

PROPOSED LIBRARY AT
UNITS 8 & 9, THE VILLAGE CENTRE,
CLANE CO. KILDARE

CONSERVATION REPORT

1. PROTECTION STATUS

The subject building is not a Protected Structure, but it adjoins the site of the Catholic Church of Saint Patrick and Saint Brigid, which is a Protected Structure on the Register of Protected Structures in the Kildare County Development Plan (Ref B14-61), and is also listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH), ref 11808007. The NIAH designates the church building, constructed in 1880, as of Architectural, Artistic, Historical, Social and Technical Interest.

The subject building directly adjoins the stone boundary wall of the Church grounds, and also adjoins the historic belfry at the rear of the site.

The NIAH Description of the significance of the church building is as follows;

Detached seven-bay single-and two-storey Gothic Revival Catholic church, c.1880, comprising seven-bay double-height nave with seven-bay single-storey lean-to aisles to north-west and south-east, single-bay single-storey gabled lower projecting bays to north-east and to south east (including sacristy projection), and entrance bay to south-west. Gable-ended (gable-fronted) roof with slate (behind parapet to gables)(lean-to to side aisles; gabled to projecting bays). Clay ridge tiles. Red clay ridge tiles to projecting bays. Cut-stone coping to gables with cross finials to apexes. Cast-iron rainwater goods on cut-stone eaves band. Coursed snecked limestone walls. Cut-limestone dressings including stepped clasping buttresses with triangular finials. Cut-limestone parapet walls to gables. Paired lancet-arch window openings to side aisles (grouped (four) over entrance to south-west). Cut-stone surrounds. Fixed-pane windows (some with stained glass fittings). Cinquefoil windows to clere-storey (and over entrances to side aisles) in cut-stone medallion surrounds. Fixed-pane windows.

Traceried (five-light) window to chancel (north-east) with cut-stone surround having hood moulding over. Decorative rose window over entrance to south-west in lancet-arch frame comprising series of cinquefoil windows with cut-limestone frames. Pointed-arch door openings. Cut-limestone surrounds. Cut-stone voussoirs. Diagonal tongue-and-groove timber panelled doors. Set back from road in own grounds. Tarmacadam forecourt to front. Freestanding belfry, c.1880 to south west comprising cut-stone plinth with cast-iron bell over. Gateway, c.1880, to south-west comprising pair of cast-iron panelled piers with cast-iron gates and railings having rendered outer piers.

Appraisal

Saints Patrick and Brigid's Church is a fine and imposing building in a severe Gothic Revival style. The church, which is set slightly back from the line of Main Street, Clane, is nevertheless an imposing feature in the locality, being the largest structure in the town, and dominates its surroundings. The entrance (south-west) front, although pierced by numerous openings including the finely detailed rose window, presents an austere façade to the street line, and is attractively framed by the school to the south-east and further buildings to the north-west. The construction of the church in cut-stone is a fine example of the high quality of stone masonry practised in the locality, and this is especially apparent in the detailing, including intricate surrounds to the window openings, door openings, and so on. The scale and detailing of the church confirm the social importance of the building in Clane and attests to the growing confidence of the Catholic community in the late nineteenth century. The retention of important early salient features to the exterior suggests that the original interior may remain intact – stained glass panels of artistic importance are incorporated in the window openings. The belfry to south-west is of some technical interest and retains its original mechanisms. The church is announced on the main street by a fine and decorative gateway, of artistic interest, that is a good example of early cast-iron work.

2 PROPOSED WORKS

The building has been in use as a childcare centre and adjoining furniture showrooms for many years. The elevational treatment of the building is very basic, with limited ground-floor windows and doors, and a predominant finish of metal sheeting. The area at the front of the building is tarmacadamed and used for car-parking.

It is now proposed to convert the building to a public library. The works proposed will require the removal of the first-floor / mezzanine accommodation, elimination of the dividing wall between the existing units, construction of a rear extension to accommodate a multi-purpose meeting room, and further internal partition walls to accommodate the required administrative offices, stores, toilets and kitchen facilities.

The front elevation of the library is to be comprehensively altered, to include a large glazed area, in front of which will be a corten-steel canopy and frame to form the entrance of the library. This frame will designate a re-paved area as a civic space free from cars and used as an outdoor adjunct to the library space, and for certain library and arts-focussed activities. It will also provide a secure space for bicycle parking.

The rear extension will also feature a glazed area, opening up a view to the historic belfry in the adjoining grounds of the church from the adjoining garden.

3 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Due to the current volume of the building, and the earlier works which have already taken place, the range of impacts to the adjoining Protected Structure envisaged as a consequence of the proposed conversion to a public library is very limited, as follows;

1. Installation of Corten framework at entrance forecourt.

The proposed framework, which will be 600mm higher than the boundary wall of the church, will not be attached to any part of the Protected Structure, and in practical terms will not be visible to churchgoers. The creation of the civic space associated with the framework will enhance the view at the rear of the church, and increase its visibility.

Heritage Impact ; Positive

2. New glazed elevation to existing building.

The large expanse of glazing proposed for the library will enable and promote views into the library, and also outwards, enabling the adjoining church building to be better appreciated, and create a visual connection between the adjoining public buildings.

Heritage Impact ; Positive

3. Extension at rear of the library building

The proposed extension, which will provide meeting and activities facilities for the Library, will provide a view to the Belfry at the rear of the site, which hitherto had been hidden from public view.

Heritage Impact ; Positive



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FOR DEATON LYSAGHT ARCHITECTS**

ENCLOSED;

Appendix 1 HISTORIC MAPS

Appendix 2 PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY

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Figure 1 'The Barony of Claine in the County of Kildare' c. 1654-7, (north to left)



Figure 2 Ordnance Survey, Kildare, sheet 14, 1836-39

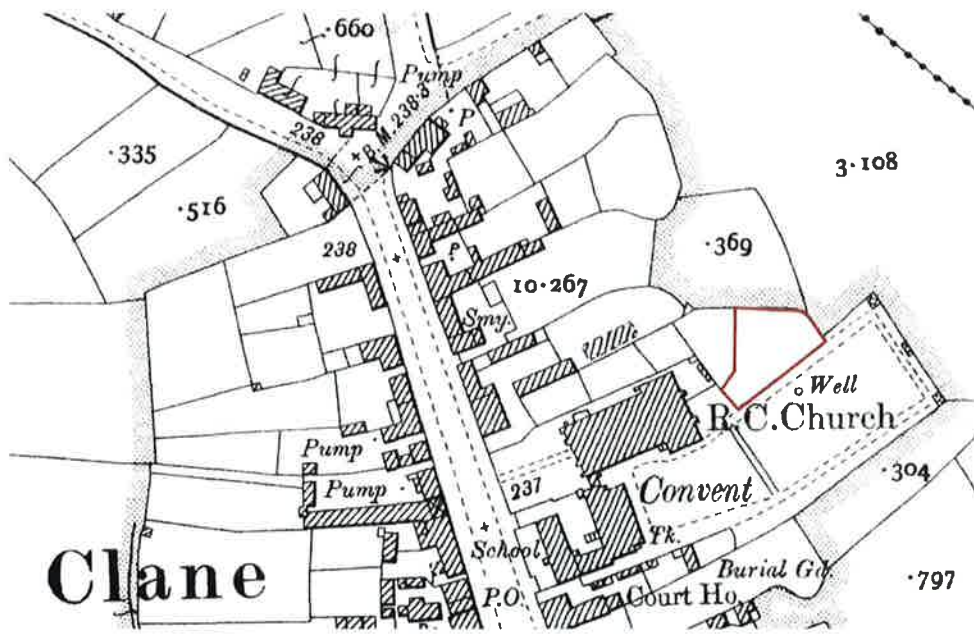


Figure 3 Ordnance Survey, KE014-06, 1908-10

Appendix 2 PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY



Figure 1 View from Main Street, Clane



Figure 2 View from the garden, Unit 8&9, The Village Centre, Clane



Figure 3 View from the end of the car park, The Village Centre, Clane



Figure 4 View from the car park, The Village Centre, Clane