

Archaeological Impact Assessment

Proposed Creative Studio & Events Facility Development

Thomas Street, Waterford

In Support of a Part 8 Planning Application

Developer: Waterford City and County Council

City Hall,
The Mall,
Waterford,
X91 PK15

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DNAC Project No: 25_09

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1. Introduction

Daniel Noonan Archaeological Consultancy has prepared this Desktop Archaeological Assessment to support a Part 8 Planning Application for a proposed creative studio and events facility development by Waterford City and County Council, on an open site located at Thomas Street, Waterford.

Located on Waterford City's historic waterfront, the development site is located within the archaeological Zone of Notification for the historic city, and immediately to the west of Zone of Archaeological Potential, RMP reference WA009-005----; in a location that is to the west of the medieval core (see **Figures 1-4**). The site is centred on ITM coordinates 660234, 612694. Given its location, a desktop assessment is an appropriate measure to support the Part 8 application.

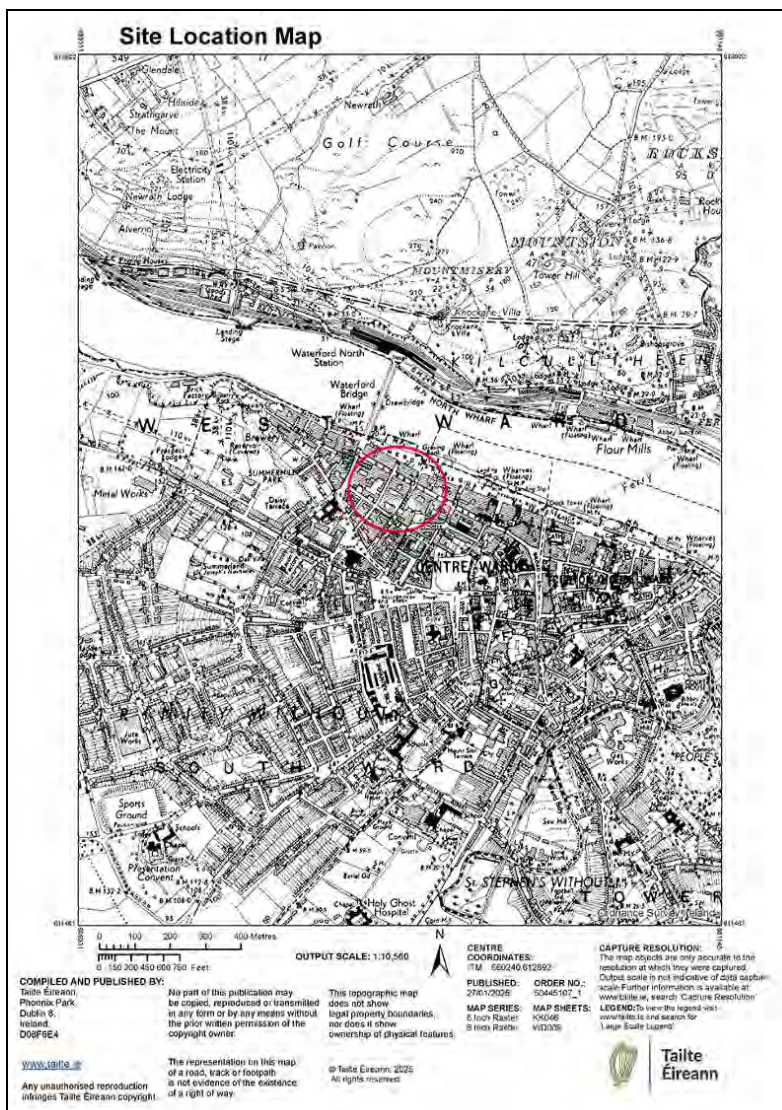


Figure 1: General location of the proposed works.

The aim of the proposed project is to develop a new, community focused, creative studio and events space, with both built and open green spaces, as an appropriate infill of a rectangular shape plot of open urban space, sited on the west side of Thomas Street.

2. Assessment Methodology

This non-intrusive assessment of the proposed development at Thomas Street was carried out through background research into the study area, known archaeological monuments in the locality, historical resources, and mapping. The research is supported by a site inspection and an appraisal of the works. The combined aim of this method was to develop an understanding of the archaeological nature of the site, and the potential for impact on the archaeological resource, and how to de-risk this through appropriate mitigation.

Intrusive archaeological test trenching was not conducted as part of this evaluation.

The sources consulted include the listings of National Monuments, Preservation Orders, Register of Historic Monuments, the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP - 1995), and Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) for County Waterford. Historical and Ordnance Survey mapping, and aerial imagery was sourced. The online databases of the National Monuments Service (NMS), the unpublished *Urban Archaeological Survey of Waterford City and County* (1989), and documentary sources, local histories and antiquarian journals were consulted.

The appraisal incorporates the results of the review of the background research, and site inspection, to form the basis of the impact assessment, and guidance for the recommended mitigation measures.

This report should be read in conjunction with the development proposals and drawings prepared by the design team; and the architectural heritage impact assessment prepared by the applicant.

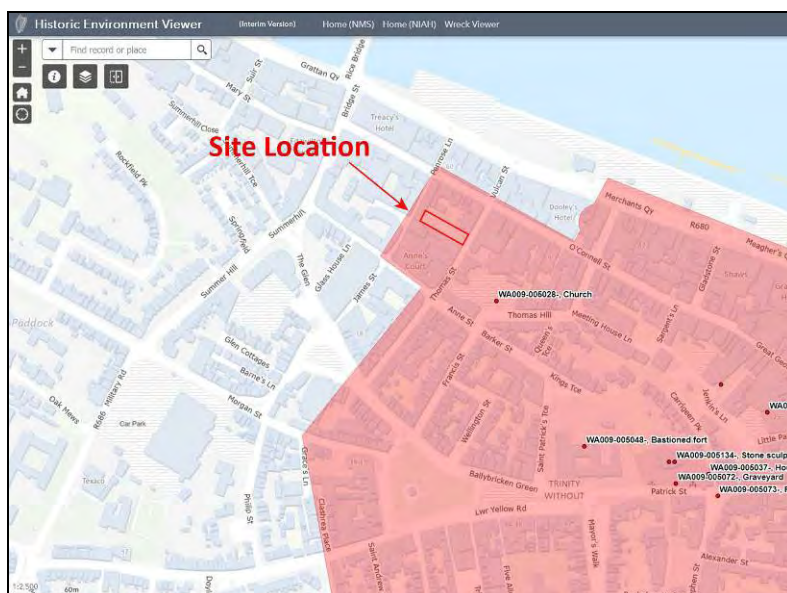


Figure 4: Annotated screenshot of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland's *Historic Environment Viewer*, showing the location of the Thomas Street development site inside the archaeological Zone of Notification for Waterford City.

3. Proposed Development Works

The proposed project is to develop a new, community focused, creative studio and events space, with both built and open green spaces, as an appropriate infill of a rectangular shape plot of open urban space, sited on the west side of Thomas Street. Full details of the proposals can be found in the extensive suite of drawings, and design information developed by the design team. A concept of the proposed layout of the development (**Figures 5-6**) shows a new three-storey infill structure to front, street side of the site. This will form a ground

level entrance to the site, with a large open, soft landscaped space dominating the rear, southern half of the site. A single storey structure with studio space is proposed for the northwest corner of the site.



Figure 5: Elevation of the proposed development at Thomas Street.

Courtesy of Drake Hourigan Architects.

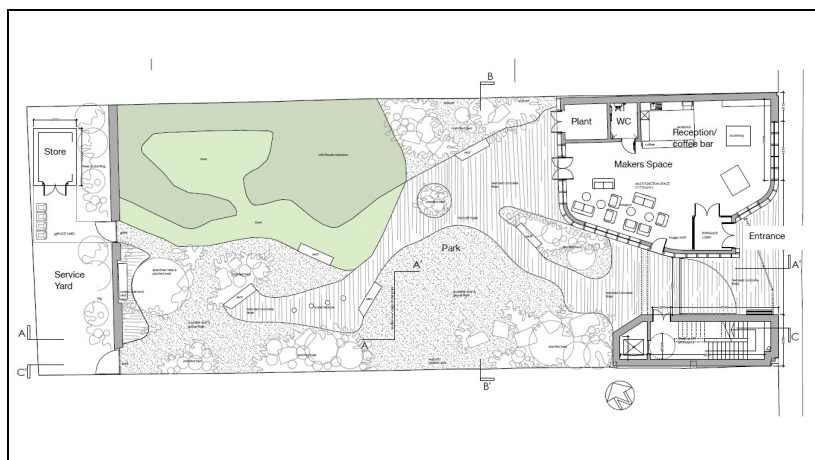


Figure 6: Plan of the proposed development at Thomas Street.

Courtesy of Drake Hourigan Architects.

4. Development Control Policies

Archaeological Protection, Legal Status & Development Control Policies

National Monuments Legislation

The Thomas Street site straddles the black line edge of the Zone of Archaeological Potential, as defined by the *Record of Monuments and Places* (RMP) reference WA009-005---- (see **Figure 3**). The site is in the archaeological Zone of Notification (ZON) for the historic city, as shaded in pink in the Archaeological Survey of Ireland's *Historic Environment Viewer* (see **Figure 4**). In addition, a number of recorded archaeological monuments are present in the wider vicinity of the development site, including the site of the church of St Thomas (WA009-005028-), from which Thomas Street derives its name.

Development to or within proximity of recorded monument or place is subject to protection under the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended). Any development that may have potential for impact on a Recorded Monument requires Notification, under Section 12(3) of the Act, to the relevant Minister for Heritage at least two months in advance. In the instance of the Thomas Street project, the Part 8 process will serve as Notification. The purpose of a Notification is to give the National Monuments Service an opportunity to assess the proposed development impacts, and make recommendations to safeguard the archaeological resource.

Waterford City & County Council – Archaeological Heritage Policy Objectives

The protection, understanding and enhancement of archaeological heritage by the local authority, in its role as both adjudicator of development, and owner of archaeological heritage assets, is contained in the general Archaeological Heritage Policy Objectives AH01-AH04 in the current *Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022 – 2028*, Volume, 11.17, pp. 299-306. With regard to the proposed smartSE project, the most immediate policies of relevance are AH 02 and AH 04.

AH 02 Managing Development

We will contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection and sympathetic enhancement of archaeological heritage, in particular by implementing the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act, 1930 (as amended).

We will ensure that archaeological excavation is carried out according to best practice as outlined by the National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the National Museum of Ireland and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland.

We will consult with the National Monuments Service as relevant in relation to proposed developments, including those adjoining archaeological sites.

AH 04 Archaeological Impact Considerations

It is the policy of the Council to:

- Ensure that development in the vicinity of a site of archaeological interest shall be designed and sited sympathetically and shall not be detrimental to the character of the archaeological site or its setting by reason of its location, scale, bulk or detailing.*
- When considering development in the vicinity of all archaeological sites including remnants of the city and town walls, the planning authority will require the preparation of an archaeological assessment detailing the potential impact of any development on upstanding structures, buried structures and deposits. The report will also include a visual impact assessment to ensure adequate consideration of any potential visual impact the proposed development may have on any upstanding remains.*
- Proposed developments will be required to retain the existing street layout, including laneways, historic building lines and traditional plot widths where these derive from medieval or earlier origins.*
- When considering development in the vicinity of upstanding archaeological/historical monuments, to aim to achieve a satisfactory buffer area between the development and the monument in order to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the amenity associated with the presence of upstanding monuments within the historic urban pattern.*
- For all developments, which have potential to impact on riverine, intertidal and sub-tidal environments to require an archaeological assessment prior to works being carried out. In addition to planning permission, development works at National Monuments of which the Minister or local authority is owner of, guardian of or in respect of which a preservation order is in force, may also require Ministerial Consent under Section 14 of the National Monuments Act 1930 (as amended) and this will be determined by the relevant authority (Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage) on application.*

5. Development Site Context, Setting & Archaeological Environment

Waterford City

The earliest recorded historical references for Waterford date to 912-913 AD. This date is supported by a sample of charcoal uncovered near the apex of the 'Viking Triangle' during investigations ahead of the Medieval Museum on Bailey New street. That gave a radiocarbon date of 898-920 AD. The charcoal sample was recovered from beneath a defensive bank overlooking the confluence of John's River with the River Suir. While an earlier Viking site was located at Woodstown 9km upriver on the River Suir, that site was only occupied from 850-950 AD, before it was abandoned, presumably for the more defensible site down river at Waterford.

The earliest Viking settlement in the City was a triangular shaped settlement formed on a tidal inlet on the high ground, at the confluence of the River Suir and St. John Rivers, defended by a fort named "Dundory" where Reginald's Tower stands today. It would have been enclosed by defensive banks and ditches on the southern and western extents of the settlement. The riverside likely remained open to the river for ease of movement of their timber boats. A timber palisade was likely constructed on top of the ditches enclosing the early settlement. As the settlement expanded westward three towers were constructed on the corners of the expanding triangular settlement, Reginald's Tower at the apex of the triangle, Turgesius to the west and Martins to the southwest. Enclosing walls were also constructed joining the towers to form a solid defensive circuit.

Reginald's Tower is Ireland's oldest Civic building, and over the centuries it functioned as a castle, a mint, a prison, the official residence of the High Constable of Waterford and currently is a museum. It was named after the 10th century Viking ruler Ragnall or one of his successors bearing the same name. A plague affixed to it ascribes a 1003 AD date to the towers' construction, but this date is still in question. As the ground and first floor of the present structure have been found to be constructed in the 12th century. The upper two stories are a later 15th century add-on to accommodate the use of cannon. While a later 16th century blockhouse was built projecting north eastward from the exterior base of the tower into the southern bank of the River Suir, (this blockhouse was demolished in 1714).

The Anglo-Norman invasion Ireland in the late 12th century led to a complete change in the power dynamic within Ireland; the Normans, having been invited to invade by the deposed King of Leinster Diarmuid Mac Murchadha and supposedly sanctioned by a Papal Bull – *Laudabiliter* -, issued by Pope Adrian IV in 1155.

Upon arrival in Ireland the Anglo-Normans quickly conquered large tracts of the east and south of Ireland. The Normans led by Richard de Clare; The Earl of Pembroke also known as "Strongbow" arrived at the city walls of Viking Waterford in 1169.

"According to Giraldus Cambrensis, who visited the city in 1180, the attackers "noticed a small building which hung down from the town wall on the outside by a beam. He (Raymond Le Gros) eagerly urged all his men to attack on all sides, and quickly sent in armed men to cut down the aforesaid beam. When it had been cut down, the building immediately collapsed, and with it a considerable part of the wall", (Pollock, 2014, 14).

The following year Richard de Clare married Aoife the daughter of Diarmuid Mac Murchadha in Christ Church Cathedral in the city.

The Normans continued with, and expanded the settlement and enclosing walled fortifications westward in the next centuries. The first mention of a murage grant for the upkeep of the walls of the city was in 1223-4 AD. With regard to the riverside protection, they may not initially have been as substantial as the landward side; and were subject to movement when more land was reclaimed along the riverbank - *“The riverside walls of the early 13th Century had taken a narrow strip of extra ground into the city. A century and a half later a narrow strip of reclaimed land beside the River Suir was also walled in”*, (ibid. page 36). This suggests at least two phases of riverside walling to the City’s defences.

It was after a Spanish attack in 1377 when the city was attacked from the riverside, that the riverside wall was renewed once again - *“1377 grant of coket for 10 years, specifically refers to the enclosure of the quays following a Spanish attack “*, (Thomas 1992, 203).

A unified quayside was subsequently constructed outside of the fortifications, having previously being a rather piecemeal approach by the monied merchants and foundations from within the city. The area to the west of the city, where Thomas Street is located, largely remained undeveloped as pasture until modern times.

By 1705 the riverside town walls had been mostly removed from surface view. By the mid-18th century the extensive quays had become one of the defining features of Waterford, with expansion beyond the restrictions of the City defences now gone.

Thomas Street

The proposed creative hub development is located on Thomas Street, in an area outside the medieval walled city, which remained undeveloped until modern times. During the 18th century the focus of urban development in City, promoted by Waterford Corporation, was on the western suburbs and the extension of the quayside to the west. New streets and associated building plots were laid out, including Thomas Street in 1726 (Dowling 1998, 188). Other developments of this period included new streets west of the city wall, such as Hanover Street, and the long throughfare that collectively are now O’Connell Street, Gladstone Street, and part of George’s Street.

Dowling’s description of the origins of Thomas Street succinctly provides the history of the street (ibid.):

This street derives its name from the old church dedicated to St Thomas the Apostle which stood on the adjacent hill of the same name. As part of the Corporation’s plan in providing a new road and street system in the western suburbs of the city, this new street or road was ordered to be constructed and laid out in 1726. This was to link up the new quay then under construction with Ballybricken and to connect with the road to Grannagh ferry, and also with the main road out of the city to Dungarvan and Cork, via Three Mile Bridge near Mount Congreve.

Its completion greatly enhanced the movement of traffic and merchandise into and out of the city, especially as the terrain on which it was built was more open and level compared with the older and more hazardous route through Patrick Street and to a lesser extent through Newgate Street.

Known as the New Road for generations, its present name evolved towards the end of the eighteenth century. In Griffith’s General Valuation of the city surveyed in the late 1840s, that part from O’Connell Street to the Glen was named Thomas Street Upper while the short stretch from O’Connell Street to

the Quay was referred to as Lower Thomas Street. In the OS map of 1841 that short stretch was named Vulcan Street, presumably from the existence of a foundry or forge which was located there. The name Vulcan is from the Roman god of fire.

In Leahy's map of 1832 the entire length of the street from the Quay to the Glen was designated Thomas Street with no differentiation between upper or lower. The whole street is located within the civil parish of Trinity Without.

Thomas Street is shown as the 'New Road' in the Richards & Scalé map of 1764 (**Figure 7**); and the general location of the proposed development location is shown as pasture, with buildings on the new street line.



Figure 7: Extract from the Richards and Scalé *Plan of Waterford City and the Surrounding Suburbs* 1764. North is to the bottom.

The location of the Thomas Street development site is generally indicated.

The Leahy map of 1834 shows more buildings along Thomas Street, and the enclosing of the city block to the west by the new Penrose Lance (**Figure 8**). It is notable that the site generally appears to be open space.



Figure 8: Extract from P. Leahy's *Map of Waterford and its Environs* 1834.

The location of the Thomas Street development site is generally indicated.

The first of the historic Ordnance Survey maps, the Manuscript Town Plan of 1841, comes just after Leahy's, and still shows the Thomas Street site to be open space (**Figure 9**). The published 1:1,056 Town Plan of 1872 also shows the site as being largely open, with some additional buildings (**Figure 10**). This historic mapping confirms, and is a feature that is seen to continue into the mid-20th century in the 1960 1:1,250 City Map (**Figure 11**), that the Thomas Street site was largely always an open space.



Figure 12: Poole Photographic Collection - *Downes and Co., Thomas Street, Waterford, outside of premises; circa. 1901-1954.*

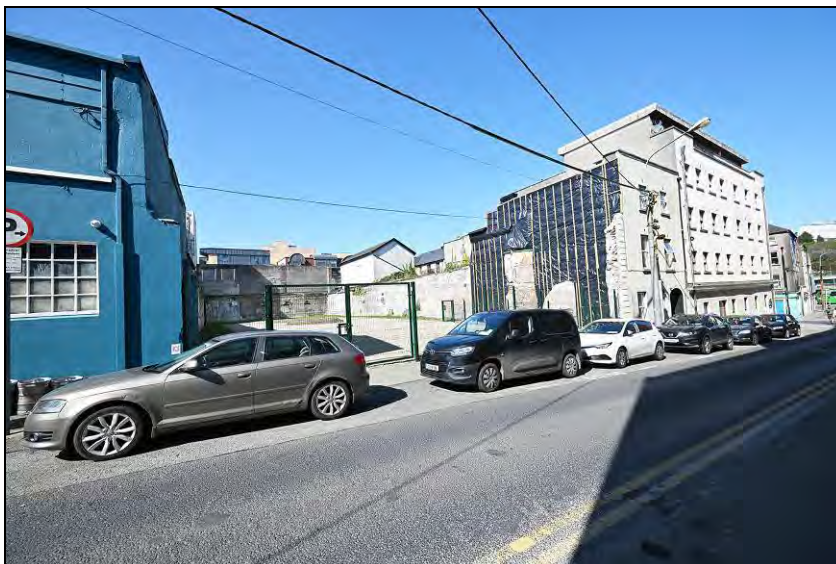
National Library of Ireland, Call Number POOLEWP 4158.

The house in the northeast corner of the site is circled in red.

6. Site Inspection & Appraisal

As part of this assessment, a walkover of the Thomas Street site was conducted. The site is rectangular in plan, on a general east to west orientation, from the west side of Thomas Street. It measures approximately 52m east to west, by 20m north to south in street frontage. The site has been put in order in recent times, with layer of gravel stone covering the majority of the surface, with grassed areas to the perimeter along the south, west and north, and two circular, raised planting beds. The boundary all-round is modern mass concrete or concrete block walling; while in the plastic protected party wall is the gable, and stacked corner fireplaces, of the probable early 18th century house shown here on the historic mapping, and the Pool Collection photograph (**Figure 12** above).

No upstanding or subsurface indicators of archaeological features of interest were noted during the inspection.



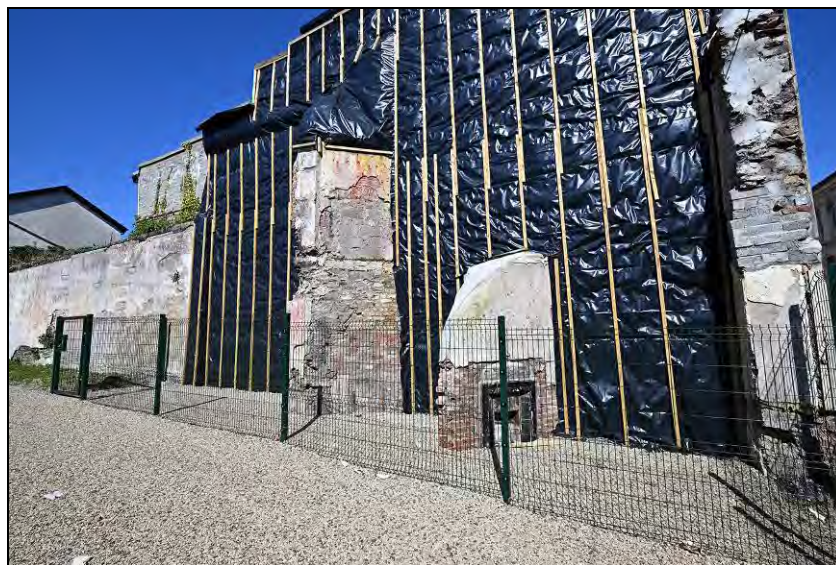
Photograph 1: View of the Thomas Street site, from the street looking west.



Photograph 2: View of the Thomas Street site, inside looking west.



Photograph 3: View of the Thomas Street site, inside looking east to the street.



Photograph 4: Stacked corner fireplaces; remains of the early 18th century house in the northeast corner of the site.

7. Impact Assessment & Mitigation Recommendations¹

From the foregoing background research and site inspection it is established that the site of the proposed development at Thomas Street is located in the Zone of Archaeological Potential, as defined by the *Record of Monuments and Places* (RMP) reference WA009-005---- (see **Figure 3**). The site is in the archaeological Zone of Notification (ZON) for the historic city, as shaded in pink in the Archaeological Survey of Ireland's *Historic Environment Viewer* (see **Figure 4**). The site is outside the medieval core, and sited on the street that was laid out in the early 18th century, along the new route developed by Waterford Corporation from Ballybricken to the waterfront.

Inspection of the site found no indication of upstanding or subsurface archaeological features. However, given that the proposed development works will involve demolition of the fireplaces, and groundworks for the new builds and general site development works, if left unmitigated there is potential for direct impact on any unknown archaeological features or material that may be present beneath the surface.

The surviving fireplaces on the north gable are of architectural interest, and should be recorded in advance of removal.

Given the subsurface archaeological potential of the site, the following recommendations are made:

- In consultation with the NMS, it is recommended that a programme of archaeological test trenching be conducted, by a suitably experienced archaeologist, to assess the potential for the presence of subsurface archaeological features or material on the site. The results of the test trenching will determine what archaeological mitigation measures are required, be that preservation in situ through protection and avoidance, preservation by record through excavation, or whether archaeological monitoring attendance is sufficient. It should be noted that the presumption for preservation in situ of archaeological material is the policy of the NMS.
- In the event of significant archaeological material or features being uncovered, further mitigation measures may be required. Avoidance through preservation in situ is the preferred option. However, depending on the nature and extent of the material, and subject to National Monuments Service and National Museum of Ireland approval, resolution of the findings through excavation may be permitted.
- The fireplaces on the north gable should be recorded through drawn and photographic means in advance of demolition, for preservation by record.

¹ Note on Recommendations

All recommendations and mitigation measures put forward are proposals only, and the decision on implementation, amendments, etc. rests ultimately with the Planning Authority – Waterford City & County Council, and the consultative bodies of the Development Applications Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and the National Museum of Ireland, and are subject to change.

- The developer must be aware that the costs associated with these investigations, and any resolution is to be borne by them. All other technical site investigations, such as engineering test pits, require archaeological supervision, with details to be advised to the attending archaeologist in advance to determine the level of supervision/monitoring required.
- Any permitted archaeological resolution/excavation works must be conducted, to archaeological best practices, in advance of construction.
- Sufficient time should be made for the test trenching, follow-up with the NMS and other relevant bodies, and implementation of any mitigation strategies, in this project.

8. Sources & References Consulted

- *Record of Monuments and Places for County Waterford*, 1995;
- National Monuments Database - www.archaeology.ie;
- Database of Irish Excavation Reports – www.excavations.ie;
- Ordnance Survey Historic Mapping;
- *Digital Repository of Ireland Waterford City Maps* - <https://repository.dri.ie/catalog/1g05v267s> ;
- *National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)* – www.buildingsofireland.ie;
- *Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022-2029*;
- *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage*. Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands 1999;
- *Code of Conduct for Archaeological Assessment*. Institute of Archaeologist of Ireland 2006.

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Dowling, D. 1998 *Waterford Streets Past and Present*. Waterford Corporation, Waterford.

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Thomas, A. 1992 *The Walled Towns of Ireland Two Volumes*. Irish Academic Press, Dublin.