

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

Proposed Refurbishment Work to 22 and 23 Thomas Hill, Waterford city

Report on the proposed works for the purpose of a refurbishment housing scheme, in accordance with Part XI of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended, and Part 8, Article 81 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001.



No.22 Thomas Hill, Waterford city, (above, right), dates c.1850, and is a Protected Structure, (RPS no. WA730963). It is listed by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, (Ref no. 22502343), as being of Architectural Interest, and it has a Regional rating. The house is built over three-storeys.

*This terraced two-bay three-storey house retains its original aspect. Although now disused, it is one of a pair. It has a pitched (shared) slate roof with clay ridge tiles to the front and asbestos tiles to the rear, rendered chimney stacks, rendered coping, and cast-iron rainwater goods. It has un-painted rendered, ruled and lined walls, with square-headed window openings with stone sills, plus 3/6 and 6/6 timber-sash windows. It also features a round-headed door-opening with a cast-iron boot-scraper, rendered surround having moulded archivolt, timber panelled door, and a spoked fan-light. Set back from the line of the Thomas Hill road with an elevated footpath to the front, having wrought iron railings with spike finials. Built as one of a pair with no.23, and although disused, it retains its original form and character, whilst together with no.23, forms a distinctive impression in the streetscape of Thomas Hill, terminating a compact terrace of houses which were built up to a decade later.**

No.23 Thomas Hill, Waterford city, (above, left), dates from c.1850, and is also a Protected Structure, (RPS no. WA730967). As with no. 22, it is listed by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, (Ref no. 22502344), as being of Architectural Interest, and it has a Regional rating.

*It is an end-of-terrace two-bay three-storey house, which has a pitched (shared) slate roof with clay ridge tiles to the front and asbestos tiles to the rear, rendered chimney stacks, rendered coping, and cast-iron rainwater goods. It has painted rendered, ruled and lined walls, with square-headed window openings with stone sills. There are replacement uPVC casement windows dating from 1990's, and a round-headed door opening with cast-iron boot-scraper, rendered surround having moulded archivolt, timber panelled door, and a spoked fan-light. Set back from line of road with elevated footpath to front having wrought iron railings with spike finials. This house is an appealing, well-composed substantial house that retains its original form. However, the inappropriate replacement fittings to the window openings have not had a positive impact on the external expression of the composition.**

* Source; NIAH.

Background

Both buildings have been vacant and unoccupied for a number of years, in the case of no.22 for a significant period of time. In accordance with Waterford City & County Council's Vacant Homes Action Plan, both buildings were identified as vacant and attempts commenced to return the dwellings to productive use.

No.22 Thomas Hill was acquired through compulsory purchase order, and no.23 Thomas Hill was acquired by agreement. Given the housing need and demand in Waterford City, it was considered that a better use of the buildings would be to provide apartments divided horizontally that would suit the housing need, rather than larger single dwellings divided vertically, for which there is practically no need or demand.

Proposed Works:

Waterford City and County Council intend to carry out refurbishment works which will convert the buildings from two separate houses into three single-storey apartments. There will be some internal reconfiguration and demolition-work required which will connect the buildings internally, without compromising the existing architectural or conservational merit of same. There will also be the demolition of certain external-built elements which currently detract from the overall composition, and which will also help negate damp ingress issues due to being built against the higher-level of the adjoining Queens Terrace.

No.23 Thomas Hill;

It is proposed to remove the existing stairs in its entirety so as to allow the space it currently occupies, to be used as part of the internal accommodation to each apartment at each floor.

To the rear is currently a two-storey extension which provides a kitchen at ground-floor and a bathroom at first-floor – there are no associated planning permissions with either property so it is not known when this was added. It is proposed to remove the first-floor element of this and increase the height of the ground-floor accommodation, which in turn will be reconfigured to include a rear-door to the garden and a more practical kitchen space.

To the side is a single-storey room with a single-pitched roof, which is built into the adjoining and elevated Queens Terrace. There is an internal door into this space, (approximately 1.72 m²), which is dry-lined and vented, from the front-room of no.23. It is proposed to block up this door, remove the pitched-roof and front wall, which contains a window of smaller scale and different proportion to the rest of those on the elevation, in order to build a new wall offset back slightly from the front of the existing terrace, with a gate in order to create a secure and open bin-storage area for the resident.

Entrance into the proposed ground-floor unit will be through the existing front entrance to no.23, and in along the existing ground-floor hallway. The existing room layout will remain as-is, with living accommodation on the left hand-side, and two bedrooms on the right-hand side. At first and second-floor in no.23, the room positions and sizes stay the same here also, except for where it is proposed to breakthrough between the two properties, where a small amount of reconfiguration will be required at both floors.

At present, no.23 is empty although recently refurbish to a relatively high standard – its generally clean with evidence of damp ingress in places, eg, at the second-floor around the eaves area, and also the party wall with no.22, and where the building abuts the higher-level of the adjoining Queens Terrace. The only remaining original internal features are coving at first-floor level, and the balustrades / balusters, as the stairs appears to be new. Ceiling-roses, timber-shutters, doors, fireplaces, etc, have all been removed as part of previous works. Everywhere appears dry-lined and re-wired.

No.22 Thomas Hill;

Entrance into the existing no.22 Thomas Hill building will provide access to the first and second-floor apartments. With the removal of the existing first-floor extension to the rear of no.23, it is proposed to re-instate windows at first-floor which have been blocked up, and which in turn have created existing windowless internal rooms.

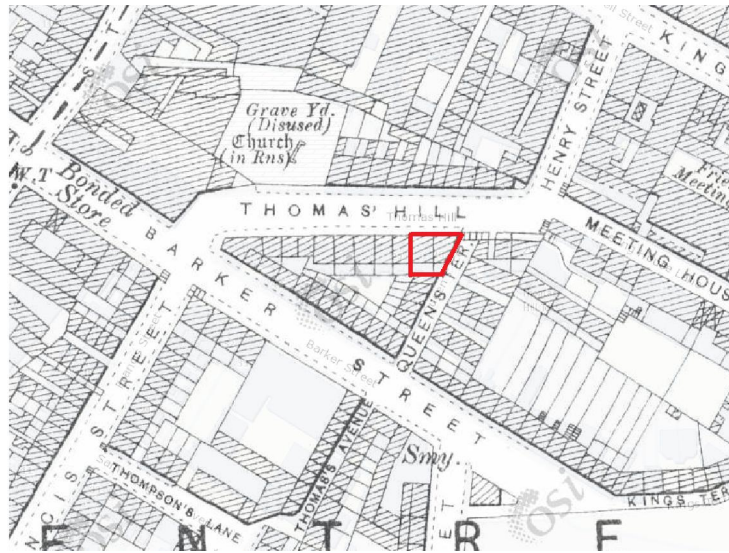
No.22 is un-occupied and, as opposed to no.23, appears to retain most of its internal architectural character and features, including doors, coving, fireplaces (which seem to be a mix of originals and 1950's ceramic-surround type), and balustrades / stairs. However there does not appear to be timber shutters in this property either.

The proposed works will require the existing stairs in no.22 to remain in-situ but with some degree of up-grading, fire-rated construction to provide a means of escape. It is intended to re-configure the doors and arrangement on the landings at first and second-floors so that there is only one door into the apartment at each level.

All three proposed apartments are based on a two-bed, three-person accommodation type, and following the required breaking-through between the buildings, as shown on the Part 8 drawings, the existing layouts lend themselves most suitably to their proposed use with negligible effect on the remaining architectural character.

Elsewhere there will be other essential works required to bring the buildings up to current building regulations, and general standards, etc., including;

1. Removal of asbestos roof tiles and replacement with appropriate slates, to both houses,
2. Re-plastering of chimney stacks generally
3. Re-plastering of end gable-wall facing on to Queens Terrace,
4. Replacement of rainwater goods with matching equivalent type generally
5. Repair of existing timber sliding-sash windows to no.22



Historic Map, 25 inch, 1888-1913

Impact Assessment:

It is considered that the proposed works outlined above will be a positive contribution towards the current status of the buildings in general – both internally and externally. There will be negligible effect on the existing level of conservational detail or architectural merit of either building; no.23 has been stripped of most salient features over previous years anyway, whilst no.22 is mostly intact and would remain intact post-development. Whilst it is known that there is damp ingress at various levels through both buildings, proposed intervention will help to address these issues before they cause any significant irreversible damage. Although the proposed intervention is to provide apartment style living accommodation, there will be no obvious change to the front elevation of the houses, except the proposed removal of the existing side-extension to no.23 which currently appears out of scale and its removal, it is considered, will help emphasize the regular proportions of both properties. The removal of the first-floor extension to the rear on no.23 will allow the reinstatement of original openings, and provide habitable rooms, which at present are internal and not practical as living accommodation. Further, it is intended to retain all features such as original doors, coving, architrave, fire-surrounds, etc.

Recommendations / Conclusions:

This proposal has been reviewed and discussed with the Waterford City and County Council Executive Conservation Officer who agreed with the proposals and had no objection to same, as presented on the attached. Ms Ryall welcomed the re-use of a currently vacant structure and agreed the proposal was considered and in keeping with the scale and character of the historical buildings. There is no issue as regards intensification as a result of the proposed new units, and the buildings regeneration would be a positive step towards the re-activation of Thomas Hill, and the town as a whole.

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MRAI, MUBC.
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19th October 2020.

No.23 Thomas Hill;



Fig.1; Damp to end gable-wall at second-floor level.



Fig.2; Landing at top of the stairs (second-floor).

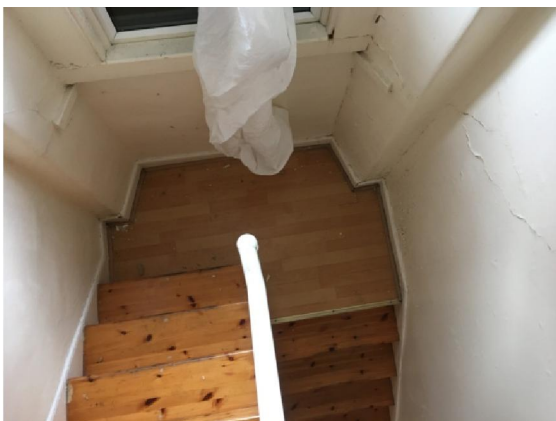


Fig.3; Return in stairs between second & first-floors.



Fig.4; Ceiling at the top of stairs, showing damp ingress.

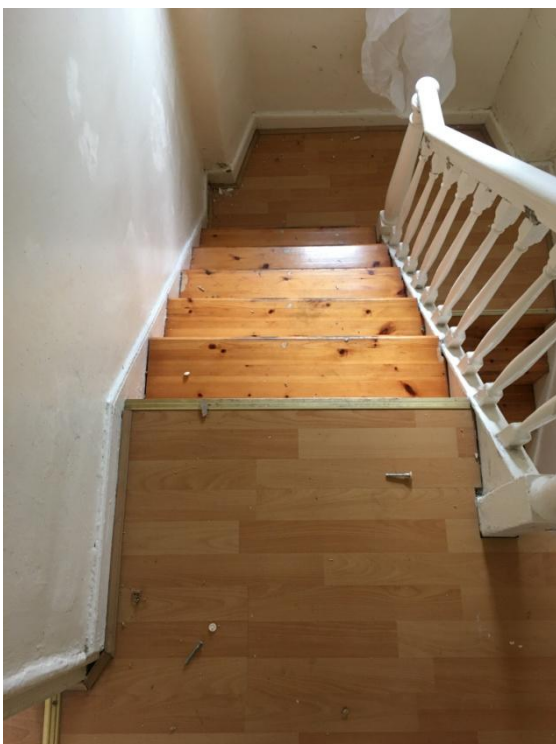


Fig.5; Stairs from the top (second) floor.



Fig.6; Internal arrangement of stairs at first-floor level.



Fig.7; Internal finish at second-floor; flush panel doors.



Fig.8; Low-level window to Thomas Hill at second-floor.

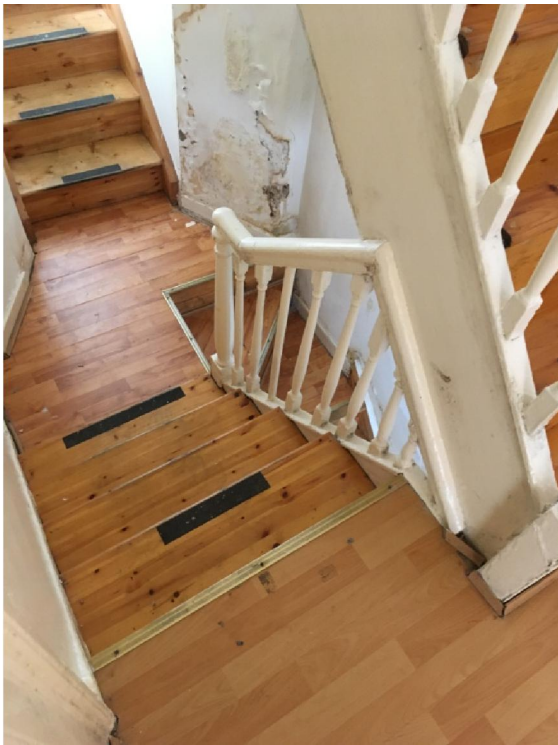


Fig.9; View from first-floor; note damp on party-wall.



Fig.10; Window to Thomas Hill at first-floor; no shutters.



Fig.11; Internal finish at first-floor; arrangement of cupboards against the coving detail suggests sub-division of larger room.



Fig.12; Internal finish at second-floor; flush panel doors



Fig.13; Window to Thomas Hill at first-floor.



Fig.14; Window to Thomas Hill at first-floor.



Fig.15; Severe damp at mezzanine-level.

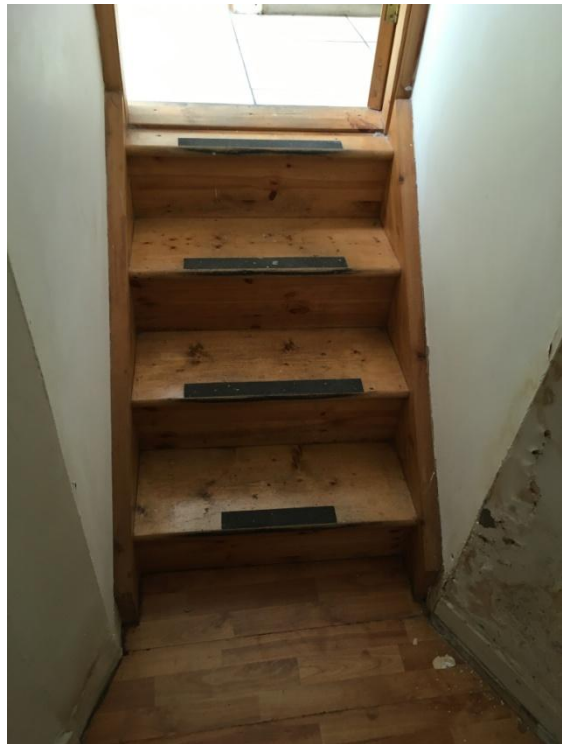


Fig.16; Recent intervention providing access to the first-floor mezzanine bathroom at the rear of no.23.



Fig.17; Bathroom at first-floor mezzanine.



Fig.18; Bathroom at first-floor mezzanine.



Fig.19; Bathroom at first-floor mezzanine.



Fig.20; Bathroom at first-floor mezzanine.



Fig.21; Entrance hallway; minimal detail / character



Fig.22; Entrance hall; location of previous ceiling rose.



Fig.23; Spoked fan-light over front entrance.



Fig.24; Ground-floor, front room; extreme damp ingress.



Fig.25; Ground front-room; extreme damp ingress.



Fig.26; Extreme damp, and door to side-room which stands adjacent to the higher-level Queens Terrace



Fig.27; Side room adjacent to Queens Trc; air-vent.



Fig.28; Modern finishes and counter-units.



Fig.29; Kitchen unit in extension to rear of no.23.



Fig.30; Shelving to rear of no.23; former window ope.



Fig.31; Rear elevation of no.22 (left) and no.23



Fig.32; Part of gable-wall of no.23 on to Queens Terrace



Fig.33; View of no.23 in relation to Queens Terrace.



Fig.34; Behind this wall is the first-floor rear extension.



Fig.35; Significant crack in end gable to Queens Trc.



Fig.36; Small side-room between no.23 and Queens Trc.



Fig.37; Significant crack in end gable to Queens Trc.



Fig.38; Defective gutters, asbestos tiles, missing render.



Fig.39; Extension to rear of no.23.



Fig.40; View of no.23 Thomas Hill, and Queens Terrace.



Fig.41; View over single-pitch of side-roof to street.



Fig.42; Relation of no.23 extension to no.4 Queens Trc.

No.22 Thomas Hill;



Fig.43; View from top floor into rear garden area.



Fig.44; Top-floor, wall adjacent to no.21 Thomas Hill.



Fig.45; Top-floor, damp ingress through ceiling and walls.



Fig.46; Top-floor, wall adjacent to no.23 Thomas Hill.



Fig.47; Top (second) floor window on to Thomas Hill.



Fig.48; Damp ingress on front wall between windows.



Fig.49; Top (second) floor – rear room; dry and clean.



Fig.50; Return in stairs between second & first-floors.



Fig.51; Top-floor, wall adjacent to no.23 Thomas Hill.



Fig.52; Top (second) floor – rear room; dry and clean.



Fig.53; View from return in stairs to first-floor level.



Fig.54; Feature in ceiling at second-floor level.



Fig.55; First-floor; original features, damp and stains



Fig.56; Damp walls causing wallpaper to peel off.



Fig.57; View from landing to ground-floor hallway.

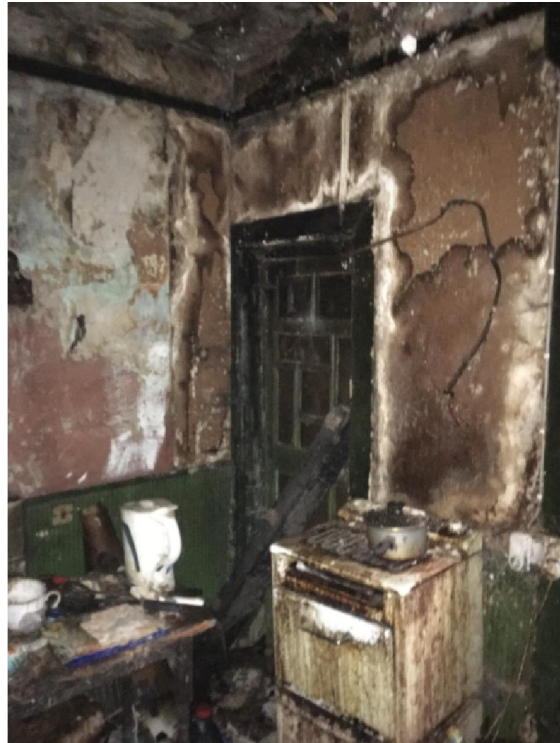


Fig.58; Rear ground-floor room; existing door to outside.



Fig.59; 1950's tiled fireplace in ground-floor room



Fig.60; Front window to Thomas Hill; original sliding sash



Fig.61; Existing store beneath stairs in entrance hall.



Fig.62; View from first-floor of mezzanine landing.



Fig.63; First-floor, rear room; window overlooking yard.



Fig.64; No.22 Thomas Hill, front elevation.