

RIAI

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Town Centre Living

DHLGH and RIAI Housing Competitions
Castleblayney | Kildare | Roscrea | Sligo

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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

A Government of Ireland initiative brought to you by the
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council



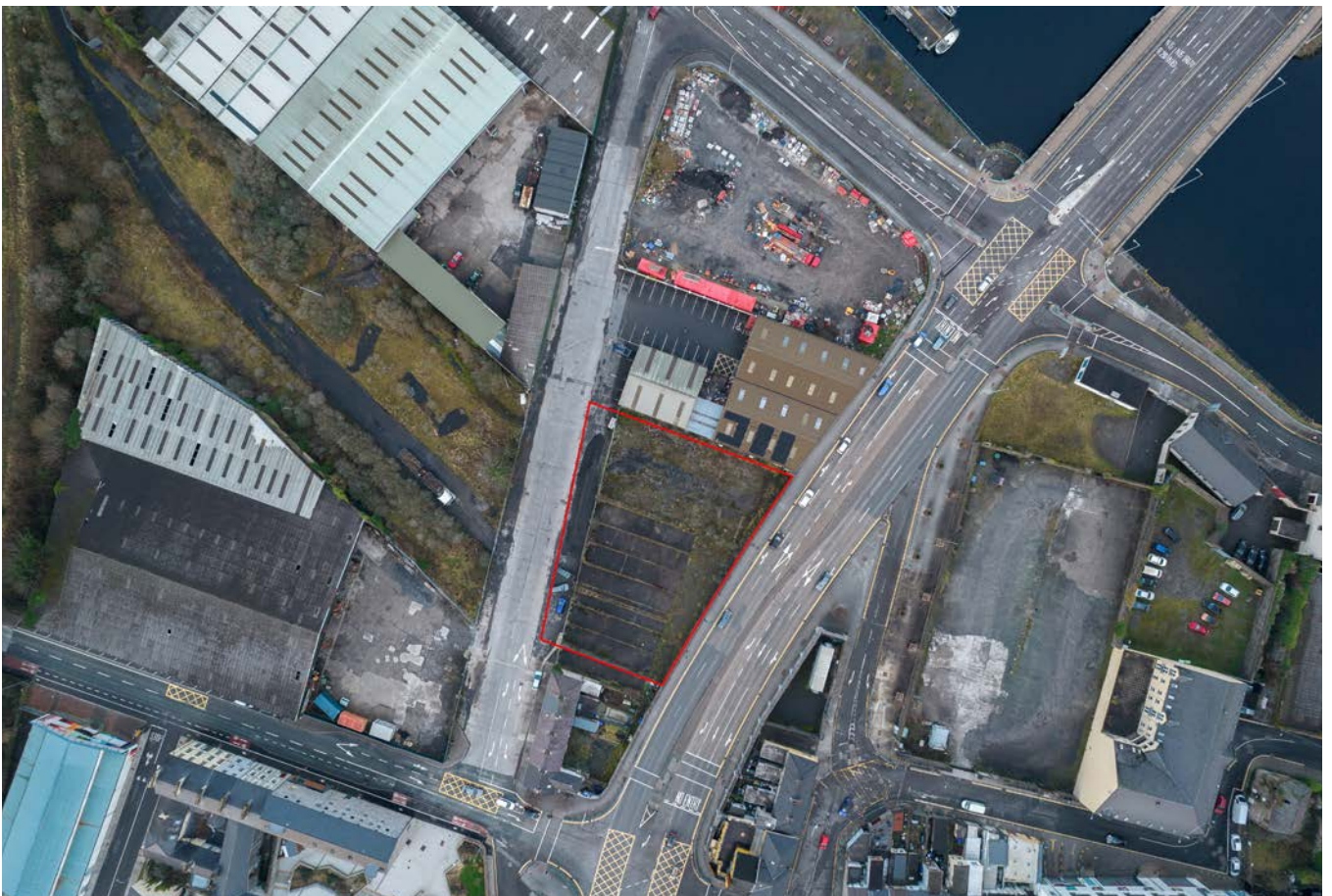
Old Fire Station, The Commons, Castleblayney



Lands at Station Road, Kildare Town



Lands at Gantly Road, Roscrea



Lands at Pirn Mill Road, Sligo Town

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1.0 Background

1.1 Introduction

In the *Housing for All* policy document the Government committed to promote a ‘Town Centre First’ approach to development in towns. This seeks to align policies and improve resources to deliver the best outcomes for our towns and villages. The *Town Centre First* policy was launched in Moate, Co Westmeath on 4 February 2022, with a central aim to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and for leisure. The policy promotes increased residential use in our rural towns and villages, consistent with the objectives of the *National Planning Framework*. Town-centre living close to existing infrastructure and services also aligns closely with the objectives of the Government’s *Climate Action Plan*.

Aligned with these ambitions, these *Town Centre Living* competitions seek to encourage innovative design solutions for social housing within town centres by way of delivering built examples as to how the objectives of the *Housing For All* and *Town Centre First* policies can be met. Following an open invitation to, and close liaison with Local Authorities, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) has selected four town centre sites in **Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan; Kildare, Co. Kildare; Roscrea, Co. Tipperary and Sligo, Co. Sligo.**

On behalf of the DHLGH, and Local Authorities, the RIAI is running four separate competitions for these towns concurrently. It is intended that the winning practices will be awarded the design commission and that the selected sites would be progressed as real social housing projects by the various Local Authorities, (or by an Approved Housing Body on behalf of the Local Authority), to progress through the pre-construction process to construction and delivery, funded by DHLGH.

Further details regarding competition entry are set out in the following sections.

The competition is intended to generate design innovation in town centre housing and in order to promote diversity in the response and award of contracts, each entrant (i.e. Architect/Practice) may submit entries for a maximum of any two of the four competition sites. No more than two contracts will be awarded to an architect and/or practice as an outcome of the competition.

1.2 Brief

The urban form of town centres in Ireland is characterised by a network of streets, routes and open spaces, forming discrete urban blocks that vary greatly in both form and function. This competition seeks to embed a new social housing development within each particular urban structure, acknowledging the existing context whilst ensuring permeability and wider connections. An individual brief has been developed with input from the respective Local Authority for each of the four sites, as set out in the Competition Packs. Entrants should review each brief in conjunction with the Design Parameters as set out below.

1.3 Award Criteria

Entries will be assessed in terms of alignment with the *Town Centre First* policy, as follows:

- Exemplary architectural design – with lessons for appropriate approaches to other sites
- Addressing the individual brief
- Town centre appropriate – streetscape, active frontage, etc.
- Best use of land
- Economic approach and delivery of value for money
- Car parking strategy consistent with location and scale
- Consistency with Design Guidelines (see 2.1.6 below)

2.0 Design Parameters

2.1 Design Aspirations/ Vision Statement

This competition seeks to deliver four exemplary winning designs for eventual construction, which celebrate housing delivery within town centres, including urban infill sites. Each site has a very specific relationship with adjoining nearby streets and open spaces, and entrants should maximize the potential of each individual site to act as a critical link between wider hierarchies of public routes.

The design response for each site should consider the following key objectives and guiding principles:

2.1.1. Housing for All

Proposals should include a mix of unit types as identified in the individual competition briefs. *The National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-27* sets a requirement for 5% of social housing to be designed to meet 'UD Home' standard <https://universaldesign.ie/Web-Content-/Section-5-Universal-Design-Home-Types-Floor-Plan-Examples.pdf>

Competitors should refer to the detailed individual project briefs which also make provision for dwellings for older persons or increased requirements for units to meet 'UD Home' standards.

2.1.2. Quality Design

Be designed to the highest contemporary standards, while incorporating diversity, developing a unique character, and delivering a sense of place.

2.1.3. Urban Context

Show a clear understanding of the site's urban context. Design proposals should

achieve a good sense of place, and enhance the urban context employing the design criteria set out in the guidance manuals referenced below, such as active frontage with buildings fronting the public realm.

2.1.4. Connections and Permeability

Explore opportunities to enhance connection and linkages throughout the area, prioritising pedestrian circulation. On some sites it may be appropriate to consider the opportunities for connections and linkages through the site, visually extending the existing street network or provide opportunity to develop adjacent lands.

2.1.5. External Spaces

External spaces must provide a safe and secure environment at all times. Whilst for this competition it is not expected that developed landscaping proposals will be submitted, however, designs should be mindful of environmental sustainability and layouts should aim not to exclude opportunities to provide Sustainable Urban Drainage where this might be appropriate, and at detail design stage, to use native species in the final landscaping design.

Value for Money

Competitors are reminded that social housing is delivered within a well-regulated financial envelope and accordingly the design should be deliverable in a cost effective manner and in alignment with Department guidelines outlined in 2.1.6 below and within the indicative budget provided for each site. The proposal should include an effective implementation and phasing plan. Unless dictated otherwise by the relevant County Development Plan,

floor areas for houses should not exceed the target floor areas set out in the *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities* (QHfSC) by more than about 5 – 7 % nor exceed the floor areas for apartments set out in the *Design Standards for New Apartments* (DSfNA) by the same amount (see references in 2.1.6 below). Minimum individual room areas and minimum room widths should also be as recommended in these documents, within the applicable tolerances for apartments.

The Design Manual for Quality Housing (DMfQH) provides the acceptable tolerances for floor areas and room widths in houses, as well as indicative internal layouts of various houses and apartment types to illustrate layouts which meet these criteria. The latter document also sets out acceptable floor areas in duplexes where a little more flexibility in respect of overall floor areas is appropriate. Whilst of greater relevance at detailed design stage, competitors should refer to the Employer's Requirements document which sets out the general quality of materials finishes and fittings to be provided in social housing. Designs should allow for heating by heat pumps as set out in items 4.5.1 and 4.5.3 of that document.

2.1.6. Alignment with Department Guidelines

As the winning design(s) is intended to be delivered as Social Housing, funded by the Department, design responses will be expected to be consistent with the following guidance documents:

- 1. Design Manual for Quality Housing (DMfQH):** <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/b3e02-design-manual-for-quality-housing/>

- 2. Employers Requirements**

document: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/2f78e-employers-requirements-for-detail-design-of-quality-housing/>

- 3. Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (QHfSC):** <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/60868-quality-housing-for-sustainable-communities/>

- 4. Design Standards for New Apartments (DSfNA):** <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/243715/d60aaacd-0b2b-4422-ab91-d511a4720132.pdf#page=null>

- 5. Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS):** <https://www.dkurs.ie/copy-of-what-is-dkurs>

- 6. Places for People The National Policy on Architecture:** <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/f9879-places-for-people-national-policy-on-architecture/>

- 7. Urban Development and Building Heights – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018):** <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/93d22-urban-development-and-building-height-guidelines-ud-bhg-2018/>

2.2 Budget

All entries should be accompanied by an Outline Cost Plan, setting out the costs associated with the works. The Outline Cost Plan should be provided with costs broken down on a broad elemental level (Cost Breakdown), in a format similar to that provided in the 'Costing Document (Building Works) Template' - C01.1a - available at: <https://constructionprocurement.gov.ie/standard-forms-for-cost-planning-cost-control/>

3.0 Competition Structure

3.1 Competition Promoter

The competition is being promoted by The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage www.housing.gov.ie who are the Sponsoring Authority and are hereafter referred to as the 'Client' for the purposes of the competition. It is intended that the winning design team will be appointed by the respective Local Authority who are the Contracting Authority and will then become the Client for the delivery of the social housing. (The Local Authority may also choose to novate the project to an Approved Housing Body (AHB) at Contract Award stage).

3.2 Competition Organiser / Registrar

The competition is being organised by the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI) - hereafter referred to as the Competition Registrar - and all queries in respects of the competition, should clearly identify the selected site/town, and be addressed in writing via email to:

The Competition Registrar

Email: competitions@riai.ie

Subject: 'Town Centre Living' DHLGH RIAI Competition for [insert selected site/town]

Competition Objectives

This competition seeks to deliver four built exemplar designs which demonstrate the viability and attractiveness of housing on town-centre urban infill sites, to offer lessons as to potential design approaches on other similar sites. A separate competition will be run simultaneously for each site. It is intended that the winning practices will be awarded the design commission and that the selected sites would be progressed as real social housing projects by the various Local Authorities, who will appoint the winning design team, to progress through the pre-construction process to construction and delivery, funded by DHLGH.

3.3 Competition Brief

The full Competition Brief for each site including Appendices (reports, drawings, site photographs, and regulations) is available on the [RIAI website](http://riai.ie). All entrants have to complete the online Registration form on the RIAI website, which will generate a unique code for the entrant.

www.riai.ie/whats-on/competitions/open

3.4 Eligibility

The competition is open to Architect-led design teams -which shall also include other design professionals such as landscape architect, conservation architect, archaeological (assessment), heritage interpretation, civil and structural engineering, mechanical and electrical, environmental, quantity surveying, fire safety consultants, disability access consultants, design and assigned certifiers and associated services, as the Architect lead shall deem necessary to provide full professional services to deliver the successful completion of the housing projects, with all the normal statutory and conveyancing opinions, certificates and documentation.

The composition of the team must be confirmed at competition entry stage on the Entry Form. Architects should be on the RIAI Architects Register or be eligible for registration in Ireland without further assessment. It is the function of the Competition Registrar to decide on eligibility. The extent of use of the design team in the preparation of the competition entry is at the discretion of the architect lead, but at the least the consulting QS should be responsible for preparation of the cost plan element of the submission, and the lead would be prudent to confirm that the responsibilities of the other disciplines adequately informs the design proposal and that the cost element of other disciplines is adequately included in the

cost plan submission. All consultants must be suitably qualified and on the relevant professional register.

As described in the introduction, this competition is intended to generate design innovation and in order to promote diversity in the response and award of contracts, each entrant (i.e. Architect/Practice) may submit entries for a maximum of any two of the four competition sites.

3.5 Assessment

The assessment shall be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the briefing information and Competition Regulations provided to competitors. Competition submissions shall be assessed anonymously in accordance with the Competition Regulations generally and such detailed regulations that the Competition Registrar may issue at the time. The criteria for the evaluation of submissions will be in accordance with the criteria set out in section 1.3 above.

3.6 Amendments

The Client may request the winning entrants to make amendments or adjustments to the design and such amendments shall be incorporated into the design.

3.7 Publicity of Competition

The Client reserves the right to use any of the entrant's submissions or information contained therein for publicity relating to the competition. The award of the winning entry in no way constitutes that the Local Authority will follow through with the construction of this design (in which case no additional prizes/fees would be payable), although this is the intention of the competition.

3.8 Competition Exhibition

It shall be the responsibility of the Client to decide on the projects to be exhibited. The Client does not undertake to exhibit any or all entries received. However, it is intended that there will be an exhibition in each of the Local Authorities of at least the three prize-winning schemes for each site, together with some of the non-award winning schemes.

3.9 Persons Ineligible

No members of the Client's staff, the Competition Registrar's staff or the assessors' or any partner, associate or employee of either shall be eligible to compete or to assist the competitors. As the four sites are adjudicated by four separate juries, assessors are entitled to submit entries for sites on which they are not adjudicating. Each adjudicating process will be treated confidentially and information from the adjudication process will not be shared between the juries until the prize winners are announced.

3.10 Competition Regulations

The competitions are organised in accordance with RIAI Competition Regulations as defined by the RIAI.

3.11 Competition Registration

Registration for the competition is free of charge. Competition registration can be made only on the official Registration Form on the RIAI website www.riai.ie/whats-on/competitions/open

Entrants can select the site(s) for which they will enter from a drop-down menu. The DHLGH will not award more than two contracts to an architect and/or practice. Registration will provide the entrant with their unique Entry Code. This unique Entry Code and the name of the town (example: **2023000_Castleblayney**) must be displayed on the anonymous A1 Board, the Report and the Entry Form.

3.12 Competitor's Questions

Competitors may submit questions up to 24 February 2023 after that no further questions can be submitted. All queries must be in writing via email to competitions@riai.ie. An explanatory memorandum based on the questions submitted will be circulated to all competitors by 3 March 2023 and will form part of the conditions and the competition brief. The Client reserves the right to refuse to answer any queries which they consider not relevant to the competition.

Questions should be addressed to the Competition Registrar and emailed to competitions@riai.ie

3.13 Competition Prizes

Entries for each of the four competition towns will be premiated with three prizes. The prizes for each competition town are:

- €12,000 First Prize
- €10,000 Second Prize
- €8,000 Third Prize

Contract Award

In the event that the project proceeds, a separate fee of 12.5%+VAT of the net construction cost for full design team services will be agreed. It is intended that the appointment will be subject to:

- Terms and conditions of the standard COE1 Conditions of Engagement for Consultancy Services (Technical) The fee will be converted from a % fee to a fixed fee at Stage 2 of the Project when the pre-Part 8 Cost Plan is agreed.
- Negotiation/agreement of fair and reasonable hourly rates (for time charges)
- Agreement of a schedule of stage payments and arrangements should the project not proceed beyond a certain stage
- Evidence of technical capacity
- Confirmation of professional registration
- Entrants should note that the Local Authority or AHB may extend the scope of the proposal e.g. where additional lands become available / revised housing need, etc

Economic & Financial Standing

Architects or Practices may combine with other architects / practices to demonstrate a suitable level of capacity as follows:

Appointment of the winning design team will be subject to provision of the following (for each consultant):

- Evidence in relation to the service provider of certified turnover for the 3 previous financial years - Minimum Annual Turnover (average over 3 years) - €250k (lead consultant); €170k (other consultants)

- Balance sheets or extracts from balance sheets
- Statement from a bank that the service provider's principal account is in good standing
- Evidence (from broker or insurance company), confirming that the consultant has current Professional Indemnity Insurance, in compliance with the following conditions:
 - Minimum level of PII - €1.25m cover on each and every claim basis or €1.5m cover on annual aggregate basis, where each and every claim cover is not available
 - Maximum permitted level of excess to be 2% of annual turnover or €5,000 whichever is greater
 - Confirmation that the above conditions will be maintained for 6 years after the completion of the construction works (where commercially available)
 - Confirmation (in the event that annual aggregate cover is in place at the date of the Contract) that each and every cover will be effected, should it become available at rates as defined in the standard [COE1 form of tender](#) (refer also to [GN1.1.2](#))
- Evidence from insurance company in the form of a copy of the policy, confirming that the consultant has current Public Liability Insurance, in compliance with the following:
 - Minimum level of Public Liability insurance required in respect of any one accident - €2.6m (€6.5m for ground or archaeological investigation)
 - Maximum level of excess - €10k (no excess permitted in respect of death, injury or illness)
- Evidence from insurance company in the form of a copy of the policy, confirming that the consultant has current Employers Liability Insurance, in compliance with the following:
 - Minimum level of Employers Liability insurance required in respect of any one accident - €13m
- Insurances shall allow for novation of indemnity to the Local Authority.

It is important that contestants satisfy themselves of the ability of all design team members to provide such information because, in the event that the winning design team is not able to submit this information, the Local Authority may then appoint the second placed design team, and failing them, the third placed design team.

3.14 Disqualification of Submissions

Submissions shall be excluded from the competition if:

- a. The entry is received after the time and date named in these conditions.
- b. Competitors disclose his/her identity or intend to influence any of the decisions of the assessors.
- c. The entry does not comply with any of the conditions for the submissions listed above.
- d. The entrant does not comply with the conditions of eligibility.
- e. The entrant has submitted more than two entries.

It shall be a function of the Registrar to decide on competition eligibility and exclusion from the competition and the Registrar's decision in these matters is final and no correspondence will be entered into this regard.

3.15 Copyright and Publicity

Any entrant submitting a design in response to this competition is deemed to grant the Client an irrevocable, royalty free, non-exclusive, assignable licence to copy and use in any way, any designs and other copyright materials submitted by such party for the purposes of this competition and related publicity.

3.16 Disputes

In the event of a dispute arising out of the competition, the matter shall be dealt with by an arbitrator appointed by the Registrar, the RIAI.

3.17 Acceptance of Competition Regulations

Submission of the official registration form

is an acceptance by the competitors of all rules and regulations of the competition and acceptance by the competitor of any other decisions or instructions issued by the Registrar in relation to the conduct of the competition.

3.18 Standard of Entries

Each of the individual site juries reserves the right not to make any award if, in the opinion of the Jury, no entry reaches the required standard. The determination of such standard shall be at the sole discretion of the jury.

3.19 Compliance with Project Budget

Competitors should be aware that the design should be deliverable in an economic manner and consistent with the project budget (within a range of 10 %).

3.20 Publication of Entries

Shortlisted and/or winning and commended entries as well as all entries to the competition may be published or used at the sole discretion of the Client.

3.21 Post Competition

The role of the RIAI is limited to the administration of the competition as the Competition Registrar and the RIAI will have no further role once the winners have been selected and competitors informed.

3.22 Return of Entries

Entries will not be returned, but a soft copy will be submitted to the Irish Architectural Archive.

3.23 Competition Language

The competition Language is English.

3.24 Further Conditions

The Client and Competition Registrar will exercise all reasonable care and will not be responsible for loss or damage to any material.

The Client and Competition Registrar reserve the right to change the timetable or cancel the competition at any stage and will not accept liability for any costs incurred.

4.0 Competition Submission Requirements

Submissions

This detailed brief is issued to entrants and is intended to give detailed information on the project. The bases for all technical design parameters and site information that are considered necessary is given in the competition packs. This information is given for the purposes of the competition and whilst it is given in good faith it shall be subject to research and checking by the competitor.

Submission Requirements:

1. Competitors are required to submit a maximum of 1 x A1 size lightweight board in landscape format, suitable for mounting on walls/exhibition panels. There is no specified format for submissions, but competitors are required to provide the following minimum information:
 - a. Illustrate the various technical, aesthetic and functional aspects of their design.
- As a minimum the entrant's submission should include the following drawings:
- Proposed Site Layout Plan (min scale 1:500)
 - Plans, Sections, Elevations as required to describe all proposed dwelling units
 - Longitudinal and cross sections through site as required
 - Street/public frontage elevation with outline context
- b. Sufficient illustrations to clearly illustrate relationship with the site context and design intention.
 2. Each competitor shall submit a short written report, which will describe the architectural, urban design and planning

approach to the scheme, specifically how the proposal responds to its town centre location and what aspects might have relevance for other town centre locations together with an outline cost plan, and outline Schedule of Accommodation.

3. The report shall not exceed 4 x A4 pages (min 11 point text) including the elemental cost plan and outline Schedule of Accommodation. One side only of the page shall be used and 4 x copies of each report shall be provided. Additional sketches, plans or any other graphic material may not be used in the report, other than those shown on the A1 submission boards.
 4. Models are not required and may not be submitted.
 5. Overlays should not be used on drawings and each submission shall be complete with no other additional material, text or sketches, etc. Material in addition to the information specified shall not be shown to the assessors.
 6. Drawings should be mounted on an A1 sized lightweight board. Material must be protected from damage in transit by the competitor and the organisers are not responsible for any damage to drawings. Insurance of submissions is the responsibility of entrants. Entries will not, in any circumstances, be returned to the competitors so it is advisable to make copies of the entries submitted. Such copies would also be important in the event of loss of an entry by the postal service.

7. There is no restriction on the drawing medium or presentation methods to be used other than as set out in this document, but competitors are advised that protective coating should be used for impermanent media.
8. Framed and glazed drawings may not be submitted.
9. The competition is anonymous, and no entry shall bear any name, mark or motto.
10. The official entry form, which will serve as a means of identification, shall be submitted in sealed envelope and attached to the A1 board. Marked **Entry Form: Town Centre Living Competition_ [Name of Town]**
11. Entries shall be contained in one package marked **Town Centre Living Competition_ [Name of Town]** with the envelope and Entry Form enclosed, and must reach the Registrar, carriage paid, not later than 12 noon on 31 March 2023 at the office of the RIAI 8 Merrion, Square, Dublin 2.
12. The submission package shall include the specified information together with the official entry form including a declaration signed by the competitor that the design is her/his personal work and the drawings have been prepared under her/his supervision and a signed copyright licence agreement to be supplied by the organisers.
13. The full competition entry - A1 board, written report (including Outline Cost Plan and outline Schedule of Accommodation), and Entry Form) - must also be supplied digitally as PDF by 12 noon on 31 March 2023.

All digitally supplied items must have competitor's Entry ID, but will otherwise be anonymous.

14. Competitors may list on the official Entry Form the names of any collaborators consultants or practice whose participation they may wish to acknowledge in any publication or exhibition.
15. The Registrar will be responsible for opening the package and each entry must have the identification number (only) on all parts of the entry.
16. Submission checklist as follows to be delivered to RIAI by 12 noon on 31 March 2023.
 - 1 no. A1 lightweight board
 - 4 no. Copies of the Report
 - 1 no. Entry Form in a sealed envelope

All items submitted must be labelled with Competitor's Entry ID, which will be provided on registration, and the name of the town you are entering for.

17. Submit the following 3 digital items by Email to: competitions@riai.ie by 12 noon on 31 March 2023

Total size of file attachments must not exceed 10MB.

1. PDF of 1 x A1 board: Please name as EntryID_Board_TCL_NameofTown.PDF

2. PDF of Entry Form: Please name as EntryID_EF_TCL_NameofTown.PDF

3. PDF of Report: Please name as Entry ID_Rep_TCL_NameofTown.PDF

5. Jury and Technical Panel

Each of the 4 competition sites will have an independent Jury to assess the entries for that particular site. Each adjudicating process will be treated confidentially and information from the adjudication process will not be shared between the juries until the prize winners are announced.

Each jury will comprise 3 members listed as follows:

1. Castleblayney

Valerie Mulvin FRIAI	(Chair)
Paul Altman FRIAI	Senior Advisor DHLGH
Lorcan MacCinna B Eng (Civil)	Senior Executive Engineer Monaghan County Council

2. Sligo

Derek Tynan FRIAI	(Chair)
Joan MacMahon MRIAI	Senior Advisor DHLGH
Seán Martin FRIAI	Senior Architect Sligo County Council

3. Kildare

Miriam Delaney MRIAI	(Chair)
Gareth Williams MRIAI	Architect Advisor DHLGH
David Creighton FRIAI	Senior Architect Kildare County Council

4. Roscrea

Orla Murphy MRIAI	(Chair)
John Martin MRIAI	Architect Advisor DHLGH
Liam Ryan MRIAI	Senior Executive Architect Tipperary County Council

In the event that a Jury Member cannot act for any reason, the Client shall appoint another assessor whose name shall be communicated to all competitors.

Technical Panel

The Jury shall have available such technical or other professional advisers as considered necessary, appointed by the client to advise the Jury but these technical advisers may not participate in the assessment of the competition and do not have any voting rights.

6. Competition Schedule

Updated Competition Dates (published 14.2.23)

Task

1. Competition Launch / Registration Opens
2. Submission of Questions
3. Circulate Response to Questions
4. Closing of Registration
5. Submission of Entries
6. Adjudication
7. Expected Results Announcement

Date

27 January 2023
24 February 2023
3 March 2023
24 March 2023
31 March 2023, 12 noon
April/May 2023
May/June 2023

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