the Robert Boyle Summer School also brings world-leading scientists and historians to Lismore annually to discuss a wide range of topics relating to Boyle and his works. The festivals and summer school are now established on the festival calendar and attract large numbers of visitors to the locality each year.

The former Bank of Ireland building is listed as a protected structure under record number RPS **WA 750793**. It is also included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) (ID 22809043).

The proposal addresses the following Development Policy Objectives as identified in WCCC Development Plan 2022 – 2028,

Economic Policy Objectives:

- **ECON 04, City and Town Centre First Approach**

We will support national policy as stated in Town Centre First: A Policy Approach for Irish Towns (DHLG&H/ DRCD) 2022 across Waterford City and County. When considering advancing local authority initiatives, and submitted development proposals, we will adopt a city and town and city centre first approach in a manner consistent with the principles of compact growth and mixed-use development, as committed to in 'Town Centre First'. We will support and enable vibrant and viable centres to accommodate a diverse range of commercial, community, heritage, riverside/ marine, amenity and residential uses to ensure they fulfil their role in supporting sustainable communities. Where proposals are not appropriate to, or cannot be accommodated in a settlement centre, we will adopt a sequential approach to identify the most appropriate location in line with the policies and development management standards of the Development Plan. To this end, the Council will promote, facilitate, and undertake works and initiatives aimed at:

An integrated and 'whole of local government' approach to packaging relevant funding schemes (e.g., TVRS; Outdoor Recreation; FLAG; CLAR; URDF; RRDF) towards town/ village renewal/ rejuvenation plans.

Promoting a 'Town Centre First Approach' founded on the 'Collaborative Town Centre Health Check Program' as set out in the Guidelines and utilising a cross departmental approach to address identified issues.

Incentivising the regeneration, upgrading and reuse of underused and vacant building stock.

- **ECON 05 Collaboration**

In providing this leadership role, the Council will foster a whole of local government collaborative approach to proactively, engage with communities, stakeholders, sectoral interests and adjoining authorities to achieve collective support and successful implementation of the Development Plan, in line with the policies and objectives set out in national, regional and local strategies.

- **ECON 06, Regeneration**

The Council will facilitate and participate in regeneration projects so as to revitalise under-utilised business parks and industrial estates and promote the regeneration of obsolete and/or under-utilised buildings and lands that could yield economic benefits and/or social enterprise, with appropriate uses, subject to compliance with the policies and development management standards of the Development Plan

- **ECON 07, Active land management**

To carry out the functions of the local authority in a co-ordinated manner in order to assist in the proactive targeting of underutilised, vacant and derelict lands and buildings, and general building stock, in pursuing the achievement of the policy objectives of this Development Plan, and in order to facilitate an Active Land Management approach to the sustainable growth and development of Waterford City and County. This will be achieved/ assisted by:

The acquisition by agreement or compulsory purchase, of vacant, derelict or underutilised sites or buildings, in order to address incidents of urban decay and vacancy, ensure revitalisation and conservation of our built heritage; regeneration of underutilised sites/ buildings, and bring about long-term economic and social/ community development and sustainability.

- **ECON 22 Sustainable Tourism**

We will cooperate with various stakeholders and tourism agencies to build on the strengths of Waterford City as the regional capital, Dungarvan as a Key Town and County Waterford in their promotion as a tourism destination of choice. To this end, we will facilitate and encourage:

Sustainable tourism 'products' and activities/ attractors in appropriate locations which are based on and reflect the city and county's distinctive history, natural and/ or cultural heritage, agri-food, marine and horticultural sector, and outdoor pursuits and recreation.

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The proposal also addresses Heritage Objectives as identified in WCCC Development Plan 2022 – 2028,

Heritage Policy Objective:

- **BH 02 Supporting our Built Heritage Assets**

To promote the sustainable reuse of protected structures for any such purpose compatible with the character of the structure. The Planning Authority may, where considered appropriate, relax use zoning and other site development restrictions and may grant exemption from or reduce the amounts of development contributions payable in order to secure the protection and conservation of protected structures or historic structures within ACAs and by way of reduction of development levies for improvements to Protected Structures. These restrictions may be relaxed and development contributions reduced or exempted where the protected structure will be rehabilitated to a high standard, where the special interest, character and setting of the building is protected and where the proposed use and development is consistent with conservation policies and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. In such cases the proposed development shall be open for consideration notwithstanding the current zoning objective for the site and therefore shall be considered as not materially contravening the Development Plan.

- **BH 05 Architectural Conservation Areas**

It is the policy of the Council to:

Achieve the preservation of the special character of places, areas, groups of structures setting out Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA).

Protect the special heritage values, unique characteristics and distinctive features, such as shopfronts within the ACA from inappropriate development which would detract from the special character of the ACA.

Prohibit the demolition of historic structures that positively contributes to the distinctive character of the ACA.

- **BH 06 Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment**

It is the policy of the Council when considering development which may have a significant impact on protected structures, its setting or curtilage or have an impact on an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), that the proposal be accompanied by an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) detailing the potential impact of the development on the architectural heritage.

- **BH 08 Reusing our Heritage Buildings**

It is the policy of the Council to encourage sympathetic development or reuse of historic buildings to promote heritage led economic growth and regeneration whilst not adversely detracting from the building or its setting. Any proposals shall respect features such of the special architecture and historic character by appropriate design, materials, scale and setting.

- **BH 13 Vacant and Derelict Structures**

It is the policy of the Council to encourage the sensitive redevelopment of vacant and derelict sites within the ACA and historic cores of city, towns and villages whilst promoting a high standard design which represents urban plots, roof lines, vistas and streetscapes.

- **BH 13 Reuse of Building Stock**

During the lifetime of the Development Plan we will carry out an audit of all protected structures in our ownership with a view to securing uses that are compatible with the character of the individual Protected Structure.

3. Development Assessment

3.1 Site Location

This Part 8 development is located on West Street in Lismore town. The building is a detached two storey structure with an L-shaped plan. It has a floor area of approximately **411 m²** which includes the bank, associated vault and offices on the ground floor while the upper floors are predominately residential. The rear garden is to be developed as a glamping pod accommodation offering and the grounds also offer a private garden to the Northeast end. The high boundary wall gives the site a very private setting.

3.1.1 Public Transport

The proposed development is located on the N72 in Lismore which is serviced by the local bus route. The bus stop for this service is across the road from this development. This connects with Dungarvan which is serviced by regional and national routes to Cork and Waterford with onward connections to other destination by bus and train. The Local Link connection to Dungarvan has 15 daily services to/from Dungarvan (Mon to Sat) and 8 services on Sunday. It is the highest use local bus service in the county.

3.1.2 Tourism

Lismore is based primarily on retail and tourism related activities. As a heritage town it has much to offer in terms of historic buildings, beautiful walks and a scenic hinterland. There are many offerings for tourists such as guided walks, playing golf, canoeing on the blackwater or attending one of the many festivals in the town. This application will help support the tourism trade in Lismore which has suffered significantly from the lack of accommodation in and around the town for several years. Lismore Castle is also a significant tourism partner and a significant visitor attraction along with its famed gardens and highly renowned Lismore castle Arts centre.

3.1.3 Health

University Hospital Waterford is located approximately 70km from the site.

UPMC Whitfield Private Clinic is located approximately 64km from the site.

Dungarvan Hospital and the Primary Care centre are only 24km from the site.

There are a number of medical practices in the Lismore/Tallow area.

3.1.4 Sports and Amenities

Lismore GAA and Lismore Golf Club are within 2km of the site. The Lismore tennis club is across the road from the site as is the local community centre which hosts a number of gymnasium-based activities and services. Lismore Heritage Centre is only 500m from the development. The wider West Waterford area particularly the Knockmealdown Mountains and the Blackwater River and Valley, is a growing hub of outdoor recreational activity and services with the recently redeveloped St. Declan's Way and the emerging Blackwater River Blueway being significant examples of a developing sustainable tourism product requiring significant investment in tourism accommodation and support services.

3.1.5 Commercial Enterprise

The building is located in the town close to food/beverage, hospitality and retail business enterprises. The envisaged tourists/visitors staying at the new facility will increase the revenue of local businesses and have significant impact in respect of local secondary economic activities such as restaurants cafes, hostelrys, food producers and providers, laundry services, transport providers etc.

4. Site Appraisal

4.1 Site Location

The site is located in Lismore town at the junction of New Street with West Street. The area of the site measures 1,983m² (0.49 acres). It falls within an area of Architectural conservation but is outside the zone of Archaeological Potential. A full assessment of the site and the proposed development was carried out by Daniel Noonan, Archaeological Consultancy, Ringwood House, Summerfield, Youghal, Co. Cork as part of the planning approval for the Glamping Pods (**Resolution Number R2024/14 and planning reference P8 05/24**). An updated statement is included in this application.

4.2 Planning & Zoning

The former Bank of Ireland site is zoned Town Core Zone (TC) within the current Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022-2028. This zoning provides for the development and enhancement of town core uses including retail, residential, commercial, civic, and other uses.

There are three historical planning applications associated with the site as follows:

- Planning Ref. **93289** (01.01.1993) West Street Lismore. Conditional approval.
Erection of new advert signs on front of premises.
- Planning Ref. **97589** (11.08.1997) West Street Lismore. Permission.
Erection of two storey pitched roof extension including toilets canteen and stairway.
- Planning Ref. **07829** (31.05.2007) West Street Lismore. Conditional approval.
Construction of a ramp railing and steps at the entrance of the bank.

4.3 Protected Structures and Archaeology

The site falls within the boundary of the Architectural Conservation Area in Lismore (see the black dotted line in Fig 4.1 below), but outside the zone of Archaeological Potential (red dotted line in Fig 4.1 below).

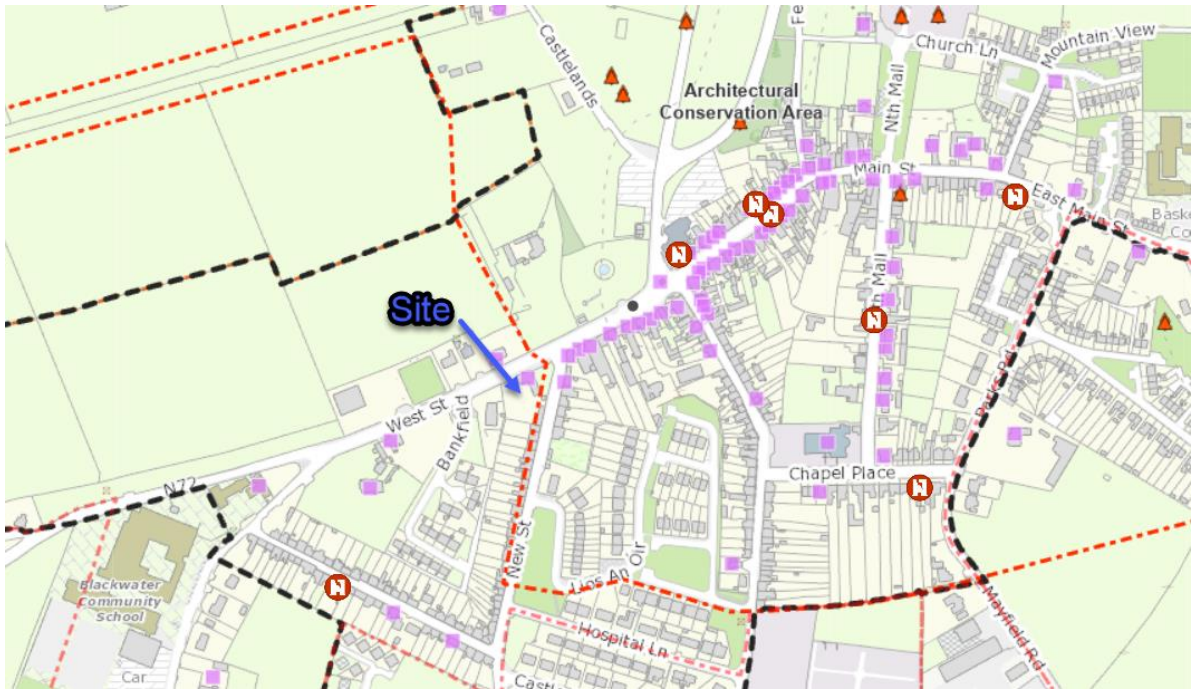


Figure 4.1 showing areas of Archaeological interest.

The former bank of Ireland building is a protected structure **RPS WA750793** built circa 1870 originally and renovated in 1980. A site assessment and report carried out by Consultant Archaeologist Dan Noonan shows no evidence of anything being detected on site and no site investigation requirement. However, the mitigation is to carry out site monitoring during any clearance or construction works. His full report and recommendations are included as a supporting document in this application.

4.4 Services & Accessibility

4.4.1 Potable Water

Waterford City and County Council records show the site is fully serviced. The mains water and combined sewer are connected from New Street.

4.4.2 Foul Water & Storm Water

Records show foul water and combined sewers within the vicinity of the subject site. See Fig 4.2 below.

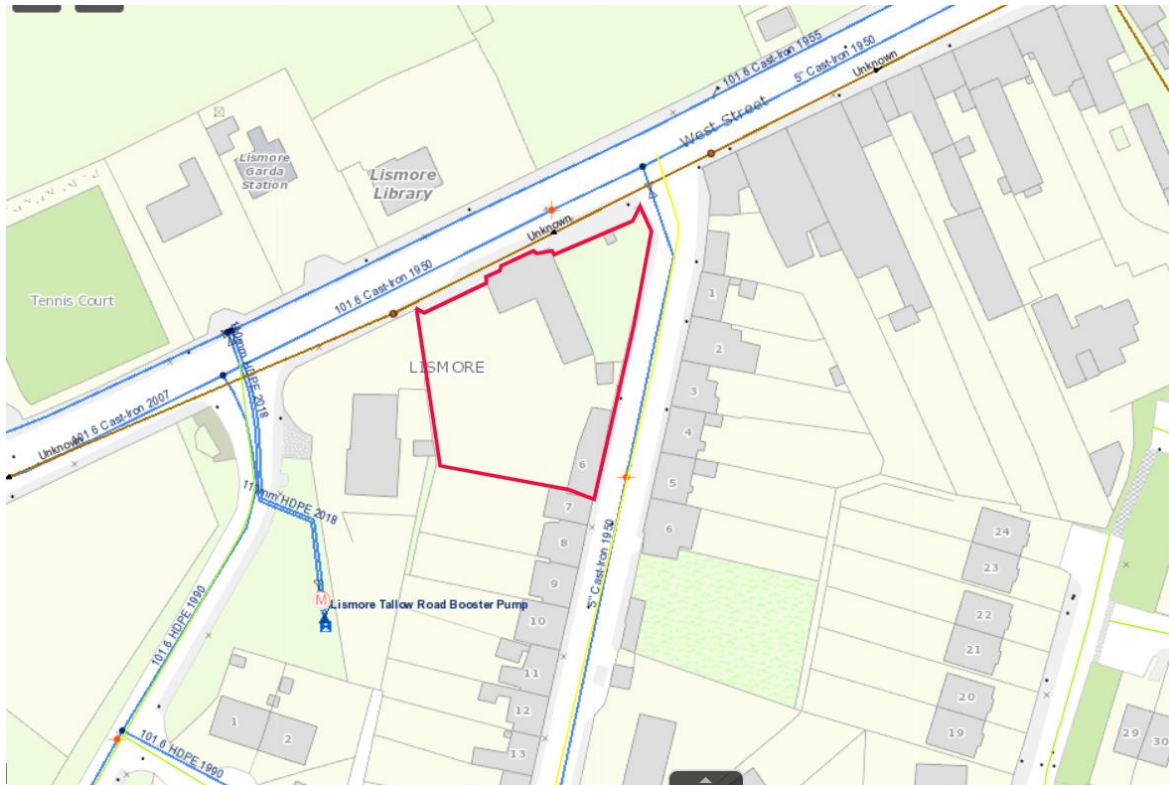


Fig 4.2 – Existing Sewer Network

4.4.3 Flood Risk

The subject site is not located within a flood zone according to the Waterford County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the OPW Flood Maps for the area.

4.4.4 Vehicular Access

The site fronts onto the N72 West Street where street parking is available. The rear vehicular access is from New Street which will be used for the glamping pods facility and for deliveries. New Street is within the 50kph speed limit. As the existing entrance is part of a protected structure some modifications on the footpath with bollards and by the inclusion of double yellow lines either side of the entrance to prevent vehicles parking and obstructing the sight lines has been agreed with the roads section. This is included in the proposed drawings.

The height restriction (2.5m approx.) will prevent large vehicles delivering to site and an alternative is to park on street nearby and use trollies to make deliveries when required. Also, Emergency services cannot access the site but can park at the entrance. Arrangements will be made to collect bins from West Street rather than New Street as the footpath is narrow and the bins would compromise pedestrian movements.

Internal roads will be 3.0m in width and constructed in accordance with DEMURS.

4.5 Environmental Impact

Construction of the proposed project will have no negative impact on the existing facilities and only a very minor impact on the surrounding area.

The proposed development is for a tourism offering comprising of 5no. pods, access, services etc. and is not a type of development included for under Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. Based on the information submitted with the application, Waterford City and County Council has considered the nature, size and location of the proposed development in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations and is satisfied that EIA is not required.

The Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment concludes that the project is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any European Sites.

4.6 Site Constraints and Abnormalities

The former Bank of Ireland building has been vacant for a number of years and is gradually falling into a state of dereliction. It is a protected structure, and the intention is to sensitively bring it back into use as a boutique hostel style accommodation offering. The overall plan for the site will be completed in a number of phases. Phase 1, the glamping pods was granted planning in April 2024 and is expected to be completed in Q2 2025. Phase 2 involves the redevelopment of the main building with likely completion in Q2 2026.

The site is centrally located in Lismore, and it offers a wonderful opportunity to provide a service in the town to meet a much-needed demand. It will help support the community in steering the future of their town and empowering them to make decisions on the most important concerns in Lismore.

As the building is located within an Archaeological Conservation Area, monitoring will be carried out during any excavation works on site. Access to the site will be provided from New Street which is an existing access point to the rear garden and mitigation measures are included due to restricted sight lines.

Prepared by:

Conor O Neill
Senior Executive Engineer
Rural Economic Development,
Waterford City & County Council

Appendix A – Full list of supporting documents and drawings.



The documents and drawings that accompany this Part 8 report in support of the application are as listed below:

- WC&CC Pre-planning report
- Newspaper Notice
- Site Notice
- EIA Screening
- AA Screening
- Archaeological Assessment and accompanying letter
- Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA)
- List of drawings on next page

Drawing No.	Scale	Description
1001	1:1000	Site Location Map
1002	1:500	Existing Site Layout
1003	1:100	Existing Ground Floor Plan
1004	1:100	Existing First Floor Plan
1005	1:100	Existing Second Floor Plan
1006_A	1:100	Existing Roof Plan A
1006_B	1:100	Existing Roof Plan B
1201	1:100	Existing North Elevation
1202	1:100	Existing South Elevation
1203	1:100	Existing East Elevation
1204	1:100	Existing West Elevation
1301	1:100	Existing Section A
1302	1:100	Existing Sections B & C
1007	1:500	Proposed Site Layout
1008	1:100	Proposed Ground Floor Plan
1009	1:100	Proposed First Floor Plan
1010	1:100	Proposed Second Floor Plan
1011_A	1:100	Proposed Roof Plan A
1011_B	1:100	Proposed Roof Plan B
1205	1:100	Proposed North Elevation
1206	1:100	Proposed South Elevation
1207	1:100	Proposed East Elevation
1208	1:100	Proposed West Elevation
1303	1:100	Proposed Section A
1304	1:100	Proposed Sections B & C

DEVELOPMENT UNDER SECTION 179 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT, 2000 AND NOTICE PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF PART 8, ARTICLE 81 & ARTICLE 120(3) OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001, AS AMENDED

Notice is hereby given that Waterford City and County Council propose to develop a Boutique Hostel at the former Bank of Ireland Building, West Street, Lismore County Waterford, P51 KP38 (a protected structure, RPS WA750793). This is an expansion to the preceding part 8 approved on the same site for Glamping Pods in the rear garden (P8 05/24).

In accordance with Part 8, Article 81 of the above Regulations, Waterford City & County Council hereby gives notice of proposals to carry out development works at the former Bank of Ireland, West Street, Lismore, County Waterford P51 KP38. The **Lismore Boutique Hostel** shall include kitchen and dining area, storage and bedroom on the ground floor with bedroom accommodation on the first and second floors.

The development will consist of:

- Building conservation and refurbishment works as necessary to the roof, doors and windows of the former Bank of Ireland building, West Street, Lismore.
- Works to the side garden, side entrance and internal floor at side entrance to provide for a universal access to en-suite bedroom on the ground floor.
- Works to first and second floors to provide en-suite bedroom accommodation.
- Alterations to the rear vehicular entrance to allow for safe access and egress of vehicles onto New Street.
- Hard and soft landscaping to side garden.
- Provision of plant room spaces associated with mechanical & electrical installation.
- Photovoltaic panels to roofs facing the garden.
- Connection to existing site services.
- Sustainable urban drainage and all ancillary site works.

Plans and particulars of the proposed development will be available for inspection or purchase, at a reasonable fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, at: Customer Care Offices, Civic Offices, Davitt's Quay, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford; and Customer Care Desk, Baileys New Street, Waterford City between the hours of 9:30am to 4:00pm Monday to

Friday for the period **4th October 2024 – 4th November 2024** inclusive (excluding Bank and Public Holidays).

Particulars of the proposed scheme will also be available to view on Waterford City & County Council's website at <http://waterfordcouncil.ie/projects/public-consultations/index.htm>

The proposed development has undergone Appropriate Assessment Screening under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, and the Planning Authority has determined that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required in this instance. In addition, the proposal has also undergone screening for Environmental Impact Assessment under the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU (and the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act, as amended), and the Planning Authority has determined that there will be no likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and, therefore, an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required. In accordance with Article 120 (3) of the Planning & Development Regulations (as amended), any person may, within 4 weeks from the date of this notice, apply to An Bord Pleanála for a screening determination as to whether the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The proposed development includes works to a protected structure which is located within the boundary of the Architectural Conservation Area in Lismore and an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared to accompany this proposal.

Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area shall be made in writing to the Director of Economic Development, Waterford City & County Council, The Mall, Waterford to be received on or before **4pm on the 18th November 2024** and should be clearly marked **Lismore Boutique Hostel** or by email to projectsteam@waterfordcouncil.ie.

All comments, including names of those making comments, submitted to the Council in regard of this scheme will form part of the statutorily required report to be presented at a meeting of the elected members. Accordingly, they will also be included in the minutes of that meeting and may appear in the public domain.

Waterford City & County Council is subject to the provision of Freedom of Information (FOI Acts 1997 and 2014) and the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2013

Mr. Michael Quinn,
Director of Economic Development,
Waterford City & County Council,
No. 35 The Mall,
Waterford.

Dated: 2nd October 2024