

Renovation Passport Guidance for Property Owners and Occupiers

How to enhance the performance
of your commercial building.

May 2026

1. Introduction

Energy upgrades can offer valuable benefits for your business, customers, and the environment. By improving the energy efficiency of your building, you can reduce operating costs, enhance your reputation, boost property value, improve occupiers' comfort and well-being and lower your environmental impact.

What is a Renovation Passport?

A Renovation Passport is a voluntary tool for implementing phased upgrades to a property, and optimising building performance.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS:

- Digital or physical document tracking a building's energy and renovation roadmap
- Provides staged actions to improve energy performance and reduce carbon
- Facilitates light/deep renovations aligned with other commitments, such as leases and finance
- Supports regulatory compliance, financing, and long-term planning.

Context

The latest version of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EU 2024/1275) sets a clear direction for the full decarbonisation of the European building stock by 2050, with clear goals and tools to achieve that vision, including strengthened provisions for energy renovation.

To kick-start a renovation wave across the continent, the directive addresses energy consumption and a reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with our built environment, highlighting measures such as: requiring member states to develop a national building renovation plan (art. 3), and to introduce Minimum Energy Performance Standards in the non-residential sector (art. 9), as well as voluntary renovation passports (art. 12), alongside financial and technical support for deep renovation (art. 17 and 18).

Steps to create a Renovation Passport

The process involves an appropriately skilled assessor / design consultant analysing a property in terms of existing systems and performance to establish phased targets for upgrade, identifying optimisation measures by highlighting priorities, plus energy and cost implications (costs / savings).

1. Survey & data collection
(Building information (type, age, size, usage))
2. Assess current performance
(BER, energy data, carbon)
3. Identify & prioritise renovation interventions
4. Build plan / roadmap
(short, medium, long-term actions) including cost benefits
5. Monitor, verify and update with actual renovation outcomes



2. Benefits of Energy Renovation

For Building Owners

- Increase property value and attract tenants
- Reduce operational and maintenance costs
- Avail of business opportunities and comply early with regulations
- Strengthen business / property value
- Addressing social responsibility / energy resilience

For Building Occupiers

- Lower energy bills / energy resilience
- Boost brand reputation and/or support sustainability commitments
- Increased comfort, wellbeing, and productivity
- Access to building's energy data
- Addressing social responsibility / energy resilience / compliance ready

For Society

Social:

- **Improved occupant comfort** through upgraded building envelopes (walls, windows, doors, etc.).
- **Lower need for heating and cooling** through improved thermal performance and energy efficiency.
- **Enhanced air quality and temperature stability**, reducing risks linked to dampness, overheating and cold environments.
- **Training and reskilling opportunities**, creating well-paid green jobs and supporting a just transition.
- **Preserved heritage features**, helping to maintain cultural identity and continuity within communities.

Economic:

- **Extended building lifespan** and preserved asset value.
- **Lower utility bills** through enhanced energy efficiency.
- **Shorter project timelines** compared to new developments, allowing upgraded spaces to be brought to the market faster.
- **Enhanced competitiveness** of existing assets in markets increasingly driven by environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria.
- **Resilience against climate threats**, ensuring operational continuity and long-term viability.

Environmental:

- **Lower resource demand** and reduced use of energy-intensive manufacturing processes for virgin materials.
- **Less waste** created by demolitions.
- **Lower whole life carbon emissions** — 50%-70% reduction compared to new construction.



3. What is the value of a Renovation Passport?

Building Renovation Passports can contribute to an increase in Ireland's renovation rate, both directly and indirectly.

A Renovation 'Roadmap', as captured in a Renovation Passport can provide building owners/occupiers and finance agencies clarity on proposed renovation measures, while also motivating action to implement renovation steps. By assessing buildings holistically, a Renovation Passport can ensure the most effective path to achieving Net Zero targets, supporting logical sequenced upgrades, avoiding lock-in / re-doing works.

Renovation Passports are intended to be living documents, evolving alongside buildings, investment cycles, lease/maintenance cycles and regulatory requirements, supporting decision-making over several years.

Renovation Passports for non-residential properties can deliver multiple benefits including:

Business Value

- Providing a roadmap for energy and maintenance costs reduction
- Future-proofing buildings for increased resilience on energy costs
- Boosting property value & rental appeal, addressing demand for energy efficient spaces

Financial Value

- Demonstrating long-term strategy addressing investor confidence, and allowing easier access to funding
- Providing evidence based, credible plan mitigating future stranding risk

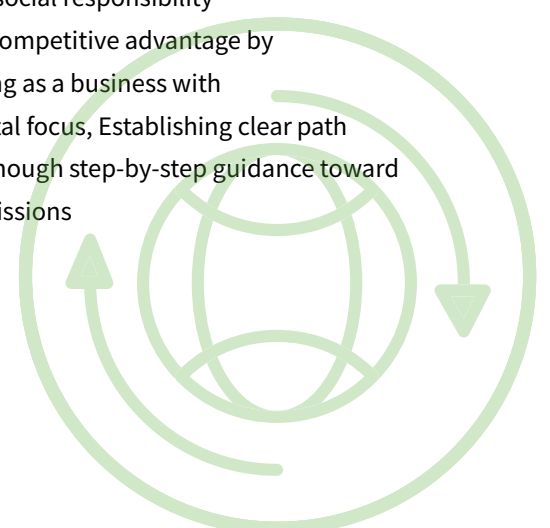
- Spreading costs over time with a clear schedule, through phased investment planning
- Supporting credibility in ESG reporting demonstrating measurable progress

Regulatory & Risk Management Value

- Avoid stranded assets by future proofing against higher energy and carbon standards
- Addressing compliance aligning upgrades with upcoming regulations
- Reducing uncertainty and delivery efficiencies in lieu of ad-hoc multiple interventions

Value to Workforce and Customers

- Improving lighting, ventilation and comfort boosts well-being and productivity
- Promoting positive corporate approach to climate and social responsibility
- Supporting competitive advantage by differentiating as a business with environmental focus, Establishing clear path to net-zero though step-by-step guidance toward reducing emissions



4. Opportunities & Challenges as identified by industry stakeholders

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“Commercial property upgrades are not just about sustainability anymore, it’s about protecting value, future-proofing portfolios, and staying investable”

“Buildings that fail to meet ESG standards may see falling values, reduced liquidity, and limited leasing demand”

“Without robust data, ESG claims become difficult to defend and that’s where stranded asset risk really emerges. Buildings need to perform in real life and not just on paper”

“Making best use of our existing buildings is arguably the most impactful solution for the built environment to decarbonise”

“Compliance is one driver, but competition is another. When it comes to cost savings, the value of the asset and the sustainability of the asset are so closely linked so sustainability just makes sense in this sector”

“Making energy renovations as straightforward as possible is crucial for driving adoption in the SME sector.”

“Commercial buildings account for a significant share of Ireland’s total energy consumption. Accelerating the depth and pace of renovation in this sector is essential for achieving our climate and energy targets.”

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“Ireland stands at a pivotal moment in its energy journey.

As one of Europe’s most challenging periods unfolds, our national strategy is driven by a firm commitment to climate neutrality, energy security, and economic resilience. Over the coming years, Ireland must navigate the growing complexity of the energy trilemma – balancing energy affordability, sustainability, and security.”

Dermot Byrne, Chair SEAI

“In the EU’s ambitious journey toward climate neutrality, retrofitting existing buildings emerges as a critical strategy. With projections indicating that up to 80% of the buildings that will be in use by 2050 already stand today, this emphasises the urgency of upgrading the current building stock. Alarming, 35% of these buildings are over half a century old, and 97% fall short of the energy efficiency standards needed to meet future carbon targets”

World Green Building Council Building Retrofits: Why upgrade our existing buildings - World Green Building Council

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- ALSO AVAILABLE:



- MORE INFORMATION:
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- <https://www.igbc.ie/project/renovation-passports/>