Proposed repairs to Church of the Assumption and Saint Laurence O'Toole, Rathangan, Wexford *(a Protected Structure)*

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

MICHAEL TIERNEY
B Arch FRIAI
Conservation Architect Grade I
September 2025

RIAI Registered Architect 2025 Conservation Architect G1

CONTENTS

1.0 Client : Rathangan Parish Committee

2.0 Applicant ; Rathangan Parish Committee c/o Mahon Fox Architects Common Quay Street, Wexford

3.0 Location of Development : Rathangan Church, Rathangan , Co. Wexford. *(Protected Structure)*

4.0 Details of Proposed Development as described in Planning Application :

Permission for proposed works as follows –

a) reroofing works *(including new ceilings to underside)*
b) repair works to stone masonry & flashings
c) installation of new cast-aluminium rainwater goods and minor works to existing below ground drainage system
d) minor internal repair, maintenance and redecoration works

all the above including all site works and ancillary services at *The Church of Our Lady of the Assumption and St Laurence O'Toole,* which is a protected structure *(ref no.WCC0645 & NIAH ref no: 15704636)*

5.0 Date of Assessment : September 2025

6.0 Planning Authority : Wexford Co Council

7.0 Competency of Authors :

This report was prepared by the undersigned on the basis of information received from the following

- Mahon Fox Project Architects *(Conservation Architects - Grade 3)*
- Sweeney Consultants Structural Engineers *(John Creed)*
- Michael Tierney Conservation Architect Grade 1
- Ciaran Kelly CKRC *(Historic building contractor)*

This report Report has been prepared in accordance with Appendix B – Guidelines to Planning Authorities *(DoELG 2011)* and BH10 Vol 1 *(WCC Devl Plan 2022-2028)*

8.0 Planning Status of Site:

The property is included in the RoPS of the Draft County Development Plan 2021-27 as follows –

WCC0645 Rathangan 2001 Wexford CDP NIAH church/chapel
Catholic Church of the Assumption and Saint Laurence

9.0 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage

The site is listed on the NIAH website under register number *15704636* listed under *Categories of Special Interest - Architectural, Artistic, Historical, Social, Technical*

An extract from NIAH survey 2007 is attached at ***Appendix 3*** with photographs of the building and contextual setting

10.0 Proposed repairs and improvements to the fabric of the building

The proposed repairs and improvements to the building are in respect of the roofs, spire/tower and rainwater disposal and include reinstement of the ceiling which is directly fixed to underside of slates

The details of the works prepared by the Project Architect and associated Method Statement detail the proposed repairs which together with the *'Structural Survey + Opening of the Roof Fabric'* ***(Appendix 1)*** to determine the scope of the proposed repairs.

The proposals have been examined by the undersigned in the context of the building being a *'Protected Structure'*. Any matters arising from same have been discussed with the appropriate specialist engaged to advise on the proposed works *(para 7.0 refers)*

The details of Proposed Works are described and detailed by the Project Architects at ***Appendices 7/8***

11.0 Contextual Setting of the Site ***(Appendix 6** –maps refers)*

The site of the church is located a short distance from Rathangan cross roads on the R736 *(fig 2).* It is known in County Wexford as *'the cathedral in the fields'* due to scale and prominence of the tower and spire in the landscape *(fig 1)*

The NIAH appraisal states that the building *'represents an important component of the later nineteenth-century built heritage of south County Wexford*'

fig 1

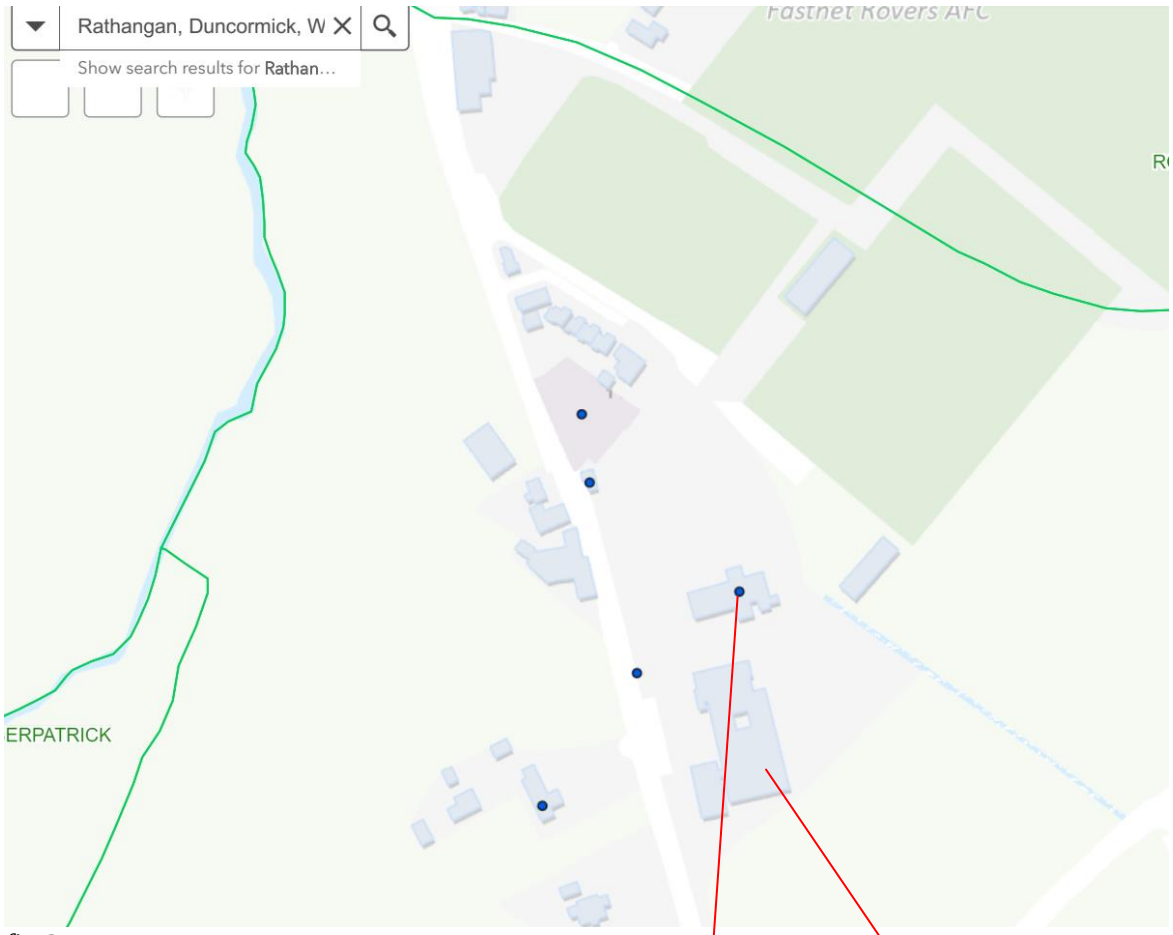


fig 2
Location map

12.0 Historical Development of the Site - *(Appendix 5 refers)*

The historical development of the site is described in ***Appendix 5*** which includes extracts from the 1st ed. OS c.1830 and 2nd ed. OS c.1900 which notes the locations of 18th c. and present 19th c. churches

Also referenced are extracts from *'The Churches of the Diocese of Ferns'* with regard to *'Church of the Assumption and Saint Laurence O'Toole, Rathangan'*

Of particular significance is a detailed historical background prepared by historian Jacqui Hynes entitled the *'Cathedral in the Fields'* extracts of which are attached at ***Appendix 5(b)***

13.0 Conclusions

The people of the parish of Rathangan and the wider locality have shown their particular interest in the Church building, both historically and presently, with their unbroken desire to enhance the fabric of the building since first erected with the various improvements *(stain glass windows etc)* in late 19th/early 20thc.through to the present *(repairs to spire)* and numerous other works and decorative elements as described in ***Appendix 5***

The problems with roof covering has been identified for some time and the decision to proceed with the necessary works to ensure the protection of the building's fabric and protect it into the future is to be commended

As the status of the Church as a *'Protected Structure'* requires a building of significant architectural heritage to be conserved and protected with the details of the proposed repairs which demonstrating an awareness and knowledge of the requirements for breathability of roof structure and slate/ceiling underlay

While the use of large spaces to enclose large gatherings for religious ceremonies may be going through a period of change in building requirements, this does not absolve the present generations from the requirement to preserve, maintain and adapt buildings of architectural heritage *(including vernacular buildings)*

Having visited the site and examined the proposals, I am satisfied that the details for the works are in accordance with best architectural building conservation principles

Signed ----------

Michael Tierney B Arch FRIAI
Conservation Architect (RIAI) – Grade I

Date September 2025

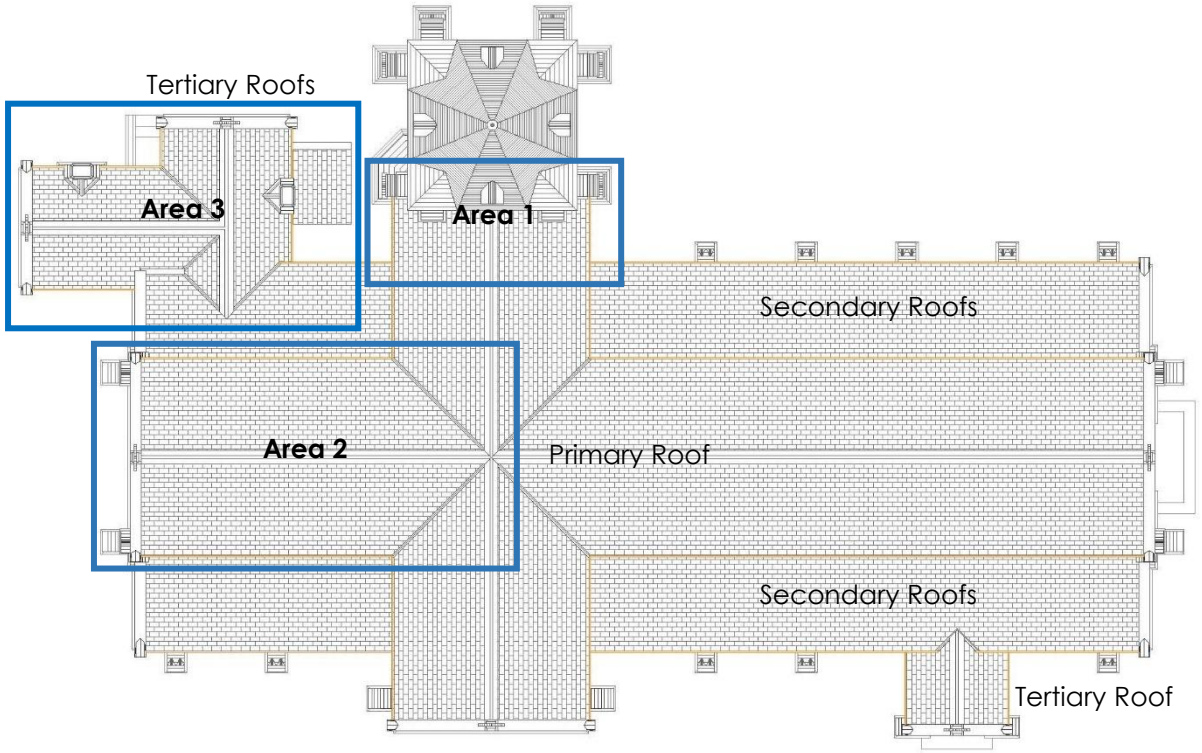
RIAI Registered Architect 2025 Conservation Architect G1

APPENDIX 1

CK ROOFING & CARPENTRY LTD
restoration conservation construction

12/08/2025

RATHANGAN CHURCH SURVEY



GENERAL

All gutters and downpipes to be replaced. / Past repairs to roof reveal some original nails were replaced with tek screws which are now corroding and resulting in slipping of slate roof tiles. Mostly an issue at the valleys and secondary roofs.

Timber roof structure in good condition. Approximate measurements of timber roof members: rafters 124mm x 52mm at 300mm centres; purlins 220mm x 145mm; battens 50mm x 17mm; plaster thickness 18mm.






AREA 1 – TOWER TO PRIMARY ROOF JUNCTION

Lead flashing to be redone/missing in some areas.

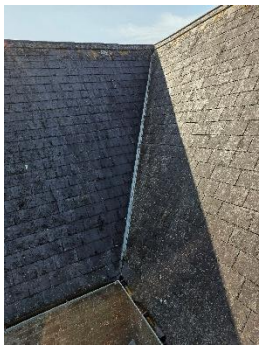


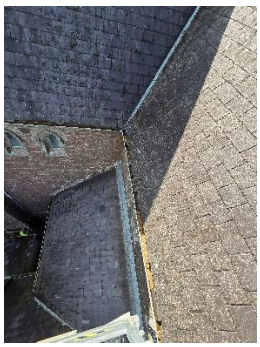




AREA 2 – PRIMARY ROOF

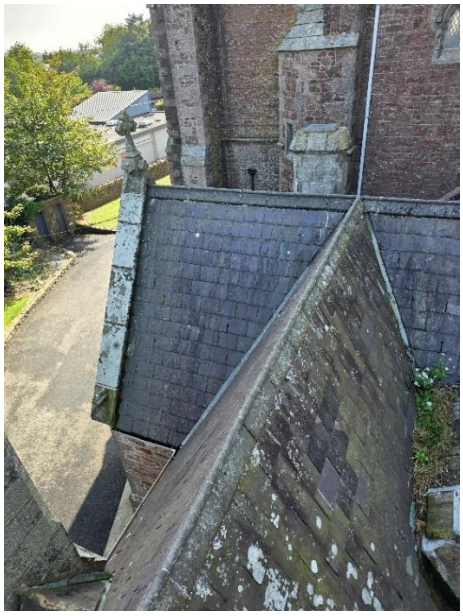
Lead valleys to be repaired.





AREA 3 – SECONDARY ROOF TO TERTIARY ROOFS

Vegetation between roof junctions to be cleared out/removed. / Chimney to wall junctions to be inspected for water ingress/evidence of dampness on interior. / Slipping slates at the gutters and valleys.









AREA 4 – TOWER INTERIOR

All 3 timber platforms in the tower are to be repaired. Platform 1 shows evidence of damaged and loose timber boards. Water damage from prior to downpipe installation/downpipe may currently be blocked. Existing bell motor to be enclosed in safety cage. Bolts to cat ladder badly corroded and need to be replaced.

Platform 2 timber boards and joists in good condition, steel support beams below are badly corroded and need to be replaced.

REPORT ON STRUCTURE OF ROOF OF RATHANGAN CHURCH

(Client: Rathangan Parish Committee)

At the request of the Parish Committee, Sweeney Consulting Engineers were engaged to report on the structure of the roof of Our Lady of the Assumption and St Laurence O'Toole Church, Rathangan, Co. Wexford.

It seems that the church was constructed in the 1860s / 1870's and the roof appears to be the original roof.

This inspection was carried out on August 12th, 2025. Mr Ciaran Kelly of CKRC was present at that time and carried out some opening up work on the roof, both internally and externally.

The weather was dry during the inspection and there had been no appreciable rain for days.

This report is based on a structural inspection, and no opinion is expressed as to the condition of non-structural elements.

The following defects were noted:

1. Many of the slates have 'slipped' and fallen off the roof. The nails in general are of iron construction and many have rusted through. 'Slipping' slates pose a grave danger to members of the public. The opening up revealed that all of the cast iron nails were corroded to some degree with some of the nails being badly corroded, and it is likely that the remaining nails are in similar condition. ***Based on our inspection and the opening work undertaken on the roof, it is our opinion that the slates and battens need to be removed. The slates should be salvaged as far as possible and replaced onto new battens fixed to the existing roof structure. Any necessary repairs to any decayed members should be carried out at the same time.***

2. Many of the slipped and damaged slates have been screwed in place over recent years using modern 'Tek' screws, which will eventually allow water to ingress into the church. It can be expected that any such ingress will cause

the lime-based parging to fall off internally, causing further risks to members of the public attending the church. It appears that the lime-based parging may be holding the slates in place given the apparent failure of the corroded nails. ***Based on our inspection and the opening work undertaken on the roof, it is our opinion that the slates and battens need to be removed. The slates should be salvaged as far as possible and replaced onto new battens fixed to the existing roof structure. Any necessary repairs to any decayed members should be carried out at the same time.***

3. The uppermost floor in the belfry is supported by mild steel beams that appear to be heavily corroded and undoubtedly structurally weakened. ***The steel structure under the top floor in the belfry needs to be replaced, galvanised steel members.***

4. The deck / floor directly under the bell in the belfry consists of a lead covering over a plywood deck on timber joists on mild steel beams. The plywood deck appears to have some decay and as such, this deck should be replaced. ***Consideration should be given to replacing the lead covering and support joists when the plywood is being replaced. It was not possible to ascertain if the steel beams are embedded in the wall or bearing on the internal corbels. The ends of the steel beams should be examined for corrosion and replaced if necessary.***

5. There is evidence of historical water ingress into the belfry walls which has caused damage / decay to some of the timber elements of the belfry floors. ***This requires further investigation and repairs may be required.***

6. Water ingress was evident in the attic over the vestry to the rear and this may be getting in through the chimney and possibly through the south facing gable wall (over the two windows). ***Further investigation is necessary.***

7. The condition of the roof timbers (purlins, rafters and battens) should be verified where they come into contact with each gable end because of the risk of hidden decay. It is possible that some timber members may need to be replaced in these areas. ***Further investigation is necessary.***

8. The condition of the roof timbers (wall-plate, purlins, rafters, ridge boards and battens) appeared in satisfactory condition generally, based on the opening up works that has been carried out. However it is possible that there may be elements of decay found in some of this timbers during the proposed works. Should this be the case, it will be necessary to repair the decayed sections of timber as follows.
   - ***Wall-plate – In areas where the wall-plate is decayed, it will be necessary to prop the roof temporarily and remove the decayed portion of wall-plate. The wall-plate should be replaced with tanalised***

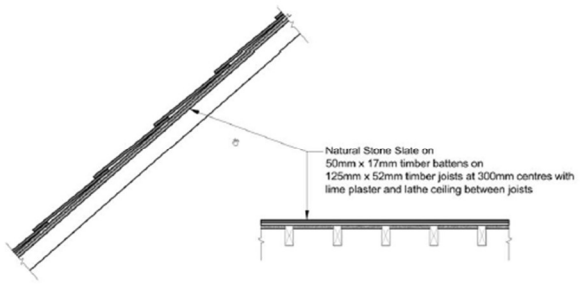
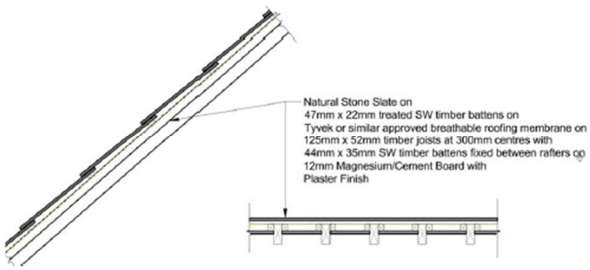
C16 grade timber spliced onto the existing wall-plate complete with a new damp-proof course.

- ***Purlins – While the purlins which were visible appeared in satisfactory condition, it is possible that some of the portions of purlin embedded in the external walls are decayed. In these areas, it will be necessary to prop the roof temporarily and remove the section of decayed purlin including where it is buried in the masonry. The decayed purlin should be replaced, with the replaced portion terminating c. 30mm from the face of the external wall. The replacement section of purlin should be bolted and lapped to the remaining purlin with 10mm thick galvanised steel plates on both sides which extend 900m onto the existing purlin and 250mm into the external wall. The ends of the steels within the wall should have a 50mm fold to provide additional strength.***
- ***Rafters – It will be necessary to replace these fully if they are badly decayed or replace partially if locally decayed. In these locations it will be necessary to replace the decayed section with tanalised C16 grade timber and install two lapping rafters (one on either side) of equal cross section across the replaced zone with a minimum 2m lap onto the existing retained zone. The lapping timber should be bolted to the existing rafters with M10 coach bolts at 600mm centers.***
- ***Ridge board – While the portions of ridge board that were visible appeared in satisfactory condition, it is possible that some of the portions of ridge board embedded in the external walls are decayed. In areas where the ridge board is decayed, it will be necessary to prop the roof temporarily and replace the decayed portion with tanalised C16 grade timber spliced onto the existing ridge board.***
- ***Battens – All battens should be replaced with tanalised C16 timbers as per 1. above.***

9. Should evidence of woodworm be noted during the works, it will be necessary to engage a timber treatment specialist to address same. Should replacement of timbers be necessary, then remedial works as detailed in 8 above, should be followed.

10.

Existing and proposed roof build-ups:

Existing roof build up:	Proposed roof build up:
	
• Existing Welsh slate on • Timber battens with • Intermediate timber lathes on • Existing decorative exposed roof timber timbers and with • Painted lime parging/plaster to underside	• Proposed new slate on • 47x22mm treated softwood timber battens on • Breathable Tyvek Supro or equal approved on • Existing decorative exposed roof timber timbers with • 44 x 35mm timber battens fixed between rafters with 12mm magnesium/cement board with plaster and paint finish to underside

Sweeney Consulting Engineers have examined the existing and proposed roof build-ups proposed by Mahon & Fox Architects as shown above and can confirm that the loadings associated with the existing and proposed are similar and acceptable.

Signed

Martin Sweeney
Chartered Engineer
11th September 2025.

Front western elevation

Southern elevation

Southern and eastern elevations

Northern elevation

Corroded nails taken from roof

Some opening up work to southern aisle roof

'Tek' screws holding slates in place over southern aisle

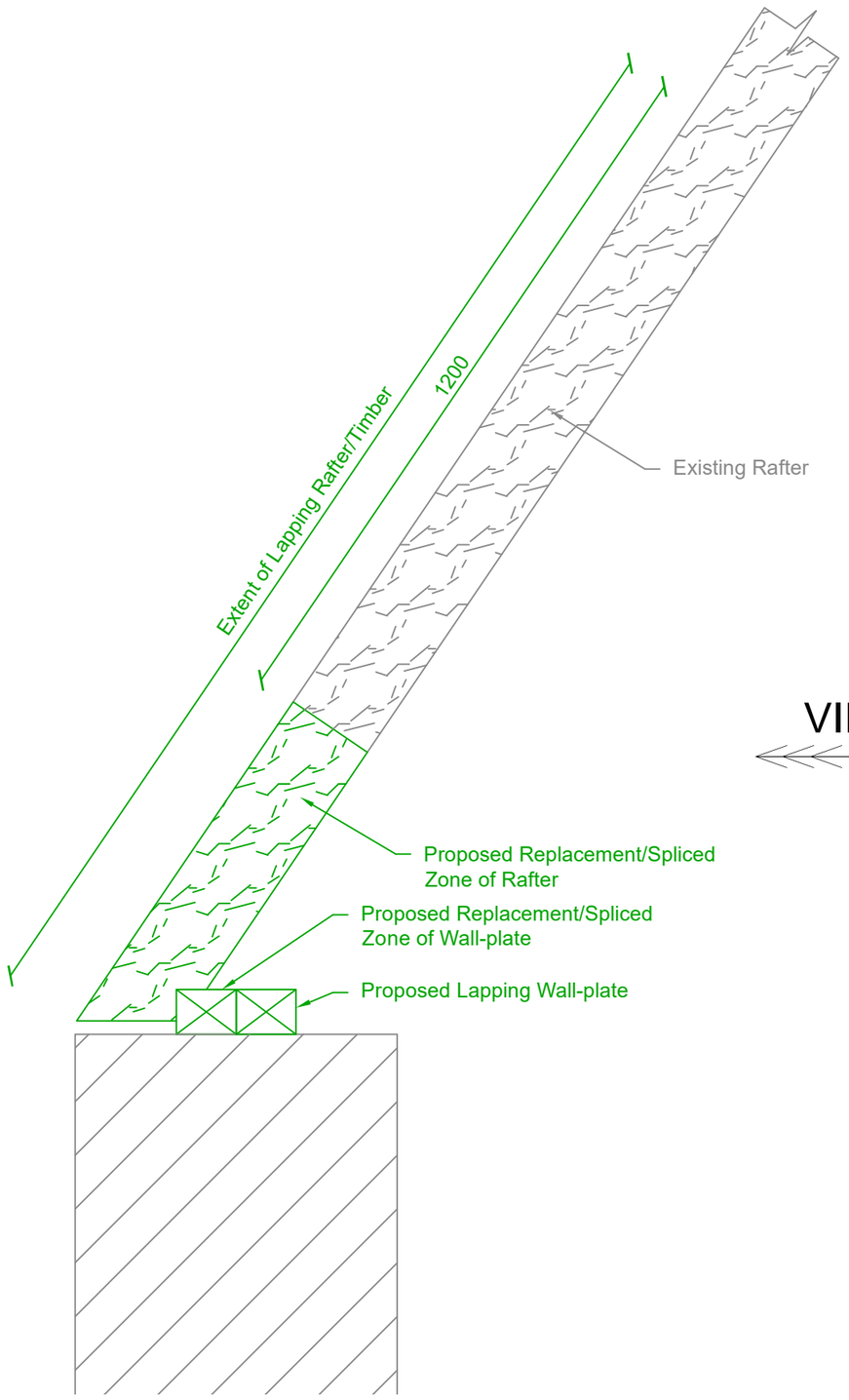
Steel beams under uppermost floor in belfry (looking upwards)

Corrosion to steel beams under uppermost floor in belfry

A3

OTES:

1. ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE VERIFIED ON SITE
2. ALL STRUCTURAL TIMBERWORK TO BE GRADE C16 AS MINIMUM UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.
3. DRAINAGE, DAMP PROOFING INSULATION AND VENTILATION TO ARCHITECT'S SPECIFICATION AND DETAIL.
4. TEMPORARY WORKS DESIGN IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CONTRACTOR. A SUITABLY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL IS TO BE ENGAGED TO CARRY OUT THIS DESIGN.



VIEW A

POSSIBLE RAFTER AND WALL-PLATE SPLICE LAYOUT

SCALE 1:10

Rev	Date	Revision Details:-
-	-	-

SWEENEY CONSULTING ENGINEERS
145 THE FAYTHE, WEXFORD, IRELAND. Y35 CC97
PHONE: (053) 9147429 EMAIL: martin@sce.ie

PROJECT:
PROPOSED REAR EXTENSION TO 6 PLASÁN, BRIDGETOWN, CO. WEXFORD.

Drawing Title:
POSSIBLE RAFTER AND WALL-PLATE SPLICE LAYOUT

Issued For:
PLANNING

Client:
RATHANGAN PARISH COMMITTEE

Date:	Drawn By:	Checked By:
11.09.2025	MS	JC

Scale:	Drawing no.:	Revision:
AS SHOWN	SCE-001P	-

A3

OTES:

1. ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE VERIFIED ON SITE
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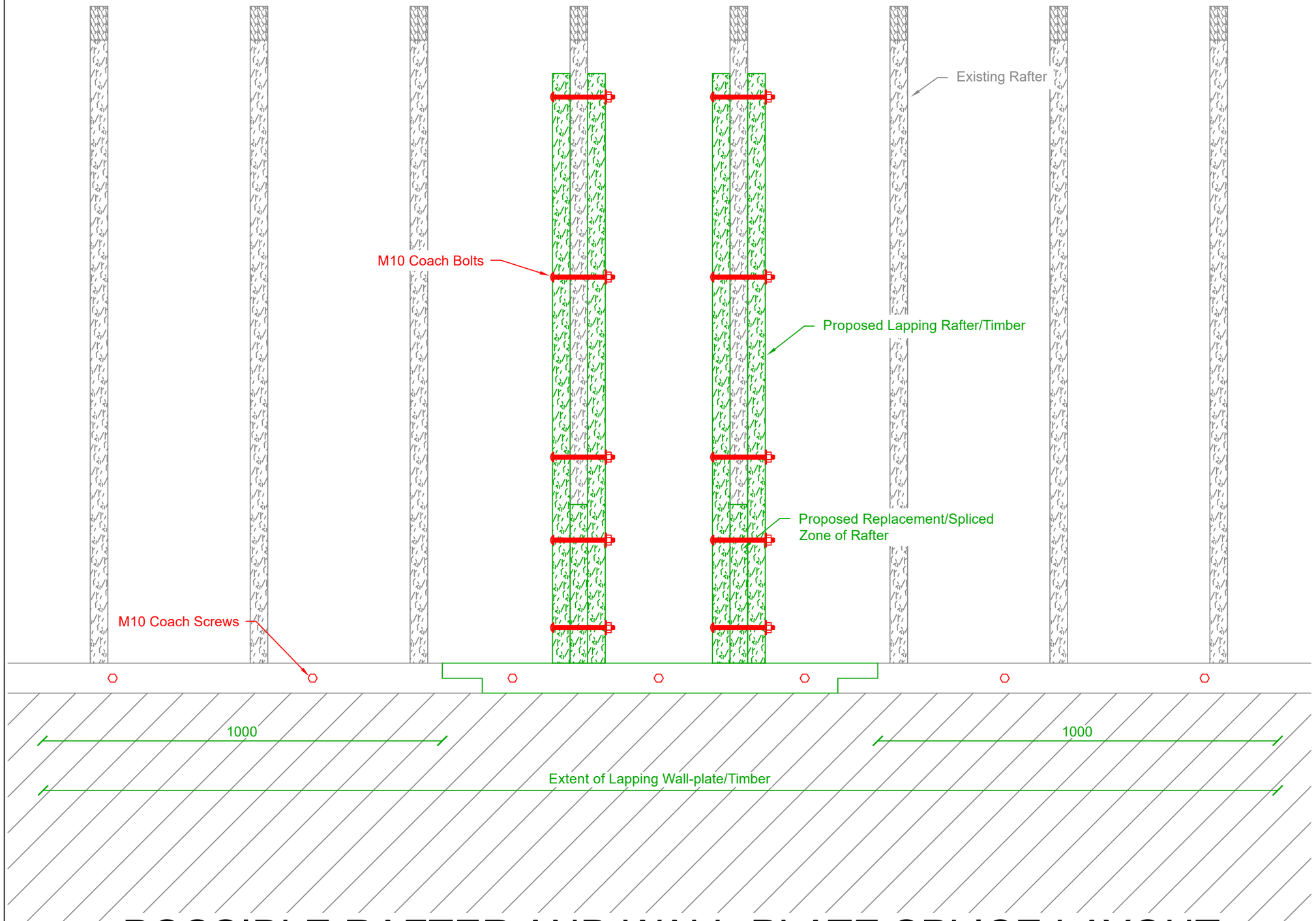


POSSIBLE RAFTER AND WALL-PLATE SPLICE LAYOUT (VIEW A)

SCALE 1:10

Rev	Date	Revision Details:-
-	-	-

SWEENEY CONSULTING ENGINEERS
145 THE FAYTHE, WEXFORD, IRELAND. Y35 CC97
PHONE: (053) 9147429 EMAIL: martin@sce.ie

PROJECT:
PROPOSED REAR EXTENSION TO 6 PLASÁN, BRIDGETOWN, CO. WEXFORD.

Drawing Title:
POSSIBLE RAFTER AND WALL-PLATE SPLICE LAYOUT (VIEW A)

Issued For:
PLANNING

Client:
RATHANGAN PARISH COMMITTEE

Date:	Drawn By:	Checked By:
11.09.2025	MS	JC

Scale:	Drawing no.:	Revision:
AS SHOWN	SCE-002P	-

APPENDIX 3 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Survey *(NIAH – extracts)*

Catholic Church of the Assumption and Saint Laurence O'Toole, RATHANGAN, WEXFORD

Survey Data

Reg No	15704636
Rating	Regional
Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Artistic, Historical, Social, Technical
Previous Name	Saint Mary's Catholic Church
Original Use	Church/chapel
In Use As	Church/chapel
Date	1865 - 1875
Date Recorded	20/09/2007
Date Updated	--/--/--

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

- Detached seven-bay double-height Catholic church,
- begun 1870; dedicated 1873,
- cruciform plan comprising five-bay double-height nave opening into five-bay single-storey lean-to side aisles with single-bay (single-bay deep) double-height transepts centred on single-bay double-height chancel to crossing (east);
- single-bay four-stage tower *(south)* on a square plan supporting broach spire.
- Renovated mid 20th c. with sanctuary reordered.

INTERIOR

- vestibule *(west*) with tessellated "quarry tile" floor;
- square-headed door openings into nave with glazed timber panelled doors having overlights;
- full-height interior open into roof with trefoil-detailed timber panelled choir gallery *(west)* on a half-octagonal plan below
- stained glass *"West Window"* (undated),
- tessellated "quarry tile" central aisle between timber pews,
- pointed-arch arcades on polished Midleton red marble pillars on cut-granite octagonal plinths,
- ***exposed braced scissor truss timber roof construction on cut-granite corbels with wind braced rafters to ceiling on carved timber cornice,***
- pointed-arch to crossing,
- mosaic tiled floor monument *(ob. 1906),*
- reclaimed cut-white marble floor monuments *(ob. 1810; 1847),*
- pointed-arch chancel arch framing encaustic tiled cut-veined white marble stepped dais to sanctuary *(east)* reordered, ----, with Gothic-style reredos below stained glass *"East Window"*
- stepped daises to side altars with quatrefoil-detailed cut-veined white marble memorial altars *(ob. 1906)* below stained glass windows
- timber boarded or tongue-and-groove timber panelled wainscoting to side aisles supporting timber dado rail
- Gothic-style timber stations between frosted glass windows
- exposed rafters to timber boarded ceiling on carved timber cornice.
- Set in landscaped grounds.

Appraisal
A church erected under the aegis of Reverend Garret Lawrence O'Toole PP (d. 1875), and to a design attributed to the little-known Robert Sinnott of Wexford (de Vál 2004, 118), representing an important component of the later nineteenth-century built heritage of south County Wexford with the architectural value of the composition, one showing striking similarities with the Richard Pierce (1801-54)-designed *"Twin Churches" (1851-8)* in Wexford confirmed by such attributes as the cruciform plan form, aligned along a liturgically-correct axis

- the construction in *"Old Red Sandstone"* offset by silver-grey *Mount Leinster granite* dressings not only demonstrating good quality workmanship and produce a lively two-tone palette
- the *"pointed"* profile of the openings underpinning a *"medieval"* Gothic theme with the chancel defined by an elegant *"East Window"* (*to a concept of Canon O'toole)*
- the polygonal spire embellishing the lofty tower as a prominent eye-catcher in the landscape.
- well maintained, the elementary form and massing survive intact together with substantial quantities of the original fabric, both to the exterior and to the arcaded interior

<u>the artistic potential of the composition is highlighted by -</u>

contemporary joinery;
reclaimed monuments (ob. 1810; 1847);
an inlaid floor monument commemorating O'Toole;
crocketed reredos; and a jewel-like "East Window",

- ***an exposed timber roof construction pinpoints the engineering or technical dexterity of the building***
- part of a neat self-contained group alongside an adjacent parochial house
- the resulting ecclesiastical ensemble making a pleasing visual statement in a rural street scene.

CONTEXTUAL VIEW
'the polygonal spire embellishing the lofty tower is a prominent eye-catcher in the landscape' (extract NIAH survey)

AERIAL VIEW OF SITE LOCATION with school to south and location of 18th c. church to north of present church

West elevation showing principal door and offset tower and spire

South elevation including transept window and tower and broached spire details

INTERIOR VIEWS

Nave with west window

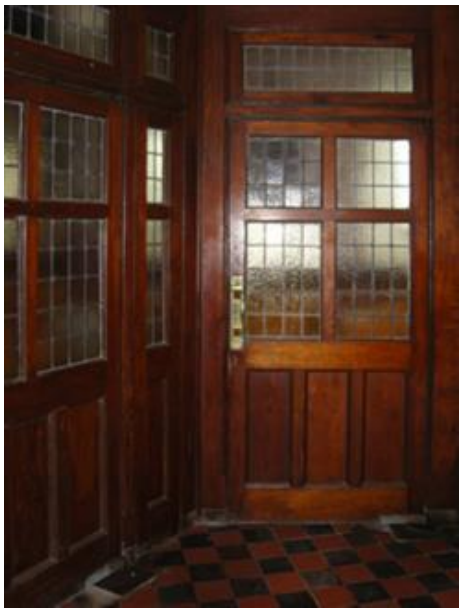
Roof details showing exposed braced scissor truss timber roof construction

View from gallery to east window

Detail view of reordered sanctuary with stained glass window over

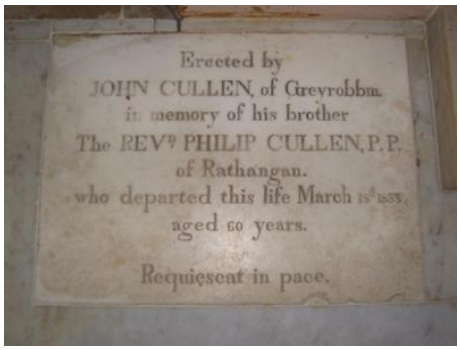
STAIN GLASS WINDOWS - *Appendix 5b refers details historical background of windows*

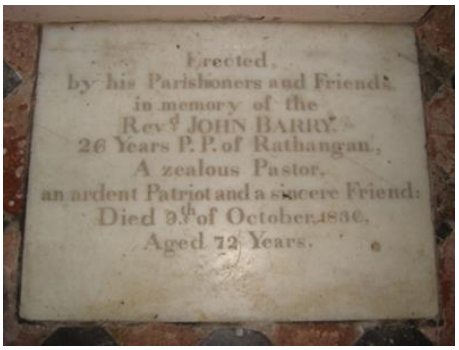
INTERIOR DETAILS



Entrance porch door and screen

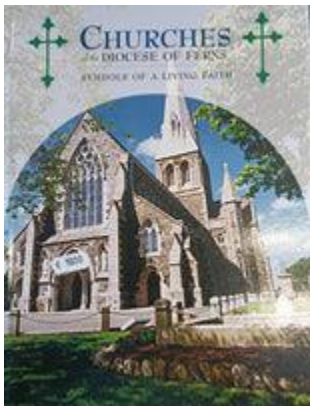
INLAID FLOOR MONUMENTS *to notable persons associated with the Church*





APPENDIX 5(a) Historical background

Extract from *'The Churches of the Diocese of Ferns'*



'In pre reformation times the principal church in the area was at Duncormick. When this was taken over by the Reformed Church, a small chapel was built at Belgrove, about mile and half from Duncormick. Subsequently a small mud walled chapel was built at Rathangan which remained in use until end of 18th c. Some remains can be seen in the old cemetery. A church at Newtown was destroyed in 1798 insurrection

Rev Garrett O'Toole PP decided in 1863 to build a new church but due to legal difficulties the foundation stone was not laid until 1870. The Architect was Robert Sinnott, Wexford and builder James Wilkinson, Enniscorthy

The church is a Gothic cruciform building having seven arches in Cork red marble separating the nave and choir from side aisles. The walls are constructed with red conglomerate stone from the local quarry of Nicharee and Carlow granite forming dressings of the doors and windows

The cathedral is often described as the 'cathedral in the fields'

A marble altar donated by the Patrician Brothers, Tullow, was installed in 1998 together with marble ambo'.

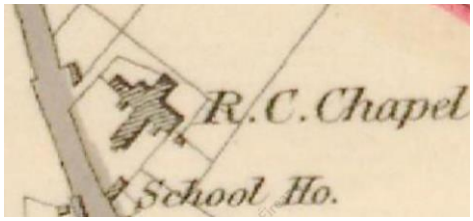


fig 1
Extract OS 1st ed. c.1830

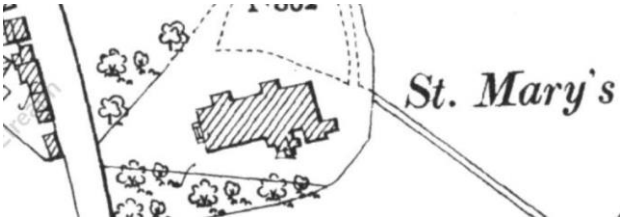


fig 2
Extract 25 inch OS c.1900

Location of earlier church is to north of later 19th c. building. The *'small mud walled chapel'* referred to above does not correspond to the larger footprint of the cruciform chapel shown on fig 1 but it may incorporate elements of a smaller earlier chapel.

APPENDIX 5(b) Historical background

Extract from **"***The Cathedral in the Fields"* by Jacqui Hynes *(Historian)*

Introduction

Described in sources as "The Cathedral in the Fields" (de Vál, 2004, p. 118) or "in a field" (Lambert, 1995, p. 3), there is surely no more apt and appropriate description of the Church of the Assumption and St Laurence O'Toole than that. Visible in the landscape from all approaches to Rathangan, it stands as a reminder of the dedication, devotion and commitment of the Roman Catholic clergy and parishioners to the parish. As acknowledged in May 2023, Reverend (Rev.) Robert McGuire observed that the church has witnessed two World Wars (1914-1918 and 1939–1945), the Easter 1916 Rising, the War of Independence (1919-1921) and The Civil War (1922-1923). During this time, our parish church has stood as a place of protection, peace and prayer.

Commenced and funded by Very Rev. Garret Canon O'Toole, the church bears a striking resemblance to the "Twin Churches" of Bride Street and Rowe Street in Wexford town and St Aidan's Cathedral in Enniscorthy. A strong supporter of local tradesmen and labourers, Canon O'Toole ensured that the materials and work for the construction were sourced from the locality as far as possible. Just over three years from commencement to its dedication, 2023 marks the 150th anniversary of that dedication, which took place on 5th October 1873. Fortuitously, this ceremony was described in detail in local newspapers of the time, including the participants and nature of the ceremony. However, Canon O'Toole would not live to see the completion of his work. His massive undertaking was completed by his successor, Very Rev. Henry Williams, one of sixteen subsequent priests who have ministered as either parish priest or administrator in the parish, many of whom have presided over repairs and restoration works over the subsequent 150 years.

Forerunners of the current church

The present parish of Rathangan comprises the five pre-reformation parishes of Ambrosetown (part of), Ballyconnick Duncormick, Killag and Kilmannon (de Vál, 2004, p. 118). A comprehensive analysis of the development of the Catholic Church in Rathangan parish from the early Christian period is provided by Rev. Fintan Morris in his "Witness to the Light" book (Morris, 2004). Therefore, we will start our journey with the first Catholic Mass House in Belgrove. According to tradition, it survived up until 1649 when it was allegedly destroyed during the Cromwellian Wars. It, according to belief, was rebuilt and survived until the early eighteenth century. The first reference to Rathangan as a religious area was in 1704 when Rev. Richard Walsh registered himself as "PP of Duncormick, Killag, Ballyconnick, Kilmannon, Mulrankin and Kilcowan, residing at Rathangan"(Morris, 2004, p. 18) in Rathangan House (current residence of Mrs Anna Lambert and her late husband Richard and her ancestral home) where there was a "chapel room". The aforementioned Mass House in Belgrove was replaced by a thatched church on a site in O'Neill's farmyard (opposite the 'old' graveyard in Rathangan) at some point during the tenure of Rev. John Codd (1741-1764). This church existed into the 1790s when it too was replaced by a more substantial church in the 'old' graveyard and dedicated to St Mary.

By 1810, priests of the parish were residing in the 'old' parochial house (now McCall's Community Centre) and by the 1820s religious services were taking place with greater frequency in the church, highlighted by the local school teacher, Mr Bartholomew Keegan, who noted to a friend that he was "with (Rev.) Mr Barry of Rathangan…I have two fine choirs in the two chapels and music to no end, and we sing the Mass and office of the Dead in Rathangan in grand style on every corpse that comes to the chapel…We do have great work here on festivals. On Corpus Christi we have a procession of the Blessed Sacrament, on Palm Sunday a great procession of palm, on 15th August, our patron day, a grand solemn Mass and procession of candles. Every Sunday in Lent we sing around the Stations, and on other festivals, we have a Benediction of the Blessed Sacraments, all of which serve to excite devotion in the people." (Morris, 2004, p. 27)

This church in the "old" graveyard was in time replaced by our 'Cathedral in the Fields'. According to the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, the Catholic Church of the Assumption and Saint Laurence O'Toole (Registration number 15704636), also called St Mary's Catholic Church *(NIAH SURVEY REFERS)*

Construction

The books of both Richard Lambert and Rev. Fintan Morris (Lambert, 1995; Morris, 2004) note with considerable detail the construction, consecration, renovations and priests of Rathangan Church, with the latter referencing various sources of the period, including articles in the *Wexford Independent* and *The Wexford People* newspapers. Therefore, only a brief synopsis is offered here.

The history of the church begins in 1863 when The Very Rev. Garret Canon O'Toole felt a new church was required to replace the thatched church in the "old graveyard" in Rathangan. He had made arrangements with the land owners (Mr John Beatty, Newtown and his uncle Rev. Frederick Beatty) and the tenant (Alderman Richard Walsh) for the procurement of the site of his proposed church. However, this 'fell through' and it was only several years later and an Act of Parliament facilitating the granting of lands for religious worship that Canon O'Toole was successful in securing not only the initially planned site but the whole field on a lease of 999 years. This site comprised "eight acres, two roods nineteen perches" (Lambert, 1995, p. 5). This equates to 3.49 hectares or 8.62 acres (*Toolkit*, 2023). The foundation stone for the new church was laid on 1st June 1870 when a dozen members of the clergy and a large crowd processed to the site, where the ground was broken, the stone laid, prayers recited, holy water sprinkled and a pause at a wooden cross that had been erected at the end of the site.

The People Newspaper of Saturday, May 28th 1870 ('New Church of the Assumption, Rathangan - Protestant Liberality', 1870) noted the church would be "cruciform, consisting of nave, side aisles, tower, transept, and chancel, is entered by three moulded door-ways— one at the west end, one at the south end of the transept, through the tower, and another at the north side, through a very neat porch. The nave and chancel are divided from the aisles by seven beautifully moulded arches, resting upon nine columns on each side, with richly-moulded capitals. The roof of the nave will be open, having the timbers stained and varnished; and the roof of the chancel will be tunnelled and afterwards decorated. The floor will be laid with tiles, diamond-wise, of red and buff. The chancel floor is raised above the floor of the nave and is to be laid with the best encaustic tiles of chaste design. The lighting of the church which will be thrown in a mellowed hue through the amber-tinted glass of the windows will be very effective. The interior measurements of the building are—length of nave and chancel 110 feet; width of nave, 16 feet nine inches; aisles, 8 feet four inches; height from floor to ridge of nave, 46 feet. The tower and spire, to the top of the cross, will be 135 feet… The aisles will be lighted by fourteen two-light windows, with suitable tracery; and over each side altar will be a two-light window, filled with stained glass. The clerestory windows are single lights, standing in pairs, over the windows of the aisle. Over the west and south doorways stand two three-light windows, with tracery-heads of elegant design. The transept is lighted by a four-light window in the north, and the window of the tower in the south; the light being admitted through a deeply-moulded arch in the tower. The east window will be of five lights, with beautiful tracery, and filled with stained glass. We congratulate the pastor and people of Rathangan on this noble erection, which will take rank amongst the best churches of the diocese, or of Ireland; and possesses one great merit —viz., it is the work of a Wexford man. Mr Robert Sinnott is both the designer and builder; and it is enough to say of him, as we can say with truth, all who know him, know that he never put a bad bit of work out of his hands. The church will last for ages, an enduring monument of the refined taste of the pastor, and fidelity of the people of Rathangan, who, we feel assured, will spare no effort to complete the good work so auspiciously commenced in Mary's Month."

Canon O'Toole further enlisted the skills of Mr James Wilkinson of Enniscorthy to build the church and local suppliers, craftsmen, and workers during the construction phase. Those craftsmen recorded by Rev. Morris and Richard Lambert include members of the Deery family from Waddingtown, who were stone masons, William Hunt of Duncormick, who along with other local forges, made the nails (Morris, 2004, p. 39) and the Dunphy family of O'Donoghue's forge (on the crossroads opposite Rathangan hall) who made the door hinges (Lambert, 1995, p. 6). Mr John E. Barry of Dublin (and owner of Belgrove) also donated the presentation bell to the church (O'Toole, n.d.). The funding of the church came primarily through the generosity of Canon O'Toole himself. As an only child, he was the recipient of a large inheritance from his parents, which he used to fund the construction of the church. His benevolent gesture was supplemented by

parish collections and individual donations from 1870, frequently acknowledged in *The Wexford People* newspaper.

Detailed descriptions of the church from its initial plans to the final completed version are noted here in detail as they show an interesting comparison between these original plans and the finished version and also outline details, features and sources of materials that can easily be forgotten or overlooked.

Consecration & Dedication

After three years of construction, the church was dedicated to Our Lady of the Assumption and St Laurence O'Toole on Sunday, 5th October 1873. The ceremony commenced at 11 a.m. with a procession of clergy, including the bishop, Dr Thomas Furlong, and the celebrant Rev. F. Reville, from the Order of St Francis (O.S.F.). The sermon was given by Rev. Bannon of the Society of Jesus (S.J. or Jesuits) and the liturgy was supported by a choir and accompanied by Mr Lyons on a grand harmonium. According to the *Wexford People* newspaper reporter present on the day, people had travelled from both the parish and neighbouring parishes to witness the dedication.

Completion, improvement and maintenance

Completion of the church, following the death of Canon O'Toole, fell to his successor, Very Rev. Henry Williams (1875 – 1882). Experienced in church architecture, he oversaw the installation of the church spire and the completion of interior decorations. During his tenure, plans were also developed to widen the main arch and side aisles but were never undertaken. Landscaping of the church grounds, erection of boundary walls and construction of the priest's gate lodge (in the corner of the current church car park) was further undertaken by Very Rev. John Doyle (1882 – 1887)

His replacement, Very Rev. Nicholas Hore (1887 – 1906), donated Our Lady's altar to the church and left monies in his will towards the construction of a new parochial house for the curate. Along with writing the renowned "Lennon's Catechism" (Morris, 2004, p. 46), The Very Rev. John Canon Lennon (1906 – 1916) added a church organ in 1907. A marble altar, the statue of St Joseph and carpet for the altar and sanctuary area were also added in 1909. This was likewise the year that a set of Stations of the Cross (Parisian oil on canvas with frames made in Dublin) was donated by Mrs Margaret Furlong, Russelstown (£111). Two pictures of the Sacred Heart and Our Lady of Perpetual Succour were also donated (in memory of Walter and Margaret Coghlan, Duncormick and deceased members of their family) and a new pulpit was added in 1912 (£45.10.0 and funded by two anonymous donors). During this time, Canon Lennon also undertook an inventory of church assets. The first repair and maintenance work was likewise undertaken during Canon Lennon's time. During 1911, the church chutes were repaired and painted, while a 1912 evaluation of the church led to repair work on the tower and spire, including work to the joints, cross and lightning conductor. The leaks were also addressed and the tower was painted. Further work on the tower was needed again in 1915, costing £83.1.6

Very Rev. Philip Canon Doyle (1916 – 1947) continued to add to the assets of the church, procuring four large candle sticks for the high altar (£8), a new organ (£60) and a new statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary (£35 and ordered from Italy to replace the existing one). A set of eleven crib figures was also purchased (£30 of which £10 was donated by Mrs Stafford, Roleens) and a further seven seats (£36 and made by Jess Coady). The church tower needed further attention in 1927 when the spire and gables were repaired, new louvre windows and lightning conductors were added and the chutes were repainted (£323). In 1929 the interior of the church was also repainted (£560). Further donations to the church in the 1930s included a clock (£50 and dedicated to the memory of Philip Hickey, Ambrosetown); statues of the Sacred Heart and St Teresa, (£64 and donated by Mrs Catherine Breen, Redmoor) and a benediction cope and veil and cloth of gold vestment (£30 and funded through the donation of Miss Ellen Coughlan, Scurlogue). The internal church porch was also erected during this time (£380 and dedicated to the memory of the Coughlan family, Scurlogue). Very Rev. George Murphy (1947 – 1959) also undertook further remodelling and upgrade work, often at his own expense. Marble altar rails were added in 1951 (funded through private donations) and electricity was installed two years later. That same year, the windows in the main body of the church were added (£239

donated by Fr Murphy himself). Statues of the Blessed Virgin and St Joseph were donated by Mrs Parle of Rivertown. In 1954 the stained glass window over the organ gallery was installed (£289.10.0, the cost borne equally by Fr Murphy and parishioners). Fr Murphy's namesake, Very Rev. Patrick Murphy (1965 – 1971) oversaw the installation of heating in the church.
During the ministry of Very Rev. Felix Byrne (1979 – 1998), the church was repainted in the early 1980s and 1998 saw a marble altar installed (donated by the Patrician Novitiate in Tullow, Co. Carlow). The latter required the reconfiguration of a section of the existing marble rails. A marble lectern was also added and the crib figures were repaired and restored.
The tower and steeple again required significant care in 2010 when it was discovered that "Gravity was the only thing holding the steeple of Rathangan Church in place"(Cullen, 2010).
Following the decision by Very Rev. Thomas Dalton (2006 – 2012) and the parish council, a general survey and assessment of the church was undertaken in advance of planned refurbishment work. It was during this survey that the precarious condition of the tower, spire, supporting metal frame and mounting for the bell was revealed. Further investigation by Rainey Steeplejacks discovered that the spire also required stabilising work to connect both sections. It was therefore decided to remove and then reinstall the spire. This work was estimated to cost in the region of €300,000 and would be funded through a ten-year fundraising plan, which would also include an upgrading of the heating system and interior refurbishment.

It was Very Rev. Kevin Cahill (2012 – 2021) and the parish council who continued the work of this ten-year plan. In 2015 the heating system was upgraded (€51,750) and the church was repainted (€75,000 and undertaken by Kevin Byrne, a local tradesman). 2019 saw the re-configuration of the gallery and stairway to make it more accessible (€9,000) and repairs and maintenance to the surrounding church drains (€15,000). Repairs to the window lead were also completed. Services from the church also began live-streaming around the world in 2021 (€2,770) (*Welcome to Our Lady of The Assumption & St Laurence O'Toole*, 2020).
These costs were also allayed by the additional voluntary contributions of labour, organisation and funding by members of the community and further afield, including repainting of the statues of the Sacred Heart and St Teresa, undertaken by Leyla McDonald, Ballymagyr and highlighting elements of the High Altar and re-painting the crib figures by the late Pat McKevitt, Rath.
Very Rev. Robert McGuire (2021 -) and the current parish council are presently (2023) involved in the installation of tarmacadam, lighting and CCTV in the car park. This work is supported by contributions from the Rathangan Country Fair fundraising events and the parish council wishes to note their appreciation of all voluntary contributions towards the upkeep of the church. There is also a pressing need to address the deteriorating state of repair of the church roof, which is presently leaking.

A living church
Over the last 150 years, the Church of the Assumption and St Laurence O'Toole has been integral to many parish events. The church has received thousands of people, their families and friends who wished to participate in church sacraments. It has welcomed those being baptised, married or beginning their final journeys for burial or cremation. It has annually hosted First Penance, Communion and Confirmation ceremonies. Over the years, it has also hosted Christmas nativity plays and carol services, concerts and missions, the latter including 1875, 1891, 1907, 1910 (Temperance Retreat), 1916, 1923, 1939, 1956, 1972 and 1982.

2020 saw major health and safety challenges for Ireland and the church community. The outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic caused a range of swift, strict and sweeping guidelines to be implemented. This resulted in the church being temporarily closed to visitors from mid-March until the end of June 2020. The church closed again in mid-October when services were required to be conducted online and only ten people were permitted to attend funerals. While this number temporarily increased to twenty-five, the strictest restrictions were re-introduced on Christmas Eve and this continued to the end of January 2021, further extended to early April that year. From May, however, restrictions began to be eased but social distancing had to be maintained. This included sitting two metres apart and every second row was to be kept

empty. The limits on attendance at religious ceremonies were fully withdrawn in October 2021. Seating arrangements for distancing no longer applied, and the church community were free again to gather, celebrate and pray as a community

Conclusion

The Church of the Assumption and St Laurence O'Toole was undoubtedly a labour of love for its instigator Very Rev. Canon Garret O'Toole and the people who built, maintained and tended the church over the intervening 150 years. Local craftsmen and families initially supplied the materials and labour for the church, and its care and upkeep have been continued and preserved by successive parish priests, parishioners, volunteers, tradespeople and specialists. The church has and continues to require, sometimes significant repairs and renovation but with ongoing support, it would be hoped that it will stand the test of time and see at least another 150 years, remaining our "Cathedral in the Fields".

Appendix A: Servants of the church

Rev. Garret Canon O'Toole

The priest who was responsible for spearheading the building of the impressive church was Very Rev. Canon O'Toole. The son of a naval officer, he was born on St Christopher's Island in the West Indies in 1806 and was ordained in 1833, having received his religious education in the Wexford Seminary and Carlow College.
His previous experience gave him excellent knowledge for the construction of "The Cathedral in the Fields". As a curate in Gorey from 1833, he was involved in the building of St Michael's Church there, including sourcing funds for its construction. Having spent time ministering in Kilanerin, Blackwater and Screen from 1845, he made his way to Rathangan parish at Easter 1851 as the curate to Clearlestown. On 31st March 1853, he was elevated to the position of parish priest of the parish of Rathangan. He contributed £6,000 (£576,069/€650,242 at today's value) of his own money to the construction costs and a further £1,000 (£96,011/€108,373 at today's value) (Bank of England, 2023) upon his death for its completion. Canon O'Toole died unexpectedly on 5th February 1875, aged sixty-nine years and he is interred in front of the main church altar beneath a medallion portrait of him. (Gahan, 2000, p. 312). In his will, he also bequeathed significant monies towards supporting and maintaining the church, parishioners and later towards the construction of Duncormick school.

APPENDIX 6 Historic and Present Maps

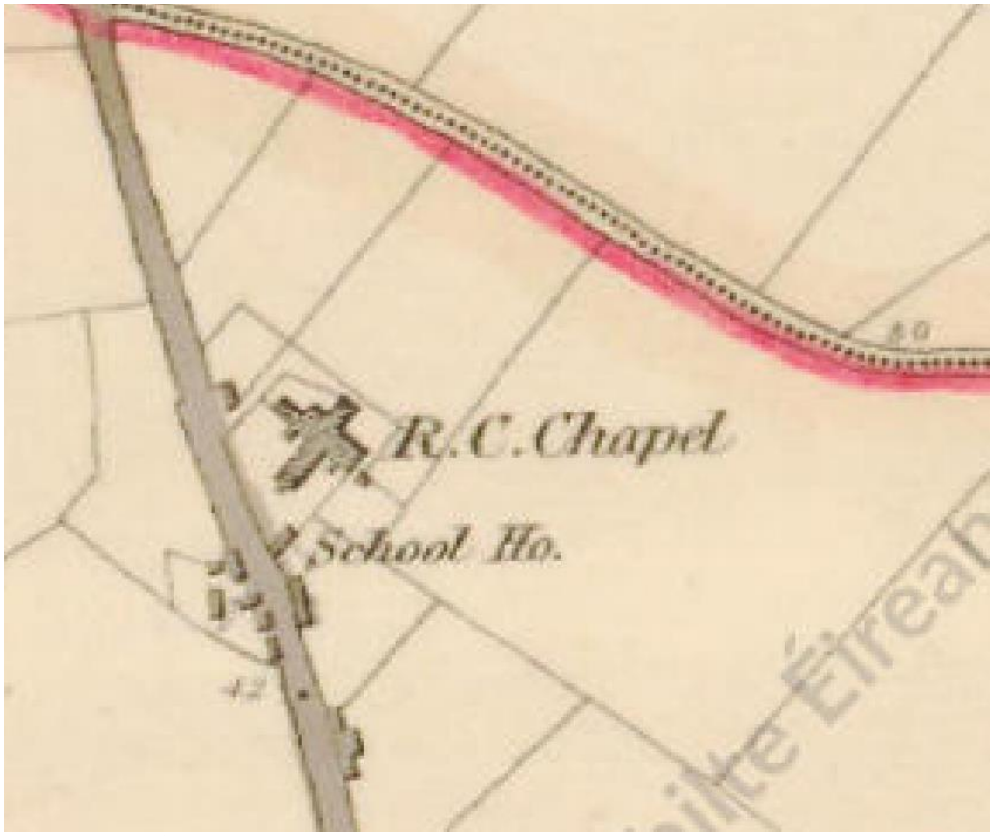


fig 1 OS 1st ed. c.1830

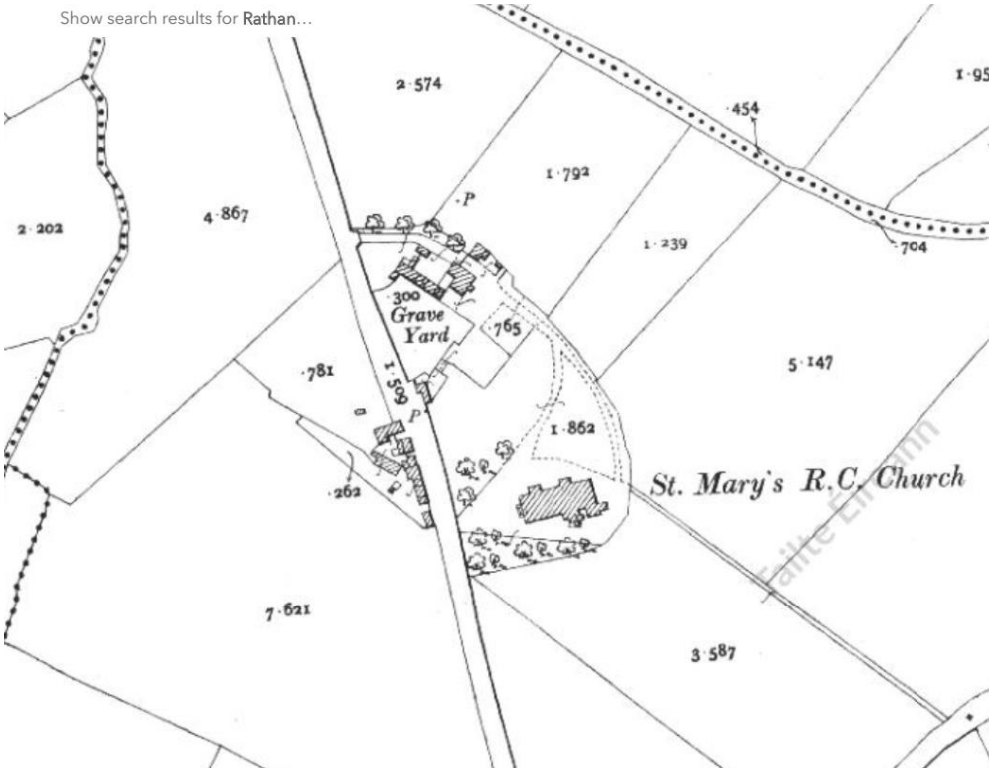


fig 2 OS 25 inch c.1900

Comparison of the historic maps shows the location of earlier church is to north of present later 19th c. building. The *'small mud walled chapel'* referred to *(Appendix 5a refers)* does not correspond to the larger footprint of the cruciform chapel shown on fig 1 but it may incorporate elements of a smaller earlier chapel.

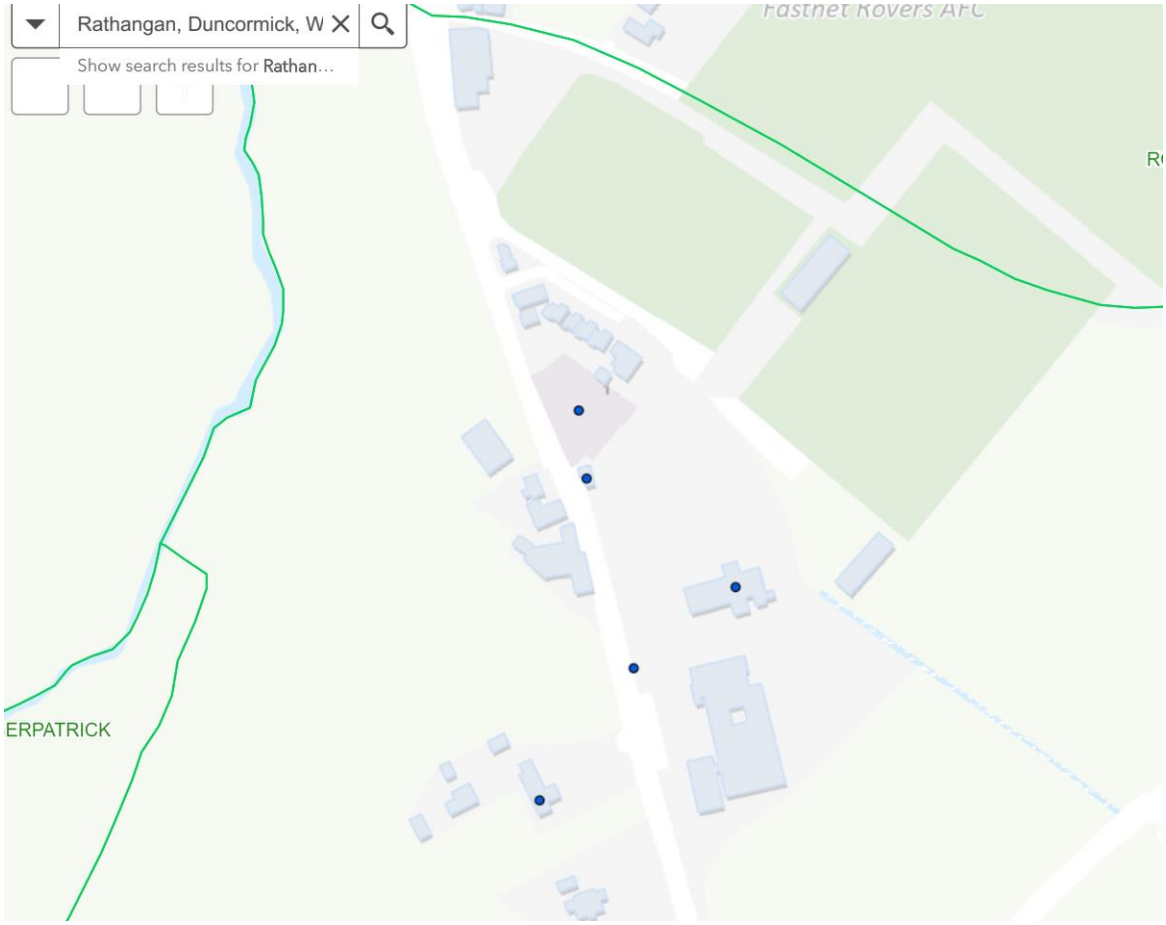
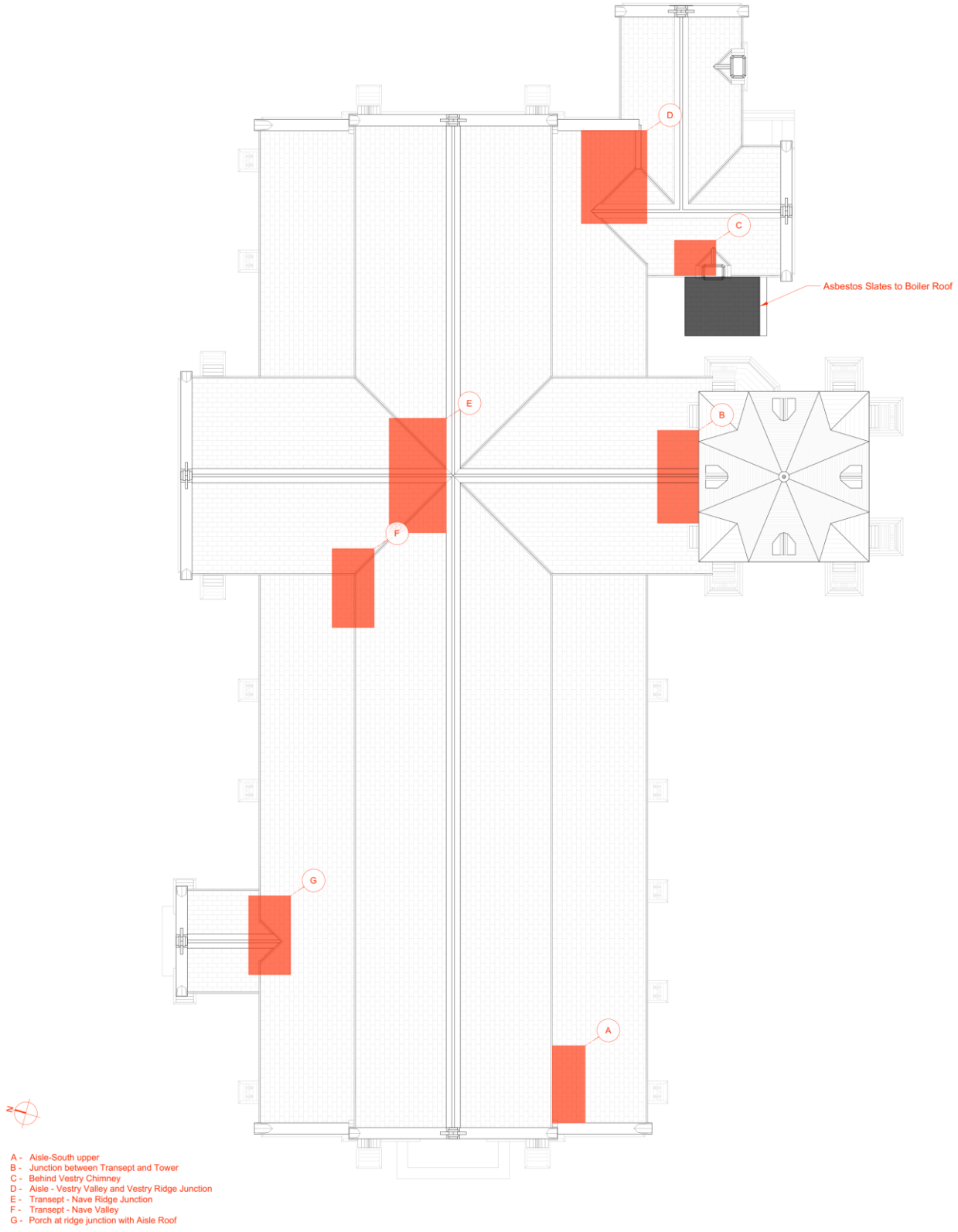


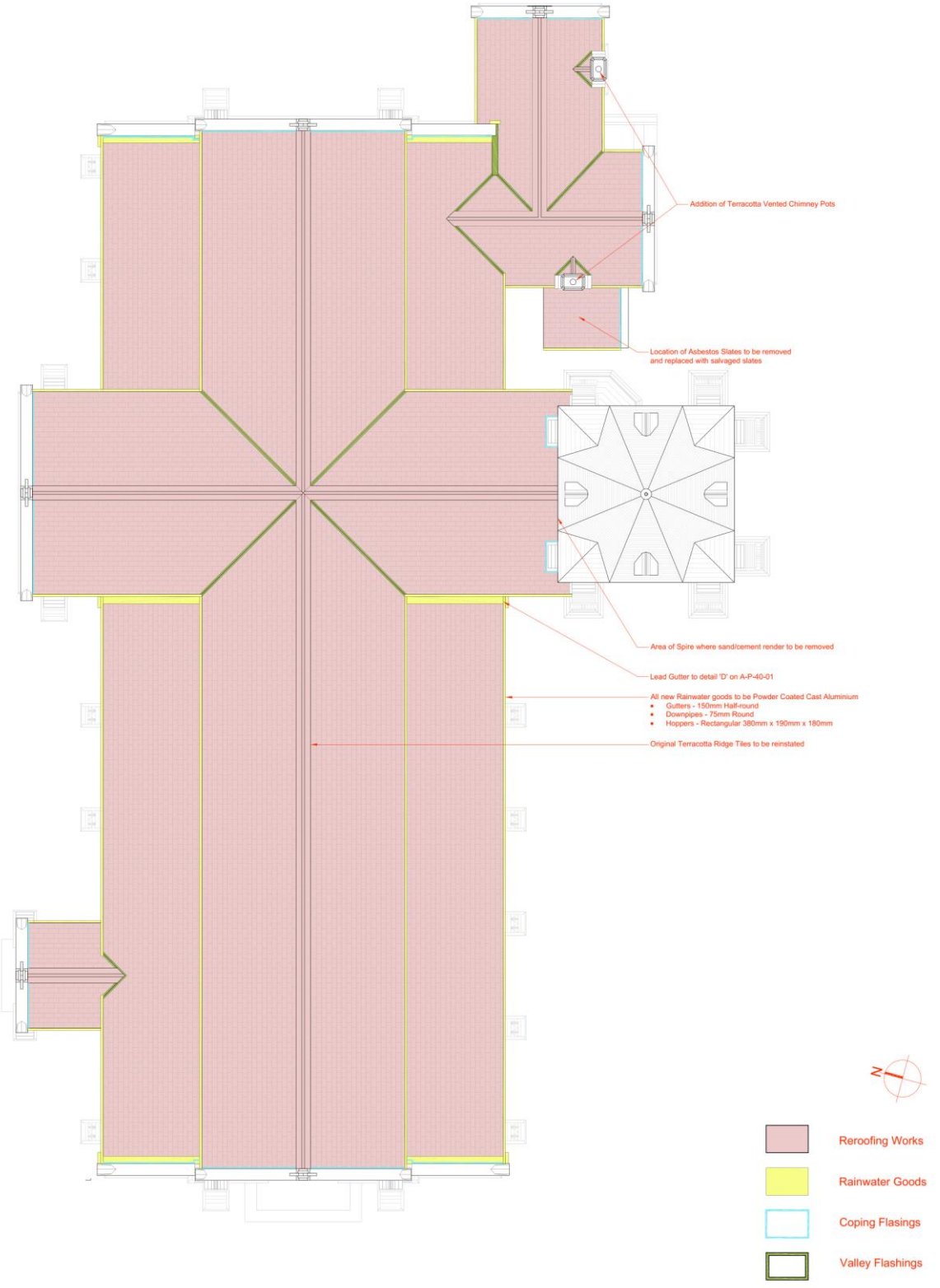
fig 3 Present Map – NIAH extract

APPENDIX 7 Plans prepared by the Project Architect



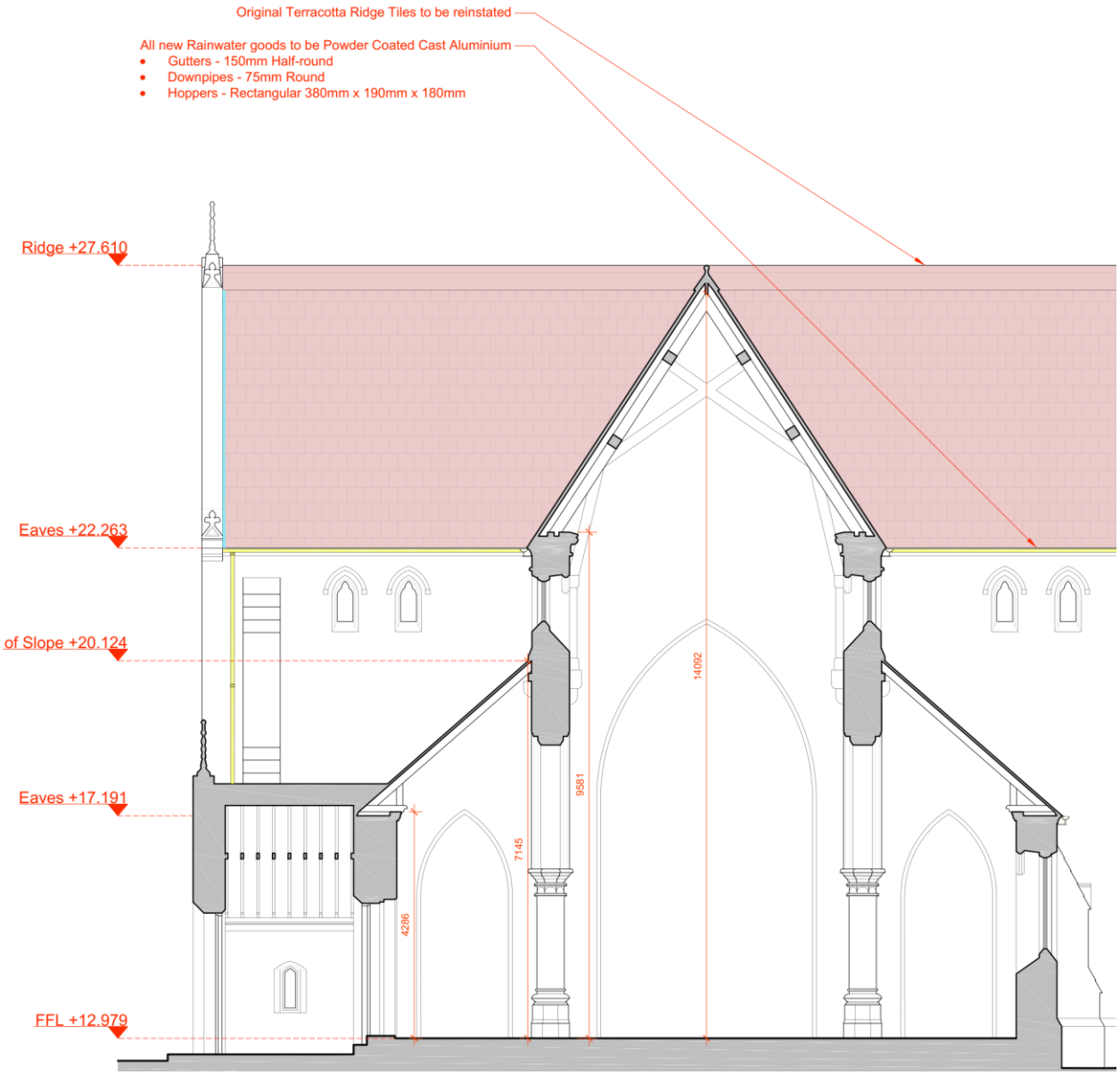
SECTIONS Opened for Condition Survey of Fabric of Roof

A3

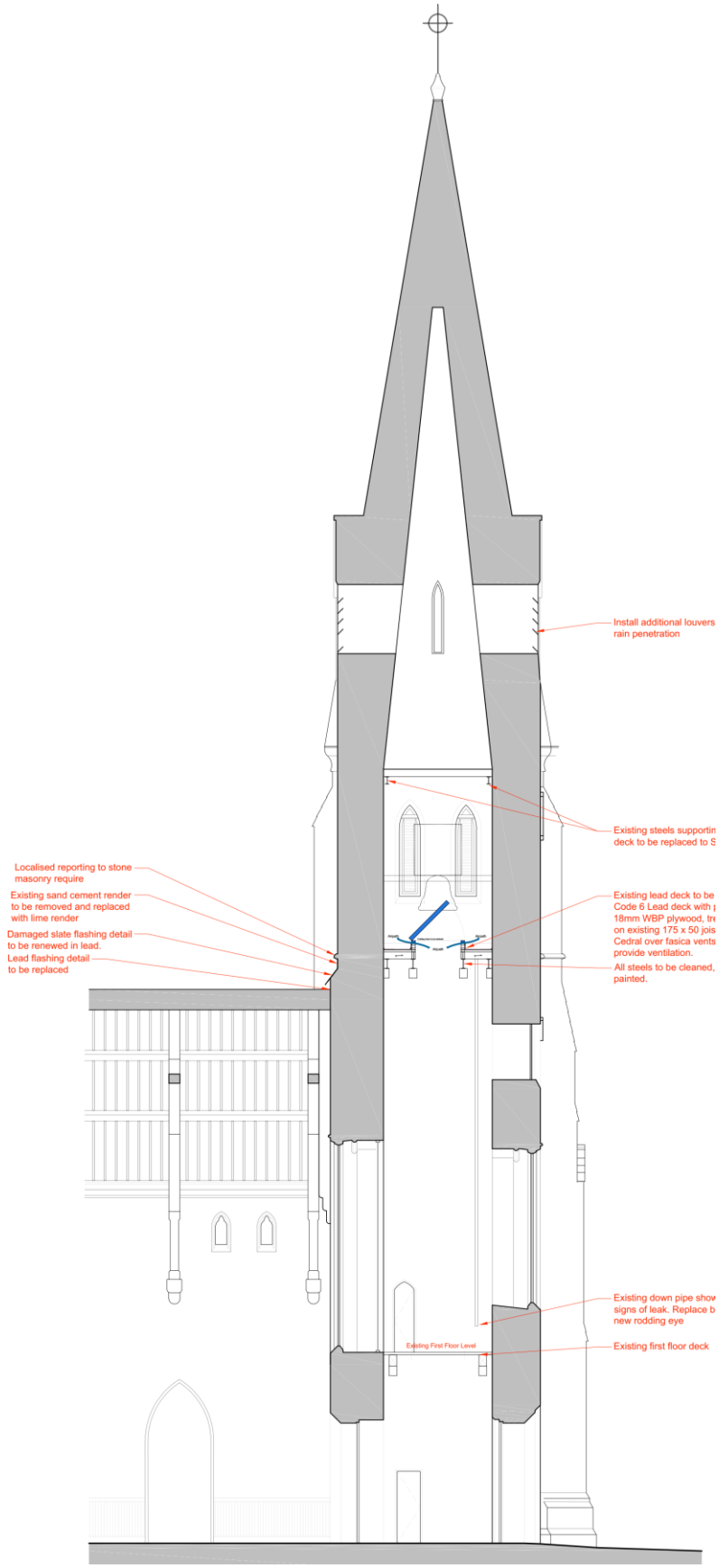


ROOF PLAN – refer to legend

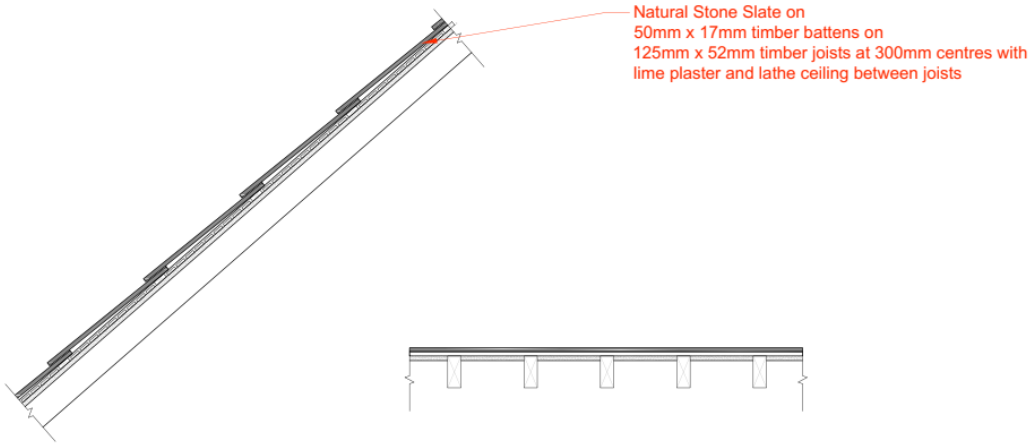
LEGEND



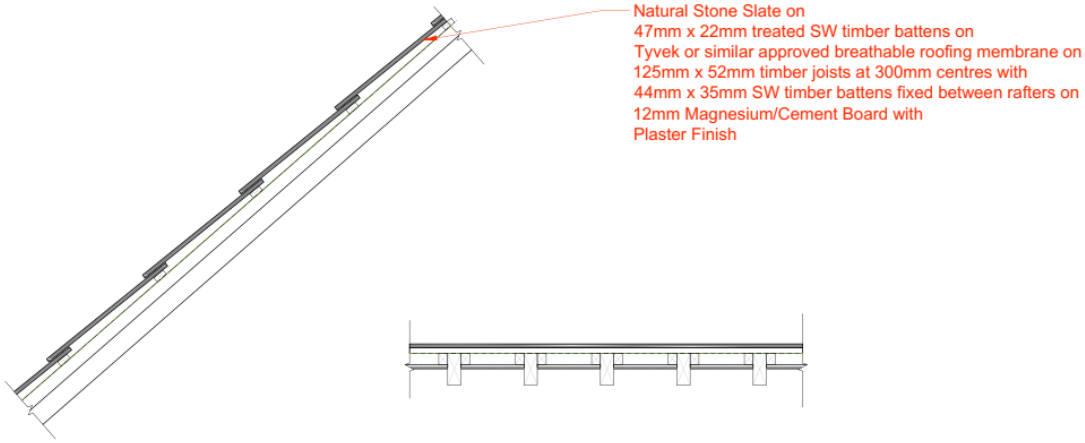
DETAILS of Works to Ridge and Rainwater Goods



PROPOSED Works to Spire/Tower

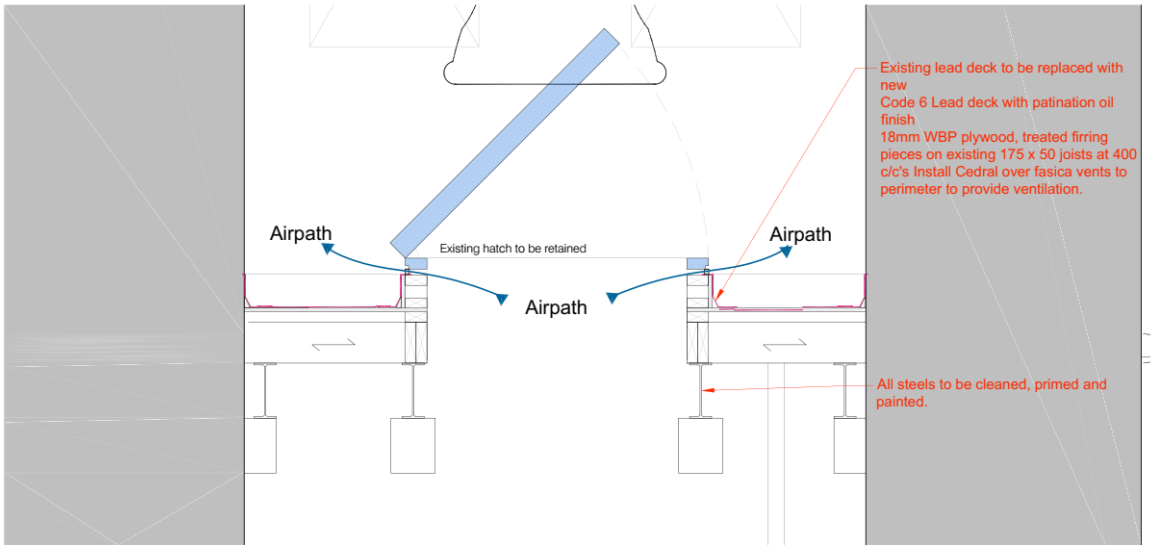


A - Existing Roof Build-up 1:20



B - Proposed Roof Build-up 1:20

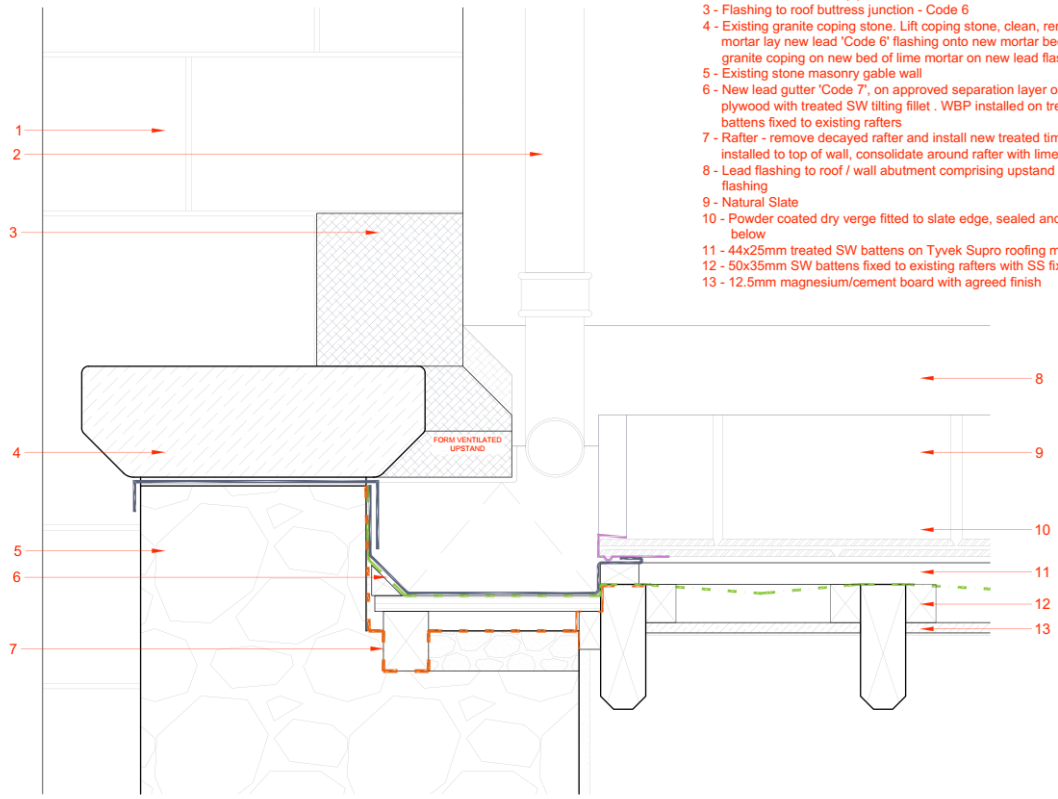
PROPOSED Alterations to Roof Build-Up



C - Proposed Replacement Lead Deck 1:20

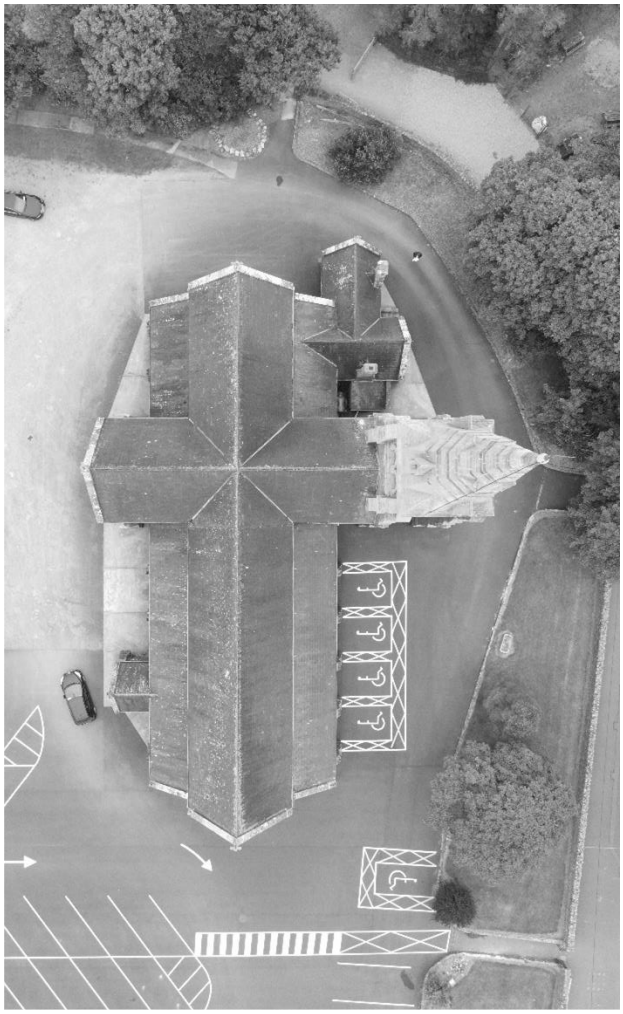
Outline Specification:

1 - Existing stone masonry (buttress)
2 - Cast aluminum downpipe from nave roof
3 - Flashing to roof buttress junction - Code 6
4 - Existing granite coping stone. Lift coping stone, clean, remove lime mortar lay new lead 'Code 6' flashing onto new mortar bed and relay granite coping on new bed of lime mortar on new lead flashing
5 - Existing stone masonry gable wall
6 - New lead gutter 'Code 7', on approved separation layer on 18mm WBP plywood with treated SW tilting fillet . WBP installed on treated SW battens fixed to existing rafters
7 - Rafter - remove decayed rafter and install new treated timber rafter on DPM installed to top of wall, consolidate around rafter with lime mortar
8 - Lead flashing to roof / wall abutment comprising upstand and counter flashing
9 - Natural Slate
10 - Powder coated dry verge fitted to slate edge, sealed and fixed to lead below
11 - 44x25mm treated SW battens on Tyvek Supro roofing membrane
12 - 50x35mm SW battens fixed to existing rafters with SS fixings
13 - 12.5mm magnesium/cement board with agreed finish



D - Proposed Lead Gutter Detail 1:5

PROPOSED Leadwork detail covering to Tower intermediate decking



Church of Our Lady of the Assumption and

St Laurence O'Toole

August 2025

25,044

Method Statement: proposed reroofing and works to associated fabric

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Conservation

Contents,

Revision Record

Section	Rev	Data	Summary of changes	By	Checked by

Introduction

This method statement has been prepared to identify the approach and methods to be used for the proposed reroofing and works to associated fabric at Church of Our Lady of the Assumption and St Laurence O'Toole, Rathangan, Co. Wexford.

Wexford Co. Co. Protected structure Ref no.: WCC0645 and NIAH Reg No. 15704636.

General purpose of the proposed works:

- The existing roof is suffering from leaks, damaged and falling lime parging and corroded metal slate fixings all of which are leading to the deterioration of historic fabric
    - Proposal: Re-roof the existing slate roofs to a new modern roof build-up while retaining original roof timbers. The proposed works are necessary to prevent water ingress and penetration into the building fabric effectively weathering the building for the next generation.
- Lead flashings (soakers & valleys) have cracked and failed in many locations. Counter flashings have not been installed to all necessary locations.
    - Remove aged, damaged, and compromised lead flashings and replace with new Lead to appropriate details and using the correct Code lead.
- New lead gutter detail to form dedicated rainwater run installed into the side aisle roofs to assist the rainwater running from the nave down to the side aisles and into the gutters. The introduction of this detail results in the installation of more typically sized gutters with additional downpipes avoiding the potential for inaccessible blockages in the future.
- Barge coping stones to gables have no DPC or lead detail beneath providing a barrier for water ingress through the coping stones and down into the external gable walls. There is no counter flashing to the slate roof flashing.
    - Lift barge coping stones and install lead flashings and counter flashing to roof to fully weather the slate roof to barge abutment detail
- Gutters are in urgent need of attention and seamless aluminum gutters have fallen from the roof in some locations. Incorrect rainwater goods have been installed to the church.
    - Replace all existing inappropriate gutters, hoppers, brackets, and downpipes, many of which are seamless aluminum. Replace with new half round powder coated cast aluminum rainwater goods complete with hoppers, brackets, downpipes, and toes.
- Rainwater gulleys are blocked and in need of attention.
    - Carry out maintenance to all rainwater gullies, shores and drains to ensure they are all free flowing into the existing public storm water system.
- Sand cement render has been installed at the spire/roof junction to the north west elevation; this non-breathable finish is effectively trapping moisture within the wall.
    - Remove inappropriate sand cement render and replace with new breathable lime render to agreed mix.

Outline of deteriorating fabric

Existing Slate roof:

Dip/sag in ridge to be investigated. Location: Nave - South West	
Photograph of corroded slate fixings. Evidence of considerable slipped slate due to corroded fixings. Location: Nave - South East	 
Slipped slate visible at valley junction. Location: Nave - South West	

Outline of deteriorating fabric

Slipped and missing slates visible at valley junction. Location: Nave - North West	 
Slipped and missing slates visible at valley junction. Location: Nave - North East	
Slipped slate visible projecting just above gutter. Location: Transept - South West	

Outline of deteriorating fabric

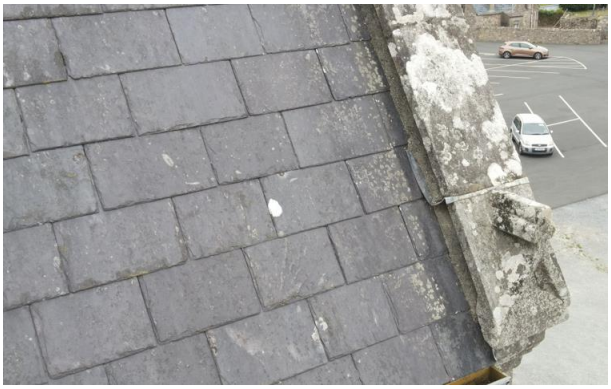
Slipped slate visible projecting just above gutter. Location: Transept - South West	
Slipped slate visible, screw type fixings visible used previously to secure loose slate. Location: Aisle - South East	
Screw type fixings visible used previously to secure loose slate and visible silicone sealant repairs to slate also visible. Downpipe discharges directly to slate roof. Location: Aisle - South West	
Ridge detail incomplete / weathering and lead detail insufficient. Location: Porch – West	

Outline of deteriorating fabric

Significant slipped slate adjacent to chimney. Location: Vestry – South	
Slipped slate adjacent to chimney along with broken gutter bracket. Location: Vestry – South	
Lime parging showing signs of significant rainwater ingress. Location: Ceiling Nave/Transept	 
	

Flashings & valleys:

Outline of deteriorating fabric

Slate drip flashing with sand cement render above Location: Transept - South East	
Sand cement pointing visible to rear face of barge coping stone above lead soaker. Location: Transept – North East	
Sand cement pointing visible to rear face of barge coping stone above lead soaker. Note: pointing eroded between coping stone. Cracked slate also visible Location: Transept – North West	 

Outline of deteriorating fabric

Sand cement pointing visible to rear face of barge coping stone above lead soaker. Location: Aisle - South West	
Broken slate, slipping visible with screw type fixings used previously to fix slate. Location: Aisle - South West	
Lightening strap has become disconnected and requires reinstatement and certification. Location: Transept - South East	
Asbestos slate visible on slate roof. Location: Boiler house roof	
Vegetation growing from the valley between eh vestry pitched roof and the pitched roof abutting the chimney. Location: Vestry West	

Outline of deteriorating fabric

Rainwater goods profiles as follows:

Seamless Ogee gutter and brackets visible Location: Porch Roof - West	
Broken slate visible, screw type fixings used previously to fix slate. Seamless aluminum gutter & downpipe visible. Location: Porch Roof - East	
Visible staining to slate roof due to compromised seamless aluminum gutter. Location: Porch Roof - East	

Valleys as follows:

Valley – blocked with vegetation and debris, new detail required. Location: Aisle - South East	
Outlet to blocked valley (above), new detail required. Staining visible to slate and vegetation visible to barge. Location: Vestry - North	
Seamless aluminum gutter and downpipe and evidence of an older corroded bracket. From the piece remaining it cannot be determined if it is original. Inappropriate bracket	

Repointing as follows:

Outline of deteriorating fabric

Granite roof detail to be repointed. Location: Stair Tower	
Condition of existing chimney to Vestry Location: Vestry - South	

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Conservation

Outline of deteriorating fabric

Belltower & Belfry as follows:

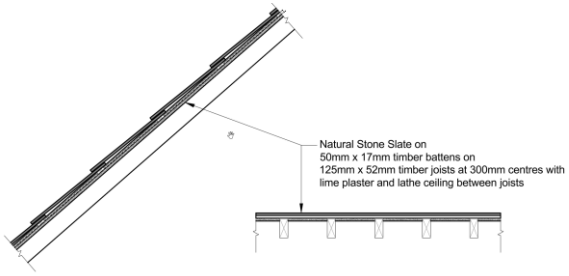
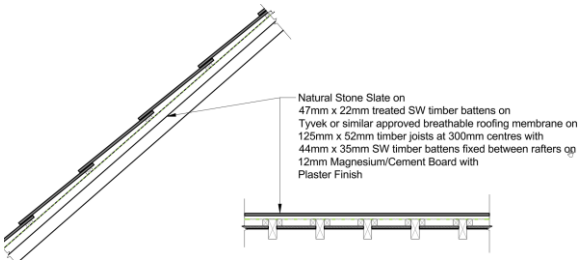
Stainless steel ladder providing access up to the bell deck where the fixings are corroded and require replacement. Location: Stair Tower	
Mild steel deck/landing to stainless steel ladder showing minor signs of corrosion Location: Bell tower	
Condition of existing steels and plywood supporting the belfry lead deck Location: Bell tower	

Condition of existing steels sporting the crash deck above the belfry Location: Bell tower	

Method Statement

Slate Roof (drawing ref: A-P-10-02 & details on A-P-40-01):

Existing and proposed roof build-ups:

Existing roof build up:	Proposed roof build up:
	
• Existing Welsh slate on • Timber battens with • Intermediate timber lathes on • Existing decorative exposed roof timber timbers and with • Painted lime parging/plaster to underside	• Proposed new slate on • 47x22mm treated softwood timber battens on • Breathable Tyvek Supro or equal approved on • Existing decorative exposed roof timber timbers with • 44 x 35mm timber battens fixed between rafters with 12mm magnesium/cement board with plaster and paint finish to underside

Works will only be carried out where the extent of the roof opened at any one time can be fully enclosed within the work day leaving a covered junction between the completed work and the existing roof. The church will be closed to the public for the duration of the works.

Removal of existing slate roof:

- Contractor to erect scaffolding with full edge protection, including debris netting and access ladders.
- Internally, pews to be relocated, works area to be cordoned off and polythene sheeting to be laid down to protect floor coverings
- During works Michael Tierney & MFA to carry out a photographic record of existing slates, timbers and internal finishes

- Contractor to carefully remove terracotta ridge tiles and slates, starting from the ridge and working downwards.
  - Slates to be carefully stacked and assessed for future reuse. If salvageable slates are to be graded and kept in pallets at ground level. Salvaged slate to be used on roofs to the vestry and boiler
  - Carefully remove timber battens and intermediate lathes
  - Lime Parging to be taken down from inside the building to avoid if dropping to the floor, hand tools to be used to avoid damage to decorative roof timbers. (samples of lime parging to be retained for review).

Inspection and Repair of Roof Structure

As the roof is being stripped the contractor will liaise with MFA and Marting Sweeney Consulting Engineers to conduct an inspection of all exposed roof timbers including wallplates, decorative rafters, ridge boards, truss, and purlins for decay, infestation, or physical damage.

From initial opening up works and investigations already carried out only minimal replacement of roof timbers will be required. We can expect minor replacements & repairs in areas where we are aware of moisture ingress, timbers affected are expected to be wallplates, valley boards and rafters where they are embedded within walls. From inspection all decorative timbers area in relatively good condition however close inspection as works progress will be required. In all cases the contractor will retain as much original timber as possible.

Repair techniques:

- Wallplate (dual wallplate arrangement):
  - Removal
    - Carefully unfix and lift rafters bearing onto the wall plate. Provide temporary support and provide temporary works design to architect. Do not remove more than manageable lengths at a time.
    - Remove decayed/damaged wall plate in sections,
    - Inspect masonry below wall plate for damage or instability, loose masonry to be consolidated as necessary.
  - Installation of new wallplate,
    - New treated wallplate timber to match species and size of original, splice new timber into original using a scarf joint to agreed detail, use stainless steel fixings.
    - Bed new wall plate on lime mortar bed (not cement).
    - Fix new wallplate to SE. details using stainless steel fixings

- Lower and re-fix rafters

- Rafters – (where embedded within walls)
  - Access each rafter, carefully lift and remove from wall all, access rafter where required splice new timber into original using a scarf joint to agreed detail, use stainless steel fixings.
  - Inspect all masonry around the embedded rafter, consolidate as required using lime mortar mix (to be agreed onsite)
  - Reinstate rafter on damp proof membrane and fix to SE details using stainless steel fixings.

- Valley boards – where required existing valley boards to be replaced with new Marine Grade Plywood (BS EN 636-3 and BS 1088)
- Splice repairs or like-for-like replacements to be completed using matching species where possible.

Installation of new Roof build-up

Prior to commencing of the new roof build up all decorative rafters and roof timbers require cleaning and washing down to remove dust and residue from works.

- Install intermediate ceiling support battens to the top of each rafter.
- Install breathable Tyvek Supro roofing membrane across rafters running along the roof starting at the bottom of the rafters while adhering to the overlaps as per the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Install treated timber battens across the rafters horizontally at a distance to suite the size of slates
- Install new natural slates fixed using stainless steel nails keeping to the original coursing, layout pattern with lap to suit slates. All new slate to match in size, colour, thickness, profile and finish the current slate to retain the original character of the church.
- Refix terracotta ridge tiles to original detail and point using lime mortar to agreed mix

Flashings and Valley's

- When removing the slate roof at junctions and abutments carefully remove lead flashings comprising of soakers, upstands and valleys.
- Carefully remove all sand-cement pointing without damaging adjacent masonry, use hand tools as required.
- Carefully rake out pointing to masonry joints where new lead soakers and flashings are to be installed, typically a minimum of 25mm deep.
- Reinstate new lead valleys on new WBP valley boards to agreed detail.
- Reinstate all lead upstands and flashings to agreed details and secure using lead wedges at max 450mm ctrs.
- Repoint joints using agreed mix

Coping stones:

- Carefully lift all coping stones, number each underside to indicate location
  - Carefully lift stone, clear backing and bedding mortar from existing stone, number and set aside for reuse,
  - Access all masonry beneath and consolidate masonry as required using lime mortar mix (to be agreed onsite)
  - Install new lead flashing
  - Relay coping stones on lime bedding mortar to new line using slate shims as necessary
  - New lead flashing for form new counter flashing to lead upstands from new slate roof

Replacement of existing Rainwater goods

The existing rainwater goods are not original and are a combination of seamless aluminium Ogee gutters with rectangular seamless aluminium downpipes and uPVC square downpipes. Brackets are corroded mild steel decorative brackets also not original and all require replacement.

Cast aluminium is considered an acceptable substitute for cast iron where there is certainty that the aluminium will not come in contact with cast Iron which it can be subject to galvanic corrosion. Heritage Cast Aluminium half round gutters with round downpipes and cast hoppers will be installed as alternative to the traditional cast iron. The gutter, hopper and downpipe sizes are as identified on drawing ref no. A-P-10-02. Brackets will also be cast aluminium, rise and fall half round.

Method of work:

- Clear and remove all plant material and debris from the rainwater goods (gutters, hoppers, downpipes and gulley traps) and associated lead flashings & dressings.
- Care to be taken to dismantle all gutters, note; there is a risk of sharp edges. Take each section down one by one ensuring they do not fall to the roof slopes below.
- Carefully remove all downpipes, bends/angles and toes.
- Carefully remove all downpipe and gutter brackets and associated fixings and repairs to masonry to be completed with lime mortar with a tamped brush finish. Lime mortar mix to be agreed.
- Install all new gutter and down pipe brackets following manufactures installation guidelines laid to falls and outlet locations as per drawing ref no: A-P-30-01, A-P-30-02 & A-P-30-03. Gutter brackets approx. 1-meter centres, care to be taken to adhere to tolerances, expansion gaps and the application of sealants.
- Install all new hoppers to downpipes. Ensure all leadwork is dressed down into new hoppers.

Repointing

- Repointing will be required to the following locations:
- Repointing to voids formed from the removal of existing fixings and brackets.
- Reporting to joints and tracks formed to accept new lead flashings and lead wedges
- Consolidation as required to masonry which is uncovered throughout the works
- Barge coping stones (bedding on new lead flashings and granite stone to stair tower roof)
- Terracotta ridge tiles

Method of work:

- Remove all ferrous fixings, brackets, vegetation and clean all stone masonry.
- Rake and brush out old, loose and decayed mortar bedding/pointing between the stones to a depth that is twice the width of the joint. Defective bedding or jointing to be replaced with a new lime:sand mortar, to agreed mix.
- Point up with lime mortar finished to slightly reveal arises keeping the work clean to prevent staining.
- Consolidation - any replacement stone shall have a rock-faced surface to match existing stonework. Reset stone using lime mortar to new line in lime mortar as specified using slate shims as necessary. Avoid damage to arises and surfaces of adjacent stonework.
- Coping stones: repoint all joints with lime mortar finished to slightly reveal arrises keeping the work clean to prevent staining.
- All surface finishing shall be of the same finish to match existing adjacent stonework.
- All surface finishing shall be done using hand tools.

Lime Render

Sand cement renders to be removed from localised area at North West Facade of the belltower.

Method of work:

- Access the masonry for moisture and or the presence of salts, allow wall to dry if necessary
- Consolidate any loose material and repoint stonework as required
- Prepare new lime render mix using NHL 3.5, well graded sharp washed sand at 3:1 sand to lime ratio (to be agreed onsite). Aggregates to match size and colour of existing adjacent render.
- Build up render using a 10-15mm base coat, a 7-10mm second coat (allow to cure for 7-10 days and protect from adverse weather and drying out using wetted hessian).
- Finally apply 3-5mm finish coat, texture to match existing adjacent render.

Replacing corroded metal elements and repair to timber floor decks

Investigations to date have identified a number of metal elements internally which require attention, as follows:

1. The main floor bell tower floor deck has signs of decay due to rainwater ingress, in part caused by a leaking downpipe (see point 5 below) and therefore the deck requires repair and the replacement of timbers. All new timbers to be treated and to match size of existing timbers. New timbers to be set back to avoid direct contact with masonry.
2. Belfry access ladder, stainless steel fixed to external wall with ferrous fixings: significantly corroded. These fixings require removal and replacement with Stainless steel chemical anchor fixings to SE approval. The replacement of these fixings should be carried out prior to undertaking works described below.
3. Mild steel landing to stainless steel belfry ladder showing signs of corrosion. The landing is not galvanized and remains unprimed/painted. Landing to be cleaned with wire brush and painted with an approved epoxy primer and a 2-pack epoxy topcoat.
4. The plywood deck beneath the lead floor to the belfry is showing signs of deterioration, quite possibly due to the buildup of condensation caused by a lack of ventilation. The plywood deck has become saturated and has undoubtedly been structurally weakened. Repair as follows:

- Remove lead,
- Remove plywood deck,
- Treat all exposed timbers,
- Install new 18mm WBP plywood deck using stainless steel screws forming new ventilated upstand detail as per drawing ref no. A-P-40-02.
- Reinstall lead to deck, and reinstall all flashing upstands. Install new counter flashing to approved detail

5. Heavily corroded steel beams supporting the crash deck above the belfry require replacement. They are currently embedded into the external walls. The exact method of work is to be agreed onsite with design team consultants. Contractor to prepare a method statement and risk assessment prior to under taking works.
6. Downpipe – existing downpipe running down through the bell tower is showing signs of a leak and possibly a blockage. New rodding point bend to be installed on PVC downpipe to allow for maintenance to be carried out to remove any future blockages.

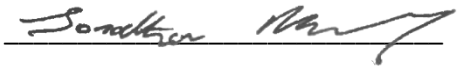
Additional items

A simple stainless steel cage enclosure to be supplied and installed to the existing bell motor. Cage to be lockable and removable to facilitate maintenance to the bell motor.

Rainwater gulley traps and drains

As part of this work all rainwater gullies, shores and drains will be opened, cleaned, and flushed through to ensure that they are in good working order. Any damaged elements will be replaced. All cast iron gratings will be cleaned and repainted using the methodology identified above.

It is a requirement that the works and workmanship in their entirety should accord with the DOEHLG guidelines and best conservation practice.

Signed 

Jonathan J. Murphy MRIAI, Conservation Architect (RIAI) - Grade III

For and on behalf of **Mahon | Fox Architects**

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