

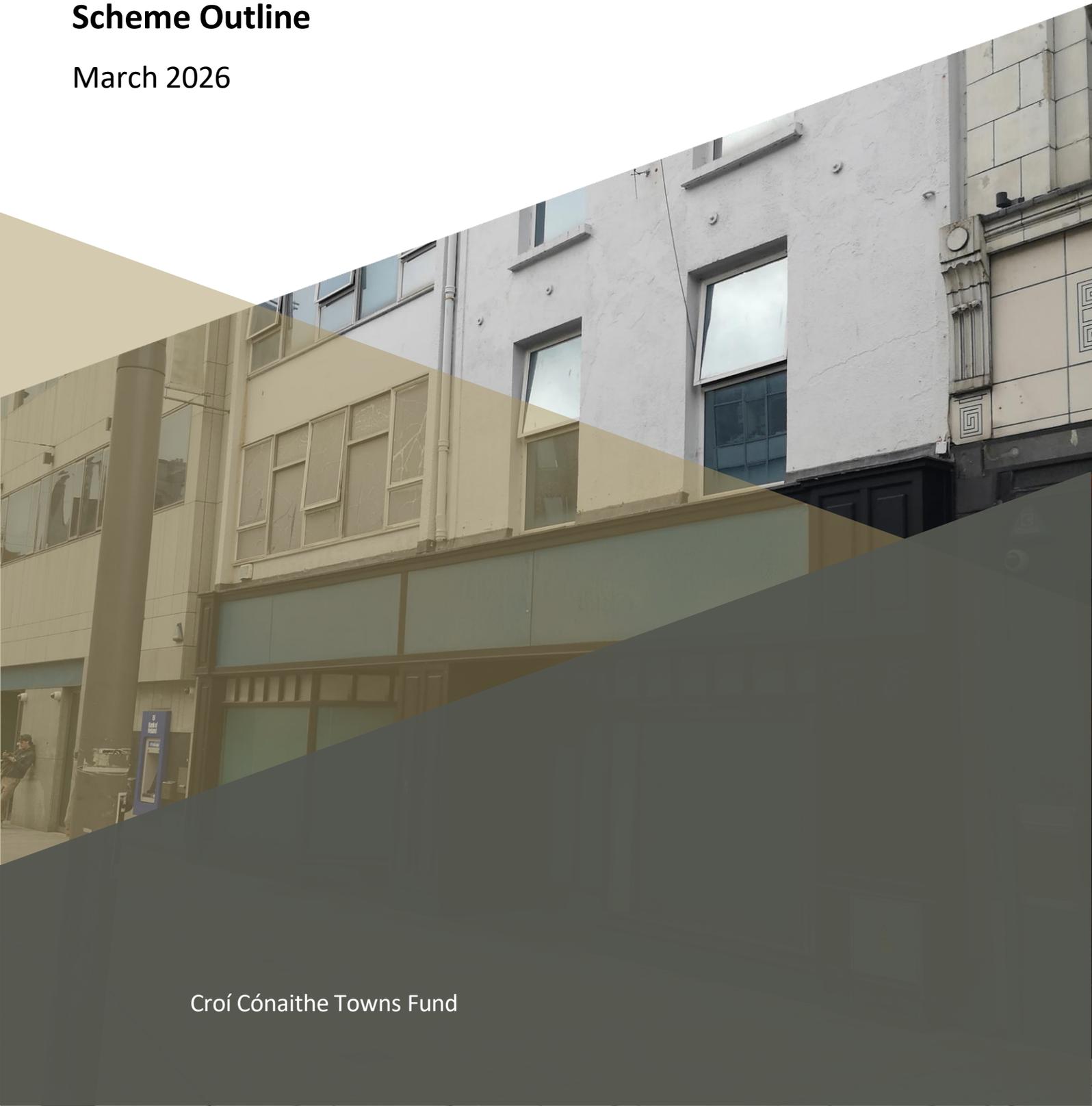


An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant

Scheme Outline

March 2026



Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund

This scheme outline and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document should be read in conjunction with each other.

Introduction

Tackling vacancy and dereliction is a key priority under the national housing plan *Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030*, with existing grants and schemes supporting bringing vacant and derelict properties back into use being improved and expanded.

Objectives of the Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund

Many areas of cities, towns, villages and rural parts of the country face the blight of vacant and derelict properties, which, if brought back into use, could add real vibrancy and provide new homes in those areas. The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, funded by the Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund, is a key initiative, which underpins these policy objectives.

There are two schemes under the Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund which are delivered by local authorities. The **Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant** provides people with a grant to support the refurbishment of vacant properties, while under the **Ready to Build Scheme**, local authorities make serviced sites available in towns and villages at a discounted rate to individuals who want to build their own home.¹

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant was launched on 14 July 2022 and benefits those who wish to turn a formerly vacant house or building into their principal private residence (PPR) or make it available to rent.

The Grant applies to eligible vacant properties in cities, towns, villages and rural parts of the country that have been vacant for two years or more prior to application and were built prior to 2008.

¹ The Ready to Build Scheme was launched on 21 September 2022. Under the Scheme, local authorities will make serviced sites available in towns and villages at a discount on the market value, to individual purchasers for the building of their home which will be their principal private residence. It is intended that the local authority will develop existing site(s) in their control or purchase site(s) and make them available for development by providing services and access to the site(s) concerned. The level of discount to the individual will depend on the level of servicing cost incurred by the local authority before the sale of the site with discounts up to a maximum of €30,000. The amount of such discount will be reflected in the sale price of the site to the purchaser.

The grant is available to individuals or households. Applications can only be made by named individuals who own the property for which the grant is being applied for or who are actively engaged in purchasing the property.

A maximum of two grants are available to applicant(s) for two individual properties - one for a property that will be their principal private residence and one for a property that will be made available for rent, with a tenancy registered with the Residential Tenancies Board.

From 31st March 2026, the Grant is being expanded to support bringing more vacant and derelict properties into use as homes. This includes the **provision of top-up amounts to existing grant levels where vacant former commercial/public use buildings are being converted in their entirety into two or more residential units.**

There is no maximum on the number of grants that an individual can apply for when applying for the Grant for the conversion of an entire commercial/public use building into two or more units, however only one grant, including top-up amounts, is payable per building.

Note – a separate application form is available in the case of such buildings. Applicants applying for the Grant need to ensure they complete the correct application form i.e.

- Application form entitled **“Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant”** to be completed for the refurbishment of a vacant/derelict single dwelling property
- or
- Application form entitled **“Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant - Conversion of former Commercial/Public Use Building”** to be completed for conversion of vacant former commercial / public use building into two or more residential units.

Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Levels

A grant of up to a maximum of **€50,000**² is available for the refurbishment of a vacant property for occupation as a principal private residence or for a property which will be made available for rent. This includes the

² From 14th July 2022 to 30th April 2023, a grant of up to €30,000 was available for the refurbishment of a vacant property while a grant of up to €50,000 was available for the refurbishment of a derelict property.

conversion of buildings which have not been used as residential heretofore³, **where one residential unit is being created**, subject to appropriate planning permission being in place.

Where the refurbishment costs are expected to exceed the standard grant of up to **€50,000**, a maximum top-up grant amount of up to **€20,000** is available where the property is confirmed by the applicant(s) to be derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous) or if the property is already on the local authority's Derelict Sites Register, bringing the total grant available for a derelict property up to a maximum of **€70,000**.

In the case of a top-up grant in respect of a derelict property not on the Derelict Sites Register, an independent report prepared by an appropriately qualified professional is required to be submitted along with the application, confirming, to the satisfaction of the local authority, that the property is derelict.

These amounts are subject to upper limits for the types of work, specified below, having regard to a reasonable cost assessment by the local authority. The grant is inclusive of the VAT cost of the works.

Additional support on these maximum grant levels is available in cases where two or more residential units are being created in a vacant former commercial/public use building. A top-up on existing grant levels of up to €20,000 is available where two residential units are being created and up to €40,000 where three or more residential units are created in the former commercial/public use building. This will bring the maximum grant levels to:-

- €70,000 in the case of a **vacant** former commercial / public use building where two residential units are created and €90,000 where three or more residential units are created and

- €90,000 in the case of a **derelict** former commercial or public use building where two residential units are created and €110,000 where three or more residential units are created.

The Expert Advice Grant of up to €5,000 will also be available to owners of former commercial / public use buildings who are considering converting them into two or more residential units. Engaging the services of a suitably qualified professional will assist in informing owners of the works required, building and statutory requirements to be met and indicative costs for undertaking such projects. There is no obligation on the owner to make a grant application after receiving the Expert Advice Grant. The following link provides further information: www.gov.ie/vacancy .

This extended grant including top-up amounts is only available to new applications made on or after the 31st March 2026.

³ This refers to buildings previously used for commercial or public use.

Note – where the vacant or derelict former commercial / public use building is being converted into one residential unit or one unit for rent – the ‘normal’ maximum grant rates apply i.e. up to €50,000 and €70,000.

Additional support under the Grant is available to support the refurbishment of vacant and derelict properties located on the islands to help bring them back into use.

The maximum rate of the Grant payable is up to 20% higher for eligible vacant and derelict properties on qualifying islands.

A list of the qualifying islands where this additional funding is available can be accessed using the following link: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/31da3-populated-off-shore-islands/>

This brings the maximum grant rates for refurbishing properties on islands up to €60,000 for the refurbishment of vacant properties and up to €84,000 where the property is confirmed to be derelict. The maximum cost limits for the individual works categories are also increased by 20%. In cases of the conversion of an entire former commercial/public use building on a qualifying island, to more than one residential unit, the maximum grant and additional top-up amounts increase by 20%.

The level of grant payable is contingent on the works being approved by the local authority as per the categories of works table, with an approval letter being issued to the applicant. The approved grant will be paid on completion of the works, subject to a review of relevant invoices/receipts and a final inspection by the local authority⁴.

Once a grant application receives approval, applicants must complete the works approved within a period of 18 months

Where newly created/refurbished residential units are being made available for rent, the Grant will be paid when a tenancy/tenancies has /have been registered with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) and proof of same has been provided to the relevant local authority. Residential units created are not to be used for short term letting/Airbnb⁵.

In respect of rental properties, all landlords are required by law to comply with the standards for rental housing and ensure that their properties are fully compliant with fire safety and minimum standards regulations for rental properties. See Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019,

⁴ The local authority may pay a lower amount having reviewed the invoices submitted / inspected the works completed.

⁵ Checks will be undertaken to ensure that grant conditions are adhered to. Where this is found not to be the case, the clawback conditions will be applied.

<https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2019/si/137/made/en/print>. As part of the declaration to be signed in the application form, applicants must agree to meet and comply with these standards.

Further Information

Those applying for the Grant to refurbish a single dwelling property are required to indicate on the application form if they are applying in respect of a property that will become their PPR or a property that will be made available for rent. Those applying for the Grant to convert a vacant former commercial/public use building into more than one residential unit are required to indicate on the application form if they are applying in respect of a residential unit that will become their PPR and or a unit(s) that will be made available for rent. This must be indicated at the outset as different conditions apply depending on the intended use.

Applicants who are converting an entire former commercial/public use building into two or more residential units are required to indicate on the application form if they have previously availed of the Grant for the purposes of a PPR. As applicants can only have one PPR, if another PPR is being applied for the clawback of the original grant paid may become applicable.

Applicants who have indicated that they are applying for a property that will be their PPR are required to indicate on the application form if they have applied for/intend to apply for the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR) or the renovation-only LAPR. The LAPR is not available to applicants who intend to convert a former commercial/public use building into multiple units.

Those applying for the Grant are also required to indicate on the application form if they are applying for the Vacant Grant alone or the Grant including the Derelict Property top-up.

Other Grants

In the case of the conversion of an entire former commercial/public use building into two or more residential units, up to €5,000 will be available for the owner to seek an Expert Advice Grant in advance of applying for the grant. Engaging the services of a suitably qualified professional will assist in informing owners of the works required, building and statutory requirements to be met and indicative costs for undertaking such projects. There is no obligation on the owner to make a grant application after receiving the Expert Advice Grant. Further information on the Expert Advice Grant can be found here: www.gov.ie/vacancy.

Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) grants may be available in combination with the grant. Works funded by SEAI grant schemes will not also be provided for under the grant. The local authority must satisfy themselves that proposed works are not claimed for under any other grant. Further information on grants available are provided at the links below:

<https://www.seai.ie/grants/home-energy-grants>

<https://www.seai.ie/blog/traditional-homes-pilot-everything-you-need-know>

Building owners may also be able to avail of the Living City Initiative (LCI) scheme (which provides tax relief for qualifying expenditure incurred on the refurbishment and conversion of both residential and commercial properties located within the historic centres of Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick and Waterford) in conjunction with the grant.

Applicants availing of the grant and the LCI will have the amount of the grant paid deducted from the overall eligible costs applicable for tax relief under the LCI. Further information is available at <https://www.revenue.ie/en/property/living-city-initiative/index.aspx>.

How the Scheme Works

Who can apply?

The grant is available to named individuals (including sole traders) who own the building for which the grant is being applied for or who are actively engaged in purchasing the building. The grant is not currently available to registered companies, developers, undertakings etc.

Eligible Properties

Properties considered for inclusion must be built before 2008 and evidence of this is required to support grant application.

Where a former commercial/public use building is being converted into two or more residential units one grant is available for the building.

Applicants who own a building that is a protected structure or traditional building should consult an Architectural Conservation officer. A list of officers and relevant local authorities is provided here:

<https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2025/01/Architectural-Conservation-Officers-07.01.2025.pdf>

Agricultural buildings are not eligible for the grant.

Required vacancy period and proof of vacancy

The building must be vacant for two years or more at the time of **grant application**. Proof of vacancy is required to support grant applications, to the satisfaction of the local authority.

Proof of vacancy can be provided by, for example, utility bills, which can help determine vacancy periods (e.g. continuous and consistent low or zero electricity usage or disconnection for a period of two years) or such other proofs as are available, to the satisfaction of the local authority. **Confirmation of vacancy must be validated and verified by the local authority prior to grant approval.**

In the case of a former commercial /public use building evidence of payment of commercial rates or rates relief/credit/adjustment/exemption etc. may be used as proof of vacancy.

Please note that an applicant(s) cannot leave a property unreasonably and purposely vacant for the purpose of qualifying for the grant.

Proof of Dereliction

For a property to be deemed derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous), the applicant(s) must confirm this by submitting an independent report prepared by a suitably qualified professional (meaning a registered building surveyor, registered engineer or registered architect) along with the application form. The property can also be deemed derelict if it is on the local authority's Derelict Sites Register.

Proof of Ownership

Proof of ownership of the property is required to support the grant application.

Where the applicant(s) does not yet own the property, for which the grant is being sought, a local authority may give approval in principle to the grant application where the applicant is able to provide evidence of active negotiations to purchase the property e.g. confirmation of engagement from the estate agent or owner of the property.

Where the applicant(s) is applying for the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR), evidence that the LAPR application has passed the stage 1 assessment will be accepted as evidence of active negotiations to purchase the property. This is required to support the grant application form.

Approval in principle shall not be confirmed as approval in full until ownership has transferred to the applicant(s). No grant drawdown may take place until such ownership has been confirmed to the satisfaction of the local authority.

Evidence of ownership for the grant payment, which the relevant local authority may consider, is outlined in the table below.

Ownership requirements for grant payment	Examples of proof that may be submitted
<p>The owner must be an individual who owns the dwelling (whether jointly or not) and the local authority must satisfy itself as to the ownership prior to approval of the grant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title deed⁶ or similar legal instrument proving ownership of the property; • Evidence of payment of Local Property Tax (LPT); • Evidence of payment of commercial rates or exemption from commercial rates due to building type* • Evidence of rates relief/credit/adjustment due to building being vacant* • Evidence of payment of the Vacant homes tax • Mortgage / loan statement dated within the last 12 months.

*In the case of a commercial /public use building being converted to residential use only

Where the applicant(s) is going to use the property as their principal private residence, a declaration (on the application form) that the individual(s) intends to reside in the dwelling on completion of the qualifying works to the dwelling must be provided to the local authority. Clawback conditions may apply where the applicant(s) ceases to reside in the dwelling as a principal private residence in the ten-year period from the payment of the grant. The local authority may annually during the clawback period seek proof that the residential unit is still being used as a PPR by applicants

Where the applicant(s) is going to make the dwelling /dwellings available for rent, a declaration (on the application form) must be provided to the local authority that upon completion of the qualifying works to the dwelling, the property will be made available to rent and that a tenancy / tenancies will be registered with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) prior to drawdown of the grant. Clawback conditions will apply if the property is not available to rent within the ten-year period from the payment of the grant with a tenancy registered in RTB.

Evidence of annual registration of tenancy with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) must be submitted to the local authority annually for a period of ten years after payment of the grant (if the grant application is

⁶ A title deed can be obtained from Land Direct, Tailte Éireann (www.landdirect.ie)

made in respect of a rental property). Residential units created are not to be used for short term letting/Airbnb⁷. Local authorities will carry out checks to ensure that this condition is being carried out to their satisfaction.

Change of tenure

Applicants are required to inform the local authority of any changes in the tenure of units for which works were approved. In the case of conversion of former commercial / public use building one grant is available per building subject to scheme conditions. Applicant(s) must apply in a single application for all of the residential units being created where a former commercial/public use building is being converted into multiple units.

In cases where there is more than one owner of a property, all owners should be named as the grant applicant on the application form.

Planning Permission

The refurbishment of a vacant property for occupation may involve development that requires planning permission. Where appropriate, the applicant(s) must submit evidence of planning permission for the development/works proposed or a declaration of exemption under the Planning Acts.

The Planning and Development Act (Exempted Development) Regulations 2018 and Amending Planning and Development Act (Exempted Development) Regulations 2022 may allow those who wish to convert certain commercial premises - including vacant areas above ground-floor premises - into residential units without requiring planning permission for such works. A limit of nine residential units can be produced under an exempted development. Further information on exempted developments is available here: <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/publications/planning-letter-202508-exempted-development-regulations-december-2025/>

A local authority may give approval in principle to a grant application where the applicant(s) is required to obtain planning permission for the development/works involved. In these circumstances, the applicant(s) shall provide details of their current planning application to accompany their grant application. Any grant approval in principle shall not be confirmed as approval in full until a final decision has issued in respect of the planning application by the planning authority.

Applicants under the scheme will be required to submit evidence that planning permission has been attained prior to final grant approval. In cases where a question arises in relation to whether a proposed development

⁷ Checks will be undertaken to ensure that grant conditions are adhered to. Where this is found not to be the case, the clawback conditions will be applied

needs planning permission or is an exempted development, applicants under the scheme will be required to submit a declaration of exemption under Section 5, of the Planning and Development Act 2000. This question may arise in particular, in the case of a change of use, properties that have been vacant for a long period of time, and properties that are in a substantial state of disrepair and/or require substantial works.

It should be noted that the provision of a planning exemption does not remove the requirement to comply with the building regulations or any other code. Primary responsibility for compliance with the Building Regulations rests with the owners, designers and builders carrying out works on the building.

Types of Work Covered

The following categories of works are eligible for grant assistance, subject to a reasonable cost assessment by the local authority and to any limits for specific works as set out in the tables below. The works proposed must be approved in advance, following inspection by the local authority of the subject property.

Costs will differ depending on the type/size/condition of the existing building. The cost threshold levels set out in Table 1 below are based on a typical two storey, three bed semi-detached house⁸.

Table 1 - Table of Works - Refurbishment of a single dwelling

No.	Works Category	Maximum Cap on specific elements (incl. VAT) <i>based on a two storey 3b semi-d</i>	✓	Cost of Proposed Works €
1	Demolitions* / Strip-out / Site Clearance (including removal of hazardous materials)	Max €50,000 for Vacant Property Grant only Max €70,000 incl. Derelict Top-Up Grant plus additional top up amount based on number of units being created		
2	Substructure works (including works to foundations; rising walls; beds/slabs; damp-proofing; underpinning)	Max €50,000 for Vacant Property Grant only. Max €70,000 incl. Derelict Top-Up Grant plus additional top up amount based on number of units being created		

⁸ In respect of islands, the maximum cost limits for the individual works categories are increased by 20%.

3	Superstructure works (including works to internal/external walls; chimneys; upper floors; stairs; roof structure; other structural timbers)	Max €50,000 for Vacant Property Grant only. Max €70,000 incl. Derelict Top-Up Grant plus additional top up amount based on number of units being created		
4	External Completions & Finishes (including works associated with external doors, windows and railings; roof lights; fascias/soffits; rainwater goods; finishes to external walls; roof finishes)	Total for category No. 4 €42,700		
4a	external completions (incl. doors, windows, cills, railings)	€21,000		
4b	fascias, soffits, rainwater goods	€4,200		
4c	Roof completions (roof lights and associated flashings)	€1,000		
4d	painting and decorating (meaning preparation and finishes to external walls)	€2,500		
4e	roof completions	€14,000		
5	Internal Completions & Finishes (including internal doors and associated frames, architraves and ironmongery; skirtings; finishes to internal walls; ceiling finishes; tiling/waterproof finishes to wet areas; roof finishes)	Total for category No. 5 €26,300		
5a	internal completions (incl. doors, frames, architraves, ironmongery)	€7,000.00		
5b	skirtings	€3,500.00		
5c	tiling/waterproof finishes to wet areas	€2,800.00		
5d	painting and decorating (meaning preparation and finishes to walls, ceilings, skirting, architraves)	€8,000.00		
5e	Floor finishes	€5,000.00		

6	Services (including plumbing; heating ⁹ ; ventilation; power; lighting; telecommunications; smoke/CO2 detection)	Max €50,000 for Vacant Property Grant only. Max €70,000 incl. Derelict Top-Up Grant plus additional top up amount based on number of units being created		
7	Fittings (including kitchen units; sanitary/bathroom fittings)	Total for category No. 7 €10,500		
7a	kitchen units	€7,700		
7b	Sanitary ware / bathroom fittings	€2,800		
8	External Works (necessary external / site works carried out within the curtilage of the site)	€7,000.00		
9	Extension either within the ambit of exempt development under planning regulations, or as part of a planning application, if required, as part of a wider refurbishment	Max €50,000 for Vacant Property Grant only. Max €70,000 incl. Derelict Top-Up Grant plus additional top up amount based on number of units being created		
10	Professional services associated with works (fees/surveys)	10% + VAT of the nett construction cost or €14k, whichever is the lesser		
	Total estimated cost of works (including VAT)			

*While demolition and extension works can form part of an application for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, such works must be part of a wider refurbishment of the existing dwelling in keeping with the objectives of the scheme. As each building is unique it is not possible to prescribe a percentage or footprint of a building which must remain. Local authorities will assess and decide upon applications in accordance with the scheme objectives. Where planning permission is granted to demolish and rebuild a property, resulting in the property being classes as a “new build”, such properties would be ineligible for the grant.

⁹ Where funding is being sought for the installation of a boiler, details of the boiler type will be required by the local authority. With effect from 1st December 2024 the grant will not fund the installation of a stand-alone boiler powered by fossil fuels for heating.

Table 2 Table of Works – Conversion of a former commercial / public use building into two or more residential units

	Works Category	Maximum Cap on specific elements (incl. VAT)	v	Cost of Proposed Works €
1	Demolitions¹⁰/Strip-out/Site Clearance (including removal of hazardous materials)	Subject to overall scheme caps*		
2	Substructure works (including works to foundations; rising walls; beds/slabs; damp-proofing; underpinning)	Subject to overall scheme caps*		
3	Superstructure works (including works to internal/external walls; chimneys; upper floors; stairs; roof structure; other structural timbers)	Subject to overall scheme caps*		
4	External Completions and Finishes (including works associated with external doors, windows and railings; roof lights; fascias/soffits; rainwater goods; finishes to external walls; roof finishes)	Total for category No. 4 €42,700		
4a	external completions (incl. external doors, windows and railings)	€21,000		
4b	fascias, soffits, rainwater goods,	€4,200		
4c	roof completions (roof lights & associated flashings)	€1,000		
4d	painting and decorating (meaning preparation and finishes to external walls)	€2,500		
4e	roof finishes	€14,000		
5	Internal Completions & Finishes (including internal doors and associated frames, architraves and ironmongery; skirtings; finishes to internal walls; ceiling finishes; tiling/waterproof finishes to wet areas;)	Total for category No. 5 €21,300 per unit		
5a	internal completions (incl. doors, frames, architraves, ironmongery)	€7,000 per unit		
5b	skirtings	€3,500 per unit		
5c	tiling/waterproof finishes to wet areas	€2,800 per unit		
5d	painting & decorating (meaning preparation & finishes to walls, ceilings, skirting & architraves)	€8,000 per unit		
5e	Floor Finishes	€4,000 per unit		

¹⁰ While demolition and extension works can form part of an application for the grant, such works must be part of a wider refurbishment of the existing building in keeping with the objectives of the scheme.

6	Services (including provision of independent plumbing; heating ¹¹ ; ventilation; power; lighting; telecommunications; smoke/CO2 detection for residential units)	Subject to overall scheme caps*		
7	Fittings (including kitchen units; sanitary/bathroom fittings)	Total for category 7 €10,500 per unit		
7a	kitchen units	€7,700 per unit		
7b	sanitary ware/bathroom fittings	€2,800 per unit		
8	External Works (necessary external/site works carried out within the curtilage of the site)	€7,000		
9	Extension within the ambit of exempt development under planning regulations, or as part of a planning application, if required, as part of a wider refurbishment	Subject to overall scheme caps*		
10	Professional services associated with works (fees/surveys – excluding costs associated with the advice grant)	12% + VAT of the nett construction cost or €15,000 whichever is the lesser		
11	Specific works associated with conversion - including new separate entrance/compartmentation/fire separation works, sound insulation, communal stairs/corridors. integrated fire alarm system for units etc.	Subject to overall scheme caps*		
	Total estimated cost of works (including VAT)			

** The top-up amounts on the maximum grant levels allowable under categories 1, 2, 3, 6, and 9 relates to the number of units being delivered i.e. where two units are being delivered the maximum top-up amount allowable under the category is €20,000, where three or more units are being delivered the maximum top-up amount allowable is €40,000.*

Where a former commercial/public use building is being converted into two or more units the grant will cover works relating to the creation of the residential unit(s), which may include communal works to the building.

¹¹ Where funding is being sought for the installation of a boiler, details of the boiler type will be required by the local authority. The grant will not fund a standalone fossil fuelled boiler.

Grant Conditions

Subject to the above, the following additional conditions will apply:

Requirement for Tax Clearance

As per Revenue requirements, and Department of Finance circular on the payment of grants (Section 8), applicants are required to show evidence of their tax clearance and also that of all contractors who carried out construction operations on the property where the value of the works exceed €650.

Regarding contractor's tax clearance the responsibility lies with approved applicants to ensure they obtain a tax clearance certificate from their contractor(s) immediately prior to making any payments to them for construction operations carried out. Failure to produce a contractor's tax clearance to the local authority at grant drawdown stage may result in the grant payment being refused. Further information in relation to this requirement can be obtained here:

<https://www.revenue.ie/en/starting-a-business/tax-clearance/when-is-a-tax-clearance-certificate-required/to-apply-for-certain-grants-and-public-sector-contracts.aspx> Appendix 2 of the

Department of Finance Circular provides a definition of Construction Operations.

<https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/finance/2006/44.pdf>

Local authorities will ensure that the grant approved works have not been grant aided via any other scheme and applicants are required to provide any information as may be requested by a local authority regarding any other grant aiding of works applied for. Applicants will be required to provide details on the grant application form of any other grants/schemes applied for/approved for the building for which the grant is being applied.

Other conditions

Applicants must provide:

- Evidence that Local Property Tax is in order where applicable;
- A quotation in respect of the proposed works;

- Evidence that commercial rates are paid or in order including evidence of rates relief/credit/adjustment due to the building being vacant where applicable; Exemption from commercial rates
- A preliminary design / outline drawing showing proposed number of residential units to be created in the building. **(Conversion of former commercial /public use building only)**;
- Agreement to the clawback conditions (see below);
- Prior to grant payment, evidence, such as appropriately detailed invoice(s), for the works undertaken;

In addition:

- Applicants who will make use the refurbished/converted unit as their principal private residence will need to also submit a signed affidavit confirming that the grant has not been applied for previously for a principal private residence.
- Applicants who will make the refurbished/converted units available to rent must also provide a signed declaration confirming that residential units in the building will be made available for rent with tenancies registered with the RTB.

Applicants are required to inform the local authority of any changes in the tenure of units for which works were approved.

Clawback

A clawback condition is attached to the grant payment for a period of 10 years from date of payment of the grant.

It is required that the applicant(s) live in and/or make available for rent the refurbished/newly created residential unit(s) for which the grant is approved for at least 10 years from the date of payment of the Grant.

If at any time the applicant(s) sells the newly created/refurbished residential units, or it ceases to be their PPR, or the rental unit(s) is no longer available to rent, or they cease to comply with the conditions of the scheme, within ten years from payment of the grant, the applicant(s) must reimburse the local authority all or part of the full value of the grant¹².

The clawback to be repaid for single dwellings is based on the amount of the grant paid and time period over the 10 year period of the clawback since the grant was paid as set out in table 1 below.

For former commercial/public use building where two or more residential units were created the amount to be repaid under the clawback will relate to the top up amount paid over and above the existing grant levels based on the number of residential units created , and the time period since the grant was paid.

Table 2 below sets out the amount re-payable, based on the number of residential units created and time period elapsed since the payment of the grant.

Table 1 - In the case of a property refurbished using the VPRG for use as a single dwelling-

Up to 5 years	Over 5 years and less than or equal to 10 years	Over 10 years
100% of the monetary amount of the grant	75% of the monetary amount of the grant	No Clawback

¹² Applicants may be able to change from a PPR to rental and vice versa without the clawback being triggered under certain conditions. Any proposed change in the tenure type must be notified to the local authority.

Table 2 - In the case of a former commercial/public use building converted into two or more residential units-

No. of residential units created with the grant	Amount to be repaid Up to 5 years	Amount to be repaid Over 5 years and less than or equal to 10 years	Amount to be repaid Over 10 years
2 Units. 1 Unit sold/not available for rent	100% of the grant top-up paid. Amount repayable €20,000	75% of the grant top-up paid. Amount repayable €15,000	No Clawback
2 Units. 2 units sold/not available for rent Grant paid €70,000 for vacant property (€50k plus €20k) Grant paid €90,000 for derelict property (€70k plus €20k top-up)	100% of the grant including top-up Amount repayable either €70,000 or €90,000	75% of the grant including top-up. Amount repayable either €52,500 or €67,500,	No Clawback
3 Units. 2 units sold/not available for rent. Grant paid €90,000 for vacant property (€50k plus €40k)	100% of the grant top-up paid. Amount repayable €40,000	75% of the grant top-up paid. Amount repayable €30,000 (75% of €40,000 = €30,000)	No Clawback

Grant paid €110,000 for derelict property (€70k plus €40k).			
5 Units. 1 units sold / not available for rent. Grant paid €90,000 for vacant property (€50k plus €40k) Grant paid €110,000 for derelict property (€70k plus €40k)	No Clawback	No Clawback	No Clawback

Where a former commercial /public use building is converted to two or more residential units a charge will be placed in respect of the grant amount paid over the entirety of the building for a period of 10 years from the payment of the grant. The charge will be registered by the local authority who issued the grant with Land Direct, Táilte Éireann or Registry of Deeds. Where a residential unit is being sold, the local authority must be informed in order to grant a partial deed of release of the charge over the unit being sold within the building.

The local authority may also look for evidence to satisfy themselves as to use of the property in accordance with scheme conditions at any time during the clawback .Grant recipients must provide same to the local authority upon request.

An agreement (comprising of the signed application form, signed letter of approval and signed charge document) must be concluded between the local authority and the applicant(s) which contains the clawback agreement, including a charge on the property, which shall be binding on the applicant(s) upon drawdown.

Applicants who have a mortgage/loan will need the agreement of their lender for the placing of the charge for the grant on the building, the charge for the grant will always rank second in priority to a mortgage on the building.

A priorities agreement for the charge has been agreed with the main lending banks (AIB and its subsidiaries, EBS and Haven, Bank of Ireland, Finance Ireland, AvantCard and Dilosk). Applicants who have a mortgage with a financial institution outside of the main lending banks will need to ensure their mortgage provider is agreeable to the charge for the grant being placed on the property.

It is recommended that applicants obtain independent advice from a competent professional in relation to the implications of the charge.

Letter of approval / Letter of approval in principle

A letter of approval will issue to an applicant(s) whose application is successful and will include the approved grant amount. Approval is granted from the date of issue of the letter and is valid for a period of for a single dwelling and for a period of 18 months where multiple residential units are being created in a former commercial/public use building. The applicant(s) is required to sign and return the letter in order to confirm that they understand the terms and conditions applicable to the grant.

The charge document referred to above, must be signed and returned to the local authority, after completion of the works applied for and prior to the issuing of the grant payment.

The signed application form, signed letter of approval and the signed charge document, form the agreement between the applicant(s) and the local authority.

Operations and Management of the Grant

The operation of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant is delegated to local authorities who administer the scheme.

Steps for assessment and approval of the grant:

The applicant(s) local authority will:

- check the application form to ensure it is fully completed, the declaration in the application form has been signed and that the required supporting documents as per the checklist on the application form have been submitted;
- assess the application in line with the conditions of the scheme as set out in this scheme outline;
- where the application is in order and required supporting documentation is provided, arrange for suitable technical staff to visit the property to make sure it is possible to do the work and assess the projected costs of the planned works in the application form;
- write to the applicant(s) to let them know if the application has been successful and the amount of grant funding approved or that they have received approval in principle.

Prior to the grant being paid:

- in cases where approval in principle was granted, proof of ownership/evidence of planning approval must be provided to the local authority **before** the grant can be paid;
- in respect of residential units that are being made available to rent, evidence that the owner has registered the tenancy/tenancies with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) is required by the local authority;
- the local authority will require applicant(s) to submit evidence such as appropriately detailed invoice(s)/receipts for the completed works;
- the local authority will conduct a final property visit to review that the work has been completed in-line with grant application;
- the local authority will provide an agreement to be signed by applicant(s) which contains the clawback agreement including a charge on the property;
- the local authority will require applicant's bank account details of where the grant is to be paid;

- the local authority will require applicants tax clearance from Revenue and the tax clearance certificate for the contractors who carried out works on the building where the value of the works exceed €650.
- if the applicant(s) has successfully availed of the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR) or the renovation-only LAPR, the terms of that scheme require that the applicant(s) sign a Vacant Property Refurbishment Payment Authority letter. Therefore, the grant payment will be made to the section of the local authority that manages the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation loan.
- once the local authority is satisfied, the grant will be paid.

For rental properties, proof of registration of the tenancy with the RTB must be provided to the local authority before drawdown of the grant. Evidence of annual registration of tenancy with the RTB must be submitted to the local authority which awarded the grant for a ten year period.

Appeals process for grant applications not approved;

If the local authority does not approve a grant application, the applicant(s) can appeal the decision. The applicant(s) must write to their local authority within three weeks of the date of the original decision, and clearly explain on what grounds they are appealing. A template appeals form is available on all local authorities' websites. A local authority official who was not involved with the original assessment will then assess this appeal and contact the applicant(s) with the result. This could take up to six weeks.

Note:

New /Reconnections to Utility Providers

Grant applicants should be aware of the requirements and timeframe to have utility connections to their property to ensure no delays occur.

Information of the requirements and timelines as set out in the ESB Networks Customer Charter is available at the link: [customer-charter.pdf](#)

Information on Uisce Éireann's connection process is available here:

<https://www.water.ie/connections>

Statutory and Legal Requirements

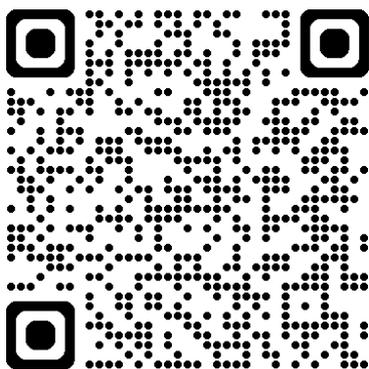
Homeowners should be aware of their responsibilities to comply with all statutory / legal requirements, regulations in relation to carrying out works to their building including but not limited to planning requirements, fire safety requirements, access requirements, building standards, health and safety, requirements for protected structures, traditional buildings in an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), boundary issues, right of way, environmental and habitat directives etc.

Applicants will be required to indicate on the application form that they are aware of their responsibilities to comply with all statutory requirements and regulations.

Further questions in relation to the grant scheme;

For any further questions on the grant please contact the Vacant Homes Officer in your local authority.

Please scan the following QR code for a list of all Vacant Homes Officers and their contact details.





**An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta**
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage