

**Contemporary
Irish
Architecture**

Gerry O'Leary

Tullamore Courthouse Tullamore, Co Offaly

ARCHITECT

NMA Architects

BUILDING CONTRACTOR

Purcell Construction Ltd

**DESCRIPTION BY ARCHITECT**

The brief was to refurbish Tullamore Courthouse to provide a building that would significantly improve the facilities for all courthouse users and courts service staff. The project is part of the Courts Service Programme for upgrading courts facilities in the county towns. The building is an integral part of the architectural and social history of Tullamore. The building is an important example of early 19th century courthouse design of national significance and is one of the major works of John Benjamin Keane architect. The refurbishment was undertaken following the vacation of part of the building by Offaly County Council in 2002. The project presented significant challenges in terms of respecting and conserving the existing building whilst addressing issues of accessibility, fire safety, security and the functional requirements of a contemporary courthouse.



'Reflection' Cafe/Brasserie, Dunnes Stores Henry St, Dublin

ARCHITECT
NMA Architects

BUILDING CONTRACTOR
McCue / Laing O'Rourke

DESCRIPTION BY ARCHITECT

The brief was to design and implement a dynamic cafe / brasserie concept for Dunnes Stores new flagship store on Henry St, Dublin, located on the third floor.
Concept: The concept was to create a design that would reflect a new direction for Dunnes Stores progression as a food retailer. To create a holistic design from logo, artwork, detailing to overall fit-out from materials and details that would echo the name 'reflection' create a contemporary environment yet appeal to the general public.

The main feature is a spine wall clad in bevelled mirrored strips, a metaphor for both the restaurant name and the environment created away from the day to day retail.
The wall defines the space between the cafe / brasserie and retail areas. The bevelled mirror strips also create a visual play to the passer by and overall create a strong visual impact. Walnut hardwood is used to add contrast to the harder reflective materials. Bespoke fixed and loose seating/areas are used to create zones within the restaurant space and to break up the narrow plan.



Private residence Waterloo Rd., Dublin

ARCHITECT
NMA Architects

BUILDING CONTRACTOR
John Lee Construction

DESCRIPTION BY ARCHITECT
The aim with this extension was to create a modern space in contrast to the existing Georgian main house. This extension began life as a musty space full of bicycles, washing machines and couches that was, in short, completely unusable. Rather than let a mine of potential go to waste, this was taken as the perfect opportunity to add light and brightness to a period home. The revamped space has rejuvenated this house and added a whole new dimension to the architecture of the building and contains rooms incorporating a sitting room, kitchen, dining area,

study, shower room and sauna. The only part of the main house that was part of the renovation process was what once served as the kitchen. The room now functions as a library with a new large window introducing an injection of natural light on the ground floor, while open tread stairs lead down to the expansive garden-level renovation. The new kitchen is now housed downstairs and encompasses a dining area. Sliding doors connect the garden with the sitting room, bringing natural light and colour into the predominantly white space.



NMA Offices Baggot Court, Dublin

ARCHITECT
NMA Architects

BUILDING CONTRACTOR
Patrick Brock & Sons

DESCRIPTION BY ARCHITECT

The brief for the project was to design a high quality mixed-use building to meet the expanding requirements of NMA Architects but more importantly to make a building which would provide a creative, bright, simple, dynamic environment conducive to the design of buildings and a positive working environment for clients, consultants and staff working together. The concept was simple; to create two independent buildings, one for working and one for living, both linked by a communal courtyard terrace providing light, leisure space and break out area for those who work and live in the buildings. The gap created by

the courtyard on the streetscape is expressed by a light transparent glass stairs and double-height entrance box with views from street to courtyard. The gap also forms two new corners/and bookends which open up into the courtyard with two asymmetric cantilevered horizontal boxes projecting within the gap to slide towards each other and define the entrance. A wall of Donegal sandstone forms the perimeter base of the building with penetrations cut out to express the function of the entrance, car park and offices. Iroko timber is used to clad the cantilevered box elements and complement the stone, render, glass/aluminium roof.



GCG Cinema Arklow, Co Wicklow

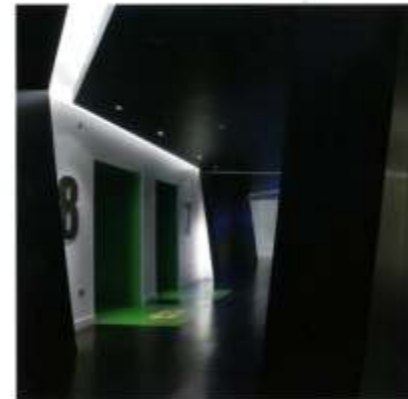
ARCHITECT
NMA

BUILDING CONTRACTOR
Patton Construction Ltd

DESCRIPTION BY ARCHITECT

The Gaiety Cinema Group, (GCG) cinema is a nine-screen multiplex located within the Bridgewater Centre, Arklow. The objective was to create a contemporary interior that reflected the cinematic environment. The foyer area maximises the double-height space creating a dynamic public area with café, kids-zone and offices to the mezzanine level. The enclosed office/administration area of the mezzanine level are expressed as staggered cube forms from the

public foyer area the elevations of the cube forms are used as projection screens previewing the latest films. To create a streamlined interior, signage, merchandise and product have all been carefully considered as part of the overall design, providing ease of use for the public. In contrast to the open bright interior of the foyer the corridor creates a sense of drama using black folding planes to visually breakdown the corridor perspective and express the cinema entrances between the connections.



Manor West Hotel
Tralee, Co Kerry

ARCHITECT
NMA

BUILDING CONTRACTOR
Boyle Bros Construction Ltd

DESCRIPTION BY ARCHITECT

The site for the Manor West Hotel is situated in a prominent location at the edge of Tralee town on the N21/22 (approach road from Cork and Limerick) and also acts as a gateway to the Manor West Retail Park. The client brief was for a modern four-star hotel including banqueting, bar, restaurant, leisure centre, pool and spa. A total of 77 bedrooms are provided including penthouse suites. The use of high quality stone, cedar wood cladding and self-coloured rendering, combined with the positioning of the leisure centre and bar/banqueting areas, both of which act as bookends, to create a high quality enclosure of the main entrance to the hotel. This theme is extended to the interior where the use of natural materials in a modern context achieves the desired effect of a prestigious facility. The bulk of the car parking is contained below ground to maximise the areas of landscaping at ground level of this restricted site.



Navan Swimming Pool Navan, Co Meath

ARCHITECT

NMA Architects

BUILDING CONTRACTOR

O'Hare McGovern (Contract) Ltd

DESCRIPTION BY ARCHITECT

The Navan pool complex comprises the pool hall with a 25m x 12.5m six-lane competition level deck pool as well as learner and toddler pools. Leisure facilities include water flume slide, jacuzzi, steam room, sauna and special water features. The complex also includes communal changing facilities, fitness room, gymnasium, poolside seating and upper level viewing gallery overlooking the pool hall.

The complex is approximately 2000 sq m in area and was built for €3.5m between January 1999 and August 2000. The architectural concept was derived from the image of the pool carved into the undulating landscape covered by a light timber canopy. This developed into the cross section of the building which sits into the natural contours of the site with transparency from interior to exterior and visual connections from upper and lower levels in the overall space covered by the curving timber roof structure. The linear reinforced concrete ground floor structure forms a solid base of services and changing area. This supports a glulam timber and steel roof structure which curves over the double height pool

hall and upper level areas. The curtain wall envelope provides good quality natural daylight and insulated panels to the south provide protection from direct sunlight onto the pool. The glulam timber roof structure includes a structural timber deck spanning 8m between the underbraced glulam beams. This deck is insulated and the roof finish is aluminium standing seam. The inclined steel supports have hinged connections to the beams and at their bases. The timber performs very well in the corrosive atmosphere of the pool hall compared with alternative structural materials and provides a warm feeling to the overall space. Careful and discreet integration of the sophisticated building services include an air plenum below deck level to the perimeter of the pools, thus eliminating most high level ductwork. Clearly zoned plant areas have separate access. Specially designed lighting brackets in the pool hall support both flood-lighting and up-lighting to the timber ceiling. The project also incorporates advanced energy efficient features, including a combined heat and power unit which generates electricity and provides heating.



Drogheda Swimming Pool Drogheda, Co Louth

ARCHITECT
NMA Architects

BUILDING CONTRACTOR
O'Hare McGovern
(Contract) Ltd

DESCRIPTION BY ARCHITECT

This swimming pool and leisure complex at Marley's Lane in Drogheda includes the pool hall with 25m main pool, learner and toddler pools as well as changing village, health spa, gym and fitness suite.

The architectural concept was based on a number of key issues:

- The two overlapping curved glulam timber roof structures express the functions of the pool hall and the adjacent linear block incorporating the fitness, changing and ancillary areas.
- The orientation of the cross section to maximise natural daylight whilst avoiding glare by reflecting southerly light into the pool hall.
- The expression of the curved glulam timber structure internally and externally forming a protective "canopy" to the facilities below.
- The linear reinforced concrete ground floor structure forms a solid base supporting the lightweight timber structure above.
- Low level glazing with views into the pool hall from the entrance to reflect the public accessibility and transparency of the leisure centre.
- The building form creates a strong and dynamic image reflecting its public recreational function.

