

Digital Hub Borris-In-Ossory Courthouse

ARCHITECTURE



Design Statement and Architectural Impact Assessment

July 2023

Howley Hayes Cooney is a Dublin based practice that combines many diverse talents, with a belief that great architecture creates a sense of time and place that enriches our lives. Throughout thirty-five years of practice, we have established a strong design ethos with particular emphasis on creativity, collaboration, and context. Our work includes - the design of new contemporary buildings, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and the creative conservation of many important historic buildings and places. We have earned a strong and trusted reputation from our clients, peers, consultants, and others with whom we collaborate, and the quality of our work has been recognised through many national and international awards.

We are a design led practice working at the intersection of contemporary design and creative conservation; and we are passionate about great buildings and places of all ages. Our creative approach to conservation is centred on our belief that change is continuous, and buildings are effectively ‘alive’ and

resilient enough to evolve over time to serve new viable purposes. Skilful design, coupled with a scholarly understanding of history and significance is essential to deliver sensitive interventions that will sit comfortably within or beside historic fabric. Sometimes radical intervention is necessary, to add new layers of meaning, or to remove damaging accretions applied previously. If guided by an understanding of history and significance, and designed sensitively to respect these inherent qualities, the ‘aesthetics of age’ will be preserved, and the building given new meaningful purpose. Conservation is also an act of sustainability, both in terms of retaining the energy embodied within a building while preserving the ‘sense of place’ it engenders.

Our working mantra is to do “as little as possible but as much as is necessary” to ensure appropriate protection to historic buildings and places, while creating opportunities and imaginative design solutions for our clients. Our conservation work covers a wide range of historic buildings and places, many of national and international

cultural significance, ranging in date from the twelfth century to the twentieth century. And in 2015 we received the RIAI Award for Commercial/Retail for People’s Park, for the conversion of a protected structure to serve as a restaurant.

HHC recently completed the RIAI award-winning Carlingford Castle, providing a fully accessible route through the preserved ruins, which allows visitors to enjoy a full understanding of the historic context. We also received the RIAI Adaptable Reuse Award (Highly Commended) for 9 Merrion Square, a Georgian townhouse in Dublin.

We have completed many repair and conservation projects on sites of archaeological and historic importance throughout Ireland including Birr and Daingean Courthouses, Russborough, Grand Canal Harbour, Kilmainham Mill and Law Society. We have completed over 270 conservation reports including conservation management plans for many significant buildings and places around Ireland.

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Quantity Surveyor

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Landscape Architect

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ISSUE

Revision

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Stage

Draft planning issue.

Planning issue.

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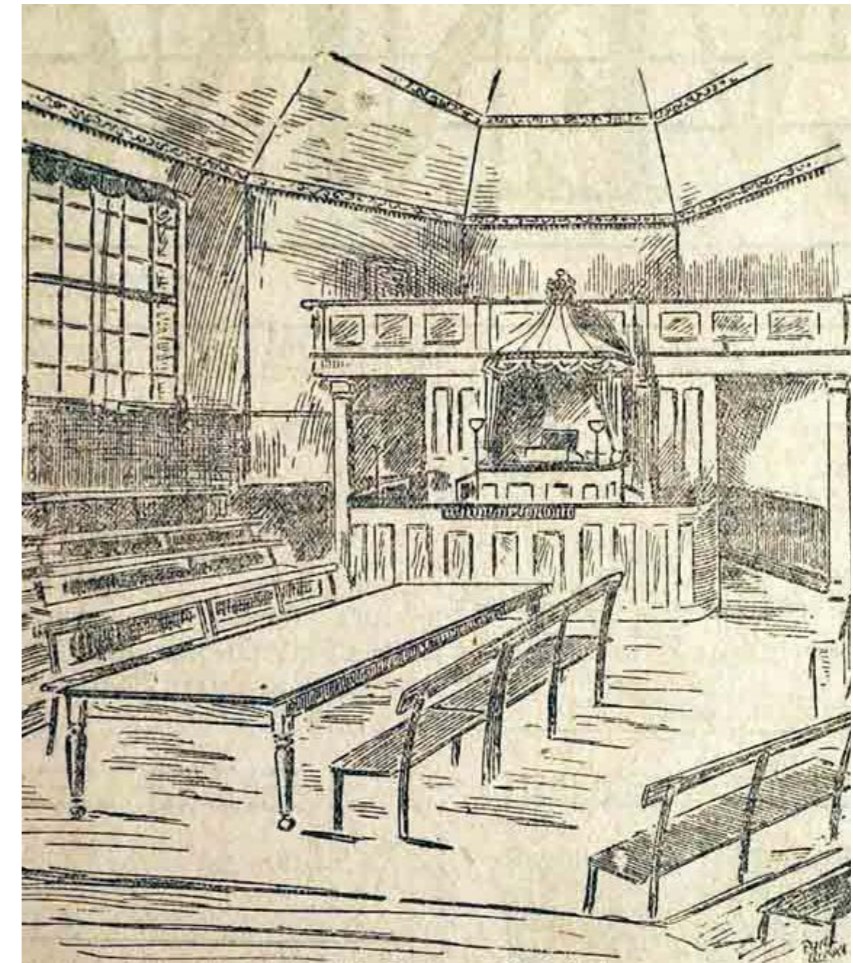


Figure 01
Dublin City Assembly House sketch

1.0 Executive Summary

Borris-in-Ossory courthouse, a protected structure, was built in the early nineteenth century, to serve as a ‘petty sessions’ seat within the county of Offaly. Constructed at a time of great legislative change, Borris-in-Ossory is similar to a number of other courthouses in Ireland built during this period and is described as a ‘Georgian’ style courthouse. Though the architect is officially unknown, it is attributed to William Butler Deane, who is also thought to be responsible for an almost identical courthouse in Stradbally.

Over the course of the twentieth century as further legislative change swept the country, it ceased to serve as a courthouse and was handed over to Laois County Council by the OPW. It has been unoccupied for more than twenty years and is now in a derelict state, though the roof of the building has been well maintained. Positioned on a highly visible site to the west end of the village, with its boarded up windows and stored material to the rear of the building, it has become an eyesore, and is in urgent need of attention.

The architectural quality, historical background and social significance of Borris-in-Ossory courthouse make it a building of regional if not national importance, when considered as part of a collective of courthouses built during the early twentieth century in Ireland.

There is a clear aspiration to bring this important structure back into a viable and sustainable use, as mandate in the county development plan, and in 2022, LCC procured a design team to commence work on the project. The intention is to conserve, refurbish and adapt the building in a sustainable manner for use as a digital working hub by the council and community. Well connected by road to Portlaoise, Roscrea and Nenagh, and by train at Ballybrophy, the development of Borris-in-Ossory courthouse will reinvigorate the village and bring back into use one its most important structures.

Various design options were explored throughout the design process, and the building was thoroughly assessed to determine the potential and possibilities for development. An accommodation brief was developed which includes for a number of flexible meeting / office / work spaces along with staff facilities, tea-stations, WCs, stores, and a lift for access. Following initial studies of the courthouse, the design team explored the option to extend the building, to provide the service and circulation spaces within new extensions to the rear façade and north wing. This would allow the historic rooms to serve as a suite of meeting / office spaces, minimising impact on the protected structure, and allow for potential growth and expansion within the building and site.

Further development on the footprint of the old prisoners yard will provide a multi-functional space, for the use of the council or tenants by day, and by the local community afterhours. Availing of south facing light and providing a new front façade to the main

street, this development will also provide a much-improved arrival point for pedestrians on approach from the village. A raised south facing terrace to the front will remain open to the public daily, creating a pleasant external place to gather, sit and socialise.

To the front of the building, a new landscaped park will be provided, to enhance the setting of this important historic structure, and to provide a much-needed public space amenity within the village.

The design proposals have been prepared by an experienced design team, who are familiar with complex refurbishment and development works to protected structures. Led by a Grade 1 Conservation architect, the impact on the cultural significance of the building has also been considered throughout the design process, and the final design proposals ensure minimal impact on the most important aspects of this early nineteenth century structure.

Figure 02
Aerial view of the former courthouse site at Borris-in-Ossory



2.0 Introduction

Located in close proximity to the M7 motorway, and less than a thirty minute drive from Portlaoise, Borris-in-Ossory is well positioned to serve as a remote digital working hub. Ballybrophy train station is a fifteen minute cycle from the village, and is served by the Dublin to Limerick train service.

Records of a bank loan drawn down for the construction of both the Borris-In-Ossory and Stradbally courthouses date from the late 1820s. Designed to house the local petty sessions Borris-In-Ossory is considered to be an early prototype for courthouses from the late 1830s and early 1840s across Ireland. Similarities with Stradbally are notable, in particular the articulation of the facades and internal arrangements of the courthouse itself. Stradbally was fully conserved and renovated in 2011, as a library and arts centre, and it is interesting to note that the stairs in Stradbally courthouse appears to be almost identical to those at Borris-In-Ossory. These two courthouses were likely designed by the same architect, William Deane Butler.

The project was advertised on the eTenders website in March 2022 by Laois County Council, with a brief calling for the conservation and renovation of an existing protected structure, Borris-in-Ossory courthouse, for use as a digital hub or office space. Funded by the RRDF, this project is essentially about the regeneration and adaptive reuse of an historic derelict building, creating a viable use and revitalising this forgotten site for the local community.

HHC visited the site in April 2022, to assess the condition of the building and gain a better understanding of its potential for adaptive reuse. HHC subsequently submitted a bid as part of a multi-disciplinary design team in May 2022 which was accepted and deemed as the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) in August 2022.

The project team visited the site in November 2022, to begin the design process.

The four most significant aspects to be addressed will be as follows:

- Ensuring the protected structure is repaired and conserved in accordance with best conservation practice.
- Upgrading the built fabric and services to provide an energy efficient and sustainably managed building.
- Providing accessibility throughout the building for all users.
- Alteration and upgrade of the building to achieve fire safety certificate requirements.

Figure 03
Claremorris courtroom session

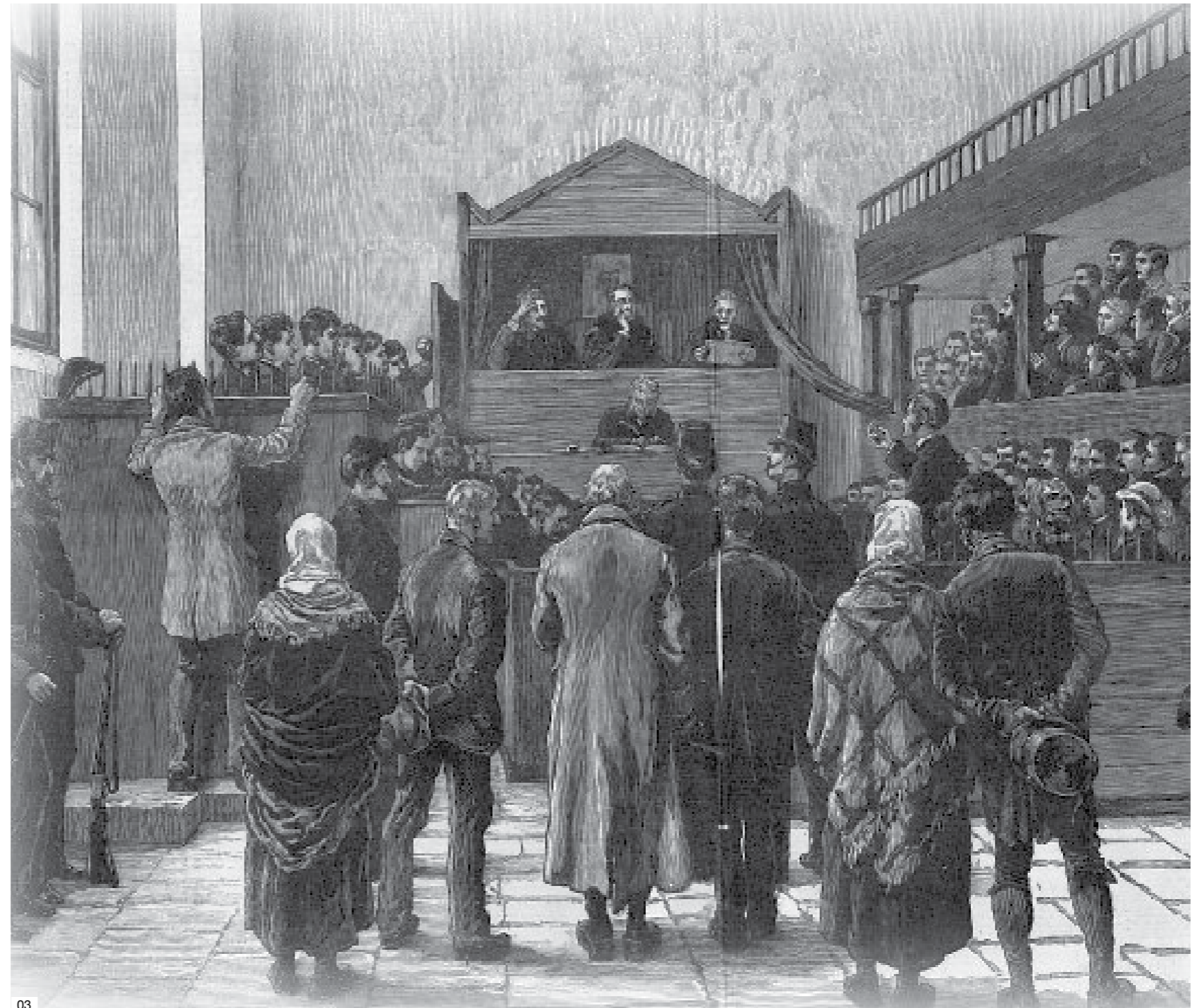


Figure 04
First edition OS map

Figure 05
Typical courtroom interior

3.0 History of Borris-In-Ossory Courthouse

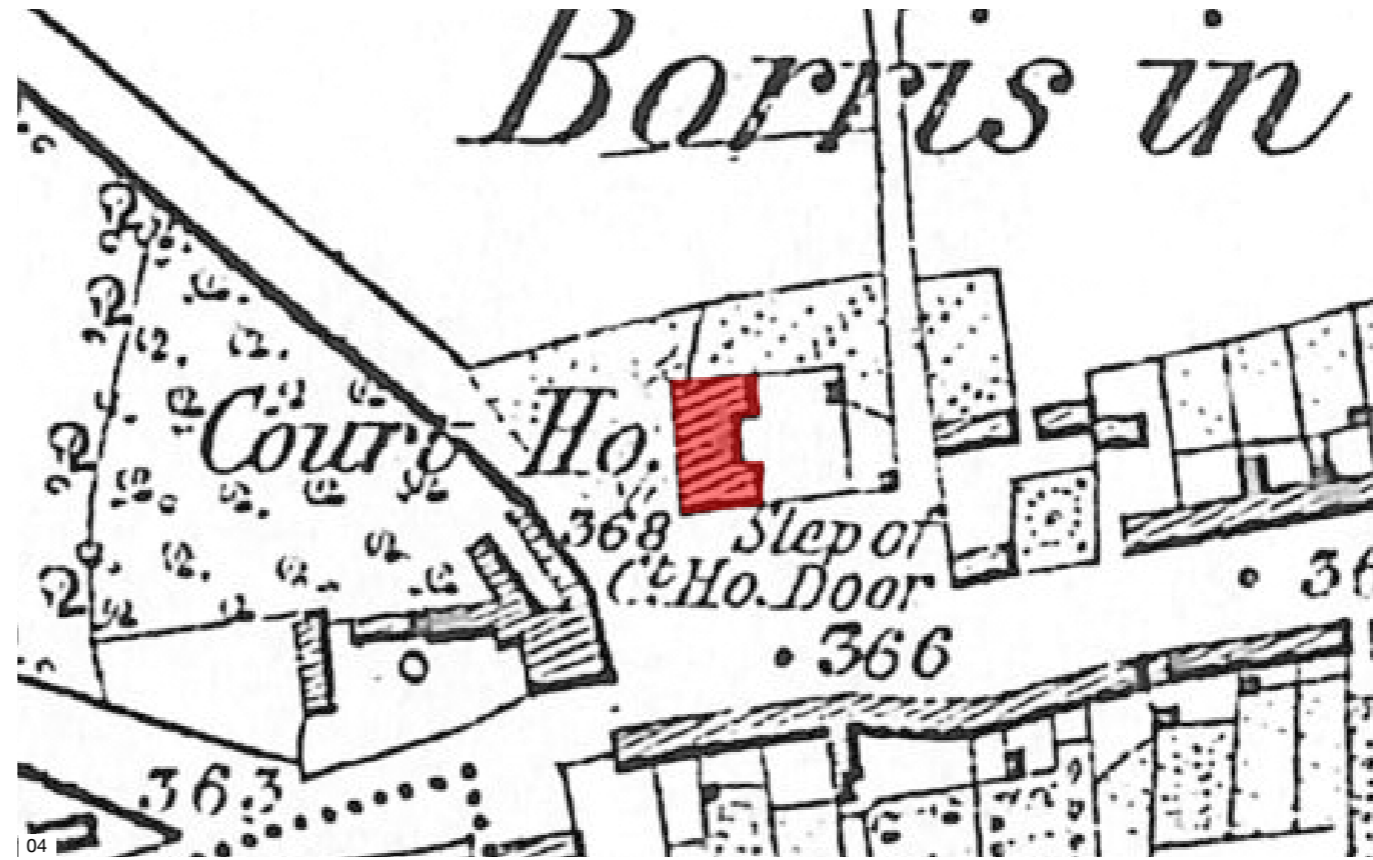
Borris-in-Ossory courthouse is an interesting early nineteenth century example of an Irish courthouse. It was constructed at the outset of a very active period of civic and legislative building in Ireland in response to evolving legislative requirements in the country.

At the turn of the nineteenth century changes in legislative proceedings led to the restructuring of the court system. These changes were particularly evident in the countryside, in smaller courts, with the gradual replacement of the traditional and more informal manor court process, which had been in operation since the seventeenth century. Many towns around Ireland housed 'petty sessions' courthouses, usually consisting of one courtroom, which were constructed between 1820 and 1840. The Petty Sessions Act of 1827 divided counties into petty sessions districts, so named to deal with 'petty crime' such as poaching, illegal distilling, licencing, and smaller employment disputes. These sessions were presided over by a magistrate, and without a jury. Quarter sessions were held four times a year in designated quarter sessions courtrooms, often with several quarter sessions districts per county. Juries were present at quarter sessions as more serious crimes were tried within these courts. The highest court proceeding within each county was the assizes, where the most serious criminal cases were heard, and these were typically held in the largest or most established town in the county.

According to the Gazetteer of Ireland's Court Houses, 'twenty-seven' courthouses could be regarded as deriving from a common or standard design, with modifications. Early prototypes of this type of courthouse are noted as Borris-in-Ossory and Stradbally. Architect William Butler Deane is thought to have been involved in several of these buildings, and architect William Caldbeck is attributed to one of them, Newtownards in Co. Down. Plans and estimates for the petty and quarter sessions court houses in Borris-in-Ossory and Stradbally were submitted to the Board of Works in 1826 as part of a loan application, and this loan was drawn down in 1828.

It is unusual that the courthouse front façade faces away from the village. Charles White, High Sheriff of Laois in 1815, resided west of the courthouse at Charleville House, and was instrumental in commissioning the construction of the building. Apparently, at his insistence, the front façade was to face his residence.

Matthew Keenan's dissertation notes that 'tenders for construction were sought by the Queen's County Grand Jury by advertising in the Freemans Journal in 1826; the contract also included the construction of two new bridewells in Stradbally and Borris-in-Ossory.' This was advertised around the time William Butler Deane was designing a new gaol in Portlaoise, so there is a strong



possibility he was also involved in the Borris-in-Ossory and Stradbally courthouses.

Keenan also notes in his dissertation that the Borris-in-Ossory bridewell 'consisted of a yard, a dayroom, accommodation for the keeper, and three cells for male prisoners; with upstairs providing accommodation for females.' Under the Prisons Act, in 1872, the Lord Lieutenant abolished the bridewells at Borris-in-Ossory, Stradbally and Abbeyleix.

Living quarters were incorporated into the north wing of the courthouse, where three generations of the court clerk's family lived between 1926 and 1987, and this resulted in the construction of the modern lean-to extension to the rear of the north wing.

Borris-in-Ossory was a district court area until 1961, when it was subsumed into the Rathdowney area. It was subsequently used by

Laois County Council, who are believed to have added the door to the south façade for access, lowering the window sill. Unoccupied since the late nineteen nineties, it is now in a derelict condition and is in urgent need of repair.

Historical Maps

The first edition ordnance survey map, surveyed in 1839 (fig. 04), shows the 'courthouse' as a symmetrical structure, with two short returns to the rear of the building. The side elevation of building is clearly set back from the street edge, with a curious note 'Step of Ct. Ho. Door' noted on this part of the map and an enclosed yard is clearly visible to the rear of the building. The front façade addresses what is now known as the Rock Road. There is no evidence of the cell block to the south wing of the building.

The second edition ordnance survey plan (fig. 07), surveyed in 1890, shows the same symmetrical plan as the first edition, also without

LEGEND

Figure 06
1850 Griffith valuation map

Figure 08
1907 OS map

Figure 07
Second edition 1890 OS map

the cell block extension to the south wing. It was customary at this time, on Ordnance Survey maps, to protect or hide the location or any detail of bridewells, and this may explain why it is not visible. Interestingly, the Griffith valuation map of 1850 (fig. 06) does show the cell block wing to the rear, but although the Griffith's Valuation of Laois dates to the mid nineteenth century, the original maps were not kept, and the maps displayed with the valuation are in fact another set from up to 30 years later. This would suggest that this map may show the building more accurately at circa 1880.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1907 (fig. 08) clearly indicates the cell block to the south wing, the building is now asymmetrical in plan, and the road is still unchanged. At some point later in the twentieth century the road was reconfigured and brought closer to the south façade of the courthouse.

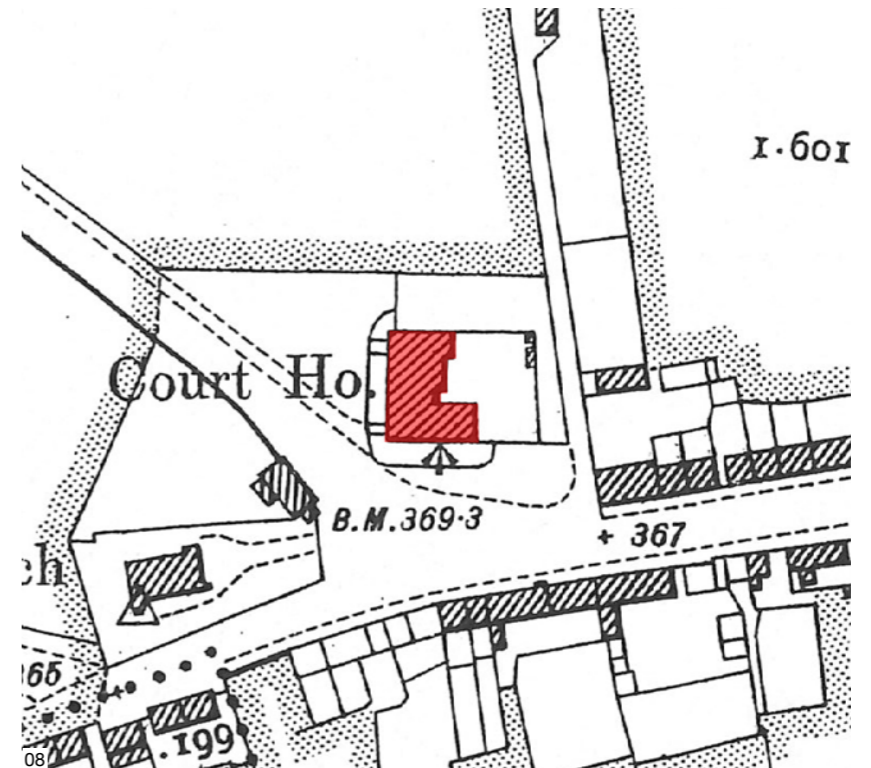
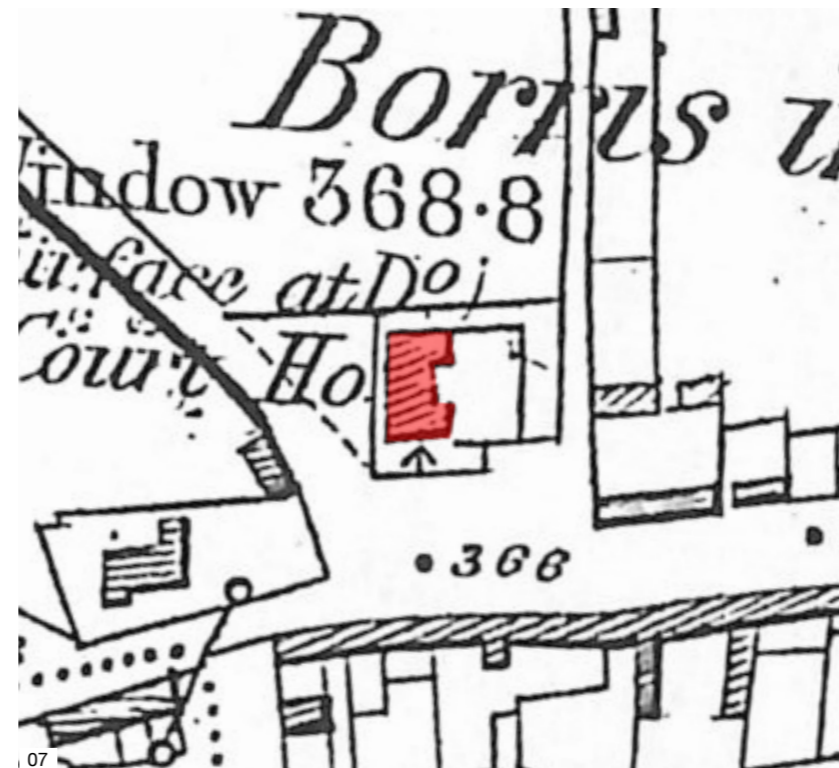
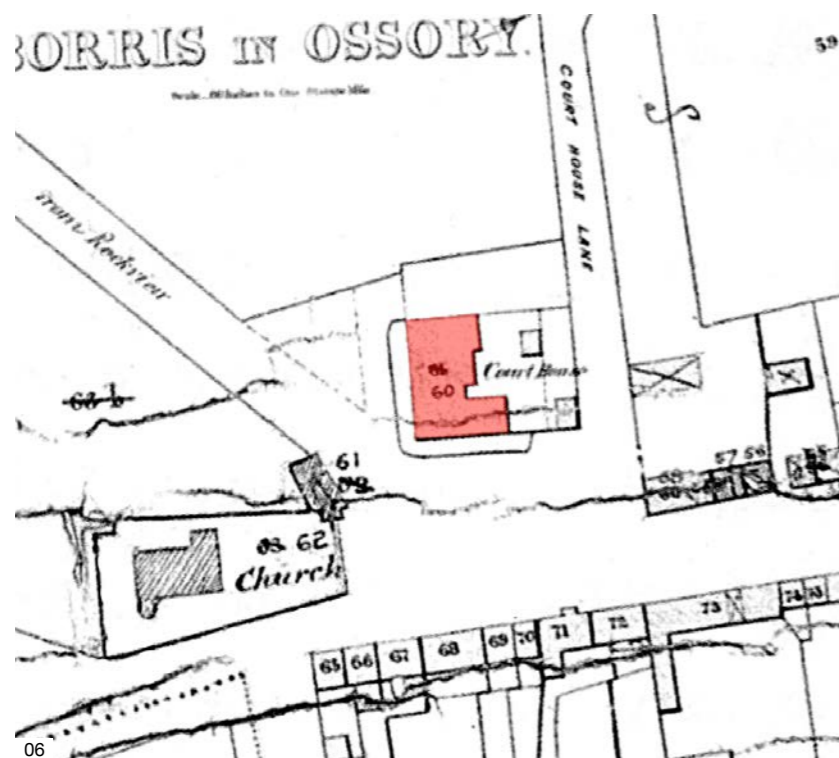


Figure 09
Orthorectified image of east elevation

Figure 10
Orthorectified image of south elevation

4.0 Description & Condition of the Building and Site

The description and condition of various elements of the building is described below. The extent of reconstruction following the fire in the early 1920s is still unclear though certain elements are clearly later insertions and replacements. Further investigations, such as removal of the cement render, will help the team determine the extent of the re-build and this work will be undertaken in later stages of the project. A photographic survey of the building is included in Appendix F.

The Courthouse Exterior

Elevations

Niall McCullough's essay on Irish courthouses in *The Courthouses of Ireland* refers to two types of this building arising during the early nineteenth century, the classical temple, and the Georgian 'house' with a five bay elevation and hipped roof. Borris-in-Ossory falls into the latter category, with its symmetrical five bay front façade arrangement, facing west, over a large open forecourt (fig. 10). At ground floor level, three centrally placed recessed panels are flanked by pedimented entrances in the end bays. Above, five round headed windows, positioned between stone pilasters rest on a continuous stone string course. Curved stone architraves terminate in a string course at the spring point of each window.

The south elevation, which addresses the street (fig. 09), is a shorter five bay façade, with blind windows to the rusticated end bays, each positioned over an oculus window. A centre bay contains a three over three window arrangement, the upper windows surmounted by decorative stone mouldings, and the lower opes with plain lugged architraves. One of the window openings has been later modified to accommodate a door, with steps, providing direct access into the cell block. This facade is now uncomfortably close to the main street, the result of a twentieth century street realignment project.

The north elevation is a simpler three bay façade, with rusticated corners and a three over three window arrangement, and the rear elevations of the building are quite plain in execution (fig. 11, 12). Small cell block windows, with bars, are evident on the south wing. Three round headed windows, without architraves or surrounds, indicate the presence of the double height courtroom behind on the main east facade. A later lean-to extension was added to the north wing at some point during the twentieth century and is now in an advanced state of dereliction and should be demolished.

The use of a reddish, purplish sandstone throughout the façade is an unusual choice and distinguishes this building from its near identical twin at Stradbally. This stone is unfortunately showing signs of advanced decay in some areas, with cracking, spalling and delamination visible throughout. This appears to be due to the



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Figure 11
Orthorectified image of north elevation

Figure 12
Orthorectified image of west elevation

Figure 13
View of south east roof corner

Figure 14
View of southern chimney stack

Figure 15
View of north east roof corner

Figure 16
View of north east roof hip



quality of the stone, which has been unable to withstand prolonged exposure, or perhaps the stone was damaged during the fire in the early twentieth century.

The rubble masonry walls within and around the decorative stonework are rendered with a hard cement dash. A roughcast cement render to the north, east and west elevations is relatively intact, but should be removed to allow for inspection of the walls behind and for the reinstatement of a more appropriate finish. The south elevation, which faces the street, has a smooth painted render finish, which should also be removed for inspection purposes.

The imposing two storey front façade is guarded by tall cast iron railings, with breaks to allow access to the pedimented entrance doors at each end.

Roof

Borris Courthouse consists of two wings, joined by a large central block, and a small single storey lean-to adjoining the north wing which was added in the twentieth century. The two storey building has three simple pitched slate roofs, which reflect the floor plan below, with hips to the east ends. The largest pitched roof, supported on queen post trusses, sits over the courtroom, with the two smaller pitched roofs, A-frames, positioned over the north and south wings. The roofs are separated by lead valleys, and the majority of the rainwater discharges to the back of the building, to the east side, keeping the more prominent south and west facades free of rainwater goods. There are historic accounts of a fire during the early twentieth century, which resulted in the loss of the roof, so the homogenous sized heather blue slate, possibly Welsh, is believed to be part of a later roof to the building. Modern rafters and battens below support the roof, though the queen post trusses appear original and must have survived the fire. Though no underlay was installed at this time, some parging, which appears cement based, was applied to the underside of the slate in a rather ad-hoc manner, primarily at the overlay locations of the slate, rather than coating the entire underside. This parging is failing throughout and much of it has already fallen away.

An unusual eaves condition, where a barge board has been added above the sandstone eaves stone, to accommodate the rainwater gutters, is also indicative of later alterations to the building. An historic gutter bracket is visible on the rear façade, indicating that the previous arrangement was more traditional in nature.

Grey clay ridge tiles, now covered in lichen surmount the ridges throughout. Two masonry chimneys with terracotta pots adorn the roof, one large one to the south wing, and a smaller one within the courtroom roof, serving the fireplaces below. Inspected internally,



17



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Figure 17
View of stair balustrade

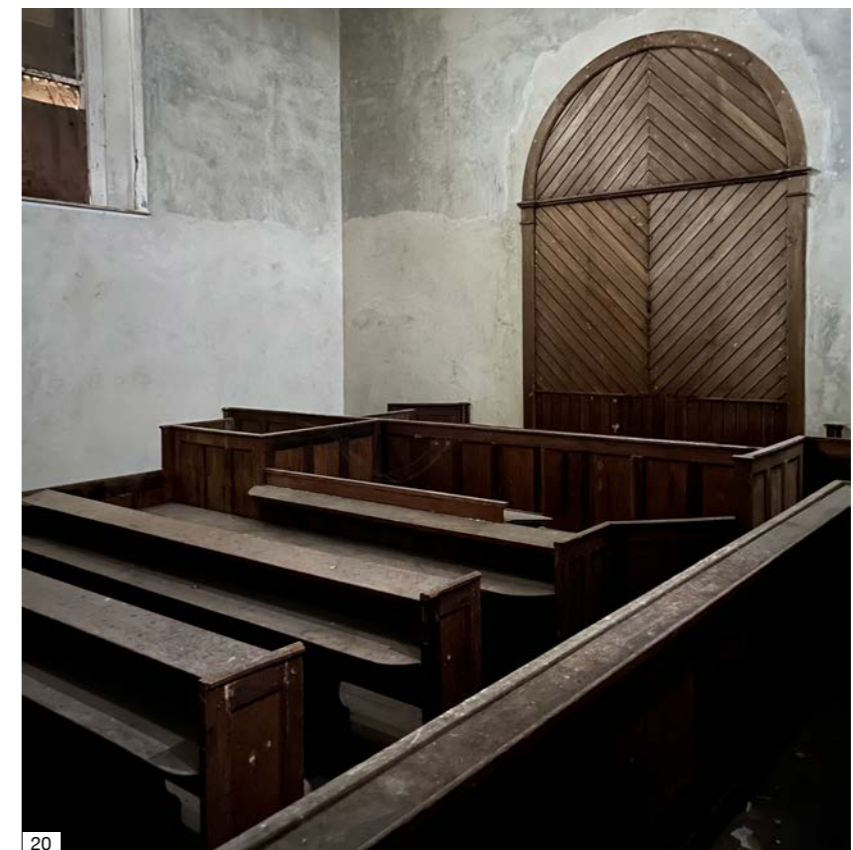
Figure 18
View of stone stair tread joints

Figure 19
View of historic floor tiles

Figure 20
View of courtroom joinery



18



20

Figure 21
View of eastern courtroom windows

Figure 22
View of vaulted masonry ceiling

they are constructed of brick and sandstone, and are in need of repair. The smaller chimney to the north, is taking in a considerable amount of water. Rainwater goods are in need of full repair / replacement throughout, several gutters have been completely lost from the rear of the building.

The roof has been relatively well maintained, and was noted as being repaired as recently as 2010. The extent of these works is unclear, but a fibre cement tile was installed along the valley between the central and north roof, and adjacent to the small chimney. However water ingress is evident within the attic, particularly at both chimneys, which is indicative of failing flashings and valleys above. Generally the roof is structurally intact, though localised repair may be required throughout.

Windows

The windows to the courtroom appear to be later insertions. Though constructed of timber and single glazed, this simple two over two arrangement, with a central mullion dividing the round headed arched windows is quite unlike the spoked mullion arrangements apparent on other courthouses from this era. More Edwardian in style, these likely date to the early twentieth century (fig. 21). Along the other façades there are a number of one over one sliding sashes dating to the twentieth century, including several which incorporate

early double glazing. The windows are generally in poor condition, and many of them have been boarded up or removed.

The Courthouse Interior

Stairs

Two matching stone cantilever stairs (fig. 17, 18), which are nearly identical to the ones at Stradbally, sit behind the entrance doors on either side of the courtroom. The north stair has been modified and repaired, with the insertion of a section of concrete, but the south stair remains intact. A smaller stone and concrete stair is positioned within the south cell block wing, which would have provided direct access between the upper rooms and lower-level cells for supervision purposes. This stair is original to the building and a similar one appears in Stradbally courthouse. The balustrades are also intact on all three stairwells, and in general they are in sound and usable condition, despite a selection of obvious previous repairs.

Floors

Original tiling is in place within the two main stairwells and although the original suspended timber floor remains within the courtroom, the joists below are badly rotted due to the presence of poured concrete between the joists some years ago. This unfortunate intervention, possibly undertaken to fire-proof the

floor or improve acoustics, means it will not be possible to retain the existing timber joists. A new suspended timber floor will be required. The cells contain poured concrete / screed floors and it is not yet known if any existing stone flags remain beneath this layer.

Modern carpets, linos and other floor coverings are visible throughout the remainder of the building, on suspended timber floors, and the condition of these will need to be assessed following the removal of these internal finishes. Historic skirtings are still in place in several rooms, and these should be retained and repaired.

Doors and Internal Joinery

According to Andrew Tierney (the Buildings of Ireland) the courtroom interior of ‘panelled seating, jurors’ box, witness stand and other furnishings’ date from 1927, though the NIAH cites this joinery as original to the building. It is unlikely these elements would have survived the fire, which required reconstruction works. Unfortunately woodworm is now active throughout the courtroom joinery. An impressive judges dias remains in place on the south wall of the courtroom.

Though many of the doors have been replaced with modern timber panel doors, the original timber architraves remain in place around doors and windows, and these should be carefully conserved and



Figure 23
View of stone door surround

Figure 24
View of wrought iron gates

retained. The double doors to the front entrance should be repaired and put back into full working order.

Ceilings & Attic

The historic lath and plaster ceiling to the courtroom has been lost, and a plasterboard ceiling installed in its place, and this appears to be the case within many of the rooms. Several of the spaces, including the cells have simple brick vaulted ceilings, or groin vaults, as is the case for two rooms within the north and south wings. One of these likely functioned as a larger cell, for multiple prisoners.

The attic has been altered significantly with several large openings created within the brick dividing walls between the north, central and south wings of the building. Concrete blockwork has been used to form these openings, and to provide supports for the purlins. The attic space over the courtroom contains four original queen post trusses as the primary structure, but the roofing above is later, as evidenced by the more modern timber rafters throughout.

Decorations

There are areas throughout the courthouse complex where paint is lifting from the walls and ceilings. This is caused by moisture, and water ingress. This condition will be improved by the repair of roofs and rainwater goods, the removal of the modern ceilings to the

courtroom areas and reintroduction of ventilation to the building through the external windows and circular ceiling openings.

Fireplaces

There are at least four historic fireplaces, of cast iron, remaining in the building. However, the majority of fireplaces within the courthouse have been replaced by later insertions from the twentieth century, and there are no fireplaces of significance remaining within the structure. Simple cast iron fireplaces are still evident in the larger cell on the ground floor (Room 0-17) and in the first floor rooms, Rooms 1-02, 1-06 and 1-08. Some of these have been painted and several are missing the insert grates.

Building Layout

Courthouses from this era were arranged internally in a particular manner, to facilitate the day to day proceedings within them. It was important that the various functions within them were kept separate and controlled, and for that reason, these buildings tend to be subdivided internally. Cell blocks or bridewells, where prisoners were held for short periods, or ahead of trial, often adjoined the courthouse, and had to be strictly controlled with a dedicated entrance and access to an enclosed rear yard for prisoner exercise. The judge was usually provided with specific quarters, also with a dedicated entrance, and this suite of rooms, or single office, was

accessed separately, away from the public, prisoners and guards. Finally, a public route into the building was required, to allow for easy entry and exit during court proceedings. The courtroom, or courtrooms in some cases, tended to be double height, and readily accessible from the front entrance. Borris-in-Ossory courthouse consists of a centrally placed double height courtroom, served by two adjoining stairwells with entrance doors. To the north of the courtroom, two rooms behind the stairwell likely served as the judge or clerks quarters. To the south sits the cell block, with guards quarters, and a dedicated corridor and door to the rear yard.

Courtroom proceedings are in a way a form of public theatre. The 'actors' all have different parts of play, from judges, legal representatives, juries, defendants, witnesses, reporters and of course the audience, or general public. Every individual has a role to play and an assigned seat or position within the established set-piece that is the courtroom.

The hierarchy, and importance of each role is clearly established through the layout and plan, the judge taking a prominent and centre position, in this instance with an impressive dias as a backdrop; the witness box and jury box elevated above the ground floor pews, to emphasise their importance to the proceedings. Arrival and departure points were usually clearly distinguished, lest



Figure 25
View of stone window surround

the judge and jury should have to mix with the spectators and public alike. However in Borris-in-Ossory, the judges dias is at the cell block end of the courtroom. This may have been an alteration during the reconstruction works during the 1920s.

As noted in Ireland's Court Houses 'relatively few new court houses were built after 1850, there was considerable pressure to extend court house buildings and redesign courtrooms', and these courtrooms were often 'redesigned to improve audibility and visibility, provide specified places for those involved in proceedings, encourage separate access and improve lighting and ventilation'. Many Irish courthouses were modified shortly after construction, to incorporate improvements, and alterations continued to be undertaken until the latter part of the twentieth century.

Services

During the nineteenth century the only source of heat within these courthouses was from fireplaces, situated in the smaller ancillary rooms, such as the judges and guards quarters. The courtroom, used for short periods of time, had no heating source. A boiler with a crudely place flue was installed within the courtroom in later years, to improve the comfort levels within this large space. During the twentieth century, electric storage heaters were installed in a

number of the rooms in the south wing, probably when the building functioned as an office for the council. Two WCs were incorporated within the original building, one within the south wing, off the stairwell, and one within an old cell. Overall there is very little intervention within the building, in terms of servicing, with no piping or radiator systems throughout.

Extensions

The modern lean-to extension to the rear of the north wing is completely derelict and the roof and floors have collapsed; this structure should be removed. It previously housed a kitchen and bathroom, and one additional room which likely served as a bedroom.

The wider site

Within the wider site, the ground conditions are quite poor to the rear of the courthouse, with remnants of old walls and foundations still visible, and two underground diesel tanks still believed to be in place.

Generally, the building is in fair condition, due in part to repairs to the roof in recent years which has limited water ingress, the courthouse is of robust traditional construction.



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5.0 Statement of Significance

Significance

Significance is the means by which the cultural importance of a place and its component parts can be measured and compared. Assessing significance can help guide the policies and proposals for the management and future use of a building, which will respect, preserve, and enhance the cultural importance of the site. This can assist in the identification of aspects and areas of a place where only the minimum of changes should be considered, and areas where the significance and character of the place could be enhanced by change.

The Guidelines to the Burra Charter state that:

“Cultural Significance is a concept, which helps in estimating the value of places. The places that are likely to be of significance are those which help an understanding of the past; or enrich the present; or which will be of value to future generations.”

There are a variety of categories generally used to evaluate the level of cultural significance of an historic place. For Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse this includes – the historical and architectural interest categories.

Borris-in-Ossory courthouse is a protected structure (RPS 319) and noted to be of regional importance on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

Historical & Social Significance

The concept of publicly administered justice has existed within society since the Roman times, and arrived in Ireland during the Middle Ages, with the introduction of the feudal system. Throughout the intervening years the judicial system has undergone change notably at the beginning of nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when sweeping law reforms were introduced and with the establishment of the Irish Free State in the twentieth century. The building stands as a testament to a time of great reform, hardship, and suppression in Ireland, during the difficult early years of the nineteenth century and before the onset of the famine.



Borris-in-Ossory courthouse faces west, away from the village, which is quite unusual for a courthouse, as they were often positioned on a prominent site within a town or village. It is believed to face west, towards Ballaghmore, where Charles White, once High Sheriff of Laois, resided in Charleville House. White was sherrif in 1815, and is believed to have spearheaded the project for a new courthouse. He is rumoured to have insisted that the building face in the direction of his home.

The burning of the courthouse during the War of Independence has historical significance, as many other buildings of legislative status, including the Custom House, were burned down in protest during this time. An account from a school notebook, written in the 1930s (in ‘Local Happenings’, duchar.ie) describes the fire in 1921, when a ‘number of men came over one night late and wrecked and burned it’. There is no mention of the ‘black and tans’ in this account, but a local resident, Miss V O’Brien is noted as the caretaker, who had to leave the building immediately. The local police barracks was also attacked and burned down shortly afterwards.

After the Great Irish Famine of the 1840s when the midlands were particularly badly affected, land reform became the dominant issue in Ireland with the Protestant Ascendancy owning almost all of the land, which was then tenanted by the Catholic majority. Many significant court cases were held throughout Ireland during this period. Borris-in-Ossory courthouse has a long and interesting history, serving as a forum for legislative proceedings throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, under a period of British rule, and latterly under the Irish Free State and the Irish Republic.

Architectural Significance

The courthouse is an interesting piece of Georgian style architecture and an early example of a purpose-built courthouse and bridewell, constructed during this period of legislative change in Ireland. Impressive in both scale and architectural quality, the Borris-in-Ossory courthouse bears a striking resemblance to the courthouse in Stradbally, and to several others around the country. It is thought to have been designed by William Butler Deane.

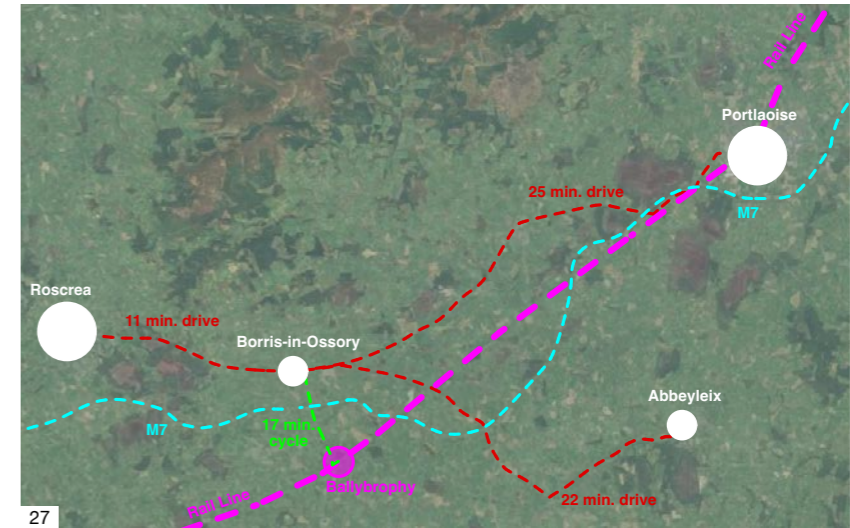
The courtroom is a good example of a courtroom interior from the early twentieth century, and includes a distinctive jury box and witness stand, along with the impressive judge’s dias. Two impressive cantilevered stone staircases are still in situ within the building, albeit one has been heavily modified with the insertion of concrete.

Externally it retains many of its original architectural features, with decorative stone embellishments across the west and south facades. Aside from the two churches, it is the most prominent and architecturally significant structure within the village, and is readily visible along the main street, when arriving into Borris-in-Ossory from the west.

LEGEND

Figure 26
Typical courtroom interior

Figure 27
Transport Links Map



Conclusion

The architectural quality, historical background and social significance of Borris-in-Ossory courthouse make it a building of regional if not national importance, when considered as part of a collective. It represents a period of great legislative change in Ireland during the early nineteenth century and played an important role in village life. During the early twentieth century it was considered representative of British influence in Ireland and set on fire as a result.

Notwithstanding some later interventions, the original form remains largely intact together with the well-preserved stairwells and courtroom space; and its similarities with Stradbally, and other courthouses from the same era, establish it as an excellent example of a typology of early nineteenth century provincial Irish courthouses. While the building fabric is relatively well preserved, it is in a very poor state of repair and is currently under threat particularly if steps are not taken to halt the decline of the building caused by several decades of neglect.

6.0 Conservation Strategy

The building has been unoccupied for a number of years, and the lack of maintenance during this period has resulted in localised areas of significant damage, due to uncontrolled water ingress, lack of ventilation and lack of heating. Despite this, the structure is generally quite stable, no doubt due to its robust construction.

All conservation works considered within this project are guided by the principle of minimum intervention as set out in the Burra Charter, under the general aim of doing – as little as possible, but as much as is necessary. The general approach and objectives for Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse can be summarised as follows:

- To implement best conservation practice for the repair of its historic fabric, such as masonry walls, historic joinery, staircases, plasterwork, roofs etc,
- To upgrade and adapt the building in a sympathetic manner so that it can be brought back into use for the public, community and local council.
- To ensure that alterations are carried out in a sustainable manner, and that reversibility is considered within all interventions / alterations.
- To consider the ongoing and effective maintenance of the building, including an on-going maintenance plan and strategy,
- To record the existing buildings and site, with a record of past interventions.
- To ensure that interpretation of the building is well-researched and accurate,
- To promote the site as an important heritage asset for the village of Borris in Ossory and beyond

Protection of Built Heritage

Ensure the protection of the built heritage through its repair and preservation, and where possible, the improvement of its settings. Document and record all repair and intervention works, as part of the history of the buildings and site.

Planning and Legislation

The site is a protected structure (RPS 319) and is noted on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). It is not within a zone of archaeological potential, nor is it a recorded monument.

Borris-in-Ossory contains twelve protected structures and one recorded monument, and the courthouse and Church of Ireland are noted as architectural focal points (fig. 33). The protected structures include two churches, a former convent, the courthouse, three houses, three shopfronts, a market house, and the old national school. The recorded monument is located at the east end of the main street, and consists of the remnants of Borris Castle, upon which Borris House was subsequently constructed.

Pre planning consultation has been carried out with Laois County Council planning department and the heritage officer in advance of the Part 8 planning submission.

External Fabric

The external fabric of the building survives in a reasonable state of repair, though the decorative carved red stone is weathered and degraded and in need of repair. Careful conservation measures will be undertaken, with the removal and replacement of the stone only undertaken as a last resort. Existing masonry will be consolidated and repaired as required with repair mortars (lime based) and structural pins / bars to hold stone in place where required. Graft repairs with a good matching stone will be inserted where required, by experienced heritage masons. Samples of repair approaches will be provided on site for review by Laois County Council prior to undertaking full repairs.

Cement coatings have been added to several of the external walls and will be carefully removed by hand, to ensure minimal damage to the masonry below. Lime based renders will be applied throughout, in place of the existing cement. The roof is in a reasonable condition and following localised repairs, and together with a new rainwater disposal system, should continue to function adequately. Repairs to the roof structure will include splice repairs to the rafter ends as required, and localised repairs to the queen post trusses. The existing slate will be fully stripped and set aside for reinstatement, but the battens will be replaced, with a new breathable underlay. Suitable breathable insulation will also be incorporated into Traditional leadwork will be installed throughout to form the valleys and flashings to the roof.

All of the windows are later replacements and a number of them are double glazed. The approach here will be to install new timber

Figure 28
Existing east facade from the main street.



sash and case windows throughout, with slim profile double glazing, which will improve the energy efficiency of the building while reinstating the historic fenestration patterns throughout the courthouse. Interesting features such as the oculus windows will also be restated under the proposals. There are many good precedents for historic windows of this type in other courthouses across Ireland, and two local ones, Stradbally and Birr Courthouse, have similar windows to Borris-in-Ossory. Study of these precedents and others will ensure that accurate historic replica windows will be produced for the courthouse.

Works will be undertaken within the wider site to improve the setting of this protected structure, while retaining and repairing significant historic features such as the cast iron railings. The old masonry walls to the prisoners yard to the rear have been lost though the evidence of this area is clearly defined by the level change between the old yard and the entrance route into the back of the site. This area will be clearly recorded when excavation and development works are undertaken on site.

Internal Fabric

Internally the intention is to retain any remaining historic features throughout, such as original architraves, stone stairs with cast iron balustrades and original tile flooring. These elements will be carefully conserved under best conservation practice. A number of non-original elements will be removed, to facilitate the insertion of appropriate internal fittings and finishes. A new oak floor will be inserted throughout the courtroom, with contemporary furniture that echoes the historic joinery, now lost, from the courtroom. The timber dias, though not believed to be original to the building, will be repaired and retained, behind a new timber platform.

Several historic cast iron fireplaces will also be retained for decorative purposes, carefully cleaned, with new grates, where required, inserted to reinstate the original appearance of these fireplaces. Repair works to the internal walls will be carried out with lime plaster. There are few remaining lath and plaster ceilings within the building, likely due to the fire in the early twentieth century, but where any are uncovered, they will be carefully repaired and reinstated. Vaulted masonry ceilings within the north and south range will be replastered as required. Historic skirting boards and door and window architraves are still in place in many of the rooms, albeit new doors have been installed for the most part throughout the building. These historic joinery elements will be retained and repaired by an experienced joiner, and paint analysis samples will be taken to determine the original paint schemes within the building. The openings to the cells are constructed of tooled limestone reveals and a stone lintel, visible below layers of paint. These will be cleaned and revealed within the proposed scheme.

The historic layout of the courthouse is still intact, with the main courtroom space supported by a number of ancillary rooms, and a suite of cells. The layout of the historic building will be retained, with only minimal intervention where required to improve circulation and movement through the building. These interventions have been carefully considered, to ensure that no significant parts of the building are affected. New openings in the external masonry walls are proposed to the north wing, and to the rear of the building, on the lesser façades, while the prominent front (west) and south façade will be kept fully intact. A later opening added to the south façade will be removed, and the original window reinstated, which will improve the presentation of this elevation.

LEGEND

Figure 29
View of courtroom roof trusses.

Figure 30
View of wrought iron gates.

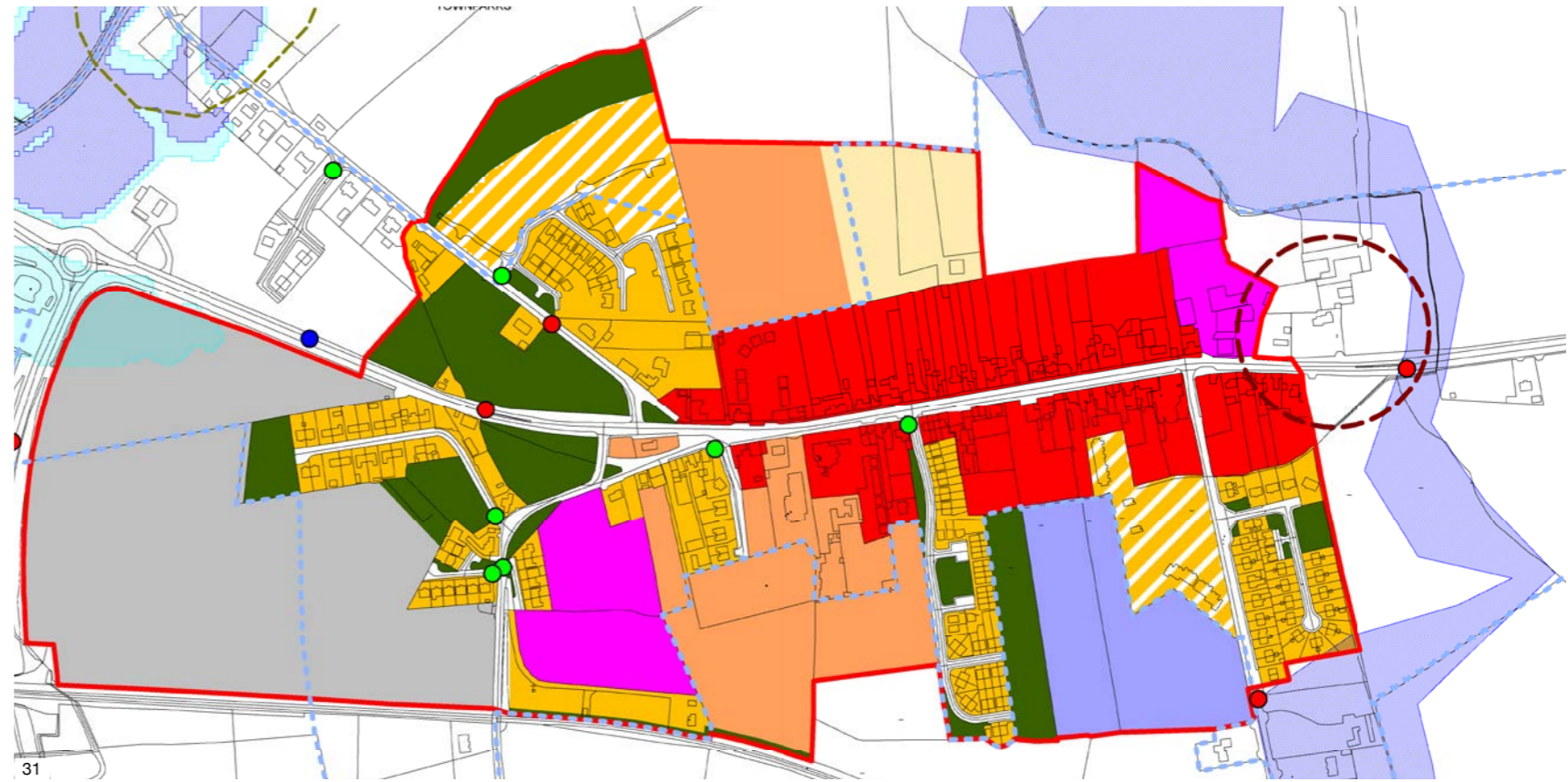


29



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Figure 31
Extract from LCC development plan
2021-27
Figure 32
Extract from LCC development plan
2021-27



Legend:

- = Town Centre
- = Open space/ Amenity
- = Residential 1. Established
- = Residential 2 - New Proposed Reside
- = Strategic Reserve 2027-2031
- = General Business
- = Community-Educational-Institutional
- = Industrial
- = Enterprise and Employment
- = Utilities
- = Tourism
- = Horticulture
- = Mixed Use

Figure 33
Extract from LCC development plan

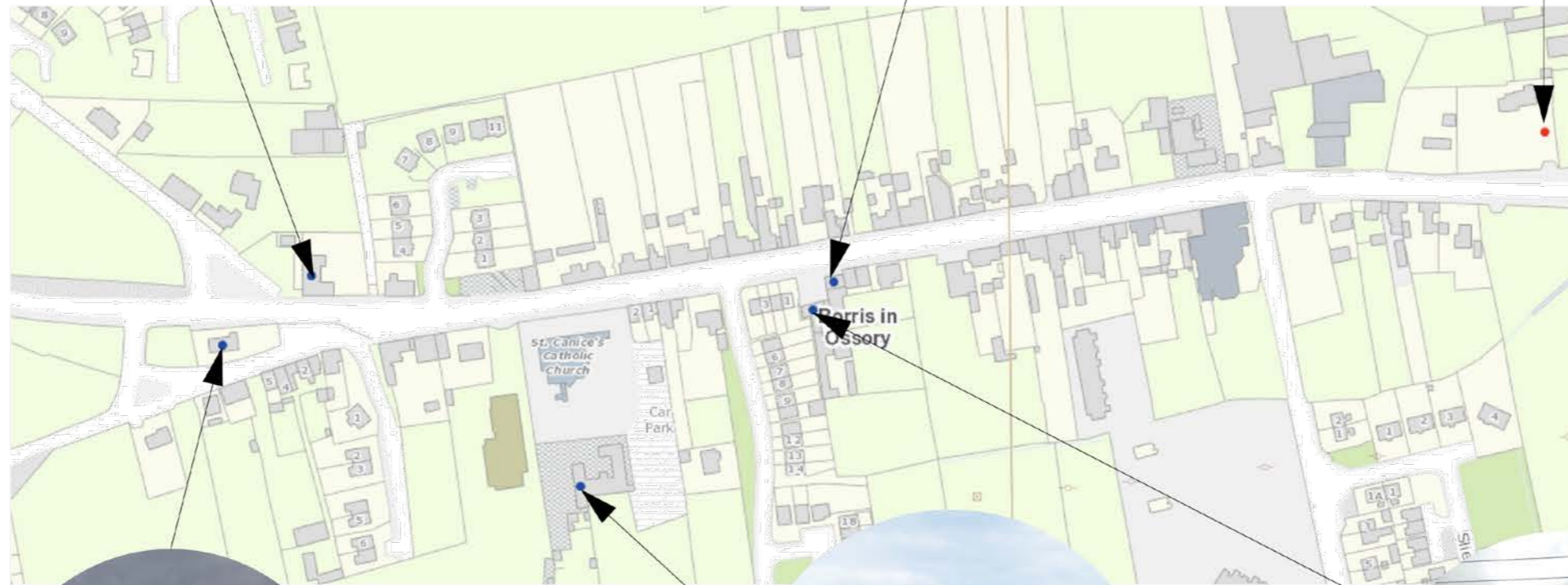


Borris in Ossory Courthouse, c.1828



Borris in Ossory Market House, 1882

Cluster of several large houses, on and around the site of Borris Castle



Saint Mark's Church, c.1870



Detached seven-bay two-storey former school, c.1870

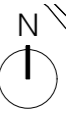


Detached three-bay three-storey house c.1890

Figure 34
Site plan indicating public buildings & spaces

LEGEND

- Outline of area per project brief.
- Community / public buildings.
- Public amenity spaces.



ARCHITECTURE



7.0 Design Approach

Development of the Brief

The Village

Borris-in-Ossory (from the Gaelic Buiríos Mór Osraí, meaning ‘the great borough of Ossory’, or the ‘Burgage of Osraige’) is located in the west of County Laois, and is a small village with a population of approximately 500 people, as noted in the Laois County Development Plan (2023-2027). It sits within easy driving distance of Roscrea, Abbeyleix and Portlaoise, and a five-minute drive to Ballybrophy train station. It has good bus service and is a long-established stopping point for inter-urban bus links.

According to the Borris-in-Ossory Strategic Plan (2018-2020) it consists of an area of 20.8km² / 5,151.6 acres / 8.0 square miles. The centre consists of a long linear main street, which provides the vast majority of the main amenity functions for the settlement, such as commercial, institutional, educational, and residential premises.

Borris-in-Ossory has been identified as a ‘Strategic Employment Zone’ in the development plan, for ‘economic growth given their strategic connectivity by virtue of the motorway infrastructure.’ The courthouse site is acknowledged as an ‘opportunity’ development site with the development plan. (fig. 31 & 32 for extracts from the development plan)

Extracts from Development Plan 2021-2027:

- Villages such as Borris-in-Ossory, Ballyroan, Clonaslee and Killenard have an important role to play in performing local residential, retailing, social and leisure functions and providing appropriate local services to a wider rural hinterland. They have attractive streetscapes, physical settings and heritage buildings that present a strong visual character. These villages provide opportunities for future expansion/ provision of services such as community centres, local shop, pub, petrol outlet and have the potential to attract a population seeking to live in a rural environment.
- Development growth should be low density, relative to the scale of the settlement, located as near as is practicable to the core area.
- Cycle Links-on Road cycle lanes to link towns and villages located along the R445 & R639 and if permitted proceed with works Borris-in-Ossory – Roscrea.
- BIO 3 Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of the old Courthouse and Convent Sites (Opportunity Sites 2 and 3) to a public/community/enterprise uses which will provide an opportunity to capitalise on their prominent locations.

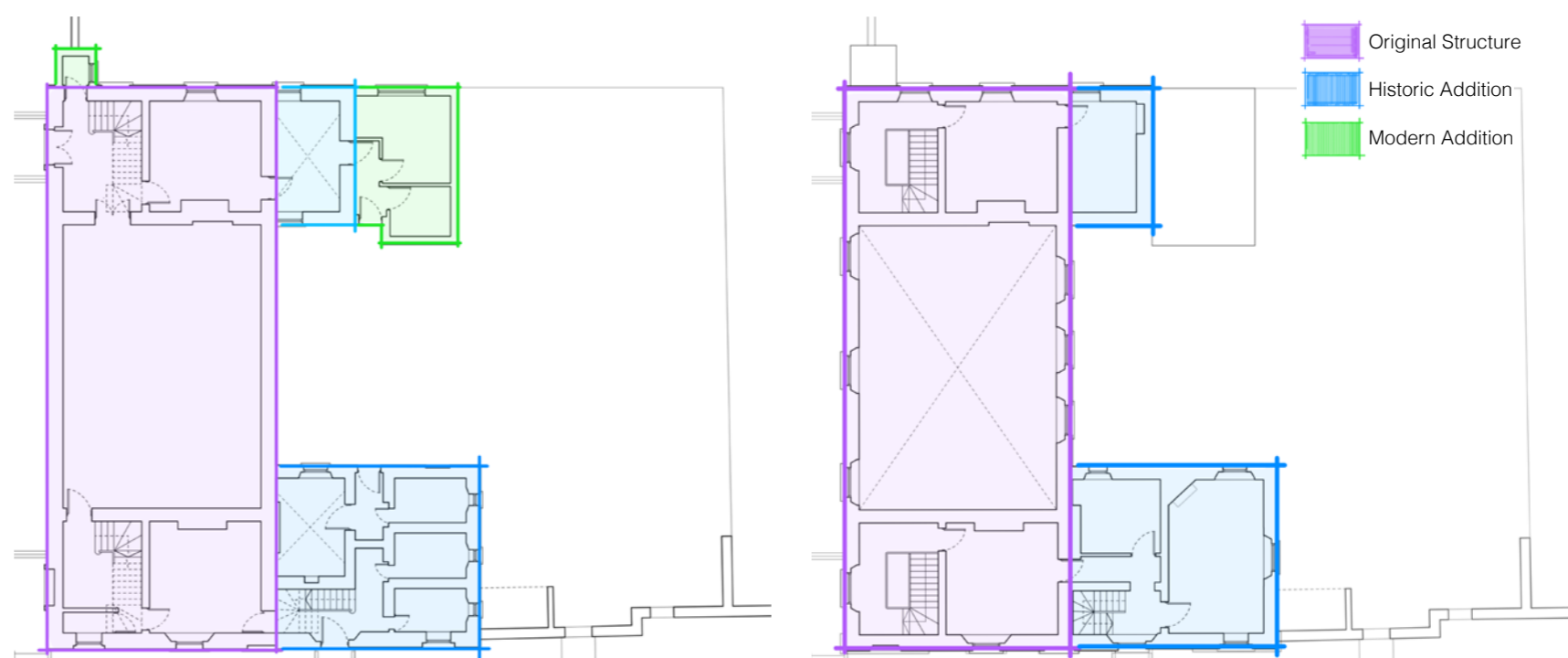
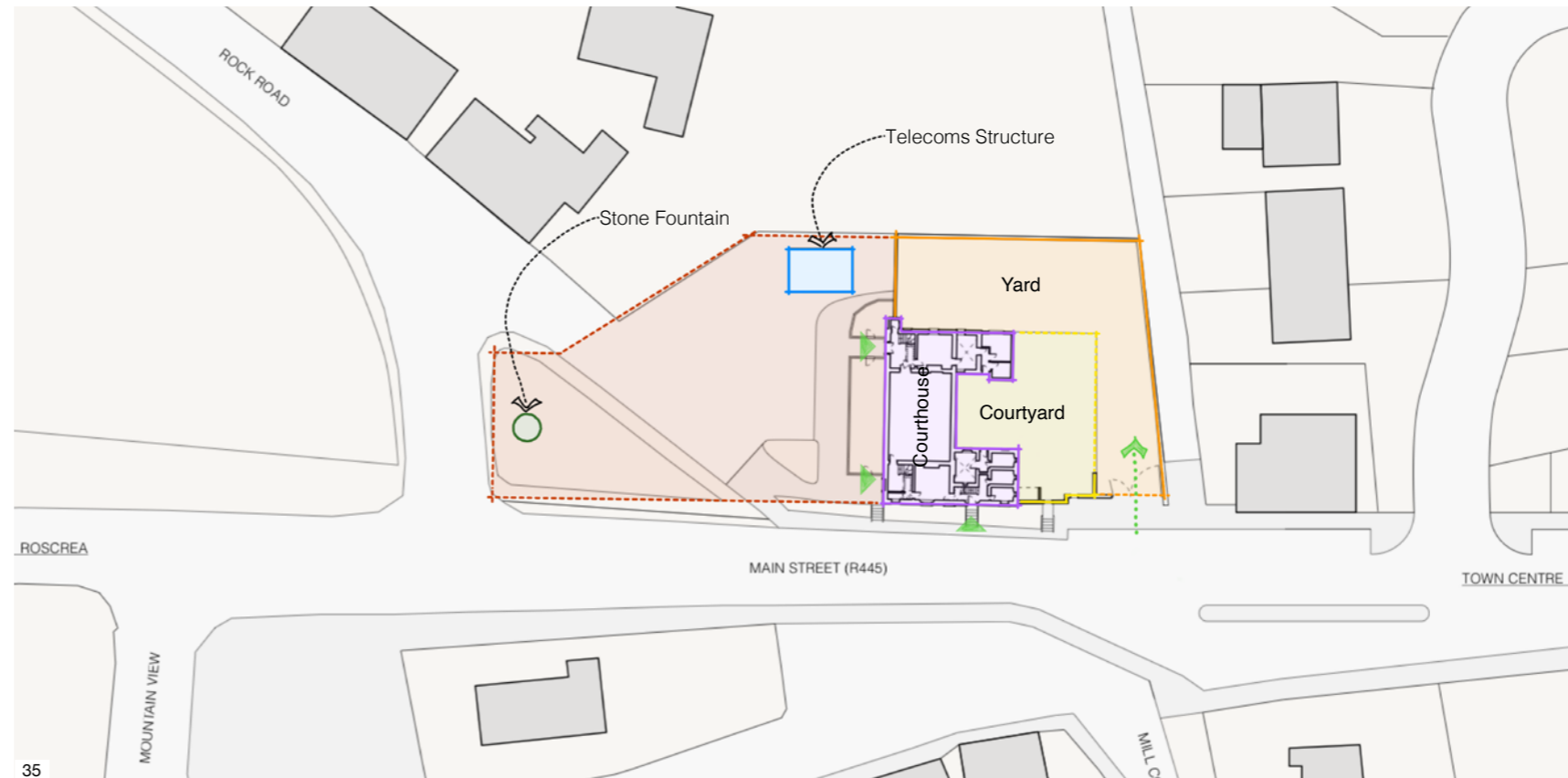
The building will be converted for use as a remote working digital hub for Laois County Council, and as noted in the project brief; the four most significant aspects to be addressed will be as follows:

LEGEND

Figure 35 Existing site analysis diagram

Figure 37 Existing first floor analysis diagram

Figure 36 Existing ground floor analysis diagram



- Ensuring the protected structure is repaired and conserved in accordance with best conservation practice.
- Upgrading the built fabric and services to provide an energy efficient and sustainably managed building.
- Providing accessibility throughout the building for all users.
- Alteration and upgrade of the building to achieve fire safety certificate requirements.

The outline brief is for the provision of flexible office space, which can accommodate remote working for Council employees, and / or other tenants, and also that there would be community benefit within the project, through provision of community use spaces.

During earlier design stages, we completed an assessment of the protected structure and site, which highlighted the areas which need improvement and alteration, and established the existing constraints within the building and across the site.

The Setting

The wider site around the courthouse has been severely compromised due to the repositioning and widening of the road and the eradication of any formal setting to the front façade. Traffic now hurtles past the building, in close proximity to the south façade. To the west of the building, the forecourt is poorly defined, and broken into two triangular shaped spaces, one which serves as an ad-hoc car park and a bottle bank, and the other is a pleasant little green space containing some trees with the millennium fountain erected in recent years. Encircled by two roads and the carpark, this green space feels isolated and disconnected from its surroundings. An OpenEir telecommunications structure has been constructed north-west of the courthouse which must remain in place.

There is an opportunity here to create a more coherent, welcoming green space to the front of the courthouse, and an appropriate formal setting for this significant protected structure.

To the rear of the courthouse remnants of the old prisoners yard are visible, and at present this area is used as a temporary storage space for the county council. Rather unusually the rear of the courthouse is visible on approach from the village, along the main street, while the front façade faces away from the village centre. This view of the courthouse from the village is quite important, particularly for pedestrians approaching the building and should be improved, to enhance the presentation of the protected structure, and improve the streetscape within Borris-in-Ossory.

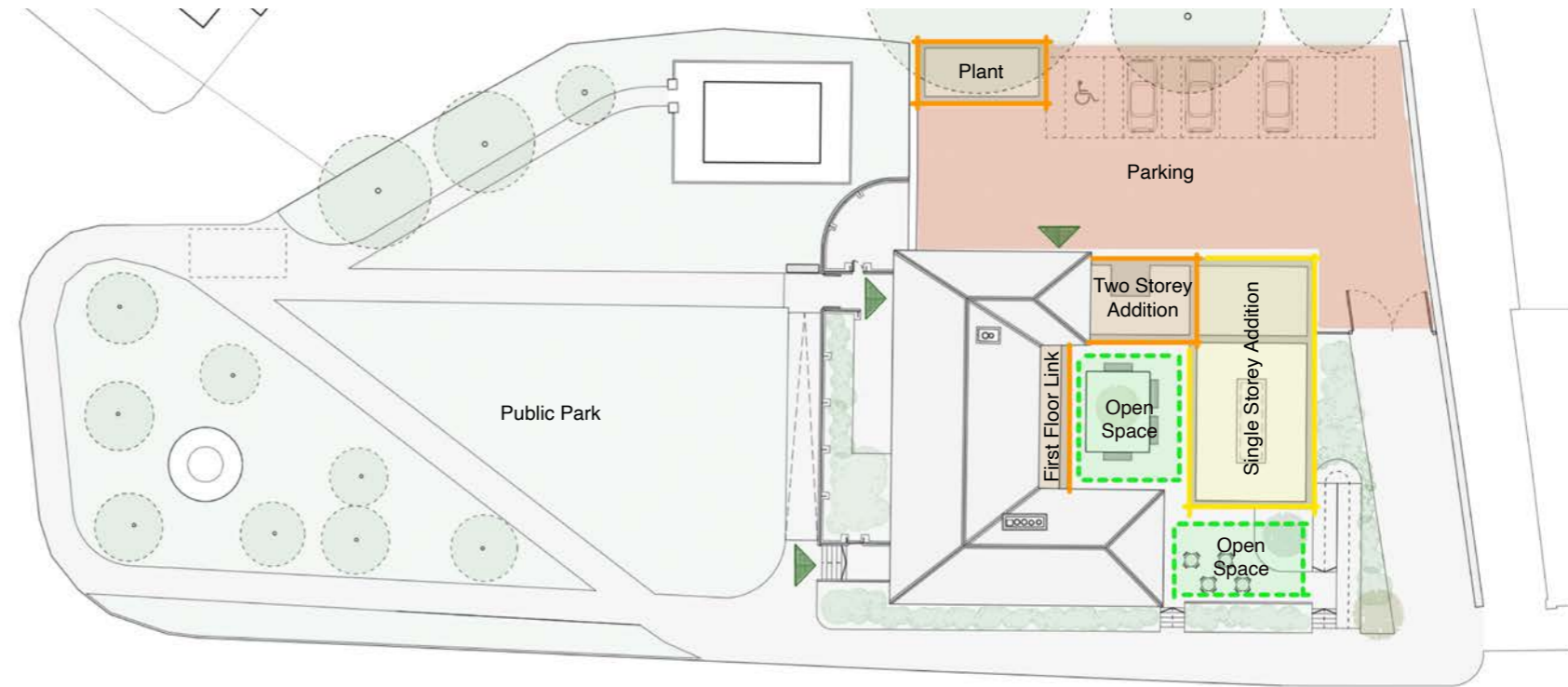
Provision of new extensions to the rear of the courthouse have been proposed within the design, as they would not detract from the significant historic west and south facades, and they provide an opportunity to greatly improve the views of the site on approach from the east. Parking is to be accommodated to the north side of the building.

LEGEND

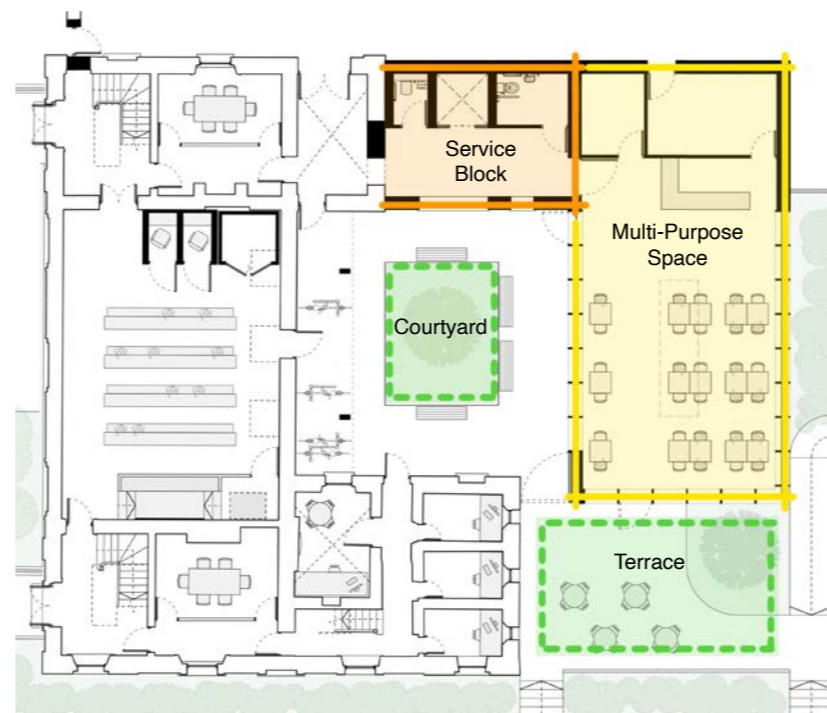
Figure 38
Site proposal diagram

Figure 40
First floor proposal diagram

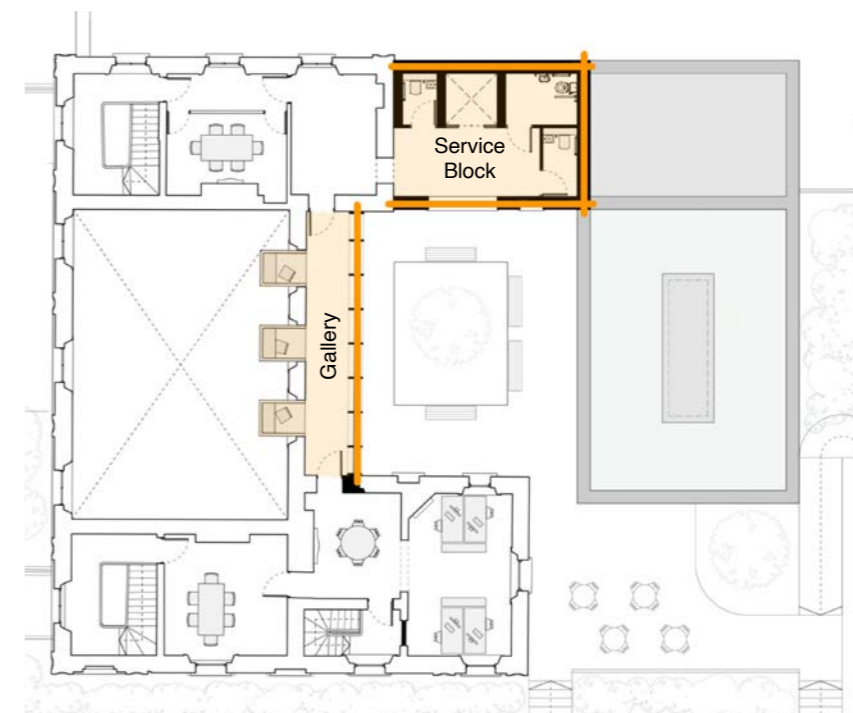
Figure 39
Ground floor proposal diagram



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Figure 41
Phase one works diagram

Figure 42
Phase two works diagram

Circulation

The double height courtroom separates the north and south wings of the building, and visitors must pass through this space in order to reach a number of rooms. As a result, the courtroom is currently on the circulation route through the courthouse, rendering this space difficult to use for meetings throughout the day. There is no connection between the north and south wings at first floor level, which is both an accessibility and functionality issue, requiring users to travel large distances to get from the first floor of the north wing to the first floor of the south wing and vice versa. Three staircases serve this relatively small building, and all are original to the building so must be retained, though this is likely to help with the fire escape strategy.

There is no lift within the building so at present the building is not compliant with building regulations for accessibility, and there is no means of accessing the first floor, other than via non-Part M compliant stairs.

Potential Accommodation / Use

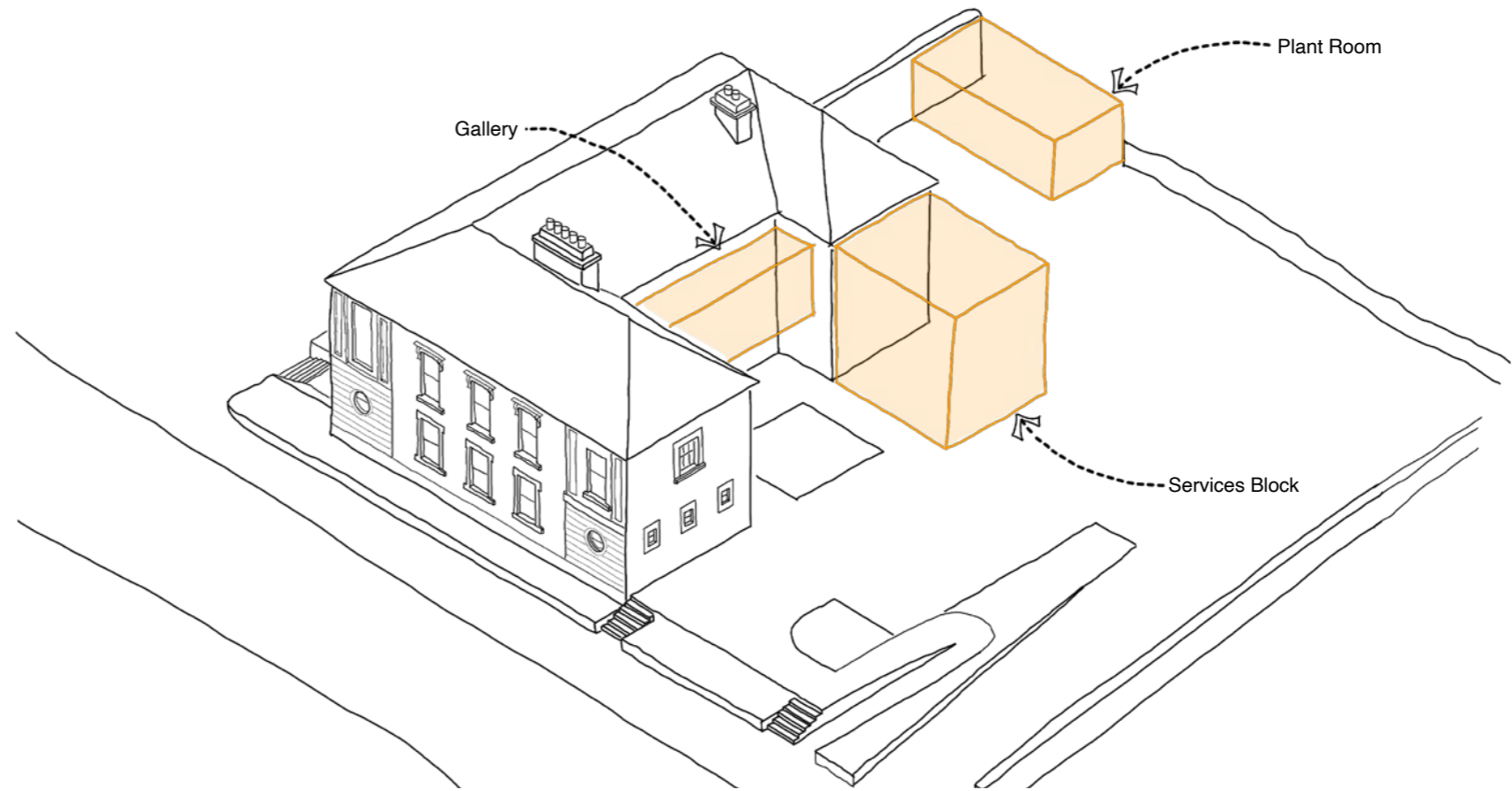
Though the courthouse appears sizable from the outside, the double height courtroom takes up a considerable footprint, leaving only nine smaller rooms for a range of possible uses. Several of these spaces sit unavoidably within the existing circulation routes, and people must pass through them in order to reach the stairs. There is very limited provision at the moment for WCs within the building, or other service spaces such as plant rooms, electrical cupboards, comms/server rooms or staff facilities. As mentioned above there is no lift within the building.

Options Appraisal

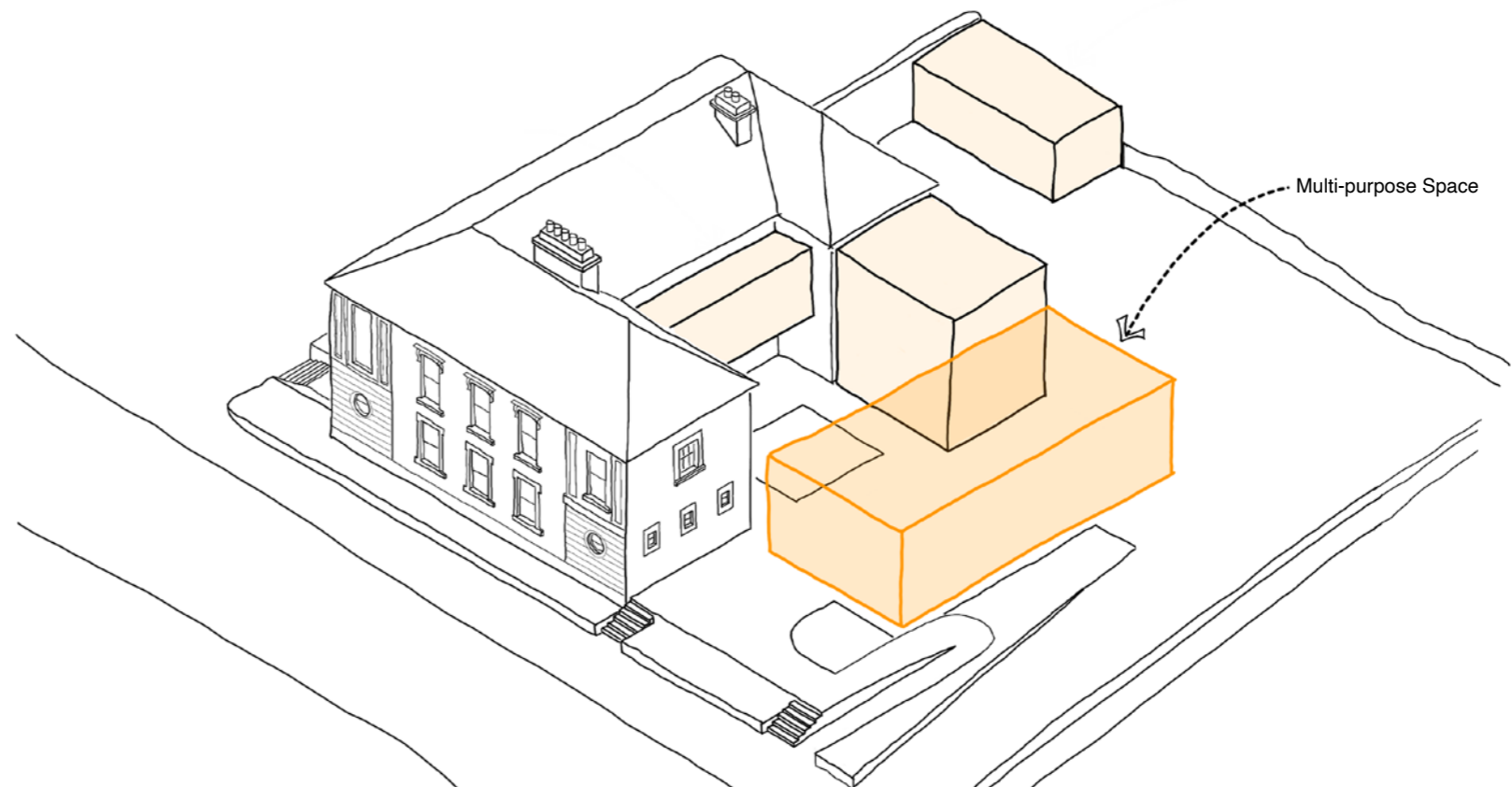
The design team carried out an options appraisal analysis during Stage 1 with a review of the existing floor plans to determine what could be provided in terms of a workable digital hub office space for the Council within the existing footprint. Following this exercise, a second option was explored which included the addition of new accommodation to the rear of the courthouse.

An accommodation brief was developed which includes for a number of flexible meeting / office / work spaces along with staff facilities, tea-stations, WCs, stores, and a lift for access. The courtroom itself is to serve as a large flexible use meeting / event space.

Initially we explored the insertion of a first-floor link corridor or mezzanine within the courtroom itself to provide a connection between the north and south wings at first floor level, and the provision of an external lift shaft to the north façade. WCs are accommodated on both levels within the north wing and the cells would serve as plant / comms / storage. Two rooms at ground floor level would provide a small kitchenette / tea-station and lunch room. This option provides one small meeting / office room at ground floor, and two small ones at first floor level, with one larger



41



42

Figure 43
Proposed south elevation

Figure 44
Site proposal

room, within the south wing, providing a more flexible space for a number of desks. Considering the size of the building, the resultant occupancy of this arrangement was very limited, with no potential for expansion, and in terms of desk space would have accommodated approximately 8 people, along with two small meeting rooms. This was considered very low occupancy, considering the size of the building. The other limitation with this option was the fact that much of the usable interior space would be sacrificed to provide support spaces, such as WCs, storage, kitchenettes, limiting the remaining functional space within the building.

The provision of service spaces such as WCs and kitchenettes within existing historic buildings, which are protected, often results in unnecessary disruption within the interiors, and limitations arise within existing floor voids for service runs, that lead to increased costs and complications on site.

Design Proposals

Following these initial studies, we explored the option to extend the building, to provide service and circulation spaces within new extensions to the rear façade and north wing. This would allow the historic rooms to serve as a suite of meeting / office spaces, minimising impact on the protected structure, and allow for potential growth and expansion within the building and site.

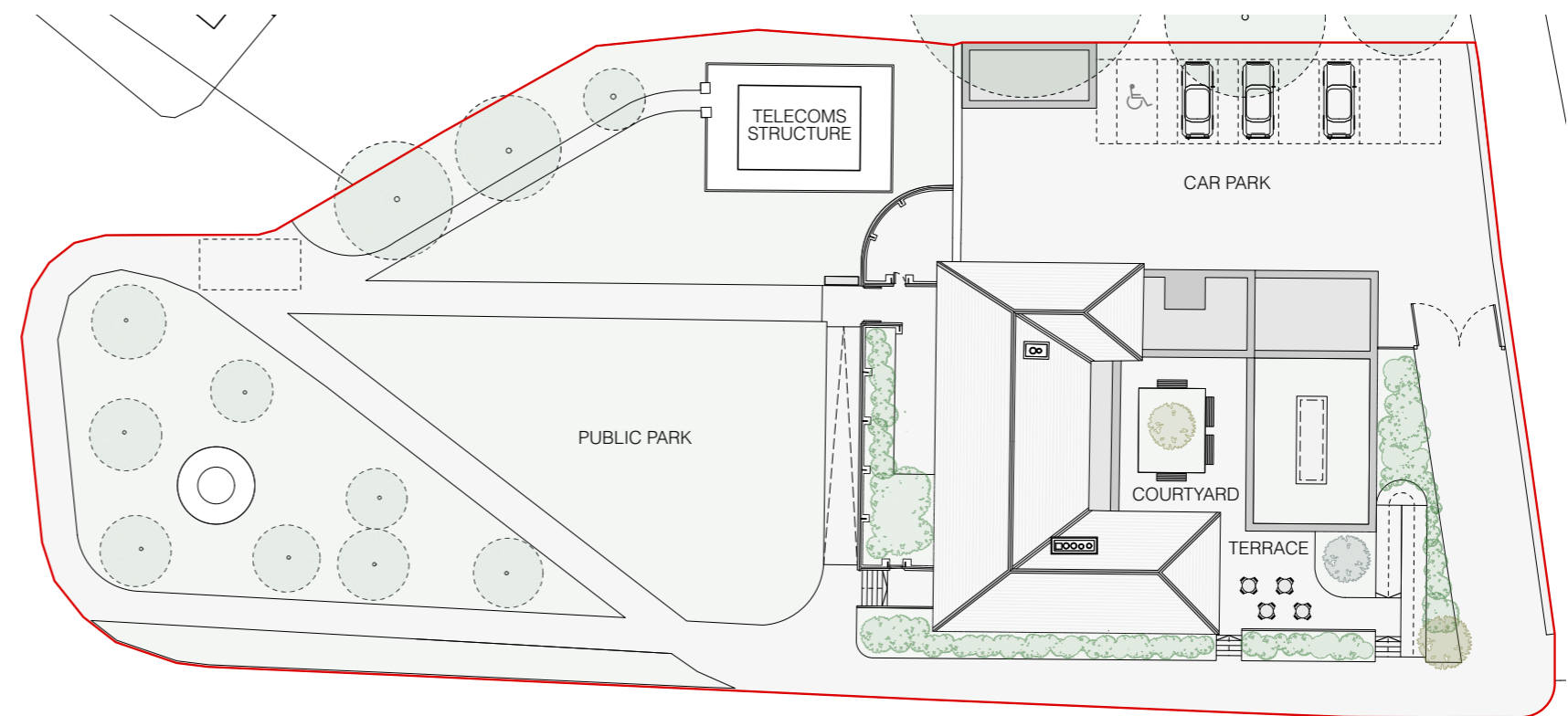
In order to unlock the internal circulation and space constraints, a new horizontal glazed gallery to the external east façade of the courthouse will provide a connection between the north and south wings at first floor level, and a new two storey extension, adjoining the north wing, will house a lift and WCs. The immediate benefit of these interventions is the provision of horizontal and vertical circulation to serve the building, with the removal of the circulation from within the courtroom. The courtroom can be used for dedicated private meetings without disturbance from individuals moving between the north and south wings. Five new WCs will be provided alongside the lift, to serve the building, allowing the rooms within the protected structure to be used as offices and meetings spaces.

Views over the courtroom will also be provided from the first-floor gallery. This structure will be designed to sit neatly under the eaves of the existing building and will also incorporate three lightweight suspended pods within the original window openings, which will serve as additional desk spaces within the building.

In addition to the 'service and circulation' extensions, a third extension will be provided within the footprint of the old prisoners yard. This will serve as a multi-functional space, e.g., as a canteen / meeting space during the day for the council or tenants of the buildings, and for a variety of uses by the local community afterwards. Availing of south facing light and providing a new front façade to the main street, this extension will also provide a



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MAIN STREET (R445)

much-improved arrival point for pedestrians on approach from the village. A planted buffer, incorporating steps and a sloped access route, will serve to separate the new extension from the busy road and negotiate the level change between the pedestrian path and the old yard. A raised south facing terrace to the front of the multipurpose space will remain open to the public daily, creating a pleasant external place to gather, sit and socialise.

This third extension will also create an enclosed courtyard to the rear of the building, reminiscent of the historic yard which was once enclosed by high masonry walls to the rear of the courthouse. This secluded outdoor space will be available for the building occupants to frequent throughout the day.

Within the historic building, desk spaces would be provided in the majority of the rooms including the old masonry cells. With high barrel-vaulted high ceilings these cells will provide interesting private office spaces. Insertion of clear glazing within the existing windows and the incorporation of glazed doors will create a greater degree of openness within each one. This option would provide dedicated desk spaces for 13-15 people along with four small meeting rooms and provide even more potential for the local community or other tenants to use the building alongside the Council.

Phasing and construction sequencing

The design has developed over the course of the project, and the initial brief was for the refurbishment of the courthouse only, with no further development on the site. Following our assessment of the site and a greater understanding of the existing conditions and constraints, the benefit of introducing three different volumes of accommodation to serve the protected structure became apparent. The first two, as described above, unlock the constraints with circulation and services for the existing building, and these two volumes, the first-floor glazed gallery and the 'service and circulation' extension, could be built under an initial phase of the project, to ensure that the courthouse will be fully serviced following refurbishment. The third volume, the multipurpose space, has been positioned in such a way that it could be constructed at the same time as the other two volumes or at a later date, should the client wish to phase the development works on site. See figures 41, 42 and 45 for phasing and sequencing.

Alternative layouts

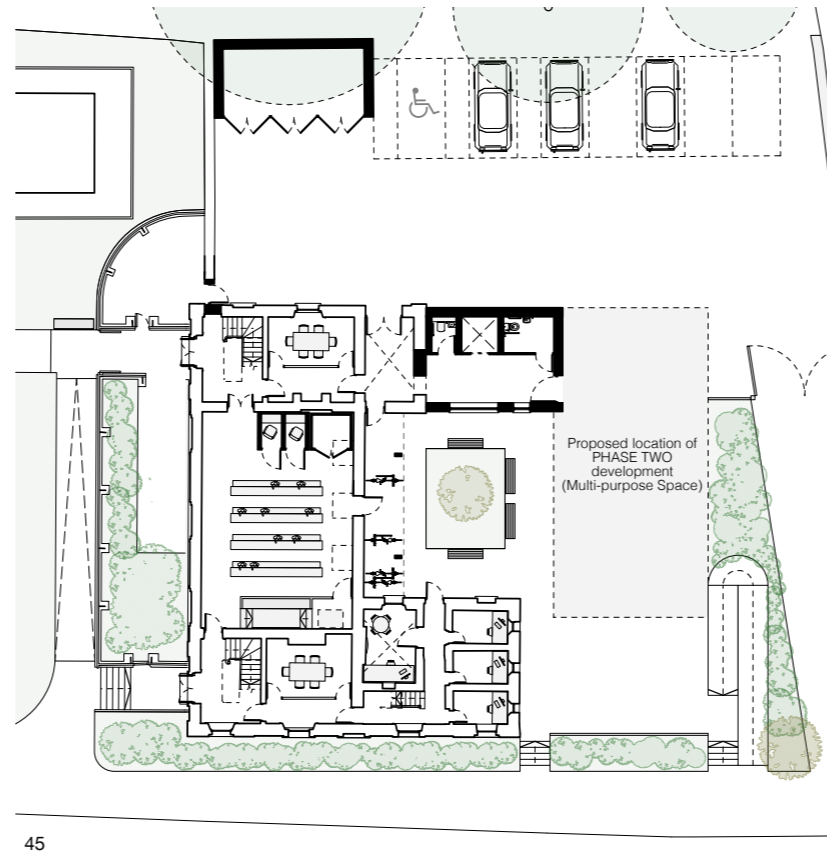
In order to ensure the ongoing use of the building, the council has advised that the building may be tenanted, in part, for periods of time. Flexibility in buildings of this nature is very important, as they may serve different users in the future, and building in capacity to let a portion of this building is both prudent and good forward planning. The south wing may lend itself to a separate tenancy agreement, for office use, and in that event will need a dedicated WC and tea-station facility. An alternative arrangement for the cell block (fig 46) could be incorporated if this was the intention of the council.

LEGEND

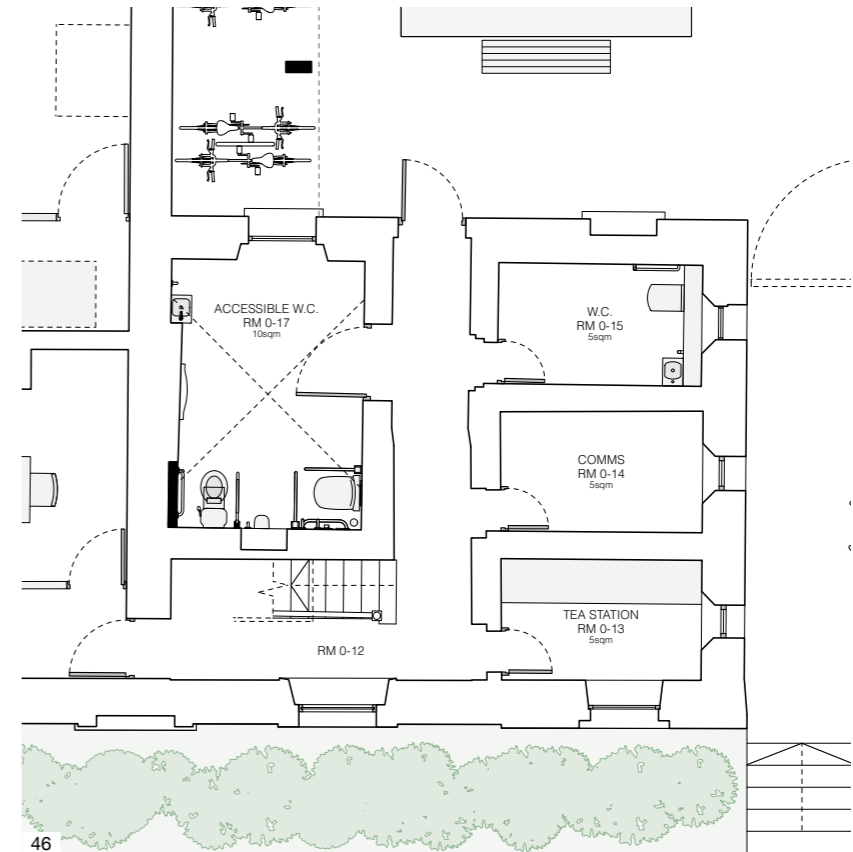
Figure 45
Phase one site proposal

Figure 46
Alternative ground floor south wing proposal

Figure 47
Proposed section thru courtroom & extension.



45



46



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Landscape

There is a welcome opportunity within this project to provide a much-needed new setting to the front of the courthouse, befitting the formal symmetrical façade of this protected structure. This will also serve as a new park / greenspace for the village, enhancing the streetscape and softening the traffic noise with new trees and soft planting. It was noted in the Borris-in-Ossory Community Plan (2018-2022) that: “*The village lacks a village green or square and has no identifiable town core at present. It is also one of the few villages in the region that does not have a playground, a town park, public walking track or facilities for young people.*”

The existing hardscape area to the west of the courthouse and the triangular green area will be combined to form a larger park to the front of the building. This will incorporate the millennium fountain which will now become a central focal point, within the park. To the rear of the building the new courtyard, wrapped on three sides by the courthouse and extension, will have bespoke benches and furniture, which will serve as an outdoor workspace for building occupants.

The original cast iron railings are still in place to the front of the courthouse and define an enclosed area between the two entrances. These will be retained and repaired in-situ, with an additional gate / entrance incorporated to the north end. As an enclosed outdoor space, they provide an opportune dwell area for parents with younger children.

To the rear, northern part of the site a car-parking area and a dedicated plant building will be provided with six car-parking spaces and one wheelchair accessible space. One EV parking bay is proposed as part of these spaces, however, this may be located elsewhere within the public realm. Access to the car-parking will be controlled via security barrier, as this parking area will be for dedicated use by the building occupants. Further detail on the landscape proposals are included in Appendix A.

Sustainability

Though the courthouse is a protected structure and therefore not required to reach current Part L Energy Efficiency requirements, the proposed design includes for significant upgrades and improvements to the performance of the building. These improvements will be delivered through the new services provided across the building and site, and through upgrades to the existing fabric within the building. Sustainability goes hand in hand with conservation, and the building is inherently sustainable, with a low carbon footprint, due to the retention of existing material. The insertion of insulated floors, and appropriate insulation to the walls and within the attic spaces will be explored and implemented where possible. Slim profile double glazing will be installed in new timber sliding sash windows throughout. Other measures such as the provision of LED lights, and the use of energy efficiency controls and sensors will also be installed throughout the building.

A green roof will be provided on the multi-purpose extension and across the whole site, the extent of green space and planting will be greatly increased.

Mechanical & Electrical / Services

There is no existing heating system within the building, aside from several storage heaters to the rooms on the first floor of the south wing. There is no gas or oil service running to the building, and there is no intention to provide one, as the building will be served by air-to-water heat pumps. Underfloor heating will be provided throughout the majority of the ground floor, with radiators throughout the first floor. Radiant heating panels will be installed on the walls of the courthouse, to heat this double height space.

The building will be naturally ventilated, through the use of openable timber windows but dedicated mechanical ventilation systems will be provided for the toilets, kitchens, and any communications rooms.

The new electrical supply will need to be adjusted to meet the requirements of the new digital hub, and telephone, television and broadband services will also need to be brought into the building. An access control system, intruder alarm system, CCTV and full fire detection systems will also be provided within the building and around the site. Further detail on the mechanical and electrical services is detailed in Appendix C.

Civils / Drainage

There is little to no risk of flooding on the site, as outlined in the Flood Risk Assessment in Appendix B. A new below ground foul drainage system will be required upstream of the building, and there appears to be sufficient falls on site to allow this to be a gravity fed system. Storm drainage design will depend on the soakage capacity on site, and soakage tests will be required to determine this. Where possible the storm water will be directed to soak pits to the east and west sides of the building, and if soakage is found to be poor, attenuation will be designed to include the use of the proposed water feature to the front of the courthouse. Further detail on the civils / drainage proposals are included in Appendix B.

Fire Safety Design and Accessibility

For protected structures and existing buildings, fire and access strategies can prove complex and in many cases straight forward solutions from technical guidance documents cannot be relied upon. For this reason, we have engaged a fire safety design and accessibility consultant to prepare a preliminary fire safety design and accessibility assessment of our proposed design. Solutions which should be acceptable to the fire officer and building control have been developed, and initial consultations with both the fire officer and building control have now been completed. An initial assessment of the fire safety and accessibility requirements of the design proposals have been carried out as included in Appendix D.

Ecology

The results of the bat survey carried out as part of this proposal indicate that the building is currently used as a roost by common, soprano pipistrelle and Leisler bats but not in number or duration that would indicate a maternity roost. As part of the mitigation measures resulting from this survey, it is proposed to install proprietary lead-formed bat access tiles as part of the slate roof repair works to maintain pathways for roosting bats either under the slates against the roofing felt or through the felt into locally formed roosting areas within the attic spaces above the north and south wings of the existing courthouse building. A derogation licence will be obtained from the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) prior to any works commencing on site. The final strategy for accommodating bats on site will be agreed with the NPWS through this licence application. Further details are included in Appendix E.

Figure 48
Ground floor proposal

ARCHITECTURE

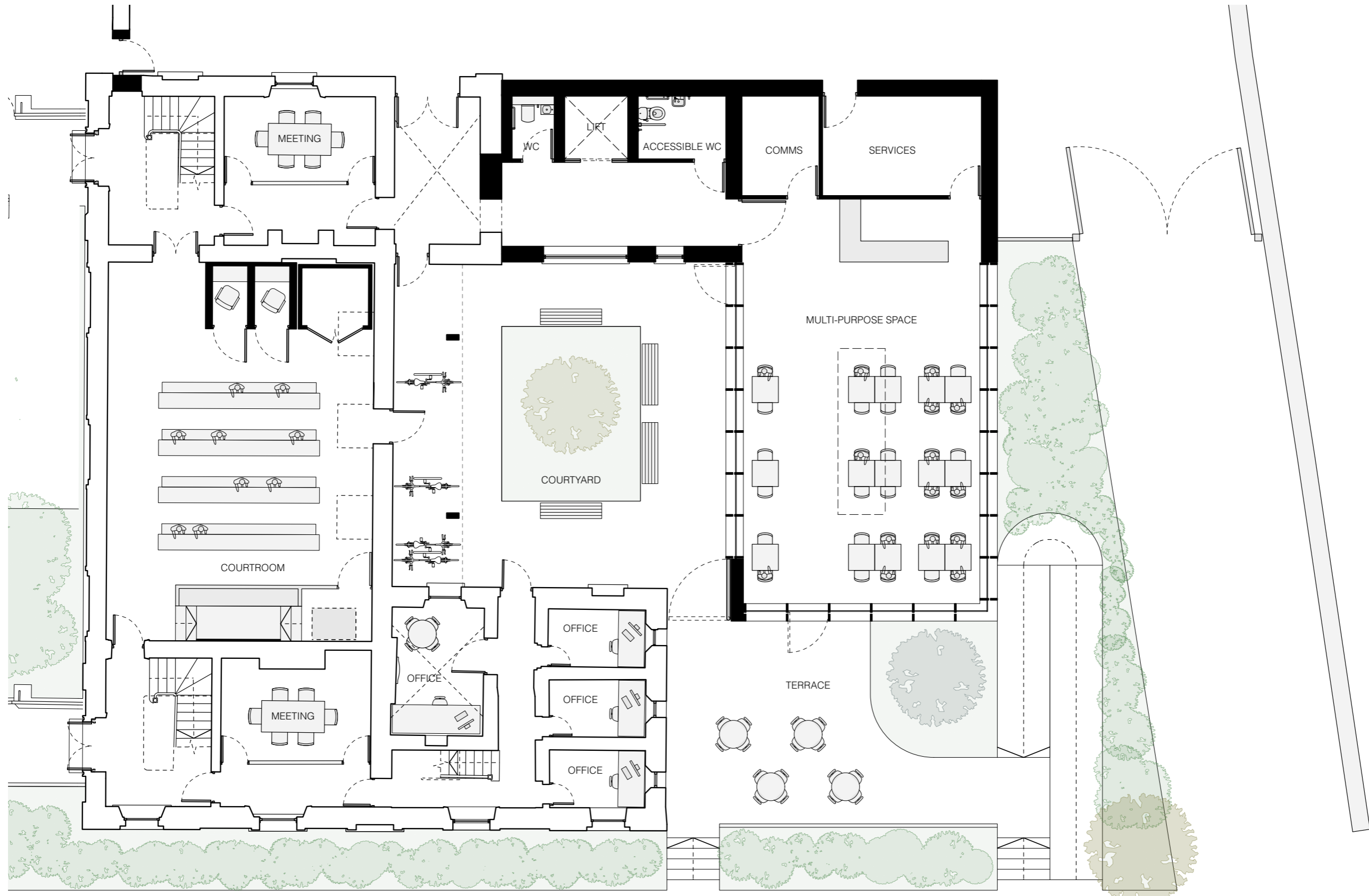


Figure 49
First floor proposal

ARCHITECTURE

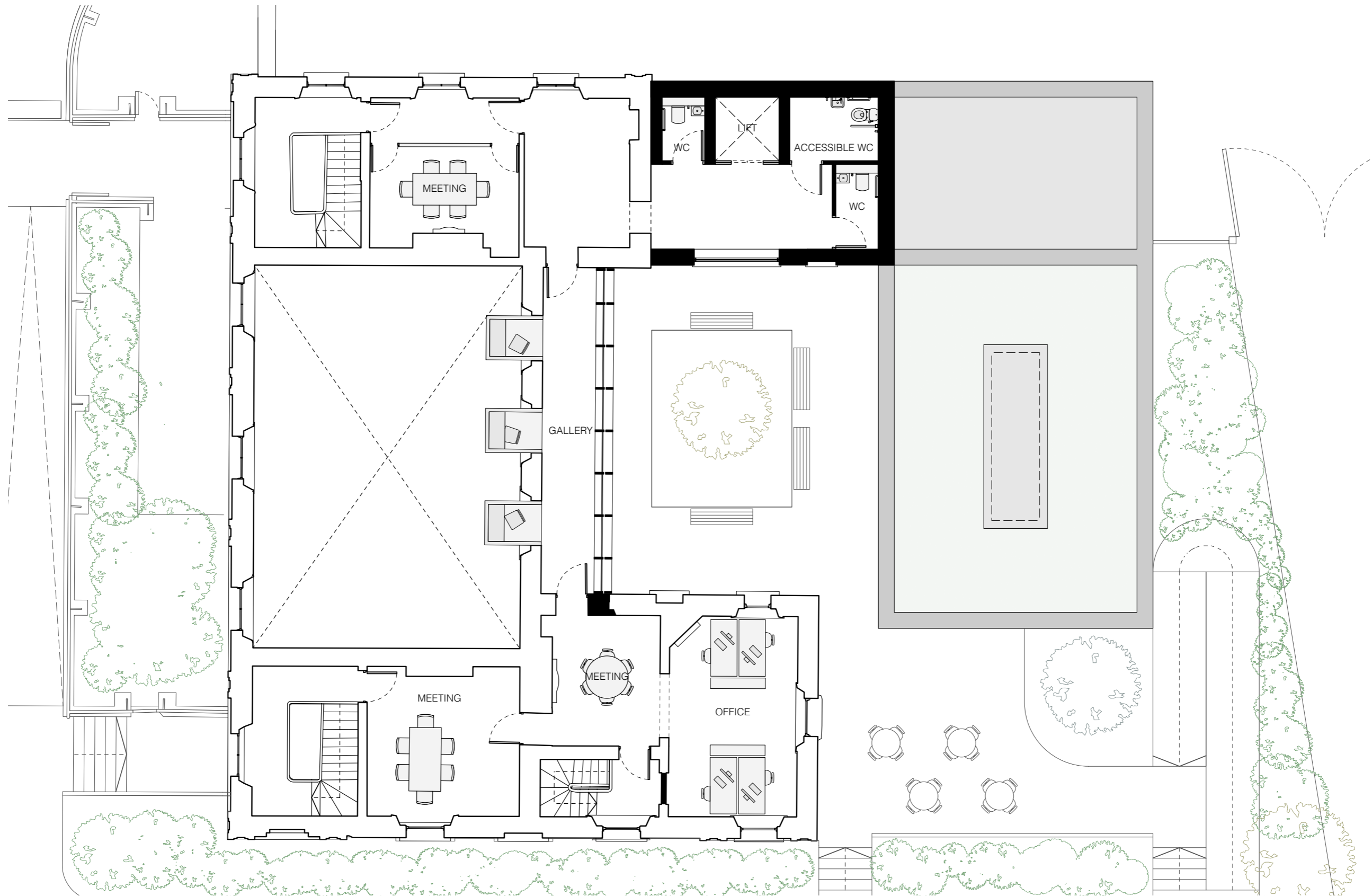


Figure 50
3D rendered view of proposal

8.0 Architectural Impact Assessment

The architectural significance of Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse lies in its external composition, in particular the facades to the south and west, and in its internal arrangements, with a centrally placed double height courtroom, cantilevered stone stairs and collection of ancillary rooms. These significant aspects of the structure will be conserved and enhanced under the design proposals, ensuring their ongoing preservation for future generations. Interventions have been carefully considered, to ensure minimum impact on the important historic areas of the building, and the project presents a welcome opportunity to repair and refurbish the historic fabric throughout the structure.

The rear (east) and north façades of the courthouse are plainer and simpler in elevation, and did not historically address any public space. With the removal of the prison yard wall at some point in the past, the rear façade has become even more visible from the Borris village side, an unusual arrangement discussed earlier in the report. The proposed development to the rear of the building is well positioned, ensuring minimal impact on the existing building, with the addition of a glazed link, and a two storey volume to the east end of the north wing. Both extensions will be structurally independent of the main courthouse, and both could be easily removed in the future. These extensions will be functional and of benefit to the

historic structure, providing circulation and services for the main building, with the provision of a corridor, lift and WCs. This will reduce impact on the protected structure, which would struggle to accommodate a code compliant lift and the quantum of WCs required.

A compatible use has been found for the courthouse, one which ensures minimal to no impact on the cultural significance of the historic site. Office use is relatively low impact, requiring a series of rooms to be fitted out with furniture. Internal interventions are generally reversible. Aside from some localised openings, the majority of the internal walls will remain completely intact, and the large courtroom volume will continue to function as an important gathering or meeting space for the village and county.

The proposals present an opportunity to repair internal joinery, and reinstate missing elements. New interventions within the building, such as the cantilevered desk pods in the courtroom, will be readily identifiable and are reversible.

The multipurpose space has been strategically positioned to infill a vacant part of the rear site, sitting within the footprint of the historic prison yard, and will form a new arrival point for those

approaching from the village. As it is completely independent of the courthouse it will have no physical impact on the protected structure when built. Its visual impact is considered minimal, with the lesser elevations of the historic building in its backdrop. When viewed from the street it sits in deference to the impressive south edifice of the courthouse.

The setting of the protected structure has been much altered over the last century, and there is an opportunity now to establish a more prominent setting for this significant building in the village. With the introduction of a new green space to the front of the building, patrons will be able to see the front façade to its full effect, and enjoy a new public park with the courthouse as a prominent backdrop.

Impact on the cultural significance of the building is considered to be minimal and in many ways positive. Conservation and repair of the existing historic fabric is a considerable aspect of this project, with new interventions designed to support and facilitate the adaptive reuse of this prominent, now derelict, building within the village of Borris-in-Ossory.



9.0 Conclusion

Figure 51
Courtroom sketch

The conservation, refurbishment and development of this protected structure will ensure its ongoing preservation and provide valuable and sustainable work and amenity spaces within the village of Borris-in-Ossory. Regeneration of these valuable historic assets within local towns and villages across Ireland is an important and worthwhile endeavour, which is now supported on a national level. It has become an increasingly urgent issue as many of these structures are falling into further dereliction and disrepair and are in danger of collapse. Robustly constructed, with fine architectural detailing, buildings such as Borris-in-Ossory courthouse will greatly enhance the streetscape once properly conserved and developed, providing local councils and communities with new spaces to work and play.



Appendices

Appendix A	Landscape <i>Nicholas de Jong Associates</i>
Appendix B	Civil & Structural <i>CORA Consulting Engineers</i>
Appendix C	Building Services <i>Hayes Higgins Partnership</i>
Appendix D	Fire Safety & Accessibility <i>Building Design Lab</i>
Appendix E	Ecology <i>Minogue Environmental Consulting</i>
Appendix F	Photographic Survey <i>Howley Hayes Cooney Architecture</i>

It should be noted that the documents contained within the appendices have been prepared to support the design process and that not all recommendations described therein will necessarily form part of the design proposals put forward as part of this planning application. In the case of a discrepancy, the reader should defer to the proposals described within the main body of text of the 'Design Statement and Architectural Impact Assessment' as prepared by Howley Hayes Cooney Architecture.

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C

Appendix A

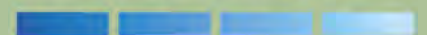
Landscape

Nicholas de Jong Associates

Borris in Ossory Courthouse

Stage Two Report - Part 8 | Landscape

July 2023





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Borris in Ossory Courthouse

Context | 1.0



Introduction

Borris in Ossory village is strategically located between Roscrea to the west and Mountrath to the east, at the intersection of the R445 (Formerly the N7) and R435 Regional routes and adjacent to Junction 21 of the M7.

South of the village is Ballybrophy railway station which is on the main Limerick/Cork to Dublin line.

The village enjoys the dramatic backdrop of the Slieve Bloom Mountains to the north east and the River Nore passes just north of the settlement.

Planning Context

Statutory guidance for development in Borris in Ossory is provided in the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 and more specifically within the Settlement Strategy section 6.3—Borris in Ossory.

Guidance is also provided by the most recent Community Plan (2018 – 2022).

The following section is an overview with extracts of the Settlement Strategy and the Community Plan, which broadly inform the development of the Courthouse from a landscape and public realm perspective.

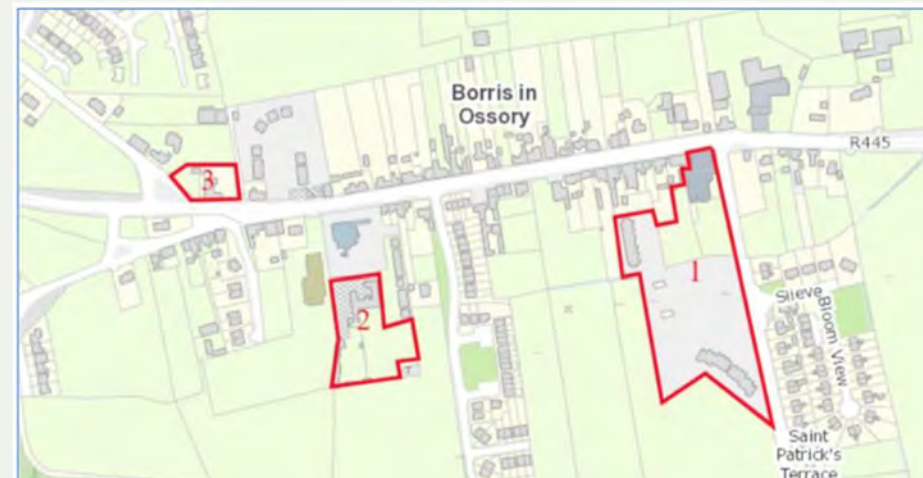
And due to its very specific wording, Objective 6 from the previous Development Plan LCDP 2017-2023 is also included albeit on a non statutory basis.

Extracts from the County Development Plan

Character & Context

*“Although the village centre is compact and the architectural quality of the village is strong, **Borris in Ossory** suffers from dereliction and poor maintenance of some buildings and **would benefit from enhancement of the public realm.**”*

Architectural focal points include the Church of Ireland and former courthouse. During 2014 and 2015, works were carried out to conserve the decorative stonework at the courthouse and to restore the historic railings and gates round the building. ”



Extract from Volume 2 Settlement Strategy of Laois County Development Plan 2021 – 2027

Regeneration Strategy—OP3

*“... **Opportunity Site 3** which occupies a **prominent location** on the western approach to the village. Considerable potential exists to develop this site as a new **community centre**, a tourism hub for nearby attractions or as a creative/**digital hub for local employment opportunities.** The building is the former courthouse and is listed on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS 319).. ”*

Written Objectives

“Built Form and Regeneration

BIO 1 - Consolidate the village centre by way of infill development, backland development and redevelopment as appropriate

BIO 2 - Encourage restoration or redevelopment of derelict sites, vacant or underused buildings within the village centre;

BIO 3 - Encourage and facilitate the re-use and regeneration of the old Courthouse and Convent Sites (Opportunity Sites 2 and 3) to a **public/community/enterprise uses** which will provide an opportunity to capitalise on their prominent locations.

BIO 6 - Enhance the appearance of the Main Street by means of tree planting and biodiversity planting proposals.”

“Economic Development

BIO 10 - Support provision, expansion or redevelopment of social infrastructure (public open space, playground facilities and educational amenities (school and child-care), and community facilities”

Infrastructure

“BIO 11 - Improve pedestrian and cycle linkages in the town and provide cycle parking at buildings in community use, particularly schools;

BIO 12 - Facilitate the mobility of persons with special needs by way of disabled parking provision and suitable pedestrian network;

BIO 13 - Facilitate traffic management improvements within the town; “

Borris in Ossory Strategic Plan 2018-2022

Borris-In-Ossory Community Plan 2018-2022



Borris-in-Ossory Community Development Association

June 2018



1

Extracts from Borris in Ossory Community Plan 2018-2022

Public Realm and Appearance

“The consultation and needs assessment identified the need to develop the following;

- *Carry out enhancement works on the approach to the village*
- *Create a public space for recreation and landscaped areas in the village.*
- *Address the derelict state of the courthouse*
- *Enhance the physical appearance of the main street and tackle dereliction.*

“The village lacks a village green or square and has no identifiable town core at present. It is also one of the few villages in the region that does not have a playground, a town park, public walking track or facilities for young people.”

Relevant extract from previous Development Plan 2017-2023

“Written Objectives

BIO 6 - Extend the quantity and improve the quality of the open space to the front of the old courthouse to provide an appropriate setting to this protected structure as well as an amenity for local people”



When mapping the existing amenity spaces in Borris in Ossory it is evident that a large part of the existing amenities, zoned open space and notable buildings are located to the west of the village centre, not far from the location of the Courthouse. A high quality public space to the west of the courthouse would help tie these amenities into the fabric of the village.

The start of the Sli na Slaine loop is also located just west of the Courthouse, which is a popular walking and running trail. The Courthouse redevelopment could become an informal hub or trailhead for recreational activities, with potential for additional future trails to stem from this location including to the River Nore.



Borris in Ossory Courthouse

Existing Amenities Identified | 1.3



Millennium Fountain and Green

Ornamental grouping of trees surrounding the Millennium Fountain



Onny's Garden

Community park with seating located on former road alignment.



Peggy Kirwan Memorial

Small amenity space with seating and a memorial stone for Peggy Kirwan

Although private the Church and School frontages are pleasant amenity spaces.



St Canice's Church and St Joseph's School Frontages

O'Keeffe Park GAA



O'Keeffe Park GAA Fields, includes pitch, dressing and meeting rooms.

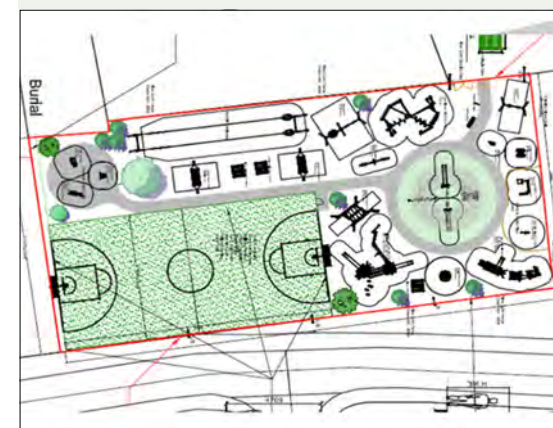


St Mark's Church



Although private, the church grounds provide a pleasant amenity space that includes number of topiary Yew trees.

Playground and MUGA



New playground and MUGA provides an amenity for children and teenagers.

O'Brien Community Hall



Provides community and recreational space.



Approach from the West



Approach from the East

Approach

The building commands a gateway presence into Borris from the west, its most impressive façade faces directly to the west, and the secondary along the main road facing directly south.

The western frontage is open looks onto a hardstanding area with a small green space further towards the Rock Road junction. And the southern frontage is the main road and footpath (R445). Both frontages are part of the public realm.

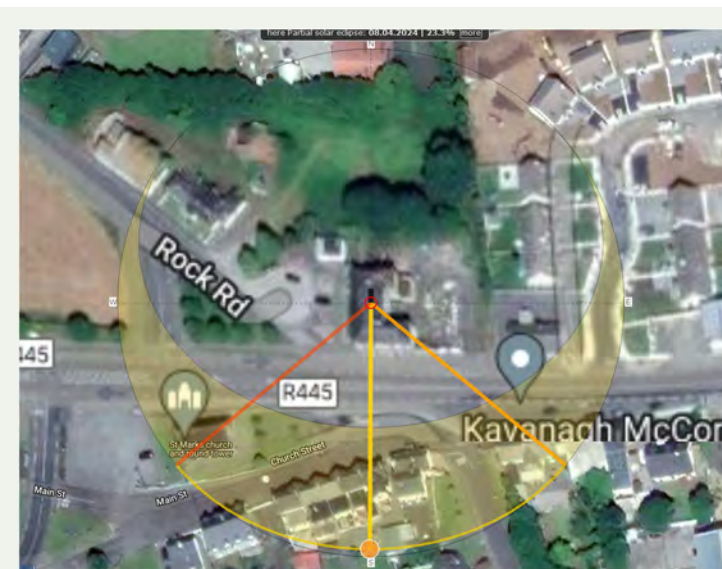
The approach to the building from the east is not currently as dramatic with part of it partially screened by a high wall along the main road.

The northern and eastern facades and their immediate surroundings are currently more private, enclosed and shaded and they are not currently in the public realm.



Sun Path Summer Solstice 2023

suncalc.org



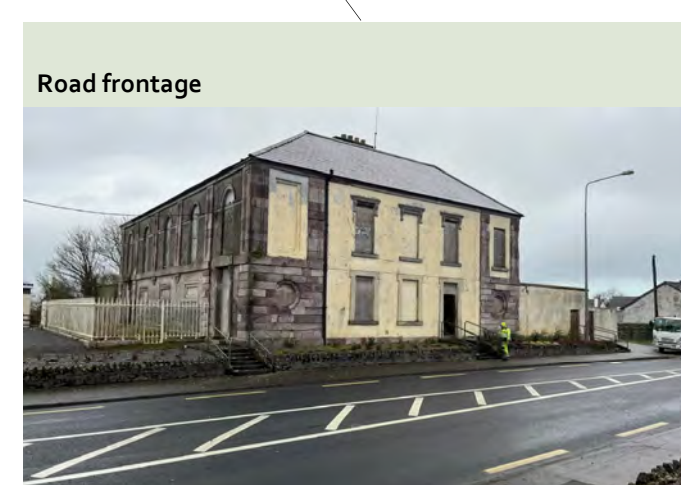
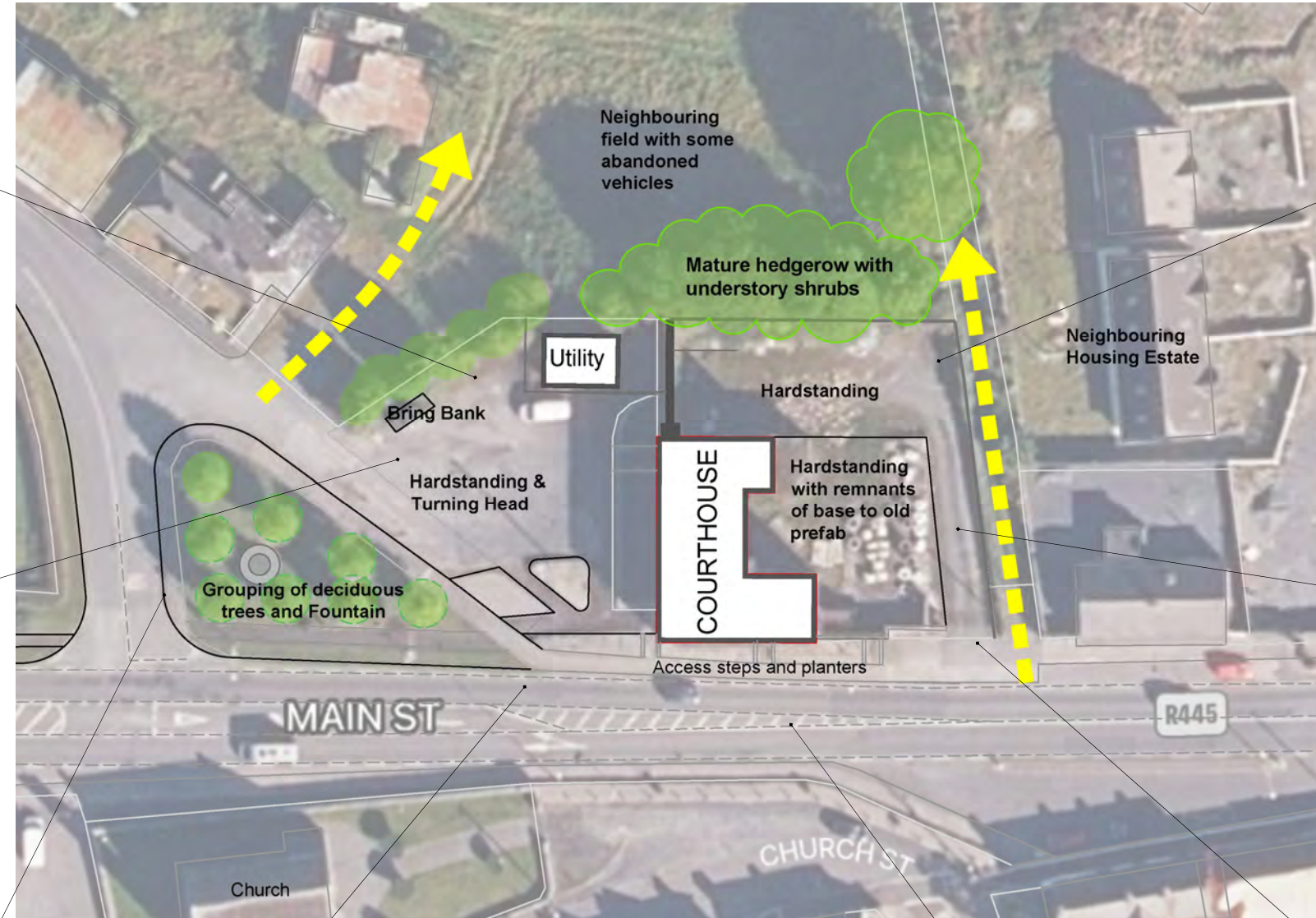
Sun Path Winter Solstice 2023

suncalc.org

Aspect

The external spaces enjoy a variety of aspects and interact differently with the building. However it is worth noting that there are a number of areas that are quite shaded and will require proposals designed for such conditions.

Existing Situation Plan and Photos



Northern and Eastern Boundaries

The boundaries to the north and the east of the site are clearly identifiable and are private enclosing a yard to the rear of the Courthouse.



The Northern boundary



The Northern boundary of Courthouse from NE farm track

To the **north** of the site there is a mature hedgerow of deciduous trees with broken understory planting of shrubs. It looks over an overgrown field with some broken cars and other scrap visible. Reinforcement of this boundary with infill planting and/or a new tier of planting could be beneficial to the project, it would need to be assessed in spring / summer.



The Eastern boundary



The Eastern façade of the Courthouse from Feather Bed Lane

The **eastern** boundary is a tired looking castellated block wall looking over a farm track at a lower level and then onwards to the rear of properties in a neighbouring housing estate. This boundary could need upgrading and softening as part of the scheme as well as some gentle screening where possible.

Southern and Western Boundaries

The boundaries to the west and the south are public and are not as easily defined.



The Southern boundary



Access steps along the Southern boundary

The **southern** edge is open and faces the main road. It currently comprises of three poor quality sets of stairs that access the courthouse, separated by raised planters with a municipal planting scheme. This boundary feels quite exposed and is quite noisy due to its proximity to the main road.



Bring Bank and overgrown Conifers along the Western boundary



The Western façade of the Courthouse from Rock Road

The **western** edge is a largely open hardstanding area used as a car park and turning head. There is a pleasant grouping of semi mature trees in an ornamental green area on the western approach forming an informal boundary to the site. And a line of Cypress trees over a recycling bring bank which offer sheltering but could do with pruning or removal.



Large wing wall to the north of the Courthouse



Walls to the east of the Courthouse



Enclosure with railings to the west of the Courthouse



Gate as part of the railings



Bring bank



Telecommunications building and the dead space to its rear

Site features to note

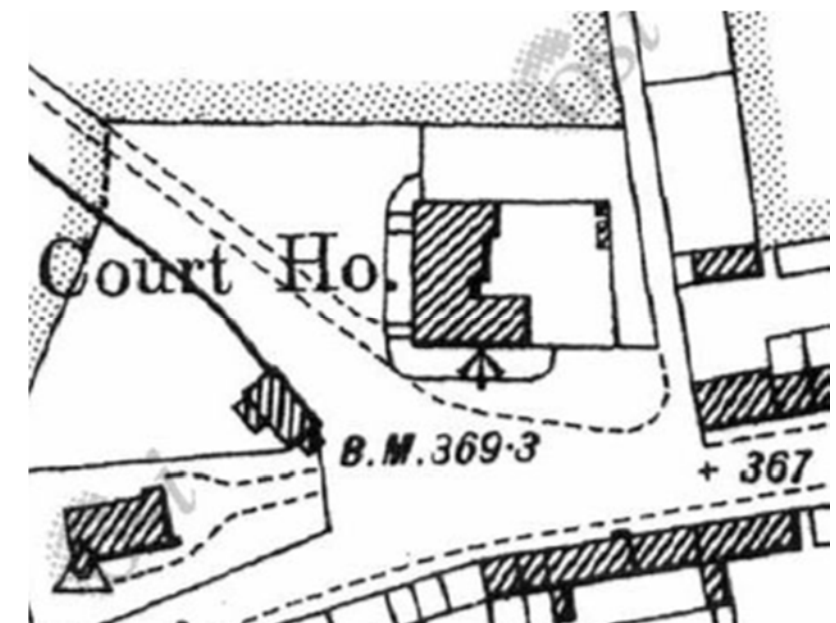
The site is currently segregated by large wing walls, one to the north and the other extending from its southern façade to the east. These may need to be retained as part of the proposals.

There is also a space enclosed by railings to the west of the site. This was part of a greater extent of railings that used to extend around the south of the building. The railings are quite a defensive and unwelcoming, and it could be beneficial to have them relocated as part of the project to better present the building along its western edge.

There is a telecommunications building to the north west side of the Courthouse. This structure is to be retained but could benefit from some form of screening or softening. To the rear the structure is an unused dead space that needs careful consideration.

A bring bank is currently located to the west of the building which could either be better integrated or moved elsewhere.

These external features and any other features not yet identified would need to be considered as part of the scheme.

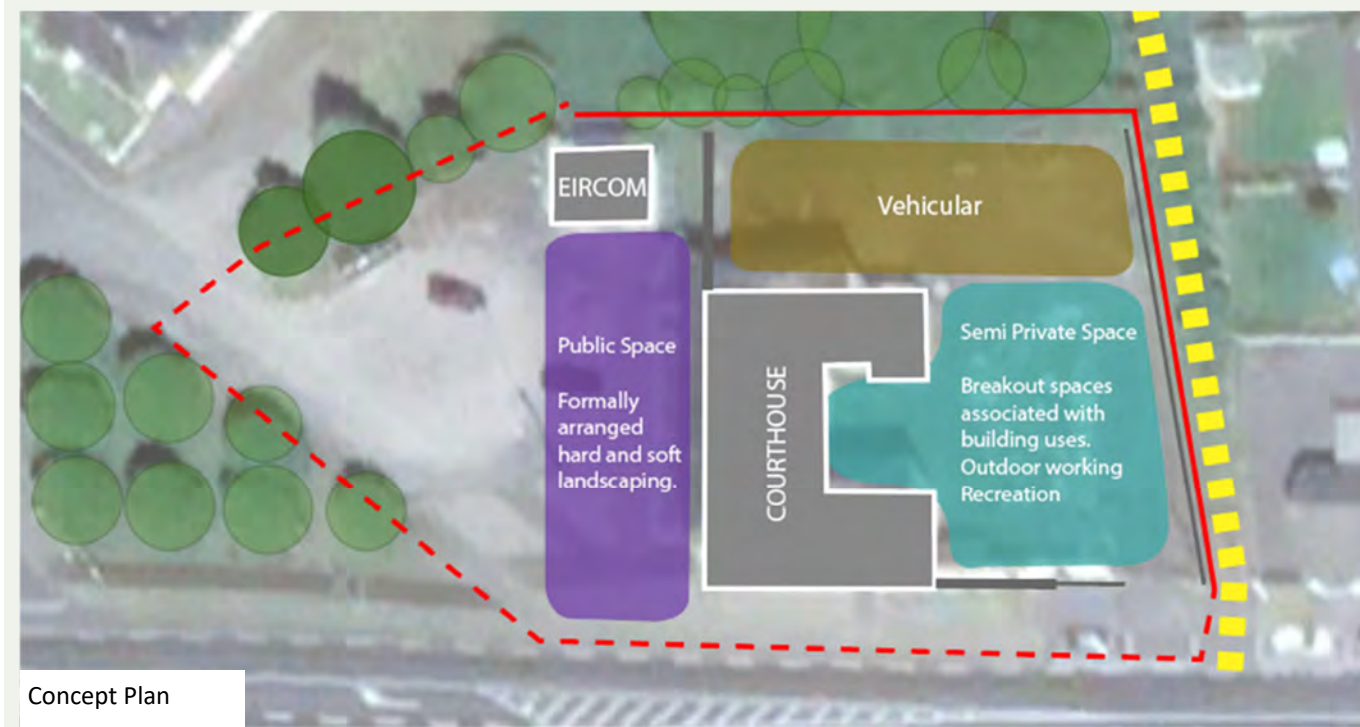


Historical map indicating the original extents of the railings

Borris in Ossory Courthouse

Stage 1 Proposals | 2.0

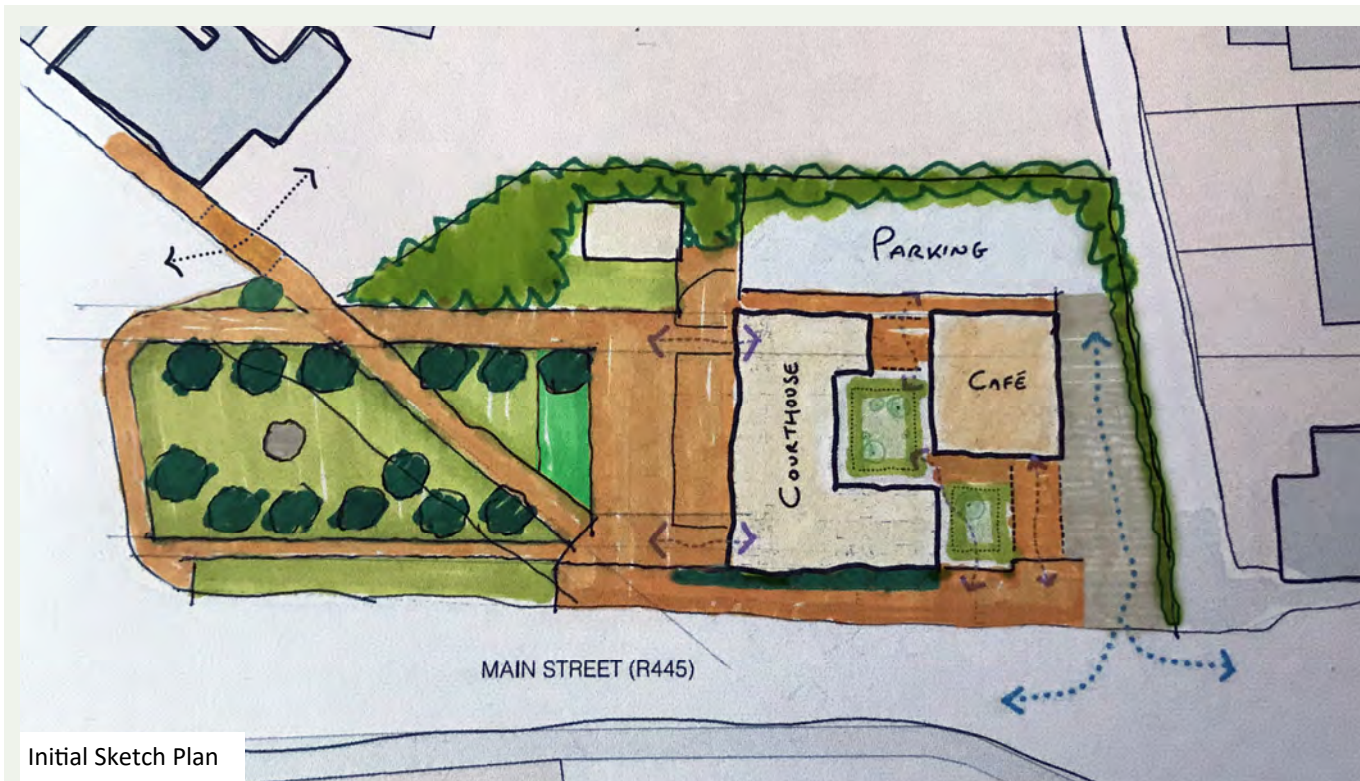




Concept Plan

Initial Concept

Informed by the brief, statutory context, as well as information gathered during informal consultation with the client. The initial design exercise was to explore the existing spaces and how they may inform a new hierarchy of external spaces around the Courthouse building and its new use as a digital remote working hub.



Initial Sketch Plan

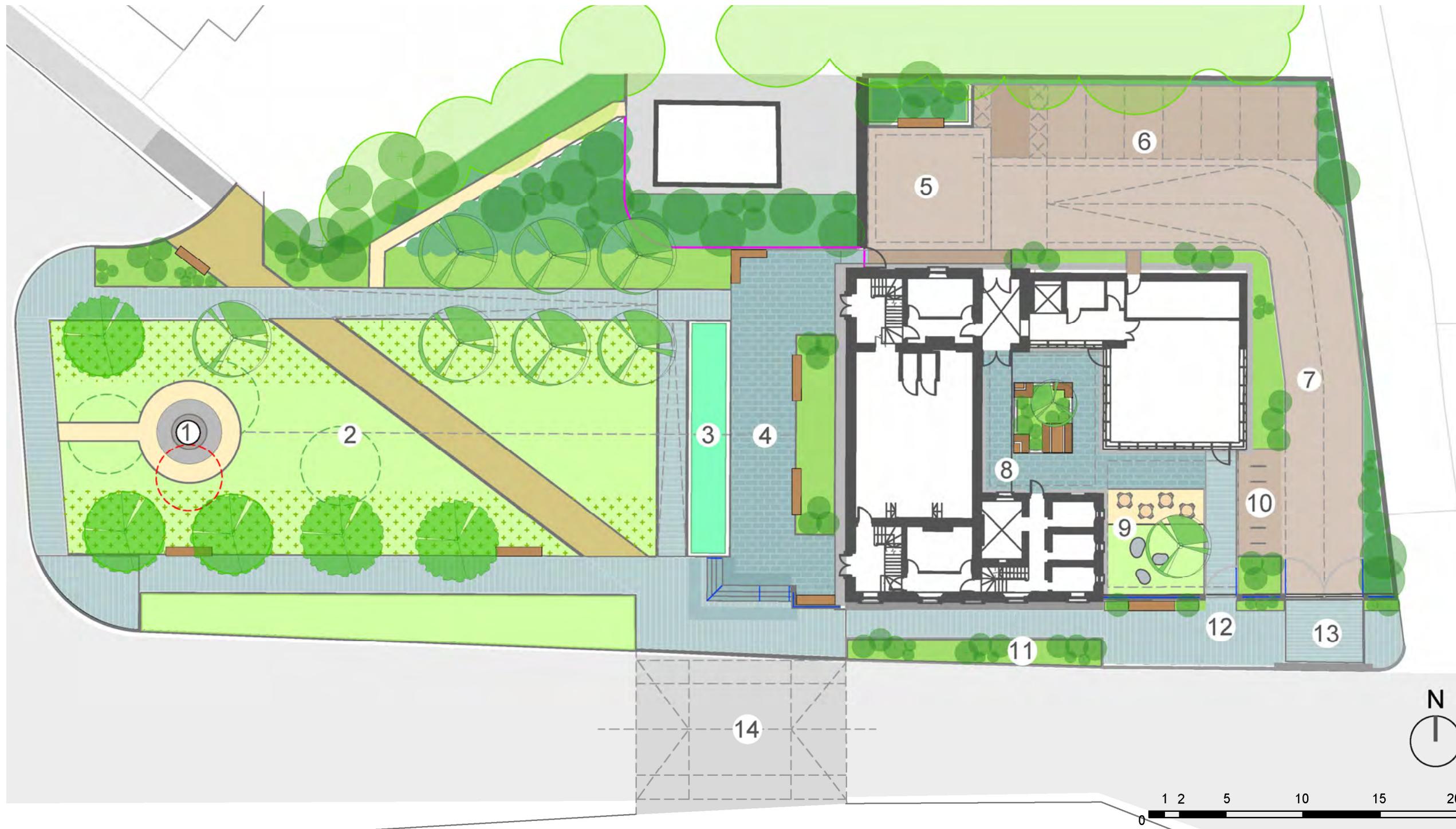
Preliminary Sketch Design

In coordination with the Architects' preliminary proposals. Sketch landscape proposals were developed which began to add shape and structure to the initial concept.

It was proposed that the site boundary be extended to incorporate the existing green space, and the entirety of the hardstanding area to the west of the site as part of scheme. Which will provide a more comprehensive civic space to the west of the Courthouse, and helps to reorientate focus back to the main façade.

The priority and movement of people and vehicles was further explored. Which identified key desire lines, including the diagonal transverse route from Rock Road into the centre of the village.

Priority landscaping features were also considered, including initial SuDS proposals (Sustainable Drainage Systems) and any visual screening.



The preliminary proposal features formal lawned gardens and a plaza to the west of the site, which accentuates the symmetry of the Courthouse. It also upgrades the status and presentation of the building to its context, especially for those approaching the village from the west.

As part of the scheme it is proposed that the Millennium Fountain be relocated slightly to the north, to line up with the centre of the Courthouse, furthermore three existing trees would also need to be removed with new ones planted to reinforce the symmetry of the space.

It is also proposed that the old railings are relocated to a more appropriate location on site.

To the east of the Courthouse are a series of more intimate and functional spaces that are more related to the internal use of the building, including secluded outdoor work spaces and more social breakout spaces. Vehicular access, parking and turning head are accommodated to the east and north of the building.

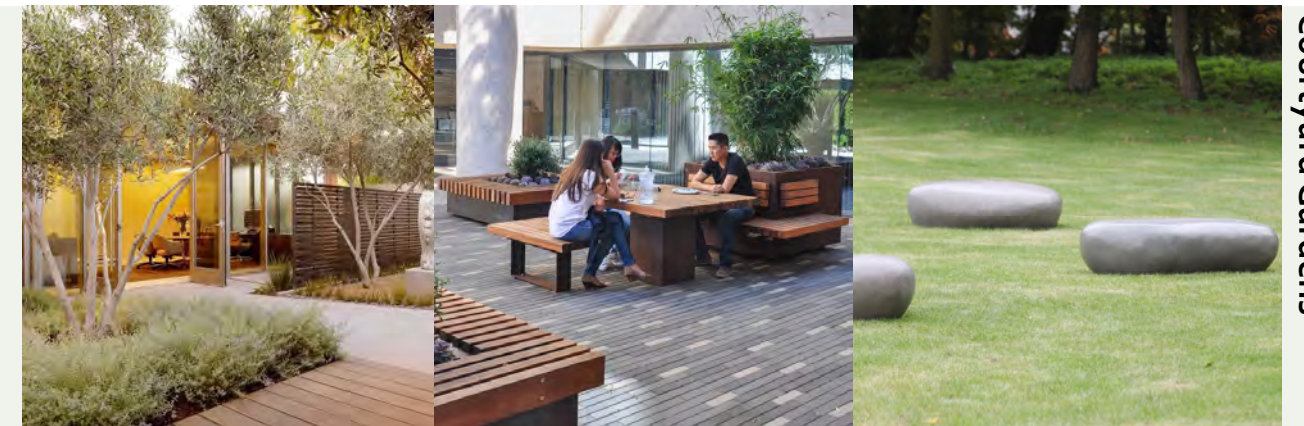
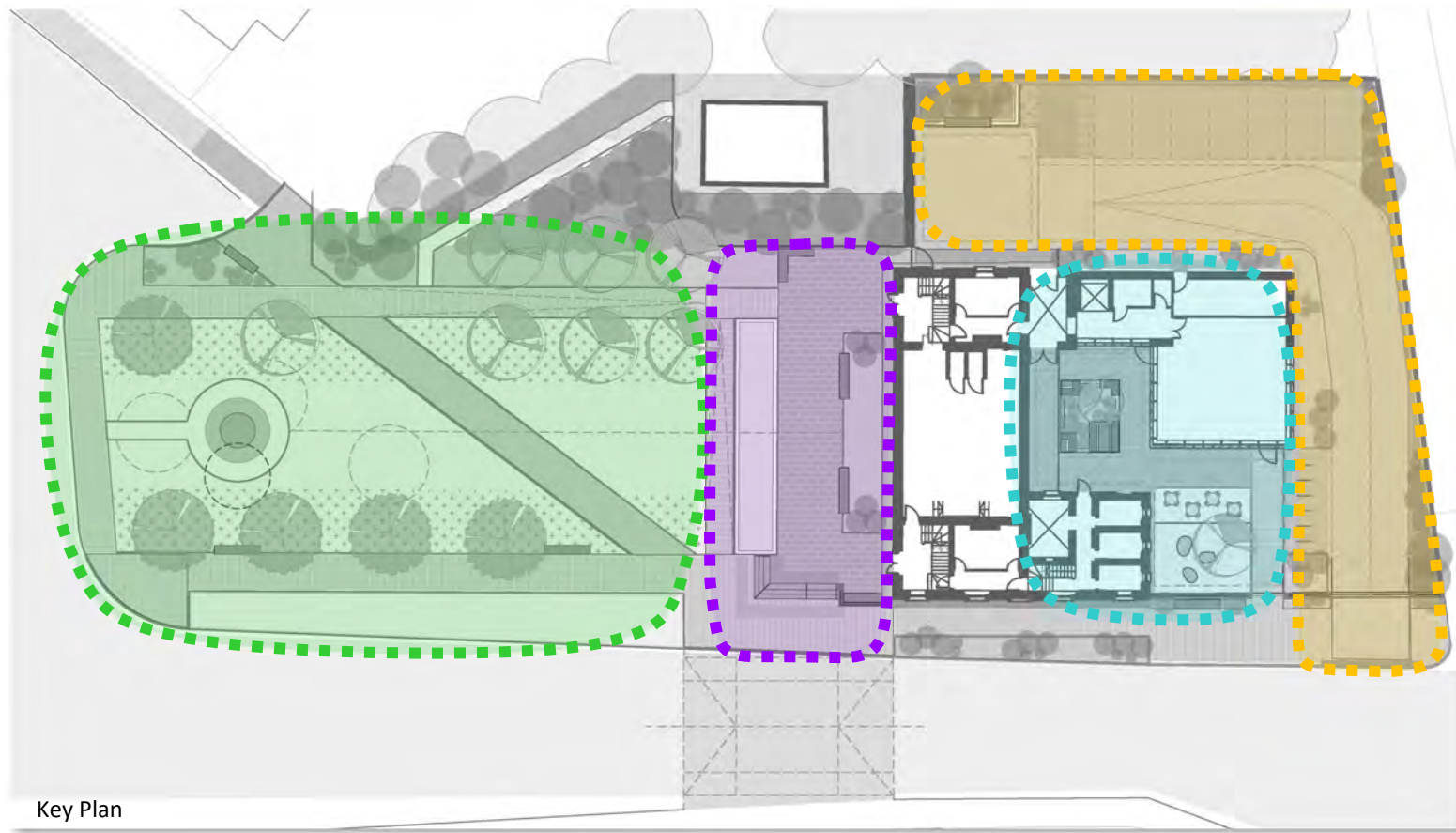
Planting will be used at key locations to provide screening and softening, including at the telecommunications hub and along the North and eastern boundaries.

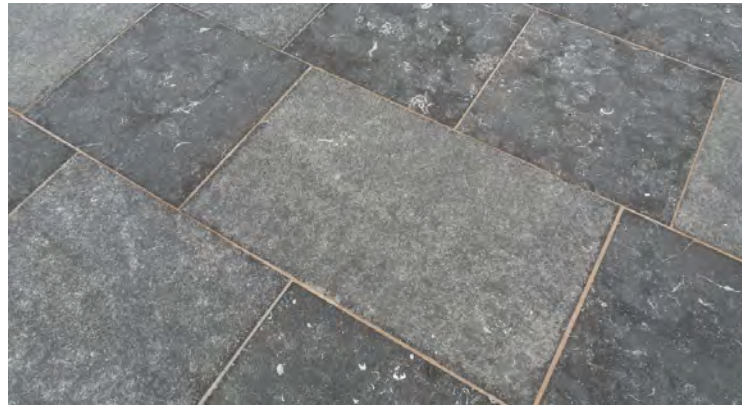
- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Natural Stone Paving | Existing Railings Relocated | Lawn | New Trees |
| Natural Stone Setts | Railings and Handrails (New) | Lawn with bulbs | Existing Trees Retained & Pruned |
| Permeable Paving | Seating | Planting Perennial Mix | Existing Trees Removed |
| Self Binding Gravel | Informal Seating | Rain Garden (SuDS) | Existing Woodland Pruned |
| Resin Bound Aggregate | Relocated Millennium Fountain | Planting Shrubs | |
| Steps | Current Location of Fountain | | |

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Key | | |
| 1 Relocated Millennium Fountain | 6 Parking (8) | 11 Green Separator Strip |
| 2 Formal Lawned Gardens | 7 Shared Surface Access | 12 Arched Pedestrian Access |
| 3 Rain Garden (SuDS) | 8 Workspace Courtyard | 13 Pedestrian Priority Vehicular Entrance |
| 4 Raised Front Plaza | 9 Social Garden | 14 Traffic Calming & Crossing |
| 5 Turning Head | 10 Cycle Parking | |

Borris in Ossory Courthouse

Precedent Images | 2.3





Natural Stone | Paving Slabs

- Surfacing for western plaza and courtyards
- Nationally sourced product where possible
- In keeping with historical context.
- Hardwearing low maintenance surfacing.
- Textured surface finish



Gravel | Resin Bound

- Surfacing for diagonal link through park
- A softer surface type to denote lower hierarchy of path yet retaining prominence over unbound surfacing.
- Can be laid permeable



Natural Stone | Paving Setts

- Surfacing for main connecting footpaths
- Nationally sourced product where possible
- In keeping with historical context.
- Hardwearing low maintenance surfacing.
- Textured surface finish



Gravel | Self Binding

- Surfacing for minor paths and linkages
- Regionally sourced product
- A softer surface type to denote lower hierarchy of path



Natural Stone | Steps

- Surface type for stairs from Plaza to street level
- Nationally sourced product where possible
- Contrasting nosing material with tactile paving
- Contrasting stone finish to surrounding paving
- In keeping with historical context.



Vehicle Access Kerb

- Provides access for vehicles to the site whilst retaining pedestrian priority on the footpath. The path surface doesn't undulate.
- Regionally sourced product where possible
- Textured surface



Concrete | Permeable Paving Blocks

- Paving for access road and car parking
- Precast Concrete (Irish)
- Permeable surface as part of SuDS interventions
- Hardwearing low maintenance surfacing



Existing Railings | Reclaimed

- Existing original railings from the western side of the Courthouse to be reclaimed, refurbished and reused on site as perimeter railings and access gates as possible



Informal Sculptural Seating

- Giant polished concrete pebbles
- A collection of different shapes to facilitate informal social gathering and interaction.



Millennium Fountain | Relocated

- Existing feature fountain to the west of the Courthouse to be relocated a few meters to the north to align with Courthouse symmetry.
- To be refurbished as necessary.



Water Bottle Refill Station

- Standalone potable water refill station
- Hardwearing stainless steel and PPC finish.
- Services interlinking community recreational activities.



Seating and Tables

- Hardwood timber benches and tables
- A mixture of types, sizes and arrangements to suit different user needs. Including public benches onto the western public space as well as work private focus areas as well as collaborative work spaces



Cycle Stands

- Durable steel cycle stands
- Root fixed for added security
- Possibility for E-Bike / E-Scooter Charging



Lawn | Grass & Clover with Bulbs

- Main surface type for western public space
- Added clover for biodiversity
- Permeable surface
- Bulbs planted under trees for spring colour and for biodiversity. *Crocus, Daffodils, Snowdrops*



Rain Garden

- SuDS intervention to the west of the Courthouse and plaza.
- Perennial planting mix specifically selected for rain gardens. All year interest.
- Pollinator friendly



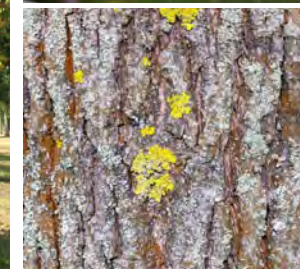
Mixed Perennial Planting

- All year round colour and interest
- Seed heads for winter interests and for biodiversity enhancement.
- Plants that can be divided for use elsewhere such as ornamental grasses.
- Bark mulch surface finish



Shrub beds

- Border shrub beds for bolstering boundaries and softening / screening.
- Dense or evergreen planting in tiers.
- Deep bark mulch surface finish



Specimen Trees - *Tilia cordata* (Lime) T.B.C

- Main tree type for western public space.
- Tree type to match existing trees around Millennium Fountain. Species to be confirmed during growing season.
- Explore the possibility of moving existing trees.



Standard Trees - Mix

- Secondary tree types.
- A mostly native mix of species to bring all year visual interest and boost biodiversity.
- *Species:* - Dwarf Scots Pine, Silver Birch, Oak, Holly, Hazel, Rowan, Amelanchier.



Illustrative view of Stage 1 proposals from Rock Road junction

Borris in Ossory Courthouse

Stage 2 Part 8 - Refined Landscape Proposals | 3.0



Introduction

Section 3.0 sets out the process of design that followed the stage 1 proposals and consultations. It includes the reasoning behind subsequent refinements that were made to the design, which culminate in the Stage 2 - Part 8 proposals.

Design Refinements

For the Stage 2 process, the design team reviewed and revised the landscape proposals with thorough consideration of stage 1 consultation feedback, as well as utilising new information from surveys and reports; e.g Topographical surveys and Ground Penetrating Radar survey (GPR).

The Stage 1 proposals were also further reviewed from the perspective of deliverability and sustainability, including basic circular economy principles, as well as accessibility and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Refinements were made to the scheme to better address those considerations as well as remove legacy requirements no longer relevant.

The following section lists and discusses the reasoning behind the main design refinements that feature in the Part 8 proposals. Starting with those that stemmed from the Stage 1 consultation feedback.

Stage 1 Feedback | Overview

The main Stage 1 feedback that concerned the landscape proposals centred on the following subjects:

1. Access control - Internal and external.
2. Planting choice and maintenance requirements.
3. Parking requirements, including EV charging.
4. Location of recycling bring bank.**

***It was subsequently decided that the location of the recycling bring bank would be moved to another location in the village outside of the site boundary, therefore it is not discussed further within this report as a landscape architecture item.*

Design Refinements

1. Access Control

Stage 1 Feedback: Access to the site would need to be able to function without the need for a grounds keeper / security. And also it would be preferred if the building and site could be partitioned if needed. Therefore the design would need to be revised to allow for automated access e.g. fob or code.

The vehicle access gate would need to be relocated away from the road to allow space for vehicles to pause without blocking the footpath.

An automated gate rather than a lifting boom barrier was the preferred option.

Design Refinement: The access gates have been pushed back to a second tier location, which has turned the terrace in front of the proposed built extension into a public space, and allowing ample space for vehicles to access the site without blocking the footpath.

The car park at the rear of the building and the central courtyard will be private spaces with controlled access provisions via automated gates.

2. Planting Choice and Maintenance Requirements

Stage 1 Feedback: The planting scheme design needs to considerate of the maintenance commitment.

Planting should also provide year round interest and species included that can be divided and used elsewhere in the village and county in the future where possible.

Design Refinement: The Stage 1 proposals were conscious of maintenance limitations and the stage 2 proposals continue with the same approach. But in addition, the overall layout has been revised slightly to maximise low maintenance planting mixes and limit small infill planting areas which can be neglected. The 'Rain Garden' has also been removed from the scheme which reduces the maintenance commitment.

Other visual and horticultural requirements of the planting mixes will be further considered during detailed design stage.

3. Parking Requirements

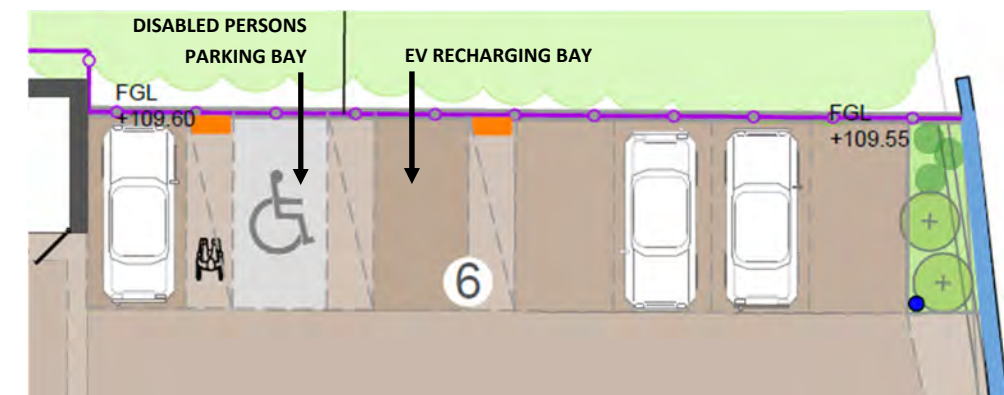
Stage 1 Feedback: Vehicle parking needs to accommodate electrical vehicle (EV) recharging points.

Design Refinement: The traffic signs manual (Chapter 7, 7.6.25) stipulates that EV recharging bays (RRM 34) need 1.2m wide margins that run both sides of the parking bay. similar to wheelchair accessible spaces. Therefore what can be achieved within the confines of the site is limited and have implications on the total amount of parking spaces that can be accommodated.

It is also worth noting that disability groups have been vocal that wheelchair accessible spaces should not be left behind when it comes to EV recharging provision.

Additional EV parking opportunities were explored outside of the site boundaries and sketch proposals were prepared for a road new crossing and associated landscaping. This is discussed further in item 11, section 3.1.3, page 24 of this document.

The Stage 2 proposals includes 21m of perpendicular parking space to the rear of the building. The refined layout shows 7 spaces in total including one marked EV recharging bay as well as providing accessible EV recharging for the disabled persons parking bay. In addition, two regular car parking spaces could benefit by their proximity to charging points, and function as unmarked informal recharging EV bays. These informal spaces benefit from shared 1.2m margin along one side. It could be argued that this approach is justifiable due to the site constraints and the growing importance of providing EV facilities.



Extract from Landscape General Arrangement Plan. BiO-LGA-001

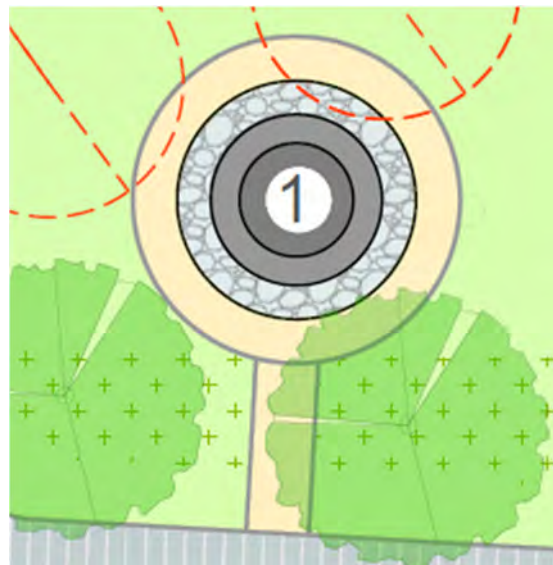
4. Millennium Fountain

The justification for moving the fountain structure to a new location was reviewed after a number of factors were considered including;

- Initial discussions on costs which suggested that it would be cost prohibitive to move the fountain, for small gains in symmetry of the space.
- The practicalities of successfully moving the structure.
- The existing underground duct network that was identified on the GPR survey.

Design Refinement: The fountain is to be retained at its current location, with the new path leading to it moved to link to the south so that it addresses the existing plaque.

The circular path around the fountain is retained, and will help define the structure within the green space as well as provide access to viewing points that sit centrally within the Courthouse gardens.



Extract from Landscape General Arrangement Plan. BiO-LGA-001 showing Millennium Fountain.

5. Path Alignments & Gradients Within the Gardens.

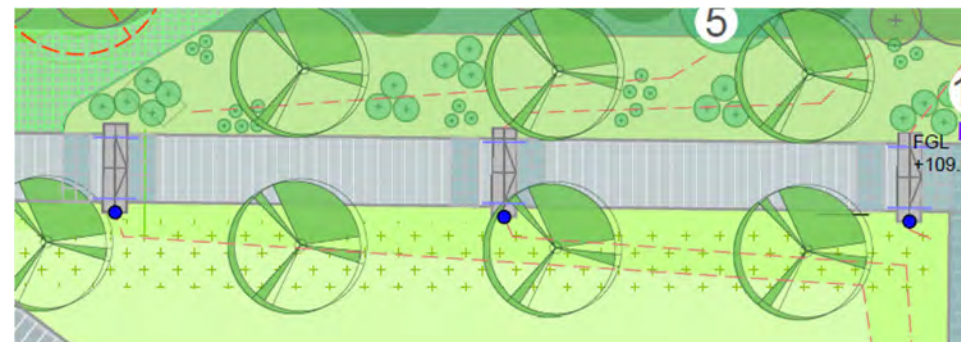
Upon reviewing the design against the topographical information, it became evident that a number of small alignment and accessibility changes were needed to tie the preliminary design to site constraints such as existing path locations, tree and furniture locations, as well as larger than expected level changes.

Design Refinement: The paths alignments have been changed slightly to tie into existing paths. This allows the design to incorporate the existing trees, and reduce the scope of required works for this area.

The ramped path leading from the Rock Road to the north west door of the Courthouse was found to be too steep to conform to *Technical Guidance Document M (Part M)*, therefore introducing steps along this

path became unavoidable, and the wheelchair accessible route maintained via the central linking path. A series of monolithic steps were introduced which gradually raise the path levels to the Courthouse. Other paths are 1:21 gradient or greater allowing for suitable wheelchair access.

The scale of the steps at the south western entrance were also revised to better relate to historic proportions, and to balance the prominence of the two western entrance doors.



Extract from Landscape General Arrangement Plan. BiO-LGA-001 showing new gradual stepped route from Roack Road to Courthouse NW door.

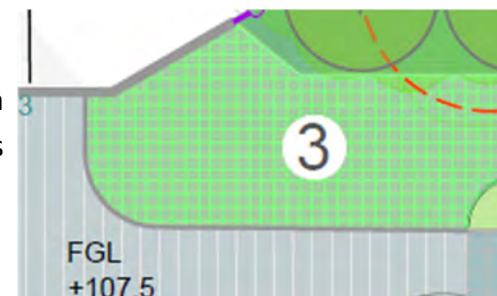
6. Hardstanding Area

EIR the utility company that operate the telecommunications structure to the north east of the courthouse were consulted in regards to the access requirements.

It was stipulated that a 3m x 6m vehicle hardstanding, and a linking path would be required to facilitate access.

Design Refinement: A dedicated 3m x 6m reinforced grass hardstanding has been included in the proposals, as well as an access path which links to the structure.

It was decided that reinforced grass would tie functionality with SuDS and aesthetic properties to help maintain the integrity of the landscape design, tying it visually into the planted boundary



Extract from Landscape General Arrangement Plan. BiO-LGA-001 showing hardstanding area

7. Removal of Raised Front Plaza and Rain Garden

Upon reviewing the measured surveys, it was decided that the area which the railings currently enclose to the west of the building would be a sufficient scale to form a fronting civic space for the Courthouse. And the enclosure including most the railings, gates and plinth walls should be retained within the scheme proposals.

The function of the rain garden subsequently became surplus to requirements, and along with maintenance concerns, it was decided that it should also omitted.

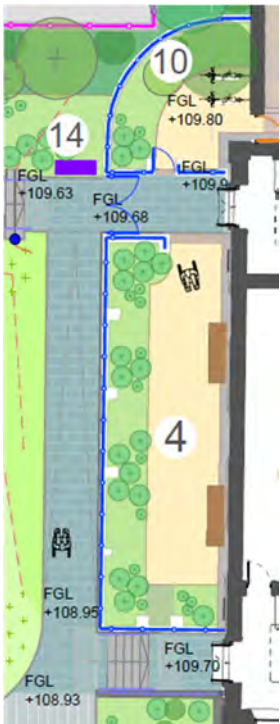
Design Refinement: The old railings now form the perimeter for a civic garden terrace to the west of the building extending from the façade to the new sloped access way. A new accessible entrance is created to the northern side, and two new benches facing west.

The refined design incorporates permeable surfaces and a mixture of shrub and herbaceous perennial planting.

8. Central Courtyard

The scale of the central courtyard was increased as a result of refinements to the massing of the new building extension as well as revisions to other parts of the scheme due to levels and access requirements. It was also confirmed that an exterior overhead gantry would be installed as part of the building renovations which would impact on the space in regards to light and cover.

Design Refinement: The proposals were moved slightly to the east to avoid the overhead gantry. They incorporate a shade tolerant tree and planting at a large raised central planter, along with wheelchair inclusive furniture. Cycle stands were relocated to the covered area to the west of the courtyard. And access to the space is via a lockable gate to the south east corner



Extract from drawing. BiO-LGA-001. Showing new arrangement.



Extract from drawing. BiO-LGA-001. Showing new arrangement.

9. Public Raised Terrace

The stage 1 proposals included a space to the east of the Courthouse facing the road, which was called the 'Social Garden'. The nature and scale of this space changed due to access control requirements, level changes, as well as to accommodate refinements to the massing of the new building extension.

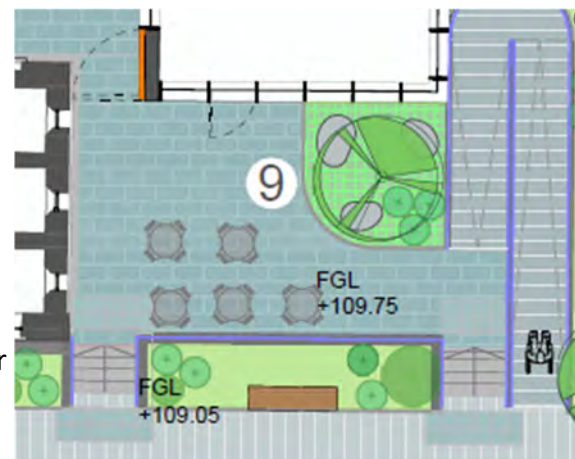
Design Refinement: A raised public terrace replaces the previous arrangement. The previous lawned green space is replaced with paving, therefore reinforced grass, planting and a tree pit are introduced to the north east side, with the aim of maximising available pedestrian space whilst also providing planting and drainage infiltration opportunities.

The space is fully public, and access is now provided by two sets of steps from the street as well as sloped access to the east.

New balustrading is included along the boundary to the southern and eastern edges.

The space will still function as a social space, with provision made for spill-out area for tables and chairs. It could also function as an informal outdoor gathering and exhibition area.

The sculptural seating elements are retained and forms part of the permanent appearance of the space under the tree.



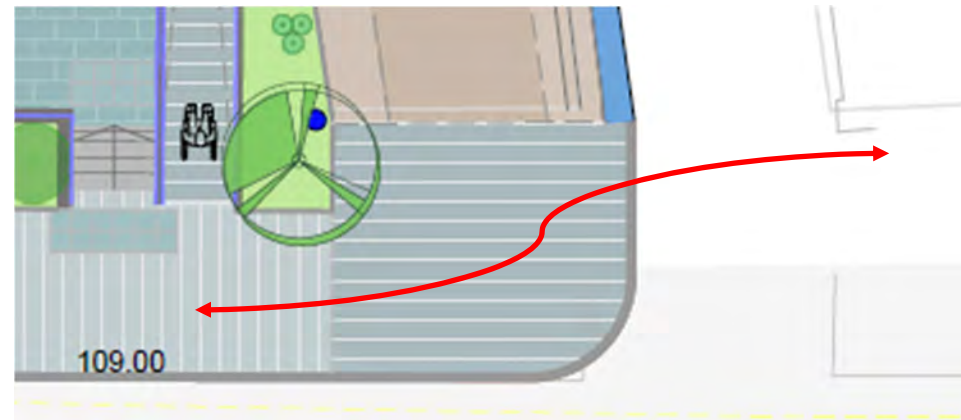
Extract from Landscape General Arrangement Plan. BiO-LGA-001 showing raised public terrace.

10. Pedestrian Priority Vehicle Access

The new vehicle access route alignment to the east of the site, was moved closer to the perimeter wall to accommodate access ramps, and to reduce the amount of small, infill planters. This resulted in the vehicle entry/exit point to the R445 road moving easterly and joining with adjacent farm track access.

The desire line for pedestrians along the R445 footpath also 'dog legs' at this point to link with footpaths to the east of the site. And due to the

ample width of the footpath at this location as well as constrained tie in requirements; ramped vehicle access kerbs were considered surplus to requirements.



Extract from Landscape General Arrangement Plan. BiO-LGA-001 showing revised

Design Refinement: It is proposed that ramped vehicle access kerbs are omitted, and replaced with standard dropped kerbs.

A gentle ramped area close to the road will address vehicle access requirements.

The footpath remains pedestrian priority, with the retention of continuous level paved surface across the entrance.

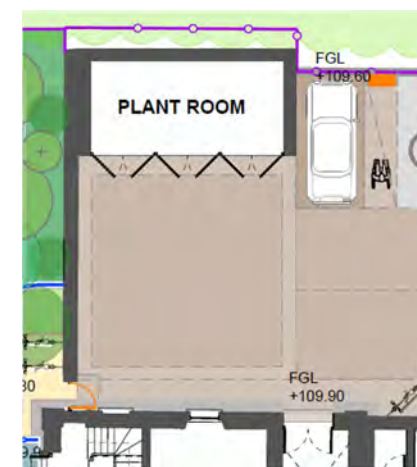
A new tree is located to the west of the entrance, which acts to both announce the entrance and softens the view of the courthouse from the east.

9. Plant Room

A plant room was added to the overall proposals, and is located to the north of the site at the turning head. This removed the possibility of having a planter at this location.

Design Refinement: The planter was removed. Thus also reducing the maintenance requirements.

The plant room now forms a boundary to the north and edge to the car parking area.



Extract from Landscape General Arrangement Plan. BiO-LGA-001 showing new plant room arrangement.

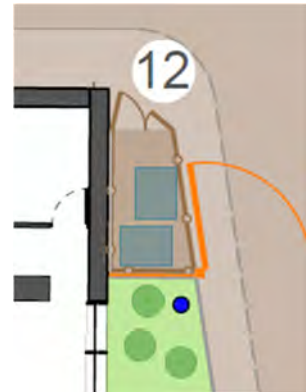
9. Bin Corral

Outdoor storage is often overlooked, especially for bins which can look unsightly, this item became a requirement when reviewing the design from a day to day operational perspective.

Design Refinement: A bin corral has been included at the north east of the site behind the access gate. Which is also in close proximity to the rear service door of the new building extension within the controlled access area.

A corral offers flexible non prescriptive outdoor storage.

Consideration will be given during detailed design for fire safety requirements associated with bin storage including to material specification.



Extract from BiO-LGA-001 showing bin corral

10. Entrance Feature

To help announce the north western entrance to the greater area, the Architects requested that a focal feature be included.

Design Refinement: A monolithic feature is proposed for the landing area to the top of the sloped path accessing the north west door.

Subject to detailed design, it is envisaged that this might include core-ten steel artwork or plaque on natural stone. This is further described on drawing BiO-L-002-Components.

11. Raised Pedestrian Crossing

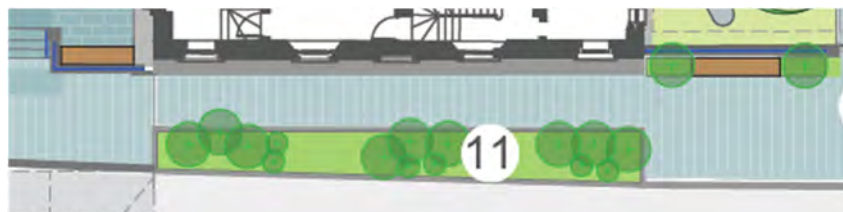
At stage 1, the need for traffic calming and pedestrian crossing was identified at an early stage, it is supported by the statutory context as well as initial site observations and accessibility requirements. A proposed location was explored to the south west corner of the Courthouse, and draft proposals were prepared exploring options for EV recharging to the south of the R445. These proposals and other are being considered.

Design Refinement: There are design refinements at this stage. Layout revisions incorporating a crossing can be incorporated at a future date if needed, and the kerb line has been cleared of planters to allow flexibility for the location, (further described on page 25).

12. Southern Planter (Formerly 'Green Separator Strip')

The Stage 1 proposals included a planted strip along the southern side of the Courthouse which functioned to address the removal of obsolete access steps as well as form a green barrier to separate the building and pedestrians from the busy road.

However, to accommodate future engineering requirements to the base of the building, new alignments and accessibility changes, as well as maintaining flexibility for potential future raised crossing point; the proposed planter location would need to be revised



Extract from Landscape Stage 1 Proposals showing previous planter location.

Design Refinement: For the stage 2 proposals the planter has been returned to the northern side of the footpath. But now made level and lowered to expose a new plinth to the building.

The planter now extends further beyond the building extents to incorporate stepped access points and seating, and offers drainage infiltration opportunities for surface water, subject to detailed design.



Extract from Landscape General Arrangement Plan. BiO-LGA-001 showing refined planter location.

13. Surface materials

The stage 1 proposals for surface finished were scrutinised from the perspective of deliverability, sustainability (inc. circular economy) and maintenance. It was decided that resin bound aggregate surfacing was to be replaced with a more suitable finish with a better end of life opportunities and reduced maintenance.

The use of natural stone setts was also reviewed from a deliverability and operational perspective, and it was decided that the use of natural stone for the footpaths would be hard to justify, and an alternative material, retaining strong aesthetic qualities should be proposed.

In addition, new steps were added to the scheme along the southern and western approaches and proposals were required.

Design Refinement: It is proposed that the natural stone setts were replaced by high quality granite aggregate PCC blocks. These products offer better material and cost performance to natural stone over large areas, and Irish manufactured products offer 100% sustainable energy in production.

However the natural stone flags (granite) have been retained for areas intimate to the Courthouse including the central courtyard, as it is more in keeping with the historical context, where the spaces demand a higher quality finish. Natural stone flags are durable and have very good end of use/life properties.

The resin bound aggregate surface type was omitted, and it has been replaced by a continuation of high quality granite aggregate Pre-Cast Concrete (PCC) paving blocks, but with a contrasting but complimentary colour mix and bond to the surrounding paving.

The steps will be of solid natural stone and relate to the building intimately. The monolithic scale and finish would better contribute to the historic context as part of the classical plinth, and contribute to the 'grounding' of the Courthouse.



Extract from Landscape General Arrangement Plan. BiO-LGA-001 showing new PCC paving arrangement.

14. Boundary Treatments

Following review of the surveys and site investigations, it was determined that the eastern and northern perimeters would require new boundary treatments due to the unsuitability, or lack of current walls and fences.

Design Refinement: The existing concrete block wall along the eastern boundary is no longer fit for purpose and also unsightly within the context. It is proposed that it will be demolished and replaced with a retaining rubble stone clad wall, which is more in keeping with the Courthouse. There is evidence of an older stone wall at the base of the existing wall along this perimeter, which will be further investigated for design cues at detailed design stage.

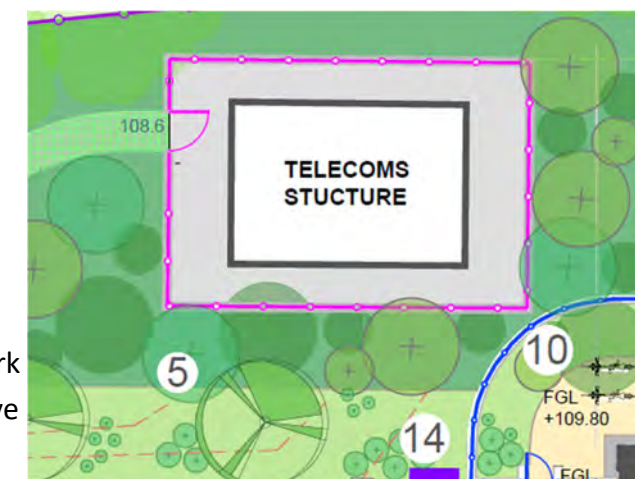
The northern boundary has no remaining continuous boundary wall or fence with collapsed wall the only remnant. It is proposed that the northern perimeter be fenced along the full extents with solid steel bar railings, and sections will require new retaining feature as a base.

15. Telecommunication Structure

EIR the utility company that operate the telecommunications structure were consulted in regards to their boundary requirements for the structure located to the north east of the courthouse. A 2.4m high fence and gate was agreed that will also help screen the structure.

Design Refinement: A continuous timber clad fence 2.4m height has been included as part of the stage 2 proposals. It is proposed that this fence be of timber finish in a dark grey colour to help dissolve the structure into the planting scheme.

A new lockable steel gate will provide access.



Extract from Landscape General Arrangement Plan. BiO-LGA-001 showing new perimeter fence arrangement for the telecommunications hub.

16. Public Lighting

No standalone public lighting was included in the Stage 1 Landscape Proposals. And on reviewing the scheme from an operational and aesthetic perspective, it was decided that low level lighting at a minimum would be needed along certain accessways and exterior spaces within the scheme.

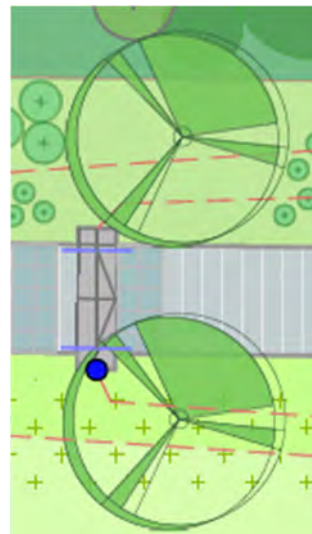
More comprehensive proposals will be developed during detailed design including Engineers design and specification.

Design Refinement: It is proposed that robust low level lights are included for the gardens to the west of the site, especially along the northern access path which now includes steps.

Lighting is also proposed along the eastern vehicle access to delineate the route into the car park.

Where possible, lighting units will be incorporated into the soft landscaping to keep footpaths free of obstruction.

All landscape lighting proposals are indicative and are subject to Engineers specification and detail design.



Extract from Landscape General Arrangement Plan. BIO-LGA-001 showing new lighting (blue dot) at stepped access route.

17. Tree Removal and Pruning

Stage 1 proposed that a number of trees be removed as part of the scheme to reinforce the symmetry of the gardens, allow the relocation of the fountain and open up views to and from that area of the green, which had become over dominated by the semi mature trees.

Despite refinements to the arrangement of the gardens including retaining the fountain at its existing location, the space would still benefit from reducing the mass of trees and reshaping of the gardens.

Two additional trees were identified as in need of pruning or removal

near the existing recycling bin bank along the northern boundary. These are overgrown Coniferous trees which would detract from the redevelopment without some form intervention. They currently offer screening and shelter to the site which will be considered for the Stage 2 proposals.



Western view of the Courthouse and gardens from the R445, showing the dense low foliage of existing grouping of trees around the Millennium Fountain.

Design Refinement: The three trees at the centre of the green are proposed to be removed. And all associated electrical connections and ducting leading to these trees identified in the GPR survey made good underground or reclaimed and reused as needed.

The other trees in that group will have their crowns raised to 2-2.5m clear stem as is possible to reduce the mass of foliage, open up views to the Courthouse and Fountain, as well as improve visibility at the Rock Road junction.

The two coniferous trees (shown above) are Cypress that will continue to grow into large trees. Pruning will be explored as options during future design stages, however it is proposed on the Stage 2 proposals that these trees be removed and replaced with native species that will form a new hedgerow, which will offer improved ecological and amenity value.



View of the Courthouse from the west, showing location of two large conifers.

Site Levels & Accessibility

Existing ground levels surrounding the Courthouse are lower than the existing and proposed floor levels within the Courthouse. The building sits on a plinth with the largest level deficits located to the Northern extents of the building.

To achieve level access in these areas, and to conform to *Technical Document M—Access and Use*, refinements are needed to levels in many areas of the site to accommodate the proposals, which have resulted in unavoidable interventions to allow the building and site to function.

Access From the North

The main impact on the proposals due to the constraints in levels are at the northern part of the site behind the Courthouse, as well as part of the eastern boundary. Where ground levels are considerably lower than internal floor levels. Available space is very limited, with little or no scope for adding access ramps.

Level access is required into two doors at the northern facade of the buildings as well as for a gated path linking into the western gardens.

It is proposed that the levels in the car park be raised with infill material and retained by new walls. (Please refer to Engineers' report for further detail).

Stepped Access Routes

Elsewhere on site, there are four stepped access routes proposed, and each one has alternative wheelchair accessible sloped route options.

Sloped Access Routes

All other access routes and surfaces within the site boundary have been designed at gradients greater than 1:20 as a baseline. This will be further reviewed during detailed design stage.

SuDS Approach

The Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) approach to the project from a landscape architecture perspective has been led by the principle of considerably reducing the amount of impermeable hard landscaping, whilst also introducing plants and trees.



Aerial image (2022) showing the extents of hard surfacing at the Courthouse.

Currently impermeable hard surfaces account for all of the surface area to the east of the building, along with most of the surface area to the south, west and north of the Courthouse. This is due to large hardstanding, footpath and parking areas associated with the former uses of the building and the old road alignment.

The existing areas of soft landscaping are confined to a triangular green area near the Rock Road junction, a strip of raised planters along the R445, as well as the tree lined northern boundary which opens out into a field.

A rain garden was included in the Stage 1 proposals to accept surface water from surrounding paved plaza, but it was omitted due to layout refinements which made it a legacy requirement.

Stage 2 Proposals

With the inclusion of permeable paving and reinforced grass, the Stage 2 proposals invert the current situation to include permeable surfacing in most areas, whilst also offering surface drainage via infiltration for most paths into lawns, planter beds or tree pits.

Any additional opportunity to intercept surface water will be further explored at detailed design stage.



Extract from LGA-L-001 Landscape General Arrangement Plan. Showing the extents of permeable surfacing. All brown and yellow coloured areas is permeable paving and gravel.



Illustrative view of Stage 2 Part 8 proposals for the western gardens from Rock Road junction

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Appendix B

Civil & Structural

CORA Consulting Engineers

ARCHITECTURE



Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment

Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse Borris-in-Ossory, Co. Laois

July 2023

Project 2238

Issue No.2

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

CORA Consulting Engineers were commissioned by the client Laois County Council to prepare a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (SSFRA) for the proposed restoration and extension of the Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse in Co. Laois. This report forms part of an overall condition survey of the site as part of Stage 2 of the appointment.

1.2. Objectives

The objectives of this report are to identify the flood risk for the proposed development. The report will assess the site and development proposals in accordance with the requirements of “*The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities*”.

The report will provide the following;

- The site’s flood zone category.
- Information to allow an informed decision of the planning authority in the context of flood risk.
- Appropriate flood risk mitigation and management measures for any residual flood risk.

1.3. Flood Risk Assessment Scope

The SSFRA relates only to the proposed development of the Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse and its immediate surroundings. This report uses information obtained from various sources, together with an assessment of flood risk for the existing land and proposed development. The report follows the requirements of ‘*The Planning System & Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)*’, (referred to as the *Guidelines* for the remainder of this report).

1.4. Existing Site

The existing site contains a historic former courthouse built in 1828. The two-storey building has been unoccupied since 2002 and is in a state of disrepair. Some repair works have taken place in the past years to fix the roof and decorative stonework.

Externally to the north and east of the courthouse, there are enclosed courtyards. The building looks out onto the Main Street to the south, and onto a hardstanding area used as a car park on the west. There is an ESB station to the northwest of the courthouse. The site is generally flat. There is little greenery around the building and most of the surrounding area is impermeable.



Figure 1 – Site Location (GeoHive Map Viewer – Map Genie Digital Globe)

The nearest Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designated watercourses are the River Nore, approximately 700m to the north west, and the Borris-in-Ossory Stream approximately 500m to the east.

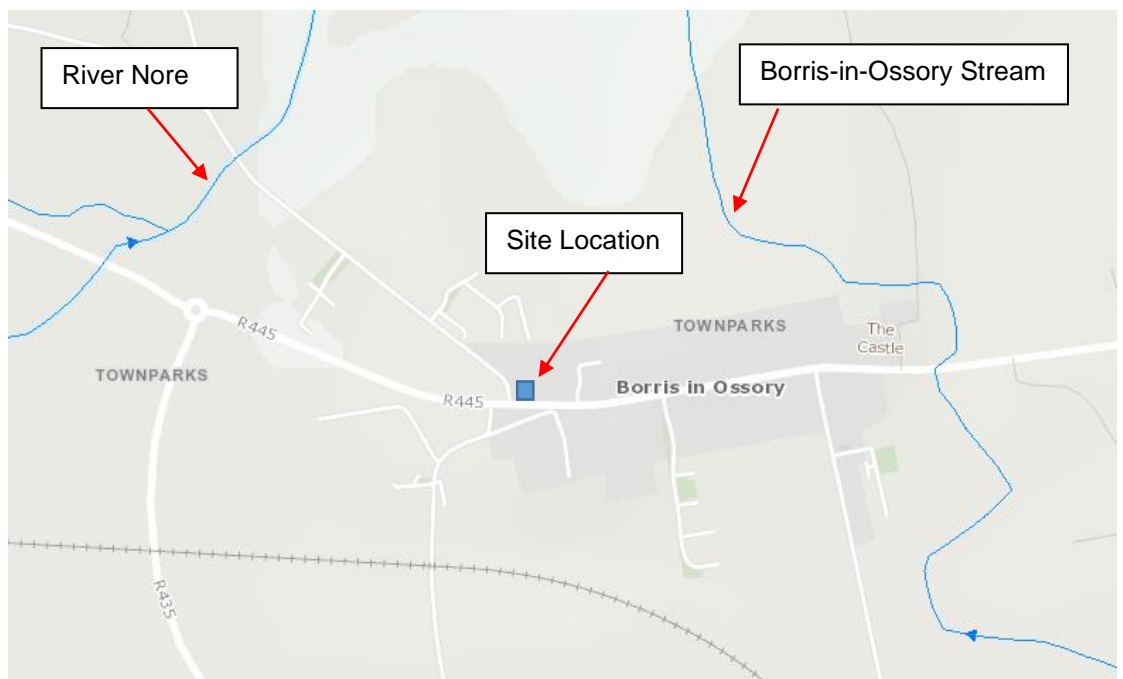


Figure 2– Map showing EPA surface water features (Geographical Survey Ireland Spatial Resources)

1.5. Proposed Development

The proposed renovation and re-use of the courthouse aims to bring the building back to life as a remote working hub, area offices and community space. Alterations such as the addition of a lift and expansions will be made as required in order to improve the ease of access and circulation in the building. Particular attention will be paid to the energy consumption efficiency and carbon emissions of the building. The implementation of green areas such as rain gardens surrounding the courthouse building and a green roof on the extension has been proposed.

2. Planning Guidelines and Flood Risk Assessment

2.1. The Planning & Flood Risk Management (FRM) Guidelines

The FRM Guidelines provide “mechanisms for the incorporation of flood risk identification, assessment and management into the planning process...” They ensure a consistent approach throughout the country requiring identification of flood risk and flood risk assessment to be key considerations when preparing development plans, local area plans and planned development.

“The core objectives of The FRM Guidelines are to:

- Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding;
- Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere;
- Ensure effective management of residual risks for development permitted in floodplains;
- Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth;
- Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders; and
- Ensure the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation are complied with for flood risk management.”

The key principles of the FRM Guidelines are to apply the Sequential Approach to the planning process i.e.

- “Avoid the risk, where possible,
- Substitute less vulnerable uses, where avoidance is not possible, and
- Mitigate and manage the risk, where avoidance and substitution are not possible.”

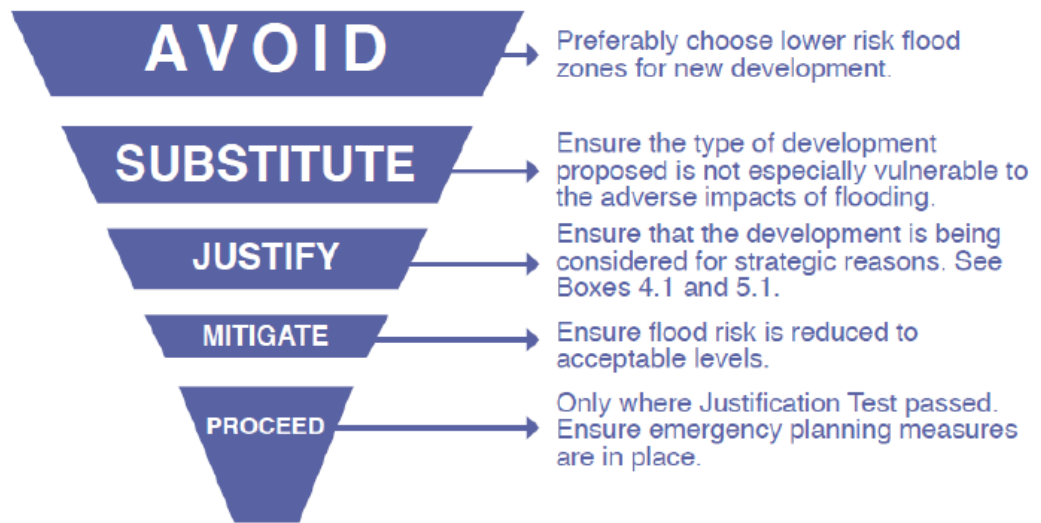


Figure 3 - Sequential Approach Principles in Flood Risk Management

Where the *Sequential Test's* **avoid** and **substitute** principals are not appropriate then the FRM Guidelines propose that a *Justification Test* be applied to assess the appropriateness, or otherwise, of particular developments that are being considered in areas of moderate or high flood risk.

2.1.1 Flood Risk Assessment

The assessment of flood risk requires an understanding of where water comes from (the source), how and where it flows (the pathways) and the people and assets affected by it (the receptors).

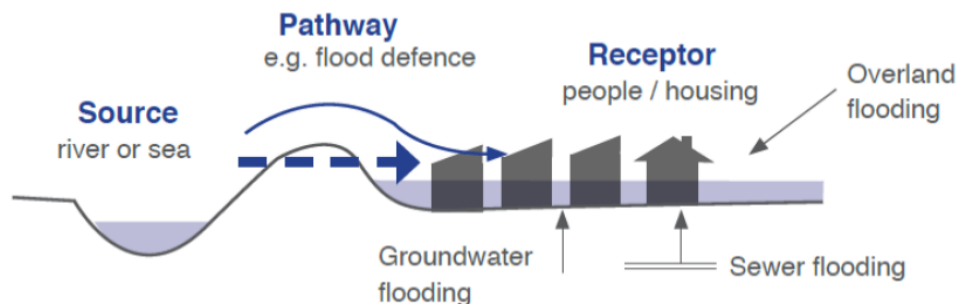


Figure 4 - Source - Pathway - Receptor Model

The principal sources are rainfall or higher than normal sea levels. The principal pathways are rivers, drains, sewers, overland flow and river and coastal floodplains and their defence assets. The receptors can include people, their property and the environment. All three elements are examined as part of the flood risk assessment including the vulnerability and exposure of receptors to determine potential consequences. Mitigation measures typically used in development management can reduce the impact of flooding on people and communities e.g., by blocking or impeding pathways. The planning process is primarily concerned with the location of receptors and potential sources and pathways that might put those receptors at risk.

Risks to people, property and the environment should be assessed over the full range of probabilities, including extreme events. Flood risk assessments should cover all sources of flooding, including effects of run-off from a development locally and beyond the development site.

2.2. Flood Risk Assessment Stages

The FRM Guidelines outline that a staged approach should be adopted when carrying out a flood risk appraisal or assessment. These stages are:

- Stage 1 Flood risk identification
- Stage 2 Initial flood risk assessment
- Stage 3 Detailed flood risk assessment

The FRA Guidelines require a SSFRA be undertaken to assess flood risk for individual planning applications. This SSFRA comprises Stages 1, 2 and 3 involving both identification and more detailed assessment of flood risks and surface water management related to the planned development site.

2.3. Flood Zones

The FRM Guidelines use flood zones to determine the likelihood of flooding and for flood risk management within the planning process. The three flood zones levels are:

- Flood Zone A – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is highest (greater than 1% AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability) or 1 in 100 for river flooding);
- Flood Zone B – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is moderate (between 0.1% AEP or 1 in 1000 and 1% AEP or 1 in 100 for river flooding); and
- Flood Zone C – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is low (less than 0.1% AEP or 1 in 1000 for both river and coastal flooding). Flood Zone C covers all areas outside zones A and B.

The FRM Guidelines categorises all types of development as either;

- Highly Vulnerable e.g., dwellings, hospitals, fire stations, essential infrastructure,
- Less Vulnerable e.g., retail, commercial or industrial buildings, local transport infrastructure.
- Water Compatible e.g., flood infrastructure, docks, amenity open space.

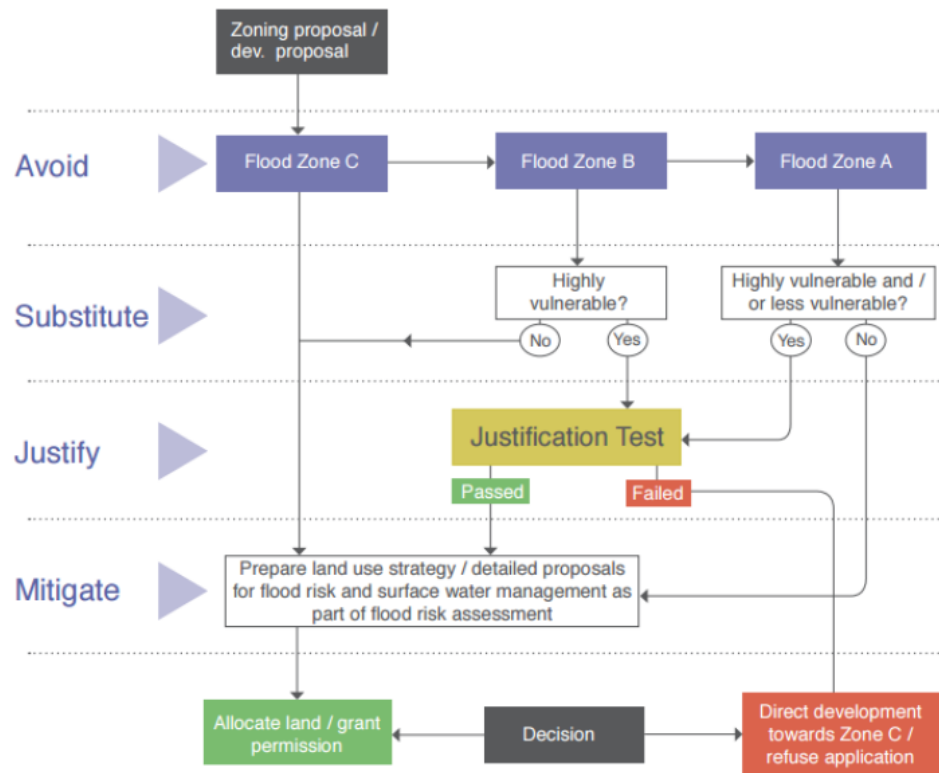


Figure 5 - Sequential Approach Mechanism in the Planning Process

The Sequential Approach restricts development types to occur within the flood zone appropriate to their vulnerability class, see Figure 6.

	Flood Zone A	Flood Zone B	Flood Zone C
Highly vulnerable development (including essential infrastructure)	Justification Test	Justification Test	Appropriate
Less vulnerable development	Justification Test	Appropriate	Appropriate
Water-compatible development	Appropriate	Appropriate	Appropriate

Figure 6 - Table 3.2 from the FRA guidelines - Matrix of Vulnerability versus Flood Zone to illustrate appropriate development and that required to meet the Justification Test

2.4. Proposed Development's Vulnerability

The proposed type of development for this site is to be commercial. Retail, commercial and industrial infrastructures are categorised by the Guidelines as **less vulnerable developments** and appropriate to be located within Flood Zone C and B. The entirety of the proposed development site is located in Flood Zone C, meaning the site is acceptable.

2.5. Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment for Development

The FRM Guidelines require a SSFRA to “gather relevant information sufficient to identify and assess all sources of flood risk and the impact of drainage from the proposal”. It should “quantify the risks and the effects of any necessary mitigation, together with the measures needed or proposed to manage residual risks”. It considers the nature of flood hazard, taking account of the presence of any flood risk management measures such as flood protection schemes and how development will reduce the flood risk to acceptable levels. A detailed assessment for a development application should conclude that core flood risk elements of the Justification Test are passed and that residual risks can be successfully managed with no unacceptable impacts on adjacent lands.

2.6. SSFRA Key Outputs

Key outputs of an SSFRA are:

- Plans showing the site and development proposals including its relationship with watercourses and structures which may influence local hydraulics;
- Surveys of site levels and comparison of development levels relative to sources of flooding and likely flood water levels;
- Assessments of;
 - Potential sources of flood risk;
 - Existing flood alleviation measures;
 - Potential impact of flooding on the site.
- How the layout and form of the development can reduce those impacts, including arrangements for safe access and egress;
- Proposals for surface water management and sustainable drainage;
- The effectiveness and impact of any mitigation measures;
- The residual risks to the site after the construction of any necessary measures and the means of managing those risks; and
- How flood risks are managed for occupants / employees of the site and its infrastructure.

3. Stage 1 - Flood Risk Identification

3.1. Available Flood Risk Information

The initial flood risk identification stage uses existing information to identify and confirm whether there may be flooding or surface water management issues for the lands in question that may warrant further investigation.

To initially identify potential flood risks for the existing site and surrounding area, a number of available data sources were consulted, these are listed in Table 1 below.

	Information Source	Coverage	Quality	Confidence	Identified Flood Risks	Flood Risk
Primary Data Source and Modelled Data	OPW – Fluvial https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/	Regional	High	High	Flood maps indicate that the development is outside any areas at risk of Fluvial Flooding	N
	OPW – Tidal https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/	Regional	High	High	Tidal flood maps indicate that the subject site is outside the tidal floodplain for the 0.1% AEP	N
	OPW – Pluvial https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/	Regional	High	High	Pluvial flood maps indicate the site has a low pluvial flood risk	N
	Laois County Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Local	High	High	Development is located fully within Flood Zone C.	N
Secondary Data Source	Walkover Survey	Local	Varies	Varies	Site is relatively flat. No signs of flooding risks visible.	N
	ICPSS	Nationwide	High	High	Site located inland – no risk of coastal flooding	N
	OPW Historic Flood Records	Nationwide	Varies	Varies	No records of site flooding	N
	Historic OSI Maps	Nationwide	Moderate	Low	Site occupied with structure for over a century	N
	EPA Ex. Rivers	Nationwide	Moderate	Moderate	No designated river/stream in site	N
	Irish Water Records	Nationwide	Moderate	Moderate	100mm diameter water mains runs across the south courtyard. A combined sewer runs to the west of the courthouse.	N
	Geological Survey Ireland Maps	County	Moderate	Low	No known groundwater issues	N

Table 1 - Review of Available Information

3.2. Available Flood Risk Information

3.2.1. OPW Predictive & Historic Maps and Flood Risk Information

The OPW CFRAM flood map indicates that the subject site is fully in Flood Zone C. This means the probability of flooding is less than 0.1% AEP or 1 in 1000 per year. Any fluvial flooding risks arising from the River Nore are located a considerable distance to the north and west and are not relevant to the site.

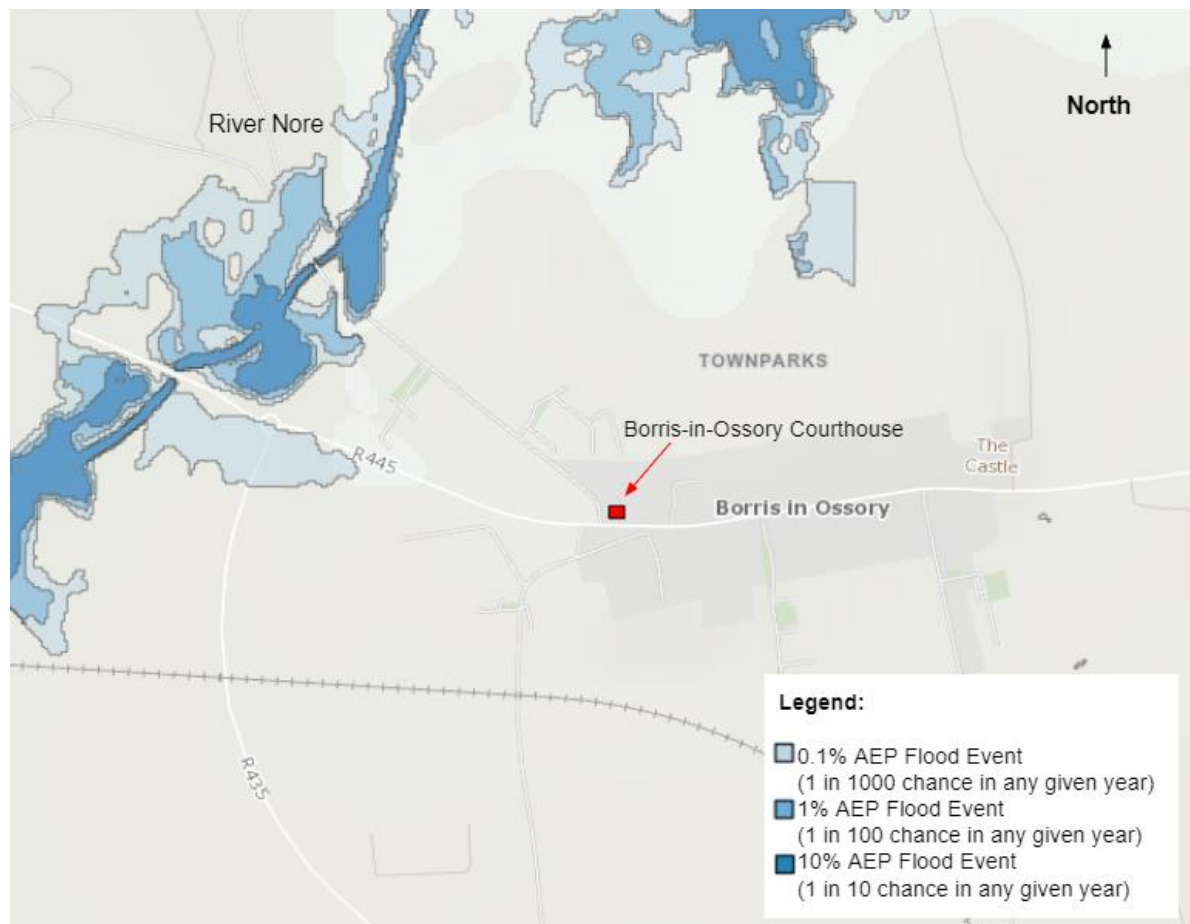


Figure 7 – Extent of flood zones A, B, and C around River Nore (extract from ECFRAM Flood Extents Map)

From consultation of flood information from the OPW's floodinfo.ie website, the site has not suffered from flooding. A review of this report shows that there are 2 locations of recurring flood events recorded within 2.5km of the site, none of which affect the proposed development site (see Figure 8).

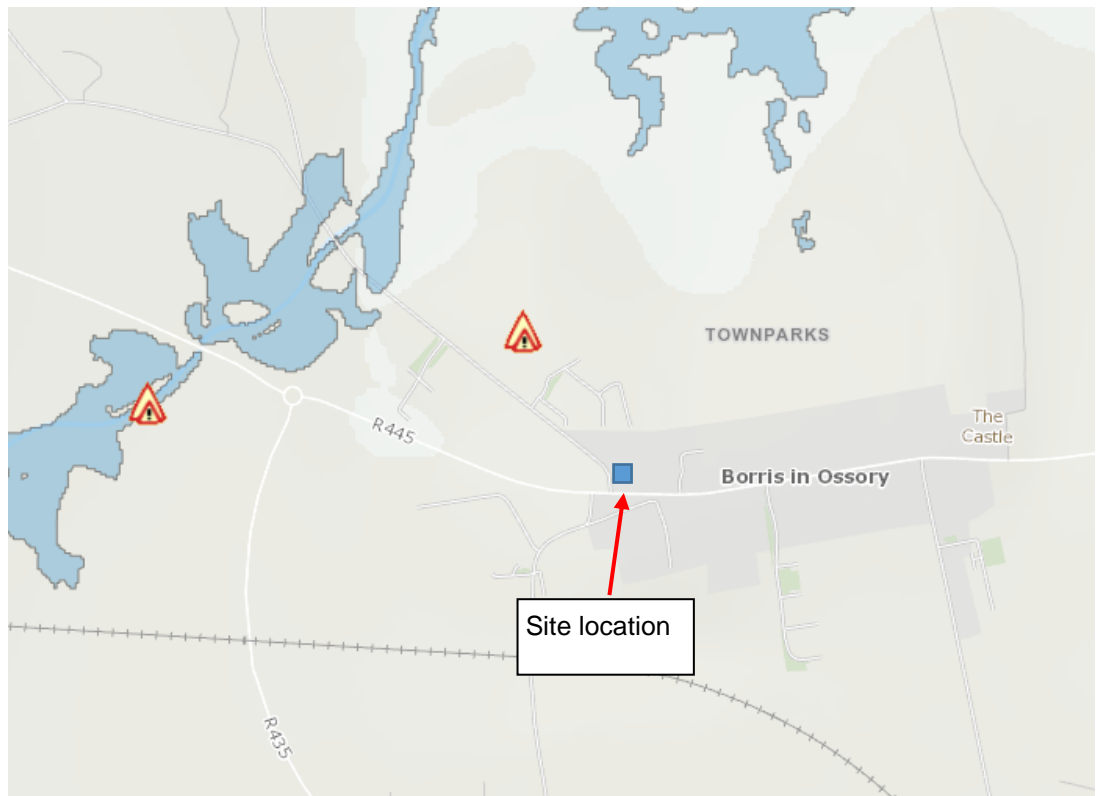


Figure 8 – Flood events in the vicinity of the site (extract from floodinfo.ie)

3.2.2. Laois County Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been prepared as part of the Laois County Council Development Plan 2021-2027. This document uses the draft ECFRAM mapping as its basis for identifying areas at flood risk. The SFRA identifies this area of the site as inside Flood Zone C (see Figure 9).

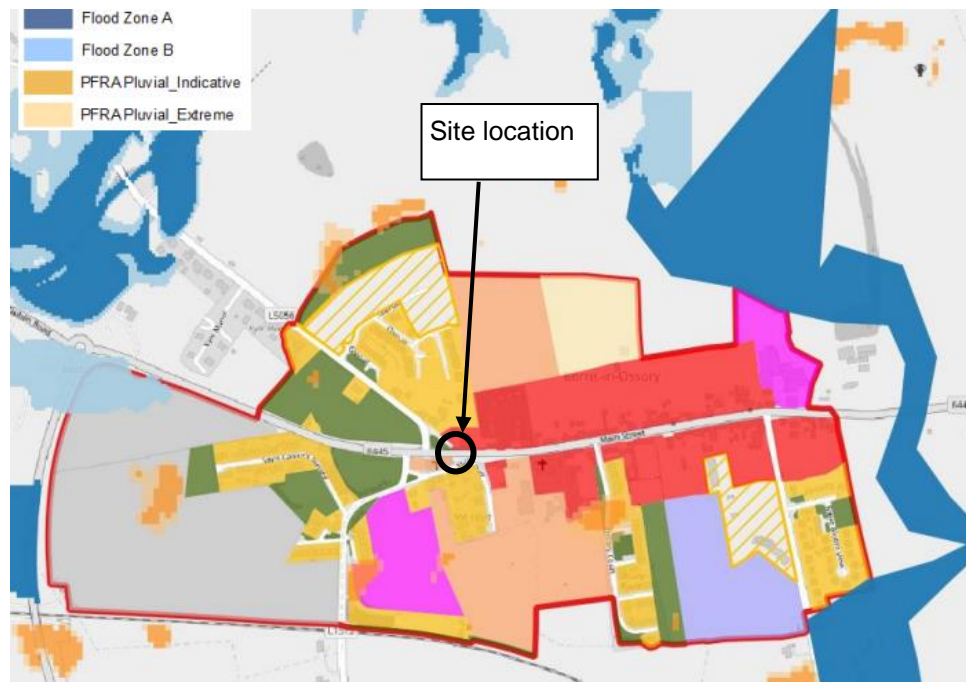


Figure 9 – Extent of Flood Risk in the areas surrounding the site location (extract from Laois County Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Development Plan 2021-2027)

Tidal Flood Risk

Since the site is located a considerable distance from the coast, it is outside the extents of coastal flood events.

Fluvial Flood Risk

The OPW's CFRAM study produced flood risk maps and the assessment of fluvial flood plains over the regions surrounding the site. The OPW have consolidated this information onto the <https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/> website. As part of this study, it was found that the site is located in Flood Zone C, where flood risk is less than 0.1% EAP, as seen above in Figure 2.

Pluvial Flood Risk

Furthermore, the OPW's ECFRAM Study also assessed effects of pluvial flooding in the area. The Pluvial maps of the area show the site has a low pluvial flood risk.

3.2.3. Walkover Survey

From a walkover of the site, it is clear that the subject site is comprised of currently vacant, derelict buildings and that the surrounding hardstanding areas are relatively flat. No evidence of flooding or flow paths are evident on site. The courthouse is elevated on the site, with steps up to the building. The internal ground level is higher than the external ground level.

3.2.4. Other Sources

Other information sources were consulted to determine if there was any additional flood risk to the subject site, these included;

- Soil data from GSI – bedrock consists of dark muddy limestone, shale – Ballysteen Formation.
- Groundwater information from GSI –There is no record or evidence of groundwater flooding for the proposed site. The site falls within an area of low Groundwater Vulnerability.
- Existing Local Authority Drainage Records – A 300mm Diameter foul sewers from Irish Water runs around the north and west of the site. The water mains runs along the south of the site and consist of 100mm diameter uPVC pipe (refer to Appendix A).

3.3. Source-Pathway-Receptor Model

A Source-Pathway-Receptor model was produced to summarise the possible sources of floodwater, the people and assets (receptors) that could be affected by potential flooding (with specific reference to the proposals), see Table 2. It provides the probability and magnitude of the sources, the performance and response of pathways and the consequences to the receptors in the context of the domestic development proposal. These sources, pathways and receptors will be assessed further in the initial flood risk assessment stage.

Source	Pathway	Receptor	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
Tidal	Subject Site not within a tidal flood risk zone	-	Very unlikely	-	-
Fluvial	Site located outside of 0.1% EAP Flood Event zone	Ground Floor	Very Unlikely	Low	Low
Surface Water Drainage (Pluvial)	Flooding from surcharging of the developments drainage system	Ground Floor	Possible	Low	Low
Groundwater Flooding	Rising ground water on the site	-	Very unlikely	-	-
Infrastructural – Human or Mechanical Error	Blockage of new drainage network	Ground Floor	Possible	Low	Low

Table 2 - Source-Pathway-Receptor Analysis

The following section provides a summary of the results of this Source-Pathway-Receptor flooding model for the subject site.

3.4. Source-Pathway-Receptor Model Results

As it can be seen in the above flooding analysis, there is a very low risk of fluvial flooding on the site coming from the River Nore and the Borris-in-Ossory Stream.

There is a low risk of pluvial flooding due to the potential surcharging and blockage of the new drainage network.

Consequently, initial and detailed flood risk assessments will follow to provide further detail on the causes, effects and possible mitigation measures for the sources of flood risk identified above.

4. Stage 2 – Initial Flood Risk Assessment Stage

The main sources of flood risk identified from Stage 1 are;

- Low risk associated with pluvial flooding due to the potential surcharging and blockage of the new drainage network.

4.1 Initial Fluvial Flood Risk Assessment

The Flood Risk Identification Stage 1 concluded that the site is fully within Flood Zone C, with a low risk of fluvial flooding due to the River Nore.

According to the Laois County Council SFRA, the town's main source of flood risk is from fluvial flooding arising from the River Nore annually overflowing its banks after heavy rainfall. According to the CFRAM maps, the site location is outside the endangered areas and is at low risk of flooding.

4.2 Initial Pluvial Flood Risk Assessment

The Source-Pathway-Receptor model identified that there could be potential for pluvial flood risk within the development site related to the future drainage network serving the proposed development.

These have the potential to cause local flooding unless they are designed in accordance with the regulations e.g. GDSDS and to take account of flood exceedance (i.e. for storm return period over 1% AEP).

The pluvial flood risk will be mitigated for the development via:

- A new surface water drainage system incorporating SuDS measures.
- Surface water network capacity to be designed in accordance with GDSDS guidance and incorporate 10% climate change.

Proper maintenance of the drainage system should also be implemented in accordance with CIRIA 753, The SuDS Manual, to reduce the risk of human or mechanical error causing pluvial flood risk from blockages, etc.

4.3 Initial Ground Water Flood Risk Assessment

The Source-Pathway-Receptor model identified that groundwater flood risk on the proposed site was very unlikely.

There are no plans to add a basement to the site or carry out excessive excavation works, meaning groundwater levels should not be a problem.

5. Stage 3 - Detailed Flood Risk Assessment

The detailed Flood Risk assessment stage will look more closely how the proposed development will mitigate flood risk from the identified source.

With regard to the low fluvial flood risk and low pluvial flood risk, the detailed flood risk assessment stage will assess this in relation to the following;

- Proposed development plans (finished floor levels, site vulnerability, building extents)
- Impact of proposed development on adjacent properties
- In relation to the objectives set out in the DCC SFRA justification test
- Any residual risks
- Mitigation measures.

5.1 Detailed Fluvial Flood Risk Assessment

As stated in section 1.5, the proposed development is to refurbish and extend the existing Protected Structure to provide a community space, local offices, and remote working hubs.

As the development for the site is proposing commercial use, it should be noted that this is categorised by the Guidelines as 'less vulnerable' development and appropriate to be located within Flood Zones B and C, and Flood Zone A only if the justification test is passed.

The initial flood risk assessment assessed the risk associated with the 1 in 1000-year fluvial flood event as the principal source of the flooding on the site, in the Present-Day scenario maps from the www.floodinfo.ie website.

The ECFRAMS flood modelling map indicates that the site is outside the 1 in 1000-year fluvial flood zone, meaning the risk of flooding in the area is very low.

The Mid-Range Future and High-End Future scenario flood maps from the www.floodinfo.ie website for future fluvial flood risk from the Nore River show no indication of future risks.

5.2 Detailed Pluvial Flood Risk Assessment

The drainage design has been developed to incorporate SUDs measures to attenuate surface water such that no additional flood risk to the surrounding area is introduced. The small area of additional roofing is designed as a green roof. There are no additional hardstanding areas being introduced and current areas of hardstanding are being developed as permeable paving. The proposed storm water drainage layout is indicated in the Structural Condition and feasibility report and on Drainage drawing submitted with the planning.

5.3 Residual Risks

Remaining residual flood risks, following the justification test for flood risk assessment include the following;

- Overground flood exceedance or (pluvial) flooding where local drainage infrastructure is surcharged.

5.4 Overground Flooding

The site topography ensures that overground flood exceedance or (pluvial) flooding where local drainage infrastructure is surcharged during increased rainfall events shall flow away from the entrances. With localised slopes at all entrance thresholds along the west and south side of the courthouse, the risk of water ingress is mitigated.

6. Conclusions

This SSFRA concludes the following;

- This Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment for the proposed Refurbishment and possible Extension to Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the “Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, November 2009.
- The proposed type of development for this site is to be commercial, categorised by the Guidelines as **less vulnerable development** and appropriate to be located within Flood Zone B or C.
- The development Site is located in Flood Zone C and is at a low risk of flooding.
- A possible source of flood risk from the surcharging or blockage of the development’s drainage system has been identified. This risk is mitigated by suitable design of the drainage network and regular maintenance and inspection of the network.

**Borris-in-Ossory
Courthouse,
Borris-in-Ossory,
Co. Laois**

**Preliminary Construction
Management Plan**

2238

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Issue No.1



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1 Introduction

1.1 General

This document presents an outline plan to inform the construction of the proposed development and ensure active control, management and monitoring of waste and environmental impacts associated with the proposed development during the Construction Phase.

This plan will be developed by the chosen Works Contractor and implemented throughout the construction phase of the project to ensure: -

- That all site activities are effectively managed to minimise the generation of waste and to maximise the opportunities for on-site reuse and recycling of waste materials.
- To ensure that all waste materials generated by site activities are removed from site by appropriately permitted waste haulage contractors and that all wastes are disposed of at approved waste licensed / permitted facilities in compliance with the Waste Management Acts 1996, 2007 & 2011.
- To manage and control any environmental impacts (noise, vibration, dust, water) that construction work activities may have on neighbouring properties and on the local receiving environment.

This Preliminary Construction Management Plan will demonstrate how it is proposed during the Construction Phase to comply with the following relevant legislation and relevant Best Practice Guidelines: -

- *Waste Management Acts 1996 to 2011*
- *Waste Management (Collection Permit) Regulations 2007 (SI No. 820 of 2007)*
- *Waste Management (Collection Permit) Amendment Regulations 2008 (SI No. 87 of 2008)*
- *Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government – Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects – July 2006.*
- *Good Practice Guide for Construction and Demolition prepared by the Air Quality and Noise Control Unit of Dublin City Council*

It is proposed that during construction the Design Team for the project will liaise with the Contractors Site Management Team to ensure that all aspects of the proposed CEMP are adhered to. In addition the Contractor will provide specialist environmental monitoring, consultancy and auditing services as required to ensure that all potential environmental impacts on the local receiving environment and on local residential amenity are controlled at source and minimised to acceptable levels and that all wastes generated by site activities are minimised, segregated, re-used, recycled or correctly disposed of by licensed / permitted waste contractors.

Each section of the Preliminary Construction & Demolition Management Plan presents the potential environmental impacts, proposed monitoring methodologies, limit values where applicable, based on the concept of Best Practice and the proposed mitigation measures to be implemental at the site. Reference to National and International Standards are also included where relevant.

2 Description of Proposed Development

2.1 General

The proposed development includes the conservation, renovation, and addition of an extension to the historic former courthouse in Borris-in-Ossory. The building is to be reused as a remote working hub, area offices and community space.

Due to the building's current state of disrepair, extensive repair work will be required. This includes repairs to the roof, external façade, and interior of the building. The floor of the courtroom needs to be replaced in full and decayed joists need to be replaced locally on the first floor. Minor amendments such as the removal of non-structural walls, creation of new openings or infilling of existing ones will be carried out to the existing structure.

The eastern extension to the north wing of the building will be demolished and a new modern timber frame extension with a green roof will be built. The area surrounding the courthouse will be cleared of debris and developed to include landscaping features and car parking. Site works will also include amendments to the current site drainage system, and the decommission and decontamination of diesel tanks buried on site. All these works shall be carried out using the principles of good conservation practice.

2.2 Scope of Construction Management Plan

The range of works to which this Preliminary Construction & Demolition Management Plan will be integrated into during the design phase and construction phase of the site over an approximate 18-month period, are summarised as follows: -

- Demolition of eastern extension to the north wing, strip out of existing finishes and services.
- Site works including drainage and landscaping.
- Excavations on the site for drainage, new foundations.
- Repairs carried out to the existing structure.
- Construction of vertical additions to the building.
- Waste Management during the Construction Phase.

It is proposed that this Preliminary Construction & Demolition Management Plan will be developed by the Contractor at the beginning of the construction phase of the works and include a detailed Sequencing and Phasing Schedule and Traffic and Parking Management Plan for the works.

2.3 Access to the Works and Traffic Management

Access to the site will be from the Main Street of Borris-in-Ossory (R445) to the south and from Rock Road to the west. The east and west courtyards will provide space for the operation base, machinery, and parking.

In relation to Traffic Management and Access, the following is proposed: -

- Pedestrian routes past the site works will be maintained during the works.
- Site accesses on Main Street and Rock Road will have a Marshall/Banksman.

A more detailed Construction Traffic Management Plan shall be provided by the Main Contractor specific to the site and will contain developed details of the measures as noted above and in particular take into account access and egress of materials and debris from the site of the works and existing public road users.

2.4 Proposed Building Construction

The works include the restoration and repair work to the existing building, both internally and externally. The demolition of an existing extension and the construction of a new modern addition to the east of the existing structure is also proposed. Landscaping works will take place in the two courtyards to the east and west of the courthouse.

3 Waste Management Plan – Construction Phase

Waste materials generated by earthworks, demolition and construction activities will be managed according to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's 2006 Publication - *Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects*.

The Contractors Waste Management Plan will specifically address the following points: -

- Analysis of waste arising / material surpluses
- Specific Waste Management objectives for the Project including the potential to reuse and process on-site demolished buildings for further use in the construction phase.
- Asbestos Removal
- Methods proposed for Prevention, Reuse and Recycling
- Waste Handling Procedures
- Waste Storage Procedures
- Waste Disposal Procedures
- Waste Auditing
- Record Keeping

3.1 Waste Minimisation

The scope of works to the building can be defined as: -

- Demolition of the existing extension.
- Strip out of all existing services and non- original finishes.
- Replacement of courtroom timber floors.
- Replacement of rotten timber joists on first floor.
- Minor interventions to create new/ infill existing door openings.
- Clearing of adjacent courtyards.
- Decommissioning and decontamination of buried diesel tanks.
- Landscaping works.

The majority of the existing structural fabric of the building will be retained in place.

Construction Waste minimisation and prevention shall be the primary responsibilities of the Purchasing Manager and the Project Manager for the Contractor during construction works, and they shall ensure the following: -

- Materials will be ordered on a 'just in time' basis to prevent over supply and site congestion.
- Materials shall be correctly stored and handled to minimise the generation of damaged materials.
- Materials shall be ordered in appropriate sequence to minimise materials stored on site.
- Sub-contractors will be responsible for similarly managing their wastes.

In addition, as the useable area for construction is confined the contractor will need to carefully manage

storage of materials on site.

The demolition of the existing extension shall generate approximately 12m³ of masonry to be removed off site. All other demolitions are minor in nature and shall generate small quantities of masonry etc.

Excavations will be carried out to the east and west courtyards of the building. Approximately 300mm will be removed from the overall courtyard area to allow for landscaping, with an additional approximate 300mm excavated for foundations of the new extension. The implementation of drainage and water supply extensions will also require excavations. Overall, the excavations are expected to generate approximately 700m³ of soil, rock, and other waste to be removed off site.

3.2 Programme of Waste Management for Construction Works

The Project Manager for the Contractor will determine the best methods for waste minimisation, reduction, reuse, recycling, and disposal as the construction phase progresses and waste materials are generated in accordance with procedures outlined in the waste management plans.

3.3 Construction Waste Disposal Management

It is proposed that from the outset of construction activities, a dedicated and secure compound within the site containing segregated bins and/or skips, into which all waste materials generated by construction site activities will be established at the site.

In order to ensure that construction staff correctly segregate waste materials, it will be the responsibility of the Site Construction Manager to ensure all staff are informed by means of clear signage and verbal instruction and made responsible for ensuring site housekeeping and the proper segregation of construction waste materials.

It will be the responsibility of the Project Manager or his/her delegate that a written record of all quantities and natures of wastes exported off-site are maintained in a Waste File at the Project office and that all contracted waste haulage drivers hold an appropriate Waste Collection Permit for the transport of waste loads.

It is proposed that waste materials generated by the demolition of existing structures and the construction of new structures will be collected and stored in separate clearly labelled skips in a predefined waste storage area in the site compound and that these materials will be collected by a Permitted Waste Contractor holding an appropriate Waste Collection permit in compliance with *Waste Management (Collection Permit) Regulations 2007 (SI No. 820 of 2007)* and *Waste Management (Collection Permit) Amendment Regulations 2008 (SI No. 87 of 2008)* and that they will be sent for recycling and reuse to appropriately Permitted / Licensed Waste Facilities in compliance with *Waste Management (Facility Permit and Registration) Regulations S.I. No. 821 of 2007* and *the Waste Management (Facility Permit and Registration) Amendment Regulations S.I. No. 86 of 2008*.

Prior to the commencement of the Project, the Construction / Project Manager shall identify permitted Waste Contractor(s) who shall be employed to collect and dispose of all wastes arising from the project works. In addition, the Construction / Project Manager for the Contractor shall identify all waste licensed / permitted facilities that will accept all expected waste exported off-site and will maintain copies of all relevant Waste Permits / Licences as required.

3.4 On-Site Waste Reuse and Recycling Management

Due to the nature of the site and the relatively small volume of material to be demolished, it is proposed that the materials generated in the demolition process will be segregated and taken off site for processing and grading for possible reuse and recycling.

3.5 Inert Wastes

The waste material generated by construction works will be mixed Construction & Demolition (C&D) waste, comprising of concrete, tiles, ceramics, bricks, and blocks. Material will be sorted and separated on site into different classifications for removal off site which is considered standard procedure.

All wood waste generated by site works will be inspected and examined and will be segregated as re-useable wood and scrap wood waste.

There are minimal excavations in the ground that shall generate waste material to be removed off site.

3.6 Hazardous Wastes

The presence of lead and asbestos has been confirmed on site by certified professionals prior to the commencement of works. The handling and removal of these and any other hazardous wastes encountered on the site will be carried out in accordance with the procedures outlined in this document and in the Construction & Demolition Waste Management Plan.

The management of all hazardous waste arising (such as but not limited to asbestos and lead) if they occur, shall be coordinated in liaison with the Contractors Health and Safety Management.

3.7 Asbestos

A detailed intrusive Asbestos Survey has been undertaken as required by current Regulations (Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) Regulations 2006-2010) to identify if any Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) is present. As identified in the Asbestos Survey, the following procedures should be followed.

All works that include the handling or removal of hazardous materials will only be conducted by specialist hazardous waste contractors that specialise in the handling of such material. All waste asbestos will be immediately removed off-site following the correct regulated procedures by an appropriately Permitted Waste Contractor holding an appropriate Waste Collection permit and that this hazardous material will be sent for appropriate disposal to an appropriately Permitted / Licensed Waste Facility.

3.8 Contaminated Soil

While it is not anticipated that there will be contaminated soil on the site – should contamination be discovered in whatever form during the formation of the base to the new lift core and drainage installation, the following principals will be followed: -

Where it is discovered that existing grounds including top and sub soils may be contaminated by fuel oil hydrocarbons, these areas of ground will be isolated, tested for contamination, and pending the results of laboratory testing, will be excavated and exported off-site by an appropriately Permitted Waste Contractor holding an appropriate Waste Collection permit and that this hazardous material will be sent for appropriate treatment / disposal to an appropriately Permitted / Licensed Waste Facility. It is the responsibility of the Project Manager or his/her delegate that a written record of all quantities and natures of wastes reused / recycled during the project are maintained in a Waste File at the Project office.

Prior to commencement on site, it is proposed to undertake a site investigation of the site including a Waste Classification Analysis (WAC Report). As part of this, soils will be tested for potential contaminants will be classified in a Waste Classification Report. The results of this Report will be used to assess the locations where soil being excavated from the site can be directed to.

3.9 General Site Works – Construction Phase

3.9.1 Construction Phase Operating Hours

The proposed operating hours for the project are proposed to be as follows: -

07:00hrs – 18:00hrs Monday to Friday

07:00hrs – 14:00hrs Saturdays

Site closed on Sundays / Public Holidays

Compliance with these strict noise controls will be verified by the programme of construction and demolition phase noise monitoring proposed in the Construction and Demolition Management Plan for the project.

Occasionally, one off works may be required outside of these works such as crane erection, large deliveries of plant which will require delivery to the site during off peak times.

3.9.2 Temporary Works/Tree Protection Measures

There is currently a number of trees located on the site. The proposed works includes the removal of some of the existing trees on site. In order to protect the remaining trees during works, suitable tree protection measures should be installed as per Landscape Architect's requirements.

3.9.3 Demolition Works on the Site

The works can be defined as follows: -

- Demolition of the existing extension.
- Strip out of all existing services and non- original finishes.
- Minor interventions to create new/ infill existing door openings.
- Clearing of adjacent courtyards.
- Decommissioning and decontamination of buried diesel tanks.

3.9.4 Excavations on the Site

It is proposed to construct an extension to the east of the existing courthouse. The proposed foundations system is to use RC strip or pile foundations, depending on site investigation results. Any excavated material – of which is expected to be inert clays and fill material – will be excavated and exported off site to a licenced landfill.

Geotechnical investigations including a Waste Classification Report are yet to be undertaken at the site.

3.9.5 Provision for Loading and Unloading Materials

The loading and unloading of materials at the site has the potential to generate elevated levels of noise and dust as a result of vehicle movements (trucks, vans, mobile cranes) throughout the working day at the site. It is proposed that dedicated delivery area shall be in the east or west courtyard area. The majority of deliveries will be made to a compound and they will be co-ordinated to ensure the previous delivery has vacated the loading bay prior to the next delivery arriving.

Drivers delivering materials to the site shall be instructed by site management to turn off idling vehicle engines when the vehicles are on site for extended periods.

Dedicated delivery areas will provide for the orderly management of delivery vehicles and the containment of spilled materials shall they arise, the concentration of specific site activities in a dedicated area away from the closest receptors and the ability to better manage and control potential noise and dust impacts.

3.9.6 Storage of Plant, Materials and Operatives Vehicles

It is proposed that all plant, materials and operatives vehicles shall be stored in dedicated compound areas within the site in order to minimise the interaction that each element may have on the other. That is, the separation of operative vehicles from aggregate material stockpiles will minimise the potential for vehicle movements to generate dust. All plant shall be stored in a dedicated area following the cessation of site activities at the end of each working day or during periods when the plant is not being utilised. It is recommended that a specific area on site shall be delineated.

Site vehicles and mobile plants (e.g., Generators) have the potential to contaminate soil and groundwater by leaking oil or fuel. The storage of these items of plant in a suitable dedicated area on mobile bunded units and drip trays will serve to minimise the potential for contamination as any leaks, oil spills or stains on the ground will be more readily identifiable and will better ensure that an immediate or more timely response.

The Contractors Site Manager shall conduct a daily visual inspection of the site to identify any signs of ground contamination from plant storage areas and that where a spill is identified, the source shall be identified and the appropriate repair / maintenance be conducted. All daily visual inspections shall be recorded by the site manager or his/her delegate on a "Daily Site Inspection Sheet". All fuels, oils and liquid materials shall be stored in a dedicated bunded area or within a dedicated impermeable storage unit to minimise the potential for soil and groundwater contamination. Storage units containing all fuels oils and liquid material must be locked and secured overnight so as to prevent against pilferage and vandalism.

A policy of "zero tolerance" shall be applied at the site in relation to the dumping of empty or partially empty oil, lubricant, fuel, or any other non-solid material in the vicinity of the site. All empty containers must be stored in a dedicated area designed to prevent the contamination of soil and groundwater as a result of leaking drums or containers prior to the proper disposal off site to a suitably licensed waste disposal facility.

3.10 Dust Management Programme

Construction site activities have the potential to generate fugitive emissions of dust levels as a result of demolition works including also cutting and breaking of hard surfaces.

Vehicle movement on unsealed site surfaces, windblown dusts from aggregate / fine material stockpiles, angle grinding of concrete and stone and deposition of materials at the site.

3.10.1 Proposed Dust Monitoring Programme

Dust deposition levels will be routinely monitored in order to assess the impact that site activities may have on the local ambient air quality and to demonstrate that the environmental control measures in place at the site are effective in minimising the impact of construction site activities on the local receiving environment.

3.10.2 Dust Management and Suppression / Abatement Techniques

It shall be the responsibility of the Site Manager to ensure that dust emissions generated by site activities are controlled and minimised and as such will implement appropriate dust suppression techniques as appropriate. Appropriate techniques will include water spraying of stockpiles and haul roads and temporarily curtailing specific operations when unfavourable weather conditions are prevailing (e.g., during dry, windy weather when the prevailing winds may cause dust to be blown towards local receptors).

A road sweeper vehicle shall be used to clean soiled roads in the vicinity of the site when required. This will also ensure that the potential for elevated concentrations of particulate matter entering any surface water drain will be minimised.

The Site Manager shall maintain a complaints log and in the event of a complaint relating to dust nuisance, an investigation shall be initiated.

4 Liaison with Local Community & Neighbours

It is recognized that there will be concerns among the local Community & neighbours about the impacts of construction. In addition to developing this Preliminary Plan and setting out clear and thorough procedures for the management of the project the Contractor will be required to:


- Appoint a Community Liaison Officer as a single point of contact to engage with the community and respond to concerns.
- Ensure specific construction tasks such as large deliveries and standard material deliveries are pre-planned and scheduled to minimize disruption where possible.
- Keep local residents and neighbours informed of progress and the timing of particular construction activities that may impact on them.

Prepared by;



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Reviewed by;



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Report on Structural Condition
and outline recommendations for repair

Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse
Borris-in-Ossory, Co. Laois

July 2023

Project 2238

Issue No.2

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Brief

CORA Consulting Engineers were appointed by Laois County Council as part of the team led by Howley Hayes Cooney Architecture to carry out a structural condition survey of Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse, Co. Laois, as a first stage in the larger conservation and renovation project for the building.

The purpose of this stage of the project was to carry out a structural condition survey of the building to inform the scope of repair and refurbishment works.

The aim of this report is to provide an overview of the structural condition of the building, to identify areas that require significant structural stabilisation works and to indicate the nature and form of structural remedial works, to assist in the overall feasibility assessment for the building.

This report has been prepared following a visual inspection of the building in the current form.

1.2. Brief description of structure

Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse is a derelict two storey building constructed c.1828 comprising a large central courtroom with two flanking wings to the north and south. It was in use by the Office of Public Works (OPW) until relatively recently. There is a large forecourt to the east of the courtroom with an Eircom interchange building and a glass bottle recycling facility to the north.



Figure 1: Borris-in-Ossory courthouse with Eircom interchange building to left hand side (north) and forecourt in foreground.

The courthouse is a Protected Structure (RPS No.319).

1.3. Method of appraisal and report limitations

Outline survey drawings were provided by Laois County Council at the beginning of the project.

Site visits were carried out by Triona Byrne, Lisa Edden and Aleksandra Zyrun of CORA Consulting Engineers on 23rd November 2022 and 10th February 2023. The inspections involved visiting all accessible areas, including attics (accessed via ladders) to record the form of timber sections and general structural condition.

No invasive works were carried out or samples taken or tested.

Structural inspections are carried out on the following conditions unless otherwise agreed in writing: -

Structural inspections are concerned with the strength and stability of the basic structure: some aspects of non-structural matters such as services, fittings, completions and finishes, doors and windows, water and weather-tightness etc., may be noted in passing and commented on but are not dealt with comprehensively.

Inspections do not deal comprehensively with the condition of timber and the presence or extent of fungal or insect infestation: a timber treatment specialist's advice must be sought in relation to these matters.

Matters of asbestos identification should be undertaken by a certified consultant with the appropriate insurances and any comment in relation to this material should be for information purposes only to give the client direction on the same.

It is not possible to state that structural elements that are covered, unexposed or inaccessible are free from defects. This includes all drainage runs. A CCTV survey/hydrostatic test can be commissioned to determine the integrity of the drains if requested.

Planning permission and bye-law matters, or fire risk assessment are not considered. An architect's advice should be sought in relation to these. Inspections do not extend to legal rights of ownership such as boundary lines.

Dimensions or areas quoted are approximate. Information relating to non-physical details is given in good faith and no responsibility is accepted for its accuracy or validity.

Reports on inspections and appraisals shall be for the private and confidential use of the client for whom the report is undertaken and should not be reproduced in whole or in part or relied upon by third parties for any use without our express written authority.

Initial structural inspections shall be considered as preliminary only. No opening up to expose the structure and no structural calculations are carried out, apart from those referred to above. Opening-up works are only representative of construction details and/or defects at that location only. Inspections are limited to noting and commenting on visible defects which might be symptomatic of structural distress. A more detailed full back analysis and appraisal can be carried out on request.

2. Observations and Commentary

2.1 Overall site

The courthouse site is located on the main road into Borris-in-Ossory from the west, at a junction of the Rock Road and the main road (R445).

The site is bounded by the R445 to the south, a block wall to the east, a tall overgrown hedge to the north and faces on to a forecourt accessed off the Rock Road to the west.

The front/western gravelled forecourt is shared with an Eircom interchange housed in a modern building to the north boundary.



Figure 2 – Borris-in-Ossory courthouse site

There is a gravelled / tarmacked area to the east of the building that is currently in use by Laois County Council as a storage area for infrastructure materials. It is believed that there are underground fuel tanks in this area, their filling points are immediately inboard of the eastern boundary wall. Another short boundary wall runs eastward from the courthouse building, parallel to the main road.

The building itself is accessed via steps from the public footpath running along the south of the building, leading up to an ancillary door.

The original main entrance would have been via the main doors on the west of the building, now blocked off. There is a fenced area against the west elevation, with original historic iron railings intact.



Figure 3: East elevation of courthouse with stored materials visible in foreground

2.2 Water services and Flood risk

The public foul sewer runs along the north of the site to a manhole at the north west corner of the site, and from there heads north-westwards. Shown in red on the Irish water map figure 4 below.

The last outfall manhole on the site connects into the public sewer to the north side of the site see the water services drawings in Appendix A. Another manhole was located to the southwest corner of the building however no foul services could be located to the rear (east) of the building because of the extent of stored materials in the rear yard.

The rainwater downpipes fall to gully traps and likely run to soak pits but this could not be confirmed. No positive connection of the storm water to the existing foul system was identified. There is a council maintained 300mm diameter stormwater pipe in the footpath to the south of the site draining from east to west connecting with the Nore River to the west.

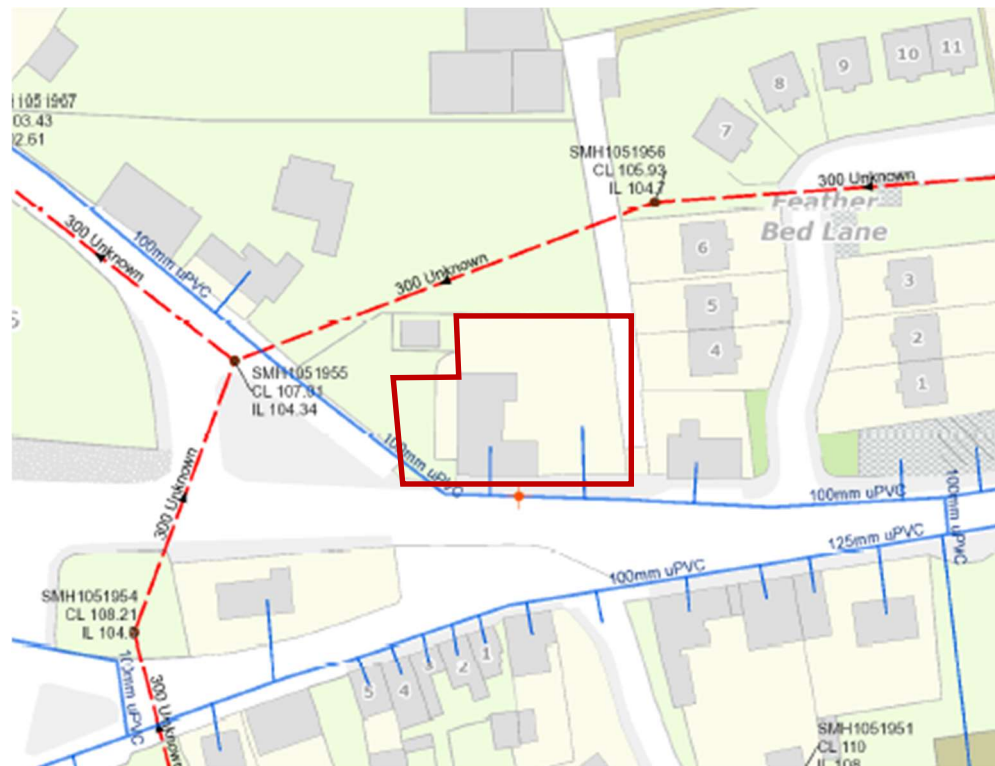


Figure 4 – Extract from Irish Water map showing courthouse site

The water supply is shown in blue in figure 4 above. There is a hydrant in the footpath immediately south of the courthouse. There are two sluice valves to the south side which appear redundant and one live connection immediately to the southeast corner of the main building.

A separate flood risk assessment report has been prepared and submitted for planning appraisal alongside this report. There was no flood risk identified on the site.

2.3 Courthouse building

The main courthouse building is of rendered stone construction with decorative carved sandstone elements (quoins, window and door surrounds, eaves course). There is a pitched natural slate roof on a queen-post timber structure over the main courtroom and a standard cut roof over the north and south wings. There are two large stone chimneys where the wings meet the main courtroom roof, and there is evidence of water ingress around both chimneys. Repairs were carried out around the northern chimney with timber repairs done to the hip structure and replacement asbestos slates in the valley (believed to have been carried out in 2010).

Key plans prepared by Howley Hayes Cooney Architecture are included in Appendix C. Room numbers referred to in the following sections are taken from these key plans, preceded by GF or FF to distinguish between Ground Floor and First Floor.

2.3.1 External

The chimney stacks are primarily of stone and brick construction, with later alterations in concrete block. Within the attic space, the chimneys are in fair condition, however above roof level, the sandstone forming the chimney stacks is in poor condition, particularly the south chimney. There are concrete block piers built up from the stone spine walls dividing the courtroom from the north and south wings, to support the purlin ends.

The external walls are of solid stone construction, with a variety of stone types throughout. The building is faced with decorative sandstone elements; quoins, window and door surrounds, decorative piers and eaves course. The sandstone is in poor condition, with large pieces of sandstone fallen/missing in places. Several stone structural elements have cracked, such as lintels over openings including the front doors to the west elevation.



Figure 5 – Typical sandstone condition; spalling, cracked, falling away



Figure 6 – Cracked lintel over door surround, west elevation

There are granite sills on the north, south and east elevations. There is a roughcast rendered finish to the north, east and west elevation, with a smooth rendered finish to the south elevation. Some of the roughcast render is spalling, particularly on the west and east elevations.

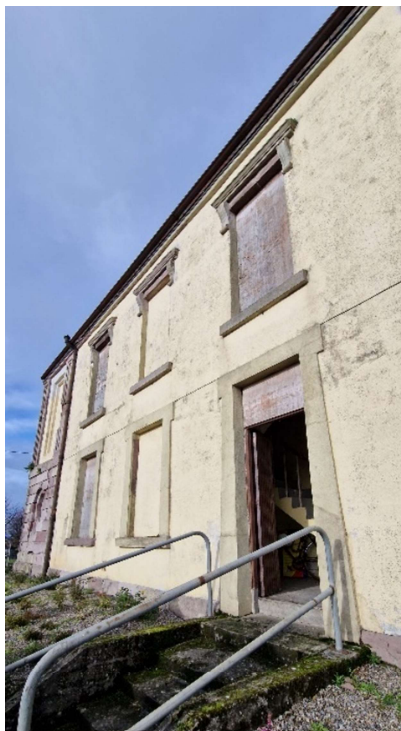


Figure 7 – Smooth rendered south elevation



Figure 8 - Decaying sandstone, south elevation

2.3.2 Roof and attic

The attic space was accessed from a hatch in the first-floor ceiling. The truss roof over the main courtroom is robust and well sized for its span and function. There was very little water ingress or slipped slates evident, however there were several very large crows nests built directly on the ceiling joists, so there must be an opening for the birds to access the attic. There was evidence of bats in the attic space but this may be a summer roost rather than an all-year roost.

Over the north and south wings, the rafters, collar ties and ceiling joists are well sized for their span and function, typically between 115-130mm deep x 40-55mm wide at 310 centres, with central hangers and ceiling binders every third rafter. There is some evidence of active woodworm on the collar ties.

There are remnants of lime parging to the underside of the slates.



Figure 9 – Queen post trussed roof over courtroom

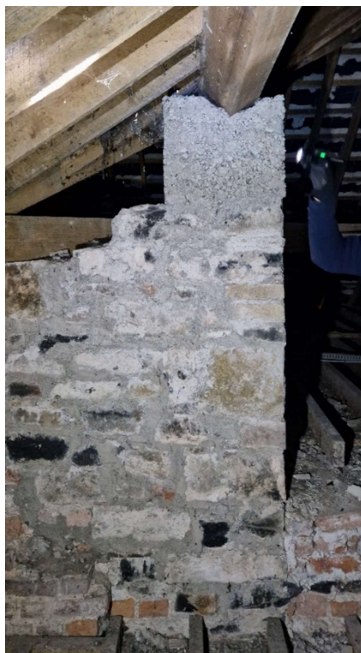


Figure 10 – Stone and concrete block spine wall

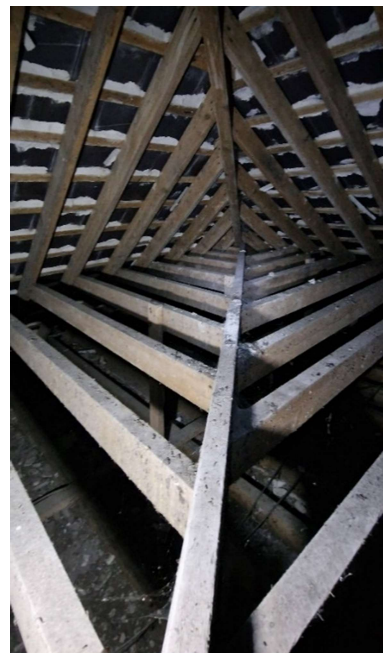


Figure 11 – Collar ties below hip rafter

2.3.3 Courthouse generally

The main courtroom (GF-8) is a large room with a double-height ceiling and large rounded windows on the east and west walls. The flanking wings to the north and south house the ancillary rooms associated with the courtroom, which would previously have served as offices, canteens, along with three holding cells in the southeast wing. There are hairline cracks on the plastered walls of the courtroom around the window heads and across the north and south spine walls.



Figure 12 – Courtroom arched windows and built-in joinery

The courtroom floor is formed of timber joists and floorboards, with concrete infill between the joists. There is built-in joinery in the courtroom including seats, raised platforms, desks and screens. There is active woodworm evident throughout the floor and the joinery in the courtroom. The floorboards are soft in places and are generally in poor condition.



Figure 13 – Courtroom looking south



Figure 14 – Courtroom looking north

2.3.4 Staircases

There are three staircases and associated stairwells in the building: one in the north wing (GF-2) and two in the south wing (GF-9 and GF-12). All three stairs were likely of 'cantilevered' stone construction initially, but sections of the north and one of the south stairs have been replaced with concrete steps. All three stairs are in good condition and appear robust. Each has an iron handrail embedded into the top of the stone/step. The upper landings are also of stone construction, approximately 150mm deep.

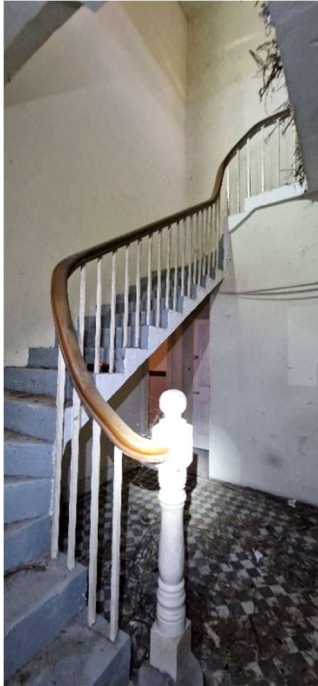


Figure 15 – Fully intact stone stairs in south wing

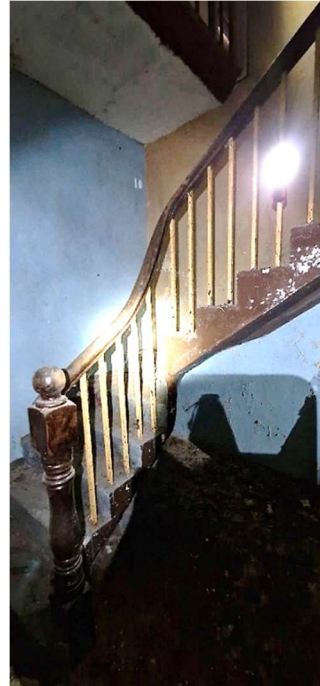


Figure 16 – Stairs in north wing with bottom steps replaced with concrete

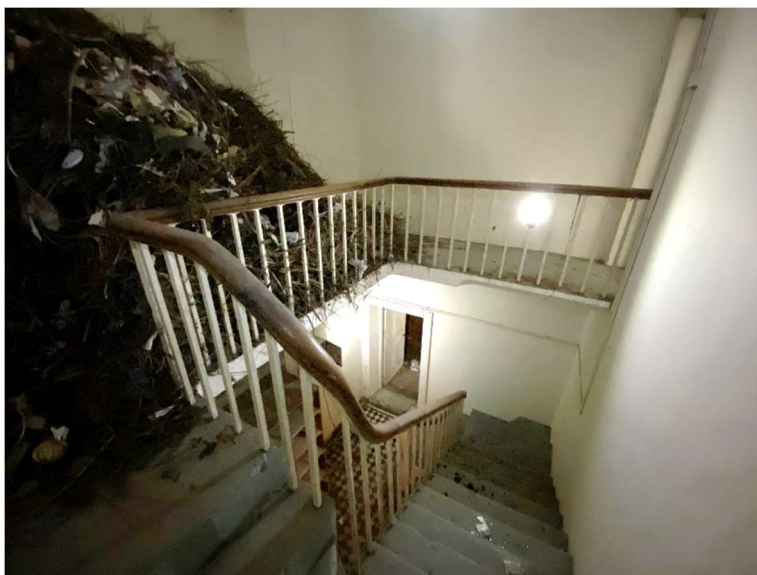


Figure 17 – Large birds' nest on upper landing of stairs in south wing

2.3.5 North wing

The north wing is comprised of four distinct spaces at ground level and two at first floor level, plus a stairwell. At ground floor, the eastern space (GF-5, GF-6 and GF-7) is a later extension of poor quality. The roof has collapsed and the space is unsafe to enter.

To the west, room GF-4 has a masonry vaulted ceiling in good condition and a timber suspended floor in poor condition, with timber joists and floorboards collapsing in places. The timber joists are supported midspan with a concrete tassel wall, with floorboards over the joists.

Further west, room GF-3 has a lino finish on what appears to be a solid floor. The underside of the timber joists at first floor level are visible overhead due to historic water ingress which has caused the ground floor ceiling finishes to collapse. The room is otherwise in fair condition.

The final room at ground floor in the north wing (GF-1) is a bathroom outshot to the northwest corner, which is in poor condition. The timber door surround has fallen forward into the stairwell, pulling some of the brick reveals with it. As viewed from the outside, the flat concrete roof has a collapsing water tank on top of it, with a downpipe from the gutter at roof level discharging into it. There is also a build-up of vegetation growing from this flat roof area.

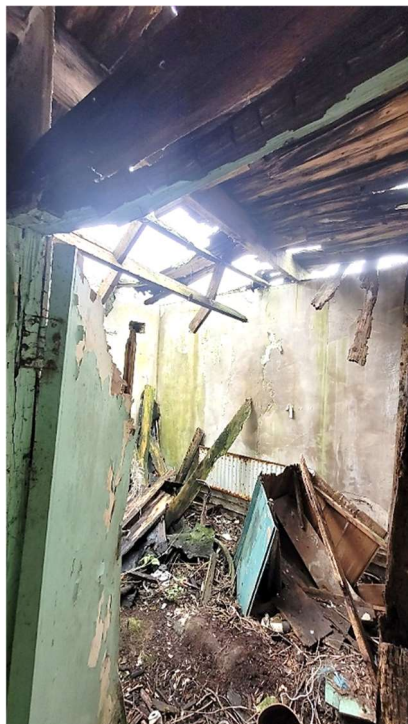


Figure 18 – Eastern extension to north wing in poor condition



Figure 19 – Room GF-4 in north wing

Upstairs, room FF-3 over the vault below is dry and appears in good condition. The dividing wall between rooms FF-2 and FF-3 appears slightly hollow; there may be lath and plaster over a solid masonry wall.

Room FF-2 has timber floor joists 175x44mm at 310mm centres with 170mm wide floorboards. The floor is likely decayed where there was water ingress above and has been cordoned off for safety reasons, just in front of the fireplace (the water ingress was around the corresponding chimney at roof level).



Figure 20 – Ceiling finishes missing in room GF-3

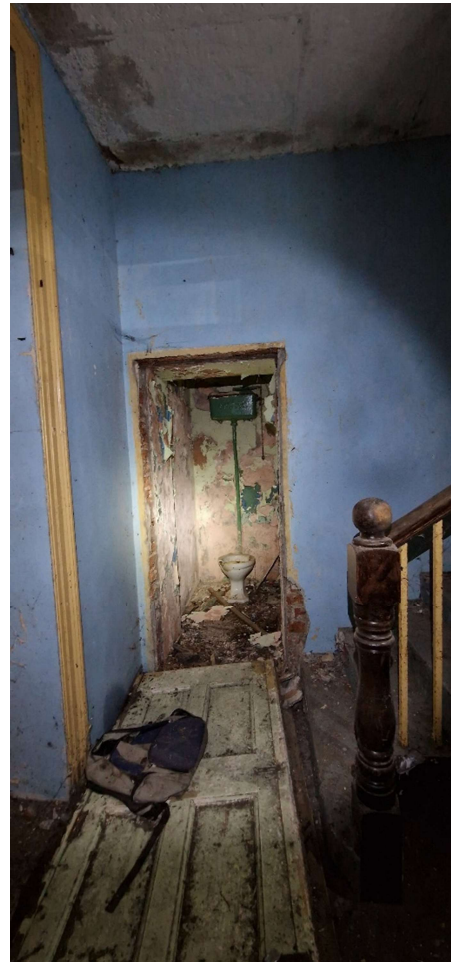


Figure 21 – Bathroom outshot (GF-1) door fallen into stairwell, north wing

2.3.6 South wing

The south wing is comprised of six rooms at ground level and three rooms at first floor level, plus two stairwells. At ground level, there are three small holding cells (GF-15, GF-16, GF-17) against the east gable, each with a vaulted ceiling and small window facing east. Each of the cells has a solid tiled floor and slight hairline cracking at the apex of the vault, but the cells are in good condition overall. There are sloping timber lintels above the windows in each cell which may require replacement if found to be excessively decayed, once opened up. The door surround to each cell is of carved stone tied into the masonry each side and is very robust.

Immediately west of the cells, a corridor with a vaulted ceiling has been blocked up in the middle, dividing the wing into two distinct areas (GF-12 and GF-14) which must now be accessed from separate external doors; GF-14 facing north into the courtyard and GF-12 facing east on to the main road. Another large room (GF-13) with a vaulted masonry ceiling and small fireplace is accessed from GF-14.

The secondary stairwell (GF-12) is accessed from the south-facing external door. This leads west into the largest room (GF-11) in the south wing, which has a suspended timber floor, timber ceiling joists above and a large fireplace. A flue from the fireplace in the adjacent room (GF-13) runs within the eastern wall of this room, and it appears to have been letting water in from roof level as there is dampness in the north eastern corner of the room.

The final room (GF-10) is a small bathroom built within the primary stairwell (GF-9) in the southwestern corner of the building. This bathroom was formed by building a solid partition wall up the underside of the first floor landing. The main entrance door to the building was in this stairwell also but it has been blocked up.

At first floor level, there are three large rooms (FF-5, FF-7, FF-8) in fair condition connected by a small corridor (FF-6) accessed from the stairwell at first floor (FF-9). The eastern room (FF-8) over the vaults below has a grid of hairline cracks on the ceiling. One room (FF-5) has a timber floor with timber joists and floorboards, and a generous 4m floor-to-ceiling height. Notably, there is an extremely large crow's nest on the primary first floor landing (FF-4), indicating that there are access points for crows.



Figure 22 – Carved stone door surround to each of three cells

3. Recommendations

3.1 Overall site, Water services and flood risk

- There are a number of services within the site boundary such as the communication lines to the Eircom interchange and reportedly diesel tanks under the rear (east) yard. All of these require mapping to inform the proposed redevelopment. Before successful mapping can be carried out using GPR and similar it is likely that some re-ordering of the material stored in the yard will be required.
- The diesel tanks when found will need to be decommissioned and decontaminated.
- The existing foul water connection to the main sewer will be redeployed and the last manhole retained. All foul drainage upstream of that will be new to suit the proposed new WC and kitchen locations. There are sufficient falls on the site to allow all this drainage to be gravity drainage. See water services sketch and proposed drainage plan in Appendices A and B.
- The stormwater drainage design has been developed to incorporate SUDs measures to attenuate surface water such that no additional flood risk to the surrounding area is introduced. The small area of additional roofing is designed as a green roof. There are no additional hardstanding areas being introduced and current areas of hardstanding are being re-developed as permeable paving. The falls on the site area such that the existing rainwater downpipes can be routed to the council maintained stormwater drainage system located in the footpath to the immediate south of the site. The proposed drainage system is shown in Appendix B
- Water supply is existent to the building with a recently installed sluice valve located to the southeast corner of the building. There is a fire hydrant in the footpath approximately halfway along the south elevation. Tests on flow rates and pressure as required by others will need to be sourced separately.
- The flood risk is exceptionally low on this site; refer to report in the Flood Risk Report.

3.2 External Envelope

- The sandstone chimney stacks require attention, the stone is spalling, and it is likely that the top flaunching is in poor condition and will need to be replaced.
- There are localised areas of water ingress around chimneys which should be addressed; roof finishes will require replacement locally and the timbers immediately under and against the chimneys will require repairs and some replacement.
- Ventilation to the roof attic needs to be considered and it may be appropriate to install additional ventilation during any works to chimneys / gutters.
- New rainwater goods, both gutters and downpipes are required and additional rainwater down pipe drops should be considered.
- The decaying sandstone elements to the elevations represent a significant structural issue, particularly the large lintels and their supports over the front doors to the west elevation. Replacement stone and carefully detailed stitching is required.
- Further investigation should be carried out to determine the sandstone source, cause, and rate of deterioration of the sandstone and appropriate consolidation techniques. These are likely to include significant amounts of stone replacement and mortar repairs to the lesser deteriorated stone. Shelter-coating may be appropriate elsewhere, although this has a visual impact and will need to be considered by way of exemplars with the wider team.
- Areas of spalled render will need to be addressed by either localised re-rendering or if sufficient funds full re-rendering.

3.3 Building Structure

- In general, the roof timbers and supporting masonry to the main building appear to be structurally sound. The queen post roof trusses are robust and the large attic space offers an opportunity with localised strengthening to house services in this roof space.
- Appropriate ventilation to the roof and attic space crawl boards / walkways should all be installed.
- The active woodworm throughout the building requires treatment.
- The upper floors of the building are serviceable, though they will require opening-up and full inspection. Repairs will involve splicing or replacing decayed joists. Strengthening may be required and will likely take the form of additional joists or the installation of a plywood skin to the tops of the joists to stiffen the floor.
- The eastern extension to the north wing is beyond its serviceable life and is recommended for demolition.
- The outshot bathroom on the north elevation (GF-1) should be re-roofed at minimum, with door reveals repaired, or demolished entirely with the doorway bricked up, toothed and bonded into the adjacent walls.
- The solid floor slabs at ground level are serviceable but could be replaced. This will give the opportunity to insulate and radon protect the floor. A limecrete floor could be considered to be more compatible with the solid masonry walls.
- The collapsed suspended timber floor (room GF-4) should be replaced with either a new timber floor or a solid insulated concrete or limecrete floor.
- The decaying courtroom floor should be replaced in full and any joinery that is to be retained in-situ should be treated for woodworm.

4. Future Development

Outline proposals for the reuse of the courthouse building and whole site have been drawn up by Howley Hayes Cooney Architects in collaboration with a wider design team. The above recommendations in this report have been discussed as part of the development of these plans and the conservation of the courthouse building has been incorporated with some alterations proposed which will be discussed below. Please refer to Appendix C for the outline structural scheme for the proposals.

i) **New external bridge connecting north and south wings of the courthouse.**

This new structure is proposed to offer greater connectivity within the building, whilst having minimal impact on the existing historic fabric. It is proposed to form the new bridge of a deep Glulam or Cross Laminated Timber edge beam supported on two posts, with both ends of the beam cantilevering beyond the posts, thus requiring only minimal interface and intervention with the existing masonry walls of the building. The bridge platform/deck and roof will be formed of timber, supported by the new edge beam on one side and from the east wall of the existing building on the other side. This will require fixing timber wall plates to the existing building at platform and roof level. There will be a fully glazed wall externally.

ii) **Courtroom overhanging pods / balconets.**

These three new structures are proposed to offer work stations in a novel way, making use of existing openings in the courtroom walls to provide additional work desks. The structures are proposed to be made timber stud framework sandwiched in timber boarding / plywood timber to provide lightweight structures that are reversible and have minimal impact on the historic fabric of the courtroom.

iii) **New extension**

The new extension structure is proposed to be framed with Glulam or Cross laminated timber posts and beams as a sustainable form of structure. The walls will be a mixture of a timber cladding and full-height glazed panels. The proposed green roof enhances the biodiversity of the site and also offers SUDs drainage measures on the site. Concrete strip foundations are required to support the extension structure. A concrete lift shaft is required to support the proposed lift, which will improve accessibility of the courtroom.

iv) **Other amendments**

Other minor amendments to the building include creating new openings for new doorways in existing masonry walls which will require new precast concrete lintels, the infilling of several existing openings with masonry and removal of non-structural partition walls and modern ceiling finishes.

Repairs to the sandstone building envelope as discussed in Section 3 is proposed as part of a full schedule of repairs to the building.

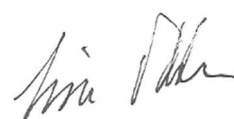
A new drainage scheme has been designed to accommodate the new development, refer to Appendix B.

Prepared by;



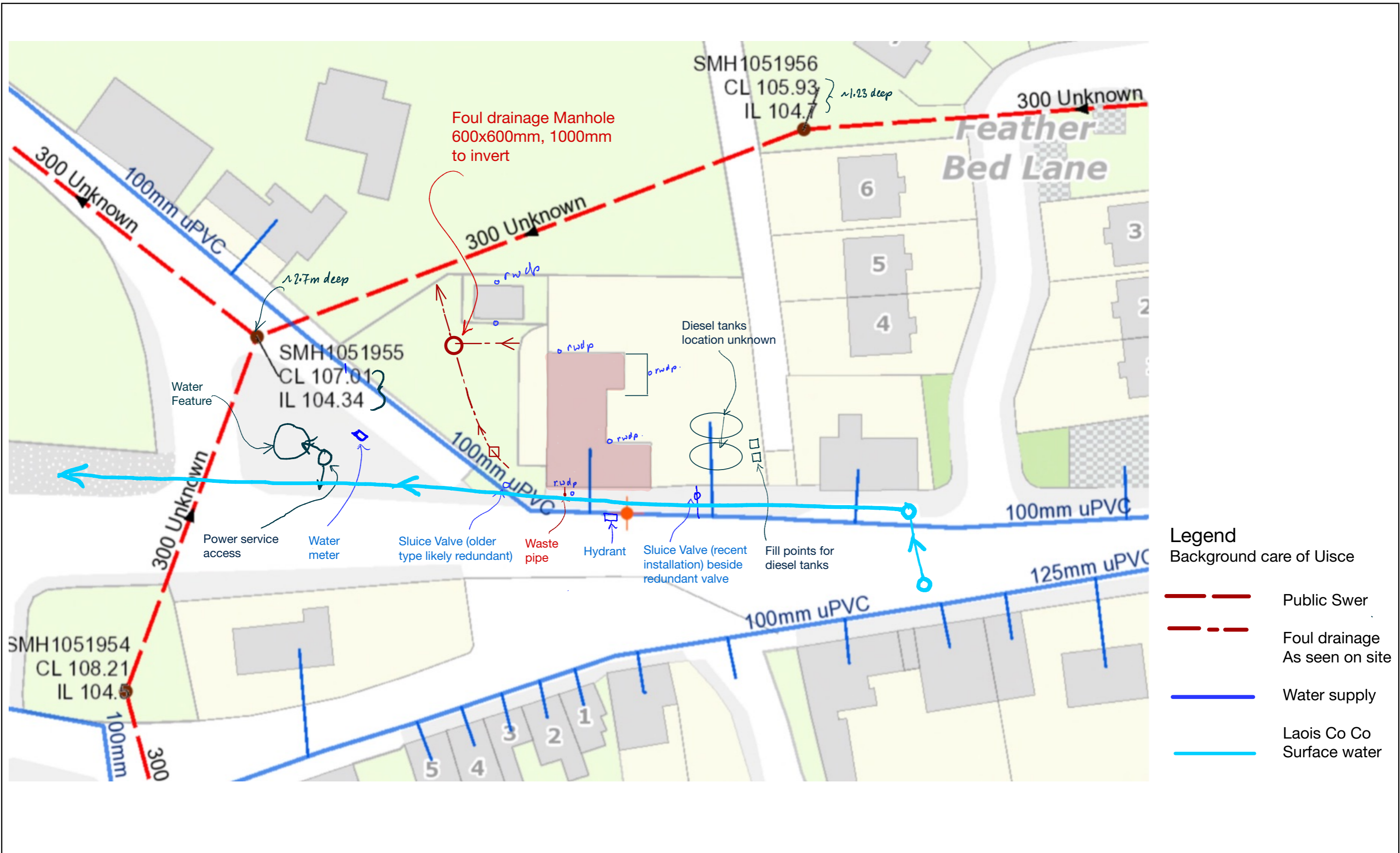
Triona Byrne BAI MAI CEng MIEI
for CORA Consulting Engineers


Reviewed by;



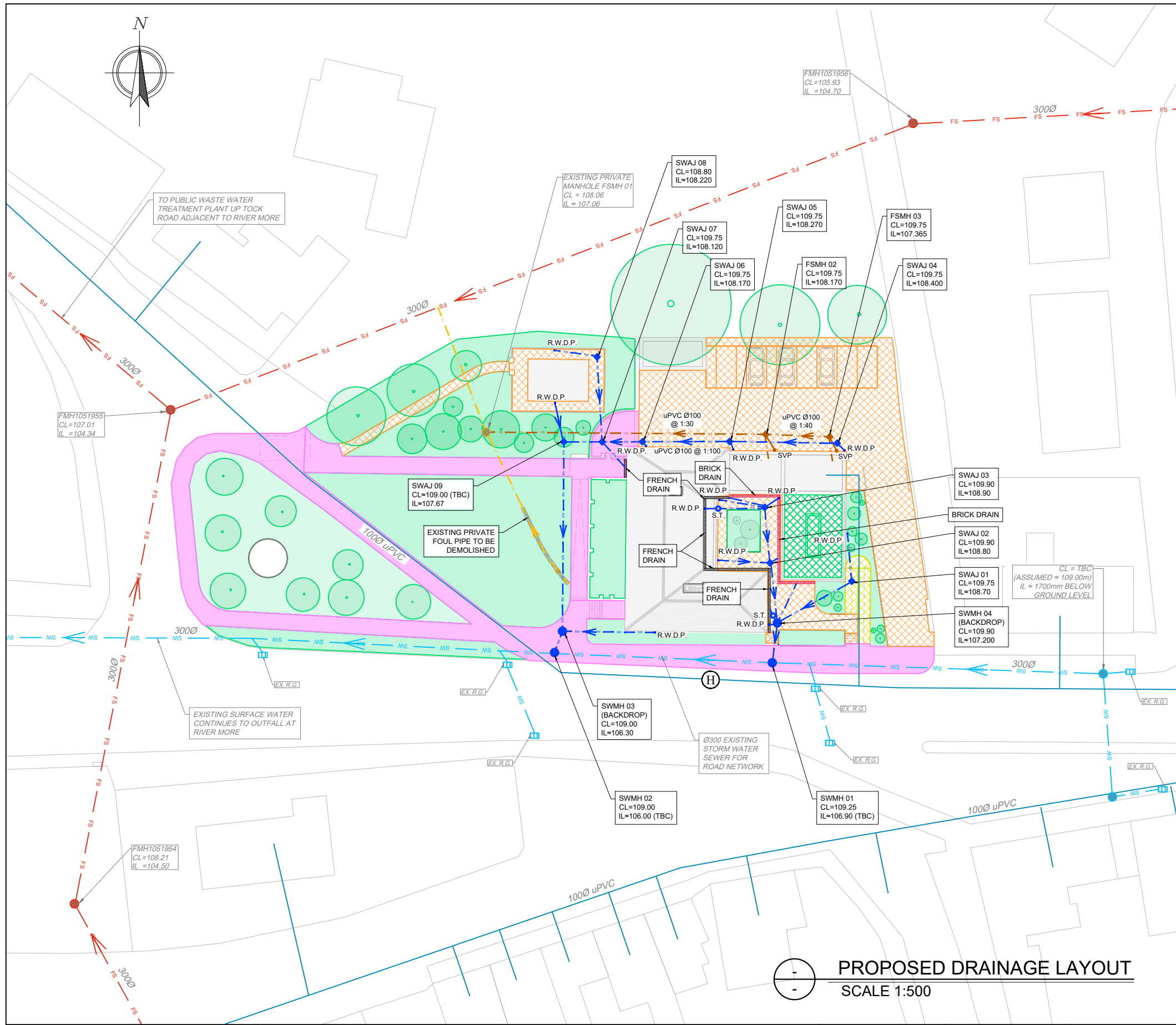
Lisa Edden BEng CEng MStructE MIEI
for CORA Consulting Engineers

Appendix A – Site Water Services Drawing



Drawing Stage:		REPORT			Drawn By:	Checked By:	Approved By:	Date:								
Project Details:		P2	Issued for inclusion in Report	20-07-2023	LE	Project Name:		Scale:	Project Number:	Behan House, 10 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2. D02 HT71 Tel: +353 (0)1 661 1100 e-mail: info@cora.ie web: www.cora.ie						
Site Address:		Surface Water added			Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse		2238									
Client:		P1	Issued for inclusion in Report	09-03-2023	LE	Drawing Title:		Project:	Originator:	Zone:	Level:	Type:	Discipline:	Drawing No.:	Stage:	Revision:
Architect:		REV. No.	REVISION DESCRIPTION	DATE	ISSUED BY	Existing site & water services								Sk C001		P2

Appendix B – Proposed drainage design



PROPOSED DRAINAGE LAYOUT
SCALE 1:500

REVISION SCHEDULE				
REV. NO.	REV. DESCRIPTION	REV. DATE	SIGNATURE	CHECKED
D1	ISSUED FOR PLANNING - DRAFT	29/06/2023	BF	LE
D2	ISSUED FOR PLANNING - DRAFT	18/08/2023	BF	LE
PL1	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	20/07/2023	BF	LE

DRAINAGE LEGEND	
	FOUL SEWER PIPE WITH MANHOLE (EXISTING)
	FOUL WATER PIPE WITH INSPECTOR CHAMBER (EXISTING/PRIVATE)
	FOUL WATER PIPE WITH INSPECTOR CHAMBER TO BE DEMOLISHED
	FOUL WATER PIPE WITH MANHOLE (NEW)
	SOIL VENT PIPE
	ROAD GULLY (EXISTING)
	Ø100 uPVC SURFACE WATER PIPE WITH INSPECTOR CHAMBER (NEW)
	EXISTING Ø300 uPVC SURFACE WATER WITH NEW MANHOLES
	SURFACE WATER PIPE WITH MANHOLE (EXISTING)
	RAIN WATER DOWN PIPE (NEW)
	SILT TRAP FROM FRENCH DRAIN
	FRENCH DRAIN TO ARCHITECTS DETAIL
	ACO BRICK SLOT DRAIN TO ARCHITECTS DETAIL
	WATER MAIN (EXISTING)
	FIRE HYDRANT (EXISTING)

SURFACE LEGEND	
	SOFT LANDSCAPING
	SEDUM ROOF
	IMPERMEABLE STONE
	IMPERMEABLE ROOF
	PERMEABLE PAVING

- DRAINAGE NOTES:**
1. READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL RELEVANT ARCHITECT'S AND ENGINEER'S DRAWINGS.
 2. ALL WATER SERVICES MANHOLES, PIPE MATERIALS AND OTHER FEATURES SHALL COMPLY WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND IRISH WATER CODES OF PRACTICE FOR THE RELEVANT ASSET
 3. WHERE COVER TO PIPES IS LESS THAN 1.2M IN ROADS, 1.0M IN PUBLIC AREAS AND 0.8M IN GRASSED/LANDSCAPED AREAS, SURROUND THE PIPE UP TO 150MM WITH 100MM CONCRETE AND LARGER PIPES WITH 150MM CONC.
 4. BACK-FILL TRENCHES IN ROADS WITH MOT STONE COMPACTED IN LAYERS.
 5. CLOSE ROAD GULLIES IN THE DIRECTION OF TRAFFIC FLOW.
 6. ADJUST FOUNDATION DEPTHS, AS NECESSARY, ADJACENT TO SEWERS TO AVOID UNDERMINING OF THE FOUNDATIONS.
 7. DO NOT SET OUT FROM THIS DRAWING. SETTING OUT TO BE DONE FROM ARCHITECT'S DRAWINGS.
 8. MANHOLE COVERS AND FRAMES SHALL COMPLY WITH THE LA STANDARD PATTERN WITH MIN OPENING OF 600MM & WITH CLOSED KEYWAYS. HEAVY DUTY TYPE A MANHOLES IN ALL TRAFFICKED AREAS AND MEDIUM DUTY TYPE B ELSEWHERE, TO BS EN124. TYPE C MAY BE USED IN ENCLOSED PRIVATE GARDENS.
 9. DOUBLE GULLIES, WITH SEPARATE CONNECTIONS TO MAIN, TO BE PROVIDED AT LOW POINTS AND AT THE ENDS OF CUL DE SACS. MAXIMUM RUN OF PIPE 15M. MINIMUM PIPE DIAMETER 150MM. MAXIMUM GULLY SPACING FOR ROADS UP TO 7M WIDE TO BE 50M UNO.
 10. MANHOLES ON HOUSE DRAINS TO BE IN PRIVATE PROPERTY. HOUSE DRAINS SHALL NOT PASS THROUGH PROPERTY THEY DO NOT SERVE.
 11. RECORD DRAWINGS OF THE AS CONSTRUCTED WORK SHALL BE

Drawing Stage:
PLANNING

Project Details:	
Site Address:	BORRIS-IN-OSSORY
Client:	LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL
Architect:	HOWLEY HAYES COONEY ARCHITECTS
M&E Designer:	-
Contractor:	-

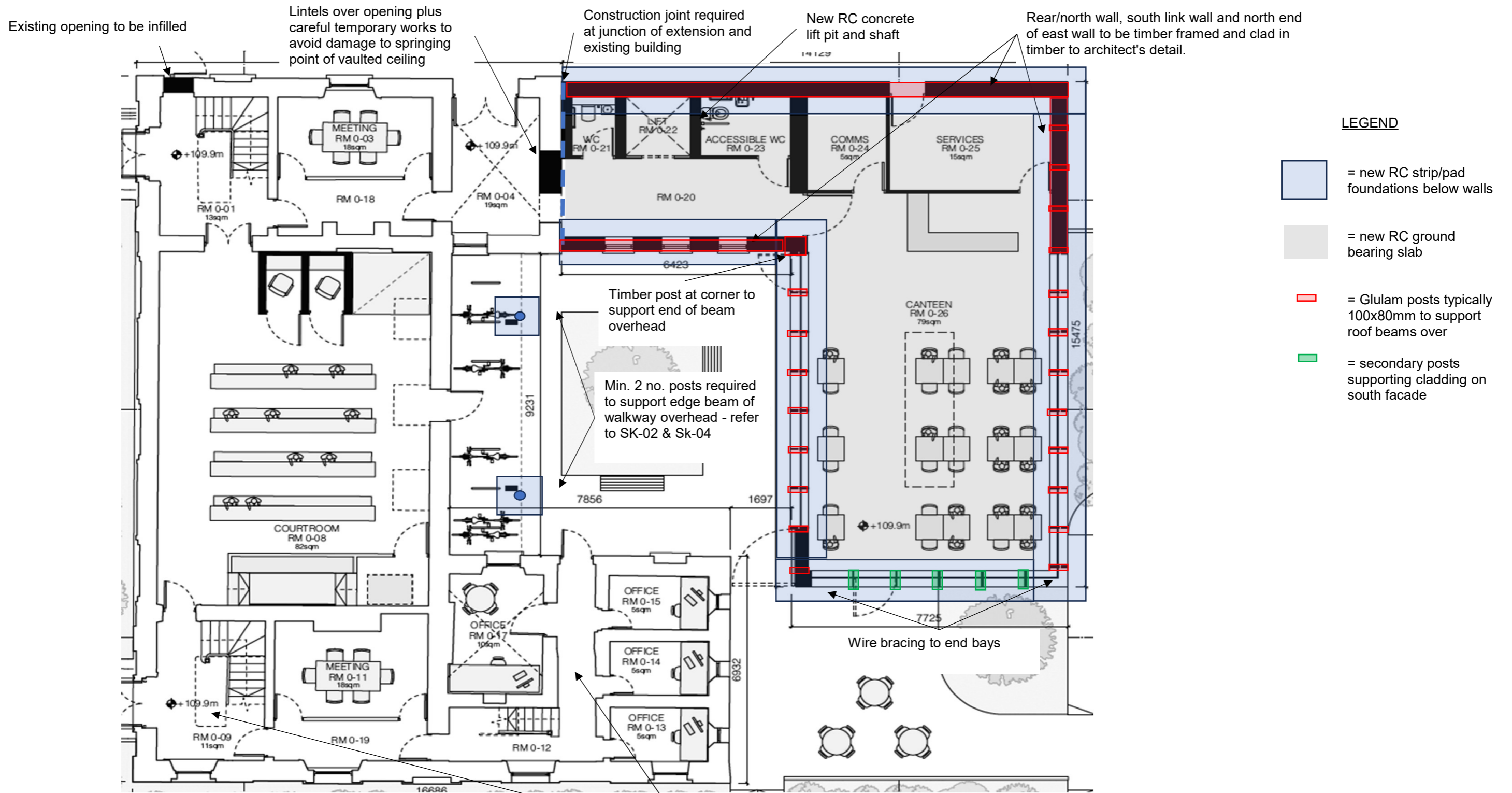
Drawn by:	BF	Checked by:	LE	Approved by:	LE	Date:	29/06/2023
Project Name:				Scale:	Project Number:		
BORRIS-IN-OSSORY COURTHOUSE				1:500 @ A3	2238		
Drawing Title:				Project:	Originator:	Zone:	
PROPOSED DRAINAGE LAYOUT				-	CORA	ZZ	

CORA
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

Behan House,
10 Lower Mount Street,
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Level:	Type:	Discipline:	Drawing No:	Stage:	Revision:
00	DR	C	001	PL	PL1

Appendix C – Outline structural scheme



LEGEND

- = new RC strip/pad foundations below walls
- = new RC ground bearing slab
- = Glulam posts typically 100x80mm to support roof beams over
- = secondary posts supporting cladding on south facade

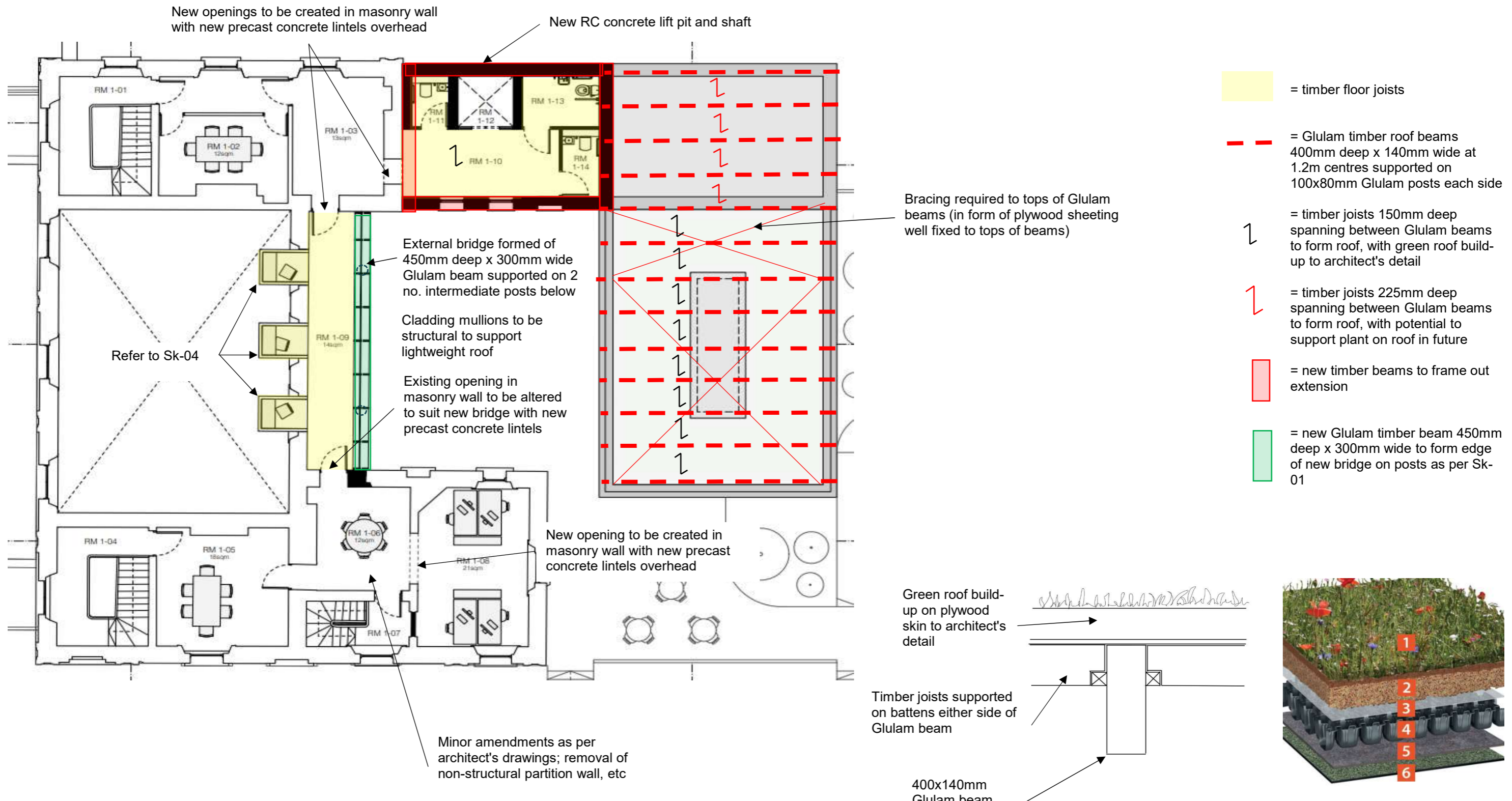
Proposed Ground Floor Plan - extract from HHC drawings

Minor amendments as per architect's drawings; removal of non-structural infill wall, etc

Notes

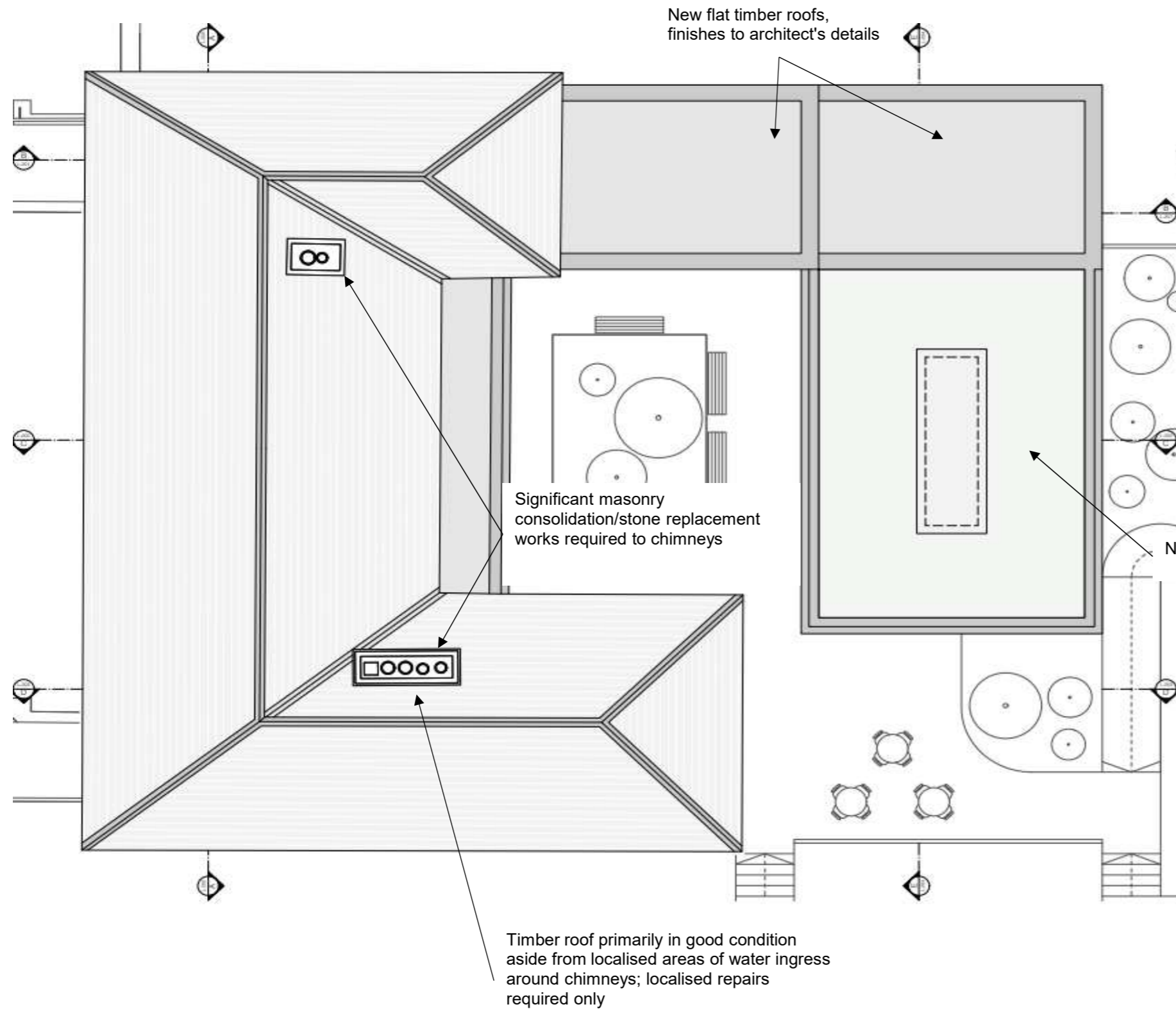
Foundation design will depend on site investigation results.

Drawing Stage: PLANNING					Drawn By: TB	Checked By: LE	Approved By: LE	Date: 26/06/2023	 Behan House, 10 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2. D02 HT71 Tel: +353 (0)1 661 1100 e-mail: info@cora.ie web: www.cora.ie								
Project Details:					Project Name: Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse			Scale: NTS							Project Number: 2238		
Site Address:	Borris-in-Ossory, Co.Laois	PL1	Issued for Planning	20/07/2023	TB	Drawing Title: Structural Scheme Ground Floor			Project:	Originator:	Zone:	Level:	Type:	Discipline:	Drawing No.: Sk-01	Stage:	Revision: PL1
Client:	Laois Co.Co.	P1	For Discussion with design team	30/06/2023	TB												
Architect:	HHCA	REV. No.	REVISION DESCRIPTION	DATE	ISSUED BY												



Proposed First Floor Plan - extract from HHC drawings

Drawing Stage:					Drawn By:					Checked By:					Approved By:					Date:					<p>Behan House, 10 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2. D02 HT71 Tel: +353 (0)1 661 1100 e-mail: info@cora.ie web: www.cora.ie</p>																																																																
PLANNING					TB					LE					LE					26/06/2023																																																																					
Project Details:										Project Name:										Scale:					Project Number:																																																																
Site Address:										Borris-in-Ossory, Co.Laois										PL1					Issued for Planning					20/07/2023					TB					Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse					NTS					2238																																							
Client:										Laois Co.Co.										P1					For Discussion with design team					30/06/2023					TB					Structural Scheme					Project:					Originator:					Zone:					Level:					Type:					Discipline:					Drawing No.:					Stage:					Revision:				
Architect:										HHCA										REV. No.					REVISION DESCRIPTION					DATE					ISSUED BY					First Floor																														Sk-02					PL1														



Roof Plan - extract from HHC drawings




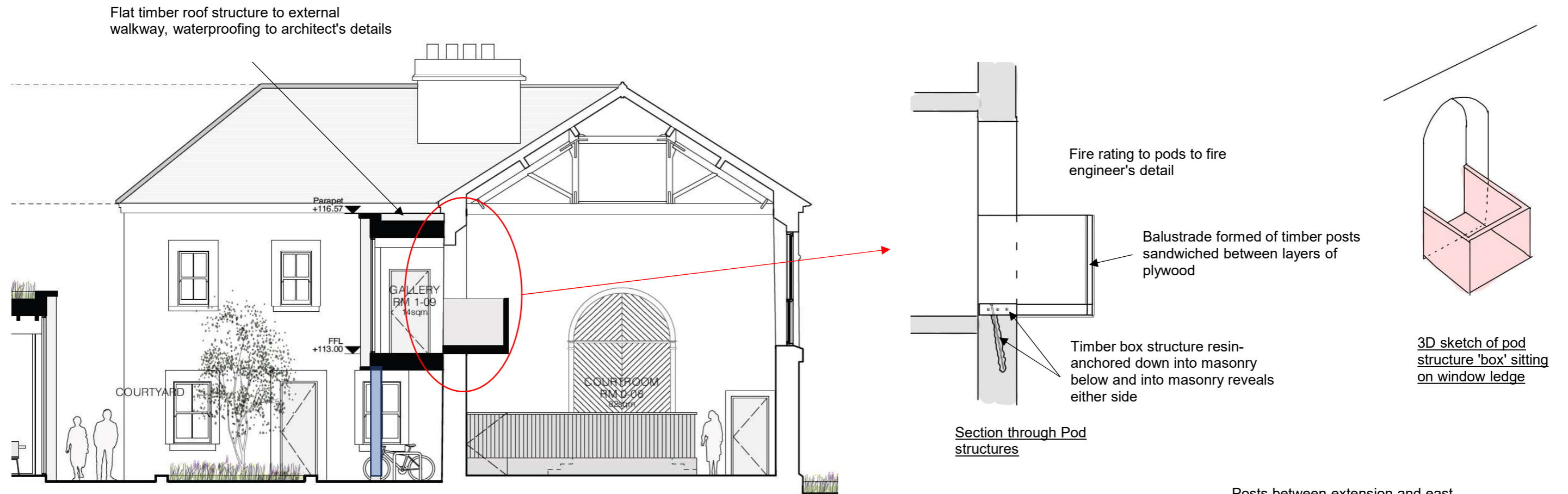
Attic - existing condition

All ceiling joists in the courtroom to be removed to expose trusses. Insulation and finishes to architect's detail. Purlin analysis and possible strengthening in the form of steel flitch plates to be undertaken in detailed design stage.



Chimney in poor condition

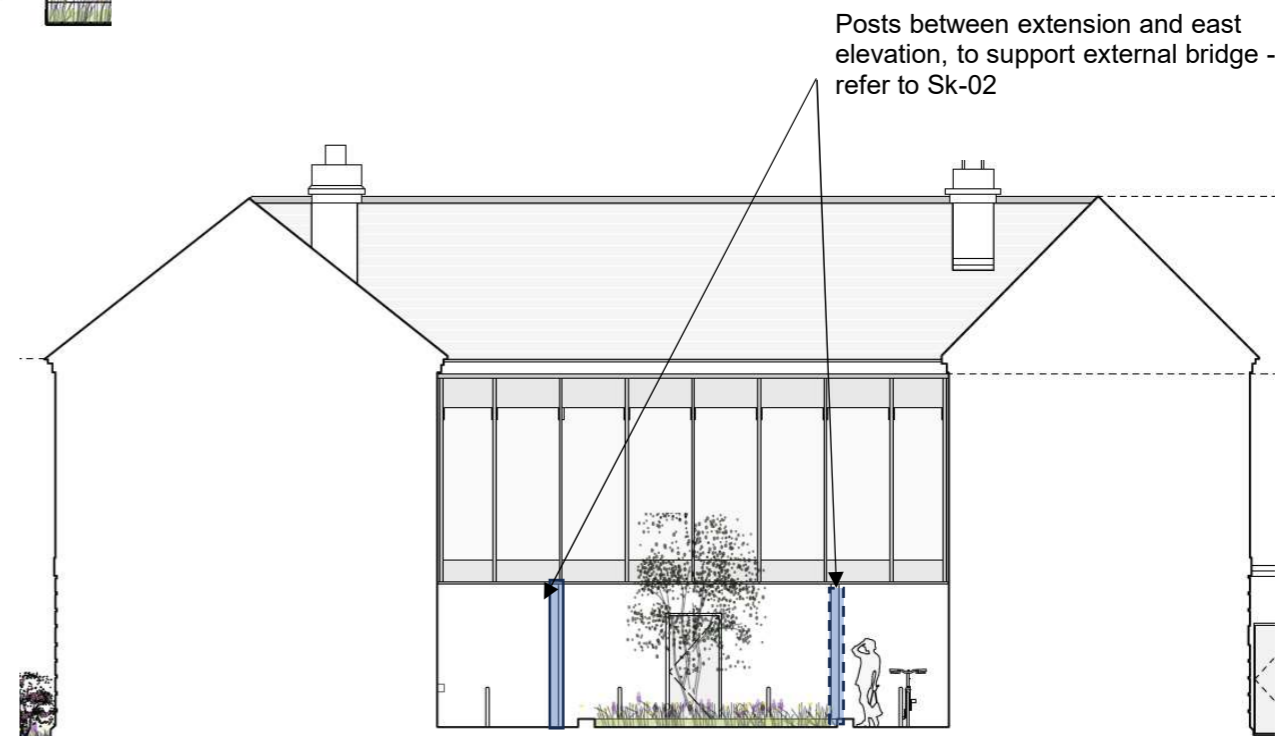
Drawing Stage:		PLANNING				Drawn By:	Checked By:	Approved By:	Date:	 <p>Behan House, 10 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2. D02 HT71 Tel: +353 (0)1 661 1100 e-mail: info@cora.ie web: www.cora.ie</p>						
Project Details:						TB	LE	LE	26/06/2023							
Site Address:	Borris-in-Ossory, Co.Laois	PL1	Issued for Planning	20/07/2023	TB	Project Name: Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse		Scale: NTS	Project Number: 2238							
Client:	Laois Co.Co.	P1	For Discussion with design team	30/06/2023	TB	Drawing Title: Structural Scheme Roof		Project:	Originator:							Zone:
Architect:	HHCA	REV. No.	REVISION DESCRIPTION	DATE	ISSUED BY											




Section CC - extract from HHC drawings

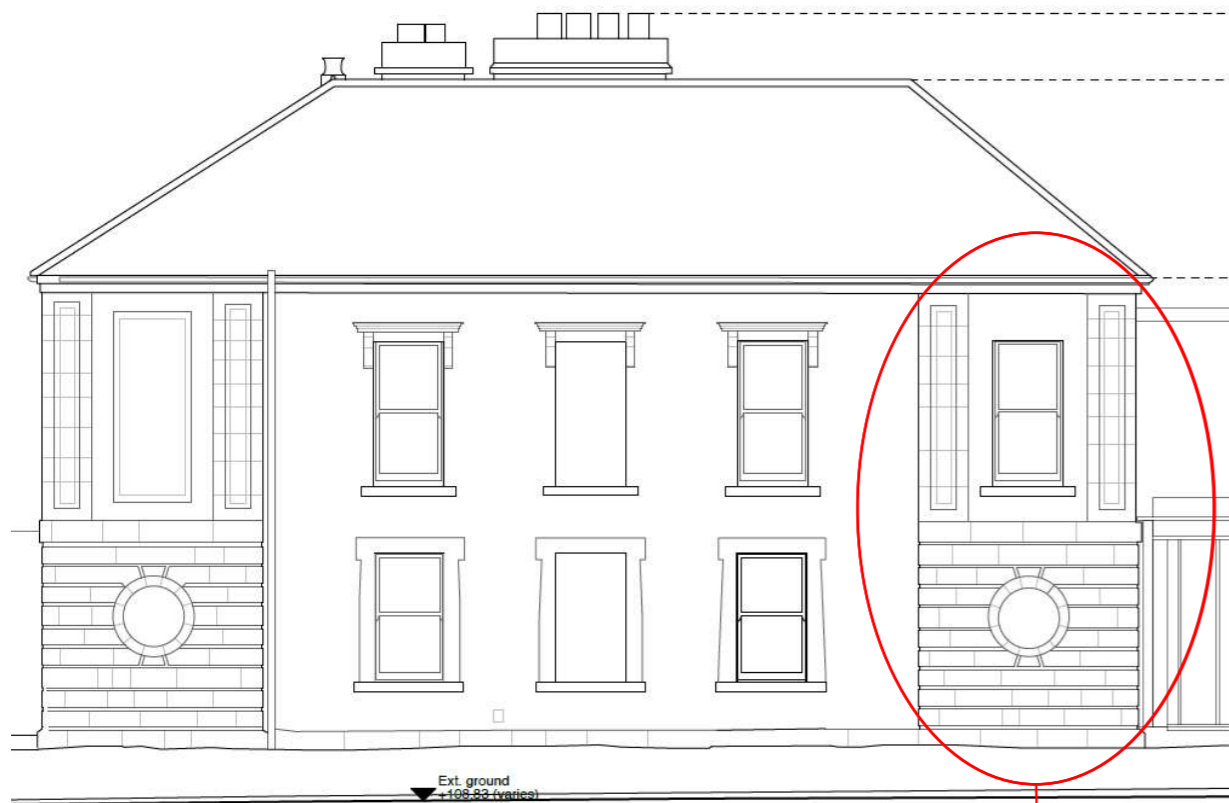


East elevation - existing

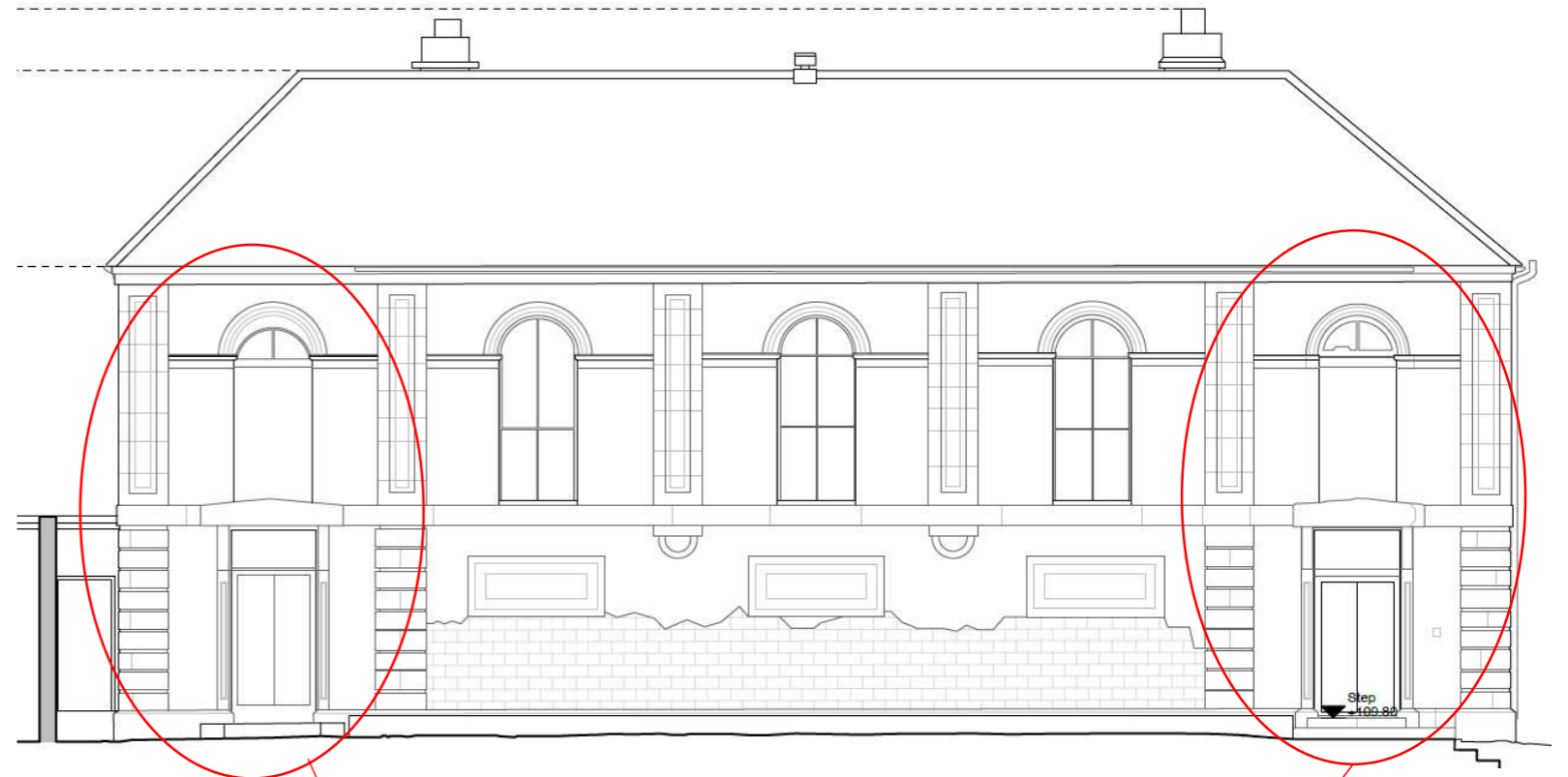


East elevation - proposed (extract from HHC drawings)

Drawing Stage:						Drawn By:	Checked By:	Approved By:	Date:	 Behan House, 10 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2. D02 HT71 Tel: +353 (0)1 661 1100 e-mail: info@cora.ie web: www.cora.ie							
PLANNING						TB	LE	LE	26/06/2023								
Project Details:						Project Name: Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse			Scale: NTS	Project Number: 2238							
Site Address:	Borris-in-Ossory, Co.Laois	PL1	Issued for Planning	20/07/2023	TB	Drawing Title: Structural Scheme East elevation			Project:	Originator:	Zone:	Level:	Type:	Discipline:	Drawing No.: Sk-04	Stage:	Revision: PL1
Client:	Laois Co.Co.	P1	For Discussion with design team	30/06/2023	TB												
Architect:	HHCA	REV. No.	REVISION DESCRIPTION	DATE	ISSUED BY												




South elevation



West elevation

Sandstone elements on all elevations in poor condition, requires significant replacement and repair. Includes but not limited to; eaves course, string course, wall cladding panels, lintels, decorative elements, quoins, chimneys.



Drawing Stage:		PLANNING				Drawn By:	Checked By:	Approved By:	Date:	 Behan House, 10 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2. D02 HT71 Tel: +353 (0)1 661 1100 e-mail: info@cora.ie web: www.cora.ie					
Project Details:						Project Name:	Scale:	Project Number:							
Site Address:	Borris-in-Ossory, Co.Laois	PL1	Issued for Planning	20/07/2023	TB	Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse	NTS	2238							
Client:	Laois Co.Co.	P1	For Discussion with design team	30/06/2023	TB	Drawing Title:	Project:	Originator:	Zone:	Level:	Type:	Discipline:	Drawing No.:	Stage:	Revision:
Architect:	HHCA	REV. No.	REVISION DESCRIPTION	DATE	ISSUED BY	Structural Scheme Façade							Sk-05		PL1

H
C H

Appendix C

Building Services

Hayes Higgins Partnership



HAYES HIGGINS

*Project Managers
Chartered Civil, Structural
& Building Services Engineers*

BORRIS-IN-OSSORY COURTHOUSE, Co LAOIS



MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

STAGE 2 REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report covers the mechanical and electrical services for the redevelopment of the old Courthouse building in Borris-in-Ossory, co Laois. The development will include meeting and remote working facilities. The design team have prepared a layout for the redevelopment of the building for consideration by the client. The M&E services will be designed to future-proof the facility for minimal interruption during the construction.

2. PROPOSED MECHANICAL SERVICES

2.1 Mechanical Site Services

2.1.1 Natural Gas Distribution

We do not envisage the utilisation of any gas in this development. This in-line with latest NZEB protocols to reduce usage of fossil fuels.

2.1.2 Oil

There will not be any oil used in this development.

2.1.3 Piped Water Services

In this project site fire hydrant main are included in the civil and structural package and are detailed in the civil and structural engineers report.

The domestic water services for this building will be fed from the incoming mains water supply/connection from council. From below figure 1 it seems that there are two mains water connections available on site. The exact position, flowrates and available pressures in these lines needs to be determined by commissioning a test/survey from a reputable company.

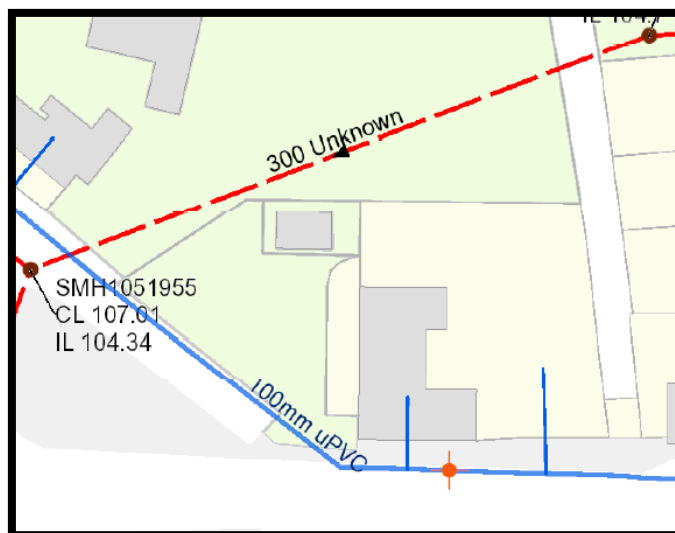


Figure 1: Water Services Map

2.2 Drainage

An above ground, gravity fed, soils and wastes system will be installed to BS EN12056-2:2000.

2.3 Water Distribution

2.3.1 Existing Water Services

A new valved mains water connection, complete with water meter, will be provided to supply water to the cold-water storage tanks, and to all other mains water outlets.

2.3.2 Water Services

The cold-water storage tanks are anticipated to be housed in the Mechanical Plantroom. All pipe-work will be insulated with cold water pipe-work run below hot water pipe-work to reduce heat gains.

2.3.3 Domestic Hot Water Strategy

Domestic hot water shall be directly heated from a plate heat exchanger coupled to a buffer vessel (thermal store) that is heated by means of a Monoblock type Air-to-Water Heat Pump see figure 2 in the following section of the report. This arrangement negates the necessity for domestic hot water storage and lowers the risk for legionella.

Sensors will be provided at the start, furthest point and at the return point to the calorifier of each hot water loop for temperature monitoring. Double-regulating valves will be provided at each branch to ensure proper balancing of the system to maintain water flows through all pipe sections.

All hot water outlets will be fitted with fail-safe lockable local TMV3 thermostatic mixing valves within 1 metre of the outlets. Groups of fittings can be combined on one mixing valve. Hot water will only be combined with cold water taps, not mains water taps for use of thermostatic valves.

2.4 Space Heating

2.4.1 Heating Centre

Even though this facility is exempt from NZEB (nearly zero energy building) regulations, due to it being a protected structure, it is considered good design practice to negate the use of fossil fuels and as such we propose a Heat Pump solution to achieve the heating requirements of this building, in-line with standard industry practice.

The proposed heating centre will be comprised of Monoblock type Air-to-Water Heat Pumps, a Buffer Vessel (Thermal Store), Plate Heat Exchanger for DHW production and all associated circulation pumps, pipework and controls. 4-5 no-off of heat pumps are anticipated to be utilised to ensure there is redundancy in the heating system. Figure 2 below provides a schematic representation of the anticipated heating centre.

The Heating Centre will be accommodated in the proposed plant room in the rear of the site. We propose an easily accessible space with an internal footprint of approx. 3m x 7m and a clear head height of 2.4m.

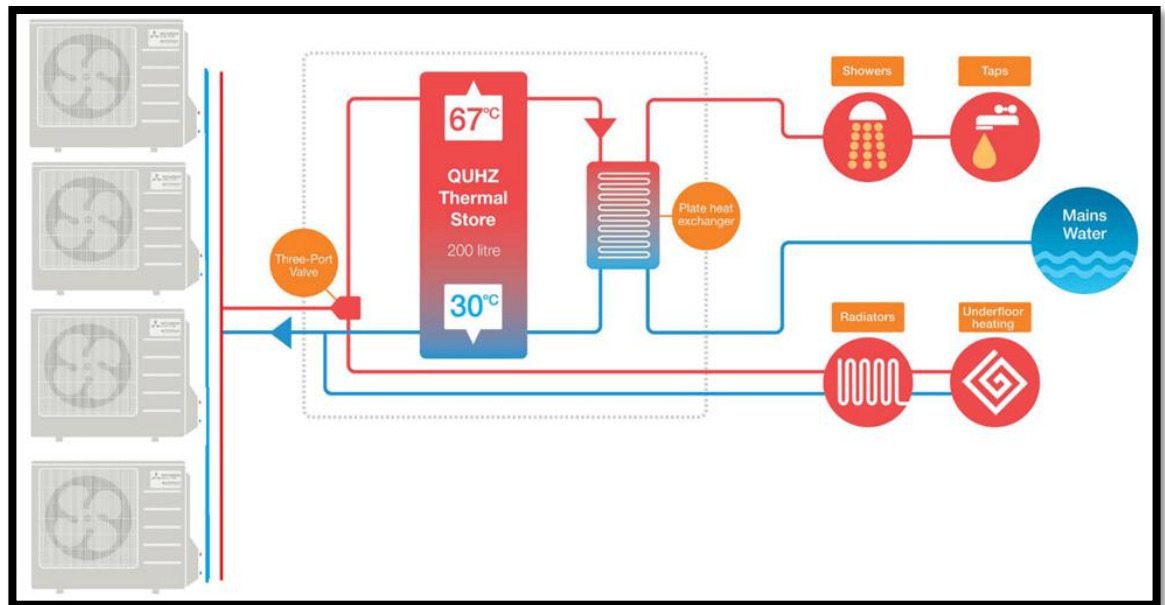


Figure 2: Heating Centre Schematic

2.4.2 Space Heating and Distribution

A complete new space heating system shall be provided to the facility fed from the plant room proposed in the car park to the rear of the site.

Space heating is anticipated to comprise the following:

- Underfloor Heating to serve the majority of the spaces including offices and meeting rooms on Ground Floor level.
- Low Surface Temperature (LST) Radiators to serve the majority of the spaces including offices and meeting rooms on the First Floor level.
- Ceiling mounted radiant panels in the double-volume Courtroom area
- Individual Rooms Controls.
- Fully compensated pumped heating circuits and configured through time schedules on the two part room valves into zones.
- For radiator circuit the distribution pipe-work will generally run at high level and drop, concealed, to feed the radiators at low level.

2.5 Ventilation and Air Conditioning

It is our understanding that the building will be naturally ventilated by means of openable windows.

In addition, the following mechanical ventilation systems will be installed:

- Extract ventilation from all toilets.
- Extract from kitchens and pantries.
- Extract from communications rooms to control emergency overheating.
- Extract from specialist area such as Cleaners Rooms etc

- Extract and/or supply, possibly via air handling units and/or heat recovery units, for areas where natural ventilation cannot control overheating. This will be dictated by Thermal modelling which will be provided as part of Stage 2.
- Split type air conditioning units to new Comms Room and other rooms of intense usage such as Meeting / Conference Rooms.

3. PROPOSED ELECTRICAL SERVICES

3.1 Electrical Site Services

3.1.1 External Power Services and Supplies

The existing Main Power supply to the site is an overhead line across the main road of the town. The Maximum Import Capacity (MIC) will be adjusted upwards to reflect the expected increase in requirement.

3.1.2 External Lighting System

External building perimeter lighting will consist of wall mounted LED down-lighters. Pole mounted LED fittings will be specified for car park, roadway and external pathways. Bollards will be used for internal courtyard pathways. Luminaries outside exit doors will be complete with 3-hour emergency pack. Separate 24 hour 7 day timers and photocells will be specified for the building-mounted, security and the car park lighting, with separate 'Hand-Off-Auto' switches in an administration type office. Photocell and time-clock control will also be provided for the security and car-park lighting. External lighting levels shall conform with the latest edition of the CIBSE/SLL Code for Lighting.

The external lighting design will be simulated at Stage 2a and fully detailed for Planning purposes.

3.1.3 Telephone, Television and Broadband Services

A new underground Eircom line will be taken from the nearest existing eircom box to the main communications centre from where the service will be distributed through the building ICT system.

3.2 Electrical Supply and Main Distribution

3.2.1 Electrical Supply

The building will be provided with 400V, three-phase supply by ESB Networks from an existing overhead line across the main road.

3.2.2 Electricity Centre

The main electricity supply meter will be located in the a switchroom. A new Main Isolating Breaker will be provided. From here a new main supply cable will be routed to the New Main Distribution Board being provided which will serve sub-distribution boards for the building. The Main Board will be designed to provide for future changes as an additional 30% expansion capacity. Appropriately rated de-tuned, self-contained Power Factor Correction Capacitor units shall be provided in separate steel enclosures adjacent to the new Main Distribution Board.

3.2.3 Main Distribution

From the main Sub-Distribution Board dedicated sub mains cables will be distributed to numerous sub-distribution boards and motor control centres throughout the building including existing areas. These SWA cables shall be routed on a system of underground ducts, galvanised steel cable ladders and trays as appropriate.

A system of galvanised steel cable ladder, tray and trunking will be designed to distribute sub-mains, general & emergency lighting, power, fire alarm, access control, security and mechanical services control wiring throughout the building. Separate basket and trunking will also provided for data. Separate systems shall be segregated in accordance with the ETCI National rules for electrical installations.

All distribution boards will be designed to provide for 30% expansion capacity.

Power Factor Correction will be incorporated wherever the power factor might fall below 0.95. The largest switched stage will be 5 to 10kVAr.

3.2.4 Backup Power Generator

We do not envisage and backup power being required for the development.

3.3 Power

3.3.1 Power Distribution Services

Socket outlets shall be 13 Amp type and shall be wired in 20 Amp maximum radial circuits and carried in galvanised steel conduit and cable trunking. Quantities and locations of outlets will be detailed at Stage 2. DADO trunking will be included in office areas.

All mechanical plant and services shall be wired through the heating plant room control panel and localised MCC panels in the building.

Fixed items of equipment will be supplied via fused, switched cable outlets and isolators, suitably rated.

3.3.2 Earthing

The objective of the system is to provide an effective system to minimise danger to life and equipment arising from:

- Faults between line conductors and non-current carrying metal work
- Atmosphere discharges
- Accumulation of static charges
- The design parameters are defined within the ETCI National rules and ESB Regulations for Electrical Installations.

This system will be detailed and included in the building services specification at a later stage.

3.4 Lighting

3.4.1 Internal Lighting System

The internal lighting system will be designed to provide the levels of illumination appropriate to each type of activity within the building as recommended in the room data sheets and the CIBSE Code for Interior Lighting.

Low energy lighting shall be utilised throughout and the majority of the general lighting shall be provided by means of LED type fittings where appropriate.

3.4.2 Lighting Control

An automatic lighting control system will be specified for areas where such control will not interfere with the functions of the rooms. In offices combined daylight/absence sensors shall be provided that shall automatically dim lighting to off when there is sufficient daylight in the room, dim lights to take advantage of daylight harvesting and also dim to off if the room is vacant for more than three minutes. A manual push switch will be provided in the offices and other 'owned' areas to allow the lighting to be switched from off to auto mode. The automatic sensors shall be specified to have adjustable lux and time elements.

Circulation lighting will be designed to be controlled by manual switching with absence detection turning lights off if circulation areas are vacant for more than 5 minutes. In circulation areas where there is adequate daylight daylight-harvesting is incorporated in the same manner as offices. Dedicated key-operated isolating switches will also be provided at the main admin office.

Lighting control in toilet areas and ensuites will be controlled via PIR detectors with appropriate run on timers.

All internal lighting systems will be detailed fully in drawings at a later stage.

3.4.3 Emergency Lighting System

A system of escape route emergency lighting will be designed in compliance with IS 3217 and will be a separate non-maintained LED emergency lighting system. It is envisaged that an addressable system will be provided.

Also emergency lighting will be provided in the same manner in all habitable rooms in compliance with IS 3217.

The layout and details of the emergency lighting design will be provided in drawings at Stage 2b.

In the event of power failure each emergency fitting or exit sign will illuminate for a period of 3 hours.

3.5 Communications

3.5.1 IT Installation

All cabling shall be terminated in the new comms cabinet. It is envisaged that 1 No. 47U cabinet shall be provided in this room for housing patch panels and active equipment. Data cabling shall be specified as being terminated in RJ45 outlets at both ends.

Separate broadband lines from the service provider's main incoming termination frame to the Comms room shall be specified for Internet (WAN) connection.

The Comms room will be provided with appropriate cooling via a split unit to maintain suitable operating conditions in the space.

HHP will specify that all data cabling be installed in a separate ELV basket and/or trunking system and room points. A CAT 6a cabling system shall distribute data within the building.

The location of the main cabinet should be very central to allow for compliance with the 90m rule for all proposed outlets within the building.

Appropriately rated fibre links shall be provided to the existing main Comms Room and patch panels to maintain all existing services to the existing buildings.

3.5.2 Telephony

A separate cabling system shall be provided for a PABX system, which shall not be provided under the electrical services contract. All cabling shall be category 6a and shall terminate in RJ45 outlets. All telephone cabling shall be terminated in a wall mounted 'Krone' frame in the Comms room. From this frame, CAT 6a cabling shall link to the PABX. The local area has sufficient eircom infrastructure to support the proposed telephone services.

3.5.3 Provision for the Hearing Impaired

Induction loops will be provided to reception areas.

3.6 Security and Protection

3.6.1 Access Control System

Access will be controlled to certain areas through the use of swipe cards and/or fobs with a full access group management system to allow levels of access to be easily assigned and controlled. Restricted access via these access control units shall be provided in discussion with the end user.

Entry and exit to the building will also be controlled as per the site requirements including the use of audio-visual access control at the main entrance.

3.6.2 Intruder Alarm System

A system of pir and window sensors will be installed in the building to provide a very simple security alarm system. The system shall be supplied and installed by a certified company under the National Standards Authority of Ireland.

3.6.3 CCTV System

A fully digital closed circuit television system shall be provided to ISEN50132 and IS199. The system shall comprise of a digital recording and monitoring facility. The CCTV system installation shall not be covert but rather be visible.

19-inch high-resolution, colour display, multi-camera monitors shall be provided at the Reception. Each camera shall be contained in a housing suitable for its environment.

The number and location of CCTV cameras to be installed is to be evaluated at a later stage in line with the particular site security requirements.

This system will be specified as an 'open protocol' from the installer.

3.6.4 Fire Detection and Alarm Systems

A fully addressable fire alarm system consisting of a fire alarm panel, automatic detectors, manual call points and alarm sounders will be designed throughout the building in accordance with the Irish Standard IS 3218. Layout and details of the fire alarm system will be detailed at a later stage.

The entire system will be controlled from a new master fire alarm panel located in the main entrance area and shall provide L1 coverage to the building.

Fire dampers will also be linked to this system should there be required when penetrating fire walls.

This system will be specified as an 'open protocol' from the installer.

3.6.5 Emergency Call System

An emergency call system shall be provided for disabled and assisted toilets comprising pull cords and alarm outside the room linked back to the reception.

3.6.6 Lightning Protection

A calculation risk analysis on the recommended requirement for lightning protection (based on IS EN 62305) will be undertaken by HHP. It is envisaged that both internal (surge protection) and external Lightning Protection will be required.

Lightning protection shall be in accordance with IS EN 62305 consisting of surge protection to distribution boards, roof top air terminal network, down conductors and earth pits. Use shall be made of metal elements of the roof and structural steel where possible. All extraneous metal parts on or above the roof level shall be

bonded to the lightning protection system. Internally all metal parts including cable tray and trunking, heating and ventilation pipework and ductwork, radiators, sinks, etc. shall be bonded to the building's main earth terminal. All metal incoming services shall also be bonded to the main earthing terminal.

4. THERMAL PERFORMANCE OF BUILDING:

The detailed thermal performance strategy for the proposed building will be developed by the design team at Stage 2 in line with Current Building Regulations and best practice guidance. The strategy will be developed based on detailed IES Thermal Modelling of the building when agreed detailed layout drawings are available at Stage 2.

Window configurations will be modelled in IES to verify performance levels. Natural ventilation will be modelled at Stage 2 to verify that the appropriate levels are being achieved.

5. CONTROLS:

5.1 Heating Controls

The heat pump shall be controlled to only operate during times when the building is occupied which is expected to be from am to 6pm. The heat pump will operate to maintain the set-point temperature in the thermal storage vessel in order for domestic hot water to available during occupied areas.

The control system shall determine the most appropriate time to turn the space heating system on by monitoring the external temperature and the room temperature set-point. Once the building is up to temperature the heat pump shall be controlled as follows: The heat pump is capable of receiving a set point temperature from the control system. As the external temperature increases, the heat pump flow set point temperature shall reduce in order to maximise the system efficiency of the heating plant. The controls system must use the system load to modulate the heat pump to provide the maximum efficiency for the active load.

Energy Saving Features

If the external temperature rises above 15oC then the heating system and all associated distribution pumps shall revert to an off state to prevent pump circulation losses. The controls system shall contain a current sensor on the return cable from each circuit. This relay shall sense whether all the heating motorized valves are closed on the associated zone circuit. If all valves are in a closed position then the space heating system and all associated pumps shall turn off. The system shall remain off for at least a ten minute period to avoid short cycling.

5.2 Hot Water Controls

The water heaters shall be enabled by a seven-day time schedule and shall control their own water temperature while enabled. The secondary hot water pumps shall be enabled whenever the heat exchanger is enabled.

5.3 Extract Fan Control

All small fans, with the exception of the small kitchen extracts and Comms room will operate under the dictates of local automatic PIR control. The small kitchens extracts will be provided with integral fan controls.

5.4 Lighting Controls

The design parameters are those defined in the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers lighting code. Light switching in all rooms shall be arranged so that individual banks can be separately switched.

An automatic lighting control system shall be provided in all non-critical areas, including toilets. The lighting system shall comprise of Dimmable Control Daylight/movement Sensors, Auto/Off switches and Momentary switches. The switching arrangements shall be as follows:

Each switch shall operate using an Auto/Off strategy. If the switch is in the OFF position then the associated lights shall be off. If the switch is in the ON position then the lights shall turn on to the required light level only if the detectors sense that the room is occupied AND the photocell sense that there is an inadequate lighting level in the room.

Detectors shall generally operate with a ten minute delay, i.e. No movement in the room for ten minutes will result in the lighting being switched off. The detectors in toilet areas shall operate with a five minute delay, i.e. No movement in the room for five minutes will result in the lighting being switched off. The light level sensors shall be programmed as follows:

- The Average working plane illumination levels as stated above shall be constantly maintained.
- Each sensor shall adjust the illumination levels of the lights / row of lights connected as required.
- Where day light levels are above the required illumination levels lights shall be switched off.

All circulation lighting shall be controlled automatically by daylight/absence sensors.

Manual switches shall generally not be provided except in the bedrooms which will be “owned” areas for clients. Corridors shall work in Presence mode in that lights are activated on detection of movement. However two ‘Hand-Off-Auto’ override switches shall be provided in or around the administration office for control of the circulation lighting.

5.5 BEMS System

For the purpose of gathering information on the building’s performance the following points shall be connected to a building energy monitoring system, controlled from a computer software programme, that shall provide graphical presentation, a traffic light warning system and text alarms:

- Electrical usage for the heat pump
- Total water usage (Mains)
- Hot water usage
- Master room temperature sensors (one per zone)
- External Temperature Sensor
- Electricity Consumption measured at each sub-board broken into general services and lighting.
- Pumps/Plant Electrical Consumption

The information provided by the system will be accessible both from a wall-mounted graphical touch-screen unit located in a secure location. It is proposed that the I.T. network will allow the consultant to remotely monitor post-occupancy building performance and compare it against simulated performance models identifying any shortfall in performance for targeted action. In addition to the information provided above, the web system will allow control of all MCC functions allowing the LCC authorities to set heating etc. Remotely. Also the aforementioned touch-screen will provide all heating controls with a password protection system allowing three levels of protection.

- Level 1 - Ability to display all point data.

- Level 2 - Ability to display all point data and set schedules and user set points.
- Level 3 – full access.

All field devices will be specified to be addressable over the communications network.

Sensors And Detectors - Temperature Sensors

Temperature sensors will comply with the following minimum requirements:

Fluid	Temperature range oC	Sensor accuracy oC
Air	-10 to + 40	+/- 0.5
Water	-10 to +150	+/- 0.5

Sensors And Detectors - Sensor Time Constants

The following sensor time constants will be met.

Measure medium	Time constant
Space/outside air temperature	300s still air
Water	30s @ 1m/s
Relative humidity	300s @ 1m/s

ISSUE REGISTRATION:**Project:** Borris-in-Ossory Courthouse **Project No:** 22ME019

Rev	Date	Purpose of Issue/Nature of Revision	Prepared by	Issue Authorised by
P1	19.07.23	Issue for information	J.M.	P.P.

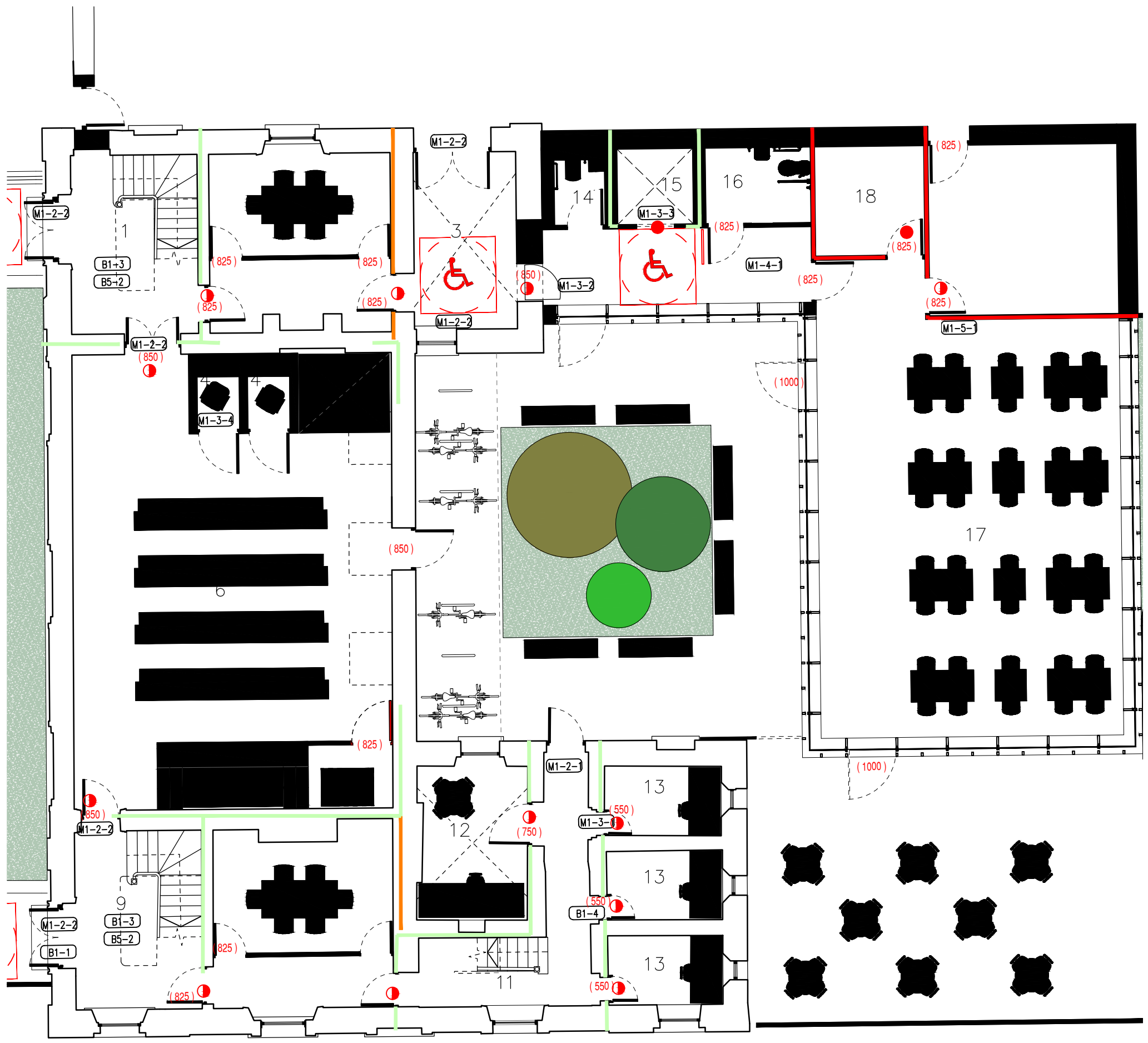
This document takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our Client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

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The Arches
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
























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Appendix D

Fire Safety & Accessibility
Building Design Lab



LEGEND

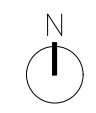
-  OUTLINE OF PROPOSED WORKS
-  Compartment wall / floor achieving 60 minutes fire resistance rating (stability, integrity and insulation) in accordance with BS 476:Pt 8/20-24. Fire rated partitions to be carried up to the underside of the structural floor or roof above.
-  Fire resisting wall/partition achieving 60 minutes fire resistance rating (stability, integrity and insulation) in accordance with BS 476:Pt 8/20-24. Fire rated partitions to be carried up to the underside of the structural floor or roof above.
-  Fire resisting wall/partition achieving 30 minutes fire resistance rating (stability, integrity and insulation) in accordance with BS 476:Pt 8/20-24. Fire rated partitions to be carried up to the underside of the structural floor or roof above.
-  60minutes Fire resisting curtain / shutter
-  30minutes Fire resisting curtain / shutter
-  60minutes Fire resisting glazing (integrity/insulation)
-  30minutes Fire resisting glazing (integrity only)
-  Toughened / Safety glass
-  Fire resisting doorset and associated side and over screens achieving 60 minutes fire resistance (integrity) in accordance with BS 476:Pt 22. Doors fitted with smoke seals to achieve a leakage rate not exceeding 3m³/hour (heads and jambs) when testes at 35Pa to BS 476:sect 31.1.
-  Fire resisting doorset and associated side and over screens achieving 30 minutes fire resistance (integrity) in accordance with BS 476:Pt 22. Doors fitted with smoke seals to achieve a leakage rate not exceeding 3m³/hour (heads and jambs) when testes at 35Pa to BS 476:sect 31.1.
-  Designated exits / direction of escape
-  Travel Distance (m). In rooms where the fire known, the direct distance is multiplied by
-  Dimensions refer to :
 (a) width of a doorway ie the clear width of door, or
 (b) width of escape route ie is the width at level when defined by the walls (handrails walls are ignored) or, elsewhere, the minir passage available between any fixed obst
 (c) clear width of stairway ie is the clear wi the walls and balustrades (strings and har intruding not more than 30mm and 100mm respectively are ignored).
-  FIRE ALARM CONTROL PANEL
-  F.A. SOUNDER
-  EXTERNAL STROBE/SOUNDER
-  EXTERNAL SOUNDER
-  SMOKE DETECTOR
-  HEAT DETECTOR
-  VIEW HI-SENSITIVITY DETECTOR
-  INDUSTRIAL VESDA AIR-SAMPLING UN
-  OPTICAL BEAM DETECTOR
-  BREAK GLASS UNIT
-  SELF CONTAINED, MAINTAINED, 3hr. I
-  EMERGENCY LIGHTING CONVERTOR DURATION, BUILT INTO GENERAL LIG
-  EXTERNAL EMERGENCY LIGHT

1. Stairwell 1	9sqm
2. Meeting Room 1	10sqm
3. Entrance Lobby	10sqm
4. Phone Pod	2sqm
5. Chair Store	4sqm
6. Desk / Bench Area	65sqm
7. Presentation Ben	9sqm
8. Platform Lift	n/a
9. Stairwell 2	13sqm
10. Meeting Room 2	12sqm
11. Stairwell 3	13sqm
12. Office 1	10sqm
13. Office 2, 3 & 4	5sqm
14. Passenger Lift	n/a
15. Accessible W.C.	4sqm
16. W.C.	2sqm
17. Canteen	65sqm
18. Plant	18sqm

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 Read in conjunction with specification and consultants drawings.
 Report any discrepancies to the Architects before putting work in hand.
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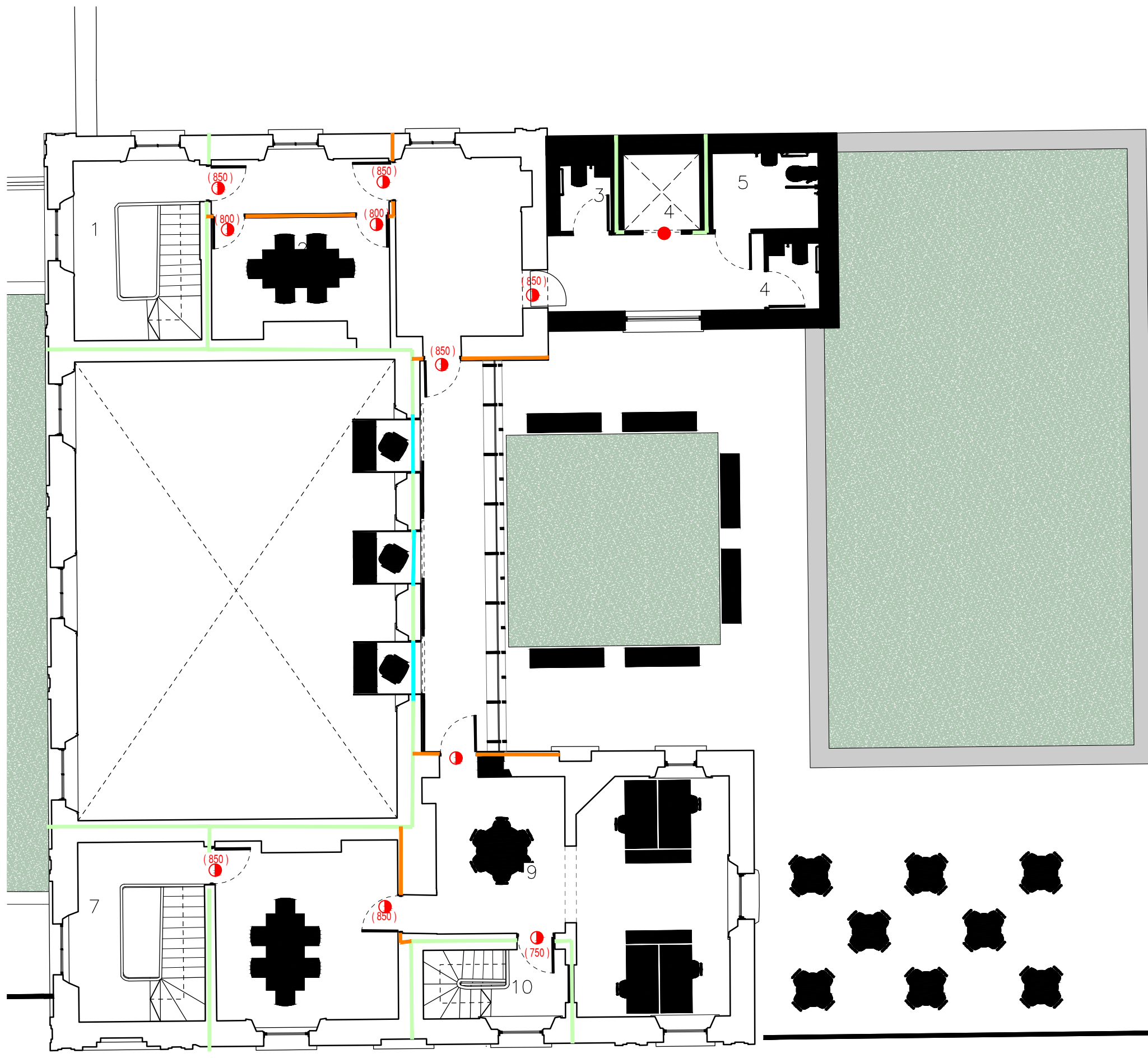
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





















Rev.	Date	Description	Drn.	Chk.	Project
-	22/02/23	DRAFT design team issue.	PT	LOC	Project Name
A	06/03/23	Amended DRAFT design team issue.	PT	LOC	Project Address
B	08/03/23	DRAFT stage 1 issue.	PT	LOC	

Client		Incorporated Law Society of Ireland	
Drawing		Drawing Title	
Project Stage	Date	Scale	Project No.
Feasibility	00.00.2021	1:100	0600
Drawing No.	Revision		
L-000	-		

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-  OPTICAL BEAM DETECTOR
-  BREAK GLASS UNIT
-  SELF CONTAINED, MAINTAINED, 3hr. DURA DURATION, BUILT INTO GENERAL LIGHTING
-  EMERGENCY LIGHTING CONVERTOR UNIT
-  EXTERNAL EMERGENCY LIGHT

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------|-------|
| 1. | Stairwell 1 | 13sqm |
| 2. | Meeting Room | 12sqm |
| 3. | Passenger Lift | n/a |
| 4. | W.C. | 2sqm |
| 5. | Accessible W.C. | 4sqm |
| 6. | Desk | n/a |
| 7. | Stairwell 2 | 13sqm |
| 8. | Meeting Room | 18sqm |
| 9. | Office | 34sqm |
| 10. | Stairwell 3 | 5sqm |

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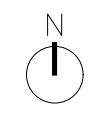
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					Drawing
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					Project Stage
					Date
					Scale
					Project No.
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					Revision

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Appendix E

Ecology

Minogue Environmental Consulting

SCREENING STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF
APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT,
COURTHOUSE, BORRIS IN OSSARY, CO. LAOIS

PREPARED FOR LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

JULY 2023

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1 Screening Statement for Appropriate Assessment

Minogue Environmental Consulting (MEC) Ltd. have been commissioned by Laois County Council DAC to undertake an Appropriate Assessment Screening for proposed works to the former Courthouse in Borris in Ossary, County Laois (see Figure 1-1 Site Location for a view of the location of the proposed development).

This Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment forms Stage 1 of the Habitats Directive Assessment process and is being undertaken in order to comply with the requirements of the Habitats Directive Article 6(3). The function of this Screening Report is to identify the potential for the project to result in likely significant effects to Natura 2000 sites and to provide information so that the competent authority can determine whether a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is required for the project.

FIGURE 1-1ITE BOUNDARY



APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Borris-in-Ossary Courthouse
Main St., Borris-in-Ossary-Co. Laois

LOCATION



JULY 2023



1.1 Legislative Context

This Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment has been prepared in order to enable the competent authority to comply with Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive). It has been prepared to assess whether or not the project alone or in combination with other plans and projects is likely to have a significant effect on any European Site in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 sites and specifically on the habitats and species for which the sites have been designated.

The definition of a 'project' is that under the EIA Directive, i.e. *'the execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources'*¹.

1.1.1 Requirement for an Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive

According to Ss.177U and 177V in Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, the competent authority has a duty to:

- Determine whether the Project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of one of more Natura 2000 sites; and, if not;
- Determine if the Project, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have a significant effect on the European Site(s) in view of best scientific knowledge and the Conservation Objectives of the site(s).

This Report contains a Screening for Appropriate Assessment and is intended to assess and address all issues regarding the construction and operation of the Project and to inform and assist the competent authority to comply with the Habitats Directive (as already defined). The Habitats legislation requires competent authorities, to carry out a Screening for Appropriate Assessment of plans and projects that, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites in view of best scientific knowledge and the Site's conservation objectives. This requirement is transposed into Irish Law by Part 5 of the Habitats Regulations and Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

1.2 Stage 1 Screening Method

This Screening Report has been prepared in order to comply with the legislative requirements outlined in Section 1.1 above and aims to establish whether or not the project, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites in view of best scientific knowledge and the Site's conservation objectives. In this context "likely" means a risk or possibility of effects occurring that **cannot** be ruled out based on objective information and "significant" means an effect that would undermine the conservation objectives of

¹ OPR Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management 2021

the Natura 2000 sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects (Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR), 2021).

The nature of the likely interactions between the project and the Conservation Objectives of Natura 2000 sites will depend upon:

- the ecological characteristics of the species or habitat, including their structure, function, conservation status and sensitivity to change; and/or
- the character, magnitude, duration, consequences and probability of the impacts arising from land use activities associated with the plan, in combination with other plans and projects.

This Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken with reference to respective National and European guidance documents: A guide for competent authorities. Environment and Heritage Service, Sept 2002. Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2010). DEHLG.

- The EC (2021) Guidelines: Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites – Methodological Guidance of the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/42/EEC.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites – The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European commission (2018).
- OPR Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management (2021). Office of the Planning Regulator

The EC (2021) guidelines outline the stages involved in undertaking a Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment for projects. The methodology adopted during the preparation of this Screening Report is informed by these guidelines and was undertaken in the following stages:

1. Describe the project and determine whether it is necessary for the conservation management of Natura 2000 sites;
2. Identify Natura 2000 sites that could be influenced by the project;
3. Where Natura 2000 sites are identified as occurring within the zone of influence of the project identify potential effects arising from the project and screen the potential for such effects to negatively affect Natura 2000 sites identified under Point 2 above; and
4. Identify other plans or projects that, in combination with the project, have the potential to affect Natura 2000 sites.

1.2.1 Desktop surveys and baseline surveys

The following data sources were used as part of the desktop survey that informed this report preparation:

- National Biodiversity Ireland database
- National Parks and Wildlife Service records on SACs, SPAs and site specific conservation management objectives
- Geological Survey of Ireland
- EPA information on water quality and Water Framework Directive data
- Laois County Development Plan 2021 -2027, Natura Impact Report.
- Adjacent AA Screenings and Natura Impact Statements for developments within the wider area.

A site visit and walkover was undertaken on 29th June 2023, to assess habitats on site and to undertake a bat survey for the building.

1.2.2 Appropriate Assessment and measures

In this Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR), there is no reliance placed on:

- (a) measures intended to avoid/reduce harmful effects on the Natura 2000 sites,
- (b) construction management/best practice measures, or
- (c) any other measures (such as SUDS) which are proposed with no relation to the intention of avoiding or reducing any potentially harmful effect of the Project on any European site.

1.2.3 Statement of authority

Ruth Minogue, BscSci, MA, MCIEEM assisted in the preparation of this AA Screening Report. Ruth has over twenty years in the field of environmental assessment and has been involved in the completion of environmental and ecological impact assessments since 2002. She is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, holds a diploma in Field Ecology (UCC), Advanced Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law (Kings Inn) and undertakes ongoing CDP training through approved training providers including CIEEM.

2 Project Description

2.1 Overview of the Project

The building will be converted for use as a remote working digital hub for Laois County Council.

The works include the provision of flexible office space, which can accommodate remote working for council employees, and / or other tenants, and also that there would be community benefit within the project, through provision of community use spaces.

Service spaces will be provided within a new two-storey extension to the north wing, which would allow the historic rooms to serve as a suite of meeting / office spaces. A new glazed link to the external east façade provides a connection between the north and south wing at first floor level. A new single-storey extension to the east of the site will provide a canteen / café space.

The project will provide a new setting to the front of the courthouse, that will also serve as a new park / greenspace for the village, enhancing the streetscape and softening the traffic noise with new trees and soft planting. The original cast iron railings are still in place to the front of the courthouse and define an enclosed area between the two entrances. Due to their height and position, they appear rather unwelcoming, and restrict access to the front façade of the building. It is proposed to relocate them on site, as it is original historic fabric which should be kept, but this would allow the area to the front façade be opened up and made accessible.

Wrapped on three sides by the courthouse and extension, the interior courtyard will have bespoke benches and furniture, which will serve as an outdoor workspace, and to the south of the canteen extension an external seating area will serve the courthouse and the general public. A new freestanding plant room will be constructed in the north west corner of the site.

Eight car parking spaces, including an electric vehicle space, will be placed to the rear of the building with cycle parking provided in the courtyard and rear yard.

The project includes significant upgrades and improvements to the thermal / energy performance of the building. These improvements will be delivered through the new services provided across the building and site, and through upgrades to the existing fabric within the building. The insertion of insulated floors, and appropriate insulation to the walls, within the attic spaces and the underside of the courtroom roof will be explored and implemented, where possible. Slim profile double glazing will be installed in new timber sliding sash windows throughout. Other measures such as the provision of LED lights, and the use of energy efficiency controls and sensors will also be installed throughout the building.

There is no existing heating system within the building, aside from several storage heaters to the rooms on the first floor of the south wing. There is no gas or oil service running to the building, and there is no intention to provide one, as the building will be served by air-to-water heat pumps. Underfloor heating will be provided throughout the majority of the ground floor, with radiators throughout the first floor. Radiant heating panels will be installed on the walls of the courthouse, to heat this double height space.

The building will be naturally ventilated, through the use of openable timber windows but dedicated mechanical ventilation systems will be provided for the toilets, kitchens, and any communications rooms that will all be located in new extensions.

The new electrical supply will need to be adjusted to meet the requirements of the new digital hub, and telephone, television and broadband services will also need to be brought into the building. An access control system, intruder alarm system, CCTV and full fire detection systems will also be provided within the building and around the site.

New below ground foul and surface water drainage systems will connect into the existing separate public sewer systems. The project footprint is approximately 1,471m².

2.2 Description of the Project Area

The project is located in the area of Townparks, Borris in Ossary County Laois and relates to the former Courthouse on the main street of the town. To the east immediately adjacent to the building is a storage yard described as built land and artificial surfaces, a treeline comprising privet hedging and coniferous trees, the south boundary fronts the main street and the west boundary comprises a small area of grassland (unmanaged adjacent to the building and amenity grassland by a parking area). The River Nore flows to the north west of the project site approximately 750m as the crow flies and is buffered by roads and other hard surfaces. It joins the River Nore and Barrow SAC designation to the north east of the project site south of Castletown. No surface water features or drains are present on the project site.

There are no European sites within or directly adjacent to the boundaries of the proposed development site. The closest European site to the proposed development is the River Nore SPA and Coolrain Bog SAC located at 0.65km and 6.3km of the project site.

2.3 Is the Project necessary for the Conservation Management of Natura 2000 sites

The project has been described in Section 2 of the Screening Report and it is clear from the description provided that the project is not directly connected with or necessary for the future conservation management of any Natura 2000 sites.

3 Natura 2000 sites within Zone of Influence of the Project

Current guidance informing the approach to screening for Appropriate Assessment defines the zone of influence of a project as the geographical area over which it could affect the receiving environment in a way that could have significant effects on the Qualifying Interests of a European site. It is recommended that this is established on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor (SPR) framework. The SPR framework is relied upon to identify pathways connecting the project to Natura 2000 sites and is relied upon during this screening exercise, particularly given the fact that no element of the project is located within the boundary of a Natura 2000 sites and all such sites are located 0.6km from the project site.

As a first step in identifying the Natura 2000 sites that could be connected to the project via SPR pathways all Natura 2000 sites occurring in the zone of influence of the project were identified. The zone of influence is defined as follows:

*“The zone of influence of a proposed development is the geographical area over which it could affect the receiving environment in a way that could have significant effects on the Qualifying Interests of a European site. This should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source Pathway-Receptor framework and not by arbitrary distances (such as 15 km)”.*²

As can be seen in **Figures 3.1** and **Figure 3.2** six Natura 2000 sites, comprising four SACs and two SPAs occur within the wider area surrounding the project site. All other Natura 2000 sites are located at a remote distance from the project site. The qualifying features of interest/special conservation interests of these Natura 2000 sites are listed in full in **Table 3.1** below. A summary overview of each of these Natura 2000 sites is provided in Table 3.1 below.

As the nearest Natura 2000 sites (Coolrain Bog SAC and River Nore SPA) are located approximately 3.6 km and 0.62km away respectively, the project will not have the potential to result in direct impacts to Natura 2000 sites. Thus, this Screening exercise focuses on investigating whether it can or cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the project will have the potential to result in indirect effects to Natura 2000 sites beyond the boundaries of their designated conservation areas.

Using the SPR framework, the project as described in Section 2 of this Screening Report, represents the source of potential impacts to Natura 2000 sites.

Potential for impact pathways to occur are examined in **Table 4.1** below. The only conceivable impact pathway that could connect the project site to Natura 2000 sites in the wider area is considered to be a hydrological pathway. As there is no direct hydrological linkage between the proposed development site and these sites. There is an indirect source pathway linkage from the Proposed Development through the wastewater treatment plant (D0290, secondary treatment) which discharges to the River Nore SPA upstream of the project site. Given the project relates to reuse of existing building as a office/community space there is no increase in loading to the wastewater

² Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, OPR, 2021

treatment plant arising from the proposal. Therefore on these grounds this source pathway is screened out.

The qualifying features of interest/special conservation interests, as listed in Table 4.1, have been considered when examining the potential for a hydrological pathway to connect the project to surrounding Natura 2000 sites. Given the distance of the project site from the nearest Natura 2000 site, there will be no potential for noise, air, light or visual emissions or human disturbance impact pathways to arise. The potential for a mobile species pathway to occur, through the reliance of mobile species, such as birds, otters, fish etc, that are listed as Annex 2 species, on the site will not arise. This is due to the absence of any suitable habitat at the project site to support mobile qualifying species/special conservation interest bird species of the Natura 2000 sites occurring in the wider surrounding area. Furthermore, it has been established during field surveys at and surrounding the project site that such mobile qualifying species of Natura 2000 sites in the wider area surrounding the project site do not rely on the project site as a breeding, resting or foraging site.

Natura 2000 sites and their associated qualifying features are likely to occur in the zone of influence of the project only where hydrological pathways establish a link between the project and the European Site.

Table 4.1 provides a determination as to whether the Natura 2000 sites in the wider area surrounding the project site occurs within its zone of influence.

3.1 Conservation Objectives

Conservation Objectives have been published for the 6 Natura 2000 sites occurring in the surrounding area. Details of these Conservation Objectives for each of these Natura 2000 sites can be found on the NPWS website at <https://www.npws.ie/protected-site>.

These conservation objectives aim to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the relevant SAC or SPA has been selected.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats,
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and

- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

FIGURE 4-1 SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SACs) WITHIN THE WIDER AREA OF THE PROJECT SITE

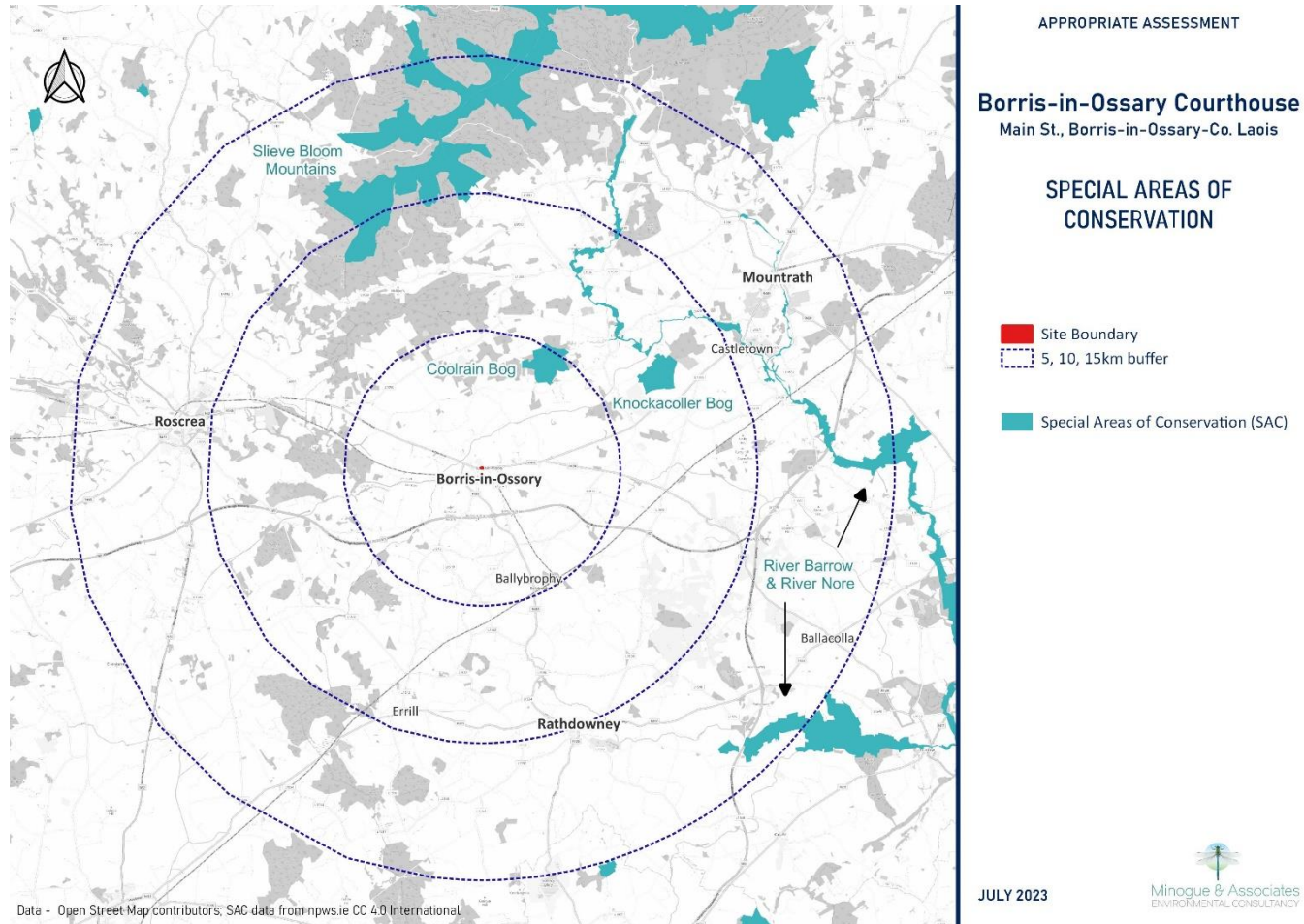


FIGURE 4-2 SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPAs) WITHIN THE WIDER AREA OF THE PROJECT SITE

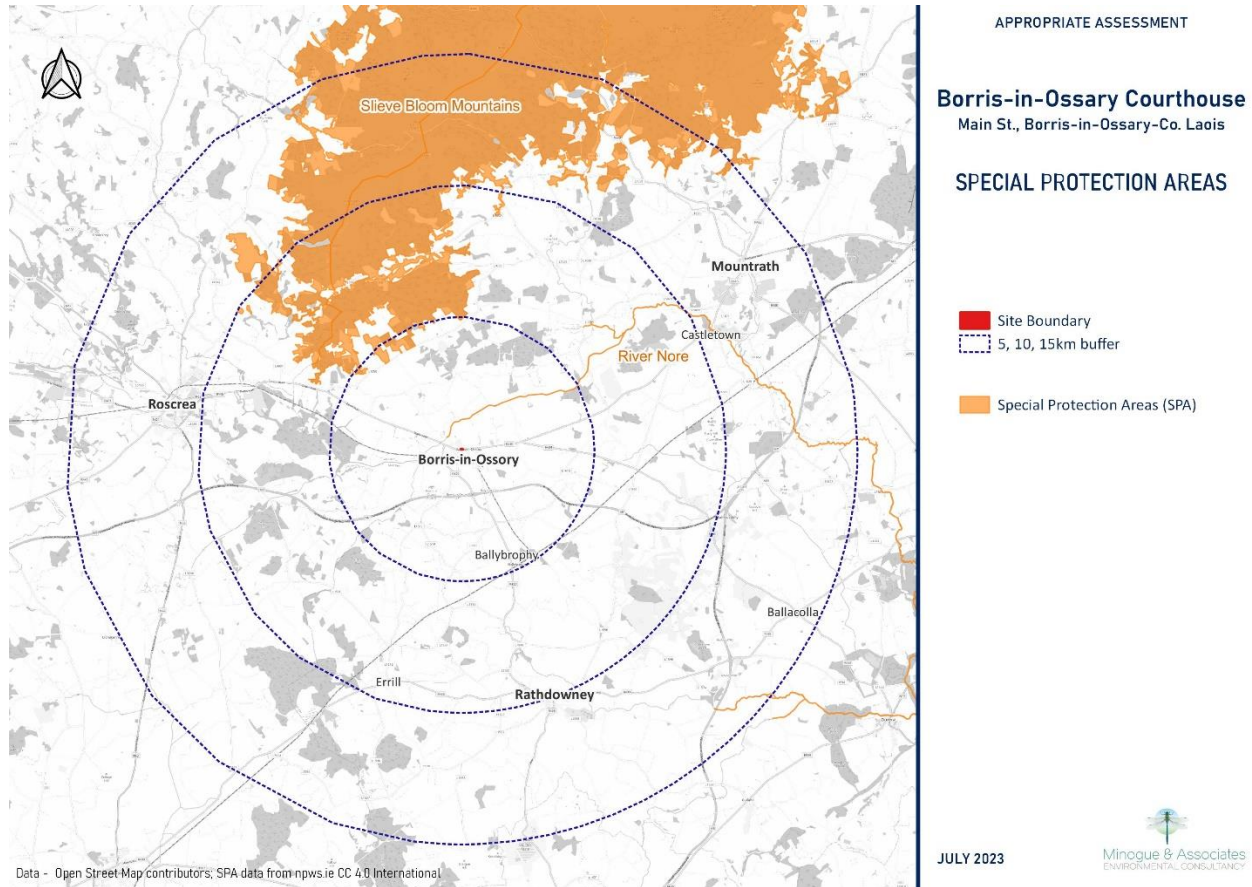


TABLE 4-1 EXAMINATION OF WHETHER NATURA 2000 SITES IN THE WIDER SURROUNDING AREA WITHIN THE ZONE OF INFLUENCE OF THE PROJECT

Site Code	Name	Distance from project site	Qualifying interests	Is there a hydrological connection?	Do European Sites occur within the Projects Zone of Influence?
002332	Coolrain Bog	3.68	Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]	The project is within the same catchment as this SAC -Nore Catchment	No. There is no hydrological pathway connecting the project site to this SAC which is located over 3km northeast of the project site, this SAC does not occur within the project's zone of influence
002333	Knockacoller Bog	6.45	Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]	The project is within the same catchment as this SAC -Nore Catchment	No. There is no hydrological pathway connecting the project site to this SAC which is located over 6km north east of the project site, this SAC does not occur within the project's zone of influence.

002162	River Barrow & River Nore	6.49	<p>Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Reefs [1170] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] European dry heaths [4030] Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099] <i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (Twaiite Shad) [1103] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421] <i>Margaritifera durrovensis</i> (Nore Pearl Mussel) [1990]</p>	The project is within the same catchment as this SAC -Nore Catchment	No. There is no hydrological pathway connecting the project site to this SAC which is located over 6km north east of the project site, this SAC does not occur within the project's zone of influence.
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000412	Slieve Bloom Mountains	8.63	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]	The project is partly within the same catchment as this SAC -Nore Catchment. The rest of this SAC is within the Shannon catchment.	No. There is no hydrological pathway connecting the project site to this SAC which is located over 6km north east of the project site, this SAC does not occur within the project's zone of influence.
004233	River Nore SPA	0.652	Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>) [A229]	The project is partly within the same catchment as this SAC -Nore Catchment	No. There is no hydrological pathway connecting the project site to this SAC which is located over 6km north east of the project site, this SAC does not occur within the project's zone of influence.
004160	Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA	4.26	Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082]	The project is partly within the same catchment as this SAC -Nore Catchment. The rest of this SAC is within the Shannon catchment.	No. There is no hydrological pathway connecting the project site to this SAC which is located over 6km north east of the project site, this SAC does not occur within the project's zone of influence.

4 Examination of Potential Effects to Natura 2000 Sites

4.1 Introduction

Table 4.1 above outlines the relationship between the project site and the Natura 2000 sites occurring within the surrounding area. The six Natura 2000 sites that have been identified in the wider surrounding area are not connected to the project site via a potential hydrological impact pathway and as such there will be no potential for the project to interact with the qualifying features of interest of these sixteen Natura 2000 sites.

The absence of any potential impact pathways will ensure that this project does not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to Natura 2000 sites surrounding the project site.

4.1.1 Examination of In-combination effects

The proposed development was considered in combination with other projects in the area that could result in cumulative effects on the environment. The online planning system of Offaly County Council was consulted on the 20th July 2023 for the subject lands and immediate surrounds. See Figure 4.1 for extract of planning applications.

FIGURE 4-1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS (2018 -2023) ADJACENT TO PROJECT SITE

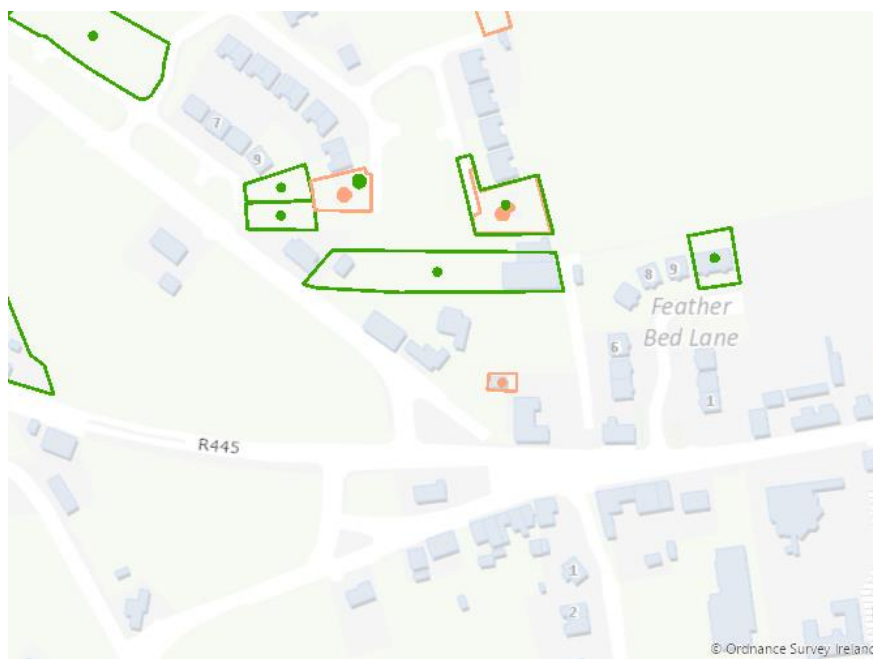


TABLE 4-1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR CUMULATIVE AND IN COMBINATION EFFECTS

Ref	Summary	Status
22 60060	construct single Story Dwelling House, Demolition of Existing Sheds, Site Entrance, Connection to Existing Services and to include all associated site works	Permission granted
21 387	Retain an existing ground slab and the proposed development of 2 no. semi-detached two storey dwelling houses and all associated site works	Permission granted
20 274	Construct an 18 metre high free standing communications structure (total height with antennas 18.75 metres) with its associated antennae, communication dishes, ground equipment and all associated site development works. The development will form part of Eircom Ltd existing telecommunications and broadband network	Permission granted
20 171	Retain works carried out under planning ref no. 04/416, comprising of substructure for 2 no. semi detached dormer style dwellings and 1] construct two no. semi-detached dormer style dwellings on existing sub-structure carried out under planning reference no. 04/416; 2] construct boundary walls; 3] connect proposed dwellings to existing foul & surface water sewers on site and 4] all ancillary site works	Permission granted

In light of the above, the project however will not have the potential to combine with other land use activities to result in likely significant effects to qualifying habitats or species of the European sites.

The project will not have the potential to result in direct, indirect, or secondary impacts to Natura 2000 sites. In relation to other emissions such as noise/dust, the scale and size of the project, the distance from the nearest Natura 2000 site does not have the potential to impact on Natura 2000 sites. As there are no pathways connecting the project site to surrounding Natura 2000 sites and as the project will not result in significant negative impacts it will not have the potential to combine with other projects in the surrounding area to result in cumulative significant effects to the local environment or Natura 2000 sites occurring in the wider surrounding area.

A Screening Matrix, in line with European Commission (2021) guidelines is provided below in **Table 4.2**.

TABLE4-2. SCREENING MATRIX FOR THE PROJECT

Brief description of the project or plan	The project and associated activities are described in Section 2 above.
Brief description of the Natura 2000 sites	The Natura 2000 sites occurring in the wider surrounding area are identified and briefly described in Figures 3.1, 3.2 and Table 3.1 above, along with their qualifying interests..
Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give	The elements of the project that could (conceivably) give rise to potential environmental effects relate to emissions from the project in the form of hydrological emissions and the potential for interactions with mobile qualifying species of Natura 2000 sites. These have been examined in Table 4.1 above and there is no

<p>rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 sites.</p>	<p>potential for emissions (including water, air, noise) from the project site to establish pathways between the project site and surrounding Natura 2000 sites to result in negative impacts to their conservation status.</p> <p>During construction and operation phases there is a no direct source-pathway linkage between the proposed development site and open waters or Natura 2000 sites (i.e. River Nore SPA). There is an indirect source pathway linkage from the Proposed Development through the public stormwater sewer, which ultimately discharges into the River Nore. However, due to the scale of works relating to an existing structure and renovation of same, and no additional loading to the wastewater treatment plant and buffering from site to receiving waters. There is no potential for impact on water quality at the Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>Furthermore whilst the project site is located within the same catchment as the River Nore SPA and SAC, the site footprint at 0.001471km² represents a tiny fraction of the total catchment area of the Nore at 2,595km² and represents less than 0.0005% of land within the catchment area.</p>
<p>Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 sites site by virtue of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • size and scale; • land-take; • distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site; • resource requirements (water abstraction etc.); • emissions (disposal to land, water or air); • excavation requirements; • transportation requirements; • duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.; 	<p>The project will not have the potential to result in direct, indirect or secondary impacts to Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>The project relates to an area of 0.0001471km² in size and does not overlap with any Natura 2000 site boundary. The nearest Natura 2000 site is the River Nore SPA at approximately 620m. This is buffered by existing built land and artificial surfaces.</p> <p>Therefore, due to the distance to the Natura 2000 sites, buffering provided by existing habitats, and absence of impacts arising from surface water discharge from the project there is no potential for impact on water quality at identified Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>In relation to other emissions such as noise/dust, the scale and size of the project, the distance from the nearest Natura 2000 site does not have the potential to impact on Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>As there are no pathways connecting the project site to surrounding Natura 2000 sites and as the project will not result in significant negative impacts to receiving waterbodies downstream, it will not have the potential to combine with other projects in the surrounding area to result in cumulative significant effects to the local environment or Natura 2000 sites occurring in the wider surrounding area.</p> <p>Please see Table 45.1 above for examination of cumulative effects.</p>
<p>Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduction of habitat area; • disturbance to key species; • habitat or species fragmentation; • reduction in species density; 	<p>As there are no pathways between the project site and surrounding Natura 2000 sites it will not have the potential to result in changes to qualifying habitats or qualifying species of Natura 2000 sites occurring in the wider surrounding area.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes in key indicators of conservation value • (water quality etc.); • climate change. 	
<p>Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 sites as a whole in terms of: interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site; interference with key relationships that define the function of the site</p>	<p>For reasons set out above the project will not have the potential to interfere with key relationships that define the structure and function of Natura 2000 sites. Given the absence of any connections between the project site and the six Natura 2000 sites in the wider surrounding area, the conservation objectives for these sites, which have been published by the NPWS, will not be undermined by the project.</p>
<p>Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loss; • fragmentation; • disruption; • disturbance; • change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.). 	<p>For reasons set out above the project will not have the potential to result in such effects to Natura 2000 sites.</p>
<p>Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.</p>	<p>The project will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to Natura 2000 sites.</p>

4.2 Screening Conclusion

During the preparation of this Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment of the project at the former Courthouse, Townparks, Borris in Ossary, County Laois, it was found that six Natura 2000 sites occur within the surrounding area of the project area. However, none of these sites are connected to the project area via a hydrological pathway, which was found to be the only conceivable pathway that could establish a connection between the project and surrounding Natura 2000 sites.

The only relevant watercourse for the project site is the River Nore as an indirect source pathway linkage from the Project through the wastewater system. As demonstrated in Section 3.1 as the project will not result in additional loading to the wastewater system, this pathway can be screened out. Furthermore whilst the project site is located within the same catchment as the River Nore SAC and SPA, the site footprint at 0.001471km² represents a tiny fraction of the total catchment area of 2,595km² and represents less than 0.00054% of land within the catchment area. The project relates to renovation and reuse of an existing building for community /commercial use.

Due to distance to the Natura 2000 sites, and absence of impacts arising from surface water discharge from the project there is no potential for impact on water quality at identified Natura 2000 sites.

In conclusion, given the absence of impact pathways and the potential for interactions between the project and these Natura 2000 sites there will be no potential for the project to result in likely significant effects to these Natura 2000 sites.

In light of the findings of this report, it is the considered view of the authors of this Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment that it can be concluded by Laois County Council that the project is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 sites in view of their Conservation Objectives and on the basis of best scientific evidence and there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to that conclusion.

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Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018)

WFD Cycle 2 Catchment Nore DRAFT (2023)

NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives:

Minogue Environmental Consulting Ltd

Bat Derogation Licence Application for Proposed works at Courthouse, Borris in Ossary, Co. Laois

Licensee Laois County Council. Scientific Agent: Ruth Minogue
(Minogue Environmental Consulting Ltd).

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This report has been prepared by Minogue Environmental Consulting Ltd with all reasonable skill, care and diligence. Information reported herein is based on the interpretation of data collected and has been accepted in good faith as being accurate and valid.

This report is prepared for Laois County Council and we accept no responsibility to third parties to whom this report, or any part thereof, is made known. Any such party relies on the report at their own risk.

1 INTRODUCTION

Minogue Environmental Consulting Ltd., on behalf of Laois County Council, are submitting this application under Regulation 54 of the European Communities (Birds and Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) for a derogation licence from complying with the requirements of the provisions of Regulations 51, 52 and 53 of the same Regulations.

The application relates to the proposed works to the former courthouse to include restoration and reuse of the building at Townpark, Borris in Ossary, Co. Laois. Co-ordinates: 624499,687561.

1.1.1 GUIDANCE

The guidance that has been referred to during the preparation of the application for the derogation licence has included:

- Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2016)
- Bat Conservation Ireland. (2014). Guidance Notes for: Planners, engineers, architects and developers
- Bat Mitigation Guidelines for Ireland (Kelleher & Marnell, 2006)
- Best Practice Guidelines for the Conservation of Bats in the Planning of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2006)

1.2 STRUCTURE OF THIS APPLICATION

This application is set out as follows:

- A description of the proposed works (Section 2);
- Data collected and survey results (Section 3)
- Evaluation and interpretation of the data collected on the local bat population (Section 3);
- Description of the potential impacts on the local bat population (Section 4);
- Description of the approach proposed toward mitigating the potential impacts (Section 5);
- Description of residual impacts (Section 5); and,
- Conclusion on the impacts on the favourable conservation status of local bat populations (Section 5).

Annex A: Photographic record

2 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORKS

The focus of the works is the proposed renovation of the former courthouse in Borris in Ossary. This is a detached five-bay two-storey former courthouse, c. 1828. Renovated, c. 1990. It is a Protected Structure. It has been out of use of over twenty years.

The works are outlined below:

The building will be converted for use as a remote working digital hub for Laois County Council. The works include the provision of flexible office space, which can accommodate remote working for council employees, and / or other tenants, and also that there would be community benefit within the project, through provision of community use spaces.

Service spaces will be provided within a new two-storey extension to the north wing, which would allow the historic rooms to serve as a suite of meeting / office spaces. A new glazed link to the external east façade provides a connection between the north and south wing at first floor level. A new single-storey extension to the east of the site will provide a canteen / café space. The project will provide a new setting to the front of the courthouse, that will also serve as a new park / greenspace for the village, enhancing the streetscape and softening the traffic noise with new trees and soft planting.

The original cast iron railings are still in place to the front of the courthouse and define an enclosed area between the two entrances. Due to their height and position, they appear rather unwelcoming, and restrict access to the front façade of the building. It is proposed to relocate them on site, as it is original historic fabric which should be kept, but this would allow the area to the front façade be opened up and made accessible.

Wrapped on three sides by the courthouse and extension, the interior courtyard will have bespoke benches and furniture, which will serve as an outdoor workspace, and to the south of the canteen extension an external seating area will serve the courthouse and the general public. A new freestanding plant room will be constructed in the north west corner of the site. Eight car parking spaces, including an electric vehicle space, will be placed to the rear of the building with cycle parking provided in the courtyard and rear yard.

The project includes significant upgrades and improvements to the thermal / energy performance of the building. These improvements will be delivered through the new services provided across the building and site, and through upgrades to the existing fabric within the building. The insertion of insulated floors, and appropriate insulation to the walls, within the attic spaces and the underside of the courtroom roof will be explored and implemented, where possible.

Slim profile double glazing will be installed in new timber sliding sash windows throughout. Other measures such as the provision of LED lights, and the use of energy efficiency controls and sensors will also be installed throughout the building. There is no existing heating system within the building, aside from several storage heaters to the rooms on the first floor of the south wing.

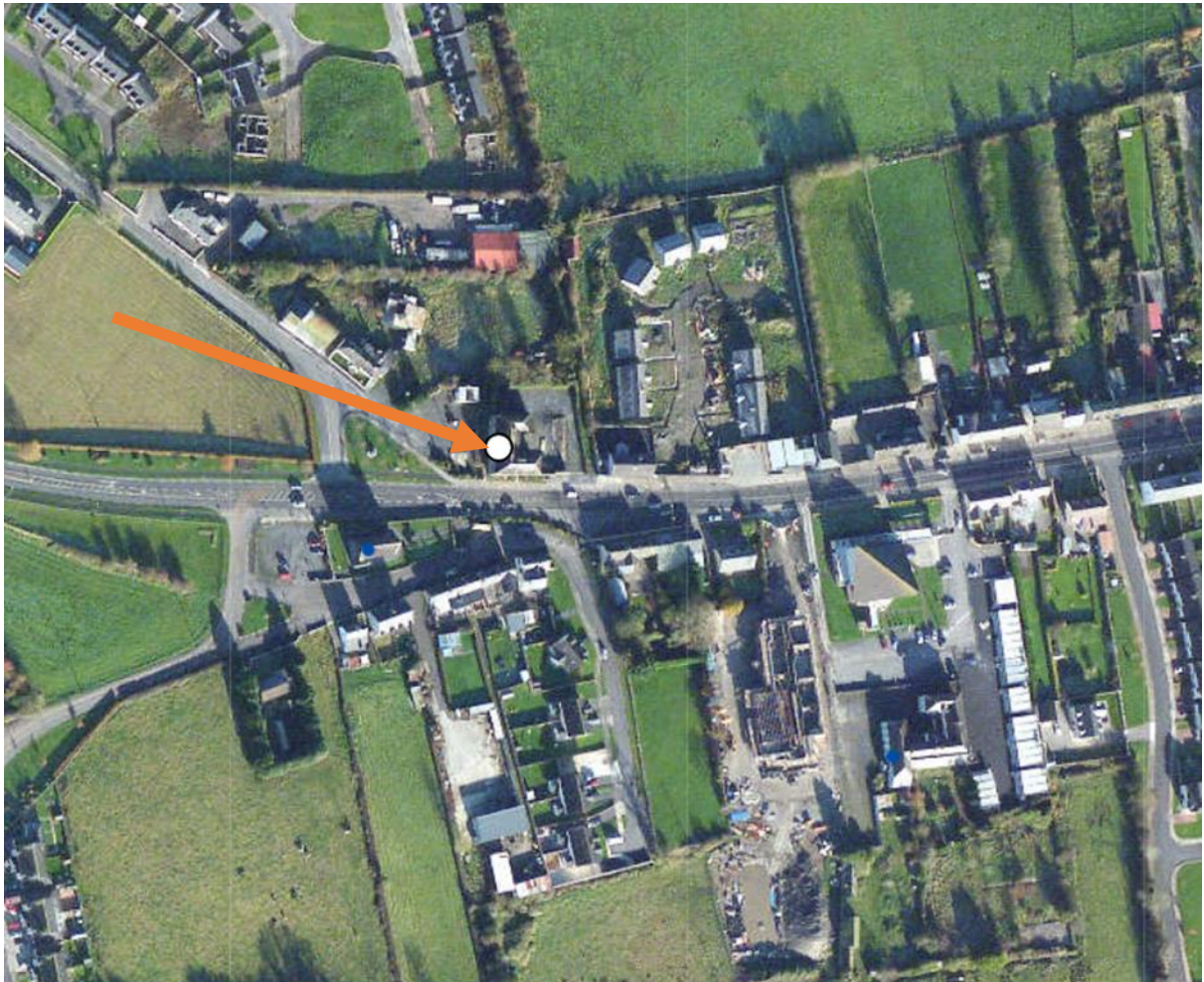
There is no gas or oil service running to the building, and there is no intention to provide one, as the building will be served by air-to-water heat pumps. Underfloor heating will be provided throughout the majority of the ground floor, with radiators throughout the first floor. Radiant heating panels will be installed on the walls of the courthouse, to heat this double height space. The building will be naturally ventilated, through the use of openable timber windows but dedicated mechanical ventilation systems will be provided for the toilets, kitchens, and any communications rooms that will all be located in new extensions. 5 The new electrical supply will need to be adjusted to meet the requirements of the new digital hub, and telephone, television and broadband services will also need to be brought into the

building. An access control system, intruder alarm system, CCTV and full fire detection systems will also be provided within the building and around the site. New below ground foul and surface water drainage systems will connect into the existing separate public sewer systems.

The works will form part of a planning application for Laois County Council..

The lands are in the townland of Townspark, Borris in Ossary, County Laois. Figure 2.1 below shows the wider area.

FIGURE 2-1 AERIAL PHOTO OF LANDS WITH APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF BUILDINGS (HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT VIEWER)



2.1.1 JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUESTING THIS DEROGATION LICENSE:

This derogation is being sought on the basis that there are no satisfactory alternatives to the renovation of the building which is being renovated and repurposed to maintain the longevity of the building and its new use as a community space.

The derogation is not detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species to which the Habitats Directive relates at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

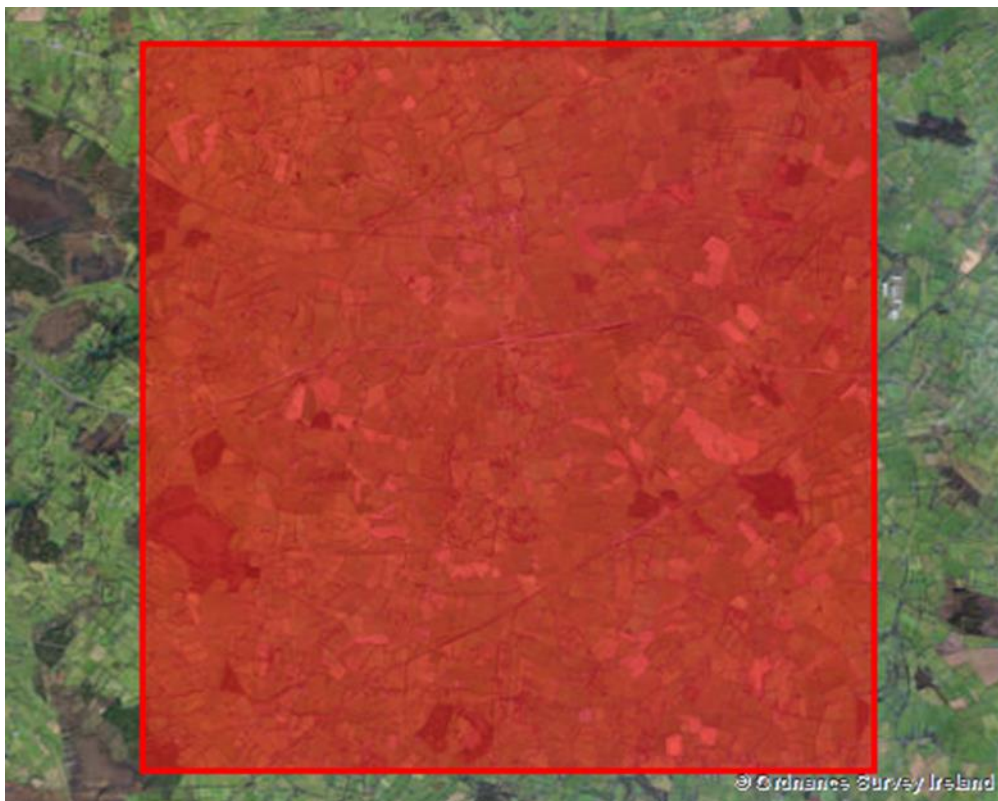
3 DATA COLLECTED IN ORDER TO EVALUATE THE LOCAL BAT POPULATION

3.1.1 DESKTOP RESEARCH

Prior to the site survey a review of existing information on bat roosts was undertaken. The national biodiversity database was searched for records of all bat species within a 10km grid of the structure (S28). Within grid S28, the following records for bats are identified as shown in Figure 3.1 below:

- Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*)
- Lesser Noctule (*Nyctalus leisleri*)
- Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu lato*)
- Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)

FIGURE 3.1 GRID S28 NBDC



The Bat Landscapes Database (Bat Conservation Ireland) which was accessed as part of the desktop research indicates the habitats and landscape features to have the second highest suitability (Colour coded orange for all bat species). See Figure 3.2 below:

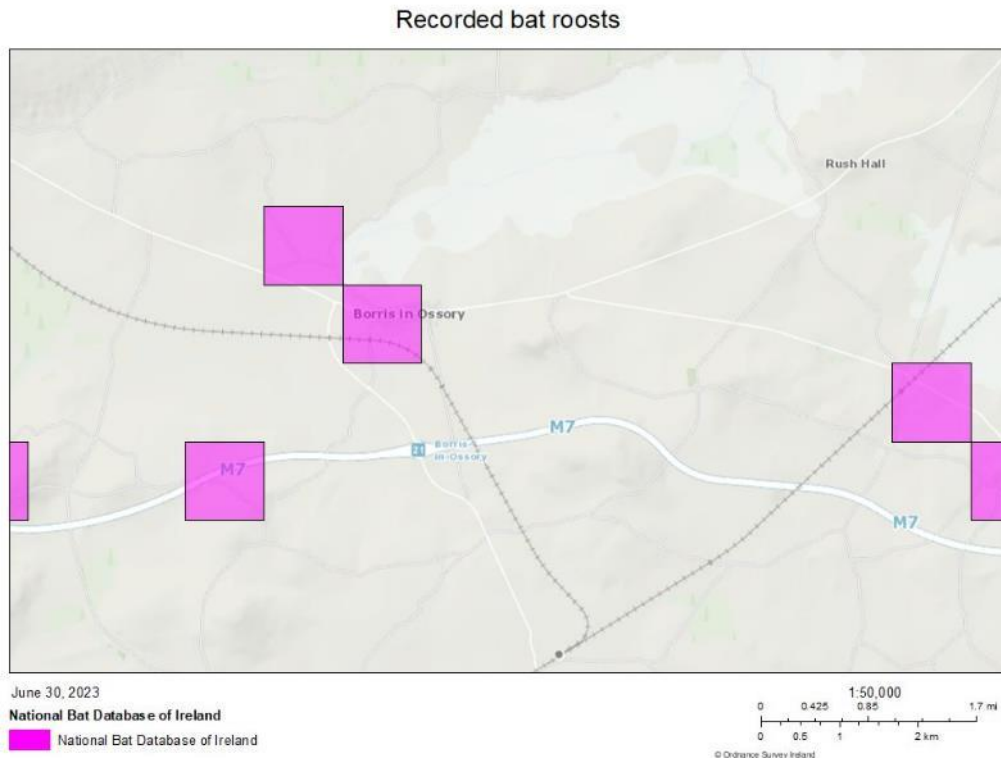
FIGURE 3-1 BAT LANDSCAPE HABITAT SUITABILITY (BAT CONSERVATION IRELAND)

Bat habitat suitability



The Survey from 2008 recorded Long Brown Eared Bats and common Pipistrelle in a building within the project site, the location is not identified but is within a 100m grid of the project site.. Common, soprano pipistrelles and Leisler bats were also recorded in 2009 in a site east of the project site.

FIGURE 3-2 RECORDED BAT ROOSTS (BCI)



3.1.2 SURROUNDING HABITATS

No features such as cellars or caves are present on site. The habitat occurring within the project site is representative of the Fossitt Level 3 habitats as follows:

- BL3 Built Land and artificial surfaces (courthouse and adjacent hard surfaces associated with yard)
- WL2: Treelines: to the rear of the building this comprises privet hedging at the base and mature species including sycamore.

There is occasional vegetation growing on parts of the building, and an area of unmanaged grassland habitat has grown on the land adjacent to the western elevation that is enclosed by cast iron railings.

There are no dense stands of ivy noted. The building itself has a number of features that increase the potential for roosting bats, namely older construction (1830s), traditional slates and timber joists and the building has not been inhabited for over a decade and was previously in use as a courthouse ie not residential use.

3.1.3 DAYTIME INSPECTION

During the daytime survey external evidence such as the following was taken into consideration:

- The presence of droppings on surfaces around the exterior of the house
- Urine staining beneath access points;
- Scratch marks around access points; and
- Visual signs of roosting bats.

3.2 BAT DETECTOR SURVEYS

An emergence dusk survey was undertaken on 29th June 2023. A full description of survey times and weather conditions during the surveys are outlined in *Table 3.1* below.

Ultrasonic bat detectors were used during the survey to aid the detection of bats. Sweeps were made at lower to higher frequency to establish the presence or otherwise of all potential bat species.

TABLE 3-1 SURVEY TIMES AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

DATE	SUNSET	DURATION	WEATHER CONDITIONS
29 TH JUNE 2023	21.59	2 HOURS	LIGHT BREEZE, 8/8 TH COVER 17C

At dusk two surveyors were positioned on the side gable /front and rear aspect of the courthouse and recorded any bats emerging from the structure and noted any bat activity in the immediate area such as commuting and foraging.

The following equipment was used:

- Elekon Batlogger M2
- Echometer Pro
- High powered torch

Bats were identified in the field to species level, *Myotis* sp. were identified to family level. During hand-held bat surveys species were identified in real time by recording peak frequency. Notes were also made on the time of recording and type of behaviour of each bat encountered during the activity surveys.

3.2.1 STATIC SURVEY

The static detector was deployed upstairs adjacent to the attic access on the side of the eastern part of the building. It was deployed from 29th June to 30th June 2023..

Results from all surveys were analyzed using Elekon Batexplorer software.

3.2.2 SURVEY LIMITATIONS

No survey limitations as the weather was conducive to bat activity and was undertaken within the bat activity season.

3.3 RESULTS

3.3.1 DAYTIME INSPECTIONS

A thorough search was undertaken on the ground and first floor of the building on 29th June 2023. No evidence of bat activity was noted such as staining, carcasses, or dead bats. The attic space was inspected by standing on the cupboard in the eastern attic access for a visual (torchlight) inspection. The attic was not entered due to concerns about the structural stability of the attic space.

No evidence of bat activity was recorded on the lower or first floor of the building on the 29th June. No evidence of bat activity was recorded on the attic visual inspection on the 29th June.

3.3.2 DUSK SURVEY OF 29TH JUNE 2023

The first bat recorded was two common pipistrelles at 22:09 that emerged from the eastern elevation and foraged briefly before flying over to the treeline to the north. Further pipistrelle activity was recorded in this area at 22:43 with 2 to 4 individuals recorded in this area. These were observed exiting the roof space of the elevation, but the exact location was not confirmed.

Other recordings of bats namely common pipistrelle and leisler bats were observed in low numbers around the site associated with the treeline where foraging was recorded and a soprano pipistrelle was recorded flying from the courthouse in an easterly direction over the neighbouring residential house.

The results of the dusk survey are as follows:

Species	Recordings [#]	Calls [#]
Nyctalus leisleri	2	2
Pipistrellus pipistrellus	7	125
Pipistrellus pygmaeus	2	3

3.3.3 STATIC DETECTOR:

The static detector was erected for 1 night, on the eastern side of the building based on the emergence survey results. Low numbers of bats were recorded over the one night survey period with the following species recorded:

Species	Recordings [#]	Calls [#]
Nyctalus leisleri	3	4

3.4 EVALUATION

The survey results suggest that bat species notably common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle bats are roosting in the courthouse building, exiting from the eastern elevation. The static detector deployed also recorded Leisler bat activity in low numbers <5.

Bat species are also foraging and commuting particularly along the treeline to the rear of the courthouse. In terms of potential access for bats, there are numerous access points and cracks suitable for crevice dwelling around the tiles, soffits and chimneys. The construction, roof void, multiple crevices, and easy access with surrounding habitat all increases the attractiveness of the dwelling for bat species. The survey results indicate the building is used as a roost by common, soprano pipistrelle and Leisler bats currently but not in number or duration that indicates maternity roost.

4 POTENTIAL IMPACT IN THE ABSENCE OF MITIGATION

This Section details the potential ecological impacts of the proposal to undertake the renovation works to the building. The potential impacts are identified with reference to the activities associated with proposed works, as identified in Section 2 to this report. In many cases, whilst a potential negative impact is identified at this stage, mitigation measures have been proposed to ensure that no significant negative impacts to bats occur.

4.1.1 CONSTRUCTION PHASE

Subject to planning consent being approved, initial works would commence in autumn 2023. Thus roosting bats may be disturbed during the construction activity due to physical interference should roosting bats be present at the building during construction activity, increased noise and dust from the works associated with the removal of rotten joists, slates etc.

Such impacts will have the potential to affect low numbers of common and soprano pipistrelles, Leisler bats should the timing of the works correspond with their presence.

4.1.2 OPERATION PHASE

The aim of the works is to restore the existing building and provide internal works. As part of the work there will be renovation to the internal structure of the building. There are no plans to provide additional lighting around the existing building.

4.1.3 IMPACTS TO THE BAT ROOST

The works to main house will result in the modification of the interior structure of the roof which will in turn modify the conditions of the existing bat roost. In addition, the measures to improve energy efficiency including insulation of the attic space will have the potential to result in the desertion and/or exclusion of common pipistrelles, soprano pipistrelles and Leisler bats from the building, resulting in the loss of a minor roost

5 MITIGATION, COMPENSATION AND ENHANCEMENT

In order for the works at the former courthouse to comply fully with applicable legislation and planning policy it is necessary to mitigate or compensate for any significant ecological impacts identified above. This section recommends appropriate measures that can be undertaken to ensure compliance with this legislation and policy and provide ecological enhancements.

5.1 RENOVATION

The timing of the remedial works is of significant importance to ensure disturbance to bats is avoided. The optimum period for carrying out works at summer roost sites is from the 1st November to 1st March.

- Any re-roofing must be provided on a like-for-like basis, using natural slate roof and a bat-friendly roof membrane (i.e. Bitumen 1F felt).
- Breathable roof membranes (BRM's) are not suitable in bat roosts.
- Some (if not all) access points must be retained.
- A pre-construction survey must be undertaken by a qualified ecologist prior to any works, to ensure roosting bats have left.
- Existing slates must be removed by hand under the supervision of a licensed ecologist. In the event that any roosting bats are discovered, these will be removed by the licensed ecologist and later released on site.
- Post-construction monitoring must be undertaken to confirm the continued use of these bat roosts.

5.2 PROVISION OF BAT TILES AND ROOSTING OPPORTUNITIES.

The following location and design guidance has been prepared to allow provision of access to the roof space and roost space for the bat species identified over the bat activity surveys. The approach to reroofing follows conservation architectural practice with replacement of like for like with natural slate roof tiles.

- Bat tiles are better placed adjacent to a rafter so bats can crawl in /out along timber.
- For species of bats that use the inside of the attic, a hole will need to be established in the felt to allow bats free access into and out of the loft.
- The following dimensions are sufficient for the bat species - 75mm x 30mm and it is very important to establish it immediately adjacent to a rafter or wall to allow bats to climb back out.
- Some species of bat use the cavity wall, and access to here from the loft will be required. A small unit in the attic space could be provided. Modern smooth felting membranes are to be avoided in this space.
- The traditional hessian reinforced bitumastic roofing/slater's felt (BS747) with a sand finish on its upper surface is recommended. The detailed design, specification and installation will be done under supervision by the project ecologist and agreed in advance with Laois County Council.
- Additional woodcrete bat boxes could be provided in the treeline to the rear of the building.

The area marked in blue below shows suggested location of bat tiles and roost on eastern elevation facing roof.

Figure 5-1 blue line indicates suitable area for bat tiles and roost creation



Figure 5-2 Example of lead bat tile



5.3 PRECONSTRUCTION SURVEY

Immediately prior to works commencing, the ecologist will undertake a survey to confirm absence of bats. In the unlikely event that a bat(s) is discovered during any stage of the proposed works the following actions will be taken to ensure that no harm will be caused to the bat(s):

- All works within the vicinity of where the bat(s) is found will immediately stop;
- The bat(s) will be removed by a suitably qualified and licenced Ecologist and placed within a temporary bat box which will be kept under suitable conditions (dark, dry, warm, quiet location) for the duration of the day;
- Works will only commence once it has been established by the Ecologist that no other bats are present within the vicinity of where the previous bat(s) was found;
- Measures will be taken to ensure that the bat(s) cannot reuse the roost in which it was found (e.g. blocking/filling the hole in which it was found; and
- The bat(s) will be released from the temporary bat box by the Ecologist after sunset on the same day that it was removed from the building.

5.4 VEGETATION REMOVAL

In relation to removal of vegetation notably the ivy on the building, this will be removed before the bird nesting season (1st March to 31st August). The removal of this vegetation during this period avoids disturbance of bat potentially roosting in the ivy over the activity season. The construction activities will be undertaken during the daytime hours only. All construction staff will be briefed prior to construction activity. This briefing will outline the legislation with regard to bats and guidance as to what to do, should they encounter a bat or any evidence of the presence of bats at any time during the construction phase. This will involve postponing construction activity until after bats have vacated the ivy.

PRIOR TO THE WORKS COMMENCING THE ABOVE SPECIFICATION WILL BE CONFIRMED AND SUPERVISED BY A QUALIFIED ECOLOGIST.

Upon completion of works a bat expert will inspect the building to ensure that specifications have been met and access is maintained for bats.

5.4.1 LIGHTING

There is no potential for foraging bats within the vicinity of the construction works, to be impacted by temporary elevated lighting levels during the construction phase of the proposed works as the proposed works will only be taking place during daylight hours. There are no proposals to remove the trees associated with the boundary that adjoins the lane which is being used for commuting and foraging by a number of bat species.

5.4.2 LANDSCAPING

As stated above, there are no proposals to remove any vegetation other than the dense ivy referenced previously

5.4.3 OTHER POTENTIAL BAT ROOSTS

All stone buildings within the proposed site contain a variety of crevices suitable for roosting bats. Bats may switch between roosts on different nights and between seasons. To avoid the accidental entombing of bats during works, crevices to be re-pointed must be inspected by a licensed ecologist using an endoscope. Where crevices contain no bats, these can be blocked to prevent entry prior to works. Where roosting bats are recorded, these works will be subject to a derogation licence.

5.5 MONITORING

The above mitigation measures will require monitoring to assess the effectiveness of their implementation. Activity surveys should be undertaken in 2023/2024 to determine potential usage and should be repeated for subsequent year to establish if the roost is being used or if modification are required.

5.6 RESIDUAL IMPACTS

The renovation of the courthouse represents a temporary loss of a roost used by common and soprano pipistrelles and leisler bats in low number. Based on the survey data over the 2023 activity season, the roost is not a maternity roost but could be used as a night roost or day roost by low numbers of bats. I

n relation to pipistrelle bats, given they are crevice dwellers and are flexible regarding habitat and roosting opportunities, in addition to other roosting opportunities within the immediate and adjacent area, the loss of this roost is not identified as significant to the local bat population of common or soprano pipsitrelles or leisler bats.

The presence of Common and Soprano pipistrelle, and Leisler's bat foraging at the project site is not unexpected. These bat species are widespread and commonly occurring throughout the country and are "*commonly encountered during bat surveys*" (NPWS, 2019). Common and Soprano pipistrelle are also "*very general in their habitat preference, foraging in woodland, riparian habitats and parkland, along linear features in farmland, and in towns and cities*" (NPWS, 2019).

The national population of this species is increasing and no existing pressures or threats to the conservation status of this species at a national level have been identified. Overall, the future prospects for this species in terms of range, population and habitat are Good (NPWS, 2019).

5.7 CONCLUSION

Minogue Environmental Consulting Ltd, on behalf of Laois County Council are submitting this application under Regulation 54 of the European Communities (Birds and Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) for a derogation licence from complying with the requirements of the provisions of Regulations 51, 52 and 53 of the same Regulations.

Direct disturbance and loss of a minor roost for pipistrelle and Leisler bats is identified for the renovation of the courthouse. The proposed timing of the works and the removal of dense ivy outside the bird nesting season further reduces risk to roosting bats such as Leislars. The avoidance of increasing light levels, minimises adverse effects on local bat populations. Provision under supervision of bat tiles and roost space on the eastern elevation, plus installation of Schwegler 1FF bat boxes on the treeline provide for roosting space for Leisler bats and may also be used by other species recorded including soprano pipistrelles.

Potential impacts have been mitigated as far as possible during the renovation phase and impacts are those that cannot be ruled out despite applying best practice techniques.

Each of the following conditions as set out in the requirements of Articles 51, 52 and 53 have been addressed in this application in detail.

6 REFERENCES:

Marnell, F., Kelleher, C. & Mullen, E. (2022) Bat mitigation guidelines for Ireland v2. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 134. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Ireland

A. J. Mitchell-Jones. English Nature:Bat Workers Manual (3rd Edition) (Eds A.J. Mitchell-Jones and A. McLeish)

An investigation of the impact of development projects on bat populations: Comparing pre- and post-development bat faunas. Bat Conservation Ireland 2008

Landscape and Urban Design for bats and biodiversity. Bat Conservation Trust 2012
Bats and Buildings Bat Conservation Trust (nd).

Marnell, F. & P. Presetnik (2010): Protection of overground roosts for bats (particularly roosts in buildings of cultural heritage importance). EUROBATS Publication Series No. 4 (English version)

Bat Conservation Global evidence for the effects of interventions 2019 Edition Anna Berthinussen, Olivia C. Richardson & John D. Altringham Synopses of Conservation Evidence

Dietz, C and Kiefer, A. Bats of Britain and Europe. Bloomsbury Wildlife, London. 2014

The Vincent Wildlife Trust's Irish bat box schemes Kate McAney & Ruth Hanniffy July 2015. Vincent Wildlife Trust

Websites:

www.biodiversityireland.ie

www.batconservationireland.ie

www.vincentwildlifetrust.ie

www.batsorg.uk

www.eurobats.org

7 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

Photo 1: Front of courthouse



Photo 2: western elevation with treeline at boundary to the north



Photo 3: eastern elevation, common ad soprano recorded exiting from roof area



Photo 4 Interior attic access eastern elevation



H
C H

Appendix F

Photographic Survey

Howley Hayes Cooney Architecture

Digital Hub

Borris-In-Ossory Courthouse, Borris-In-Ossory, Co. Laois

ARCHITECTURE

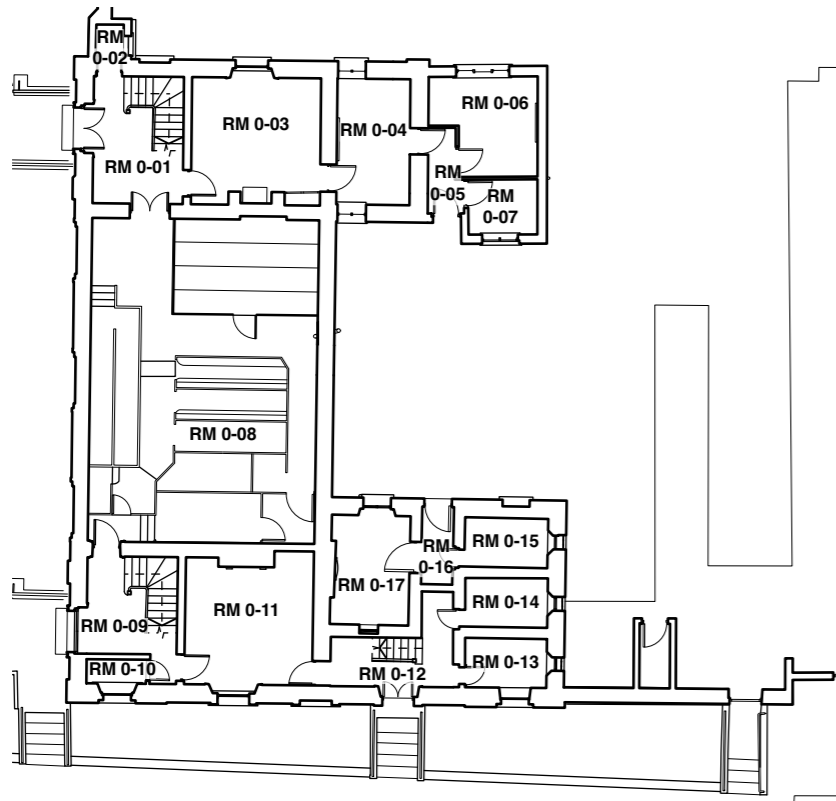


Photographic Survey

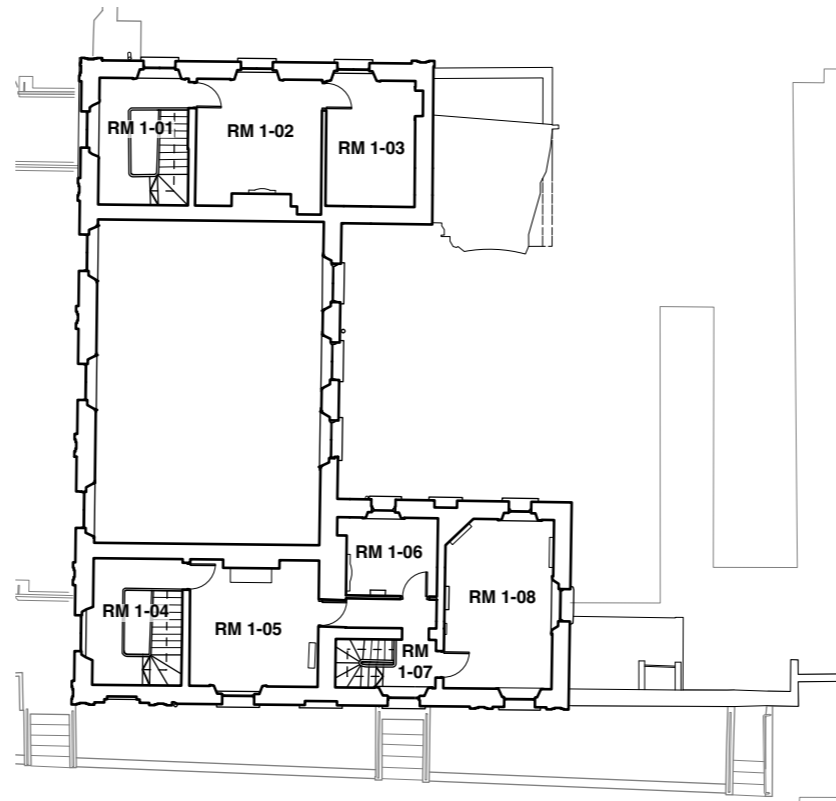
July 2023
Issued - 28.07.2023



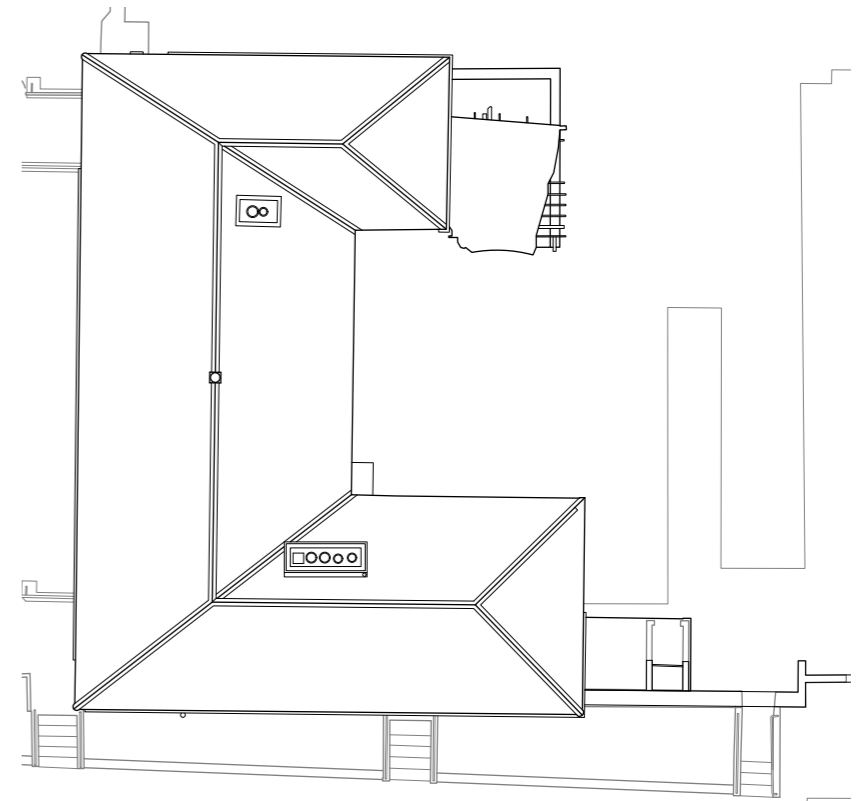
Floor Plans



Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan



Roof Plan

External

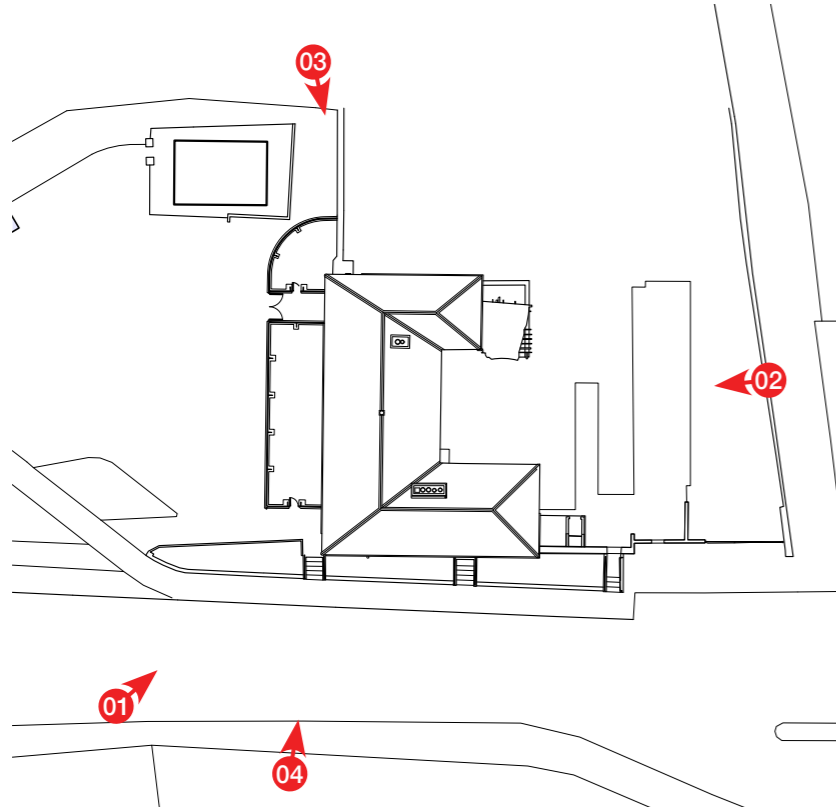


Image 01 - Aerial view looking North East

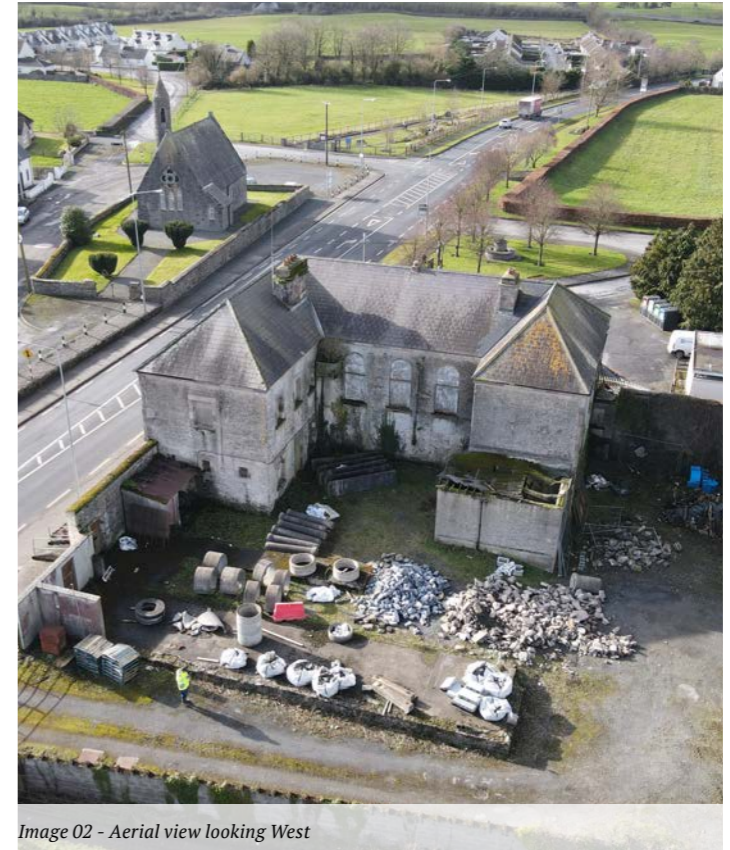


Image 02 - Aerial view looking West

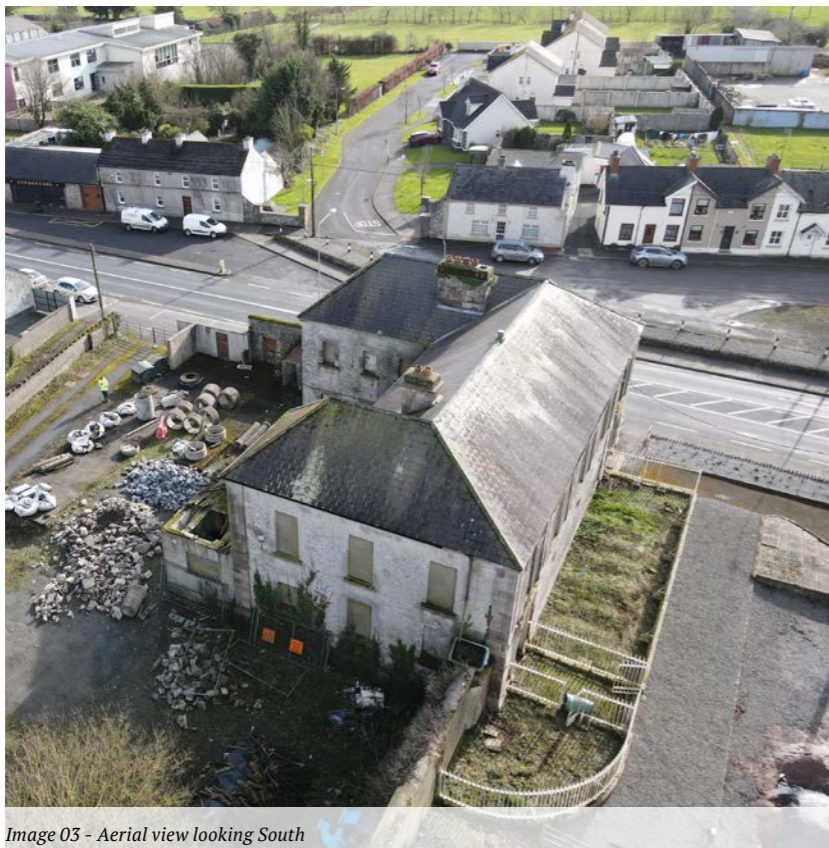


Image 03 - Aerial view looking South



Image 03 - Aerial view looking North

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External

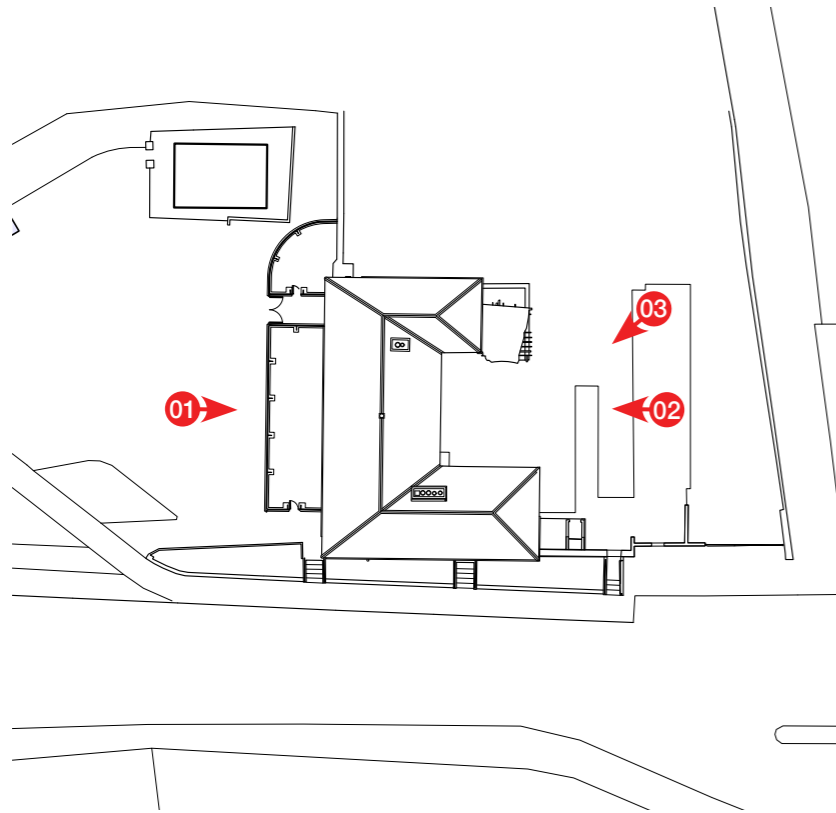


Image 01 - East elevation

ARCHITECTURE



Image 02 - West elevation



Image 03 - West elevation from yard

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External

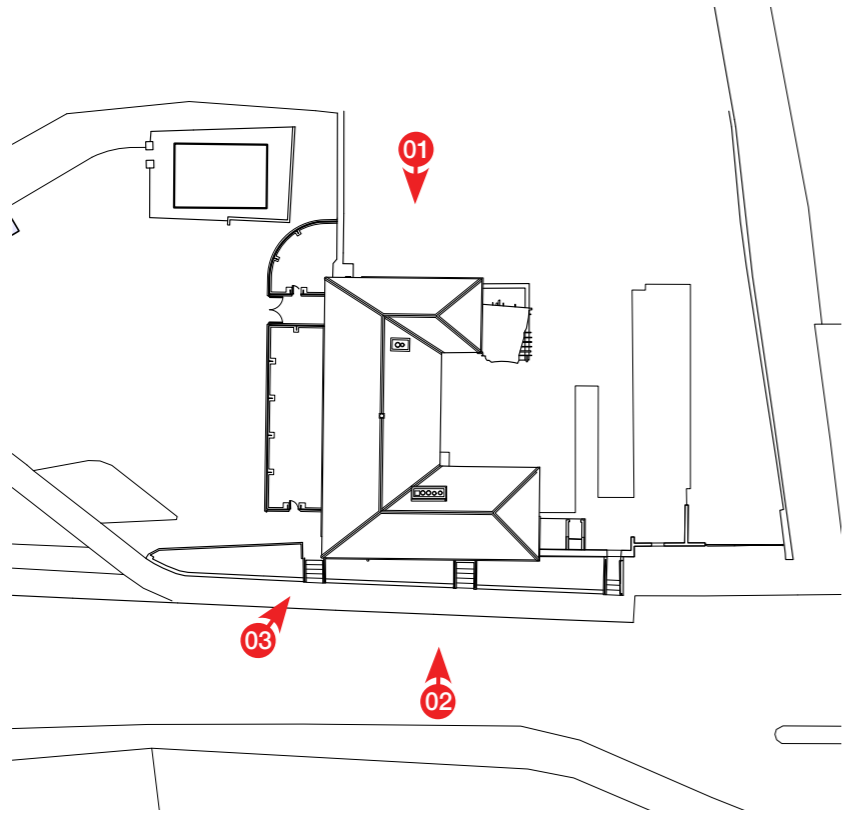


Image 01 - South elevation



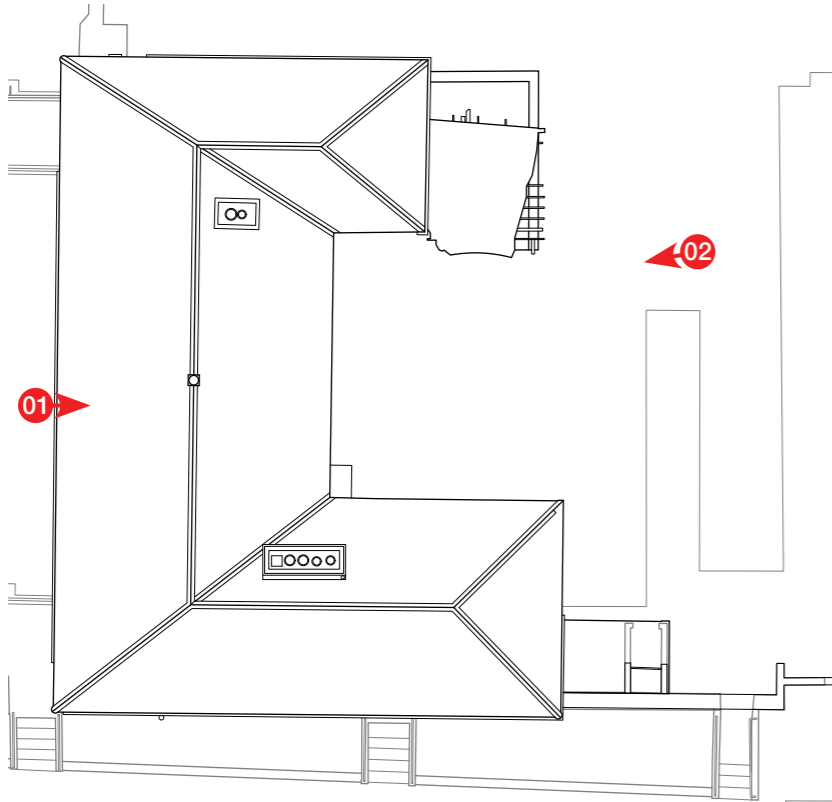
Image 02 - North elevation



Image 03 - North elevation blocked window detail

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H
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Roof



Queen Post Truss



Roofspace

ARCHITECTURE



Roof detail

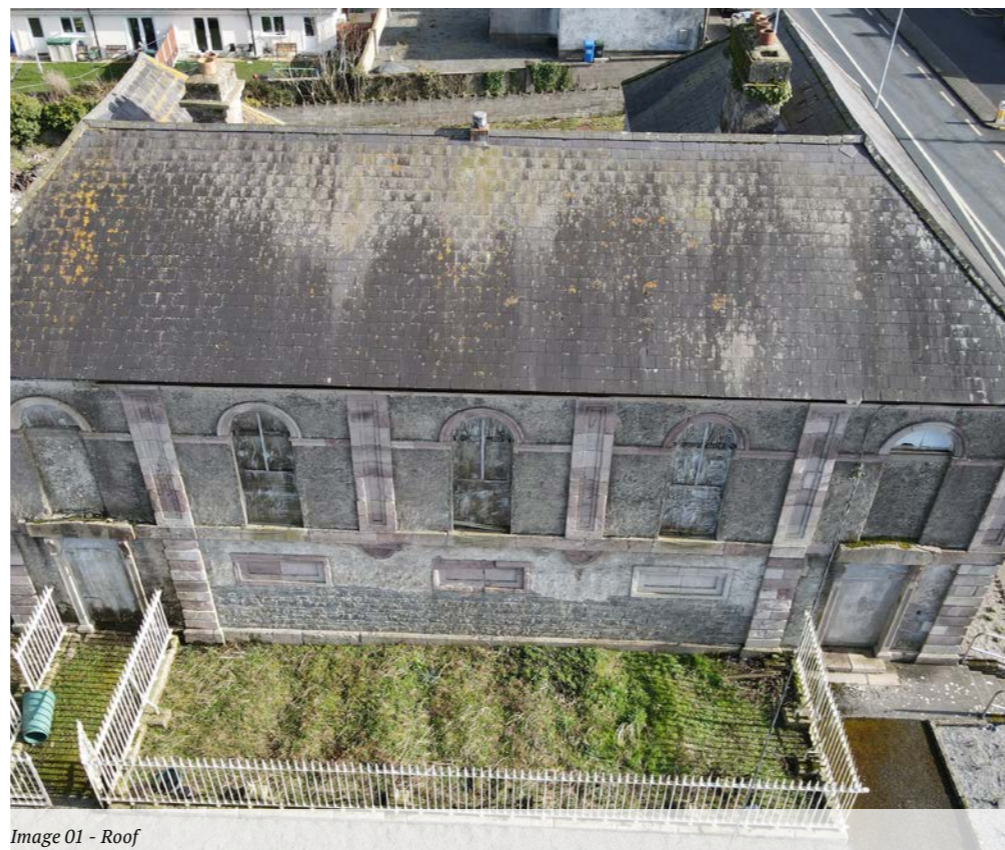


Image 01 - Roof

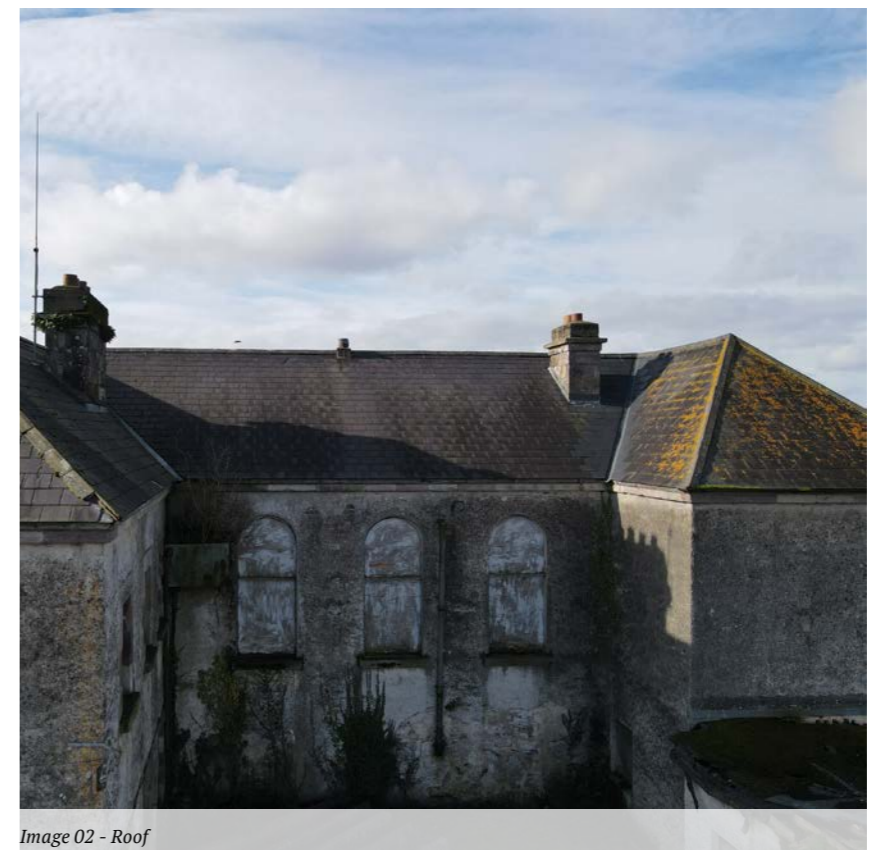
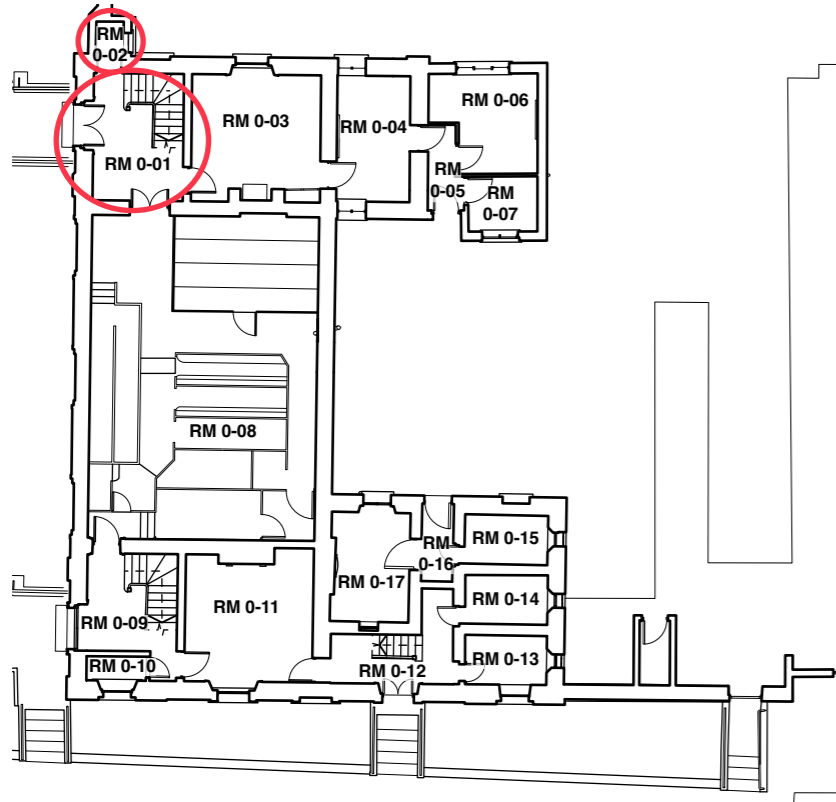
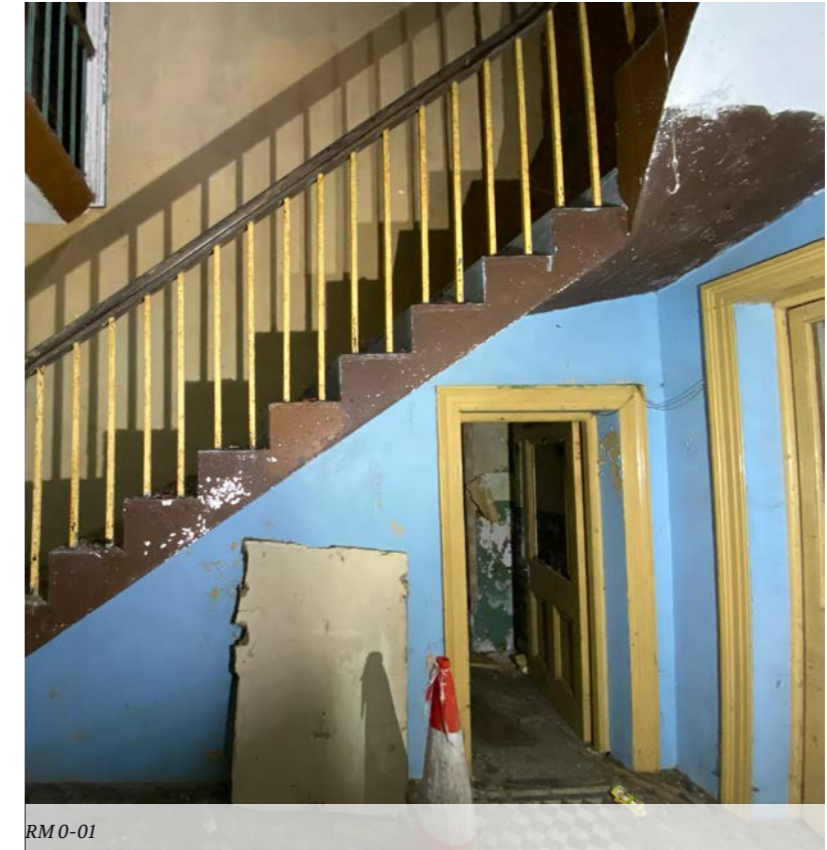


Image 02 - Roof

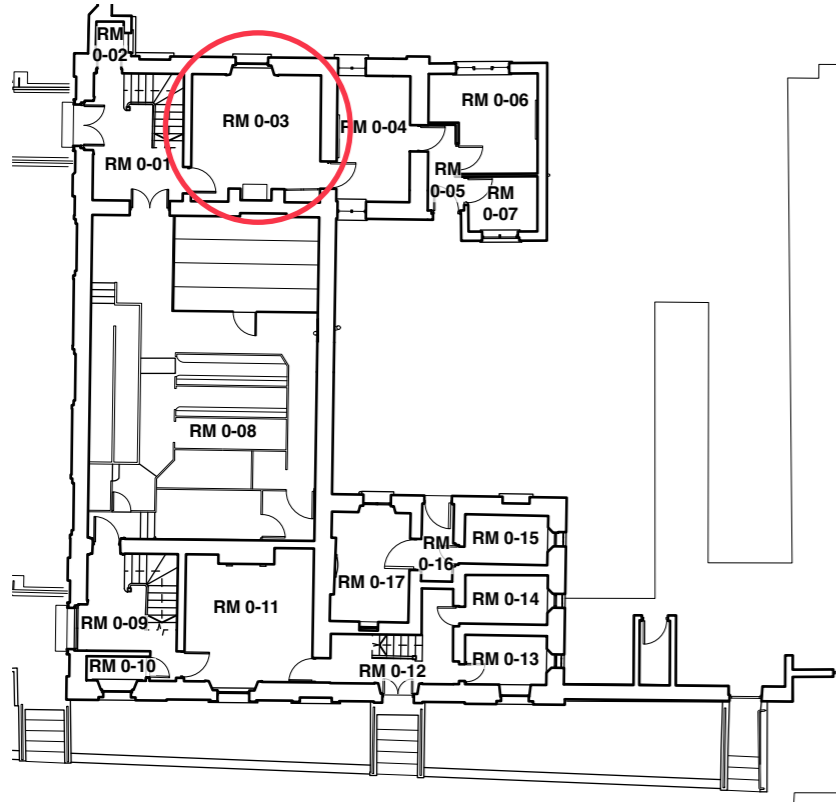
Ground Floor RM 0-01 & RM 0-02



ARCHITECTURE



Ground Floor RM 0-03



ARCHITECTURE



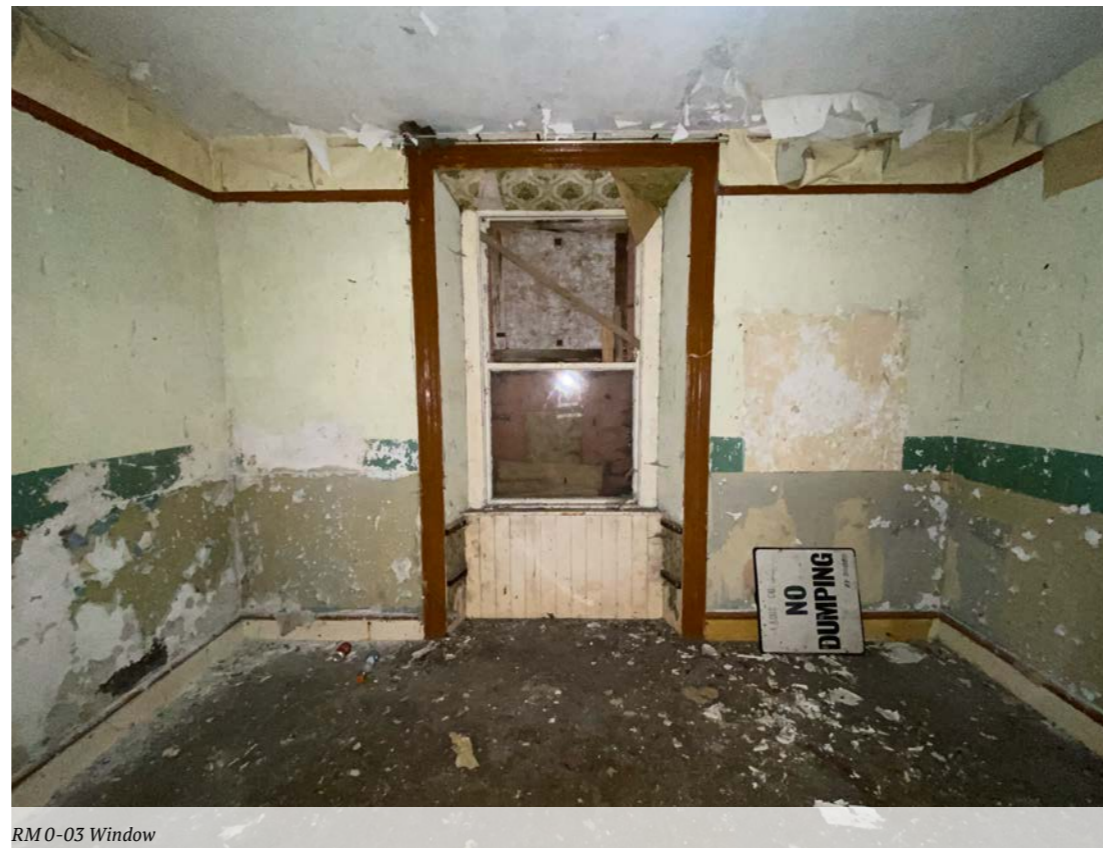
RM 0-03



RM 0-03



RM 0-03 Stove

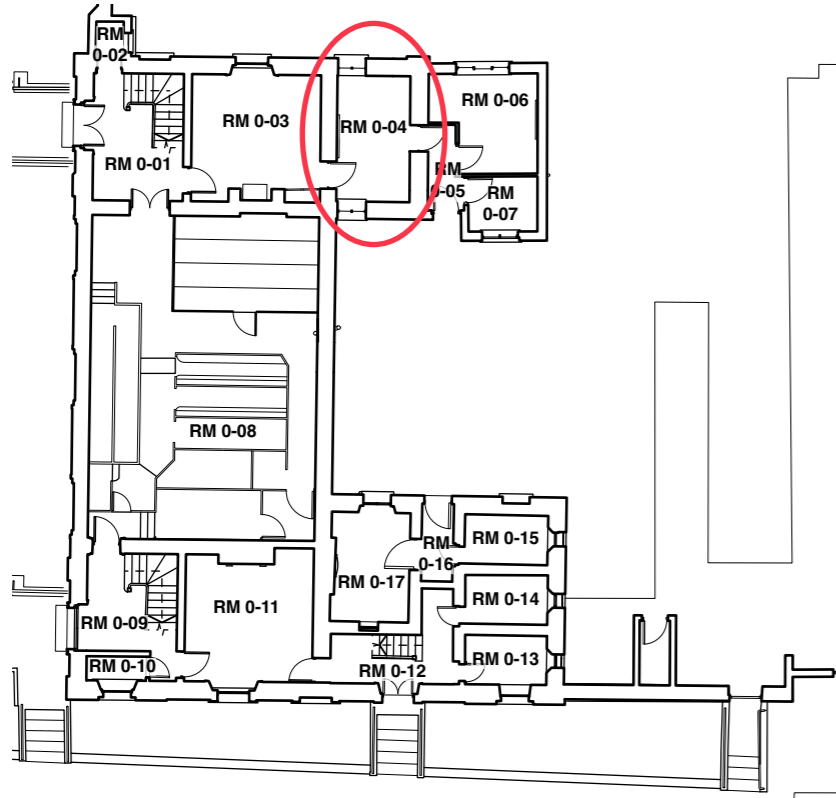


RM 0-03 Window



RM 0-03 Ceiling damage

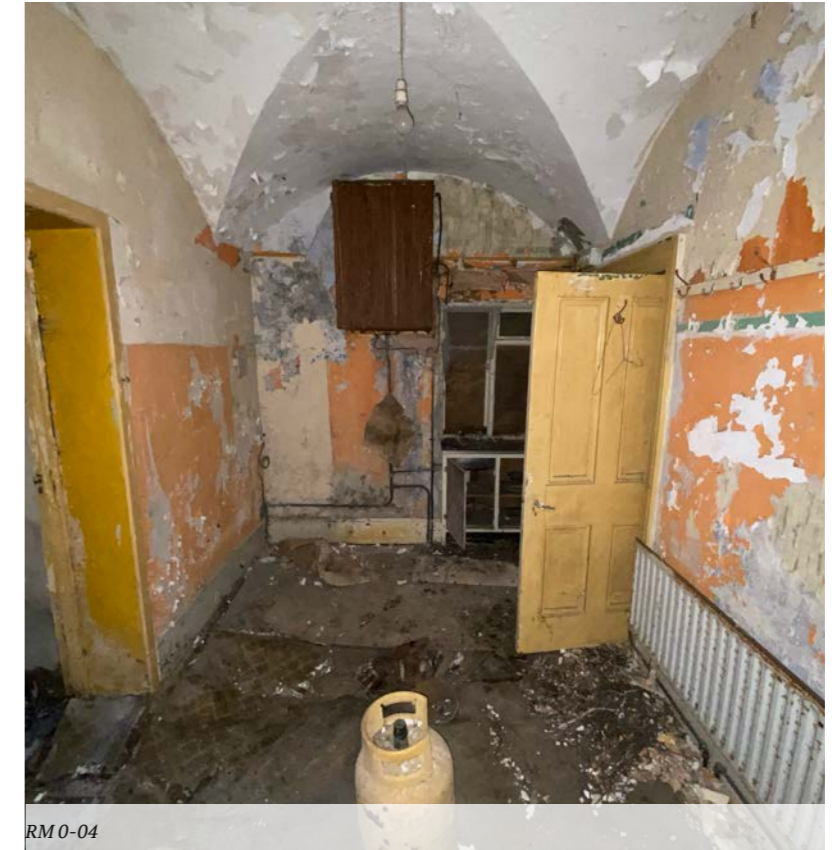
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ARCHITECTURE



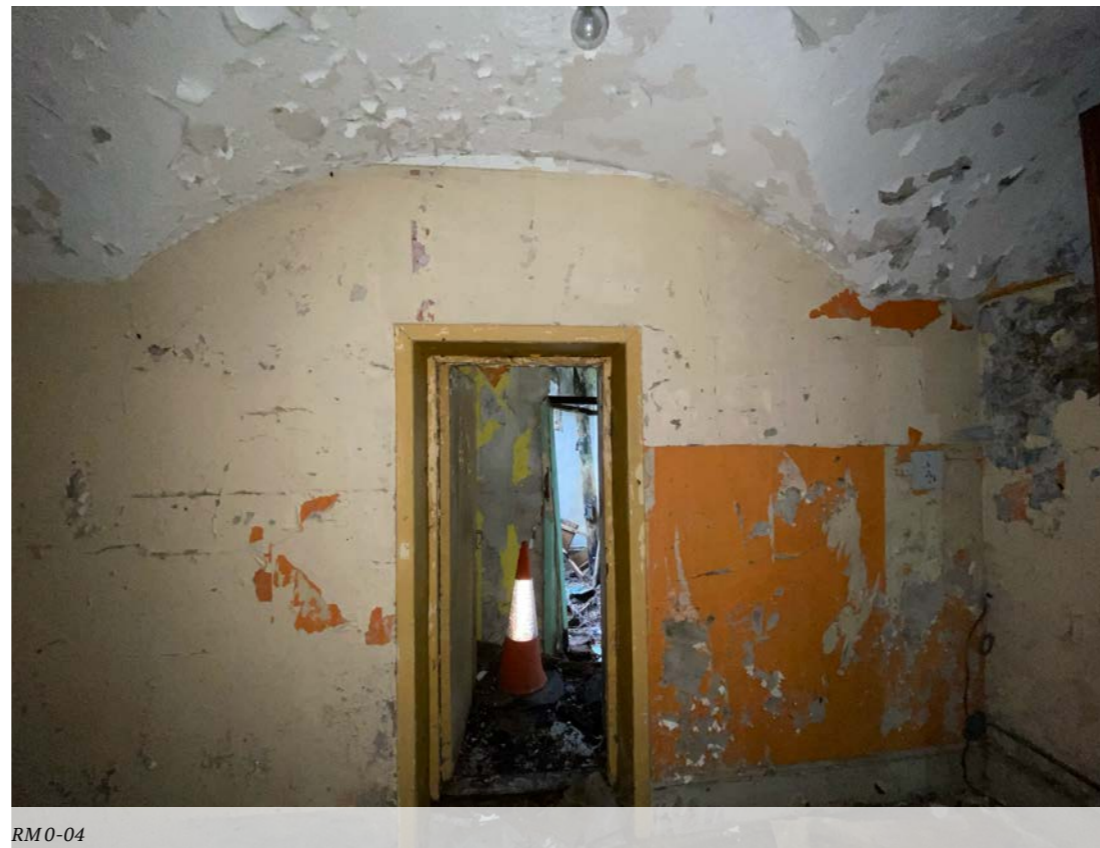
RM0-04



RM0-04



RM0-04 Window

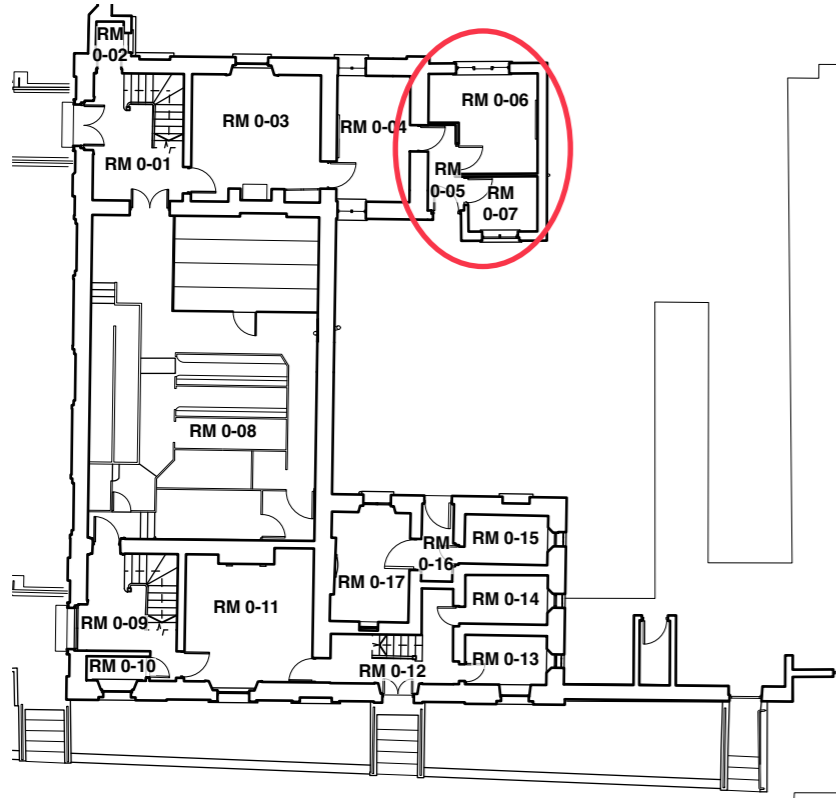


RM0-04



RM0-04

Ground Floor RM 0-05, RM 0-06 & RM 0-07



ARCHITECTURE



RM 0-05



RM 0-06



RM 0-06

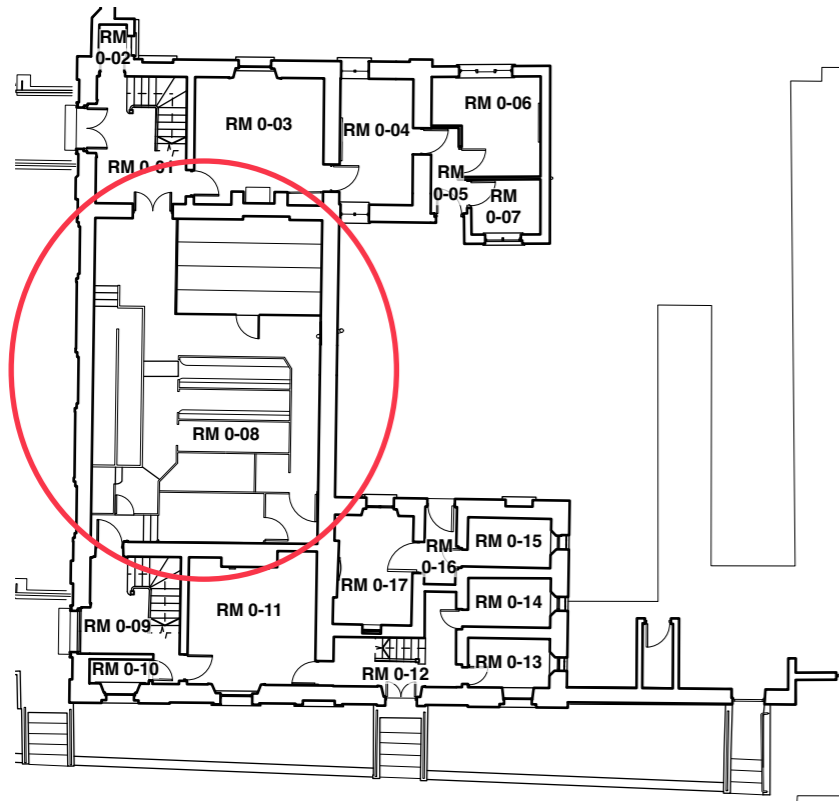


RM 0-07



RM 0-07

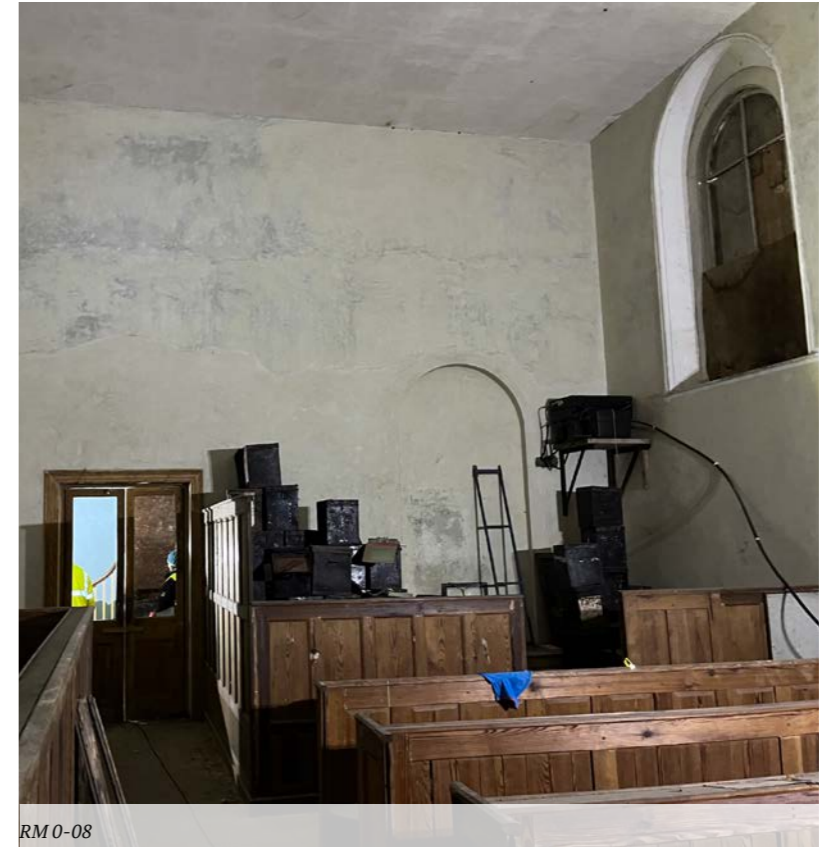
Ground Floor RM 0-08



ARCHITECTURE



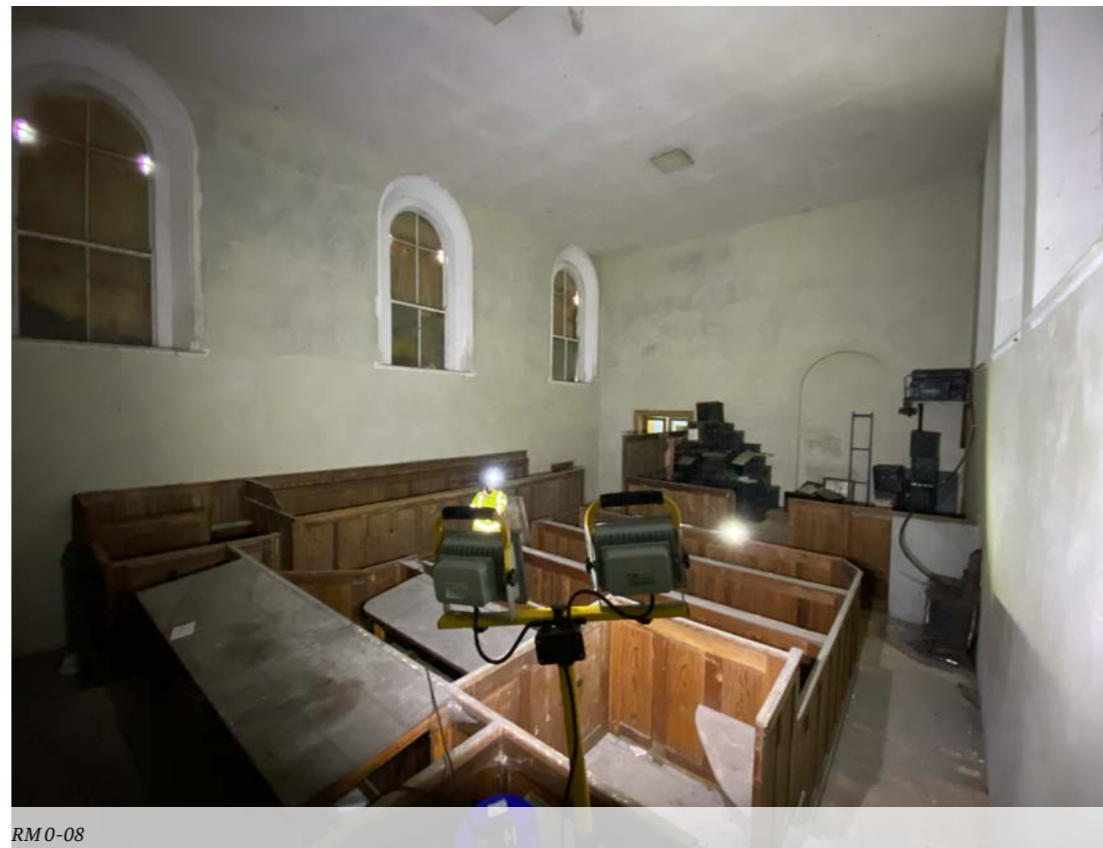
RM 0-08 Courtroom Stands



RM 0-08



RM 0-08 Courtroom Furniture

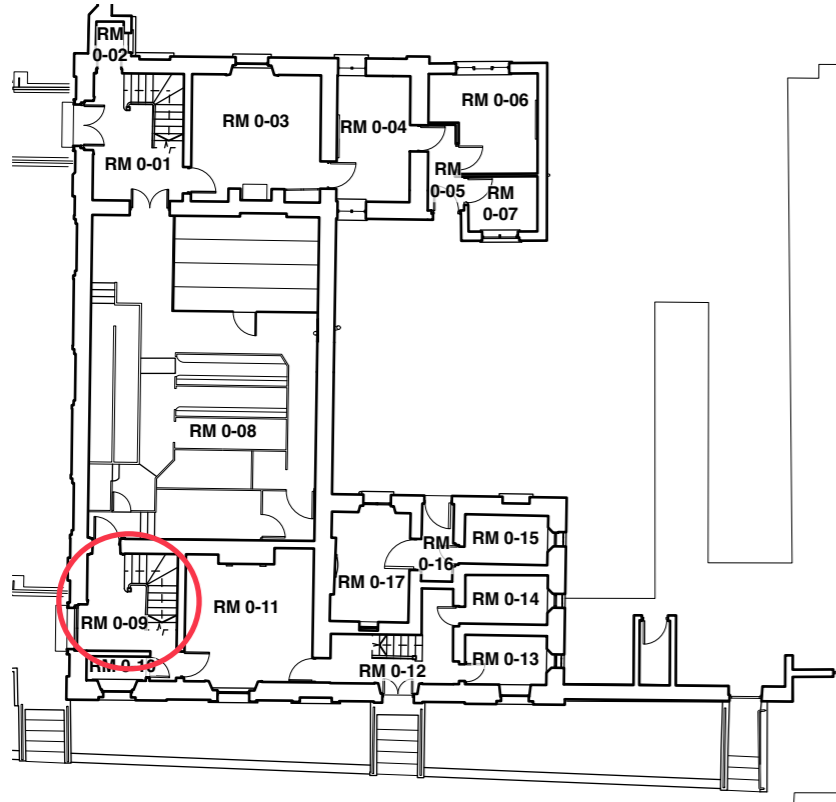


RM 0-08

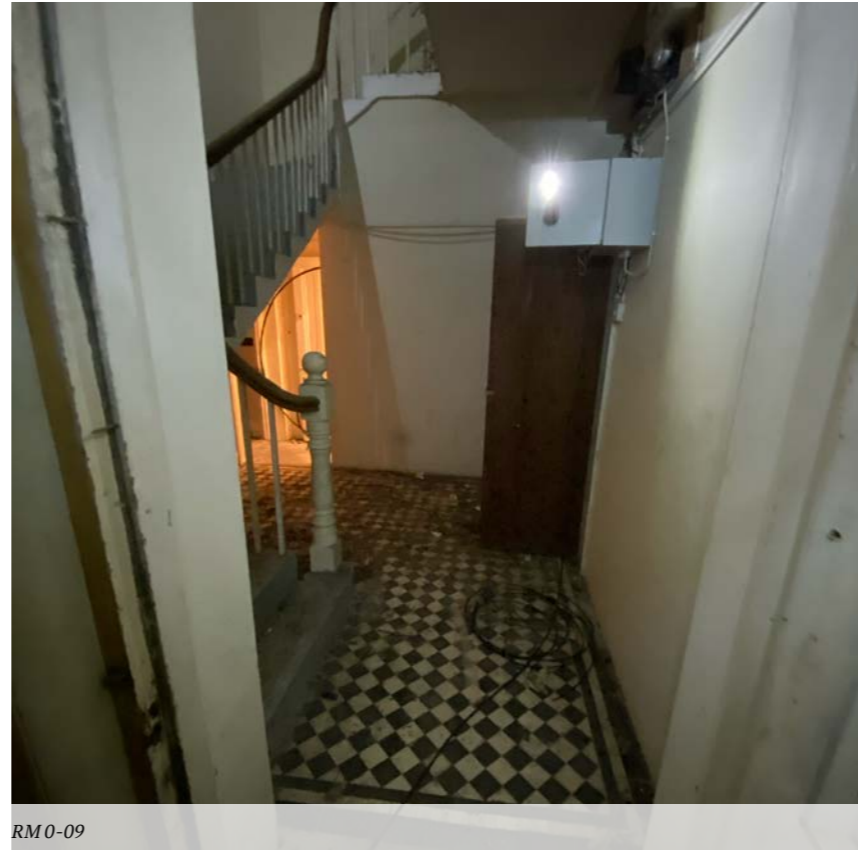


RM 0-08 Door

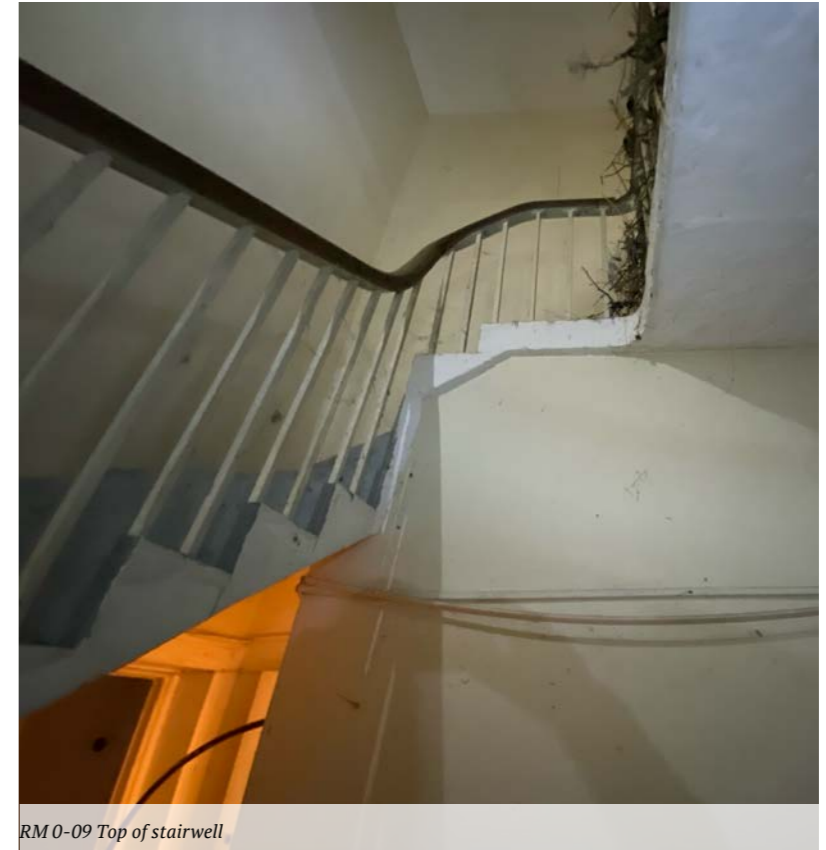
Ground Floor RM 0-09



ARCHITECTURE



RM 0-09



RM 0-09 Top of stairwell



RM 0-09 Stairwell



RM 0-09 Stairwell steps

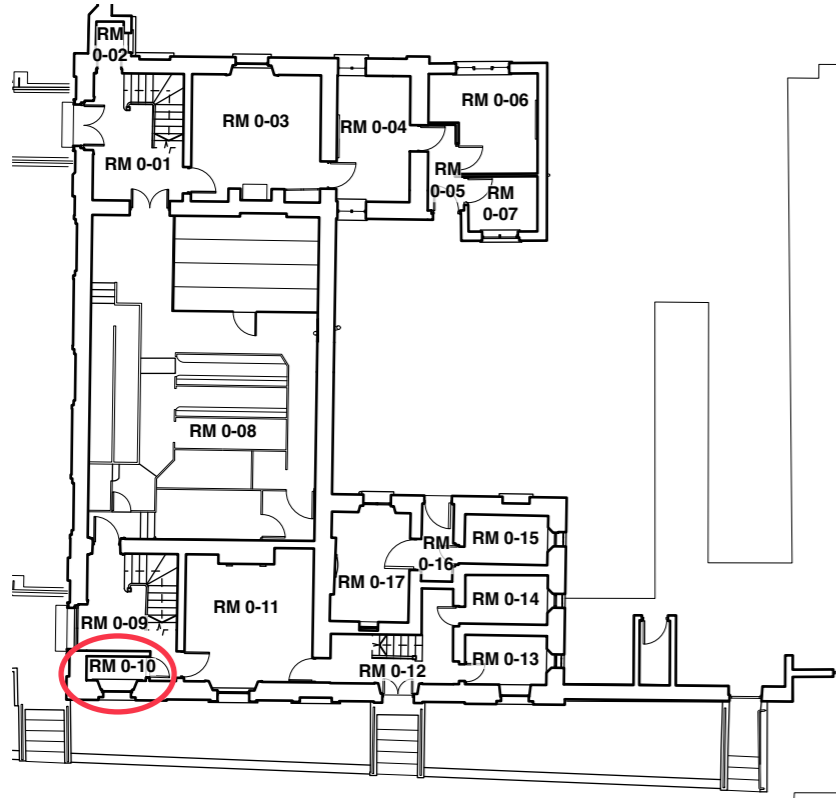


RM 0-09 Bottom of stairwell



RM 0-09

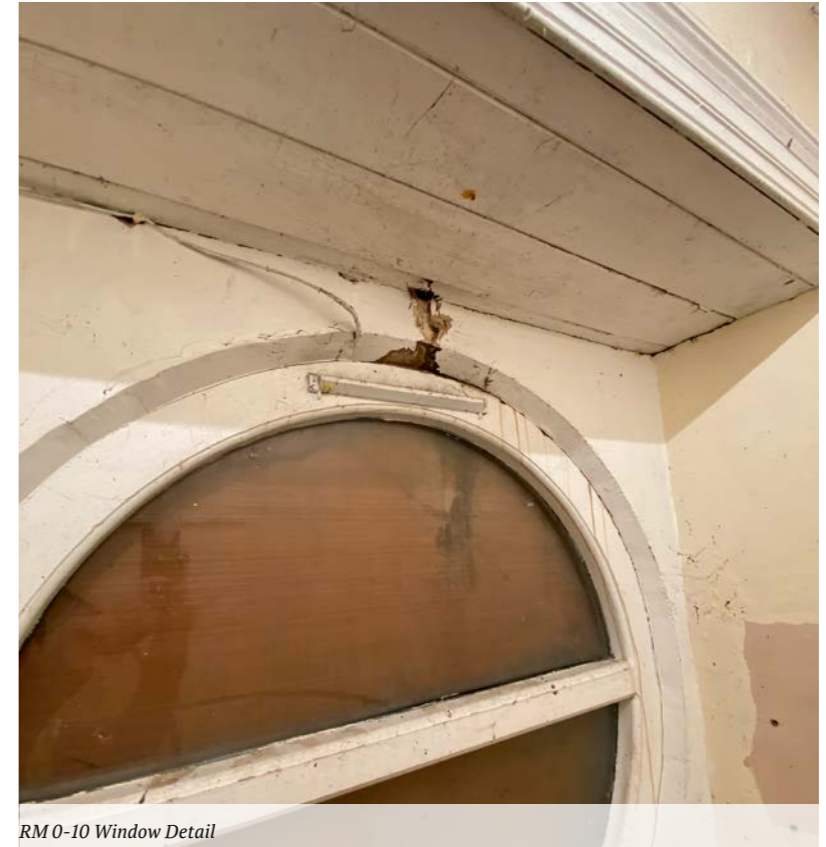
Ground Floor RM 0-10



ARCHITECTURE



RM 0-10 Window



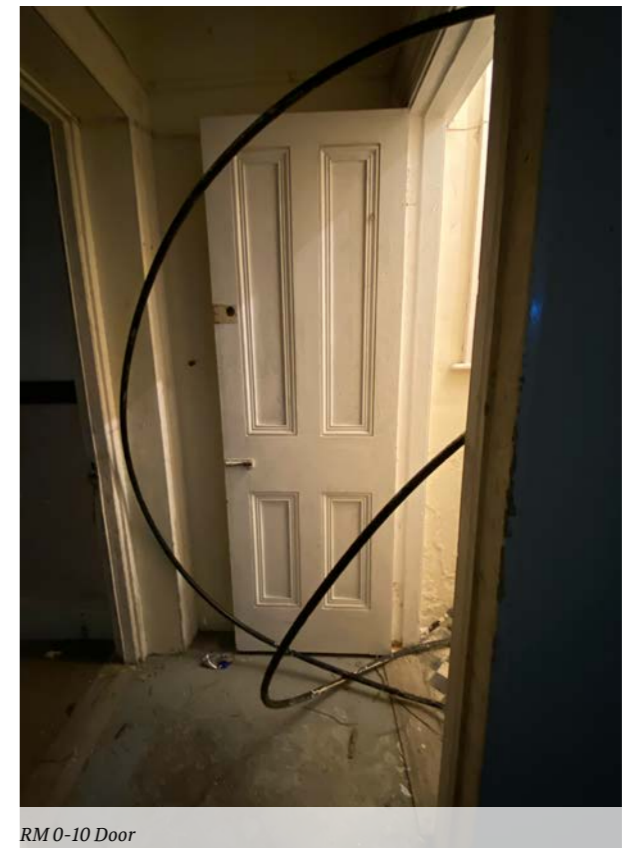
RM 0-10 Window Detail



RM 0-10

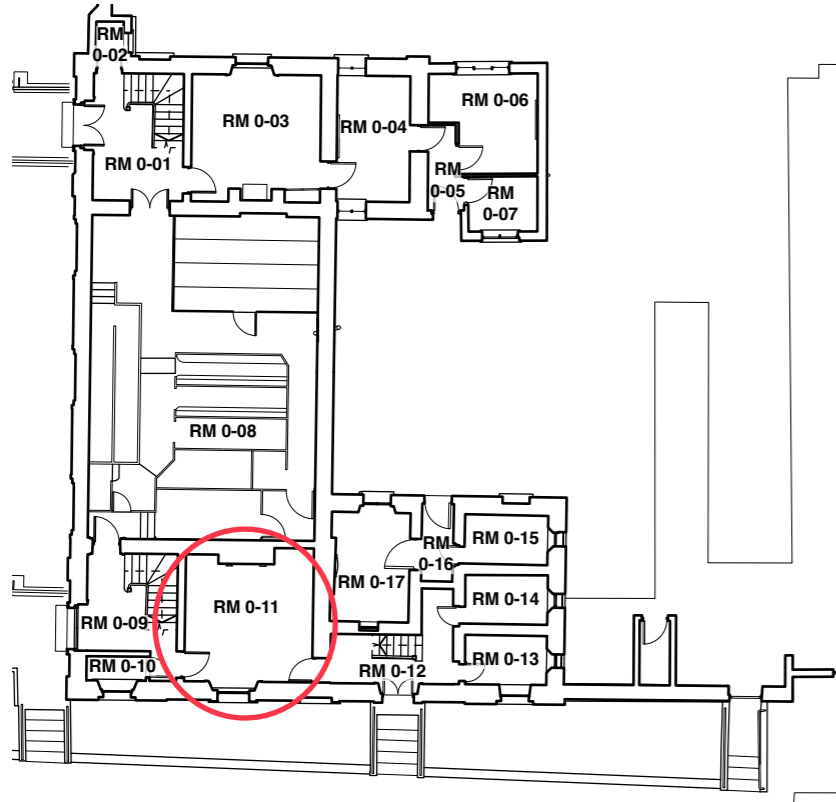


RM 0-10 Back wall

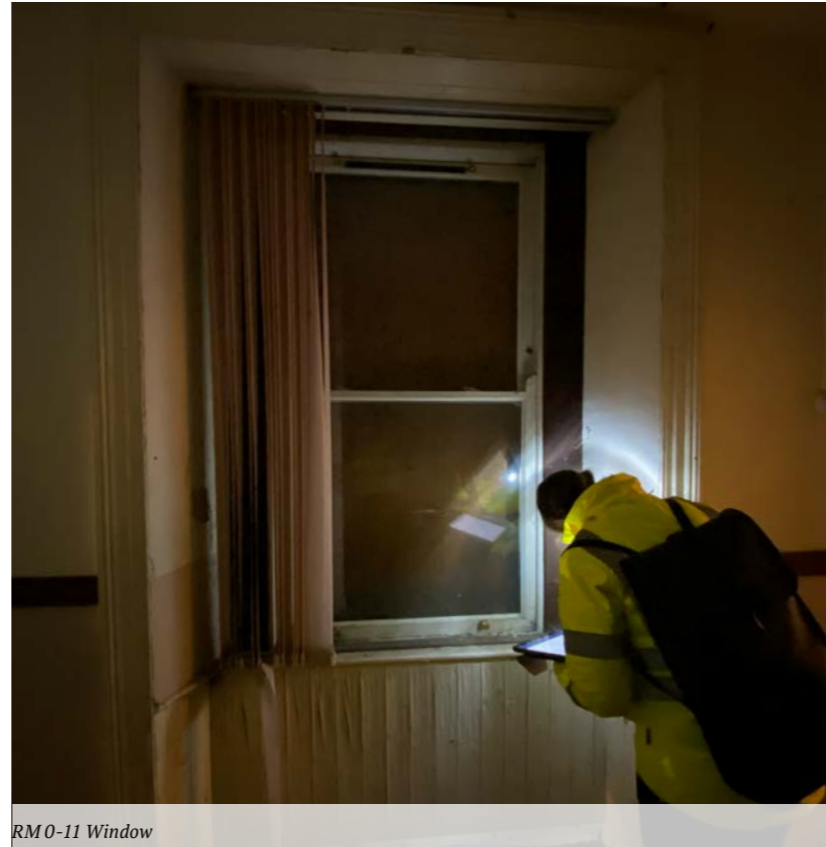


RM 0-10 Door

Ground Floor RM 0-11



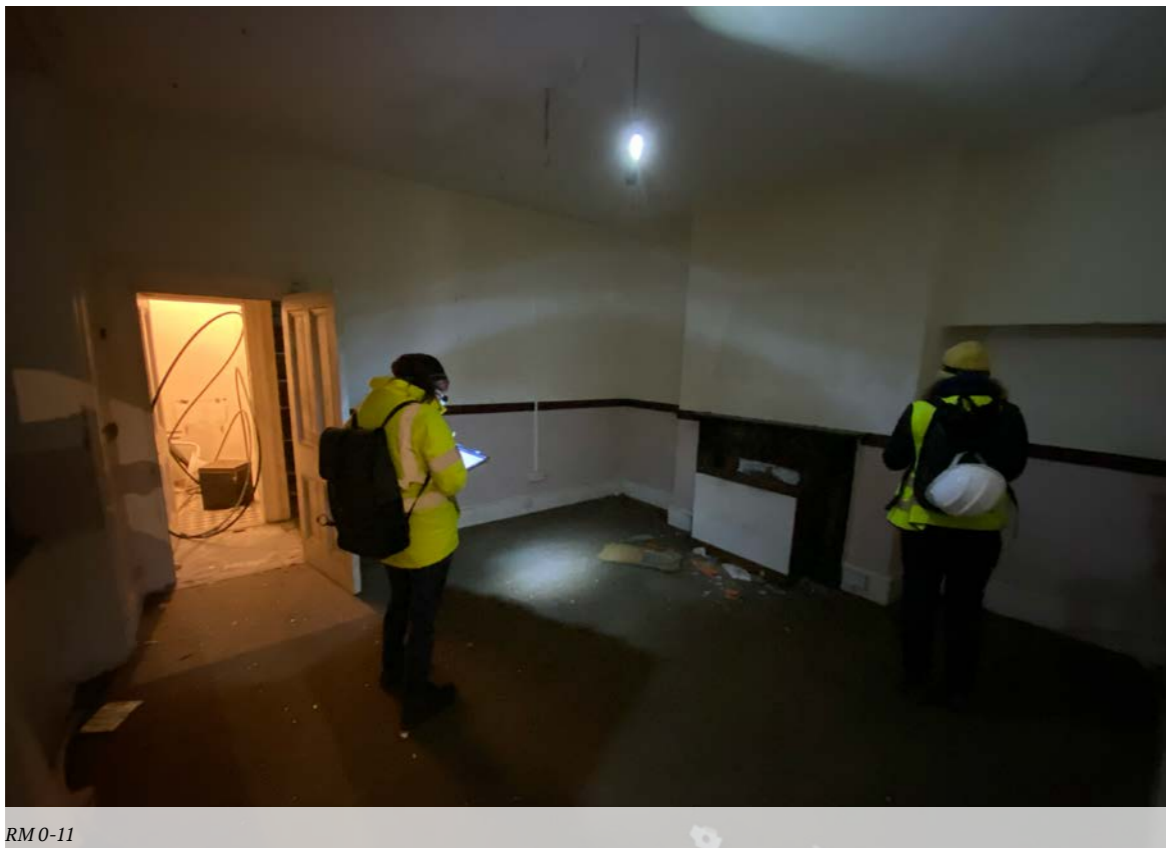
ARCHITECTURE



RM 0-11 Window



RM 0-11 Fireplace



RM 0-11

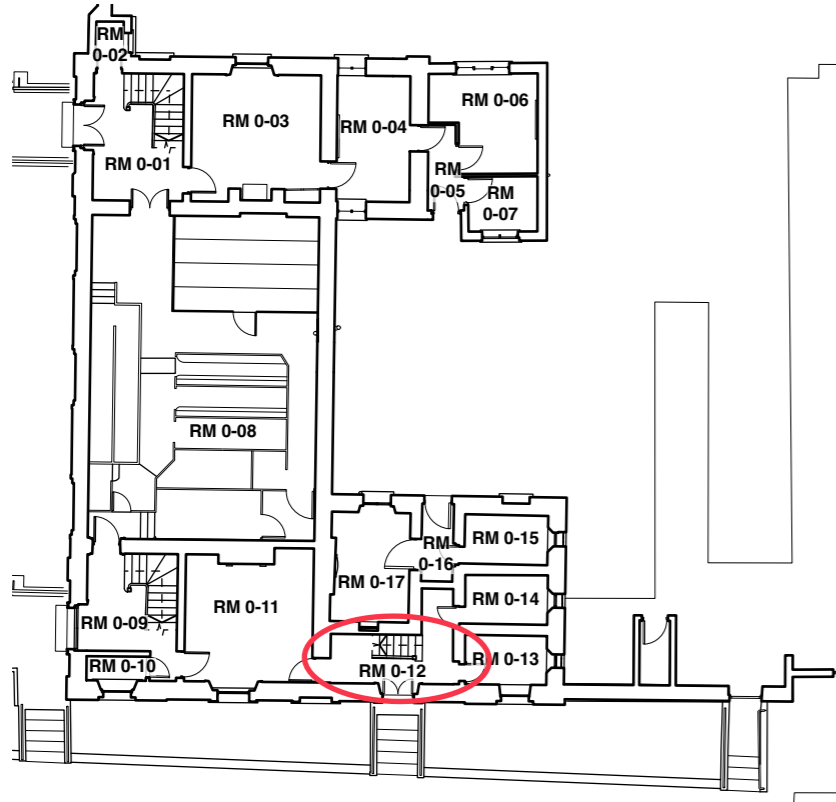


RM 0-11 Door

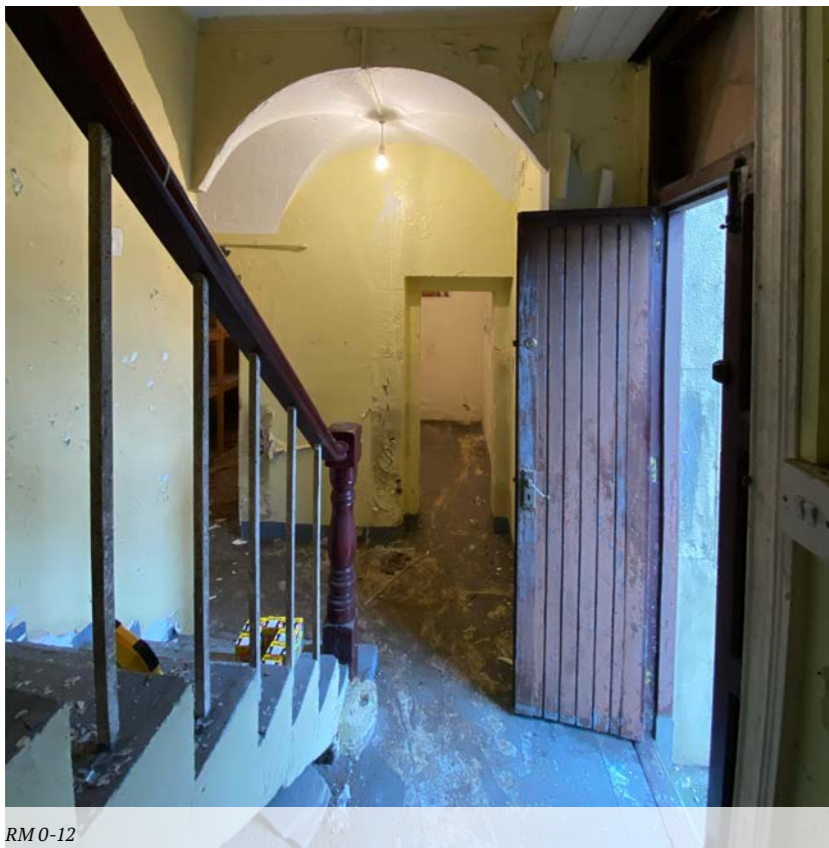
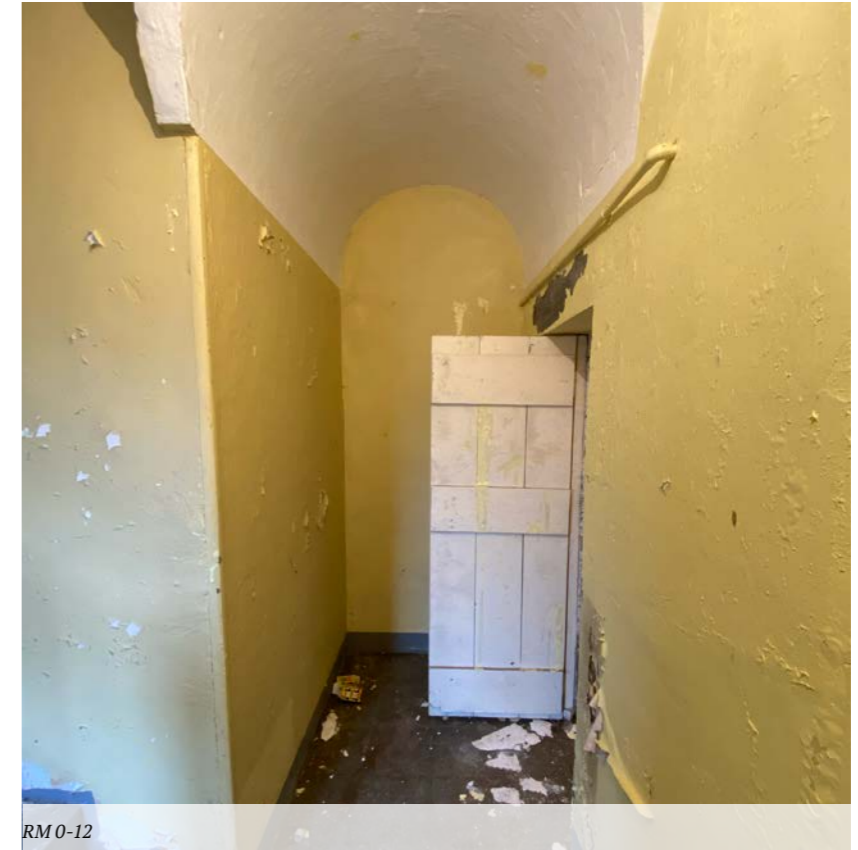
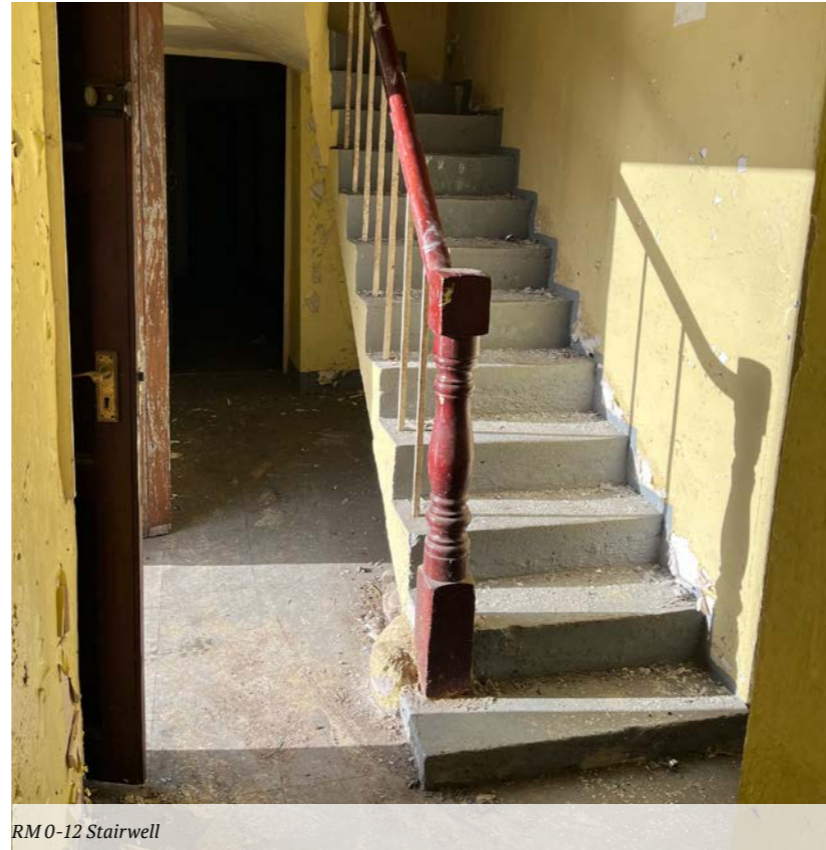


RM 0-11 Fireplace detail

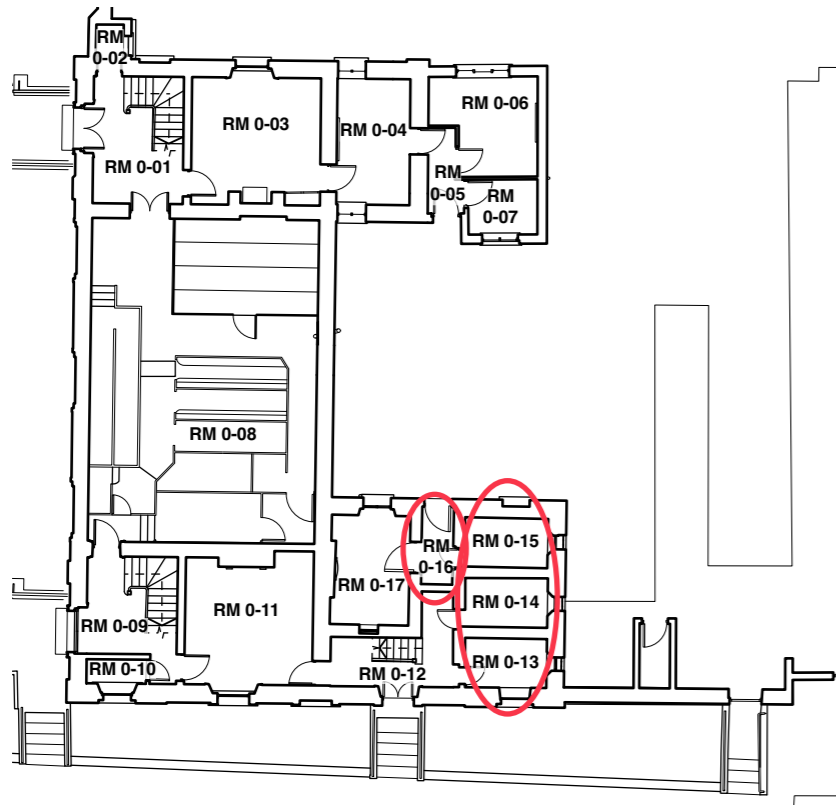
Ground Floor RM 0-12



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Ground Floor RM 0-13, RM 0-14, RM 0-15 & RM 0-16



RM0-13



RM0-13



RM0-14



RM0-15

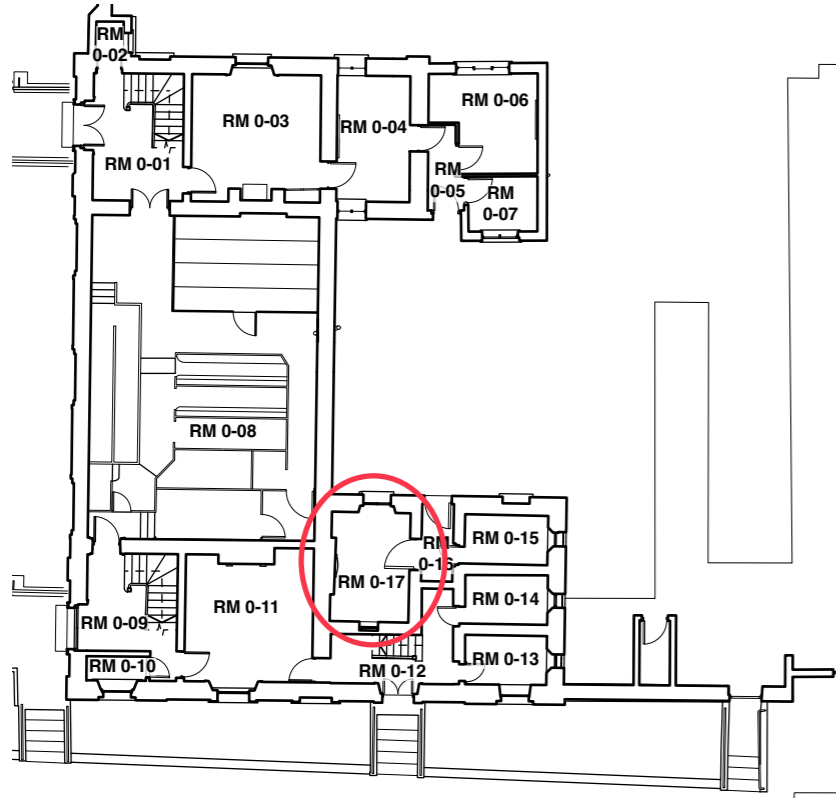


RM0-16

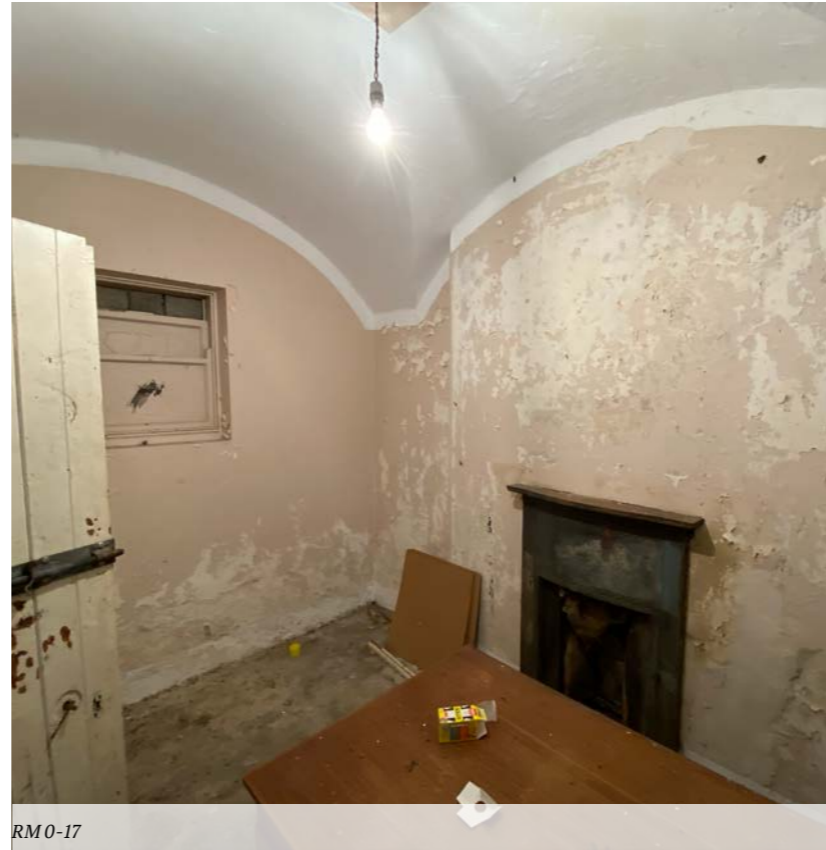


RM0-16

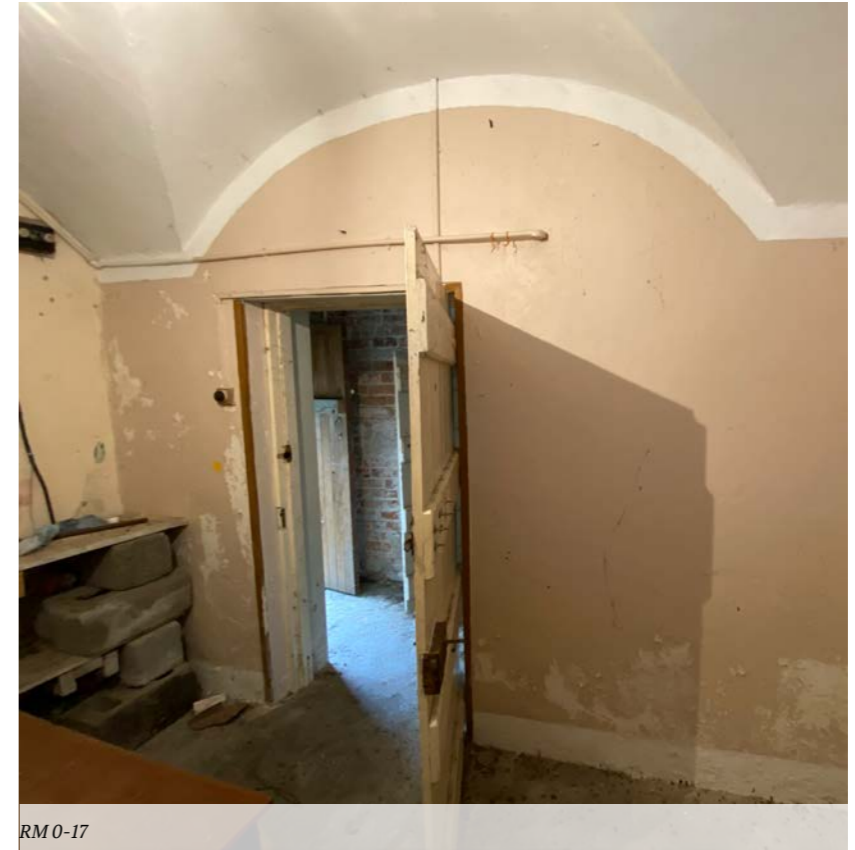
Ground Floor RM 0-17



ARCHITECTURE



RM 0-17



RM 0-17



RM 0-17 Window

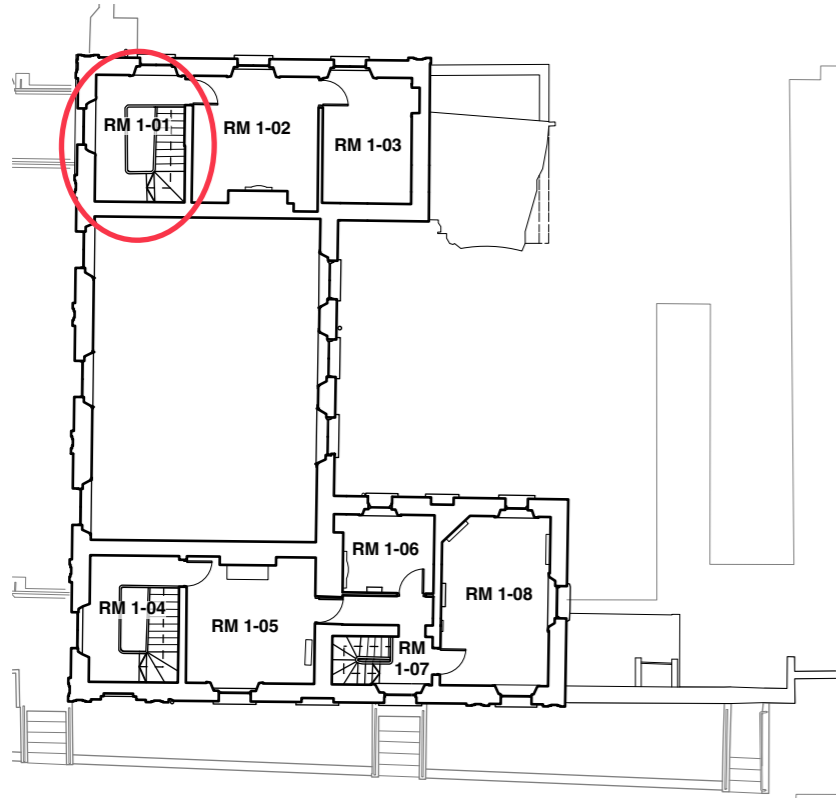


RM 0-17 Fireplace

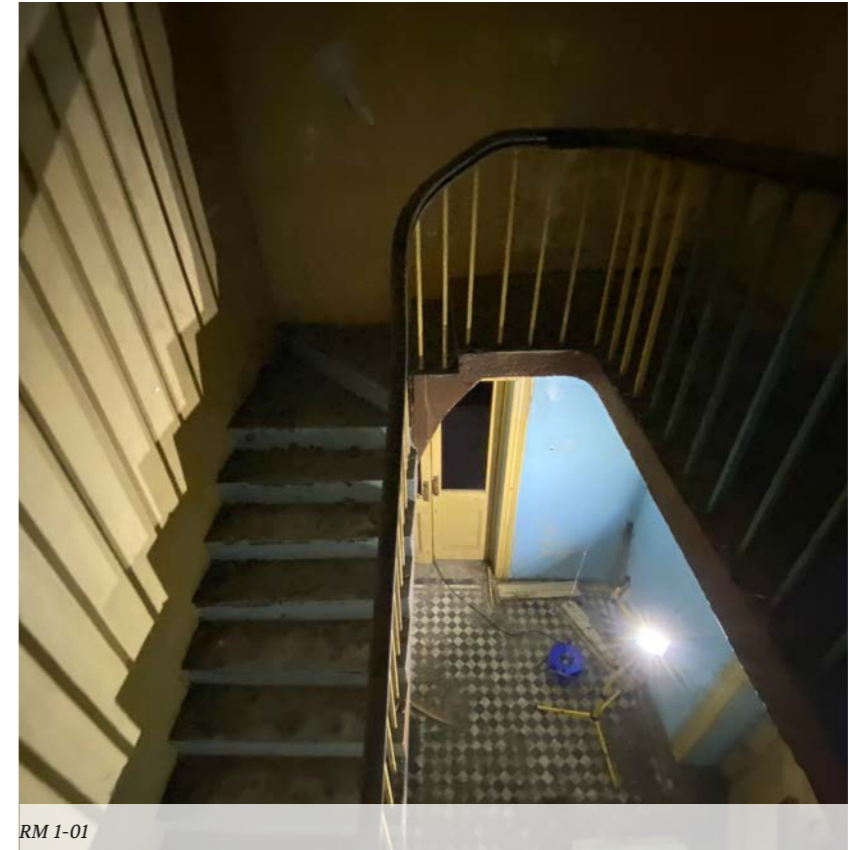


RM 0-17 Blocked window

First Floor RM 1-01



RM 1-01



RM 1-01

ARCHITECTURE



RM 1-01

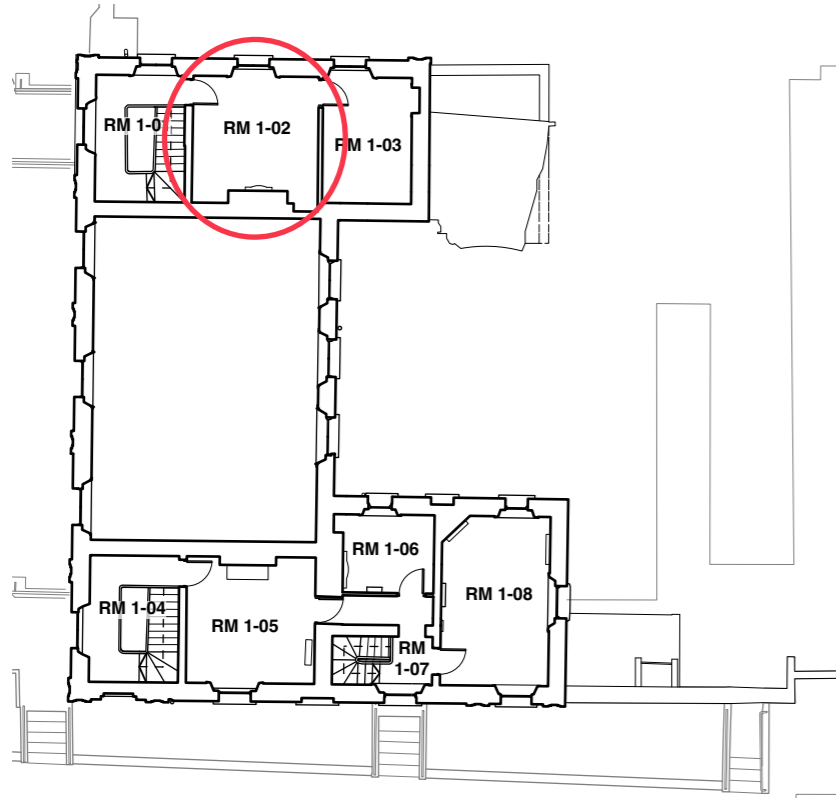


RM 1-01 Window

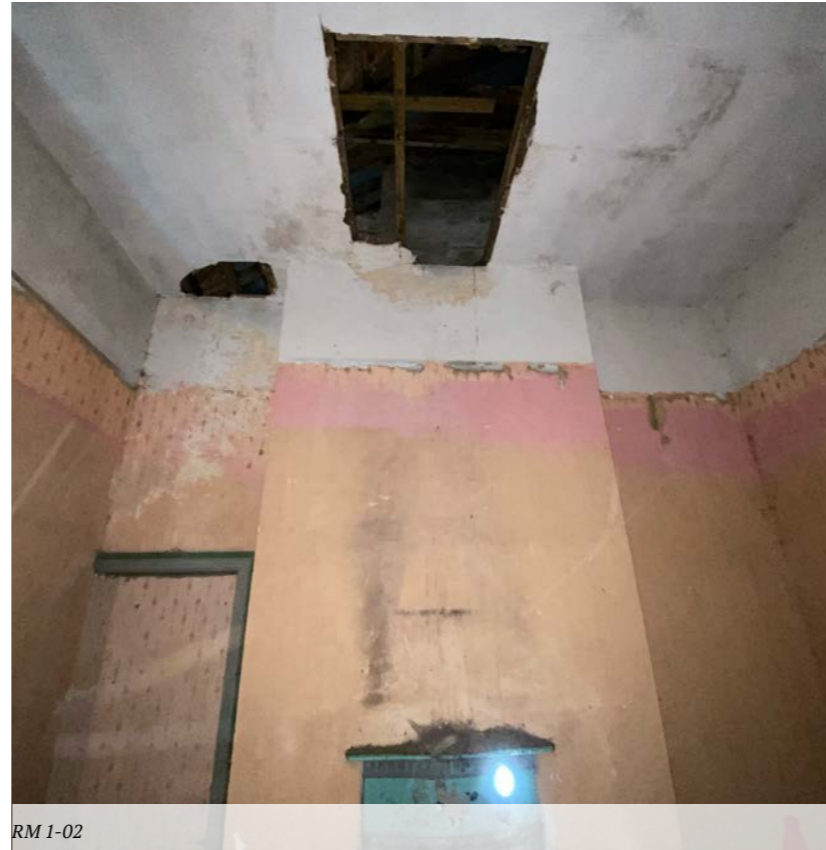


RM 1-01 Blocked window

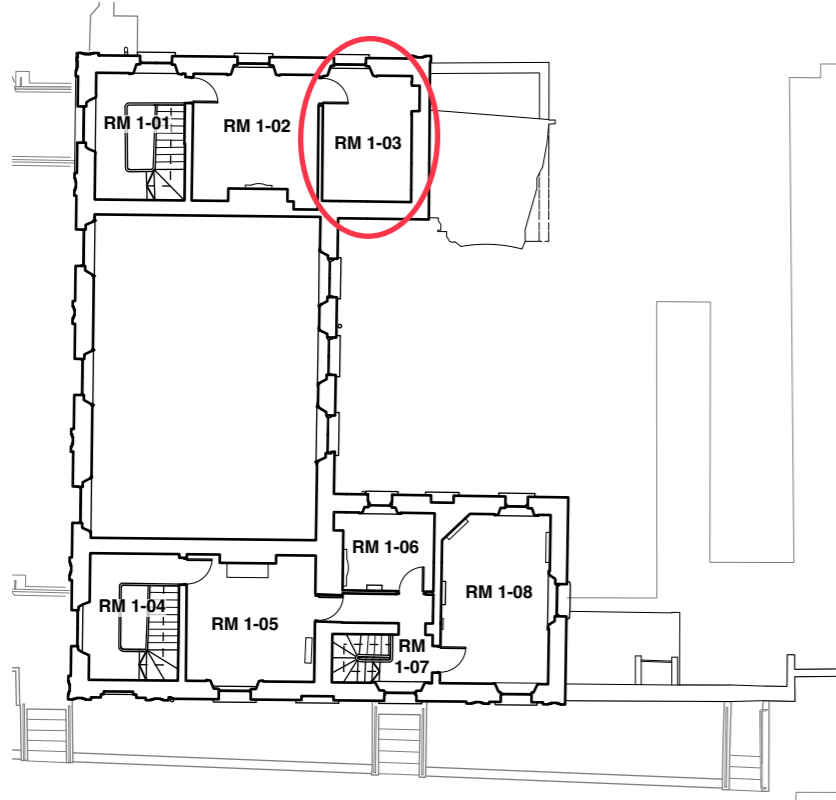
First Floor RM 1-02



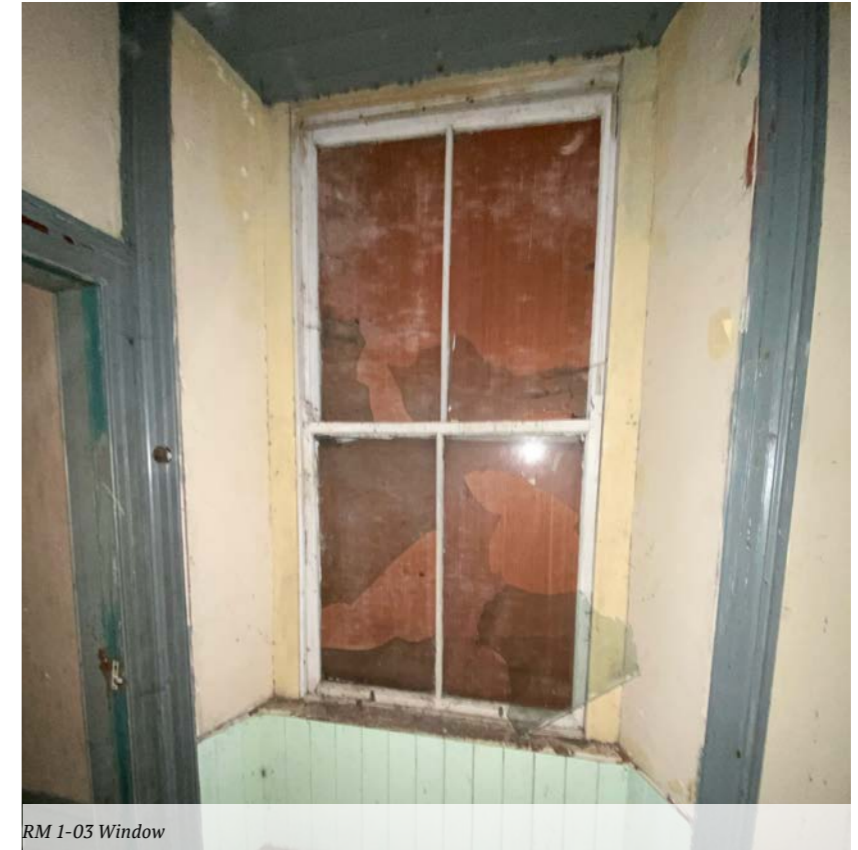
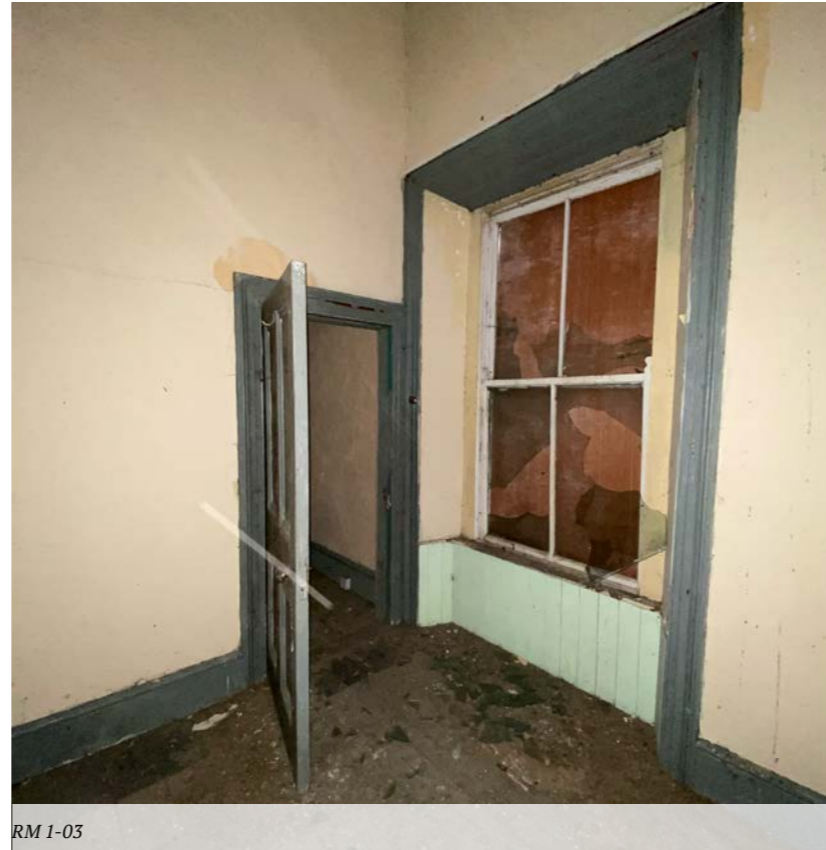
ARCHITECTURE



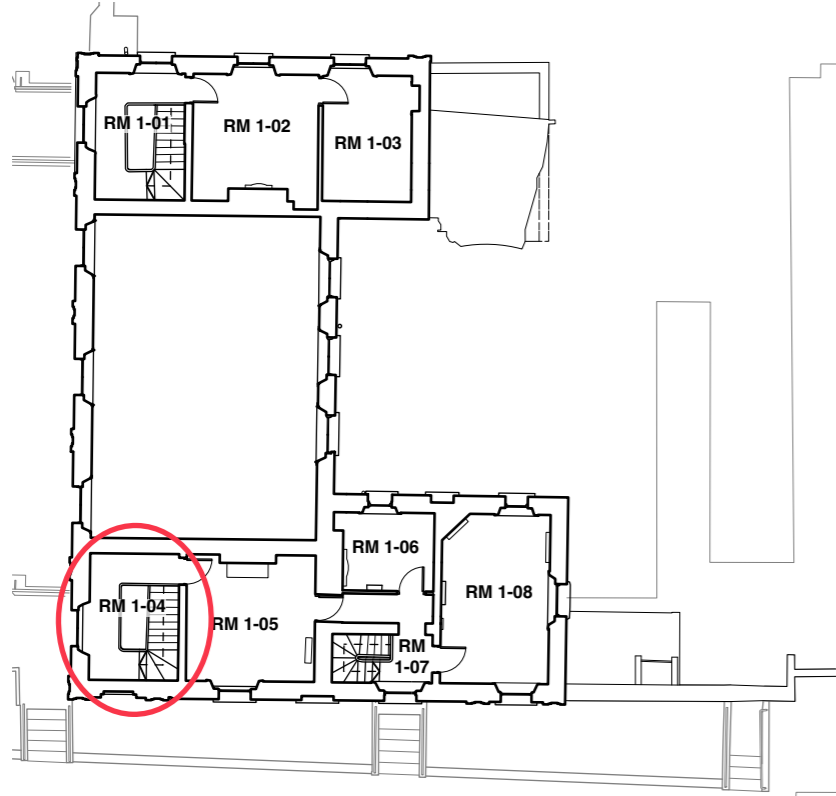
First Floor RM 1-03



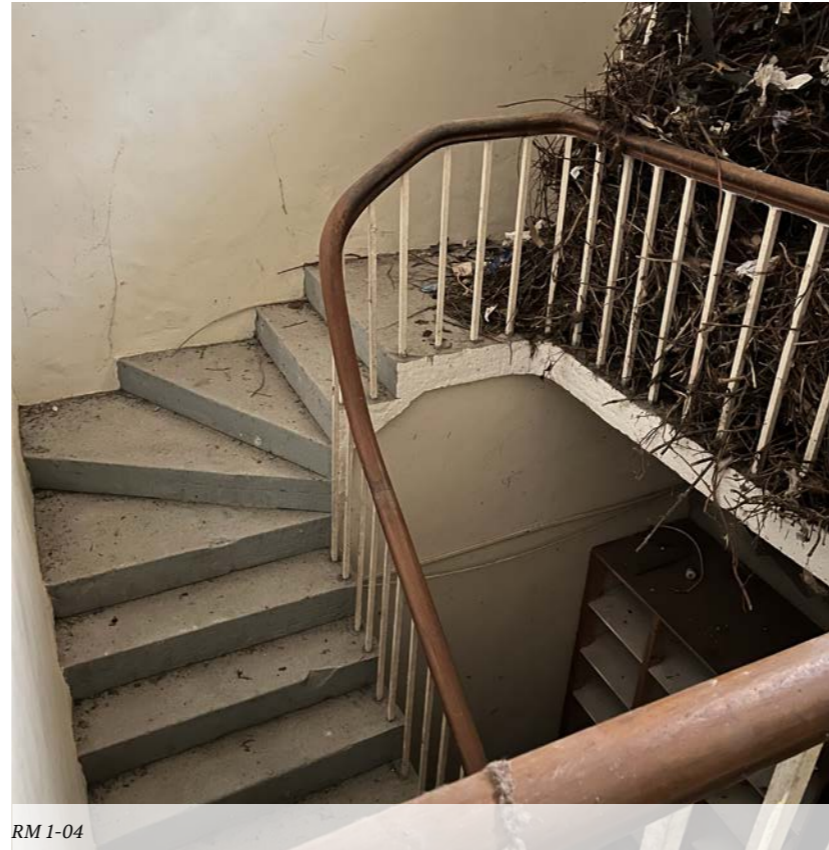
ARCHITECTURE



First Floor RM 1-04



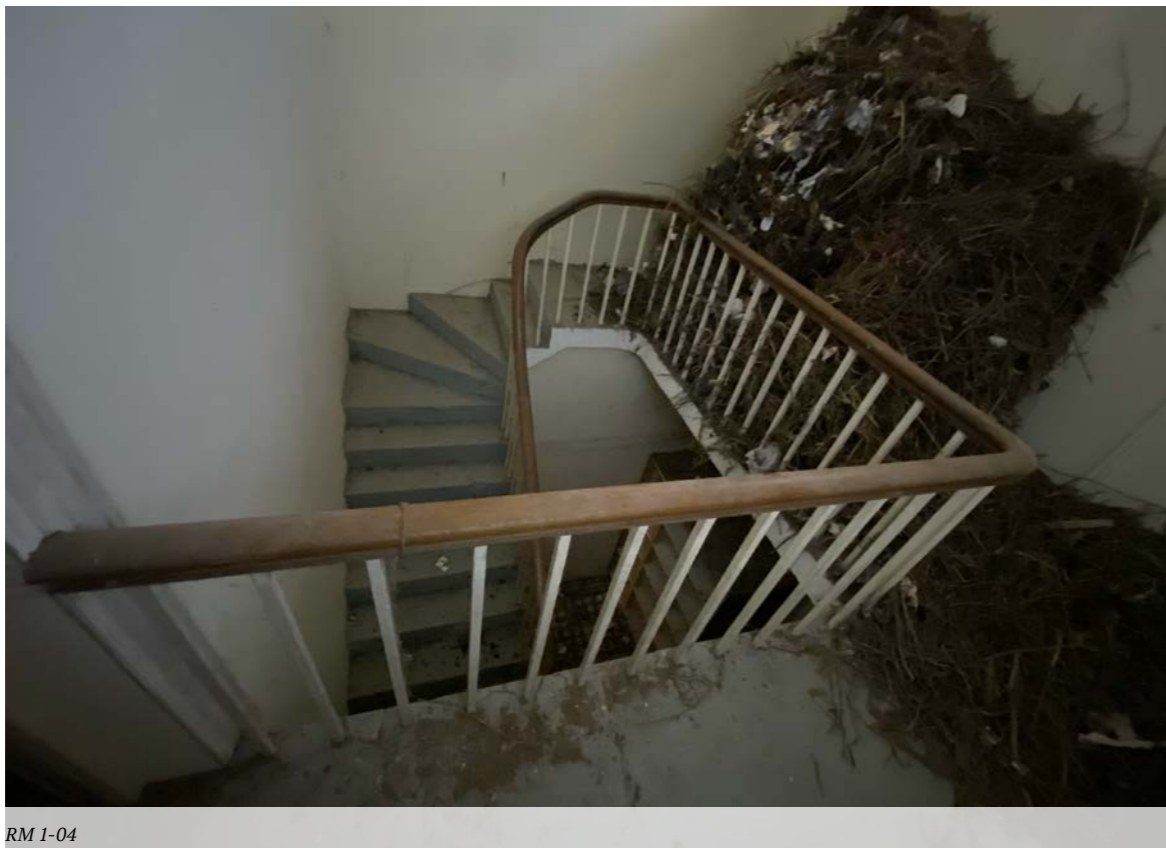
ARCHITECTURE



RM 1-04



RM 1-04



RM 1-04



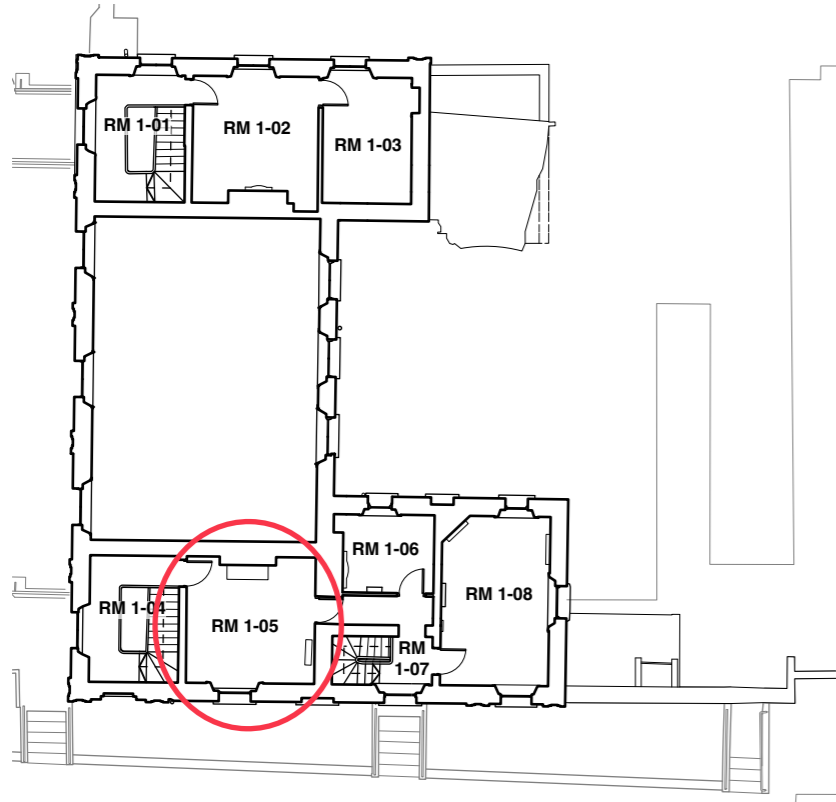
RM 1-04



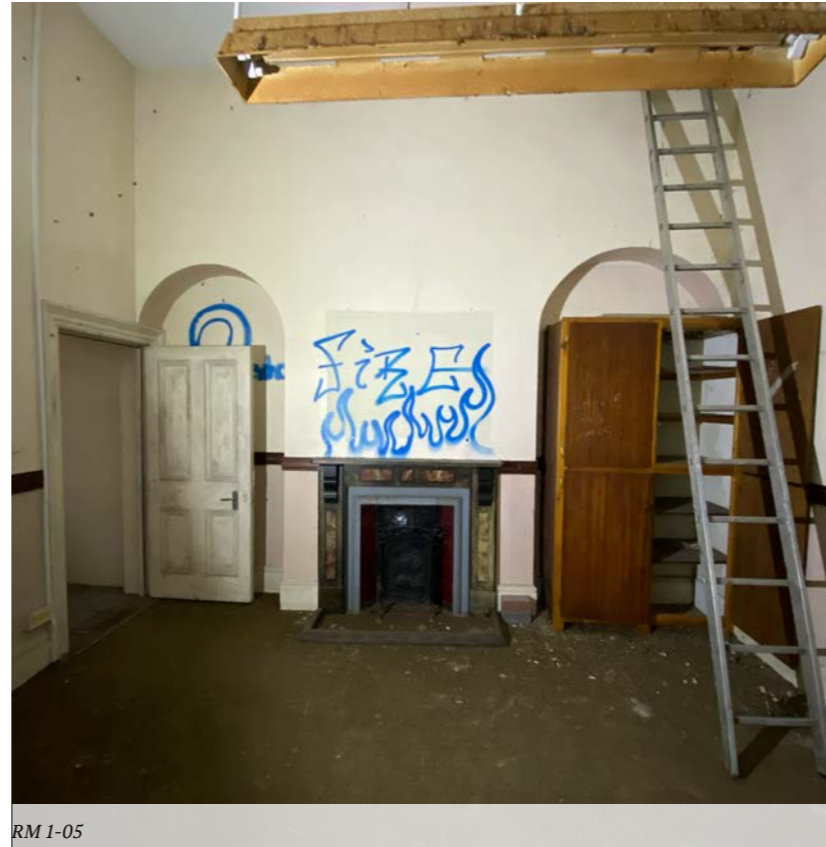
RM 1-04

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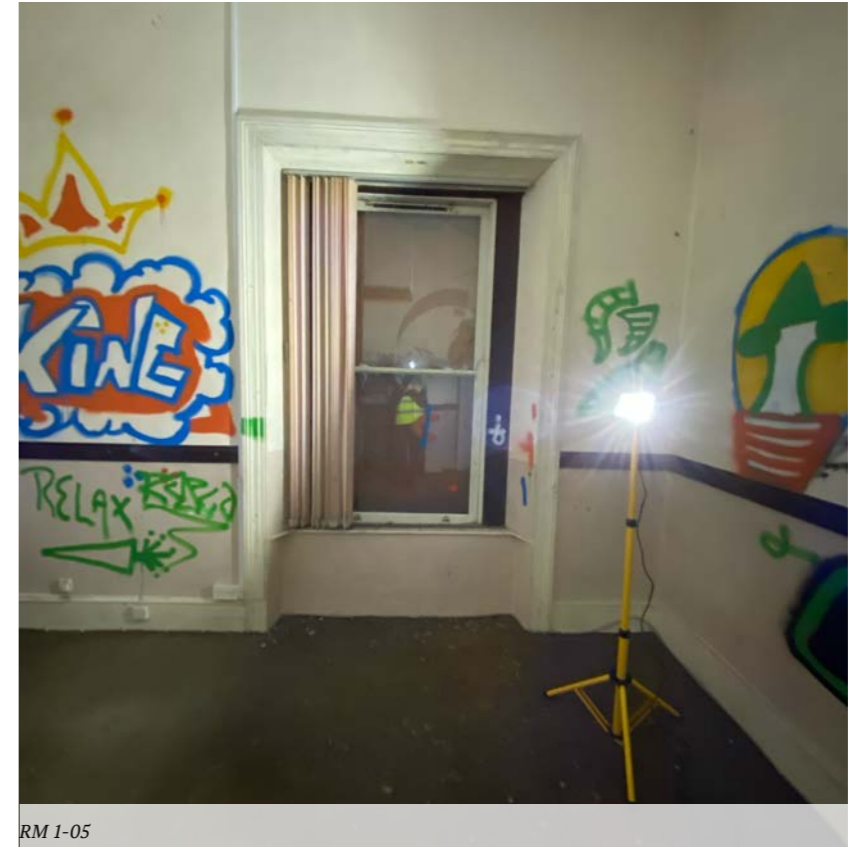
First Floor RM 1-05



ARCHITECTURE



RM 1-05



RM 1-05



RM 1-05 Fireplace

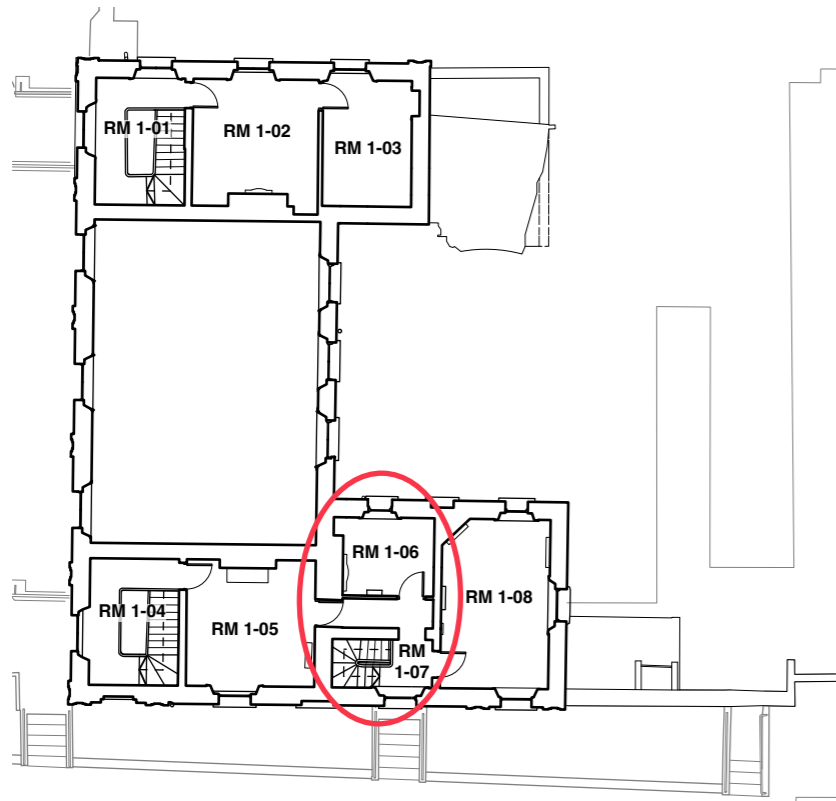


RM 1-05

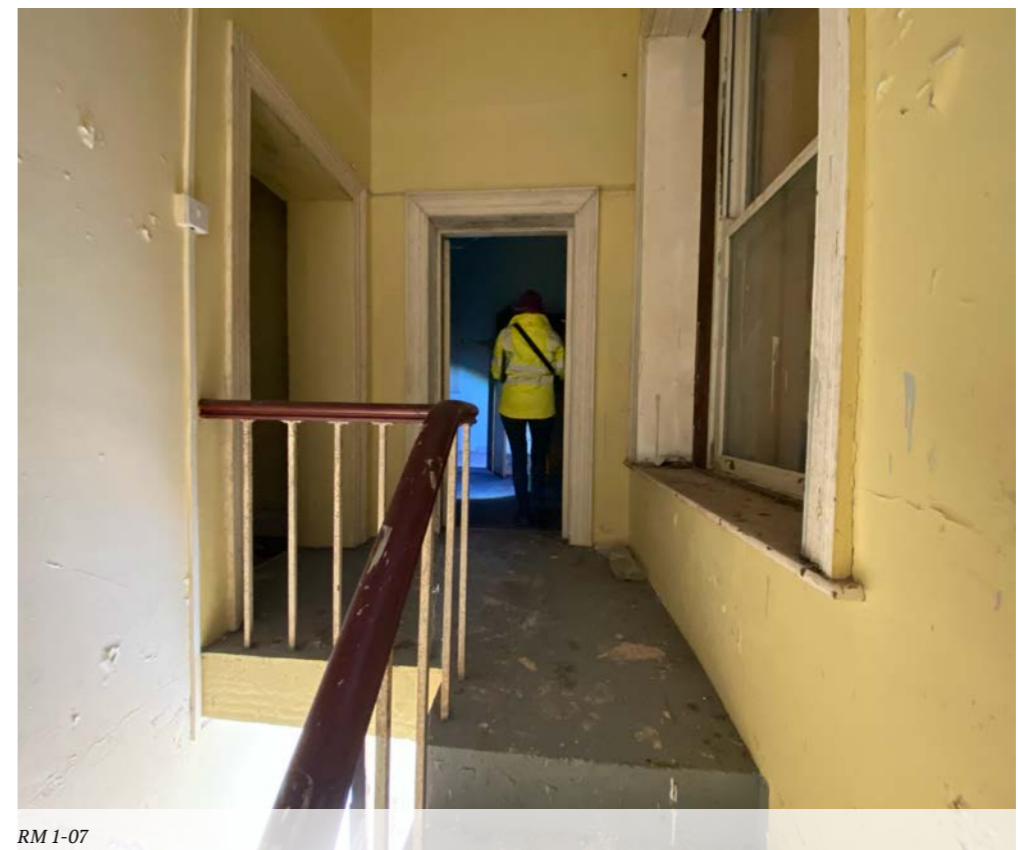
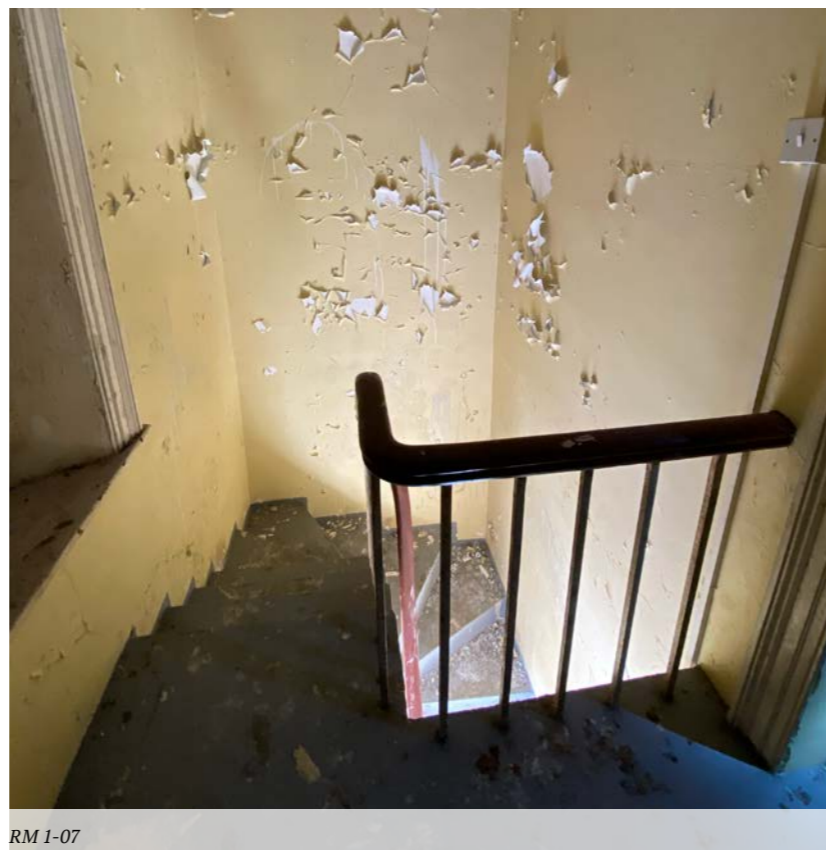
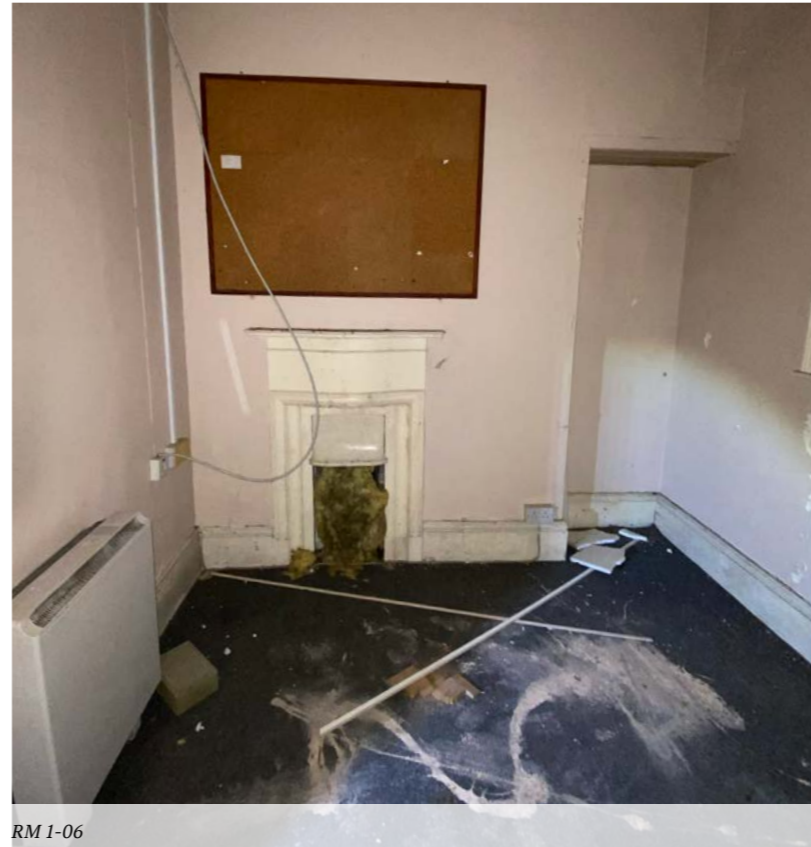


RM 1-05 Door

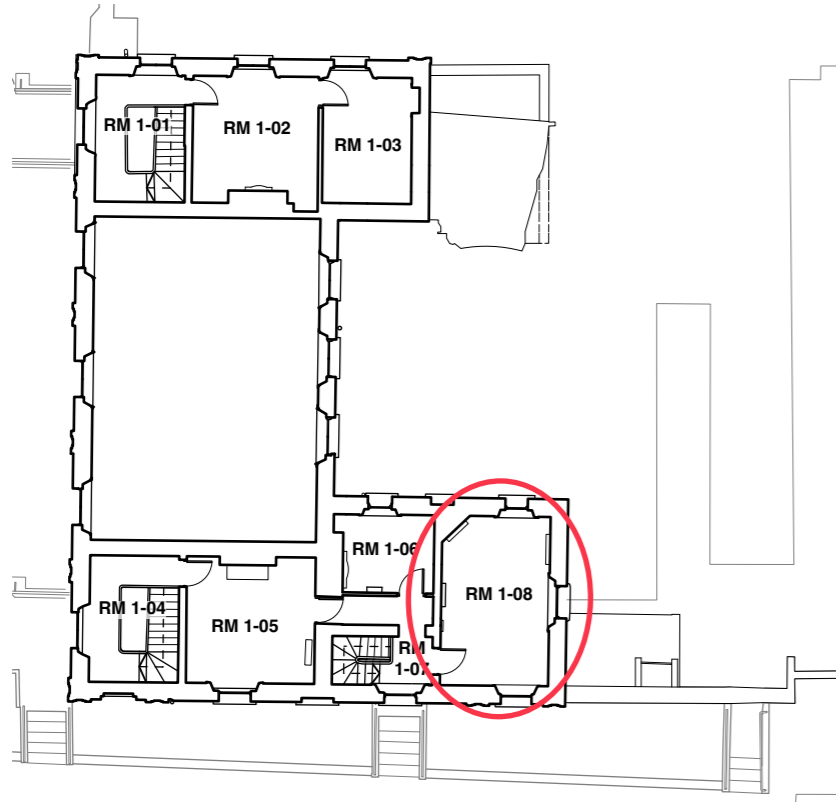
First Floor RM 1-06 & RM 1-07



ARCHITECTURE



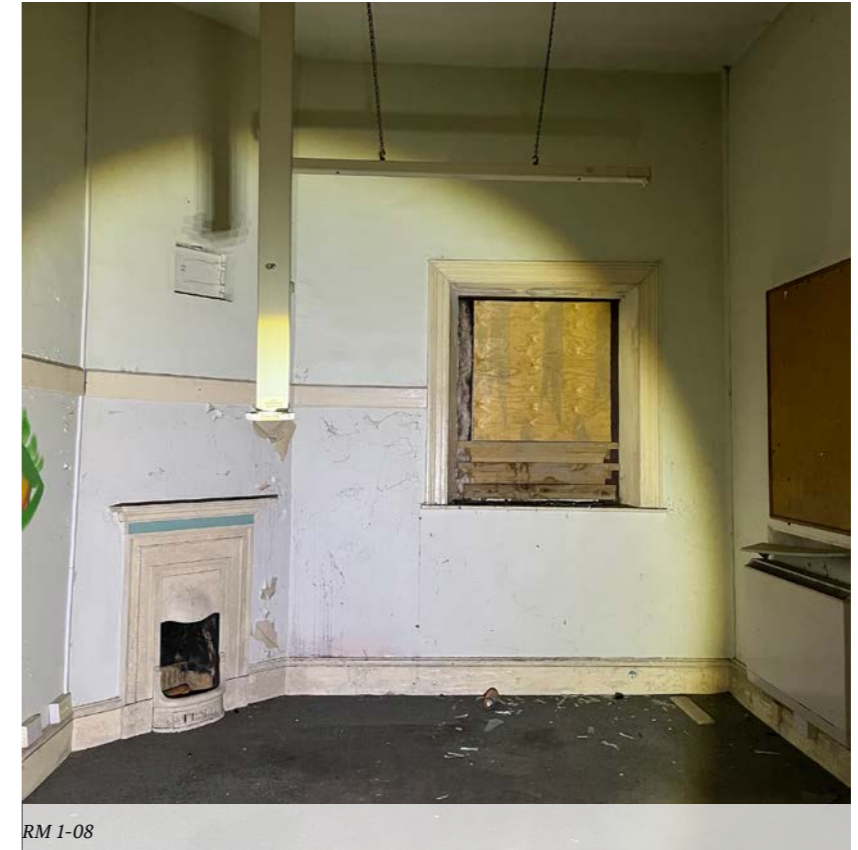
First Floor RM 1-08



ARCHITECTURE



RM 1-08



RM 1-08



RM 1-08 Window



RM 1-08 Window



RM 1-08 Fireplace

We are a design led practice working at the intersection of contemporary design and creative conservation.

Throughout thirty-five years of practice we have established a strong design ethos with particular emphasis on creativity, collaboration and context. Our work includes - the design of new contemporary buildings; the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and the creative conservation of many important historic buildings and places. Each project is approached with an open mind as we develop our designs in close conversation with our clients and other designers. We have earned a strong and trusted reputation from our clients, peers, consultants and others with whom we collaborate, and the quality of our work has been recognised through many national and international awards.



AWARDS

RIAI Public Space Award 2021
King Johns Castle, Carlingford (Winner)

RIAI Adaptation & Reuse Award 2021
Merrion Square House (Highly Commended)

RIAI Conservation Award 2020
St. Bartholomews's Church (Commended)

RIAI Silver Medal 2019
Church of Carthage (Highly Commended)

RIAI Commercial/Retail Award 2016
The People's Park Pavilion (Winner)

RIAI Conservation Award 2015
St. Catherine's (Highly Commended)

IGS Conservation Award 2014
West Wing Russborough (Highly Commended)

RIAI Conservation Award 2014
West Wing Russborough (Winner)

RIAI Conservation Award 2012
Hotel Ard na Sidhe (Highly Commended)

IGS Conservation Award 2012
Hotel Ard na Sidhe (Highly Commended)

RIAI Conservation Silver Medal
Browne Clayton Column (Highly Commended)

IGS Conservation Award 2011
Russborough

RIAI Conservation Award 2008
Russborough (Highly Commended)

RIAI Conservation Award 2008
Killiney Obelisk (Commended)

OPUS Conservation Award 2005
Browne Clayton Column

OPUS Design Award 2004
Balgaddy

RIAI Conservation Award 2004
Dromoland Gazebo



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