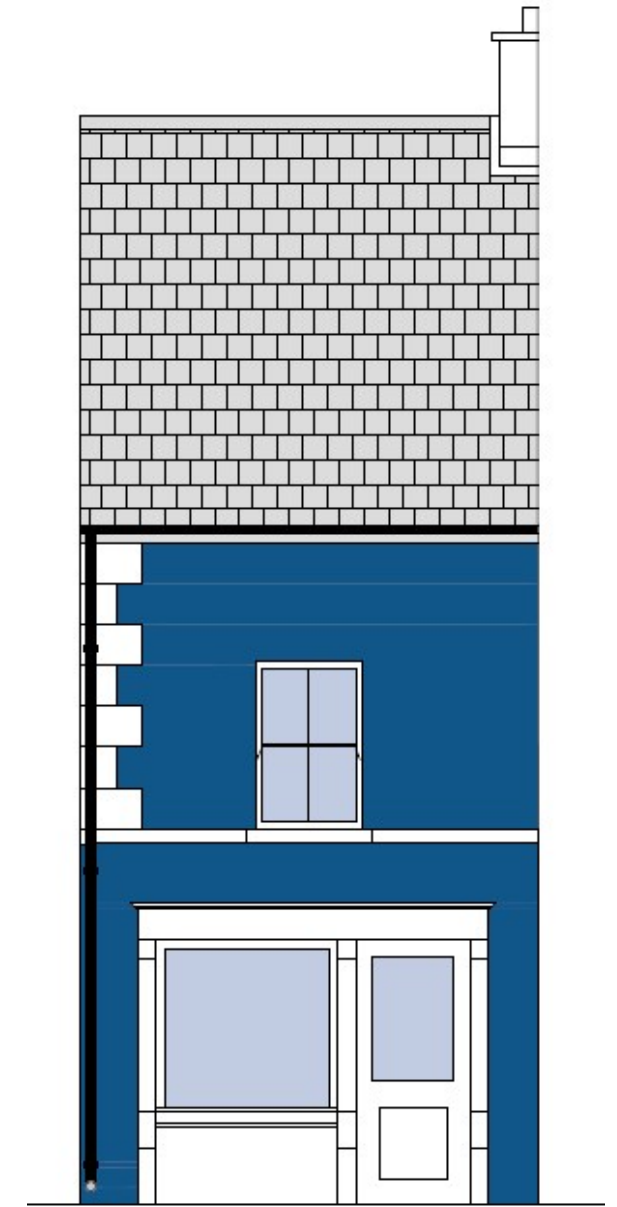


Design Statement

October 2023

Rev A



No. 53 Connaught Street, Athlone



Housing for All

A new Housing Plan for Ireland



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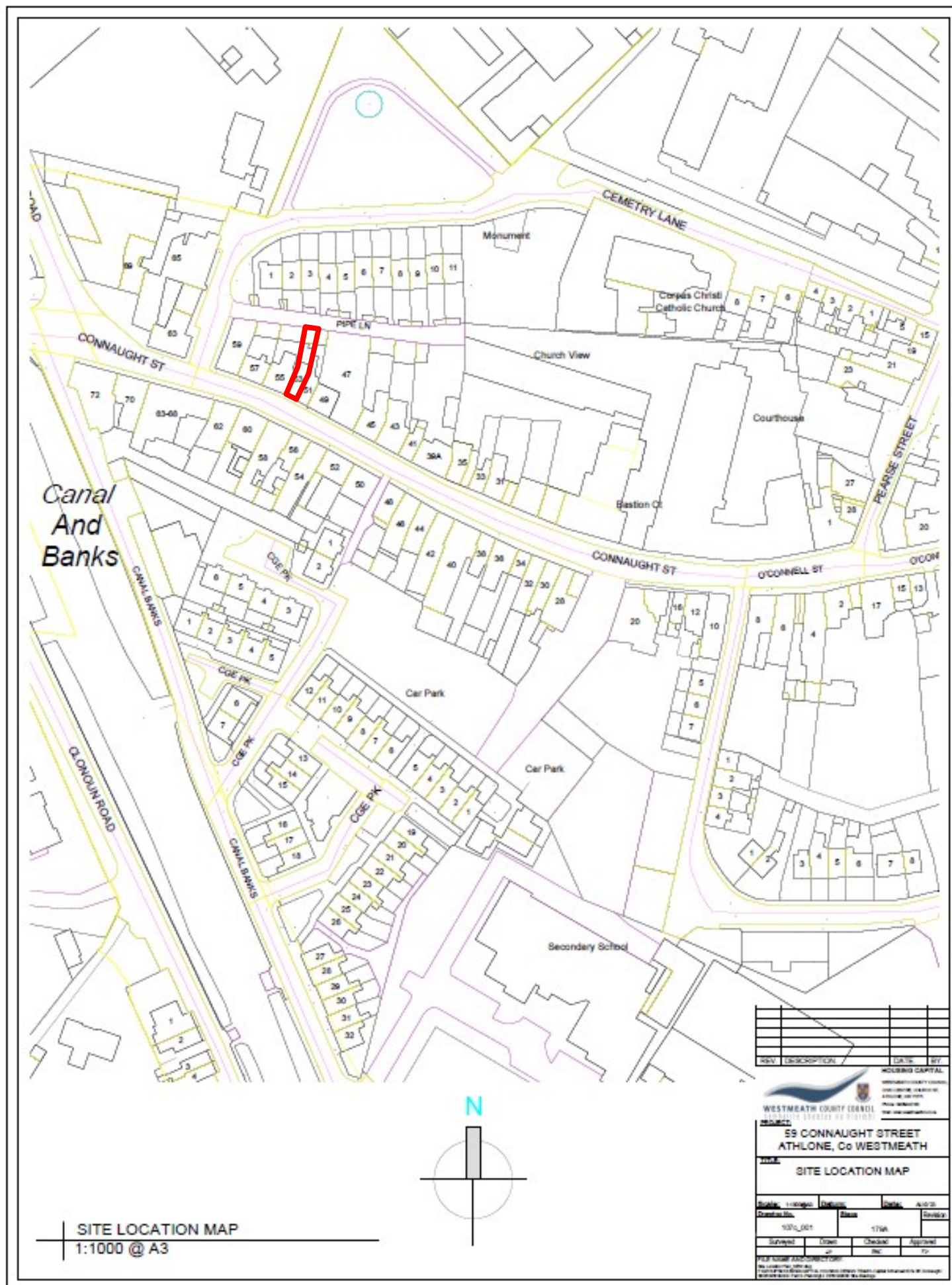
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Introduction

This design statement report has been prepared by Westmeath County Council. It relates to the design of Auburn House No.36 Connaught Street, Athlone Co. Westmeath N37 P2K8, Coordinates: 53.421885, -7.947145. The purpose of this report is to describe the site, to summarise the proposed development and to explain the key aspects of the urban and architectural design.

The existing building is in the Athlone Town Architectural Conservation area, and an area of Archeological Importance. The existing building is a 2 storey townhouse has been vacant for some time. The existing building was built in a street with a history of retail and trade. The last known to be used as a single residential unit home with 2 Bedrooms.

Pre-Planning Consultation

There is no previous planning application or planning history on the application site area.

An initial proposal for the overall site was submitted to Orla McGann of (Planning Department) Westmeath County Council by the Housing Section at Westmeath County Council on the 16th of Aug 2023.

A subsequent Pre planning consultation was held on 20th September 2023, and all comments provided by the planning department are recorded and addressed within this report.

It was acknowledged that the proposal was in accordance with the Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020.

National & Regional Policy Context

Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework 2018 (NPF)

Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness 2016

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region (2019)

Housing for All 2023—housing plan for Ireland to 2030

Local Policy Context

Athlone Town Development Plan 2014-2020 (ATDP)

Mixed Use O-LZ3 – ‘To provide for, protect and strengthen the vitality and viability of town centres, through consolidating development, encouraging a mix of uses and maximising the use of land, to ensure the efficient use of infrastructure and services’.

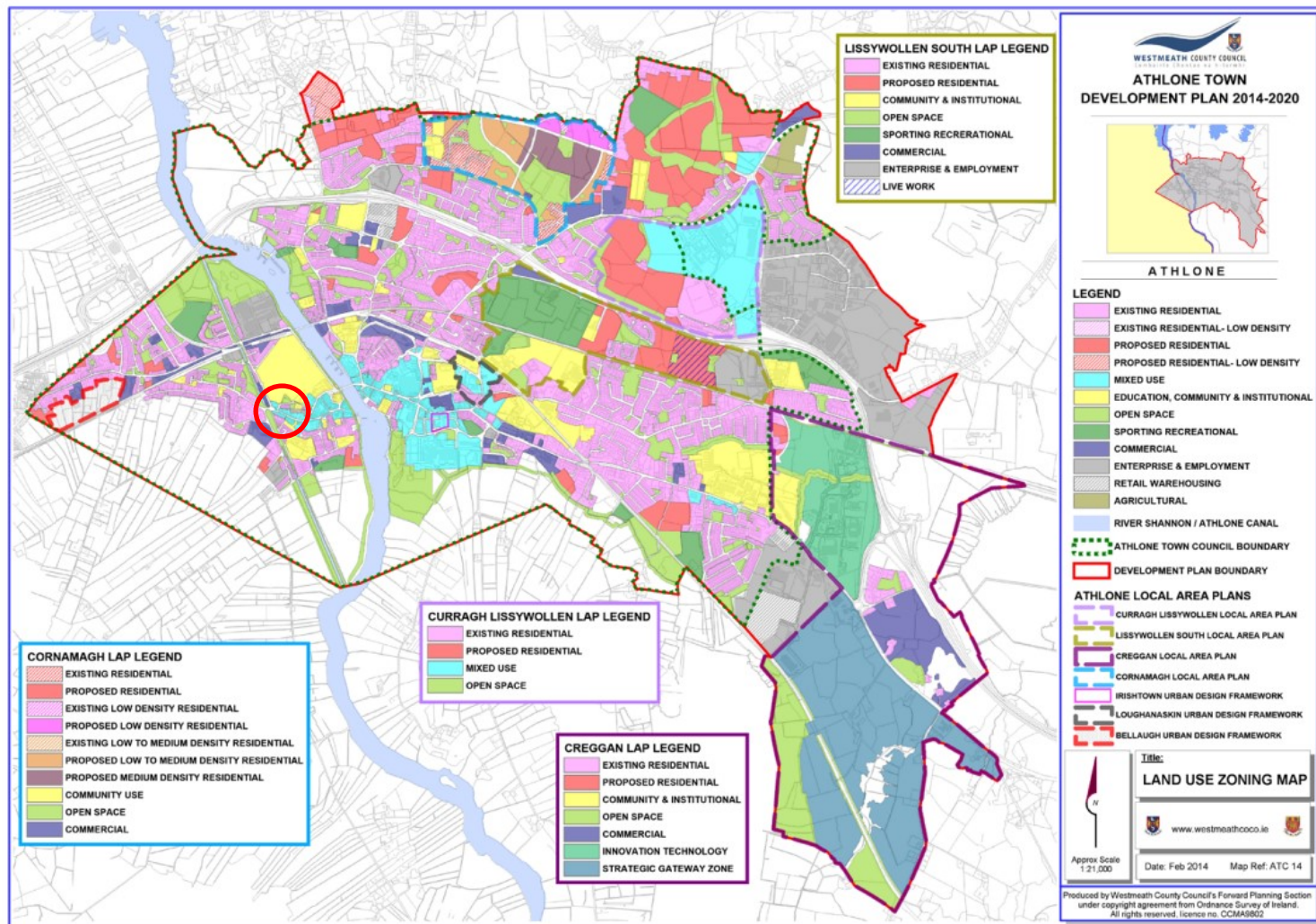
Outline Brief

The proposed development consists of renovating and extending the existing dwelling. Private open space shall be provided, in substantial accordance with the requirements of the Local Area Plan and DHLGH guidelines.

The development proposal consists of the provision of a 1no. 2bed 2 Storey Town House with a 2 storey extension.

Under the current Local Area Plan, the proposed site is zoned Mixed Use, which would allow subdivision and extensions. In addition, the site falls into an Architectural Conservation Area and an Area of Archeological Importance, which would permit development such as this, provided it is suitably sympathetic, and would not negatively impact the existing context or amenities.

Athlone Town Development Plan 2014—2020 Land use Zoning map





Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities



Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
December 2015

“SUSTAINABLE URBAN HOUSING: DESIGN STANDARDS FOR NEW APARTMENTS” GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING AUTHORITIES, 2015

This Housing Quality Assessment provides a framework which quantifies the criteria required under the 2015 Sustainable Urban Housing Guidelines (SUHG). The assessment provides these elemental items in table format to demonstrate compliance to the

guidelines. The unit types are provided as a supporting document for visual reference.

Qualitative aspects such as the Residential Conceptual Design approach are covered under the Architectural Design Statement.

The SUHG cover a variety of key topics, an overview of each is provided below to provide a summary to the data provided in the Assessment tables.

The 2015 Guidelines specify planning policy requirements

for:

- Internal space standards for different types of apartments, including studio apartments;
- Dual aspect ratios;
- Floor to ceiling height;
- Apartments to stair/lift core ratios;
- Storage spaces;
- Amenity spaces including balconies/patios;
- Room dimensions for certain rooms.

Planning And Development (Amendment) Act 2015) - The Act provides for amendments to section 28, 34 and Part IX of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

In summary, SPPRs supersede the following provisions of the current County Development Plan;

- Section 8.2.3.3 (ii) Dual Aspect
- Section 8.2.3.3 (v) Internal Storage
- Section 8.2.3.3 (vii) Minimum Apartment Floor Areas
- Section 8.2.8.4 (iv) Private Open Space for Apartment Development

All Units have been design and developed to incorporate the minimum standards set out in the SUHG.

Site layout with sun orientation and swot



History of Site

The building was built in approximately 1810, and would have replaced an older structure on the same plot. The existing house first appears on the second edition of the 6" Maps, which dates from the 1840's. The Building was constructed as a town house and was used as a dwelling up until the 1990's. The site was identified as a potential housing development site in 2015.

No.53 Connaught Street is mentioned in the online history pages of the Athlone in the 1930's.

It states:

"No.53 Harkins Dressmaker."

Whilst the property is not large enough to support a business the records confirm that the ground floor living space would have been a multi purpose place of business and a home. There are some tell signs on the front elevation of a shop front, of the street photographs taking in this period, none that show this particular building.

Description of site plot

The subject site is located mid terrace of an existing urban street in Athlone, backing on to housing to the north, and located to the West of the town core.

The building on site is currently unoccupied and has a layer internal décor dated up to the 1950's , and the rear shed is derelict and very overgrown. The existing House to the front of the site needs repair and renovations, having been last occupied in 2016.

The Site is located on Connaught Street leading to 'Battery Heights' and 'Magazine Road' and approximately within the 10 –15min walking distance to the town center, therefore it has excellent access to Retail, civic, medical, institutional and transport facilities, It is less than 1 kilometre walk to the bus and rail network which has excellent services to Dublin and Western routes. In conclusion it is ideally located for residential development.

The existing house proper is a modest early 19C Era house and in a poor state of repair, it is proposed to undertake a sensitive re-build, preserving the protected structure while largely rebuilding the house and adding a rear extension to current compliant TGD standards.

The town house site is bounded to the east and west with party walls which it shares with the neighbouring properties no. 51 and no.55. No. 51 Connaught street is a twin property to No. 53 and shares the same chimney structure and roof line. The site measures approximately 21 meters North to South and approximately 3.7 meters East to West. The natural ground level of the site slopes downwards wards from North to South towards the Athlone Canal. The front door access is at ground level and at the South of the site the building is entered at basement level.

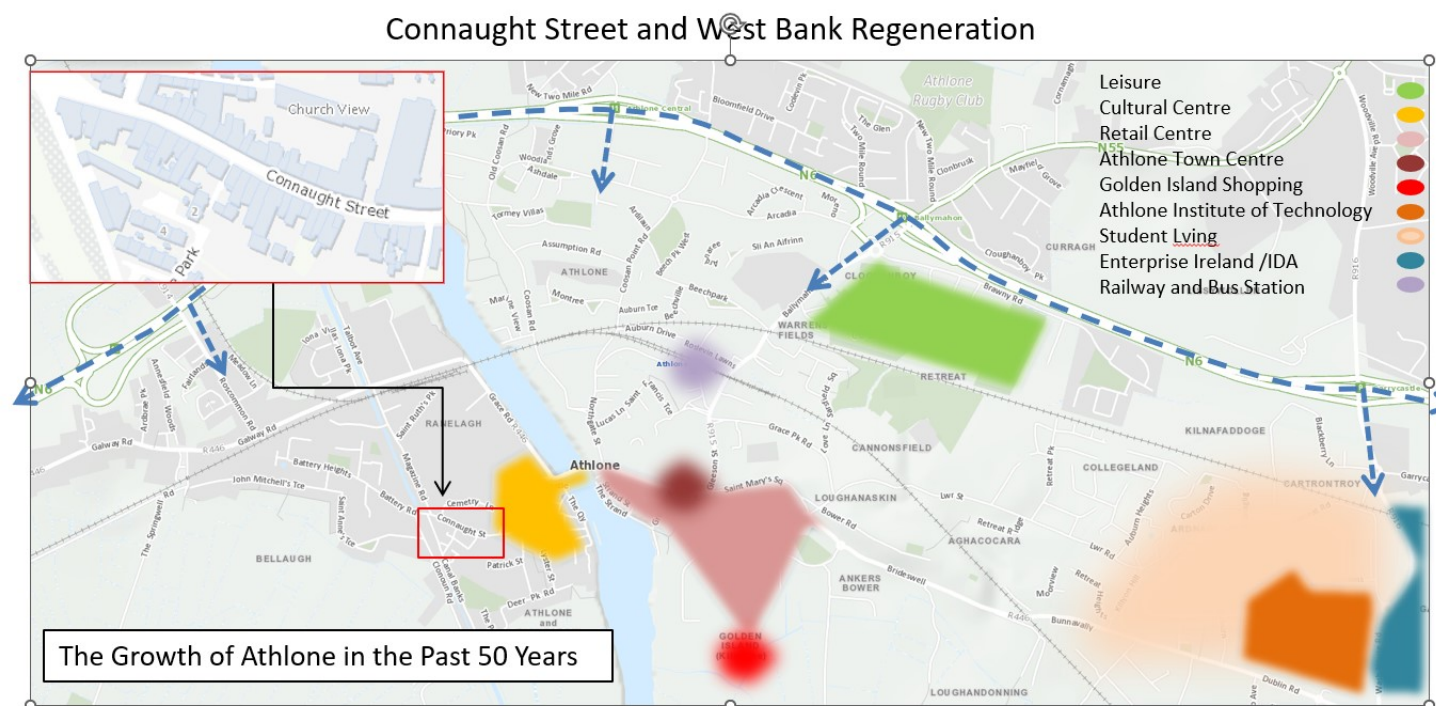
The closest bus stop to the site (Stop ID: 455471) for buses travelling in to town is located approximately 100 metres to the west of the site on 'Battery road' and is served by the A1 Bus Eireann route which offers connections to Bealnamulla in Roscommon.

The site also benefits from nearby transport links. The site is well served by a number of reasonably frequent bus services departing from Athlone bus station approximately 2km to the south west of the site offering the following services: • Route 72 to Limerick Train Station • Route 70 to Green Bridge • Route 440 to the Rail Walk • Route 461 to Roscommon • Route 466 to Longford • Route 73 to Waterford City • Route 70 to Mullingar • Route 65 to Kilnacloy.

Historic Photo of Connaught Street in the 1940's



Site plan with block identifiers (layouts)



Concept

The concept design is based on retention of existing building structure and the built heritage features of the site whilst providing sufficient housing density to meet the requirements of the Athlone town plan and local area action plan.

The key concepts which have informed the development of the site include the following:

- The renovation of an existing residential building to give back the 2 Bed 4 person residential home, where the existing building has been vacant for some time and that will contribute to the success of the sustainable town center and local businesses and amenities.
- The retention & repair of the existing structure of No.53 Connaught Street will improve and enhance the local architectural and historical street fabric.
- The addition of an extension to the rear of the property will put back a sensitively sized volume to provide a adequate kitchen / living space and a double bedroom.
- The use of a white acrylic render on the rear elevation and extension along with aluminum / wood windows will to create a delineation of new structure. The promotion of energy efficiency by use of good quality external materials and insulation, efficient heating systems, sustainable water use and drainage design.

Description of proposed development

The proposed development is comprised of the extension and renovation of an existing house on a stepped town site, which would have been the top of a hill sloping down to the Canal on the west and the Luan River to the north east of the site.

This proposal is intended to retain the existing humble historic façade, whilst putting back a reference to its previous use in order to best preserve the character of Connaught Street. The existing roof structure complete with rough sawn round purlins is beyond its useful life and will need to be replaced, the replacement roof will be put back with the original roof lines and materials in keeping with the character of Connaught street.

The proposal will also require the removal of the 3no. existing floors and replacement with 2no. new floors within the existing structure to provide suitable head heights.

The proposed site access and egress for this development will be via the existing front door directly off Connaught Street, the existing rear yard on the northern end of the site which has a small sloping garden is secured with the use of an existing stone boundary wall and access will be provided by the removal of the temporary blockwork walls and replaced with a Slatted Steel fence wall and gate.

The development will consist of the following:

1no. 2 bed 4 person (71.0m²) house and private amenity space amenity space within a rear garden.

The proposed development will use of good quality external materials and insulation, efficient heating systems, use of PV panels on roofs, sustainable water use and drainage design.

The front elevation of the house will retain and repair where necessary smooth rendered façade with 2 over 2 timber sliding sash windows with the addition of a minimalist timber shop and timber front door.

Street Front Facade

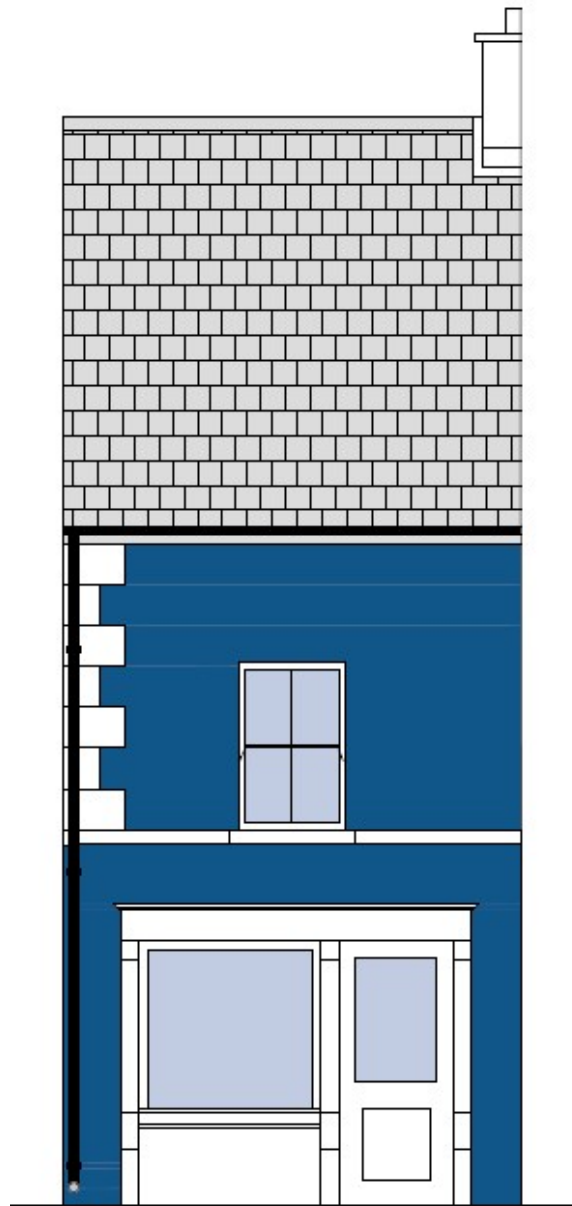


No.2 Bird Road, Clonskeagh, Dublin

The proposal to re introduce Shop frontage to no. 53 Connaught Street has been taken in order to best preserve the character of Connaught Street.

The use of minimalist and sensitive shop front design allows the street character to be maintained and co-exist with the privacy of the residential unit.

References can be taken from a number of successful shop to residential conversion projects across the country that have been lauded Architecturally and also one number property on Connaught street that appears to have converted to residential property before these conversions became a trend.



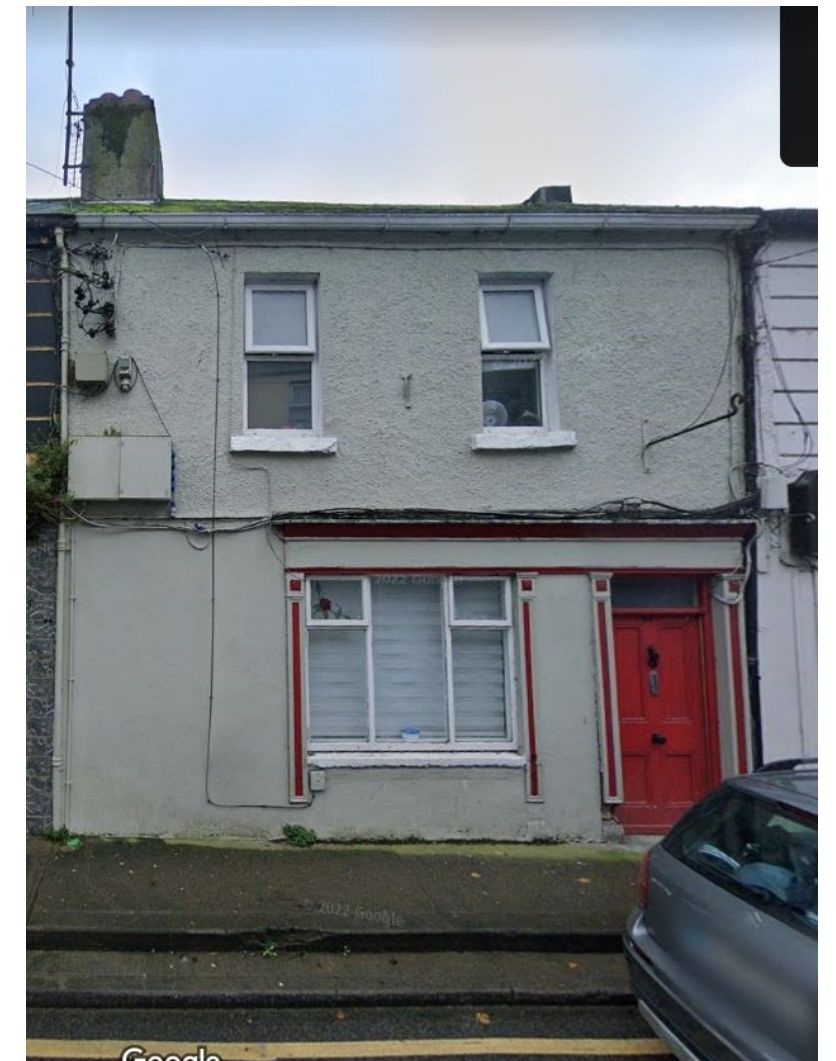
Proposed No. 53 Connaught Street



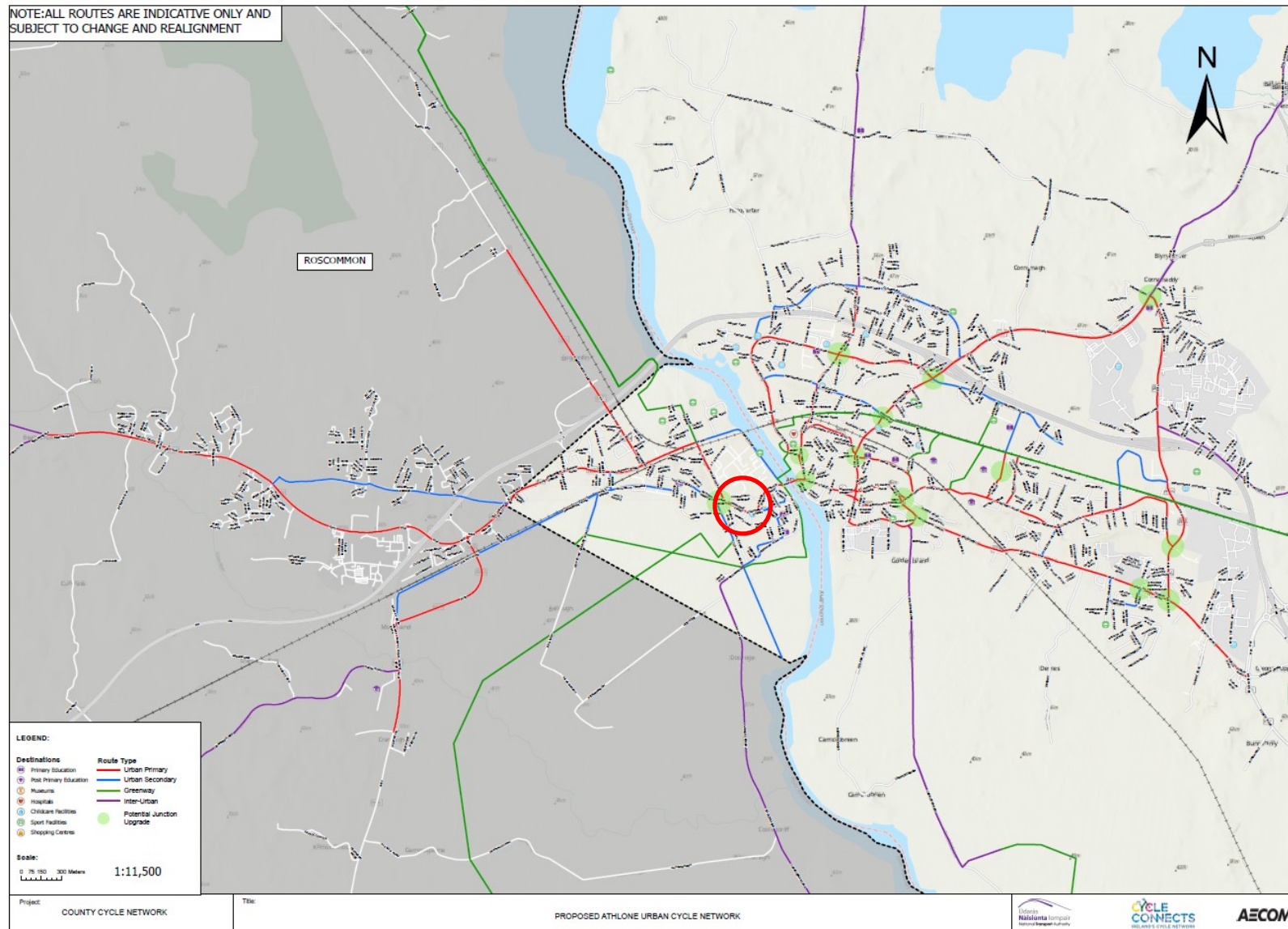
No. 73 Mainstreet, Dun Laoghaire, Co.Dublin



The Square, Ballyragget, County Kilkenny



56 Connaught street, Athlone



Access, Parking & Movement (DMURS)

The Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027 specifies that car-parking shall be provided at a rate of one space per dwelling and an additional visitor space for every three dwellings. The development guidelines would therefore require 1 space.

However, this proposal does not propose any additional spaces, as it is a town centre location and as there is a large surface car park to the rear of the property.

The strategy for the proposed development delivers a high degree of permeability and legibility for all network users particularly for sustainable forms of travel.

The primary access for the subject site will be via Connaught Street which is serviced by bus routes, the secondary access for the site is via the rear of the property.

The development will incorporate cycle storage within the development, this approach will encourage people to leave their car at home in favour of walking and cycling to near by facilities. The Site is on an Urban Secondary Active Travel Route for Athlone, this route will facilitate access to the Athlone Active travel network of Urban Primary, Urban Secondary and Inter Urban routes, the Athlone Canal - Green way and the Old Rail Trail (NCN Dublin to Galway Greenway).

Materials - Outline Specification

A minimal palette of durable materials is proposed for the external facades.

Materials have been chosen for their suitability to the local environment, ability to provide variety in terms of colour, tone and texture, and for their appropriateness to the building use.

For sustainability, materials have been chosen which are substantially maintenance free in order to ensure that the buildings will age and weather well without the need to carry out extensive maintenance regimes.

For the new extension the materials include brick and acrylic render on mineral wool external insulation with aluminum / wood casement windows and Polyester powder coated vertical Steel slat balconies, which are complemented by powder-coated Entrance door canopies and polyester powder coated aluminum parapet cappings and window cills.

All service pipework and vents are concealed.

All external finishes are long service life materials with minimal maintenance requirements. Adequate hard standing is provided throughout the site for reach & wash equipment to allow for regular cleaning.

Foundations

Mini Pile or Slab Foundation – based on SI report / investigation.

Ground floor build up

Existing floors lifted and excavated to provide new insulated floors

New 150 concrete subfloor

1600 gauge DPM / Radon

Floor Insulation – 150mm Unilin XT/PR – UF or similar or (0.022 Thermal Conductivity) to achieve a minimum Uvalue of 0.13

500 Gauge Separating

Underfloor heating (wet System)

60mm Thermal (2.3 Conductivity of screed) Gypsum Liquid screed

Front Elevation wall

100mm drylined Timber or metal stud walls with 100mm rockwool insulation (or other more suitable recommended systems)

Party walls (side walls)

Lime render / lime washed existing stone walls

Or Dot and Dab insulated plasterboard lining to the existing wall.

Rear Elevation & extension

Traditional blockwork cavity (350mm overall) walls with 150mm cavity and 120mm Kingspan Kooltherm K100 or similar cavity insulation.

Outerleaf to be prefinished masonry blocks, Forticrete – Road Stone or equal and approved.

Upper floors build up

2no. layers of 12.5mm Plasterboard to u/s of existing floor joists.

Existing floor joists to be retained and made good.

Cork separator between the joists and the new floor sheeting.

Floorboards to be removed and replaced with OSB Sheeting with full fill Rockwool or similar and approved between the joists.

Existing Pitched Roof

Existing cold roof structure and roof covering to be removed and replaced with new cold roof. 400mm Rockwool Blat in the roof space between and over the joists.

Fenestration

New timber Front door & shop front window (reduced detail) as reference to former use. Glazing to be 12mm DGU.

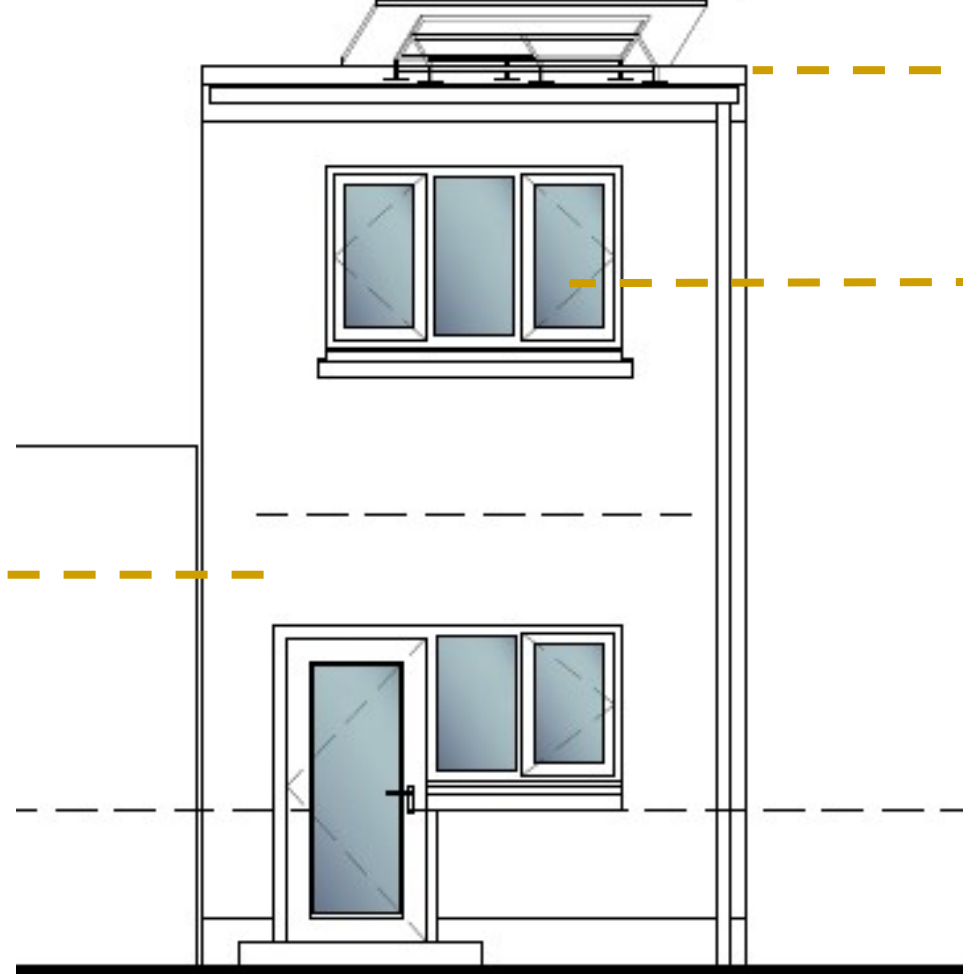
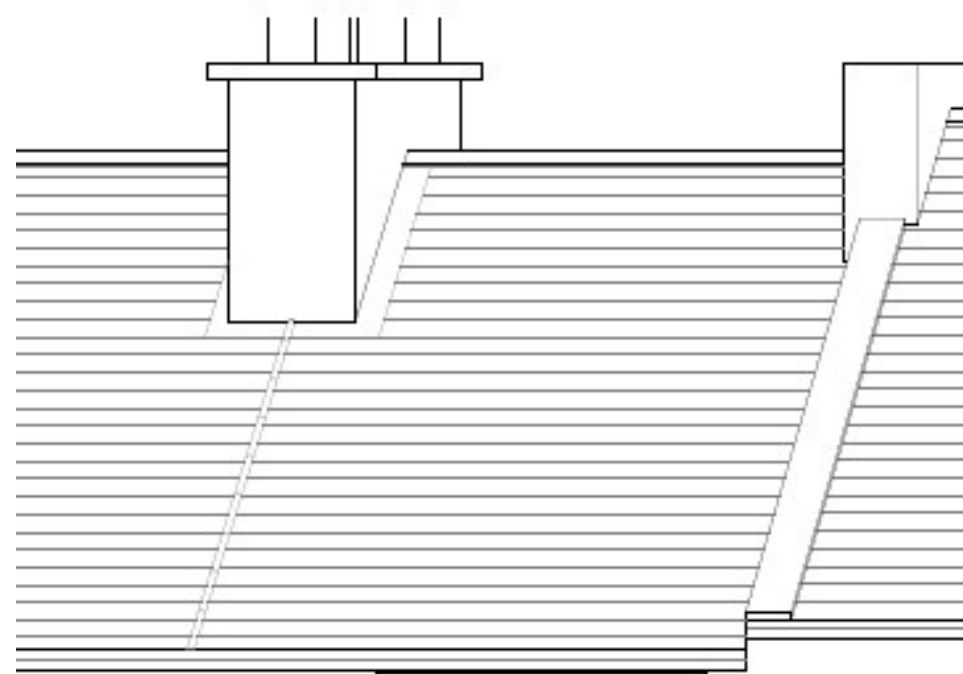
New replacement timber sash window at first floor / front elevation (to match existing) made from conservation techniques using a 12mm DGU.

New Windows and doors to the rear elevation – 24mm DG units in Alu Clad windows and doors.

Materials—Architectural Treatment & Materials to the extension



Slatted Steel gate and fence wall as security to rear of property.



Acrylic Rendered External Walls



Aluminium close fascia with Single ply membrane to roof of rear extension Elevation



Aluminium Windows & Doors to new extension / Rear



Existing Structure

Existing Building front walls at First floor level and above to be retained and repaired using traditional methods, Any openings only to be made once approval is received.

Windows to front facade:

All windows to be retained and repaired if possible, window damaged or no longer fit for use are to be replaced with a new treated timber sash window made using the methods, proportion and dimensional sizes of the remaining original windows.

Specialist joiner to carry out the repairs/ replacement if required to the Two over Two timber sash windows.

Rain Water goods

Organic matter/ plants etc to be removed from roof level, gutters, flat roofs and spigots.

Damaged / broken rainwater goods to be repaired and replaced with existing rainwater goods with cast iron equivalent to match existing.

Proposed works to Ground Floor Shop Front

The Ground floor level rubble stone walls are to be made good structurally to allow the outer face of façade to be clad with blue grey slate - Random Rubble / 'Donegal Slate' as an up and over surround to the Shop entrance, with selected thin blue slate as cladding to the supporting pillars.

Shop Front / Glazing

Windows and door to be supplied and installed by a Specialist joiner to include 24mm Double Glazed with 6mm Toughened Glass outer and 6mm Thick Glass inner pane.

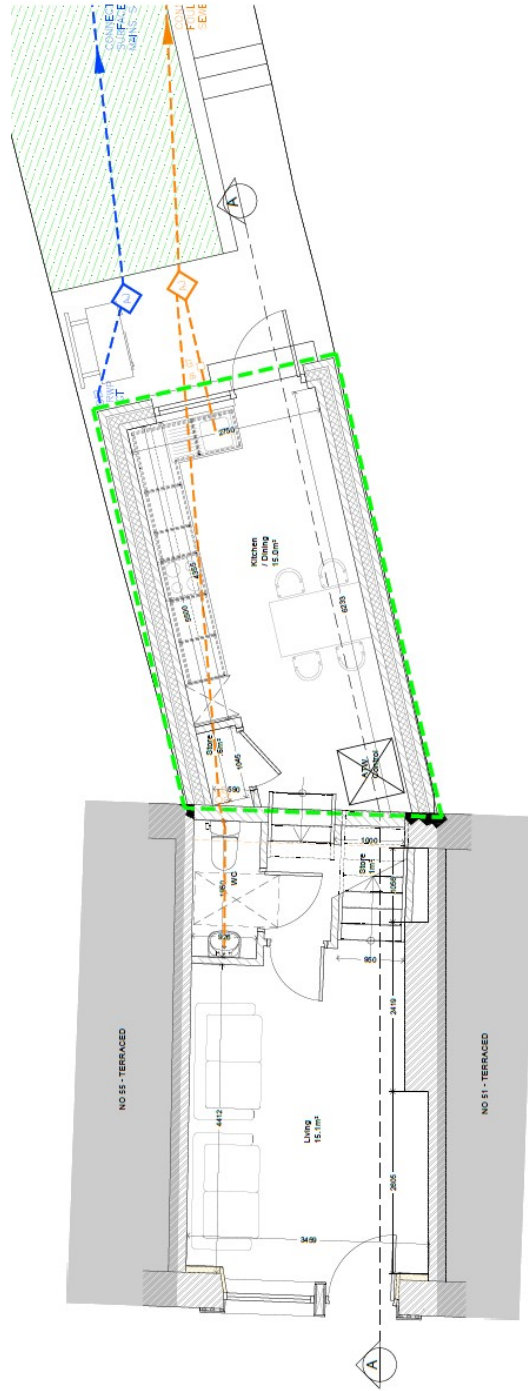
Rear elevation—Proposed New Walls

External finish to be a pre finished masonry outer leaf so that the walls can abut the neighboring properties/ boundary walls without losing the much needed internal floor area.

Windows & Doors to new rear extension

Windows and doors to be RAL 7016 Polyester Powder coated Aluminum with 24mm Double Glazed.

Typology - Unit layouts



Ground Floor Plan

Living and Kitchen areas



First Floor Plan

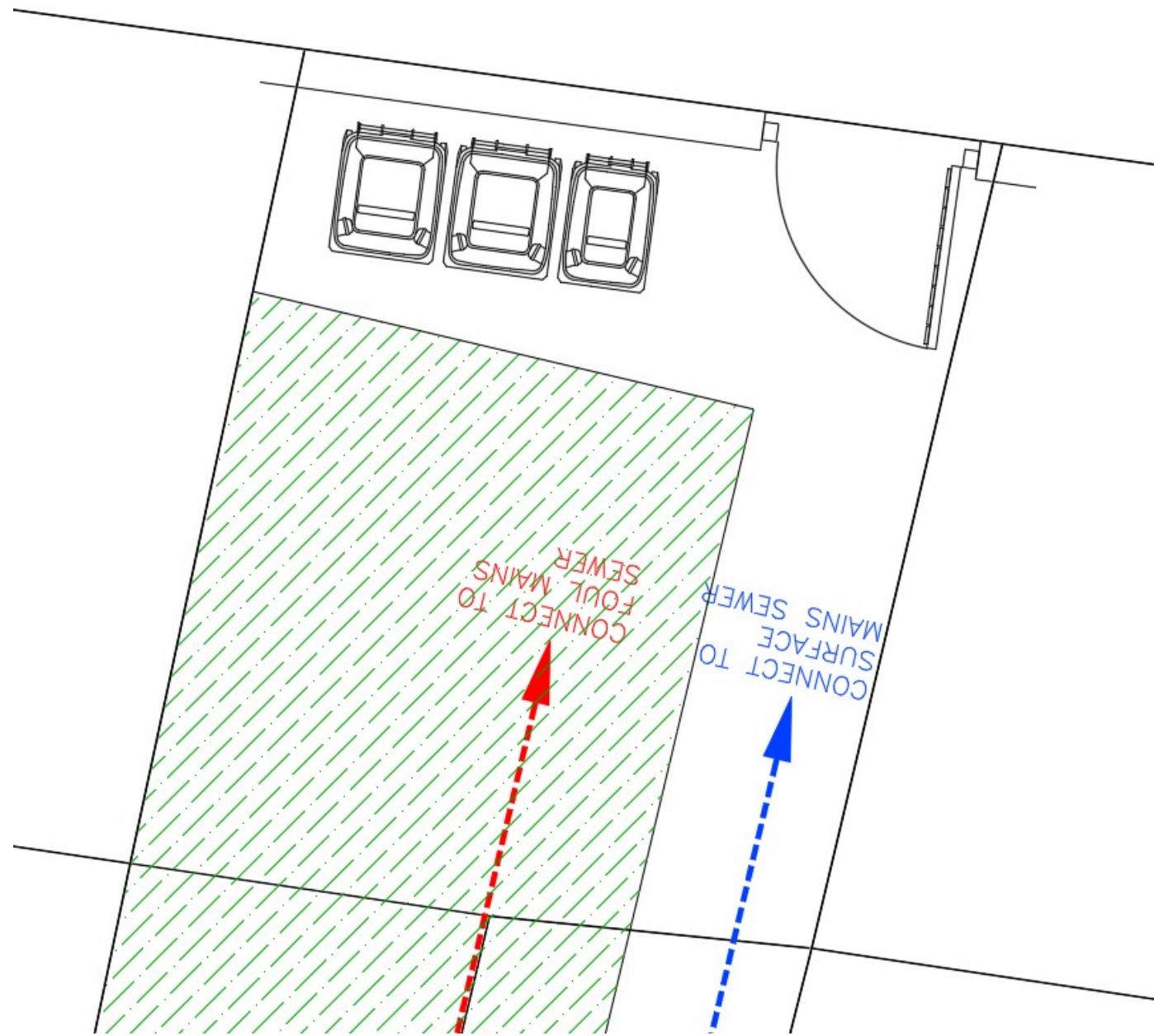
2no. Bedrooms

Proposed Layouts

The proposed layouts are based on using the existing structure for a single living room at ground floor and bedroom at first floor. The Stair case is pushed back in to the new extension to make way for a bathroom at first floor.

The change in level from front of house to the rear of the property of approximately 2m will mean that the property will be split level with the rear extension being stepped down by approximately 4 risers. The proposed extension will house the kitchen at ground floor and bedroom at first floor.

The house was designed around the narrow property width and restricted floor area, resulting in a partly open plan so the living room flows from the Living room to the kitchen. The front entrance leads directly into the living room due to a restricted floor area. The bedrooms branch off the stair case and bathroom and are separated at opposite ends of the property with their own doors.



Waste Management Plan

An Operational Waste Management Plan has been prepared by Westmeath County Council and is included below.

The house will have its own dedicated bin storage area at the rear of the property inside the fence wall and gate.

The bin storage area will have sufficient space for 3 no. 240 Litre bins, for 1no. General Waste, 1no. Recyclable waste and 1no. Food / Compostable waste.

Waste Management Proposal - Proposed dedicated Bin storage at rear of No. 53 Connaught Street.



Energy & Sustainability

The buildings have been designed to maximise energy efficiency and promote Sustainability by use of good quality external materials and insulation, efficient heating systems, and sustainable water use and drainage design.

The development proposed the use of 2no. Photovoltaic panels per housing unit, therefore there will be a total of 6no. Solar PV panels provided on the rear facing roofs of the development.

The development will employ the use of air source heating systems combined with electrical heating backup, heat recovery and ventilation systems in all types.