

**No. 21 Mitchell Street, Clonmel, County Tipperary**

**Conservation Appraisal to Accompany Submission to Draft  
Clonmel Local Area Plan 2024-2030**



*Prepared by:*

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*On behalf of*  
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**September 2023**

# Table of Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Context	4
3	Existing site	10
4	Conclusion	12
	<i>Appendix / Photographic Record</i>	<i>13</i>

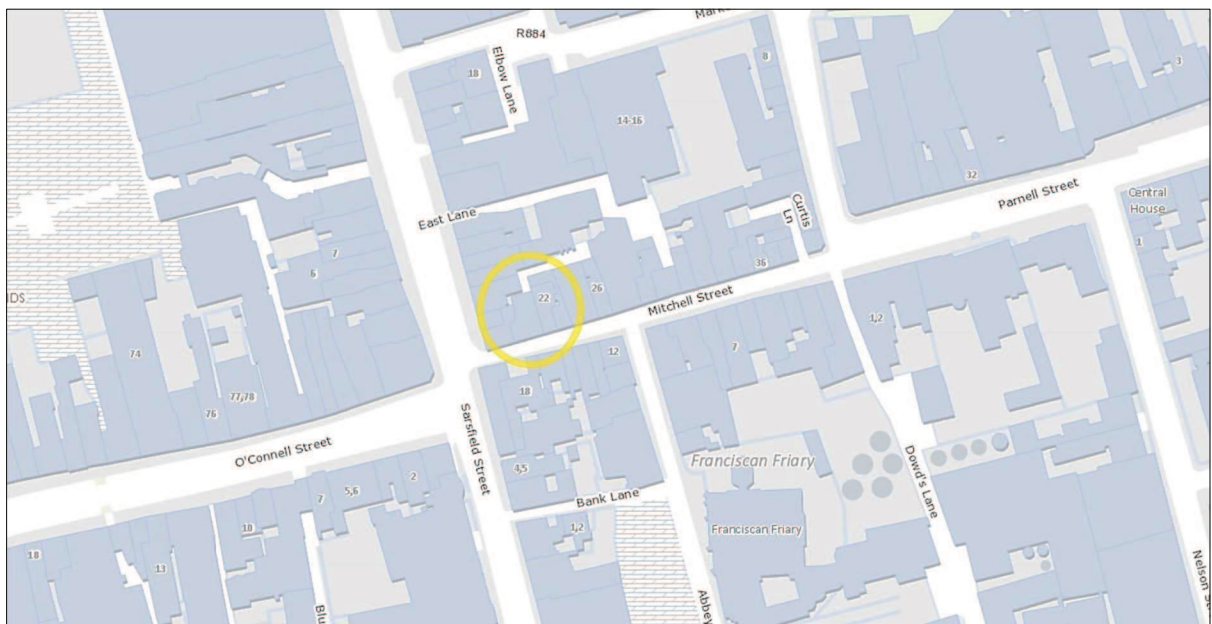
# 1 Introduction

██████████ has been engaged to compile a conservation appraisal of the subject site at Number 21 Mitchell Street, Clonmel, County Tipperary E91 EV74 by ██████████ Messrs. Gerard and Ian Byrne. This document will be submitted in support of a submission to Tipperary County Council as part of the call for public input into preparation of the new Clonmel Local Area Plan (LAP) 2024-2030.

The building ██████████ are seeking to have ██████████ property removed from the record of protected structures (RPS) which is to be updated in tandem with review of the existing 2013 plan and preparation of the new Clonmel LAP.

No 21 Mitchell Street is included on the currently active Clonmel and Environs Development Plan 2013; **RPS reference: 174**. The subject building is also within the boundary of the O'Connell Street and Gladstone Street architectural conservation area (ACA) which is characterised in the Draft Clonmel LAP as follows:

***O'Connell Street and Gladstone Street ACA** – This ACA contains fine terraces of three/four storey buildings that relate to the focus of the Main Guard building at the axis of the two principle streets and the West Gate at the western end. The distinctive townscape within this ACA contains numerous buildings of social, cultural, historical and architectural interest.*



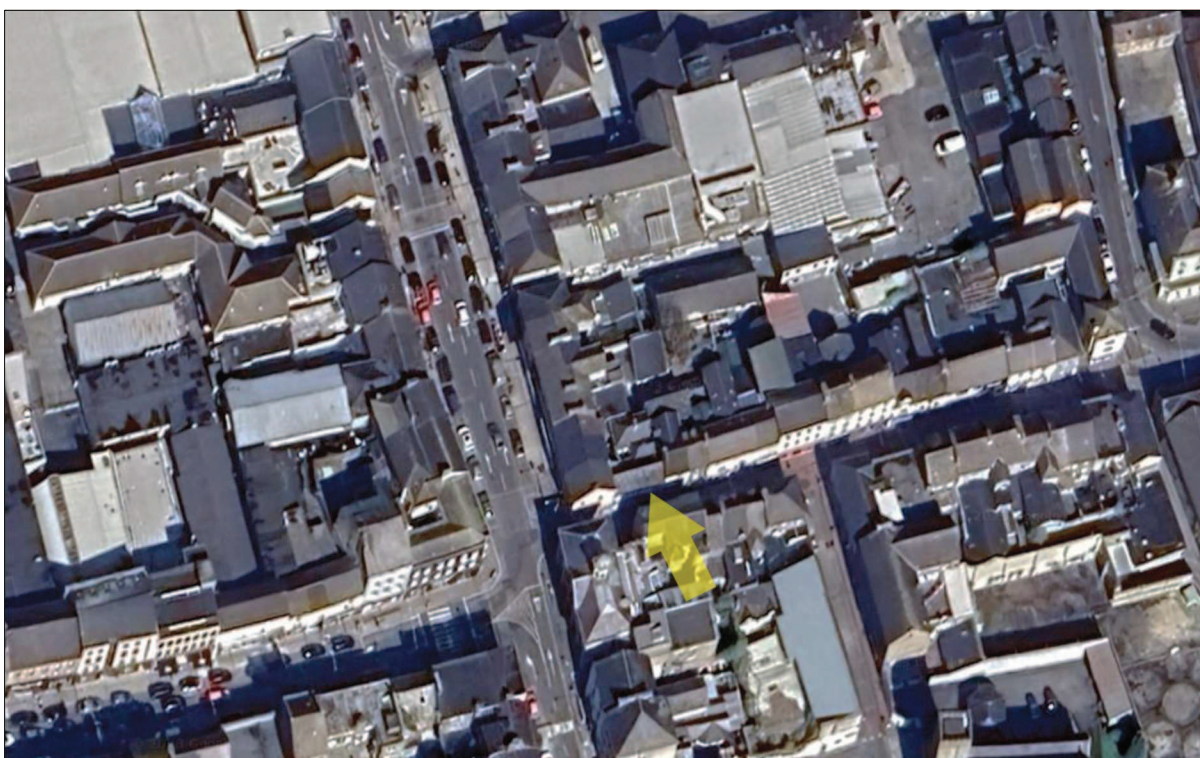
**Figure 1.** Site location map showing subject property at No. 21 Mitchell Street within yellow circle. (source: Tailte Éireann Irish Townland and Historical Map Viewer)

The following document provides background information and a comprehensive record of desk-top research, description and the results of a photographic survey undertaken in September 2023 contained within an appendix at the end of the main document. The document has been prepared by ██████████ an experienced historic building specialist ██████████

## 2 Context

### SITE AND LEGAL CONTEXT

The subject site comprises a presently vacant late eighteenth or early nineteenth-century, terraced building with ground-level shop extending north into rear extension with a basement at the front and residential accommodation at first floor level. The site also incorporates an arch leading to a historic laneway that accesses the rear of properties fronting south onto Mitchell Street within the urban core of Clonmel.

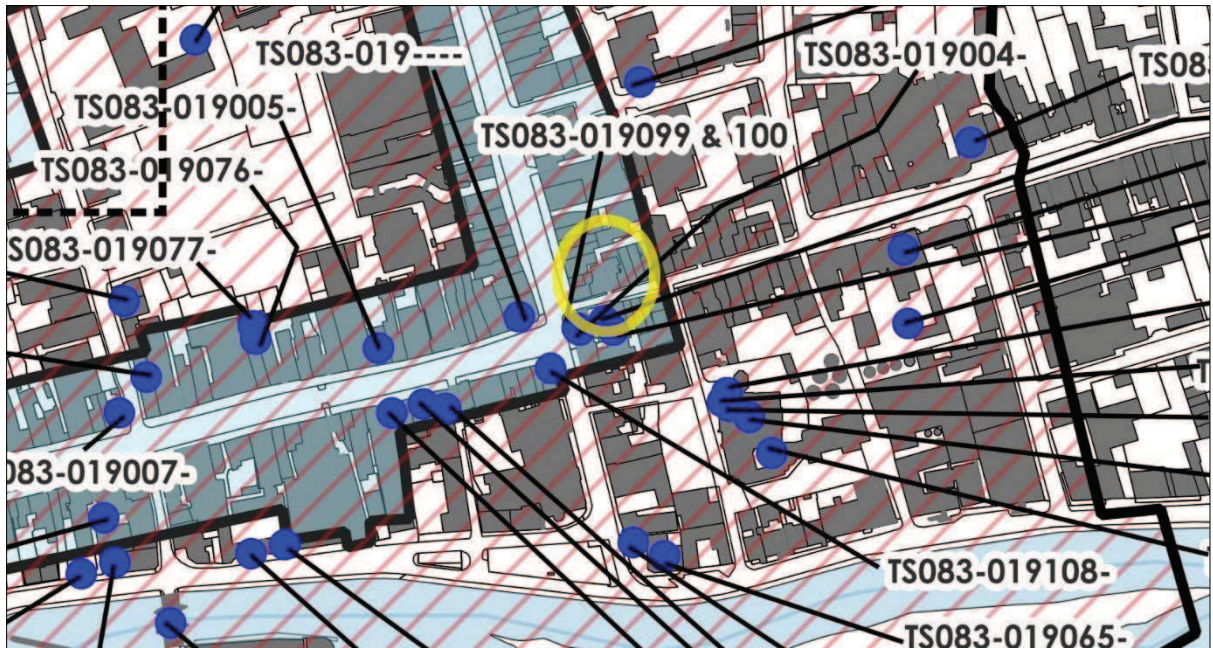


**Figure 2.** Aerial view of Clonmel town centre with subject site arrowed on north side of Mitchell Street close to junction with Gladstone Street and Main Guard building (Source: Google Maps)

The subject site at No. 21 Mitchell Street is listed on the record of protected structures within the current Clonmel and Environs Development Plan 2013 (RPS ref. **174**). The description in the current RPS is as follows:

*Terraced three bay, two storey house, c 1830 with integral passageway to right; renovated c 1980 with shopfront inserted to ground floor.*

No 21 Mitchell Street was recorded by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage during its survey of Clonmel in 2005 (NIAH reg. no.: **22117044**), and it lies within the boundary of the O'Connell Street and Gladstone Street Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) also delimited in the present Clonmel and Environs Development Plan as well as in the Draft Clonmel Local Area Plan 2024-2030 (see **figure 3** below). There are **no** sites designated by the National Monuments Service (NMS) within the property although the site is within the zone of archaeological potential associated with a number of recorded sites including the Historic Walled Town of Clonmel scheduled for inclusion in the next revision of the Record of Monuments and Places (NMS ref. **TS083-019----**).



**Figure 3.** Extract from Built Heritage Map of Draft Clonmel LAP showing yellow-circled subject building on Mitchell Street within Architectural Conservation Area and Zone of Archaeological Potential. (Source: Tipperary County Council)

### HISTORIC CONTEXT

While little of the pre-twelfth century history of Clonmel is known, it is understood that its position at the highest navigable point on the Suir from its mouth at Waterford led to the establishment of a settlement close to the river, possibly in the vicinity of St Nicholas' Church, on the south side of the river within 500m of the subject site. The town developed as an important Anglo-Norman town from the end of the twelfth-century with defensive walls and other infrastructure completed from this time up to the latter parts of the fifteenth-century. By this time, Clonmel was becoming established as the most important town in the area with commercial and administrative importance helped by its position in the heart of a rich agricultural area with transport links by river and road. This powerful position led to the town's targeting by Cromwell in the 1650s when the town was besieged and significant damage caused to its human population and built fabric. A period of relative peace and prosperity returned from the late seventeenth-century which saw the opening of new streets and partial dismantling of the town wall and other fortifications to enable greater communication for the commercial and social growth of the town.

The following passage is reproduced from the archaeological impact assessment completed by [REDACTED] and published within the overall assessment of the proposed [REDACTED] in 2020:

*Clonmel's strategic position on the river Suir led to its establishment as the market centre for a wide agricultural hinterland during the agrarian revolution of the late eighteenth century. More than two-dozen mills were set up in and around the town, the majority owned by members of the influential Quaker community. The quays were developed and extended to cater for the increased trade and this in turn drew new businesses into the town. Its economic importance, together with its inherited central administrative position in the County, resulted in the establishment of many successful estates in the surrounding countryside, as well as the consolidation of a new thriving merchant class within the town itself. The central part of the town was largely rebuilt between*

1780 and 1820, albeit on the existing street pattern which had been laid out in the medieval period.

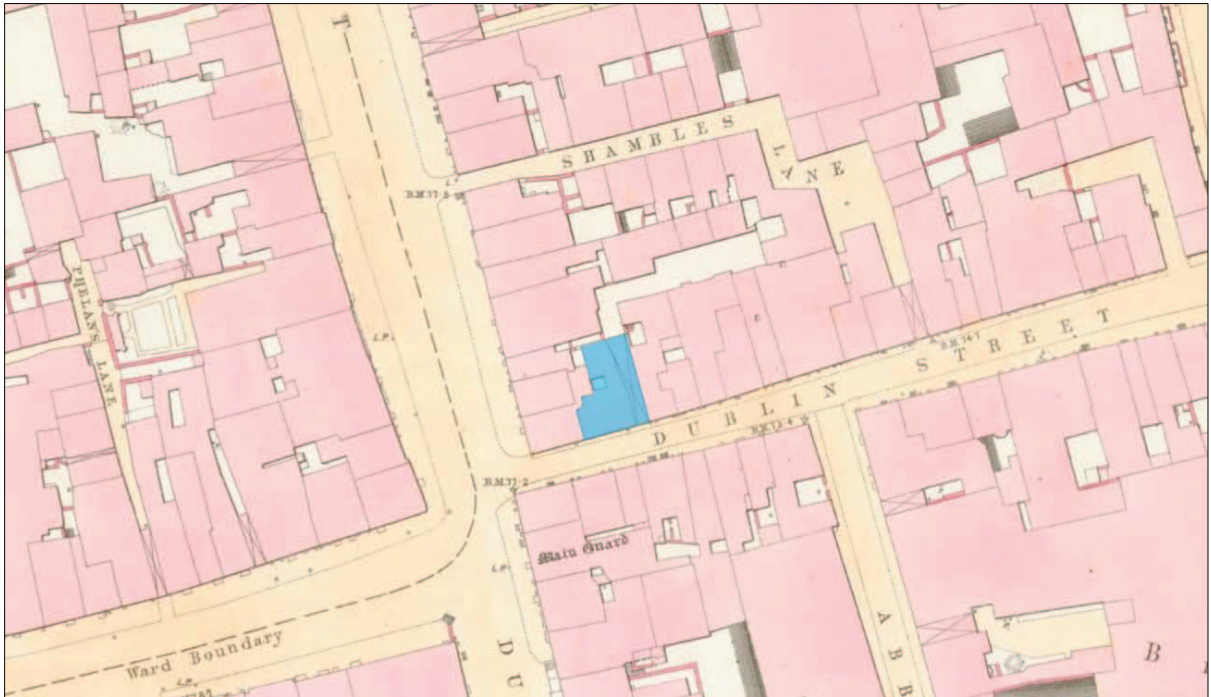
Little direct evidence of the subject building's origin and development have been uncovered during detailed but not exhaustive desk-based research on the site for the present document. The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1843 (**figure 4** below) shows a same street-line which includes the subject building as at present.



**Figure 4.** First edition Ordnance Survey 6" map of Clonmel surveyed in 1839 and published in 1843. Lane on subject site appears to be in same position as that arrowed above on north side of Dublin Street (later renamed Mitchell Street). (Source Tailte Éireann Irish Townland and Historical Map Viewer)

The later nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey map of 1874 (**figure 5**) shows the footprint of building and covered archway on the subject site in detail with the main street-fronting block connected to rear extensions with a small open area between the two parts of the site. This area is shown as being roofed over by the subsequent 25" Ordnance Survey map published in 1906 (see **figure 6** below) and is now incorporated in the ground-level shop with a flat roof over this providing an open light well for first-floor windows.

The arrangement of the rear laneway on all historic maps is shown largely as it remains at present with links to the rear of neighbouring properties.



**Figure 5.** Ordnance Survey 1:500 map of Clonmel created in 1874 showing subject site highlighted in blue. Footprint of site remains the same with small, previously open area behind west side of street-fronting block roofed over at first-floor level by early twentieth-century. (Source: UCD Historic Map Library)

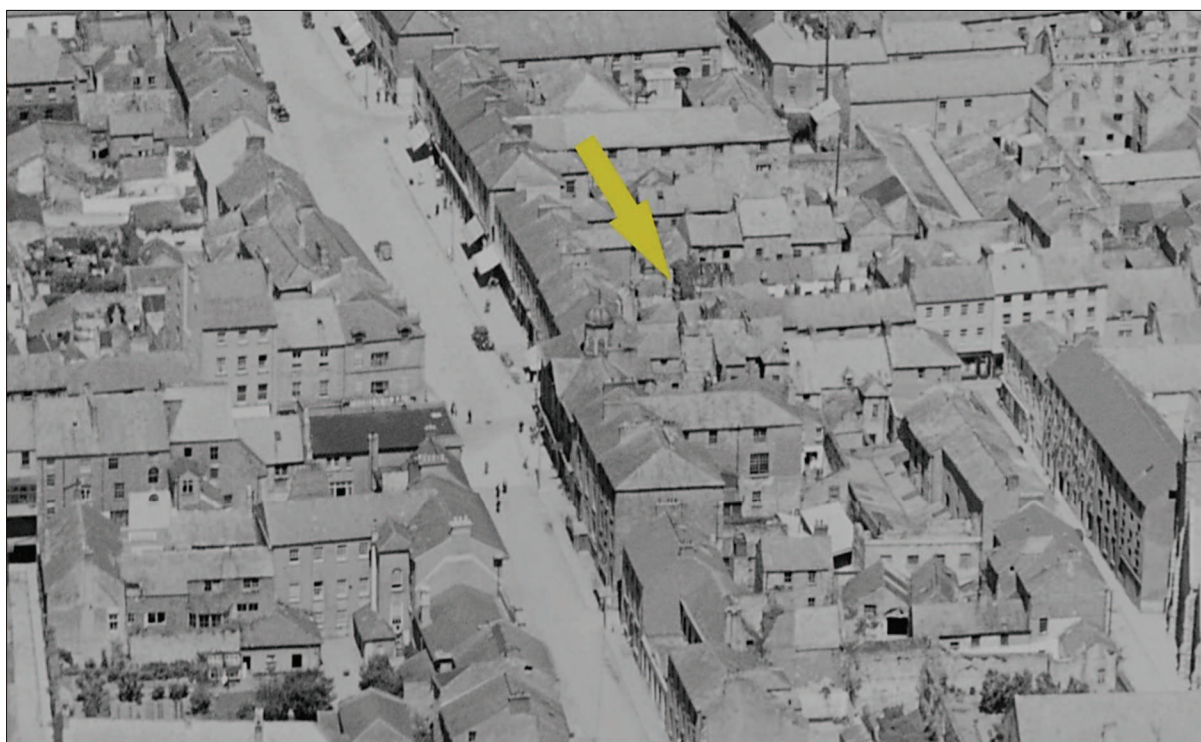


**Figure 6.** 25" edition of OS mapping of subject site surveyed in 1904 and published in 1906. Subject site shown within red shaded area with archway to rear lane and same building footprint as at present.

The ground-floor shop is currently vacant but has been occupied throughout the twentieth-century as a

██████████ were recorded as residing in the eight rooms of the subject building in the 1911 census<sup>1</sup>. ██████████ was recorded in Clonmel Directories as operating a confectionary and refreshment rooms at the site at least up to 1930<sup>2</sup>. Latterly it served as a sweetshop up to the 1990s owned by the late parents of the current proprietors and then as an interior fabrics shop, a clothing boutique and most recently, an electronic cigarette shop<sup>34</sup>.

A 1933 aerial photograph of Clonmel viewed from the south (**figure 7** below) shows the roof of the rear extension to the subject site abutting the neighbouring No. 22 Mitchell Street with the hipped, western end and chimney stack on the ridge. The chimney appears to be quite tall and elaborate with oversailing courses of brickwork, unlike the relatively simple stack in place at present (see **plates 7 & 9** within appended photographic record). Combined with the apparent lack of the rear extension visible on the later 1955 aerial photograph in **figure 8**, it is likely that at least the roof structure and first floor-level of the rear extensions were re-built in the latter half of the twentieth century. This hypothesis is further supported by the lack of visible historic fabric such as rainwater goods, window frames or sills to the rear elevations at first floor-level.



**Figure 7.** 1933 Aerial Photograph of Clonmel from south with arrowed chimney on hipped-roofed extension to rear of street-fronting pile of subject site. Chimney appears more elaborately detailed and larger than present chimney stack here suggesting that it may have been rebuilt later in the twentieth-century.  
(source: [britainfromabove.org.uk](http://britainfromabove.org.uk)<sup>5</sup>)

<sup>1</sup> [http://census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Tipperary/Clonmel\\_East\\_Urban/Mitchell\\_Street/817339/](http://census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Tipperary/Clonmel_East_Urban/Mitchell_Street/817339/)

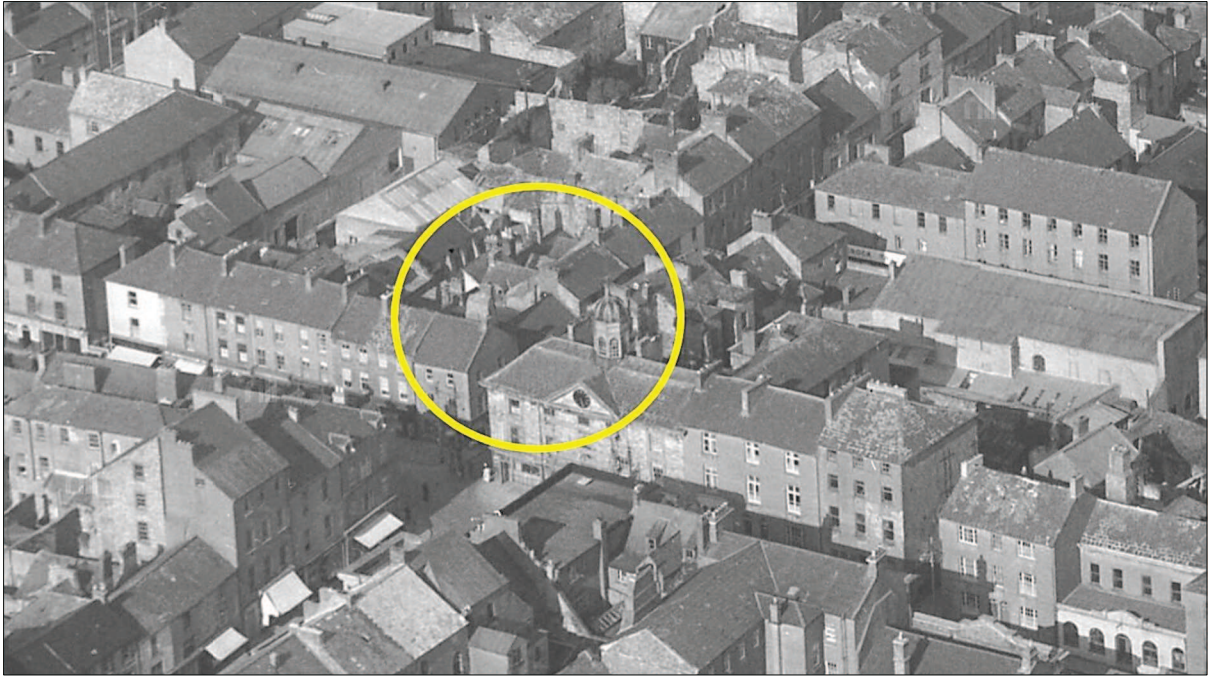
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.igp-web.com/IGPArchives/ire/tipperary/directories/clonmel-multi-yrs.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://clonmelonline.com/clonmel/shop-premises-occupiers/mitchel-street-shops/21-39-mitchel-street-clonmel/>

<sup>4</sup> Pers. Comms. With Gerard Byrne 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/en/image/XPW042370>





**Figure 8.** April 1955 Aerial Photograph of Clonmel from south-west with pitched roof of street-fronting pile of subject building visible within yellow circle. Note apparent absence of hipped-roofed extension with chimney to rear of this suggesting that present rear extensions are later twentieth-century reconstructions.  
(source: National Library of Ireland digitised archive<sup>6</sup>)

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<sup>6</sup> <https://catalogue.nli.ie/Record/vtls000733769>

### 3 Existing site

#### DESCRIPTION

The subject site on the north side of Mitchell Street in Clonmel town centre consists of a rubble sandstone-built two-storey over basement, three-bay terraced shop with integrated archway leading to a rear lane and residential accommodation to the first floor-level of the main front block as well as an extension to the rear. The extensions comprise a single-bay pile behind the east side of the street-fronting block with a cement-tiled, hipped roof that drains onto a single-storey, flat-roofed section (**plate 9** within appended photographic record) behind the central bay of the main block. Behind this is a two-bay extension on the east side of the site with a pitched roof, hipped to the west end and clad with natural slate to the rear elevation, with a rendered chimney stack on the ridge (**plate 7**). All rear elevations are smooth rendered or wet-dashed with plastic rainwater goods and uPVC window frames throughout.



**Figure 9.** 2005 photograph of south façade of subject building prior to replacement of timber sliding sash first floor windows and wrought-iron gate to rear lane, known locally as Flanagan's Lane

The site was surveyed by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage in 2005 (NIAH reg. no. **22117044**) and it was described at that time as follows:

*Terraced three-bay two-storey house over basement, built c.1830. Now in use as shop and having shopfront and square-headed integral passageway to front elevation. Pitched slate roof with cast-iron rainwater goods. Painted rendered walls with square-headed window openings having painted stone sills and one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows (since replaced with uPVC windows). Shopfront comprising painted ruled-and-lined rendered walls with timber panelled pilasters flanking openings with timber fasciaboard and moulded cornice above. Square-headed door opening to upper floor with timber panelled door and plain over-light. Square-headed door to shop with timber panelled double-leaf door (**plate 4**). Bipartite square-headed plate glass window having carved timber surround and sill with decorative spandrels and stall riser with recessed panels (**plate 3**). Wrought-iron gate (since replaced with galvanised steel gate) to passageway.*



**Figure 10.** 2005 photograph of shopfront before closure of basement hatch to central panel beneath shop display window

Internally, the ground-level shop is open plan from the street-front entrance doorway and display window (**plate 10**) to the rear of the site (**plate 13**) where a small w/c room (**plate 14**) is partitioned off along the northern wall. A doorway on the west side of the shopfloor behind the existing modern service counter leads to a rudimentary timber staircase to the earthen-floored basement under the street-fronting block of the site. The rubble masonry walls of the building are visible at basement level and there are two recesses where south-facing window openings were previously blocked up (**plate 15**). Concrete plinths on the damp floor support treated timber uprights that provide additional support to the modern timber floor joists and floor-boards for the ground-floor shop. There is a large, brick-infilled, brick-framed fireplace with an iron segmental arch support visible on the western party wall where the brickwork is flush with the surrounding sandstone masonry.

The panelled timber door on the street-front elevation of the site leads to a short hall (**plate 16**) and modern timber staircase with quarter-pace landing rising up the north-west corner of the front block of the site (**plate 17**). The first floor rooms are fully lined with plasterboard with no historic joinery, window-surrounds, fireplaces or original floor-coverings (**plates 18 & 19**).

## APPRAISAL

The NIAH appraised the site in 2005 as follows:

*The modest size and scale of this building make it a fine addition to the narrow streetscape. It retains much of its original form which is enhanced by the retention timber sliding sash windows and integral passageway. The simple, though well-executed, shopfront is a significant feature.*

In spite of insensitive replacement of the front windows in recent years and replacement of some elements of the timber shopfront as part of ongoing maintenance of this historic feature on the streetscape, the subject site retains much of its traditional scale and appealing visual contribution to the historic character of the surrounding area. The footprint of the terraced building, its front masonry wall and arrangement of the front façade with its integrated, historic laneway are the only remaining elements of built heritage significance on the site.

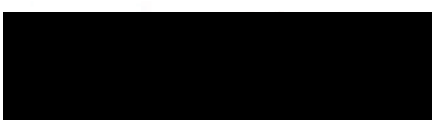
## 4 Conclusion

It is the contention of the building owners that continued inclusion of No. 21 Mitchell Street within the ACA, along with current and proposed policies in the Draft Clonmel LAP, provide ample protection for the remaining architectural details and historic character of the subject building. Its continued inclusion on the record of protected structures is no longer warranted given the lack of original window frames on the front or rear elevations and the complete absence of any historic interior detail. The ground-level shopfront contains elements of early to mid twentieth-century craftsmanship and architectural detailing, although the cornice and several pilasters have been replaced in recent decades. There is no intention on the part of the owners to remove or alter this distinctive element of the building. It should be noted that policy 3.9 within the draft Clonmel LAP applies to all traditional shopfronts whether they form part of a protected structure or not.

**Policy 3.9:** *Require traditional shopfronts to be retained or refurbished, in accordance with the requirements of Policy 13-2 of the TCDP and Chapter 12 of the Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011).*

The aforementioned *2011 Guidelines for Planning Authorities* also apply to repair, maintenance and development of historic structures within ACAs as well.

The building owners are fully supportive of the range of objectives in the Draft Clonmel LAP that promote the sustainable regeneration of the commercial and residential building stock of the *Urban Core* of the town, and they are fully cognisant of the importance of retaining the positive historical, architectural and visual contribution of built heritage to the character and vitality of Clonmel town centre. However, it is their view that because of the other protections in place for notable features of architectural merit outlined above, continued inclusion of No. 21 Mitchell Street on the RPS is unjustified and represents an unnecessary, potential planning obstacle to the optimal use of all parts of the site in line with the objectives of its 'urban core' zoning.



**Eamonn Hunter**



11<sup>th</sup> September 2023

## Appendix 1 | Photographic Record



*Plate 1. South façade fronting onto Mitchell Street with gated entrance to rear laneway on east side of front elevation.*



*Plate 2. Front façade from south-west.*



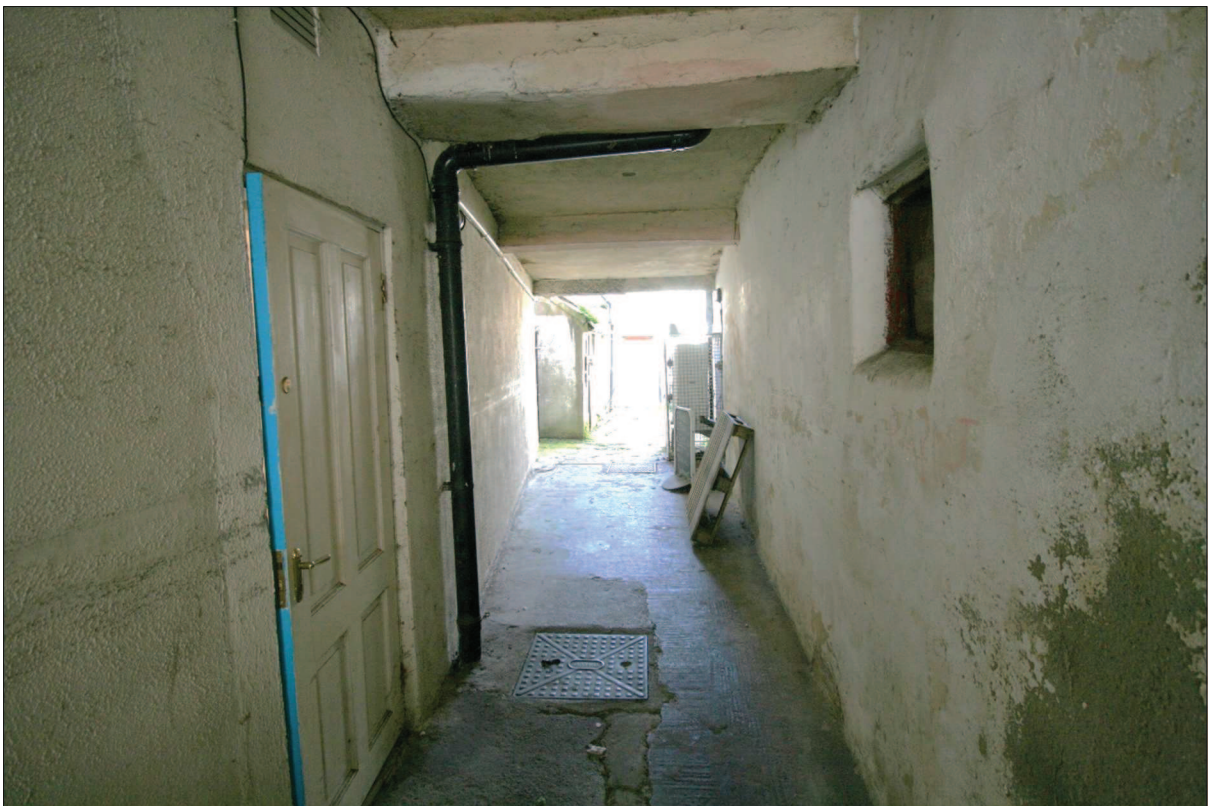
**Plate 3.** Detail of east pilaster and display window on southern façade. Central glazing bar of display window, shopfront fascia and cornice have been replaced in recent years while many elements of shopfront frame are early to mid twentieth-century in origin.



**Plate 4.** Detail of early to mid twentieth-century main shop entrance doorway with replacement pilaster to west (left) side of opening.



**Plate 5.** Ruled and lined smooth render to front elevation. Cast iron eaves gutters and heavy window sills with replacement window frames over replacement cornice to timber shopfront.



**Plate 6.** View north along laneway to rear of site with modern timber door to ground-level shop visible to left of photograph. Smooth-rendered wall to right is west gable of adjacent terraced building on Mitchell Street.



*Plate 7. View to south from rear lane towards rear, north elevation of subject property*



*Plate 8. Rear, north elevation of subject property looking towards rear of properties fronting onto Gladstone Street*





*Plate 9. West-facing window at first floor-level overlooking small flat-roofed area between front and rear blocks of subject building.*



*Plate 10. Interior of ground-level shop looking towards south-facing display window and entrance doorway*



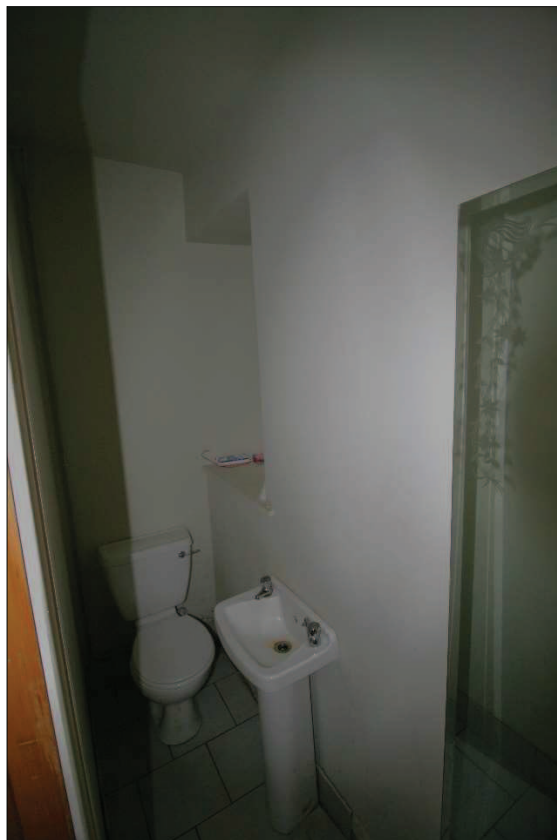
**Plate 11.** Detail of early to mid twentieth-century timber panelled entrance doors with modern glazed lobby door



**Plate 12.** Interior of ground-level shop looking towards east side wall with door leading onto rear laneway



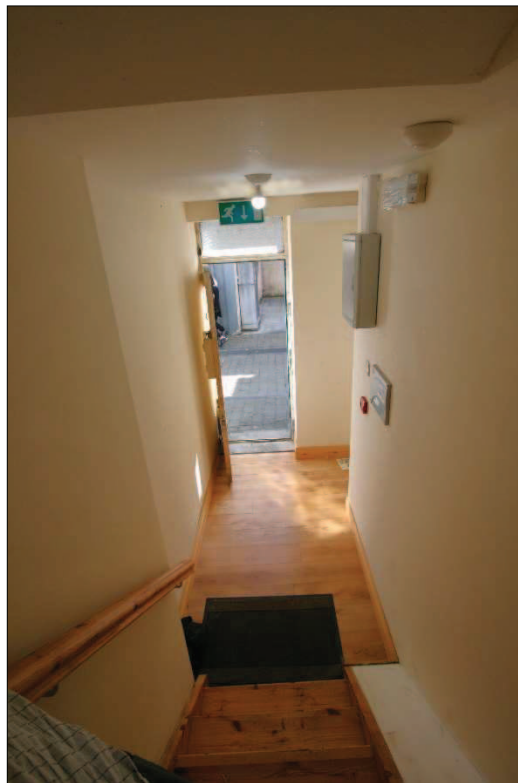
**Plate 13.** Rear of ground-level shop with partitioned toilet at rear northern end of building. Moisture damage visible to left side of photograph resulted from defect to flat-roofed section above here and has since been repaired.



**Plate 14.** Toilet to rear of ground-floor shop



**Plate 15.** Basement beneath front (south), street-fronting pile of building with earthen floor and blocked front window openings. Floor supports here are treated wood on concrete block supports with PVC damp course beneath wood to prevent upwards migration of floor dampness



**Plate 16.** View towards entrance doorway to first-floor apartment accommodation from modern staircase.



*Plate 17. Modern timber staircase at west side of street-fronting building from first floor-level*



*Plate 18. Interior of western first-floor room within front block of building.*



**Plate 19.** *First-floor bedroom to east side of rear part of building with window overlooking laneway.*