

**Declaration**

In accordance with Part IV, Section 57 (2) of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 2000 (as amended).

Louth County Council:

This declaration specifies what works would, or would not, in the opinion of the planning authority materially affect the character of the protected structure, or any element thereof, and, as a result, require planning permission. Under the Act, protection extends to the entire structure including its interior and the land lying within its curtilage.

It also extends to any other structures lying within the curtilage of the protected structure, to their interiors and to all fixtures and features that form part of the interior or exterior of any of these structures. Where specified in the Record of Protected Structures, protection may also extend to any other feature within the attendant grounds of the protected structure.

Nothing in this declaration exempts work that would not otherwise be exempt from a requirement for planning permission. Changes of use or intensification of the current use may require planning permission. If in doubt, the owner/occupier should consult the planning authority for further advice before commencing any work.

This Declaration may be referred to An Bord Pleanála for review within 4 weeks of its issue, upon payment of the requisite fee in accordance with Part IV, Section 57 (8) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended.

Applicant Name:	Seatown Place Housing ULC		
Status (i.e. Owner or Occupier):	Owner		
Date of Request for Declaration:	27 th May 2026	Date of Inspection:	17 th July 2026
Date of Issue of Declaration:	13 th August 2026	Previous Declarations:	DB 24 - 06



S57 Ref: D 26-05

Address:

Name of Building: The former laundry Annex within the curtilage of St. Joseph's House RPS D292 Seatown Place Dundalk Co. Louth A91 W102

Address 1: Seatown Place

Address 2: Dundalk

Address 3: Co. Louth

Eircode: A91 W102

Location:

National Grid co-ordinates: E N

O.S. Map Type:

Map Sheet:

Site Number:

Protection Status:

Y

Details:

Under the Planning and development Act 2000 (as amended)

Y

RPS D292

Record of Protected Structures:

✓

N

Architectural Conservation Area:

Y

✓

N

ACA 23 – Jocelyn St/ Seatown Place

Under the Planning and development Act 2000 (as amended)

Record of Monuments and

Places:

Y

N ✓

Zone of Archaeological potential:

Y

✓

N

ZAP 2- Dundalk

Preservation Order or Temporary P.O.:

Y

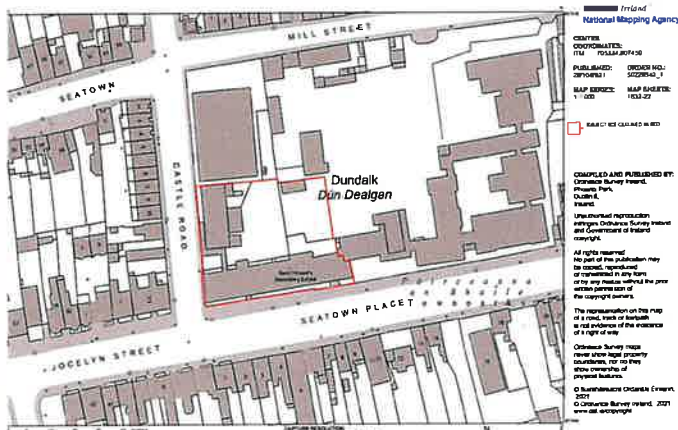
N ✓

NIAH Registration No. (if applicable):**13705035**



Introduction:

The referrer has sought a section 57 declaration as per the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in respect of works to two protected structures at Seatown Place, Dundalk. i.e. D290 & D292



Site Location – Red Line Boundary



Photo of Castle Street Elevation for Laundry Building





Photo after works carried out on building



Photo from Historic Building Appraisal report dated 10th April 2026



The former laundry building Below minus annex, fire escape and with enlarged opes at ground level

**Protection Status:**

Under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Record of Protected Structures is set out in the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027, as varied.

Description of the Structures:

St Joseph's House D 292 (13705035)

This building (RPS D292) is described, respectively, as -

St. Joseph's House – Corner-sited attached twelve-bay three-storey over basement with attic convent building, built c. 1860. Pediments to end three-bays to east and west. Pitched slate roofs, hidden by smooth rendered parapet wall to front elevation, clay ridge tiles, smooth rendered corbelled chimneystacks, cast-iron hoppers and downpipes, cast-iron cross finials to gables. Unpainted ruled-and-lined smooth rendered walling, chamfered plinth, cut stone coping to pediment and raking cornices forming open-bed pediments, statue of St. Joseph in painted stucco niche above entrance door. Square-headed window openings, granite sills, uPVC casement windows; round-headed window openings to pediments, painted timber casement window to west pediment. Round-headed door opening, slightly projecting smooth rendered reveals, painted engaged fluted tapering Doric columns on stone plinths supporting frieze and cornice, painted timber six-panel door, petal fanlight, accessed via flight of five splayed stone steps, cast-iron balustrades on painted plinths, three integral boot scrapers. Basement area bounded by wrought- and cast-iron railings. Street fronted, part of complex of convent and school buildings.



Appraisal : This imposing convent building dominates the streetscape of Seatown Place. Its apparently severe façade is relieved by attractive details including the very fine doorway and handsome railings with no less than three integral boot scrapers. Its considerable size is testament to the expansion of the Convent of Mercy and the Catholic Church in Ireland in the mid nineteenth-century.

Laundry Building to rear of St Joseph's House D 292

The RPS designation for St. Joseph's House (D292) on Seatown Place does not specify the laundry building and describes the orphanage, the 'corner-sited attached twelve-bay three storey over basement with attic convent building, built c. 1860,' however the former laundry is however is within the historic curtilage of the Protected Structure.

Planning History:

LCC granted P.A. Ref. No 21/1390. This decision was upheld on Appeal to ABP [ABP-315242-22].

The permitted development included the change of use of former St. Joseph's Orphanage & Industrial School (D290) and St. Malachy's Convent (a protected Structure RPS D 292) to 58 no. apartments. Works included restoration, alteration and extension of these protected structure buildings.

S57 Declaration (Ref. DB 22-02) the following works were deemed to be exempted development:

- The refurbishment of the property for temporary accommodation of 245 people including all associated conservation, fire rated upgrading, mechanical, electrical and drainage works.
- The fit out works to facilitate the temporary residential use of the building does not propose external alterations to the building.

Fire rated upgrading, mechanical, electrical and drainage works are reversible and are to be carried out in accordance with best conservation practice.

This S57 pertained solely to the Laundry building to the rear of St. Joseph's House.



Referral Question: Would the following works materially affect the character of the protected structure and as a result, require planning permission?

1. Refurbishment works both internal and external to the former Laundry Anex Building (previously derelict) to facilitate the 'fit out for temporary accommodation of refugees, provide for fire upgrading, mechanical, electrical utility connections and drainage works to the facility'.
2. Alterations include removal of non-historic concrete block washroom extension and fire escape to rear east facing courtyard façade, the primary window ope at the top of the fire escape has been reset and the small secondary ope beside it blocked up.
3. The public west elevation to Castle St includes has additional opes which are necessary to accommodate the building's temporary function,
4. Internally the upper floors of the former laundry have been sub-divided to provide accommodation for refugees
5. The new opes in the western elevation have been fitted with timber replica windows where the primary fenestration has been well repaired and decorated.
6. Much of the primary staircase has been taken out, and a new staircase has a simple rail and balusters, similar to what it replaced. The ground floor accommodates a dining space and kitchens, where the glazed doors and over lights occupy the tall opes out to the east.

Legislative Provision:

Section 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) states 'that notwithstanding Sections 4(1)(h) and any regulations made under Section 4(2), the carrying out of works to a protected structure, or proposed protected structure shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of:

- a) the structure; or
- b) any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Assessment:



This Declaration relates to the works completed within the Laundry annex to the rear of St. Joseph's Female Orphanage and Industrial School.

NOTE: The works to the Laundry building have already been converted and completed for the temporary housing of Ukrainian people.

The works included the

- c) Refurbishment works both internal and external to the former Laundry Anex Building which was in derelict condition to facilitate the fit out for temporary accommodation of refugees, provide for fire upgrading, mechanical, electrical utility connections and drainage works to the facility'.
- d) Alterations include removal of non-historic concrete block washroom extension and fire escape to rear east facing courtyard façade, the primary window ope at the top of the fire escape has been reset and the small secondary ope beside it blocked up.
- e) The opes have, in the main, retained their primary glazing, where the ground floor opes have been fitted with glazed doors. The public west elevation to Castle St includes additional opes which to accommodate the building's temporary function,
- f) Internally the upper floors of the former laundry have been sub-divided to provide accommodation for refugees
- g) The new opes in the western elevation have been fitted with timber replica windows where the primary fenestration has been well repaired and decorated.
- h) Much of the primary staircase has been taken out, and a new staircase has a simple rail and balusters, similar to what it replaced. The ground floor accommodates a dining space and kitchens, where the glazed doors and over lights occupy the tall opes out to the east.

The section 57 application has been supplemented by way of a Historic Building Appraisal report prepared by Frank Myles c/o Archaeology and Built Heritage dated 10th April 2026; a Planning Report prepared by Reid Associates, a S57 Declaration form and site location plan and drawings by ailtreachta Architects.

An inspection of the site was undertaken on Friday 17th July 2026 and included the laundry building, and the attended grounds with Alister Coyne (Grade 3 Conservation Architect).

It was noted:



- I inspected the various interventions undertaken to the Laundry Annex which lies within the curtilage of the primary protected structure at St. Joseph's House (D292).
- The interventions undertaken to facilitate the provision of emergency accommodation have returned a near-derelict building to life and improved the public realm façade on Castle Road. The new opes on this elevation are not particularly evident and do not detract from the special character of the building. The interventions are totally reversible.
- The removal of the concrete block washroom extension and the redundant fire escape has clarified the eastern elevation and moreover created a pleasant off-street urban environment, enhancing the vista from the Protected Structures on Seatown Place. These structures did not contribute to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest at the former laundry Annex within the curtilage of St. Joseph's House RPS D292.
- The principal elements of interest in the interior, the concrete ceiling section and the window joinery have been retained, the joinery repaired and repainted. I verified same upon my site inspection.
- Similar fit out works have been deemed exempt in accordance with S57 in respect of the primary protected structures St Joseph's and St Malachy's. This has set a precedent for deeming the subject works, which are similar but relate to an ancillary building, as being exempt. The works are sustainable in conservation terms in that they continue a socially important use within the building. The works are reversible in that they are all demountable and will be demounted on cessation of the use for refugees.
- Planning permission was granted for the demolition and removal of the laundry annex as part of permission P.A. 21/1390, Appeal Ref 315242-22 for apartments. A S57 Declaration (Ref. DB 22-02) St Joseph's House and St Malachy's Convent issued in respect of the following works, which were deemed exempt:
 - The refurbishment of the property for temporary accommodation of 245 people including all associated conservation, fire rated upgrading, mechanical, electrical and drainage works.
 - The fit out works to facilitate the temporary residential use of the building does not propose external alterations to the building. Fire rated upgrading, mechanical, electrical and drainage works are reversible and are to be carried out in accordance with best conservation practice



Before Works



After works – Washroom removed + Fire-scape removed, alterations to opes



Castle Street Elevation pre works



Castle Street – Post works

Conclusion:

**Recommendation:**

The subject works as specified comprise a non-material impact on the architectural character of the Former Laundry Annex. The Laundry Annex is not individually designated as a protected structure and comes within the overall protection as lying within the curtilage of the primary protected structures on the site St Josephs and St Malachy's.

I hereby recommend that a declaration of Exemption be issued for the reason(s) set out hereunder:

I conclude, that **WHEREAS** a question has arisen as to whether the proposed development detailed under Section 10 of the Request for Section 57 Declaration would or would not materially affect the character of protected structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest at the former laundry Annex within the curtilage of St. Joseph's House RPS D292 Seatown Place Dundalk Co. Louth A91 W102

AND WHEREAS SEATOWN PLACE HOUSING PLC requested a declaration on the question from Louth County Council on the 27th May 2026

AND WHEREAS Louth County Council in considering this referral, had regard particularly to –

- a) Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act, 2024
- b) Section 4 (1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended),



- c) Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended),
- d) The Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities,
- e) The status of The Laundry Annex located within the curtilage of the protected structures **St Joseph's House D 292**,
- f) The planning history of the site,
- g) The special interest pertaining to the protected structure in question and the nature and extent of works set out in the referral question which seeks the change of use, refurbishment works to the Laundry Annex Building, to fit out for temporary accommodation of refugees,

AND WHEREAS Louth County Council has concluded that –

The nature of the proposed is development and is exempted development on the grounds that the works would not materially affect the character of either the **St Joseph's House D 292**, a protected structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural or social interest.

NOW THEREFORE Louth County Council, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Section 57 of the 2000 Act as amended, hereby decides that the section 57 works as outlined is development and is exempted development.

Signed by Inspector

Declan Conlon
Declan Conlon, Executive Planner

Signed by Planning Authority Officer

Turlough King
Turlough King A/ Senior Planner

Date:

30th July 2026

Date:

31st July 2026

