
Architectural Conservation Assessment

Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille

Main Street, Drinan, Ballymahon, Co. Longford

Longford County Council



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Associates
Architects

PREFACE

This Architectural Conservation Assessment has been prepared to support the application for permission for development at Main Street, Drinan, Ballymahon, Co. Longford. The development will consist of

- the demolition of existing rear extension, construction of new rear extension, and refurbishment of the Dean Egan Library
- **the construction of rear extension and refurbishment of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille and segregation of dedicated access adjacent to Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille to the lands to the South**
- **the construction of a new community workshop facility, yard space and parking to the rear of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille**
- the refurbishment of the Convent of Mercy NIAH Reg. No. 13316005, demolition of existing side extension, construction of new extensions to the South West and North East of the Convent of Mercy.
- the construction of a new community hall, parking and set down area on the grounds of the Convent of Mercy
- the construction of public realm improvement works including shared surfaces, landscaping, widening of existing lane adjacent to the Dean Egan Library and associated realignment of existing boundary wall.
- The provision of all groundworks, service connections, site drainage, internal paths, paving, parking, public lighting, public open space; and all associated site development works to complete the development.
- The proposed development is within the curtilage of protected structures LCC RPS No. 103 NIAH Reg. No. 13316028 and LCC RPS No. 255 NIAH Reg. No. 13316003.

This development is part of “Ballymahon – Pobal le Cheile Regeneration Project”, which includes works to Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille, the Dean Egan Library and the Convent of Mercy. The complete works that relate to Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille (RPS no. 255) include a) the construction of rear extension and refurbishment of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille and reinstatement of adjacent right-of-way, and b) the construction of a new community workshop facility, yard space and parking to the rear of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille. All other works listed in the development description above are to be disregarded as they do not affect Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille, and as such are irrelevant to the conservation assessment of this protected structure (RPS No. 255).

Applicant: Longford County Council

Application Type: Planning Application

Location: Main Street, Drinan, Ballymahon, Co. Longford

ITM Centre Point Co-Ordinates: 615277,757349

Ordnance Survey Reference No.: 2694-B / 2694-D

Structure:
Detached Seven-Bay Single-Storey Building: Former National School
NIAH Reference Number: 13316003
RPS Reference Number: 255

Date of Assessment: March 2024



NIAH: Front Elevation of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille

INTRODUCTION

Historical Description: From National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

“Detached seven-bay single-storey former national school, dated 1920, now disused, with central three-bay gable-fronted breakfront flanked by two later lower two-bay single-storey flat-roofed additions to front elevation (northeast). Pitched natural slate roofs with three brick chimneystacks, timber bargeboard and cast-iron rainwater goods. Rendered cornices to flat roofs. Painted lined-and-ruled render walls with carved limestone plaque to breakfront, over main entrance. Square-headed window openings with replacement windows and concrete sills. Square-headed door opening with timber panelled door and multi-paned overlight. Flight of concrete steps to entrance. Rendered boundary walls having square profile piers with double-leaf painted metal gates flanked by stiles. Set back from the road with roughcast rendered playground shelter with concrete columns and roughcast rendered outhouse to site. Located to the northwest end of Ballymahon.”

Appraisal:

The form of this symmetrical schoolhouse is enlivened by the central breakfront, which adds interest to the regular front façade. Although extended, this building retains much of its originally character. The single-storey, multiple-bay form of the structure is typical of the many single-storey national schools constructed in Ireland by the Office of Public Works during the first decades of the twentieth century. It forms part of a group with the other school buildings to the northwest end of Ballymahon and is of social importance to the town. The site is carefully planned with the stiles on the axis of the breakfront that results in a pleasing and formal roadside feature. Although dated 1920, there is a school building indicated here on a 1914 map of the area, indicating that structure replaced an earlier school building to site.

CORE DATA

Purpose of the assessment:

This Architectural Conservation Assessment has been prepared to support the application for the development of “Ballymahon – Pobal le Cheile Regeneration Project”, which applies to Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille (RPS 255), the Dean Egan Library (RPS103) and the Convent of Mercy. This Architectural Conservation Assessment has been prepared to support the refurbishment of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille and the proposed works to the rear of the protected structure, as such, the development works which apply to this site are:

- the construction of rear extension and refurbishment of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille and segregation of dedicated access adjacent to Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille to the lands to the South
- the construction of a new community workshop facility, yard space and parking to the rear of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille

Name & address of structure: Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille, Main Street, Drinan, Ballymahon, Co. Longford

Form of Statutory Protection: Longford County Council RPS 255

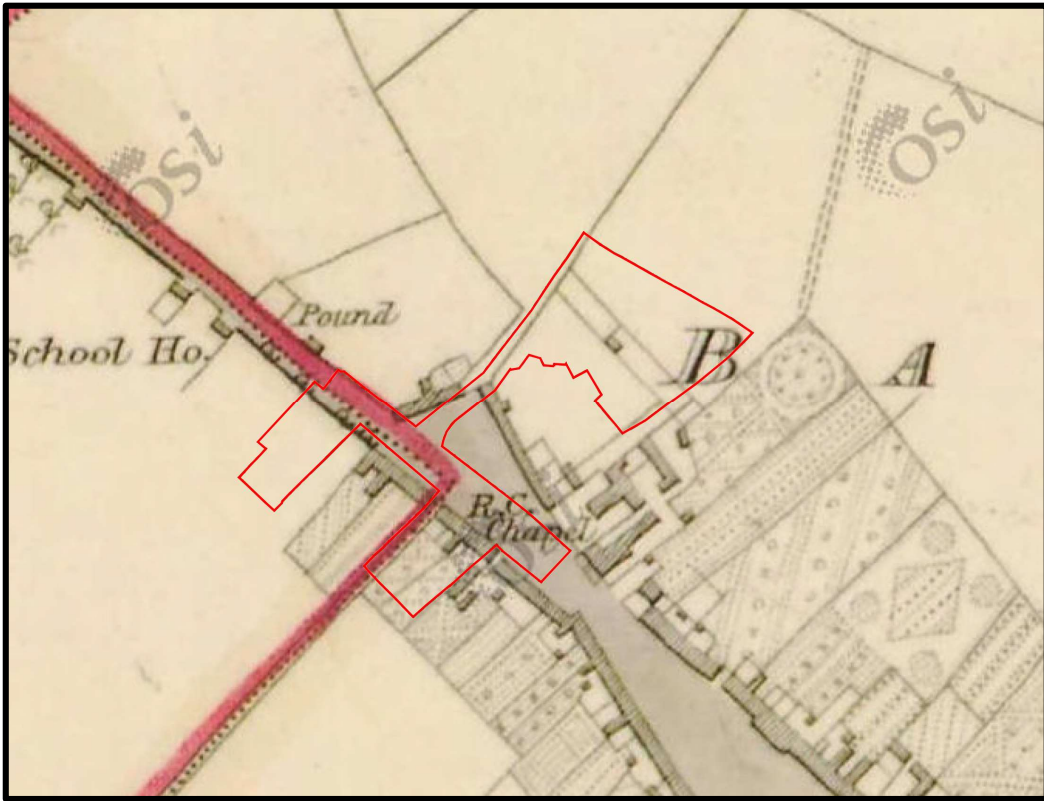
Record of Protected Structures: 255 Longford County Council Development Plan 2021-2027

NIAH Reference: 13316003

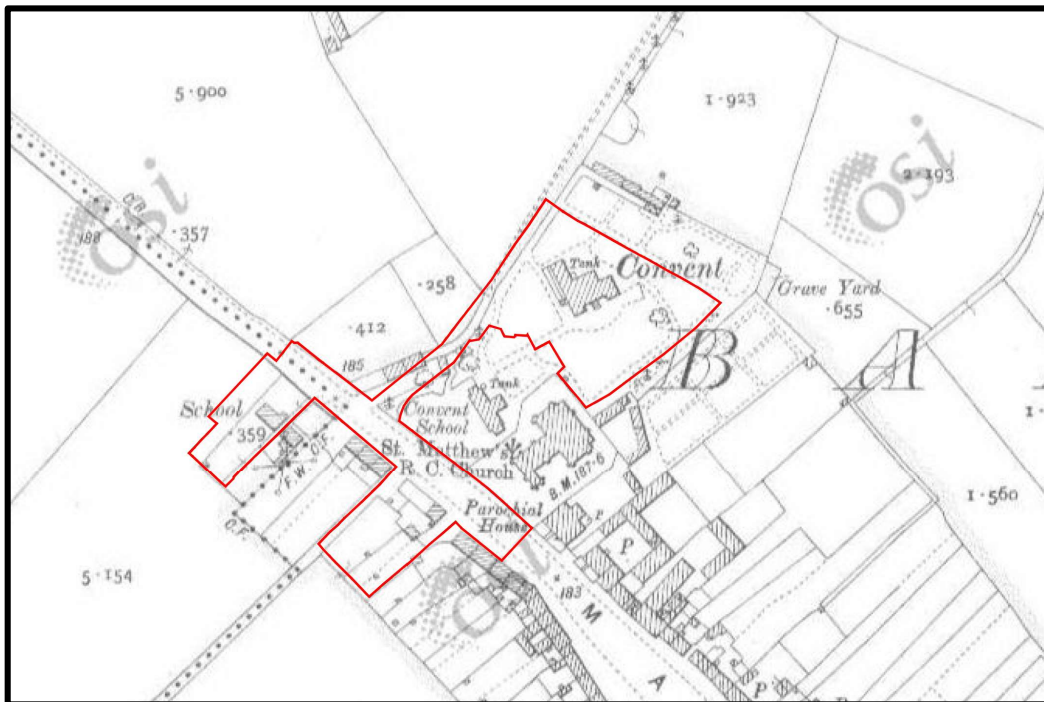
255	Former School	Scoil Naisunta Naomh Colmcille, Main Street, Ballymahon, DRINAN	13316003	215346	257403	Regional	Drinan	Ballymahon	Former School
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Longford County Council Development Plan: Extract of Record of Protected Structure

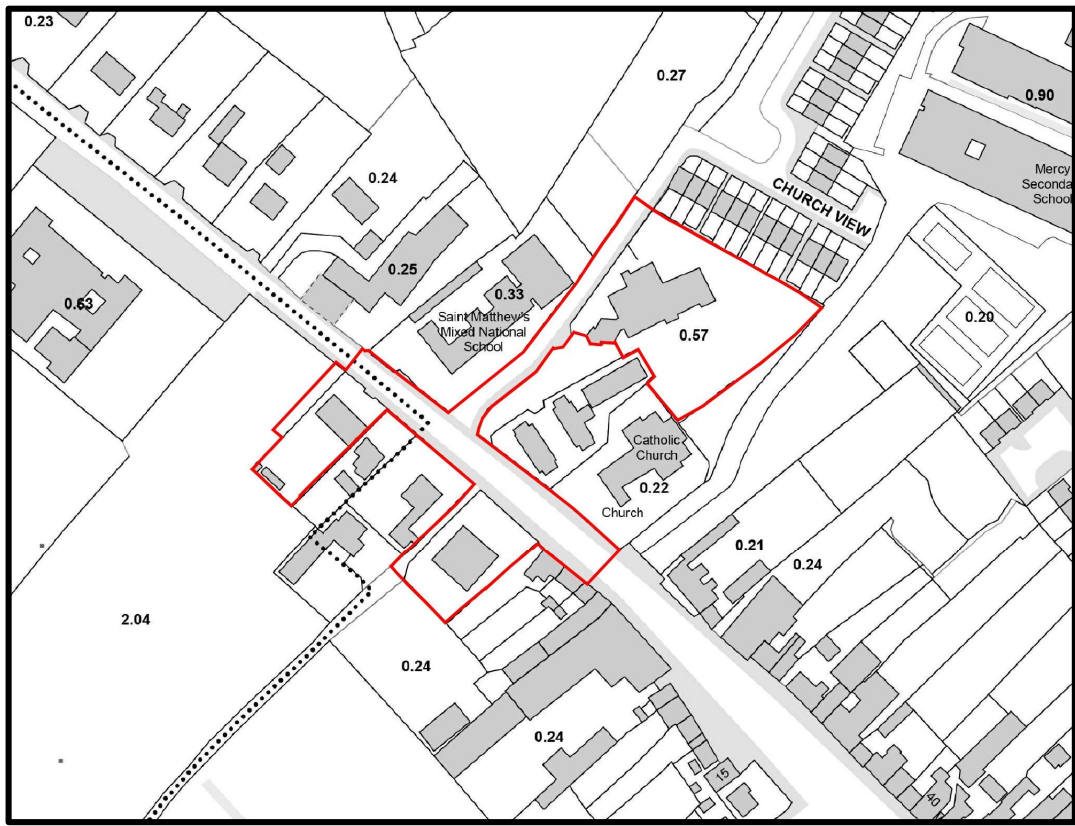
MAPS



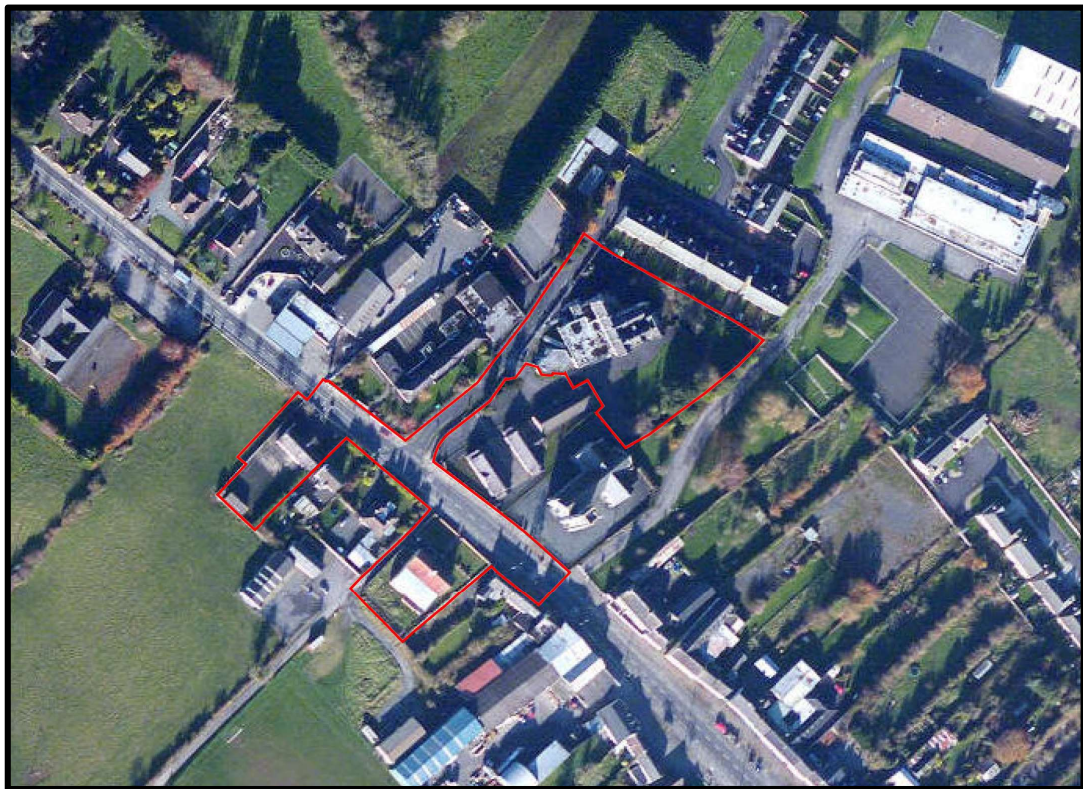
GeoHive Map Viewer - Historical map 6 inch Colour 1837-42



GeoHive Map Viewer - Historical Map: 25 inch 1888-1913



KLA - Site Location Map



Google Maps – Ariel Image

PROPOSED WORKS

The proposed works are as a result of the applicants wish to suggest the following works:

- The refurbishment of the existing protected structure Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille. This renovation would include the repair and replacement of existing windows & doors, the removal of the existing slate roof, to facilitate the installation of a breathable membrane and reinstatement the original slates using original elements and methods and thermal upgrade/ insulation of the building. This renovation work will conform to conservation best practice and is urgent as the building is currently derelict and deteriorating.
- Internal works which consist of high-quality refurbishment, the construction of internal walls separating the large internal space, currently in disrepair, into remote working hub/offices and a meeting room. Existing accommodation under the original flat roof area will be reconfigured as toilets and a kitchenette. Renovations will be carried out insofar as possible in accordance with building regulations and with the input of qualified structural engineers where required.
- The construction of a small flat-roofed lobby to the rear of the structure to provide an alternative access point to the rooms within the schoolhouse, connecting through an existing door, which will also provide level access, currently not possible to the front of the building. The architectural style and choice of materials for this extension will make clear that it is a later intervention in line with the principles of conservation.
- The refurbishment of the existing playground shelter within the curtilage of the protected structure at the rear of the site, to be used as an exterior store/ workshop area.
- The construction of an extension adjacent to the existing playground shelter, which will contain a community workshop, Universal Access WC, and office. The extension and existing playground shelter will be tied together by an exterior sheltered workspace creating a location for community and creativity to thrive. The lightweight aluminium pergola will complement the existing playground shelter and extension without affecting their visual impact.
- The addition of 4 parking spaces, including one accessible space, will provide the necessary parking for the community to avail of these facilities.
- The demolition of front boundary wall to open the area to the public and prevent the entrance to the site appearing uninviting and unapproachable.

- The design concept for the extension focuses on modern architecture with clean lines, large windows for natural light, and a harmonious combination of aluminium, concrete, and painted render. The materials were chosen for their durability, low maintenance, and ability to create a sleek and stylish appearance. Aluminium will be used for exterior elements such as window frames, doors, and the pergola. Painted render finishes to match the existing buildings will be applied to exterior walls, providing a clean and minimalistic appearance.

Please see images below of the existing building, and drawings of proposed works.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY



KLA – Image of the front elevation of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille



KLA – Image of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille



KLA – Image of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille



KLA – Image of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille



KLA – Image of side elevation of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille



KLA – Image of rear elevation of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille



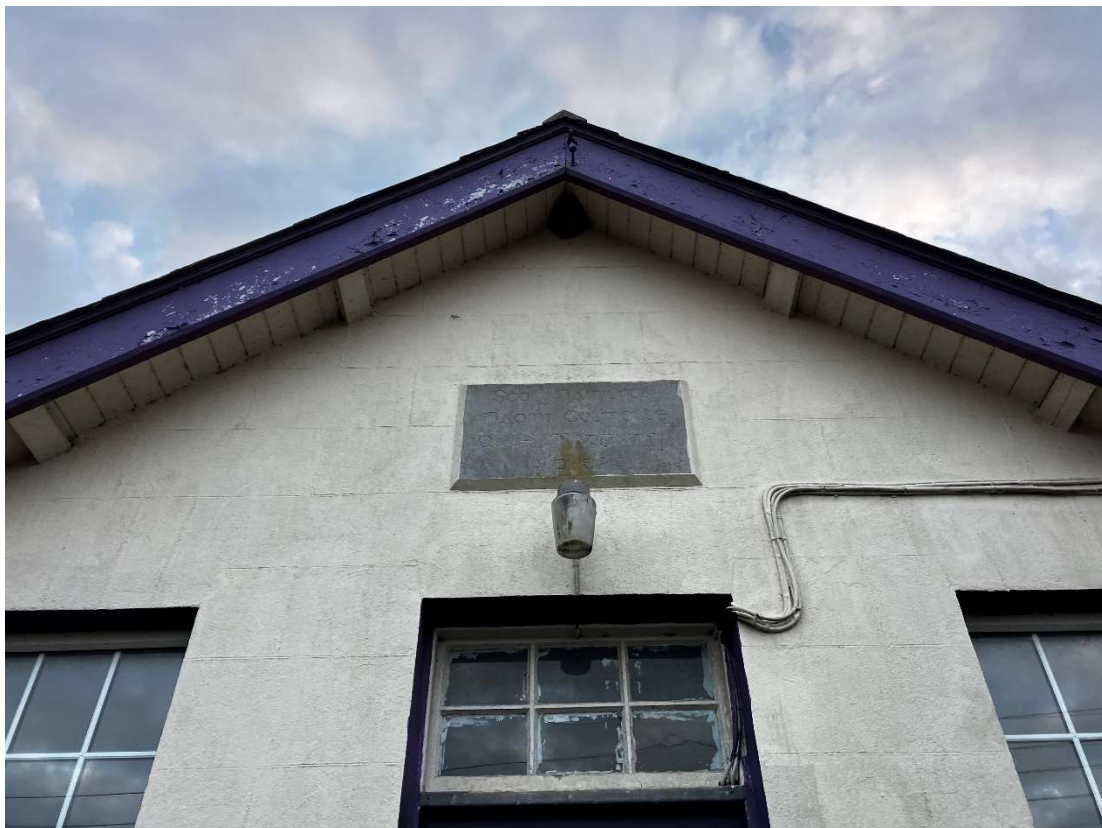
KLA – Image of side elevation of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille and shelter & outbuilding at rear



KLA – Image of playground shelter and outbuilding to rear of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille



KLA – Image of street elevation of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille



KLA – Image of existing carved limestone plaque over main entrance



NIAH– Image of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille c.2005



KLA – Image of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille - 2022

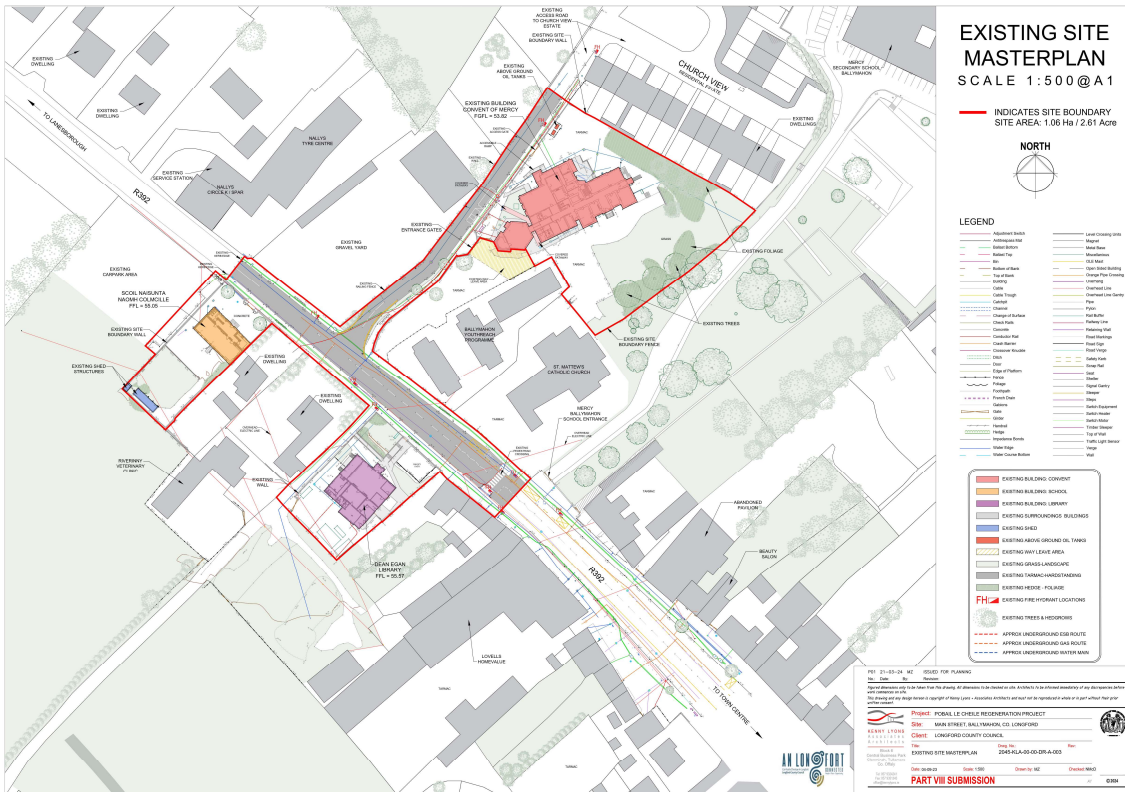


NIAH – Image of playground shelter and outbuilding at the rear of the site c.2005

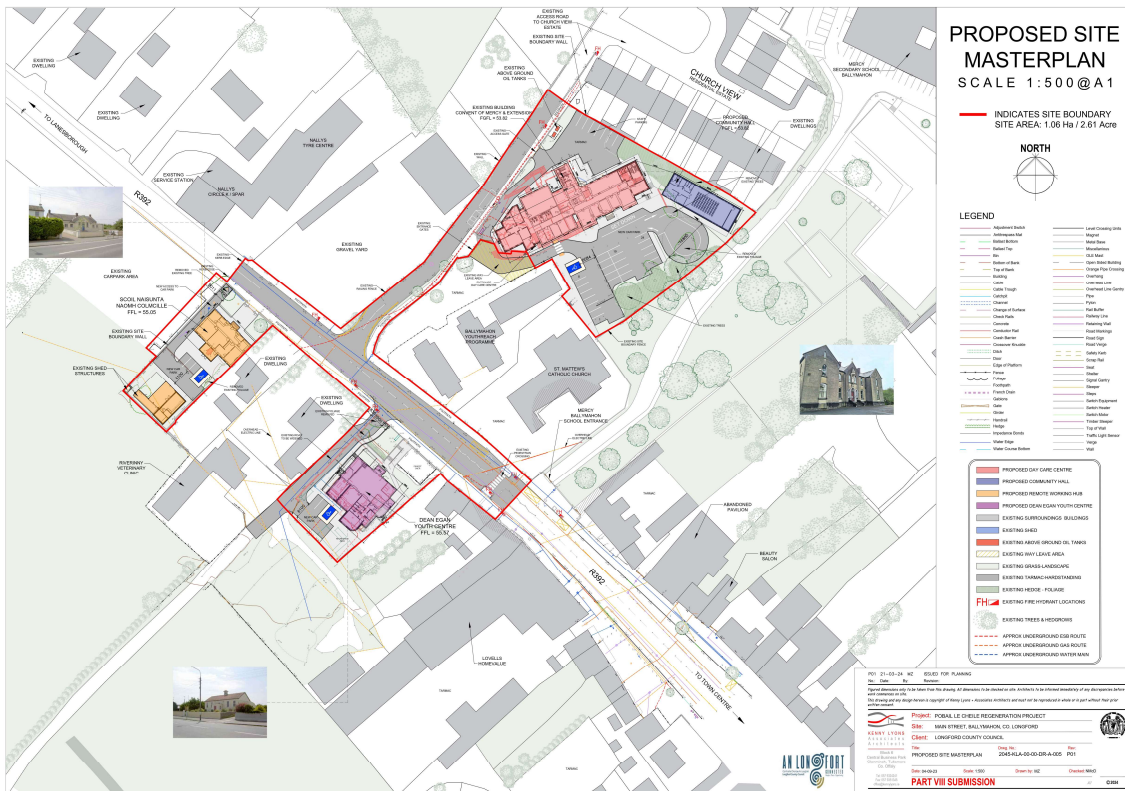


KLA – Image of playground shelter and outbuilding at the rear of the site - 2022

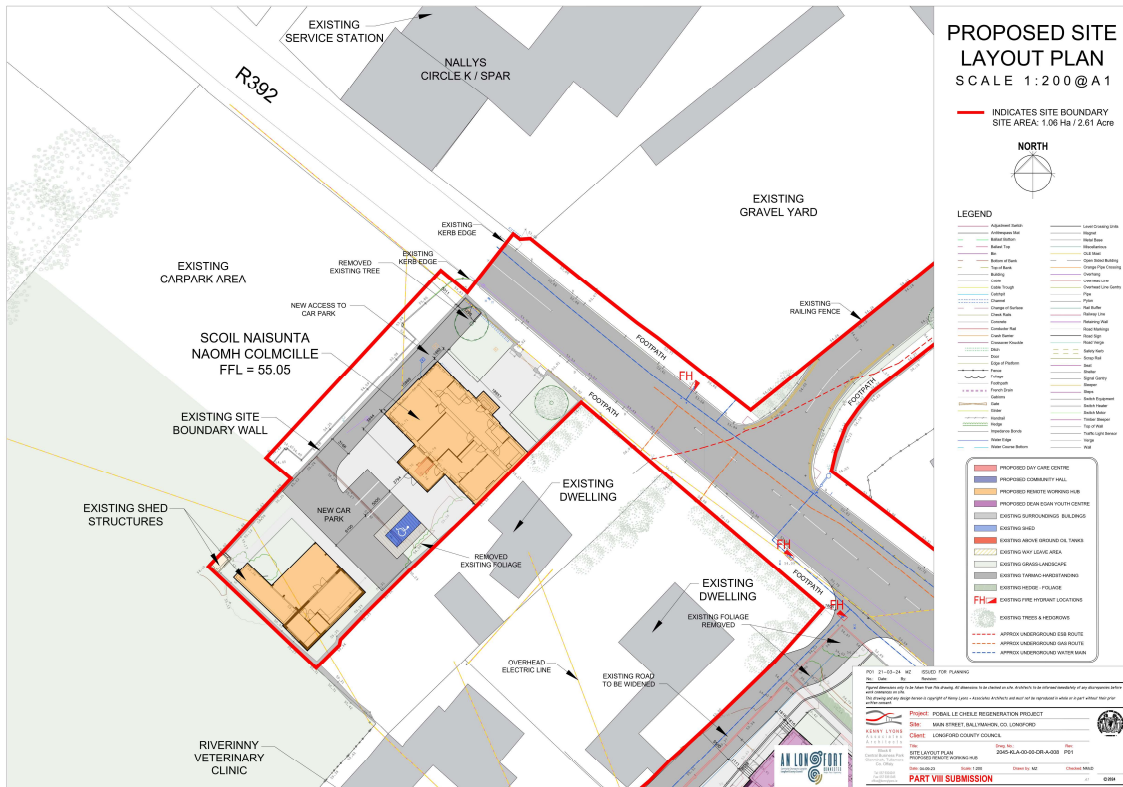
DRAWINGS



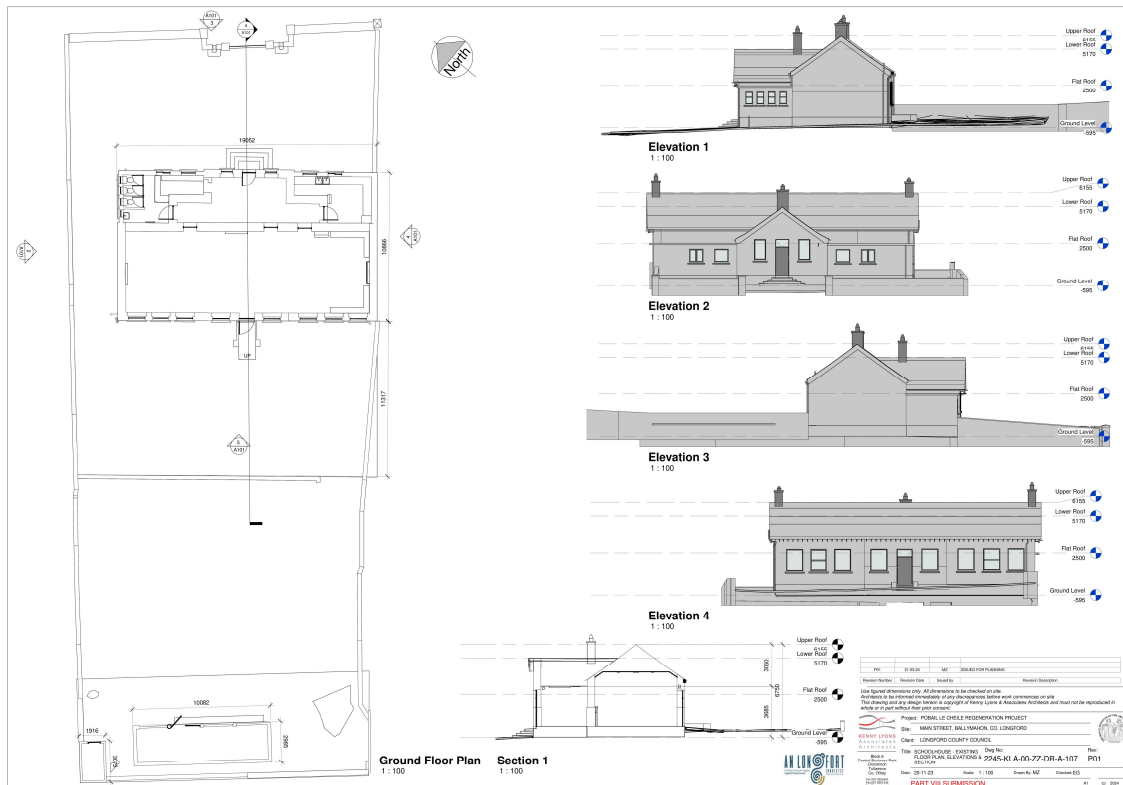
KLA – Existing Site Layout Plan



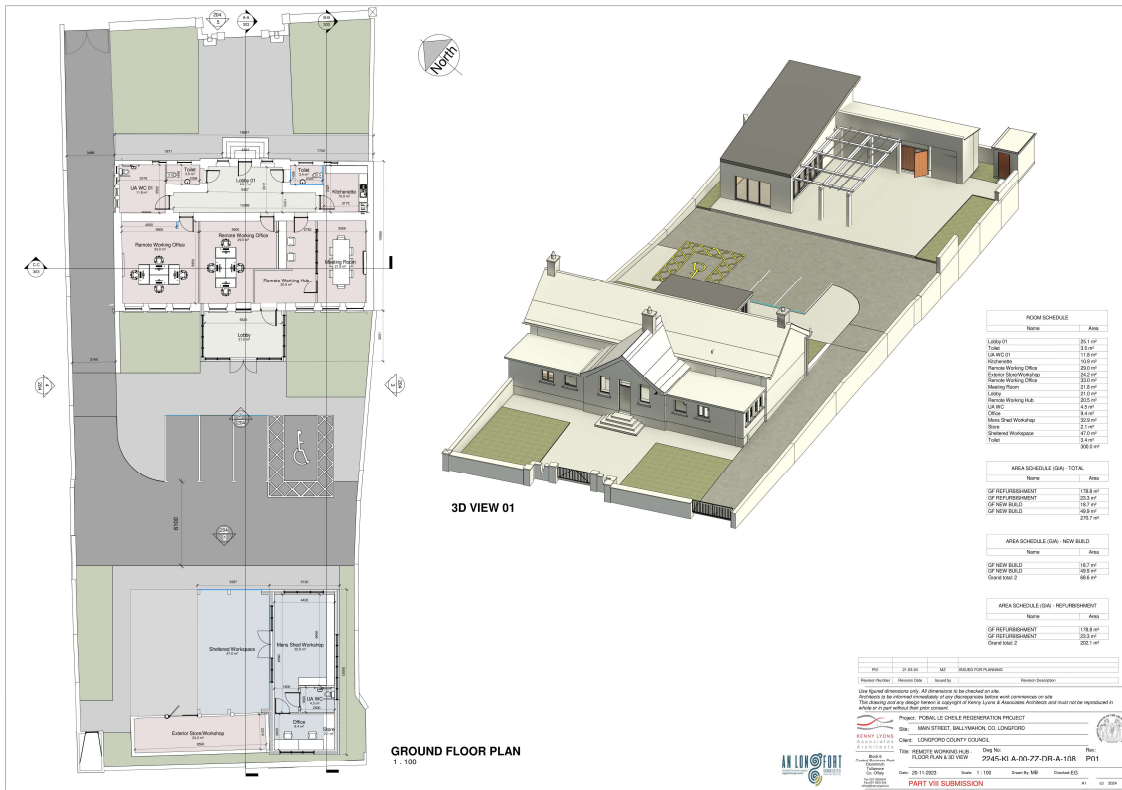
KLA – Proposed Site Layout Plan for “Ballymahon – Pobal le Cheile Regeneration Project”



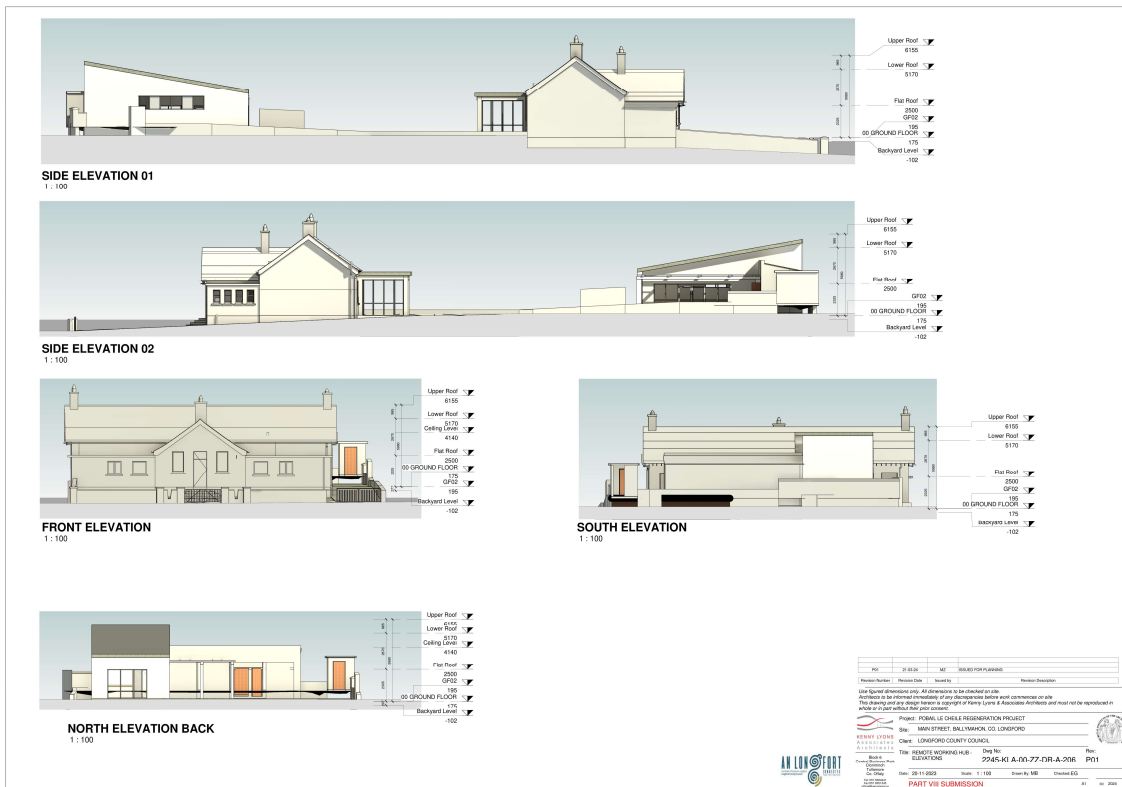
KLA – Proposed Site Layout Plan for Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille



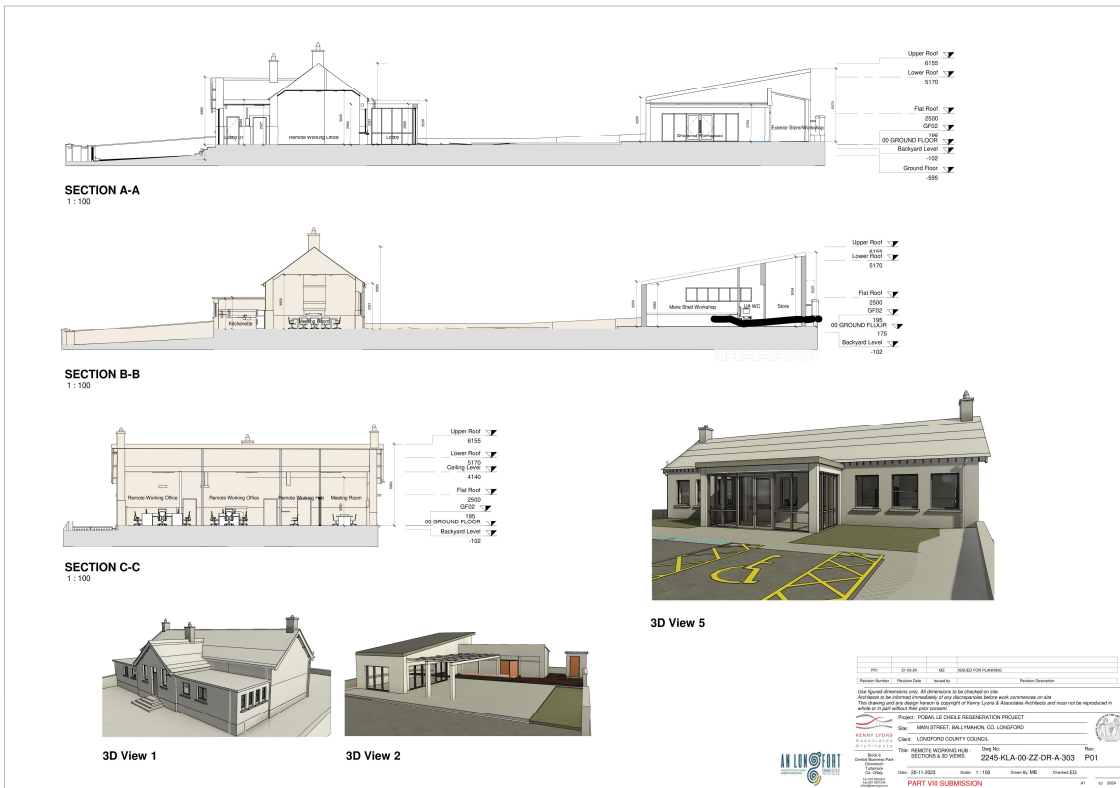
KLA – Existing Schoolhouse Building



KLA – Proposed Floor Plan & 3D



KLA – Proposed Elevations



KLA – Proposed Sections & 3D Views

IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL:

The impact of the proposed intervention will be positive as it will refurbish the existing protected structures and complement their architecture with modern design sensitive to the existing form.

Schedule of Interventions:

Feature Ref	Description	Proposed Alteration	Impact Of Proposed Alteration	Evaluation of proposed works/ mitigating measures/ justification
Front Windows	Square-headed window openings with replacement windows and concrete cills.	Repair existing windows and where necessary, replace windows.	Positive impact restoring the original character, fabric visuals and energy upgrade of the building.	Best conservation practice will be implemented. Specialist window supplier.
Timber Panelled Door	Square-headed door opening with timber panelled door and multi-paned fanlight.	New solid timber plank style door & refurbished fanlight.	Positive impact, the original fabric of the doors has been neglected. Repairing the panelled timber door will improve function and visual aesthetic and energy upgrade of the building.	Best conservation practice will be implemented. Specialist timber supplier.
Pitched Slate Roof & Flat Roofs	Pitched natural slate roofs with three brick chimneystacks, timber bargeboard and cast-iron rainwater goods & two flat roofs.	Removal of existing slate roof, installation of a breathable membrane & reinstatement the original covering. Include for appropriate roof space insulation.	This will have a positive impact on the building. Improving the roof structure and preserving the buildings character. and energy upgrade of the building.	This is a justified step to extend the longevity of the roof and the protected structure.
Cornices	Rendered cornices to two-bay single-storey flat roofs.	The existing corning seems to be in reasonable condition, can be refurbished, if necessary, otherwise will be re-rendered.	This will have a positive impact on the building. Protecting the cornices and preserving the buildings character.	This is a justified step to extend the longevity of the cornices and the protected structure.
Concrete Steps	Existing flight of concrete steps to entrance.	Steps to be retained and cleaned of existing moss and debris. Refurbishment is presumed unnecessary.	This will have a positive impact as it is part of the original character of the buildings front façade.	This proposed work is required in order to provide a safe, non-slip entrance to the building.

Feature Ref	Description	Proposed Alteration	Impact Of Proposed Alteration	Evaluation of proposed works/ mitigating measures/ justification
External Walls	Painted lined-and-ruled render walls with carved limestone plaque to breakfront over main entrance	Walls to be refurbished in a considered manner, with dry lining to be installed internally where possible.	This will have a positive impact as the thermal performance of the building will be improved, while the external facades are restored to reinstate the original visual aesthetic.	This is a justified step to improve the insulation of the building, restore the external facades, and recover the building from its current derelict state.
Boundary Walls	Rendered boundary walls have square profile piers with double-leaf painted metal gates flanked by stiles.	Front boundary wall to be demolished to open site to the public.	This will have a positive impact as it will open the site to members of the public and avoid any segregation the existing hardline boundary could cause.	This is a justified step as the boundary wall currently separates the site from the street and creates an unapproachable & uninviting entrance to the site.
Existing Playground Shelter	Roughcast rendered playground shelter with concrete columns.	Roughcast rendered playground shelter to be repainted and existing timber door to be replaced.	This will restore the old shelter to a functioning exterior store/workshop and revive the external façade.	This is an important step to prevent further disrepair of the shelter and allow it to be a visually appealing structure on this site.
New Extension	Single storey pitched roof extension and sheltered exterior workshop space	Construction of a single storey pitched roof extension & aluminium pergola at rear of site using materials and style which highlights that it is a later intervention.	Extension & existing playground shelter will be tied together by an exterior sheltered workspace creating a location for community and creativity to thrive.	This is a justified step to provide the community with a workshop for all to use, using thoughtful design and in line with best conservation practice.
New Porch	Single storey flat roofed glazed porch	Construction of single storey glazed porch to rear of existing building, containing a new lobby & entrance area	This will have a positive impact as it supplies a new level access entrance to existing building and allows alternate access route to remote working hubs.	This is a justified step as it provides an accessible entrance to existing building and draws people from the carpark into the building.

Significance of Structure:

The regeneration and repurposing of this protected structure is a necessary and important step to allow present generations to enjoy the physical expression of past generations. These works would also prevent the building from falling into further disrepair and allow it to somewhat relive its former use as a schoolhouse through the provision of a space where adults can remotely work, ensuring education and companionship still flourish within this building. The crucial restoration of this building, the adjacent outhouse and playground shelter will reinstate their architectural significance in the heart of the community of Ballymahon.

Effectiveness of the Works:

The proposed works will preserve the entirety of the original protected structure of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille and its corresponding outbuildings. If ignored and left in its current state, the roofs, windows, and doors will fall into further disrepair. We believe that the proposed refurbishment of Scoil Náisiúnta Naomh Colmcille will be beneficial to the enhancement of Ballymahon town and allow the building to be preserved and celebrated for generations to come.

Architectural Impact Statement prepared on the 14/03/2024 by:



Joseph Breslin BArch BSc (Architectural Studies) MRIAI
Accredited in Conservation Grade III
For Kenny Lyons & Associates Architects

BIBLIOGRAPHY & ICONOGRAPHY:

- 1) Longford County Council Development Plan 2021-2027.
- 2) Historic Maps, Site Location Map – By OSI - (www.osi.ie).
- 3) Photographs by Kenny Lyons & Associates.
- 4) Photographs from National Inventory of Architectural Heritage - (NIAH)
- 5) Aerial Image from Google Maps.