

CONSERVATION REPORT FOR UPGRADE WORKS TO ORANMORE LIBRARY (FORMALLY ST. MARY'S R.C CHURCH) ORANMORE, CO. GALWAY.

LISTING ON RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES: REFERENCE NO. 240.

ORANMORE LIBRARY, MAIN STREET, ORANMORE, CO. GALWAY H91 PC59.



PREPARED BY SCOTT TALLON WALKER ARCHITECTS, CONSERVATION ARCHITECTS GRADE 2

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Galway County Council Protected Structure RPS no. 240.

**ORANMORE LIBRARY, MAIN STREET, ORANMORE, CO.GALWAY.
H91PC59**

1. INTRODUCTION.

This report is being prepared for Galway County Council to accompany a planning application for upgrade works to the Library Building resulting from a requirement for the library to be brought into use for 'MY OPEN LIBRARY' which facilitates library members to have access to the library while unattended from 8.00am to 10.00pm seven days a week.

Also the proposed works are to bring the building up to date with fire escape requirements and disability access.

The works are to include a new internal main entrance lobby, new external exit lobby on side (south) elevation and rearrangement of stairs access to 2 separate balconies.

In addition to the building being used as a library it also accommodates offices and meeting rooms for Oranmore Community Development Association.

2.HISTORY OF THE BUILDING.

Background.


*The building in which the library is housed was formally the Roman Catholic Church for Oranmore, St. Mary's. The church was built on a site received as a gift circa 1780 by the then Parish Priest of Oranmore and Ballinacourty Dr. Peter Blake. At that time there was no church to say Mass in Oranmore and Mass was said in Frenchfort House. Having obtained the site Fr. Blake started collecting money for its construction. However, Fr. Blake was always a man of poor health and died at the early age of 40 in 1789. He was succeeded by Dean Anthony Walker Blake who completed the building of the Church in 1803. The Church like many built at this time was the T-plan design. The adaption of the T-plan is a recognition of the fact that a T-plan church, especially with galleries in each of the three arms, can accommodate more people, more conveniently and cheaply, while giving them all a clear view of the altar than any other shape. Maurice Craig in the book **The Architecture of Ireland** writes 'these buildings are undervalued, I fear, because being so simple they are not thought to be beautiful. The beauties of these churches include their fenestration, the texture of the lime-plaster rendering, and the carefully graduated slating.' Dean Blake died in 1818. In 1833 Fr. Gill was appointed Parish Priest of Oranmore and Ballinacourty. Six years after his appointment to Oranmore, the roof of the church in Oranmore was blown down and swept away on the night of the Big Wind in January 1839. Fr. Gill went to America to collect funds for the restoration of the roof. Fr. Gill was a great preacher and collected sufficient funds to repair the roof. The church remained in use up until the early 1970's when due to the growing population it was deemed to be too small. The site did not allow for expansion so when the Presentation Sisters donated a site the decision was taken to build a new church. This new church was officially opened in 1974 and St. Mary's was deconsecrated. From then on it lay vacant and became virtually derelict. Its demolition had been sought but thanks to the valiant efforts of the former Parish Priest, Fr. Matt O'Connor and the Restoration Committee it was saved from this fate.*

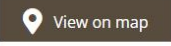
In 1993 essential repairs were carried out to prevent the collapse of the building. A community use was sought for the building and approval was sought and obtained for a library to be housed in soon to be restored building. Permanent restoration work was commenced by the Restoration Committee in September 1995 with the aid of a FAS Training Scheme and continued until summer 2000 when the building was handed over to Galway County Council. The stained-glass windows over the original altar and in one of the side aisles which had broken have been retained and restored to their former glory.

Text from a leaflet issued by Oranmore Community Development Association with a history of the building and outlining works carried out on the building in 1993.

3. National Inventory of Architectural Heritage listing.

Oranmore Library, ORAN MORE, Oranmore, GALWAY





Survey Data

Reg No	30409508
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Artistic, Social
Original Use	Church/chapel
In Use As	Library/archive
Date	1800 - 1805
Coordinates	138026, 224500
Date Recorded	01/10/2009
Date Updated	--/--/--

Description.

Freestanding cruciform-plan gable-fronted Roman Catholic church, dated 1803, with gabled bellcote added c.1885. Now in use as a library. Two-bay nave elevation, and full-height single-bay transepts, full-height chancel to east, and bowed bays to re-entrant corners. Lean-to additions to north and south elevations of nave, and to east elevations of transepts. Pitched slate roofs, with pyramidal roof over crossing, carved limestone cross finials to transepts, and carved limestone bellcote with bell and cross finial to entrance gable lined-and-ruled rendered walls with smooth render quoins, having rendered buttresses flanking main entrance, and carved limestone date-stone over doorway, Pointed arch window openings to nave and west elevations of transepts, having smooth render block-and-start surrounds and stone sills, with recent timber windows, that to north transept lowered to accommodate door opening with recent timber battened double-leaf doors, top half of timber Y-tracery window remaining. Pointed arch window openings with cut limestone tracery, chamfered limestone surrounds, cut limestone sloping sills, and stained-glass windows to entrance gable. Pointed arch three-light east window with cut limestone surround and sloped sill, having carved limestone tracery, trefoil-headed lights with five-pointed star over, and having stained-glass. Quatrefoil window to north elevation of north transept, having recent timber window. Paired lancet window openings to gable of south transept, with cut limestone tracery, chamfered limestone surrounds, cut limestone sloping sills, and stained-glass. Pointed arch door opening to main entrance, having cut and carved limestone surround and double-leaf timber




battened doors with cut limestone threshold. Pointed arch door openings to transepts with cut limestone hood-mouldings and chamfered limestone surrounds, partly blocked and with recent timber window to north transept, and having timber battened door to south transept. Square-headed door openings to extensions having timber doors. Church interior renovated 1998 to incorporate library. Painted smooth rendered walls to interior with open truss roof and decorative stained-glass windows to former chancel and south transept windows. Timber galleries. Church is set within graveyard with numerous gravestones. Cast-iron double-leaf gates flanked by matching pedestrian gates, with square-profile cut limestone piers, and cast-iron railings on rendered plinth walls.

Appraisal

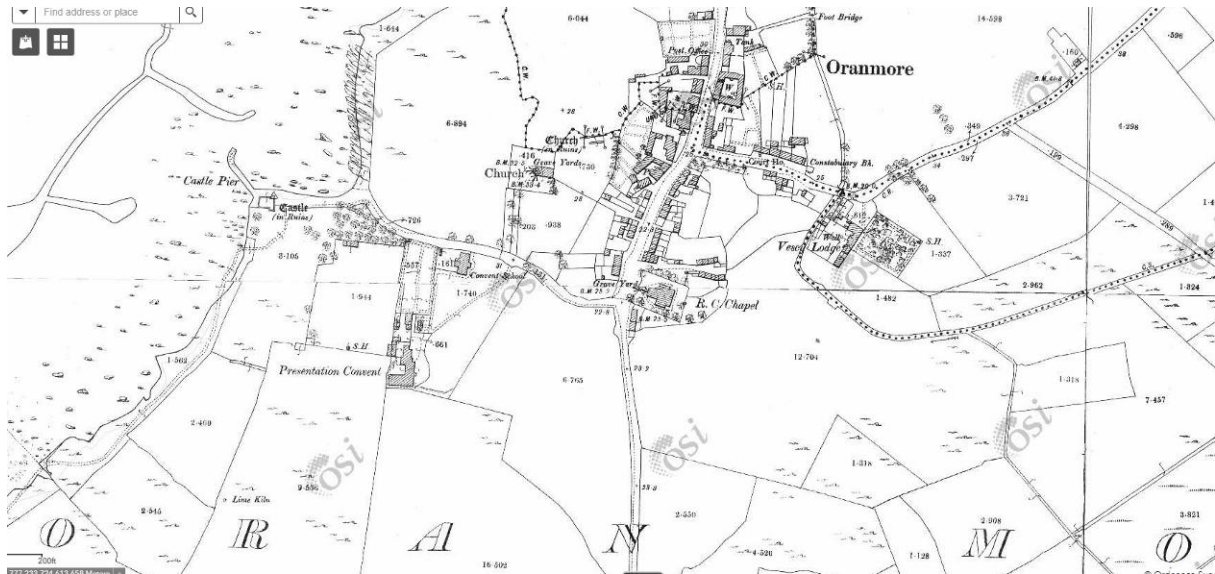
A pre-Emancipation former church retaining its essential character and features of interest. The decorative stained-glass windows are of artistic interest and contribute to its visual appeal. The render detailing of the walls adds interest to the exterior. The bows to the re-entrant corners of the cruciform plan are unusual. The site is of social importance as a former church, and still serves an important social role as library.

Text from NIAH Description and Appraisal.

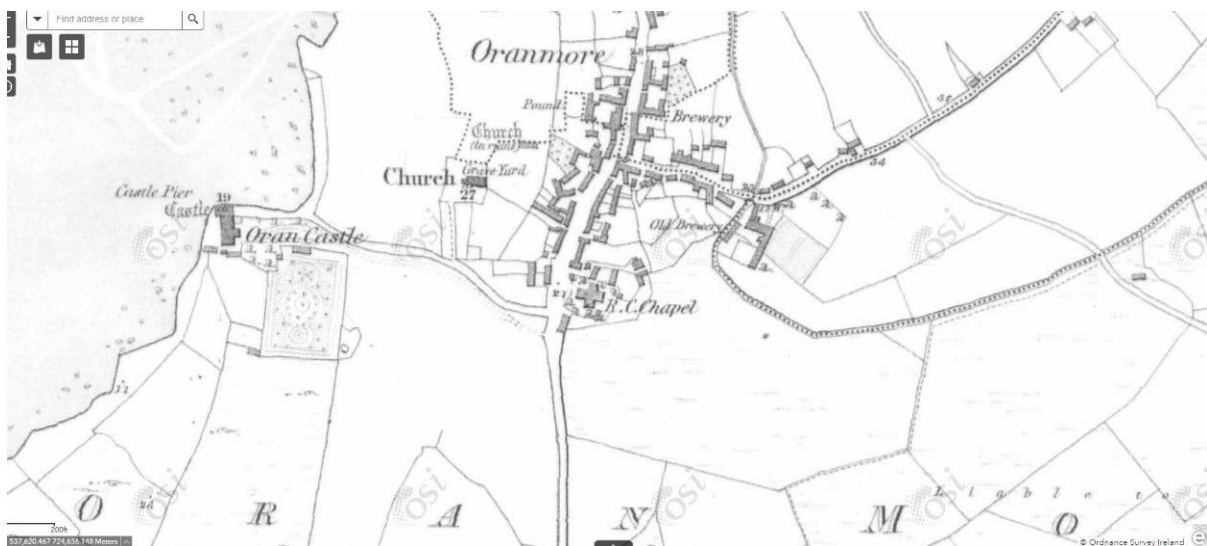
4. GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL PROTECTED STRUCTURE LISTING.

240	30409508	Oranmore Library	Gothic style cruciform plan church, dated 1808. Altered c 1885, gable belfry added and some window opens altered. The facade is rendered and has stone dressings. The interior has unusual roof structures and gallery. Extensively renovated c. 1998 - 2000, to accommodate community facility, retaining interior features. Set within graveyard with numerous gravestones, Ashlar gate piers and iron gates.	Regional value because of its architectural quality; unusually early example of a Catholic church; interior value - roof structure and gallery etc; Detail value - gates and piers etc; Setting - Contribution to village streetscape.	Oranmore	ORAN MORE	X:138020 Y:224500	
241	30409504	Oranmore Castle	Square tower house, c. 1450, with advanced bay on left. Re-roofed, restored and adjoining three-bay, two-storey house with connecting single-storey corridor built c. 1940. Set on shoreline with and including quay and private jetty.	National value because of its age and building type; the interior as an example of a tower house adaption; group value including quay, jetty and castle; the building is an important landscape feature and the site has archaeological potential.	Oranmore	ORAN MORE	X:137650 Y:224590	
242	30409512	Rinville Park	Detached three-bay single-storey gate lodge with dormer storey and gabled breakfront, c.1850. Adjoining entrance gates to Rinville Park.	Regional value on account of its architectural quality and being a good mid 19th cent example of a demesne gate lodge. It is also a significant landscape feature.	Oranmore	RINVILLE WEST	X:136340 Y:222110	

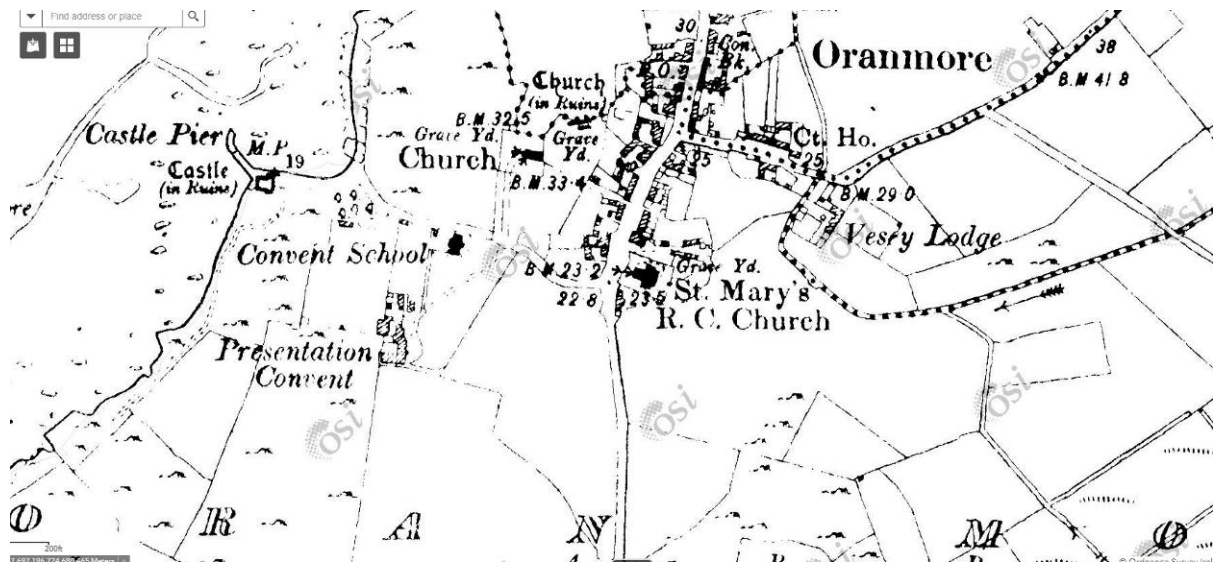
5.HISTORIC MAPS AND AERIAL IMAGE OF ORANMORE SHOWING ORANMORE R.C.CHURCH 'ST. MARYS.'



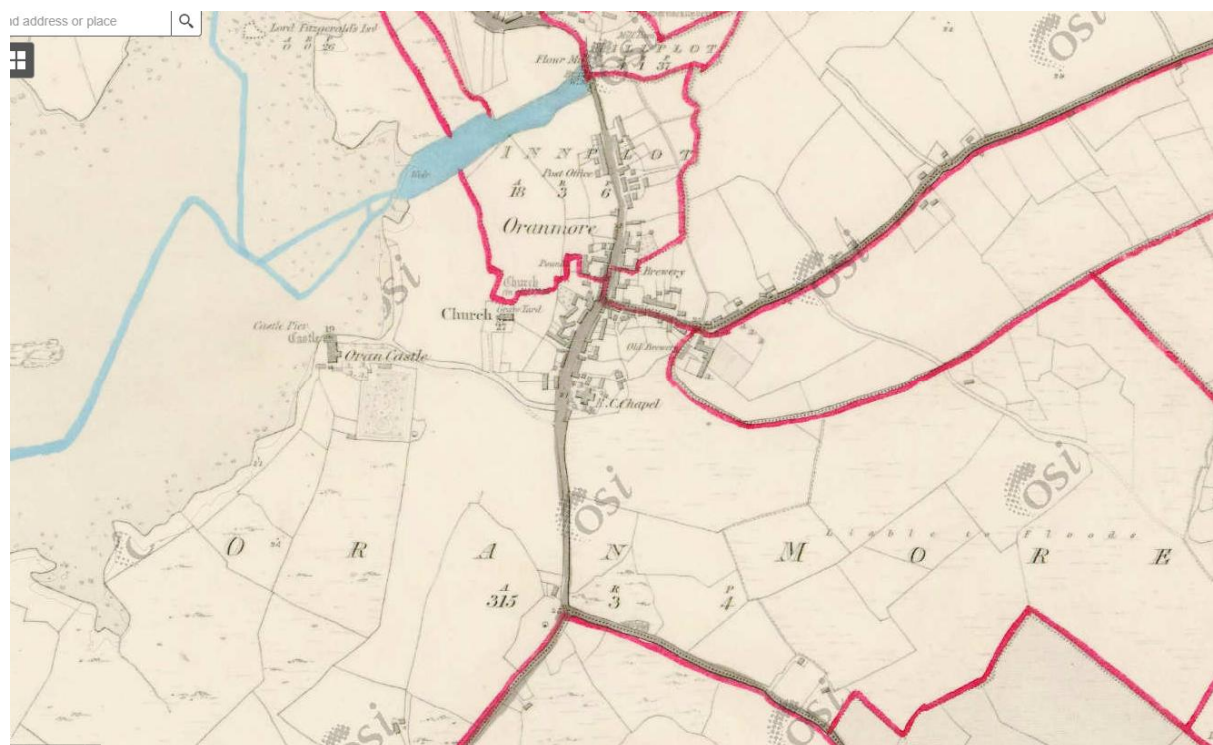
Map 1. Extract from O.S. Historic Map Oranmore Galway 6 Inch Last Edition Black. Dated 1829-1842



Map 2. Extract from O.S. Historic Map Oranmore, Galway 25 Inch



Map 3. Extract from O.S. Historic Map Oranmore, Galway. 6 Inch first Edition Black. Dated 1838.



Map 4. Extract from O.S. 6 Inch. First Edition Colour dated 1829 to 1842.



5. Present day aerial view of Oranmore Library Building and surrounds.

6. SITE PLAN AND DRAWINGS OF EXISTING LIBRARY BUILDING.

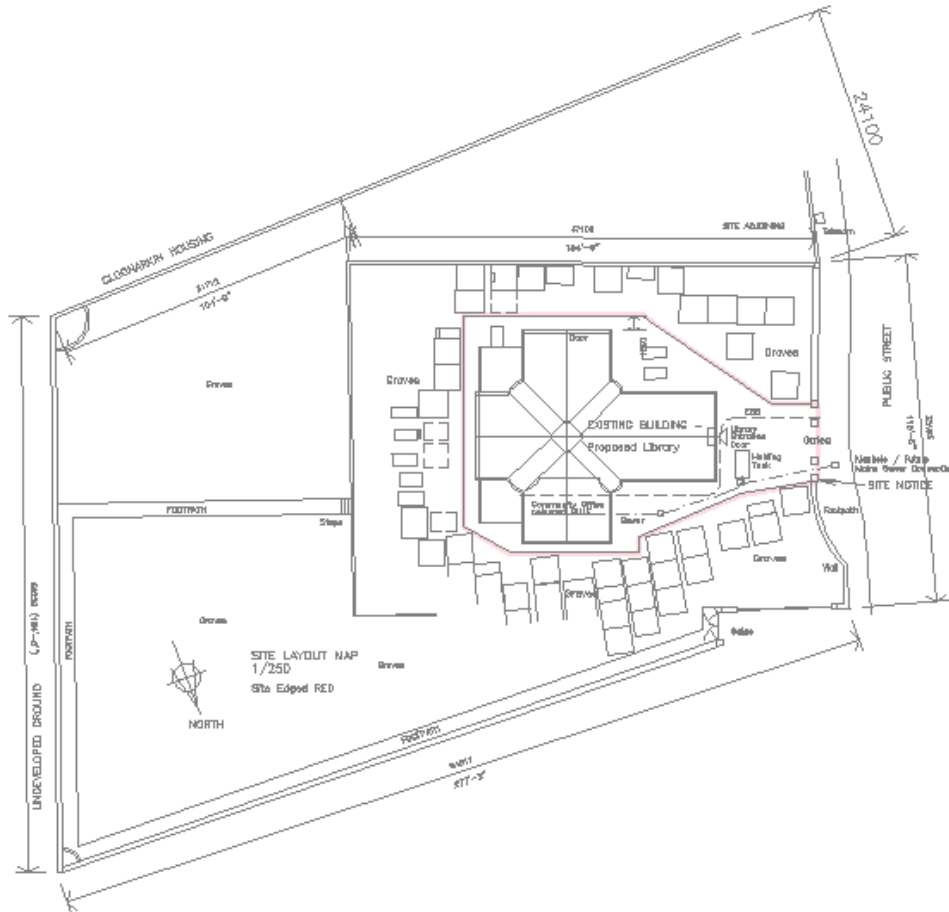


ILLUSTRATION 1. Site plan

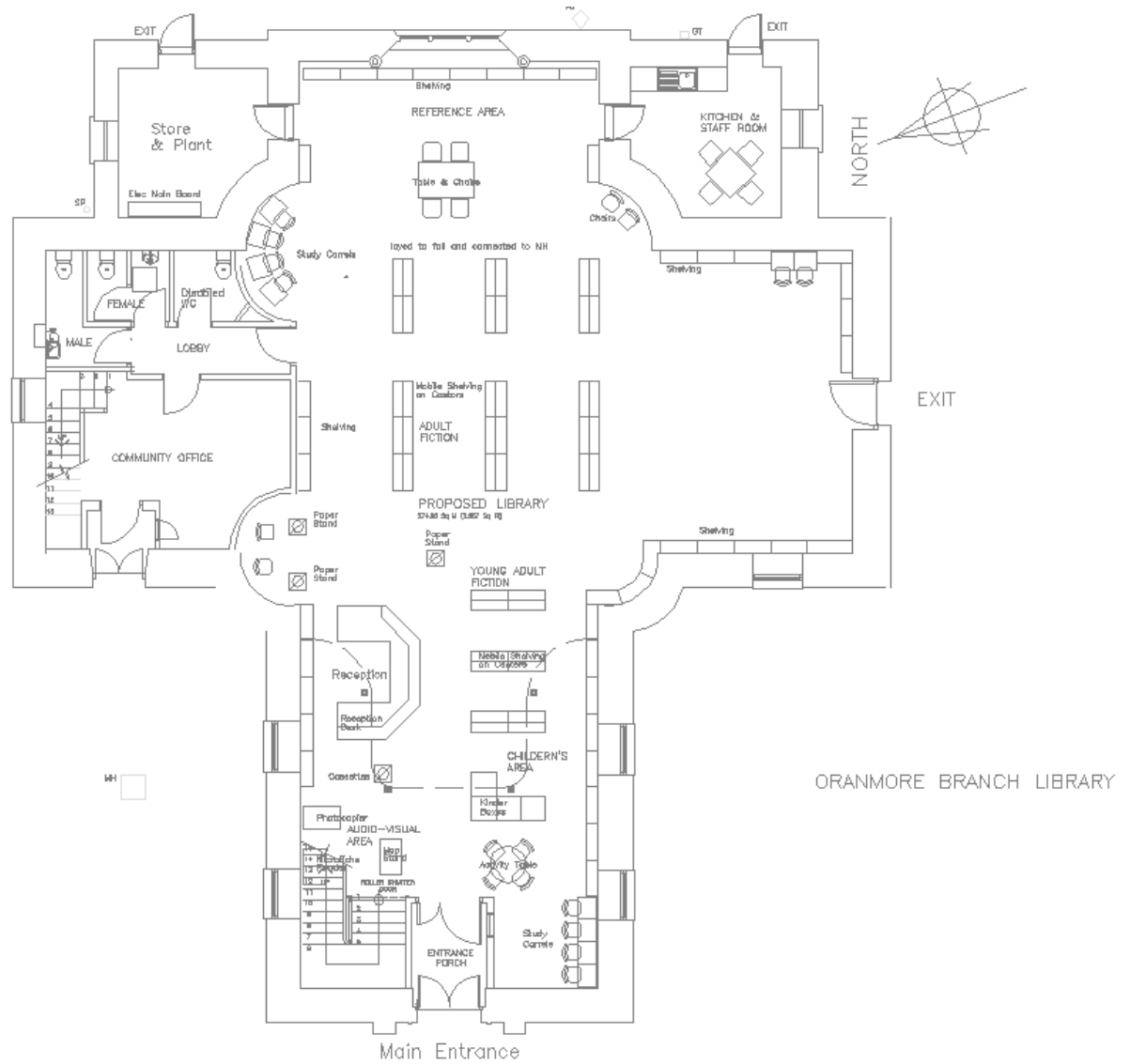
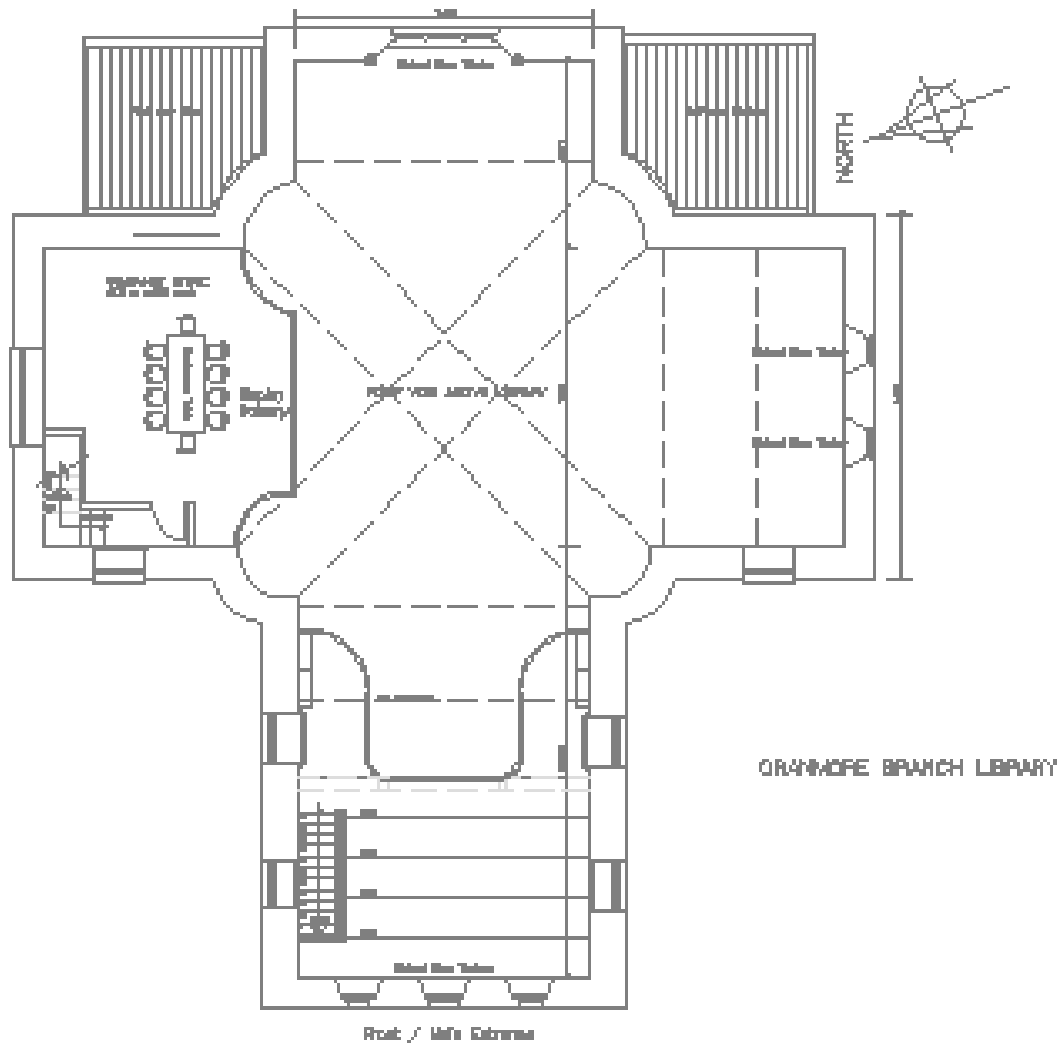
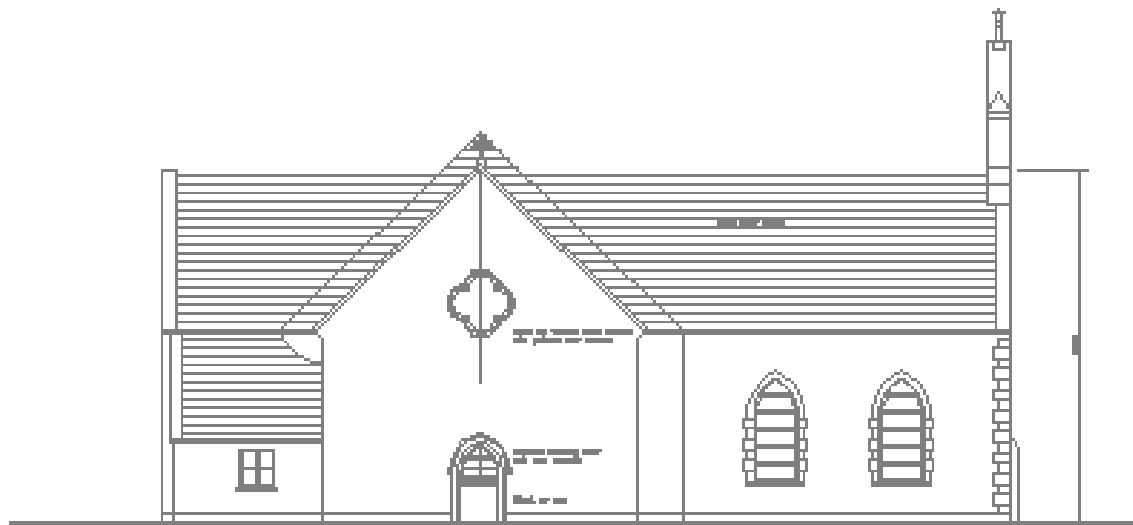


ILLUSTRATION 2. Existing floor plan

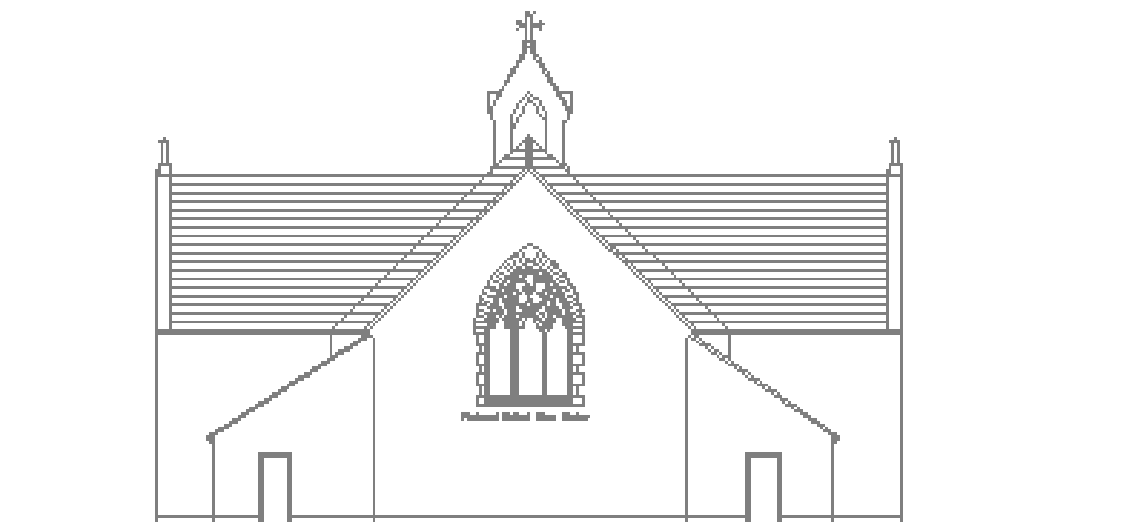


FIRST FLOOR PLAN. EXISTING LAYOUT
SCALE 1:200

ILLUSTRATION 3. Existing Upper floor Balcony plan.



NORTH ELEVATION
Scale 1/100



EAST (REAR) ELEVATION
Scale 1/100

ILLUSTRATION 4. North and East Elevations.

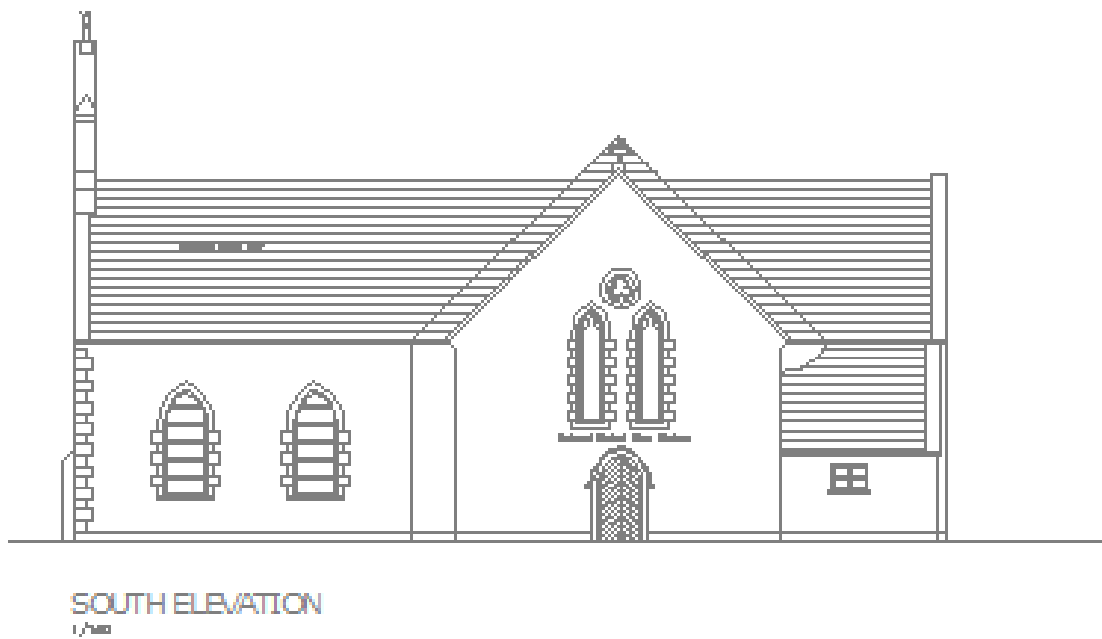
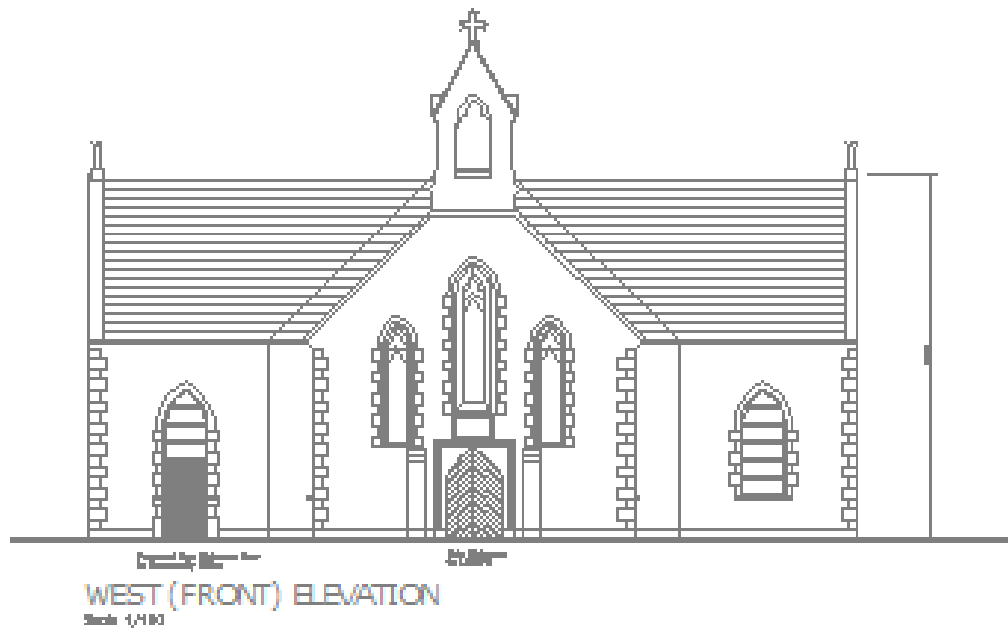
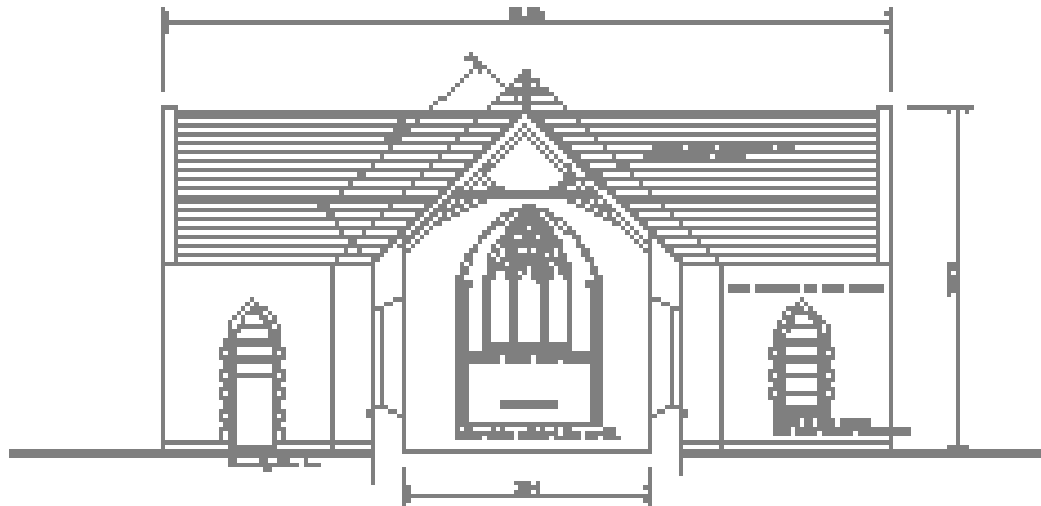


ILLUSTRATION 5. South and West Elevations.



SECTION / WEST ELEVATION
Scale 1/40



SECTION / NORTH ELEVATION
Scale 1/40

ILLUSTRATION 6. Sections.

7. Proposed Works.

NORTH TRANSEPT EXIT LOBBY

The library side exit door requires a minimum clear width of 850mm, and the door needs to open out. The existing door cannot be arranged for outward opening. Externally the door opening has pointed arch door openings of cut limestone hood-mouldings and chamfered limestone surrounds. It is proposed to retain the existing door and to leave it in an open position during normal opening hours. It is proposed to construct an external steel frame 400mm deep and fit glass doors into frame as final exit doors. Doors to have push bars and draft seals all around. The chamfered limestone pointed moulding around the door opening can still be viewed through glass externally. Refer to plan view of proposed external exit lobby and elevations below, illustrations 7 and 8.

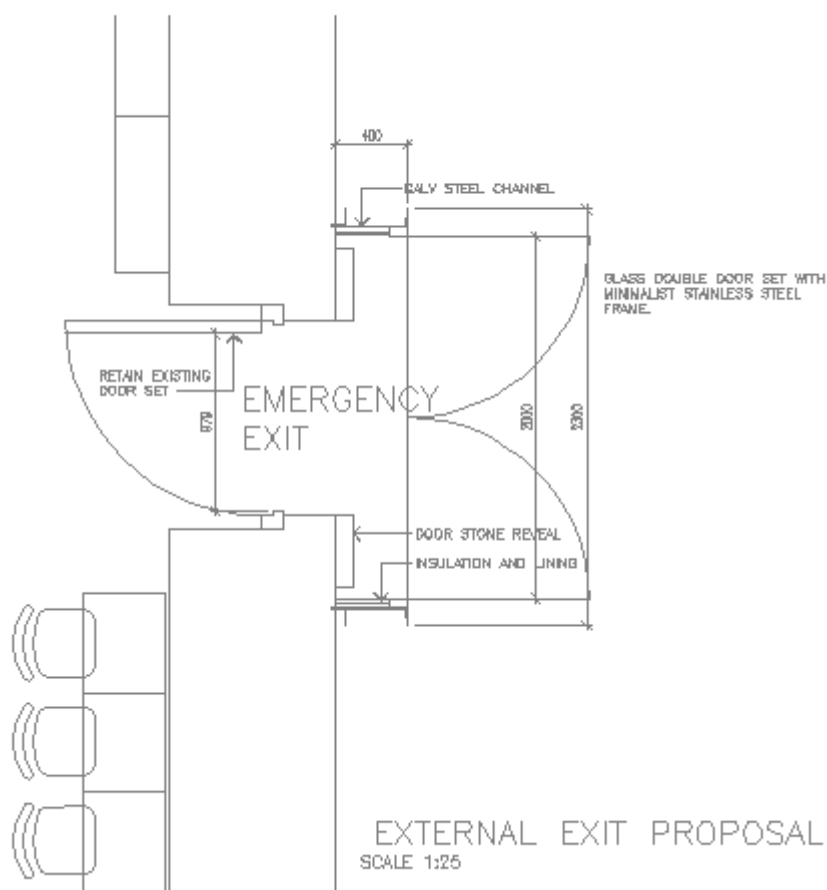


ILLUSTRATION 7 . Proposed external Lobby Plan



ILLUSTRATION 8 . Proposed external Lobby Elevations.

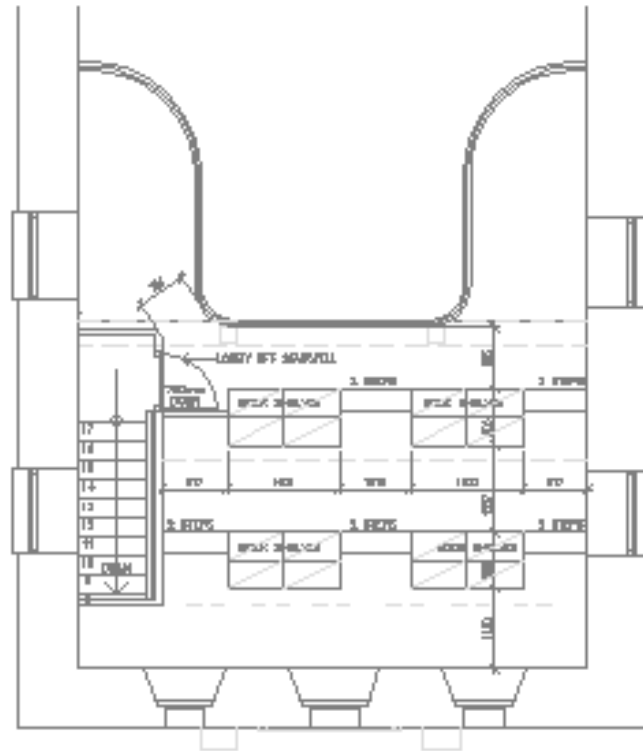
MAIN ENTRANCE LOBBY

To facilitate 'MY OPEN LIBRARY' with Library members having access to the library from 8.00am to 10.00pm seven days a week it is proposed to construct a security porch at the main entrance within the building. The existing timber doors are to be retained in place in an open position. A glass sliding door is proposed to be fitted. This door will be programmed to open automatically while Library is manned. When Library is not manned the glass door can be opened by Library card holders. This will get them into the newly created lobby where a second door will be openable by same card for access into the library main body.

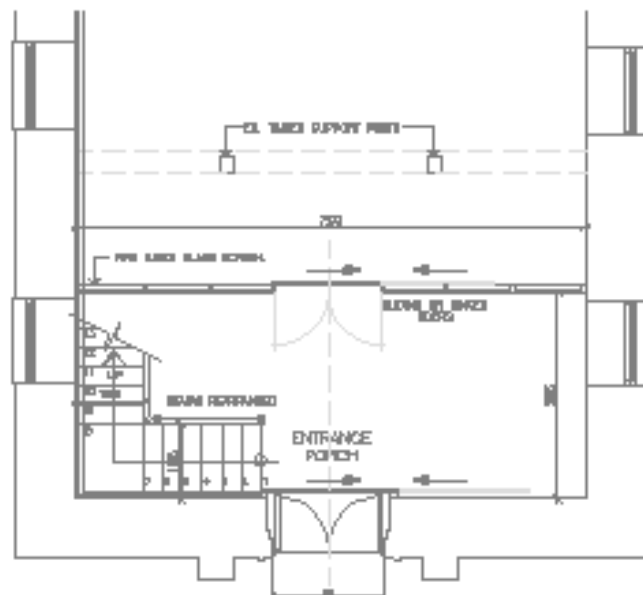
The lobby screen will be a fire rated glass screen and door. The gallery stair is to be rearranged for disabled access and will exit within the newly created lobby.

The existing gallery over main entrance is to be taken into play for use by library users. Book shelving is proposed. A stair enclosure is to be constructed as shown on drawings.

These new proposals will have no material impact on the existing balcony structure. The existing entrance lobby constructed in the nineties will be replaced with a larger lobby. The re-arranged new stair will be constructed within the footprint as the existing stair. The existing stair is not the original balcony stair and would have been fitted also in the nineties. All works being proposed is reversible.



QUIRE BALCONY FLOOR PLAN, PROPOSED.
SCALE 1:50



GROUND FLOOR PLAN ENTRANCE LOBBY, PROPOSED.
SCALE 1:50

ILLUSTRATION 9. Proposed entrance lobby and balcony plans.

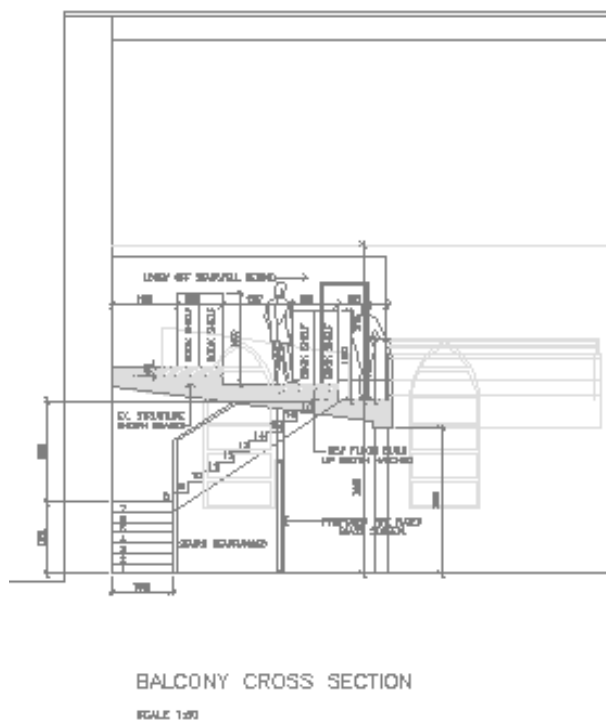


ILLUSTRATION 10. Proposed entrance balcony section.

NORTH TRANSEPT BALCONY STAIR.

It is proposed to rearrange the north transept balcony stair to comply with fire regulations and disabled access. Like the main entrance balcony stair, the transept balcony stair was fitted in the nineties and is not the original balcony stair. It is proposed to fit a new stair in a straight flight with a half landing. The stair will have a fire rated enclosure. The stair exit door positioning at balcony level accommodates exiting away from open balcony balustrade. The stair will exit into a fire protected lobby at ground floor. The new stair location will require minor rearrangements of toilets under on ground floor. The proposed stair landing carries across gable end window which is not ideal. However it is located in this location so stair complies with disabled access. The depth of the wall has the window set 300 to 400mm away from the stair stringer. The stair stringer section to be made as small as possible to allow as much light into stairwell as possible.

This new proposal will have minimum impact on the existing balcony structure. The existing lobby constructed in the nineties will be replaced with a larger lobby. The existing stair is not the original balcony stair and would have been fitted also in the nineties. The toilets on ground floor were constructed in the nineties and the rearranged stair necessitates toilets rearrangement as indicated on drawings included in this report. All works proposed will not materially effect original building structure, i.e. walls window openings or door openings. All work being proposed is reversable.

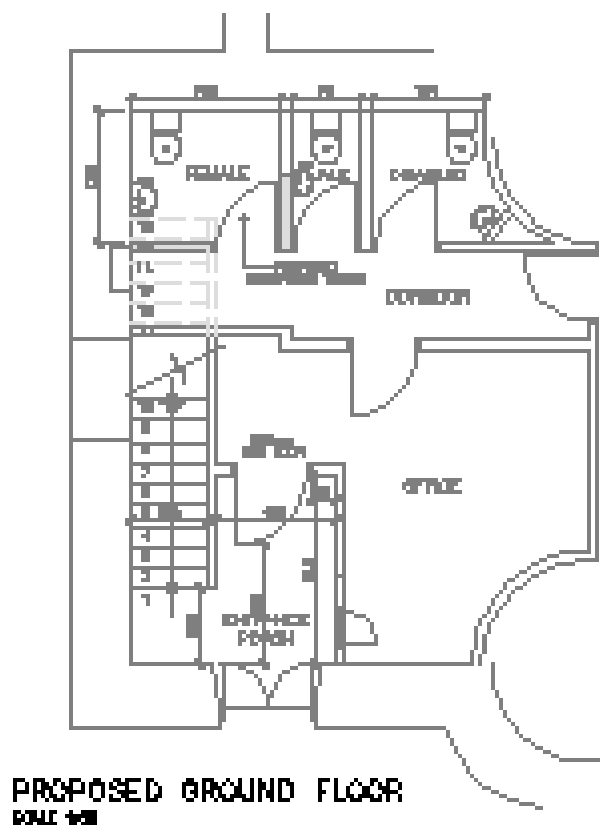


ILLUSTRATION 11. Proposed ground floor north wing rearranged stair and toilets

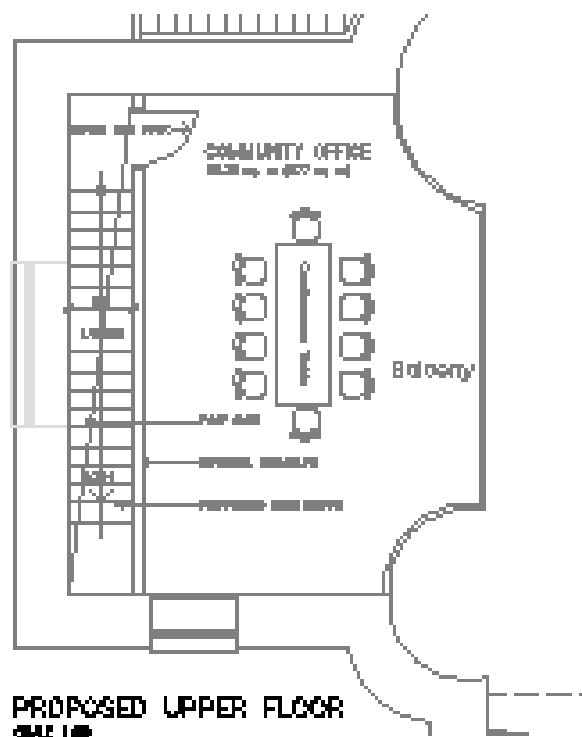


ILLUSTRATION 12. Proposed upper floor north wing rearranged stair plan.

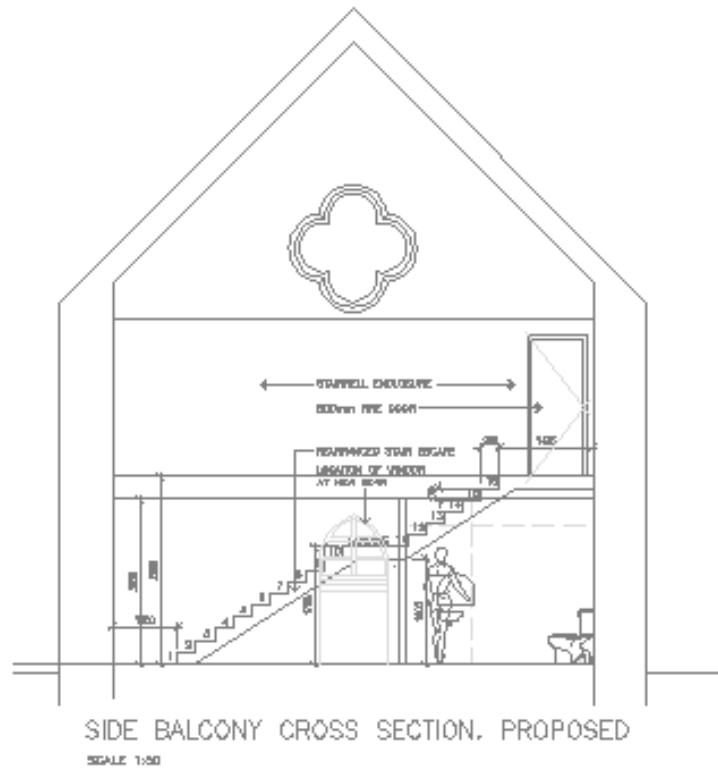


ILLUSTRATION 13. Proposed rearranged stair from balcony north wing.



Image 1. IMG_0506. Building South Elevation view.



Image 2. IMG_0509. Main entrance.



Image 3 of foundation stone over main entrance door.



Image 4. IMG_0516. Building Northeast View.



Image 5. IMG_0521. Building Southwest view.



Image 6. IMG_0530. Exit door. South Elevation.

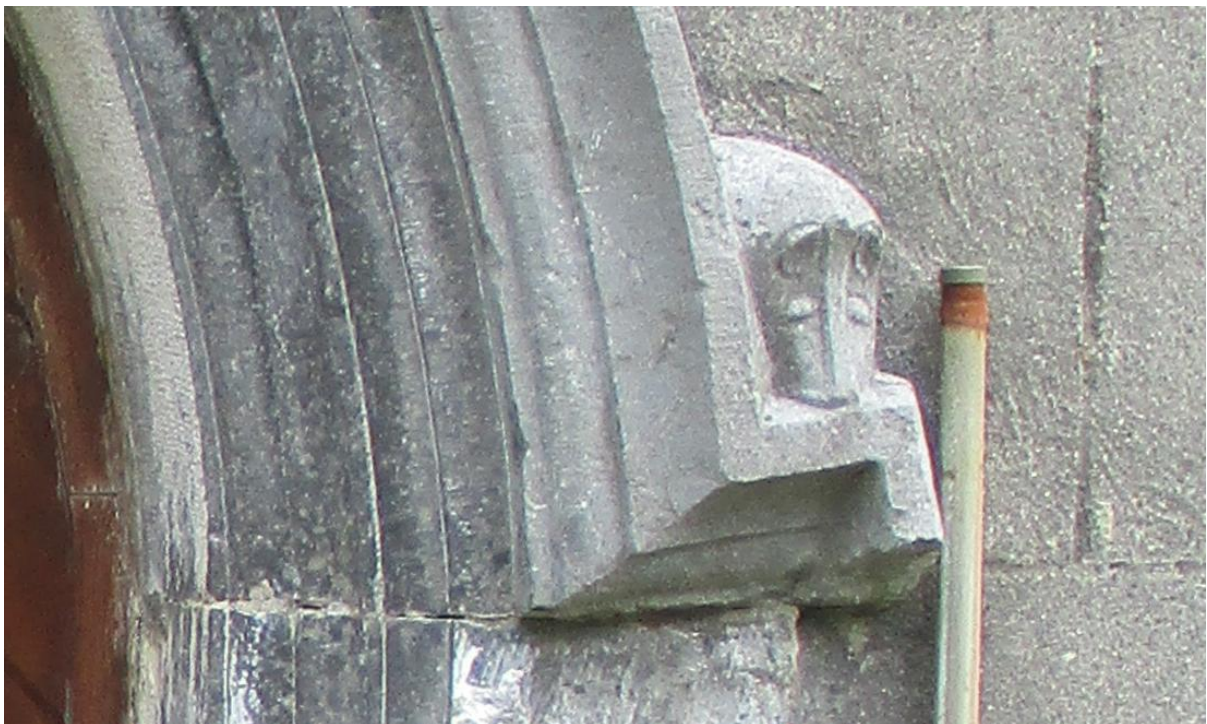


Image 7. South transept exit door reveal detail.



Image 8. IMG_0527. Main entrance balcony.



Image 9. IMG_0545 Library space viewed from balcony.



Image 10. IMG_0546. Library space viewed from balcony.

8. Conclusions.

The works being proposed are to bring the building in line with up-to-date fire regulations, disabled access and 'My Open Library' providing library card holders access to the library from 8.00am to 10.00pm seven days a week.

The proposals involve 3 areas of work.

1. New south transept exit lobby. An external exit porch is proposed outside existing exit door. The existing exit door can't be opened out because of its configuration. Opening the door out or permanently open is a fire exit requirement. It is proposed to have the door in a hold open position and sheltered with a lobby externally. An internal lobby would encroach significantly into the library footprint and so would not work. The proposed external porch is designed to have minimum visual impact on the building's north elevation. The new construction will not interfere with door cut stone point reveal or the stained-glass windows above door.
2. New main entrance lobby. The proposed entrance lobby will facilitate library users access to the building out of hours. The proposed disabled access re-arranged stair will exit into the enlarged lobby. The existing timber doors can be retained and held open within the depth of the building walls. The new glass door at the entrance will give transparency and a sense of safety to people using the building out of hours. The existing balcony will not be altered and can be used by the public as part of the library with new book shelving added.
3. North transept balcony stair rearrangement. To comply with fire regulations and disabled access it is proposed to replace /rearrange stair as shown on drawings included with this report. The new arrangement is a straight flight with a half landing. The new stair will exit into a protected lobby and have an enclosure at balcony level. The stair being replaced is not an original stair to the balcony. The fitting of the new stair will have minimal effect on the existing balcony structure as old and new stair are in the same location. The toilets on ground floor under stair will require rearrangement as indicated on attached drawings.