



Planning Ref: 2561085  
14 January 2026

Planning Section  
Kerry County Council

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: 2561085 – Permission to (1) demolish old building containing shop, supermarket, stores & private accommodation along with keeping the front elevation, (2). Construct new building containing health and medical centre and office units with all associated site works AT Main Street, Cahersiveen, Co. Kerry.**

Comment

The Heritage Council was established in 1995 as a statutory body under the Heritage Act 1995 with a Council (the Board of the body) appointed by the Minister. The Heritage Council is a prescribed body under the provisions of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 and S.I. No. 600/2001 of the Planning and Development Regulations, section 28 inter alia, in accordance with its functions under Section 6 of the Heritage Act, 1995. We seek to provide submissions on forward planning, development management, and strategic infrastructure developments as they relate to Ireland's heritage, namely built, cultural and natural heritage.

The Heritage Council supports the reuse, regeneration and active occupation of buildings within historic town centres, particularly where vacancy and dereliction threaten the vitality and character of historic streetscapes. We are increasingly concerned regarding vacancy and underuse in Irish towns and recognise that appropriate redevelopment can play a key role in sustaining town centre vitality. This is in line with national policies on compact growth in the National Planning Framework Ireland 2040.

Cahersiveen is a historic town where the character of Main Street is defined by a coherent streetscape and a consistent building line, being of a traditional scale. Development proposals in this context should be carefully assessed against their impact on the wider townscape.

While the subject building is not listed on the record of protected structures, it is located within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) as designated under the Kerry County Development Plan 2022 – 2028. ACAs are designated for their collective architectural and townscape value, and not solely for individual buildings, as in this case.

As per Policy KCDP 8-44 of the Kerry County Development Plan 2022-28, the local authority seeks to ensure that “developments in an ACA have a positive impact on the intrinsic character of the area, respect the existing streetscape and layout, and are compatible in terms of design, materials, traffic, views, and intensity of site use”.

**Baill na Comhairle | Council Members**

Martina Moloney (Cathaoirleach | Chairperson), John Burgess, Damian Downes, Deirdre McDermott, Muiris Ó Céidigh, Dr. Patricia O Hare, John G. Pierce, Sheila Pratschke, Prof. Mark Scott, Dr. Mary Tubridy

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The proposal seeks partial demolition while retaining the front elevation, with a view to constructing a new health and medical centre with office units behind. An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment has been provided with the proposal.

The Heritage Council acknowledges that under policy KCDP 8-45 that demolition within an ACA should generally be avoided. However, in this case, after carefully considering the AHIA report, we are satisfied that the proposed demolition is confined to the non-historic fabric of the building beyond the front façade. The key issue for this proposal is to ensure that the front elevation of the building continues to contribute positively to the ACA in which it is located, as it is the contribution to the streetscape that is the property's primary heritage asset, as opposed to the historic detailing of the property itself.

Irrespective of the positive benefits that the re-use will bring to the wider built heritage of Cahersiveen, the proposed alterations to the front elevation are minimal, and in some cases positive (e.g. Replacement of existing windows with sliding sash windows). The local authority may wish to seek a condition on the specific details of any alterations to the front façade.

In this regard we would recommend a different colour palette on the two original front elevations which would be a subtle intervention that would reflect more the original plot widths in the ACA. This can be secured by condition.

Furthermore, once architectural heritage integrity is secured, such proposals should encounter a hospitable planning environment and in this regard the Heritage Council recommend that Kerry County Council apply any development management standards concerning car parking and amenity flexibly when determining this planning application.

### Conclusion

The Heritage Council supports town centre regeneration and the reuse of underutilised sites and vacant properties. While we also believe that proposals in an Architectural Conservation Area, must demonstrably preserve or enhance the character of the area.

In general terms, we have no objection to the proposal, which we believe does not result in undue negative impacts on the character of the ACA. While the local authority will benefit from a site visit to verify this, we consider that the AHIA has provided a justification for the scheme, in line with the aforementioned policies of the Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028.

I trust these views will inform Kerry County Council's determination of the application.

Yours sincerely

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**Virginia Teehan**  
Chief Executive Officer

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