



An  
Coimisiún  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report PL-500198-KE

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<b>Development</b>	<b>PROTECTED STRUCTURE: Extension, with internal modifications. Demolition of shed and associated site works.</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Old School House, Kilkea, Castledermot, Co. Kildare</b>
<b>Planning Authority</b>	<b>Kildare County Council</b>
<b>Planning Authority Reg. Ref.</b>	<b>2560046</b>
<b>Applicant(s)</b>	<b>Wizard Earl Ltd</b>
<b>Type of Application</b>	<b>Permission</b>
<b>Planning Authority Decision</b>	<b>Refuse Permission</b>
<b>Type of Appeal</b>	<b>First Party Normal Planning Appeal</b>
<b>Appellant(s)</b>	<b>Wizard Earl Ltd</b>
<b>Observer(s)</b>	
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	<b>11/02/2026</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>David Freeland</b>

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## 1.0 Site Location and Description

The subject site is located within the centre of the rural settlement of Kilkea which is located c 5.8km to the north-west of Castledermot and c. 9km to south-east of Athy. The site occupies a prominent position at the junction of the R418 and the L8083 which define the core of the Kilkea settlement.

The site contains the former Kilkea National School, a Protected Structure (RPS. Ref. B37-18) which is now in use as a dwelling. The School building is a detached four-bay dormer structure with attic accommodation. The building is noted for its gabled projecting porch to the left and gable end bay to the right, its rubble stone and cut-granite elevations with decorative timber eaves and bargeboards. Modern interventions include uPVC windows and gutters and a single storey flat roof extension to the rear with stone finish to match the main building. There is also a single storey stone outbuilding to rear of a similar era as the main School building. The site boundary is formed by low stone wall with pedestrian entrance to the front (west) with two vehiculare entrances to the south and north of the dwelling. The School building forms part of wider historic buildings within Kilkea which includes a number of historic dwellings to the east, the Kilkea Church of Ireland, graveyard and rectory located to the immediate west and Kilkea Castle and Demesne to the south. The current Kilkea National School adjoins the subject site to the north.

## 2.0 Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises the following:

- The construction of a single storey extension to the east of the building,
- The demolition of a single storey shed,
- Internal modifications including all associated site works and services  
Planning Authority Decision

### 2.1. Decision

Following receipt of Further Information, Kildare County Council made a decision to refuse permission for the following reason:

*Having regard to the proposed extension to the Old Schoolhouse, which acts as a focal point within the Kilkea Village with significant historic heritage value, which is a protected structure (Ref B37-18), and considering the site's prominent location, on a corner site facing onto two roads, where the proposed development would be highly visible including the projection of the historic shed (which did not form part of the development description in the revised notices) and the raising of its roof and considering the incongruous nature of the link structure between the Old Schoolhouse and its associated shed / outbuilding (also protected having regard to it being located within the attendant grounds of the protected structure), which inappropriately competes with the eaves of the protected structure, and does not capitalise on the opportunity to successfully reintroduce a principal and important façade of the original schoolhouse, the proposed development would be contrary to Objectives AH O21, AH 032 and AH 059 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 as it would:*

- a) Cause loss of or damage to the special character of the protected structure and/or any structures of architectural heritage value within its curtilage and adversely impact on the setting, curtilage, or attendant grounds of a protected structure, (Objective AH O21).*
- b) Adversely impact on the setting of a protected structure or obscure established views of its principal elevations (Objective AH O32).*
- c) Remove historic fabric, negatively impacting on the character, which it is an objective of the Plan to preserve, including original building features or materials such as windows, doors, roof coverings and setting (e.g. gates, gate piers, boundary treatments, courtyards) and erode the setting and design qualities of the original structure and would not be in proportion or subservient to the existing building. (Objective AH O60).*

*And if granted would have a negative impact on and would materially affect a protected structure, it would set an undesirable precedent and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*

## **2.2. Planning Authority Reports**

### **2.2.1. Planning Reports**

2.2.2. There are two planning reports on file.

2.2.3. The first planning report on file dated 12/03/2025 is summarised as follows:

- The planning authority accepted the principle of extending the dwelling subject to safeguarding the Protected Structure, residential amenities and the policies and objectives of the Development Plan.
- In terms of design, siting and layout, the Planner's Report considered the site to occupy a pivotal corner location within the Settlement Core of Kilkea (per Volume 2 of the CDP) of which the proposal failed to adequately the CDP policy for the site location. Particular reference was made to Objective AH 059 which requires extension to respect the setting, form, scale and materials of the existing vernacular structures. The report indicated that the existing shed structure should be retained and all materials to be used should be clearly stated to ensure good conservation practice.
- From a conservation perspective significant concerns were expressed regarding the quality of the proposed design and materials. It was considered the development should be higher architectural quality that clearly define the original fabric from the new addition. The shed proposed be demolished was identified as forming part of the original school complex and within the curtilage of the Protected Structure. The retention of the structure was requested with potential for its integration as part of a revised scheme.
- The Planning report highlighted recommended enhancement measures to the school house building (as suggested by the Heritage Officer) including the reinstatement of timber fenestration and iron rainwater goods and retention of the historic pedestrian gate and main doorway.
- Concerns were raised relating to the limited commentary within the submitted Architectural and Built Heritage Assessment, particularly relating to the rear shed and lack of justification for the proposed works.
- The Planning Authority identified deficiencies in the submitted documentation, including inaccuracies in drawings, insufficient clarity regarding the scope of works (particularly in relation to those undertaken previously and the pedestrian entrance and potential blocking of the front door – as stated on the

development description), and the absence of a comprehensive list of proposed works to and within the curtilage of the protected structure. A revised Architectural Heritage Assessment and more detailed conservation report were requested.

#### 2.2.4. Other Technical Reports

- Environment Section: Report dated 07/02/2025 – No objection subject to conditions.
- MD Engineer: Report dated 13/02/2025 – no objection subject to conditions.
- Water Services: report dated 31/01/2025 – no objection subject to conditions.
- Heritage Officer: Report dated 04/03/2025 – Request Further Information.

2.2.5. Further Information was requested on 13/03/2025 relating to 12no. Items broadly addressing: : (i) deficiencies in the Architectural and Built Heritage Assessment; (ii) design quality and compliance with Development Plan objectives; (iii) inaccuracies in site layout and contiguous elevations; (iv) materials and finishes; (v) treatment of the outbuilding; (vi) treatment of the pedestrian entrance; (vii) provision of a bat survey; (viii) clarification of proposed works; and (ix) submission of a design statement in accordance with the Development Plan.

2.2.6. Following receipt of Further Information (11/09/2025), the second planning report on file is dated 03/10/2025 is summarised as follows:

- The Planning report noted the applicant's amendments to the scheme which included retaining the rear outbuilding, the submission of updated drawings, design statement and Architectural and Built Heritage Assessment. The submitted bat survey confirmed no evidence of current roosting bats.
- Notwithstanding the revisions the Planning report retained concerns regard the overall design approach. It was noted that the revised scheme proposed to raise the roof height of the outbuilding, retain the existing 1970's extension with amendments and connect to the main dwelling via a flat roofed link. The Planning Report further observed that the drawings appeared to indicate a potential extension of the outbuilding southwards to align with the building line of the main schoolhouse which was not clearly stated within the development

description and may require removal of a mature tree. Due to statutory time constraints, clarification could not be sought.

- The Planning Authority considered that the revised design did not adequately address the unsympathetic 1970's extension and failed to demonstrate a high-quality contemporary design in place of the area between the School House and the existing shed to be retained. The proposal failed to respect the form, scale and materials of the original structure and would result in development that is unsympathetic to the special features and character of the Protected Structure. In general, the Planning Report noted the cumulative effect of the alterations to the existing extension, raising of the roof to the outbuilding and linking structure would adversely impact on the setting and curtilage of the Protected Structure and would be contrary to a number of architectural heritage objectives of the CDP.
- While the retention of the outbuilding was welcomed in principle, the alteration of its height and (potential) length was considered to adversely affect the integrity, its relationship with the principal structure. Concerns relating to limited scope and contents of the revised Architectural and Built Heritage Assessment were retained.
- Revised site layout and contiguous elevation drawings were considered to be improved though not fully comprehensive in accounting for the neighbouring dwelling to the east. In this regard, the planning authority considered the scheme to be a missed opportunity to align with the approach of the extension to the rear of the adjoining dwelling, also a Protected Structure.

2.2.7. Other Technical Reports: no further reports on the public file.

### 2.3. **Prescribed Bodies**

No response was received from prescribed bodies.

### 2.4. **Third Party Observations**

None.

### 3.0 Planning History

No planning history of subject site.

#### Relevant applications within the vicinity:

**P.A. Ref. 171082** – Kilkea Lodge Farm (Site Adjoining to the East): Permission Granted for a single storey extension to side and rear of existing single storey cottage, the re-building of the eastern gable wall of the existing cottage and all ancillary site development works at Kilkea Lodge Farm, a Protected Structure (RPS Ref. B 3719).

**ACP Ref. 323772 / P.A. Ref. 2461388** - Back Gate Lodge Kilkea Demesne – Protected Structure (same applicant as appellant): Permission Refused by ACP for the construction of a single storey extension to the south-west of the building and internal modifications including all associated site works and services.

### 4.0 Policy Context

#### 4.1. National Policy & Legislation

Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011)

#### 4.2. Development Plan

##### Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029

##### Settlement Strategy

##### *Chapter 2 Core Strategy & Settlement Strategy*

Table 2.8 – Core Strategy Table includes Kilkea as a Rural Settlement (see also Table 3.1 and 3.7 of Volume 2 Part 2 – Villages & Rural Settlements) as part of the settlement hierarchy of County Kildare.

##### *Volume 2 Part 2 - Villages and Rural Settlements*

The subject site (The Old School House) is located within the Settlement Core of Kilkea alongside the Kilkea National School adjoining to the north and Kilkea Church of Ireland, graveyard and rectory located to the immediate west.

Table 3.8 sets out the aims and objective for development within the Settlement Core of rural settlements. It is the aim to develop rural settlements *'in a coherent, attractive and sustainable manner around the settlement core. New development, which reinforces the settlement core as the service centre and enhances its character as the centre of the settlement, will be encouraged'*. It is an objective that *'where there is a historic core of architectural importance, it shall be protected, with particular care taken that any new development does not negatively impact on its character'* and *'to reuse where possible existing buildings / out-buildings within the village boundary in order to maintain the historic character of the village'*.

### Protected Structure

The subject site contains a Protected Structure, Kilkea National School (RPS No. B37-18) and is described as a 'House' with the Council's Record of Protected Structures. The School building is also registered on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) under Reg. No. 11903722. The NIAH description and appraisal is as follows:

#### *Description*

*Detached four-bay single-storey former national school with dormer attic, dated 1863, with single-bay single-storey gabled projecting porch to left, single-bay single-storey gabled advanced end bay to right, three-bay single-storey side elevation to south-east and single-bay single-storey gabled advanced bay to rear elevation to north-east. Renovated and extended, c.1970, comprising two-bay single-storey flat-roofed return to rear to north-east. Refenestrated, c.1995. Now in residential use. Gable-ended roofs on a T-shaped plan (gabled to porch). Replacement artificial slate. Clay ridge tiles. Rendered chimney stack. Yellow clay pots. Overhanging timber eaves and decorative bargeboards. Replacement uPVC rainwater goods, c.1995. Flat-roof to return. Bitumen felt. Rubble stone walls. Hammer dressed cut-granite quoins to corners. Cut-stone date stone/plaque. Rubble stone walls to return. Rendered quoins. Square-headed openings. Cut-stone sills. Cut-stone block-and-start surrounds with chamfered lintels. Replacement uPVC casement windows, c.1995. Replacement glazed timber panelled door, c.1995. Set back from road in own grounds. Rubble stone boundary wall to front. Detached*

*two-bay single-storey rubble stone outbuilding, c.1865, to north-east. Gable-ended roof with slate. Clay ridge tiles. Timber eaves and bargeboards. Iron rainwater goods. Rubble stone walls. Square-headed openings. Stone sills. Timber fittings.*

#### *Appraisal*

*Kilkea National School (former) is a fine small-scale building, built as part of an extensive building campaign by the Duke of Leinster of Kilkea Castle Demesne - the construction of the school in rubble stone with cut-granite dressings is shared with many further buildings in the village that were also built during this phase of development, for example the church opposite. The stone masonry is of excellent quality, indicating the wealth and status of the estate and the owners who commissioned the school. The carved details, particularly the window surrounds and doorcases, have precision and fine detailing that remains crisp. The design and detailing of the school complement its intimate scale, notably the decorative bargeboards to the gables that afford the range an ornate quality. The school is attractively set in its own grounds just off the side of the road and is a picturesque feature in the village. The school has been well-maintained and, despite additions, retains most of its original character - the re-instatement of timber fenestration might restore a more accurate representation of the original appearance. The school is of considerable social and historic interest having originally served as the educational facility in the locality.*

#### *Chapter 11 Built & Cultural Heritage*

Chapter 11 set outs the Council's policy towards the protection, conservation and management of architectural heritage in the contained including those structures contained on the Record of Protected Structures.

Section 11.15 set out relevant policies and objectives relating to Protected Structures.

Relevant policy and objectives include:

- Policy AH P6: *Protect, conserve and manage the archaeological and architectural heritage of the county and to encourage sensitive sustainable*

*development in order to ensure its survival, protection and maintenance for future generations.*

- *Objective AH O20: Conserve and protect buildings, structures and sites contained on the Record of Protected Structures of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.*
- *Objective AH O21: Protect the curtilage of protected structures or proposed protected structures and to refuse planning permission for inappropriate development that would adversely impact on the setting, curtilage, or attendant grounds of a protected structure, cause loss of or damage to the special character of the protected structure and/or any structures of architectural heritage value within its curtilage. Any proposed development within the curtilage and/or attendant grounds must demonstrate that it is part of an overall strategy for the future conservation of the entire built heritage complex and contributes positively to that aim.*
- *Objective AH O22: Refuse planning permission for the demolition of any protected structure unless the Council is satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist. The demolition of a protected structure with the retention of its façade will likewise not generally be permitted.*
- *Objective AH O23: Require an Architectural Heritage Assessment Report, as described in Appendix B of the Architectural Heritage Protection, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011), to accompany all applications with potential for visual or physical impacts on a Protected Structure, its curtilage, demesne and setting. This report should be prepared by a person with conservation expertise that is appropriate to the significance of the historic building or site and the complexity of the proposed works.*
- *Objective AH O32: Ensure that new development will not adversely impact on the setting of a protected structure or obscure established views of its principal elevations.*
- *Objective AH O33: Promote best practice and the use of skilled specialist practitioners in the conservation of, and any works to, protected structures.*

*Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment reports should make reference to the DHLGH Advice Series on how best to repair and maintain historic buildings. The AHIA report should summarise the principal impacts on the character and special interest of the structure or site and describe how it is proposed to minimise these impacts. It may also describe how the works have been designed or specified to have regard to the character of the architectural heritage.*

- *Objective AH O34 Encourage high quality design in relation to planning applications that are made for the construction of extensions or new buildings affecting protected structures or older buildings of architectural merit not included in the RPS. The Council will have regard for the visual impacts on the setting and character of protected structures and/or buildings of architectural merit not included on the RPS, when considering applications on neighbouring sites.*
- *Objective AH O36 Actively encourage uses that are compatible with the character of protected structures. In certain cases, the Planning Authority may relax site restrictions / development standards in order to secure the preservation and restoration of a protected structure or building of architectural merit that is not included on the RPS.*
- *Objective AH O37 Promote the use of energy upgrade materials and technologies that follow good conservation practice and are compatible with the character and vapour permeable construction of traditionally built structures.*
- *Objective AH O38 Support appropriate and sensitive thermal upgrade of protected structures and other heritage buildings. These works shall be undertaken with the necessary planning permission / statutory declarations with the advice of Kildare County Council's Architectural Conservation Officer.*
- *Objective AH O39 Promote the maintenance and appropriate re-use of buildings of architectural, cultural, historic and aesthetic merit which make a positive contribution to the character, appearance and quality of the streetscape or landscape and the sustainable development of the county. Any*

*works associated with the re-use of such buildings should be carried out in accordance with best conservation practice.*

- *Objective AH O41 Promote the retention of original or early building fabric including timber sash windows, stonework, brickwork, joinery, render and slate. Likewise, the Council will encourage the re-instatement of historically correct traditional features.*
- *Objective AH O43 Ensure that national guidelines and the principles of conservation best practice are followed in assessing the significance of a Protected Structure and in considering the impact of proposed development on the character and special interest of the structure, its curtilage, demesne and setting.*
- *Objective AH O55 Resist the demolition of built vernacular heritage, in particular thatched cottages and farmhouses, and to encourage their sensitive reuse having regard to the intrinsic character of the structure and the potential to prolong the life cycle of the embodied carbon contained within the structure.*
- *Objective AH O59 Respect the setting, form, scale and materials of existing vernacular structures and to only permit changes to these structures where they are sympathetic to their special features and character.*
- *Objective AH O60 Preserve the character, including original building features or materials should be retained such as windows, doors, roof coverings and setting (e.g. gates, gate piers, boundary treatments, courtyards etc) of vernacular buildings, where deemed appropriate by the planning authority. Proposals for extensions to historic or vernacular buildings should not erode the setting and design qualities of the original structure and should be in proportion or subservient to the existing building.*
- *Objective AH O63 Ensure that new buildings adjacent to vernacular structures and extensions to vernacular buildings are of an appropriate design and do not detract from the character of these structures.*

### Development Standards

Chapter 15 sets out the relevant criteria for extensions to dwellings and specifically for development within the curtilage of Protected Structures.

Section 15.4.12 requires that extensions to dwellings be sensitively designed to respect the appearance, character, form and scale of the existing house and adjoining property while allowing flexibility for high-quality contemporary design. A different approach may apply in the case of a Protected Structure, structures with significant heritage or within an Architectural Conservation Area.

Section 15.17.1 notes that bats (a protected species *under the Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2012 and the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), Annex IV*) often roost in old building and may be disturbed during works within Protected Structures.

Section 15.17.1.1 sets out the criteria to consider and or comply with when undertaking works to a Protected Structure. In summary this requires works to Protected Structures to have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011), submit an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment Report with planning applications prepared by an accredited conservation architect and a design statement.

### **4.3. Natural Heritage Designations**

- 4.3.1. The closest natural heritage designations to the subject site includes Corballis Hill pNHA (Site Code: 001389) located 7.5km to the east, Oakpark pNHA (Site Code: 000810) located 8.4km to the south, Barrow Valley at Tankardstown Bridge (Site Code: 000858) located 3.9km to the west, Ballcore Rath (Site Code: 001751) located 8.3km to north-east and Lowtown Fen (Site Code: 001764) located 10.5km to north-east.
- 4.3.2. The closest European site to the subject site includes the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site Code: 002162) located 3.8km to the west and the Slaney River Valley SAC located 11.9km to the east.

### **4.4. EIA Screening**

- 4.4.1. The proposed development is not a class for the purposes of EIA as per the classes of development set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (or Part V of the 1994 Roads Regulations). No mandatory requirement for EIA therefore arises and there is also no requirement for a screening determination. Refer to Form 1 in Appendix 1 of report.

#### 4.5. Water Framework Directive

The subject site is located in rural area within close proximity (c. 280m) to the River Waterbody Greese\_050. The subject site is located within the rural settlement Kilkae with adjoining lands largely agricultural. The site adjoins the Kilkae Castle Estate to the south

The proposed development comprises an extension to a existing dwelling which is a Protected Structure.

No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal.

I have assessed the proposed extension of the existing dwelling and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seek to protect and, where necessary, restore surface & ground water waterbodies in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no significant risk to any surface and/or groundwater water bodies either qualitatively or quantitatively.

The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- Nature of works e.g. small scale and nature of the development
- Location from the nearest water bodies

#### Conclusion

I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives and consequently can be excluded from further assessment.

## 5.0 The Appeal

### 5.1. Grounds of Appeal

- The appellant contends that the proposal was carefully designed to respect the character of the protected structure.
- Having regard to the single reason for refusal which refers to the projection of the historic shed which did not form part of the development description in the revised notices, the appellants argues that this is factually incorrect and appears to be made in error as no revised notices were issued or required during the course of this application.
- The appellant argues that the requirement to retain and integrate the existing shed as part of the design rather than be demolished was duly complied with. It is suggested that this requirement necessitated a modest increase in ridge height to achieve functional headroom and circulation space. It is further suggested that the proposed link between the shed and dwelling is of limited scale and sympathetic design.
- The appellant refers to the submitted Conservation report prepared by a Grade 1 Conservation Architect. The appellant highlights that the report clearly stated that the proposal would not adversely impact the special character, setting or architectural integrity of the Protected Structure. It is contended that the planning authority did not give due weight to the professional conservation input.
- It is contended that the proposal does not materially contravene the relevant Development Plan objectives specifically relating to the policies relating to the sensitive adaptation and reuse of Protected Structures to ensure long-term viability (Objective AH O21) and minimal and reversible interventions that maintain architectural integrity while enabling functional use.

## 5.2. **Planning Authority Response**

In a letter dated 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025, the Planning Authority confirmed its decision and referred to the Planner's Report and various technical department reports in relation to the assessment of the planning application.

## 5.3. **Observations**

None.

## 5.4. **Further Responses**

None.

## 6.0 **Assessment**

- 6.1.1. The appeal site contains the former Kilkea National School, a Protected Structure (RPS. Ref. B37-18) which is now in residential use. The building forms part of a group of nineteenth century structures which make up the historic core of Kilkea including the Kilkea Church of Ireland, rectory and graveyard, dwellings to the east (also Protected Structures) and Kilkea Castle Demesne. The original settlement pattern remains highly legible (as demonstrated by a review of the 6 inch and 25-inch historic maps) with the appeal site occupying a prominent location at the junction of the R418 and L8083.
- 6.1.2. I agree with the planning authority's assessment that the continued use of the building for residential use is appropriate and that the provision of additional accommodation by way of extension to the Protected Structure is acceptable in principle subject to ensuring the protection of the special character of the structure, its curtilage and setting and represents a high-quality architectural and conservation approach to development.
- 6.2. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the reports of the local authority, and having inspected the site, and having regard to the relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be considered relate to the Design of the Proposed Development and the Impact on the Protected Structure.

6.2.1. I note that no submissions from neighbouring properties were received and that the planning authority raised no concerns relating to impacts upon the residential amenities of the area. Having regard to the scale of proposed development and separation distances to neighbouring properties, I am satisfied that the proposed development will not give rise to undue impacts upon the residential amenities of neighbouring residential dwellings.

#### Design of the Proposed Development and the Impact on the Protected Structure

6.2.2. The former school building is now a relatively substantial residential dwelling extending to approximately 186sq.m. The main building retains much of its original form and architectural detailing notwithstanding alterations understood to have been undertaken in the 1970's and 1990's which includes a flat-roofed rear extension and replacement materials including uPVC windows and gutters. The existing rear extension is finished with rubble stone to align with the original structures within the site which is largely pastiche in appearance.

6.2.3. The site contains a detached stone outbuilding of a similar date, materials and construction as the main building (see NIAH description outlined under section 4.2 above). I concur with the planning authority that the outbuilding forms part of the curtilage of the Protected Structure and contributes towards its special interest. Its demolition, as originally proposed would result in the loss of historic fabric and would materially harm the character and integrity of the Protected Structure. I consider that the application as presented initially failed to demonstrate exceptional circumstances that would justify the removal of this element of the curtilage.

6.2.4. I am of the view that there is clear potential to reuse and sensitively integrate the outbuilding as part of a coherent overall strategy for the long-term conservation and viable use of the Protected Structure. Such an approach would align with Development Plan objectives and national conservation guidance.

6.2.5. Following the planning authority's request for Further Information, the applicant revised the proposal to retain the outbuilding with works including the raising of its roof height and an apparent extension of the outbuilding (as suggested by the layout on submitted plans at FI stages) and a physical connection to the main dwelling by way of a flat roofed link structure. The existing 1970's extension is proposed to be

retained and altered by raising of the roof height and a new render finish to its elevations.

- 6.2.6. The Planning Authority's assessment of the submitted further information noted that it appeared the outbuilding was being proposed to be extended. The Council's reason for refusal made reference to the *projection of the historic shed (which did not form part of the development description in the revised notices)*. It is unclear as to whether this is potentially a graphical or surveying error as I note the original existing layout plans submitted with the application illustrate the structure as being larger than it actually is. The site visit clarified that the outbuilding is set-back from the side (south) building line of the dwelling and not aligned with as suggested on submitted plans. I do not consider that the submitted drawings provide an entirely accurate representation of the site layout.
- 6.2.7. While these revisions address in part, the planning authority's objection to the demolition, I am not satisfied that the resulting scheme represents a high-quality architectural or conservation solution in line with the policies and objectives of the CDP and the conservation practice set out within the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines. The raising of the roof to the historic outbuilding and its potential extension alters its original scale and form and diminishes its legibility as a secondary structure within the curtilage. In combination with the retained and proposed modified rear extension, I am of the view that the overall composition would diminish the special interest of the Protected Structure.
- 6.2.8. I note the Architectural and Built Heritage Assessment report submitted at FI stages has been prepared by a Grade 1 Conservation Architect. The report indicates the following works to the existing buildings:
- Redirection of the existing stairs within the main dwelling structure. In this regard the report notes the interior has been previously rearranged to provide residential accommodation and only surviving internal features of note are the balustrade to the rear staircase and a cast iron insert of the fire surround to the first-floor front room.
  - Existing stone porch and entrance will revert to original hall usage.
  - The previous reworkings were carried out by previous owners and the sequence of works is not known.

- A process of further conservation works such as the replacement of PVC windows, gutters and downpipes but will be part of another application
- The report includes a conservation methodology and outline schedule of works.

6.2.9. I agree with the Planning Authority that the above report is insufficient to justify the development as proposed. I consider that the report provides for limited assessment of the proposed extension and integration with existing buildings.

6.2.10. In line with the Planning Authority's assessment, I consider that the proposed interventions do not adequately address the unsympathetic 1970's extension nor do they clearly distinguish the historic fabric from new work in a manner consistent with the best conservation practice. The resulting forms lacks architectural quality and fails to capitalise on the opportunity to provide a contemporary yet respectful addition that would enhance rather than dilute the character of the Protected Structure. I refer to the sensitive approach to development undertaken to the rear of the neighbouring dwelling to the east, also a Protected Structure which highlights successful integration of a contemporary extension with a historic structure (as granted under P.A. Ref. 171082).

6.2.11. While the submitted documents suggest that there may be a forthcoming application to address works to the main school house building, it is unfortunate that the application does not include for full conservation works to the Protected Structure alongside the extension (including conservation grade windows and gutters) in the interests of ensuring long term conservation of the Protected Structure. I welcome the works to remove the existing toilet within the front porch to revert to use as a hall space and I consider it appropriate to retain the existing pedestrian gate to the front. Appropriate conservation works to the front entrance, gateway and boundary wall may be dealt with by of condition in the event of a grant of permission.

6.2.12. Given the prominent corner location of the site within the historic core of Kilkea, the visual impact of the development within the curtilage of the Protected Structure is a matter of particular sensitivity. The school building and its associated buildings are experienced from two public roads and form a key component of the village streetscape being positioned directly opposite the Kilkea Church of Ireland and entrance to Kilkea Castle Estate. In this context, the cumulative effect of raising roof

level, extending the outbuildings (as suggested by site plans submitted at FI stages) and introduction of additional linking elements results in a form of development that is not in-keeping with the objectives for the Kilkea settlement core and in my view, will adversely impact the character of the Protected Structure.

6.2.13. In conclusion, having regard to the protected status of the former school building (RPS Ref. B37-18), its prominent location within the historic core of Kilkea, and the contribution of the associated outbuilding to its special interest and curtilage, I consider that the proposed development by reason of the raising of the outbuilding roof, the retention and alteration of the unsympathetic 1970's extension and the introduction of a linking structure would be of insufficient architectural quality, would adversely affect the character, setting and curtilage of the Protected Structure. The proposed development therefore conflicts with Objective AH 021, Objective AH 034 and Objective, AH O39 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 and does not comply with the principles of best conservation practices as set out in the Architect Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011) which require that works to Protected Structures be of high quality and respectful of the historic fabric. As such, I am in general agreement with the Planning Authority's reason for refusal.

#### Other Matters

6.2.14. As indicated, the submitted plans at FI stages suggest that it is proposed to extend the outbuilding to rear although not indicated within the development description or submitted documentation. This would suggest that there are inaccuracies within the submitted plans. This is a new issue, and the Commission may wish to seek the views of the parties. However, having regard to the substantive reasons for refusal set out above, it may not be considered necessary to pursue the matter.

## **7.0 Recommendation**

I recommend that permission be Refused for the development for the reasons and considerations set out below.

## 8.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. Having regard to the subject dwelling, a former school building and Protected Structure (RPS. Ref. B37-18), its prominent location within the historic core of Kilkea and the contribution of the detached stone outbuilding to the special interest and curtilage of the Protected Structure, it is considered that the proposed development by reason of, the raising of the roof height and alteration of the historic outbuilding and the retention and modification of the existing rear single storey extension without adequate redesign/replacement to achieve a high-quality intervention would adversely affect the character, setting and curtilage of the Protected Structure.

The proposed development fails to demonstrate that it forms part of an overall conservation led strategy for the Protected Structure and does not constitute as a high-quality design response appropriate sensitive heritage context. As such the proposed development would be contrary to; Objective AH O21 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029, which seeks to protect the curtilage and special character of Protected Structures; Objective AH O34, which encourages high quality design for extensions affecting Protected Structures; and Objective AH O39 which requires that works associated with the reuse of heritage buildings be carried out in accordance with best conservation practice. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The Commission is not satisfied that the proposed development has been adequately or accurately described, having regard to the inaccuracies on the submitted drawings in terms of the footprint of the existing outbuilding to rear of the dwelling. As such, the drawings do not provide a reliable basis for the assessment of the proposal in terms of its relationship with the protected structure. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

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David Freeland

13<sup>th</sup> February 2026

## Appendix 1 - Form 1

### EIA Pre-Screening [EIAR not submitted]

<b>An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Reference</b>	PL-500198-KE		
<b>Proposed Development Summary</b>	<b>PROTECTED STRUCTURE: Extension, with internal modifications. Demolition of shed and associated site works.</b>		
<b>Development Address</b>	Old School House, Kilkea, Castledermot, Co. Kildare		
<b>1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA?</b> (that is involving construction works, demolition, or interventions in the natural surroundings)	<b>Yes</b>		
	<b>No</b>	✓	
<b>2. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and does it equal or exceed any relevant quantity, area or limit where specified for that class?</b>			
<b>Yes</b>		Class.....	EIA Mandatory EIAR required
<b>No</b>	✓		Proceed to Q.3
<b>3. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) but does not equal or exceed a relevant quantity, area or other limit specified [sub-threshold development]?</b>			
		<b>Threshold</b>	<b>Comment (if relevant)</b>
<b>No</b>	✓	N/A	<b>Conclusion</b>
			No EIAR or Preliminary Examination required
<b>Yes</b>		Class/Threshold.....	Proceed to Q.4
<b>4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?</b>			
<b>No</b>			<b>Preliminary Examination required</b>
<b>Yes</b>			<b>Screening Determination required</b>

Inspector: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_