

ST. CATHERINE'S CHURCH

Thomas Street, Dublin 2

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

for

The Nehemiah committee

December 2016



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta  
The Heritage Council



Working for heritage | Working with communities



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Conservation and Management Plan was commissioned by the Nehemiah Committee of St. Catherine's Church, Thomas Street, Dublin 8 with funding from the Heritage Council's *Heritage Management Grant Scheme 2016*; Ref: CBHO5840.

The Plan is intended to provide a framework for the future maintenance and continued development of St. Catherine's Church over the next 10-year period, cognisant of legislative requirements; its varied functional requirements; the condition of its built fabric and its national significance as a building of architectural, artistic, historic and social interest.

The Plan will include an outline schedule of necessary interventions categorised in three orders of priority; immediate (works to be executed within 12 months); interim (works to be executed within 2 years) and long-term (works to be executed within 10 years). This schedule will include guidance as to particular statutory obligations, tendering and works options pertaining to each recommended intervention, to ensure the practical relevance of this document as a tool for the long term management of the building's fabric.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 1.1 Background to the requirement

The Plan describes the present condition of the building and establishes its architectural character. Its objectives are as follows;

- Description of the building and its environs
- Assessment of its historic significance
- Issues and Vulnerability
- Conservation strategies
- Implementation

Policies for the protection, conservation and enhancement of St. Catherine's must address the need to protect the historic fabric while simultaneously facilitating its use as an active church community building accommodating a wide range of functions, as follows:

- Church services
- Mother and toddler groups
- Community afterschool care
- Community activities
- Commercial events

Accommodating a variety of functions for a broad range of users within the confines of a historic church building presents a range of ongoing challenges.

This Plan is intended to assist the Nehemiah Committee in their role as custodians of the building and its established functions, to conserve, maintain and plan for any future works to the structure within a strategic framework.

### 1.2 Heritage Council Funding

**Ref: CBHO5840**

A letter, received by the Church, dated 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016 from the Heritage Council confirms the awarding of a sum of €3,000.00 under the Heritage Management Grant Scheme 2016. Whilst the general date for submission of a Plan is the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2016, this office was granted an extension until the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

### 1.3 Studies carried out by others

The schedule of works in Section 7 of this report below was compiled by Molloy Associates to identify all works required to be undertaken in St. Catherine's Church. In some instances, where relevant, the the findings and recommendations of previous reports, undertaken by other consultants, are referred to in this schedule.

Below is a summary of the various reports and surveys previously commissioned by St. Catherine's Church (formerly The CORE Group), over the past ten years.

#### 1.3.1 2015 Energy Analysis Report prepared by Codex Energy

This report was commissioned to determine cost-effective energy upgrades which could be carried out to the building. In summary, thermal upgrade works to the building envelope were discounted due to the high cost and impracticality of upgrading historic fabric.

Recommendations in the report were as follows;

- Replace the gas fired boilers with air to water heat pumps
- Replace internal lights with high performance LEDs

Please note Item 18 of Section 7 makes reference to this report and advises that all recommendations contained within should be implemented.

#### 1.3.2 2014 Fire Safety Assessment prepared by Fahy Fitzpatrick Consulting Engineers.

*Please refer to item 3.2. below for further detail*

This report was commissioned to provide a visual fire safety review of the principal ground and first floor areas and their compliance with Fire Safety Regulations at the time; (Part B of the Building Reg. 1997 amended). The report lists recommendations mainly relating to installation of appropriate ironmongery and management practices. It is noted that the layout and use of the building has not altered since the date this report was prepared.

Please note Item 16 of Section 7 makes reference to this report and advises that all recommendations contained within should be implemented.

#### 1.3.3 2015 Structural Report prepared by Fahy Fitzpatrick Consulting Engineers

This report was commissioned to record and comment on structural defects observed in the property and provide recommendations on findings, none of which have been implemented to date.

Please note Item 19 of Section 7 makes reference to this report and advises that all recommendations contained within should be implemented.

#### 1.3.4 2016 Draft Health and Safety Statement

*Please refer to item 3.3. below for further detail*

A health and safety statement is currently being prepared by the building owners. This report is currently in draft format.

Works required to the building for reasons of health and safety are identified in Section 7.

#### 1.3.5. 2006 Condition Survey, Krystyna Rawicz & Associates Ltd. and outline of known previous works undertaken in response to its recommendations.

The last known condition survey of the premises was carried out in February 2006 by Krystyna Rawicz & Associates Ltd. This report comprehensively and diligently recorded the general condition of the church and made sensible recommendations where defects were noted. Whilst some of its recommendations were implemented, others were still outstanding at the time of inspection by Molloy Associates. Section 7 of this report effectively supersedes this report.

*Please note: Section 7 of this report now supersedes this condition survey.*

#### 1.4 Previous works

It is likely that whilst a comprehensive conservation report and schedule of works was prepared in advance of commencement in 2006 of the first primary works, this office has been unsuccessful in obtaining any documentation in respect of same.

Lesser works, to the Bell Tower were executed in 2002.

#### 1996 Phase 1 (Paul Arnold Associates)

##### **Roof works**

- Roof coverings to main church replaced
- Purlins strengthened
- Lead guttering replaced

##### **Window works**

- Windows repaired / renewed

##### **Internal works**

- Timber decay and insect infestation addressed
- New concrete floor with underfloor heating installed
- New extension constructed to the rear of the offices to provide meeting rooms and toilets
- Installation of electrical services

#### 2002 Phase 2 (Gerry Cahill Architects)

- Roof coverings to bell tower replaced



## 2004 to Present

- Regular power washing of front façade and the forecourt paving

### 1.5 Scope of the Conservation and Management Plan

It is acknowledged that the condition of the building may have deteriorated in the ten years since the detailed condition survey was undertaken by Krystyna Rawicz & Associates in 2006, and so it has been supplemented by a visual condition survey prepared by this office in October 2016. Refer to Appendix A2 for photographic survey.

## 2.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

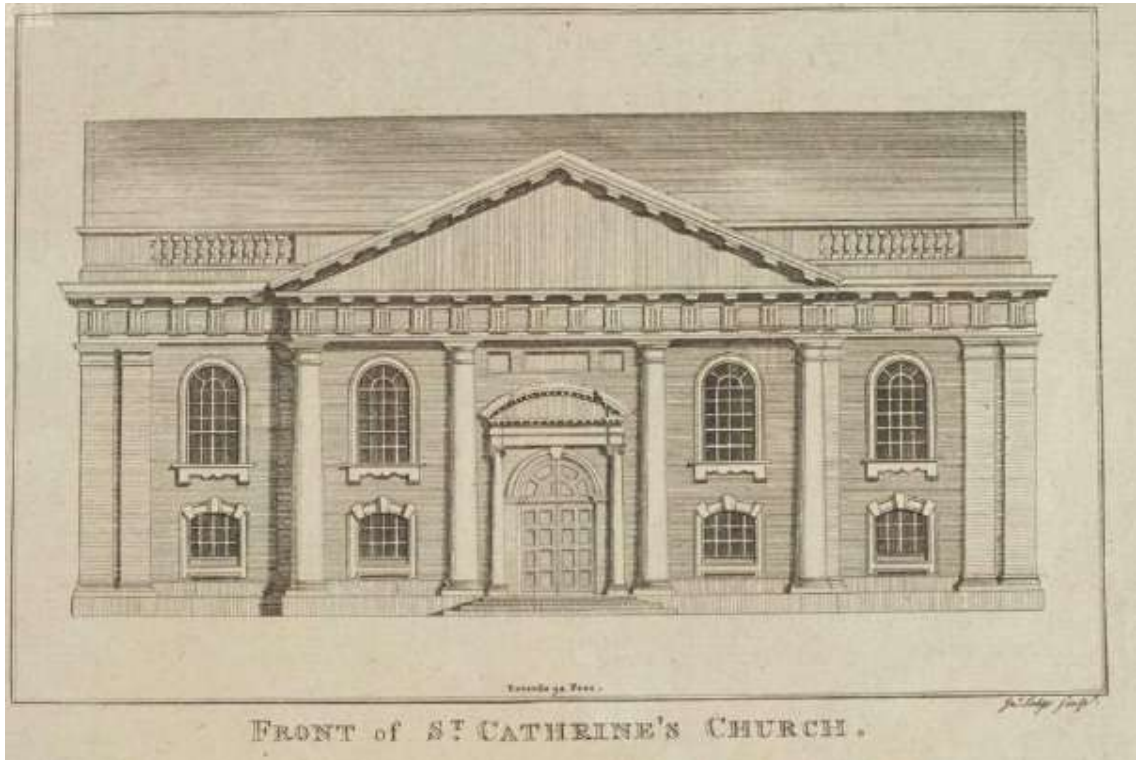


Plate 1 Engraving by Robert Pool and John Cash of St. Catherine's Church 1780

### 2.1 Statutory Context

St. Catherine's Church, Thomas Street, Dublin 8 is included in the Record of Protected Structures of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016 -2022 under the reference. 8153 and is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) as Reference No. 50080611.

The structure is recognised as being of National Importance for its architectural, artistic, archaeological, historical and social significance.

## 2.2. Brief Historical analysis



Plate 2 Photo of North West elevation St. Catherine's Church (NLI 1865-1914 Laurence Collection)

### 2.2.1 A brief history of St Catherine's Church, pre- 1760

The present St. Catherine's Church (1769) occupies the site of an early church constructed in 1185 as a chapel of ease, part of Saint Thomas' Abbey. It was appropriated to the Augustinian priory of St. Thomas and subsequently to the Earls of Meath. Indicated on Speed's map of 1610 as 'St. Cathren's Church', a rectangular building with a tower at the West end, this earlier church influenced the design of the present church building build by John Smyth in 1760-1769.

*"The Priory of St. Thomas the Martyr (SMR No.DU018-020051) served a profound role in the development of the western suburb and indeed the wider area. As a royal foundation it was to be one of the most powerful ecclesiastical settlements and landowners in medieval Dublin. The Priory was founded in 1177 by order of King Henry II in repentance for the murder in 1170 of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas á Becket. The Priory was promoted to Abbey status in c.1192. The Abbey always enjoyed separate governance, acquiring its own lands, grants, charters and court, much to the annoyance of the City. Rights were granted to St. Thomas' by the Crown, The Abbey was the first major urban developer in the western suburb. Its rights over water allowed them c.1200 to divert the River Poddle at Harold's Cross on a ratio of 2:1 constructing a*

*large dividing 'tongue'. Evidence of the influence of the Abbey is found in St. Catherine's Church. This structure was built in 1765 but stands on the site of a former church, part of the extended Abbey complex, built in the 13th century (SMR No. DU018-020074)."*<sup>1</sup>

### **2.2.2. A brief history of St Catherine's Church 1760 – 1900**

The current building in its present form was built in 1760-1769 on the site of a medieval church. The church was described in detail in the "Historical guide to the city of Dublin" by George Newenham Wright writing in 1825;

*"The front of St. Catherine's is built of granite stone; and has in the centre four Doric semi-columns supporting a pediment, and at its extremities coupled pilasters. There are two stories, the windows of both of which have carved architraves, and are circular headed. At the west end stands a tower, containing the belfry, in which there is only one bell. The original intention was to erect a steeple and spire, but the idea appears to have been totally abandoned of late.*

*The interior, which is about 80 feet by 50, is remarkably imposing, and exhibits excellent taste: it resembles those of St. Thomas, St. Werburgh, and St. Anne, but in internal decorations is superior to all of them. Though the design is by Mr. Smith, the architect of St. Thomas's, St. Catherine's appears to have been finished in a more elaborate style. The pews and the front of the gallery are of carved oak, highly varnished. The organ is large and ornamented, and there are two handsome galleries, one on each side of the organ, for the parish children. The communion-table stands in a recess, beautifully decorated with stucco-work, and has a handsome arched ceiling, also richly ornate.*

*The cemetery belonging to this church is about 180 feet in length by 80 in breadth, and is now almost disused, owing to the poorer classes in the parish preferring to inter their relatives in country churchyards. There is no monument deserving notice, except that of Dr. Whitelaw, the historian of Dublin (who died Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>, 1813), which is placed near the door of the vestry room, and there is also another tablet to his memory in the interior of the church.*

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<sup>1</sup> Extract Thomas Street and its Environs ACA

*At the end of the south gallery, and immediately over the monument of Dr. Whitelaw, is a large tablet of white marble, dedicated to the memory of J. Stackpole, Esq. Barrister at Law.*

*Beneath the communion-table, in a vault, are deposited the mortal remains of the Earls of Meath and their offspring; but without any monument, and on the north side of the communion table is a small tablet, sacred to the memory of an exceedingly ingenious engineer, to whom the inhabitants of Dublin are much indebted; with the following inscription; "To the memory of WILLIAM MYLNE, Architect and Engineer, from Edinburgh, who dies, aged 56, March 1790, and whose remains are laid in the church-yard adjoining. This tablet was placed by his brother, Robery Mylne, of London, to inform posterity of the uncommon seal, integrity, and skill, with which he formed, enlarged and established on a perfect system, the water works of Dublin."*



*ST. CATHERINES CHURCH, THOMAS STREET, DUBLIN, 1797*

*Plate 3 St. Catherine's Church, James Malton 1797*

A Samuel Lewis also described the Church's architectural elements in 1840 in his book "A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland",

*"The church, which had been a chapel to St. Thomas the Martyr, was rebuilt in its present form in 1769: it is situated on the south side of Thomas-street, and is built of mountain granite, in the Doric style: four semi-columns, with their entablature, enriched by triglyphs, support a noble pediment in the center, and on each side the entablature is continued the entire length, and supported at each extremity by coupled pilasters: above the entablature, at each side of the pediment, is a stone balustrade. Between the*

*center columns is a handsome Ionic arched door, and the other intermediate spaces are occupied by a double range of windows. The interior is elegantly simple: eight Ionic columns support the galleries, above which the same number of Corinthian pilasters rise to the roof. At the west end of the building is an unfinished belfry."*

Architects Curdy and Mitchell restored the church in 1877 and during the following decade an interior reordering was undertaken by architect James F. Fuller, during which the original box pews were replaced.

A contributing factor to the building's historical and social significance is its connection to the execution of Robert Emmet, one of the 1798 leaders of the failed Rebellion against British rule. On the 20<sup>th</sup> September 1803, after being accused of high treason, Emmet was hanged and beheaded in front of St. Catherine's Church. There is a granite column in the forecourt that commemorates the event.

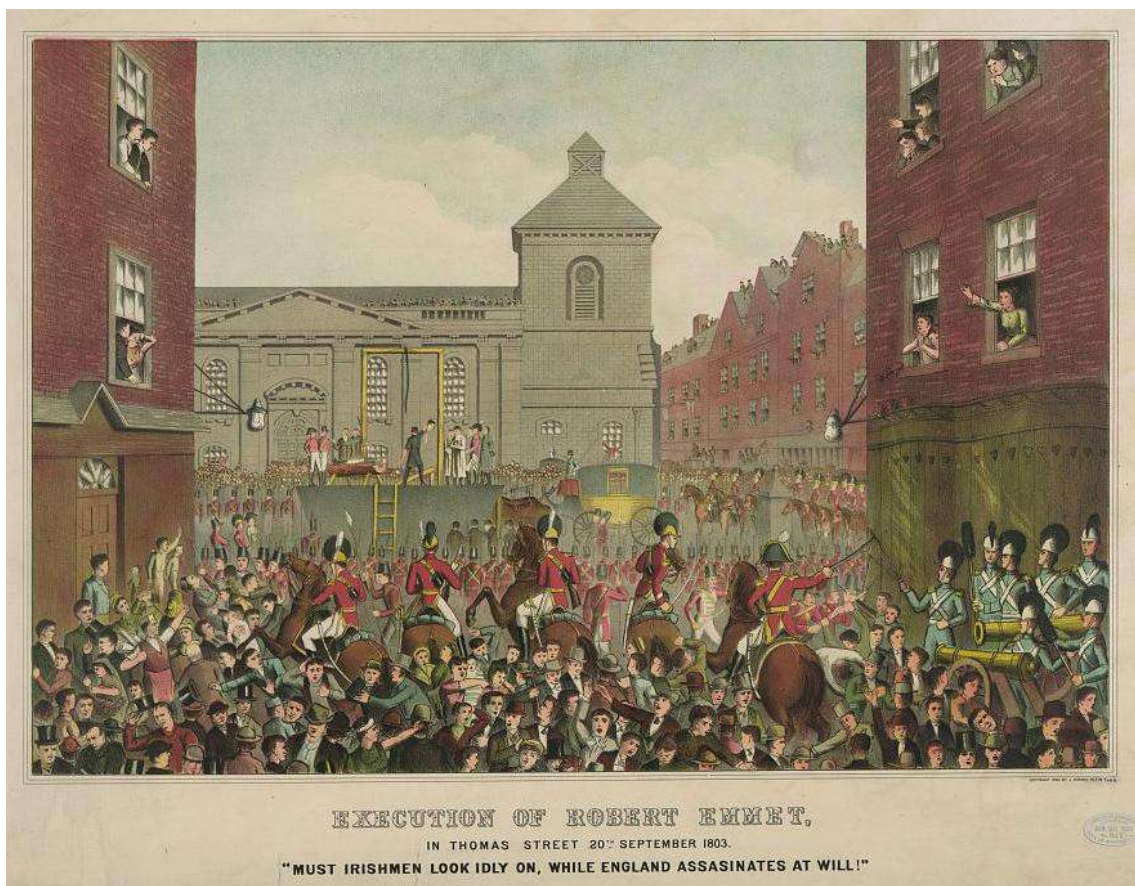


Plate 4 Drawing depicting the Execution of Robert Emmet in front of St. Catherine's Church 1803 (NLI F.W. Byrne)

### 2.2.3. A brief history of St Catherine's Church 1900 – Present

An undated historic photograph of the church interior sourced from the Irish Architectural Archives shows the original arrangement of the altar with a carved pulpit (presumed mahogany) to the left and ornate chancel rails enclosing a raised semi-circular alter.

It is not known when these elements were removed but they are not visible in a series of photographs taken in the 1970's. Both images show the ornate plasterwork to the reredos, though in the earlier images the engaged columns have a darker finish.



*Plate 5 Historic photograph of reredos depicting carved pulpit and chancel rails in-situ*

The condition of the building deteriorated as the congregation numbers declined culminating in the closure of the adjacent churchyard for burials in 1894 followed by the closure of the church in September 1966. The church was deconsecrated the following year.



*Plate 6 Photo of St. Catherine's Church exterior prior to façade restoration by Dublin Corporation.  
Photo credit unknown*

Dublin Corporation took charge of the building in 1969 and restored the exterior in 1975. Various efforts were subsequently made to find an alternative use for the building. By 1990, Dublin Corporation offered the church for sale as part of an inner city development plan, to the CORE group, now known as St. Catherine's, who undertook the restoration of the property.

The report by Krystyna Rawicz & Associates Ltd. 2006 outlined the substantial refurbishment works which were carried out in the late 1990's by Paul Arnold Associates. Documentation relating to this refurbishment is not currently available, but the work carried out believed to have included replacement of roof coverings, lead gutters, treatment of dry rot, replacement of ceiling timbers and strengthening of roof trusses, installation of concrete floor with underfloor heating, refurbishment and/ or replacement of windows. The galleries, organ and funerary monuments were restored and fabric from one of the internal staircases, which had collapsed, was used to restore a second staircase.





*Plate 7 Historic photograph viewing towards gallery organ c1970 (IAA)*

Internal modifications including the construction of a 3 storey extension on the site of the former vestry to provide offices, the installation of a contemporary drought lobby and the minor remodelling of the interior to provide kitchen facilities. All works were undertaken to facilitate the requirements of St. Catherine's Church and its active role within the community.



Plate 8 Interior view towards altar c. 1970 left.



Plate 9 Interior view during restoration works to the interior c1998 above

## 2.3 Receiving environment

### 2.3.1 Thomas Street and its enclosing Architectural Conservation Area

St. Catherine's Church is located within the boundary of Thomas Street and Environs Architectural Conservation Area (Adopted: 07.09.2009) as prepared by the Dublin Civic Trust on behalf of Dublin City Council.

The region has been highlighted as an area of architectural, historic, cultural and archaeological merit. The site of St. Catherine's has connections dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century and its history is well documented in the Thomas Street & Environs ACA.

All works connected with the church are subject to the policies set out therein.

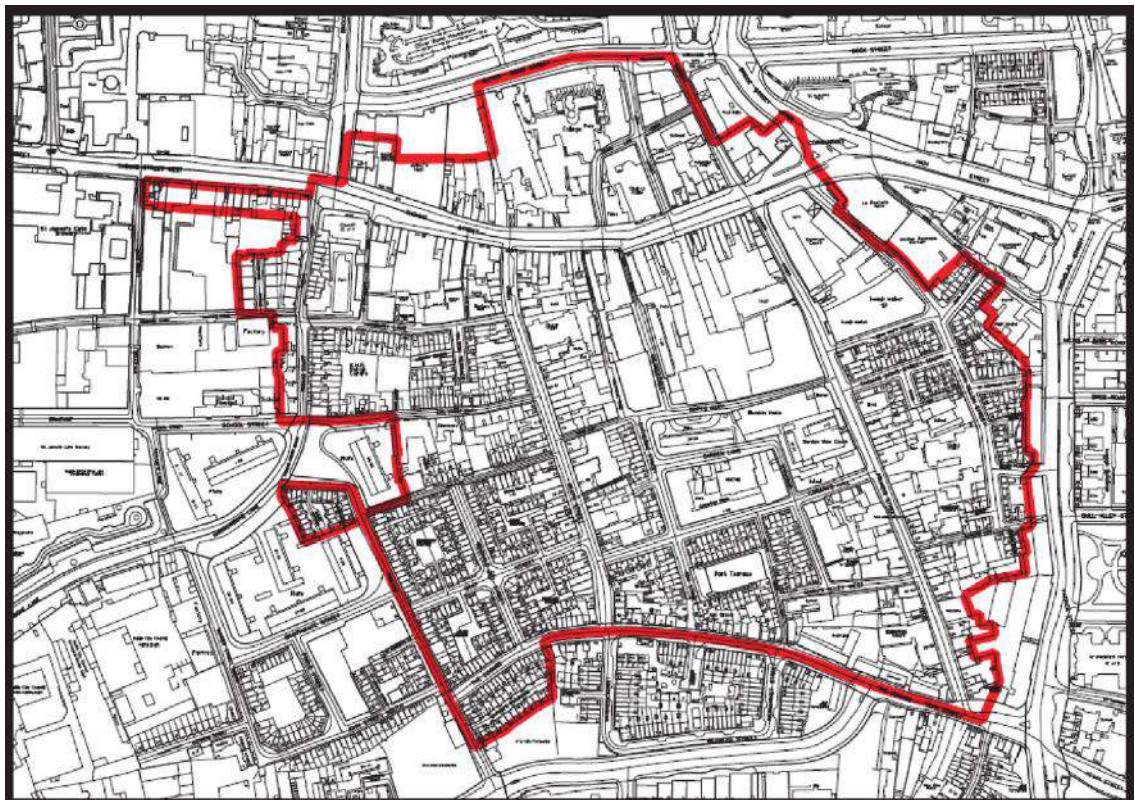


Figure 1 Map showing ACA Boundary with arrow pointing to St. Catherine's Church.

### 2.3.2 St. Catherine's Park

St. Catherine's Park was originally the graveyard belonging to St. Catherine's Church and although the properties are now in separate ownership, the physical, social and historical connection between the two remains. The park has been in the ownership of Dublin City Council since the closure of the church in the late 1960's and is in use as a green park. The gravestones and original boundary and railings are intact on the boundary with St. Catherine's Church.

### 2.3.3 St. Catherine's Lane

St. Catherine's Lane links Thomas Street past the graveyard (now St. Catherine's park) to Hanbury Lane.

This laneway is of historical significance as it formerly served as the entrance to St. Thomas's Abbey.

Historic features such as stone setts and granite guard stones flanking the boundary wall are intact.

The low cut granite plinth and cast iron railing enclosing the forecourt of St. Catherine's Church adjoins the laneway.



*Above: Plate 10, St. Catherine's Lane stone setts and granite guard stones.*

### 2.3.4. Adjoining building on Thomas Court

The adjoining residential property, No. 37 Thomas Court (NIAH Reg. No. 50081089), should also be considered in the context of the curtilage of the church, as it was likely to have served as a former presbytery. Rocque's Map of Dublin from 1757 depicts a building in this location that corresponds with a building abutting the earlier church. The building, much modified and in poor condition, is currently unoccupied but contains a fine early example of a granite Gibbsian doorcase and carriage arch. Given the cartography evidence, this building may contain early fabric, possibly predating St. Catherine's Church as designed by John Smyth. The ownership of this building is currently under dispute.

### 2.3.5. Morphological context of St. Catherine's

The following historic maps trace the development of the church on Thomas Street. The present church was constructed on the site of an earlier church which had formed part of an extended Abbey complex dating from the 13th century, (SMR No. DU018-020074).

Cartographic evidence dating back to the 1610 John Speed Map, indicates a building referred to as "St Cathren's Church" on the site of the current church building. The image depicts a rectangular building with a tower to the west end which may have influenced the design of the current church.

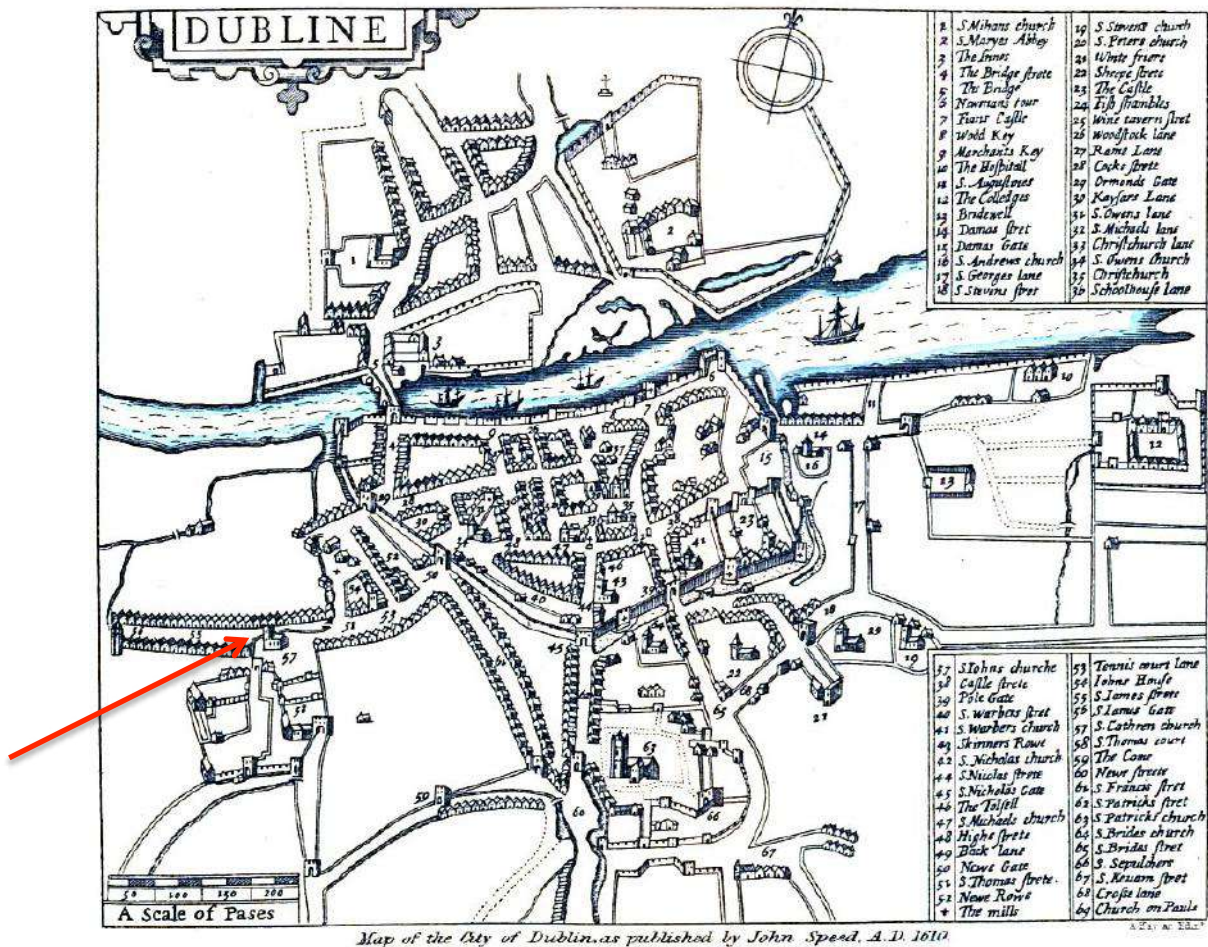
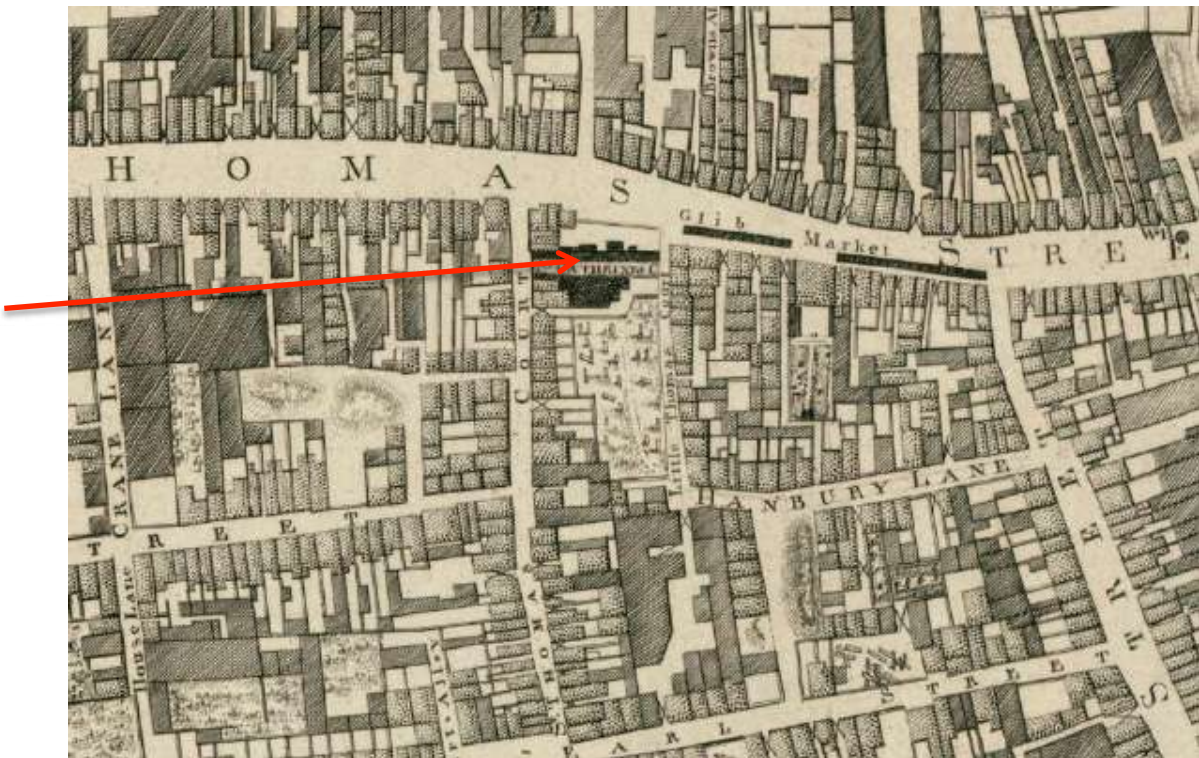


Figure 2 John Speed Map of Dublin 1610, depicting site as no. 57 St. Cathren's Church.

Rocque's Map of Dublin from 1757 depicts the medieval church building prior to the construction of the present church building, a few years later. The graveyard connected to the church is clearly evident. The building line with a forecourt addressing Thomas Street is established, although smaller adjoining buildings with an aspect onto Thomas Court extend onto Thomas Street. Little Thomas Court (now known as St. Catherine's Lane West) running along the eastern boundary of the church gable extended along the length of the graveyard to the site of the former Abbey.



*Figure 3 Historic Map - Rocque's Map of Dublin 1757 depicts earlier church on present site.*

The 1897-1913 25-inch ordinance survey map shows St. Catherine's Church in its current configuration. The footprint of the building clearly shows the main entrance and secondary entrance addressing Thomas Street, the connecting vestry building along the eastern boundary, the adjoining building on Thomas Court and the boundary wall adjoining the connecting the graveyard.

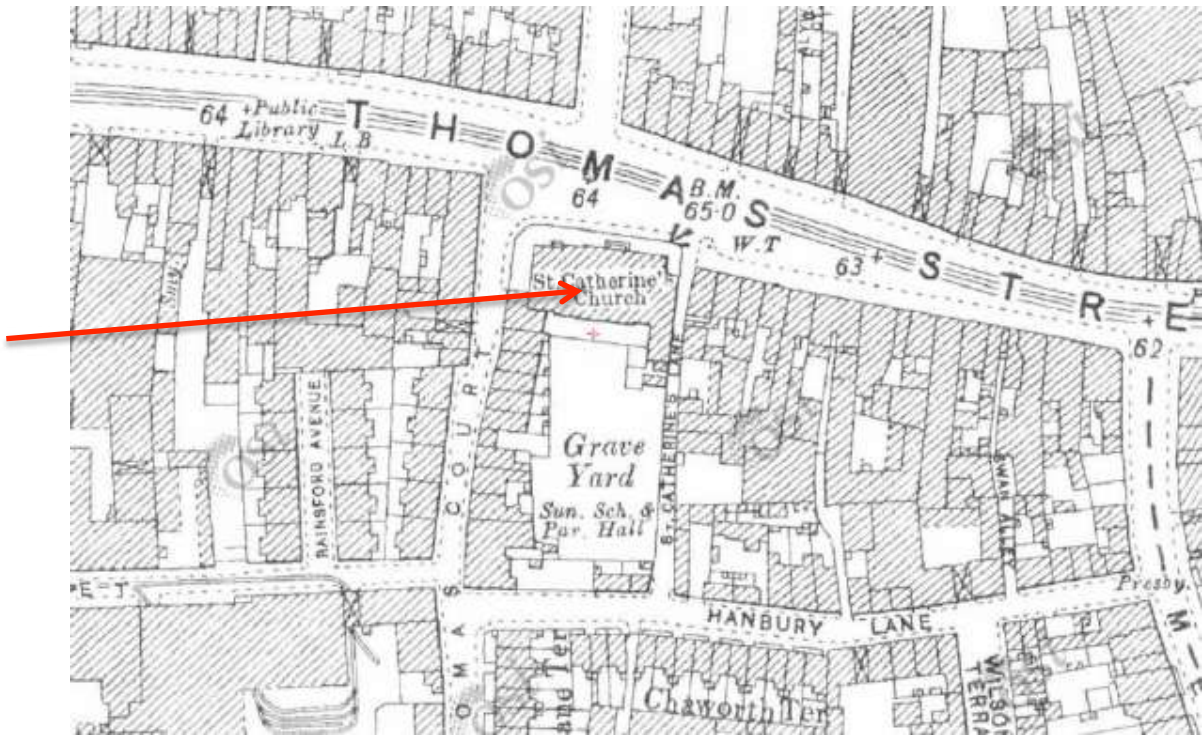


Figure 4 Historic map – 25 inch OSI map (1897- 1913)

### 3.0 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

This section of the report is a general review of the building's status of compliance with statutory requirements. It also comments on potential impacts that compliance with these regulations may on the building fabric in the future.

#### 3.1 Planning History

A schedule of the recent planning history relating to the Church is listed below;

Item	Planning ref. No.	Applicant / Agent	Date	Brief Description
1.0	4155/04	Anthony Reddy Assoc.	2004	Permission for internal alterations to form a draught lobby.
2.0	2326/02	Gerry Cahill Architects	2002	Restoration works to bell tower.
3.0	3157/01	Gerry Cahill Architects	2001	Single storey extension to the rear.
4.0	0960/01	Gerry Cahill Architects	2001	Erection of advertisement banner on North East elevation
5.0	0012/98 & 0013/98	Paul Arnold Associates	1998	<p>Extension and renovation.</p> <p>Note: Drawings only on microfiche – full application file including conservation reports, schedule of conservation works and all methodologies requested</p> <p>Note: DCC have confirmed file is missing.</p>

Planning consents for protected structures follow three routes; formal planning consent for modifying works; exempted development under a Section 5 application for singular repair works and exempted development under a Section 57 (2) for wholesale conservation works. No such declarations have been sought in relation to this building to the knowledge of this office.



### 3.2 Fire safety history

There is no fire safety certificate pertaining to St. Catherine's Church at present nor is one required. It should be also noted that future material alterations to the structure would instigate the requirement for a fire safety certificate.

Notwithstanding the above, all buildings open to the public are subject to the Fire Services Act, irrespective of their heritage status. In 2014, a Fire Safety Assessment of the Church was prepared by Fahy Fitzgerald Engineers, with recommendations as outlined below. A summary of the recommendations is separated into a) works required and b) building management objectives. As previously stated, the report should be referred to in full and its recommendations implemented.

#### Recommended fire safety works outlined in the 2014 Fire Safety Assessment.

- Ensure all final exit doors have push bar open devices.
- Ensure all doors along escape routes open in the direction of escape. (Note: relevant doors identified in full report)\*
- Add extra way finding and emergency lighting and remove unnecessary components. (Note: relevant components identified in report)
- Add extra first aid fighting equipment. (Note: locations identified in report)
- Upgrade the fire alarm to L2/L3 automatic system.
- There shall be two in two exits from the Nave: the front main entrance and the exit at the meeting area.
- The 750mm door along the escape route to the rear of the meeting area exit should be widened to the same size as the final exit door, 1800mm.
- Both leaves of the exit door at the meeting area are to be openable with a push bar system.
- The side lobby stairwell is to become a protected stairwell with 30 minute fire doors and a fire resisting construction to restrict the travel distance from the first floor.
- The stairwell at the right hand side of the alter is to become a protected stairwell with 30 minutes fire doors and fire resisting construction to restrict the travel distance from the second floor.
- The side gate is to be linked to the main alarm panel and is to open upon activation. The keypad system may be kept as a result.
- The side gate should open in the direction of escape.
- Stores and cupboards along escape routes are to be fitted with 30min fire doors and fire resisting construction. (Note: locations identified in full report)

### Building Management recommendations

- Ensure all doors along escape routes are not locked and can easily be opened.
- The final exit on the right hand side of the altar is not to be used as a means of escape from the Nave.
- The number of allowed occupants in the second floor meeting room is to be reduced from 31 to 20 persons.
- The main entrance double doors are to be left open during service times while using the lobby as protection against wind and cold. Or else the door should open outward and have a push bar system on both door leaves.
- The iron railing gate should always be open during service times.
- Escape routes to be kept clear of clutter.

It should be noted that some recommendations within this report have an impact on historic fabric and would require planning permission. It is not uncommon for anomalies to arise where planning permission is not forthcoming for works required for fire safety. In instances where there is a disparity between recommendations and heritage policies governing works to the building, a fire engineer and conservation architect should be engaged to agree an acceptable solution.

In addition to implementing the recommendations of this report, the Church is responsible for ensuring that fire safety equipment is inspected by competent persons on a regular basis. Log books should be kept to record maintenance procedures. The requirements are clearly set out in the applicable statutory codes listed;

- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 2007.
- BS 9999:2008 Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings.
- I.S. 291:2002 - The Use, Siting, Inspection and Maintenance of Portable Fire Extinguishers.

### 3.3 Health and Safety history

A Health and Safety Statement is currently being prepared for the benefit of the building users. The purpose of this statement is to give guidance to all staff members so that they can perform their duties with awareness of the potential hazards associated with the workplace.

Buildings items that require attention under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 2007 are identified in Section 7 of this report.

These items are summarised as follows;

- Secure top rail of balustrade either side of pediment. The granite top rail would have originally been secured to the turned balusters with iron dowels. The top rail was mortar fixed only to replacement concrete balusters, probably installed during the refurbishment works in 1998. This mortar pointing has since cracked and dislodged leaving the individual top rail stones unstable and creating a risk to public safety.
- Add temporary protection to lower levels of first floor gallery columns. The original timber-veneered casing to these columns are broken and splintered posing a risk of injury to passing persons and children using the space. The historic fabric should be retained inside any temporary encasing to facilitate later restoration.
- It is noted that the height of the three-sided gallery has previously been extended by means of a simple painted steel railing to increase the effective guarded height. This intervention is considered satisfactory, both from a safety and a conservation viewpoint.

Alterations required for the safety of maintenance personnel to restricted areas.

- Provision of handrail to spiral staircases to roof spaces and to belfry for the protection of maintenance personnel.
- Repair short ladders within roof space where unstable or worn. Ladders should be inspected at suitable intervals where they are exposed to conditions causing deterioration liable to result in danger.
- Extend permanent handrail to facilitate safe access to all external access hatches on roof.
- Provide handles to facilitate easier opening of roof access hatches.

#### **3.4. Status of Disability Access Provision**

St. Catherine's Church does not currently have nor does it require a Disability Access Certificate (DAC). Notwithstanding current statutory exemptions, it is incumbent on the Church, given its community and commercial function to improve dignified, independent access for less able bodied users.

It should be also noted that future alterations to the structure may instigate the requirement for a disability access certificate. Technical guidance document Part M 2010, introduced the concept of 'practicability' when dealing with works to existing/historic buildings, where proposed extensions, material alterations and certain material changes of use can invoke applicability of St. Catherine's for a DAC.

Part M encourages a balanced and integrated approach when dealing with works to existing/historic buildings. In determining the practicability of works, circumstances to consider include

where the works would have a significant adverse effect on the historical significance of the existing building, facility or environs or where existing structural conditions or other physical or site constraints would prohibit modification of an existing feature. For further information refer to section 0.7 of TGD M 2010.

There is an awareness of the challenges presented by the current stepped access and a desire within the organisation to facilitate all members of the community. The Church body believe there is a moral duty to promote accessibility and inclusivity for the benefit of all. It is noted that any such works that impact the historic fabric require planning permission.

#### 3.4.1. Brief Description of the existing arrangement

##### Approach

The existing main entrance door and the two side doors are approached by 3no. steps from the forecourt. Currently, a timber framed temporary structure provides ramped access to the western entrance, however, it is intended to replace this temporary fixture with a more permanent structure.

The use of temporary ramps, while reversible and potentially less invasive to the historic building, tend to have utilitarian and unwelcoming appearance. Demountable ramps are not recommended due to the unsatisfactory reliance on a managed operation. Any permanent solution must harmonise with the character of the protected structure.

The design of a permanent access solution must give due consideration to the visual and physical impact on the building and its immediate forecourt setting. It is acknowledged that the classically designed symmetrical façade may not easily accommodate any such intervention, and alternative solutions may need to be explored on the basis that Part M recommends that both a ramp and steps be provided. In advance of commissioning a detailed architectural proposal, consideration should be given to the preparation of an access strategy which will identify the most appropriate solution as the basis for a good design.

##### Internal circulation

There are no level changes within the ground floor. There is no accessible access to upper level accommodation.

##### Sanitary Facilities

An accessible WC is provided at ground level.

##### Other

There are many other items relating to lighting and signage, which could be provided to improve the accessibility and usability of the building.

#### 3.4.2. Existing guidance documents

The National Disability Authority and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht have produced a useful reference document in the Advice Series titled "*Access - Improving the Accessibility of Historic Buildings and Places, 2011*".

For general advice on planning issues relating to architectural heritage, refer to the statutory guidelines entitled *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011)* published by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Chapter 18 of these guidelines deals with issues relating to improving access.

A summary of the design process required to improve the accessibility of St. Catherine's Church as set out in this advice series is summarised below and the publication should be referred to for information in full;

##### a. Access strategy

*Set out St. Catherine's Policy with regard to accessibility*

- Ensure that the needs of all are addressed, including employees, visitors and service users
- Identify those persons responsible for progressing and managing the implementation of the strategy
- Establish preliminary timescales and budgets
- Inform procurement briefs and specifications to be used when engaging external contractors, professionals and specialists in order to ensure the availability of the necessary skills in building and landscape conservation and in universal design
- Provide for the preparation of access audits, conservation assessments and access plans, ensuring there is appropriate coordination between these and other relevant plans, strategies and policies
- Allow for the improvement of access as a continuous and ongoing process
- Ensure measures are in place for monitoring and review

##### b. Access audit and conservation assessment

*The below two processes should be carried out in tandem with each other*

- Audit to include assessment of barriers inhibiting ease of movement; including entry, circulation within the building, use of facilities, communication systems, procedures

for emergency situations, management and maintenance. The audit should prioritise its recommendations to allow for a phased approach to facilitate budget constraints.

- Conservation assessment to comment on impact of any alterations on the historic fabric and advise on the most appropriate options to improve accessibility from a conservation architecture viewpoint.

**c. Access options**

*Detailed design of alterations*

- On foot of the findings from the above stage, detailed design of alterations should commence.
- The relevant guidance documents (TCG Part M 2010) should be applied
- Consultation with a conservation architect, with due regard to adaptations that may be required to protect historic fabric.
- Discussions with the local authority

**d. Access Action plan**

*Action plan for implementing improvements*

- Identify what improvements require statutory consents.
- Distinguish between short term and long term aims.
- Allocate budgets.
- Establish timeframes for implementation.
- Establish monitoring and review procedures.
- Assign responsibilities for the above.
- Maintenance of alterations and staff training.
- Ongoing review of policies and requirements.

## 4.0 THE ARCHITECTURE OF ST. CATHERINE'S

### 4.1 Architectural development

As previously stated, the present St. Catherine's Church was designed by John Smith in 1769 on the site of a 13th century Abbey complex. A sketch below traces the architectural development of the present day church building.

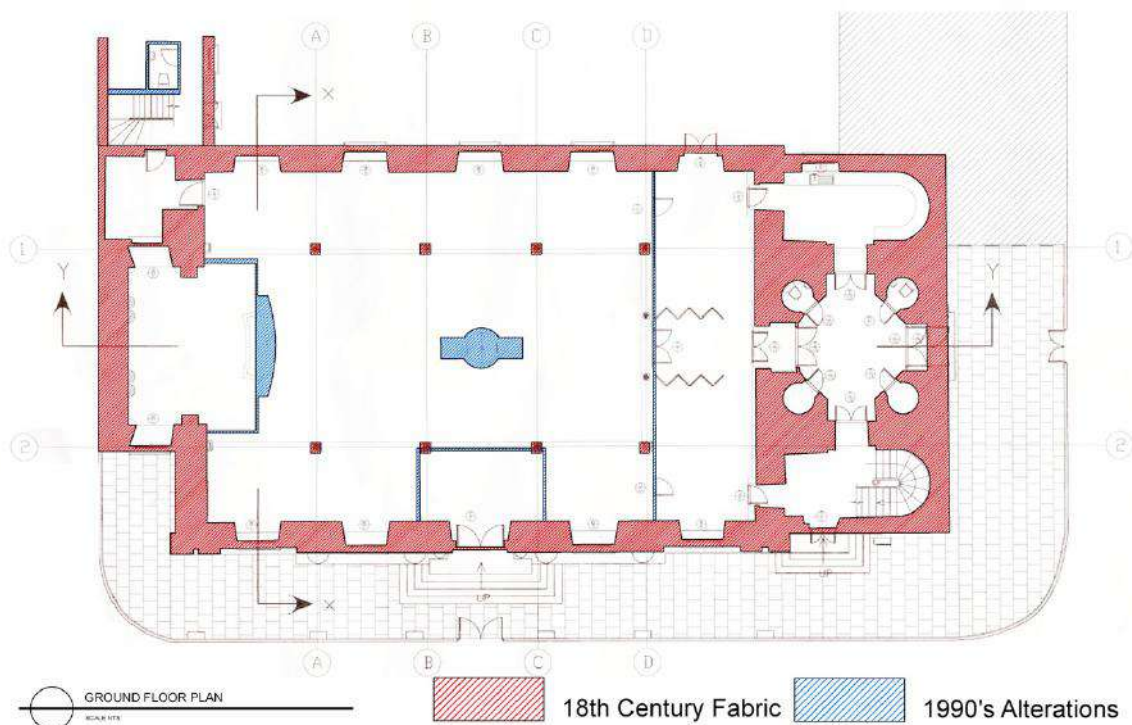


Fig 5. Plan of St. Catherine's Church indicating chronology of interventions, as recorded in the 1990s

#### Chronological summary

- 1769 St. Catherine's Church as designed by John Smyth
- 1877 Restoration by Curdy and Mitchell including the removal of the box pews
- 1996 Extension of galleries to meet east gable and side extension on site of vestry and construction of three storey administration building on the site of the single storey former vestry. Architect: Paul Arnold
- 2002 Belfry works Architect: Gerry Cahill Associates

## 4.2 Architectural features

As stated in item 2.1 above, St. Catherine's Church is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) as Reference No. 50080611. The structure is recognised as being of National Importance for its architectural, artistic, archaeological, historical and social significance.

The NIAH describes the Church as follows;

### Description

*Freestanding five-bay double-height former Church of Ireland church, built c.1765, restored 1877 and 1998. Now in community use. Central pedimented breakfront to front (north) elevation, single-bay double-height chancel to east elevation, and two-stage square-profile tower to west, lean-to porch to front of tower. Pitched slate roof, with granite coping and cast-iron rainwater goods, granite parapet comprising balustraded panels and carved granite coping to front. Granite coping to parapet to rear (south) elevation and to chancel. Pyramidal slate roof to tower, with square-profile timber vent to apex, carved granite eaves course having granite consoles. Carved granite cornice with modillions, forming pediment to breakfront, to front, frieze of triglyphs and guttae supported on paired pilasters to ends of façade, columns separating bays to breakfront. Cut granite wall to front, carved granite plinth course. Recessed Portland stone panels over entrance to front. Snecked calp limestone walls to east and rear elevations and to ground stage of tower, calp limestone quoins, granite platband to east elevation. Granite platbands to tower, rusticated granite to upper stage. Round-headed window openings to first floor to front and rear elevations, timber framed windows having stained glass panels and granite sills. Carved granite architraves and carved sills having aprons with guttae detailing to openings to front.*

*Segmental-headed window openings to ground floor, with granite sills and timber framed windows, carved granite architraves having keystones to front. Windows set within round-headed recesses to either end of rear elevation. Segmental-headed window openings to front of porch, with recessed surrounds, granite sills, timber-framed window and nine-over-six pane timber sash window. Lunette window to west elevation of tower, granite sill and timber framed window. Diocletian window to chancel, granite mullions and surround, platband forming sill course, stained glass window. Carved granite Ionic doorcase to front comprising columns supporting segmental-pediment with corbels, round-headed door opening having carved granite architrave and scrolled keystone, double-leaf timber panelled door and timber panelled tympanum. Granite steps with cast-iron bootscrapes. Segmental-headed door opening to front of porch, stepped surround, double-leaf timber panelled door and timber panelled tympanum,*



*granite steps and cast-iron bootscape. Segmental-headed door opening to rear, double-leaf half-glazed timber panelled door and steel gate. Round-headed door opening to west elevation of tower, carved calp limestone Gibbsian surround, stepped opening, double-leaf timber panelled door and timber panelled tympanum, granite steps. Stepped round-headed openings to front, rear and west elevations of upper stage of tower, carved granite architrave surrounds, sills and timber louvered vents. Clock inserted to front elevation of vent.*

*Cast-iron railings on carved granite plinth wall enclosing front of building.*

*Barrel vaulted ceiling to nave to interior, flanked by cornice of scrolled modillions, bands with Greek key pattern across ceiling. Coffered ceiling to chancel and chancel arch. Plastered walls. Decorative stucco detailing to rear of chancel. Entablature to chancel comprising paired Composite columns supporting broken segmental pediment having modillions and foliate swags. Round-headed blind opening with moulded surround. Panelled timber gallery on three sides, having cast-iron columns encased in timber. Carved timber balustrade to open string staircase to tower.*

### **Appraisal**

*An important classical church with a galleried interior to a design by John Smyth, on the site of an earlier church which was built in the late twelfth century as a chapel of ease, part of Saint Thomas' Abbey. It was restored in 1877 by Curdy & Mitchell, and deconsecrated in 1967 due to a declining congregation. It has since been restored and re-consecrated, and is used by City Outreach for Renewal and Evangelism (CORE). It is prominently sited, closing the vista from the north quays and Queen Street, and it makes a striking impression on Thomas Street. A central pedimented breakfront and regular fenestration creates a well-balanced, symmetrical façade, with a classical entablature and doorcase expressing a sense of stature in the Church of Ireland at the time of construction. The tower was intended to have a spire but was left incomplete due to a shortage of funds. Elaborate stucco decoration in the chancel and ceiling provides artistic interest to the interior. The site is of historical interest also, as Robert Emmett was executed in front of the church in September 1803, for having led a rising that year. His death is commemorated in a monument at the front. The graveyard to the rear enhances the setting of the church, which is of considerable architectural, historical and social interest.*

### 4.3 Brief inventory

#### 4.3.1. External architectural elements

**Building Form:** The primary building form is a double storey rectangular plan with projecting rectangular bay on the alter end. The building is irregularly attached to the west No. 37 Thomas Court (itself a protected structure, NIAH register no. 50081089), and a 3 storey administration building to the south (formerly a single storey vestry). There is a single wing to the east with a lean-to roof, and a two stage square bell tower with pyramidal roof flush with the western façade.

**Exterior Walls:** The exterior walls are random coursed calp limestone to the south and east and western gables with granite coping and granite dressing stones to the window architraves on the eastern gable. The front (northern) façade is faced a coursed cut stone: smooth dressed Leinster granite with stepped granite plinth. The façade of the lean-to eastern wing has with more recent replacement stonework. The wall composition is undetermined.

**Windows:** All fenestration is in timber, with stained panels and some leaded insets

**Roof:** Slated roof covering with lead lined valleys and parapet gutters, granite parapet coping stones.

#### 4.3.2. Internal architectural elements

**Floor:** Contemporary concrete floor with underfloor heating to main body of church installed circa 1998 with contemporary sunken baptism font.

**Walls:** Painted plaster walls.

**Ceiling:** Barrel vaulted ceiling to nave to interior, flanked by cornice of scrolled modillions, bands with Greek key pattern across ceiling.

**Chancel:** Coffered ceiling to chancel and chancel arch. Plastered walls. Decorative stucco detailing to rear of chancel and arched ceiling of chancel. Entablature to chancel comprising paired Composite columns supporting broken segmental pediment having modillions and foliate swags. Round-headed blind opening with moulded surround.

**Gallery:** Three sided panelled timber gallery, with timber columns encased in timber. (Note one has been replaced with a steel section. Decorative capitals, where surviving and in parts, are in carved timber with detail applied in painted gesso.

**Stairs:** Carved timber balustrade to open string staircase to first floor. This stairs was reconstructed in 1998 using elements from both this stairs and a matching stairs (now removed) on the side of the western entrance.

**Internal Doors:** Timber paneled doors with jugged architraves (some of which are contemporary). Vertical sheeted doors in supporting areas.

**Other Architectural features:** Wall mounted commemorative stone plaques.

## 5.0 PRIMARY ISSUES AFFECTING THE BUILDING FABRIC OF ST. CATHERINE'S

Architectural issues requiring attention are identified below.

### 5.1 External issues

#### 5.1.1. St. Catherine's Park tree growth

There are a number of mature trees within the adjoining St Catherine's park, one of which is located in very close proximity to the Church. This tree is causing structural damage to the original granite plinth and cast iron railings. It has caused the paving in the yard to become displaced and in need of attention. The overhanging foliage on this tree is also resulting in blocking the parapet gutters on the southern side of the main church roof. It is recommended that the tree be removed to prevent further damage.

#### 5.1.2. Elevational stonework

The front, north gable is faced in Leinster granite, and the gables and rear façade are comprised of calp limestone.

**Calp AND limestone facades:** Individual stones in the limestone facades with inherent problems including incorrect bedding have resulted in localised fractures. These facades would benefit from repointing with appropriate lime based mortars to address instances of water ingress. There is some evidence to suggest that these facades may have originally had a lime harling finish and it may be considered appropriate to reapply a similar finish to these facades. Any such works would have a significant impact on the appearance of the building and would require careful consideration and agreement with the local authority.

**Granite (front façade):** Of most concern, is the severity of the stone decay evident on the entire north façade. Granular disintegration of the granite and severe discolouration is apparent. The stone has been cleaned on several occasions in the past twelve years with a power washer and a hydrochloric acid cleaner, Neolith.

One possible cause of the accelerated decay now apparent on the façade is due to repeated acid cleaning; where the acid was too strong and/ or was not completely washed away after application. This stone decay diagnosis would need to be confirmed by a specialist with a core sample. Options to address the decay include use of consolidates or stone replacement. The condition and thickness of the facing stones would need to be assessed for their suitability for treatment/ reusability.

Patterns of discoloration also suggest water penetration to all projections; i.e. overhanging cornice and window surrounds. These areas require a detailed, high level inspection to identify sources of possible water ingress and schedule remedial works to be undertaken to address sustained deterioration.

It is of worth noting that the condition of the external stone work on the front façade was noted in the condition survey prepared by KRA in 2006 as being “very friable, and likely to deteriorate further unless stabilisation measures are undertaken”. While it is not possible to assess the rate of decay, it is noted from the photographic record that the stone has continued to deteriorate in the ten years since.

Time and budget constraints have limited this research to visual inspections only and it is proposed that the Church commission more invasive laboratory based analysis to assess the extent of decay present and inform proposed solutions and detailed specification of materials to be used in the conservation techniques proposed.

#### 5.1.3. Roof weathering

The roof has a slate finish and is in good condition. There is a broken slate on the southern roof abutting the western gable, with a temporary lead flashing repair and there is localised moss growth, also on the south facing roof, on the site of a previous repair which is indicative of water ingress in this location and should be investigated.

#### 5.1.4. Rainwater disposal

The roof gutters are lead lined and in good condition. The southern parapet gutter was partially blocked with leaves and debris from the overhanging tree described above. It is recommended that the debris is cleared to free the outlets and facilitate inspection of the leadwork in this location.

The cast iron rainwater pipes are generally in good condition, some joints require attention as evident by staining on the facades. The lead dressing onto the hopper heads on the eastern gable is failing and requires fixing.

## 5.2 Internal issues

### 5.2.1 Architectural treatment of reredos

The chancel stuccowork is of significant artistic and architectural importance. The most pertinent issue relating to the plasterwork is the need to protect it from water ingress, which would otherwise cause irreparable loss of fabric. Repointing and rendering the eastern gable and fixing defective rainwater goods as described above would significantly improve this issue.

Plasterwork should be left to dry over a period of time. Following an extended drying out period of approximately 18 months, it is proposed to apply a consolidant by way of a lime scumble/wash of appropriate depth.

After a period of a further 2 years, when the stucco is fully dry, a breathable paint, such as Beeckosil Protect could be applied.

The local authority and a qualified conservation architect should be engaged to advise on conservation the extent of restorative works that might be appropriate. Specialist contractors should be engaged to undertake work in this area.

#### 5.2.2 Internal services

The main body of the church is heated by means of gas fired underfloor heating installed during the refurbishment works in the late 1990's. A report by Codex Energy carried out in April 2015, noted that the heating controls were not operating satisfactorily, leading to the use of supplementary electric heaters in some areas. It was also recommended that the gas boilers be replaced with air to water heat pumps which would be more efficient and compatible with the underfloor heating already installed. The positioning of new heat pumps will require careful consideration to prevent a negative impact on the setting of the church. The report is appended in full for information.

A kitchen is provided in the annex to the west of the church. It is noted that this facility is limited in size which at times is required to facilitate large scale catering.

The main sanitary facilities are located in the ground floor of the extension to the west.

## 6.0 MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 6.1 Appointment of a Building Fabric Committee

The first step in adopting a Conservation and Management Plan is to create a dedicated committee whose sole function is to co-ordinate and manage packages of work and their respective statutory consents and execution.

### 6.2 Review procedures

This Plan and the policies therein, should be reviewed as the need arises but no later than five years after their initial adoption. Procedures for review mechanisms should be established by the committee responsible for implementation of the Plan.

### 6.3 Implementation of maintenance procedures

It is recommended that resources be allocated to implement routine maintenance works, to be carried out by way of direct occasional labour or a maintenance contract with a contracting firm. It is our recommendation that a maintenance contract is established with a competent heritage contractor, who not only will have full insurances to carry out the high level work required, but will have the skill to identify defects as they emerge, and will be in a position to establish preventative measures where necessary.

The Heritage publication "Heritage Advice Series – places of worship" acknowledges that "*The specialist knowledge of a building professional can be greatly enhanced by the support of a group of volunteers drawn from the congregation who, with training, can keep a watchful eye on those elements of the church fabric that need the greatest degree of vigilance. Some churches already have established finance committees but there is also a need for a fabric committee, the remit of which concentrates fully on care, repair, damage prevention and alteration.*"

A maintenance approach should include inspection schedules, with inspections coordinated in accordance with regularity. Routine Inspections are categorised as inspections carried out monthly/ quarterly. Other inspections are to be carried out annually, biennially, etc. Regular inspections, particularly relating to roofs and rainwater goods, which prevent water ingress, are essential to prevent damage to historic building fabric. Any areas that have the potential to result in water ingress should be prioritized as a preventative measure to avoid future extensive repairs. Caution is advised, however, that access to roof spaces and heights should be restricted to competent persons for health and safety reasons.

### Routine Inspections

- Rainwater goods and drainage should be regularly inspected and cleaned, particularly following spells of stormy weather. Inspection of gutters and other leadwork for penetrations / signs of water ingress.  
Note: that the overhanging foliage on the south parapet demands attention.
- The roof should be inspected twice a year. Inaccessible areas of the roof should be inspected from the ground or adjoining accessible roofs. Loose slates and tiles should be re-fixed and broken ones replaced.
- Inspection of roof space internally for signs of water ingress
- Inspection of roof space internally for signs of vermin/ pigeons and checks to ensure that the mesh is in place.
- Removal of vegetation from gutters, parapets, and pointing.
- Moss should be regularly brushed off the roof to prevent a build-up.
- Internal wall and ceiling inspection to identify signs of water ingress internally i.e. leaks and damp spots.

### Maintenance works to be carried out every 2-3 years

- Replace broken glass in windows.
- Inspection of fire and life safety lights and equipment.
- Inaccessible area will periodically require closer inspecting with a cherry picker. To minimise costs, a comprehensive schedule of the areas to be inspected should be strategically coordinated in advance. E.g. façade stonework, high-level windows etc.

### Maintenance works to be carried out every 3-5 years

- Painting of external joinery
- Painting of internal joinery
- Painting of walls
- Inspection of inaccessible areas with cherry picker to coordinated with the attendance of a contractor on site to facilitate minor works e.g. removing vegetation etc. at the same time for efficiency.
- Painting of external metalwork

## 6.4 Implementation of statutory and voluntary improvement works

Implementation of works supplementary to the building fabric protection works above, will similarly become the responsibility of the Building Fabric Committee. Works should be categorised in terms of priority as follows;



### *Necessary Capital improvements*

- Implementation of recommendations in fire safety assessment report prepared by Fahy Fitzpatrick
- Monitoring of bowing of beams between internal columns
- Refixing of loose stones of top rail on balustrade to side of pediment. (Public Health and Safety Issue)
- Repair works to External Stonework. Detailed assessment of the granite stone work is required by a specialist.
- Minor works to improve access in restricted areas. (Health and Safety)

### *Desirable Capital improvements works*

- Improvement of accessibility
- Implementation of energy saving proposals recommended in Codex report.
- Restoration Works to chancel. Works to be undertaken by a specialist
- Restoration works to internal columns and carved capitals. Works to be undertaken by specialist.
- Repair iron railings where corroded.

Implementation of these policies will require substantial investment and St. Catherine's Church will require support from appropriate sources.

## **6.5 Resource management**

- The ongoing use of the church building is the most effective way of protecting the building for future generations, however, the cost of ongoing maintenance and restoration works is a significant challenge to the owners. All available external support and funding are to be explored.
- Budgets should be allocated for routine maintenance works
- Sinking funds should be allocated for future capital improvements or for any other unexpected remedial works outside the normal scope of the annual maintenance budget. Specific improvement works could be targeted by fund-raising campaigns.

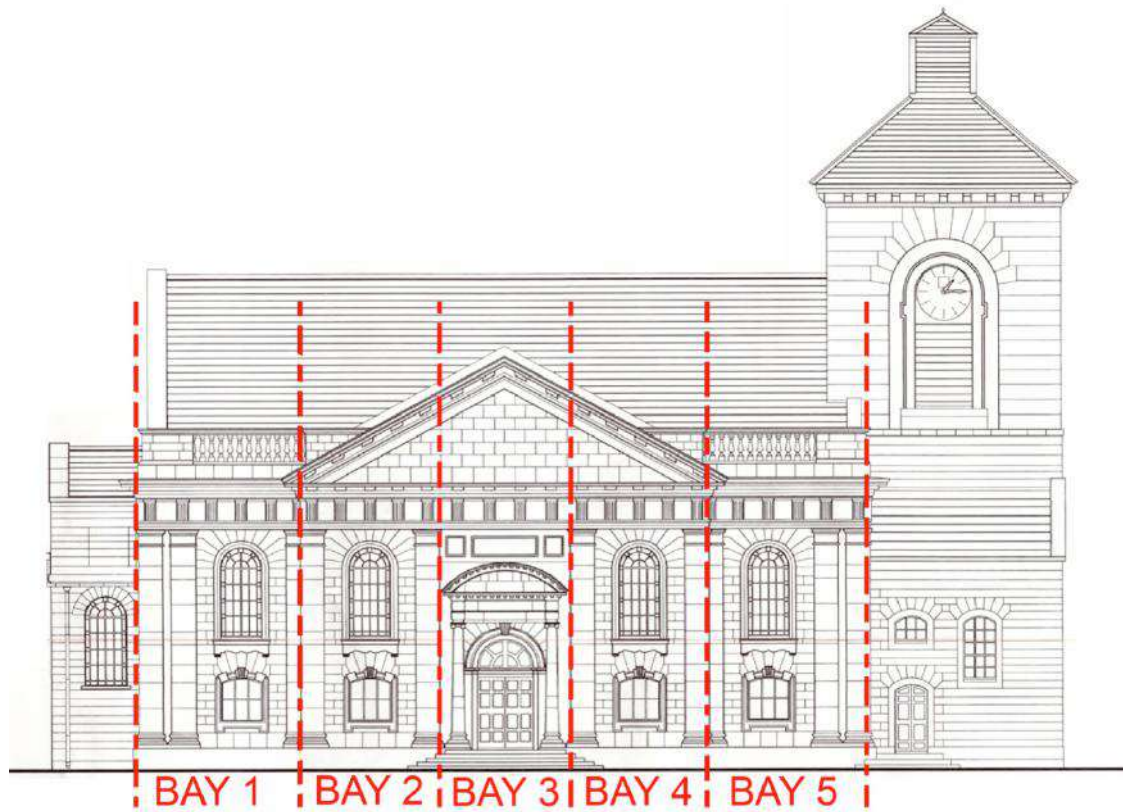
## **6.6 Archive management**

- Keep a logbook of maintenance works – record the date, actions taken, contractor used, estimated and actual costs and results achieved. This will be a valuable resource for planning and carrying out future maintenance.
- Maintain record of drawings and specifications for the benefit of future conservation works.
- Maintain record of building services.

- Record of all condition surveys, reports etc.in a single database
- Records to be stored on site with back-up off site.

## APPENDIX A2

## PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY



North Façade: Identification of bays for reference.



PLATE 1 North / front façade



PLATE 2 North façade, Bay 1



PLATE 3 North façade, Bay 2



PLATE 4 North façade, Bay 3/ Central Bay



PLATE 5 North façade, Bay 4



PLATE 6 North façade, Bay 5



PLATE 7 Severe discolouration to to top RHS façade on Bay 5, North elevation



PLATE 8 Detail of Stone Decay on Granite Stone, north facade



PLATE 9 Detail of Stone Decay on Granite Stone, north façade



PLATE 10 Detail of Stone Decay on Granite Stone, north façade





PLATE 11 Granite steps to secondary entrance, North elevation



PLATE 12 Lean to extension, North elevation



PLATE 13 West elevation



PLATE 14 Contemporary extension to upper levels. Original vestry building at ground level.



PLATE 15 South Elevation



PLATE 16 Remnants of original harling



PLATE 17 Junction with adjoining structure on Thomas Court



PLATE 18 East Elevation (Note heavy soiling)



PLATE 19 East façade – Note staining from RWP and vegetation to be remove



PLATE 20 North façade of chancel projection



PLATE 21 Belltower – West façade



PLATE 22 Projecting slate weatering detail resulting in damage to stone



PLATE 23 Belltower, north façade. Clock face on plywood in need of refurbishment,



PLATE 24 Coorosion on horizontal bottom rail of iron railings





PLATE 25 Original gate and railings to southern boundary with tree damage to plinth



PLATE 26 Southern boundary; expansion of iron filing points have broken granite plinth



PLATE 27 Eastern boundary enclosure



PLATE 28 Cast iron bootscrapes to west and north entrances.



PLATE 29 Coping stones to Northern balustrate unsecure



PLATE 30 Mortar fixings for top rail broken away



PLATE 31 Remove Moss around roof repair (south facing roof) and inspect for water ingress



PLATE 32 Moss to be removed from lower roof and gutter checked for leaks/ blockages



PLATE 33 Overhanging foliage contributing to blocked gutters



PLATE 34 Internal view towards altar



PLATE 35 Chancel – Note cracking to LHS detailed in Fahu Fitzpatrick structural report



PLATE 36 Detail of plasterwork in Chancel



PLATE 37 Detail of plasterwork in Chancel



PLATE 38 Refurbished stairs – North west corner of structure



PLATE 39 Damp on wall at landing of stairs





PLATE 40 Damp staining at wall and ceiling junction along southern external wall



PLATE 41 Damp staining at wall and ceiling junction along southern external wall



PLATE 42 Bowing of beams between coulms require monitoring



PLATE 43 Damaged timber lining to Timber columns



PLATE 44 Capital of internal column (surviving example)



PLATE 45 Damaged/ missing capital of internal column



PLATE 46 Typical Upper Level Window to Main Church. Note fogged planes



PLATE 47 Slipped Keystone to Arched ope in Belltower



PLATE 48 Beetle infestation to timber lintel in Belltower