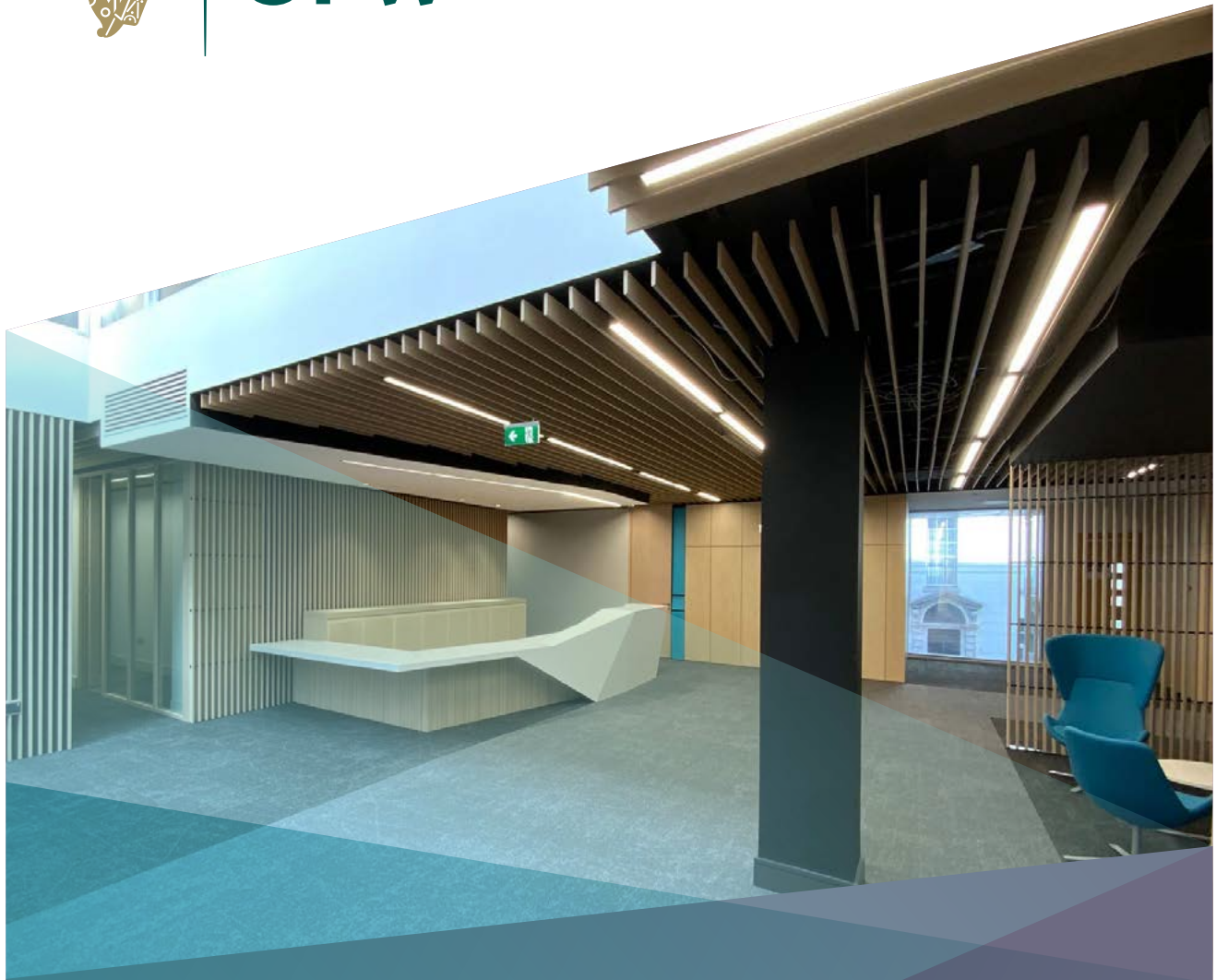




OPW



Office of Public Works
Statement of Strategy

2023-2026



← Cover page: Refurbishment works carried out in Chapter House, Abbey Street.

DPP clocktower refurbishment.

1

Foreword by Minister of State, Patrick O'Donovan



I was delighted to be appointed as Minister of State with responsibility for the Office of Public Works, initially in June 2020 and then be re-appointed in December 2022. The very welcome renewal of my appointment has given me the opportunity to continue to lead the organisation in delivering on a very

challenging mandate from Government. The Office of Public Works (OPW) is a key service provider to the Government: managing the Government's estate portfolio; maintaining and presenting Ireland's built heritage; and managing Ireland's flood risk. This involves delivering capital infrastructural projects, including those funded by client Departments and agencies for Government. I am particularly pleased to note that the OPW is further developing the organisation's advisory role to assist other departments and agencies in delivering their capital programmes under the National Development Plan.

The breadth of the OPW's role and expertise is reflected in the Programme for Government, *Our Shared Future*. This contains numerous commitments that can only be successfully implemented through the OPW continuing to collaborate closely with our client organisations and customers. Central to meeting these commitments over the coming three years is delivering the objectives set out in this Statement of Strategy.

Since its establishment in 1831, generations have enjoyed and benefitted from the OPW's specialist work including on state buildings, heritage sites, flood relief measures and at our parks and gardens. In this time, managing our diverse capital projects was underpinned by a commitment to meet our responsibility to our natural environment. Our future success will be measured by continuing to deliver harmony between our built and natural environments, including how we respond to new challenges such as climate change. It is timely and appropriate to set this as an

indicator for our future success and to state this as a new vision for the OPW: *Our Built and Natural Environments in Harmony*. I am very pleased to note that this Strategy will continue to be based around four key themes, two of which, **Climate Action** and **Sustainability**, are fully aligned with the Government's goal to radically reduce the State's carbon footprint. The theme relating to **Our Clients** reflects the OPW's commitment to excellent customer service that is designed to enhance the visitor experience at our sites, and to improve our relationships with important client departments and agencies. This theme, in tandem with our commitment to enhancing our organisational capability under the **People and Processes** theme involves driving reform in the OPW to improve organisational structures and accountability so that we continue to provide value for money in the work that we do on behalf of the State.

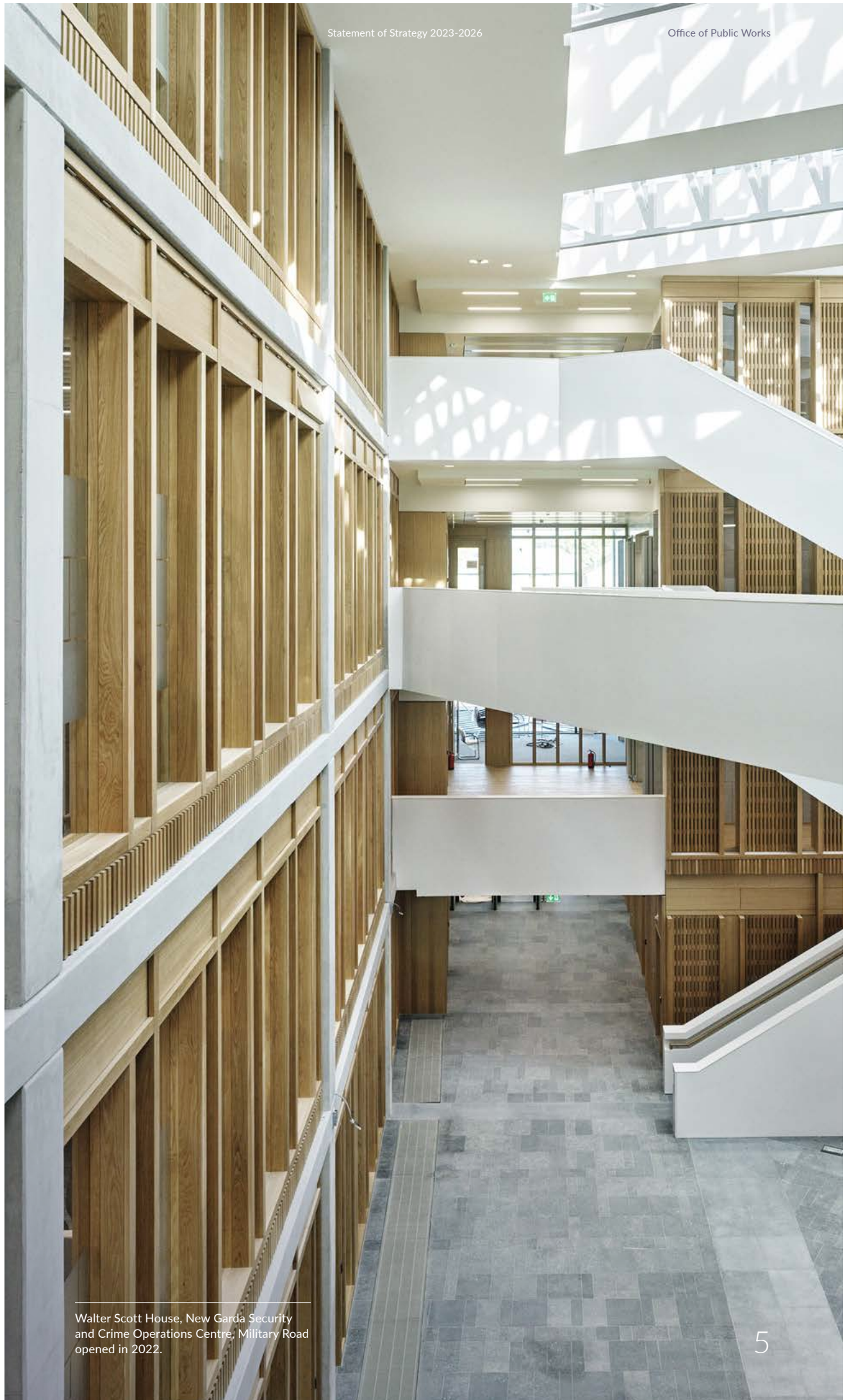
Notwithstanding the disparate roles and specialisms within the OPW, adopting this theme-based approach will strengthen collaboration within the OPW and with our client organisations and customers.

I have been consistently impressed by the OPW's staffs' commitment, capacity, flexibility and responsiveness to delivering the highest level of public services.

The OPW was a key player in responding to the challenge of Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic, and more recently has made a significant contribution to the State's Humanitarian response to the crisis in Ukraine. This demonstrates the commitment by the OPW staff to adopting new approaches to service delivery and quickly responding to new challenges. I am confident the OPW will continue to deliver the highest level of public services and achieve the objectives set out in this revised Statement of Strategy.

Tá áthas orm ár dtiomantas leanúnach do sholáthar seirbhísí dhá-theangacha a fhéiceál ar fud ár dtairiscint, rud atá ag teacht lenár dualgaisí faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, ach níos tábhachtaí arís, tríd an díogras atá againn ár n-oidhreacht a chosaint.

Patrick O'Donovan, TD
*Minister of State with responsibility for the Office of Public Works
and the Gaeltacht*



Walter Scott House, New Garda Security and Crime Operations Centre, Military Road opened in 2022.

2

Foreword by OPW Chairman, Maurice Buckley



While the organisation predates the founding of the State, the OPW has moved with the times to remain as relevant today as it did in 1831, when it was first established. The organisation has proven itself to be progressive, innovative and forward thinking in order to fulfil its wide-reaching and ever changing remit on behalf of the people of Ireland.

As we approach our bicentenary in 2031, the immense contribution of successive generations of OPW employees to the welfare of the people of Ireland and the development of the state is reflected in the services we deliver today. We continue to be a self-confident professional organisation with a long and worthy tradition of public service. We pride ourselves on approaching tasks with creativity and resilience to overcome evolving challenges, including climate change and its pervasive impact on so many aspects of our work. This Statement of Strategy is therefore built on the best traditions of the OPW and also sets out how we intend to address current challenges.

Following the appointment of a new senior Minister at our parent Department, Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery & Reform (DPENDPDR) in December 2022, the OPW has re-evaluated its Statement of Strategy which was drawn up in 2021. This provides us with an opportunity to review our alignment with the Programme for Government and how we support the Government's wider commitments. The objectives set out in this updated Strategy mean we will continue to fulfil and achieve the full potential of the OPW's important role to Ireland's economy, society, culture, heritage and environment.

We were delighted to welcome back Minister, Patrick O'Donovan who was reappointed as our Minister and equally pleased to have the opportunity to revisit our Statement of Strategy, our blueprint to guide us to do our job better.

While we have updated our strategic objectives and priorities, we are satisfied that these should be grouped and underpinned by the current key themes that inform our work. The Strategy will continue to be a statement of how we will engage with our key stakeholders, our clients, our public and our staff to ensure that we continue to provide an excellent service to all.

Key Themes underpinning the OPW Strategy

The themes that will remain as the guiding structure for the new Strategy are as follows:

Theme 1: Our Clients

Strengthening our Outward Facing Service

Theme 2: Sustainability

Embedding Sustainability in our Decisions

Theme 3: Climate Action

Mitigating and Adapting to the Impact of Climate Change

Theme 4: People and Processes

Enhancing our Organisational Capability

These themes and corresponding objectives guide business activities in the main divisional areas of the OPW: Flood Risk Management; Estate Management; Heritage Services; and the overarching responsibility for delivering Capital Works projects on behalf of the State. More recently we have actively developed an Advisory Service to assist departments and agencies in the delivery of their capital programmes under the National Development Plan. The strategy will also continue to reflect our ambition to strive for operational excellence underpinned by our Corporate Service functions.

The delivery of a work programme, such as the OPWs, that engages across a wide range of issues and with many Government bodies, relies on collaboration, communication and a sense of shared purpose. Significant opportunities now present themselves to drive forward an ambitious programme of investments in the areas of Climate Adaptation, Sustainability and Biodiversity.

Flood Risk Management

Climate change projections indicate that flooding events will become more frequent and severe in the future. This will have a considerable impact on flood risk in Ireland. Launched in 2018, the OPW Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) are a roadmap for flood risk management measures. Building on the FRMPs, the OPW has published a Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Flood Risk Management 2019-2024, in line with the requirements of the National Adaptation Framework and the Climate Action Plan.

Estate Management

The OPW manages a significant part of the State's property portfolio and provides accommodation for Government Departments and agencies (almost 1million m² of office accommodation). Emerging blended working policies have created new opportunities in how we manage the size of the office accommodation footprint for the civil service over the longer-term. The OPW will therefore be prioritising the monitoring of the level of demand from Departments for accommodation with a view to ensuring that the estate continues to be utilised efficiently. Given the age profile of the buildings in the portfolio, significant investment will be required, beginning with the capital funding allocated to the OPW under the current NDP, to achieve reductions in the carbon footprint of the portfolio and to realise savings on the cost of managing it over the longer-term.

Heritage Services

The OPW will continue to promote leading conservation practices for Heritage Properties and National Monuments to protect this rich historic fabric in a sustainable manner for future generations to enjoy. This is in addition to our ongoing year-round presentation of our national heritage to visitors, our focus on biodiversity, tourism investment across the heritage estate as well as delivery of a €500m capital investment programme for the National Cultural Institutions.

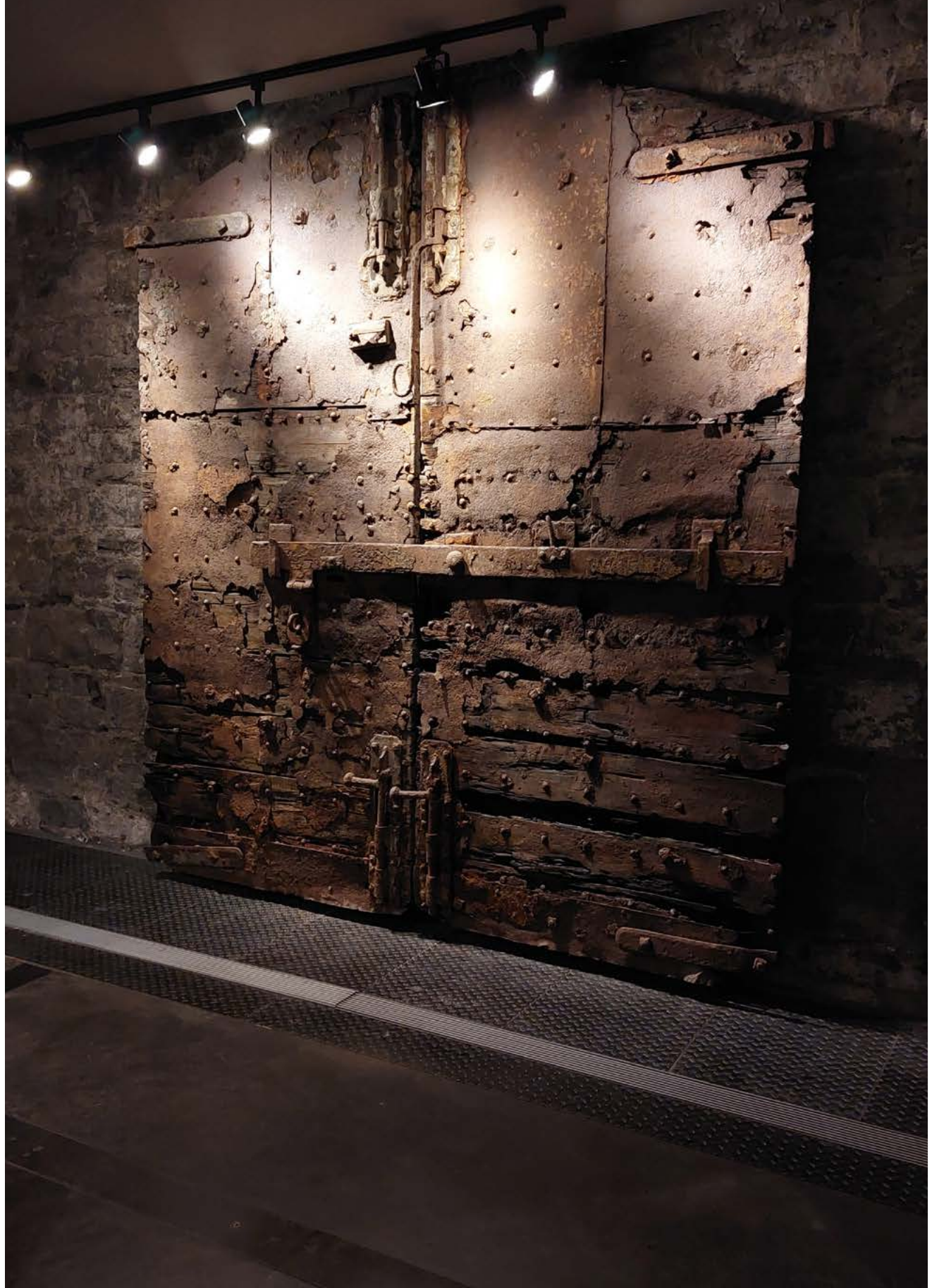
Capital Works Delivery

The Office of Public Works is responsible for the implementation of a programme of prioritised capital infrastructural works. OPW is committed to providing a first class service to its clients and to the many public users who experience the buildings and the environments that it creates. The delivery of Brexit infrastructure demonstrated our capacity to provide an agile response where the urgent implementation of government investment priorities is required.

Our new Statement of Strategy, builds on our successes and strengths and sets out our vision, mission, values and goals. These are the foundations that will enable us to fully align our objectives and high level work programmes, through our multi-annual business plans, with the Programme for Government. I would like to thank our staff for their professionalism, enthusiasm and commitment to deliver this strategy and the work programmes underlying it.

We have a solid base to work from and although we have a lot more to do, I am very excited and motivated about the positive impact the OPW will have in the years to come, as we continue to work with all of our client organisations, our staff and all stakeholders in delivering the objectives and ambitions contained in this Strategy.

Maurice Buckley
Executive Chairman



The newly restored 1921 Escape Gates at Kilmainham Gaol Museum.

3

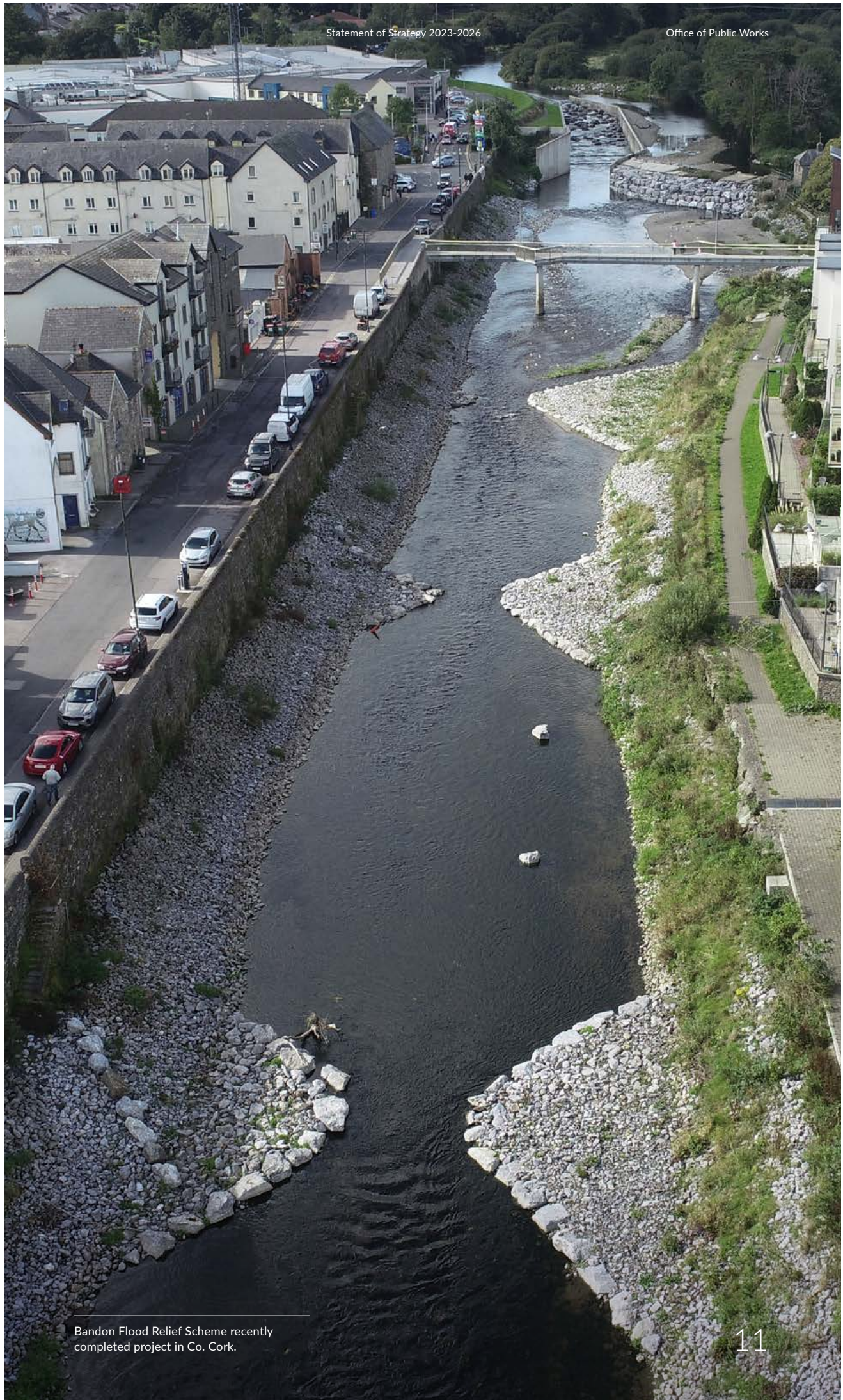
Introduction

This is the Statement of Strategy for the Office of Public Works (OPW) for the period 2023-2026. As per the provisions of the Public Service Management Act 1997, following the appointment of a new senior Minister at our parent department, Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery & Reform (DPENDPDR) in December 2022, the OPW has re-evaluated its Statement of Strategy which was drawn up in 2021. This new Strategy sets out our vision, mission, our purpose and our values. It updates our strategic objectives and priorities and reasserts the themes that will inform our work over the next three-year period.

We have consulted with our client departments and agencies and gratefully received a wide range of observations and comments; these have been taken into consideration while revising this strategy document.

Our Strategy takes account of the Programme for Government, *Our Shared Future* and also reflects the broader Government strategies such as: *Our Public Service 2020*; *Climate Action Plan 2023*; *Heritage Ireland 2030*; *Civil Service Renewal 2030 Strategy*; *Civil Service Renewal 2024 Action Plan*; and *Project Ireland 2040*.

Our new Strategy is a statement of how we will engage with our key stakeholders, our clients, our public and our staff to ensure that we continue to provide an excellent service to all. Our Strategy is a forward-looking document that provides structure to the key objectives of our various business units and ensures a consistency of approach across our organisation. We have set the development of our own staff and our own capability as a distinct strategic objective to reflect the priority we attach to supporting staff initiatives, their learning along with personal and career development.



Bandon Flood Relief Scheme recently completed project in Co. Cork.

4

Mission, Purpose and Vision Statements

Our role in the delivery of Capital Infrastructure and Advisory Services, extends across all the key areas of the organisation, Estate Management, Heritage Services and Flood Risk Management. The OPW is recognised as an essential part of the apparatus of Government that is often called upon to respond quickly and flexibly to the challenges of the day in carrying out the mission assigned to us in legislation and the Programme for Government. The OPW has a strong sense of identity and direction that is reflected in our core purpose, mission, vision and values through which we identify how we wish to contribute to the economic and social development of the State.



Mission

To manage the State property portfolio, Ireland's flood risk, and our national heritage – all in a sustainable manner



Purpose

To provide the Government and the public with versatile, innovative and specialist services



Vision: **Towards 200 Years**

Our built and natural environments in harmony



Mission

To manage the State property portfolio, Ireland's flood risk, and our national heritage – all in a sustainable manner

Our mission provides a summary description of the functions of the OPW across the areas of Estate Management, Built Heritage and Flood Risk Management where delivery of state infrastructure and advisory services to other departments and agencies is core to what the organisation wishes to achieve. Whether we are developing and utilising the State property portfolio, managing and informing Ireland's flood risk or preserving and promoting our national heritage, our mission communicates a sense of our identity to our customers, staff and to the general public. It highlights our main areas of operation and influences every decision we make as an organisation.



Purpose

To provide the Government and the public with versatile, innovative and specialist services

The OPW's key strength is its people, with an invaluable source of innovative and specialist skills across a wide variety of interrelated areas. Our core purpose is to provide the Government with a range of specialist services, including professional, management, technical, craftsmanship advice and expertise in response to the need to drive and support economic and social development through managing a variety of significant projects and State events. This invaluable resource allows Government to efficiently respond to an array of issues that arise which require specific professional interventions.



Vision: Towards 200 Years

Our built and natural environments in harmony

As our Bicentennial anniversary approaches in 2031, we have invested time to articulate our overall vision of where we want to be. At the broadest level, we believe our contribution is to shape the evolution of our built and natural environments while maintaining harmony with each other, with our history and within the society in which we live. This underpins our role in protecting and enhancing the built environment through our buildings and flood relief schemes, as well as our continued efforts in caring for Ireland's historic monuments, properties, parks and gardens. In continuing to do so, our vision inspires us as we strive to maintain the harmony and balance between our evolving environments through the work that we do. The long-term measure of our success will be the contribution we make to the social and economic life of this island nation.



Picturesque Annes Grove Gardens, opened to the public following extensive restoration works.

5

OPW Values

The OPW is driven by its values, which reflect our statutory role and our responsibilities. Developing this Statement of Strategy was an opportunity to review and restate our core values, inclusive of any new ones that inform how the OPW operates.

The values that the OPW shares with the wider Civil Service include:

- A strong public service ethos of integrity, independence, impartiality, equality, fairness and respect,
- A culture of accountability, efficiency and value for money, and
- A commitment to the highest standards of leadership, professionalism and rigour.

The following is feedback from some of our client departments, with whom we work closely on various projects and initiatives.

Revenue

“Revenue and OPW have a long and very positive collaborative working relationship in relation to matters of shared strategic and operational importance.”

Department of Defence

“The OPW also provides important supports to the National Emergency Coordination Group in response to emergencies requiring national level coordination...”

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

The Department “...acknowledges the strong collaborative partnership that exists between this Department and the OPW in the ongoing protection, management, conservation, presentation and interpretation of the national monuments in State care.”

Department of Foreign Affairs

“The Department of Foreign Affairs enjoys a close and effective working relationship with your Office – not least in relation to delivering large-scale events and visits – and which is, and will remain, key to delivering our collective commitments under the Programme for Government.”

Specifically, in relation to performing and meeting our functions and responsibilities, the OPW adopts the following overarching values:



Expertise

All OPW staff strive to become expert at their work and we continuously grow our expertise.



Respect

We are considerate in our behaviour towards people. The OPW advocates FREDIE: fairness, respect, equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement.



Excellence

We each take pride in our work, aiming for high levels of cost effectiveness, quality and client satisfaction.



Collaboration

We develop partnerships and teams based on honesty and openness. We embrace different perspectives and build consensus.



Sustainability

The work we do is built to last. We act for climate resilience. We pledge to future generations a continued legacy of the resources we safeguard along with the accrued knowledge and wisdom to protect them.

The culture of the OPW is shaped by our values; these tenets as expressed in this Statement will be embedded in our activities and behaviour throughout the lifetime of this Strategy.



Since 2008, the OPW has been managing 80 acres of semi-natural grassland at Castletown, in Co Kildare, as biodiversity-friendly.

6

Strategy Themes and Objectives

This Statement of Strategy concerns itself with the work and activities of the OPW. Some of this work includes:

- Managing a significant part of the State’s property portfolio at 2,500 properties and providing accommodation for Government departments, with over 680 Garda properties and approximately 530 offices,
- Leading in the delivery of significant infrastructure projects and programmes including Brexit and the rapid build homes programme for Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection who have fled the war in Ukraine,
- Maintaining and presenting Ireland’s most iconic heritage properties, including Ireland’s two World Heritage Sites, 780 National Monuments and over 5,000 acres of gardens and parklands. At a national and international level, we are showcasing the very best in what Ireland has to offer relating to tourism, and
- Leading Ireland’s management of its flood risk, including delivering some 150 flood relief schemes under the National Development Plan to 2030 as part of Project Ireland 2040, and maintaining some 12,000km of river channels and 800km of embankments.

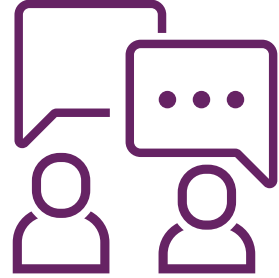
Each of these functional areas has their own challenges and priorities. However, what unites the OPW is our staff who plan and organise our work collaboratively and collectively across these functions and across the broad range of our professional, technical and unique disciplines and skills to meet the Government’s strategic priorities and commitments. That is why we have developed four themes to structure and govern the work of the OPW and this focus will continue over the coming three years. In turn, we have identified four overarching objectives to act as a blueprint for the OPW to underpin our work in the coming years towards successfully achieving our vision for our built and natural environments in harmony.

This Strategy is a bridge between the successes from our past Strategies and our priorities for the coming three years with a perspective covering at least the next decade.

Theme 1: Our Clients

Strengthening our Outward Facing Service

Further improve and sustain our strong ethos of customer service excellence through better collaboration and enhanced delivery mechanisms.



Theme 2: Sustainability

Embedding Sustainability in our Decisions

Ensure sustainability informs all of the OPW's decision-making at each stage of the project.



Theme 3: Climate Action

Mitigating and Adapting to the Impact of Climate Change

Deliver clear plans and actions to contribute to implementing the Climate Action Plan 2023.



Theme 4: People and Processes

Enhancing our Organisational Capability

Strengthen our organisational capability through the effective development of our staff and optimised, innovative processes to support delivery of the OPW's business objectives.





OPW has published *Heritage Ireland on Screen - A Guide to Filming at Ireland's Historic Locations*.



Theme 1: Our Clients

Strengthening our Outward Facing Service

The OPW does not operate alone. We recognise that although our functions differ to those of our key client organisations and customers, our respective roles and interests can be aligned as we work to improve the quality of public services in Ireland. In the coming three years, our objective is to further develop existing partnerships, strengthen our existing and create new collaborations, to ensure that we are optimising the delivery of our functions and reaching the potential of our role.

Objective 1

Further improve and sustain our strong ethos of customer service excellence through better collaboration and enhanced delivery mechanisms.

To achieve this objective, the OPW staff will continue to be empowered to ensure the needs of our client organisations and customers are central to informing their work and decisions. In doing so, we will continue to evolve our processes for directing clients to the correct areas that can deal with the issue they raise. We will provide timely and appropriate information and continually improve the client experience. Our latest Customer Service Action Plan covers the same period as this strategy. It sets out a comprehensive list of the standards of service that customers (both the public and representatives of client departments and Agencies) can expect in their engagement with the OPW. We strive to provide a consistently high level of customer service to our clients across all business areas and locations.

The OPW has a strong reputation for our expert knowledge and professional advice. As a centre of excellence, the OPW is an important resource for Government, State Agencies, academics and the public on expert, specialist and professional advice on architectural projects, estate management, historic properties, engineering services, flood risk management, art management, botanical matters, specialist crafts and skills to name just some. Our knowledge means we take decisions that are based on best evidence and support wider decisions across Government. We will endeavour to share our knowledge, our research and professional advice to a wide audience and provide practical and technical support to our clients and stakeholders. The continuous improvement of our staff's skills, learning and experience will be maintained to support both our clients' experience and their continued trust in our advice, opinions and recommendations.

The OPW provides a variety of services across a wide range of our professional, administrative, technical and craft disciplines. We want to build on our client engagement to better inform both internal and external clients of our services, achievements and successes. Feedback from our key stakeholders and the public will continue to provide valuable information on their needs and how the OPW is perceived as an organisation. This information will help us to improve our performance where needed and ensure that our external communications are effective and reaching the right audience.

The OPW, in its role as provider of accommodation, particularly recognises the importance of a well-functioning Accommodation Officers' network. Through the progressive strengthening of the relationship between Accommodation Officers with their OPW Case Officers a finely tuned client demand management process can be fostered. The introduction of an Integrated Workplace Management System will ensure that this relationship is based upon sound data. The OPW continues to monitor the impact of emerging blended working policies that are expected to create considerable opportunity to reconsider the size of the office accommodation footprint required for the civil service over the longer-term. The OPW will ensure that the estate continues to be utilised efficiently in a blended working environment. This will involve striking a balance, in consultation with our clients, between meeting accommodation needs while also rationalising the portfolio to reflect space utilisation levels impacted by blended working arrangements. The OPW will seek the support of all departments and offices, in critically assessing the level of demand for accommodation, including average utilisation levels, so that we have a sound evidence base for making investment decisions on reconfiguring and retrofitting existing buildings and on acquisitions, disposals and new builds.

As a major stakeholder in the commercial property marketplace, the OPW recognises the need to work constructively with developers and landlords to ensure optimum results for OPW clients. While at all times operating fairly, the OPW will also act commercially to ensure the best outcome for the taxpayer.

As a landowner, the OPW will continue to make strategic, long-term decisions to optimise its portfolio. As required, OPW will take all necessary steps to safeguard its property through securing of title, protecting against illegal activity and encroachment and, at all times working with tenants and occupants to ensure constructive, professional relationships.

OPW will continue to deliver infrastructural projects and programmes of work to provide quality, designed and built accommodation, facilities and infrastructure for all our clients and the public. These projects will include complex, culturally significant and politically sensitive works. OPW is committed to deliver these projects including new build, conservation restoration, refurbishment, maintenance and fitouts on time, within budget, to a high quality and architectural standard and to the client's satisfaction.

In order to achieve this overall delivery objective, OPW will continue to provide design and technical excellence, professional project management, construction supervision, advisory and support services that are of the highest standard.



The National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin hosted a Plant Science Festival to showcase the fascinating and diverse world of plants as part of Science Week.



Theme 2: Sustainability

Embedding Sustainability in our Decisions

Sustainable development is development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development is about ourselves, the degree to which together all sectors of society manage our resources and value our natural environment as we move forward as an economy and as a society. Sustainability is at the heart of the Government's policy commitments in the Programme for Government, *Our Shared Future*. This Strategy sets a strategic objective for the OPW to ensure that our approach to sustainability adequately addresses these policy commitments, the emerging environmental challenges and that the services we provide continue to contribute to Ireland's economic prosperity and the well-being of its citizens.

Objective 2

Ensure sustainability informs all of the OPW's decision-making at each stage of the project.

Guided by the Sustainability Policy for the OPW, the Office strives to deliver its mission in a sustainable manner. Through this policy, the OPW has developed many initiatives across the organisation and the public sector towards:

- reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions,
- avoiding the generation of waste through life cycle thinking, reuse and recycling,
- adopting green procurement, where possible, and
- raising awareness of sustainability issues.

The OPW will review its Sustainability Policy, so that its decisions continue to be informed by the latest evidence and policies and strike the right balance between economic, social and environmental needs.

Biodiversity plays a key role in the continuing ability of nature to provide ecosystems, necessary for human well-being such as clean water and air. The OPW is one of a number of Government bodies working to support the delivery of Ireland's National Biodiversity Action Plan. The OPW has launched its own Biodiversity Action Strategy 2022-2026 to improve biodiversity across its entire operation. The strategy identifies 48 specific actions across five themes that the OPW will undertake to embed biodiversity into all areas of its working brief over the next five years.

While it is acknowledged that Ireland's biodiversity is declining, the OPW already operates at many levels to preserve Ireland's biodiversity, from devising national strategies, setting good practice standards, conducting public outreach and educational programmes, engagement with NGOs, through to a whole range of applied biodiversity enhancement initiatives intertwined with services nationally. Some examples include:

- Lead development of Ireland's National Strategy for Plant Conservation with a series of measures to strengthen conservation of indigenous plants,

- Development of national environmental guidance for river maintenance works, to further reduce potential environmental impacts and maximise ecological gain, and
- Community outreach programmes like the Phoenix Park Biodiversity Festival and National Honey Show, to engage people, raise awareness and public education.

Our estate management function will promote a longer-term vision for more innovative ways of working that are in line with the actions set out in the Programme for Government. These include significant reductions in carbon emissions, greater remote working, balanced regional development and the promoting of nearly zero energy buildings.

As part of the Strategy, we will strive to have an energy efficient accommodation portfolio, to support Ireland's Action Plan for Energy Efficiency in the Public Sector and will ensure that buildings in the OPW portfolio comply with all relevant building regulations and energy efficiency targets.

Well maintained, older buildings can be the very essence of sustainability, due to their embodied energy, the durability of materials and their tolerance of sympathetic alterations. We will further the delivery of planned and preventative building maintenance through the improvement of the quality of products and services as well as taking an integrated life cycle approach in the maintenance of our property and public buildings.

The OPW will continue to promote leading conservation practices for Heritage Properties and National Monuments to protect this rich historic fabric in a sustainable manner for future generations to enjoy. The OPW will actively contribute to the actions contained in Heritage Ireland 2030 and will continue to partner with Government departments, semi-state organisations, local authorities and industry in implementing conservation principles in refurbishment and construction programmes. These work-programmes deliver on specific programmes and actions in the National Development Plan 2021-2030 and Project Ireland 2040. The OPW is leading on or contributing to the delivery of 53 actions identified in Heritage Ireland 2030 relating to visitor experience, education, community engagement, access, interpretation, research, conservation, collections care, maintenance, heritage data, promotion, partnerships, training, traditional building skills, heritage craft skills and biodiversity.

Ongoing OPW heritage conservation and operations support the implementation of actions in the Built and Archaeological Heritage Sectoral Climate Adaptation Plan.

The OPW apprenticeship programmes in Traditional Building Skills contributes to the delivery of Heritage Ireland 2030 and the Action Plan for Apprenticeships 2021-2025.

The OPW will continue to carefully manage heritage sites in a sustainable manner that will balance our remit to protect heritage assets with increased and more interactive access for visitors. We will ensure the adaptation and upgrading of facilities at existing historic properties is in line with best international conservation practice. We will strive to develop exemplar projects in adaptive and appropriate energy retrofitting techniques for historic buildings.

The OPW will deliver new, deep retrofit and fitout capital infrastructural projects that will provide fit-for-purpose office accommodation including flexible, value for money, energy and space efficient accommodation that also encompass wider issues such as sustainability, energy efficiency, life cycle costing, and universal access.

Over the coming decade the OPW plans to design and complete some 150 additional flood relief schemes. The options for and the design of all such schemes involves an assessment of their environmental impact and is central to the planning and confirmation process. Where feasible, the OPW will continue to work with local authorities and other key statutory bodies to incorporate public realm opportunities into the design of flood relief schemes, to enhance the social value to protecting communities from flood risk.

The design of all flood relief schemes already assesses the scope for natural water retention measures to provide some degree of flood risk reduction. This proactive approach to soft engineering measures will be further guided by the research, 'SLOWWATERS', the OPW is co-funding with the Environment Protection Agency. The OPW will continue to work proactively with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage with the delivery of the River Basin Management Plans.

The work of the Interdepartmental Flood Policy Co-ordination Group, chaired by the OPW, is the key structure through which the OPW promotes a whole of Government sustainable approach to Ireland's management of flood risk. The 2009 Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management provide a transparent and robust framework for the consideration of flood risk in planning and development management and to minimise the location of future communities in areas at flood risk.

The establishment of the National Flood Forecasting Service by Met Éireann, and overseen by OPW, is key to support the development of a framework for community resilience, to assist individuals and communities to plan and respond to their flood risk; and inform any additional feasible measures to support these communities. The OPW through the Interdepartmental Flood Policy Co-ordination Group will continue to facilitate the development by other sectors of these and other new policy initiatives to help minimise the impact of flood damage to individuals and communities.



Clontarf Garda Station facade works carried out by the OPW's Property Maintenance section.



Theme 3: Climate Action

Mitigating and Adapting to the Impact of Climate Change

Climate change is already having a significant impact on our economy, society and environment and will continue to do so into the future. We are already experiencing the results of this through flooding, more extreme weather and rising sea levels. The Government is creating and implementing policies and strategies to achieve its long-term goal of transitioning to a low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. These are set out in the Government's *Climate Action Plan 2023* and the OPW will prioritise its significant contribution to implementing its actions and achieving its targets.

Objective 3:

Deliver clear plans and actions to contribute to implementing the Climate Action Plan 2023.

Greenhouse gas mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change are being addressed in parallel national plans – respectively through National Mitigation Plans and National Climate Change Adaptation Frameworks. The OPW will co-ordinate its response to both national plans to ensure we optimise our response and bring consistency to working with our partners.

On mitigation, the *Climate Action Plan* sets out 2030 targets for the Public Sector to:

- reduce CO₂ equivalent emissions from the sector by 51%, and
- improve energy efficiency by 50%.

Climate Action Plan 2023

Climate disruption is already having diverse and wide ranging impacts on Ireland's environment, society, economic and natural resources. Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement on climate change require a transformational shift of our economies and societies towards climate resilient and sustainable development. The *Climate Action Plan 2019* sets out an ambitious course of action over the coming years to address this issue.

Climate Action Plan 2023 is the second annual update to Ireland's *Climate Action Plan 2019*. This plan is the first to be prepared under the *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021* and economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. The plan implements the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings and sets a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve our emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050, as we committed to in the *Programme for Government*.

The OPW has maintained a long-standing tradition of building design based on energy efficiency, dating back to the 1996 publication *Green Design; Sustainable Building for Ireland*. Through our *Optimising Power @ Work* campaign, we focus on instigating behavioural change, the elimination of waste, the optimisation of existing controls and the upgrading of mechanical and electrical systems.

By 2022, departments have been able to achieve energy savings of approximately 28% by partnering with the OPW which has allowed us demonstrate leadership on energy efficiency for the whole of our economy and society. As we continue to promote this campaign over the coming three years, we will support the Government's Climate Action Plan by expanding its focus to address not just the use of energy but also its source, by reducing, where possible the use of energy generated from fossil fuels.

Our response to climate action presents a number of opportunities in respect of the provision of new buildings and deep retrofit projects. We will enhance our current architectural and landscape design. Where possible we will embrace opportunities in anticipating future trends including the concept of embodied energy and life cycle costs. The OPW are taking the lead in a number of Public Sector Retrofit Pathfinder Projects. These exemplar projects will contribute to sustainable and strategic management of the public building stock, reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. These flagship projects will also allow the OPW to build an evidence base on design approach, specifications and costs which will support the development of scalable models for energy management and retrofit investment in the OPW's and the Public Sector's building stock in the achievement of national policy targets. The pathfinder projects will also input into the continued updating of policies, procedures, guidance and practices required to support the implementation of Climate Action and Sustainability Strategies and the transition to Modern Methods of Construction including, Design for Manufacture and Assembly (DFMA) and the Circular Construction Economy (CCE).

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has reported that for a 1.5°C rise in temperature, the global mean sea level could rise by up to approximately 1 metre by 2100. Projections of more intense Atlantic storms could potentially increase surge events and wave heights. Met Éireann has also projected that in Ireland, the autumns and winters may become wetter, with a possible increase in heavy precipitation events of approximately 20%.

These climate change projections indicate that flooding events are expected to become more frequent and severe in the future. This will have a considerable impact on flood risk in Ireland, particularly where our cities and most of our main towns are located either on the coast or alongside our estuaries or rivers. The design of flood relief schemes, under the overall framework of our Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs), will include an assessment of adaptation requirements with a view to protecting many of the properties that would otherwise become prone to increased flooding from future climate change scenarios.

Building on the FRMPs, the OPW published a Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Flood Risk Management 2019 - 2024, in line with the requirements of the National Adaptation Framework and the Climate Action Plan 2019. The Sectoral Plan will be implemented during the timeframe of this Strategy to

meet the objectives of ongoing research and assessment, and adapting our flood risk management practice to address the potential impacts of climate change on future flood risk and risk to communities, householders and businesses.

The OPW will assess the vulnerability to climate change of state-owned heritage assets, including National Monuments, National Historic Properties, public buildings, designed landscapes and gardens, and others. We will integrate climate action into all heritage management plans and policies. We will undertake disaster-risk management plans for state-owned historic buildings and collections, setting out measures to minimise the likelihood of an emergency and reduce the extent of damage and loss should it occur.

The impacts of climate change on our coast cut across many sectors and require planning now to prepare for the medium and longer term climate change impacts. The OPW is jointly chairing an Interdepartmental Group established to develop a national co-ordinated and integrated coastal change policy with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and will submit options and recommendations to the Government for consideration for managing the projected impact of coastal change to our coastal communities, economies, heritage, culture and environment.



The Blasket Centre's (Ionad an Bhlascaoid) new visitor experience includes a new exhibition to deliver an authentic, and imaginative re-telling of the story of the Blasket Islands.



Theme 4: People and Processes

Enhancing our Organisational Capability

Our staff are the key to the OPW's success. Organisational capability describes the unique combination of skills, processes, technologies, and human abilities that enable our quality service delivery. We have actively supported our staff to develop their competencies and careers which has contributed to both their personal development and the achievement of organisational objectives. Our staff actively embrace change to add efficiency to how we work. We are fully committed to the ongoing programme of change in the Civil and Public Service, including through *Our Public Service 2020*. The OPW will engage with DPENDPDR to implement the findings of the Organisational Capability Review, conducted during 2022, the report from which is due to be published during 2023. We will assess the findings of this review and welcome the opportunity to further improve our processes to the benefit of our customers and our staff. Our current processes place the OPW at the forefront of driving excellence in all areas, including in managing public investment and project delivery in a flexible and client-focussed manner and presenting Ireland's heritage. We will continue to develop a "One OPW" mind-set, with equality, inclusion and fairness at our core, driven by shared active commitment to organisational goals and priorities and brought to life by our organisational Values. We are committed to strengthening our organisational capability where possible to deliver in an environment with ever changing needs and expectations.

Objective 4

Strengthen our organisational capability through the effective development of our staff and optimised, innovative processes to support delivery of the OPW's business objectives.

There are many facets to the OPW that have evolved over the years to be the body charged by Government with resolving widely varied and often unrelated challenges and responsibilities in land, flood, construction and building management. The breadth of the organisation's role can be appreciated in our stewardship of properties from the very ancient to the brand new, our role in flood protection, our expertise in State event organisation and many other activities. It is difficult to capture this breadth in a single succinct definition. Through a combination of in house administrative, professional, technical and craft disciplines, supported by externally procured expertise, the OPW provides professional estate, capital infrastructure and advisory services of a high standard to Government and the country.

The OPW has one of the broadest aggregation of skill sets available to any organisation, public or private, in the State. It uses this broad base to support its ambition to be at the forefront of driving transformational change in the Civil Service. This ambition is commensurate with its role of steward and custodian of property and cultural State capital. The OPW aims to burnish its established track record and reputation through quality and timely delivery of its services.

Our strategic focus is to build on our organisational capability. We will work with managers and staff to create the optimal environment for staff to realise their potential, to shape and support their career and life ambitions and to make a difference every day through meaningful and stretching work. By attracting, developing and retaining the best people, we will shape the organisation with the right skills, to be the right size with the right costs and locations. We commit to growing internal talent, recruiting entry level talent, developing an apprenticeship framework and implementing succession planning to ensure tacit knowledge transfer and service consistency. Equality and engagement supports will remain central to employee relations within the OPW. The development of a revised HR Strategy along with a Learning and Development Strategy and Workforce Plan will provide an overarching framework for achieving these important objectives.

The relationship between effective leadership and strong performance is widely recognised in this strategy. Managers will be supported in their development as mentors and coaches through an ethos of lifelong learning. Collaboration, knowledge sharing, peer learning and post project reviews are core to our approach to our work and will continue to enable and promote capability development.

We will optimise those processes to achieve efficiencies, where possible, and foster an innovative mind-set that is driven by continuous improvement. We will examine the use of digital, technological and automation innovations in delivering services to our client organisations and customers, as well as ensuring that the best technology is available to allow staff to perform. We will further develop our organisational capability to support effective, innovative and emerging work practices. For example, the introduction of appropriate BIM deliverables into OPW procurement processes – both for design services and contractors. It has the potential to reduce direct building costs, mitigate construction risk and reduce potential contractual conflicts, providing improved outcomes on public works projects.

Accredited Management Systems (such as ISO 9001) will be enhanced and spread across the organisation to structure and streamline our documented processes in order to implement best practice, to comply with statutory and regulatory requirements, to identify non-conformance and continuously improve quality and consistency. This will be underpinned by the development of an Innovation Strategy which will help identify new ways of thinking, emerging technologies and more effective processes to support operational effectiveness and efficiency. We will introduce improved case-tracking solutions with automated workflows and enhanced by Robotic Process Automation technology. Paper processes will continue to be reduced and data analytics along with reporting solutions will be enhanced to assist with planning and decision-making. As part of this, we will place a high value on data collection, maintenance and appropriate sharing. By further developing and enhancing our systems and processes, we can ensure compliance with our statutory and legislative responsibilities including in our occupational health, safety and welfare systems.



Fitout of new Passport Offices in Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.

7

Measuring and Monitoring Our Performance

Section 4 of the Public Service Management Act, 1997 requires the Chairman of the OPW to provide progress reports to the Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery & Reform on the implementation of the Strategy Statement annually or at such intervals as the Government may instruct from time to time. A Strategic Review is included in the Annual Report of the OPW, which is submitted to the Minister of State with responsibility for the Office of Public Works and the Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery & Reform and is published on our website www.opw.ie.

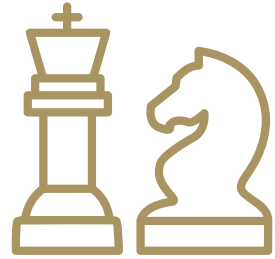
Delivering on our objectives and measurement through related outcomes will be critical to the success of this Strategy. By measuring and monitoring our performance, we will ensure that the OPW is meeting the ambitions set out in this Strategy. Accordingly, the strategic thematic objectives set out in this strategy will feed into Three Year Business Plans.

The Three Year Business Plans allows us to set out the measures, actions and resources required, their priority and sequence; and the best timing for change, so that we can embed what we are doing, and pace the introduction of new initiatives. They will also set out the targets and indicators that we can use to measure our performance and achievements.

The Three Year Business Plans will inform the annual business planning processes. The annual Operational Plans will provide an opportunity to monitor and inform continued progress and for individual staff these annual plans inform Annual Role Profiles. These are reviewed six monthly as part of the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) of the Office.

A Management Board Sub-group will be responsible for ensuring that each of the objectives under the four themes is monitored and measured at regular intervals. There will also be opportunities for regular stakeholder feedback to ensure objectives are being progressed.

1 | OPW Strategy



2 | Three Year Business Plans



3 | One Year Operational Plans



4 | PMDS Goal Setting





Cahir Castle, one of Ireland's largest and best-preserved historic castles, won the European Film Commissions Network Location Award in 2021.



OPW