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NO. 2-4 DUBLIN STREET, BALBRIGGAN
PART 8 PLANNING DESIGN REPORT

JULY 2023

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1.0 Introduction

1.01 Paul Keogh Architects were appointed in June 2021 for the provision of Integrated Design Team Services for the public realm redevelopment of 2-4 Dublin Street, Balbriggan.

1.02 This Design Report has been prepared and compiled by Paul Keogh Architects, in consultation with other design team members, to record the evaluation / assessment process and the design decisions taken. The report includes site evaluation and analysis, overview of the design development, and a description of the proposed site layout.



Existing Dublin Street Elevation

2.0 Brief & Vision

2.01 The aspirations for the development at 2-4 Dublin Street, as set out in the Outline Project Brief and as developed through Stakeholder Consultation (Item 12.0), The project envisages transformative changes to the existing building, including full refurbishment of No. 2 Dublin Street (a protected structure) as work spaces, in line with best conservation practices, and redevelopment of No. 4 Dublin Street (the attached retail unit), as Creative Hub.

2.02 The project forms part of the Our Balbriggan proposal. Fingal County Council are undertaking the rejuvenation of Balbriggan town through a variety of projects including public realm, place making and the redevelopment of underutilized or vacant buildings and sites.

2.03 The objective of the redevelopment of the main house (no.2) is to develop work spaces which will vary in scale and dimension to accommodate artistic, creative and other related enterprises. The work spaces are intended to provide an engaging environment in which to meet, work and foster exchange between artists, creatives and entrepreneurs. Workspaces are to be self-contained and secure, with 24 hour a day access and security. The existing building will require structural, fire, acoustic, ventilation and services upgrades, whilst retaining the original features and character. A change of use is proposed from Residential to Commercial.

2.04 The objective of the re-development of the former commercial space at no.4, adjacent and the main property at no.2 Dublin Street, is to create a Creative Hub. The Creative Hub is envisaged as a technology studio, design space and training hub aimed at fostering innovation and creation within the community, while providing digital education and stimulating economic activity.



Site Location Map

The co-location of the Creative Hub adjacent to dedicated workspaces aims to promote and stimulate creativity and collaboration between artists, creatives and entrepreneurs, collaborative meeting spaces are essential in the re-development of the project. A Workshop Space, Audio/ Video Room, Office and Classroom Space will be designed for flexibility and contain computers, workspaces, and digital equipment (audio recording, video editing, gaming) These spaces will require adequate sound insulation and services provision such as power, data, and ventilation.

2.05 To the rear of the site, at ground-floor level, provision should be made for a shared support services space i.e. kitchen and toilet facilities and a medium-size co-mingling/meeting area with wi-fi to accommodate meetings/interactions between community/artists with potential for small classes/lectures or exhibitions and a small administrative space for use in the management of the buildings/artistic space plus storage.

2.06 A curated gallery space/ project space located to the rear of the site and connected to the Creative Hub and Workspaces is indispensable to the programme of both elements of the project. The gallery will not only provide for resident artists but to showcase emerging and established artists from around the country and abroad. In addition, the gallery / project space will facilitate multi-functional use as an event space for the local community. Adjacency to the external courtyard space is important to allow for flexibility and spill-out during events / gatherings.



Above right: Rear of no2 Dublin Street
Below right: Laneway

3.0 Site

3.01 The site, shown outlined in red on the attached site plan, is formed of no. 2 Dublin Street, an early nineteenth century Victorian-era townhouse, and no.4 Dublin Street, a modern lean-to retail unit. The site is bordered by residential and commercial properties of varying scales as well as the Balbriggan Courthouse, George's Square and Town Library. The site is in proximity to other sites which the Council propose to rejuvenate as part of the Our Balbriggan Strategy.

3.02 The overall site area measures approximately 570 m² / 0.057 ha.

3.03 There are no current planning applications on record for this site.

3.04 The site falls within the scope of the overall Our Balbriggan Master Planning consultant, Paul Hogarth, and Active Travel consultant, DBFL. The 2-4 Dublin Street proposals have been developed in line with the recommendations of Paul Hogarth and adhere to the principles of the overarching Master Planning proposals.

4.0 Site surveys and investigations

4.01 On the instruction of FCC following a tender process, the existing buildings and site have been surveyed by MMA CE. The existing building and site survey drawings are included in Appendix 4 of this report.

4.02 The OPW have shared the existing drawings of the adjoining courthouse building with PKA on the 22nd February 2022.

4.03 T&T have compiled an asbestos removal specification and with asbestos removal taking place in July 2022.

4.04 T&T procured further opening up works to reveal condition of lintels, walls, roof structure and floors. The IDT (PKA, HHP, Nolan CC) attended a site walk in August 2022 to review the opening up works undertaken.

4.05 Gordon Knaggs & Associates, Timber Technologists, undertook a site visit, and inspection including; Visual strength grading of structural timber and identification of the species present (assigning components to Strength Classes for design purposes), assessment of decay, insect attack and other damage or deterioration, moisture content of components, A written report with findings and general recommendations for remedial work is included in the Civil & Structural Report in Appendix 2.

4.06 Hayes Higgins Partnership surveyed structural defects in the building superstructure during the visual survey undertaken which require remediation, details are contained within the Civil & Structural Report in Appendix 2.

4.07 The owners / residents of the adjoining properties (no.6 Dublin Street and no.5 St George's Square) have been consulted by FCC and PKA. Early engagement has been positive and liaison with neighbours will continue during design development.



Site aerial photograph



Dublin Street facade

5.0 Development Plan

5.01 The site is subject to Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 and Sheet 4 Balbriggan indicates a zoning of MC – Major Town Centre (Protect, provide for and/or improve major town centre facilities).

5.02 The 2-4 Dublin Street development forms part of the Our Balbriggan Rejuvenation Plan 2019-2025 and is in proximity to other sites which the Council propose to rejuvenate as part of the Our Balbriggan Strategy.

6.0 Context, Roads & Active Travel

6.01 The site lies on Dublin Street (R132) which is classified as an arterial street. The site is also accessed from a vehicular laneway to the rear via Hampton Street.

6.02 Parking for the users and visitors to the scheme is accommodated in the Bracken Court Hotel carpark under the Balbriggan Town Hall legal agreement with Fingal County Council which provides the Council with a total of 57 parking spaces. There is cycle parking provided in Georges Square, a well observed public space adjacent to the site and additional cycle parking will be provided as part of this project as required.

6.03 A provisional allowance for vehicular parking is based on the Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023. A total of 9 parking spaces, including 1 no. Disabled parking space, will be allocated within the Bracken Court Carpark. A total of 6 bicycle parking spaces will be allocated in the laneway to the site.

6.04 Vehicular access for deliveries and refuse collection is via the laneway to the rear of the site. The laneway will be used as the main public entrance to the project, providing level access. As such the laneway becomes an extension of the public realm connecting the Georges Square to the primary entrance.

6.05 A setting down area is provided in the lane at the accessible entrance. This facilitates a person arriving at a building as a passenger in a vehicle, to alight from the vehicle and enter the building safely and conveniently.



Excerpt from DBFL - Active travel strategy for Balbriggan

CI - Community Infrastructure	Provide for and protect civic, religious, community, education, health care and social infrastructure
GB - Greenbelt	Protect and provide for a Greenbelt
GE - General Employment	Provide opportunities for general enterprise and employment
HA - High Amenity	Protect and enhance high amenity areas
HT - High Technology	Provide for office, research and development and high technology/high technology manufacturing type employment in a high quality built and landscaped environment
LC - Local Centre	Protect, provide for and/or improve local centre facilities
MC - Major Town Centre	Protect, provide for and/or improve major town centre facilities
OS - Open Space	Preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities
RA - Residential Area	Provide for new residential communities subject to the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure
RB - Rural Business	Provide for and facilitate rural-related business which has a demonstrated need for a rural location
RC - Rural Cluster	Provide for small scale infill development serving local needs while maintaining the rural nature of the cluster
RS - Residential	Provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity
RU - Rural	Protect and promote in a balanced way, the development of agriculture and rural-related enterprise, biodiversity, the rural landscape, and the built and cultural heritage
RV - Rural Village	Protect and promote the character of the Rural Village and promote a vibrant community in accordance with an approved Local Area Plan, and the availability of physical and community infrastructure
TC - Town and District Centre	Protect and enhance the special physical and social character of town and district centres and provide and/or improve urban facilities
Architectural Conservation Area	
Burial Site	
Development Boundary	
Masterplan Area	
Study Area	
Zone of Archaeological Notification	
Indicative Cycle/Pedestrian Route	
Road Proposal	
Preserve Views	
Greater Dublin Area (GDA) Cycle Network	
Local Objective Points	
Protected Structures	
Recorded Monuments	



Fingal Development Plan 2017 - 2023 Balbriggan

7.0 Archaeology, SAC, Protected Structures

7.01 The 2-4 Dublin Street site does not fall under any Environmental Preservation Areas, SAC, SPA or NHA (Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 - Sheet 4 Balbriggan).

7.02 The site lies within an Architectural Conservation Area.

7.03 Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 - Sheet 4 Balbriggan identifies no.2 Dublin Street as a protected structure within the extent of the site. Appendix 2 – Record of Protected Structures indicates:

- 0058 no.2 Dublin Street - Early 19th century house (excluding modern lean-to shop extension)

Adjacent to the site are the following protected structures:

- 0042 Court House, Georges Square - Two-storey stone courthouse on corner site.

- 0044 no.7 Georges Square- 19th century former residence, now offices.

7.04 The National Monuments Service historic environment viewer identifies no monuments in the vicinity.



Postcard of early 20th-century George's Square.



Balbriggan Courthouse



No.7 George's Square

8.0 Design Report

8.01 The development strategy for the 2-4 Dublin Street project has been formulated in response to the policy background, local authority input, best practice guidance, and the context and conditions of the site. The Workspaces and Creative Hub at 2-4 Dublin Street represents an important part of the Our Balbriggan proposal. The design strategy aims to tie in with the wider rejuvenation of Balbriggan town through the redevelopment of underutilized or vacant buildings and sites.

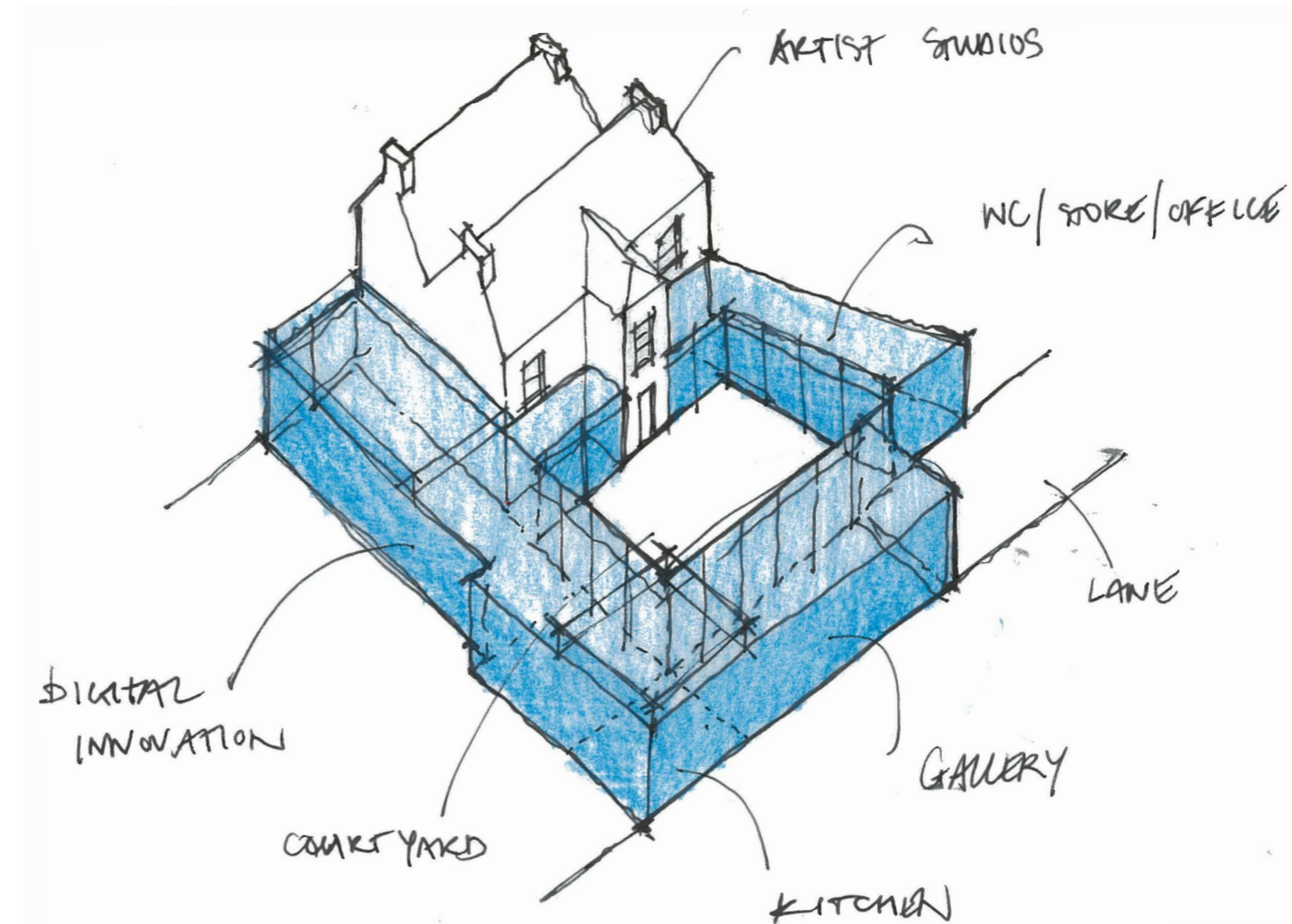
8.02 Design Intent.

The Victorian era house at no.2 Dublin Street, a protected structure, will be restored to its original condition and configuration, conserving the external envelope, with particular emphasis on the Dublin Street façade and the historic features and proportions of the rooms internally. Later additions on either side of the staircase to the rear of no. 2 will be removed, returning the original form of the existing building.

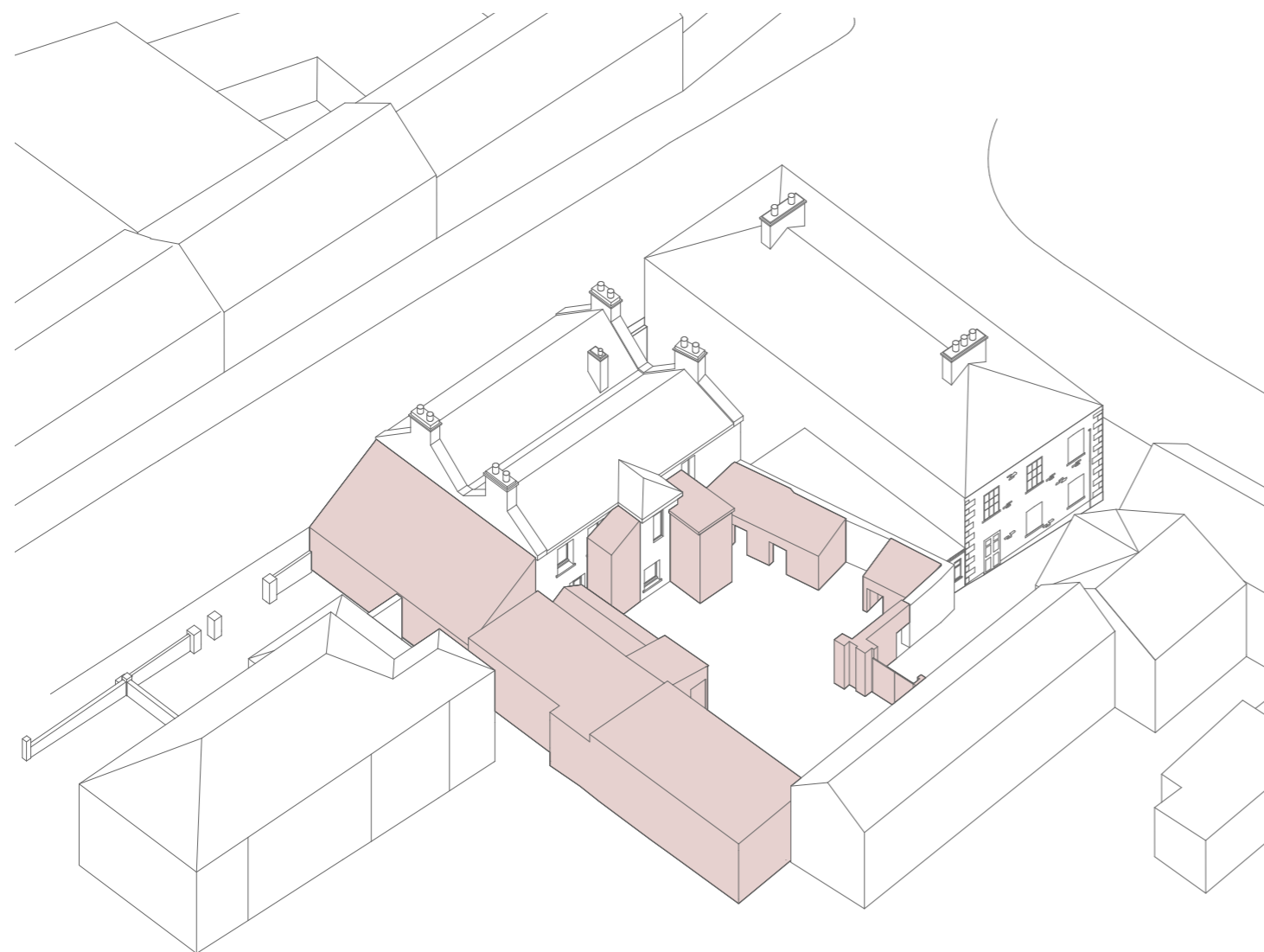
Principally, the existing building will house the artist studios element of the brief, with each existing room a studio for a single artist, and a new structure in place of the former retail unit will contain the Creative Hub. The proposed structure wraps around to the rear of the site making a connection to the existing building, providing a Gallery/Project space, and creating an external courtyard.

A combination of a glazed ribbon window corridor and a colonnade boarder the courtyard. This is designed to make connections between the Workspace/Studios, Creative Hub workshops, the gallery space, and to aid 'cross pollination' of the respective users.

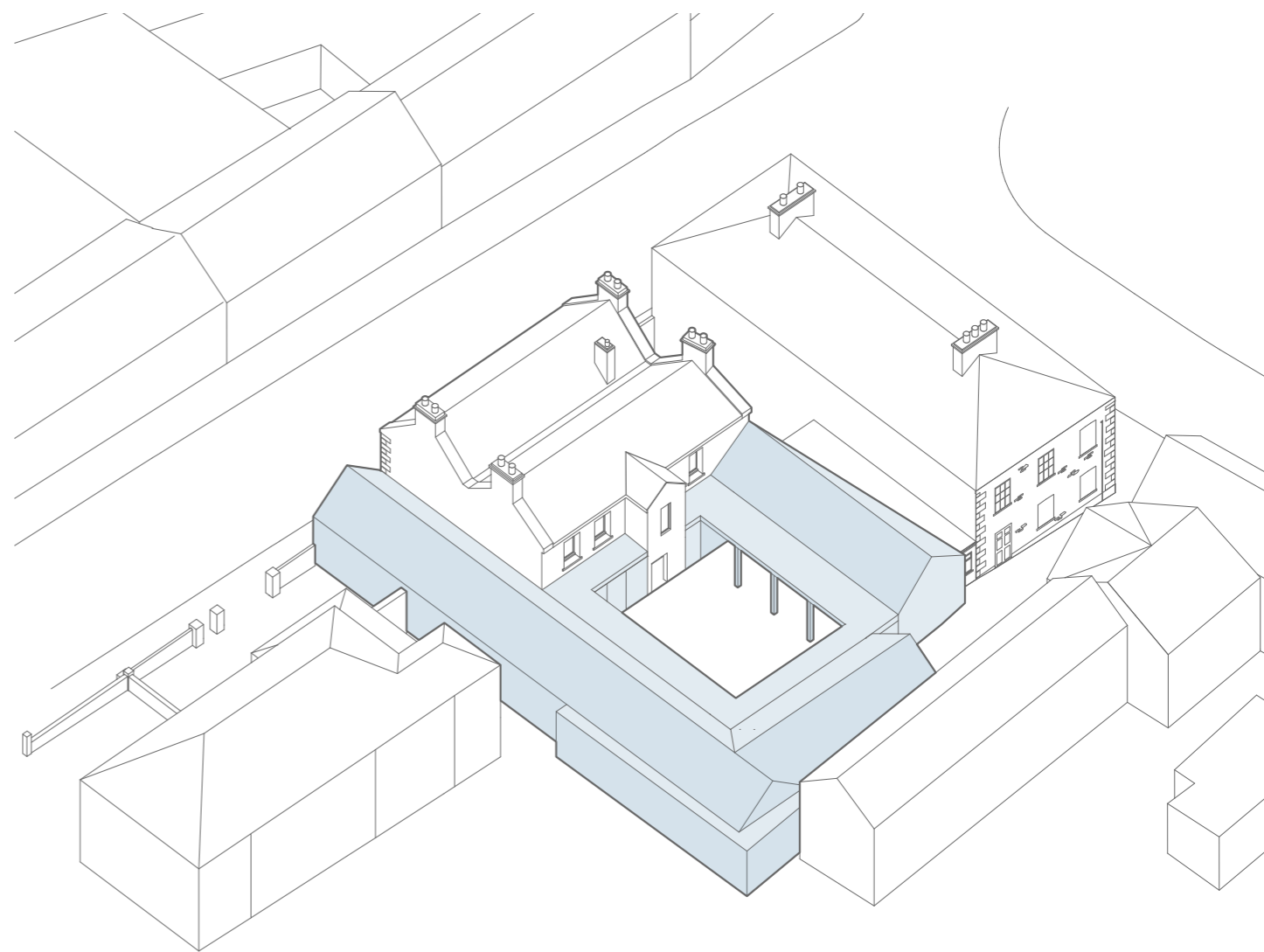
Ancillary spaces such as wc's, storage and communal kitchen are accommodated in the northern side of the courtyard. A gate connecting the laneway and courtyard forms the main entrance to the scheme and point of level access.



Initial Concept Sketches



Existing / Demolition Massing Axo



Proposed Massing Axo

8.03 Historical Context

John Rocque depicts the developing town of Balbriggan in 1760 with recognisable elements of its contemporary plan. Subsequent mapping marks the town's progress into the twentieth century. The filling-in of the inner harbour, the massive viaduct over and the completed station are illustrated on the 1860's revised sheets. The Courthouse (RPS 0042) is mapped on George's Square, and was constructed by the Board of Works in 1844 to the designs of Alexander Tate, who was appointed the first county surveyor for the northern district of Dublin the following year.⁵ Also evident is the house at No. 2-4 Dublin Street (RPS 0058), which was owned in the mid-1980s by the McKeon family who possessed deeds dating to back 1745.

No. 2-4 Dublin Street

The façade of this mid nineteenth-century residence affords no glimpse of any earlier fabric which might have existed at this location. The house is unlikely to be that depicted on the 6-inch mapping, where prior to the construction of the adjacent Courthouse the northern gables would have addressed George's Square. The house retains many of its primary architectural features

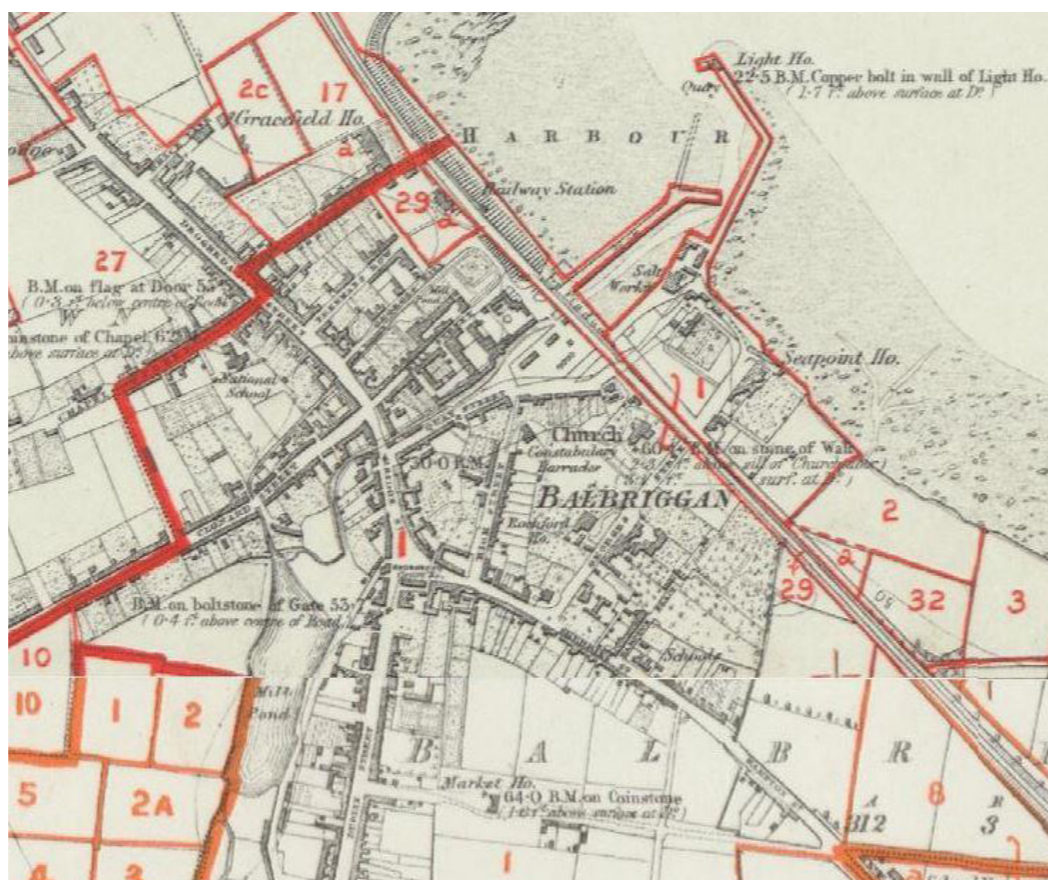
The west-facing front façade addressing Dublin Street is handsomely proportioned. The front entrance has stepped access as a result of the slope of Dublin Street, falling from right to left across the front façade. The entrance door is slightly asymmetric with decorative pillars and arched fan light. The existing roof is M-shaped gable pitched roof with hip and valley staircase projection to rear has non-original slate roof. Rendered chimney stack with clay pots are in good condition. All external walls are rendered with plinth course and painted quoining. Single pane sash windows are have Limestone cills. Most windows to the rear are 20th century replacements. Large vertical 3-pane fixed glazed window the rear staircase landing. Doors: hall door is timber panelled door with decorative pillars, limestone steps and arched over light.



John Rocque, Actual Survey of the County of Dublin, 1760



Map, 1840



Map, 1867



OS Map, 1906

8.04 Workspaces.

The existing building at no.2 Dublin Street provides suitably proportioned studio spaces for artists, creatives and entrepreneurs with good levels of natural light and ventilation. A total of 9 no. workspaces are provided (2 no. of which are wheelchair accessible), 4no. workspaces on Ground Floor and 5no. on First Floor, which are accessed from the existing staircase.

8.05 Creative Hub.

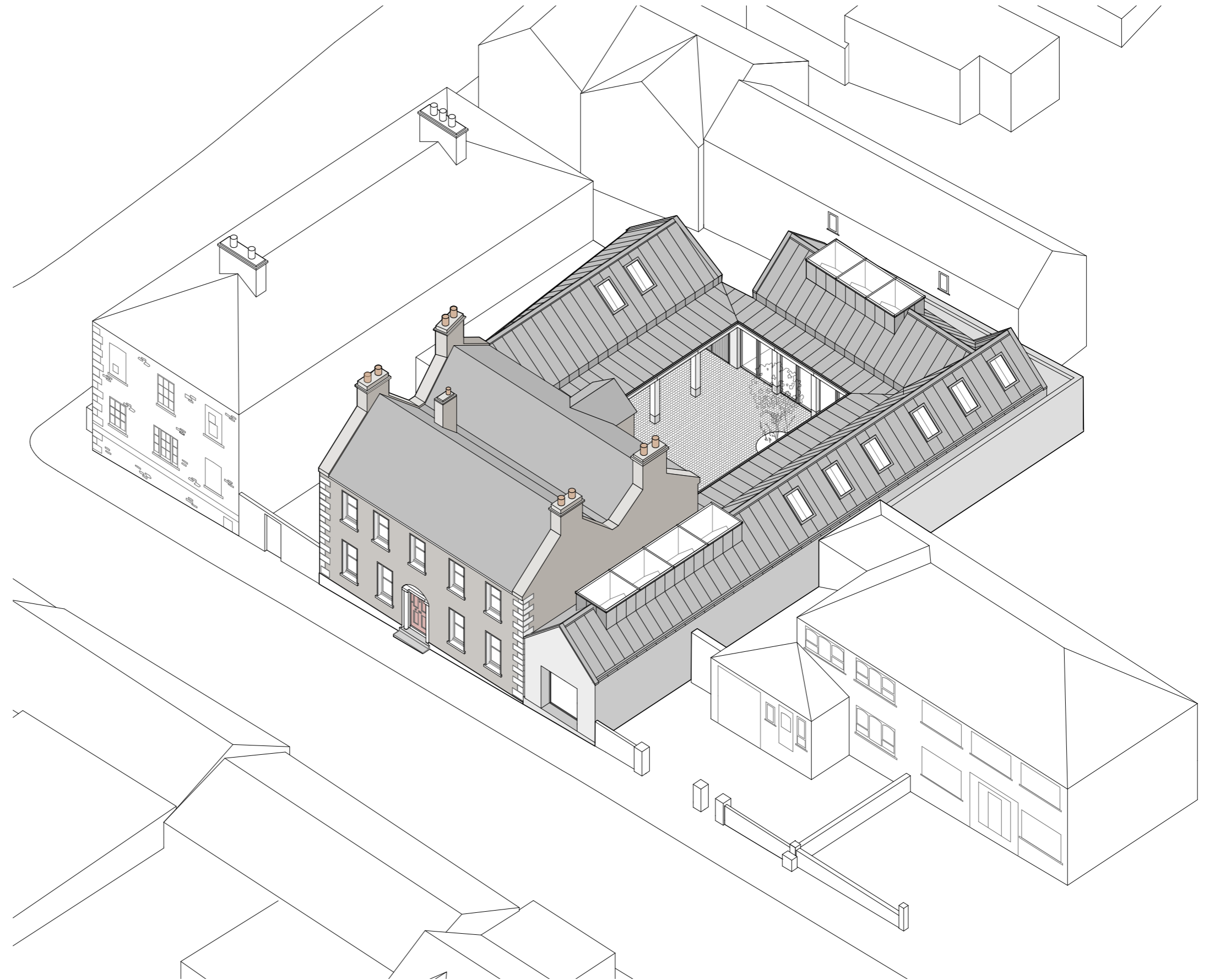
A new structure is comprised of a workshop space, Audio / Video room (Podcast, Video editing, etc), office/server room and a flexible classroom space. Flexibility is important to these spaces to allow for future changing uses. Floor to ceiling heights will be maximised in these areas to provide adequate natural light and ventilation.

8.06 Gallery / Project Space.

This provides space for exhibitions and events for both artists and 'makers' but also for wider use by the artistic/creative community. The gallery is conceived as a 'white cube' to allow for a wide range of exhibitions and performance/events. Glass doors open out onto the external courtyard space for spill-out during events. The gallery / project space will facilitate multi-functional use as an event space for the local community, providing for a wide range of performances and events.

8.07 Ancillary Spaces.

Provision of wc's (1no. accessible, 3no. total), storage and communal kitchen area for Artists and Creative Hub users. Office / Reception room including provision for server



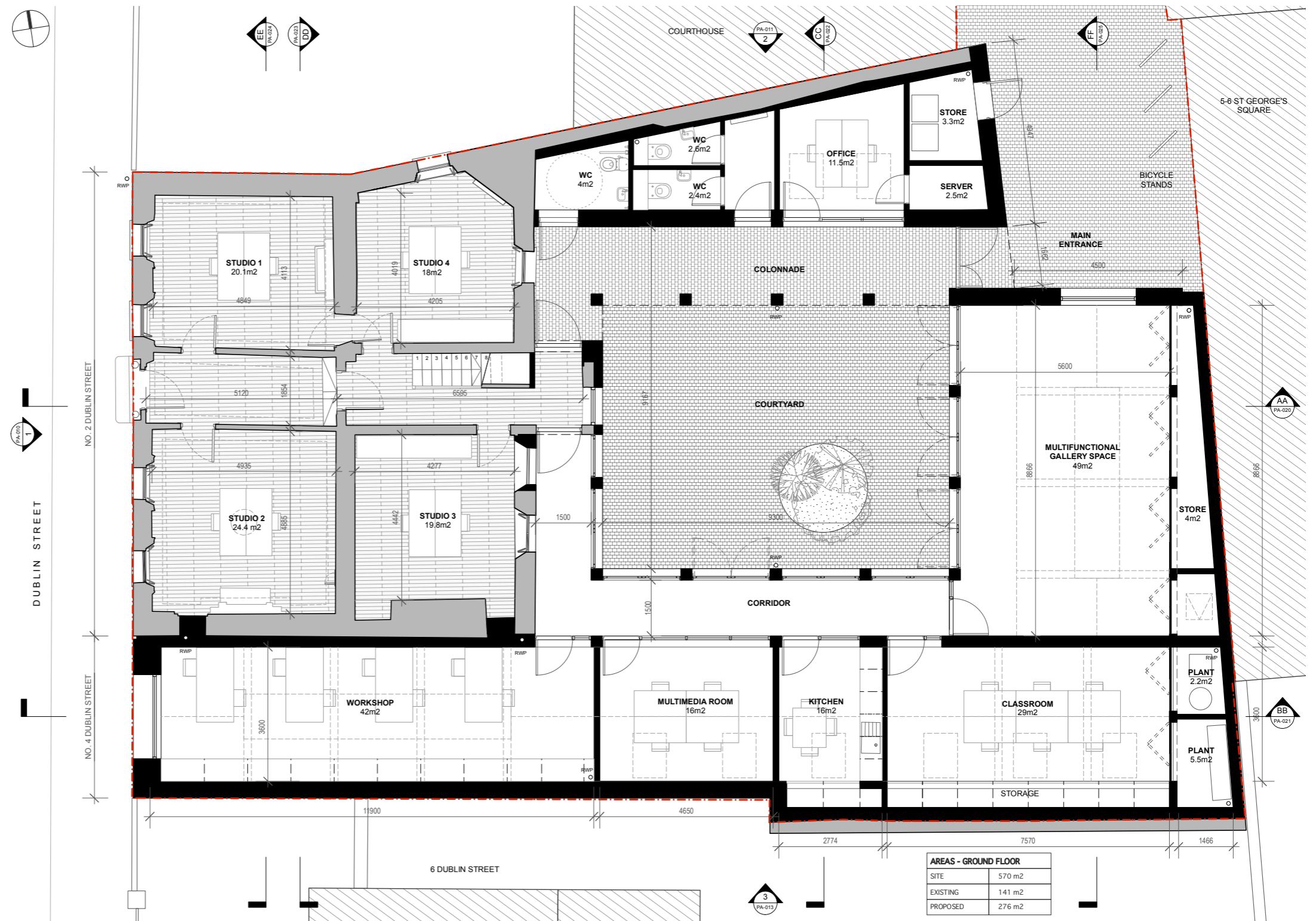
Proposed Axo

8.08 Access & Circulation.

The existing building at no.2 Dublin Street, a protected structure, will retain its stepped entrance onto Dublin Street. Level access to the existing building will be possible from the rear courtyard only. Internally, level access is provided to the rear 2 no. workspaces, an existing step in the hallway prevents level access to the front section of the existing house.

The provision of a lift is deemed impractical and detrimental to the historic nature of the protected structure. Consultation with Building Control is recommended at the outset of Stage 2a to discuss the proposed level of compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations. Workspaces located on the first floor of the existing building will not be wheelchair accessible.

The approach to the building, via the main entrance from the rear laneway, shall be fully wheelchair accessible. Level access is proposed throughout the new elements of the scheme, both internal and externally. The scheme is designed in accordance with the recommendations of the National Disability Authority's Buildings for Everyone.



Proposed Ground Floor Plan

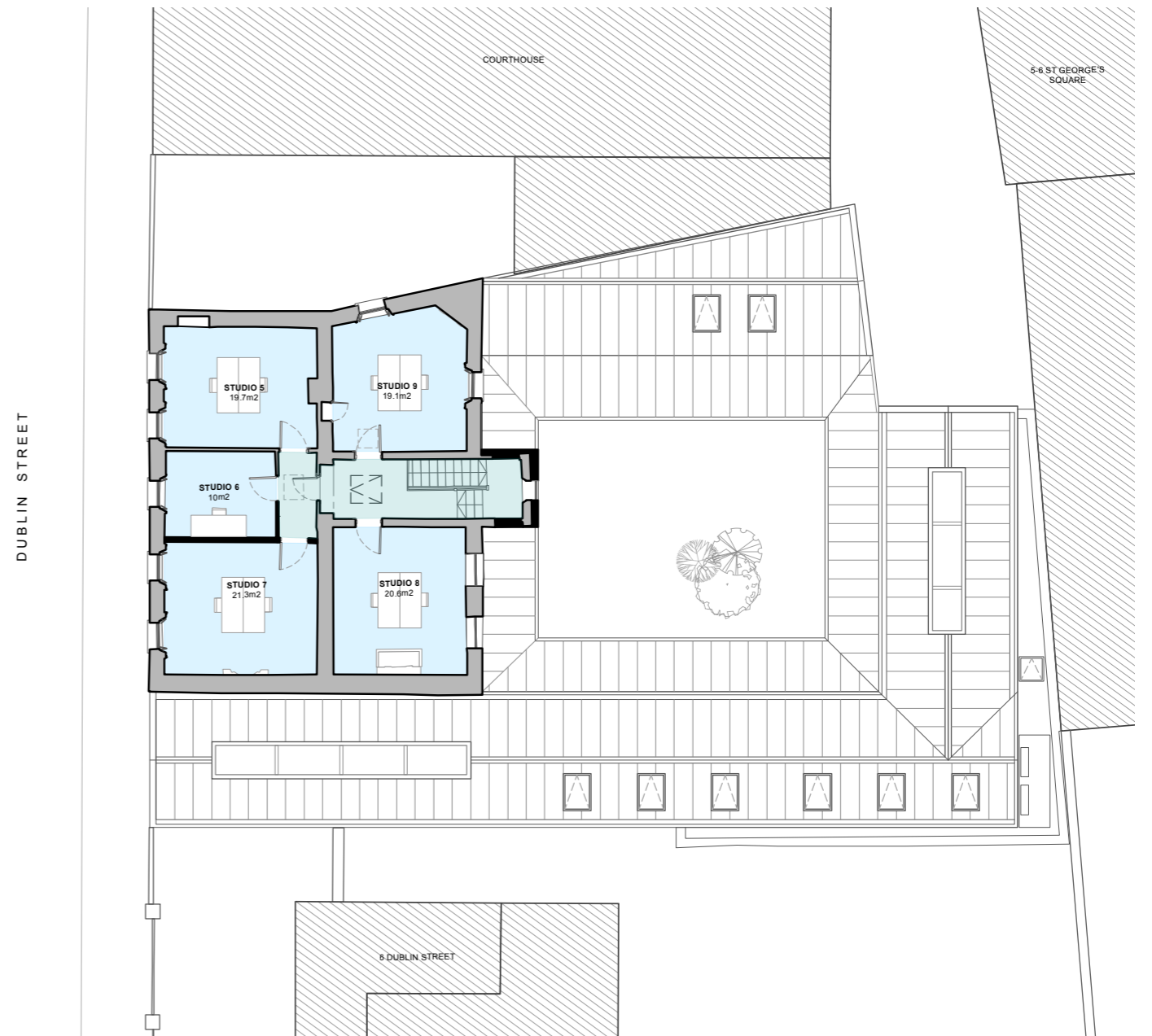
Proposed Uses Diagram

USES:

	ARTIST STUDIOS	170m ²
	DIGITAL HUB	102m ²
	COMMUNAL/PUBLIC	169m ²



Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan

8.09 Heritage.

The design focuses on protecting the architectural heritage of the existing structure at no.2 Dublin Street whilst also adapting to the requirements of high-quality artist studios and Innovation Hub. Specific attention is paid to the sensitive interface of the proposed and existing structures.

The proportions and features of the existing building will be conserved and restored in line with conservation best practice. Ongoing consultation with FCC Heritage team will be required throughout the design process and construction.

The proposed development comprises alterations and renovations to the protected structure of no.2 Dublin Street to improve the functionality of the building and improve fire safety and accessible connections to the proposed structures on the site. The outer envelope, roof and external walls, windows and doors are all to be repaired and refurbished to the highest conservation standards.

The repair and restoration works to existing sash windows will conserve and restore character to the façade. Repair and replacement works to existing roofs, valleys and parapets, including wall plates and rafters throughout. Repair works to surviving elements of historic fabric including staircases, balustrades, cornices, door cases, panelling will enhance the character of the interior.

A new structure in place of the former retail unit at no.4 will contain the Digital / Innovation Hub. The proposed structure wraps around to the rear of the site making a connection to the existing building with new elevations on Dublin Street and to the rear laneway. The form and material of the new structure seeks to compliment the character of the existing building and sit sympathetically within the context of Dublin Street.



Proposed Dublin Street Elevation



Perspective View - Dublin Street looking North



Perspective View - Dublin Street looking South



Perspective View - Laneway looking South

8.10 Materials.

An emphasis on materials that are sensitive to the existing architectural heritage of the site are proposed with an awareness of the functional nature of the project brief and vision.

The new structures are proposed as pitched roof volumes to the side and rear of the existing building. Standing seam zinc roofs and grey/buff brickwork make up the external envelope, with the intention of complimenting the existing building and context.

In the new build elements, the roof structure is exposed internally in the workshop, classroom and gallery spaces. Timber columns make up the colonnade and courtyard structure.

In the existing building, works to repair surviving elements of historic fabric including staircase, balustrades, cornices, door cases, panelling and fireplaces are proposed. Repair and restoration works to existing sash windows and associated window shutters and joinery are also proposed.

It is a core objective that materials are sourced from the most environmentally- responsible sources – to reduce the carbon emissions involved in the production and transportation of material from afar when similar – and frequently better – can be sourced closer to home, ideally Irish sources if possible.



Standing seam zinc roof



New-build brickwork



Pitched Roof / Roof lights



Exposed roof structure



Gallery / Workshop Roof lights



Restoration of existing rooms as studios



Timber colonnade



Granite setts & Tree pit



Entrance Gates / Signage

9.0 Case Studies / Precedent

9.01 Pallas Studio & Gallery

- Varied sizes of studios – average approx. 4x3m.
- Studio requirements- power, wifi, water/sink, natural light, good level artificial lighting.
- 24-hour studio access necessity. Artists may use studios out of hours or work other jobs during typical working hours.
- Types of artists are generally painters / graphic / mixed media / digital.
- Walls are used for pin-up, mounting and storage
- One artist per studio space
- Pallas has a curated gallery space/ project space. Mark says this is indispensable to the programme. The gallery is not only for resident artist but to showcase emerging and established artists from around the country and abroad.
- Kitchen space for artists is well used.
- The courtyard in Pallas is important for spill out for exhibitions and is rented out for specific events (music, screenings, parties).



Artist Studios



Artist Studios



Gallery Space



Courtyard

9.0 Case Studies / Precedent

9.02 Creative Hubs

- **Vancouver Public Library**
Audio / Video recording & editing

- **Empire Events**
Podcast / Streaming Studios

- **The Playground, Diffusion Labs**
Audio / Video Production & Editing

- **TOG Hackerspace, Dublin**
Makerspace, workshops

- **Farcet, Belfast**
Makerspace, workshops, co-working



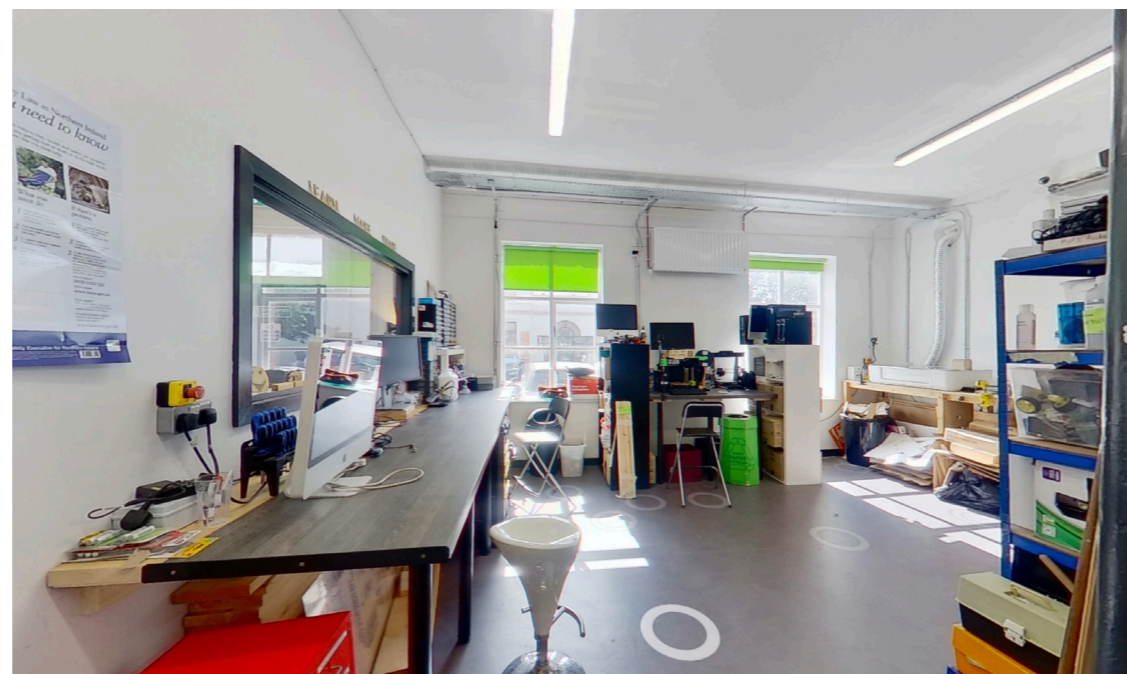
Digital Editing - The Playground Diffusion Labs



Podcast Studio - Empire Events



Green Screen - Vancouver Public Library



Workshop - Farcet, Belfast



Workshop - TOG Hackerspace

10.0 Utilities

10.01 An investigation into mechanical & electrical services on the site has been undertaken by Hayes Higgins consulting engineers and their preliminary report is contained in Appendix 3 of this report.

11.0 Civil & Structural

11.01 Analysis of the condition of the existing building and development of the Civil & Structural engineering on the site have been undertaken by Hayes Higgins Associates Consulting Engineers and their Stage 2a report is contained in Appendix 2 of this report.

11.02 Investigations into the availability of watermain supply, foul and storm sewer connections have been undertaken by Hayes Higgins Associates Consulting Engineers and their Stage 2a report is contained in Appendix 2 of this report.

12.0 Stakeholder Engagement

12.01 PKA attended meetings with FCC internal stakeholder departments as follows.

Stage 1:

- Conservation Office (attended on site, 28th January 2022)
- Digital Strategy Office (9th February 2022)
- Arts Office (21st February 2022)

Stage 2a:

- Conservation Office (28th June 2022)
- Water, Parks, Roads (26th July 2022)
- Digital Strategy Consultation (2nd September 2022)
- Balbriggan Councillors Consultation (15th September 2022)

12.02 PKA attended meetings with external stakeholders as follows.

Stage 1:

- Pallas Projects/Studios (attended at their studios in Dublin 8, 17th February 2022)
- OPW (22nd February 2022)
- Digital HQ (attended at their offices in Dun Laoghaire, 14th March 2022)
- TOG HackerSpace (attended at their workshop in Inchicore, 14th March 2022)

Stage 2a:

- Neighbour at no. 6 Dublin Street (24th August 2022)
- OPW & Court Services (25th August 2022)

A Stakeholder Engagement report is contained within Appendix 5 of this report.

13.0 Statutory

13.01 The development strategy for the 2-4 Dublin Street project has been formulated in response to the policy background, local authority input, best practice guidance, and the context and conditions of the site. The project will require the normal statutory approvals: planning permission (Part 8 application) and a fire safety certificate, disability access cert. The project will be subject to BCAR regulations.

13.02 The design options for the project will be considered in relation to policy in the Fingal County Council Development Plan, 2017-2023, as well as other relevant plans and policies e.g Our Balbriggan 2019-2025 Rejuvenation Plan. We will also assess the options in relation to relevant Government guidance (Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines, Urban Design Manual,

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, Flood Risk Management Guidelines, EU Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening). This will also include planning related examination of architectural and engineering drawings, specifications, conservation report, engineering reports, archaeological report, and public notices.

13.03 The project will be required to conform to the Health & Safety regulations and a preliminary Health & Safety Plan will be required for the project. PKA have been appointed as PSDP and will submit the AF1 form to the HSA for the 2-4 Dublin Street Project Design risk assessments will be prepared by PKA and HHP. They will be updated as the design develops during each stage and appended to the project preliminary health and safety plan.

14.0 Conclusions

14.01 The design team confirms that the recommended site layout proposal represents the most appropriate and economic response to the brief, both in terms of responding to the site context, client's stipulated requirements and for the provision of suitable urban realm upgrades.

14.02 The proposed scheme layout can be developed with appropriate architectural and conservation treatment to provide a scheme suitable Artist Studio/Innovation Hub.



APPENDICES

1. PKA Existing / Proposed drawings
2. Building and Site survey
3. Stakeholder Engagement

Reference Documents

Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023

Our Balbriggan Rejuvenation Plan 2019-2025

Our Balbriggan: Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage Assessment