

21st June, 2023

**Part 8 Proposed Kildare County Library, Archives and Cultural Centre, Main Street,
Newbridge Co. Kildare.**

To whom it may concern,

This letter is written in support of the proposal by Kildare County Council for the refurbishment and extension of the existing Newbridge (County) Library, to create the new Kildare County Library, Archives and Cultural Centre.

Riverbank Arts Centre, the municipal arts centre in County Kildare, is the adjacent building on Main Street, Newbridge. We have viewed the detailed design proposal by Networks. As a neighbouring cultural organisation, we fully support the vision, development and realisation of a cultural quarter in Newbridge.

We believe this attractive public building will form an important gateway to the main street, and as a flagship cultural building it will set the tone for adjacent cultural resources. We welcome the provision of greater accessibility to cultural buildings in Newbridge, and the proposed improvements to the public realm infrastructure. We believe this building, along with its enhanced resources, will reinvigorate and reanimate Newbridge's civic and cultural quarter.

Riverbank Arts Centre has a separate redevelopment proposal, due to go to Part VIII for approval in the coming months. Our design team, Studio Red, has liaised closely with Networks over the last year to consider efficiencies in relation to construction requirements and to ensure minimum disruption to the public. The ideal resolution is to ensure that these redevelopments take place concurrently. Riverbank Arts Centre's redevelopment plans are equally ambitious, together these accessible and attractive public buildings will become the cultural nexus of Newbridge, and a visionary resource for County Kildare.

Riverbank Arts Centre has a track record of working closely with Kildare County Council Libraries on ambitious projects and programmes, including Kildare Readers' Festival. The proposed redevelopment offers great potential for increased collaboration and enhanced support of local organisations, artists and arts workers, school groups and individuals, based in Newbridge and the wider county.

We welcome the proposed use of outdoor space, and have refined our own design proposal to ensure that these spaces, including the proposed Sensory Garden, can be accessed more readily via our building. The shared external space offers a great opportunity for outdoor cultural events and activities.

In summary, it's our belief that the proposed Kildare County Library, Archives and Cultural Centre, alongside the Riverbank Arts Centre redesign proposal, will allow a far greater connection with communities we serve, and significantly enhanced facilities for all. As attractive cultural buildings at the entrance to the town, they will greatly enhance the streetscape of Newbridge. They signify the importance of arts, culture and literature to County Kildare and will offer exemplary and exciting creative spaces and resources to young people and people of all ages, in Newbridge and its environs.

Should you require any additional information, the board or executive at Riverbank Arts Centre or our own design team, Studio Red, would be happy to provide it.



Paul Davis
Chair



Caroline Williams
Venue Director

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Riverbank Arts Centre CLG Is a registered Charity (20074982) with Revenue Commissioners (CHY 19193)