



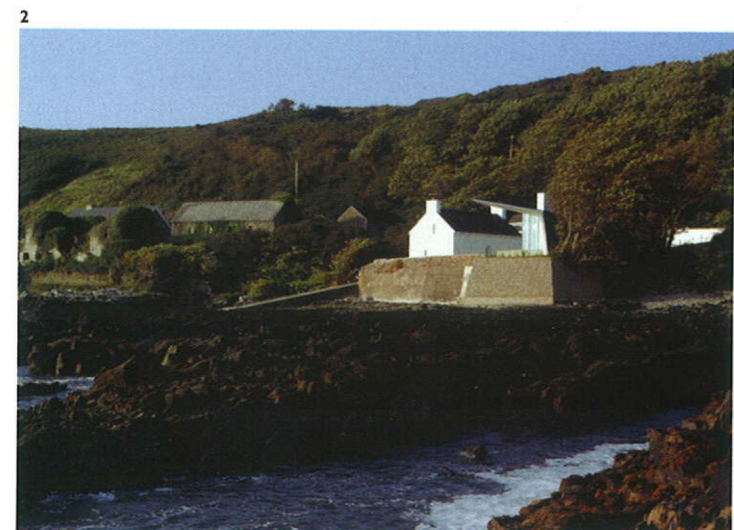
The architect for this project, Niall McLaughlin, was given the challenge of producing a building that would match the striking beauty of its site, at Clonakilty, County Cork, on the west coast of Ireland. In their project description, the practice makes reference to the 'beautiful shards of metamorphic rock that finger out to the sea from the base of the small cliffs'; the new building

element of the project, which adds to the conversion of a boathouse and the coastguard's cottage, produces a built shard of its own, distinctive but responsive to the geological forms in which it sits.

The conversion elements of the project are simple and effective, providing a master bedroom and bathroom in the cottage, and guest rooms in the boathouse. The new extension

for living/dining is reached via a glazed cloister, the whole based round a quiet courtyard. The experience of each element of the design, from arrival to sitting at the dining table, is a journey in miniature, with vistas of sea and coast powerful, but not ubiquitous, and complemented by domestic interior views.

The temptation to provide maximum views from all points at all times has been wisely



## View point

Niall McLaughlin's house conversion and addition respect and enrich their coastal environment.

- 1 Long elevation borders a courtyard space.
- 2 The wind protected site.
- 3 Light was a key design prompt.





As the architect puts it, 'We have designed the extension to capture the last scraps of sun as it declines behind the hill in the early evening'. The new extension more than makes up for this, producing a totality in which comfort, aspect, light and geographical drama are synthesised to great effect. This is an architectural project where success has been achieved by treating each potential difficulty as a constructive opportunity. Rather than a series of tactical responses, which end up compromising the diagram of framed views and calculated routes, the building has a feeling of serenity and completeness that belie the design effort required to achieve such an outcome. PAUL FINCH

- 4 View sharing dining space.
- 5 The cottage contains master bedroom and bathroom.
- 6 Cottage interior.
- 7 The area looking back to the kitchen.
- 8 Separation of function avoids a picture window cliché.



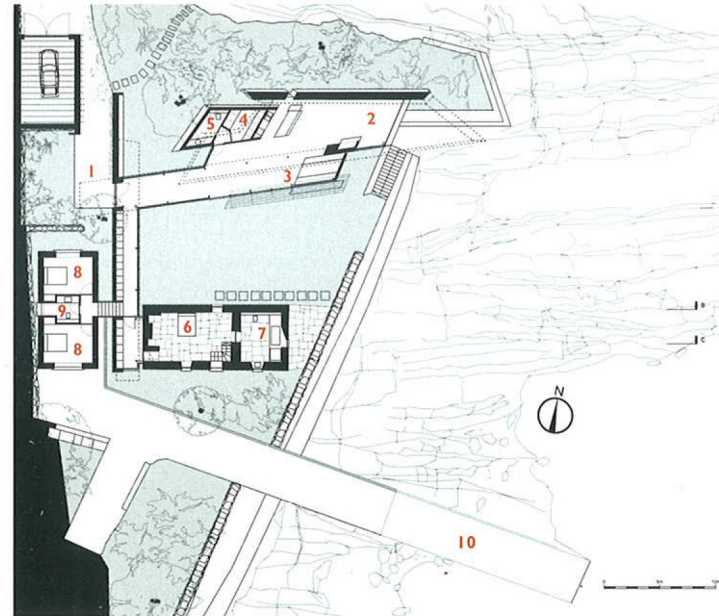
resisted, and the cliché of the big picture window in the extension has also been avoided, in favour of a pair of separated framed views, one from the living area and one from the dining area immediately next

to the courtyard. Responding to light has been a successful driver for the project, given that the relatively sheltered location of the existing buildings, on a south-east facing site, has resulted in a lack of sunlight.

**Architect**  
Niall McLaughlin  
**Structural engineer**  
Packman Lucas  
**Photographs**  
Niall McLaughlin and Nicholas Kane



**HOUSE, CLONAKILTY,  
COUNTY CORK, IRELAND**  
ARCHITECT  
**NIALL MCLAUGHLIN**



geometry responds to topography



section showing converted boathouse (left) and cottage



the addition frames the space

- 1 entrance
- 2 living room
- 3 dining
- 4 kitchen
- 5 lavatory
- 6 master bedroom
- 7 ensuite
- 8 guest bedroom
- 9 guest bathroom
- 10 slipway

