

# DESIGN STATEMENT, Open Library Project at Drumahaire, Dromahair, Co.Leitrim



<b>Project</b>	Open Library Dromahair	
<b>Location</b>	Drumahaire, Dromahair, Co Leitrim	
<b>Client</b>	Leitrim Co Co	
<b>Issue</b>	Client	1
<b>Date</b>	12/08/2020	NS
<b>Scope</b>	Design Statement	

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

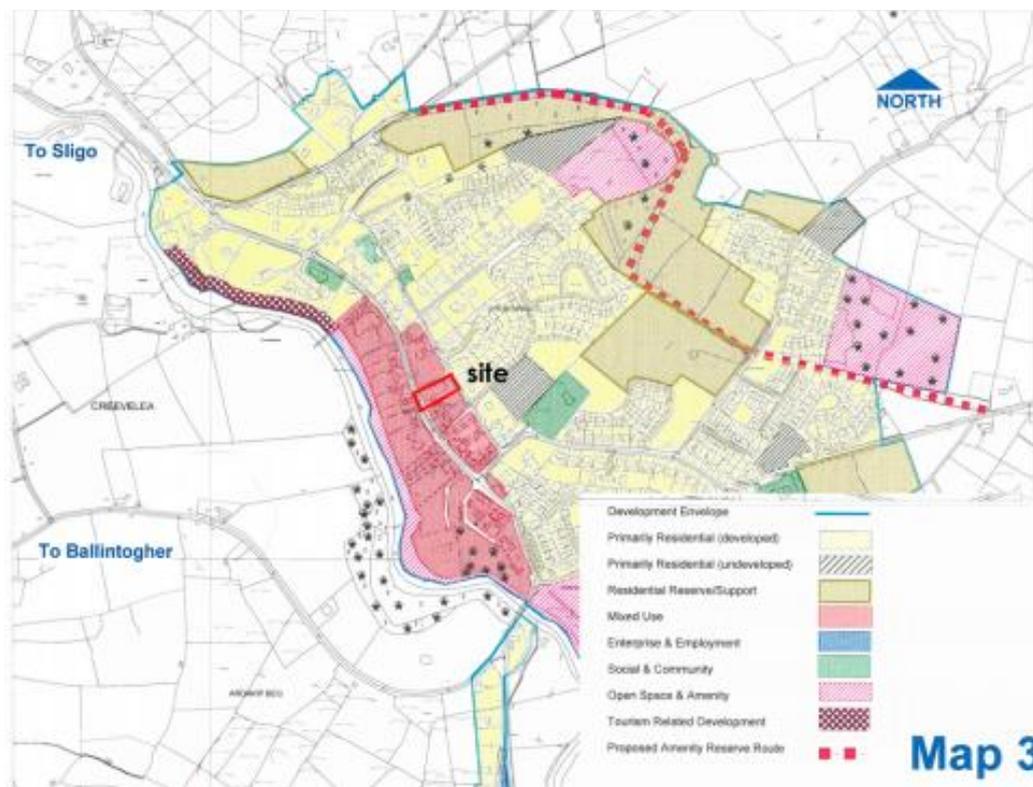
Purpose of Report	This Conservation Report and Impact Statement has been prepared as part of planning application for a Proposed Open Public Library Development to west of site with regard to proposed future development of balance of site as social housing
Owner	Leitrim County Council
Address of Structure	Drumahaire Td, Dromahair, Co Leitrim. F92YF6E
Description	Proposed Open Public Library Development at Dromahair, Co.Leitrim. The Proposed Development will comprise of (a) Demolition of existing two storey Hotel including existing Function Room & storage sheds (b) construct new two storey Open Library circa 500 sq. m consisting of Reference/Study space, Computer area, Workshop/Activity space, Listening/Viewing facilities, Exhibition space, Multipurpose meeting rooms, Office space, Staff room, Comms. room, Public toilets, Storage areas and all associated site development works including construction of footpaths, roads, car & bicycle parking areas, street lighting, ducting for utilities, hard & soft landscaped areas, formation of new connections to existing foul/surface water drainage and existing utilities. The proposed development is located within the Dromahair Architectural Conservation Area.
Coordinates	580331. 831280
Site Area	0.17Ha
Zoning	Mixed Use as per LCDP 2015-2021
Current Use	Former Breffni Centre Hotel Site/Semi Derelict
ACA	Within Dromahair ACA (Map 4.15 LCDP 2015-21)
Planning Authority	Leitrim County Council LCDP 2022-28 is at Pre Draft Stage
Site Location	Inside Development Boundary (Map 3 Zoning Drumahair) LCCDP 2015-21) Dromahair Development Framework (under development) Dromahair UFP 2006? Dromahair is a Tier 2B Centre
Access Road	Located on the eastern side of Main Street (R288) in the centre of Dromahair Village. Back Line to rear (NE) Laneway to NW
Protected Status	Within the ACA area only
Author	Nicholas Sweeney RIAI Conservation Grade 3, Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Building Repair & Conservation
Date of Inspection	12 <sup>th</sup> September 2020

## INTRODUCTION

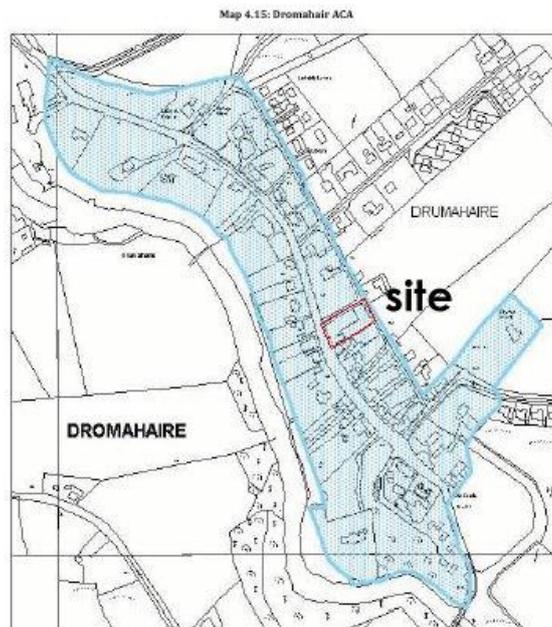
Sweeney Architects have been retained by **Leitrim County Council** to prepare a Conservation Report and Impact Statement in relation to proposed Open Library & Residential Project, Drumahaire, Dromahair, Co Leitrim. The balance of site (to rear, east) is proposed as future housing project and is indicatively laid out in the planning submission. Sweeney Architects are a Grade III Conservation Practice registered with the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI). The property was inspected on 12<sup>th</sup> September 20120.

## Location

The site is located to centrally along main street Drumahair to east side within the Dromahair Architectural Conservation Area.



Zoning Map LCCDP 2015-22



Map 1: Dromahair ACA (Map 4.15 LCDP 2015-21)

### Existing Layout

The site contains semi-derelict 2 storey Hotel facing main street with ballroom to rear. The original 2 storey structure (coloured green) was extended to north west-side following the 1908 OS survey (coloured purple). The southern end was extended in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century with a rear ballroom also added around this time.



### Initial Brief

Dromahair underwent a 49% population growth rate from the 2011 Census figures to the 2016 figures. The population in 2016 stood at 808 but has increased since then with many young families moving to the area. Dromahair lies 10km from Manorhamilton (population 1,466) and 17km from Sligo town (population 19,199). 89.3% of people living in County Leitrim are living in rural areas and the percentage of households with broadband internet access in Leitrim is 58%, the lowest in the country.

It is envisaged that the provision of an upgraded library facility will be a Community Library serving both the immediate urban area of Dromahair village and the surrounding catchment area.

The library will be a public space at the heart of the community that will aim to strengthen communities in a dynamic, creative and inclusive manner. It will be a space where services and collections can be viewed, listened to, read aloud, played with and computed. The building and its collections will enable staff to provide a range of resources and services in a variety of media to meet the needs of individuals and groups for education, information and personal development including recreation and leisure. The development of a new library facility will contribute positively to the development of the village by providing a key public building which will support not only residents of the town but also those of outlying communities. It will also act as a community hub which will connect communities and act as a space where people can gather to interact, learn and explore.

The library building will aim to be a warm, friendly and enticing space for all. It will be designed for Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) enabled self-service operation and will offer a 'My Open Library' service. The heating system will be sustainable and the design will aspire towards a zero-energy building by employing energy efficiency technologies. It will also aim to provide an engaging user experience which will be stimulating and inspiring by accommodating changing and emerging technology in a manner that will balance aesthetics and functionality.

The provision of the self-service activities to be accommodated during My Open

Library hours will include, but is not limited to: **Minimum Service Provision**

**Requirement**

Stock issuing and returns

PCs with internet access

Wi-Fi

Printing

Photocopying/ Scanning

Study/reading spaces

Laptop/tablet spaces & charging points

Access to toilets

Multifunctional meeting facilities

**Delivery Mechanism**

Self Service Kiosk with RFID enabled stock

6 PCs with PC Reservation System

Free Wi-Fi. Broadband speed is 100Mb.

Printing available by sending documents from home or from mobile device

Self Service photocopying and scanning pay as you go using Surf box

Combination of reading tables, informal spaces and individual study spaces.

10 Laptops/tablets with accompanying charging points

2 separate bathroom areas – male and female with facilities for people with disabilities and baby changing.

Separate Meeting Room and flexible meeting area/community space

The proposal is for a library to comprise approximately 300-500 square metres over two floors utilising the existing hotel structure where possible and extending as necessary. It should seek to include a number of the following distinctive spaces:

- Lending library for adults, teenagers and children
- Reference/Study Space
- Computer Area
- Workshop/Activity Space/Makerspaces
- Listening/Viewing Facilities
- Exhibition Space
- Multi-Purpose Meeting Rooms
- Storage Area
- Office Space
- Public Toilets
- Staffroom
- Comms Room

A strategically located elevator should also be included in the design.

All internal design and specification of office furniture and all fixtures and fittings should be included. A card activated security system should be considered as well as the provision of secure and covered bicycle parking stands.

The increased space relative to the existing library will facilitate the running of community based activities and initiatives in addition to the library's core functions and will develop the role of the library as a focal point for community activity in the areas of literature, education, culture and recreation.

### Design Response

Retention of the original hotel building was considered particularly regarding the status of the Architectural Conservation Area. The issues relating to the retention of the building are summarised

- The ground floor ceiling level at southern end is slightly less than the required 2.4m height and any option to retain would need to resolve this issue.
- The building is highly altered from the original structure with several walls propped at ground level. Only a single fireplace at ground level has been retained. The ground floor corridor width at 900mm is extremely narrow and unsuitable for a public building
- The likely original entrance with stairs (now entrance to bar) cannot be replaced with a *public* type stairs within the area constraint.
- The NE/SW access road lacks a footpath and the corner to the hotel and main street cannot achieve a 6m radius in the current position.

Several options were presented to Client for consideration. The approved option has the following design features:

- Spaces organised with the ground floor as traditional library space with flexible use at first floor level. The separation of uses to be recognisable in the elevation to aid orientation
- The access to first floor level to front (to avoid entering the library over and back)
- Second staircase to allow for larger volume at first floor level
- Lighting of library via external windows to elevations rather than top lit or saw tooth roof
- Roof and wall finishes to match the ACA area
- Service areas to east side to avoid overlooking to adjoining building and to maximise fenestration to corner

Design had regard to Previous Planning Permission below:

<b>Ref:</b>	071233 (ABP pl:12.235230)
<b>Application date</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2007
<b>Description</b>	demolish the existing Breffini Centre hotel and function room and to construct a 3 storey 1739 sqm building to incorporate a supermarket at ground floor (gross floor area 902 sqm to include retail floorspace of 600sqm), a creche at first floor (543.5sqm) and outdoor play area, part covered of 112 sqm, a gym at second floor level of 197sqm and a community room of 44sqm. Levels on site will result in first floor being at ground level to the rear with vehicular access to 27 on-site car parking spaces over the supermarket and the outdoor play area level with the creche.The proposal includes the provision of all circulation and access within the structure, connection to the existing public sewer and watermain, and all associated site development works
<b>Decision:</b>	granted on appeal by An Bord Pleanala
<b>Decision Date</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2008

It was considered that parking to front area to be avoided and also to provide footpath to access road as net public gain which was approach previously approved.

Parking to rear including disabled space. This design has regard to potential future housing scheme to rear and potential for sharing visitor spaces.

Design guidance from Part M and Buildings for everyone has been implemented where possible

Storage space is generous and distributed throughout the building