

# JOHN CRONIN & ASSOCIATES

ARCHAEOLOGY | CONSERVATION | HERITAGE | PLANNING

## Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

### Phase 2 Planning Amendment Saint Kevin's Hospital Site, Shanakiel, Cork City



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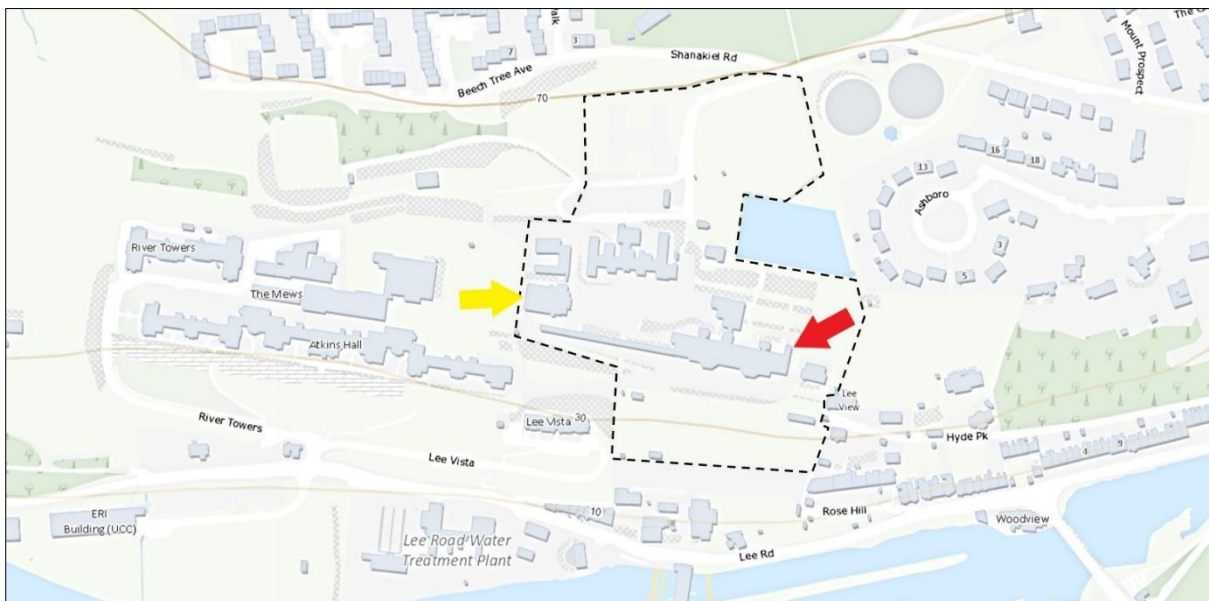
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# 1. Introduction

John Cronin & Associates have been engaged by Reddy Architecture and Urbanism on behalf of their client The Land Development Agency (LDA), to prepare an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment of proposals to revise a number of elements of the consented development of the Saint Kevin's site granted permission on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021 by An Bord Pleanála (ABP-308923-20). These changes will include alteration of the granted office enterprise centre use of the former Roman Catholic Chapel building on the site to its new proposed use as a creche. The applicants (LDA), also seek permission to convert the consented three-storey Block G on the site, comprising apartment and townhouse dwellings, to a two-storey block of 6 no. townhouses, while the existing consented creche at ground-level within the former Saint Kevin's Hospital building will be converted to 6 no. apartment dwellings.

The exact description of proposed amendments to the development of the Saint Kevin's site by the Land Development Agency is as follows:

*The proposed amendments include replacement of the permitted Block G (A c. 1072.5sq m, 3 no. storey apartment building comprising 5 no. two bedroom duplex apartments and 5 no. four bedroom duplex apartments) with 6 no. two storey townhouses (4 no. three bedroom, 2 no. four bedroom townhouses, cumulatively c. 675.2sq m) including associated private amenity space. The proposed development will also comprise of the internal reconfiguration and change of use of the permitted ground floor creche within the Former St Kevin's Hospital (c. 440 sq m) building to provide 6 no. apartments (4 no. one bedroom, 2 no. two bedroom), with no associated changes to elevations of the building; and the change of use of the permitted office/enterprise space within Chapel to a creche (630 sqm) with associated outdoor play area. The proposed amendments provide an overall increase of 2 no. additional units on site. The proposed development also includes for all associated site development and excavation works above and below ground.*



**Figure 1:** Saint Kevin's site boundary indicated approximately by dotted outline with yellow arrow pointing to former Roman Catholic Chapel building and red arrow pointing to former Saint Kevin's Asylum building

This assessment is based on desk-based documentary and cartographic research as well as on-site visual inspection of the former chapel building in December 2023 by an experienced building conservation consultant from the offices of John Cronin & Associates. Subsequently, an initial inspection of the former chapel building was undertaken by timber decay specialist Peter Barrett. The present document has been prepared by John Cronin and Associates images from the December 2023 site inspection compiled to form a photographic record presented in and appendix to this report. Cross references to individual plate numbers within the photographic record of the site are made throughout the main body of this document to illustrate key aspects of the site.

Note that an assessment of the structural condition or structural vulnerabilities of any structures on the Saint Kevin's site is beyond the scope of this reporting.

## **Overview**

Enabling and initial development phases of works to develop the residential accommodation consented on the Saint Kevin's site commenced in late 2022. The former hospital site is a protected structure within the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (RPS ref.: **PS1154**).

The stone-built former Roman Catholic chapel building is dated to 1898 and was rated by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage in 2011 as being of regional significance with special interest in the architectural, artistic, historical and social categories (NIAH reg. no. **20865011**). The brick-built, four-storey over basement former Saint Kevin's Asylum building was completed in 1893 on the site and has both the same NIAH regional rating and special interest categories (NIAH reg. no. **20865030**) as the chapel.

## 2. Historical context

The St. Kevin's complex is located on a series of terraces constructed on the south-facing slope of the Lower Lee valley above the Cork City Waterworks and the Lee Road on the western outskirts of Cork City. The site is located c.2km to the west of the historic core of Cork. The St. Kevin's building itself comprises a large red bricked, four-storey over basement building, designed by William Henry Hill and constructed c.1893. The building formed an annexe to the wider Cork District Lunatic Asylum complex which included the larger and pre-existing Eglington Asylum west of the subject site.

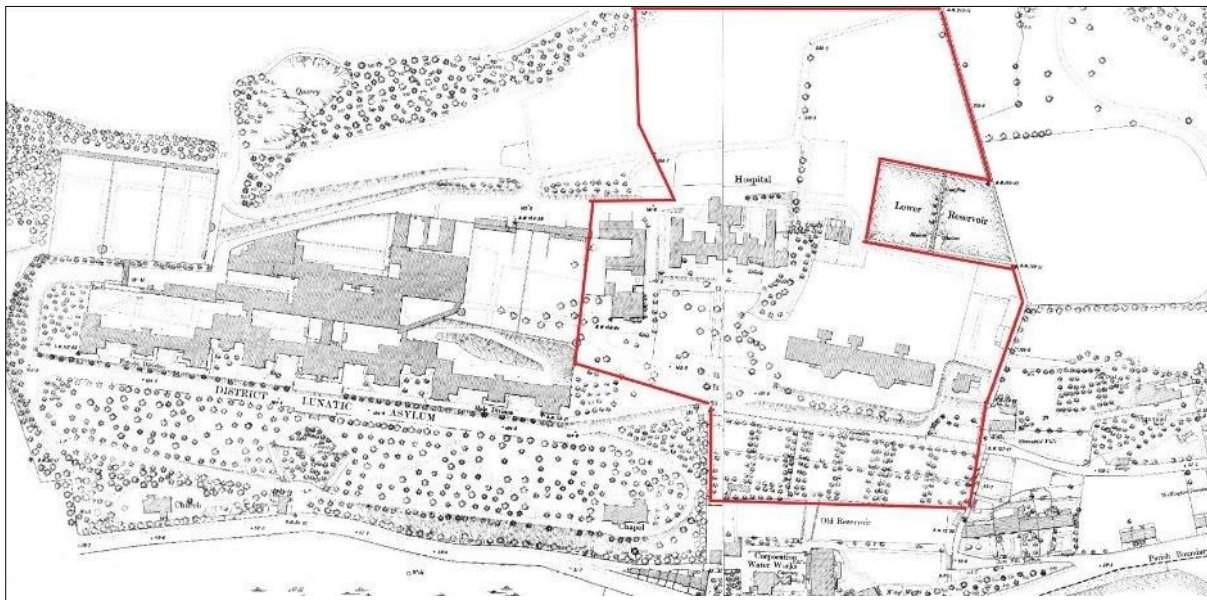
Prior to development of the St. Kevin's complex, the subject lands were occupied by 'Carrigmore House' and demesne. As well as the early 19<sup>th</sup> century 'Carrigmore House', the demesne also contained gate lodges, a summer house, access avenues and formal gardens. The main house itself was located where the former Catholic chapel, constructed to the west of St. Kevin's, now stands. A smaller property called 'Lee View', and its associated formal gardens, was located to the immediate southwest of the original entrance gateway to Carrigmore House off the road presently known as Rose Hill, in an area which today comprises sloping waste ground. The first edition OS map (**figure 2** below) appears to show that access to Lee View was not via this entrance but instead via a long tree-lined avenue which branched off the southernmost of the access routes into the Carrigmore Demesne.



**Figure 2:** Extract from the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map (surveyed 1840) depicting the subject lands prior to the development of any mental health facility at the subject lands. The extant former chapel building now occupies the footprint of Carrigmore House shown here.

'Lee View' House had been demolished by the 1869 five feet to one statute mile mapping of the city by the Ordnance Survey. This was to accommodate the laying of a rising main from the newly reconstituted Waterworks to the new Lower Reservoir which was constructed c.70m upslope of where St. Kevin's was to be built. No surface trace of either 'Carrigmore House' or 'Leeview House', or any associated structures, survive within the present development site.

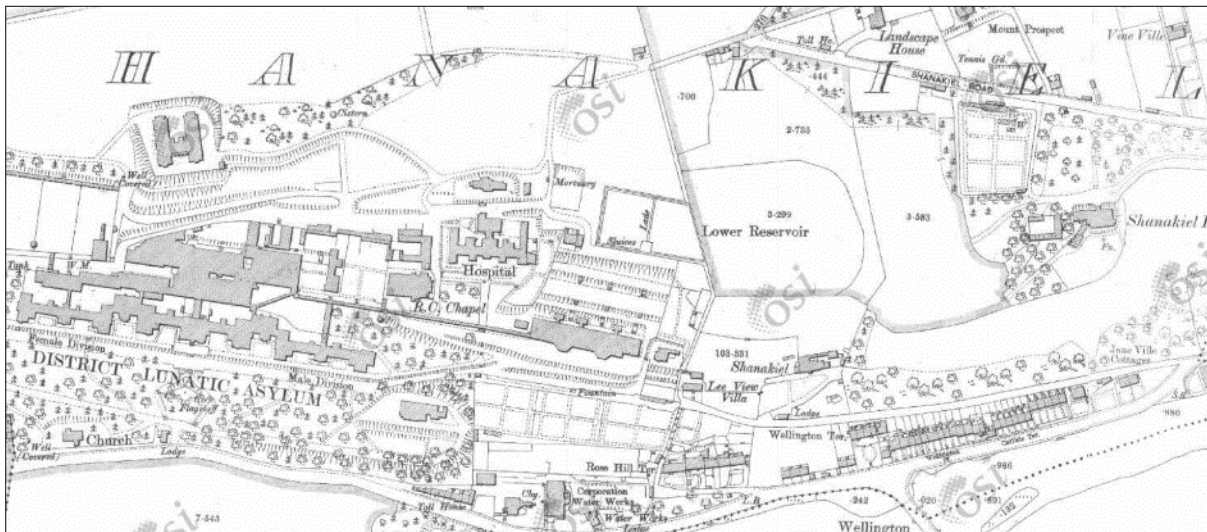
The northeast portion of the proposed development, where the main vehicular entrance off Shanakiel Road is situated, wraps around the old 'Lower Reservoir' of the Cork City Waterworks. The reservoir, which survives intact, is located outside the boundaries of the subject site. It was designed by architect Sir John Benson and its construction commenced in June 1857. This reservoir covered approximately one acre and, according to Rynne (1999, 231) "in accordance with Benson's specifications, was to be 15ft deep and be capable of holding up to 4 million gallons". A 10ft thick rubble masonry wall divided it into two almost equal compartments, which allowed for one to be drained and cleaned, when necessary, whilst enabling the other to remain in commission. Approximately 100 navvies were employed in the excavation of the reservoir, the earth from which was used to form an embankment. Cut-stone blocks from Foynes, County Limerick, were used in the construction of the reservoir basin, which was lined with local slob brick and 2-3000 Belvelly bricks. This new low-level reservoir had a capacity of 3.5 million gallons, with a top water level of 196ft OD, and supplied the low-level areas of the city. A second, high-level reservoir, with a capacity of 0.75 million gallons and a top water level of 386ft OD, designed to supply the higher districts of the city, was constructed at Holly Hill in 1860. Both the 19<sup>th</sup> century high and low-level reservoirs were phased out in the mid-1980s, with the latter replaced by the twin reservoirs which are situated to the immediate southeast of the site entrance off Shanakiel Road.



**Figure 3:** Composite of OS map sheets 52 and 53 (surveyed 1893) showing the development of the subject former hospital site (approximately outlined in red) which was ongoing at this time. The existing chapel had yet to replace the extant Carrigmore House. The communication corridor between the original district lunatic asylum and the new St Kevin's buildings shown here had also not yet been constructed at this time.

While sparse settlement in the Shanakiel and Sunday's Well areas is recorded on cartographic sources from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the majority of the existing streetscape dates to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These areas developed as wealthy residential locations and were characterised by a large number of fine 19<sup>th</sup> century villas, such as Carrigmore House and Shanakiel House. The wider area was

also the setting for a number of striking public and religious buildings. These include: the former Vincentians church (constructed 1851-6); the former City Gaol (constructed 1820's), the former Good Shepherd Convent and Magdalene home (constructed 1870-73) and the Cork City Waterworks (commencing 1770's).



**Figure 4:** Extract from the 25-inch edition OS map (surveyed 1900) depicting the subject lands subsequent to the extension of Cork District Lunatic Asylum into the Saint Kevin's site. Note that chapel and communication corridor had been constructed by this time.

### ***Mental health care in Cork City***

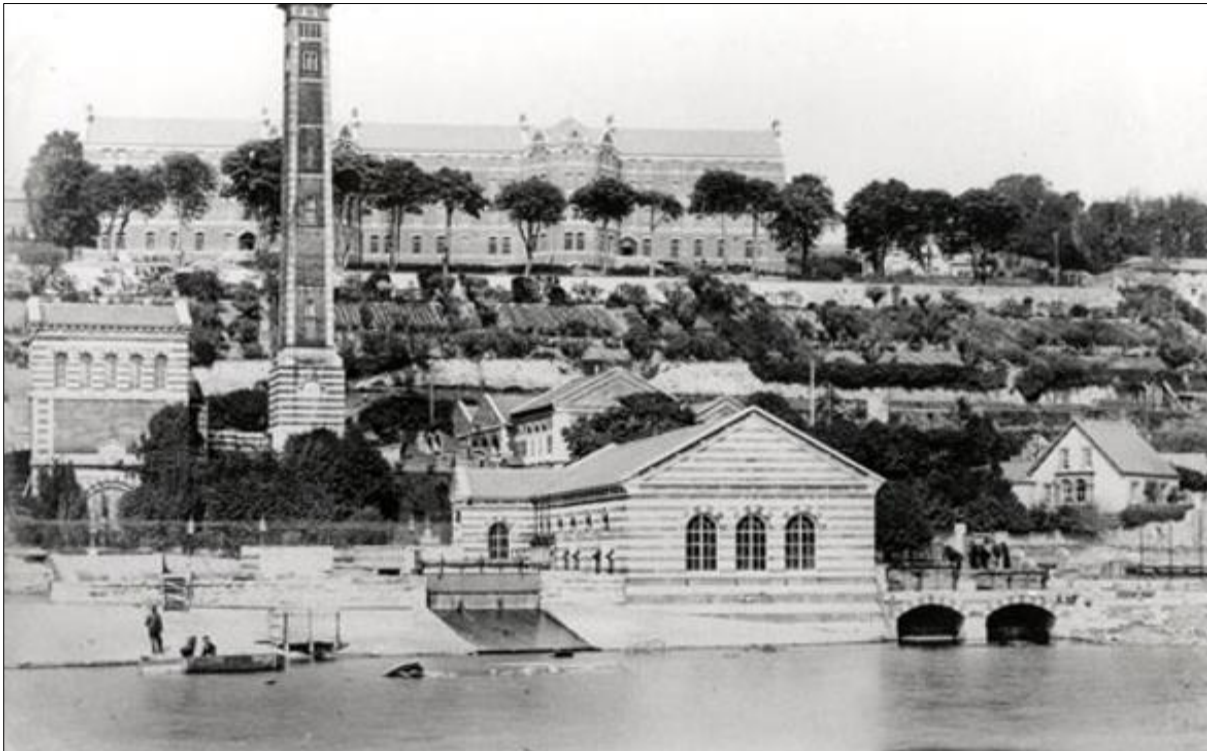
The first asylum for the insane in Cork opened in 1791 and was located on the Old Blackrock Road at the site of the South Infirmary. Implementation of the Irish Lunatic's Asylum Act in 1845 provided legislation for two new asylums in Ireland, a criminal one in Dundrum, County Dublin and a 500-bed district lunatic asylum in Cork. An advertisement for tenders for an appropriate site for the Cork District Lunatic Asylum required that it should be within two miles of the city and that there should be sufficient ground around it for patients to exercise. Following consideration of a number of sites, lands on the northern side of the Lee Road, adjacent the City Waterworks and totalling c.53 acres, were chosen as the preferred site.

The original asylum, which was known as Eglinton Asylum (named after the Earl of Eglinton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland) (later renamed Our Lady's Hospital) was designed by local architect, William Atkins, in 1846, and constructed by Alexander Deane from 1849 to 1852. This building (known locally as 'The Grey Building' due to its dark grey sandstone and limestone façade) was constructed on an artificial terrace to the west of where the later St. Kevin's building was to be built. Originally three separate blocks, male to the east and female to the west flanking a central block, the need for additional accommodation resulted in their linking in 1861, which led to the creation of an extremely long building. When completed, it formed the longest facade of any building in the country.

Despite the significant scale of the Eglinton Asylum, by the 1880's there was a requirement for more accommodation capacity, and facilities, within the District Lunatic Asylum complex. Following design disagreements between William Atkins and the relevant authorities, William Henry (W.H.) Hill was appointed to design and oversee the construction of the new facilities. Between the years of 1888 and 1894, building contractors E & P O'Flynn and Samuel Hill constructed the new accommodation block which subsequently became known as St. Kevin's, as



well as additional buildings such as the mortuary, the Catholic church, the St. Dymphna's block and a number of ancillary buildings such as staff residences and outbuildings (all of these have since been demolished with the exception of the chapel). Also constructed was a 'communication corridor' which linked the new, red brick-built accommodation block with the pre-existing asylum building. The single storey communications corridor, a western section of which extended underground, comprised a near 200m long link between the pre-existing asylum buildings and the new accommodation block to the east. The additional developments, designed by W.H. Hill, raised the accommodation capacity of the combined asylum facilities to 1430. Further late 19<sup>th</sup> century works designed by William Henry Hill included temporary buildings and dining halls, constructed in 1897-8, for which the contractor, P. Murphy, was paid £2097.



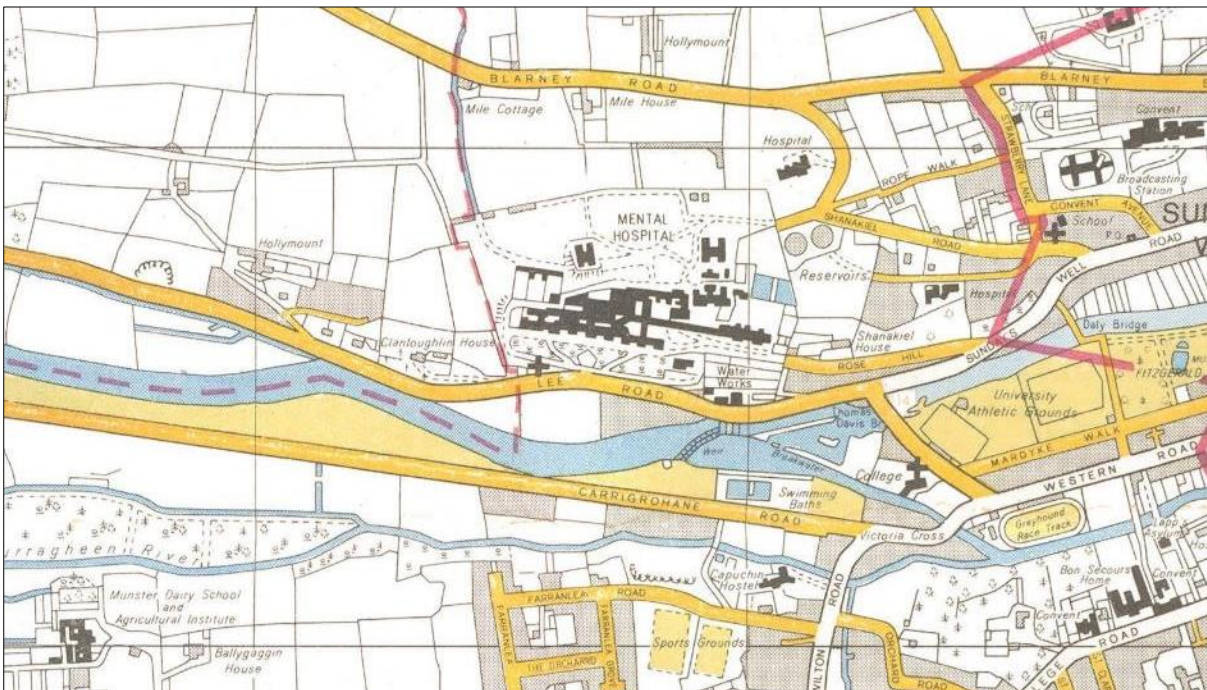
*Figure 5: Late 19<sup>th</sup> century photograph with Cork City Waterworks in foreground and St. Kevin's at higher level in background of frame. What appears to be vegetable gardens occupy the sloping ground to the front of the St. Kevin's building*

William Henry Hill died in 1911, however his son and namesake, also an architect, carried on the business under the same name. William Henry Hill Jnr had served a pupillage under his father who took him into partnership in 1899. The younger Hill continued as architect to the Cork District Lunatic Asylum and he supervised a range of additional ancillary developments during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These works included: additional accommodation, structural improvements and alterations to the west wing which were undertaken in 1913 by contractor Daniel Kelleher for £732; works to the laundry carried out in 1920; the development of a drying chamber in connection with the laundry in 1939 and the construction of a temporary building containing dormitories and day rooms in 1940. Furthermore, a new hospital and admission block within grounds of the asylum, as well as other ancillary works, appears to have been constructed under the supervision of architect Henry Houghton Hill between the years of 1933 and 1940. Finally, a new gate lodge was constructed in 1955 and an admissions unit, along with landscaping works to the grounds, was constructed to the design of James Rupert Edward Boyd Barrett between 1959 and 1962.

Latterly, St. Kevin's housed the Southern Health Board's Mental Health Services, as well as an intensive care unit for mental health services for Cork City and County. The unit was permanently shut in 2002 and its remaining patients were transferred to the Carraig Mór Centre located to the north of the subject site. The St. Kevin's building had been considered for conversion to Southern Health Board offices, however, an alternative site was chosen, and the building was abandoned and fell into disrepair. A major fire gutted approximately two thirds of the building in 2017.



**Figure 6:** Historic aerial view of St Kevin's hospital site when operational in 1955. Note that site appears to have developed historically in a somewhat ad hoc manner with a range of different building styles. Structures ranged from one to four storeys in response to the terraced site but maintained their own individual character with different façade treatments and architectural styles within the combined complex which was in constant use for over 100 years (Source: National Library of Ireland digitised catalogue)



**Figure 7:** Extract from the 1964 OS map of Ireland showing Cork City's official boundary with solid red line before new city boundary with dotted red line came into effect in 1965.

## Legal Context

The Heritage Act (1995) (as amended) defines architectural heritage as including: *all structures, buildings, traditional and designed, and groups of buildings including streetscapes and urban vistas, which are of historical, archaeological, artistic, engineering, scientific, social or technical interest, together with their setting, attendant grounds, fixtures, fittings and contents.*

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) was established under the Architectural Heritage Act (1999), to record architectural heritage structures within the State and to advise local authorities in relation to structures of architectural heritage significance within their administrative areas. The conservation principles of care and protection of architectural heritage and the facilitation of the listing of significant buildings of architectural merit are set out in Part IV of the Planning and Development Act (2000). This requires Local Authorities to maintain a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) of structures with special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, to be included in City/County Development Plans. In addition, Local Authorities must provide for the preservation of townscapes etc. through designation of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). Any changes that materially affect the character of a protected structure require planning permission.

The site of the former Saint Kevin's Hospital is not within the boundary of any ACA delimited in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 but the entire site is listed on the RPS within the same plan (ref. **PS1154**). The subject former chapel building and the former asylum structure were individually recorded by the NIAH in 2011 as being regionally significant and having special architectural, artistic, historic and social categories of interest.

The NIAH described and appraised the Roman Catholic Chapel (NIAH ref. no. 20865011) as follows:

### **Description**

*Freestanding double-height Roman Catholic chapel, dated 1898, now disused. Comprising seven-bay side elevations with single-storey side aisles having gabled entrance porches, with lower chancel having lean -to sacristy to east end. Pitched slate roofs having ridge crestings, single pitched to aisles, with ashlar limestone copings and ashlar limestone bellcote to west gable. Cast-iron rainwater goods. Roughly dressed sandstone walls with buttresses, having limestone quoins. Inscribed limestone plaque over entrance. Pointed arch window openings, arranged in pairs to side aisles and in triples to clerestory, with triple of lancets with ogee heads to east gable and pair of lancets to west gable. Ashlar limestone dressings to openings. Pointed arch door opening with limestone surround leading to recess door.*

### **Appraisal**

*Built as part of the Eglinton Asylum, later known as Our Lady's Hospital, this former chapel forms part of a significant group of related structures. It was built in the closing years of the nineteenth century to serve the Roman Catholic congregation, with the earlier Church of Ireland church located to the south-west of the site, close to the road. The materials utilised in its construction, including sandstone, limestone, and slate add colour and textural interest to the site. The inscribed plaque gives the date of 1898, and names of Most Reverend T.A. O' Callaghan, Bishop of Cork and John Walsh Cleary, Chairman of the Board of Governors. This large complex played a significant social role in both city and county in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.*

St. Kevin's Asylum (NIAH ref no. 20865030) was described and appraised by the NIAH as follows:

### **Description**

*Detached double-pile thirty-three-bay four-storey over basement former asylum having pair of full height canted six-bay projections with gables flanking central five-bay section, built c.1895, now disused. Full height stairwell blocks to rear. Pitched slate roofs having red chimneystacks, limestone eaves course and cast-iron rainwater goods. Red brick walls with limestone and yellow brick string courses. Moulded terracotta string course between basement and first floor. Pointed arch openings, square-headed openings to top floor, having limestone sills, yellow brick voussoirs and multiple-pane timber sliding sash windows. Rubble limestone walls to rear elevation, with red brick dressing to openings. Disused detached five-bay two-storey house to west, having pitched slate roof, rendered walls and square-headed openings. Disused detached multiple-bay two-storey block to north-west, having central single-storey projecting bay, flanked by full-height gabled projecting bays, with projecting terminating end bays.*

**Appraisal**

*Designed by William Henry Hill to provide additional accommodation for up to 1,430 patients at the site, this building forms part of an extensive complex, which included a gate lodge, Church of Ireland church, Roman Catholic church, dining hall, assembly room for fund raising activities and numerous related building. A link was built between this building and the main hospital to the south-west, which takes the form of an underground tunnel and a prolonged corridor like building attached to the west. Its red and yellow brick construction contrasts with the sandstone and limestone utilised for earlier buildings on the site, and makes it an eye-catching addition to the urban landscape. This large complex played a significant social role in both city and county in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.*

The *Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028* includes a number of objectives to ensure the protection of the architectural heritage resource within the City and those relevant to the subject site include:

**Objective 8.17 Conservation of the City's Built Heritage:**

- a. *To seek to ensure the conservation of Cork City's built heritage.*
- b. *To ensure that Cork's Built Heritage contributes fully to the social and economic life of the city and to pursue actions that ensure Cork's built heritage will benefit from good custodianship and building occupation.*

**Objective 8.18 Reuse & Refurbishment of Historic Buildings:**

- a. *The City Council will actively encourage the re-use of historic buildings in the interests of conservation and environmental sustainability to minimise waste and optimise on the embodied energy in existing buildings.*
- b. *Uses which will have a minimal impact on the character of historic structures will be encouraged.*
- c. *Alterations will adhere to best practice conservation standards.*
- d. *The reinstatement of lost features and removal of unsympathetic additions will be encouraged where appropriate.*

**Objective 8.21 Enabling Development:**

*To allow for the enabling of development Cork City Council will consider permitting the following, notwithstanding the zoning objectives of the area:*

- a. *The restoration of a Protected Structure, or other buildings of architectural or other merit, currently in poor condition, to conservation best practice for any purpose compatible with the character of the building*

### 3. Description of Existing Structures

The overall Saint Kevin's development site is located 2.5km west of Cork city centre on a prominent, south-facing hillside. The site offers expansive views over the western suburbs of the city and is accessed from Shanakiel Road which rises from the Sundays Well road, a major east west link road north of the River Lee. This provides a direct route eastward to the city-centre and to Wellington bridge to the west, situated below the site. The entire site extends to approximately 5.7 hectares and is being developed for residential use on a number of tiered levels reflecting the historic arrangement of structures on the land here. The distinctive brick-built former asylum building fronts the east side of the site's southern elevation with the retained elements of the link corridor (**Plate 34** within appended photographic record) extending west from this in front of the former chapel.

The **former asylum building at St Kevin's** suffered a major fire in 2017 which rendered the roof structure unsafe, resulting in its removal during stabilisation and site enabling works in 2022 and 2023. The external envelope of the former chapel building is intact, but the interior has undergone significant degradation due to extensive ingress of water and vandalism.

The **former Roman Catholic chapel** was originally constructed in 1898 on site of a previous dwelling, Carrimore House, most likely to designs by W.H. Hill, architect for most of the 1890s expansion of the asylum complex. It has been disused for over ten years and is in a poor state of repair.

It is a free-standing double-height chapel, comprising seven-bay side elevations with single-storey lean-to aisles on both sides of the main nave and having gabled, single-storey entrance porches on the north (**Plate 14**) and south elevations (**Plate 1**). The lower east chancel has lean-to side alters on its north and south side elevations there is a hipped-roofed, single-storey sacristy extension attached to the north elevation (**Plate 13**). Steps lead to a steel doorway to a basement beneath the east chancel (**Plate 8**) but this was not accessed for survey. Steep-pitched slate roofs have crested terracotta ridge tiles, with ashlar limestone copings (many of which are missing) terminating with gabled kneeler stones. There is a rubble sandstone and ashlar limestone bellcote to the west gable (**Plate 3**) and a similarly-detailed chimney stack over the east gable of the main nave (**Plate 10**). A carved stone cross adorns the gabled parapet cap-stone of the east chancel gable wall. There are remains of replacement cast-iron rainwater goods on timber eaves fascia boards (**Plate 11**). Walls are of roughly dressed, uncoursed rubble sandstone and limestone pointed with cementitious mortar, with corner buttresses, having cut limestone quoins and dressings. There is an inscribed limestone plaque dated 1898 over the pointed, cut-limestone frame of the main south entrance porch (**Plate 6**). There are pointed arch-headed ashlar limestone-framed window openings throughout, arranged in pairs to side aisles (**Plate 32**) and in triples to the clearstorey. There are three pointed stained-glass lancets having stone hood mouldings surmounted by a circular window containing a quatrefoil opening and three upper-level slits around a blind quatrefoil opening to the east gable (**Plate 10**) and a pair of tall, cusped headed lancets to the west gable with a quatrefoil window overhead (**Plate 25**). The open porches lead to pointed arch door opening with the double, timber-sheeted pointed doors removed. Brick piers hold wrought-iron railings on top of a rubble sandstone retaining wall which encloses the area around the east end of the church building (**Plate 9**) while the higher ground to the north is held back by remains of a rubble masonry retaining wall that encloses a concrete yard north of the former chapel.

The interior of the church is open with all fittings and furniture including pews and the altar having been removed. Floors are solid concrete with damaged remains of geometric clay tiles and suspended timber to former seating areas in the north (**Plate 30**) and south aisles (**Plate 22**), which is extensively decayed as a result of water ingress through missing roof slates. The pointed arcade separating the nave from the aisles has simple moulded plaster detail on circular columns with cusped capitals (**Plate 27**). The timber sheeted roof is held on a scissor-truss timber structure supported by timber uprights on projecting stone corbels (**Plate 26**). The mezzanine gallery to the west end of the nave is accessed by a badly-decayed, free-standing timber spiral staircase (**Plate 29**) and like the raised altar within the east chancel (**Plate 25**), along with side alters (**Plate 23**), has distinctive wrought-iron railings to the front with shamrock motifs. A screen of turned timber spindles with pointed detail separates the nave from the area beneath the gallery (**Plate 28**).

### **Built heritage appraisal**

As identified during the NIAH survey of the former Saint Kevin's Hospital complex, the chapel building as well as the former asylum structure share obvious social interest through their use on part of a large, highly visible and very significant healthcare institution in Cork City since the mid nineteenth-century to the early years of the present century. In recognition of the prominent site of these two key buildings of the expansion of the District Lunatic Asylum in the final decade of the nineteenth-century, the designers incorporated distinctive and striking visual features such as the use of contrasting brick colours on the former asylum building and the cut stone dressings which enable clear visibility of the building proportions and façade rhythm from a number of key vantage points along the lower Lee valley to the south. This attention to proportionate, architectural detailing and artistic presentation has resulted in the remaining, extensively damaged buildings continuing to contribute positively to the historic character of a wide surrounding area with their landmark quality and enormous potential to provide a significant sense of place to the repurposed site.

## 4. Proposed Works and Impact Assessment

### Former Asylum Building

Severe deterioration resulting from the major fire in the former asylum building resulted in the need to remove much of the unstable internal structures and remnants of the roof in order to install an engineer-designed, steel support structure that provides fully-reversible reinforcement to the masonry walls of the building. This urgent stabilisation work has been completed in accordance with the granted permission for residential development of the entire site and the proposed new minor changes in arrangement of rooms proposed within the interior of the building to convert previously consented creche facilities to apartment accommodation will have a **negligible** impact on the upstanding historic fabric or character of the former asylum building. No further alterations to previously approved elevations will result from the proposed change from creche to apartment use in this building and the high-quality conservation of masonry walls as well as reinstatement of appropriate roof and window materials will be unaffected by the current revised proposals.

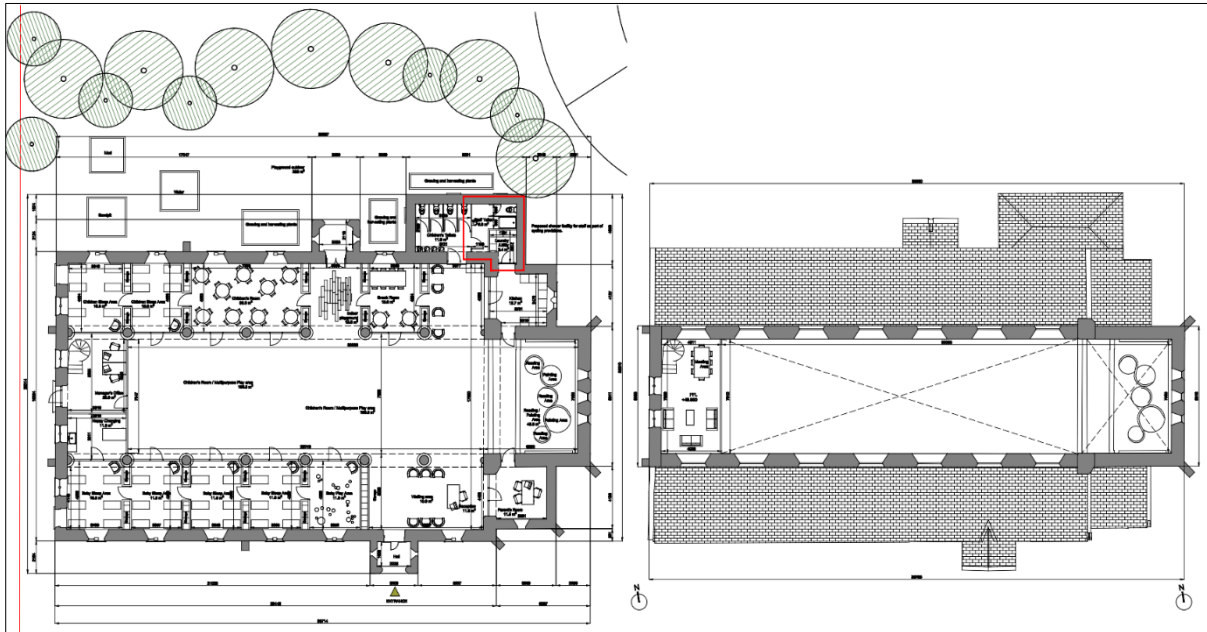
The proposed alteration of the consented **Block G**, north of the former asylum building, from three-storey apartment accommodation to two-storey townhouses on a similar footprint will have **no** impact on historic material, character or setting of the site.

### Former Roman Catholic Chapel

The former chapel has deteriorated significantly since becoming derelict through vandalism, loss of roof slates and rainwater goods leading to extensive water ingress that has caused widespread timber decay of internal joinery and internal wall surface damage. Although not yet structurally assessed and in advance of detailed timber decay inspection, the main roof structure appears reasonably sound, with no major collapse or deviation on elevations of the main nave and side aisles. The masonry walls generally and cut limestone window frames are all intact and in apparently good condition. The northern entrance porch as well as the hipped sacristy extension to the north and the basement level were not accessible for visual assessment in advance of the present document but are likely to require significant repair works as part of any redevelopment of the building. Extensive, specialised repair works will be necessary on all elements of external envelope of the historic former chapel to facilitate its incorporation into the wider development of the Saint Kevin's site. In view of the significant level of conservation work required to arrest and repair damage, it is proposed to re-use the former chapel for a role that requires the least amount of alteration and intervention to the existing form of the building.

All necessary conservation measures to the external envelope will have a **positive** impact on the existing historic building which contributes significantly to the character of the subject site and surrounding area. The new layout proposed in drawings by the project architects to provide creche facilities in the structure illustrate an appropriate and sustainable repurposing of the heretofore neglected but visually very prominent structure. All significant historic fabric in the building will be retained and repaired as required with the insertion of fully reversible new partition walls within the side aisles providing the necessary internal layout to facilitate the new role for the structure. Necessary services within the interior will be incorporated in new plaster surfaces to walls, in the new partitions or within a new floor structure to minimise any irreversible intervention to masonry walls or visual interference with the original spaces within

the building which will remain legible in the redesigned interior. Incorporation of salvaged geometric floor tiles in an appropriate manner within the new creche facility will be a positive means of retaining historic fabric and some of the original character of the building in its reimagined form.



**Figure 8:** General arrangements of proposed rooms to be inserted around the central former nave of former chapel building which will be retained as full-height open space with children's room or multipurpose play area use. All inserted stud-wall partitions will be potentially reversible with no permanent interventions to historic masonry walls. All necessary services will be routed within inserted partitions to minimise chasing of original walls although any necessary ducting in historic masonry walls will be incorporated in repaired internal plaster build-up where possible. No cut stone detail will be interfered with as part of proposed works. (Drawings after Reddy Architecture and Urbanism)



## 5. Conclusions and recommendations

As permitted with the original proposal for the wider Saint Kevin's development site, all new buildings to be constructed on the site are situated north of the brick-built former asylum structure, the most expressive remaining elements of the link corridor and the former chapel. These three retained historic structures will continue to act as the dominant forms at the front of the landholding, contributing *positively* to views of the site from an arc of points to the south.

The current proposed revisions to proposals for the former asylum building and the new-build block G north of it will have no perceptible impact on the historic character or fabric of the wider Saint Kevin's site, or its contribution to the wider area. Incorporation of the most appropriate and sustainable uses for the conserved buildings on the site will be the most reliable means of ensuring their ongoing maintenance and upkeep to a high standard that continues their positive contribution to their surroundings.

The proposed change of use for the former chapel building from the consented business enterprise centre to a creche will have little bearing on the conservation works required to the building's external envelope or to the minimal impact on the internal fabric and character of the presently derelict building. To inform development of working proposals for conservation of the upstanding historic fabric of the former chapel building, a timber decay specialist experienced in conservation of similar historic structures has undertaken an initial assessment of the building to be followed up by more detailed inspection (with an appropriate access platform) of the key roof structure. Best practice conservation methods will be the central focus when designing the extensive repair and development detail of works to the former chapel building. The results of progressive strip-out and inspection of timber elements will determine the extent of intervention to the roof and internal parts of the building but the following conservation principles will be applied throughout the works design and execution:

- minimal necessary intervention to the historic structure,
- retention of the maximum quantity of sound historic fabric,
- reversibility of interventions,
- use of appropriate materials and repair techniques including use of fragments of surviving fabric to inform detail of suitable replacements,
- oversight by appropriately experienced conservation specialists.

The former chapel is an important landmark building containing examples of high-quality design and late nineteenth-century craftsmanship. These elements of the building along with its historic form and character will be retained and conserved to a high standard as part of the appropriate re-use of the building.

### Recommendations

It is recommended that conservation method statements are agreed with the design team, conservation consultants and planning authority staff in advance of development works when the required investigative surveys have been completed. These will accompany tender documents for perspective contractors seeking to complete the works and will provide detail on the expected finish and expertise required to carry out repairs and development works in accordance with best practice. Conservation personnel will be retained throughout the design and construction phases

of the works in order to collaborate with the project team and implement best practice on unforeseen issues. The initial conservation method statements will cover the following:

- repairs to the existing timber roof structure and reinstatement of salvaged slate cladding,
- raking out cement mortar joints to all external stonework and re-pointing with appropriate lime mortar,
- replacement of missing cut limestone details including several gable parapet cap stones,
- repair and matching replacement of broken sections of cast-iron rainwater goods,
- repair and/or appropriate replacement of damaged window frames,
- replacement timber doors,
- perimeter drainage of ground and storm gullies,
- stripping of damaged internal wall plaster and replacement with suitable lime plaster,
- repairs and/or replacement of existing historic joinery to balcony and stairs,
- repair and refurbishment of masonry boundary walls and wrought-iron railings around perimeter of building.

## Appendix | Photographic Record



*Plate 1: South elevation and east gables of former chapel with lowered portion of former link corridor in foreground.*



*Plate 2: Southern elevation with large area of missing slates to western side of aisle roof*



**Plate 3:** Detail of western bell-cote, localised loose slates and cement-pointed, weathered masonry of southern clerstorey.



**Plate 4:** Area between west gable of chapel and masonry wall that forms western site boundary



*Plate 5: View to east across southern elevation*



*Plate 6: Southern entrance porch with 1898 date stone over doorway.*



*Plate 7: Detail of east end of southern elevation of former chape; with lean-to side alter area abutting south aisle and steps down to basement level beneath east sanctuary*



*Plate 8: Steps down to basement level beneath east sanctuary*



**Plate 9:** East gables and northern elevation of former chapel with curved brick and rubble masonry retaining wall supporting higher ground levels around the building with wrought-iron railings protecting the parapet.



**Plate 10:** Detail of east gable masonry, chimney over chancel arch and damaging vegetation growth to exposed wall-tops on north elevation and lower portion of east gable wall of sanctuary



*Plate 11: Detail of masonry at north-east corner of sanctuary with remnants of replacement cast-iron rainwater goods.*



*Plate 12: Detail of exposed wall-tops and partially sarked rafter ends to northern elevation of sanctuary*





*Plate 13: Hip-roofed sacristy extension to east side of northern elevation*



*Plate 14: View to west across northern elevation of former chapel with gabled rear entrance porch in foreground.*



*Plate 15: North elevation of former chapel*



*Plate 16: Detail of northern aisle and west elevation of northern entrance porch*



*Plate 17: Area of missing slates at west end of northern aisle*



*Plate 18: Area of missing slates at west end of main nave roof on northern elevation*



*Plate 19: Detail of geometric clay tiles and cut limestone threshold to main, southern entrance porch interior*



*Plate 20: Detail of exposed underside to chamfered timber structure of damaged, roof to southern entrance porch.*



*Plate 21: Doorway from southern entrance porch from within southern aisle.*



*Plate 22: View to west along southern aisle with decayed timber floor that formerly held pews and geometric clay-tiled path along wall.*



*Plate 23: East end of southern aisle with pointed arched opening into side alter.*



*Plate 24: Severe moisture ingress at junction of wall separating southern aisle from southern side altar and south wall of nave with damaging vegetation exacerbating decay of plaster surface and masonry.*



*Plate 25: View to west across nave from sanctuary*



*Plate 26: Detail of scissor-truss roof and southern clearstorey from beneath chancel arch.*



*Plate 27: Detail of northern clearstorey and nave colonnade separating this main space from the northern aisle.*



*Plate 28: Timber screen separating area beneath western balcony from nave. Balcony railing here matches ornate wrought-iron detail of alter rails at east end of chapel.*





*Plate 29: Badly-decayed timber spiral staircase to west balcony*



*Plate 30: Western end of northern aisle*



*Plate 31: Rear entrance doorway off northern aisle.*



*Plate 32: Detail of cut limestone frame to cast-iron windows on northern aisle*



*Plate 33: Significant fruiting body of timber decay fungus on floor adjacent to main alter step. Initial phase of assessment of building by timber decay specialist has identified extensive, severe infestation as a result of prolonged water ingress.*



*Plate 34: View to east along remains of link corridor towards former Saint Kevin's Asylum building which has been stabilised for development in phase 2 of the overall construction project.*