



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development



Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

Town and Village Renewal Scheme



Building Acquisition Measure 2023

Measure Outline

All queries should be emailed to: townandvillage@drcd.gov.ie

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Building Acquisition Measure	3
3	Application, Assessment and Approval Process	4
4	Grant Level and Payment Schedule	5
5	Funding Conditions	6

1 Introduction

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme was introduced in 2016 and is one of a number of measures designed to rejuvenate rural towns and villages throughout Ireland.

The programme is funded under Project Ireland 2040 as part of “*Our Rural Future – Ireland’s Rural Development Policy 2021-2025.*”

Our Rural Future will see increased investment out to 2025 in remote working infrastructure to provide an opportunity for people to continue to live in rural communities while following their career ambitions. It will also see continued investment to support town centre living. It will ensure cross government investment to support rural towns and villages as hubs of economic and social activity.

In February 2022 the Government published “*Town Centre First - A Policy Approach for Irish Towns*”. This represents a whole of Government policy and aims to tackle vacancy, combat dereliction and breathe new life into our town centres. The Policy is underpinned by significant levels of public investment spread across major Government schemes, of which Town and Village Renewal is one such scheme.

Since the launch of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme in 2016, over €149 million has been allocated to more than 1,600 projects across Ireland. The Scheme has supported towns and villages the length and breadth of the country.

In 2022 the Building Acquisition Measure was launched in recognition of the urgent need to transform and regenerate town centres. This new measure was introduced to immediately acquire derelict or vacant buildings, with the intention of using these projects for town regeneration purposes in line with the Town and Village Renewal Scheme.

Due to the level of engagement between Local Authorities and their rural communities to develop a large quantity of well-produced applications, and the quality of projects funded in 2022, funding will again be made available in 2023 under the Building Acquisition Measure.

2 Building Acquisition Measure

In recognition of the urgent need to transform and regenerate town centres, the measure to immediately acquire derelict or vacant buildings, with the intention of using these projects for town regeneration purposes in line with the aims of Town and Village Renewal Scheme (TVRS), is available again this year. The Building Acquisition Measure will form part of the overarching Town and Village Renewal Scheme structure.

Buildings purchased under this Measure must be for use as multi-purpose community spaces. Multi-purpose use could include: enterprise spaces, arts, tourism, youth hubs, theatre space, gallery, sports or pastimes space. It may also include a space for local craft market or food/farmers market.

This Measure is strictly only available for application and drawdown in 2023. No commitments will be carried forward in to 2024. The local authority must also commit that:

- The building will form the basis of an application under the 2023, 2024 or 2025 TVRS **OR**
- The building will be in the process of being developed for town regeneration purposes via the local authorities own resources or another relevant public funding stream by the end of 2025.

Failure to satisfy this requirement will result in the return of all funding to the DRCD.

Local authorities (LA) may purchase up to 3 vacant or derelict buildings **where the drawdown of funds can be completed in 2023**. The total fund available per LA under this measure is €500,000.

Funding can be drawn down by the LA once evidence can be provided that the sale has been legally agreed and that full funds have been transferred from the LA for the purchase. If the sale agreed subsequently does not progress to full closure, all monies must be returned to DRCD.

Only the purchase price of the building is eligible for funding. Other transactional costs involved in the purchase are not eligible. In light of the costs involved in the purchase being borne by the local authority 100% of the purchase cost will be funded up to the maximum limit per local authority of €500,000.

Applications for the Building Acquisition Measure should be made on the Building Acquisition Measure application form.

3 Application, Assessment and Approval Process

Up to three applications with a combined maximum value of €500,000 is permitted under the Building Acquisition Measure for the purchase of vacant and derelict buildings for future development as community assets and must be submitted by **28th April 2023**. Final project selection will be made by the Department on the basis of applications submitted by the Local Authorities. All such transactions must be completed for drawdown of funding in 2023.

Applications will be assessed as part of a competitive process.

On application Local Authorities will be required to submit:

- An individual application form for each building.
- An independent assessors' report / valuation confirming the value of the building.

Please keep input on the forms to the suggested word count. No Supplementary material to be provided without prior consultation with the line unit.

4 Grant Level and Payment Schedule

The indicative budget for the Building Acquisition Measure portion of the 2023 Town and Village Renewal Scheme is €13 million.

For the Building Acquisition Measure 100% of the purchase cost will be funded up to the maximum limit per local authority of €500,000.

The Local Authority confirms that the purchase of the building will be completed and all relevant draw down information will be submitted to the Department by **9th October 2023**.

To draw down funds, local authorities will need to provide:

- (i) A completed BAM drawdown form
- (ii) An independent assessors' report / valuation confirming the value of the building
(This is a report carried out by an Estate Agent or an Auctioneer.)
- (iii) Building Inspection Report / Building Survey
(This is a report carried out by a qualified Architect/Surveyor)
- (iv) Signed contract of sale
(Contract of sale from solicitors)
- (v) Proof of transfer of the monies from the Local Authority to the vendor
(A Financial Management Report showing transfer of monies from the Local Authority)

The above must be submitted to the Department by **Monday 9th October 2023**. Where this cannot be submitted, the funding will be decommitted.

5 Funding Conditions

Non-Compliance with the conditions as outlined or non-compliance with any additional stipulations agreed during contract negotiations may result in the requirement to refund part or all of the grant aid awarded.

All expenditure under the Building Acquisition Measure of the Town and Village Renewal Scheme is subject to the terms of the Public Spending Code <http://publicspendingcode.per.gov.ie/> . The following requirements are also applicable;

Requirements

- 1 All Building purchases must be completed for draw down of funding in 2023.

The Department may de-commit funding allocated to the purchase of a building where it is not completed within the time specified.

The grant funding for the approved purchase will be provided from the Department's capital budget.

- 2 All appropriate financial, Public Procurement and accounting rules and regulations must be complied with and each grantee will fully account for the funding received in a timely manner.
- 3 Full and accurate documentation to support all expenditure should be maintained in the project file and accessible by Department officials for audit purposes at all times, for a period of six years from the date of completion of the project.
- 4 Grantees will acknowledge the support of Project 2040 / Department of Rural and Community Development / Government of Ireland, and any other applicable sources of funding (as identified in the relevant Funding Agreement) in all public announcements, advertising and signage, as appropriate, relating to the project. In addition, the Department may seek to use the project in the broader promotion of its policies.
- 5 Grantees will provide any reports and information relating to the project as may reasonably be requested by the Department from time to time.