



Declaration

In accordance with Part IV, Section 57 (2) of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 2000 (as amended).

Louth County Council:

This declaration specifies what works would, or would not, in the opinion of the planning authority materially affect the character of the protected structure, or any element thereof, and, as a result, require planning permission. Under the Act, protection extends to the entire structure including its interior and the land lying within its curtilage. It also extends to any other structures lying within the curtilage of the protected structure, to their interiors and to all fixtures and features that form part of the interior or exterior of any of these structures. Where specified in the Record of Protected Structures, protection may also extend to any other feature within the attendant grounds of the protected structure.

Nothing in this declaration exempts works that would not otherwise be exempt from a requirement for planning permission. Changes of use or intensification of the current use may require planning permission. If in doubt, the owner/occupier should consult the planning authority for further advice before commencing any works.

This Declaration may be referred to An Bord Pleanála for review within 4 weeks of its issue, upon payment of the requisite fee in accordance with Part IV, Section 57 (8) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended.

Applicant Name:	Brendan Grogan (Louth County Council)		
Status (i.e. Owner or Occupier):	Owner (Louth County Council)		
Date of Request for Declaration:	28 th January 2025	Date of Inspection:	4 th February 2025
Date of Issue of Declaration:	28/03/2025	Previous Declarations:	None

Address:

Name of Building:

Corn Exchange

Address 1:

Fair Street

Address 2:

Drogheda

Address 3:

Co Louth

Eircode:

A92 P440

Location:

National Grid co-ordinates:

E

N

O.S. Map Type:

Map Sheet:

Site Number:

Protection Status:

Y / N

Under the Planning and development Act 2000
(as amended)

Record of Protected Structures:

Y ✓

N

Architectural Conservation
Area:

Y ✓

N

Under the Planning and development Act 2000
(as amended)

Record of Monuments and
Places:

Y

N ✓

Zone of Archaeological
potential:

Y ✓

N

Preservation Order or
Temporary P.O.:

Y

N ✓

Details:

RPS DB-069

Fair Street including Council Borough Offices

ZAP 1 - Drogheda

NIAH Registration No. (if applicable):

13618043

Introduction:

The referrer has sought a Section 57 declaration as per the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in respect of works to a protected structure known as the Corn Market at Fair Street, Drogheda.



Protection Status:

Under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Record of Protected Structures is set out in the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027, as varied.

The building (RPS DB-069a) is described as -

Former Cornmarket, 1796, by Francis Johnston. Limestone ashlar with round headed arches. Originally an open market with arcades on four sides with offices to Fair St. It demonstrates the fashion for architectural primitivism which was fashionable throughout Europe in the late eighteenth century.

Planning History:

Planning Ref: 20738- PART 8: Louth County Council hereby give notice of its intention to carry out amendments to development at Drogheda Civic Offices permitted under previous Part 8 Application Ref. No. 18/727.

Planning Ref: 18727- PART 8: The refurbishment and development shall comprise the following: 1. Refurbishment of the existing council office building - 52-53 Fair Street (Single Storey PROTECTED STRUCTURE-ref DB-069A; NIAH ref.no.13618043). 2. Refurbishment of the former council chamber building - 54 Fair Street (Two Storey PROTECTED STRUCTURE ref - DB-069b & NIAH ref.no.13618044) 3. Refurbishment of the Former Community Services Building - 55-56 Fair Street (Two Storey PROTECTED STRUCTURE ref no. DB-082. NIAH ref. 13618045) 4. Provision of a new infill building to the existing PROTECTED STRUCTURE is also being created to link the main office building with the Community Services and Valhalla buildings. 5. Alterations of the staff car park entrance onto Bolton Square Car Park.

Planning Ref: 15590- Part 8: Permission required to carry out refurbishment and extension of Drogheda Civic Offices on Fair Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth. The proposed works are to protected structures and are within Architectural Conservation Area No. 4 - Fair Street and adjacent to Architectural Conservation Area No. 1 - Bolton Square as designated in the Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011 - 2017. Refurbishment to comprise of the following: 1. Refurbishment of an existing council office building 52-53 Fair Street (single storey protected structure ref DB 069a; NIAH ref. no. 13618043. 2. Refurbishment of the former council chamber building 54 Fair Street (Two storey protected structure ref DB 069b; NIAH ref. no. 13618044. 3. Refurbishment of the former community services building 55-56 Fair Street (two storey protected structure ref. no. DB 82; NIAH 13618045. 4. Provision of a new infill building to the existing protected structures is also being created to link the main office with the Community Services and Valhalla buildings. 5. Alteration of the staff car park entrance onto Bolton Square car park.

Description of the Structure:

The NIAH appraisal of the property includes –

- Detached multiple-bay single- and two-storey stone former market, dated 1796, court house addition c. 1850, now in use as offices.
- Plan comprising;
 - two parallel ranges attached to main façade, south;
 - three-bay two-storey central block flanked by single-storey wings, integral carriage arches, terminating with pedimented breakfronts, former court house attached to north elevation of south range.
 - Pitched and hipped slate roofs, clay ridge and hip tiles, central block surmounted by painted timber lantern and weathervane, moulded cast-iron gutters on stone corbelled eaves course, square-profile cast-iron downpipes, lead flashing to central parapet.
 - Ashlar limestone walling to south elevation, chamfered plinth course, ashlar limestone string courses to main block, rubble stone walling to west elevation, ashlar limestone dressings, painted smooth rendered ruled-and-lined render to interior walling, limestone block-and-start quoins to north elevation of former court house;
 - ashlar limestone Doric columns support roof of interior walls to east and west.

- Square-headed window openings, ashlar limestone surrounds, timber multiple-pane casement windows, round-headed window openings to central block (former door openings), timber spoked fanlights surmounting full-length timber and glazed casement windows, segmental-headed window openings (former carriage arches) to east and west of south elevation, projecting ashlar limestone surround, dentil cornice, timber and glazed casement windows surmounting timber panelled base, tooled limestone carriage stops flank openings.
- Round-headed door opening to south elevation, central block, ashlar limestone surround, keystone, leaded stained glass fanlight containing Drogheda Town Insignia, timber panelled double doors, accessed by concreted steps and ramp; square-headed door openings to terminating pedimented breakfronts to east and west of south elevation, plain-glazed overlight, vertical glazing bars, timber panelled door;
- Segmental-headed door opening to former court house, fanlight dated 1999, surmounts ashlar limestone surround, timber spoked fanlight, timber panelled double doors flanked by sidelights. Interior reworked, stone floored reception located at central block, leading to atrium connected to former court house behind.

Designed by Francis Johnston in 1786/7 and built in 1796, this former corn market displays all the characteristics of neo-Classical architecture with a symmetrical plan and pleasing proportions. The timber entablature is particularly notable and unusual. It demonstrates the fashion for architectural primitivism which was fashionable throughout Europe in the late eighteenth century. The corn market served as the town's market place and was later altered by the insertion of the court house in the mid-nineteenth century. The Corporation moved to the corn market in 1899, and a recent renovation plan has taken place ensuring the future of this fine classical building.

Referral Question:

Would works materially affect the character of the protected structure and as a result, require planning permission?

The works will include:

- Part of the internal roof structure is to be repaired. Envisaged repairs to the stonework that supports the wooden structural beams.
- Full electrical upgrade. Strip out of existing services.
- Internal wall and ceiling insulation fabric upgrade.
- Replacement of existing grid ceiling to facilitate all works.
- Minor adjustments of certain internal walls to suit new furniture layout.
- Upgrade of existing heating system including installation of new radiators, replacing oil and gas burners.

Legislative Provision:

Section 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) states 'that notwithstanding Sections 4(1)(h) and any regulations made under Section 4(2), the carrying out of works to a protected structure, or proposed protected structure shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of:

- a) the structure; or
- b) any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Assessment:

The Planning Authority has reviewed the submitted Section 57 Declaration form and associated structural report. The works are assessed below:

Internal Attic /Roof Repairs

A structural report by Duffy Chartered Engineering pertaining to the repair works to the roof has been submitted. The scope of the report was to identify structural defects, wet rot, dry rot, woodworm or high moisture content in timbers. The report goes into detail on observations and recommendations. In terms of recommendations the works to the roof include:

- Metal work to posts stripped back and repainted as well as timber being treated with suitable timber preservative.
- Adequate insulation to be provided where it is considered poor as well as 50mm gap between plasterboard and insulation to allow rafters to breathe.
- Firestopping is required to flue that runs through attic and roof as well as some piping.
- Works also include repair of section of the wall where kingpost truss joins as well as repairs to rafters.

It is noted that a structural engineer and a preservation architect are to advise on repairs and that a registered stonemason to carry out the works assisted by the main contractor.

Assessment

The works to the attic listed above are remedial in nature and seek to ensure that the structural integrity of the building is maintained. These works will not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Full Electrical Upgrade. Strip Out of Existing Services

There is no information submitted detailing the extent of the electrical works other than that noted above. However, it is noted that there will be no alteration to structure or external façade.

Assessment

It is considered that in order to ensure the building is fit for modern office purposes and provided that the strip out and upgrade does not involve works to the exterior of the building I would be satisfied that these will not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Internal wall and ceiling insulation fabric upgrade

There is limited detail provided in terms of which internal walls are involved in the insulation fabric upgrade. However these are likely to be internal stud walls used to partition work areas / offices.

Assessment

As noted above, the walls involved in the insulation fabric upgrade are highly unlikely to be original features, rather stud walls erected to facilitate the use of the building as office accommodation. This work along with upgrading of the insulation fabric behind the suspended ceilings will not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Replacement of existing grid ceiling to facilitate all works

The grid suspended ceiling is to be removed and replaced in order to allow for the work in the internal roof / attic area.

Assessment

I am satisfied that the replacement of the grid ceiling will not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest

Minor adjustments of certain internal walls to suit new furniture layout

The drawing titled ground floor plan (Drg. no. 3026-5-402) and the drawing titled the demolition works (Drg. No. 3026-5-401) that accompanies the S57 Declaration clarifies the areas within the building that are to undergo minor adjustments.

Assessment

These walls are not part of the original historic fabric, and I am satisfied that these works will not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Upgrade of existing heating system including installation of new radiators, replacing oil and gas burners

Whilst there is limited detail on the upgrade of the existing heating system it is noted that there will be no alterations to any building structure or any façade.

Assessment

On the basis that there will be no alterations to any building structure or façade I am satisfied that these works will not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Any further documentation attached (maps, photographs, sketches, notes etc.)?

- Signed S57 Declaration form
- Drawing- Demolition works- Drg. No. 3026-5-401
- Drawing- Proposed ground floor plan -Drg. no. 3026-5-402
- Drawing- Proposed floor & ceiling finishes - Drg. No. 3026-5-403
- Structural survey report
- Updated structural survey report

WHEREAS a question has arisen as to whether the proposed development detailed under Section 10 of the Request for Section 57 Declaration would or would not materially affect the character of protected structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest at the Corn Exchange, Fair Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth.

AND WHEREAS Brendan Grogan, Louth County Council requested a declaration on the question from Louth County Council on the 21st January 2025.

AND WHEREAS Louth County Council in considering this referral, had regard particularly to –

- a) Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
- b) Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
- c) Section 4 (1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
- d) Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended,
- e) The Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities,
- f) The special interest pertaining to the protected structure in question and
- g) The nature and extent of works set out in the referral question which seeks whether:
 - Part of the internal roof structure is to be repaired. Envisaged repairs to the stonework that supports the wooden structural beams.
 - Full electrical upgrade. Strip out of existing services.
 - Internal wall and ceiling insulation fabric upgrade.

- Replacement of existing grid ceiling to facilitate all works.
 - Minor adjustments of certain internal walls to suit new furniture layout.
 - Upgrade of existing heating system including installation of new radiators, replacing oil and gas burners.
- would materially affect the character of the protected structure and require planning permission

AND WHEREAS Louth County Council has concluded that –

- (i) the stated works to the protected structure comprise of works and are, therefore, development, and
- (ii) the stated works would not materially affect the character of the structure, or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest,
- (iii) the stated works would consist of the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement and alteration of this structure which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of neighbouring structures.

NOW THEREFORE Louth County Council, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Section 57 of the 2000 Act as amended, hereby decides that the proposed works to the Corn Exchange, Fair Street, Drogheda, Co. Louth as detailed above, **constitutes development that is exempted development.**

Signed by Inspector



Conor Campfield, Senior Executive Planner

Signed by Planning Authority Officer



Turlough King, Senior Executive Planner

Date:

20/03/2025

Date:

20/03/2025