

**ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE  
ASSESSMENT  
AT  
GOOD COUNSEL CENTRE  
TAYLOR'S LANE  
BALLYBODEN  
DUBLIN 16**

**ON BEHALF OF:  
SHANNON HOMES DUBLIN UNLIMITED COMPANY**

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## ABSTRACT

Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd has prepared this report on behalf of Shannon Homes Dublin Unlimited Company, to study the impact, if any, on the architectural heritage resource of the proposed large scale residential development comprising the demolition of the former institutional buildings and assorted outbuildings and the construction of 402 apartments, retail units, creche, car and cycle parking and ancillary facilities at the Good Counsel Centre, Taylor's Lane, Ballyboden, Dublin 16 (OS Sheet Dublin 22). The report was undertaken by Rob Goodbody of IAC Ltd.

There are no protected structures on or adjacent to the site, nor is the site in or near an architectural conservation area. None of the buildings on the site or adjacent to it are included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

The historical background shows that there was a house on the application site since the early nineteenth century, though this was demolished later in the century and a new house built on another part of the site. Both of these houses were known as Catherine's Park or St Catherine's Park. In the 1950s the property was acquired by the Augustinian Order and new buildings were erected for use as a college. The nineteenth-century house known as St Catherine's Park was incorporated within the new buildings. In more recent years the property was leased to the Health Service Executive, but it has now closed down and has been vacant for about eight years.

The building survey shows that while the external appearance suggests that the entire range of buildings dates from the 1950s, closer examination reveals that the nineteenth-century house is identifiable. Some features from that time include a small number of cornices, the staircase, window and door architraves and some doors. Other features are no longer present, such as the chimneypieces, most of the shutters, some doors and some decorative door surrounds. Some of the furnishings of the chapel have also been removed, including the altar, a number of subsidiary altars and some timber cabinets.

An Bord Pleanála recently granted permission for the demolition of the existing structures on site and the construction of 496 apartments, creche, retail units and all associated works subject to conditions. While this was subsequently quashed due to procedural matters in the high court, there were no concerns raised by either ABP or SDCC about the removal of these existing buildings.

This reflects the application prior to the SHD for planning permission for the demolition of the buildings and while this was refused the reason for refusal did not include any reference to architectural heritage. The Architectural Conservation Officer at that time declared that the building was not considered to warrant retention, though some features could be salvaged.

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## CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>I</b>
<b>CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>II</b>
List of Plates .....	iii
List of Figures.....	iv
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2 CONSERVATION CONTEXT</b> .....	<b>2</b>
2.1 Record of protected structures .....	2
2.2 Conservation areas .....	2
2.3 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage .....	2
2.4 Ballyboden village Plan .....	2
<b>3 RESULTS OF DESKTOP STUDY</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>4 FIELD INSPECTION</b> .....	<b>7</b>
4.1 Exterior .....	7
4.2 Interior – original house .....	9
4.3 Interior – Chapel .....	25
4.4 Whitechurch Library .....	27
<b>5 ASSESSMENT</b> .....	<b>28</b>
5.1 Analysis .....	28
5.2 Previous assessments .....	29
5.3 Whitechurch Library .....	30
5.4 Conclusion .....	30
5.5 Architectural salvage .....	31
<b>6 REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>32</b>

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## LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1: View eastward across front of building .....	7
Plate 2: View westward along northern front of building .....	7
Plate 3: Front façade of former house .....	8
Plate 4: Rear elevation of former house.....	8
Plate 5: Window in former entrance hall .....	9
Plate 6: Doorway at side of former entrance hall .....	9
Plate 7: Staircase at ground-floor level .....	10
Plate 8: Foot of staircase on ground floor .....	10
Plate 9: Windows in arts and crafts room .....	11
Plate 10: Hearth and doorway in arts and crafts room .....	11
Plate 11: Windows in staff dining room .....	12
Plate 12: Chimneybreast in staff dining room .....	12
Plate 13: Window in office .....	13
Plate 14: Chimneybreast and partition in office.....	13
Plate 15: Rear arts and crafts room.....	14
Plate 16: Rear arts and crafts room.....	14
Plate 17: Staircase at first-floor landing .....	15
Plate 18: Doorway to the west of landing .....	15
Plate 19: Windows in first floor sitting room.....	16
Plate 20: Door and chimneybreast in sitting room.....	16
Plate 21: Window in eastern therapy room .....	17
Plate 22: Eastern therapy room .....	17
Plate 23: Central therapy room on first floor .....	18
Plate 24: Window in therapy room .....	18
Plate 25: Window in visitors' room .....	19
Plate 26: Chimneybreast in visitors' room.....	19
Plate 27: Staircase leading to second-floor .....	20
Plate 28: Staircase at second-floor level .....	20
Plate 29: Bedroom at eastern end of top floor .....	21
Plate 30: Doorway between bedrooms.....	21
Plate 31: Bedroom window .....	22
Plate 32: Doorway between bedrooms.....	22
Plate 33: Bedroom door .....	22
Plate 34: Window in small sitting room.....	23
Plate 35: Doorway to small sitting room .....	23
Plate 36: Bedroom at rear of top floor .....	24
Plate 37: Door to rear bedroom .....	24
Plate 38: Interior of chapel.....	25
Plate 39: Interior of chapel.....	25
Plate 40: Side chapel .....	26
Plate 41: Vestry .....	26
Plate 42: Whitechurch Library, with application site beyond.....	27

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1: Location map ..... 1  
Figure 2: Detail of Taylor's map of 1816..... 3  
Figure 3: Detail of Ordnance Survey map of 1843..... 3  
Figure 4: Detail of Ordnance Survey map of 1864..... 4  
Figure 5: Detail of late 19<sup>th</sup> century valuation map..... 4  
Figure 6: Detail of Ordnance Survey map of 1907..... 5

# 1 INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared as part of the documentation to be submitted with a planning application for permission to develop the lands associated with the former Good Counsel Centre, Taylor's Lane, Ballyboden. The development would include the demolition of the buildings on the site. The purpose of the report is to assess the architectural heritage quality, if any, of the buildings on the site, with particular reference to a nineteenth-century house, the fabric of which is incorporated within the later institutional buildings on the property.

Planning permission was granted on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2020 by An Bord Pleanála for a Strategic Housing Development (ABP 307222) which included the demolition of the existing buildings and the replacement with a new apartment development similar to that proposed under this current application. While this was subsequently quashed by the High Court, neither ABP nor SDCC raised any concerns about the removal of the existing structures.

SDCC supported the demolition of the existing structures in a planning application submitted to South Dublin County Council in April 2016 seeking permission to demolish the buildings on the site (planning reference SD16A/0121). Permission was refused in November 2016. The reason for refusal related to road widening and pedestrian safety and not to the proposed demolition.

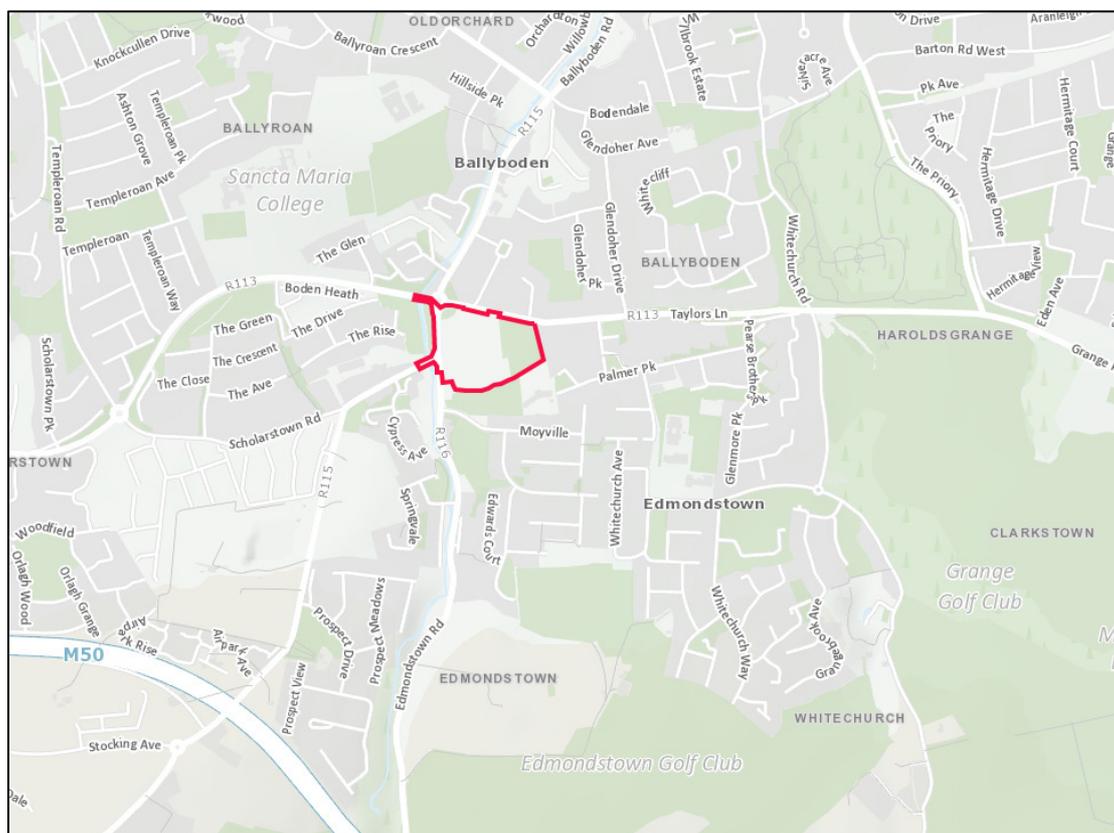


Figure 1: Location map

## **2 CONSERVATION CONTEXT**

### **2.1 RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES**

There are no protected structures on or adjacent to the application site. Approximately 40m to the east of the site, and separated from it by other properties, is Whitechurch Library, which is a protected structure.

### **2.2 CONSERVATION AREAS**

The application site is not within or adjacent to an Architectural Conservation Area.

### **2.3 NATIONAL INVENTORY OF ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE**

No buildings on the site or adjacent to the site are included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. Whitechurch Library is included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) under reference 11216029, c. 40m to the east. The library is assigned a Regional significance for its architectural, historical, social and technical interest.

It is noted that Catherine Park was included in the NIAH garden survey under reference 2334. However, this survey was merely a desktop study to identify gardens or demesnes that were in existence at the time of the first-edition Ordnance Survey maps and to record what was present and what survives. It is not qualitative and gives no indication as to whether the garden is or was of particular merit, many gardens or demesnes that no longer exist being included in the survey. The inclusion in the survey affords no legal protection to the site and does not imply any merit.

### **2.4 BALLYBODEN VILLAGE PLAN**

A plan for Ballyboden was prepared in 2006 and published under the title *Ballyboden Village Plan*. This plan did not provide for the retention of the buildings on the present application site. The site was shown as a potential site for development, with the site of the present buildings indicated as a proposed plaza with potential roads running through the land at present occupied by the institutional building.

### 3 RESULTS OF DESKTOP STUDY

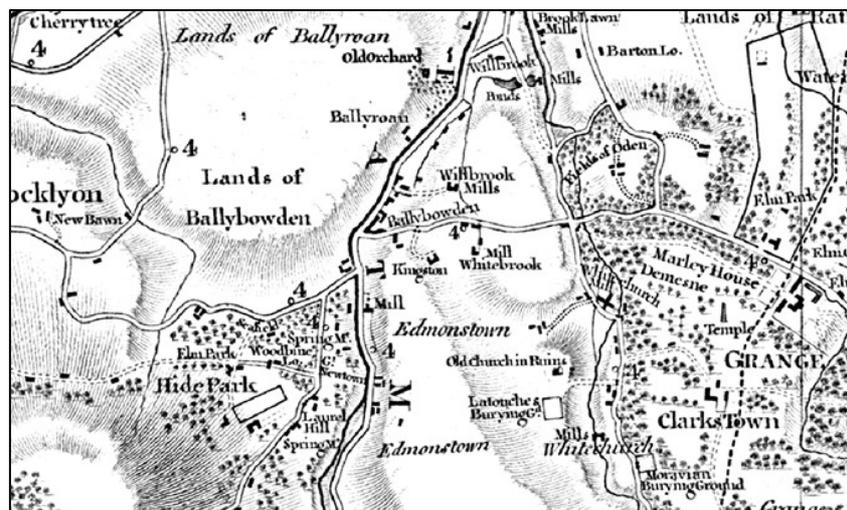


Figure 2: Detail of Taylor's map of 1816

At the end of the eighteenth century Ballyboden Road was a continuation of the road running out from the city via Rathfarnham and it led into the mountains and no further. At Ballyboden it branched, the western route running along Stocking Lane, while the eastern branch ran along Edmondstown Road, both terminating in the mountains to the south. These roads served more than the agricultural areas and mountain grazing, however, as the Owenduff River provided the water power for a number of mills. In the opening years of the nineteenth century Stocking Lane was continued southward into Wicklow as the Military Park Road and it is probable that Taylor's Lane was extended to Ballyboden at that time to improve accessibility to the Military Road. Taylor's map of 1816 shows the junction of Taylor's Lane with Ballyboden Road, though there is no sign of a house to the south of that junction.

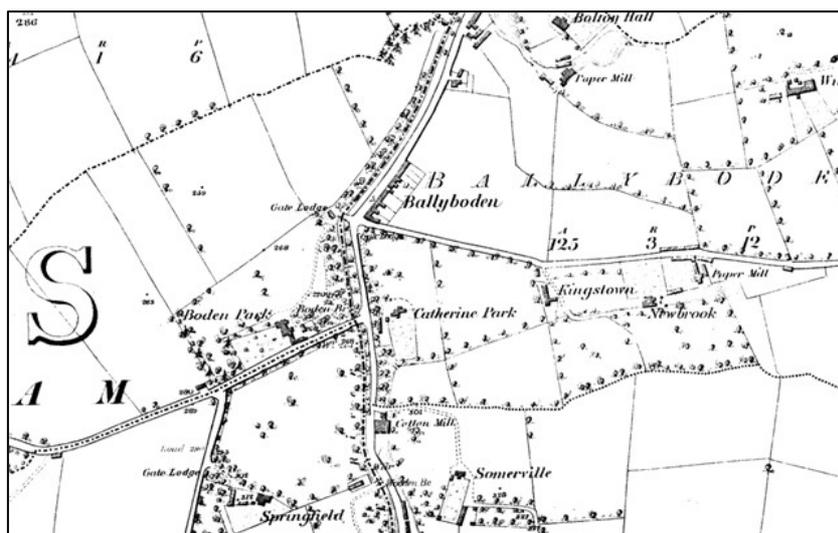


Figure 3: Detail of Ordnance Survey map of 1843

The first edition of the Ordnance Survey's six-inch map, published in 1843 (Figure 3), depicts a house called Catherine Park opposite the junction of Scholarstown Road with Edmondstown Road. The house was also known as St Catherine's Park.

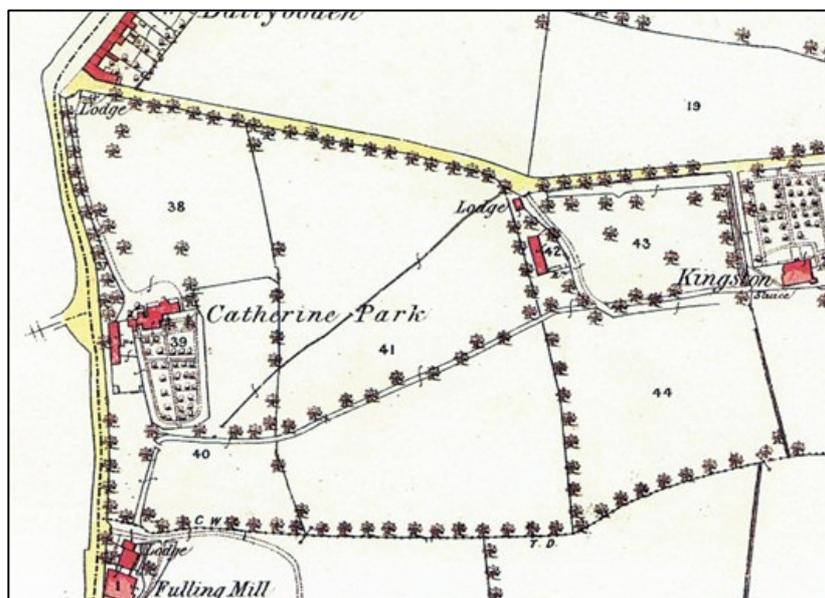


Figure 4: Detail of Ordnance Survey map of 1864

In the 1860s the Ordnance Survey published a map at a larger scale, and this showed Catherine Park clearly, with its driveway running from Taylor's Lane, at its junction with Ballyboden Road (Figure 4). An enclosed garden is shown to the south of the house and immediately to the south of this is a mill race, which runs from a mill south of Catherine Park, to another mill to the east, beyond the margin of this map extract.



Figure 5: Detail of late 19<sup>th</sup> century valuation map

A map prepared for the Valuation Office around this time, based on the 1871 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 5), shows the extent of the property associated with Catherine Park

at that time. The mill race is seen to run through the grounds of Catherine Park. Very few landscape features are evident in these maps, other than the enclosed garden, trees around the perimeter and along the mill race and field boundaries.

Catherine Park was for many years the home of William Russell, who had a successful shop in Sackville Street, now O'Connell Street, under the trade name Wm Russell & Co, Tea Wine and Spirit Merchants, and with a subtitle, New East India Tea Company. This latter title did not imply any connection with the East India Company, but reflected the claim that the firm was one of the first to import tea from India, in preference to China, when it was established in 1827. William Russell's status in the community was recognised by his appointment as a magistrate for the city of Dublin. William Russell rebuilt the gate lodge and the entrance to the property in 1874 to the designs of the architect Joseph Maguire.

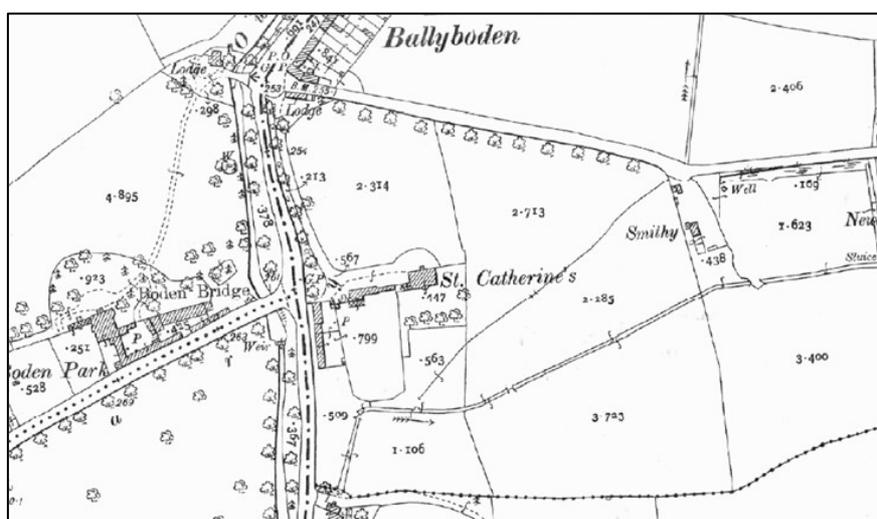


Figure 6: Detail of Ordnance Survey map of 1907

Following William Russell's death in 1882, Catherine Park was acquired by J M Hugo, who did not remain long in the house before selling it on to Rev George Kirkpatrick and it is probable that this was the time that the house was rebuilt. The Ordnance Survey map of 1907 shows the house, now labelled "St Catherine's" at a significantly greater distance from Edmondstown Road than previously (Figure 6). Some buildings were shown to the west of the house, with the enclosed garden to the south. It is possible that at that stage something of the original house remained in the outbuildings.

Rev George Kirkpatrick was seventy-five years of age when he retired from his position as vicar of Rathgraffe parish, Castlepollard, County Westmeath. He moved to St Catherine's Park with his wife Mary and their three young daughters. Rev Kirkpatrick died in 1908, following which the house was acquired by Edward J Hopkin and it was subsequently the home of Justice O'Byrne.

St Catherine's was acquired by the Augustinian Order in 1955 as a college for students studying to join the order and extensive buildings were erected at this time, including residences, lecture halls and an oratory. The oratory was used as the chapel for

Ballyboden parish on its formation in 1973, until the new parish church was completed in 1981. With the falling off in numbers wishing to join the Augustinian Order a smaller building was erected in the grounds and the original buildings were leased to the Eastern Health Board in 1983. The successor to the health board, the Health Services Executive, closed the facility some years ago.

## 4 FIELD INSPECTION

The property was visited for the purpose of preparing this report on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The buildings had previously been inspected on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and there has been a visible deterioration in the building since that time.

### 4.1 EXTERIOR



*Plate 1: View eastward across front of building*

The former Good Counsel Centre is a three-storey, multiple-bay, T-shaped building on the southern side of Taylor's Lane and the eastern side of Edmondstown Road. The building has a low-pitched ridged roof with chimney stacks in one part of the long side. The windows are aluminium casements and vary in size and proportion. The building is faced with rough-cast render. At the eastern end the part of the building that projects to the north is the chapel, with long windows and a glazed apse at the northern end.



*Plate 2: View westward along northern front of building*



*Plate 3: Front façade of former house*

The remains of the late nineteenth century house, St Catherine's Park, are incorporated within the long east-west range of the building. The only indications on the front façade are the fenestration and the presence of chimneys. The windows are vertical, with smaller windows on the top floor, though the original sash windows have been replaced by aluminium casements. There is no door in the former front of the house and the façade has been rough cast rendered, in common with the rest of the institutional building; the roof also dates from the 1950s and is slated.



*Plate 4: Rear elevation of former house*

At the rear of the former house a full-height canted bay projects from the centre of the façade. To the west of the staircase the building has a two-storey element, to the rear of which the building rises to its full three storeys. The projecting bay has two one-over-one timber sliding sashes and a small timber sash survives on the top floor. The rest of the windows are later uPVC casements.

## 4.2 INTERIOR – ORIGINAL HOUSE

### GROUND FLOOR

#### Former entrance hall

The original entrance hall survives in the centre of the southern façade of St Catherine's. This is a modest-sized area, used more recently as a kitchen. The front door opening has been converted to a window, with timber architrave. The ceiling has a modillion cornice.

It is assumed that a doorway originally opened into the stairwell beyond, though there is no trace of it now.

*Plate 5: Window in former entrance hall*



On either side of this room doorways lead into the adjacent rooms, one with a moulded-timber architrave and four-panelled door, the other with a slender architrave and a plain hollow door. In both cases scars on the walls adjacent indicate the former presence of more decorative architraves and overdoors.

*Plate 6: Doorway at side of former entrance hall*

## Staircase

A large staircase rises up at the rear of the former house and projects into the canted bay at the rear. The stair rises in two flights, with a landing at the turn.

The stair is open string, with fretted tread ends. The balustrade has turned balusters that support a hardwood handrail, though significant numbers of the balusters have been broken. At the foot of the stair is a substantial newel, decoratively carved, though with the upper part missing. The area beneath the stair is enclosed by vertical timber panelling.



*Plate 7: Staircase at ground-floor level*



*Plate 8: Foot of staircase on ground floor*

### Arts and crafts room



*Plate 9: Windows in arts and crafts room*

The arts and crafts room is to the east of the former entrance hall, at the front of the house. The room is entered via a four-panelled door set in a moulded-timber architrave. The room is lit by two windows, with moulded-timber architraves; the shutters are missing. The doorway from the former entrance hall is not seen on this side of the wall. The room has a decorative cornice, edged with egg and dart moulding. There is a chimneybreast, while the chimneypiece is missing.



*Plate 10: Hearth and doorway in arts and crafts room*

### Staff dining room



*Plate 11: Windows in staff dining room*

The staff dining room is at the front of the former house, to the west of the original entrance hall. It is lit by two windows, each with moulded-timber architrave and panelled shutters. The room is entered via a twentieth-century hollow door set in a moulded-timber architrave. There is a chimneybreast in this room, while the chimneypiece is missing. There is a decorative cornice bordered with an egg and dart moulding and this is similar to the cornice in the arts and crafts room.



*Plate 12: Chimneybreast in staff dining room*

## Office



*Plate 13: Window in office*

The office is in the south-eastern part of the original house at ground-floor level and has been reduced in size by a timber partition with a glazed upper section, facilitating the provision of the central corridor. Entry is via a twentieth-century hollow door. The room is lit by a single rear-facing window with a moulded-timber architrave; the shutters are missing. A plain run cornice is bordered by an egg and dart moulding. There is a chimneybreast, though the chimneypiece is missing.



*Plate 14: Chimneybreast and partition in office*

Arts and crafts room at rear



*Plate 15: Rear arts and crafts room*

There is a second arts and crafts room at the rear of the ground floor, in the two-storey element at the south-west of the original house. This room lacks the traditional features seen in the other rooms in the original house and appears to have been rebuilt. The windows are boarded up, but appear to have been continuous, or nearly so, along the southern façade. There are no cornices, shutters, traditional architraves or doors, though there is a chimneybreast with no hearth or chimneypiece.



*Plate 16: Rear arts and crafts room*

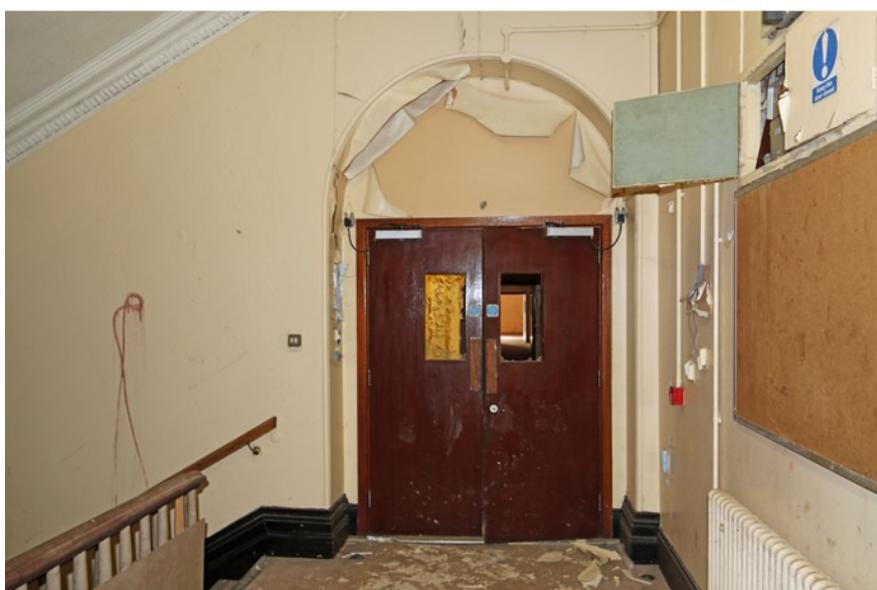
## FIRST FLOOR



*Plate 17: Staircase at first-floor landing*

The staircase continues up from the ground floor to the first-floor landing and onwards. It is lit at the turn of the stair between ground and first floors by a one-over-one timber sliding sash window set in a moulded-timber architrave with panelled shutters. The style of the stair is similar to that described above, at ground-floor level. Above the stair is a plain-run cornice bordered by an egg and dart moulding.

A pair of modern fire doors leads to a corridor to the west from the landing, set in a larger round-headed niche. To the east a single door, also of twentieth-century date, leads to another corridor.



*Plate 18: Doorway to the west of landing*

## Sitting room



*Plate 19: Windows in first floor sitting room*

The sitting room is at the front of the first floor, in the north-eastern part of the house. It is lit by two windows, each with a moulded timber architrave, while the shutters are missing. A short partition wall projects slightly from the wall between the windows. The room is entered via a four-panelled door with a moulded-timber architrave. There is a chimneybreast in this room, though the hearth has been stopped up. There is no cornice.



*Plate 20: Door and chimneybreast in sitting room*

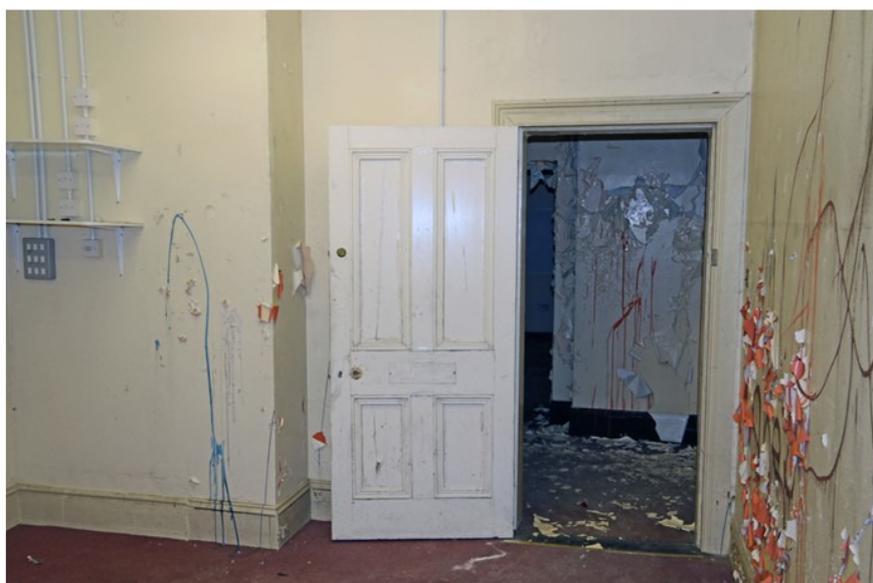
## Therapy rooms



*Plate 21: Window in eastern therapy room*

The central and western part of the first floor at the front of the original house is divided into three therapy rooms, one of which was partitioned off from the sitting room described above, while the other two were originally a single room, now divided.

The photographs above and below show the westernmost therapy room, which is lit by a single window with moulded-timber architrave, while the shutters are missing. A chimneybreast has no chimneypiece or hearth. There is no cornice. The door is four-panelled.



*Plate 22: Eastern therapy room*



*Plate 23: Central therapy room on first floor*



The central and eastern of the three first-floor therapy rooms are joined by a doorway cut through an original masonry wall. This pair of rooms is entered via a four-panelled door set in a moulded-timber architrave. Each of the two rooms has a window set in a moulded-timber architrave, while the shutters are missing. There is no cornice.

*Plate 24: Window in therapy room*

## Visitors' room



*Plate 25: Window in visitors' room*

The visitors' room is at the rear of the original house, in the south-eastern part. It is separated from the corridor by a twentieth-century stud partition in which several areas of plasterboard have been damaged. The room is lit by a single window set in a moulded-timber architrave, while the shutters are missing. The room is entered via a four-panelled door set in a moulded-timber architrave. There is a chimneybreast in this room, though the hearth has been stopped up. A plain run cornice runs around three sides of the ceiling. A section of the ceiling has collapsed.



*Plate 26: Chimneybreast in visitors' room*

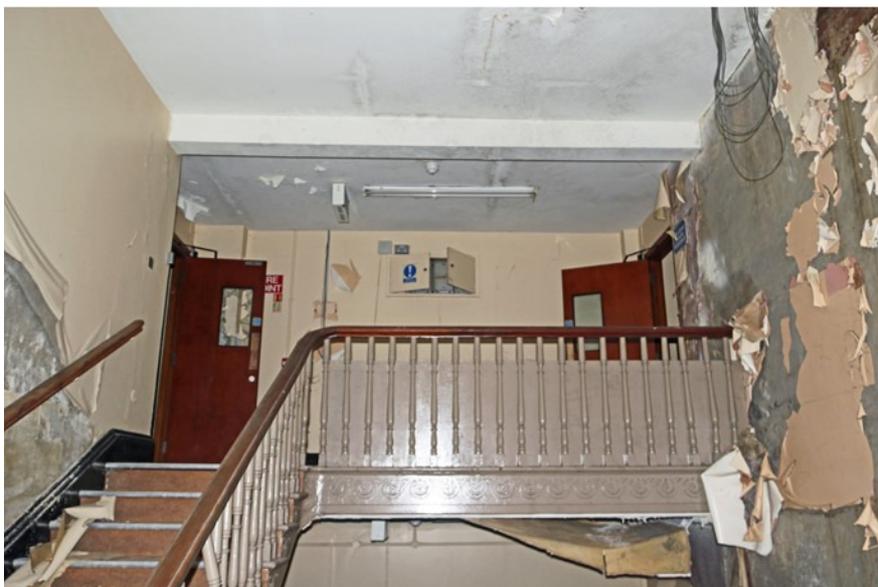
## SECOND FLOOR

### Staircase



*Plate 27: Staircase leading to second-floor*

The staircase runs up to the top floor without change of style. At the top the balustrade, with its turned balusters and its handrail, run across the margin of the landing. As with the floor below, the stair turns in the canted bay at the rear of the former house, where it is lit by a one-over-one timber sliding sash set in a moulded timber architrave and with panelled shutters. There is no cornice above the staircase and the ceiling is flat, except for a beam crossing above the balustrade.



*Plate 28: Staircase at second-floor level*

## Bedrooms



*Plate 29: Bedroom at eastern end of top floor*

The front of the original house has been divided into five rooms at second-floor level, four being bedrooms, while the fifth was a small sitting room. Each is lit by a window set in a moulded-timber architrave, while the shutters are missing. The rooms are accessed from the corridors by just three doors, each of which is four-panelled and set in a moulded-timber architrave. There are three openings between the bedrooms, one of which has a modern fire door, while the others have no door or frame. There are no chimneypieces or cornices at this level.



*Plate 30: Doorway between bedrooms*

*Plate 31: Bedroom window*



*Plate 32: Doorway between bedrooms*



*Plate 33: Bedroom door*



*Plate 34: Window in small sitting room*

The small sitting room at the front of the top floor has one window, as noted above, with an architrave but no shutters. The partition wall between this room and the adjacent bedroom meets a chimneybreast, though the hearth is stopped up and there is no chimneypiece.



*Plate 35: Doorway to small sitting room*



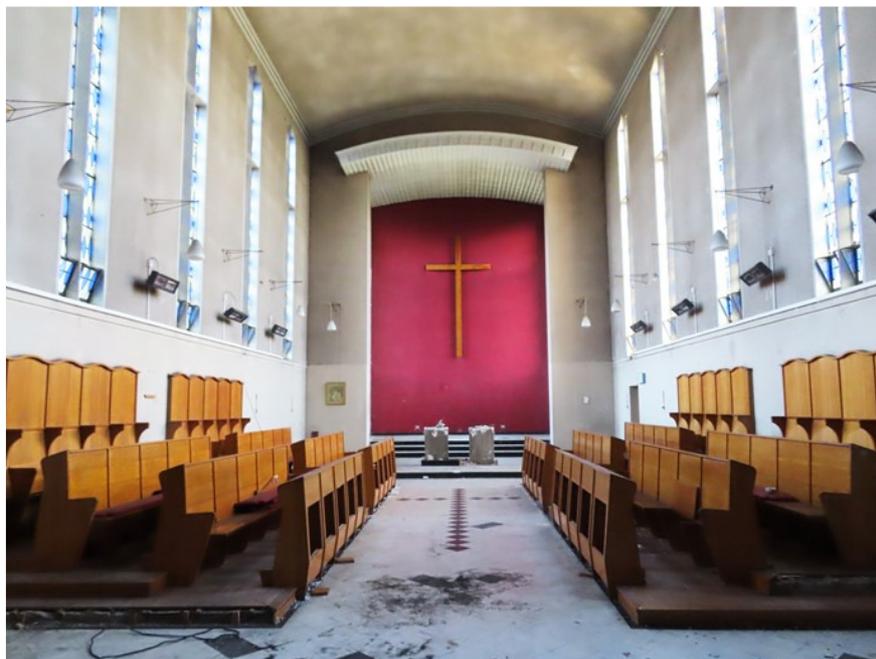
*Plate 36: Bedroom at rear of top floor*

The rear room at the south-eastern corner of the former house functioned as a double bedroom. The room is entered via a doorway with a four-panelled door set in a moulded-timber architrave. The room is lit by a window with a moulded-timber architrave, while the shutters are missing. There is no cornice in this room. There is a chimneybreast, though the hearth has been stopped up.



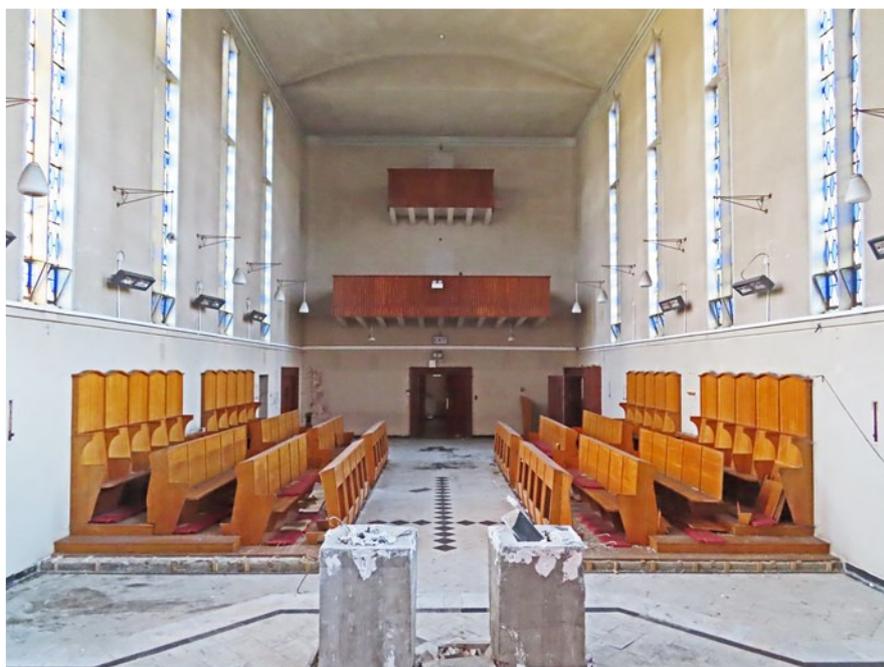
*Plate 37: Door to rear bedroom*

### 4.3 INTERIOR – CHAPEL



*Plate 38: Interior of chapel*

The chapel is the same height as the rest of the building, though internally it occupies the full height. It is lit at either side of the nave by five lancet windows with cruciform divisions and with a geometrical arrangement of coloured glass. The chancel is glazed on either side, with similar cruciform divisions. The exterior of the end wall of the chancel is faced with brick and has a dedication stone near the base. There are two galleries at the liturgical west end of the chapel, though the access to each is blocked off. The altar is missing. The pews and a confessional remain in place.



*Plate 39: Interior of chapel*

### Side chapel



*Plate 40: Side chapel*

To the south of the chapel is a side chapel, which formerly had a series of practice altars. These have now been dismantled. The windows to this chapel are boarded up and the interior is plain.

### Vestry



*Plate 41: Vestry*

Also adjacent to the chapel is the vestry. It had vestment cabinets and other joinery that is no longer present.

#### 4.4 WHITECHURCH LIBRARY



*Plate 42: Whitechurch Library, with application site beyond*

Whitechurch Library, located c. 40m to the east of the proposed development area, is a 1½ storey library building that was built in 1911 to the designs of T J Byrne, in the Arts and Crafts style. The ground-floor façade has a substantial breakfront in the centre, with two gables; this frontage is largely of rock-faced granite, with some red brick, particularly behind the breakfront. The gables are faced with roughcast render. The roof has a covering of small terracotta tiles, with red clay ridge and hip tiles. The eaves are bracketed and continue across the top of the ground-floor façade in the breakfront as a modillion cornice. The ground-floor windows are timber sliding sashes, while there are two Diocletian windows in the gables and there are dormers in the lesser elevations. The library is set back slightly from the road frontage.

The library is separated from the application site by other premises, including a single-storey domestic property, with the house set well back from the road and surrounded by a high hedge. Beyond that property the application site is marked by a belt of high trees near the boundary.

## 5 ASSESSMENT

### 5.1 ANALYSIS

The historical background section above has shown that while there was a house on this site that was built at the beginning of the nineteenth century, nothing now survives of that house. It was demolished in the late nineteenth century and a new house was built on a site set back further from the road. Both houses were known variously as Catherine Park, St Catherine's Park or St Catherine's.

In the 1950s the Augustinian Order built a training centre on the site and they incorporated part of the late-nineteenth century house in the fabric of the new centre. Examination of the building has shown that the original roof was removed in its entirety, the front door was converted into a window, all of the windows on the front elevation were replaced with aluminium casements and the façade was rendered with pebbledash. For the most part the windows at the rear were also replaced, with the exception of the two sash windows on the projecting bay of the staircase and one small window at second-floor level. The rear façade was also refaced with pebbledash.

In the interior of the nineteenth-century house significant alterations took place, most particularly the redivision of many of the rooms and the opening up of new doorways and closing of original doorways. The south-western portion of the house appears to have been entirely rebuilt. The new divisions include the provision of a corridor running through the house from one end to the other, to provide a through route along the entire institutional building. This has resulted in the reduction in size of the original rooms at the rear. Other alterations include the blocking up of all of the hearths and removal of the chimneypieces, with the exception of three on the ground floor, the replacement of many of the ceilings and the floor coverings and the provision of fire doors in places.

The 2016 planning application proposed that certain items would be salvaged from the building. Some of these were historic elements from the nineteenth-century house, while others were liturgical fittings from the chapel. While planning permission was refused the removal of many items has taken place, as no permission was required, the buildings not being protected structures. Hence the three chimneypieces that had been retained in the original house are now gone, the decorative architraves and overdoors from the original entrance hall have been removed, as have most of the panelled shutters. The marble altar has been removed from the chapel along with the practice altars from the side chapel and the vestment cabinets from the vestry.

The building has been vacant now for about eight years and while it is boarded up it has nevertheless suffered some deterioration. The windows are boarded up to prevent entry and this has been reasonably successful. For the most part the boarding is on the interior, which has allowed for some windows to be broken. Considering the large number of windows in the building the amount of breakage has been very limited. The roof has deteriorated; however, and there is water penetrating through the building, particularly within the nineteenth-century house.

## 5.2 PREVIOUS ASSESSMENTS

In the manager's order prepared by the planning authority in 2016 the Architectural Conservation Officer's opinion was cited at length, and it is worthwhile to quote extracts from this:

During 2005 an assessment was carried out of the former St Catherine's Park to ascertain whether it should be included in the record of protected structures (RPS). At the time it was considered that the structure which once stood as St Catherine's Park ... was later replaced with the current St Catherine's c1905 and only a small portion of the original 19<sup>th</sup> century building was left in situ, which has now been substantially altered externally and internally due to the addition of the 1950s wings and external render used to marry the building with later additions. It was considered that the former St Catherine's Park/St Catherine's House did not merit inclusion on the RPS for this reason.

Given the array of existing buildings and the proposal for demolition the [Architectural Conservation Officer (ACO) attended] a pre-planning on-site meeting in order to ascertain the best way to deal with the proposed demolition of this complex, ensuring that the existing architectural features could be identified, inventoried and possibly marked for salvaging if considered appropriate. [The ACO] recommended that due to the nature of the application for demolition of the existing complex an architectural conservation assessment and full photographic survey be undertaken. A photographic survey, architects design report/conservation assessment and structural survey have been provided as part of the planning application.

Underlying the proposal for demolition of the existing buildings are a number of key considerations ... As it stands there is no suitable use for these structures due to their poor insulation levels, the existing floor finishes and associated features contain asbestos and there are substantial issues relating to settlement and structural issues. These have led to horizontal shearing cracks between the walls and roof at top-floor level and shearing cracks between the wings around the chapel and the original house. The buildings are currently vacant and are in a bad state of disrepair due to the use of inferior materials at the time of their construction. ... They would require a substantial level of refurbishment works to facilitate further usefulness. Although there are features and items of architectural interest there is not sufficient architectural merit to render justification for the retention of the existing buildings on the site.

Under the recommendations of the architectural conservation assessment report it is stated that the Augustinians will retain a number of artefacts from the existing buildings. Elsewhere, it is recommended to retain a number of items listed in the report for either donation to another order or for appropriate salvage and reuse. These features will be itemised within the scope of the demolition contract documentation as being carefully removed from the buildings and retained. This inventory of items/features being retained will be agreed with the planning authority in advance of the proposed demolition.

Following on from this, the planner's report concludes that "based on the above assessment, the Conservation Officer's report raises no objections to the proposed development subject to conditions".

In the submission by South Dublin County Council to An Bord Pleanála in relation to the proposal lodged with the Bord as an SHD application in 2020, the Architectural Conservation Officer was critical of the proposal on design grounds but did not raise any objection to the demolition of the building. She did, however, express concern that features seemed to have been removed from the Georgian [*recte* late Victorian] section of the main building and the chapel. However, as noted above, as the buildings are not protected structures and there was no planning permission in force the removal of any items was not an issue that needed planning permission.

The inspector's report in relation to the SHD application considered the implications for the demolition of the buildings on site in the context of a number of objections to the proposed demolition that had been submitted. The inspector also took into account the architectural heritage assessment that was amongst the documentation submitted as part of the SHD application and concluded that "I concur with the conclusions in the report that there would be merit in retaining this building, or other buildings on the site, which are of limited architectural value." In the context of the inspector's report it is clear that there is an error in this statement and that it should have read "there would be *no* merit in retaining this building ...". This is also clear given that the architectural heritage assessment with which the inspector was concurring clearly stated that there was no merit in retaining the building. The inspector also dismissed any concerns that the proposal would adversely impact Whitechurch Library, given the screen of trees between the library and the proposed development.

### **5.3 WHITECHURCH LIBRARY**

It was noted above that Whitechurch Library is a protected structure and is included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The library building is c. 40m from the boundary of the application site. As is seen in plate 42, the application site has a dense belt of high trees on its eastern boundary. The proposal includes the retention of these trees and hence the present screening between Whitechurch Library and the proposed buildings will remain in place.

### **5.4 CONCLUSION**

As was seen in the report of the Architectural Conservation Officer that was cited above, a decision was taken in 2005 that the former St Catherine's did not warrant addition to the record of protected structures. Furthermore, the Architectural Conservation Officer had no objection to the demolition, subject to conditions, in 2016.

The only changes to circumstances since those dates are that the buildings have further deteriorated and that key elements have been removed, such as the chimneypieces, the door surrounds from the former entrance hall, most of the shutters, the altars and the vestment cabinets.

In the light of the above, there would be no purpose in retaining the former nineteenth-century house at St Catherine's or any of the other buildings on the site.

It has also been noted that the proposed development would have no adverse impact on the character or setting of Whitechurch Library, which is the only protected structure in the vicinity of the application site.

### **5.5 ARCHITECTURAL SALVAGE**

It is recommended that the following elements are offered to architectural salvage companies, or are otherwise reused or disposed of for reuse:

- Roof slates
- Four-panelled doors and their architraves
- Remaining window shutters
- Balusters and newel post from staircase
- Pews from the chapel
- Confessional
- Dedication stone

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