



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe  
Galway County Council

## **Galway County Council Statement to accompany Part 8 Application**

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED)  
Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (AS AMENDED)**



### **Tuam Station House Tuam, Co. Galway**

Permission is being sought at Tuam Station House, Vicar Street, in the Townland of Vicarschoral Land, Tuam, for:  
change of use from former commercial uses to office and event space. Demolition of internal and external elements to provide new office space and welfare facilities, and new glazed connecting walkway. New single storey extension to accommodate an event space and new two storey extension to facilitate a podcast room at ground floor and canteen at first floor level, with new fully accessible entrance area. New hard and soft landscaping and all ancillary site works. The proposed development will include work to Recorded Protected Structure No. 52 and to a building listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage No. 30331045. An Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report has been undertaken in respect of the proposed development and concluded that Environmental Impact Assessment is not required. An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been carried out and concluded that there will be no impact on any European Sites.

March 2025  
Galway County Council,  
Áras an Chontae

## Prospect Hill Galway

### 1. Project Description

Galway County Council is seeking Part VIII planning approval to carry out works at the Tuam Station House, Vicar Street, in the Townland of Vicarschoral Land, Tuam, County Galway. The Station House is reference No. 52 on Galway County Councils register of protected structures and is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage reference No. 30331045. It is the intention of the proposed works to bring this prominent historic building back into local use. The scope of works shall include:

- Change of use from former commercial uses to office and event space.
- Demolition of existing contemporary single storey extensions to station house at southeast and northwest gable elevations (circa 57 m<sup>2</sup> each)
- Demolition of contemporary masonry corridor to platform elevation of station house (circa 91 m<sup>2</sup>).
- Demolition of contemporary internal elements to facilitate the construction of new reception area, offices, plant room, stores, toilet facilities, and ancillary accommodation.
- Demolition of existing contemporary, masonry-built site boundary wall.
  
- Construct new single storey extension to northwest gable of station house building to accommodate an event space (circa 50 m<sup>2</sup>).
- Construct new two storey extension to southeast gable of station house to accommodate a podcast room at ground floor level, and canteen at first floor level with accessible stairs and lift in lobby area (circa 116 m<sup>2</sup>).
- Construct new glazed connecting corridor to platform elevation to replace the contemporary masonry corridor (circa 106 m<sup>2</sup>).
  
- Repair and or replacement of existing timber sash windows and replacement of contemporary main entrance double door with new timber double door.
- Repair and replacement of existing suspended timber floor.
- Repair and or replacement of timber roof structure to main station house roof.
- Replacement of damaged slates to main roof to match existing as far as practicable and retention and reinstatement of existing slates.
- Repair and or replacement of existing cast iron rainwater goods to match.
- Repair of projecting timber fascia and soffits and carved timber brackets throughout.
- Repair of existing brick chimney stacks, reinstatement of lead flashing, and installation of new traditional style chimney pots.
- Thermal upgrade works within the station building using vapour diffusible or breathable materials to suit historic fabric.
- New mechanical and electrical services to be installed in such a way as to preserve and protect historic fabric as far as practicable.
  
- Repair and or replacement of timber roof structure to lean-to platform canopy.
- Replacement of existing corrugated iron roof sheet to existing lean-to platform canopy in accordance with conservation architects' recommendation.
- Repair of existing wrought iron pedestrian bridge, stairs and balustrade.

- Repair of cast-iron water tank and repointing of cut limestone base, and renovation of existing historic doors and ironmongery with the inclusion of ventilation openings.
- Undertake all necessary repair works to metal water tank to limit further fabric degradation.
- New surface finishes to railway platform to replace existing tarmacadam with retention of existing interlocking limestone blocks to platform edge.
- New hard and soft landscaping to include public seating, pedestrian avenue, planting beds, and all associated site works.
- New building mounted and free-standing signage and external public lighting.

## 2. Background to this Project

In 2020 the Paul Hogarth Company was commissioned by Galway County Council to compile the Tuam Regeneration Masterplan. Part of the Masterplan concluded that:

*'The former railway station and surrounding lands in Tuam lie largely underused at present. The area has been identified as suitable for comprehensive mixed use development. This would involve the restoration of historic buildings, while creating new spaces for employment generating purposes.'*

In March of 2025 Galway County Council appointed AAB group to prepare a Preliminary Business Case for the delivery of a Creative Technology Hub in the Station House Building. The document describes the economic benefit which this facility would deliver for local enterprise and how the restoration of the historic Station House Building will rejuvenate the area.

The Station House renovation and reuse would provide a fantastic resource to the local community enabling local enterprise and entrepreneurs in the Creative Technology industry to grow and collaborate both in Tuam and internationally. It will also act as a generator for 'spin-out' companies, providing space for education, mentoring, and career development within the community.

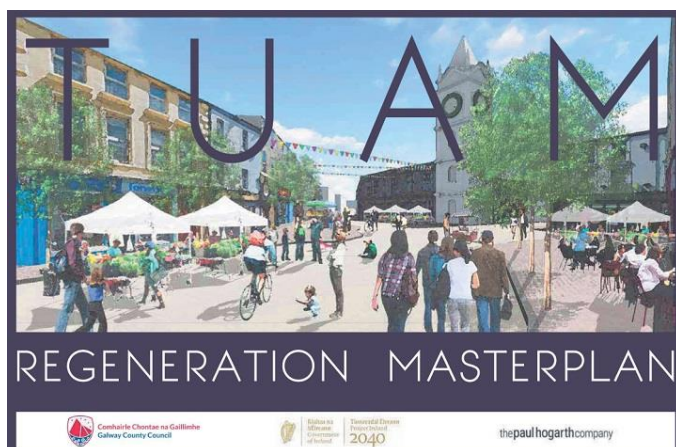


Figure 1. The opportunity to provide a covered outdoor space is highlighted in the Tuam Regeneration Masterplan

This project is being applied for as a result of a funding award by the Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme (Thrive) Strand 1, under the Northern and Western Regional Programme 2021 – 2027 and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The Tuam Station House is under the ownership of CIE. Galway County Council has the owner's consent to make this application for Planning Permission. The Tuam Station House is a Protected Structure reference No. 52 and is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage reference No. 30331045

The Station Building is described as follows: Tuam railway station is a handsome villa-style building. It is a fine building in the tradition of railway architecture and is enhanced by the retention of most of its original fabric although it is now in a considerable state of disrepair with some of its original metal work having been removed leading to fabric degradation. It is a detached nine-bay single storey railway station with central projecting gable fronted porch with slightly recessed flanking two bay sections built circa 1880. Pitched slate roof with six red brick chimney stacks, and wide eaves with carved timber brackets. Painted rendered walls, front elevation having rusticated limestone quoins to all corners, and cut limestone skirting. Square-headed window openings with limestone sills and two-over-two pane timber sliding sash windows, except for the western-most opening which is replacement timber. Square-headed doorway having cut limestone doorcase with impost, plinths and brackets supporting heavy cornice, glazed timber panelled double leaf doors and plain overlight, and approached by limestone step.

To the east, the water tank which forms part of the original architectural ensemble is also a good structure in the engineering tradition. The water tank, signed 'B Graham Waterford', stands on a limestone base built of large blocks of roughly finished limestone, some with natural vermiculation. The corners have rusticated raised quoins. The northeastern elevation includes a central doorway with round-headed arch.

The building has remained vacant for a considerable number of years. This project will include the renovation and adaptive reuse of the internal spaces and complete external renovations to repurpose the building as a Creative Technology Centre.

The Tuam Station House is prominently positioned on Sean Purcell Street which is a major artery leading into the heart of the town and makes a significant contribution to the streetscape. It is the intention of this project to use the building's location to showcase the importance of the renovation and repurposing of our historic structures. The architectural language of the contemporary extensions will be the first in a series of high quality, carefully considered, architectural interventions throughout the town with the focal point being at the historic market square.



Figure 2: Station House building in context

### **3. Planning Context**

#### **National Planning Framework**

This project is being applied for as a result of a funding award by the Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme (Thrive) Strand 1, under the Northern and Western Regional Programme 2021 – 2027 and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The project will use the Town Centre First Framework which promotes a multi-disciplinary, participatory community led approach to identify and develop projects and initiatives tackling town centre regeneration, vacancy and dereliction. The Town Centre First Policy is an integral part of the National Planning Framework (NPF) in fulfilling its objective to reverse vacancy and dereliction in our rural towns. The proposed development seeks to address this by renovating and repurposing a vacant historic building, enhancing and improving the visual amenity of the streetscape, and bringing the town centre building into local use.

#### **Regional Economic & Spatial Strategy (RSES)**

The North West Regional Assembly formally made the RSES on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020. This document seeks to guide development in the north western region as a whole. The adopted document contains numerous policies supporting the proposed works including RPO 3.4, To support the regeneration and renewal of small towns and villages in rural areas and RPO 5.14, Support the conservation of the Region's National Monuments and built heritage, structures that are of special architectural, historic, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest that are of Regional Significance or above.

#### **Galway County Development Plan**

A primary objective of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (CDP) is the proper planning and sustainable development of County Galway over the period 2022-2028 and beyond. The development plan sets out the overall vision, with strategies, policies and objectives for the county as a whole. The proposal is in compliance with the CDP strategy to ensure that the physical environment and streetscape is enhanced, and that our built heritage is protected. By repurposing the station house it's enduring relevance within the community is safeguarded thereby ensuring it's ongoing maintenance and longevity.

#### **Tuam Local Area Plan**

The Tuam Local Area Plan 2023-2029 (LAP) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements and provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). It sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Tuam in the context of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (CDP) and the Regional Planning Guidelines. It is informed by Ministerial Guidelines issued pursuant to Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, together with EU requirements regarding Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA).



In order to preserve areas of architectural value, the Tuam Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) has been designated. The Station House falls just outside of the ACA however, it's contribution to the cultural and architectural quality of Tuam is significant.

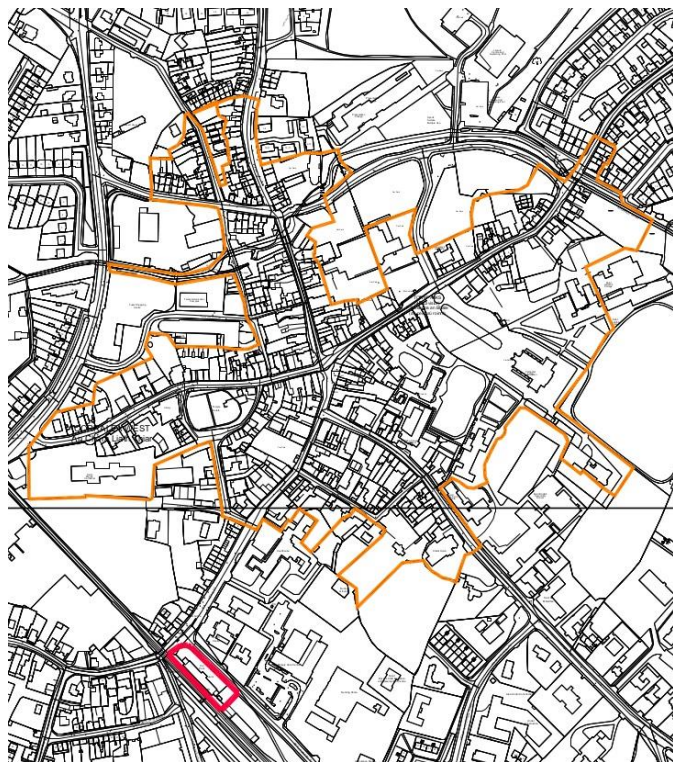


Figure 3: The ACA boundary is shown in orange and the project site boundary is circumscribed in red

This proposal is supported by 2 key strategic priorities of the LAP:

- *“Protecting the natural assets, environment, built heritage and public realm of the town, including its local character for the benefit of future generations to come.”*
- *“Promoting a strong sense of community spirit, civic pride, local identity and social inclusiveness in the locality and establishing a strong local identity that is distinguishable from other areas.”*

This proposal also seeks to comply with the following objectives as set out in the LAP:

**Objective LU 1 – Town Centre/Commercial (C1) (Refer to Maps 1A/1B)**

Promote the sustainable development of the Town Centre as an intensive, well connected, high quality, well-landscaped, human-scaled and accessible environment, with an appropriate mix of uses, including residential, commercial, service, tourism, enterprise, public and community uses as appropriate, that provides a range of retail services, facilities and amenities to the local community and visitors to the town. The town centre and associated main streets shall remain the primary focus for retail and service activity within Tuam.

**Objective SI 2 – Universal Access**

Ensure that housing developments, community facilities, public spaces, public roads, public footpaths and transport services give due consideration to the needs of disabled or mobility impaired people and the requirements of the Disability Act 2005 and the Council's Disability Action Plan 2007-2015 and the Traffic Management Guidelines 2003

**Objective HC 2 – Protected Structures**

Ensure the protection and sympathetic enhancement of structures included and proposed for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) that are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, together with the integrity of their character and setting.

**Objective HC 3 – Architectural Conservation Areas**

Protect, conserve and enhance the essential character of the Tuam Architectural Conservation Area, through respecting the surviving historic plots and street patterns and through the appropriate management and control of the design, location and layout of new development, alterations or extensions to existing structures, and/or modifications to the setting of the structure and the character of the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA).

**Objective HC 4 – Development Relating to Protected Structures and ACA**

Ensure that any development, modifications, alterations, or extensions materially affecting the character of a protected structure, or structure adjoining a protected structure, or structure within or adjacent to the Architectural Conservation Area, is sited and designed appropriately and is not detrimental to the character or setting of the protected structure, or the Architectural Conservation Area. This will include the following:

- Works materially affecting the character of a protected structure or the exterior of a building/structure within an Architectural Conservation Area will require planning permission.
- Any works/development carried out to a protected structure or the exterior of a building/structure within an Architectural Conservation Area shall be in accordance with best conservation practice and use sustainable and appropriate materials.
- Works/development within the Architectural Conservation Area shall ensure the conservation of traditional features and building elements which contribute to the character of the area.
- New proposals shall have appropriate regard to scale, plot, form, mass, design, materials, colours and function.

**Objective HC 5 – Energy Efficiency and Traditional Buildings**

Ensure that measures to upgrade the energy efficiency of protected structures and traditionally built structures/buildings are sensitive to traditional construction methods and use appropriate materials and do not have detrimental impact on the material, aesthetic, visual character or function of the building.

**4. Design and General Factors**

The design of this scheme considered the architectural integrity of the existing building, its setting in the streetscape and within the context of the ensemble of protected structures located on the wider site. The proposed works have been designed to be sympathetic to this context and to promote the aesthetic of the Station House by drawing attention to its essential characteristics. The removal of the recent masonry extensions to the gable elevations along with the removal of the masonry corridor to the platform elevation will serve to reinstate the original architectural proportions and mass as they were first envisioned. These additions currently detract from the character of the building and obscure the original fenestration pattern to the platform elevation.

The proposed new extensions to the gable and platform elevations are designed to be clean and simple such that they do not compete aesthetically with the sombre simplicity of the Station House. The proposed modern additions are designed to remain subservient and read as modern interventions which do not detract from the stoic and practical design of the Station buildings.

The proposed development and renovation will not result in any loss of significance or material harm to the Station House. It will conserve its status and enhance its appearance bringing it back into local use.

The proposed renovation works will include appropriate measures to reduce carbon emissions and to improve thermal comfort for the building's future occupants.

All proposed works have been designed with due consideration of Part B and Part M of the National Building Regulations. The designs will be further developed and implemented, in accordance with Parts A to M of the Technical Guidance Documents, once this application has received approval.



Figure 4: Station House building on Sean Purcell Street

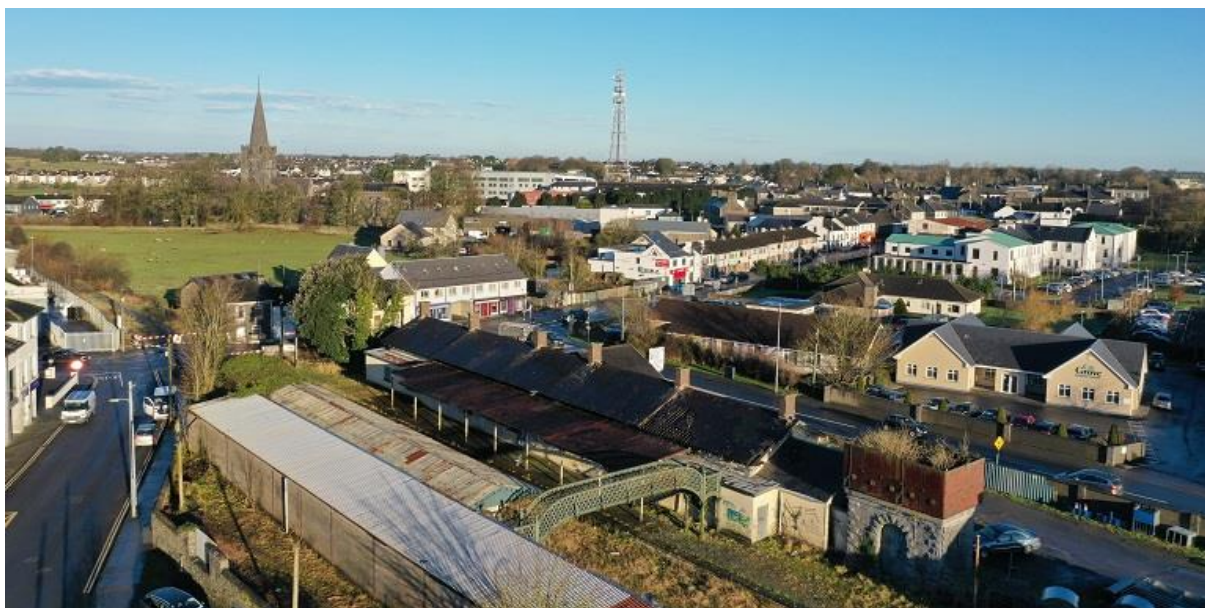


Figure 5: Station House building platform elevation



## **5. Protected status**

The proposal involves carefully considered works to the Station House building which is reference No. 52 on Galway County Councils register of protected structures and is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage reference No. 30331045. Please refer to the Conservation Architect's report dated 11 February 2025 which accompanies this application for detailed evaluation of the Station House building.

## **6. Environmental Impact**

Please refer to the Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment submitted in support of this application. This report concludes that: the Tuam Station House project will NOT have any significant impact on any European Sites either alone or in-combination with any other plan or project.

Please refer to the Environmental Impact Screening Report submitted in support of the Tuam Station House project. This report concludes that: EIA for this project is not required.

## **1. Pre-Part 8 Consultations**

Pre-Part 8 consultations were undertaken with the following key stakeholders: Galway County Council

- a) Planning Department
- b) Tuam Municipal District Area Engineer
- c) Roads and Transportation Department
- d) Conservation Officer

## **2. Part 8 Consultations**

It is intended that details of the proposed scheme will be referred to the following in conjunction with the public advertising of the proposals.

### **Tuam Municipal District Elected Members**

- a) Councillor Mary Hoade
- b) Councillor Shaun Cuniffe
- c) Councillor Donagh Mark Killilea
- d) Councillor Karey McHugh Farag
- e) Councillor Andrew Reddington
- f) Councillor Siobhan McHugh Ryan
- g) Leas Cathaoirleach Ollie Turner