

# Carnew Remote Working Hub Planning Report

February 2025

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

# 1.1 Project Introduction

Wicklow County Council are proposing to carry out the following development at the Former Bank of Ireland, Main Street, Carnew, Co. Wicklow under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. The development will comprise a change of use from the existing bank to a community-based Remote Working Hub intended to provide an active and vibrant working environment on Carnew Main Street.



Front entrance ramp and Car Charging Area



Existing underutilised yard to the rear of the existing building

## 1.3 Site

The site of the Carnew Remote Working Hub is centrally located within the village of Carnew, set directly on the northern edge of Main Street (R725). The area of the proposed development site extends to c. 0.025 ha. and includes an existing yard to the rear and an existing access ramp to the front.



Aerial view of Carnew Village

## 1.4 Existing Building

The building is an end of terrace, two storey, pitched roofed building located immediately adjacent to the Main Street within Carnew. The property has masonry exterior walls in good condition but in need of redecoration. There is a solid ground floor, timber framed first floor and a fibre cement slated roof. To the rear there is a small single storey, concrete, flat roofed vault. The vault is a single storey concrete section to the rear right corner of the building. The strong room door etc are all still in place.

The building is unoccupied and appears to have been vacated relatively recently. The electricity is connected. There are the original aluminium windows throughout, double glazed at back, single glazed at the front. An ATM was previously installed in the front elevation but is now removed. There are extensive physical security measures throughout the building and all rear and side windows are barred on the inside. The building is heated with traditional storage heaters. The ground floor is one large open plan room with offices along the western gable and the vault in the northwest corner. The main ground floor has been subdivided with a front to rear partition at some time to provide a separate space along the eastern side. A timber stairs leads to the first floor. The first floor is similarly good condition. It is subdivided into individual rooms and glass fronted offices. The staff kitchen and toilets are located on the western end of the building.

There is no evidence of water penetration, dampness or degradation of the fabric of the building.

A gated side entrance provides access to the rear yard – this is not wide enough for vehicular access



View of side entrance to rear yard



View of existing Ramp

# 2.0 PLANNING



## 2.1 Carnew Town Plan

Carnew is a designated Level 5 Small Town (Type 1) settlement. The site is zoned T C - Town Centre

<p><b>TC: Town Centre</b></p>	<p>To provide for the development and improvement of appropriate town centre uses including residential, retail, commercial, office and civic use.</p>	<p>To develop and consolidate the existing town centre to improve its vibrancy and vitality with the densification of appropriate residential and commercial developments ensuring a mix of residential, commercial, recreational, civic, cultural and leisure uses while delivering a quality urban environment, with emphasis on regeneration, infill town and historic centre conservation, ensuring priority for public transport where applicable, pedestrians and cyclists, while minimising the impact of private car based traffic and enhance and develop the existing centre's fabric.</p>
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The site of the proposed development lies within Opportunity Site OP P1 (Main Street - Back Alley link site) identified within the Carnew Specific Objectives in the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028. Extract below:

*This block measures c 0.5 hectares located in a prime town-centre location and is under-utilized in terms of development potential. This area forms a key site for the opening of backlands of Main Street properties along Back Alley and linking existing and proposed housing and open space lands to the Main Street (see SLQ 1).*

*The redevelopment of the block shall maintain an active street frontage onto Main Street with the exception of the proposed access road. New residential and/or commercial uses, which will create a new street frontage and passive supervision, would ideally be located along the new street. The design and overall layout shall be of exceptional architectural quality with the primary emphasis on pedestrian movements between the existing Main Street and lands to the rear.*

### **OP1 objectives**

- *No development shall prejudice or impede the creation of a new street along the existing lane, capable to accommodating two way traffic flow;*
- *New structures shall address and provide passive supervision of the new street and of Back Alley;*
- *In order to achieve the best use of land, development standards with respect to car parking and open space may be relaxed subject to the highest quality of design and residential amenity being maintained.*

The proposed development is fully compatible with the above objectives.

## 2.2 Flooding

The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Of The Wicklow County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 identifies no lands at risk of flooding within the area of the Carnew Level 5 Town Plan.

### Opportunity Sites

**OP1 Main Street - Back Alley link site**



## 3.0 SCHEME CONCEPT

## 3.1 Context

Carnew is a small rural town located on the R725 which connects Gorey and Carlow. Considering the town's location at the juncture of Wicklow, Wexford and Carlow and has strong socio-economic and cultural links with the adjoining counties. The urban form of the town provides for an expansive Main Street, with wide footpaths, laid out in a linear format. There have been recent works to improve the urban fabric along the Main Street including the installation of a car-charging station and the widening of footpaths. While there has not been extensive development in the area recently, the town presents as a busy focus for local activity.

The economic development strategy of the current development plan is to take advantage of the existing economic assets in order to stimulate employment within the area and increase the jobs ratio by 50% by 2028. The current proposal for Carnew Remote Working Hub seeks to coordinate with and support this strategy.

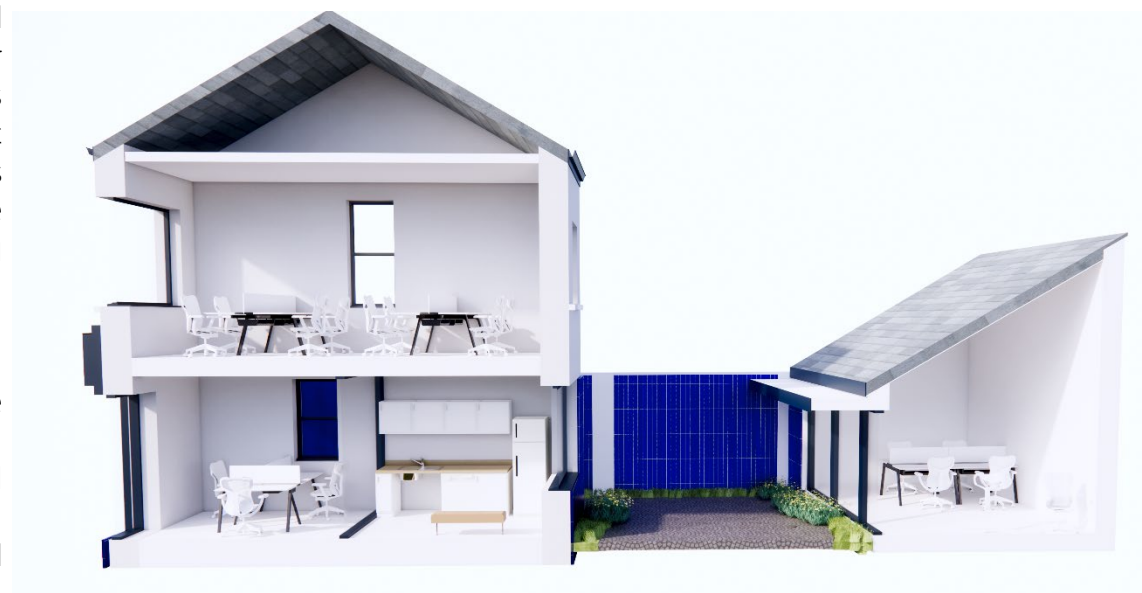


## 3.2 Concept

The refurbished and extended building is immediately adjacent to the Main Street in Carnew and the proposed design is intended to promote well-being, inclusion, and community cohesion for those using and interacting with it. The new shopfront is intended to improve the building's relationship with the street and the community, giving glimpses through the new full height glazing into the working spaces. The new entrance route along the western side of the site allows views of the internal courtyard which remains, nonetheless, a secluded outdoor space for the building's patrons to enjoy. This active street front strongly contrasts with the opaque existing frontage.

The proposed development to create the Remote Working Hub comprises:

- The demolition of the existing entrance ramp, steps, railings and bollards to the south of the building along the Main Street.
- The renewal, alteration and, in some cases, the enlargement of the existing windows and doors on the north, south and west elevations.
- Refurbishment works to the existing building which will include the demolition of all existing internal partitions and the existing stairs; the reconfiguration of the internal walls at both levels; the construction of a new stairs and passenger lift connecting the ground and first floors.
- A new, single-storey lean-to extension to the rear of the property will house sanitary accommodation (including a universal accessible WC and an open plan office space) and will be connected to the existing building by a new pitched roof structure with a glazed entrance and enclosing the existing flat roofed vault. All pitched roofs will be finished in natural slate and will accommodate photovoltaic panels where appropriate.
- The erection of a new shopfront and signage at the front of the building including an integrated decorative entrance gate. The gate will allow access via the refurbished side passage to the west of the property to a new paved and planted entrance courtyard to the rear of the existing building, created from the currently unused existing yard.
- The building fabric, ventilation, space and hot water heating systems, lighting, control systems and renewable energy sources will be renewed and upgraded to meet the requirements of Part L of the Building Regulations, to provide an energy-efficient sustainable building and to minimise the development's energy use & carbon emissions.
- A new separated foul and surface water drainage system will be provided, connecting to the existing outfall.



Section showing existing two-storey building and proposed single-storey extension, looking west.

# 4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

## 4.1 Site Layout

No change has been made to the site boundary of the existing building.

The proposal seeks to take advantage of the under-utilised back yard as an entrance route. The existing ramp to the front of the building will be removed to promote a more direct relationship to the street for the new working environment.

The intention is to enhance the public realm and to create a more inviting and flexible entrance space to the side and rear of the existing building.

A new extension has been proposed to the rear of the existing yard on the north side of the site.



Section showing existing two-storey building and proposed single-storey extension, looking east.

## 4.2 Landscaping

The existing yard to the rear is under utilised and has not been landscaped.

The proposal is that this space will be used with the access to the side of the existing building as an entrance route and as a recreational area. New planting and trellises will be introduced. The area will be repaved with new setts and the existing wall to the west will be treated as a feature with new brightly coloured tiling and external lighting,



Façade to Main Street

## 4.3 Building

The layout of the Carnew Remote Working Hub is simple and clear - it comprises the existing building, on two levels, and a new extension to the rear. These are accessed via the existing external route to the west leading through a new courtyard to a new building entrance at the junction of new and old.

The Ground Floor of the existing building is used for new offices and a canteen/coffee area. Large new windows open to the Main Street with strategically placed screening/shading to provide privacy.

A new lift and stairway lead to the First Floor which has been similarly divided into more office accommodation and a meeting/break-out room.

The existing vault, which is constructed very robustly and would be difficult and expensive to alter, has been integrated as a generous storage area for the Hub.

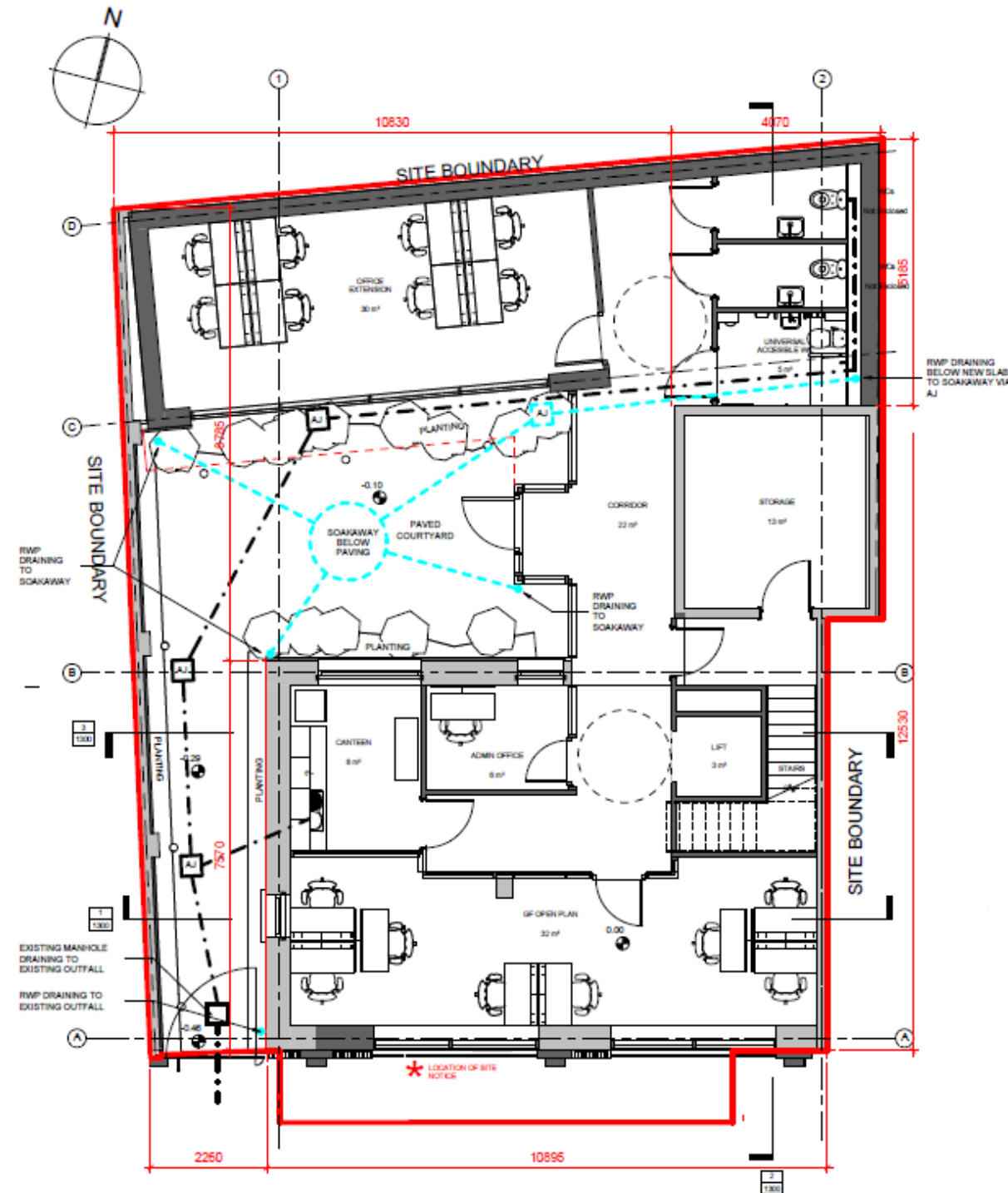
A new extension to the north provides more office accommodation with large windows opening on the courtyard, shaded by a generous overhang.

The existing building will be provided with a new, natural slate roof and repaired, renewed, painted finish to the existing walls.

The new extension will be finished in slate and render to match.

All existing rainwater goods will be replaced with new power coated aluminium fittings.

The new shopfront will be constructed in rainscreen aluminium cladding in anodised/PPC finish, full height double glazed window systems in anodised/PPC and will be combined with a new decorative gate in powder coated steel gate securing the western entrance route.



Ground Floor Plan, showing the existing two-storey building to the south, entrance route to the west, leading to the internal courtyard and main entrance and a new extension to the north.

## 4.4 Services

### Domestic Water:

The design will seek to re-use the exiting supply.

### Electrical Services:

The design will seek to re-use the exiting supply.

### MISCELLANEOUS SITE CONSIDERATIONS:

#### Lighting:

A new lighting scheme will be provided for the rear courtyard and entrance route to enhance the new landscaping.

#### Ecology:

Lighting design will consider the wildlife habitats and prevent unnecessary illumination of nearby trees and hedges.

#### Upward Light Ratio:

The upward light ratio for all light fixtures will be minimised.

### LOW ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

#### MEP Design Criteria:

The following design, installation and general guidance standards are to be incorporated within the MEP services for the project: -

- Current Building Regulations.
- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act and associated regulations.
- CIBSE guides, standards etc.
- Design to fully meet the requirements of the local Environmental Health Officer, Fire Officer and Building Control Officer. These requirements being incorporated over and above any minimum standards given in this document.
- All relevant Irish and European Standards.
- Good Engineering Practice Guidelines as recognised within the industry.
- NSAI/ ETCI Wiring regulations
- Irish Water requirements
- ESB requirements
- Eir requirements
- Third party TV, Broadband provider requirements (i.e. Virgin Media, Eir, Three.)

The proposed building aims for high airtightness and superior insulation, complemented by a combination of mechanical and natural ventilation. The goal is to achieve a minimum Building Energy Rating (BER) of B1, along with compliance with Part L and Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) standards.

The following objectives will be implemented:

- minimise energy usage.
- ensure that the building is appropriately designed to reduce the demand for cooling and where air-conditioning or mechanical ventilation is installed and that installed systems are energy efficient, appropriately sized, and controlled.
- make creative and maximum use of natural light.
- maximise use of passive environmental control
- provide energy-efficient LED lights on the inside and outside of the building and control these with daylight and presence detection sensors.
- use Solar Photovoltaics panels and Heat Pumps in the building
- Incorporate high efficiency heat recovery and EC fans in mechanical ventilation systems including AHUs.
- control ventilation system by occupancy and CO2 levels
- consider mechanical window climate control for the office area, pending an external noise assessment later in the design process.
- provide the building owner with detailed information on the building fabric, fixed services, controls, and maintenance to ensure efficient energy use.

Existing surface water drainage will be re-used where possible.

New surface water drainage will discharge to a soakaway in the rear courtyard.

New and existing foul drainage will discharge to the existing foul water outfall.



# 5.0 SCHEDULES OF ACCOMMODATION

## 5.1 Existing Schedule of Accommodation

## 5.2 Proposed Schedule of Accommodation

Existing Bank of Ireland Accommodation Schedule		Proposed Remote Working Hub Accommodation Schedule	
Gross Internal Area - 146m <sup>2</sup> (Ground Floor - 82m <sup>2</sup> / First Floor - 64m <sup>2</sup> )		Gross Internal Area - 196m <sup>2</sup> (Ground Floor - 135m <sup>2</sup> / First Floor - 62m <sup>2</sup> )	
Description	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Description	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
Ground Floor		Ground Floor	
Office	6	Storage	13
Office	7	Universal Accessible WC	5
Safe	13	Lift	3
Corridor	4	Lift Equipment	1
Entrance	3	Stairs	9
Public Space	42	Corridor	22
Corridor	5	WCs	3
Counter	2	GF Open Plan	31
	Subtotal - Ground Floor	Canteen	10
		Office Extension	30
First Floor		Admin Office	5
Landing	7	WCs	3
Corridor	2		Subtotal – Ground Floor
Canteen	9		135
Male WC	4	Meeting Room	16
Female WC	9	Landing	7
Office	5	Lift	3
Office	7	Lift Equipment	1
Office	13	FF Open Plan	35
Corridor	8		Subtotal – First Floor
	Subtotal – First Floor		62
Total Accommodation Area	<b>146</b>	Total Accommodation Area	<b>196</b>
<b>Total Site Area – 0.025 Hectares</b>			