

PRELIMINARY INSPECTION  
OF ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH  
CLERIHAN, CLONMEL, CO. TIPPERARY  
PROTECTED STRUCTURE REF. NO. S.141  
SUMMARY REPORT



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**SUMMARY REPORT**

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**A. INTRODUCTION**

I visited the Church briefly on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2018 when I met Fr. Brady and Members of the Building Committee.

I superficially viewed the Building and attic space and accepted instructions to undertake a more complete Visual Inspection.

From the initial walk-through it was evident that leaks; Dampness and Damp Related Defects, Timber Defects, Woodworm and Asbestos Containing Materials appeared to be present. It was also evident that the Church needs improved ventilation and that the Mechanical and Electrical Installations need major upgrading.

On 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018 I visited the Church with Jerry Geaney, Building Services Consultant and we undertook a Visual Inspection.

Visits to take measurements for preparation of the attached Drawings followed.

I set out my Summary Report and Recommendations.

**B. PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Because of the age of the Building and of alterations/repairs which have been undertaken over the years, a Pre-Demolition/Refurbishment Asbestos Survey will be required.
- Extensive dampness is evident in the Building and there is visible evidence of damp related damage to some timbers, and evidence of woodworm.  
Those would be assessed by a Specialist in timber and damp related defects, whose recommendations would be adopted in the Conservation/Restoration Works.  
While the Proposed Works will, in the main, comprise Conservation Repair and some upgrading, some minor Alterations are being considered.
- The Main Entrance Porch may be enlarged (by repositioning the inner screen and incorporating the Store Room on the South side).  
That would allow for better transition from outside to inside and would provide an opportunity to improve draught proofing and ventilation.

## **C. NOTES FROM PRELIMINARY INSPECTION**

### **C.1 ROOFS AND CEILINGS**

- While the line of the main roof looks reasonable in most areas, there is a very significant dip in the ridge of the North Transept. That will need to be rectified in the course of the Works.
- Slating looks poor on the North slope of the Nave and on the North Transept. Elsewhere it appears moderate.
- All of the valleys are leaking and will need to be stripped back, re-formed and re-lined.
- There is extensive cracking in the ceiling throughout the Church. There is also significant staining over the Sanctuary and adjacent areas, resulting from leaking valleys where the Nave and Transepts meet.
- Attic insulation is minimal and is poor.
- Woodworm is evident in roof timbers.
- It is also evident that the roof is not original and might be about 60 years old. (The walls have been built up at the gables and the sides and there is sarking felt under the battens).
- There is a lean-to slated roof over the Confessional where it projects beyond the North wall of the Nave.
- The flat roofs over the Lobbys and the Sacristy and Ancillary Areas, the Boiler House and the Store, appear to be of concrete and do not appear to be insulated.

As part of any Remedial Work we recommend that they be treated, insulated and covered with a durable membrane system.

The Lantern Light over the Sacristy needs repair/overhaul and re-glazing or replacement.

- Repairs to and partial replacement of fascias, soffits, rainwater goods etc.; would form part of the Recommended Work of Repair and Upgrading.

## C.2 WALLS AND PARTITIONS

- The walls of the Transepts, and the West gable of the Nave are, approx.. 600mm thick and appear to comprise stone masonry rendered and dashed externally and plastered and painted internally.  
In the course of the major renovations (60 years ago approx.?) they were built-up to receive the new roof.
- The side walls of the Nave are thinner (350mm approx.) and incorporate piers/Buttresses at approx. 2.9M centres.  
They were probably built on old rising walls as part of the major alterations and comprise blockwork or mass concrete.
- The walls of the Sacristy and Toilets; the Lobbys/Stairwell on each side, are approx. 350mm thick, rendered and painted externally and plastered and painted internally.
- The West gable is very damp. This could have caused damage to timbers in the Gallery.
- Cracks are visible on the gable wall at the Main Entrance notably where blockwork meets the stone masonry of the Bell Tower.
- The Bell has seized and will need to be overhauled/restored as part of the Refurbishment Works.
- The partitions at the Entrance Porch/Stairwell and Store are of timber and the partitions to Toilets appear to comprise blockwork or mass concrete.
- There is significant distortion of the Reredos, at high level, where the upper section has deflected and appears to have moved forward. It will need to be secured in position as part of the Works.
- I recommend that, in the course of Repairing and Upgrading the Building, the external walls should be insulated.

On walls of blockwork (or concrete) conventional systems can be used.

On the original walls, (stone masonry), a breathable system will be needed.

- The Bell Tower is cracked. Render needs to be hacked-off, flashings and counter flashings replaced, and cracks repaired. It then needs to be re-rendered and painted.

### **C.3 FLOORS, STAIRS AND GALLERIES**

The Ground Floor comprises a mix of timber and concrete (tiled floor to Nave, with timber flooring at each side, and possibly older tiled flooring under carpet in Sanctuary).

- Timber floors in the Transepts, carpeted.
- Concrete floors in Entrance Porch and adjoining rooms and in the Lobbys/Stairwell, the Sacristy and Ancillary Areas.
- The tiled concrete floors are unlikely to have a damp-proof membrane. They need to be left uncovered. The tiles that have been carpeted over need to be exposed for inspection. New floors might be considered in those areas.
- The concrete floor at the Main Entrance is damp. This may be the result of a poor threshold detail and poorly fitting doors.  
There are old tiles on the floors of the Stairwell and Store on either side.
- The timber floors in the Transepts need to be investigated.
- Stairs are of timber. The Stairs to Choir Gallery is not covered but has a plant-on at the edge of each step and may have been covered previously.
- The Stairs to the other Galleries are also of timber and are carpeted.  
Woodworm is evident in that Stairs and in the Statue plinth in the Storage Area.  
The floor to the Choir Gallery is of timber, covered in carpet tiles and appears sound.
- All of the Galleries appear sound, but timbers abutting or built-in to damp walls may have been damaged by dampness. We recommend that they be investigated further and the appropriate conservation measures can then be decided.
- The Balustrading to each Gallery will need to be raised or protected by a glazed screen to act as guarding.
- Soffits to Galleries appear to comprise hardboard. They need to be removed and replaced with fireline slabbing.

### **C.4 WINDOWS, EXTERNAL DOORS AND FRAMES**

- The windows to the Lobbys/Stairwells are of timber, single glazed.  
They are in very poor condition and need to be replaced.  
The stained-glass windows in the Nave appear in good condition. The frames will need preparation, repair and repainting.
- The storm glazing will need to be refitted or replaced to allow improved ventilation.

- The window in the West wall of the North transept appears original and will need to be overhauled and repaired.
- The other windows on the Transepts are mainly stained glass in timber and the framing needs some repair.
- External doors are of hardwood.  
The Main Entrance doors need to be replaced or substantially remade and fitted with draught seals and a new threshold detail.  
Other doors need overhaul and need to be fitted with draught seals.

#### **C.5 INTERNAL DOORS & FRAMES**

- Inner Entrance Doors and frames are of hardwood with glazed upper panels.
- Other internal doors and frames are panelled doors in painted timber.
- The inner Entrance Screen would be repositioned and altered/extended to suit its new position.

#### **C.6 MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS**

The Mechanical and Electrical Installations will need substantial upgrading.

Recommended Works will include the following:

##### **Mechanical**

- Replace the Oil Tank with a Bunded Tank (positioned away from the Building).
- The Boiler installation needs upgrading. The asbestos cement flue to be removed and replaced with a twin-wall insulated flue.
- Radiators and pipework will need to be replaced as part of the overall Refurbishment.

##### **Electrical**

- The Electrical Installation needs substantial upgrading. Recommended Works include re-wiring to serve new Distribution, Lighting, Power, Emergency Lighting, Fire Detection and Alarm System, Intruder Alarm, External Lighting etc. Automation of some doors will also be included.

## C.7 EXTERNAL WORKS

The concrete yard to the North of the Church is at or close to floor level.

Along the South side a lower path/channel edged with a low retaining wall was provided. That reduced the risk of damp penetration but means that the Lobby is approached by steps and the channel is below the adjoining macadam.

The enclosed yard area in the North East corner outside the Sacristy needs to be thoroughly cleaned out, drained and surfaced and edged with drainage channel.

The screen wall and enclosure to Tower, on the roadside boundary of that yard needs to be repaired, capped and re-rendered or reduced in height, capped and fitted with a railing. The access door and frame are in poor condition and should be replaced.

Cleaning of yards and paths and replacement of some sections; Improving drainage around the building where ground level is above floor level etc.

Attachments: Drawings Nos. 1-6 inclusive

Photographs





GENERAL VIEWS





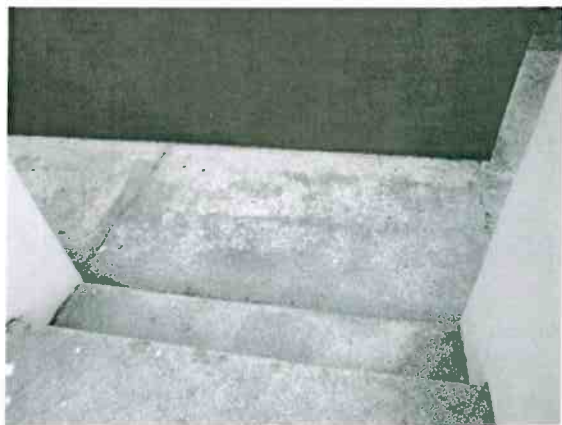
High Paving Level on North Side



Channel on South Side



Lobby Windows Poor



Steps to Doorway



Trailing cable



Visible Deflection in Roof of North Transept  
Slating Moderate Concrete Flat roofs may be  
uninsulated



Slating looks poor on North slope



Walls built up in blockwork



Boundary Wall needs repair



External doorset to Sacristy poor  
Yard needs to be cleaned and surfaced



Repositioning of inner entrance screen should be considered



Deflection in Recess evident



Trailing cables on Choir Gallery

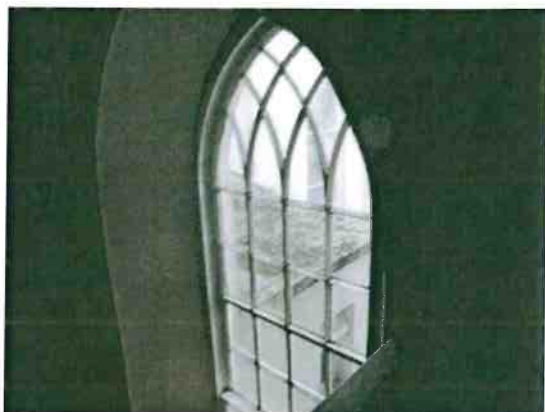
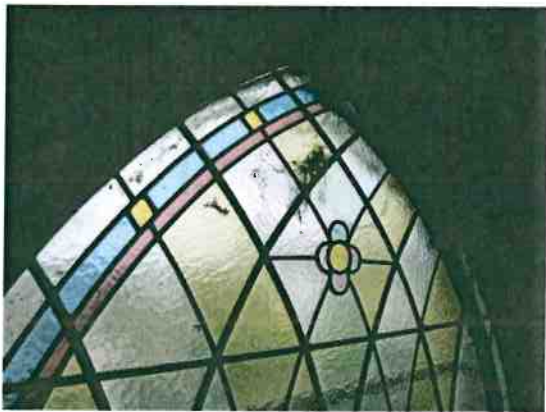




Floors could be damp under carpet



Old tiled floor



Window to be overhauled and retained



Stained glass needs cleaning  
Some frames need repairing and replacing  
Storm glazing needs to be considered





Front Door in poor condition  
Rain getting in also



Dampness in walls



Soffits to Galleries to be replaced



Lantern light in Sacristy



Dampness evident



Poor window in Lobby/Stairwell