
Architectural Conservation Assessment

Dean Egan Library

Main Street, 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, 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 the Dean Egan Library (RPS no. 103) include a) the demolition of existing rear extension, construction of new rear extension, and refurbishment of the Dean Egan Library, and b) 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. All other works listed in the development description above are to be disregarded as they do not affect the Dean Egan Library, and as such are irrelevant to the conservation assessment of this protected structure (RPS No. 103).

Applicant: Longford County Council

Application Type: Planning Application

Location: Main Street, Ballymahon, Co. Longford

ITM Centre Point Co-Ordinates: 615277,757349

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

Structure:
Detached Five-Bay Single-Storey Building: Former Public Library
NIAH Reference Number: 13316028
RPS Reference Number: 103

Date of Assessment: March 2024



NIAH: Front Elevation of the Dean Egan Library

INTRODUCTION

Historical Description: From National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

“Detached five-bay single-storey former public library, dated 1930, with single-bay flat-roofed entrance porch to the centre of the main elevation (northeast) and single-storey lean-to extension to rear (southwest). Now in use as a community centre. Pitched tiled roof with central pyramidal roofed louvered vent on square-plan and with rendered chimneystacks to the rear. Painted pebbledashed walls with painted smooth rendered eaves and plinth courses. Painted channelled smooth rendered walls to porch. Square-headed window openings with painted smooth render surrounds, painted rendered sills and replacement windows. Diocletian window to central bay (behind porch) with painted smooth render surround and timber casement window. Square-headed opening to front face of porch with double leaf timber panelled door, having painted metal lettering and electrical lamp above entrance. Recessed from road having painted pebbledashed boundary walls with painted smooth rendered piers with stepped profile and iron gates, to site. Located to the northwest end of Ballymahon.”

Appraisal:

This library retains stylistic features reminiscent of the Modern style employed in Irish Free State architecture in the first half of the twentieth century, this is particularly evident in the treatment of the porch, gate piers and in the metal lettering and lamp above the entrance. The vent creates an interesting roof profile. An unusual building type in the area, the library was built in memory of, and named after, Rev. Dean Egan. In spite of refenestration this building largely retains its original form and character. It is an interesting addition to the predominantly nineteenth century streetscape of Ballymahon and an integral element of the built heritage of the town.

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 the Dean Egan Library and the proposed works to the rear of the protected structure, as such, the development works which apply to this site are:

- the demolition of existing rear extension, construction of new rear extension, and refurbishment of the Dean Egan Library
- 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.

Name & address of structure: The Dean Egan Library, Main Street, Ballymahon, Co. Longford

Form of Statutory Protection: Longford County Council RPS 103

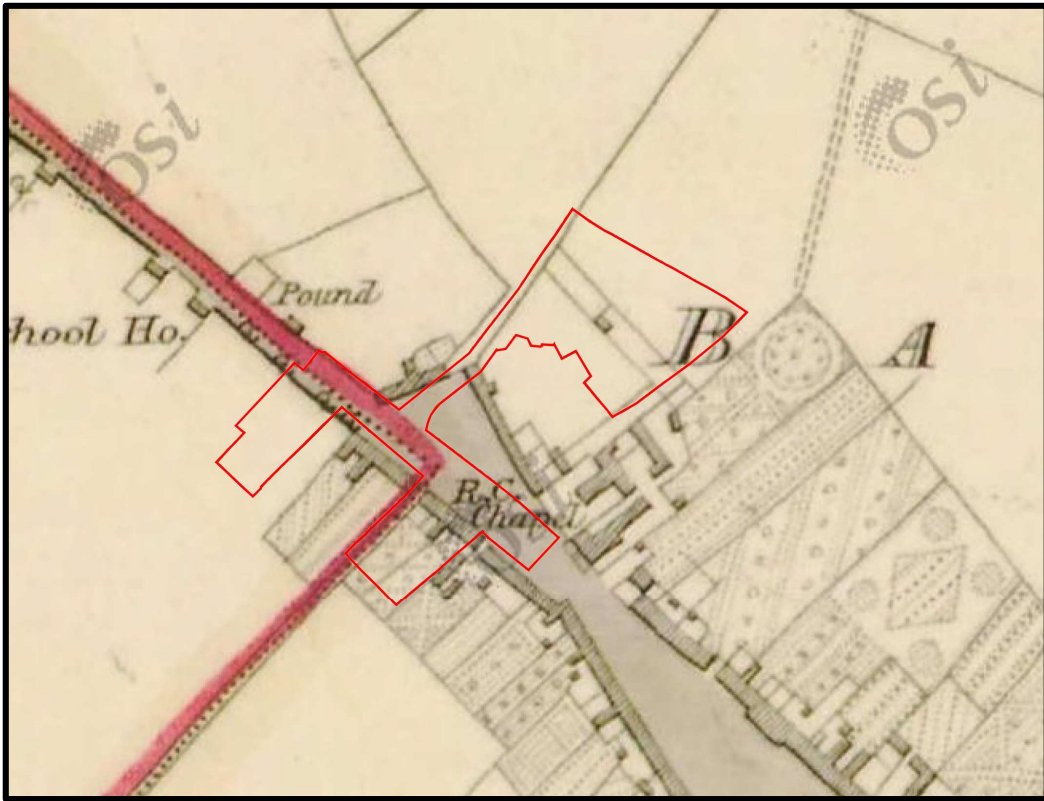
Record of Protected Structures: 103 Longford County Council Development Plan 2021-2027

NIAH Reference: 13316028

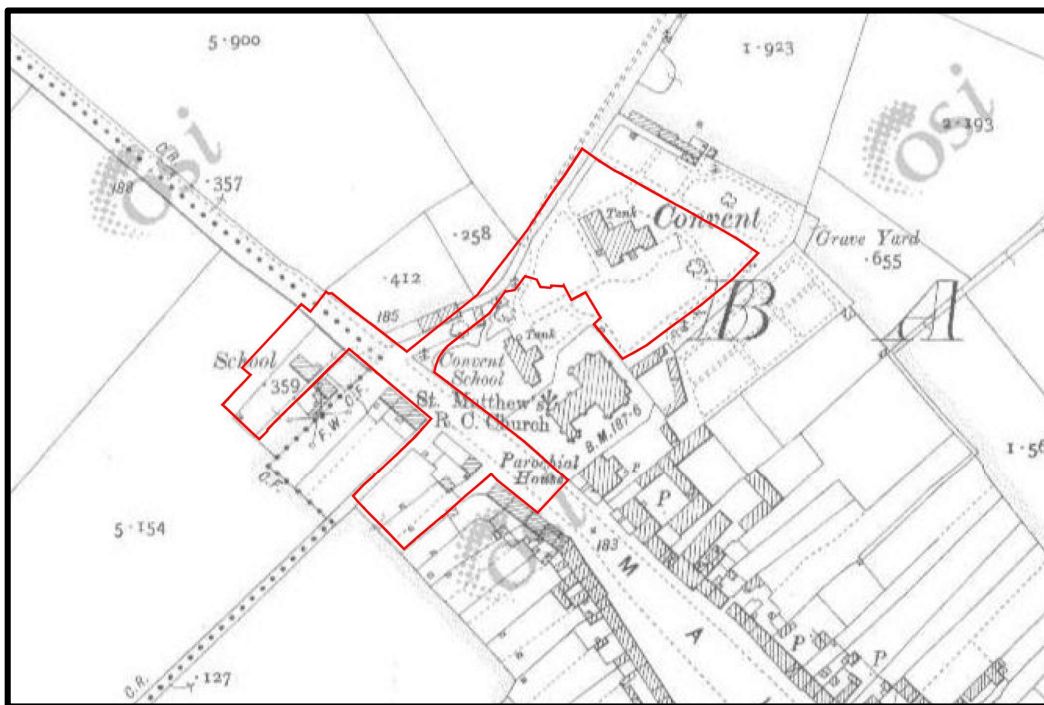
103	Former Library	Dean Egan Library, Main Street, BALLYMAHON	13316028	215397	257347	Regional	Ballymahon	Ballymahon	Former Library
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Longford County Council Development Plan: Extract of Record of Protected Structure

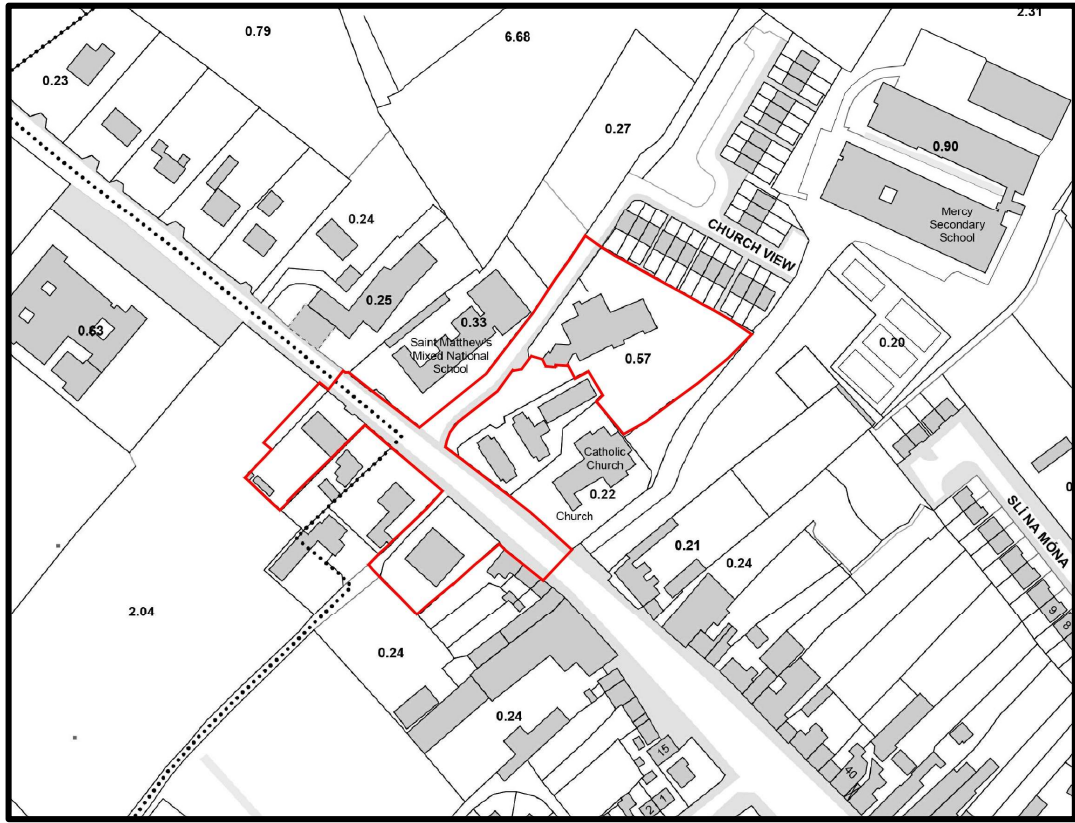
MAPS



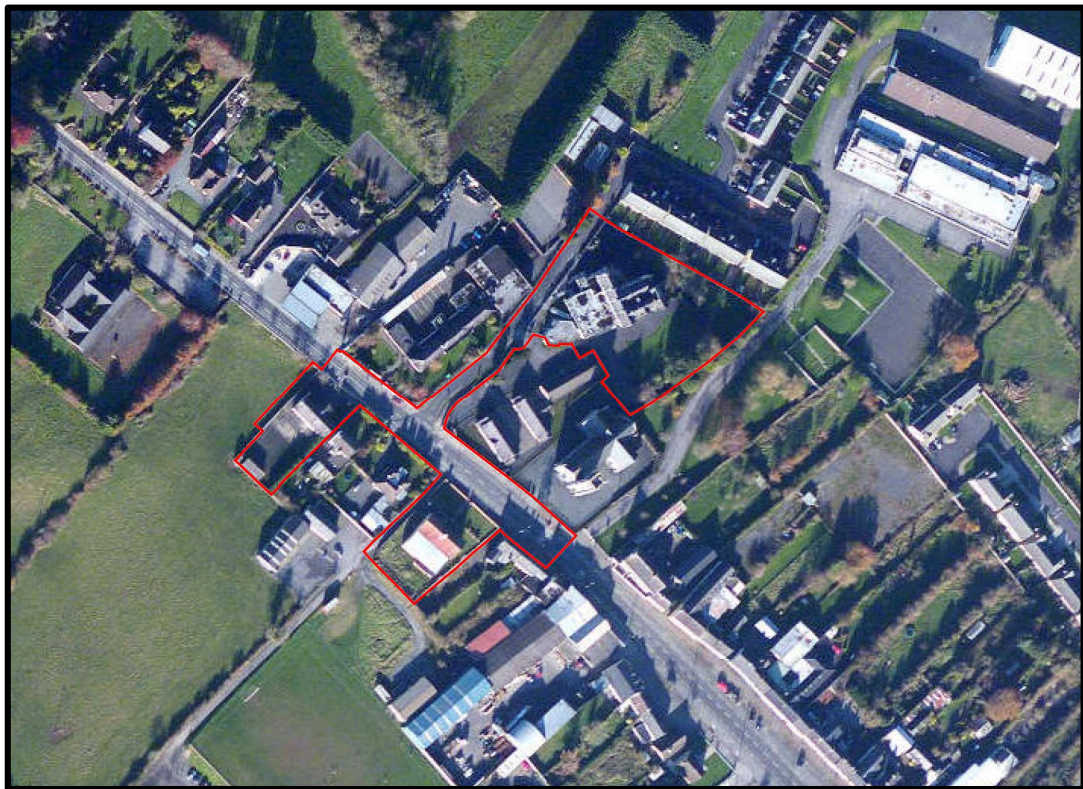
GeoHive Map Viewer - Historical map 6 inch Colour 1837-42



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 applicant's wish to undertake the following works:

- The refurbishment of the existing protected structure, the Dean Egan Library. This renovation would include the repair and replacement of all existing external windows & doors and thermal upgrade/ insulation of the building.
- The existing tiled roof will be repaired as necessary with careful attention to original materials and methods. Particular attention will be paid to the unusual roof vent feature to ensure it is retained in keeping with its original design.
- Internal works which consist of restoring the interior space to its original form by removing two existing offices currently dividing the hall and repurposing the area as a sports hall. Two new offices will be constructed behind the existing stage screen with steps to these offices built in the main hall space, a new internal wall will be constructed behind the stage screen to improve soundproofing and privacy for the offices. It is important to note that such renovations will be carried out in accordance with conservation best practice, current building regulations and incorporating the input of qualified structural engineers where required.
- The demolition of existing poor-quality single-storey lean-to extension to the rear of the Dean Egan Library, which, along with the main building, is currently being used as a family resource centre.
- The construction of a single storey flat roof extension to the rear of the Dean Egan Library will provide much needed community space including rooms such as a music room, chill out room, stores, reception, kitchen, toilets, and a lobby. The extension will be accessed through a new entrance lobby to the south-east and will also have 3 points of access from existing Dean Egan library into the extension. 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 construction of a small carpark to the rear of the extension including 3 parking spaces, one of which is accessible. These new spaces will be accessed via the existing road along the western boundary of the site, which will be widened to a two-way access road. Other site works include the demolition of two existing sets of steps on north-western gable of the building to facilitate revised fire escapes parallel to the new footpath along the realigned road and boundary, and the demolition of front boundary wall with an examination of the possibility of relocating the original piers and gate to another location on site.

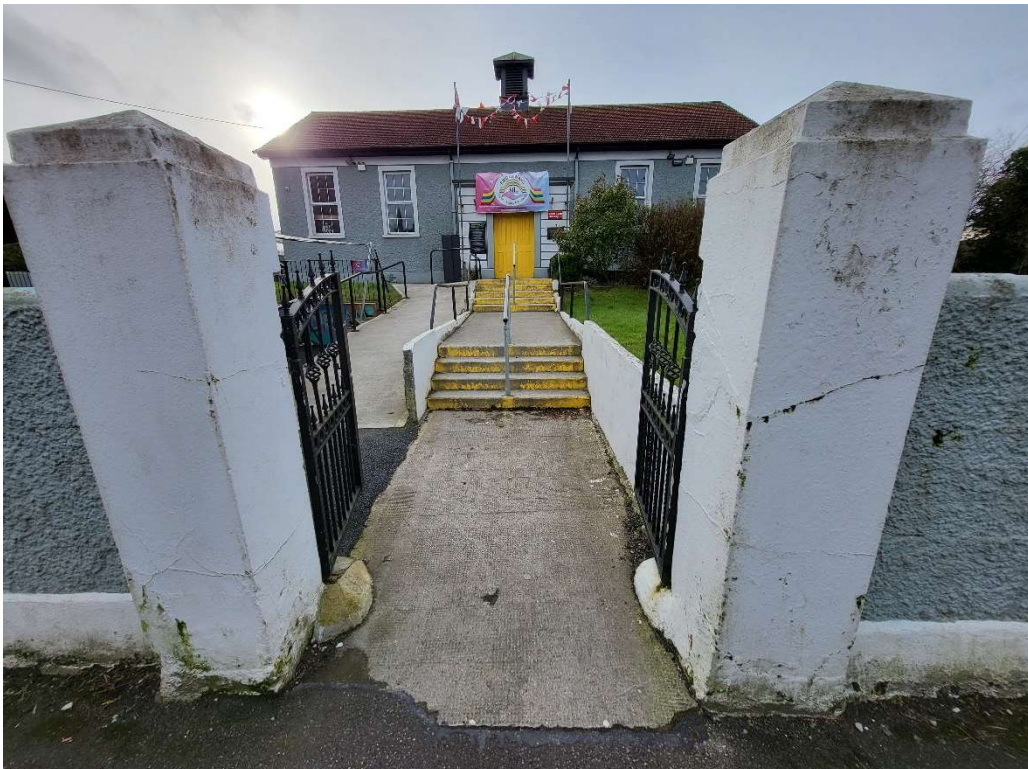
- The design concept for the extension focuses on modern architecture with clean lines, large windows for natural light, and a harmonious combination of aluminium, concrete, and painted render. The materials were chosen for their durability, low maintenance, and ability to create a sleek and stylish appearance. Dark grey powder coated aluminium will be used for exterior elements such as window frames and doors. Painted render finishes to contrast the existing building 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 the Dean Egan Library



KLA – Image of the front gates of the Dean Egan Library



KLA – Image of the stepped approach to Dean Egan Library



KLA – Image of the ramped approach to Dean Egan Library



KLA – Image of the north-western corner of the Dean Egan Library and existing narrow access road



KLA – Image of existing extension at rear of the Dean Egan Library viewed from access road



KLA – Image of existing extension and yard at the rear of the Dean Egan Library viewed from access road



KLA – Image of two existing offices to be demolished in the Dean Egan Library



KLA – Image of partition screen and stage, to be retained, in the Dean Egan Library



KLA – Image of front entrance with Diocletian window in the Dean Egan Library



KLA– Image of the interior of the single storey extension to rear of Dean Egan Library



NIAH – Image of front elevation of Dean Egan Library c.2005



NIAH – Image of front elevation of Dean Egan Library c.2005



NIAH – Image of front elevation of Dean Egan Library c.2005



NIAH – Image of side elevation of Dean Egan Library c.2005 viewed from access road



NIAH – Image of front elevation of Dean Egan Library c.2005

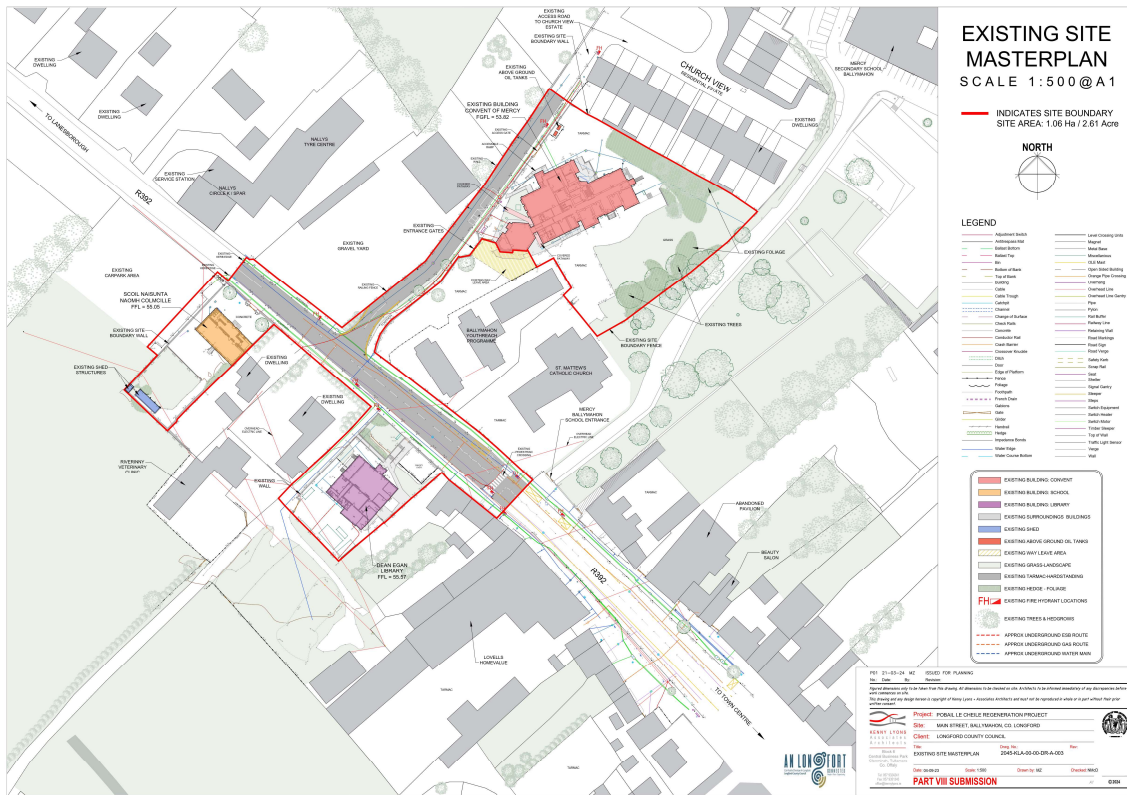


***NIAH** – Image of front elevation of Dean Egan Library c.2005*

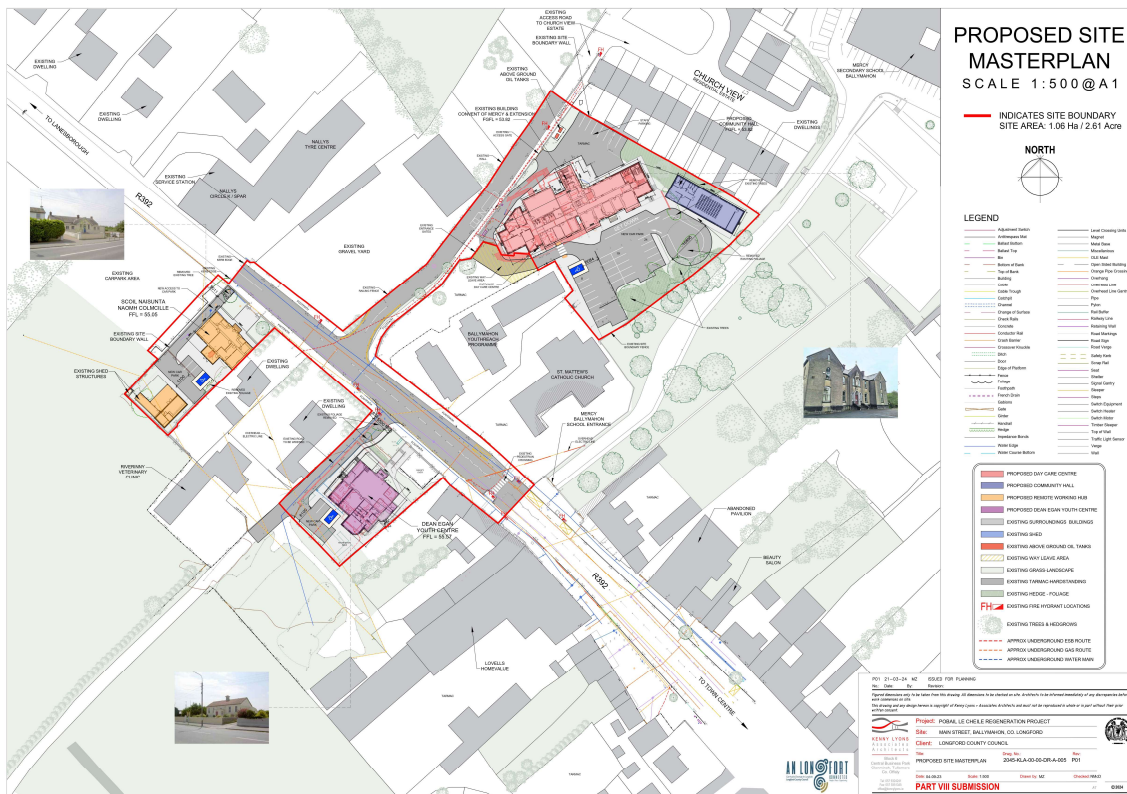


***NIAH** – Image of front elevation of Dean Egan Library c.2005*

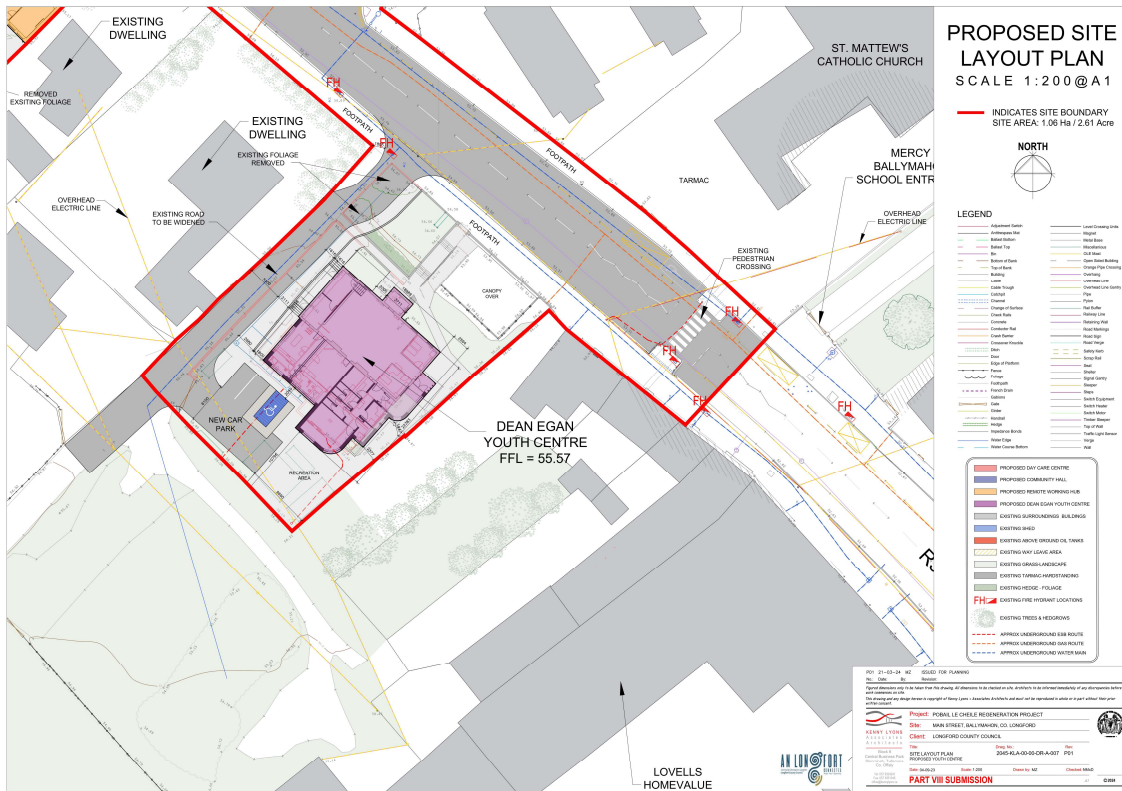
DRAWINGS



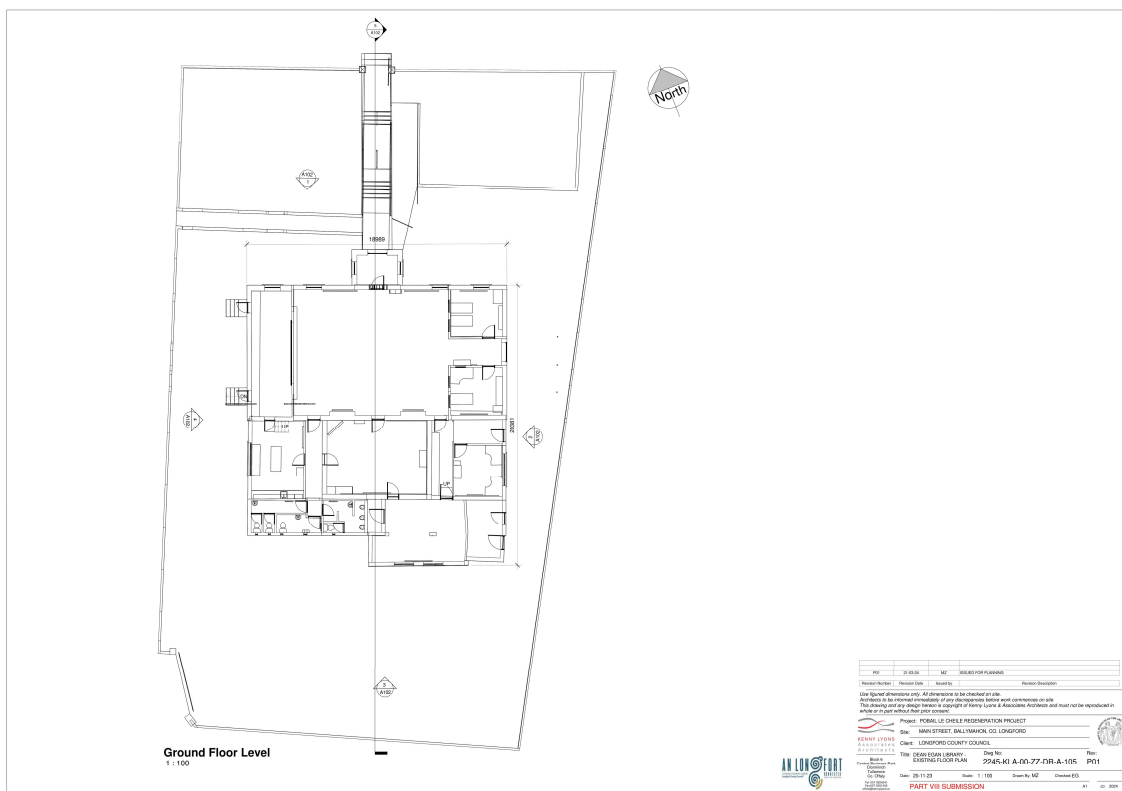
KLA – Existing Site Layout Plan



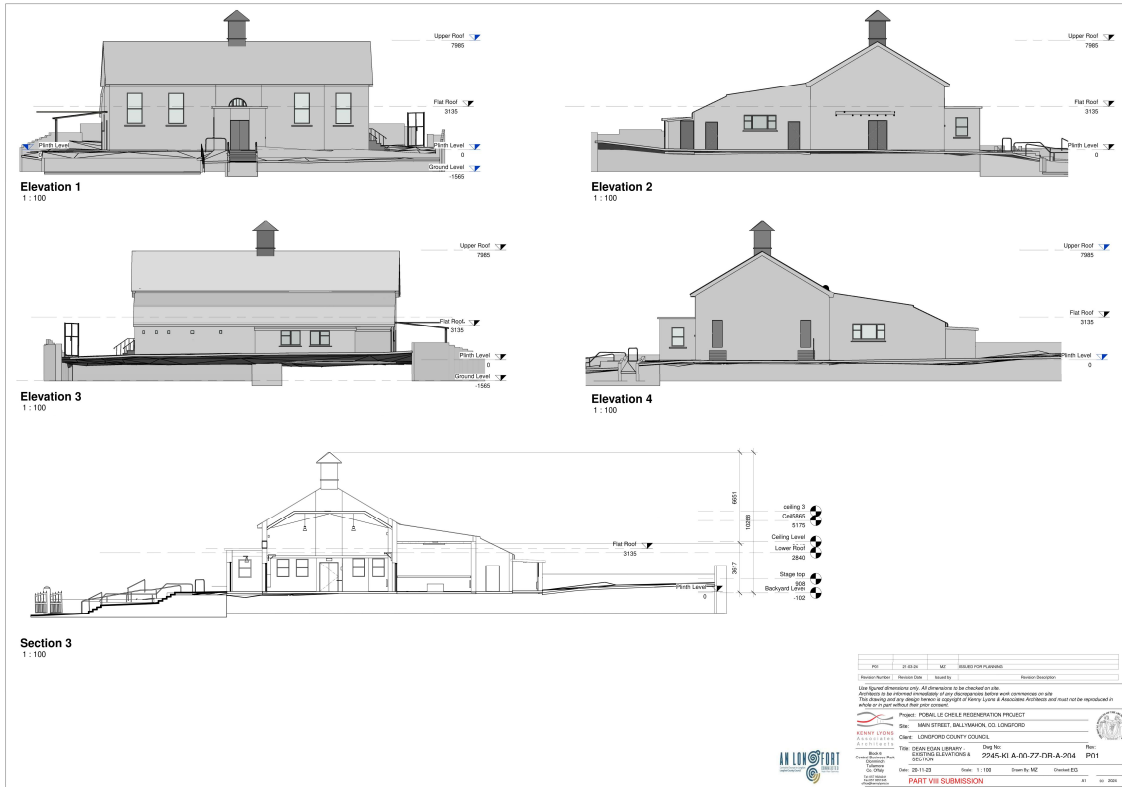
KLA – Proposed Site Layout Plan for “Ballymahon – Pobal le Cheile Regeneration Project”



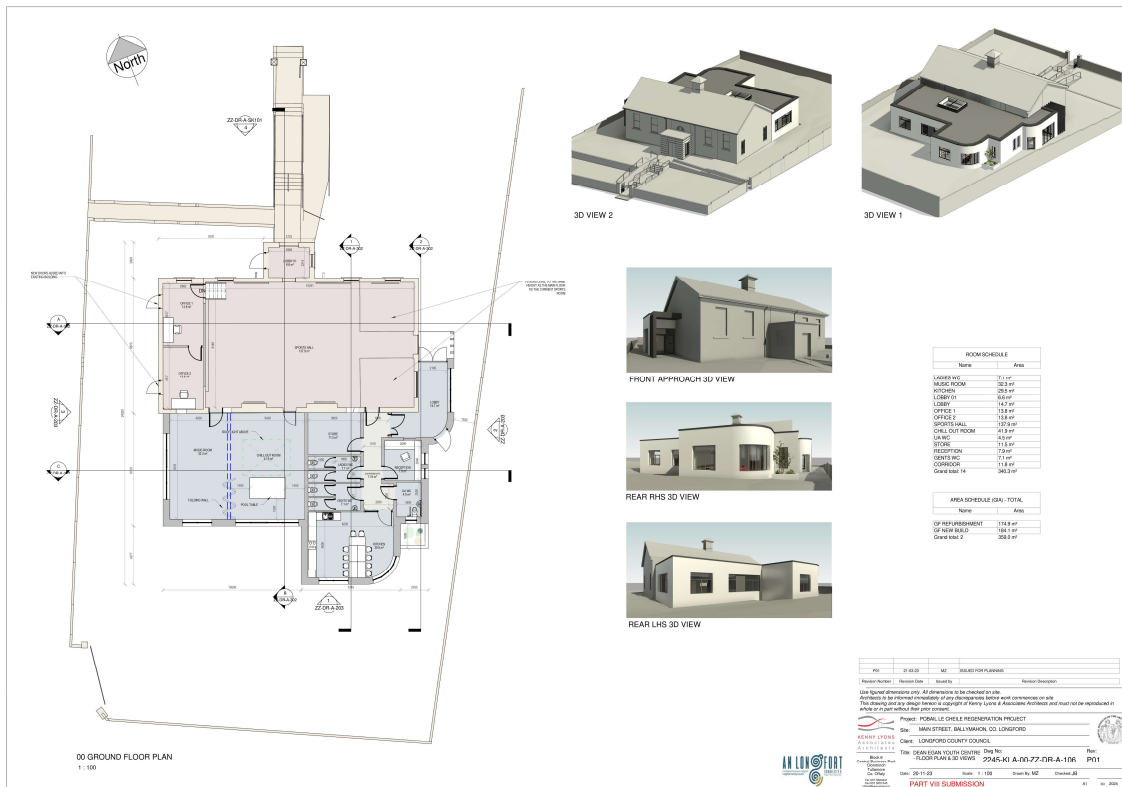
KLA – Proposed Site Layout Plan for the Dean Egan Library



KLA – Existing Floor Plan for Dean Egan Library



KLA – Existing Elevations & Section of Dean Egan Library



KLA – Proposed Floor Plan & 3D



KLA – Proposed Elevations



KLA – Proposed Sections

IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL:

The impact of the proposed intervention will be positive as it will refurbish the existing protected structure and complement its 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
Windows	Square-headed window openings painted smooth render surrounds, painted rendered cills and replacement windows.	Repair existing windows and where necessary, replace windows.	Positive impact restoring the original character and fabric visuals of the building. Energy upgrade	Best conservation practice will be implemented. Specialist window supplier.
Timber Panelled Door	Square-headed opening to front face of porch with double leaf timber panelled door, having painted metal lettering and electrical lamp above entrance.	Repair existing door and if necessary, replace.	Positive impact, the repaired panelled timber door will improve function and visual aesthetic. Energy upgrade	Best conservation practice will be implemented. Specialist timber supplier.
Pitched Tiled Roof	Pitched tiled roof with central pyramidal roofed louvered vent on square-plan and with rendered chimneystacks to the rear.	Existing roof appears to be in good condition; however, localised leaks will be repaired as necessary. Repairs will also be carried out to the original vent feature as necessary.	This will have a positive impact on the building as it preserves the original roof structure and the buildings character.	This is a justified step to retain the original roof of the protected structure.
External Walls	Painted pebbledashed walls with painted smooth rendered eaves and plinth courses.	Refurbishment appears to be unnecessary for external walls as they are in fine condition, however, dry lining to be installed internally where possible.	This will have a positive impact as retaining the external facades will keep the original visual aesthetic and through dry lining, the thermal performance of the building will be improved.	This is a justified step to ensure the original façade is not altered and the thermal performance of the building will be improved.

Feature Ref	Description	Proposed Alteration	Impact Of Proposed Alteration	Evaluation of proposed works/ mitigating measures/ justification
Porch Walls	Single-bay flat-roofed entrance porch to the centre of the main elevation with painted channelled smooth rendered walls to porch.	Existing smooth rendered walls & grooves to be retained and repainted. Existing flat roof to be retained and repaired/ upgraded as necessary.	This will have a positive impact as it restores the visual impact of the original porch.	This proposed work is required in order to preserve the buildings character.
Boundary Walls	Rendered pebbledashed boundary walls with painted smooth rendered piers with stepped profile and iron gates to site.	Front boundary wall to be demolished and the potential of relocating/reusing the entrance gates and piers to be examined.	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, while retaining the piers & gates, for relocation, as the fundamental elements of the boundary.	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 Extension	Existing single-storey lean-to extension to rear (southwest) of Dean Egan Library.	Existing extension to be demolished as it is in poor condition and not part of the original Dean Egan Library	This will be positive as the existing extension does not compliment the original Dean Egan Library and is in poor condition.	This step is necessary as the extension does not compliment the architecture of the existing library and occupies a crucial and central area on this site where a new extension, sensitive to existing form, could be built.
Other Demolition Works	Existing internal offices. Existing sets of steps on the north-western side of building.	Existing offices to be demolished to restore the original form of a large open area, and to repurpose it as a sports hall. Two sets of external steps to be demolished on north-western edge of building.	Restore the interior of library to a large open area. Demolition of existing steps allows for the space for access road, new footpath & new steps to run along edge of building.	These works are necessary as the main internal space in the building is an impressive & large area currently diminished by the small offices, which don't go to ceiling level. Provision of new steps will give the building better accessibility.

Feature Ref	Description	Proposed Alteration	Impact Of Proposed Alteration	Evaluation of proposed works/ mitigating measures/ justification
Internal Works	Construction of new internal wall, two new offices and a set of internal stairs to access offices.	The construction of a new internal wall behind existing stage screen provides privacy and soundproofing needed for the two new offices to be built behind said wall. New stairs will be constructed within hall to access offices.	Positive as it provides the building with two new offices while also retaining the existing stage screen and stage.	This step is justified as it will optimise space within the existing building while improving soundproofing and providing office space for the community.
New Extension	Single-storey flat roof extension to rear of existing building.	The construction of a new single-storey flat roofed extension to the rear of the Dean Egan Library, providing rooms for the community. 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.	This will have a positive impact as it will provide vital community space in an extension that contrasts existing form. The connection of the extension will be mindful of existing form and will be discreetly flashed against historic fabric.	This is a justified step in order to supply the community of Ballymahon with essential spaces needed for their growing population. Rooms such as music room, store, kitchen, reception, toilets etc. are provided in this extension in the form of clean modern architecture.

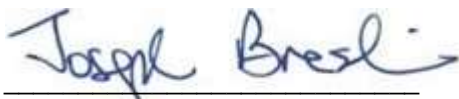
Significance of Structure:

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 disrepair and allow it to provide the vital space and resources needed for the youth and the rapidly growing community of Ballymahon town. The crucial restoration of this building will reinstate its architectural significance in the heart of the community of Ballymahon and allow it to continue to be an integral element of the built heritage of the town.

Effectiveness of the Works:

The proposed works will preserve the integral parts of the original protected structure of the Dean Egan Library. We believe that the proposed refurbishment of the Dean Egan Library will allow it to achieve its full potential and functionality and 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 19/03/2024 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.