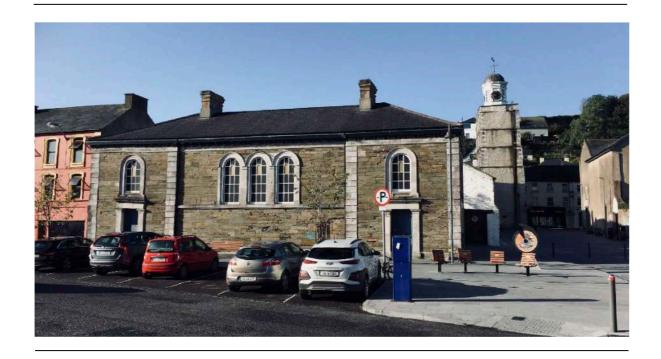
DESIGN FORUM CONSERVATION

Youghal Courthouse.

Youghal, Co. Cork.

Conservation Report & Heritage Impact Assessment:

4th April 2024



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Contents:

1.0 Introduction:

2.0 Background:

- 2.1 Site location:
- 2.2 Historical context summary.
- 2.3 Conservation Status and Related Regulations

3.0 Building record:

- 3.1 Description and record of exterior and site.
- 3.2 Description and record of interior.
- 3.3 Condition.
- 3.4 Building use.

4.0 Significance:

5.0 Development proposal and Conservation strategy / Heritage Impact assessment:

- 5.1 Proposed development.
- 5.2 New building relationship with Protected Structure
- 5.3 Building Approach.
- 5.4 Elevation Treatment:
- 5.5 Interventions and Analysis of Heritage Impacts

6.0 Methodology:

I.0 Introduction.

Design Forum Conservation were engaged by Cork County Council to provide Conservation support to the County Council Architects Department, in the planned extensive refurbishment and upgrading of the existing disused Courthouse and Soup Kitchen buildings off Market Square, Youghal.

Design Forum Architects have teamed up with Dr. Rosanne Walker B.A., B.A.I, PgDIP, PhD, of Alry Building Consultants who provided support in advice to assist in the thermal upgrading of the historic buildings.

This refurbishment will involve significant structural works and the construction of a new extension link between both buildings. The refurbished buildings will act as a new Exhibition Centre in Youghal, Co. Cork.

This version of the report is to accompany the Part 8 Planning Application for the proposed works.

Site visits were conducted in 2021 & 2022.

Site record and review was carried out by:

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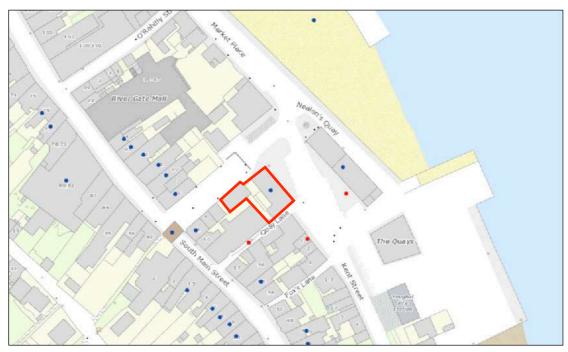
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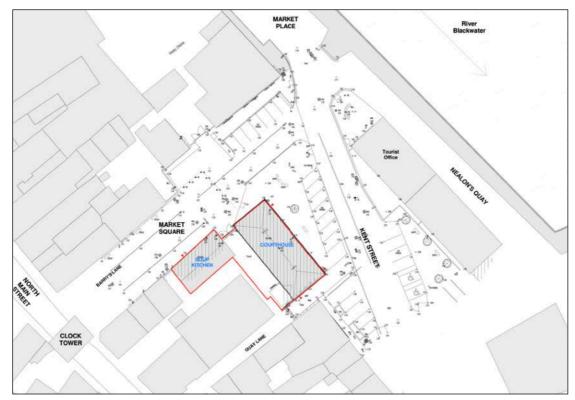
2.0 Background.

2.1 Site location:

The building is located in the centre of the town of Youghal on Kent Street facing the harbour (River Blackwater) and quays.



• Fig 1. Courthouse & Soup kitchen location. OS Map extract



• Fig 2. Site location map.



• Fig 3. Site from above.



• Fig 4. Site from above.

2.2 Historical context summary.

Courthouse:

The Courthouse building is strategically positioned on Market Square, which connects Youghal Clock Gate Tower and the North and South Main Streets to the quayside.

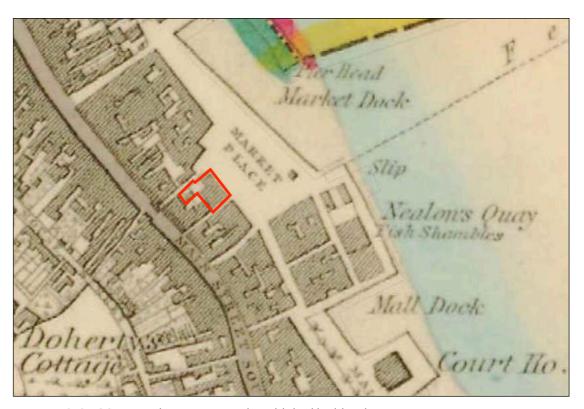
Having been vacant for the past two decades, the Courthouse fell into a poor state of repair and is in need of redevelopment. The building, previously in ownership of Courts Services, underwent some roof works that were carried out on behalf of OPW in 2014.

Soup Kitchen:

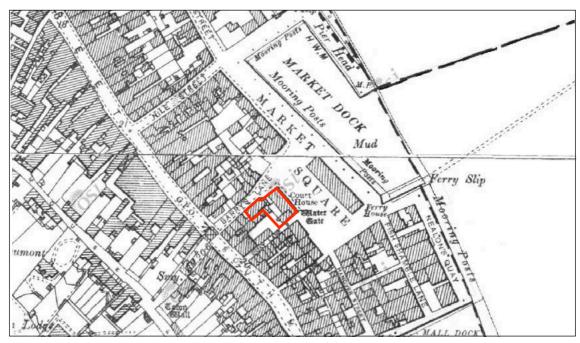
The second of the two buildings forming part of this Project - The Soup Kitchen building, is a single storey, semi-detached historic structure. The Protected Structure status of the building has not been confirmed, but at present time it does not appear on the Protected Structure list, Youghal Development Plan.

The building has rubble stone walls, which are lime whitewashed. The pitched roof, currently covered with corrugated asbestos sheets is running parallel to Barry's Lane. The building has two access points, both located directly onto the newly resurfaced Barry's Lane – pedestrian plaza. The Soup Kitchen was most recently used as a boat storage/ shed.

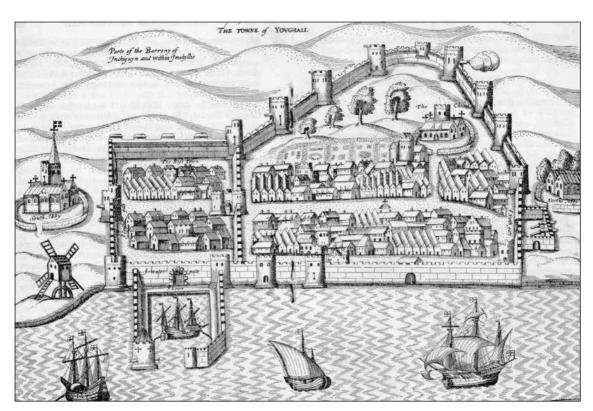
The Courthouse building dates from c1845, just after the first edition 6" OS maps were surveyed.



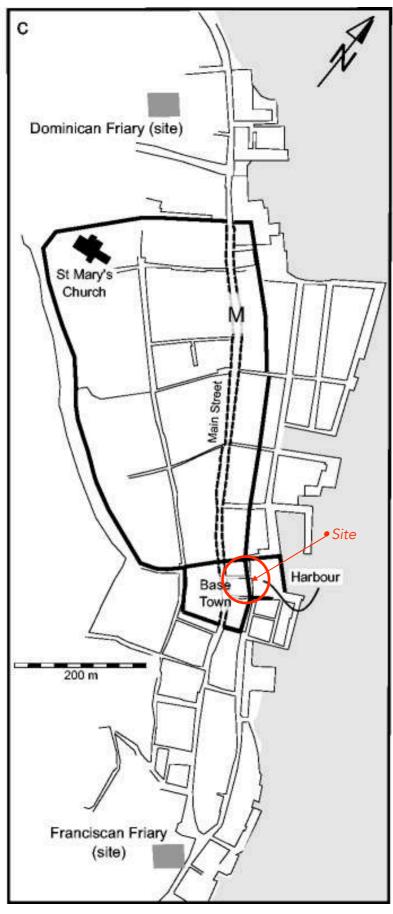
• Fig 5. 1840's OS Map with vacant site and established building line.



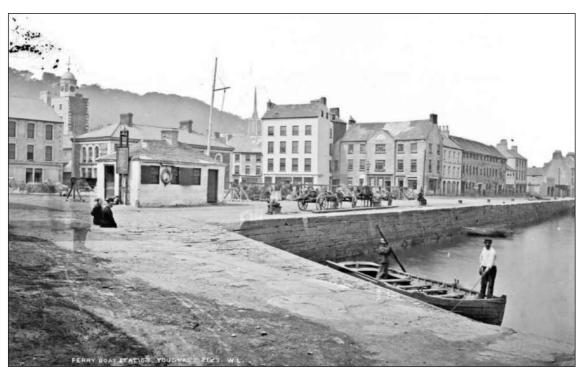
• Fig 6. First edition 25" OS Map c1900.



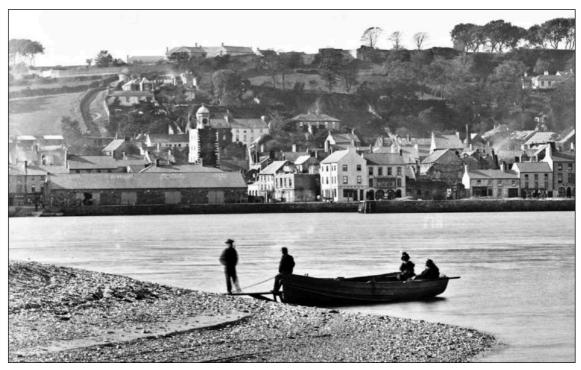
• Fig 7. Map of Youghal from the 17th century Pacata Hibernia. The smaller walled section to the left was known as Base Town or Irish Town. It was for the native Irish and the entrance to the main town was through a guarded gate. Note the heavily fortified quay walls.



• Fig 8. Site located in context of old town wall.



• Fig 9. Youghal 'Ferry Boat Station' c1900 Lawrence collection NLI. Courthouse behind.



• Fig 10. Youghal 'Ferry' from opposite side with courthouse roof visible behind warehouse c1900 Lawrence collection NLI. Courthouse behind.



• Fig 11. 'Cromwells Arch/ Watergate. c1900 Lawrence collection NLI. Courthouse to left.

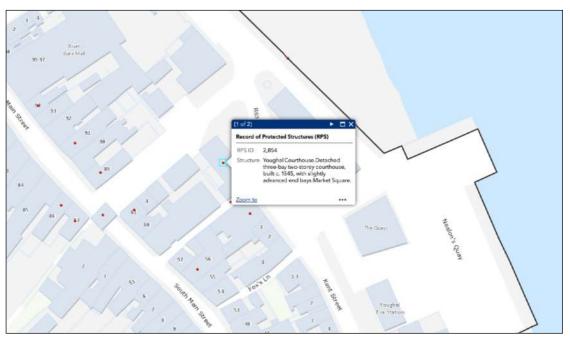
2.3 Conservation Status and Related Regulations:

2.3.1 Protected Structure:

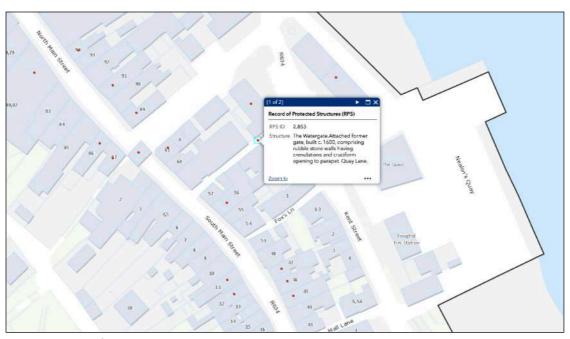
The building is a protected Structures and listed No.2,854 on the Cork County RPS.

"Youghal Courthouse. Detached three-bay two-storey courthouse, built c. 1845, with slightly advanced end bays. Market Square."

The adjoining 'Watergate' gateway is also listed as a protected Structure: RPS 2,853.



• Fig 13. Extract from RPS - Development plan. RPS ID 2854.



• Fig 14. Extract from RPS - Development plan. Adjoining archway/ gate RPS No. 2,853.

2.3.2 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage:

The building is included in the NIAH register: 20823127

The building was built: c1845

NIAH Description:

Detached three-bay two-storey courthouse, built c. 1845, with slightly advanced end bays. Hipped slate roof with dressed and carved sandstone chimneystacks and timber bracketed eaves course with dressed limestone eaves course below.

Cut sandstone walls with dressed limestone quoins. Round-headed openings to first floor, those to the central bay and side elevations triple arcaded, with carved limestone surrounds, block-and-start to side elevation, and sills and multiple paned round-headed timber sliding sash windows.

Triple square-headed openings to ground floor of side elevations with dressed limestone block-and-start surrounds, cut limestone sills and timber windows. Gable-fronted outbuilding to south-west.

NIAH Appraisal:

This structure is a variation on the standard courthouse design attributed to William Caldbeck. It retains much of its original form and structure, including timber sash windows with hand blown glass, but was refurbished internally c. 1965 and 1985. It retains internal features such as the original light surrounds and plaster ceiling with moulded cornice to the double height courtroom, bar room fittings and cast-iron fireplaces.

The structure is notable within the town for its large detached form and exposed stonework, which adds variety of materials and texture and links it to nearby clock tower, tourist information office and Watergate.

There is evidence of fine crafting in the windows and their surround and the limestone dressings add variety to the façade and add rhythm and symmetrically, delineating bays. The building adds to its prominent site on Market Square and opposite the dock.



• Fig 15. Extract from NIAH maps with site outlined and identified on schedule - Ref: 20823127.

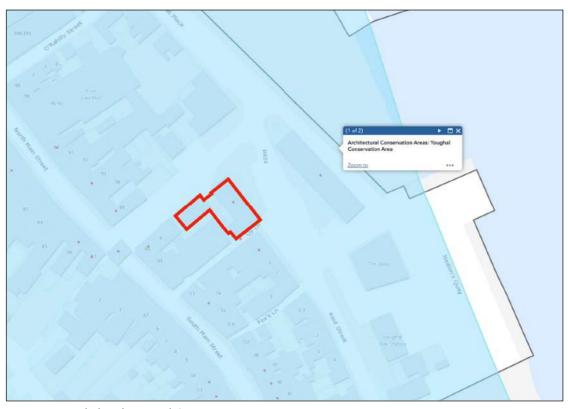
2.3.3 Recorded monuments/ Archaeology:

The significant Archaeological history of the site is being addressed by project team Archaeologist Dan Noonan, under separate cover.

The site is just outside the medieval town wall at the location of the medieval quay. Contemporary 18th Century maps show that there was a building on the site incorporating the town wall as it's back wall and possibly extending, at least partially, into the area now covered by the Courthouse building. The Manuscript town plan of 1841 shows the site as vacant but the building line to the South had already been established. The new courthouse was built forward of the established building line and thus probably also forward of the medieval quay wall.

2.3.3 Architectural Conservation Area:

The site is located within the local Youghal Architectural Conservation Area. This area extends to the entire waterfront and town of Youghal.



• Fig 16. Youghal Architectural Conservation area.

3.0 Building record:

The building was visited on three occasions to carry out inspections:

Access was available throughout the building albeit limited in some areas due to partial ceiling collapse internally.

3.1 Description and record of exterior and site.

Roof:

It would appear the OPW had the building re-roofed in 2014, after the building was starting to deteriorate as a result of water ingress.

The new roof appears to be Bangor Welsh slate, appropriate to the building.

The two chimneys have lead soakers and flashings also likely to have been addressed at the time of re-roofing. The Chimneys are partially plastered in sand cement render and look as though they may have been capped at the time of work, with no visible chimney pots.

The roof of the Soup kitchen was clearly not part of this same project and is in need of replacement. This roof is most likely to be a typical Corrugated asbestos sheet roof, with some previous repairs in corrugated iron. Survey would be required and asbestos specialist engaged to remove and dispose of.

The rainwater goods appear to be cast iron and also appropriate to the building. These may have been replaced at the same time as the roof. There is one profiled moulded gutter to the front and sides and a half round to the rear.

Rainwater goods to Soup Kitchen are poor and should be replaced with the roof.

Masonry structures:

The building is coursed snecked sandstone with finely detailed limestone base plinth, quoins, window surrounds, string course and eaves cornice.

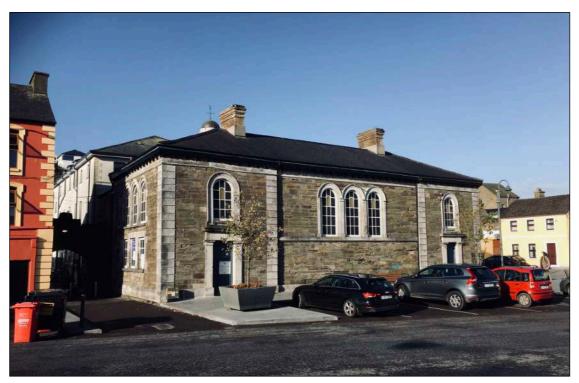
With sandstone and limestone, there are many types with different durability and weathering characteristics, and so the defects below are generalised a bit. This would appear to be a local sandstone.

Much of the sand stone in the wall is face bedded and have suffered significant erosion as a result.

Erosion and settlement have lead to mortar joints being open in many areas and exacerbating the problems of water ingress, the associated frost damage, and water being absorbed. Some sand cement pointing repairs also add to the problem and will need to be addressed, by removal and repointing in Lime mortar.



• Fig 17. Courthouse Re-roofed in 2014 by OPW.



• Fig 18. Courthouse Re-roofed in 2014 by OPW.



• Fig 19. Rear Soup Kitchen to Market Place.



• Fig 20. Rear Soup Kitchen to Market Place.



• Fig 21. Rear Soup Kitchen to Market Place with sports shop to right.



• Fig 22. Rear Soup Kitchen and buttressed wall towards Courthouse.



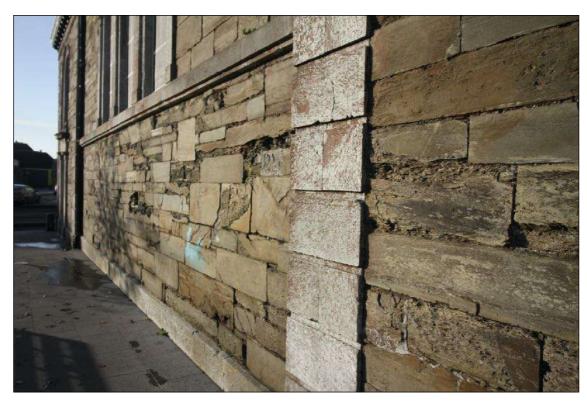
• Fig 23. Quaker Community Soup kitchen, part of earlier 17th Century Custom house.



• Fig 24. Linking wall between Courthouse and Soup kitchen.



• Fig 25. Eroded pointing and severe erosion in face bedded stones.



• Fig 26. Eroded pointing and severe erosion in face bedded stones.



• Fig 27. Eroded pointing and severe erosion in face bedded stones.



• Fig 28. Eroded pointing and severe erosion in face bedded stones.

There would need to be a close look at the gutter detail and associated flashings to ensure avoidance of a situation where bimetallic corrosion might result.



• Fig 29. Gutter detail to Courthouse and flashing and possible steel channel detail to be investigated.

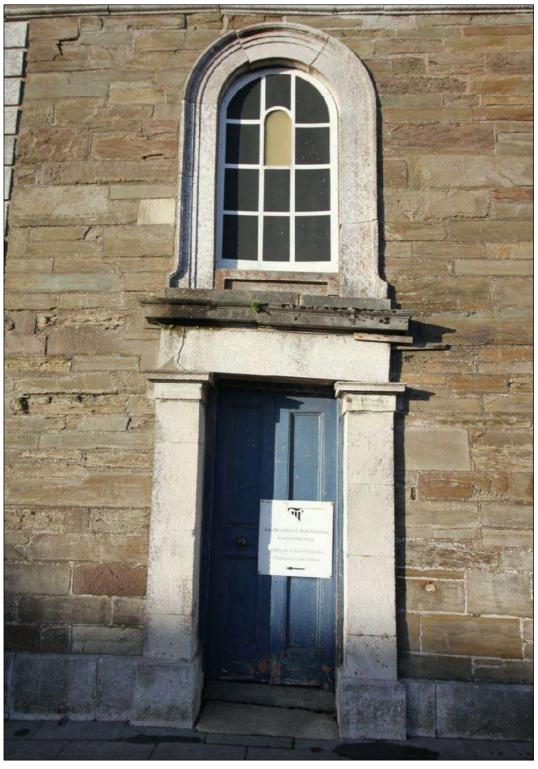


• Fig 30. Gutter detail to Soup kitchen and corrugated roof.

Structural settlement in External walls:

There are many areas where the Courthouse building has significant subsidence and settlement. A previous report by David Kelly partners has recorded the extent of settlement at between 70mm in NW corner and 93mm in NE Corner.

The settlement and movement issues will be addressed. In more detail in Horgan Lynch reports and survey and site investigations will throw more light on the matter.



• Fig 31. Settlement in South East corner.

3.2 Description and record of interior.



• Fig 32. Southern East gable with many of the same issues as North Eastern front wall.

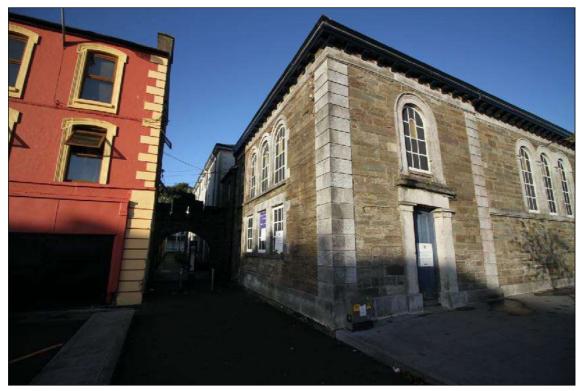




• Fig 33 &34. Southern gable and SW corner with rubble walls and poor pointing, and Cromwells Arch.



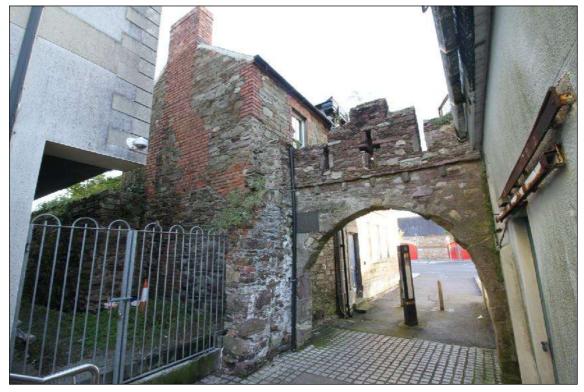
 \bullet Fig 35. Site plan, with Courthouse to right and Soup kitchen to left.



• Fig 36. South Eastern corner.



• Fig 37. South West elevation and remains of old City wall.



• Fig 38. Cromwells Arch and 'Watergate' originally line of access to harbour through city wall.



• Fig 39. North West elevation.

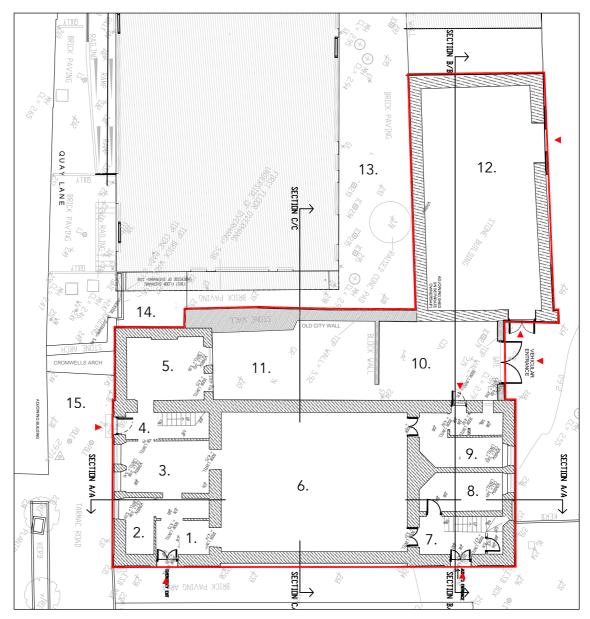


• Fig 40. Link between Courthouse and Soup kitchen.

3.2 Description and record of Interior:

Courthouse:

Rooms are identified below in this ground floor survey plan:



• Fig 41. Ground floor plan existing buildings.

Rooms ground floor:



• Fig 42 -44. Room 1. Entrance.







• Fig 45-46. Room 2. Off entrance.





• Fig 47-49. Room 2. Off entrance.







• Fig 50-51. Room 23. Office.





• Fig 52- 53. Room 23. Office.







• Fig 54- 57. Room No.4 stairs.







• Fig 58. Room No.5 Rear yard Entrance (former kitchen).



• Fig 59. Room No.5 Rear yard Entrance.



• Fig 60. Room No.6 Courtroom.



• Fig 61. Room No.6 Courtroom.



• Fig 62. Room No.6 Courtroom.



• Fig 63. Room No.6 Courtroom.



• Fig 64. Room No.6 Courtroom.



• Fig 65. Room No.6 Courtroom.



• Fig 66. Room No.6 Courtroom.



• Fig 67. Room No.6 Courtroom.

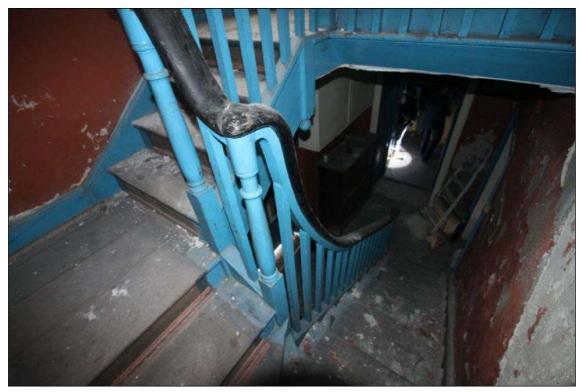




• Fig 68- 71. Room No.7 stairs.







• Fig 72. Room No.7 SE stairs



• Fig 73. Room No.7 SE entrance





• Fig 74 - 77 Room No.9 Rear entrance and toilet.







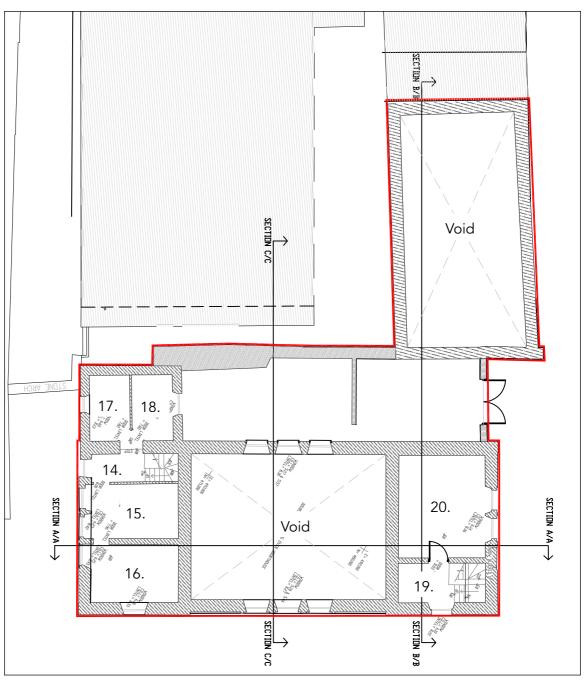
• Fig 78. Rear yard No.10.



• Fig 79. Rear yard No.10.

First Floor:

Room identification:



• Fig 80. First floor plan.





• Fig 81-84. Room. 14 First floor landing .







• Fig 85. Room. 15 First floor office off landing.



• Fig 86. Room. 15 First floor office off landing.





• Fig 87 - 88. Room. 15 First floor office off landing.



• Fig 89. Room. 15 First floor office off landing.



• Fig 90. Room. 16 First floor office off landing.



• Fig 91. Room. 16 First floor office off landing.



• Fig 92. Room. 16 First floor office off landing.



• Fig 93. Room. 16 First floor office off landing.



• Fig 94. Room. 17 First floor office off landing.









• Fig 97. Room. 18 First floor office off landing.







• Fig 99. Room. 19 Main front stairs office entrance.



• Fig 100. Room. 19 Landing window.



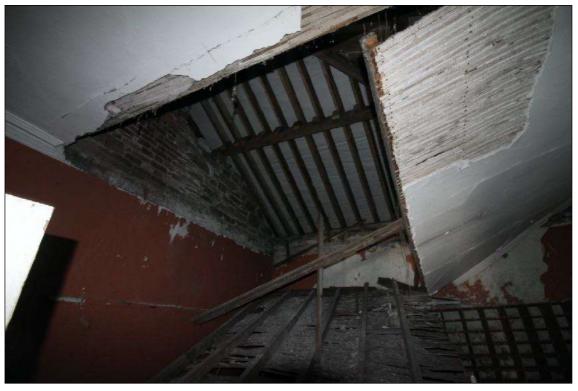
• Fig 101. Room. 19 Stairs.



• Fig 102. Room. 19 Landing from stairs.



• Fig 103. Room. 20 approaching from landing.



• Fig 104. Room. 20 Collapsed ceiling.



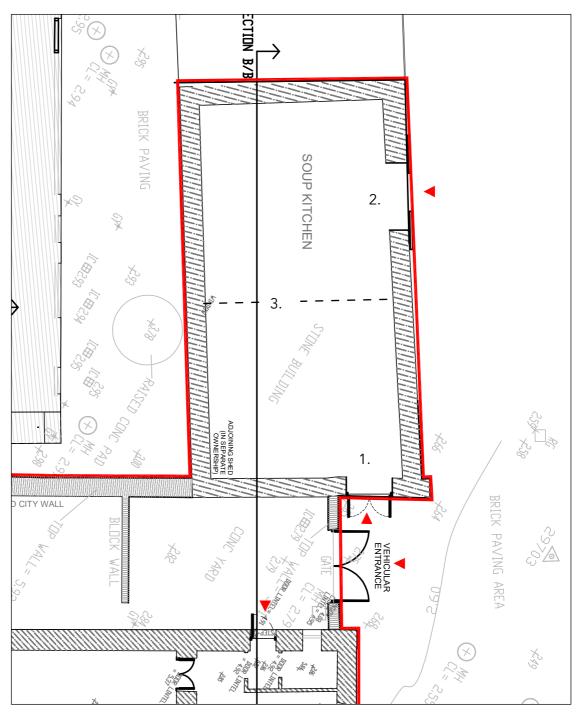
• Fig 105. Room. 20 Collapsed ceiling.



• Fig 106. Room. 20 Collapsed ceiling.

Soup Kitchen:

Ground floor plan.



• Fig 107. Ground floor plan of existing soup kitchen building.



• Fig 108. Side of door Kitchen building, facing Courthouse rear.



• Fig 109. Side of door Kitchen building, facing Courthouse rear, partially.



• Fig 110. Market place elevation, with sliding door entrance.



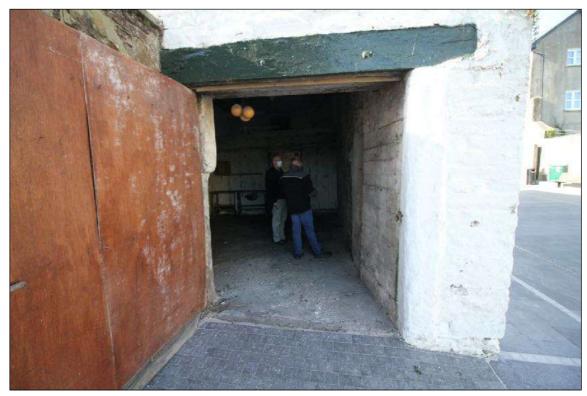
• Fig 111. Market place doors to rear yard, between Courthouse and soup kitchen.



• Fig 112. Corner of Soup kitchen building and second entrance.



• Fig 113. Corner of Soup kitchen building.



• Fig 114. Entrance to Soup kitchen building. Door No1. On plan



• Fig 115. View. Inside same door above.



• Fig 116. Soup kitchen internal screen. No3. On plan



• Fig 117 & 118. Soup kitchen view towards waterfront. Door No.1.



• Fig 119. Roof structure and corrugated sheets above.



• Fig 120. Screen wall No. 3.



• Fig 121. Door No.2. Access door above to adjoining?



• Fig 122. Screen No.3.

3.3 Condition and description of buildings.

As evidenced from images above, the exterior of the building underwent an OPW restoration project at roof level in late 2014. This certainly halted the worst deterioration and saved the interior to the extent that it is saved today.

The Courthouse building has two masonry chimneys on the roofline with modern render over older render presumably undertaken at the same time. Chimneys need attention with signs of vegetation growing out of the tops. The roof is covered in a Blue Bangor slate or similar, with clay capped ridges and hips.

The front walls are coursed snecked sandstone rubble walls with limestone plinth, quoins, string course and window surrounds and eaves cornices. As previously mentioned the local sandstone is face bedding and has suffered from the inevitable effects of moisture and front damage and erosion over the years. Some pointing is cement based and has contributed to the failure in parts of the external skin.

Rear walls have been rendered in cement based mortar.

Walls have significant settlement as mentioned before, and engineering assessment is addressed under separate cover.

The windows and doors in the courthouse are generally in poor condition, with most boarded up and hidden externally. Internally, many look as though restoration would be an option. More detailed review would be advised in due course and following a window by window assessment.

The rear overgrown yard is accessed through the GF kitchen room, with an additional gate onto Barrys lane.

The soup kitchen building is in relatively good condition, though modified over the years and may have been more that one structure originally. The roof has also protected this building and it has remained relatively dry internally as a result.

Rear walls were not inspected with access through adjoining property.

Internal description:

Roof:

Internal inspection was limited to ground and first floor and did not include attic or roof space. The fallen section of the ceiling in the upper offices as recorded previously, gives some view of the roof structure sand underside of slated roof.

The OPW may be in a position to provide records of works undertaken, and this should be explored.

The extent of work carried out should be investigated before any assumptions that all on top is well! A previous comprehensive report indicated that roof repairs involved the repair of the original roof with new rafters paired with original and efforts were made to straighten the roof at the same time. A new roof membrane was added when re-slating. It would be important to establish if this membrane was breathable and or ventilation was provided to the roof space when these works were undertaken.

The roof of the Soup kitchen needs further inspection at a height to confirm the condition of the timber structure. Asbestos will have to be addressed.

Ceilings:

Ceilings generally are lath and plaster as evidenced by the collapsed ceiling in the original office. Cracks in the ceilings generally and deflection, indicates the likelihood that ceiling are separating in parts from joists. In places there is evidence of woodworm attach and also dry rot clearly visible in other locations.

A report specifically into the rot and damp issues would be advisable to establish the extent of issues and likely treatments.

Walls:

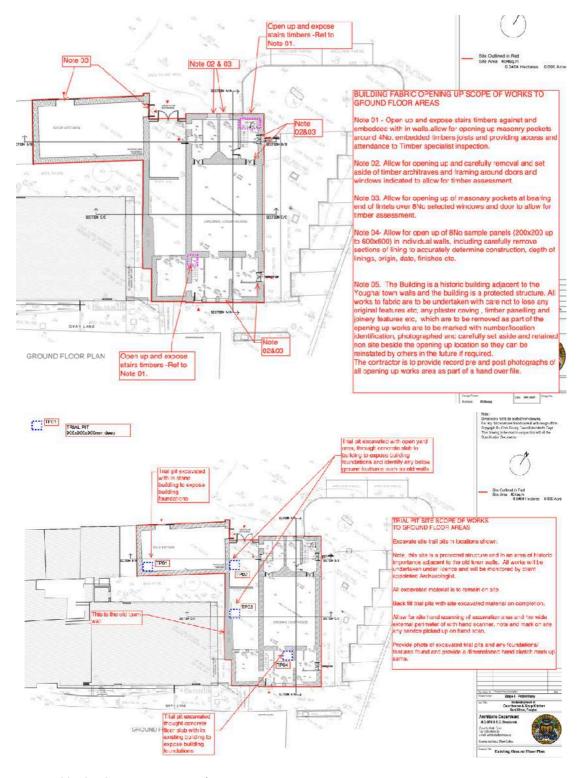
Generally there are inevitable areas of damage and internal cracking in plastered walls throughout, some as a result of settlement/ subsidence and movement in the building and others potentially resulting from dampness and water penetration of the external walls, and maybe from original poor roof. External plaster generally will possibly be addressed as part of thermal upgrade, but other plastered walls may need to be replastered as well.

Floors:

One would assume that there will be decay under existing floors, though this will need some opening up to confirm. The floor board deflection in areas would suggest the joists are in poor condition. Lack of perimeter drainage will have contributed to rising dampness and associated issues.

We would recommend a few more detailed inspections of the building including ground conditions and rot assessment. The site investigation phase should address these items and they are due to commence shortly.

The site investigations are also set to review any archaeological impact and potential implications as well.



• Fig 123-124. Site investigation plans.

4.0 Significance:

Present-Day Courthouse & Soup Kitchen:

The Courthouse is a free-standing building located close to the modern waterfront, in the heart of the medieval core of Youghal. It stands on the west side of the Market Square, the site of the defended medieval harbour, which was in-filled from 1750 onwards. The narrow Quay Lane, with its iconic 19th Century reconstruction of the Quay Gate (locally known as 'Cromwell's Arch'), is to the south; and historically controlled access to the medieval harbour. To the north is the wider expanse of Barry's Lane, a 19th Century enlargement of an earlier and much narrower passageway that ran from the South Main Street to the seaward Town Wall.

The 'Soup Kitchen' is a partially detached, double-height structure located immediately to the northwest of the Courthouse, and faces on two sides onto Barry's Lane. The building is gabled to the east, with a longer elevation to the north onto Barry's Lane. Until recently it was used as a boat store. Variation in the fabric of the building indicates that it has been altered over time; and may potentially be a combination of two buildings. This building was operated by the local Quaker community as a soup-kitchen from 1847-52, during the peak of the Great Famine. The gable to the east is very reminiscent of the gable-fronted buildings in this locality shown in Thomas Dineley's 1681 view of the harbour potentially suggesting an early date for this structure?

The building is very significant locally in the town of Youghal. It has been out of use for quite a number of years, since the courts service vacated the building. It's location in the historic core of the town, on the waterfront, makes it perfectly suited to the proposed new use, which will bring back public access and provide a valuable resource to the town and region.

5.0 Development proposal Conservation strategy & Heritage Impact assessment:

5.1 Proposed development:

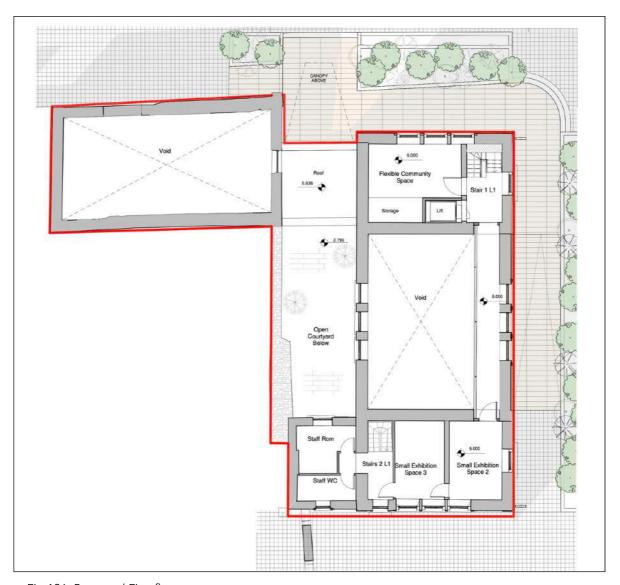
The current proposal is to introduce a new Exhibition Centre in the Courtroom (Main Hall), and WC's and plant room in the Soup Kitchen, with the construction of a new small extension link between both buildings.

The Soup Kitchen will become the support area for the new Exhibition centre.

The proposal is for the new link room to become the main entrance to the facility with a canopy over the entrance, signalling the public entry point to the building. A new lift will be introduced to provide accessibility through the facility, and link walkway at first floor to connect the two areas at either end of courthouse at the upper level.



• Fig 125. Proposed Ground floor.



• Fig 126. Proposed First floor.

At the upper level there will be a new flexible community space, with the new lift alongside, and the link 'bridge' to connect to the accommodation at the bottom end of the plan where there will be a number of small exhibition spaces and the staff area.

To the rear of the building the courtyard will remain open and at the upper level there is no new accommodation being provided.

5.2 New building relationship with Protected Structure:

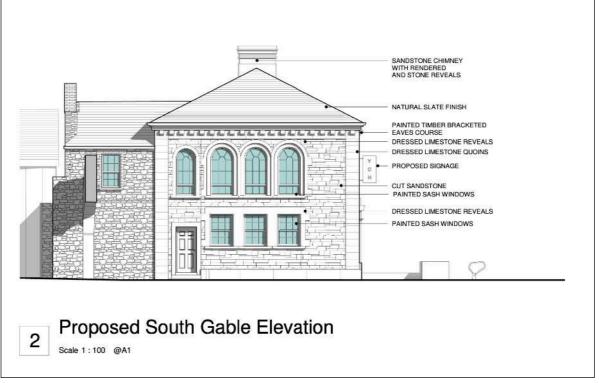
The only new structure proposed at this point is the closing of the area of the new entrance, retaining the existing external wall and providing a glazed screen into the small courtyard behind.

The proposals other than this small link, or all contained within the existing structures.

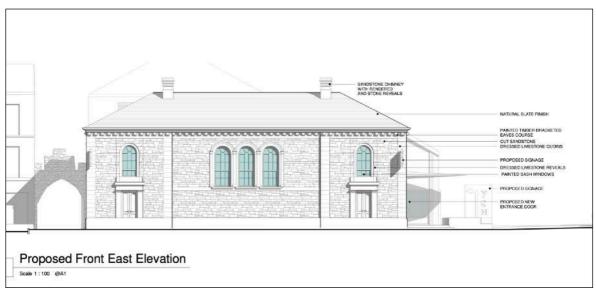
From the outside of the structures the main visible element will be the entrance canopy, and other than this, relatively little intervention will be seen in terms of alteration to the buildings.



• Fig 127. North Elevation and proposed entrance between Courthouse and 'Soup Kitchen'.



• Fig 128. South elevation and section through Watergate to left of image.



• Fig 129. East Elevation, with new entrance canopy emerging from Left of image signalling entrance.

5.3 Building Approach:

The signage and the canopy will signal the entrance to the facility, and address the pedestrian Market Place alongside, in an appropriate manner. Apart from two smaller signs on the front elevation, the main signage will be from the Market Place entry. While the canopy will have quite a striking impact, it would be a mistake not to have a stone signal for this new facility and engage the passers by!

5.4 Elevation Treatment:

The exterior of the building will undergo a complete refurbishment, with stone walls being re-pointed appropriately with lime mortar pointing, to improve weather resistance and to secure loose material (stone) on the facade. A more detailed study has been prepared to review this remedial work.

5.5 Interventions and Analysis of Heritage Impacts:

The key significant impacts of the proposed works we have identified are as follows:

External impacts:

5.5.1 Stonework:

All external stonework defects and pointing will be addressed, and this repair work will potentially have a minor impact. The solution to the porous face bedding spalling stonework may impact on the external appearance, and will need careful consideration.

5.5.2 Extension:

The small link building between the soup kitchen and Courthouse will be visible mostly from within the facility and inside the new open landscaped courtyard. The impact will be minimal, and reversible with the front wall to Market Place being retained.

5.5.3 Roof:

The Soup kitchen roof will need to be replaced. This corrugated roof will have to be removed. The roof will be re-slated. A full assessment of structural timbers will be carried out when works are being undertaken and no sound material will be removed, with repairs as required.

5.5.4 Signage:

A necessary addition to any such facility to ensure public are aware of the facility. There is a proposal, as mentioned above, to mount a number of signs on the East (quayside) elevation and one large sign on the ground outside the entrance to the North elevation.

5.5.5 Windows and doors:

The existing windows and doors in the building will be restored where it is possible, and where replacement might be required, these will be made to replicate the original windows in the building.

Internal impacts:

5.5.6 Soup kitchen:

Changes to Soup kitchen involve providing support areas for the facility including introducing a new plant area to rear, and breakup of existing space to accommodate toilets etc.

5.5.7 New link extension:

The new link extension between buildings provides the facility entrance off the street. The space is minimal and impact is negligible. The new canopy will be visible, but is an important part of signalling the presence of this new facility to visitors, and would be easily reversible in future.

5.5.8 Courtroom:

The main intervention in this space is the addition of the suspended bridge walkway, which is an important connection to the two upper floors, and with a new small lift being introduced, helps provides full accessibility to all spaces on the first floor. It also provides an interesting viewpoint within the facility and accesses more wall space for exhibition/display while being structured to minimise its impact.

This intervention is also fully reversible.

5.5.9 Lift:

Introduction of a lift and associated demolitions. This small lift provides the same accessibility to the upper level of the building and being fitted outside the main volume of the court room makes it relatively low impact.

5.5.10 First floor changes:

Minimal significant impact, other than lift and associated shaft.

6.0 Methodology:

This report is based on a programme of desktop research, site inspection and desk-based assessment. The following sources were consulted as part of the desktop study:

6.1 Historic Environment Viewer:

The Historic Environment Viewer is an on-line digital service provided by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. It has been developed to enhance the user's experience by facilitating access to the databases of the National Monuments Service's Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) in a seamless one-stop point of access for both built heritage data resources. The viewer is capable of being accessed on the majority of browsers and platforms, including smart phones.

6.2 Cartographic Sources:

The detail on cartographic sources can indicate past settlement and land use patterns in recent centuries and can also highlight the impact of modern developments and agricultural practices. This information can aid in the identification of the location and extent of unrecorded, or partially levelled, features of archaeological or architectural heritage interest.

6.4 Aerial photography:

In parallel with the cartographic study, a review publicly-accessible aerial photographic sources from the Ordnance Survey, Google /Bing Maps and Apple Maps was undertaken.

6.5 Development Plans:

The local authority development plans relevant to the study area was consulted as part of this assessment. These plans outline the local authorities' policies for the conservation of the archaeological and architectural heritage resource and include the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and any designated Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). The relevant development plan for the study area is the Cork County Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

6.6 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage:

The function of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage ('NIAH') is to record built heritage structures within the Republic of Ireland and to advise local authorities in relation to structures of interest within their areas.

6.7 Dictionary of Irish Architects:

The Dictionary of Irish Architects is an online database which contains biographical and bibliographical information on architects, builders and craftsmen born or working in Ireland during the period 1720 to 1940, and information on the buildings on which they worked.

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