
Architectural Design Statement

Shinrone Mixed-Use Development

Birr Road, Shinrone, Co. Offaly

Offaly County Council



KENNY LYONS
Associates
Architects



KLA – Image of the front elevation of the Shinrone Library

Preface

Applicant:	Offaly County Council
Application Type:	Planning Application
Location:	Birr Road, Shinrone, Co. Offaly
ITM Centre Point Co-Ordinates:	605165, 92910
Ordnance Survey Reference No.:	3989-C/ 4048-A

Introduction

This report was prepared by Kenny Lyons & Associates Architects on behalf of Offaly County Council to accompany the Part VIII process for change of use from a library building to a new mixed-use development, consisting of a multi-purpose community space and childcare facility. This document outlines the project particulars for a new mixed use development and should be read in conjunction with all drawings, documents, and reports, for the proposed development. Permission is being sought by Offaly County Council for the redevelopment of the existing Old Library building and site, to incorporate a new mixed-use development, consisting of a multi-purpose community space and childcare facility with 1 no. new extension, a new vehicular one way in-out system, parking provision and all associated site works.

Site Background

The building was last used as a local branch library and has been vacant since 2009. Before it served as the library, the building was home to Shinrone Secondary School. Its history and significance in the area have left a lasting impression, with many locals fondly remembering it as a central place for education and connection.

Located at the northern edge of Shinrone village, the building sits within easy reach of the village centre, offering excellent pedestrian access to the heart of the community. Despite its current vacant state, the structure's strategic position and previous uses make it a valuable asset for restoration.

The refurbished building will not only provide a modern facility for education, work, and social interaction, but it will also serve as a cornerstone for community support and engagement. This transformation will create a welcoming environment for people of all ages, fostering connections and opportunities for learning in Shinrone.



Google Maps – *Ariel Image*

Development Description

The redevelopment of Shinrone Library will create as a multi-purpose space, functioning as a childcare facility by day and a community space by night. During the day, it will provide an environment for children, with dedicated childcare rooms, sleep areas, and secure play spaces. In the evening, the space will transform to host local meetings, workshops, and community events, offering a flexible environment for people of all ages. This dual-purpose design ensures the building remains a valuable resource, supporting both childcare needs and community activities.

The redevelopment will include the addition of an 11-square-meter extension, which will house a dedicated toilet block with direct access from Childcare Room 1, making it more convenient for both children and staff. Additionally, two sleep rooms will be created within Childcare Room 1 to accommodate children during nap times, ensuring a quiet and comfortable space for rest.

The rear section of the building will also be restructured to create dedicated toilets for Flexible Community Space, for children using that space. A wheelchair-accessible toilet will be incorporated to meet accessibility requirements, allowing all members of the community to utilise the facility with ease. Furthermore, a new storage room will be added, providing essential space for Shinrone Heritage Group.

Outline of Childcare Facility:

Nature of the Facility: Full day Care Services

Numbers:

Total number of Children: 12

Total number of Staff: 5

Parking Provision: 12 Spaces

Proposed Hours of Operation: 8am-6pm

Open Space Provision: Secure Play Area to the rear with direct access from Children Room 1.



KLA – Image of the front elevation of the Shinrone Library

The exterior of the building will also be upgraded with the installation of external insulation, which will improve energy efficiency and comfort throughout the year. All existing windows will be replaced helping to reduce heating costs and environmental impact while enhancing the building's overall appearance.

As part of the redevelopment of the former library building into a multi-purpose community space and childcare facility, significant site reconfigurations will be made to improve accessibility and safety for both vehicles and pedestrians.

The existing vehicle entrance will be widened to accommodate increased traffic flow, and used as exit only. To enhance pedestrian safety, the boundary wall along the R492 will be demolished and rebuilt, creating space for a new footpath along the road. This will ensure safe and easy access for visitors walking to and from the facility.

A line of existing Ash trees along the southwest boundary will be removed as they are unfortunately infected by Ash die back. Native broadleaf trees (minimum size 12-14cm diameter) shall be planted in informal clusters throughout the subject site to replace the removed Ash trees. Species shall be chosen from those included in Table 4.16 List of Native Trees and Shrubs of the Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027.

New access points will be introduced, including a vehicle gate for secure entry to the site, as well as two pedestrian gates, offering convenient access for those on foot. The carpark will be organised as a one-way system to improve traffic flow and safety within the site. A total of 12 car parking spaces will be provided, ensuring ample parking for visitors and staff.

The design also includes an uncontrolled crossing on the R492 to connect the existing footpath on the south side of the road, which leads to the village, with the proposed site. This will enhance connectivity to Shinrone village and encourage more pedestrian traffic.



KLA – Image of the existing Site Entrance and boundary wall along the R492

Low level bollard lights have been proposed for external lighting to provide focused downlight, minimising light spill. This approach reduces light pollution, supporting nocturnal animals by preserving their natural environment while ensuring safety and visibility for the site's users. External lighting design calculations will be carried out at the detailed design stage to ensure optimal illumination levels for safety, visibility, and energy efficiency.

At the rear of the building, a dedicated, secure play area will be created for the children, offering a safe outdoor environment directly accessible from the building. This play area will be enclosed, ensuring the safety of children.

A series of SUDS measures have been proposed for the site, including permeable paving for the car park, a permeable play surface, and soakaways for storm water disposal. The soakaways will manage stormwater from the car park and roofs of the buildings. An attenuation tank is also proposed in the centre of the car park, serving as a backup system during extreme weather events. In the unlikely event that the tank reaches full capacity, it will overflow into the existing sewer line on-site. The site will be tested for soakaway and attenuation suitability during the detailed design stage to ensure the systems are appropriately sized.



KLA – Image of the rear elevation of the Shinrone Library, this area is the location of the proposed extension

This redevelopment project aims to breathe new life into the former library, transforming it into a vital community hub that will provide essential childcare services, support local families, and offer a welcoming, accessible space for a variety of community activities. With its thoughtful design and sustainable upgrades, the new facility will serve as a cornerstone of the local community for years to come.

MAPS



KLA - Site Location Map



Google Maps – Ariel Image

PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY



KLA – Image of the front elevation of the Shinrone Library



KLA – Image of the front gates of the Shinrone Library



KLA – Image existing hallway within Shinrone Library



KLA – Image of existing bike shed to rear of library to be refurbished



KLA – Image of Room 1



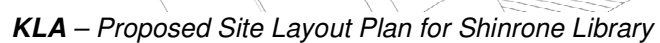
KLA – Image of Room 2

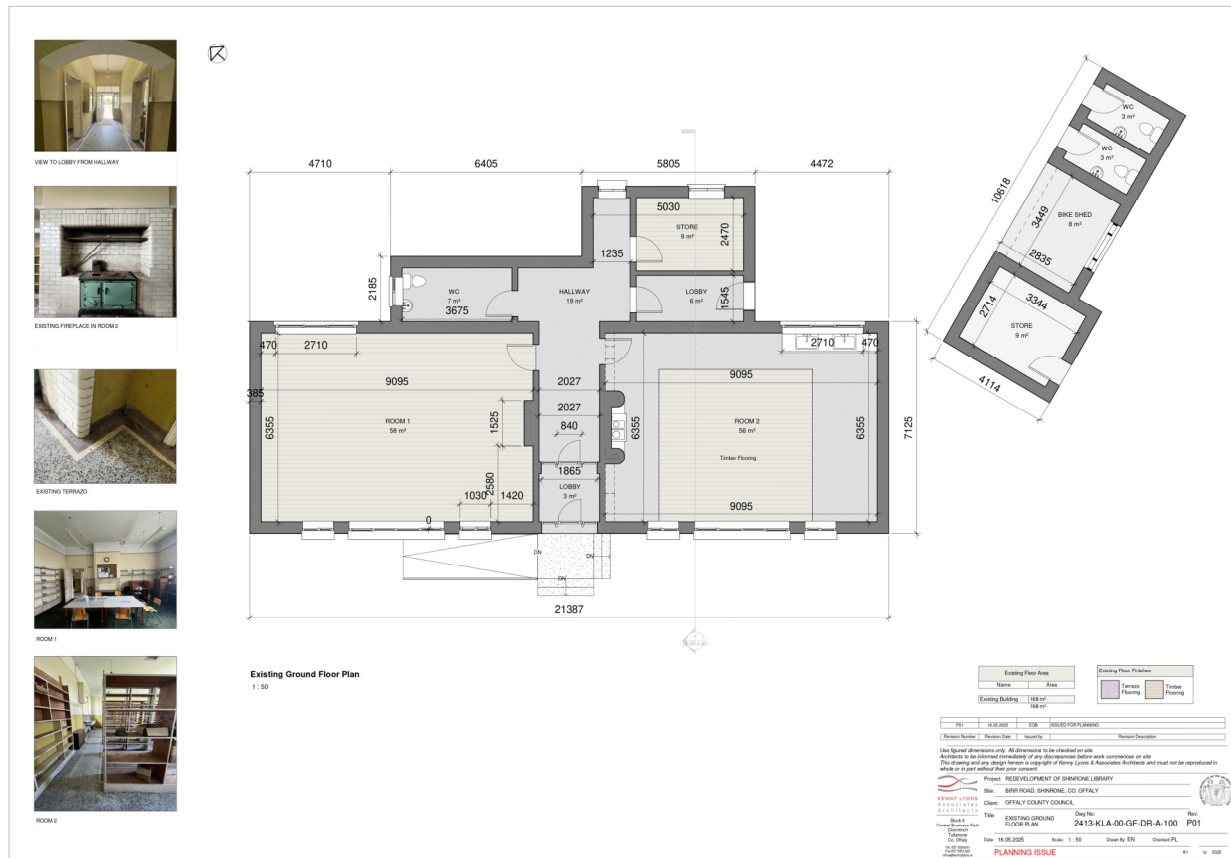


KLA – Image of the tiled fireplace in Room 2

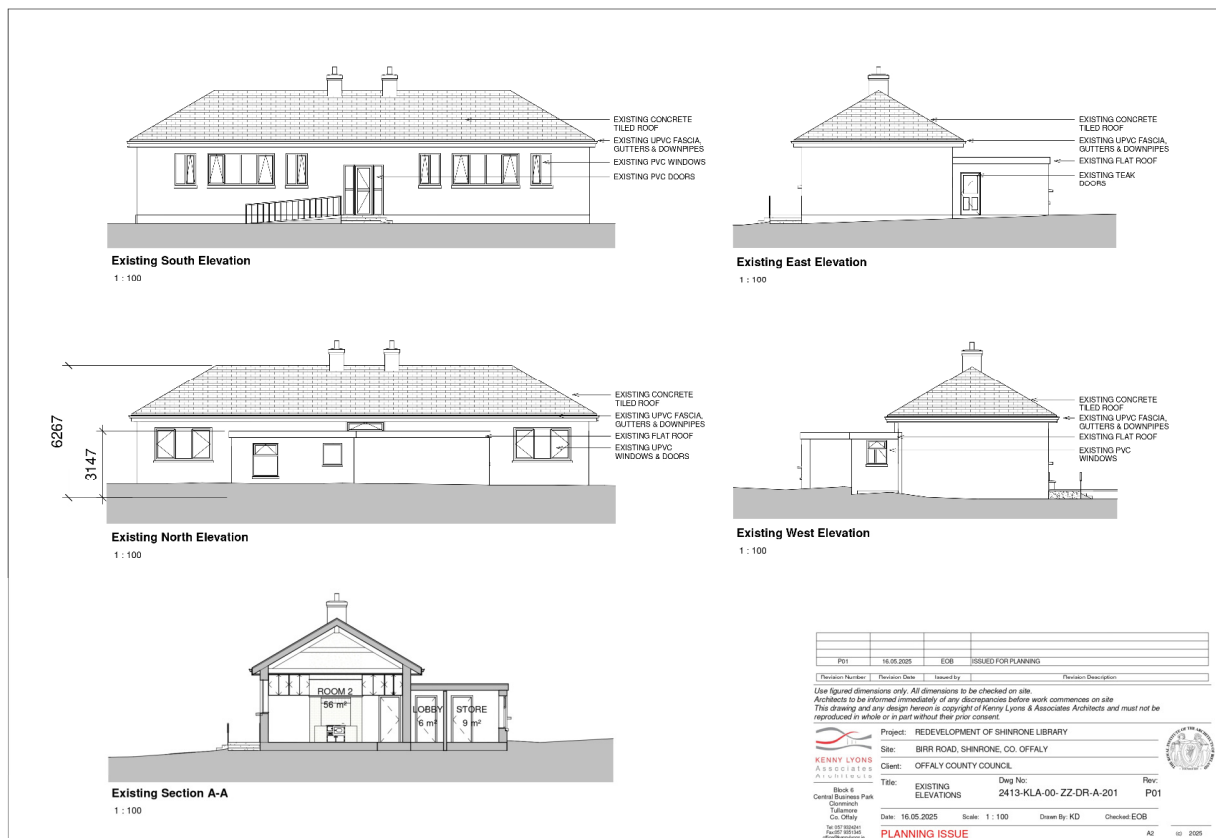


KLA – Image the rear entrance lobby

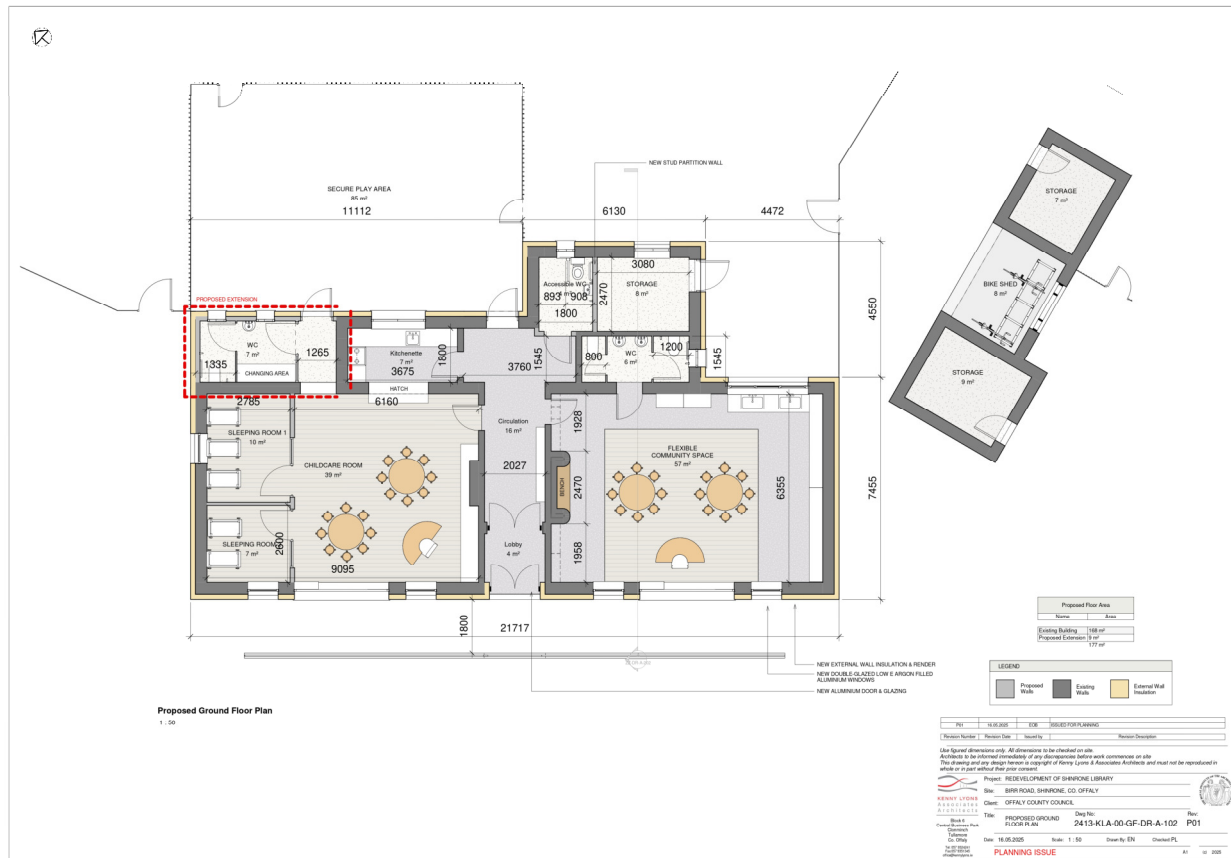




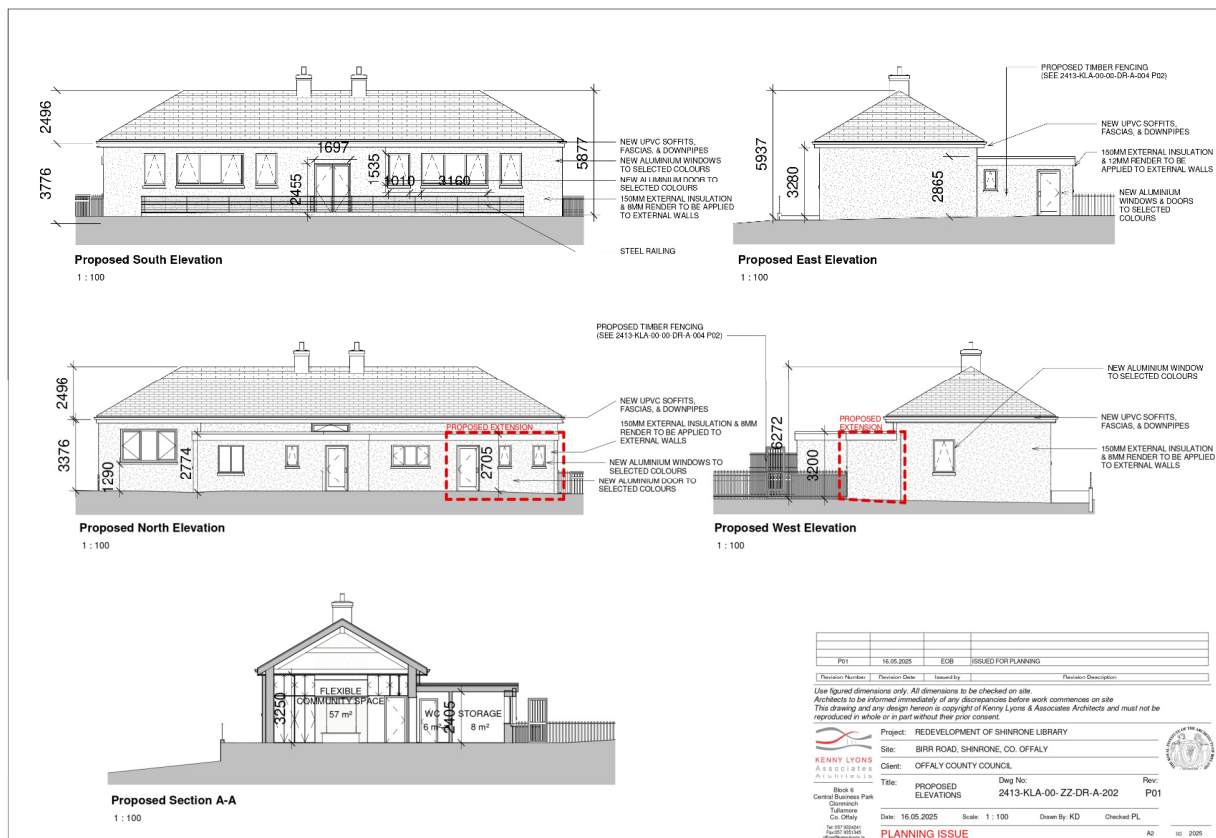
KLA – Existing Floor Plan for Shinrone Library



KLA – Existing Elevations & Section of Shinrone Library



KLA – Proposed Floor Plan



KLA – Proposed Elevations & Section

Summary:

The redevelopment of this former Library and school is a necessary and important step to allow present generations to enjoy the physical expression of past generations. These works would also prevent the building from falling into disrepair and allow it to provide the vital space and resources needed for the children and the rapidly growing community of Shinrone. The crucial restoration of this building will reinstate its architectural significance in the heart of the community of Shinrone and allow it to continue to be an integral element of the built heritage of the town.

The proposed works will preserve the integral parts of the original structure of the Shinrone Library. We believe that the proposed refurbishment of the Shinrone Library will allow it to achieve its full potential and functionality and will be beneficial to the enhancement of the community and allow the building to be preserved and celebrated for generations to come. This sustainable approach to the refurbishment and upgrade of the existing building fabric is to be welcomed as we strive to reduce carbon emissions in Offaly.

Architectural Impact Statement prepared on the 15/05/2024 by:



Emily O'Brien (BArch)
For Kenny Lyons & Associates Architects

BIBLIOGRAPHY & ICONOGRAPHY:

- 1) Offaly County Council Development Plan 2021-2027.
- 2) Historic Maps, Site Location Map – By OSI - (www.osi.ie).
- 3) Photographs by Kenny Lyons & Associates.
- 4) Aerial Image from Google Maps.