

# ÁRAS AN PHOBAIL

integrated services building



## DESIGN TEAM

Project Manager and Quantity Surveyors

**Richard Walsh and Associates**

Architects

**Michael Williams Associates**

Civil, Structural, Building Services Engineers, Energy Advisors and Traffic Management Consultants

**Malachy Walsh and Partners**

Building Contractor

**M Fitzgibbon (Contractor) Ltd**

**Áras and Phobail** is a multi tenanted community building which consists mainly of office space. This building has been designed to incorporate the most cost effective construction methods available while achieving maximum energy efficiency and overall value for money. A lengthy consultation process was undertaken in order to fully understand and incorporate into the overall design the spatial requirements and needs of each of the individual tenants. Public consultations allowed the design to develop as not only a Tenant Integrated Centre but also addressed the philosophy of integration of the local community into the use of the building after normal working hours, where shared use in certain spaces would be possible.

The statutory and non-statutory agencies in Tralee, together with the local community, have worked closely together over the past number of years to develop an overall Framework Plan for the improvement and regeneration of the Mitchels area. This plan was endorsed by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2008. The various agencies, the Town Council and the local community continue to work together through the Mitchels/Boherbee Community Participation Task Group and the Mitchels/Boherbee Community Regeneration Steering Committee to ensure the objectives of the framework plan for regeneration are achieved. All parties involved in the regeneration process are working towards the same goal of making sure that there is a vibrant, sustainable community which will contribute positively to the ongoing viability of the Town of Tralee.

The new Community Services Centre will house amongst others NEKD, the Health Services Executive, Kerry Education and Training Board, Kerry Travellers Development Project, An Garda Síochána and Springboard. The Centre will provide a wide range of community, family support, health and education services both for the immediate area and the wider community; as such it is perhaps the single most important project within the Mitchels Regeneration Area.

Áras and Phobail will also accommodate offices for the HSE, NEKD and Tralee Women's Resource, Kerry Education and Training Board, allowing for the development of multi-agency / joint initiatives. These groups will pay a rent that will support and pay for the running of the building, thus ensuring the sustainability of the project into the future. Full occupancy is now achieved and indeed other organisations and groups have confirmed their interest in locating in or relocating to the Centre if space becomes available. The allocated tenancies are long term advocates of the project and deliver services which are always in demand, especially in times of recession. The fact that so many different agencies will be housed in the one facility will give rise to ease of access to services for the clients and particularly the residents of the area. Each agency will be in a position to make referrals to other agencies in the Centre which is a positive for all involved. The inclusion of a large community room on the ground floor of the building is also a tremendous asset to the community.

The new Centre will ultimately be connected to a five megawatt central district heating system that will provide heat and hot water to some 700 homes in the area as well as possibly to Tralee General Hospital, Kerry County Library, Moyderwell National School, Presentation Convent Secondary School, Lee Strand Dairy and various other community services facilities in the area. Woodchip fuel will be produced locally in association with the Kerry Wood Energy Association. Malachy Walsh and Partners are advisors and designers in all aspects of the energy input, both on this project and on the larger overall district heating undertaking.



The new centre is jointly funded through the Dormant Accounts Fund, loan facilities from Tralee Credit Union and the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government's Regeneration Programme with additional support from Tralee Town Council and is managed by the Mitchels Integrated Services Company Ltd. This company was charged with the responsibility of negotiating with the various potential tenants of the property and to agree a design for the building. Overall construction cost is €4.3M.

## Building Occupants

North and East Kerry Development

Kerry Education and Training Board

Health Service Executive

Tralee Women's Resource Centre

Kerry Intervention & Disability Services Mid Kerry Team

Kerry County Council Community Room and Regeneration Office

Springboard

Kerry Diocesan Youth Service

Kerry Travellers Health & Community Development Project

