

## 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.

<b>Applicant Name:</b>	Beachpool Property Ltd		
<b>Status (i.e. Owner or Occupier):</b>	Owner occupied		
<b>Date of Request for Declaration:</b>	03/05/2024	<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	08/07/2024
<b>Decision Due Date:</b>	25/07/2024	<b>Previous Declarations:</b>	None on record
<b>Date of Issue of Declaration:</b>	16/07/2024		

#### Address: Church

#### Location:

Name of Building: 11 – 15 Merchant Quay,  
Drogheda

National Grid co-ordinates: E N

Address 1: 11 – 15

O.S. Map Type:

Address 2: Merchant Quay

Map Sheet:

Address 3: Drogheda

Site Number:

#### Protection Status:

Under the Planning and development Act 2000  
(as amended)

/ N

#### Details:

Record of Protected Structures:

N

DB-156

Architectural Conservation Area:

N x

Under the Planning and development Act 2000  
(as amended)

Record of Monuments and Places:

N x

Zone of Archaeological potential:

N

Preservation Order or Temporary  
P.O.:

N x

NIAH Registration No.:

13619002

## Introduction:

The referrer has sought a section 57 declaration as per the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in respect of works being carried out to 11 – 15 Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co Louth.



## 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).

11 – 15 Merchant Quay is described in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage as an:

*Attached nine-bay five-storey former mill, built c. 1830, now used as offices. Rectangular-plan, four-storey return to north-west, integral carriage arch to south elevation. Hipped slate roofs, clay ridge and hip tiles, cast-iron gutters fixed to red brick corbelled eaves course, circular cast-iron downpipe, projecting roof canopy to south-west, remnants of pulley mechanism visible. Snecked limestone walling to ground floor, roughly coursed limestone walling to upper levels, tooled limestone block-and-start quoins. Square-headed window openings, tooled limestone sills, red brick block-and-start surrounds, uPVC casement windows. Square-headed door opening to west of south elevation, red brick block-and-start door surround, concrete supports to base, timber diagonally sheeted door, segmental-headed carriage opening to centre of south elevation, tooled limestone block-and-start surround, projecting chamfered plinth blocks, metal roller blind. Street fronted, facing docks and river.*

The NIAH appraisal states:

*This is a fine typical example of a dockside former flour and corn mill situated on the north side of Drogheda's River Boyne. The stone work is finely crafted and enlivened by the red brick block-and-start surrounds which add to the architecturally significant structure. The remaining pulley system add to the technical interest of the building which is a reminder of Drogheda's industrial past and an important part of Drogheda's architectural heritage.*

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## Planning History:

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<b>Development Address</b>	11-15 Merchants Quay & North Strand Drogheda Co Louth MERCHANTS QUAY DROGHEDA.
<b>Applicant Name</b>	KFE Property Development
<b>Application Status</b>	APPLICATION FINALISED
<b>Decision Date</b>	05/02/2015
<b>Decision</b>	CONDITIONAL
<b>Development Description</b>	Extension of Duration for permission 09510053 - Redev.of extg. Protected Structures at 11-15. Dev. consist of RESPITE/DAYCARE & assisted living Facility with 24 bedrooms, 24 assisted living Apts, Offices, Dining, Residents Lounge, Activities Room & all a
<b>File Reference</b>	14463
<b>Development Address</b>	1.ALONG NORTH STRAND, DRO 2.11-15 MERCHANTS QUAY, D 1.NORTH STRAND,2.11-15 MERCHANTS QUAY
<b>Applicant Name</b>	
<b>Application Status</b>	APPLICATION FINALISED
<b>Decision Date</b>	14/12/2000
<b>Decision</b>	CONDITIONAL
<b>Development Description</b>	1.DEMOLISH CONCRETE BLOCK WALLED SINGLE-STOREY WAREHOUSE,2.DEMOLISH CONCRETE BLOCK WALLED ANNEXES TO EXISTING P1 LISTED 4/5 STOREY LIMESTONE WAREHOUSES
<b>File Reference</b>	00510217
<b>Development Address</b>	11-15 MERCHANTS QUAY & NORTH STRAND DROGHEDA MERCHANTS QUAY & NORTH STRAND
<b>Applicant Name</b>	GILLEN CONSTRUCTION LTD
<b>Application Status</b>	APPLICATION FINALISED
<b>Decision Date</b>	27/07/2001
<b>Decision</b>	CONDITIONAL
<b>Development Description</b>	REDEV.EXISTING P1/41 LISTED 4/5 STOREY WAREHOUSES-APPROX.904 SQ.M OF OFFICES(2)24 NO.APARTMENTS ON 1ST-5TH FLOORS INCLUS.,RELOCATE ENTRANCE,CARPARKING,RECONSTRUCT DOORCASES & WINDOWS,REPLACE & RENEW ROOFS,NEW LIFT TOWER
<b>File Reference</b>	00510283

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<b>Development Address</b>	11-15 Merchants Quay & North Strand Drogheda MERCHANTS QUAY DROGHEDA.
<b>Applicant Name</b>	Merchants Quay Partnership
<b>Application Status</b>	APPLICATION FINALISED
<b>Decision Date</b>	02/07/2009
<b>Decision</b>	CONDITIONAL
<b>Development Description</b>	Redev.of extg. Protected Structures at 11-15. Dev. consist of RESPITE/DAYCARE & assisted living Facility with 24 bedrooms, 24 assisted living Apts, Offices, Dining, Residents Lounge, Activities Room & all assoc. facilities. Ground floor will provide for
<b>File Reference</b>	09510053

## Description of the Structure:

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- Substantial stone former warehouse / mill located facing towards River Boyne.
- Building is five storeys tall
- Building was used for clothing manufacture between late 1960's and late 1990's but is no longer in use
- Internal floor plan is mainly open reflecting its former industrial and warehouse use
- The front façade of this building is imposing and retains much of the buildings original character whilst a number of returns and additions have been constructed to the rear
- Building is currently vacant although internal conversion and erection of stud walls have taken place
- Windows have been replaced
- Building is accessed off Merchants Quay, North Strand to the rear
- Public car parking is available directly opposite this building on Merchants Quay

## Referral Question:

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

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The Section 57 form submitted refers to a Heritage Assessment for providing a schedule of works being carried out. It should be noted that works have commenced.

The Assessment provides an internal and external inventory of this building.

- It is proposed to convert the main building on the street frontage, with its middle and eastern returns and also the 1970s building to the rear to provide for emergency accommodation for refugees.
  - This includes subdivision of the three upper floors to provide bedrooms and bathroom facilities, while the ground floor is to be used as recreation areas, library and ancillary functions, with kitchen and dining room in the later building at the rear. The works also involve the installation of new windows and doors along the front elevation.
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### 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.

Section 68 of the Act stipulates that the carrying out of any works specified in a notice under section 59 (1) or 60 (2) shall be exempted development.

Section 57 (5) of the Act stipulates that if the declaration relates to a protected structure that is regularly used as a place of public worship, the planning authority (or the board)

- (a) in addition to having regard to the guidelines and recommendations referred to in subsection (4), shall respect the liturgical requirements, and
- (b) for the purpose of ascertaining those requirements shall –
  - (i) comply with any guidelines concerning consultation which may be issued by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, or
  - (iii) If no such guidelines are issued, consult with such person or body as the planning authority (or board) considers appropriate.

### Assessment

I have had regard to the proposal described; the proposed works involved and the impact on the Protected Structure, carried out a site inspection of the building and its setting and had regard to the legislation described above and the setting of the buildings.

It is considered that the installation of new windows would materially affect the character of the structure and therefore cannot be considered as exempted development under the provisions of section 57 (1) (a) or (b).

The front elevation of this building is the most prominent feature of this protected structure and serves as a landmark along the riverside area of Drogheda. It is considered that the introduction of PVC windows is not in keeping with the historic fabric of this building.

The internal subdivisions for the purpose of providing rooms for accommodation and other ancillary features including kitchen and living areas do not erode the historic fabric of this building or detract from its visual appearance and are considered to be reversible.

The temporary use of a building for accommodating persons seeking international protection is exempt under Class 20F subject to a number of limitations. This assessment does not relate to the proposed use of this building, the purpose of this assessment concerns potential impact upon the character of this Protected Structure. The applicant must ensure they satisfy all the limitations of the exemption and that they satisfy other codes such as fire and building control.

### Conclusion:

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I conclude, that WHEREAS a question has arisen as to whether the proposed development under Section 10 of the Request for Section 57 Declaration –

- Proposed works to facilitate the conversion of the main building at 10-15 Merchant Quay on the street frontage, with its middle and eastern returns and also the 1970s building to the rear to provide for emergency accommodation for refugees as detailed in the submitted Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment.

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 10-15 Merchant Quay, Drogheda.

**AND WHEREAS** Beachpool property Ltd requested a declaration on the question from Louth County Council on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024.

**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 nature and extent of works set out in the referral question in respect of this structure,

**AND WHEREAS** Louth County Council has concluded that:

- (i) the stated works above, to the protected structure comprise of works and are, therefore, development, and
- (ii) the replacement of windows to the protected structure with white pVC windows materially affects the character of the structure, and elements of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest and as such of the carrying out of works which has altered this structure and affects the exterior of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure for which it was protected and as such cannot be considered exempt development.
- (iii) The internal works to the structure and amendments to the layout are not considered to affect the external appearance of the protected structure and are not such that would materially detract from the character of the protected structure or historic fabric of the structure and therefore can be considered exempt development.

**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

- (i) The replacement of the windows to white pvc windows at 10-15 Merchant Quay, Drogheda, as detailed by the Request for Section 57 Declaration and submitted Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment at 10-15 Merchant Quay, Drogheda, **constitutes development that is NOT exempted development.**
- (ii) The internal amendments and alterations to the layout to the protected structure at 10-15 Merchant Quay **constitutes development that is exempt development.**

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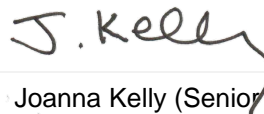
**Signed by Inspector**



James King (Assistant Planner)

**Date:** 16/07/2024

**Signed by Planning Authority Officer**



Joanna Kelly (Senior Planner)

**Date:** 16th July 2024

**LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ORDER**

**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (as amended)**

**Section 57 Declaration – Works to a Protected Structure**

**Chief Executive's Order No:** 526/2024

**Reference No:** S57 DB24-02

**Date Application Received:** 03<sup>rd</sup> May 2024

**Description:** Conversion of main building on the street frontage, with its middle and eastern returns, and the 1970's building to the rear to provide emergency accommodation for refugees. Includes subdivision of the three upper floors to be used as recreation areas, library and ancillary functions, with kitchen and dining room in the later building at the rear. Works also involve the installation of new windows and doors along the front elevation.

**Name of Applicant:** Beachpool Property Ltd., Newgrange Lodge,  
Staleen Road, Donore, Co. Meath

**Location of Development** 11-15 Merchants Quay, Yellowbatter,  
Drogheda, Co. Louth A92 E791

**WHEREAS** a question has arisen as to whether the proposed development under Section 10 of the Request for Section 57 Declaration:

- Proposed works to facilitate the conversion of the main building at 11-15 Merchants Quay on the street frontage, with its middle and eastern returns and also the 1970s building to the rear to provide for emergency accommodation for refugees as detailed in the submitted Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

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 11-15 Merchants Quay, Drogheda.

**AND WHEREAS** Beachpool Property Ltd requested a declaration on the question from Louth County Council on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024.

**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 nature and extent of works set out in the referral question in respect of this structure,

**AND WHEREAS** Louth County Council has concluded that:

- (i) the stated works above, to the protected structure comprise of works and are, therefore, development, and
- (ii) the replacement of windows to the protected structure with white PVC windows materially affects the character of the structure, and elements of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest and as such of the carrying out of works which has altered this structure and affects the exterior of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure for which it was protected and as such cannot be considered exempt development.
- (iii) The internal works to the structure and amendments to the layout are not considered to affect the external appearance of the protected structure and are not such that would materially detract from the character of the protected structure or historic fabric of the structure and therefore can be considered exempt development.

**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

- (i) The replacement of the windows to white PVC windows at 11-15 Merchants Quay, Drogheda, as detailed by the Request for Section 57 Declaration and submitted Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment at 11-15 Merchants Quay, Drogheda, **constitutes development that is NOT exempted development.**
- (ii) The internal amendments and alterations to the layout to the protected structure at 11-15 Merchants Quay **constitutes development that is exempt development.**

SIGNED:

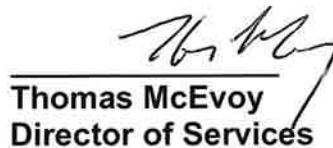
  
Joanna Kelly  
Senior Planner

Dated: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024

**ORDER:**

In pursuance of the powers conferred upon the Council by the above Act, I concur with the above recommendation and I hereby direct that a **Section 57 Declaration of Exemption be Refused** for the works, as described in Conclusion (i) above and that a **Section 57 Declaration of Exemption be Granted** for the works, as described in conclusion (ii) above.

SIGNED:

  
Thomas McEvoy  
Director of Services

Dated: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024

To whom this function has been delegated in accordance with the provision of Sections 154 of the Local Government Act 2001 by Order no CE.S.335/22 dated the 01st day of September, 2022.



## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (as amended) REQUEST FOR SECTION 57 DECLARATION

The above Act provides that notwithstanding section 4(1)(a), (h), (i), (j), (k), or (l) and any regulations made under section 4(2) of the Act, the carrying out of works to a protected structure, or a 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

As an owner or occupier of a protected structure you are entitled under the above Act to make a written request to the Planning Authority to issue a Declaration as to the type of works which it considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure or of any element (as set out in Section 57(3) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended) of that structure.

In order to allow for consideration of this request, please supply the following information:

<b>1.</b>	Name of Applicant:	Beachpool property Ltd		
<b>2.</b>	Address of Protected Structure:	Eircode:		
	Merchant Quay, Yellowbatter, Drogheda, Co. Louth	A92 E791		
<b>3.</b>	Correspondence of Protected Structure: (if different from 2 above)	Newgrange Lodge Staleen Road Donore, Co Meath		
<b>4.</b>	NIAH Ref. No.	13619003	Louth RPS Ref. No.	N/A
<b>5.</b>	Is the structure owner occupied or rented?	Owner Occupied		
<b>6.</b>	If rented, state name and address of owner:			
<b>7.</b>	Use of structure (residential, commercial etc.)	Unused former warehouse		
<b>8.</b>	Has a Declaration been sought previously?	No		
<b>9.</b>	Are you aware of any (1) previous planning application/s or (2) enforcement proceedings pertaining to this site? (If so, please give details):			
	Planning Application: 2121			



## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (as amended) REQUEST FOR SECTION 57 DECLARATION

10. Please provide a brief description of the nature and scale of the development proposed (both internal and external) in particular the works that you are seeking a declaration for
- Please see enclosed plans and a recent Heritage Assessment providing a detailed schedule of the works being carried out

Please note that the accuracy and relevance of the Declaration made by the Planning Authority is informed by the information furnished by the applicant.  
Any deviation from the information provided may require the re-consideration of the declaration.

11. Please provide a Site Location Map to the scale of 1:1000 clearly identifying the structure and boundaries to which this application refers. The subject structure should be outlined in **red** and overall landholding to be outlined in **blue**

I wish to apply for a declaration from Louth County Council as to the type of works as outlined above, which may or may not require permission in the above named structure.

Signed: Karl Kinsella

Date: 03-05-2024

Daytime contact telephone number: [Redacted]

It should be noted that the Council is normally obliged to issue this declaration within three months (12 weeks) of a request being made.

You will be contacted within this period to arrange an appointment for a suitably qualified person to carry out a detailed survey of the internal and external features of the structure.

**Please Return Completed Form To:**

Conservation, Planning Dept., Louth County Council,

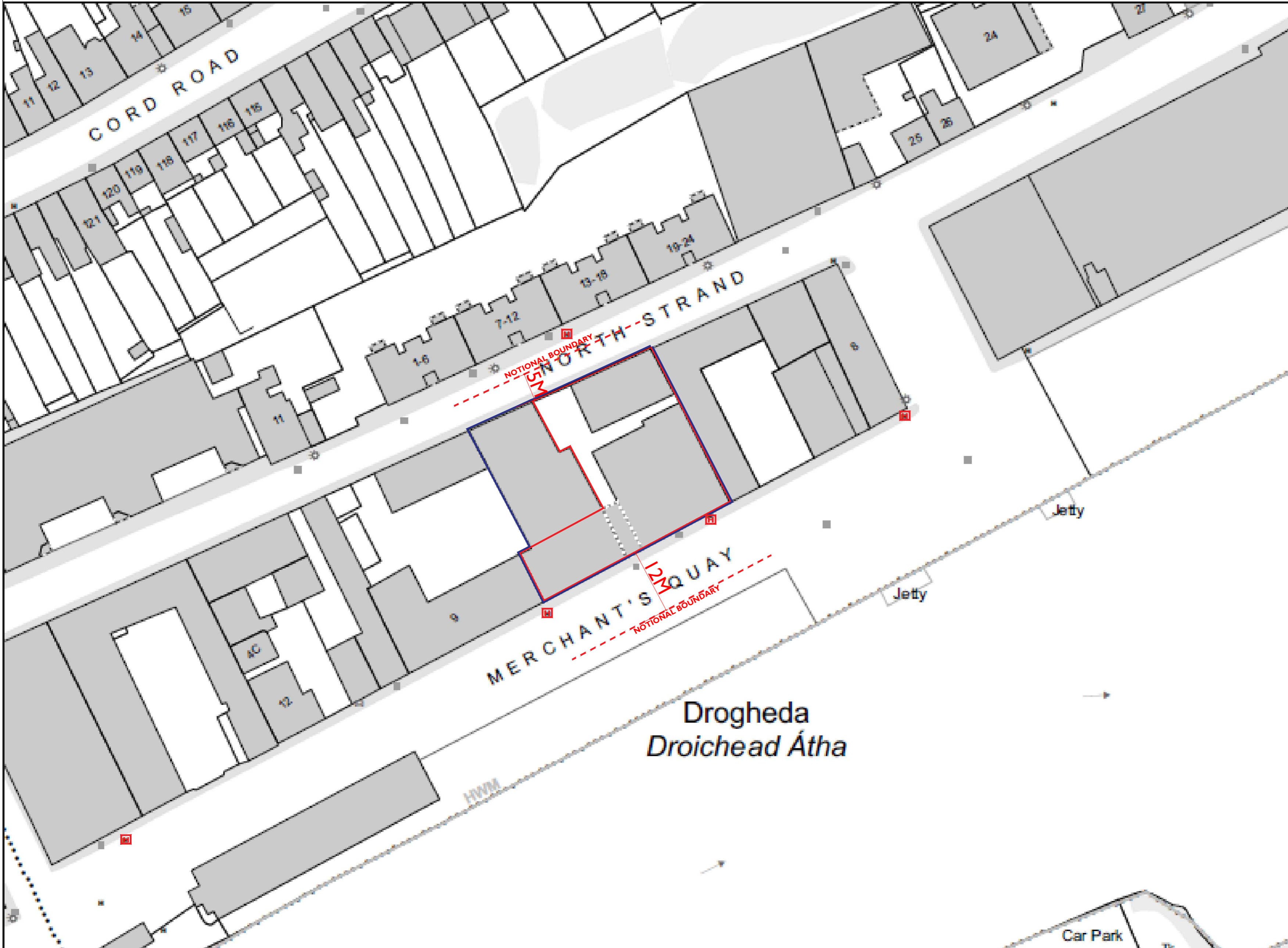
Town Hall, Crowe Street, Dundalk, A91 W20C

Email: [conservation@louthcoco.ie](mailto:conservation@louthcoco.ie)

# Planning Pack Map



Tailte Éireann



**CENTRE COORDINATES:**  
ITM 709298,775278

**PUBLISHED:** 20/09/2023  
**ORDER NO.:** 50358460\_1

**MAP SERIES:** 1:5,000  
1:1,000  
1:1,000  
**MAP SHEETS:** 2319  
2319-12  
2319-17

LOCATION OF FIRE HYDRATE  
 EXTENT OF OWNERSHIP IN BLUE  
 EXTENT OF SITE IN RED

**COMPILED AND PUBLISHED BY:**  
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D08F6E4

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Drogheda  
Droichead Átha



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Project: Proposal - Ukrainian Response for Emergency Accommodation	Project No: 23-115	Rev: -	Drawing Number: SL 01	Scale: 1-500
Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Site Location Plan	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		

# Merchant Quay, Drogheda

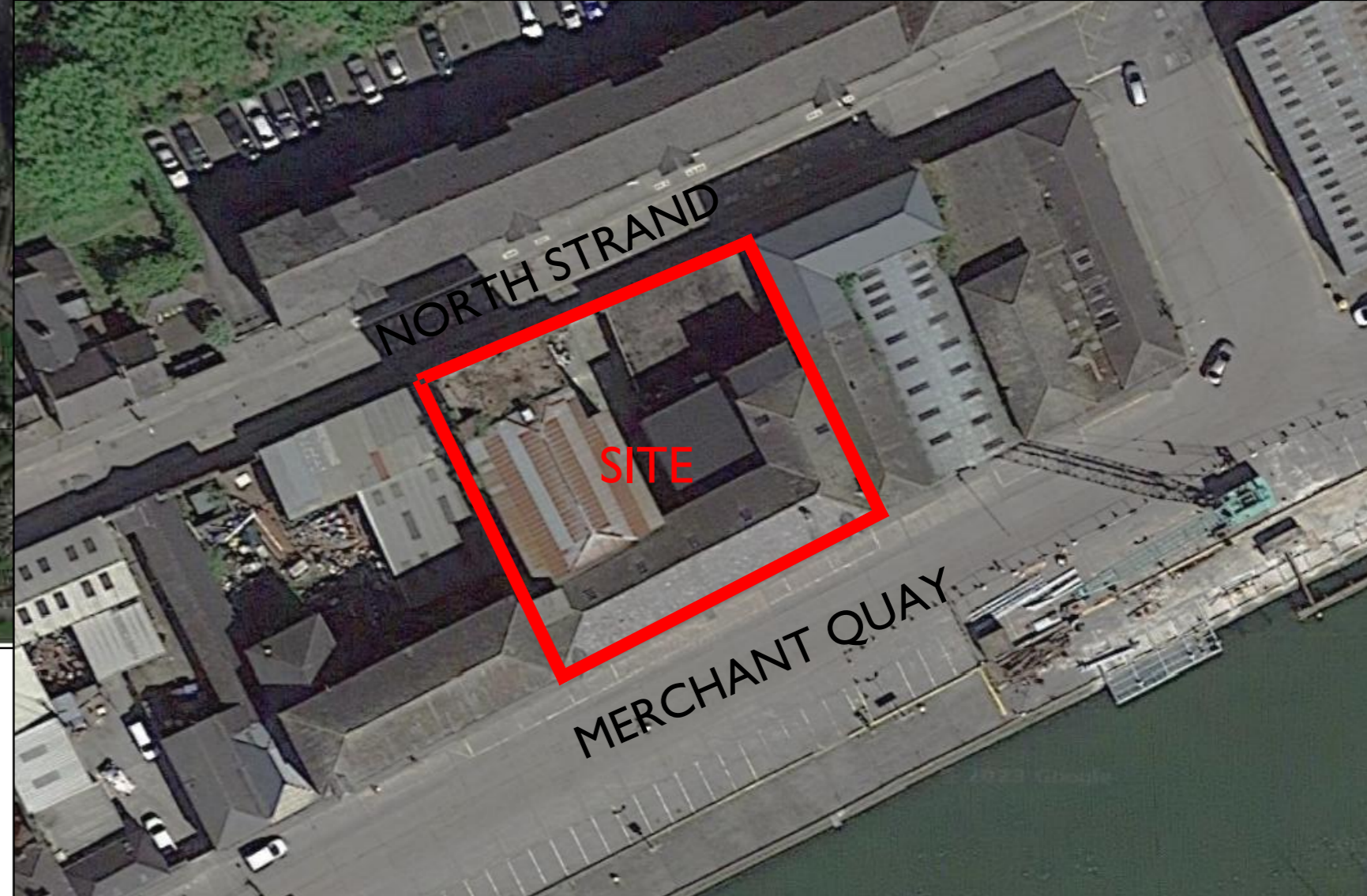
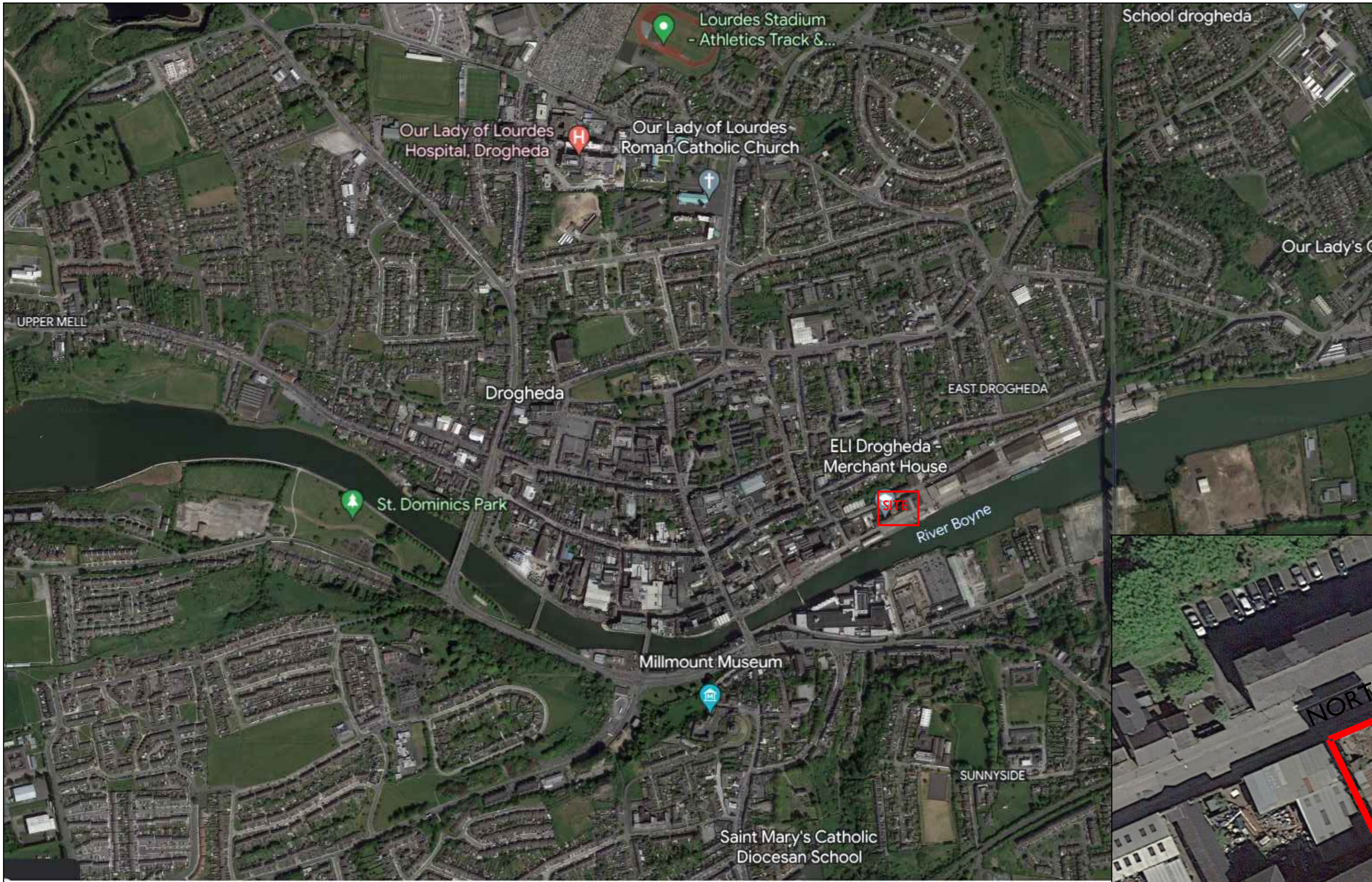
## Proposal - Ukrainian Response for Emergency Accommodation



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Project: Proposal - Ukrainian Response for Emergency Accommodation	Project No: 23-115	Rev.: -	Drawing Number: 00	Scale: -
Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: COVERPAGE	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		



Google Image- Drogheda, Co. Louth

Site Location



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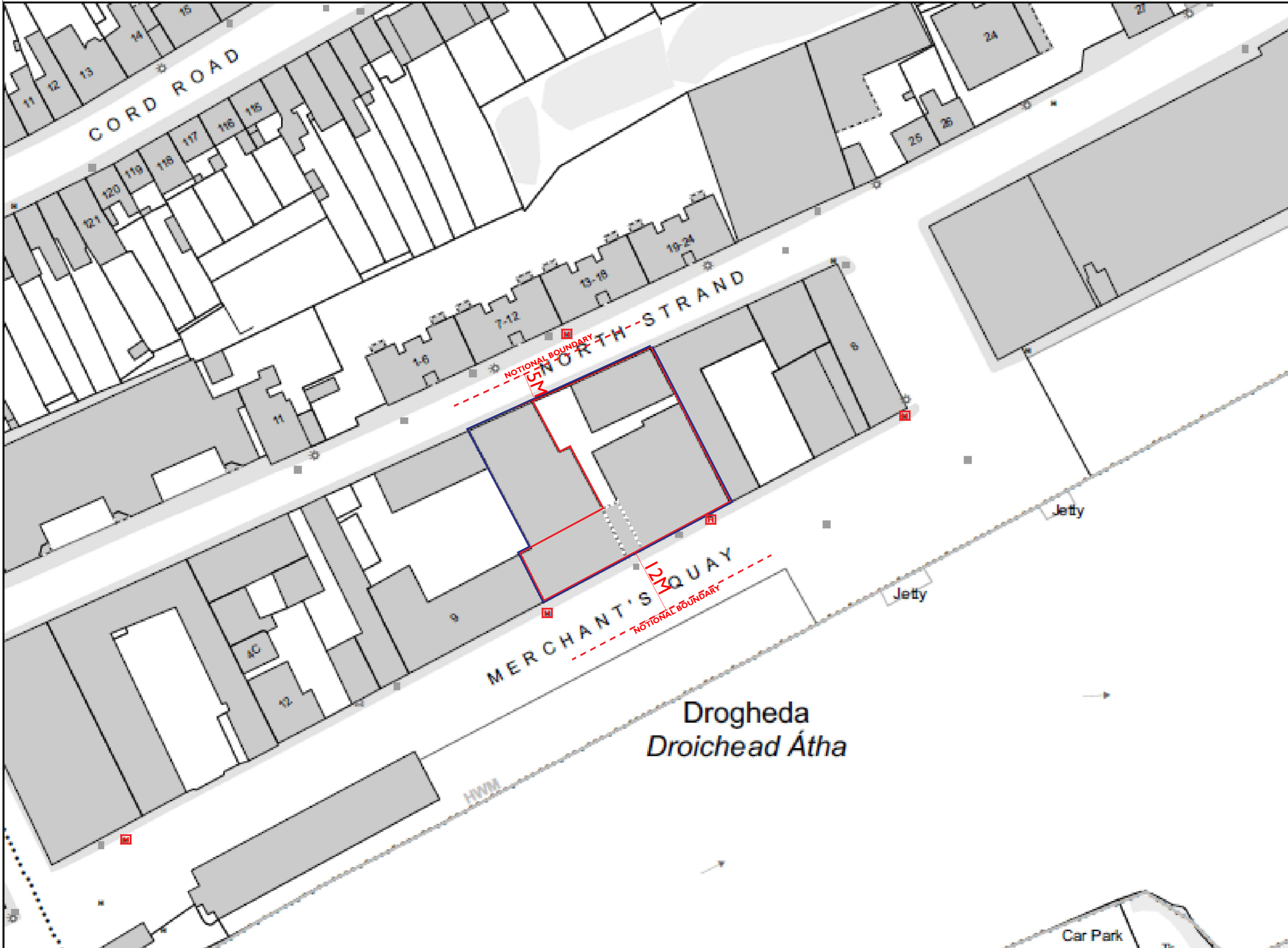
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Project: Proposal - Ukrainian Response for Emergency Accommodation	Project No: 23-115	Rev.: -	Drawing Number: SL 02	Scale: -
Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Site Location	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		

# Planning Pack Map



Tailte Éireann



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LOCATION OF FIRE HYDRATE  
 EXTENT OF OWNERSHIP IN BLUE  
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Drogheda  
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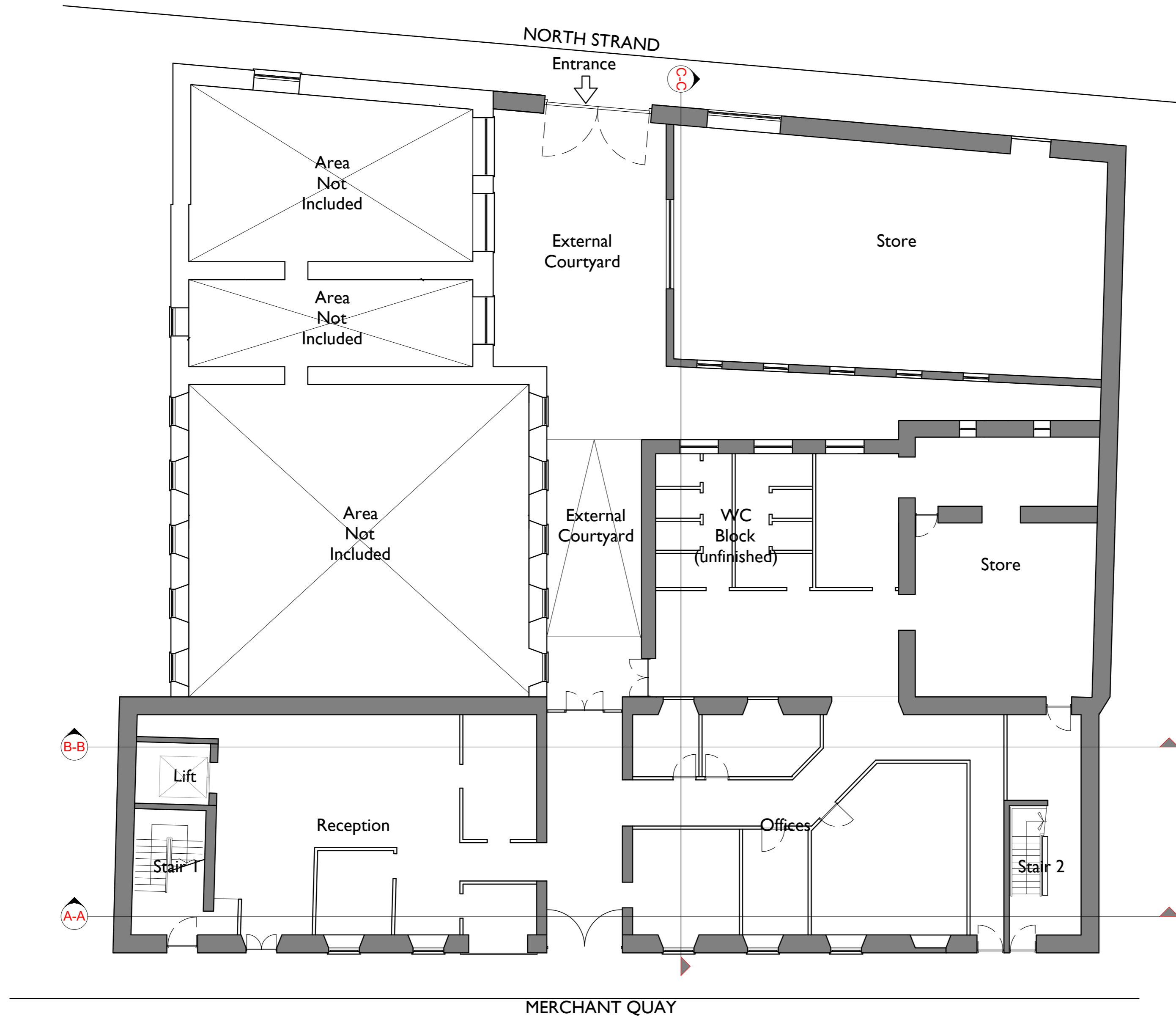


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Project: Proposal - Ukrainian Response for Emergency Accommodation	Project No: 23-115	Rev: -	Drawing Number: SL 01	Scale: 1-500
Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Site Location Plan	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		

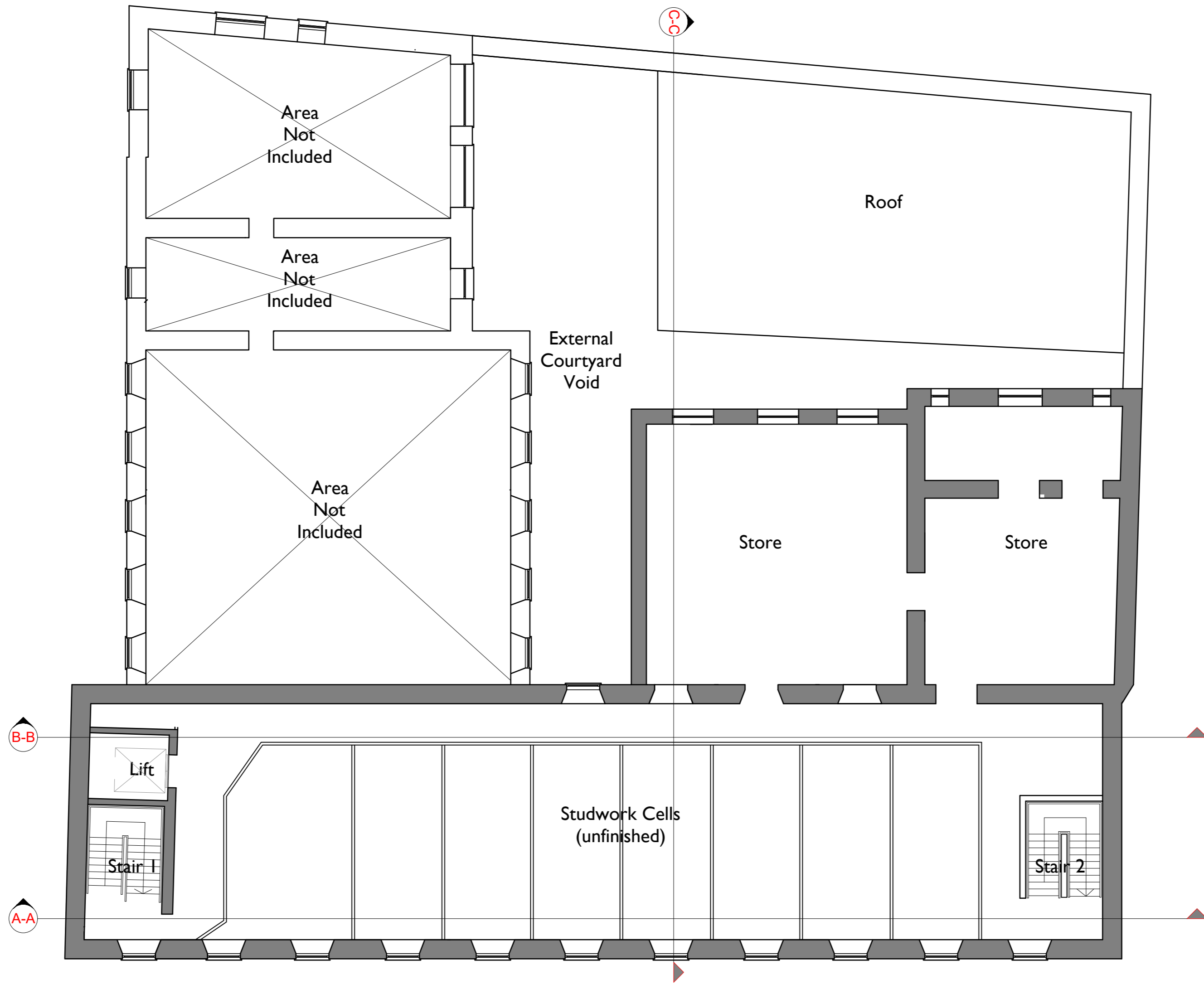


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Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Existing Ground Floor Plan	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		

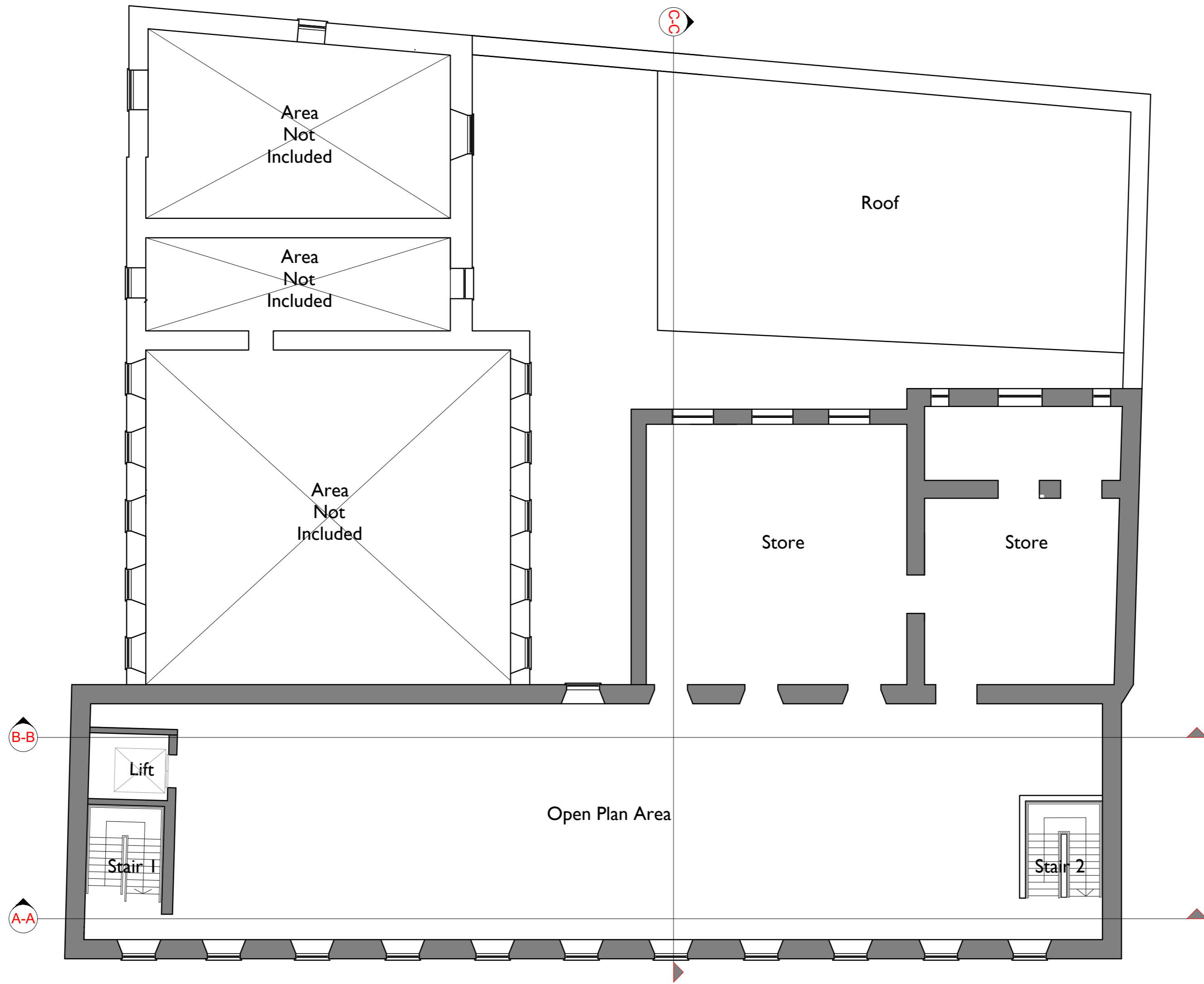


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Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Existing First Floor Plan	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		

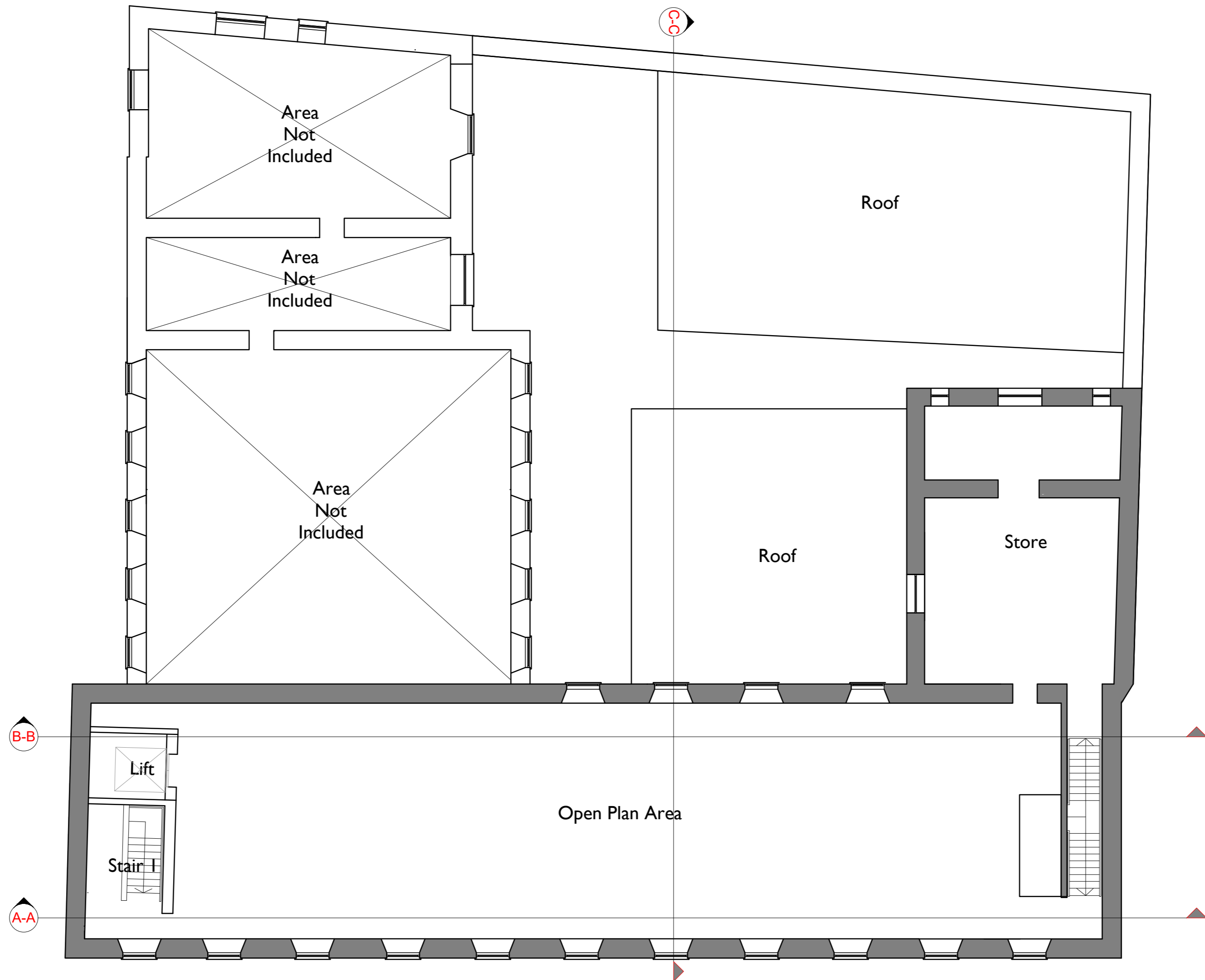


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Project: Proposal - Ukrainian Response for Emergency Accommodation	Project No: 23-115	Rev.: A	Drawing Number: EX02	Scale: 1:125 @A2
Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Proposal	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Existing Second Floor Plan	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: APR 23	Check: -		

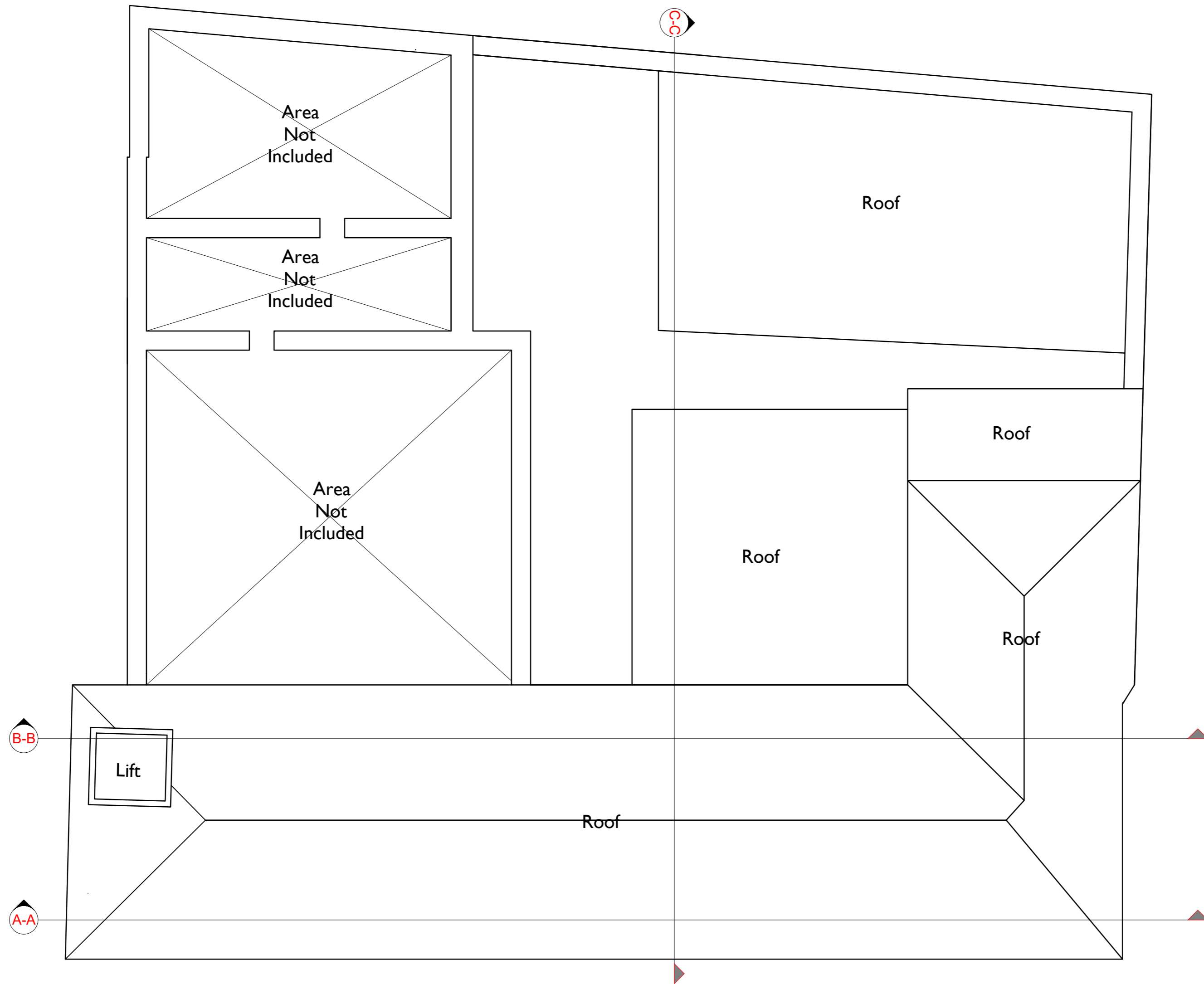


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Project: Proposal - Ukrainian Response for Emergency Accommodation	Project No: 23-115	Rev.: -	Drawing Number: EX03	Scale: 1:125 @A2
Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Existing Third Floor Plan	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		

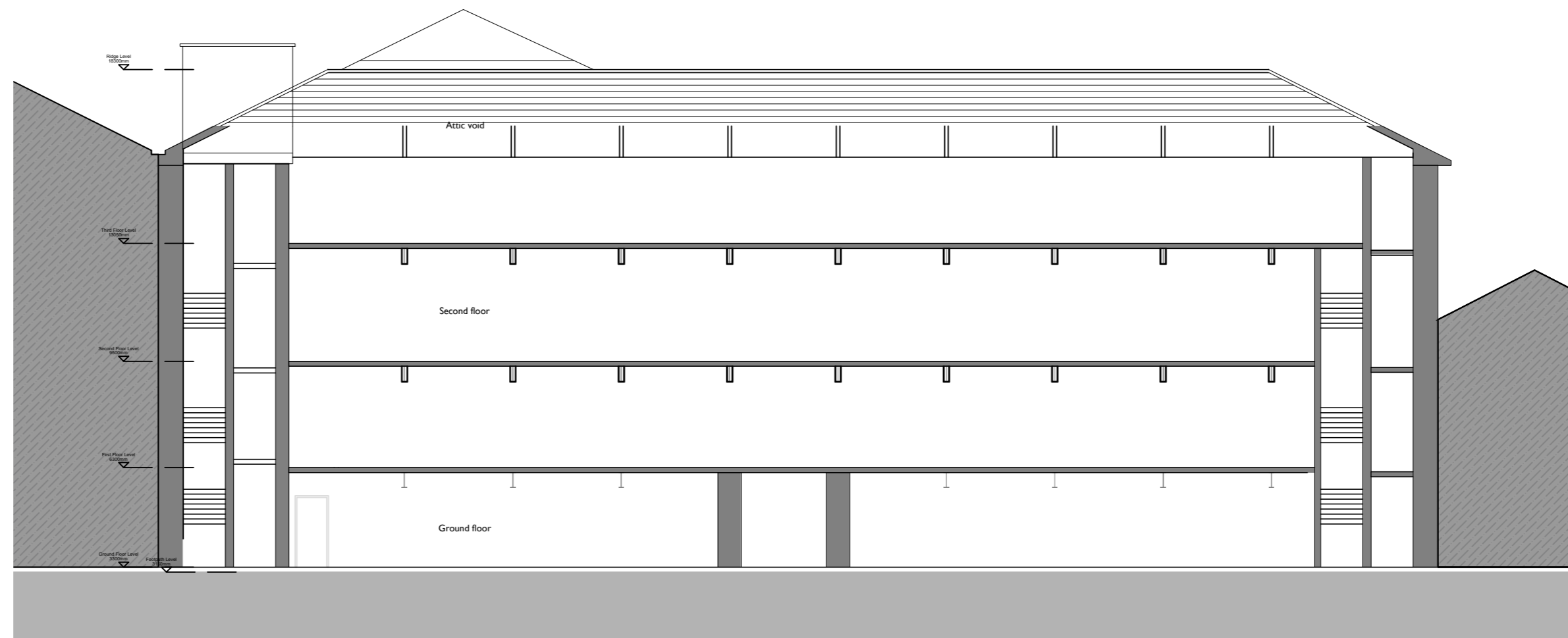


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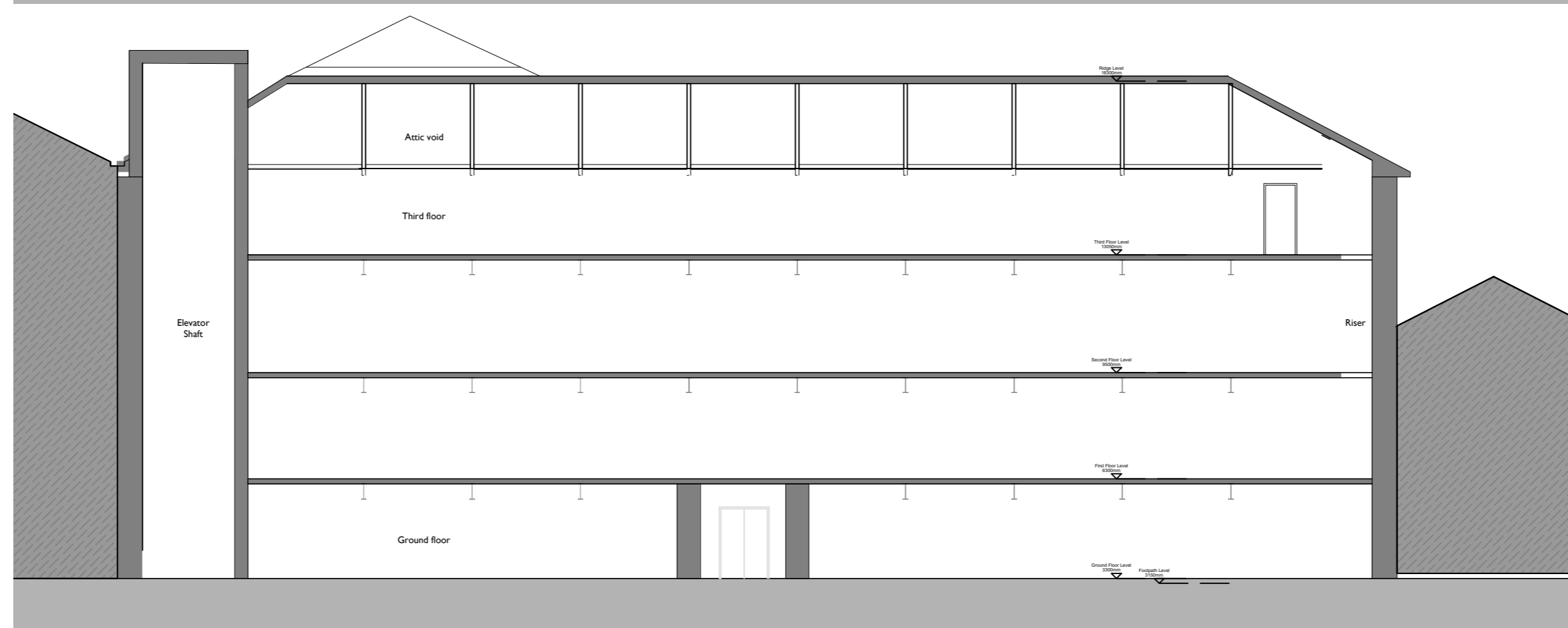
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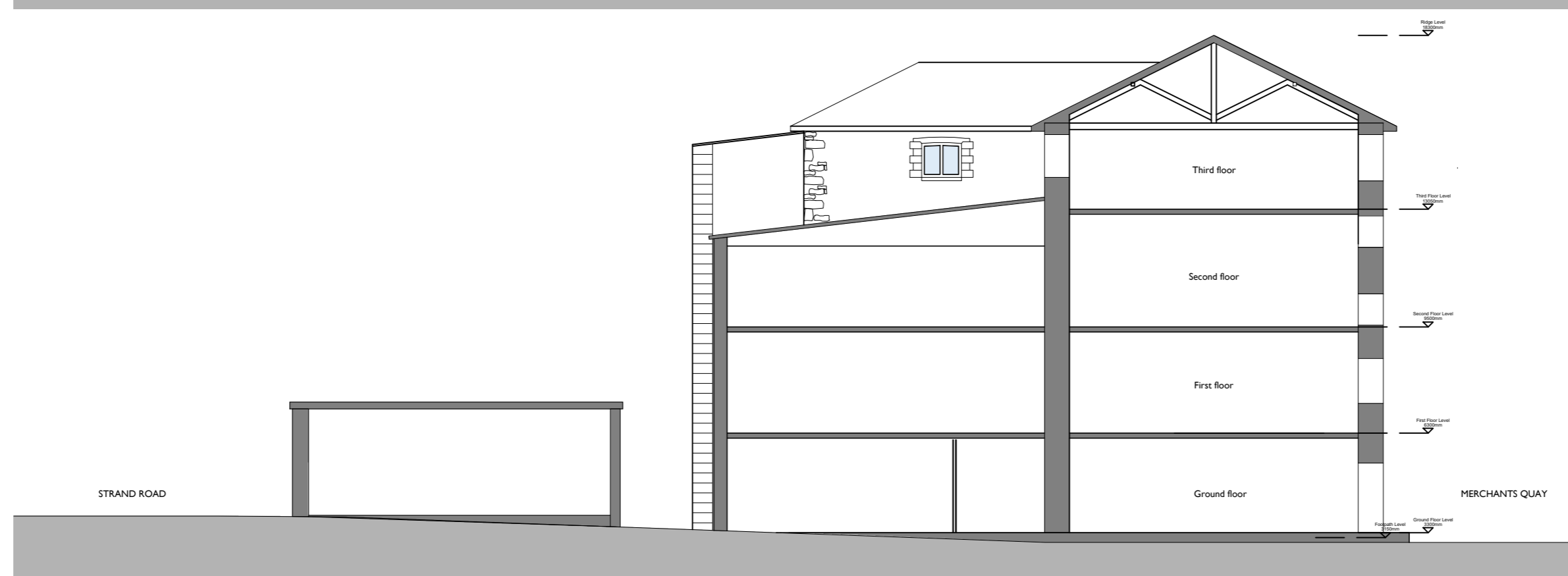
Project: Proposal - Ukrainian Response for Emergency Accommodation	Project No: 23-115	Rev.: -	Drawing Number: EX04	Scale: 1:125 @A2
Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Existing Roof Plan	
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Section AA



Section BB



Section CC



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Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Existing Section AA , BB & CC	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		



- Existing Natural Slate roof
- Existing Stone External wall
- Existing metal single glazed windows
- Existing Brick surrounds to windows
- Metal clad sliding door to be made good
- Existing Cut stone archway
- Existing T&G Entrance Gate to be restored and made good
- Existing metal clad doors

EXTENT OF SITE



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Project: Proposal - Ukrainian Response for Emergency Accommodation	Project No: 23-115	Rev.: -	Drawing Number: EX E00	Scale: 1:125 @A2
Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Existing Front Elevation	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		



Natural Slate roof

Metal frame single glazed windows

Corrugate metal roof

Brick surrounds to windows

White PVC window

Smooth plaster finish

White PVC door

Flush Timber doors

Tongue and groove Entrance Gate

Metal clad sliding door

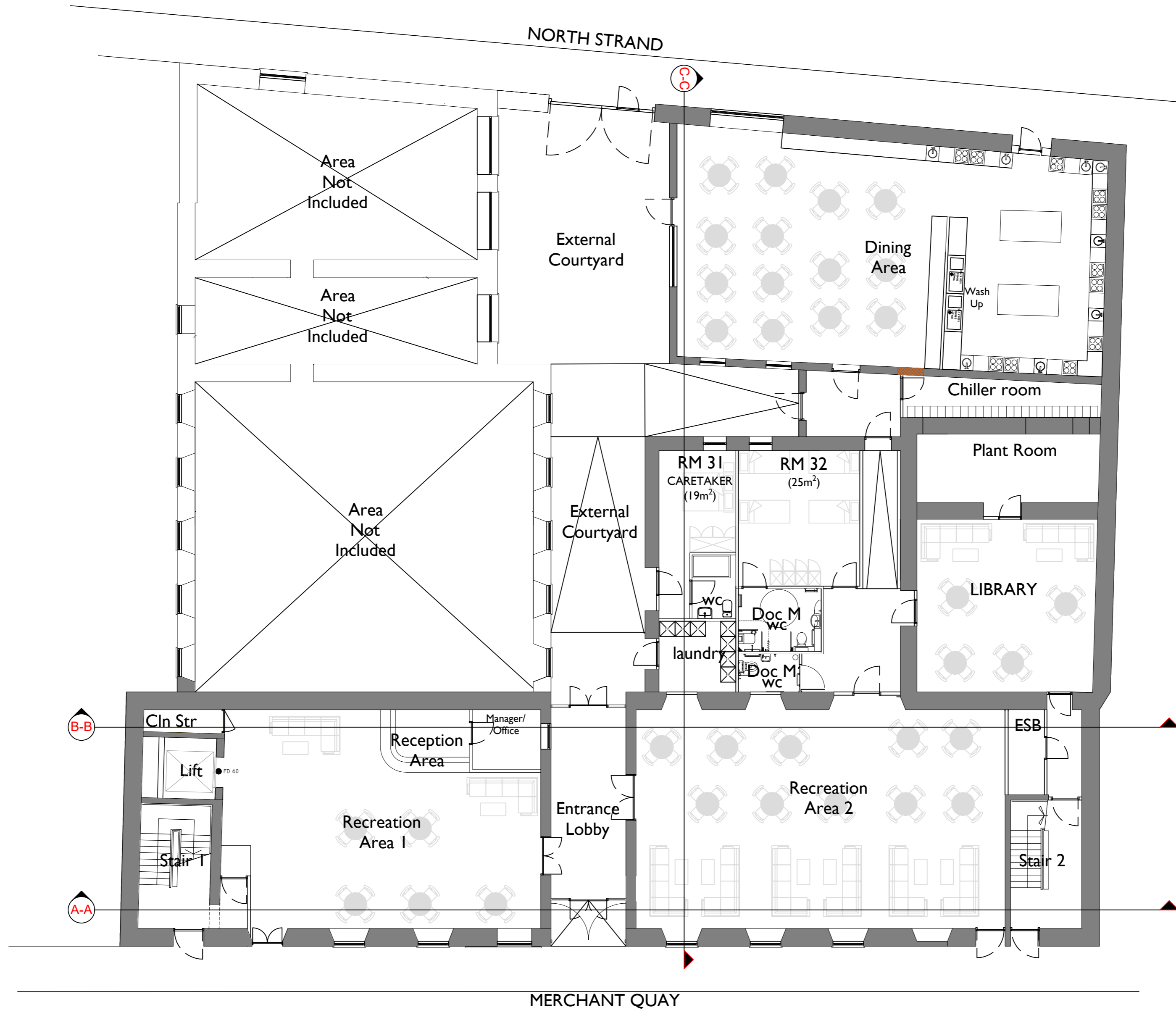


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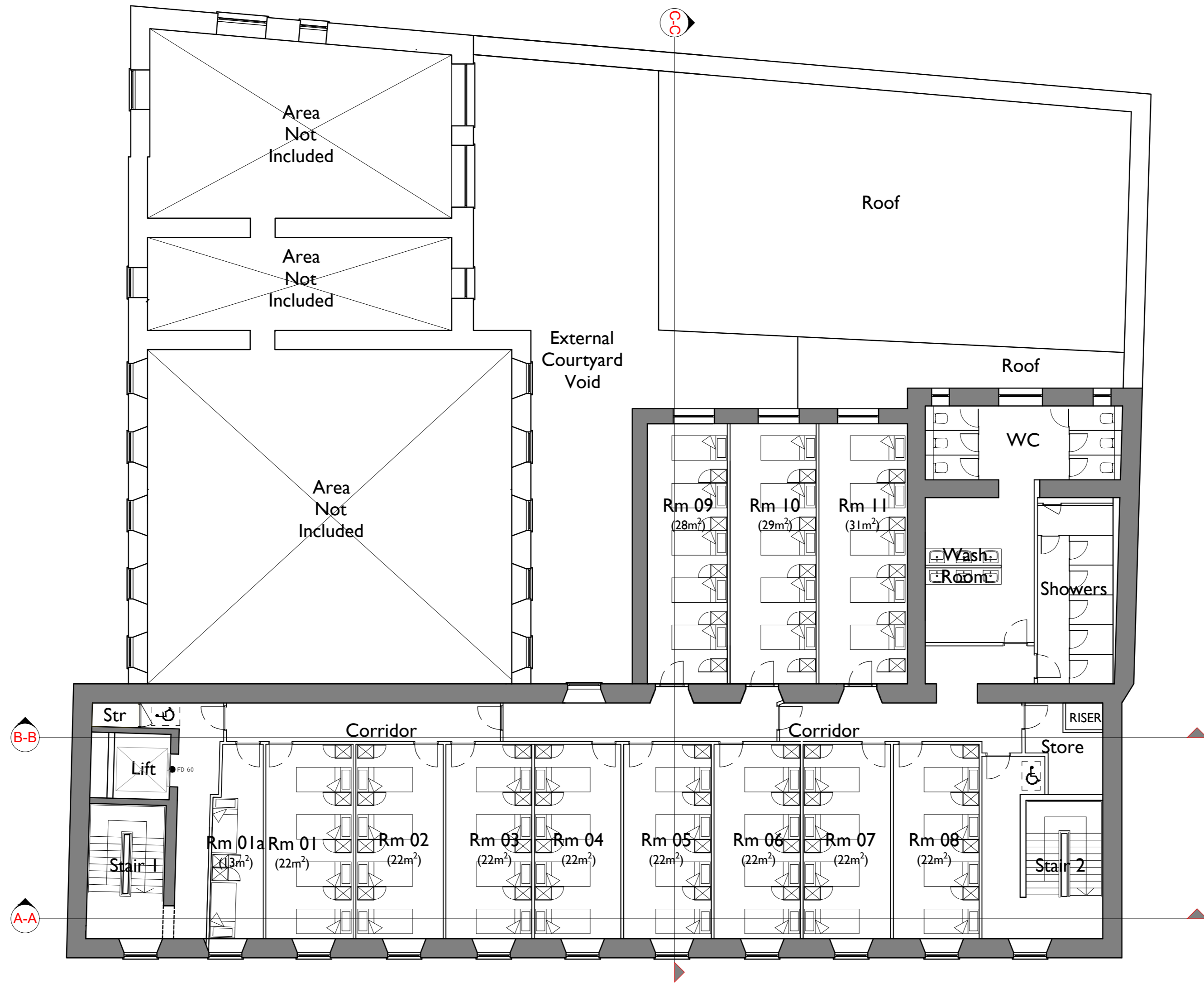
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Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Existing Rear Elevation	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		



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			Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Proposed Ground Floor Plan	
			Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		

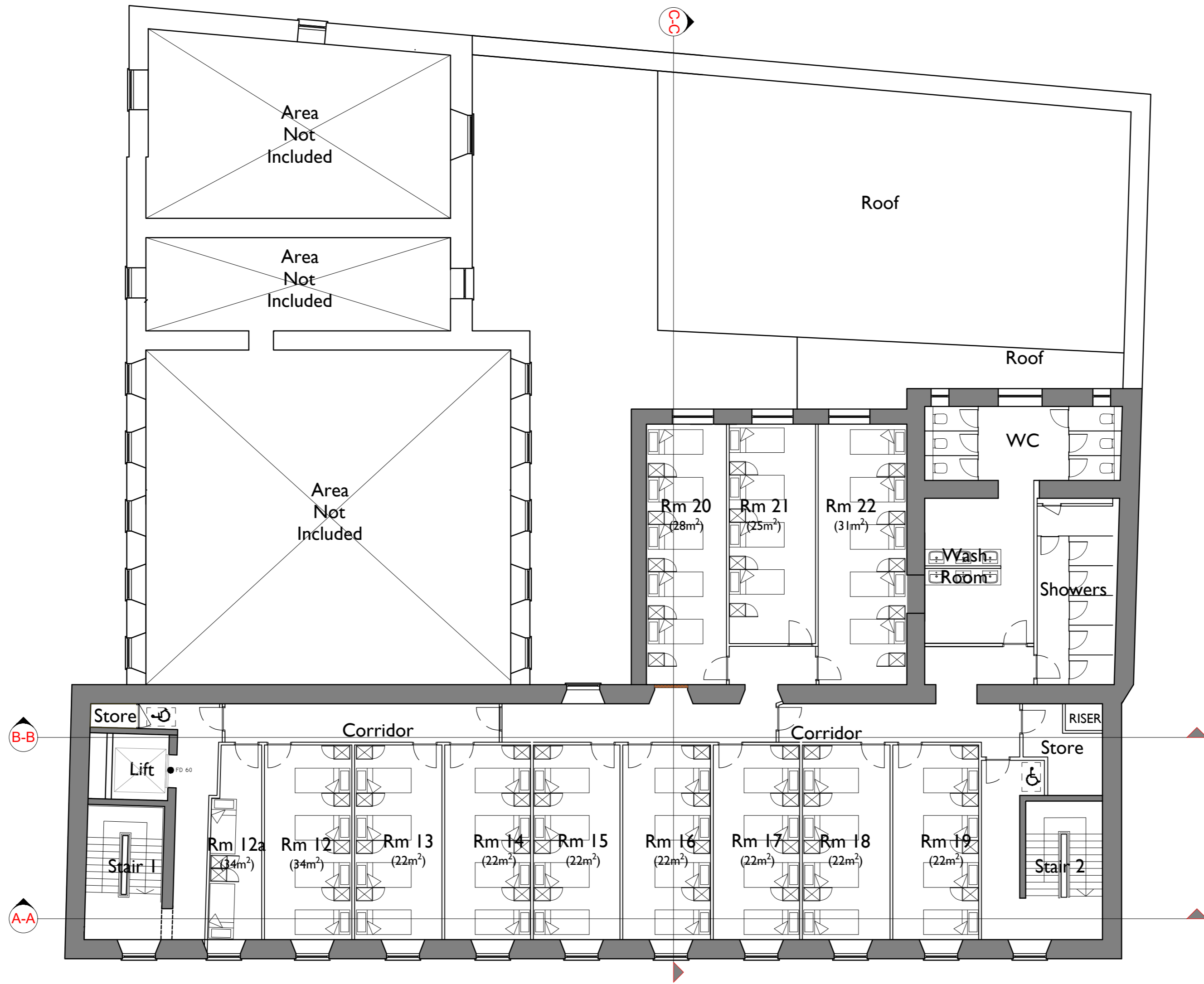


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Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Proposed First Floor Plan	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		

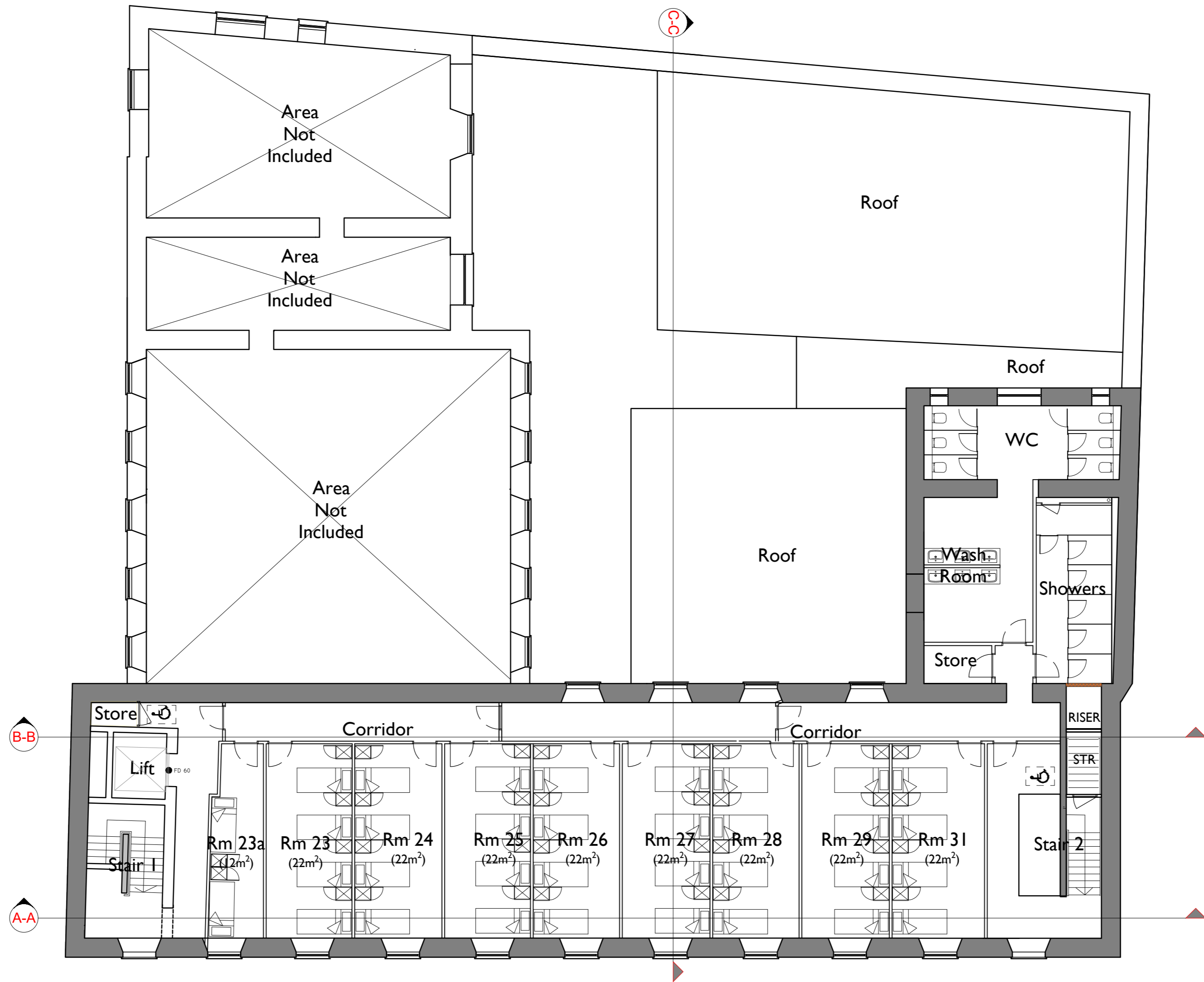


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Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Proposed Second Floor Plan	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		

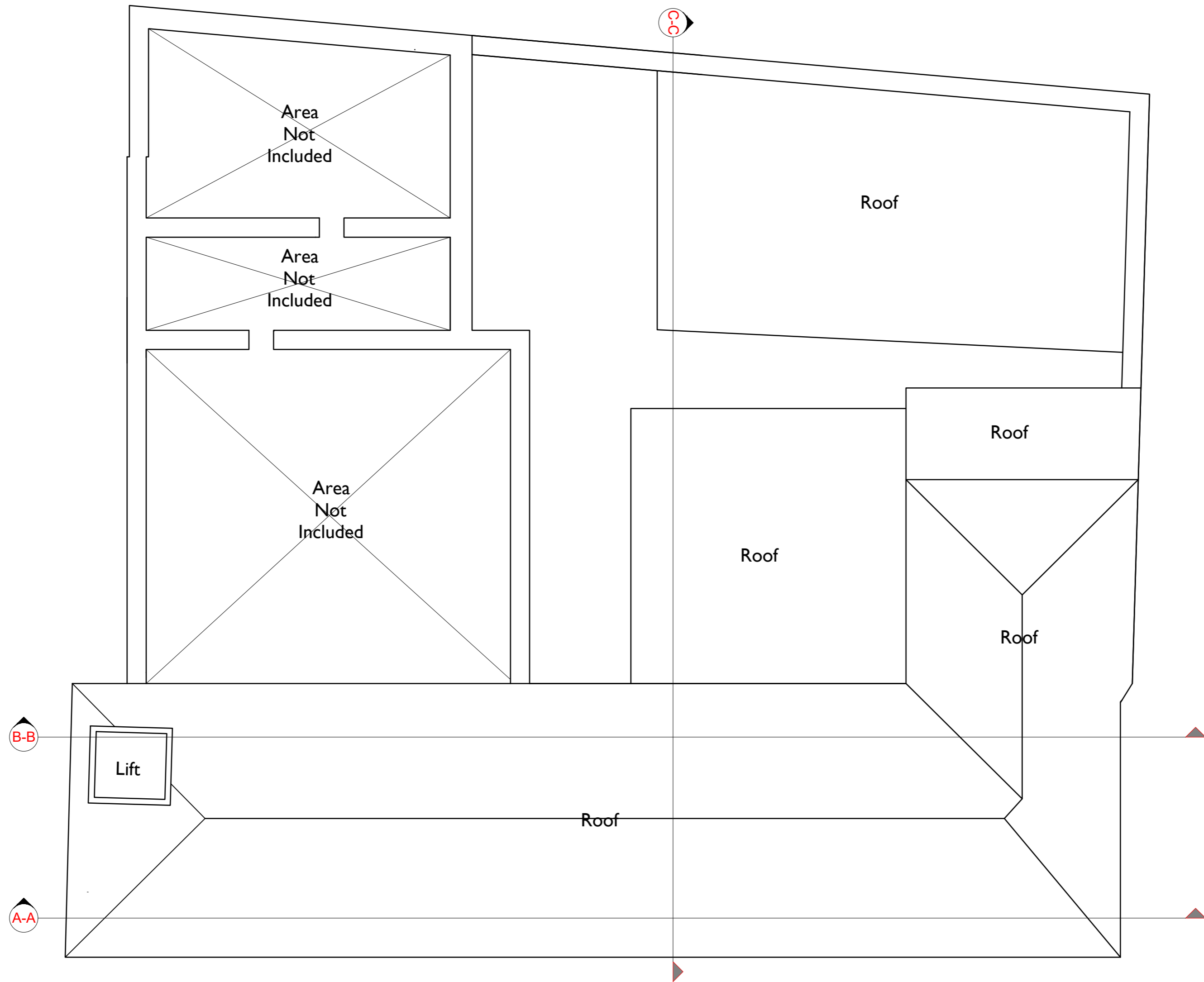


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Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Proposed Third Floor Plan	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		

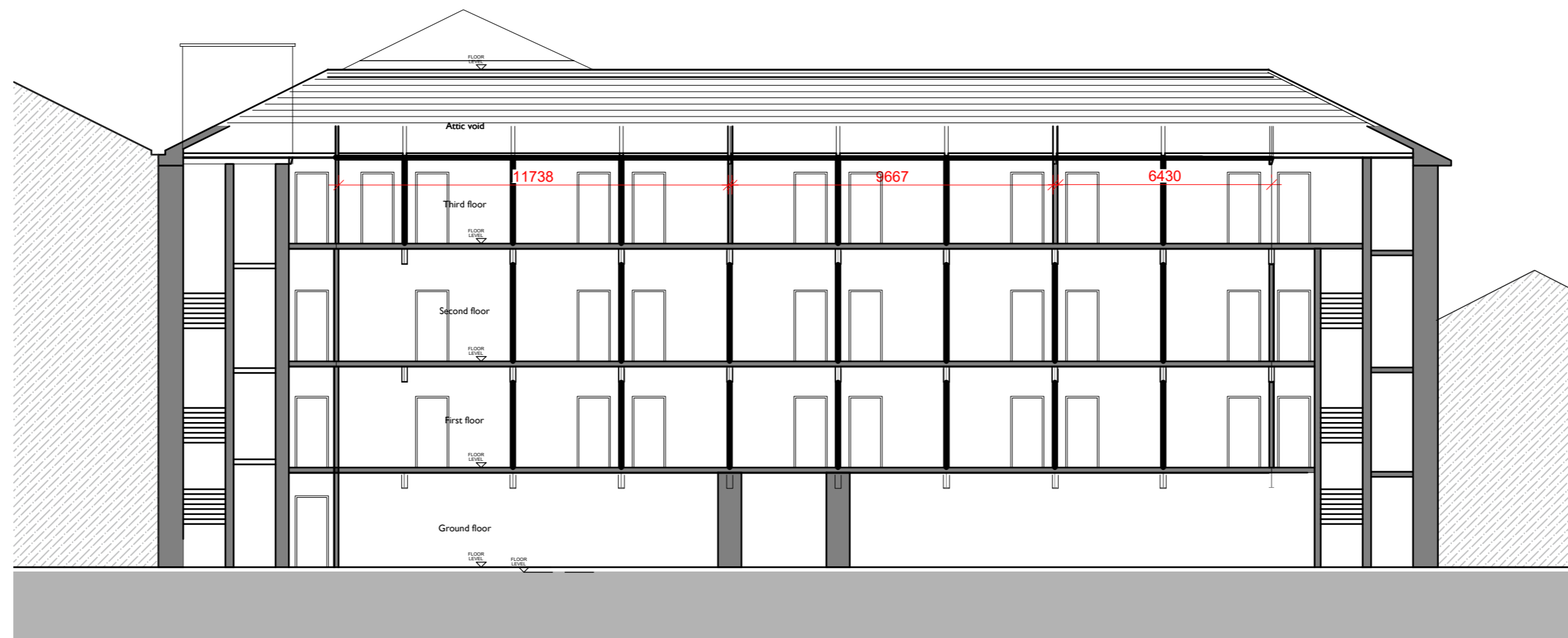


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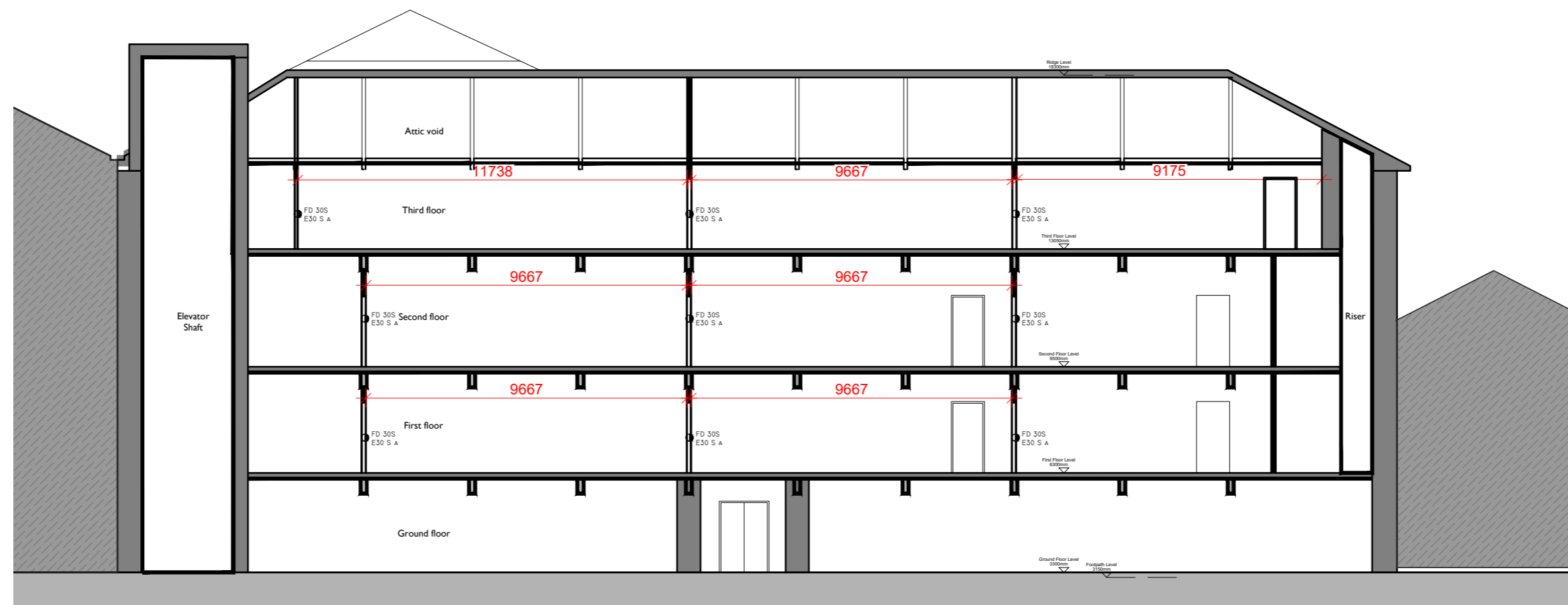
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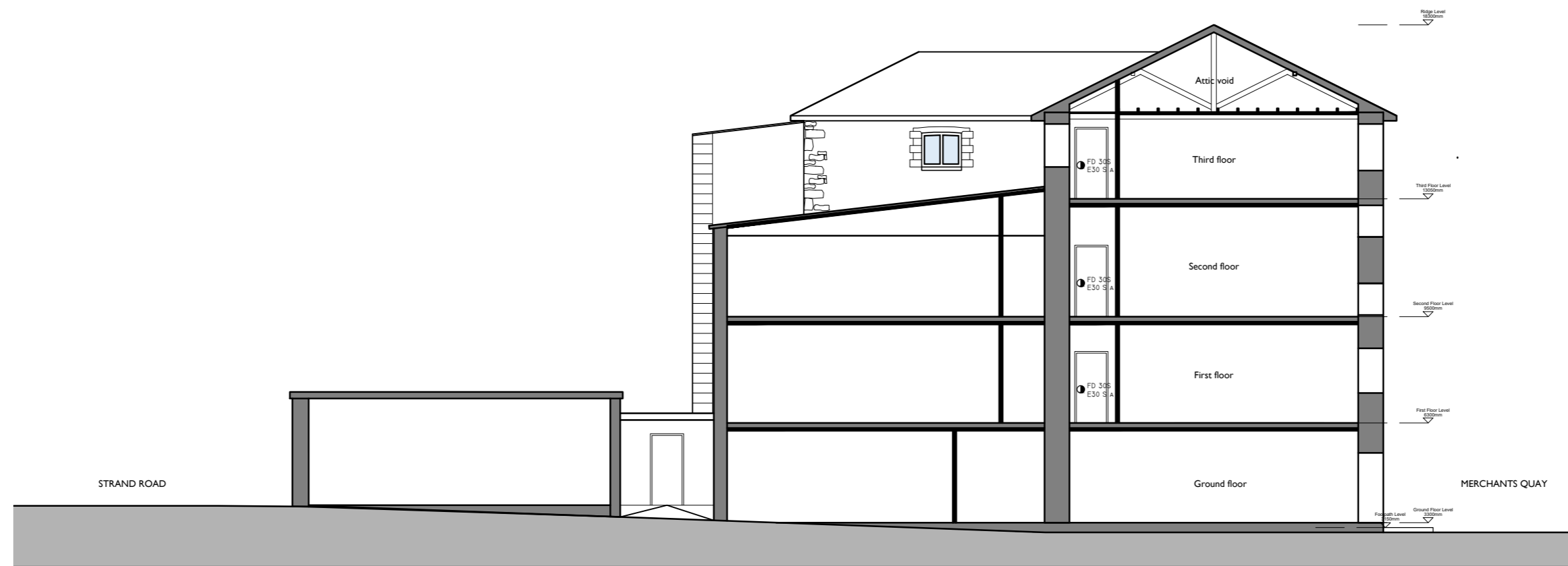
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Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Proposed Roof Plan	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		



Section AA



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Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Proposed Section AA , BB & CC	
Client: Beachpool Property Ltd.	Date: SEP 23	Check: -		



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Address: Merchant Quay, Drogheda, Co. Louth	Stage: Construction	Drawn by: RM	Drawing Title: Proposed Rear Elevation	
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**MERCHANTS QUAY  
DROGHEDA**

**ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE  
IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**25<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Historic Building Consultants  
Old Bawn  
Old Connaught  
Bray**

**1308/01**

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## Summary

This report has been produced as a historical and historic building survey of a stone-built former corn mill at Merchant's Quay, Drogheda as part of the documentation in relation to the conversion of the building for emergency accommodation for refugees. The building is a protected structure and lies within the Merchants Quay Architectural Conservation Area.

The report finds that Merchant's Quay lies on land that was reclaimed from the Boyne estuary in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, and that the former mill was constructed, with neighbouring structures, as part of the corn milling and trading business of the McCann family. An engine house was constructed at the rear of the property to house a steam engine to power the milling process. In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the use of the building in connection with the corn trade ceased. The floor to ceiling heights would have been inadequate for the requirements of the day and the original floors were removed from the building and replaced with concrete floors. This process resulted in the reduction in the number of floors in the main building from five to four, with a resultant increase in headroom. The building was then used for manufacturing in connection with the clothing industry until the 1990s. Some short-term uses have been made of the building since that time, with some changes to the building undertaken.

Over the years some additions have been made to the building at the rear, each one in concrete blocks and of a very utilitarian design. Part of the building complex, notably the engine house, has been vacant for some time and the interior is now derelict. Adjacent to the engine house is a former mill structure and this is roofed in corrugated iron, but is derelict inside, as the floors have been breached on all levels during the removal of the machinery. Those sections of the building do not form part of the present proposal.

It is now proposed to use the complex of buildings, except for the engine house and the mill building, for emergency accommodation, with bedrooms and bathroom facilities on the upper three floors of the main building on the Merchants Quay frontage, including the return and annex at the rear. The ground floor of the main building is to provide recreation areas, including a library and ancillary facilities. The single-storey industrial building at the rear of the site is to be fitted out to provide a dining area and kitchen. This industrial building is of very recent date and is not of architectural heritage significance. The external stone facades are to be retained, including the original window openings, though with the modern windows replaced with double-glazed windows for better thermal performance. The original doors are to be retained and new glazed doors provide inside the original doorways.

The conservation of a building requires that it should have a use, and as this building complex is no longer suited to its original purpose the conversion to residential use would be the best way to ensure the future. As the original floors are either missing or damaged, and as no original partitioning survives the subdivision to provide bedrooms and other facilities would involve work that would not compromise early fabric and would be reversible.

## **Background**

This report has been prepared for Beachpool Property Ltd as part of the documentation in relation to the conversion of the premises to provide emergency accommodation for refugees.

The site was inspected for the purposes of preparing this report on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2024 on which occasion the recent photographs incorporated in the report were taken. The building survey section describes the building as it was prior to any conversion works being undertaken and these were mainly taken in June 2020, with some photographs included from previous examinations of the site on various dates in 2006 and 2015.

The report includes the results of historical research carried out on the background history of the property.

While this report contains comment on aspects of the condition of the buildings it is not a condition report or a structural report and must not be read as such.

This report has been prepared by Rob Goodbody BA(mod), DipEnvPlanning, DipABRC, MA, MUBC, MIPI.

## Historical background

Drogheda is known as an industrial and port town, with its strategic location at the mouth of the river Boyne, it has served as an important transportation link between the surrounding fertile agricultural lands and the wider world. The value of its location was appreciated as early as the 10th century by the Danes. The central importance of the port to Drogheda's development is emphasised by the ship behind the barbican on Drogheda's coat of arms.

The town's motto "Deus praesidium, mercatura decus" translates "God our strength, merchandise our glory". Trade conducted via Drogheda further increased when the town acquired rail links to Dublin in 1844, Navan in 1850 and Belfast in 1852.

The warehouse which is the subject of this report was constructed at about the same time as the railway link to Dublin was established and its situation is dominated by the view of the railway viaduct.

## The Quays

The Quays were an essential part of the communal life of the town. As referred to above, Drogheda was the main port in the area and was an important centre of the linen industry from about the 1730s to the 1820s. The two most important commodities for export to England were linen and grain which were sent to Liverpool and Glasgow. Other exports between 1780 and 1820 included butter, beef and port. Imports during this period included coal, timber, iron, bark and rock salt, in addition to more luxurious imports such as tea, tobacco, sugar and wine. The building in Merchants Quay and its neighbours were constructed to facilitate this trade and its name enshrines the importance of the merchant in Drogheda's civic life. The town's trade was based on the Boyne, which was navigable up to the bridge and the Corporation maintained the weir and estuary above the Maiden Tower beacon at the estuary.

In 1826 the Drogheda Steampacket Company was formed and by 1840 five steamers operated from Steampacket Quay adjoining Merchants Quay to Liverpool and Glasgow.

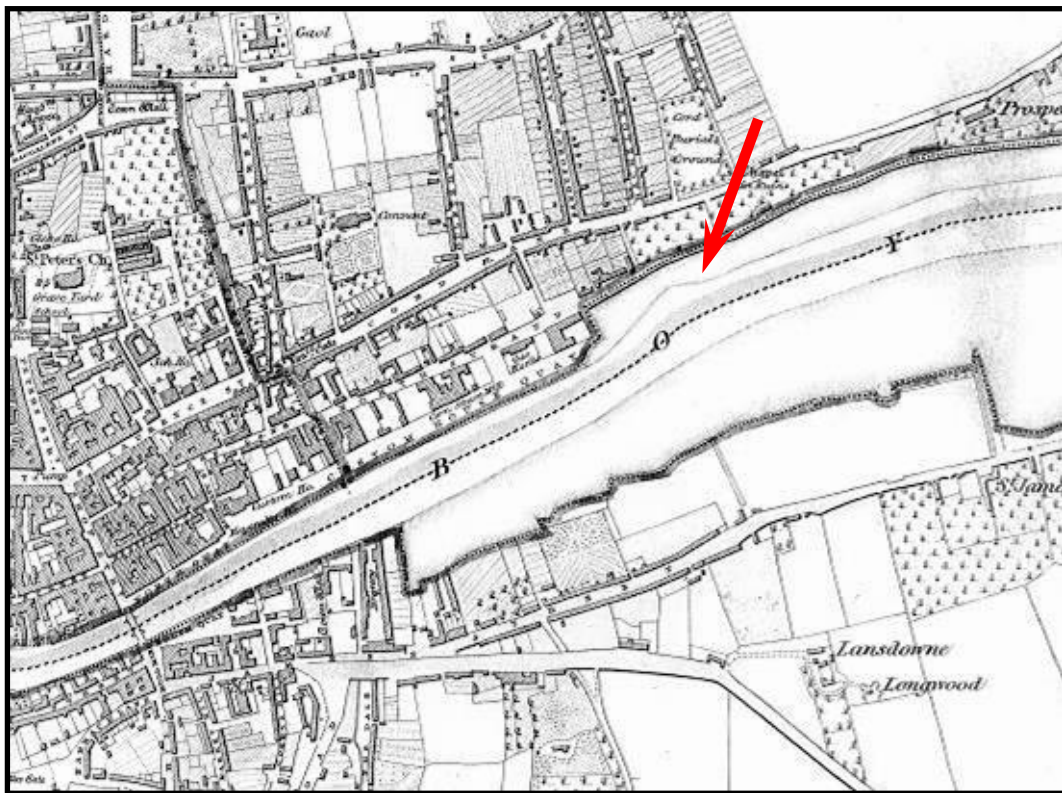
In 1837, a few years before the construction of 10 Merchants Quay, Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* described contemporary Drogheda: 'There are several large flour and corn-mills, of which that belonging to Messrs. Smith and Smythe, with the adjoining stores, was erected at an expense of £20,000; the machinery is impelled by a steam-engine of 50-horse power, and is capable of grinding 40,000 barrels of wheat, and 60,000 barrels of oats annually.' Seven years later, the *Parliamentary Gazetteer* described the corn trade in the town: 'sales of corn are made to merchants and millers at their stores, by dealers who

buy it in other markets. The great bulk of the corn consumed in distilling and brewing, is exported in either a raw or manufactured state to England or Scotland. The average annual shipments of corn during the years 1833-35, amounted to 5,375 tons of wheat, 3,500 of oats, 1,020 of barley, 1,025 of pese [sic] and beans, and 500 of vetches.' The construction of the corn mills on Merchants Quay was in response to this profitable trade.

### **Cartographic Survey**

The banks of the river were all shown fortified by walls up until Newcomen's Map of 1657, but by the time of the publication of Ravell's map in 1749, these walls are no longer indicated. All the other walls are shown complete on Ravell's map ending at the water's edge.

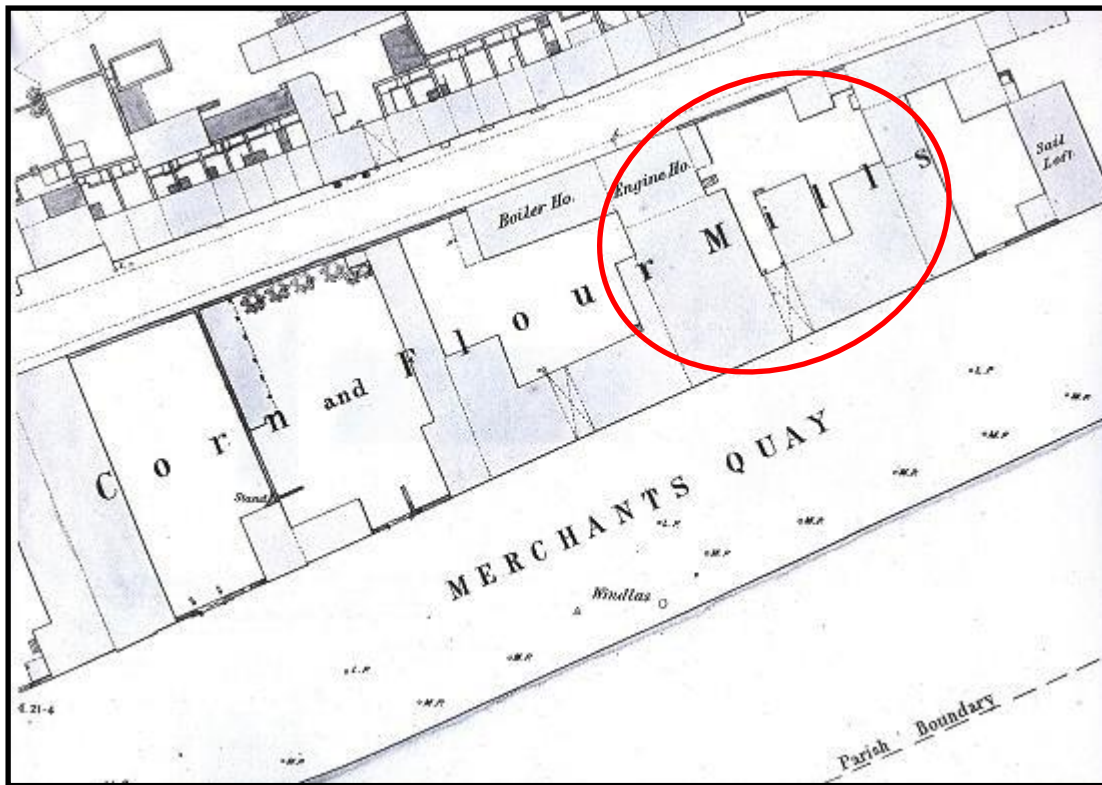
The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1835 (see Fig. 1 below) shows the quays area of Drogheda little changed from Ravell's map, with the North Quay and the Custom House Quay on the north side of the river and the South Quay on the opposite bank. One or two buildings are shown at the westerly end of the unnamed area where the present-day Merchant's Quay is now located. A ruined chapel is the only structure further downriver and is surrounded by ornamental grounds.



*Figure 1: First edition Ordnance Survey map of 1835 showing present-day Merchant's Quay as undeveloped land*

Only thirty-five years later the 1870 Ordnance Survey map (see Fig. 2 below) shows an immense change has taken place in the urban landscape. The landward side of the quay has been entirely built upon with mills and sail lofts, inns and goods sheds all in place to cater for the import and export trade.

The building in Merchant's Quay that is the subject of this report is in a group of buildings that are collectively described as 'Corn and Flour mills' and displays largely the same footprint as that which exists today.



*Figure 2: Ordnance Survey map of 1870*

## 10 Merchant's Quay

As is shown below, the building considered in this report was built for the McCann family and occupied for many years by McCann and Hill. This family does not appear in the entry for Drogheda in Pigot's directory for 1824, as John McCann's mills were at Beamond, four miles from the town. By 1846 Slater's directory includes James McCann as a baker at 15 West Street, and Joseph McCann as a corn merchant in James Street. It seems likely that the two were related, being in complimentary trades. This supposition is given further weight by the entry in Slater's directory for 1881, which lists John McCann and Sons under the three separate headings of millers, corn merchants and bakers, all three at the same address at 15 West Street. It would appear that this was the registered business address, rather than the location of all of their activities, a significant amount of which was taking place at Merchant's Quay by that date.



*Plate 1: View of the Drogheda Quays from The Mall at the turn of the last century, looking towards the Boyne Viaduct. Subject property is arrowed*

The 1870 Ordnance Survey map (Fig 2 above) is a large-scale map, at 1:500, and provides a detailed picture of the layout of the premises at Merchant's Quay. It shows the premises that are the subject of this report, flanked by the similar adjoining premises and the smaller building to the east. The map shows an engine house at the rear of the site. These would have been necessary to provide the energy and heat used to dry the grain before grinding. The *Mills and Millers of Ireland*<sup>1</sup> describes the owners of the property as John and Ann McCann and describes the structure as 'corn store, kiln.'

There is a high moisture content in Irish grain, so that it is necessary to dry it in a kiln before it is ground. A kiln of the period would have had a floor made up of perforated clay tiles, supported on an iron framework. The grain was spread on the

<sup>1</sup> William Ernest Hogg, *The Mills and Millers of Ireland of About 1850* published by the author.

floor and a furnace on the level below provided hot air to rise through the perforations and dry the grain. As with a malt house the workers would turn the grain over periodically with wooden shovels. American grain was imported in large quantities from about 1870, and this would also have required some degree of drying, though usually less than the Irish-grown corn. Unusually, a significant amount of the produce of McCann's mill was exported to the United States in the form of oatmeal. The quantities were sufficient to warrant the establishment of a special representative in America, a job carried out by Joseph McCann, brother of John, until 1884, when he returned to Drogheda to take charge of the business following his brother's death.



*Plate 2: Merchant's Quay, viewed from the west, circa 1980*

Another milling company in Drogheda was R R Hill and Sons, which had established the first steam mill in Drogheda in 1824 and which also had an export trade to the United States and Canada. In 1897 the two firms and were incorporated as McCann & Hill Ltd.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the building was listed in the Valuation Office records as "Corn stores, granary and yards", with the buildings valued at £80, and the occupier as McCann & Hill. The adjoining building to the east (No. 11) was listed as "Corn store and yard", with the same occupiers, valued at £75. The adjoining building to the west (No. 9) was listed as vacant, and owned by John McCann & Sons, description "Corn store, kiln and yard". Over time the entries in the valuation records showed changes as follows:

**1905** Description was changed to "Corn mill, stores and yards" and valuation was increased to £110.

**1920** “Offices” added into description and numbers 10 and 11 amalgamated for the valuation. Valuation increased to £225 [£110 + £75 = £185, indicating that the building of the offices added £40 to the valuation].

**1937** Description given as “Corn and oat mill, stores, office and yard”, and valuation increased to £295.

**1950** “Dryer” added to description. Valuation increased in 1950s to £370.

**1968** Description deleted. Now “Factory (unfinished) – 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> floor”. Valuation reduced to £185, then £160.

A second occupier was also listed for same property at this time - “Doran Packaging Ltd, workshop”, valued at £20 from 1971. This was changed to “Ships Chandlers” from 1989.

**1997** Valuation reduced to £60 for upper floors.

The change of description to ‘factory’ in 1968 reflects the closure of McCann & Hills’ mill in 1966. Following this there was a new lease of life for the structure and a number of alterations to the building fabric appear to date from this time, including the construction of a concrete block, single-storey flat-roofed addition to the rear courtyard, which replaced the original boiler room. It appears that the central return was also extended at this time. The original windows are still extant at one of the returns and suggest that all the window openings were originally furnished with multi-pane timber sash windows. At the time of their replacement with steel windows at the main part of the building, many of the original limestone sills were removed and concrete sills inserted. In addition, the vertical openings that had once functioned as doors to the upper storeys were adjusted to become window openings. Further adjustments were made to the door openings at the ground floor front elevation.

The works carried out in 1968, as noted in the valuation records, included the removal of the floors above first floor level in the building and their replacement at revised levels. As a result, the number of floors in the building has been reduced from five to four and the headroom has been increased and there are now two rows of windows on the second floor.

The building was occupied by Eddie Murphy & Company, a clothing manufactory, until the late 1990s, making men's trousers.



*Plate 3: View of Merchant's Quay, circa 1980, with the former McCann & Hill mill arrowed*

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## **Conservation context**

### **Record of Protected Structures**

The former warehouse and mill at Merchants' Quay is a protected structure and is included in the record of protected structures under reference DB-156b.

### **Conservation areas**

The former warehouse and mill at Merchants' Quay lies within the Merchant's Quay Architectural Conservation Area

### **National Inventory of Architectural Heritage**

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage has included the building at Merchants' Quay in its survey of County Louth, carried out in July 2005. The building is assigned a Regional rating for its architectural and technical interest.

## Building survey

This section is a survey of the building as it was prior to the commencement of works to convert the building for emergency residential accommodation. Remarks on these conversion works are included toward the end of this report.

### External Inventory

Built *circa* 1850, the building in Merchants Quay was constructed as a corn mill. It comprises of a terraced multi-bay, four-storey (originally five-storey, internal floor arrangements altered) limestone rubble stone building with red brick dressings, having a shallow pitched slate roof, rendered chimney stacks to gable ends, mix of cast-iron and uPVC rainwater goods. The original form of a series of vertical openings which allowed goods to be hoisted to the upper storey via pulley-wheel has been altered to function as windows at the stairwell, while their slate-roofed canopies survive at eaves level. A lift was installed towards the rear of building in the late twentieth century.

Square-headed window openings contained 1960s steel casement windows; door openings are square-headed with overlights. Elliptical-headed carriage arch opening to centre of front elevation gives access to passageway to rear yard, though the doors have been damaged through vandalism.

The rear elevation consists of limestone rubble-stone construction with red brick dressings. Three returns of different construction dates create a roughly W-shaped plan. The westerly return contains the former engine house and appears to have been built in stages with a red-brick section in the centre. This return links the front and rear of the site and is now derelict. The three-storey central return appears to have been extended at some point in the mid-twentieth century with concrete block construction. The easterly return has also been extended with concrete block construction.

Enclosed rear courtyard is accessed from the street to the rear via sliding timber gates and steel gates, square headed door opening in rubble-stone wall. A single-storey flat-roofed structure in the courtyard was built *circa* 1970.

### Walls

Limestone rubble walls with concrete infill sections, red brick dressings. Narrow chamfered plinth. Dressed stone quoins. Red brick wall construction to rear elevation of central section west return with red brick relieving arches to east elevation. Cement render to central return.

### Doors

#### *Main Entrance Doors*

Paired square-headed entrance doors to east and west containing steel-sheeted doors, outermost doors with rectangular timber overlights. Further square-headed opening with cut limestone voussoirs now blocked up. Large square-headed opening altered to contain sliding gate. All doors steel-sheeted to exterior.

**Arch**

An elliptical-headed carriage arch opening is located near the centre of the front elevation. Massive voussoirs of fine quality cut limestone, containing frames of damaged double-leaf gates, boarded up with plywood sheeting, gives access to passageway leading to a glazed screen with a door opening on to rear courtyard.

Square-headed window openings with red brick block and start surrounds to front elevation. Window openings were altered in the late 1960s with concrete insertions to accommodate steel casement windows. Original limestone sills survive in places. Ground floor windows blocked up.

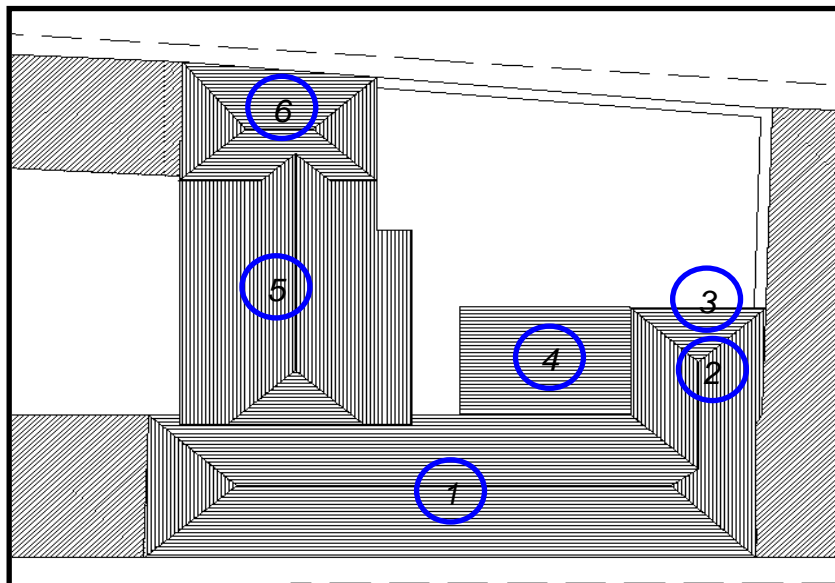
Camber-headed window openings to west return in red brick block and start surrounds containing multi-pane timber sash windows.

**Roof**

Pitched slate roof with rendered gable-located chimneystacks having mixed cast-iron and uPVC rainwater goods. Five-storey return to west rear having corrugated iron sheeted roof. Large ventilation pipe. Concrete lift shaft. Corrugated iron sheeted roof to central return.

Plates 6, 7 and 8 below show the rear elevations and the existing roofs, as seen from the street and the locations from which these photographs were taken are shown in Fig. 4. Plate 4, below, shows the mill and engine house as seen from the west along North Strand. Figure 3, below, shows the plan of the roofs, which are described more fully below.

Roof number 1 covers the main building fronting the quays. This is a hipped roof with a covering of slate and appears to be original to the building.



*Figure 3: Roof plan of existing buildings, with roofs numbered as discussed in text*

Roof number 2 covers a small return at the rear of the main building, at its eastern end. This roof is hipped and slated. Its internal structure consists of paired rafters and collars and the top floor of this building projects into the roof space.

Roof number 3 is a lean-to roof on a modern concrete block structure added to the rear of the return on the eastern end of the site. The roof has a covering of corrugated iron.

Roof number 4 is a lean-to roof with a covering of profiled steel over a concrete extension built on to the rear of the main building.



*Plate 4: Mill and engine house as seen from North Strand, to west*

Roof number 5 is half-hipped, with a covering of corrugated iron, and covers the mill building in the large return to the rear of the main building on its western end. The interior structure of this roof is of queen-post trusses supporting three purlins on each of the longer slopes. These in turn carry rafters on which is laid roofing felt and corrugated iron. The trusses have been significantly cut over time to facilitate modifications, presumably to the nature of the machinery and services in the building.

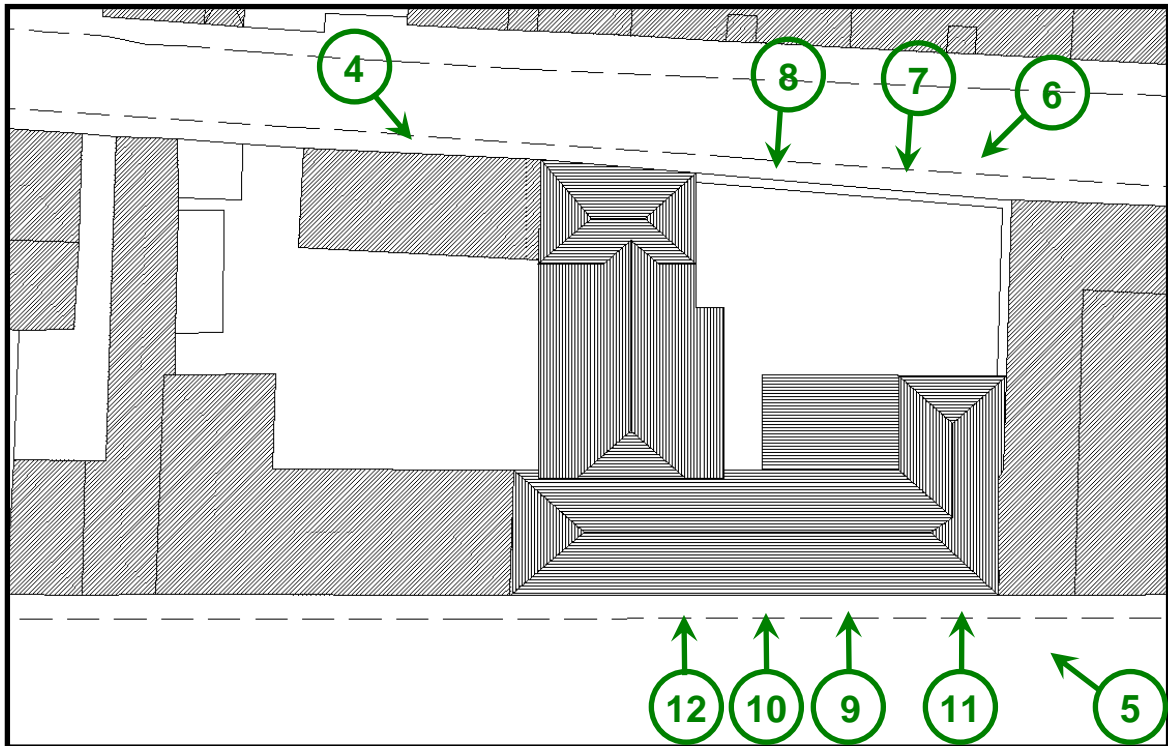
Roof number 6 is at the rear of the return on the western side, covering the engine house at the North Strand side of the site. This roof has not been examined in any detail due to the dangerous nature of the building and difficulties of accessibility. It appears to be a jack arch roof of unknown composition or condition.

**Yard**

Area to rear of building comprises random rubble stone walls with single-storey flat-roofed building circa 1970. Ground surface obscured by heavy moss growth.

**Photographs**

The photographs of the exterior of the building are shown on the following pages, keyed into the plan below.



*Figure 4: Locations and directions of photographs of exterior of building*



*Plate 5: Front elevation*



*Plate 6: Rear return, viewed from north-east*



*Plate 7: Rear boundary and rear of building*



*Plate 8: Gateway and rear boundary to North Strand*



*Plate 9: First and second floor windows*



*Plate 10: Carriage opening and doorway, front elevation*



*Plate 11: Door openings, front elevation east*



*Plate 12: Door openings, front elevation west*

## Internal Inventory

The ground floor is subdivided by carriage entrance and passageway to rear yard. Separate doors give access to each section of the building at ground floor level. The descriptions below begin with the main building across the Merchant's Quay frontage of the site, working through floor by floor. For each floor, a floor plan is included to indicate room numbering used for this report, and to show the locations of all photographs. The former engine house, kiln and mill at the rear are not included in the present proposals and hence are not described in this report.

### Front building

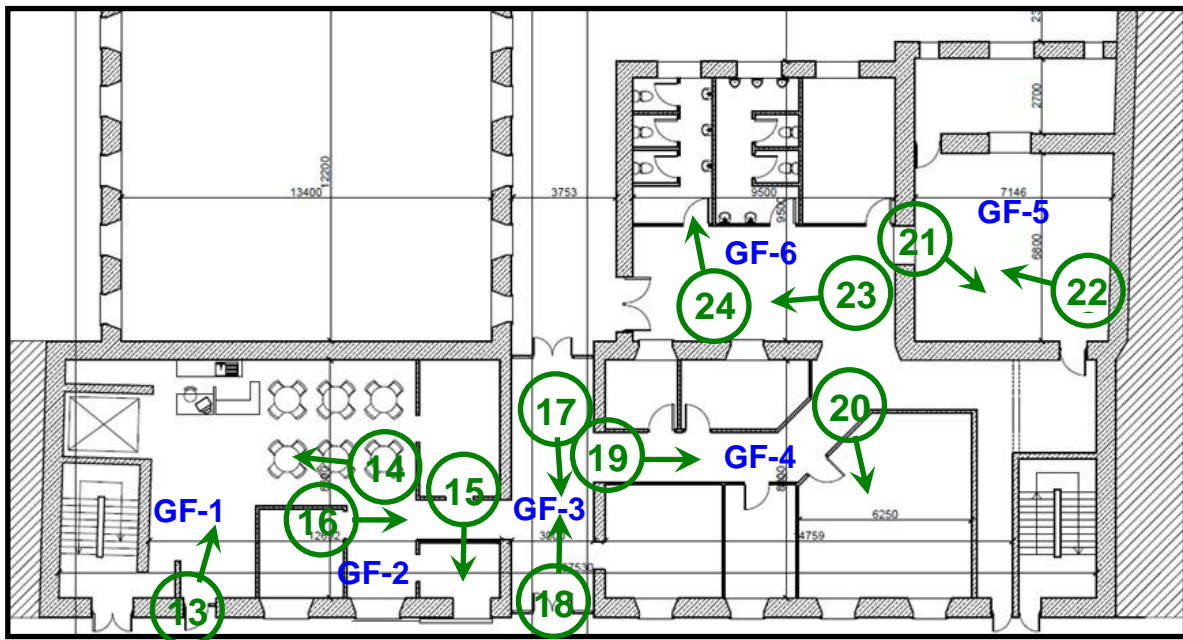


Figure 5: Ground floor plan of front building with room numbers and photograph locations

### Ground floor

#### GF-1: Ground Floor Room 1

Accessed from west door, this room is located off the stairwell, south-facing room with door opening on west wall, containing lift to upper storeys, leading through to ground floor room 2.

Floors: Concrete surface.

Joinery: No skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Smooth plaster walls.

Openings: Square-headed door openings, door to east missing. Square-headed door opening to south containing timber-sheeted double doors, leads to street. No window opening.

Ceiling: Smooth concrete ceiling.



*Plate 13: GF-1:  
Ground floor room 1*



*Plate 14: GF-1: Ground  
floor room 1, lift*



*Plate 15: GF-1:  
Ground floor room 1,  
view to front*

**GF-2: Ground Floor Room 2**

Originally part of same space as room 1 but divided with partitions of relatively recent date. Accessed internally via square-headed door opening from ground floor room. Square-headed door opening containing timber-sheeted sliding door leads to street.

Floors: Concrete floor surface.

Joinery: No skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Smooth plaster walls.

Openings: Square-headed door openings. Square-headed door opening containing timber-sheeted door leads to street. Square-headed window openings containing timber casement windows, in splayed openings with bars externally.

Ceiling: Smooth concrete ceiling between steel beams.



*Plate 16: GF-2: Ground floor room 2*

**GF-3: Ground Floor Passageway**

Floors: Concrete floor surface.

Joinery: No skirtings or timber fittings.

Walls: Whitewashed rubble stone, brick in places.

Openings: Elliptical-headed opening to front containing damaged timber gate. segmental-headed door openings on either side, lined with brick. Elliptical-headed archway at rear is infilled with glazed screen. No other window openings.

Ceiling: Concrete ceiling.



*Plate 17: GF-3: Ground floor passageway, looking to front*



*Plate 18: GF-3: Ground floor passageway, looking to rear*

**GF-4: Ground Floor Room 4**

Area divided by partitioning with canted passageway leading through. Functioned as offices, toilets and kitchen area. Access gained by square-headed door opening from street. Modern partitioning of timber, plasterboard and glass.

Floors: Concrete floor.

Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Smooth plaster walls.

Openings: Square-headed door openings. Square-headed window openings containing timber casement windows now blocked up.

Ceiling: Smooth plaster ceiling.



*Plate 19: GF-4: Passageway through ground floor room GF-4*



*Plate 20: GF-4: Ground-floor office*

#### **GF-5: Ground Floor Room 5 – rear return**

Projecting to the rear of the main building on the eastern side and functioning as store.

Floors: Concrete floor surface.

Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Bare rubble stone with brick dressings to door openings.

Openings: Access gained by square-headed door opening from street, now blocked up. Square-headed window opening containing timber casement windows, in splayed openings.



*Plate 21: GF-5: Return to rear on eastern side*



*Plate 22: GF-5: Return to rear on eastern side*

**GF-6: Ground Floor Room 6 – rear extension**

Extension to the rear of the main building adjacent to the eastern rear return. Providing circulation and toilet facilities.

Floors: Concrete floor surface.

Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Bare rubble stone with brick dressings to door openings on eastern wall to return, plasterboard facings on stud walls elsewhere.

Openings: Timber-sheeted doors lead to yard at rear. Toilets have windows to rear.



*Plate 23: GF-6: Extension to north of main building with doors to yard*



*Plate 24: GF-6: WCs in extension to north of main building*

First Floor

← Accessed via vinyl-surfaced staircase with steel handrails.

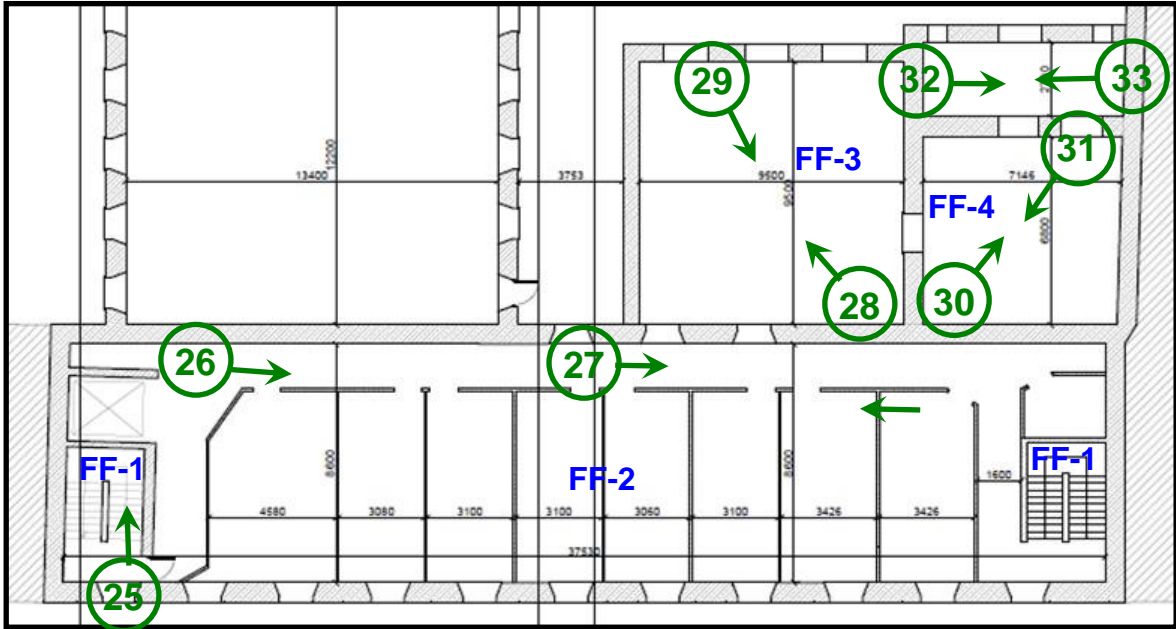


Figure 6: First-floor plan of front building, with room numbers and photograph locations



Plate 25: FF-1: Staircase

**FF-1: First floor, staircase**

The staircases at either end of the building are of concrete with steel or aluminium nosings. The walls of the stair core are plastered and painted and there are tubular steel handrails. The staircase is not described on each floor in this report and the photograph above is taken as typical of the stairs on all floors and at both ends of the building.

Floors: Concrete.

Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Smooth plaster walls.

Openings: Square-headed door openings on each floor. Square-headed window openings on each floor containing steel casement windows, in splayed opening with splayed sills.

Ceiling: Smooth plaster ceiling.

**FF-2: First Floor Room 2**

This space takes up the entirety of the first-floor level of the main building except for the staircases and the lift.

The space has been subdivided with timber studding in preparation for the provision of individual spaces, though the work was not completed.

Floors: Concrete.

Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Smooth plaster walls.

Openings: Square-headed door openings. Square-headed window openings containing steel casement windows, in splayed openings with splayed sills. Metal accordion lift doors to west.

Ceiling: Smooth plaster ceiling between concrete encased steel beams.



*Plate 26: FF-2: First-floor main room, viewed from west*



*Plate 27: FF-2: Eastern end of first-floor main room*

**FF-3: First Floor Room 3**

Located in modern extension at rear.

Floors: Concrete.

Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Smooth plaster walls on two sides, bare rubble walls on other two sides, with brick linings to openings. Evidence of water ingress.

Openings: Segmental-headed openings leading from main building. Square-headed window openings containing uPVC casement windows with plastered sills.

Ceiling: Smooth concrete ceiling between steel beams.



*Plate 28: FF-3: First-floor rear room in extension*



*Plate 29: FF-3: First-floor rear room, with rear of main building*

#### **FF-4: First Floor Room 4**

Located in eastern return. Square room with additional room beyond providing toilet facilities

Floors: Concrete floor.

Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Smooth plaster walls. Within smaller room there are two WC cubicles with timber architraves.

Openings: Square-headed openings. Square-headed window opening containing uPVC casement windows, plastered sill.

Ceiling: Smooth concrete ceiling between steel beams.



*Plate 30: Room FF-4: Eastern return at first floor*



*Plate 31: FF-4: Main room in rear return, looking towards main building*



Plate 32: FF-4: WCs at rear of return



Plate 33: FF-4: WCs at rear of return

## Second Floor

The second floor has two rows of windows, a result of the floors being reset at different levels in the past to gain greater headroom at the expense of the number of storeys.

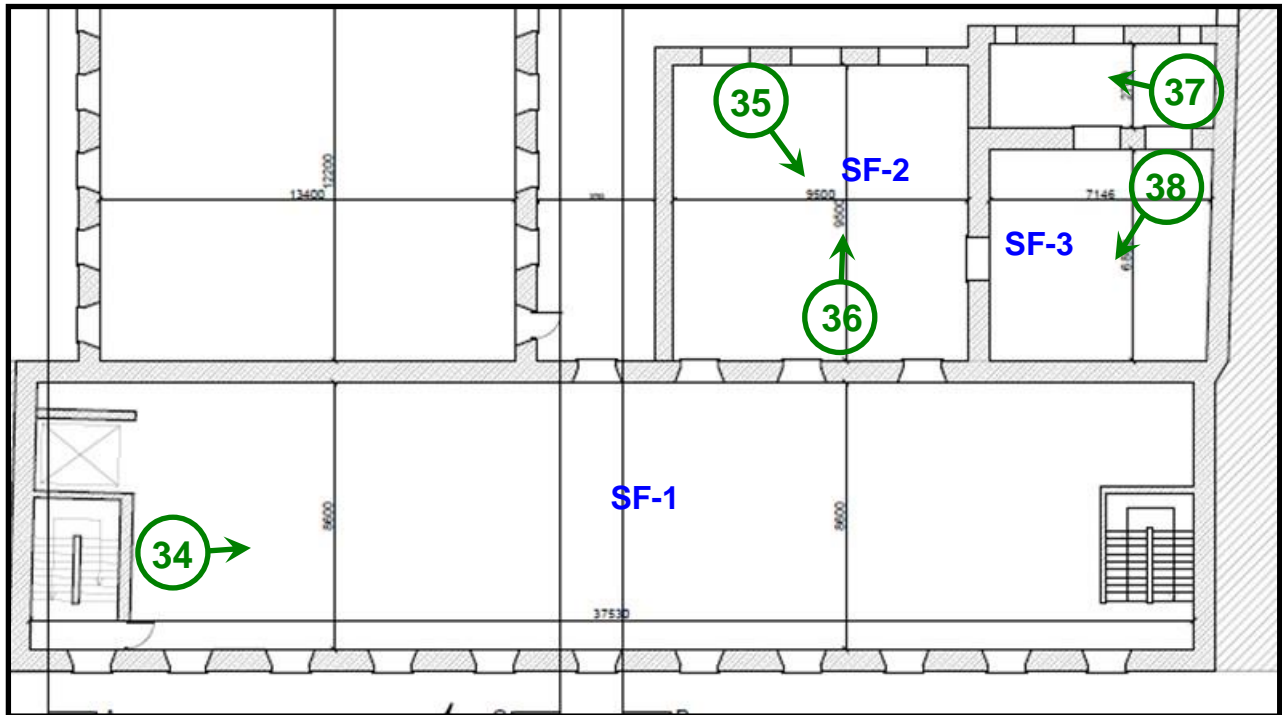


Figure 7: Second-floor plan of front building with room numbers and photograph locations

### SF-1: Second Floor Main Room

The main building at first-floor level is a single space, except for the stairs at either end and the lift at the western end. The double row of windows is a result of the removal of the original floors in 1968 and the insertion of new floors at different levels to the original floors, in order to achieve better ceiling heights.

- Floors: Concrete floor.
- Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.
- Walls: Smooth plaster walls.
- Openings: Square-headed door openings. Two rows of square-headed window openings containing steel casement windows, in splayed openings with splayed sills. Metal accordion lift doors to west.
- Ceiling: Smooth plaster ceiling between concrete encased steel beams.



*Plate 34: SF-1: Second-floor main room, viewed from west*



*Plate 35: SF-2: Second-floor rear room*



*Plate 36: SF-2: Rear room, viewed from south*

**SF-2: Second Floor Room 2 – rear extension**

Located in extension to rear.

Floors: Vinyl floor surface.

Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Smooth plaster on two walls, rubble on the other two, with brick linings to openings. Evidence of water ingress.

Openings: Square-headed openings. Square-headed window openings containing fixed metal windows with casement overlight, concrete sills.

Ceiling: Profiled steel resting on timbers laid onto steel girders.

**SF-3: Second Floor Room 3 – rear return**

Located in eastern return. Square room with smaller room beyond that formerly provided toilet facilities.

Floors: Concrete.

Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Smooth plaster walls.

Openings: Square-headed openings.

Ceiling: Smooth concrete ceilings between steel beams.



*Plate 37: SF-3: Former toilets at rear of return*



*Plate 38: SF-3: Principal room in return*

### Third Floor

The third floor is the uppermost floor of the main building on the quay frontage.

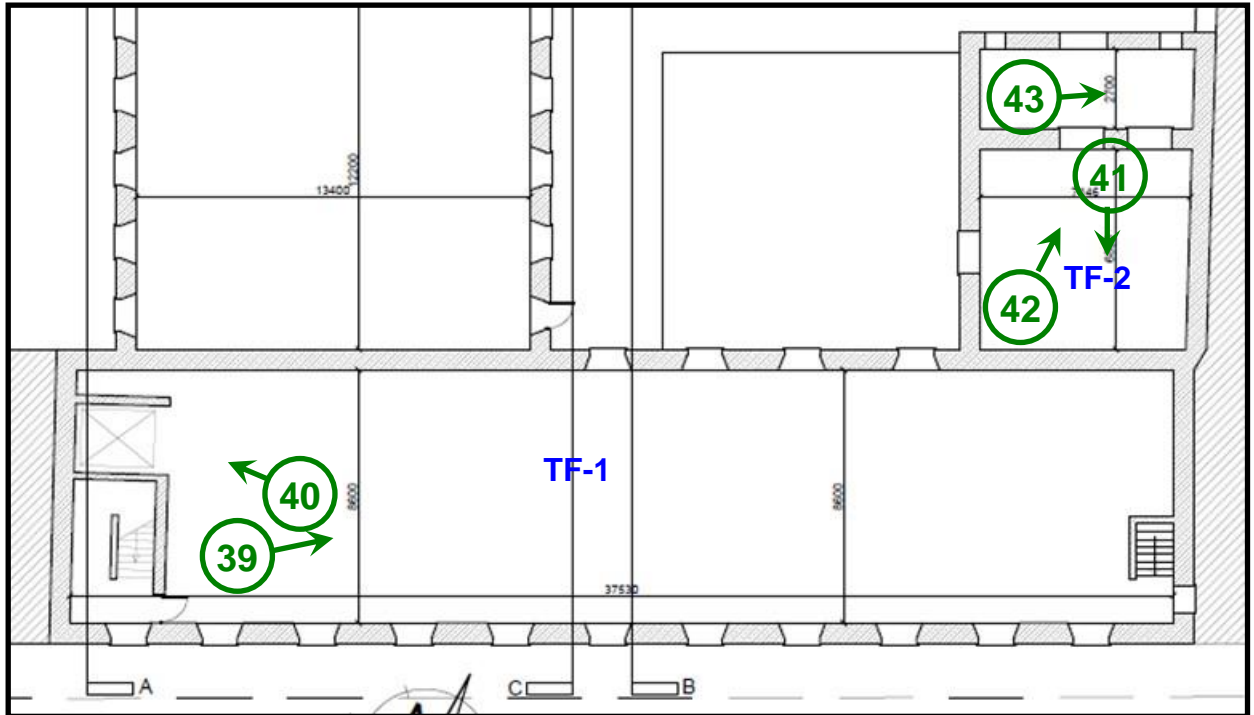


Figure 8: Third-floor plan of front of building, with room numbers and photograph locations

#### TF-1: Main Room on third floor

Floors: Concrete.

Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Smooth plaster walls.

Openings: Square-headed door openings. Square-headed window openings containing steel casement windows, in splayed openings with splayed sills. Metal accordion lift doors to west.

Ceiling: No ceiling. Room is open to the roof structure, consisting of timber king-post trusses supporting purlins that carry the rafters. Slate roof above with remnants of pugging. Trusses are supported in the centre on timber posts and there are repairs to the trusses in places using steel plates.



*Plate 39: TF-1: Third-floor main room*



*Plate 40: TF-1: Lift in third-floor main room*

**TF-2: Third Floor rear office and toilet**

In rear return. Used as storage, leading to toilet and sink area.

Floors: Concrete.

Joinery: No evidence for skirting or timber fittings.

Walls: Smooth plaster walls.

Openings: Square-headed door openings. Lit by rooflights.

Ceiling: No ceiling, room is open to the roof structure, which has paired rafters supported by collars.



*Plate 41: TF-2: Third-floor return*



*Plate 42: TF-2: Third-floor return*



*Plate 43: TF-2: Toilets at rear of third-floor return*

## Assessment

The former corn mill and store at Merchant's Quay is an imposing, 11-bay structure presenting five storeys to the quays. The appearance is typical of 19<sup>th</sup> century mills, with a symmetrical façade of stone, with brick dressings to the windows, and with uniform rows of windows throughout the floors. This building was erected by the same company as that to the west, and is of similar design, though it is slightly larger.



*Plate 44: Frontage of building*

This southern face of the building, fronting on to the river, is the most important surviving element. The rear elevation has been altered over the years, chiefly through the construction of large returns of concrete blockwork and was never the principal façade.

Internally, the building has been altered almost beyond recognition. The main front section has had the floors removed and new floors inserted so as to change it from a five-storey building to a four-storey building. The internal faces of the outside walls have been relined and in all the interior has a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century appearance. At ground floor level the building has been subdivided into smaller units and these convey little of the original character, with the exception of the central archway that gives access to the rear, where the doors to the front survive, though badly damaged. The staircases have been completely modernised in concrete with 20<sup>th</sup> century handrails and tread coverings.

The central return at the rear is entirely modern inside, and is constructed of concrete, having no original character either internally or externally.

The eastern return is partly original, the section nearer to the main building being constructed of limestone, but with a concrete extension to the rear. Externally, this structure is almost invisible behind later accretions, though the uppermost section can be seen projecting above the adjoining extension. Internally this space has been modernised, with plastered walls, and bears no resemblance to a 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial structure.



*Plate 45: Top of original eastern return, seen from main building*

## Proposed development

### Summary

It is proposed to convert the main building on the street frontage, with its middle and eastern returns and also the 1970s building to the rear to provide for emergency accommodation for refugees. This would include subdivision of the three upper floors to provide bedrooms and bathroom facilities, while the ground floor is to be used as recreation areas, library and ancillary functions, with kitchen and dining room in the later building at the rear. The use of the individual parts of the complex is set out below, with the names given to each part shown in figure 12:

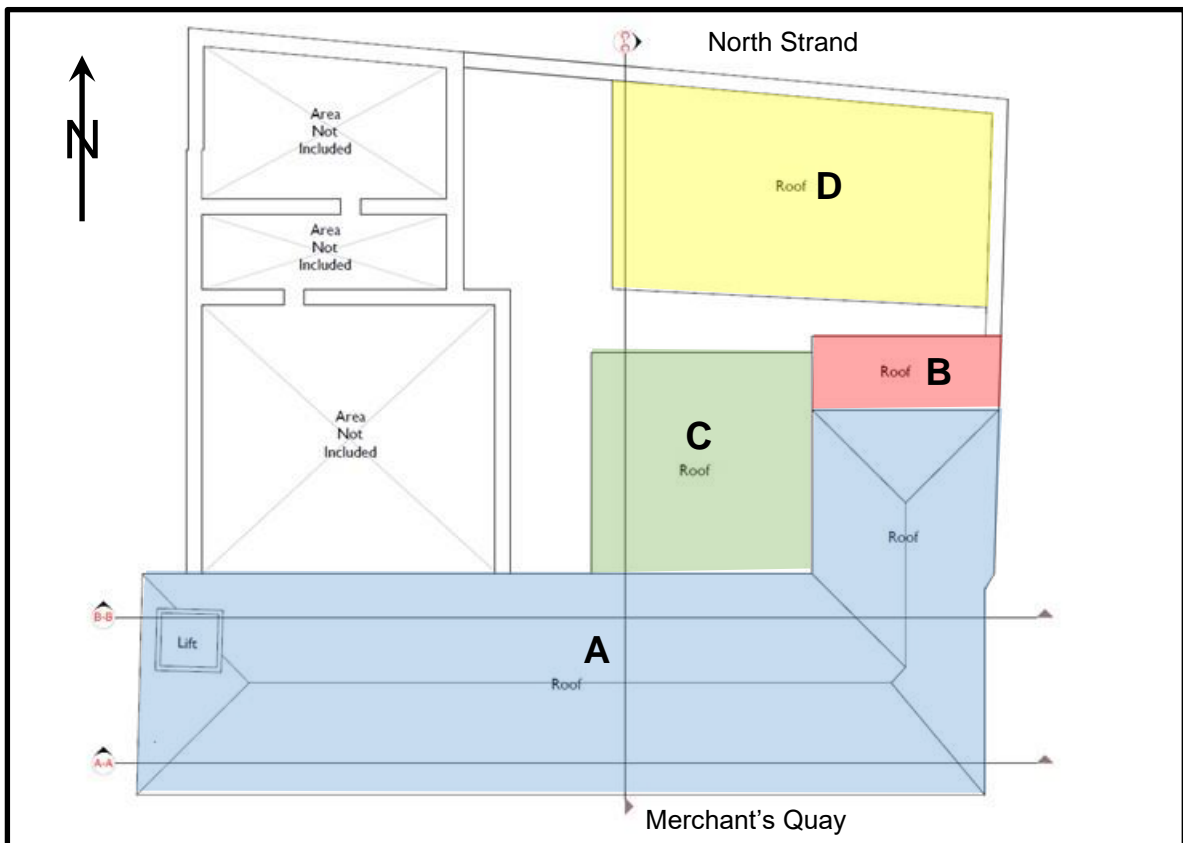


Figure 9: Naming of blocks

### Block A

Block A is the main building fronting on to Merchant's Quay, with its return at the eastern end. This is to be refurbished to provide bedrooms on the first, second and third floors, with wash rooms in the return at each level together with recreation rooms and a reception desk at ground-floor level, with a library in the return.

## Block B

Block B is a small twentieth-century addition at the rear of the original return. The ground-floor level is to be fitted out as a plant room, while the upper three floors will provide WC facilities for the bedroom areas.

## Block C

Block C is the addition at the rear of the main building, alongside the rear return. This is to provide four bedspaces plus a caretaker's bedroom, a laundry and circulation space at ground-floor level, while the upper three floors are to be fitted out with bedrooms.

## Block D

Block D is the 1970s building at the rear of the site, alongside the North Strand frontage. This is a single storey building and is to be converted to provide a kitchen and a dining room to serve the entire complex.

## Other works

The works will also include the provision of a new lift in the existing lift shaft and fitting up of ventilation systems through the bedroom areas.

## Block A – building fronting Merchant's Quay

### Ground floor

It is proposed to reconfigure the ground floor to provide a reception area and recreation facilities. The route through the building to access the rear of the site would be retained as such. The principal alterations to this part of the building are the removal of partitions inserted in the last ten years, the provision of a reception desk and the addition of a glazed screen with doors inside the main entrance, while leaving the original doors in place.

*Conservation implications:* The works proposed in this area are relatively minor as the present partitioning is a recent addition and its removal will reopen the space to its original configuration. The glazed doorway is a light-touch insertion that will not adversely affect the character of the building, while the original doors, which have been badly damaged, will be repaired.

### First floor

At first floor level in the main building fronting on to Merchant's Quay the main room would be subdivided to provide bedrooms. Studwork was inserted into the first-floor area some years ago and this is being utilised to provide divisions between bedrooms, while similar work is to be carried out on the top two floors. Some openings have been created through the rear wall at the upper levels to provide access to the later addition and these are to be utilised to access bedrooms in that area. Within the return the space is to be used to provide washing facilities for those occupying the bedrooms..

*Conservation implications:* The subdivision into bedrooms would not have a significant effect on the historic fabric, given that the floors are of late date and the partitioning would be easy to remove in the future if desired.

### **Second floor**

The second floor would be a repeat of the first floor, with partitions inserted to form eight bedrooms and with washing facilities in the return.

*Conservation implications:* The works on this level would be relatively minor and would be reversible.

### **Third floor**

The second floor would be a repeat of the first and second floors, with partitions inserted to form eight bedrooms and with washing facilities in the return. At this level the space extended into the roof space and this is not acceptable from a fire and heat conservation perspective and hence the works include the provision of a ceiling throughout this floor. The ventilation systems are concealed above the ceiling.

*Conservation implications:* The works on this level would be relatively minor and would be reversible. The ceiling is supported on metal studwork without any direct impact on the roof structure.

### **Block B – Small rear addition**

The small 1970s addition at the rear of the return was built to provide for WC accommodation and this is the purpose for which it will be used.

*Conservation implications:* There are no conservation implications arising from the works in this addition.

### **Block C – Addition at rear of main building**

#### **Ground floor**

The addition at the rear of the main building has been partitioned in the recent past. It is proposed to remove that partitioning and to fit out new partitions to provide for a caretaker's room, an en-suite bedroom a laundry and a WC.

*Conservation implications:* The present partitioning is of late date and not of conservation significance. The proposed partitioning, as with partitions elsewhere in the building, will be light touch and easily removed to return the space to its earlier configuration.

## **Upper floors**

The three upper floors of this later addition are to be fitted out with partitions to provide for bedroom space. .

*Conservation implications:* The proposed partitioning, as with partitions elsewhere in the building, will be light touch and easily removed to return the space to its earlier configuration.

## **Block D**

The eastern end of Block D is to be fitted out to provide for kitchen facilities to serve the residential element of the building. The greater part of this space, at the western end, is to be left as an open area to provide for dining space.

*Conservation implications:* This is a twentieth century building of no architectural heritage significance. The works will not have any appreciable impact on the character of the building complex.

## **Summary of works**

### **Floors**

The main building fronting the quays was altered and redivided in the 1960s, as noted above, and has concrete floors in place. These are not at the same level as the original floors in this building. It is proposed to reuse these floors, and no alteration to floors in this part of the building would take place.

### **Roofs**

No works are proposed to the roofs.

### **Internal walls**

The internal partition walls are to sit on the existing concrete floors and will have minimal effect on the original fabric of the building.

The openings in the wall between the rear return and the adjacent extension are to be closed up on all three upper levels. This work can be easily removed in the future to reverse the works and there would be no significant impact on the character of the building.

### **Windows**

The windows have been replaced with double glazed side-hung casements in similar style to those they have replaced. The windows were not original and appear to have been replaced in the late 1960s, as shown above in the historical background.

## **Assessment of proposal**

The elements of the building complex that is the subject of these proposals may be divided into two categories:

- The original building, with existing modern floors inserted at revised levels
- Comparatively modern addition and extensions

### **Original building and return**

The proposal would retain the present floors in the original building, and the original window openings. The present windows are not original and have been replaced with double-glazed windows, with the security bars removed at ground-floor level. This would retain the building with its original stone façade and openings facing onto the quay

### **Extensions to original building**

The proposal would retain the two extensions to the original building, which are the small WC addition to the rear of the return and the larger addition adjacent to the return and at the rear of the main building. The present windows are not original and have been replaced with double-glazed windows.

### **Shed at rear**

The modern shed at the rear of the building it being retained and fitted out as a kitchen and dining room.

## **Conclusion**

The future of any building is dependent on it having a purpose, which normally means having a suitable use. Nineteenth-century industrial structures are not always suited to continued use as industrial buildings and in these cases their conversion to an alternative use is advisable. The proposed use for residential purposes would ensure the survival of this building complex, and the existing facades and openings of the early buildings would be retained.

## **Conservation principles**

The fundamental principle underpinning the present proposal is that set down in Article 5 of the Venice Charter, which states that “the conservation of monuments is always facilitated by making use of them for some socially useful purpose”. In this particular instance the building complex was built for industrial and warehouse purposes. It has been altered to a significant degree over time through the revision of the floor levels within the main building and the addition of extensions at the rear. It has also been allowed to deteriorate in part though lying vacant over most the past twenty-five years.

It would no longer be possible to use this building complex for industrial or warehouse purposes without major interventions, if at all, due to the major changes in the nature of industry and storage. It is proposed to reuse the complex for residential accommodation without any radical changes, and this should cause no significant issues in conservation terms.

As regards the subdivision of the building, Article 5 of the Venice Charter, as quoted above, continues that “such use is therefore desirable but it must not change the lay-out or decoration of the building. It is within these limits only that modifications demanded by a change of function should be envisaged and may be permitted.” The original layout of these buildings was open plan and would not be compatible with residential use, nor with other potential uses of the building. The proposed subdivision of this space would take place in the context of a building that was not only open plan but has effectively been gutted. There is little remaining that can be equated with the original layout. The subdivision of the space would not preclude the removal of the divisions at a later time to reinstate the open plan of these buildings in its original form.

The principal feature in the character of the building is its frontage to the quays, which is prominent not only on the quay frontage, but from across the river. This elevation would remain intact with minimal changes, so as to meet the criteria of Article 13 of the Venice Charter.

## Planning context

As noted in the Conservation Context section above, the former warehouse and mill building that is the subject of this report is a protected structure and lies within the Merchants' Quay Architectural Conservation Area.

The works now proposed to the building, as described above, are intended to provide emergency accommodation for refugees from the conflict in Ukraine. These fall within the criteria set down in The European (Planning and Development) (Displaced Persons from Ukraine Temporary Protection) Regulations 2022 (SI No. 306 of 2022). Section 3(1) of those regulations state that

The Act of 2000 (other than sections 181A to 181C) shall not apply to the classes of development specified in the Schedule carried out by, or on behalf of, a State authority during the relevant period for the purposes of providing temporary protection to displaced persons.

The classes of development listed in the schedule to those regulations include "Residential accommodation, including ancillary recreation and sporting facilities" and this category applies to the present proposal.

The planning acts include provisions for a property owner or occupier to seek declarations from the planning authority, including provisions set down in sections 5 and 57 of the 2000 Act.

Section 5 provides for a declaration to be sought from the planning authority determining whether or not proposed works constitute development and, if so, whether or not that development is exempted from the need to apply for planning permission. A declaration under section 5 is not necessary in this instance, as the regulations in SI 306 of 2022 clearly show that planning permission is not required for the present proposal.

Section 57 of the act provides for a declaration as to what type of works to a protected structure would require planning permission. This provision is set down in section 57(2), which reads:

- (2) An owner or occupier of a protected structure may make a written request to the planning authority, within whose functional area that structure is situated, to issue a declaration as to the type of works which it considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure or of any element, referred to in subsection (1)(b), of that structure.

Subsection (1)(b) reads:

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

As with section 5, the fact that SI 306 of 2022 removes the proposed development from the provisions of the planning acts and that it includes no provision for the planning authority to make a determination in relation to such works, the facility to seek a declaration under section 57 would have no purpose.