The RATHMINES INITIATIVE

C/O 6 Prince Arthur Terrace,
Rathmines, Dublin 6, D06 A8P5

7th November 2024

Patrick O'Donovan, TD,
Minister for Further and Higher Education,
52 St. Stephen's Green,
Dublin 2, DO2 DR67

Re: Rathmines Town Hall and Rathmines Technical Institute

Dear Minister O'Donovan,

It was a pleasure to meet you and your team some time ago at San Elmo, Killiney, in connection with the "Abbey Stones", during your term as Minister for the OPW, and I'd like to congratulate you on your subsequent appointment as Minister of Further and Higher Education.

Today I am writing to you on behalf of The Rathmines Initiative in connection with the two adjacent iconic Rathmines buildings noted above, with which, I believe, you are familiar. Both are in the ownership of higher education bodies within your scope of responsibility, being the ETB in the case of the Town Hall, currently in use as a College of Further Education, and TUD in the case of the Technical Institute.

The Technical Institute building is vacant after the relocation of its educational function to TUD Grangegorman and the expiry of a temporary lease to a creche. As well as containing considerable current accommodation potential, it sits on a site of 0.53 hectares with extensive undeveloped back-lands which have great potential for positive future development to benefit the public and the community in Rathmines.

In the meantime, there is a public project in its very early stages to refurbish the Town Hall and more importantly, its historic auditorium, which could in the future provide a very much needed amenity for Rathmines. When that project moves forward, the ETB's educational function will need temporary accommodation, and for this, the Technical Institute building would be ideal. (Currently many of the large rooms in the Town Hall are being used as lecture halls for ETB courses, and the classrooms in the Technical Institute would be ideal substitutes for these.)

There are also a number of large spaces in the Tech building which could in the meantime serve for community use in Rathmines, such as for meeting spaces and as overflow for the Swan Leisure complex, which has been operating at full capacity for a number of years now. If the Tech Institute were transferred from TUD to the ETB, this valuable accommodation now lying idle could be brought back to public use.

So, the purpose of this letter is to alert you to the value of these two buildings, to ask you to use your influence to have TUD and the ETB engage with us and the local community on the ideas above, and most of all, to endeavour to ensure that these two iconic public buildings will not be sold for private use.

Yours Sincerely, Ciarán McGahon, pp The Rathmines Initiative

Cc: Local TDs & Councillors