



PLANNING REPORT

ST KINNETH'S CHURCH Ballivor, County Meath

de Blacam and Meagher ARCHITECTS

JANUARY 2021



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1.0 Introduction

1.1	Name and Address of Structure	St Kinneth's Church Main Street Ballivor County Meath
1.2	Introduction	

St Kinneths Church closed as a place of worship in 1990. It was acquired by Meath County Council in 2004 with a view to restoring it for use by the local community. The purpose of the current scope of proposed works, subject of this application, is to carry out necessary repairs to the building fabric and to install new services into the building to facilitate its use by the community. The proposed works will comprise:

- a) Change of use from deconsecrated church to community building.
- b) Construction of a new accessible toilet, office and tea station within the church.
- c) Installation of a new insulated floor slab.
- d) Repair and restoration works to stained glass windows, roofs, ceilings, stairs and joinery.
- e) New mechanical and electrical services including underfloor heating.
- f) Associated site works and landscaping.

The building is a Protected Structure, and as such, the proposed works are designed to be discreet and retain the special characteristics of the existing building, while introducing the new services necessary to bring the building back into use.

The building is for community use and would be open for use throughout the day. It is anticipated that much of its use would be in the evening.

It is envisaged that following community engagement, a further phase of works will be proposed. These future works would be to fit out the interior to suit the particular function(s) for which the local community wish the building to be used.



Aerial photograph

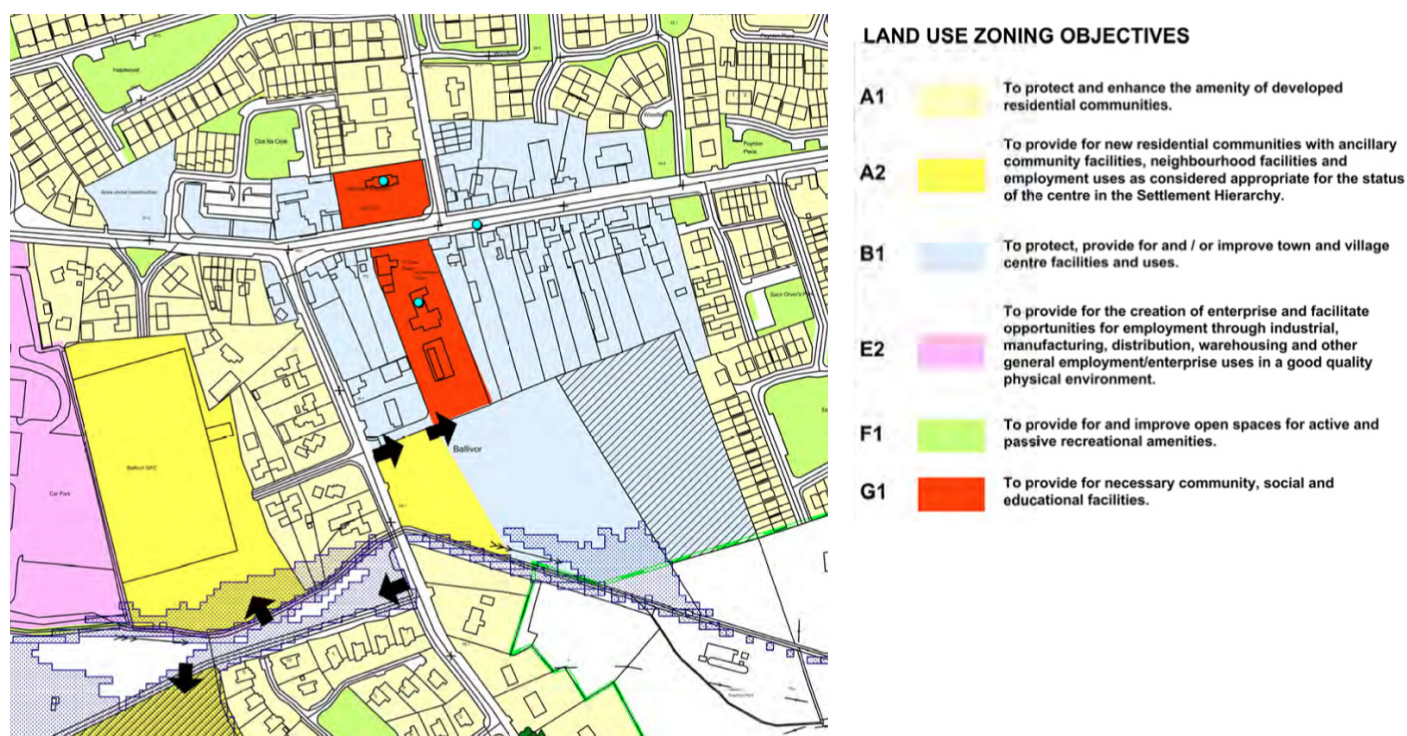
2.0 Planning Context and Planning History

St Kinneths is zoned G1 in the County Development Plan, “*To provide for necessary community, social and educational facilities*”.

As such its proposed use as a Community Building is considered an appropriate use for the building. This is further supported by the building’s key central location in Ballivor.

The building is a Protected Structure, Ref. MH035-102.

There are no live Planning Permissions relating to the building. The only previous application of note was for permission to convert and extend the church for use as a community centre and library, which was granted permission in 2008. None of the proposed works associated with this application were carried out.



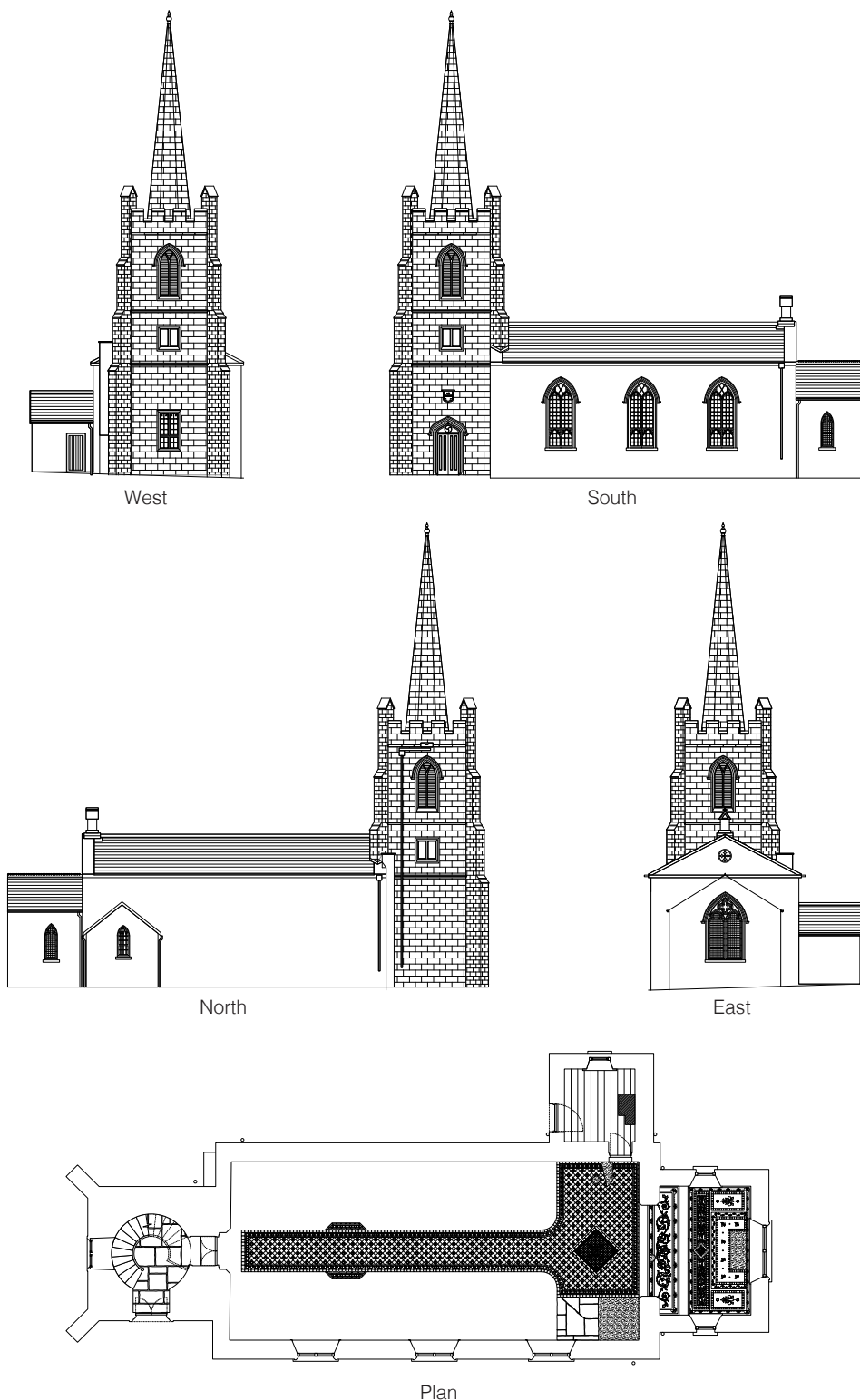
Extract from Development Plan map, Ballivor

3.0 Conservation

St Kinneths is a Protected Structure, Ref. MH035-102.

The village of Ballivor developed around a Royal Irish Constabulary barracks built in the early 1800s, located at a crossroads midway between Trim and Raharney. As the village grew, it was decided to build a new church to serve it. The original church, built in 1821, consisted of a tower and nave (the vestry and chancel being later additions). It follows a typical design for Board of First Fruits churches of the time, with a square tower to the west and a simple rectangular nave with three windows on the south wall, a single window to the east and a blank wall to the north. The plan of the tower is of note, being square on the outside and circular on the inside. It has a stone spire (one of only six Board of First Fruits churches to have a spire) which is hexagonal in plan, tapering up to a point.

An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared to accompany this application. The proposed works are informed by this report and are designed to respect the character of the Protected Structure.



4.0 Site Services

Surface Water Drainage

The existing building has pitched roofs draining to cast iron gutters and downpipes around the perimeter of the building. These discharge into existing gulleys and drainage channels which in turn lead to soakaways within the existing church grounds. The system is functioning, with no reports of surface water or drainage issues associated with the site.

As no works are proposed which will alter the existing surface water drainage from the building, it is proposed to retain the existing surface water drainage system as it is, with no change to the existing system.

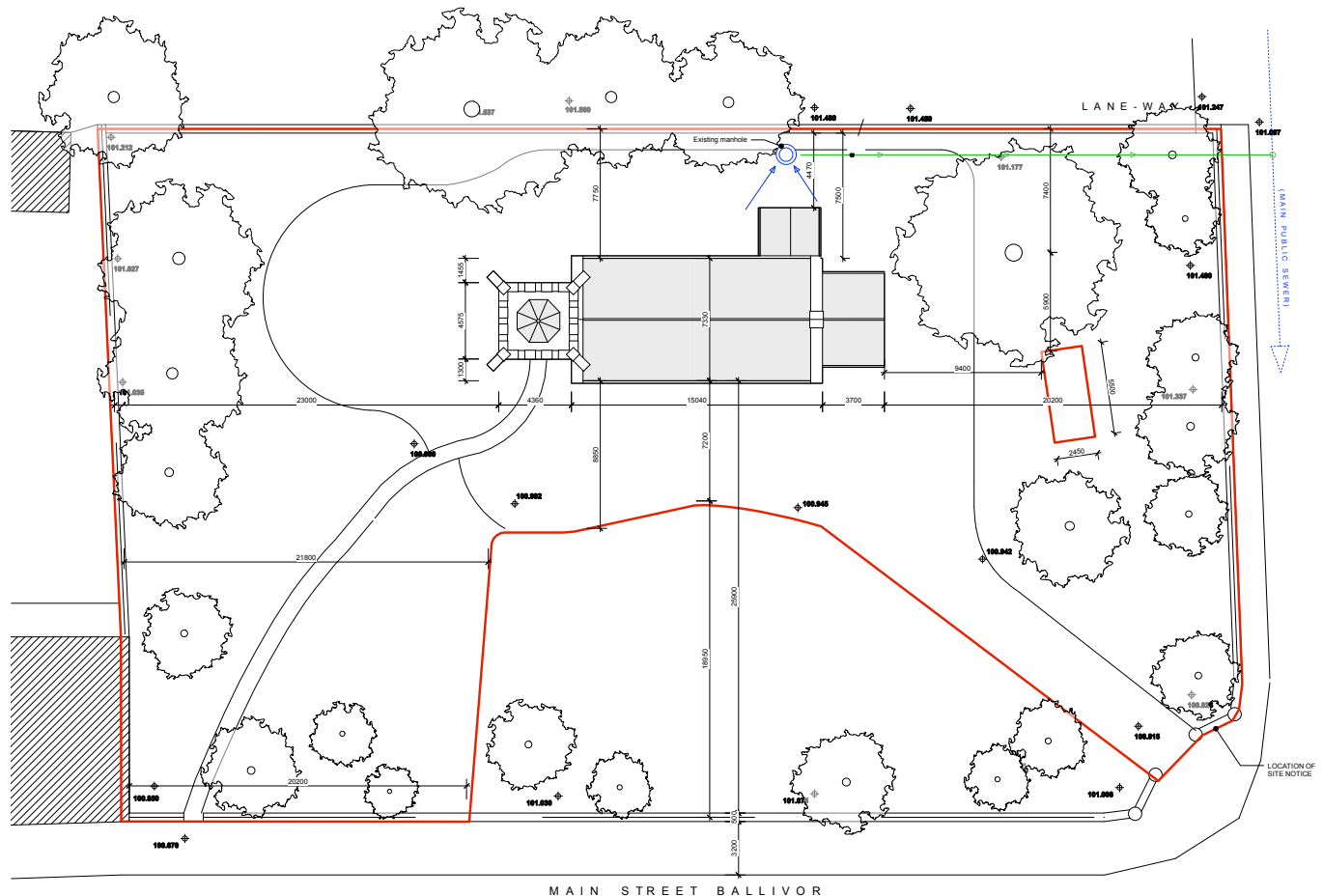
Foul Drainage

Existing foul drainage is to the north of the church, with an existing 150mm pvc foul line which connects to the public sewer on the Athboy Road to the east of the site. This terminates at a manhole directly to the north of the Vestry. There are currently no toilets in the building and the tea station which previously discharged to this drain has been removed.

It is proposed to install 1 no. accessible toilet and 1 no. tea station as part of the proposed works. These would connect below ground to the existing manhole. All works would take place within the site, with no requirement for a new connection to the public sewer.

Irish Water

The building has an existing water supply which is adequate for its needs.



5.0 Mobility and Transport

The building is located on the main street in Ballivor. Pedestrian access to the site is via a main gate on the corner of Main Street and the Athboy Road and a second, smaller pedestrian gate at the south west corner of the site, on Main Street. While vehicles can enter the site from the gate on the corner, this is for service access only and there is no on-site car parking. Bus services run on Main Street, stopping directly outside the site.

The existing building is a church (a Protected Structure), which closed for use in 1990. It is now owned by Meath County Council and this application seeks a change of use to a Community Building. The building will be for use of up to fifty people at any one time (this being the maximum capacity under Fire Safety Regulations based on the existing fire exit widths of the building)

As the proposed use is for a Community Building to serve the local community, it is envisaged that the majority of people will arrive by foot or bicycle and this will be encouraged. As noted above, the building is also served by the local bus route.

There is no car parking on the site and none is proposed. The existing grounds are a graveyard around a Protected Structure, and therefore not appropriate to be converted to car parking. There is existing car parking on both sides of Main Street directly outside the site. As there is likely no increase in the volume of traffic arriving at the building from when it was a church, this is considered adequate in this instance.

Access to the grounds for construction and future servicing works is via the existing gate on the corner of Main Street and the Athboy Road. This is the only access to the site with the remaining sides enclosed by historic (Protected) walls. Necessary Traffic Management procedures will be put in place to ensure that construction traffic can enter and exit the grounds in a safe manner.



Aerial Photo



Street View showing existing car parking on Main Street

6.0 Fire Safety and Disability Access

The Fire Authority has been consulted to review the proposals. A Fire Safety Certificate Application is being prepared and will be submitted shortly.

A Disability Access Certificate will also be required for the change of use. A new accessible toilet is proposed as part of the works. The new works will be designed to be accessible, to the extent reasonable within the confines of working within an existing Protected Structure. This has been considered and will be addressed in the Disability Access Certificate Application.

7.0 Conclusion

The proposed change of use from deconsecrated church to Community Building is in line with Development Plan zoning *"To provide for necessary community, social and educational facilities"*.

The proposed change of use and associated works will bring a currently vacant building back into use by the local community. This is considered to be a positive intervention which will bring this prominent building on the Main Street of Ballivor back into public use.

As the building has always had a public use (previously a church) it is submitted that this proposal will not impact adversely in terms of traffic or drainage services. It is consistent with Development Plan policy to consolidate village centres, sustain and enhance community facilities and to promote facilities such as this close enough to residential areas so that people can walk or cycle to them easily.



St Kinneths, Ballivor