



ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

TWO SHOP/HOUSES, MAIN STREET, BORRIS

'E. BREEN'

MARGARET QUINLAN ARCHITECTS

RIAI Grade 1 Accredited in Conservation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The two buildings, E. Breen, are adjoining, almost certainly separate in the past, but now interlinked as shop units with living at the rear and at first floor level. They are now vacant and Carlow County Council has acquired them for conversion into social housing units.
- 1.2 This is an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment which reviews the proposal for their alteration and conservation and assesses its impact.
- 1.3 It is intended to form part of the documentation required for the Part 8 process.

2.0 DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The buildings are two-storey and terraced, with the larger unit to the east projecting forward and forming the end of the terrace with a gable wall and access gate to the rear. There is rear garden space, shared at present.

The ground floor of the original buildings is mostly shop space with basic timber shop fittings. The rear extensions provide living/kitchen space and are of a poor construction quality.

The street frontage is of interest. It is one of a number of attractive 19c shopfronts. It benefits from the buildings being offset. The shop windows have a cusped foil detail on the corners and the largest window has a scroll detail along the head. There are granite dressings to one doorcase. Sliding sash windows to first floor.

2.2 Historical Sources

The buildings are shown on the first and second editions OS Maps



1st edition OS map c. 1840,



2nd edition OS map c. 1900. Note division of rear garden and railway track to the rear

2.3 **Record of Protected Structures** RPS No. CW 199

Description

A small, three-bay, two-storey, gable-ended house with painted, smooth-rendered walls and small, natural slates on the roof. It has a simple granite doorcase and a shopfront on the corner of the house with minimalistic, carved, timber decoration. (Regional significance)

Note

- The RPS only refers to the larger end-of-terrace unit Unit B
- The roofs has been re-slatted with man-made slates and modern ridge tiles since the description was entered in the RPS.

Both buildings 'E Breen' are located within the Borris Architectural Conservation Area. They are not listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 Setting

Borris is a place with a rich built heritage. The main street falls from west to east with Borris House demesne forming much of the south side and an interesting architectural mix of dwellings, shops and public buildings on the north. Granite ashlar and decorative details abound in addition to some fine shopfronts.

'E. Breen' lies between two such shopfronts - Nolans and Daltons across the street. While not as classical as either of those, the larger building Unit B off-sets at a slight curve in the street. This creates a projection into the pavement which lends prominence and character.

3.2 Building/s

The buildings existed before the mid-19th century its edition OS map and appear to be substantially unaltered apart from the rear extensions.

There is attractive detailing of elements in the frontage - Unit B contains a fine granite doorcase and the shop windows have cusped foils on the corners and other vernacular details on the joinery, all of which add interest.

The projection into the pavement incorporates a side shop-window which faces the pedestrian walking down the street.

There may be other granite detailing externally which has been painted over. Internally, there are basic sets of shelving and fittings but no other features of significance.

3.3 The significance of 'E. Breen' lies in its contribution to the streetscape and in forming part of the historic fabric of the town.

3.4 The interior is considered to be of little significance.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 Aim

To bring the two buildings back into use as two sustainable residential units to the benefit of the housing stock and the urban space.

4.2 Design Approach

- To maintain the character of the frontage by retaining and conserving the shopfront and front elevations generally
- To reinstate the original layout of two separate units by removing more recent low-grade rear extensions and blocking opes in the party wall.
- To retain all viable fabric.
- To ensure best layout for new living accommodation in the orientation of the living spaces, retaining maximum benefit from the existing south south-west facing windows
- To upgrade the building envelope to minimise heat loss in the interests of sustainability.
- To provide serviced spaces as unobtrusively as possible.

4.3

Proposal	Justification	Impact
SETTING		
New boundary between two buildings	Provide garden division between two units	Positive impact. Reinstate original boundary - see 2nd edition OS
Remove leylandii from rear garden	Leylandii are overgrown and deprive the rear of light	Positive visual impact. The deciduous trees are further back, will not block light and will be retained
Replace gate to side entrance, inward opening with 2 no. unequal leaves.	Gate in poor condition and in one large leaf.	Positive impact. Two leaves will enable easier access for the less able-bodied. Character will be retained by cladding the new gate/s in corrugated metal sheeting to match existing

Proposal	Justification	Impact
EXISTING BUILDING/S		
Exterior Retain all existing door and window openings	Retain character	Positive impact
Carry out test clean on painted round-headed door case and on plinths including pilasters . Clean back to granite if feasible	To establish if the painted elevational details are granite and if the paint can be removed successfully	Possible positive impact in restoring original character. Any cleaning will be by specialist
Replace rainwater goods with full half-round and downpipes	To increase capacity and deal with levels	Positive impact
Record detail of shopfront (including windows) by photograph.and sketch, numbering all decorative components Careful removal by specialist joiner, retaining all components Careful removal of any historic glass.	To make a proper record of the fabric to be conserved to inform the reinstatement.	Positive impact
Repair all joinery where possible in doors and windows. Replace to match existing where decay is extensive, reinstating all decorative components in windows, shopfront fascia and pilasters. Where no historic glass survives, double/triple-glazed units may be used. Where it survives , use secondary units internally. The ground floor window beside the side entrance may be divided into 3 no. vertical lights	To conserve character while making fit for purpose To conserve energy To adjust proportions of the modern unit. The division based on those of the Nolan and Dalton shop windows	Minimal impact. Loss of fabric only where timber is no longer viable
On upper floor sliding sash windows will be draught-stripped. Secondary glazing may be used internally but not to affect elevation externally.	To conserve energy Secondary glazing, if used, will be such as not to affect elevation externally.	Positive impact
Remove metalwork from window cill, grit-blast, treat with cold-gale, Paint and reinstate	To conserve feature	Positive impact
Remove rear extensions	Building of poor quality and not usable	Positive impact
Repair existing render where necessary in lime mortar, paint	Signs of hairline cracks. Check for hollow spots	Positive impact

Proposal	Justification	Impact
Interior		
All shop fittings to be removed. Note Every effort must be made to find a new use elsewhere in Borris, possibly in a craft or coffee shop. If so, affix metal label to identify the origin of the furniture	Not possible to retain in the new residential use. To retain historical value	Negative impact if fittings not salvaged. Mitigation of loss of shop fittings
Remove floor, stairs, wall finishes. Replace with new building elements to comply with Building Regulations inc. conservation of energy.	No longer viable To make fit for contemporary and sustainable use.	Loss of original fabric Positive impact in enabling new use of disused building
EXTENSION		
An extension to contain service spaces is necessary in the larger unit. It has been designed as a extension of the existing roof pitch	To provide bathroom and utility space and to maintain the main space in the original without subdivision	Minimal impact. Sectional profile was chosen to minimise visual impact and to be in character with the existing

Please read in conjunction with Photographic Survey in addition to photographs on p. 7 and 8

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Above
Round-headed door case, probably granite



Left and below
Window on projecting corner with metal fitting





Cusped foils in corners and scrollwork detail along head



Plinth and stub pilasters

