



ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

RAIL LINK PROJECT CARLOW

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Carlow County Council proposes to create a new pedestrian route from Carlow train station to Carlow town centre. This process is subject to a Part 8 application under the Planning Acts.
- 1.2 The route involves the creation of a new public realm space off St. Josephs Road, improving pedestrian and vehicular access to St. Joseph's school, St. Catherine's Centre, St. Leo's College and Carlow College. The proposed route and the works to create it are on what are currently the grounds of St. Joseph's school, St. Catherine's Centre, St. Leo's College and Carlow College.
- 1.3 Of the buildings adjoining the proposed new route, only Carlow College is listed on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) in the Carlow Development Plan (RPS CT73 10000437). As the works will take place within its curtilage, an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment is required to consider the impact, if any, on the protected structure.
- 1.4 This assessment has been prepared by architect Margaret Quinlan, FRIAI, Grade 1 accredited in Conservation.
- 1.5 This assessment is to be read in conjunction with the Part 8 documentation prepared by Carlow County Council

2 Carlow College

2.1 Summary Description of the building (as listed on the RPS)

RPS No.	NIAH No.	Description	Date range	Rating Importance
CT73	10000437	St. Patricks College College Street Originally freestanding four storey 18th century building advancing forward at centre and sides. Late Georgian extensions to flanks with larger windows.(excludes rear extension)	1785- 1793	National Architectural, Historical, Interior, Personality, Group. Uniqueness Rarity

2.2 Historical Background

Carlow College has an illustrious history. It is Ireland's oldest third level Catholic college founded in 1782 and opened in 1793 after relaxation of the Penal Laws. From 1793 until 1892 Carlow College was both a lay college of the humanities and a seminary.

From 1840, the University of London accredited degrees at Carlow College in the Arts and Law. With the University Education (Ireland) Act 1879, the Royal University of Ireland was established, and the following year, degrees offered at Carlow College were accredited by this educational body. From 1892, lay students were based at Knockbeg College and Carlow College operated exclusively as a seminary for the education of priests until 1989.

In 1990, Carlow College once again welcomed lay students to study third-level courses in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Since 1997, Carlow College has embarked on a building and renovation campaign which has seen the development of new lecture halls and the completion of a Students Centre, Library and Archive (2006). As part of its on-going support for the arts, the College donated land to the Carlow Local Authority for the development of the Centre for Contemporary Art and The George Bernard Shaw Theatre (VISUAL), an €18 million development project located in the heart of Carlow Town. In 2011 Carlow College refurbished Lennon House to provide on-campus accommodation.

The earliest part of the building is the large central block, almost 37 metres long. In 1817, Carlow-based Thomas Alfred Cobden (1794-1842) was engaged as the architect for an extension. Thomas Cobden, a young English-born architect also designed the Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Assumption and other Carlow buildings of the time, including Duckett's Grove.

The south wing was added in 1819 and was connected to the existing college by a two-storey link building.

The main north wing was built between 1821 and 1835 on a much grander scale. It contains a very fine cantilevered granite staircase leading up from a granite paved entrance hall. A large hall with semi-circular apse, once the college chapel, is now named the Cobden Hall and is used for college and public events.

A new wing at the south end, connected to the old building by a closed cloister intended to serve as play hall, was designed by William Hague. The foundation stone was laid in summer of 1879.

The chapel of the Sacred Heart, built in the Hiberno-Romanesque style, was built to mark the centenary of the college and now functions as the College Library. An exhibition on the history of the college is on display in the corridor leading into the Library.



1st Ed OS map c 1840



2nd Ed OS map c 1900

3 Proposal



Carlow College The proposal ends to the rear of the north wing (on left)

- 3.1 The development proposes the creation of a new pedestrian route from Carlow train station to Carlow town centre. It involves the creation of a new public realm space improving pedestrian and vehicular access to St. Joseph's school, St. Catherine's Centre, St. Leo's College and Carlow College.
- 3.2 It begins at St Joseph's Road and ends at a point approximately 20m from the north-east corner of the north wing of Carlow College and in line with its rear wall. The end point is a ramp which connects to the recently completed public realm works at Visual. Visual is the Carlow Arts Centre opened in 2009 and housing a 335-seat theatre and the largest cube gallery space in the country where it hosts a programme of high-quality national and international contemporary art, performances and multi-media events.
- 3.3 The works are all landscaping works and do not involve the building of any structure. They include new boundary walls, directional signage, lighting totem, visitor information point, fencing, new entrances, gates, public lighting, CCTV cameras, benches, road surfacing, natural stone paving, landscaping, footpath surfacing and all ancillary siteworks.
- 3.4 The major works are largely concentrated in two sections - at the east from the public road between St Catherine's Centre and St Joseph's School and to the west between Lennon House and the north wing of Carlow College. These sections are linked by an existing pedestrian tree-lined walkway in Carlow College grounds where necessary works will be implemented to footpath levels, kerbs and boundaries.



Start of route - east section at St Joseph's Road



Existing walkway to be modified between east and west sections



End of new route - west section close to north wing Carlow College

PROPOSAL	JUSTIFICATION	IMPACT
<p>Paving, kerbs, drainage</p> <p>All material will be in the tonal range of the protected structure and subject to planning approval – ideally by samples on site</p>	<p>To provide an attractive and high quality surface with well-designed surface water drainage</p>	<p>Positive impact for the new route.</p> <p>The use of natural stone will be positive in the insertion of a new element in a mature setting</p> <p>No visual impact on the protected structure.</p>
<p>Planting</p> <p>All existing trees are retained except those identified by tree surgeon for intervention</p> <p>New planting</p>	<p>New planting is introduced to supplement the existing and for positive visual impact.</p> <p>Also used as dividers in planting beds</p>	<p>Positive impact</p> <p>Proposed tree protection will be beneficial to the existing planting</p>
<p>Boundary treatments including gates.</p> <p>All will be in character with the existing</p>	<p>To define the space and provide boundaries to the adjoining ownerships</p>	<p>No adverse impact on the protected structure.</p> <p>Consider a fine wet dash finish rather than napped render for new block walls</p>
<p>Lighting</p> <p>Cctv</p> <p>information point</p>	<p>To ensure user safety and to deter anti-social behaviour</p> <p>To give the user information on this historically and culturally important campus</p>	<p>Positive for the site as a whole</p> <p>Low visual impact</p> <p>No adverse impact on the protected structure</p>



End of new route with north wing Carlow College on left and Visual ahead



North wing Carlow College at end of proposed new route

4. Summary Assessment of Proposal

The Public Realm proposal will not have any adverse impact on the protected structure of Carlow College, and the associated buildings and features within its curtilage.

The scheme will be of considerable benefit to the entire campus and will greatly enhance the urban infrastructure of Carlow by providing an attractive pedestrian route to and from the town centre.


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