



**Conservation Report  
FOR THE PROPOSED EXTENSION AND  
REFURBISHMENT OF  
THE MAYFAIR BALLROOM AND ADJACENT CAR  
PARK, HORSE BARRACK LANE,  
KILKENNY**

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## Introduction

The Mayfair Ballroom is located in the Kilkenny City Centre Architectural Conservation Area and Kilkenny City zone of Archaeological Potential RMP KK19-26

This report has been prepared by Mark Kennedy of Reddy Architecture & Urbanism as part of the submission on behalf of Kilkenny County Council for a Part 8 Planning Application further to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2013 and Section B1.1 of Appendix B of "Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities".

## Client Instruction

Acting on the instruction of Kilkenny County Council, this report has been prepared following an inspection of the "Mayfair Ballroom and adjacent car park" on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and following a review of the proposed design for the Mayfair Building, as per the following:

- Demolition of extensions to the north-east gable of the existing building (approx. 102m<sup>2</sup>) including removal of a boiler house and steps adjoining the City Wall (a National Monument).
- Provision of a new two storey extension to the gable ends of the existing building (approx. 884m<sup>2</sup>) to be externally insulated with a render finish.
- Remodelling and extension of the existing 2 storey flat-roofed section on the east façade to be externally insulated and clad with a "second-skin" louvred system.
- Existing northern façade to be externally insulated with a render finish.
- Replacement of the existing roof with a standing seam metal roof.
- Replacement of the existing windows with new double-glazed windows in a powder coated aluminium frame.
- Modifications to the internal layout of the building and provision of a new mezzanine level in the double-height space of the former ballroom.
- Construction of a public urban square and new access to the building on the site of the existing public car park to the south west of the building.
- Site works associated with the formation of new connections to existing public foul and surface water drainage and existing utilities as required.

The Mayfair Ballroom site is comprised of the Mayfair Ballroom building and adjacent car park. The site is defined on the Northwest by the medieval town walls along the Breaghagh River, on the southwest by Watergate and on the southeast by Horse Barrack Lane.



Figure 1: Mayfair Ballroom 1960s. Photo: Tom Brett Photographic Collection in the ownership of Kilkenny County Council

## The Scope of the Report

The inspection and survey was undertaken to provide a conservation assessment of the architectural fabric of the Mayfair Ballroom building and to carry out an assessment of the impact of the proposed refurbishment and extension of the building on the fabric of the building. This also took into consideration the context and location of the building in an Architectural Conservation Area, a zone of archaeological potential and adjacent to two national monuments.

## The Mayfair Site

*The Mayfair Ballroom opened on St Stephen's night 1943. It was one of the most popular venues in the county throughout the 1950s, 60s and 70s and it played host to a number of well-known American names including Ray Charles, The Everly Brothers, Dusty Springfield, The Tremeloes, Engelbert Humperdink, Chubby Checker and, just months before he was killed in an air crash, Jim Reeves, who played to 1,700 people, the biggest crowd ever seen at the Mayfair. The decline of the show bands resulted in the Mayfair closing in 1973*  
(katharineblake.wordpress.com).

The *Mayfair site* is comprised of The former Mayfair Ballroom building and the adjacent car park to the west.

The former Mayfair Ballroom was most recently used by the Diageo Brewery and has been modified for their requirements for offices and a canteen and a locker room.

The Mayfair Building is constructed with rendered concrete walls. There is a double pitched roof of corrugated sheeting, which is an asbestos containing material. The double roof is defined by metal roof trusses.

The ballroom is a large, high-ceilinged room with windows facing onto the Breagh River. The ballroom has been subdivided for offices and locker rooms, post closure as a ballroom in 1973.

A two storey concrete block-built extension at the rear of the building and a lean-to kitchen extension at the front are both later additions added after the ballroom closed in 1973 and were demolished under archaeological supervision as part of this project in 2017 (AMS 2017c). The elements of the Mayfair building demolished (Figure 4) consisted of a:

- 64 sq. m single-storey extension to the east
- 36 sq. m single-storey extension to the west;
- raised walkway to the southeast and associated canopy.

The building is located directly beside the mediaeval town walls and the Breagh River. There is a very narrow area between the ballroom and the City Wall. The distance between the building and the medieval walls ranges from about 0.65m –1.6m at the most. A concrete block built boiler house at the northeast corner of the service yard abuts the City Wall. Trees were removed in this location as part of the demolition / enabling works in 2017, and the tree stumps still remain and their careful removal form part of the future works.

It should be noted that there was a medieval bridge at the North West end of the building and the springing point of the arch is still visible on the southern bank of the river.

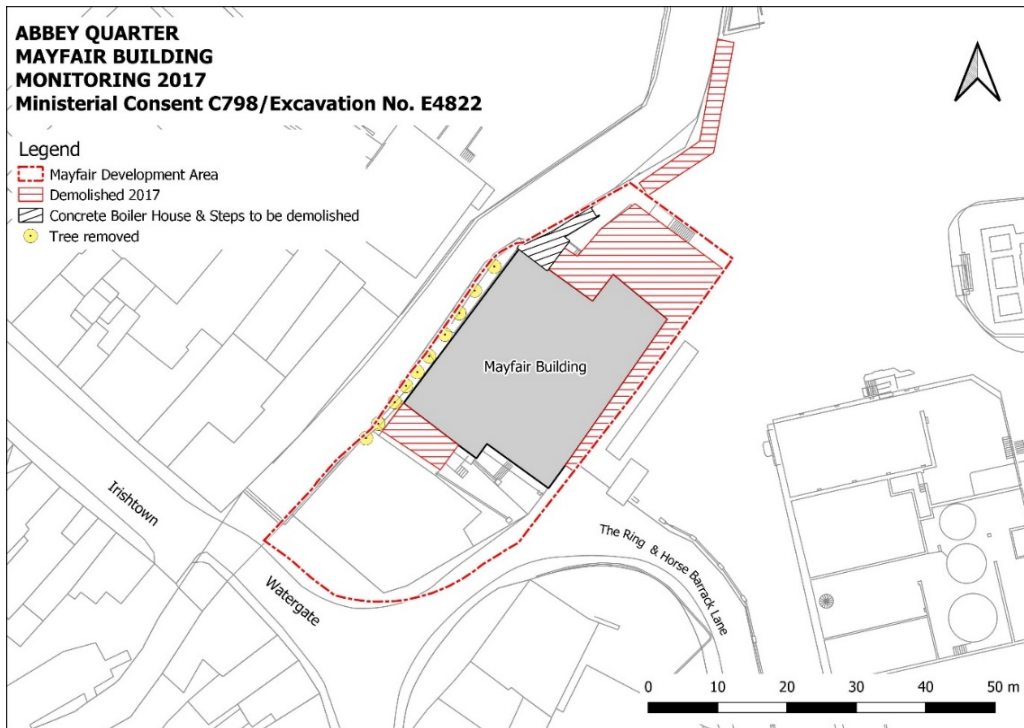


Figure 2: 2017 Ministerial Consent for Excavation work to Mayfair site

## The Car Park

A small car park at the southwest end of the site is separated from Watergate Street by a raised planting bed surrounded by a modern low stone wall. The car park is paved with tarmac.

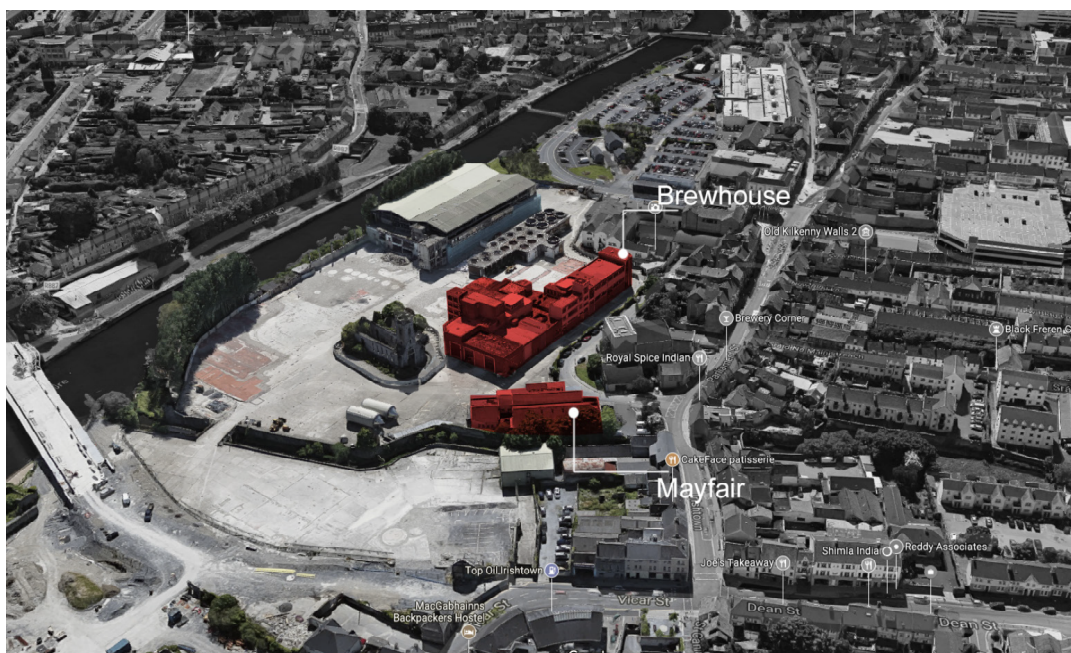


Figure 3: Aerial View of Site from Google Maps



## Conservation Assessment of the Context and setting of The Mayfair Site



Figure 4: Mayfair and St. Francis Abbey as seen from the tower of St. Canices

### Conservation Strategy to the Mayfair site

On the initial assessment of the Mayfair Ballroom it is clear that the main historical significance of The Mayfair Ballroom is not the historical fabric of the building but the social history of the building and its setting. The social history and the setting of the Mayfair Ballroom takes precedence over the fabric of the building.

It is essential that the conservation approach to the building focuses primarily on the social history of the building but more significantly it will focus on the conservation of the setting of the building within its proximity to the medieval City Walls and St Francis Abbey.

The medieval setting is the primary focus of the conservation approach to the proposed design intervention to the Mayfair site.

The most significant characteristic of the Mayfair Ballroom is the site and context.

- A) The Mayfair site is located within a Zone of Archaeological Potential, RMPKK19-26
- B) The Mayfair Ballroom is located within the Architectural Conservation Area of Kilkenny City Centre
- C) The conservation approach will have to be considered within the framework of City Centre Conservation Policies and objectives and within the archaeological framework and policies as outlined in the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan 2014 -2020
- D) The Mayfair site is constructed directly adjacent to the medieval town wall which is a National Monument.
- E) The Mayfair site is situated beside St. Francis' Abbey which is a National Monument.
- F) There is an existing view from St Francis Abbey across the Mayfair site towards St Canice's Cathedral and the medieval town wall to rear.

The setting of the building was outlined in the original Part VIII Archaeological Assessment of the medieval structures and archaeological zone carried out by Mr Collin O Drisceoil MA MIAI. Below is an extract from the report:

*"The site is located on the southern bank of the River Breagagh, within the former flood-plain of the river Breagagh. Originally however the Breagagh was considerably wider than it is today (O Drisceoil 2004). During the earlier part of the thirteenth century massive reclamation works were undertaken within the old floodplains of the Nore and Breagagh to provide for the expansion of the town and a functioning quayside. This was achieved by dumping thousands of tons of refuse, stone and rubble between a succession of wooden revetments. Direct archaeological evidence for reclamation was uncovered to the rear of No.1 Irishtown, 50m north-west of the Mayfair building (Doyle 2004) (Licence number 02E1592). The project took place prior to the widening and deepening of the Breagagh River, part of the river Nore flood-relief scheme. Four metres of waterlogged archaeological stratigraphy was recorded including a series of timber fences, the remains of a post-and-wattle structure and a substantial riverside revetment. The bulk of the sequence dated from the late twelfth- fourteenth centuries and was associated with a large assemblage of finds.*

*The Mayfair site is bounded by the mediaeval Town Wall which were constructed on the bank of the River Breagagh. This is a National Monument. Following the reclamation of the Nore and Breagagh. Kilkenny's Town Walls were built to defend the urban population and create a secure marketplace. It is now thought that the bulk of the stone circuit was in place by 1300, having replaced a more constricted earthen rampart (Thomas 1992, ii, 131-2; Oxford Archaeology 2005, 55-62). The proposed development area is 10m to the northeast of the site of a gate on the Town Wall which is variously referred to as the 'Irishtown gate', 'Hightown gate' and 'Watergate', and linked the boroughs of Hightown and Irishtown. Its date of erection is not recorded though there is likely to have been a gate at this point from an early stage in the development of the town. It was demolished in the later 18th century and no accurate representation of it survives. The 1655 Down Survey map depicts a large rectangular gatehouse, though whether or not this is accurate is open to question. Similarly, Rocque's map (1758) simply shows a gap in the wall where the gate stood.*

*The Mayfair site is located adjacent to Saint Francis' Abbey. This is a National Monument. Saint Francis' Abbey was founded by Richard Marshall in around 1234 (Bradley, 2000). The remains of the thirteenth century choir survive. A portion of the area to the north of the abbey church, as well as the nave and cloister to the south, was excavated in the late 1960s by Marcus Ó hEochaidhe in connection with major development work at the brewery, which surrounds the monument. The excavations have never been fully published but a sketch-plan (published in the Old Kilkenny review 1975) and photographs (see below) indicate that an extremely large north transept with an aisle, in reality another church, was found to extend 22m north of the nave (also excavated) and chancel, which still stands. The transept is known to have contained an early 17th century graveslab (Manning 2007), indicating it was used for burial beyond the reformation.*

*From Saint Francis' Abbey there is a strong visual connection across the Mayfair building and across the Breagagh River to the mediaeval town and St Canice's Cathedral. The current Cathedral dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The Cathedral stands on an ancient site which has been used for Christian worship since the 6<sup>th</sup> century. There has been a church dedicated to St Canice on the cathedral site since the late seventh century A D. The earliest church on the site is presumed to have been made of wood, later to be replaced in the later medieval period by a romanesque-style stone church. This was in turn replaced by the current imposing medieval cathedral. A few yards from the present south transept stands an imposing 9th-century round tower, 100 ft high. Accessible only by a steep set of internal ladders, it may once have been both a watchtower and a refuge. The summit gives a clear view of Kilkenny and the countryside around. The hill on which the cathedral stands is believed to be the centre of the first major settlement at Kilkenny, and the round tower suggests an early ecclesiastical foundation.[3] Much less is known about the early secular structures, but the area around the cathedral, called Irishtown, is the oldest part of the present city*

A more recent archaeological study of the subject site has been completed by Dr Richard Clutterbuck of Archaeological Management Solutions Limited, Hector Street Mills, Kilrush, Co. Clare, and this Archaeological Impact Assessment forms part of the documentation of the Part VIII application.

## **Overview of the City & Environs Development Plan 2014-2020 that will inform the conservation approach to the building and its setting.**

From a review of the City & Environs Development Plan 2014-2020, the following is a summary of the policies of the City & Environs Development Plan 2014 – 2020 considered in the design approach to the Mayfair site :

- *Endeavour to preserve in situ all archaeological monuments, whether on land or underwater, listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), and any newly discovered archaeological sites, features, or objects by requiring that archaeological remains are identified and fully considered at the very earliest stages of the development process and that schemes are designed to avoid impacting on the archaeological heritage.*
- *To require archaeological assessment, surveys, test excavation and/or monitoring for planning applications in areas of archaeological importance if a development proposal is likely to impact upon in-situ archaeological monuments, their setting and archaeological remains.*
- *Ensure that development within the vicinity of a Recorded Monument is sited and designed appropriately so that it does not seriously detract from the setting of the feature or its zone of archaeological potential. Where upstanding remains of a Recorded Monument exist a visual impact assessment may be required to fully determine the effect of any proposed development.*
- *Require the retention of surviving medieval plots and street patterns and to facilitate the recording of evidence of ancient boundaries, layouts etc. in the course of development.*
- *Safeguard the importance of significant archaeological or historic landscapes from developments that would unduly sever or disrupt the relationship, connectivity and/or inter-visibility between sites.*
- *The Council will promote awareness of, and facilitate access to, the archaeological inheritance of County Kilkenny*
- *The Council will support the National Policy on Town Defences*  
*“There should be a presumption in favour of preservation in-situ of archaeological remains and preservation of their character, setting and amenity”.*
- *To ensure the preservation of the special character of each ACA particularly with regard to building scale, proportions, historical plot sizes, building lines, height, general land use, building materials, historic street furniture and paving.*

## City Centre Architectural Conservation Area

The Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan provides the following description, statement of character and policies associated with the City Centre ACA as follows :

### Description and historical background

*The city centre ACA encompasses the medieval core of Kilkenny, the boundaries of which follow the line of the city wall to the west and north, the river to the east and Rose Inn Street to the south (see Figure 7.6). This area is defined by the central spine of the city running along High Street and Parliament Street with the medieval slips running to the east between High Street and Kieran Street and the surviving burgage plots to the rear of properties on High Street and Parliament Street. This part of the City contains some of the city's most architecturally and historically significant structures including St. Francis Abbey, The Black Abbey, St. Mary's Church, Rothe House, Shee Alms House, and the Hightown Circuit of the city walls, visual reminders of the city's prosperity in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. The Tholsel and the Courthouse are also within this area representing major contributions from the 18th century. Apart from these landmark buildings and structures (of which there is a high proportion in such a small area) the external built fabric of these streets dates to the 18th and 19th centuries. Even within this however, there are small reminders of the medieval past incorporated into many of the city's structures, particularly on High Street, and it is highly likely that there is further medieval fabric hidden from view.*

*The urban vernacular of much of the City Centre is characterised by rendered and painted facades with classically proportioned wall to window ratios and the survival of the timber sash as the most common window type. This presentation is typical of the commercial centres of most Irish towns. One departure from this type is the east side of Parliament Street which is home to a number of redbrick four-storey over basement Georgian houses. Adjacent to these is an important reminder of the 19th century brewing industry in the St. Francis Abbey Brewery.*

### Statement of Character

*The City Centre ACA is characterised by its evolution during the medieval period as Hightown, containing the residences of the merchant princes, the custom house/Tholsel, the market cross and later the courthouse. Much of the medieval street pattern survives with the main streets running along a north south central spine, having narrow slips unique to Kilkenny running downhill off the main street to the east and having long burgage plots running east-west to the rear of the properties on High Street and Parliament Street. The area today is characterised by a sizeable collection of landmark medieval and 18th century buildings set in an 18th and 19th century commercial streetscape of two and three-storey rendered facades with classically proportioned wall to window ratios and many surviving early shop and pub fronts to ground floor. In the north-east corner of the area is a significant element of Kilkenny's 19th century industrial heritage in the form of the St. Francis Abbey brewing site.*

### ACA Development Management Standards based on assessment of special character

- CCACA 1: *Assessment of proposals for the presentation of commercial premises will require retention of genuine early/original shopfronts/pubfronts, and the provision of high quality contemporary design when new shopfronts/commercial fronts are proposed,*
- CCACA 2: *To maintain high standard of presentation of ground and upper floors by controlling the size, number and composition of advertisements on buildings to prevent and reduce visual clutter in the ACA. Plastic or neon signage will not be considered in the ACA.*
- CCACA 3: *To protect the remaining surviving medieval street pattern and tight urban grain, particularly the burgage plots to the rear of High St. and Parliament St. limiting large scale developments which may necessitate assimilation of smaller historic building plots and retention of the existing scale of three and four storey buildings.*
- CCACA 4: *To improve the visual appearance of the car parking area at the Market Yard and to ensure a high standard of architectural design for any development at Bateman Quay.*

In addition, the following General ACA Development Management Guidelines apply to all ACA's

### **General ACA Development Management Guidance**

- *To have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines when assessing proposals for development affecting an ACA.*
- *To ensure the retention, repair rather than replacement, and the regular maintenance of original/early features in buildings which contribute to the character of an ACA, such as roof profiles, chimney stacks, roof coverings, external wall treatments, doors and windows, shop fronts, pub fronts, and to ensure the use of appropriate materials and repair techniques when repairs are being carried out.*
- *To ensure the conservation of early/original timber windows and to ensure that inappropriate materials such as uPVC windows, doors, fascias, rainwater goods etc. are not introduced to buildings within an ACA.*
- *To ensure the conservation of historic shopfronts and pubfronts*
- *To require high quality, contemporary design and materials in shopfronts/pubfronts where replacement is necessary and new ones are proposed and to avoid pastiche shopfronts/ pubfronts.*
- *To ensure the preservation of the special character of the ACA when assessing proposals for advertising, to limit the number of projecting signs to no more than one on each commercial premises to avoid visual clutter, to control lighting and coloured lighting on facades.*
- *To require high quality contemporary design and materials when new buildings are being introduced into an ACA and the retention of historic scale and plot size.*
- *To retain historic items of street furniture where they contribute to the character of the ACA.*
- *To facilitate the removal of overhead cables throughout the ACA.*
- *To seek the retention of mature trees/significant planting (when in good condition) which contribute to the character of the ACA.*



## The Architectural Brief and response as set out by Reddy Architecture and Urbanism

The brief provided by Kilkenny County Council outlined the requirements to renovate, remodel and extend the building to ensure it can respond to its new role as a Kilkenny City Library.

### Existing Building Form

The existing building is two storeys with a painted render finish. The original building can be identified by the pitched roofs to the two gabled forms. The later extensions to the building facing Horse Barrack Lane are flat roofed. The fenestration to the building is varied in design and material and without pattern. The combination of varied forms and varied fenestration types and pattern results in a confused building with little architectural merit.

### Proposed Building Form

The double gabled forms are the predominant form of the existing building, and the extensions to the east and west of the existing building (front and back) seek to extend this architectural form. The front elevation has been designed to emphasize the original double gabled feature to ensure the Mayfair building is still recognizable as a local landmark.

The proposed building retains the overall two storey scale of the existing building. The height of the new parapet to the existing south elevation and the flat roof extensions proposed to the east and south match the height of the eaves level of the existing pitched roof.

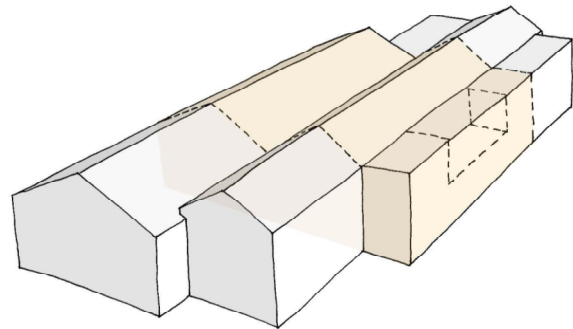


Figure 5: Concept Massing Diagram

### Internal Spaces

The main library and reading spaces are located within the existing structure of the building. The spatial qualities of the former ballroom will be evident in the children's area. The dividing wall introduced by the Brewery will be removed. The original trusses, double-height space and pitched roof form will be reinstated lending a bright and airy aspect to the space.

A mezzanine level will be constructed within this space to house part of the adult library section. This mezzanine is connected to the ground floor via a secondary feature stairs.

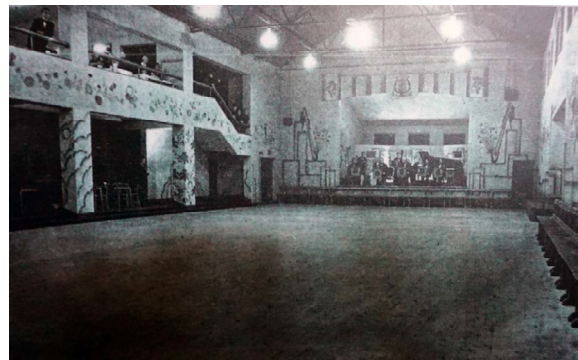


Figure 6: Ballroom on its opening Night in 1943

## Materiality

### Existing Building Materiality and Finishes

The facades of the existing building are finished with a painted render. The pitched roofs are clad with profiled concrete cladding panels which contain asbestos. Existing windows are a mixture of single and double glazed in timber and aluminium frames. The window frames are not thermally broken and are creating condensation on the internal face of the frames which has contributed to the deterioration of the fabric of the building. Generally, the building is of poor quality, and there are no significant elements of materiality or workmanship that would be considered unique or of merit.

### Proposed Building Materiality and Finishes

The front and rear gable ends of the building will be externally insulated with a self coloured render finish. The pitched roofs will be finished with zinc standing seam roofing. All windows will be double glazed in powder coated aluminium frames. The decision to retain and extend the existing facade raised the design challenge of producing a cohesive facade that would simultaneously respond to the internal functions and address the external spaces.

The choice of a double-skin made of colourful vertical louvres helps to confer this coherence to an otherwise disjointed facade. The double-skin facade will consist of vertical elements placed at regular intervals, occasionally punctuated to allow the creation of feature windows and privileged views of the Abbey. The passer-by who wanders along the front of the library and looks up at it will

be accompanied by a kinetic impression created by the rhythm of the louvres. The facade will be animated and will embody the movement and evolution from the Irishtown entrance into the heart of the Abbey Quarter.

The new urban square to the west of the building (previously approved) and the new footpath along its southern and eastern sides will be constructed from a combination of varying lengths of Kilkenny Limestone and Granite. This landscaping is intended to form a seamless extension to the Horse Barrack Lane public realm.



Figure 7: View of Existing Building from Parliament Street (West)



Figure 8: View of Proposed Building from Parliament Street (West)



Figure 9: View of Existing Building from St. Francis Abbey (East)

The design proposal seeks to provide a civic building at the gateway to the Abbey Quarter that is sympathetic to the vernacular form of the existing structure, whilst also distinguishing it as a public building - a new library facility for Kilkenny.

## Impact Assessment

Proposal	Description	Assessment of Impact			Comments
		Positive	Neutral	Negative	
Demolition of extensions to the north-east gable of the existing building (approx. 102m <sup>2</sup> ) including removal of a boiler house and steps adjoining the City Wall (a National Monument).	These works involve the careful; removal of a modern structure abutting the National Monument. The works will require careful monitoring and a detailed method statement from a conservation engineer in advance of commencing on site	Medium			These works will require Ministerial Consent in accordance with the provisions of the National Monuments Act. Once complete, the City Wall will be better protected and also more visible for the public.
Provision of a new two storey extension to the gable ends of the existing building (approx. 884m <sup>2</sup> ) to be externally insulated with a render finish.	The construction of extensions to both sides of the building, and in proximity to the City Wall. Façade is pulled back at ground floor level to facilitate access / maintain visibility of the City Wall.	High			At present the building is presented in an incomplete manner to the east and west. These works will provide a better elevational treatment and also a public entrance onto the new landscaped Square to the west of the proposed building. The proposed extension in this area has been set back, to ensure the extension does not obscure the City Wall in this area. The extension to the east of the building will be built on the footprint of the existing Mayfair Building.
Remodelling and extension of the existing 2 storey flat-roofed section on the east façade to be externally insulated and clad with a "second-skin" louvred system.	This intervention will effectively fill in the gap at 1 <sup>st</sup> floor level to the south of the building, along with the provision of the louvred second skin.	High			The provision of the infill will coalesce this element of the building, and the louvred second skin provides a unified design approach to an otherwise disjointed façade. The playful and vibrant nature of the louvres animates the façade.
Existing northern façade to be externally insulated with a render finish.	Provision of an external render and insulation system to the existing plastered façade. More glazing will be introduced to this façade, including a projecting glazed pod which opens up views on the City Wall within the building.		Neutral		This has no impact on the setting of the City Walls. Measures will be required during construction to ensure that these works will not adversely affect the City Walls. The works will require ministerial consent in line with the provisions of the National Monuments Act.

Replacement of the existing roof with a standing seam metal roof.	Removal of the existing asbestos roof and replacement with a high-quality standing seam roof. This will also facilitate the exposure of the existing steel roof trusses in the original ballroom.	High			This is positive in terms of the setting of the building and the overall upgrade of the roofscape close to the national monuments, however there is an environmental risk with the removal of the existing roof - which will need to be carefully undertaken by a specialist contractor.
Replacement of the existing windows with new double-glazed windows in a powder coated aluminium frame.	Replacement of low quality thermally inefficient windows with new high-quality frames and glazing	High			This will improve the aesthetic appearance and thermal efficiency of the building.
Replacement of the existing windows to the northern facade	The new windows to the northern facade will use the existing window opes, but with a dropped cill level, providing better visibility of the adjoining city walls.	High			The provision of better visibility of the city walls is in keeping with the policies and objectives of the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan.
Modifications to the internal layout of the building and provision of a new mezzanine level in the double-height space of the former ballroom.	The proposal to rearrange the internal environment of the building which will reinstate the main ballroom volume, but also allows for the inclusion of a mezzanine to provide additional floorspace within the building	Medium			The ballroom space will be reinstated but will also be modified by the inclusion of the mezzanine.
Construction of a public urban square and new access to the building on the site of the current car park.	The proposed landscaping works will provide a public square that resolves the level changes between Irishtown Gate, the finished floor of the building, Horse Barrack Lane and the city wall. It will be constructed of high-quality durable material (limestone and granite), as a continuation of Horse Barrack Lane.	High			The creation of a new urban space in front of the Mayfair Building is consistent with the objectives of the Kilkenny City & Environs Development Plan. The construction of a paved entrance area to the building will improve the setting and presentation of the adjoining City Walls.
Foundations to the proposed new build / extensions.	The foundations for the extended building will be designed to minimise excavations works and to avoid impact on the below ground archaeological layers		Neutral		Raft foundations will be used.

## Conclusion

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000, Part IV, Section 51 which seeks to protect structures which form part of the architectural heritage containing a special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, it is considered that the overall proposed development will have an overall positive impact on existing building, the adjoining national monuments, and the streetscape at Irishtown and the Abbey Quarter.

The Mayfair Ballroom had a very significant role in the Social Heritage and History of Kilkenny City and County. The proposed retention and adapted re-use of the former Ballroom Building as a Public Library, will provide a community use for the building, helping to conserve the social heritage of the building and providing new cultural opportunities for the local community of Kilkenny City & County.

The reuse of the existing building and to bring the building back into public use, which it has not been since 1973, is a very positive development for the Mayfair. As a gateway building to the Abbey Quarter, the reuse of an existing structure is both an efficient use of existing building stock and also protects and preserves the archaeological potential at the site.

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