

Proposed Urlingford Fire Station, Co. Kilkenny.

Job No.: 2019016.

Client Name: Kilkenny Co. Council.

Project Description: Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment report on the proposed new entrance to accommodate the new Urlingford Fire Station.

Status: Planning Stage.

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1.1 Project Team

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1.2 Introduction:

This report has been prepared by C. J. Falconer & Associates Ltd. on behalf of Kilkenny County Council to –to comply with the recommendations of the Architectural Conservation Officer to review the following as part of a prior Planning Proposal:

- 1) Direct impact on the random rubble limestone wall, which is considered to be part of the protected structure. All potential alternative access points to the land at the rear to be explored with the removal of the street front wall only undertaken as a last resort.
- 2) An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment to be undertaken at this early stage. Conservation assessment and repair specification for all stone boundary walls to be complied.
- 3) The visual impact of the proposed development on the protected structure requires to be considered. This will include a visual impact assessment the development, and will include the urban finish, scale and distance of the Fire Station from the protected structure. The protected structure should hold it prominent position in its surrounding context.
- 4) Lights, road finishes, and landscaping should not intrude on visual prominence of the protected structures. Further discussion may be required as to road access to the site: as the original splayed walls are integral to the settings and the protected structure and add to the symmetry of same, it is important that they remain in-situ.

The above points are to be addressed within this Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment:

Item no. 1) refer to section 3.

Item no. 2) refer to this report; the proposals for addressing the wall are included here following correspondence with the conservation officer.

Item no.3) refer section 3.

Item no. 4) refer section 3.



Above image: Artist impression of proposed Fire Station.

This report contains references to the historical research of the site. The report assesses the heritage impact of the proposed access required through an existing protected stone wall curtilage to the Urlingford Library, for the proposed new Fire Station.

2.0 History.

2.1 General History of the site.

The site is located to the rear of the old Court House, a protected structure (Record of Protected Structures C255), built Circa 1840 to designs by William Deane Butler. Urlingford Library operates from this Court House. A random rubble limestone wall abounds a section of the curtilage of the site adjacent to the footpath and flanking the entrance of the Court House building.

To the rear of the Court House the Constabulary Barrack (NIAH Reg no.12304010) dated 1843-1900 was located. This building appears on both historical plans with the Court House. Images and a description of this building is recorded on the NIAH site. this building is now demolished but walls outlining the footprint of same can be seen on the site.

The high walls encompassing the boundary of the site of approx. 3.5m in height, would have also formed a private enclosure to the barracks.

These walls now form part of the boundary of the newly proposed Fire Station and as 19th. Century fabric they shall be repointed and repaired as necessary in the required manner as part of the development.

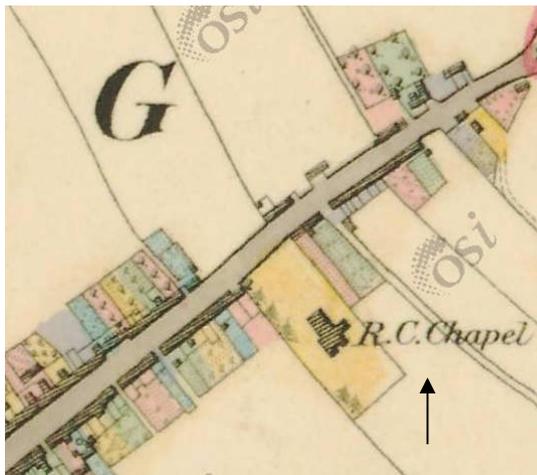
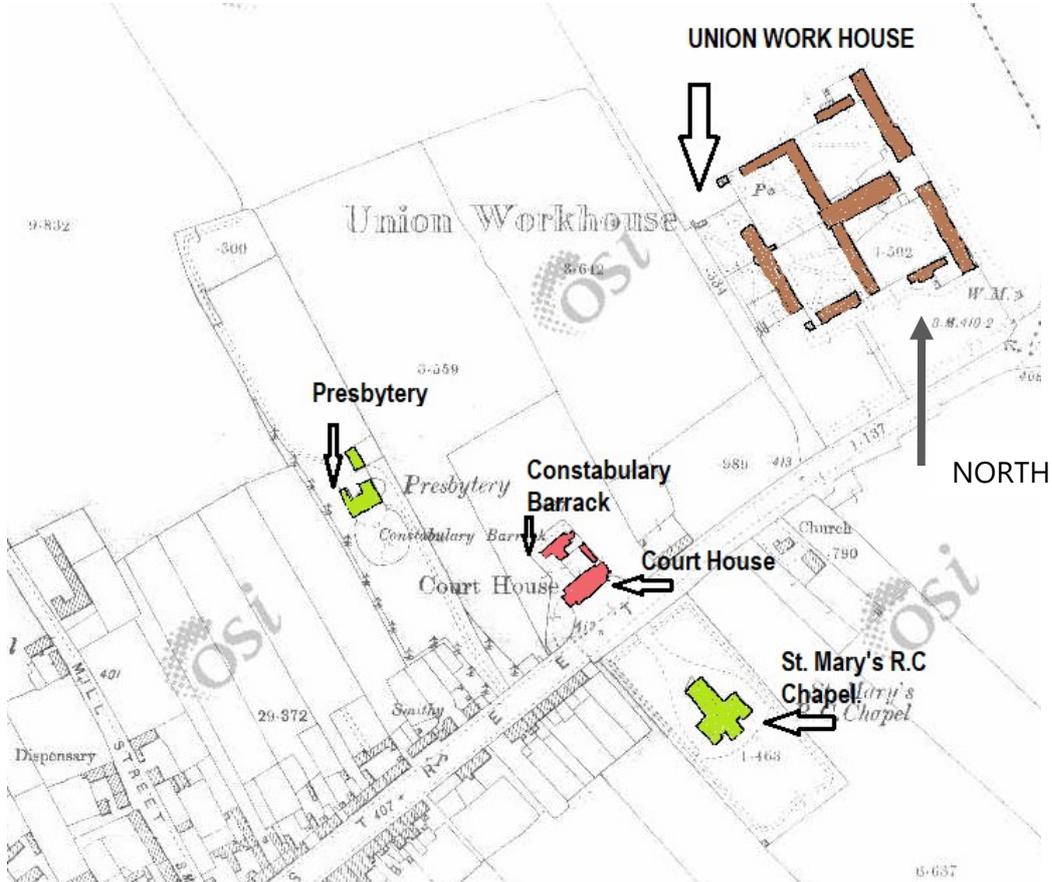
Both the Courthouse and the prior existence of the Barracks are of both architectural, and heritage significance as they sought to uphold and protect law and order to the Urlingford and the wider area in the barony of Galmoy during the period 1843 to 1900.

This historical setting would have been impressive indeed as the familiar established municipal area of the town as locals would have walked weekly or perhaps daily to this area of the town to attend mass in St. Marys parish church directly across the road from the Court House.

St. Marys church built in 1830 (NIAH 12304011) would have established a formidable moral code in the town prior to the establishment of the Court House and barracks. The presbytery, built in the same era as the Court House, a protected building (NIAH 12304008) is set back from the road, and perhaps in a strategic position to the rear of the Court House in order to remain private, but with full cognisance of on goings at the Court House and barrack.

The location of both church and state in this small town is indeed of social significance, it is a small wonder how the town plan remained so close to its historic traditional layout, with the strength these forces could have offered together.

However it is to be noted that this period in Ireland was clouded with the pivotal transformation of demographics resulting from the famine between 1845 and 1849 and the subsequent years of hardship following same. Consequentially of great historical and social significance was the introduction of the large Union Workhouse a field away from the Court House on a 12 acre site designed by Architect George Wilkinson and built to accommodate 500 people. The Poor law Union in Urlingford founded from 1850 covered an area of 121 square miles. Statistics as recorded on Poor law Union Maps of County Kilkenny - <http://sites.rootsweb.com/~irlkik/plumap.htm> indicate that 33% of the population of Urlingford died during the period from 1841 to 1851. Thus the rapid decline in population, with subsequent transfer of lands and farms would have had a substantial affect on all aspects of social life in the town and surrounding areas. The former work house was demolished int 1934 and the St. Marys Avenue estate was completed in 1937 – Kilkenny people news 31st. May 2012.



Above image: Above Left OSI map dated 1829– there is no evidence of the Court House at this time, however there is a Church located close to the site of the current St. Marys Church. Right image OSI map dated -1941 the Court House library had been built at this time. The top image is OSI dated 1890/1910 indicating the church Constabulary Barrack and Union Workhouse.

2.2 Historic Evolution of the site.

The earlier historic description is telling in so far as the town planning locates the Court House and St. Marys Church to the end of the town where the main road forks to access Johnstown and Borrismore. The social role provided was of immense importance for the administration of justice and to enhance social order of the town. This area held the municipal control over the town.

The absence of the Constabulary Barracks and Union Workhouse intensify the heritage importance to the town of the remaining St. Marys Church and Court House.

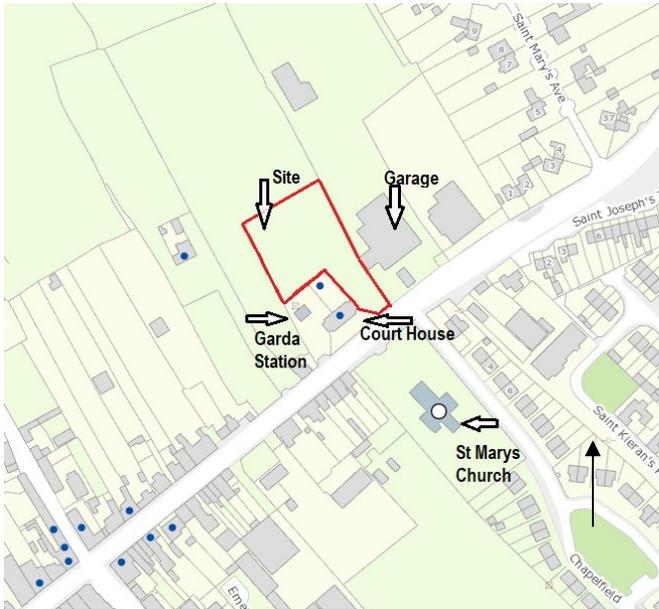
The use of the Courthouse as a Public Library – ensures a shared facility for use of and by the inhabitants of Urlingford for social research, community communication and local cohesion and so meets with the principals of the Washington Charter 1987. The introduction of the Garda Station close to where the constabulary barracks was sited also meets with the principals of the Washington Charter 1987 in so far that the site retains the purpose of a Municipal law and order for the town.

The proposed establishment of the Fire Station within this environ is welcoming as it too will meet the policies of the Washington Charter 1987 - *new functions and activities should be compatible with the character of the historic town or urban area-* as the function will be to protect and serve the inhabitancy of Urlingford and the wider expanse. The proposed Fire Station located to the rear of the courthouse, and low ridge height will not undermine the architectural heritage of the courthouse.

It is noted that the town planning consists of residential and homesteads which hug the main street for the entire length and begin to loosen close to the where the main street divides to expand onto other towns; the Court House and St. Mary's Church form a natural book end to the town and there after the traditional layout no longer continues.

The Urlingford local area plan states that this area of the town has had large scale commercial development and industrial development in recent years of a contemporary and commercial scale paying no allegiance to the town and traditional building pattern. These buildings are highly visible and have employed non local materials.

There is of importance therefore that further introduction of additional buildings to this part of the town will meet conservation guidelines.



Above image: current layout to site from Myplan.ie.



Above image: the housing traditionally hugs the street line of the town.



Above image: Large Garage with Large vehicle parking to the rear adjacent to the site.

3.0 Proposed works.

3.1 Potential alternatives for Site Access.

The site is located to the rear of the Library building. There is no option available for access, as to the left of the courthouse there is a garda station and adjacent to same is a homestead; to the right of the proposed access, a large commercial garage operates. The entrance for this service could not rely on a shared entrance due to the nature of emergency which it needs to facilitate.



Image Above -Current proposed access though the Protected stone wall.



Image Left Proposed Site Plan.

The entrance width required is to accommodate access for a Fire Tender and pedestrian access– this will require the relocation of a necessary section of the rubble limestone wall in order to facilitate the entrance width. The stone is to be reinstated to the other side to face the garage wall and to address the entrance of the fire station.



Above Image: Left -existing homestead alongside entrance to the Garda station indicated above Right.

3.2 Treatment of the boundary and Ground and external features.

3.2a Existing Boundary treatment:

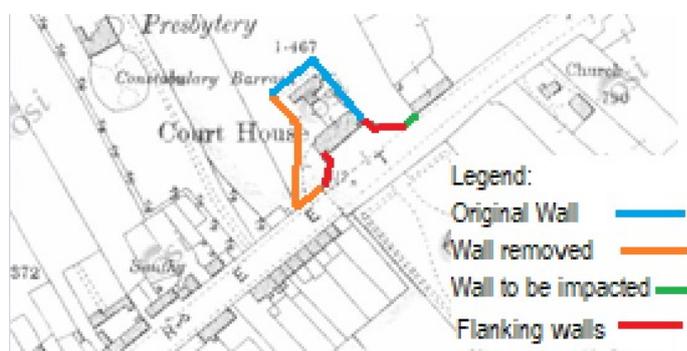


Above images indicate the boundary treatment from left to right addressing the main street.

Splayed rubble limestone walls flank the boundary introducing the Court House to the public and invite entry. The flanking walls continue to join a higher wall which form the full wall boundary around the rear and sides of the courthouse as a formal boundary. Chain fencing creates an understated soft front boundary to the Court House allowing for the entire façade to be on clear view to the public. It is the nature of the design of Court House buildings that an open public forecourt is presented. There are mature trees on the site with a shrubbery directly in front of the Courthouse.

These walls will also now form part of the boundary of the newly proposed Fire Station and as these are of 19th. Century fabric, the shared boundary walls should be repaired in their entirety as part of the development.

Outlined below on the historic town plan is the extent of the original boundary wall retained and outlines and the area of walling previously removed to accommodate the Garda station entrance. The shared boundary is coloured blue. Also indicated on this plan is the line of the wall coloured green, the removal of which is required to facilitate the wide entrance for the fire station access.



Above: Study of the current extent of the original boundary walls to Court House site.

3.2b-Addressing the boundary wall.

It is with the historical evolution described earlier and by employing the policies of the Washington convention 1987 that the imposition of relocating a large section of the wall to the wing of the proposed new Fire Station entrance could be feasible and of a positive intervention.

The relocation of this street fronted wall will in fact not alter the symmetry currently evident for the Court House building as the remaining flank wall is to remain. The finish to the quoin stones, once the section of wall is removed, will need to be addressed, however.

In compliance with the Conservation Officer, it is agreed that the shared quoin stones extending from the splay to the front wall are to be retained and accommodated in any wall finish here, allowing original wall angle and quoin to be retained.

This street fronted wall however is of significance and the sensitive nature of retaining this significance could be managed to accommodate the fire engine access. It would be of some advantage to therefore address the existing flanking wall of the Court House whilst also reducing the imposition of the adjacent garage forecourt walls by relocating the width of the section of the street fronted stone wall, required for the Fire Engine access, and refacing the rendered concrete block walls. In its stead the existing line of the wall will be demarked with Stainless steel studs.

A conservation assessment and repair specification for the existing boundary walls which form the wider curtilage walls of the protected structure is to be included for in the scope of works for this project as per the recommendations considered necessary by the Architectural Conservation Officer.

A programme of works including specification and methodologies is to be included in the tender. Such works adhere to the Granada Convention ratified by Ireland in 1997.

The proposal is to locate the fire station at a distance as indicated below: 24m from the South West boundary and 16.28m from the historic rear boundary wall of the Court House and 42.815m from the rear elevation of the Court House building.

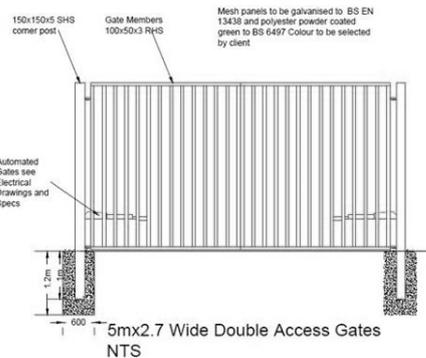
There is to be a pollinator area created to ensure a soft buffer zone between the protected wall and the new development, refer below, this is to be planted with spring and summer low shrubs and grass flowering plants to encourage pollination of bees and other pollinators so there is to be no effect to the structure or appearance of the wall, and maintains all activities at a safe distance from same. The site plan indicates a minimum margin of 3.8m for the proposed pollinator area.

A construction management plan will be required to ensure, the corrective works necessary for the existing walls and works to ensure the annual maintenance of the pollinator areas without any adverse effect to the boundary walls.

The proposed entrance gate is to be set back from the boundary of the site, obscured from immediate view from the street.



Above Image: Boundary wall in red with distances added from the Courthouse building and boundary wall. Also indicating the proposed pollinator buffer area in front of the existing stone wall boundary of the protected structure.



Above image: Left - Indicates the proposed relocation of the existing stone boundary wall to face the near side of the garage wall - the current position of the stone and mortar type to be replicated. Above image: Right - The proposed entrance gate, this is to be set back from the boundary of the site obscured from view,

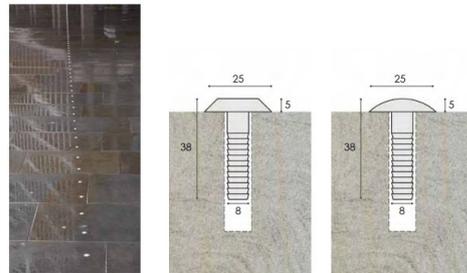
3.2c Paving & Ground treatment:

The proposed public access paving to the Fire Station is to be the extension of the existing public paving in front of the Court House currently terminating to the drop kerb of the adjacent Garage. This will now continue as indicated on the plans, along the Pollinator planted area, to the terminate almost opposite the entrance door of the proposed Fire Station.

The line of the street façade wall is proposed to be preserved for posterity with the introduction of Stainless steel studs demarking the original line in the ground.



Key Criteria	
Material	Brass or Stainless steel (subject to location)
Supplier	Kent Stainless or other approved supplier
Dimensions	25 mm Ø with 5 mm upstand and 38 mm deep thread
Spacing	1500 mm centres along straights and 300 mm centres when changing direction
Fixing	Core drill 10 mm Ø hole to depth 45 mm filled with epoxy resin



Above image: Left- Existing paving to be continued for pedestrian route for pedestrian access to the new Fire Station.
Above image: Right -Proposed stainless steel studs taken from – ' City Public Realm people Places Projects- City of London Technical Manual'.

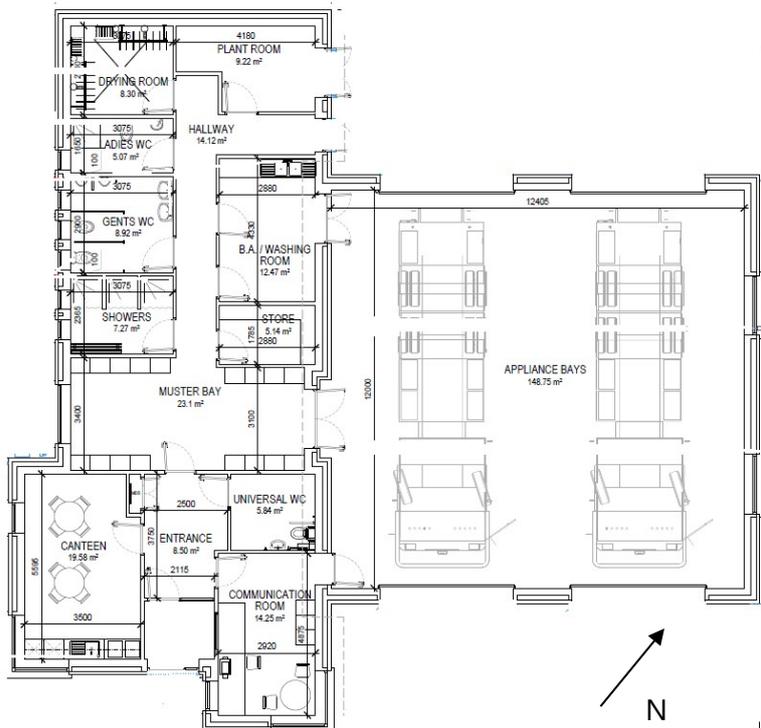
3.2d- Lighting

Sensitive lighting is to be undertaken with the implementation of low energy PV light standards, non night light pollution in design. The lights are to focus principally on the essential entrance / egress of this emergency for public service building.

Proposed details and data of the lighting will be submitted with the planning application.

3.2e Architectural Scale and Form of the proposed Fire Station.

The proposed Fire Station is planned to meet simple functional design and low domestic scale. The form of the building is broken to 2 sections- the main services area to the centre of the plan running front to back, the Fire Engine Appliance Bay to the right in a large clear span. The roof falls in 2 simple lean to planes resulting in a low ridge height. The resulting design is traditional to the extent that its form is true to is function.



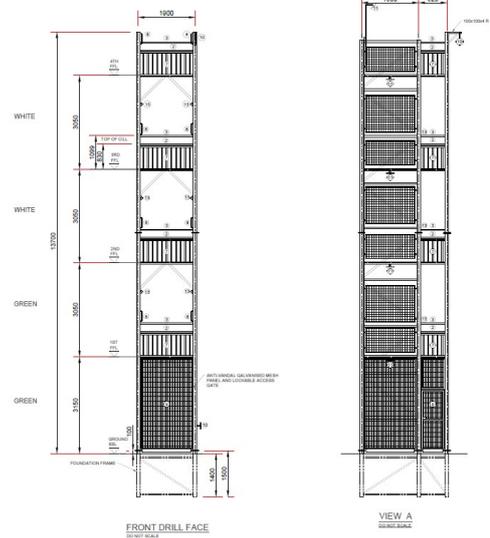
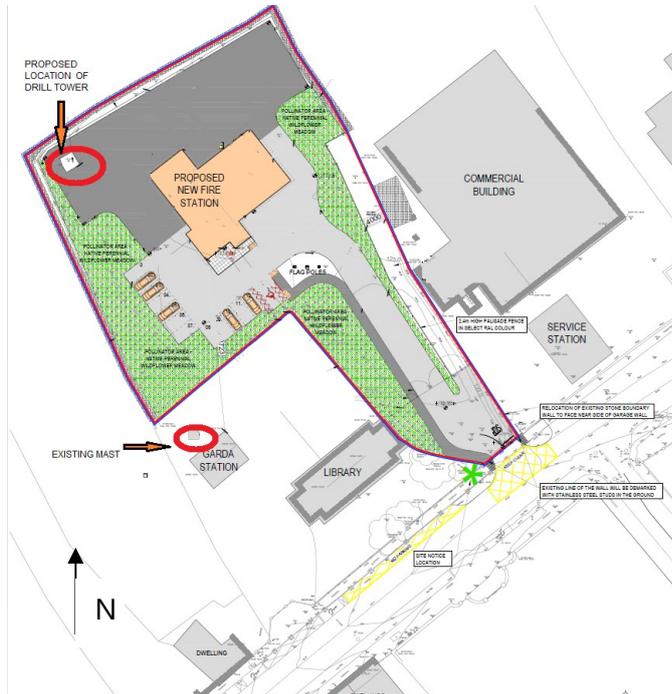
Above image: Ground Floor Plan.

The proposed building height is 8.20m approx. to the highest point of the ridge, considerably lower than the 13.7m approx. height of the courthouse. The proposed overall plan length is 22.54m to the front elevation and 21.72m to the side elevation. The building is located to the rear of the Courthouse and with selected planting it could be concealed from the road and in affect will have no negatively visual impact on the Court House elevations.



Above: Proposed Fire station and drill tower in context with Garda Station, Courthouse/ Library and Garage.

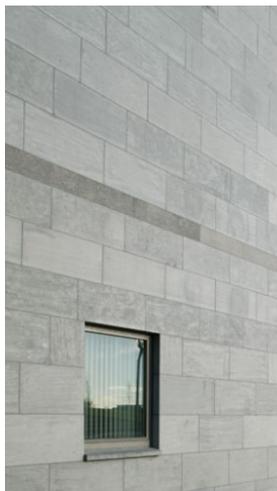
The location of the high drill tower is also proposed in a position to the rear of the proposed Fire Station to reduce the visual impact of this elevated structure.



Above: Location of drill tower to limit visibility from the road, as located to the rear of the existing mast.

3.2f Façade materials.

The façade materials proposed will present a subdued understated finish which will neither compliment or detract from the Court House building, but will assist to blend the building into the setting.



Selected stone is to form cladding to the identify the entrance door within the elevation. The finish is of a white spar dash to the other elevations.

Roofing material is to be a grey coloured proprietary pvc finish on metal decking. A low standing seam roof profile will highlight the new station as being of a contemporary vernacular in its design, while enhancing the backdrop to the court house.



The windows are to be of a selected colour of coated aluminium. The proposed Main fire doors and entrance door are of a regulation colour red, as indicated below, but the location and planting will properly mask the view of same from the roadway.



Above: 3d image of the proposed Fire Station below similar material colouring proposed.



Below Images: 3d image of the proposed Fire Station below- Aerial view of the front and side elevation and front elevation underneath.

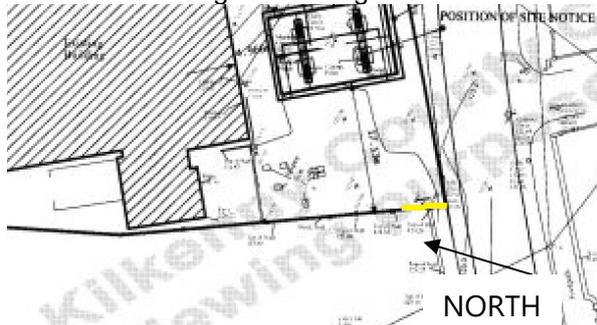


3.3 Proposed works to be undertaken to the entrance wall:

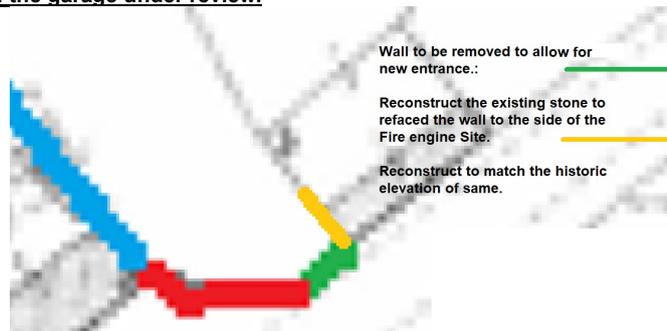
A full record of the wall is to be undertaken from an indept survey to be recorded in elevated drawings and full specification.

It appears from the historical town plans that a street front wall in this position was built into another structure running parallel to the main street, it could very possibly be this stone rubble wall.

The line of the boundary concrete capped wall of the Garage (yellow in the image below) does not appear to closely follow the original boundary indicated on the older maps as the Garage capped wall does not line at an near angle of 90 degrees as indicated on the older maps.



Above site plan indicating the capped concrete wall of the garage under review.



Above: Street fronted wall (coloured green in the image to the right) to be relocated to address and flank the new entrance required for the proposed new Fire Station.

A proposal would be the following:

All recorded methods are to adhere to those as per the manner included in the Department's Architectural Heritage Guidelines Sections 6.7.3- 6.7.5., in essence as follows:

1. Record both elevation in its entirety- by photographic images and drawings - Number and record each of the stones in the current position with thickness of mortar joint.
2. Remove the section of stone rubble wall required, retaining the Quoins to the flanking wall- and addressing the quoins in a manner to be agreed. Securely store stones ideally close by. Ensure that the stones are carefully preserved as found.
3. Rebuild the section of boundary wall and reinstall the stone in their entirety to face the existing garage wall to match the layout previously, using the survey and record of same, without causing any damaging the stones.
4. The completion to either end of this wall is to be undertaken in a manner to be agreed with the Architectural Conservation Officer.

The above proposal maintains the section of wall close to the original setting and informs a continuity of history of Urlingford town.

4.0 Conclusion.

In conclusion the Court House building and St. Marys Church in Urlingford are of great heritage importance in the town and are duly protected structures with social, historical, and architectural significance.

The construction of the Fire Station building in the location to the rear of the Court House building will not detract from the importance of these 2 protected structures. In fact, there is significance in that the proposed siting of this important social facility, which is necessary for the safe governing and autonomy of the town is maintained within the town, and links in this capacity with the adjacent historic site.

The creation of an ope, and relocation of the historic wall to form a flank as if to open a door, to accommodate such a venture is also of significance as it allows the town council to recognise how ties of the past can physically assist this opportunity of siting the Fire Station in this location. The relocation of the wall pays homage and respect to the past and to the future of the town.



Signed,

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