

# Issertkelly Church and Graveyard

ARCHITECTURE



Conservation Management Plan (CMF22-2-GA001)

November 2022



This conservation management plan was commissioned by Galway County Council to assess the current condition and make recommendations for any necessary repairs to the ruin of the Church of Iisert Kelly, also known as Iisertkelly, near Loughrea, Co Galway. It is grant funded by the Community Monuments Fund, from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. It has been prepared by Howley Hayes Cooney Architecture in association with Rory Sherlock Archaeology; Bernie O'Doherty Archaeologist, John Britton Engineering; and MKO ecology. The surveys and enabling works on which this report is based were carried out in August and September of 2022.



An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta  
Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage



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## 1.0 Introduction



*Figure 1 - View of the south wall of Issertkelly*

The ruined church and graveyard at Issert Kelly (or Isert kelly / Isserkelly ) is a medieval stone church with adjoining graveyard, and has long been in a ruinous state, with a significant loss of masonry to the north, east and west wall, with only a portion of the south wall still upstanding (fig 1). Located within the townland of Issert Kelly North, approximately 13km south-east from the town of Loughrea and the graveyard is likely still in use and visited occasionally by local parishioners with relatives buried there. The church appears to consist of a single cell structure, though it is difficult to determine this accurately due to the significant collapse of the walls. Vegetation trimming was undertaken at the site in September 2022, to reveal the condition of the upstanding south wall. Of particular concern now is the stability of this wall which is leaning forward, and the integrity of the entrance arch. There are also significantly large rooted trees sitting on the top of the wall tops.

This report includes - a cartographic record of the church; sketch survey plans and elevations; a photographic survey of the structure before and after the trimming of vegetation; an archaeological appraisal; a structural report;

and an ecological report. Also included is a statement of significance and a conservation strategy outlining a recommended course of action to implement much-needed repair and consolidation works. All repair recommendations are designed to be sensitive to the historic importance, cultural significance and status of the church as a scheduled recorded monument. The church ruin and its graveyard setting combine to create an historic place of both spiritual and archaeological significance. Surveys on which this report is based were carried out during September 2022.

The ivy trimming works were approved by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Time constraints and the dense network of stems and roots of the ivy that remained after the trimming, together with the complexity of the form of the surviving ruined wall, made it impossible to prepare accurate measured drawings at this stage, however, a full record of the structure has been prepared and is included within the plan. The plan concludes with an outline schedule of proposed conservation and maintenance works together with a summary of conclusions.

## 2.0 History of Issertkelly Church and Graveyard

### Archaeological history

The medieval Church of Issert Kelly with its idyllic rural graveyard setting are both included in the Record of Monuments and Places, reference (RMP No (GA114-097001-) and (RMP No GA114-097003-) respectively, and are afforded legal protection under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2014). A medieval church, Issert Kelly is located in the townland of Issertkelly North within the civil parish of Issertkelly, Co Galway. The placename Issert Kelly is derived from the Irish Díseart Ceallaigh, wherein 'díseart' is a 'hermitage' and Ceallaigh is the name of a person associated with the site. The element díseart is common in Irish placenames and the Placenames Database of Ireland ([www.logainm.ie](http://www.logainm.ie)) lists 86 examples, including,

Irish Placename	Anglicised Name	County
Díseart Ceallaigh	Issertkelly	Galway
Díseart Nuan	Estersnow	Roscommon
Díseart Chiaráin	Issertkieran	Tipperary
Díseart Aonghaís	Dysartenos	Laois
Cnocán an Dísirt	Mount Desert	Cork
Cill an Dísirt	Killadysert	Clare
Cill an Dísirt	Killydesert	Donegal
Cill an Dísirt	Killadiskert	Leitrim

In this short list of examples, the first four appear to include personal names, while the remainder specify locations (little hill of the hermitage, church of the hermitage), but it is interesting to note the many ways in which díseart can be corrupted through anglicisation.

The placename alone suggests that an early medieval ecclesiastical site, probably a hermitage or small monastery, was once located in the area of Issertkelly, which is located between Kilchreest, Ardahan and Gort in the limestone lowlands of south Co Galway. The ruinous remains of the church at Issert Kelly appear to represent a relatively large twelfth or thirteenth century parish church, but it is quite possible that this church was built upon the site of a pre-existing early medieval monastery or hermitage. There is clear evidence for a deserted settlement to the north of the church – this can be seen on oblique aerial images of the site (fig 2) taken



Figure 2 - Deserted Village of Ardahan, Issertkelly North (Cambridge Aerial Photography)

for the CUCAP collection (Cambridge Aerial Photography) in the 1970 and it is still evident at ground level too – and these earthworks may represent activity contemporary with the parish church, but they could, in addition, represent earlier activity too.

### Anglo-Norman Period

The Anglo-Normans followed up their military successes in Ireland by establishing new settlements, towns, churches, and castles, and the granting of seized lands to their supporters and financial benefactors. After the suppression of Gaelic society a re-ordering of civic administration took place, leading to the establishment of these new Anglo-Irish settlements and places of worship. The church at Issert Kelly may predate the arrival of the Anglo-Normans into the area in 1235, but it certainly became a focal point in the small McHubert Burke lordship that developed in the area after that date. Their first castle, built in the mid-1200s at Castleboy, was located almost 2km south of the church, an unusual arrangement at a time when many Anglo-Norman caputs were established beside existing ecclesiastical centres, a local example being Ardahan. In the early 1400s the McHubert Burkes built a new castle, Issert





Figure 3 - Aerial view of the church, a single cell structure - the east wall (on left of photo) is entirely collapsed

Kelly Castle, less than 500m from the church and this castle was their principal seat for an extended period, being described as the residence of 'McHubert cheif of his sept' in 1574 (Nolan, J.P.,109-23).

In some instances, existing Gaelic churches were altered and adapted to suit the needs and fashions of the Anglo-Normans. Some pre-existing single-cell churches were reconstructed as two-cell nave and chancel churches, while new churches were also constructed, in the two-cell arrangement. The Irish church was also reformed with the introduction of a church structure based on dioceses and bishoprics, within which parishes were subordinate to their relevant bishops. By the end of the thirteenth century most of the bishops in Ireland were Anglo-Norman.

Issert Kelly Church is a single cell church though the east and west ends of the church are in such an advanced state of collapse it is difficult to determine if it was ever modified to incorporate a chancel wall (fig 3). Like most medieval churches,

Issert Kelly Church is orientated traditionally with an east west axis. The congregation would have gathered in the nave (west end) and the priest celebrated mass at the alter in the east end.

### **Eighteenth Century**

It is unclear when the church at Issert Kelly fell into disuse, but the ecclesiastical parish of Issert Kelly lost its independent status in the early 1700s, suggesting the church may have fallen out of use at that time, or possibly earlier. Civil parishes, which are indicated on Ordnance Survey maps from the mid-1800s and were used as areas of local administration, differ from modern Roman Catholic parishes in most areas, but in many cases the civil parish is co-terminus with the Church of Ireland parish and, indeed, with the medieval parish which predates them both. In this way, the civil parish, as defined in the nineteenth century, can offer a window into the human geography of medieval landscapes and the civil parish of Issertkelly is unusual in several respects. Firstly, it is composed of just nine townlands, in comparison to a county-wide average of just

over 39 townlands per parish. Secondly, while most parishes form a single land unit, Issert Kelly parish is separated into two discrete blocks, with eight townlands grouped together around Issert Kelly church and an outlying townland, Ballygarraun, forming an exclave to the east. Thirdly, Issert Kelly parish did not survive into the modern period as an independent Church of Ireland parish, since it was united with the nearby parishes of Killinan, Kilchreest, Killogilleen, Killora and Kilthomas to form the 'Killinane Union' in 1726. This amalgamation, by order of the Privy Council, certainly downgraded the status of Issert Kelly, but it made sense in the context of the time – the six old parishes had just 125 townlands between them and, furthermore, while their total population in 1834 was 9,149, only 267 of that number (2.9%) were members of the Church of Ireland (Kearney, G.)

### Nineteenth Century

When the Ordnance Survey visited the site in 1838, (Herity, M., 121-3), Patrick O'Keeffe reported on the site as follows:

Yesterday I visited the old Church of Isserkelly, which is situated about seven miles W.S.W. from Loughreagh and got the local pronunciations of the names of the townlands in the parish of Isserkelly...

The old Church of Isserkelly stands in ruins in a graveyard in the townland of Isserkelly North, It is about 70 ft. long and 27 ft. in breadth; the thickness of the walls being about  $2\frac{3}{4}$  feet. The north side-wall is nearly level with the ground, except the part which adjoins the west gable, where it appears to retain its original height. A small portion of the east gable adjoining the south side-wall remains. The south side-wall is almost perfect, being a little injured towards the east. The west gable, though not prefect, yet rises above the original level of the side walls. The doorway is on the south side-wall near the west gable, being about 9 feet high and 5 feet wide, and in the curvilineally pointed style. On the same side-wall towards the east there is a pointed window 8 or 9 feet long, and about 4 feet wide.

During the nineteenth century, the first edition 6" to a mile Ordnance Survey map of the area



Figure 4 - First Edition OS Map showing the church, in ruins, and a settlement to the north

depicts Issert Kelly Church as a rectangular building within an enclosed site to the south also containing a graveyard (fig 4). A small settlement is clearly visible further north of the church, which is thought to be the medieval settlement associated with the church and is included on the RMP (GA114-097002-) On this map the church is described as being 'in ruins'.

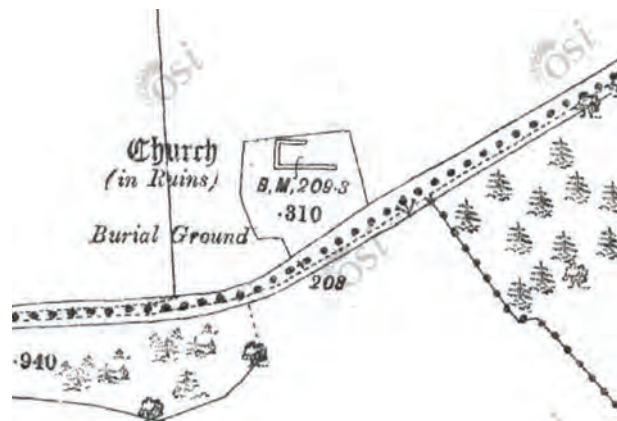


Figure 5 - Second Edition OS Map showing the church in ruins

During the mid nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey maps were used for the compilation of the Primary Valuation of Ireland, known as Griffiths Valuation, which was an early form of property tax, organised by Sir Richard Griffith. The Griffiths Valuation from the mid nineteenth century for Issert Kelly North identifies the Dudley Pearse, John Connolly and Thomas Connors as being the occupiers of this land.

The second edition Ordnance Survey map, the twenty five inch (1892) depicts the church 'in ruins' and indicates clearly that only the south, west and a portion of the north wall remain on the site (fig 5). The settlement to the north of the church is no longer evident.



### 3.0 General Description



Figure 6 - Vegetation removal underway at the site in September 2022

#### Issert Kelly Church

The extant church at Issert Kelly is a rectangular, single cell building, constructed of un-coursed rubble limestone. Orientated traditionally, the structure measures some 24m long by 9.8m wide, with wall thickness of 1.25m, and is probably of medieval date. Vegetation removal carried out as part of this project has allowed for the examination of the south wall, remnants of the west wall, and the entrance opening and the remains of one window in the south wall (fig 6).

The Archaeological Survey of Ireland describe Issert Kelly Church as follows:

On initial inspection in October 1982 all that survived was the overgrown W half of the N side-wall and W gable, as well as most of the S side-wall. It was built of well-cut and mortared limestone blocks. A doorway was evident towards the W end of the S wall along with a window further to the E; both had been robbed of most of their cut stone. The OS Letters (O'Flanagan

1927, Vol. 1, 504-5) describe the doorway as being 'in the curvilinearly [sic] pointed style' and the window as 'pointed'. A chamfered mullion, reused as a grave-marker, may indicate that it was of two lights. On re-inspection in January 2010, a c. 8m length of the E end of the S wall had fallen inwards into the church, which was densely overgrown with ivy. A carved window head fragment was noted lying at the E end of the S wall. A settlement cluster (GA114-097002-) is associated. (Holt 1910, 138).

The notes from this inspection note that the condition of the church is 'poor' and the measurements of the opening in the south wall being nine feet high and five feet wide. The window in the south wall is described as being four feet wide.

Standing masonry includes much of the long south wall and some of the west wall. The east



gable and north wall has mostly collapsed, and both remain as grass covered mounds containing collapsed masonry. Most of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century gravestones are visible in the graveyard, but it cannot be determined what graves, if any, remain in the nave due to the overgrowth and collapse stone lying on the ground.

### **South Wall**

The south wall is the most intact wall left of the structure, ranging between 1m to 5m in height with an average wall thickness of 800-900mm, and it contains the main entrance to the church (fig 7 & 8). Constructed of large boulder stones, indicating some age, several of the quoin stones are still in place on the west end, including one which was inscribed with a letter 'T'. Given the font, this is thought to be an eighteenth or nineteenth century inscription (fig 11) . The north west corner is still intact at low level, as

is a portion of the west wall. This is the only remaining corner left in the church.

The south east corner is no longer evident. The wall almost reaches roof height above the entrance-way but it is difficult to determine this, due to the vegetation growth along the wall top. In this location the wall stands at almost 5m in height. The entrance has lost its cut stone arch and reveals, and the west side of the opening is still heavily embedded with plant roots. Historical accounts note a window opening further east of the entrance opening, and the wall does dip dramatically in the approximate location one would expect a window, however there are no readily identifiable cut stones to indicate the window reveal, head or sill. The south-east section of wall drops to about 1m in height.

There is evidence of somewhat recent collapse of the south wall internally, and this is not



*Figure 7 - South wall, exterior (R Sherlock Archaeology)*



*Figure 8 - South wall interior (R Sherlock Archaeology)*

surprising given the extent of vegetation growing on the structure in recent years. Prior to the removal of vegetation from the wall, it was difficult to see the wall at all.

### West Gable

The west gable has suffered collapse, and stands at 500mm to 2.5m in height, and still retains its south-west corner, with includes one substantial quoin stone (figs 9&10). With the removal of more vegetation, it might be possible to see the lower south corner of a centrally placed window in this wall. The north end has completely collapsed, and evidence of the collapsed masonry is still visible on the ground around the structure.



Figure 9 - West wall exterior (R Sherlock Archaeology)



Figure 10 - West wall interior (R Sherlock Archaeology)



Figure 11 - Inscribed 'T' on a south wall quoin stone

### North Wall

The north long wall is almost completely collapsed, but masonry to an approximate height of 500mm to a metre still remains in a mound along the line of this wall. Though difficult to decipher, it is significant that this masonry still remains on site, and that the location of the north wall is still visible. It is clear from the aerial photography, and on site, that a portion of this wall has collapsed on top of the boundary wall to the north (fig 12).

### East Gable

Little remains of the east gable, the walls survive as a collapsed insitu mound, to less than a metre in height (fig 13). As with the north wall the masonry for this wall is still visible on site, which at least gives some delineation to the chancel end of the church.





Figure 12 - The north wall (on right in photo) has collapsed in part onto the boundary wall

### Roof & Floor

There is no evidence of any roofing material on the site, although if slate coverings had been used some evidence may be contained within the fill. Alternatively, the slates may have been quarried for use in other structures in the area. Similarly, there is no evidence of a floor finish, as the steady build-up of soil and grass has covered most of the original floor level. Some preliminary clearing

of the nave floor has revealed graveslabs. The position of the entrance opening in the south and north wall indicate that the functioning floor level of the church was not substantially different to the extant ground level of the church.

Following site clearance within the nave, which did not disturb any existing masonry, six recumbent slabs averaging 1.7m to 2m in length, lying E-W orientation were uncovered throughout the church. One of these graveslabs dates back to 1702. This date would support the view that the church had been in dis-use for some time when it was united with the nearby parishes of Killinan, Kilchreest, Killogilleen, Killora and Kilthomas to form the 'Killinane Union' in 1726.

There are tradesmen motifs visible on two of them, one of which looks like an anvil – and may represent a blacksmith/ shoe maker/cobbler, and another appears to be a spade (isosceles triangle) and the furrow of a plough, possibly representing a ploughman/tiller.



Figure 13 - View of the east gable, with the south wall visible on the left

The Ordnance Survey visit of the site in 1838 was documented by Patrick O'Keeffe, who mentions four cross-slabs within the church, gives the inscription from one and provides illustrations of the other three, (fig 14). The inscription on the fourth slab, as given by O'Keeffe, appears to read '1703 PRAY FOR THE SOULE OF BRYNE RUOAN AND H.R.N.F. M.R.I.C.' The gravestones are further documented in the archaeological report in Appendix C.

### Graveyard

The church at Issert Kelly is situated to the north of a D-shaped graveyard (GA114-097003-) that measures 49m north-west to south-east and 40m north-east to south-west and is bordered by the local road Grannagh Beg to the south. A stone wall delineates the boundary of the graveyard with a centrally positioned gated entrance to the graveyard within the southern boundary wall set slightly back from the road.

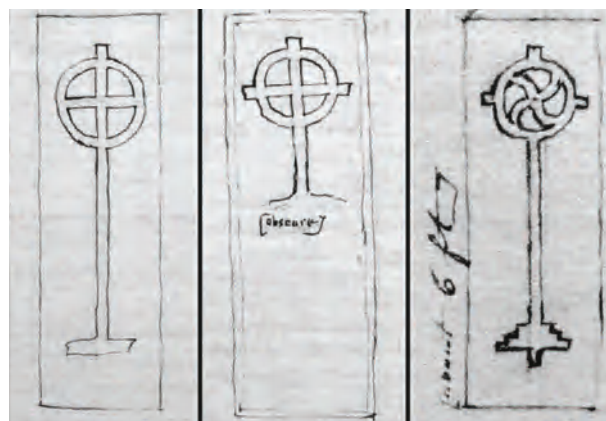


Figure 14 - O'Keeffe drawings of gravestones in the nave

There are pastures around the graveyard on all sides. There are several gravestones surrounding the church which date to the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and the description on the RMP notes that 'numerous graves are marked by plain block headstones'. The graveyard is in need of ongoing care and attention – to manage vegetation and protect the headstones.



## 4.0 Conditions Survey

### General Description

The standing masonry of the church consists of un-coursed, random rubble masonry, predominantly limestone, ranging from small to medium sized units, with much larger stones integrated, primarily at lower levels, and at the corner. Walls generally average 850mm in thickness, and due to the limitation of access could only be inspected from ground level. No scaffolding access was provided at this time due to the unevenness of the ground around and within the church. All surviving walls are in generally poor condition, and have suffered from invasive plant growth over the years. Unfortunately, significant portions of the walls have been lost, including a significant portion of the west gable, almost all of the east gable, and the north wall.

The south wall is a cause of particular concern, as vegetation has caused significant damage to portions of this upstanding wall and it is now leaning forward in one area. The wall is likely held together in certain parts by just rooted plants and a significant and worrying loss of mortar is evident. Wide joints are visible in several locations which will require pinning and



Figure 15 - Lean of the south wall is evident when viewed from the side

repointing in the future. The area above left of the entrance way (when facing the church from the graveyard side) appears particularly vulnerable, as noted in the structural engineers report (see Appendix A). There are at least three large tree stumps still sitting on top of the wall, along with a considerable amount of rooted ivy. The other area of most structural concern is the south-west corner which is leaning, likely due to settlement, and this wall has been cited by the structural engineer as being at risk of imminent collapse (fig 15). A relatively intact collapsed portion of wall is visible on the inside, to the east end of the nave.



Figure 16 - Arched opening in the south wall

The lean in the wall is a cause of major concern and has been assessed by John Britton Consulting Engineers (see Appendix A) and was found to be 300mm out of alignment over a height of approximately 4m. The structural assessment determined that this wall is in danger of imminent collapse.

The arched entrance in the south wall is in very poor condition (fig 16). Missing the cut stones to both reveals, which has resulted in deep pockets of unstable masonry, it is also missing all of its outer voisseurs stones to the arch (figs 17). Although the inner face appears to retain its voisseurs, the joints have lost all mortar, and the arch needs to be repointed (fig 18).



Figure 17 - The masonry entrance reveal



Figure 18 - The underside of the arch

The west wall is approximately 900mm in width and up to 2.5m in height in some locations. The south west corner, though intact at the base, is likely under duress due to the lean in the south wall. As with the south wall, this wall is also in need of repointing, pinning and consolidation of the wall tops, following removal of vegetation.

The north and east walls are essentially collections of rubble, though some areas of low

level intact wall may remain below the collapsed masonry. This masonry should be sorted so that remnants of any remaining walls below can be inspected.

### Ivy Removal

Ivy was trimmed back across the whole structure in September 2022 to within an inch or two of the wall faces, though due to the precarious nature of the structure, it was not trimmed back to this degree in all locations (fig 19). This work was undertaken after a bat survey in August 2022 confirmed there were no active bat or bird roosts in the structure. Roots within the walls were not disturbed, as this could result in the loosening and potential loss of masonry and ministerial notification is not in place at this time to allow for the repair of masonry (see Appendix C for notification documents). This process allowed the team to inspect the ruin and determine how much of the historic structure remains in tact beneath the vegetation. Prior to this work it was not possible to inspect the upstanding ruins. The vegetation removal works were notified to the National Monuments Service and monitored on site by Archaeologist Rory Sherlock.

Eco-plugs, which are a form of controlled biocide, were installed in the cut roots of the vegetation to minimize re-growth over the coming seasons.

### Structural Survey

John Britton Consulting Engineers carried out a structural appraisal of the upstanding ruins, visual inspection only, and this report is included in Appendix A. In the short term the structural engineer recommended the following:

- Immediate support of the south wall to prevent collapse – propping as outlined in the proposals in Appendix A. Longer terms methods to take down the top portion of this wall and rebuild should be undertaken once propping is in place.
- Removal of vegetation to prevent ongoing damage to the ruined walls.
- Repairs to the arched entrance way with reinstatement of masonry to the entrance reveals and lost arch voisseurs overhead.





Figure 19 - The ruin prior to the trimming back of ivy

Due to the immediate structural concerns with the south wall, the decision was made to install temporary props to the wall, designed by John Britton Consulting Engineers and constructed by Mathieu Mitchell contractors. Galvanised props, supported by heavy ballasts were put in place in October 2022 (fig 20). The ballasts were placed on the existing ground, in suitable locations between the graves, due to the archaeological nature of the site, it was not considered appropriate to excavate for the insertion of foundations for props. This measure is considered to be temporary in nature, and is required to prevent the imminent collapse of the south wall, however it is not a long-term solution for the Due to the presence of graves, and the fact that this is an archaeological site, This work was notified to the National Monuments Service and monitored on site by archaeologist Bernie Doherty.

The conclusions of the report found that the upstanding ruins are in a very vulnerable state, and structural propping is required with the



Figure 20 - Installation of propping underway at Issertkelly

utmost urgency. A programme of more detailed repairs, starting with vegetation removal, should then be undertaken once props are in place. The installation of propping has now been undertaken on site, to stabilise the structure in the short term.



## 5.0 Ecological Survey



Figure 21 - The site during the bat survey

The ruined Issertkelly church consists of two limestone walls with no remaining roof and the walls are in poor repair, with numerous cracks and crevices that have the potential to support roosting bats. The walls were covered in thick ivy (*Hedera hibernica*), which has obscured much of the walls. The interior of the church is dominated by bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*. agg.), nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and elder (*Sambucus nigra*).

The graveyard is an area of dry calcareous/neutral grassland (GS2), which is managed by cutting or grazing. It is surrounded by a low stone wall and the fields in the surrounding area are dominated by sheep grazed dry calcareous/neutral grassland (GS2). There are sparse tree lines in the wider area, but the site itself is very open, with fragmented vegetative connectivity with the wider area. Overall, the structure was considered to have Moderate suitability for roosting bats and of relatively low value for commuting/foraging bats.

A bat survey was undertaken on the 29th August 2022, by Pat Roberts of MKO (fig 21). A search for roosts was undertaken within the ruined walls. The aim was to determine the presence of roosting bats and the need for further survey work or mitigation. A walkover was carried out and the structure was assessed for its potential to support roosting bats. Any potential roost sites were subject to a roost assessment. This comprised a detailed inspection of the exterior and interior to look for evidence of bat use, including live and dead specimens, droppings, feeding remains, urine splashes, fur oil staining and noises.

The exterior of the building was inspected first from ground level with the aid of binoculars. A systematic search of all accessible areas was undertaken by a licensed bat ecologist. A dusk emergency survey was also undertaken during the evening of the 29th August. The interior and exterior of the old church were searched for signs of nesting birds and during the bat survey, attention was paid to any nocturnal bird activity.

During the survey, the structure was searched from ground level for suitable roosting habitat and it was noted that there were suitable cracks and crevices that provided potential roosting habitat for bats throughout the ruin. It was not possible to conduct a thorough search and visual inspection of the entire ruin due to the presence of the thick ivy. However, the lower and less densely covered sections were inspected and no signs of roosting bats were recorded.

Three species were recorded during the survey:

- Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
- Leisler's Bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*)

The first bats recorded were two common pipistrelles. These bats were recorded approximately twenty five minutes after sunset and appeared to commute into the site from the south west. These bats foraged around the graveyard periodically throughout the survey but were not observed either entering or leaving the ruins. No more than two bats were recorded at any one time.

In addition, there were two brief contacts with Leisler's bat at approximately thirty minutes and one hour after sunset respectively. These bats were not seen but were located outside the site. No bats were recorded entering or leaving the ruined building and no signs of roosting bats were recorded on the site. Low levels of foraging activity were recorded on the site.

No birds were recorded nesting within the Issertkelly church ruins or within the graveyard. It is likely that the ivy-covered ruins had supported nesting birds, but that these nests had been vacated by the time of the survey. The following species were recorded in the wider area during the survey:

- Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*)
- Wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*)
- Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)
- Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*)

#### **Future recommendations for the site**

- A bat and breeding bird survey should be carried out before any further works are undertaken at the site.

- Works that potentially disturb or displace any protected species will be avoided where possible. In the unlikely event that such impacts cannot be avoided, a derogation licence will be sought from the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

- Cracks and crevices should be maintained / left open to provide a habitat for bats. Certain cracks / crevices should be selected to be kept open following consultation between the ecologist and conservation team.

- It is recommended that bird and bat boxes are provided where possible if roosting/ nesting habitats are lost as a result of the conservation works.

- The introduction of hedges such as hawthorn, crab apple, guelder rose and blackthorn could add significant biodiversity value to the graveyard.

- Small trees and shrubs could also be planted to add biodiversity throughout the graveyard.

- Where possible ivy should be encouraged, where it does not pose a threat to the built heritage.

- Grassland management is also recommended, with a no cutting regime during the summer months to allow plants to flower and set seed.

Further recommendations are included in the full ecology report in Appendix B.



## 6.0 Statement of Significance



Figure 22 - View of Iisert Kelly from above

### Cultural Significance

The Guidelines to the Burra Charter state that – “Cultural Significance is a concept, which helps in estimating the value of places. The places that are likely to be of significance are those which help an understanding of the past; or enrich the present; or which will be of value to future generations.” There are a variety of categories generally used to evaluate the level of cultural significance of an historic place. For Iisert Kelly Church and Graveyard this includes – the historical; architectural; archaeological: ecological; social and spiritual interest categories.

### Historical Significance

Though scant documentary and cartographical evidence survives on the church at Iisert Kelly, there is evidence of it as a site of longstanding Christian worship, with extant standing ruins that appear to the medieval period. Small, single-celled medieval churches are not uncommon in the Irish country side, and any former place of worship of this age has considerable significance.

An historic settlement is visible on the first edition ordnance survey map of the area, which is thought to be the medieval settlement associated with the church.

### Archaeological Significance

The above ground archaeological fabric is interesting and further architectural detail may come to light in the masonry, when the ivy and ground cover are fully removed, or which might be discovered amongst the fill material following cleaning and sorting of the loose rubble banked along the walls of the church. If non-invasive archaeological investigation or limited excavation reveals details of an early monastic settlement further north the significance of the site will rise accordingly. A number of graveslabs were uncovered within the main nave, one of which dates back to the early eighteenth century (fig 23).

### Architectural Significance

The architectural significance of Iisert Kelly church lies in the age of the structure and the



Figure 23 - The graveslabs uncovered within the nave

architectural composition or detail of features such as the large quoin stones, arched entrance and any remaining windows which may come to light following further vegetation management. Unfortunately it has lost a significant amount of its architectural standing due to extensive collapse. Having stood for hundreds of years, Iisert Kelly church is a good partial example of a single cell medieval church.

#### **Ecological Significance**

The ecological significance of the site is notable, given the remoteness and small number of annual visitors to the graveyard. With minor adjustments to the grass cutting regime and some judicious tree planting the site could be even more aesthetically pleasing with an even broader biodiversity. The significant loss of the ivy cover on the masonry can be mitigated by less frequent cutting of nearby hedges, or the introduction of planting throughout the graveyard.

#### **Social & Spiritual Significance**

The social significance of Iisert Kelly Church is also important, providing testament to the community that once lived within the surrounding countryside and worshipped in the church. A fine collection of surviving headstones and grave markers still adorn the graveyard, telling of lives lived within the local community. A small carving of a 'T' is visible on the one of the quoin stones, though it is not clear what this signifies. There are likely local community with long standing ancestral ties to the site.

#### **Conclusion**

While each individual category of significance might appear to be relatively modest when considered in isolation, the combination of history, archaeology, architecture, ecology, social history and spirituality make Iisert Kelly church a place of importance, and it should be considered a site of regional significance.



## 7.0 Conservation Strategy

### Conservation Guidelines

All proposed works at Iisert Kelly Church and graveyard should be carried out in accordance with the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004); the document Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Government of Ireland 1999); the Advice Notes for Excavators; and the documents Care and Conservation of Graveyards (OPW 1995); and Guidance for the Care, Conservation and Recording of Historic Graveyards (Heritage Council of Ireland 2010).

The surviving masonry at Iisert Kelly Church has been badly damaged by vegetation and weathering. If the south wall is not propped it will collapse. If the ivy is not removed, and localised repairs including repointing carried out to the remaining south and west wall, the masonry will continue to deteriorate and the walls will be in danger of further or future collapse. Careful treatment of this vegetation followed



Figure 24 - Large vegetation still rooted into the top of the wall

by appropriate masonry conservation and consolidation will protect the extant masonry, and reverse the current deterioration. Any masonry conservation work will focus first on stabilising and securing the south wall and entrance arch.

### Vegetation Removal

Though vegetation has been trimmed from the structure, there is still a considerable amount of growth along the wall tops which should be addressed in order to prevent further loss of masonry (fig 24). A strategy for access to the ruin should be devised with a suitable contractor which will establish a means to erect scaffold or platforms in order to carry out work at high level from the wall tops, in order to treat and remove the heavy roots along the top of the walls. The ivy should be removed from all upstanding masonry to facilitate local repairs to be carried out where required. The contractor should ensure that all significant root systems are targeted and in particular the roots which have now been plugged with eco-plugs.

Vegetation should be fully removed from the wall tops of the south and west wall of the church to allow for the consolidation of these wall tops, and application of rough racking – treatment to the wall tops with appropriate mortars and embedded gallets, to ensure adequate water run-off. Vegetation should also be cleared from the collapsed areas of the north and east wall to facilitate inspection of these walls and sorting of the masonry.

Large vegetative root structures should be removed from the top of the south wall, and repairs carried out to the entrance arch.

Schedule of Conservation and Structural works  
The most urgent works required are needed as follows;

- Installation of fencing and signage by Galway County Council to advise the public that the church is an unstable and unsafe structure.

- Full removal of remaining ivy from the south and west wall.
- The larger roots should be removed from the top of the south wall, and masonry repairs and consolidation carried to the wall.
- The wall top of the south and west walls should be rough-racked to protect it from on-going water ingress.
- Mortar samples should be taken from the structure to determine the composition of the original mortars and to inform repair mixes.
- Repairs and consolidation to the reveals and head of the entrance within the south wall, along with repairs to any remnants of a window in the south wall.
- Repointing of the entrance arch (fig 25)
- Localised repointing, pinning and repair to the lower south and west wall.



Figure 25 - Masonry reveal to the south entrance

Of lesser urgency but required within the short-term (within 2-5 years) are works to the following:

- Clearing of vegetation to the north and east walls and sorting of the masonry
- Possible consolidation of the lower areas of the north and east walls if these are found to be intact on site.

The wall heads should be protected with either lime and sand flaunching – rough racking. All works should be carried out by skilled masons with conservation experience, under the guidance of experienced architectural, engineering and archaeological consultants who specialise in work of this nature. Consultation with the National Monuments Service within the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, together with approvals from Galway County Council, will be necessary prior to commencing any repair works.



Figure 26 - Graveslab uncovered in the nave

Special care must be taken on site to protect the gravestones on site during any conservation works (fig 26). Fallen masonry may have already damaged gravestones within and around the church, so any works to consolidate, move, or sort masonry should be fully recorded to ensure that graveslabs underneath are documented in their found condition. Detailed method statements will be required for work of this nature.

In tandem with the conservation works to be carried out on site, further study and research should also be undertaken, to document, record and better understand the site. This work is of utmost importance and should be considered alongside the repair works.



Further study :

- 3D photogrammetry of graveslabs to record them and improve legibility and understanding of the carvings and letters.
- Graveyard mapping could be carried out. Survey 123 is a Galway County Council initiative where the community is taught how to record memorials and the information is then stored by Galway County Council. The graveyard map should outline the location of architectural fragments re-used as grave markers.
- Geophysical survey of the medieval settlement to the north of the graveyard – to establish if this church is associated with a wider medieval landscape.
- Local knowledge is paramount in identifying the locations of graves in any old graveyard – interviews with locals will help to establish the history of burials at the site.



Figure 27 - Aerial view of the graveyard - looking at the internal face of the south wall



## 7.0 Summary of Conclusions

The ruined church and graveyard at Issert Kelly (or Issertkelly) is a medieval stone church with adjoining graveyard, and has long been in a ruinous state, with a significant loss of masonry to the north, east and west wall, with only a portion of the south wall still upstanding.

The church appears to consist of a single cell structure, though it is difficult to determine this accurately due to the significant collapse of the walls.

The medieval Church of Issert Kelly with its idyllic rural graveyard setting are both included in the Record of Monuments and Places, reference (RMP No (GA114-097001-) and (RMP No GA114-097003-) respectively, and are afforded legal protection under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2014).

Orientated traditionally, the structure measures some 24m long by 9.8m wide, with wall thickness of 1.25m, and is probably of medieval date.

The church at Issert Kelly is situated to the north of a D-shaped graveyard that measures 49m north-west to south-east and 40m north-east to south-west and is bordered by the local road Grannagh Beg to the south.

The placename alone suggests that an early medieval ecclesiastical site, probably a hermitage or small monastery, was once located in the area of Issertkelly, which is located between Kilchreest, Ardahan and Gort in the limestone lowlands of south Co Galway.

The ruinous remains of the church at Issert Kelly appear to represent a relatively large twelfth or thirteenth century parish church, but it is quite possible that this church was built upon the site of a pre-existing early medieval monastery or hermitage. There is clear evidence for a deserted settlement to the north of the church.

The church at Issert Kelly may predate the arrival of the Anglo-Normans into the area in 1235, but it certainly became a focal point in the small McHubert Burke lordship that developed in the area after that date. In the early 1400s the McHubert Burkes built a new castle, Issert Kelly Castle, less than 500m from the church and this castle was their principal seat for an extended period.

It is unclear when the church at Issert Kelly fell into disuse, but the ecclesiastical parish of Issert Kelly lost its independent status in the early 1700s, suggesting the church may have fallen out of use at that time, or possibly earlier.

Standing masonry includes much of the long south wall and some of the west wall. The east gable and north wall has mostly collapsed, and both remain as grass covered mounds containing collapsed masonry. There is no evidence of any roofing material on the site, although if slate coverings had been used some evidence may be contained within the fill.

The south wall is a cause of particular concern, as vegetation has caused significant damage to portions of this upstanding wall and it is now leaning forward in one area. The wall is likely held together in certain parts by just rooted plants and a significant and worrying loss of mortar is evident.

There are at least three large tree stumps still sitting on top of the south wall, along with a considerable amount of rooted ivy.

The arched entrance in the south wall is in very poor condition. Missing the cut stones to both reveals, which has resulted in deep pockets of unstable masonry, it is also missing all of its outer voisseur stones to the arch. Although the inner face appears to retain its voisseurs, the joints have lost all mortar, and the arch needs to be repointed.

The north and east walls are essentially collections of rubble, though some areas of low level intact wall may remain below the collapsed masonry. This masonry should be sorted so that remnants of any remaining walls below can be inspected.

The Guidelines to the Burra Charter state that - "Cultural Significance is a concept, which helps in estimating the value of places. The places that are likely to be of significance are those which help an understanding of the past; or enrich the present; or which will be of value to future generations." There are a variety of categories generally used to evaluate the level of cultural significance of an historic place. For Issert Kelly Church and Graveyard this includes – the historical; architectural; archaeological; ecological; social and spiritual interest categories.

While each individual category of significance might appear to be relatively modest when considered in isolation, the combination of history, archaeology, architecture, ecology, social history and spirituality make Issert Kelly church a place of importance, and it should be considered a site of regional significance.

The conclusions of the report found that the upstanding ruins are in a very vulnerable state, and structural propping is required with the utmost urgency. A programme of more detailed repairs, starting with vegetation removal, should then be undertaken once props are in place.

Careful treatment of this vegetation followed by appropriate masonry conservation and consolidation will protect the extant masonry, and reverse the current deterioration. Any masonry conservation work will focus first on stabilising and securing the south wall and entrance arch.

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# Appendix A

Structural Report

### **Issertkelly Graveyard, Kilcreest, Co. Galway.**

### **Conservation Structural Engineering Notes to Assist Conservation Architect's Conservation Management Plan.**

**Our ref. 1699**



## **1.0 Introduction**

This report has been prepared to assist the Conservation Architect in the development of the Conservation Management Plan for Issertkelly Graveyard, Kilcreest, Co. Galway.

The layout of the remaining ruined structure can be seen from the Google satellite image below, and largely consists of the South-facing Wall, the partially abutting West Wall, and low-level stone representing the outline of the North and East Walls. The South-facing Wall, as seen in the photo above, contains an arched doorway.



The ruins at Issertkelly were inspected by this office on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022. It was apparent that the ivy growth had been cut back not long before this inspection.

## **2.0 Executive Summary**

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### **2.1 Health and Safety**

Although there is some Heras fencing in place, in general there is full access to the site and the public are free to walk about. With this in mind, it is important to ensure that the structure does not pose a risk to the general public.

Upon inspecting the ruins, the following items pose a health and safety risk onsite.

- A significant lean to the southwest corner of the South-facing Wall was observed; using a spirit level, this was measured to be approximately 300mm out of alignment over 3.9m in height. Based on measurements taken on-site, it would appear that the centre of gravity for this wall is outside the middle third, as detailed in Section 3 below, and is in imminent danger of collapse.
- Nearly all existing walls show signs of masonry and mortar loss, allowing water to penetrate deep into the core; some large stones are at risk of falling out.
- The jambs to the existing arched doorway in the South-facing Wall are in poor condition, offering very little support to the arch overhead.
- Past ivy growth has penetrated deep into the core, pushing facing stones outward and potentially making them unstable.

### **2.2 A Stitch in Time**

The building is symbolic to the area, especially in relation to other historical buildings within close proximity such as Issertkelly Castle; and represents an important part of history for the local community. It is clear that the building is in grave danger of ongoing rapid deterioration. Simple inexpensive remedial/protection works could arrest this in the short term, and more extensive repairs could be carried out in stages as and when funding becomes available, in order to conserve the existing structure.



### 3.0 Investigations and Appraisal

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#### 3.1 South Wall and Arched Doorway

The South Wall, with the arched doorway circled below, is the largest wall of the ruins and is quite imposing, being visible upon approaching the ruins from the main road. The wall measures approximately 800-900mm in width and ranges from 1-5m in height.



**South-Facing Wall**



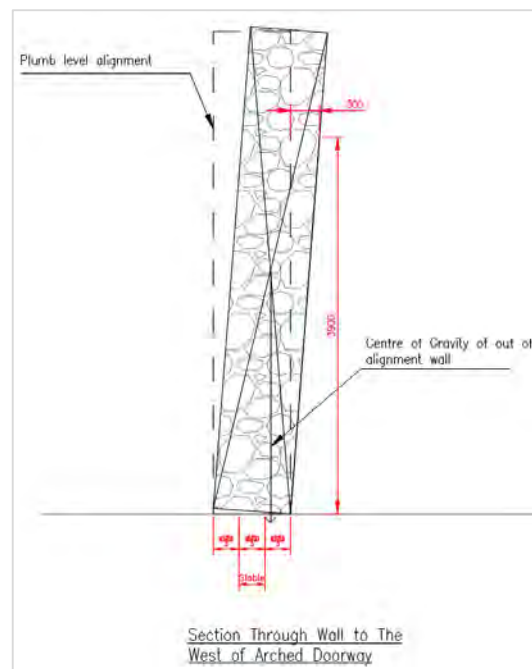
The arched doorway appears to be in very poor condition: the jambs are missing cut stones, likely for some time; the outer voussoir stones are missing, circled below left. Although the inner face of the arch appears to have voussoir stones these are lacking in pointing as shown below centre; and the core of the wall is missing for some depth on one side of the arch, as shown below right.



Although at the time of the inspections the vegetation growth had been cut back, there was evidence of significant vegetation to the full extent of the South Wall. The extensive vegetation has led to significant loss of mortar and pinning stones from the joints, and this loss has likely been increased through erosion as a result of water ingress. This wall also shows several apparently loose facing stones, likely having been dislodged due to vegetation growing deep into the core of the wall. The area circled right is of particular concern in relation to loose facing stones.

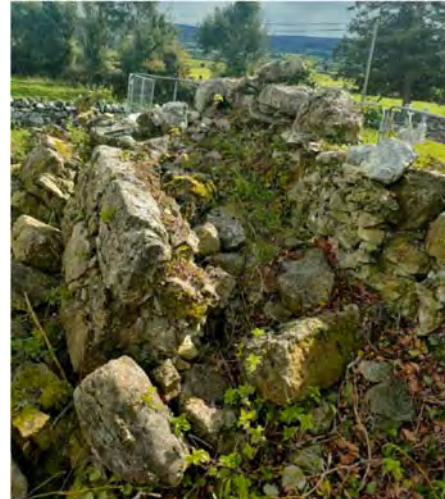


The most concerning aspect of this elevation is the significant lean to the southwest corner, as shown in the photo below. This is most likely a result of settlement due to nearby grave excavations and/or damage by vegetation: either past ivy growth moving the stones out of position or the weight of the ivy hanging onto the wall. The lean in the southwest corner was measured to be approximately 300mm out of alignment over 3.9m in height, and for stone walls to remain stable under self-weight, the centre of gravity should lie within the middle third of the base of the wall. Based on measurements taken onsite, it would appear that the centre of gravity for this wall is outside the middle third, as shown below, and is in imminent danger of collapse.





The southeast section of the South Wall is significantly lower than the remainder of this wall. There are also significant amounts of stone to the inside of this wall, indicating significant collapse in the past, as shown in the photo right.



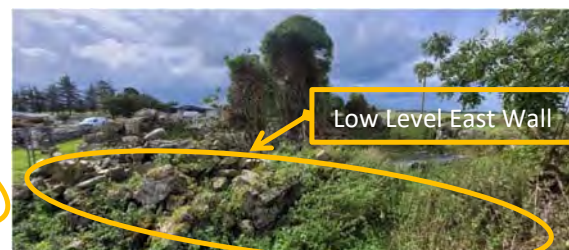
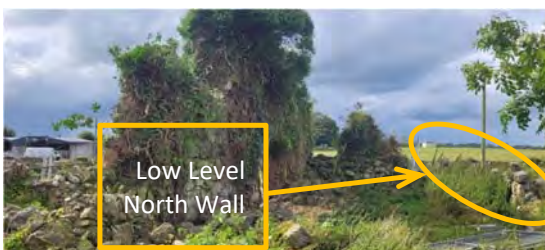
### **3.2 West Wall of South Transept**

The West Wall of the ruin is approximately 900mm in width and ranges from 0.5m to 2.5m in height. Settlement is evident to the southwest corner and connection to the South Wall in this corner is significantly reduced, as shown in the photo below, weakening both the West and South Walls. As with the South Wall, the West Wall is missing lime mortar and pinning stones throughout, most likely from erosion due to water ingress or ivy growth.



### **3.3 North and East Walls**

These walls are generally 800-900mm thick. They are significantly reduced in height, standing only 0.5m to 1.0m high. Although these walls are relatively low, typically only just above existing ground levels, they remain important, as they define the outline of the structure. The East Wall is currently surrounded by internal stone rubble, most likely from past partial South and East Wall collapses.





## **4.0 Conclusions**

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The remains of the graveyard at Issertkelly are showing worrying signs that, if no action is taken, future dilapidation and deterioration of the structure are almost certain. Whilst vegetation is presently in a cut-back state, it is clear that large areas of the ruins are subject to heavy ivy growth. This has led to significant mortar and masonry loss and may have contributed to the lean in several of the walls.

Repeated grave excavations have led to areas of subsidence in and around some of the walls, particularly to the southwest; and this was most likely exacerbated by excessive vegetation growth.

The existing arched doorway to the south wall is missing several key elements for supporting such masonry arches, in particular the outer voussoir stones and door jamb reveals are missing.

The ruin in its present condition poses a significant health and safety risk, as several areas are in danger of imminent collapse and there is also a potential for loose stones to dislodge and fall. There are signs of past collapses with existing debris visible throughout. Further collapse not only poses a significant risk but has the potential for archaeological loss to the existing structure and nearby gravestones.

## **5.0 Recommendations**

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### **5.1 Vegetation**

The tops and faces of all walls should be sprayed with an approved herbicide, Round-Up or similar, to kill off ivy and other vegetation. Removal of the dead vegetation should be left for c. two months, to allow it to shrivel and loosen its grip on the existing mortar and masonry. Tree stumps and branches should be cut and injected with an approved arboricide, Brushwood or similar; and final removal of vegetation should only be carried out by trained personnel and in the presence of a suitable specialist stone mason.

### **5.2 Wall Tops and Faces**

Several wall tops are suffering from vertical water ingress. This can be largely arrested by forming a thin lime capping layer, laid to a slight fall, to the top of the walls.

The whole of the walls should be re-pointed with an NHL lime mortar. Considering the budget limitations, this should be done on a phased basis, addressing the areas most at risk first. Where large voids are present due to loss of pinning stones, suitable reclaimed pinning stones should be inserted and pointed.

### **5.3 South-Facing Wall**

The leaning wall to the southwest should, in the interim, be propped to prevent collapsing of the structure under self-weight; separate correspondence regarding this has already been communicated. In order to remove the props, the wall will need to be partially taken down and rebuilt. The reduction will be dependent on the amount of lean and the height of the wall, so will vary along the length. From preliminary onsite measurement, the wall will need to be reduced to approximately 2m above existing ground level. The height to which the walls are rebuilt is subject to Archaeologist/Conservation Architect advice and the availability of salvaged stone. The image below highlights (in yellow) the estimated area of wall to be carefully taken down and rebuilt.

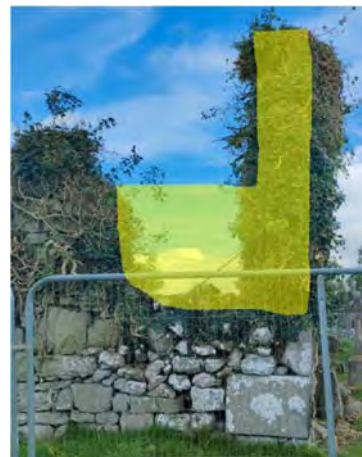


The arched entrance here is in danger of collapse if left to deteriorate. It is recommended that the door jambs are consolidated by rebuilding these with suitable reclaimed stones, filling the core also. Whilst, structurally speaking, these could be re-built with suitable facing stone, there may be a preference to have these built using commissioned cut stone, subject to budget constraints and Archaeologist/Conservation Architect advice. This work should be only carried out by a specialist stone mason. Along with rebuilding the jambs, the outer voussoir stones should also be rebuilt using suitably reclaimed stone.

As mentioned above, the whole of the wall should be re-pointed with an NHL lime mortar. Considering the budget limitations, this should be done on a phased basis, addressing the areas most at risk first. Where large voids are present due to loss of pinning stones, suitable reclaimed pinning stones should be inserted and pointed. The wall cap should be cleaned down, then rough raked using lime mortar and flat salvaged stone, with any loose stone re-bedded in-situ in such a manner as to positively disperse water.

#### **5.4 West-Facing Wall**

As mentioned above, all vegetation and wall pointing should be addressed as and when funding becomes available, and the whole of the wall should be re-pointed with an NHL lime mortar. Considering the budget limitations, this should be done on a phased basis, addressing the areas most at risk first. Where large voids are present due to loss of pinning stones, suitable reclaimed pinning stones should be inserted and pointed. The wall cap should be cleaned down, then rough-raked using lime mortar and flat salvaged stone, with any loose stone re-bedded in-situ in a manner that positively disperses water.



This wall and indeed the south-facing wall would benefit from a small section being rebuilt using reclaimed stone, thus tying the corner, as shown highlighted in the image to the right.

#### **5.5 East and North Walls**

These walls are the lowest overall height, and will therefore require a lesser amount of structural work, as the risk for these walls is significantly less than the South and West Walls. All vegetation and wall pointing should be addressed as and when funding becomes available and the whole of the walls should be re-pointed with an NHL lime mortar. The wall cap should be cleaned down, then rough-raked using lime mortar and flat salvaged stone, with any loose stone re-bedded in-situ in a manner that positively disperses water.

#### **5.6 Existing Stone Rubble and Reclamation.**

There are significant amounts of stone rubble within the existing building. Some of the rubble may have archaeological significance and/or be reusable in the proposed wall repairs. Vegetation from this area should be removed and a specialist stone mason should sort through the stones under the supervision of the Archaeologist.



## **5.7 Maintenance**

Until funding becomes available, regular and ongoing maintenance should occur. A survey of the existing structure should be commissioned to locate and identify all aspects of the structure, and should include loose stones in the adjacent area. This survey should also determine the current vertical alignment of all walls, particularly the walls with a visible lean. The survey should be referenced to a fixed datum so that future movement can be monitored.

Ongoing clipping and spraying of vegetation should be carried out in order to reduce the weight acting on the wall and to further reduce wind exposure. Removal of large trunks or branches should only occur when a specialist stone mason is onsite.

Ongoing excavations at the base of the wall for grave-digging should be avoided; if this is not possible, graves should be dug perpendicular and not parallel to walls, to minimise undermining of walls.

# Appendix B

Ecological Report and Bat Survey

## **Ecological Assessment and Conservation Management Plan**

Issertkelly Church and  
Graveyard, Recorded  
Monument Number:  
GA114-097001 – 3.







## DOCUMENT DETAILS

Client: **Galway County Council**

Project Title: **Issertkelly Church and Graveyard, Recorded Monument Number: GA114-097001 – 3.**

Project Number: **220836**

Document Title: **Ecological Assessment and Conservation Management Plan**

Document File Name: **BS - F – 2022 – 10-24- F**

Prepared By: **MKO  
Tuam Road  
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Ireland  
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Planning and  
Environmental  
Consultants

Rev	Status	Date	Author(s)	Approved By
01	Final	24/10/2022	PR	PR

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

This report is provided to advise the project team on any ecological considerations that they may need to take into account during their preparation of a conservation management plan for the Issertkelly Church and Graveyard, Recorded Monument Number: GA114-097001 – 3.

## 1.2 Statement of Authority

The bat survey was undertaken on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021 by Pat Roberts BSc.(Env.), MCIEEM who has over 17 years' experience in ecological assessment and has designed, organised and undertaken numerous bat and bird surveys and related impact assessments in full accordance with the most relevant and applicable guidance. Pat has attended numerous training courses on bat survey and assessment including Bat Conservation Ireland bat detector workshop, Bat Handling Course, Bats and Arboriculture and use of bat call analysis software. In addition, he has provided bat survey training to staff at MKO and also partaken in voluntary bat surveys and assessments such as the National Daubenton's Bat Survey.



## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Bat Survey

#### **Preliminary Ecological Appraisal**

A walkover survey of the site of the proposed development was carried out during daylight hours on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 2022. The building on the site was visually assessed for potential use as bat roosting habitats and commuting/foraging habitats using a protocol set out in BCT *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (3rd edn.) (Collins, 2016). Table 4.1 of the 2016 BCT Guidelines identifies a grading protocol for assessing structures, trees and commuting/foraging habitat for bats. The protocol is divided into four Suitability Categories: *High, Moderate, Low* and *Negligible*.

#### **Roost Survey**

A search for roosts was undertaken within the ruined walls. The aim was to determine the presence of roosting bats and the need for further survey work or mitigation.

A walkover was carried out and the structure was assessed for its potential to support roosting bats. Any potential roost sites were subject to a roost assessment. This comprised a detailed inspection of the exterior and interior to look for evidence of bat use, including live and dead specimens, droppings, feeding remains, urine splashes, fur oil staining and noises.

The exterior of the building was inspected first from ground level with the aid of binoculars. A systematic search of all accessible areas was undertaken by a licensed bat ecologist.

#### **Dusk Emergence Survey**

A dusk emergence survey was undertaken during the evening of the 29<sup>th</sup> August. The aim of this survey was to identify bat species using the site and to gather any information on bat behaviour and important features used by bats. The activity survey focussed on the old church that is the subject of the conservation management plan but also monitored activity throughout the site.

Four surveyors were equipped with Peterssen D100 heterodyne bat detectors, were positioned surrounding the building with a clear view of the entire structure. Where possible, species identification was made in the field and any other relevant information was also noted, e.g. numbers, behaviour, features used, etc.

The dusk survey commenced 30 minutes before sunset and was completed within 1.5 hours after sunset. Conditions were suitable for bat survey with no wind, dry, overcast and warm (19°C at the start of the survey and 16°C at its termination).

Survey design and effort was created in accordance with the most current best practice guidelines for surveying bats (Collins, 2016). Bats use different roosts, commuting routes and foraging areas throughout their annual life cycle and depending on the availability of insect prey. Therefore, all surveys are subject to seasonal and meteorological constraints.

August is within the optimum survey period for bat activity surveys (Collins, 2016). No limitations associated with access or weather conditions were recorded during the survey.

2.2

## Breeding Bird Survey

The interior and exterior of the old church were searched for signs of nesting birds and during the bat survey, attention was paid to any nocturnal bird activity.

3.

## RESULTS

3.1

### Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

The ruined Issertkelly church consists of two limestone walls with no remaining roof. The walls are in poor repair, with numerous cracks and crevices that have the potential to support roosting bats. The walls were covered in thick ivy (*Hedera hibernica*), which obscured the view of much of the walls. The interior of the church includes the fallen walls and is dominated by bramble (*Rubus fruticosus. agg.*), nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and elder (*Sambucus nigra*).

The graveyard is an area of dry calcareous/neutral grassland (GS2), which is managed by cutting or grazing. It is surrounded by a low stone wall and the fields in the surrounding area are dominated by sheep grazed dry calcareous/neutral grassland (GS2). There are sparse tree lines in the wider area, but the site itself is very open, with fragmented vegetative connectivity with the wider area.

Overall, the structure was considered to have Moderate suitability for roosting bats and of relatively low value for commuting/foraging bats.



Plate 3.1. Ruined walls at Issertkelly Church with dense ivy.





Plate 3.2. Ruined church and graveyard



Plate 3.3. Issertkelly Graveyard

## 3.2

## Roost Survey

During the survey, the tower structure was searched from ground level for suitable roosting habitat and it was noted that there were suitable cracks and crevices that provided potential roosting habitat for bats throughout the ruin. It was not possible to conduct a thorough search and visual inspection of the entire ruin due to the presence of the thick ivy. However, the lower and less densely covered sections were inspected and no signs of roosting bats were recorded.

## 3.3

## Dusk Emergence Survey

Three species were recorded during the survey:

- Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
- Leisler's Bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*)

The first bats recorded were two common pipistrelles. These bats were recorded approximately 25 minutes after sunset and appeared to commute into the site from the south west. These bats foraged around the graveyard periodically throughout the survey but were not observed either entering or leaving the ruins. No more than two bats were recorded at any one time.

In addition, there were two brief contacts with Leisler's bat at approximately 30 minutes and one hour after sunset respectively. These bats were not seen but were located outside the site.

No bats were recorded entering or leaving the ruined building and no signs of roosting bats were recorded on the site. Low levels of foraging activity were recorded on the site.

## 3.4

## Breeding Bird Survey

No birds were recorded nesting within the Issertkelly church ruins or within the graveyard. It is likely that the ivy-covered ruins had supported nesting birds, but that these nests had been vacated by the time of the survey. The following species were recorded in the wider area during the survey:

- > Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*)
- > Wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*)
- > Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)
- > Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*)

4.

## BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

4.1

### Recommendations in relation to Nesting Birds and Bats

- › Given the presence of potential roosting/nesting features within the church, it is recommended that a bat and breeding bird survey should be undertaken in advance of any further works that may be undertaken within the abbey in the future. This will ensure that any bats that may take up residence in the building would be adequately protected.
- › Works that potentially disturb or displace any protected species will be avoided where possible. In the unlikely event that such impacts cannot be avoided, a derogation licence will be sought from the National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- › It is recommended that where possible some cracks and crevices are left open during the conservation of the church so that the building still provides suitable habitat for these taxa. This should be undertaken following consultation between the project ecologist, the conservation team so that all parties are in agreement with regard to which cracks to retain.
- › It is recommended that bird and bat boxes be provided where possible if significant roosting/nesting habitat is lost as a result of the conservation works.

4.1.1

#### Trees and hedges

- › Hedges of native species such as hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*) crab apple (*Malus sp.*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and spindle (*Euonymus europeaus*) could add significant biodiversity value to the graveyard. A potential location could be along the boundaries of the of the graveyard.
- › Small trees and shrubs could also be planted to add structural and habitat diversity throughout the graveyard. Species such as yew (*Taxus baccata*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*), cherry (*Prunus spp.*) and fruit trees are attractive to look at, do not grow too large and provide berries and fruits, which provide a source of food for wildlife.
- › Where possible, ivy could be encouraged where it does not pose a threat to the built heritage such as on the boundary walls. This plant provides an important source of nectar and pollen for bees and other insects and provides berries, which provide a source of food for birds during the winter months.

4.2

### Grass Management

- › The graveyard supports potential species rich calcareous grassland and could be managed as a meadow with no cutting during the summer months (April – August inclusive) to allow the plants to flower and set seed.
- › Grass could be cut less often and in a rotation throughout the graveyard so that there is a variety of grass lengths at all times within the graveyard. Sections could be cut on a six week cycle.
- › Fertilizer should be avoided and all grass clippings removed either from the site or to a designated compost area within the graveyard.
- › Chemical herbicides should be avoided where possible.

4.3

### Mosses and Lichens

- › Gravestones, walls and old stone buildings provide a good substrate for a wide variety of moss and lichen species.



- › Management of stone work should take into account this habitat. Close collaboration between the project ecologist and the conservation project team would assist in preserving this habitat whilst conserving the building and gravestones.

#### 4.4

## Public Awareness and Further Studies

- › Where management practices for biodiversity are undertaken within the graveyard, this should be explained to the graveyard users either verbally or through educational signage. For example, an explanation of why certain areas of the grassland are not cut may be advisable or information on lichens on gravestones may be useful.
- › A public open day for the conservation project should include information on biodiversity within the site and any management actions that are ongoing or will be undertaken to enhance it. Many of the actions will be transferable to people's own gardens and it is key that people are made aware of the reasons for each management action and its importance for biodiversity.
- › A list of species found within the site could be compiled (plants and animals). This would be a reference point against which any improvements to biodiversity could be measured.
- › A dedicated lichen survey could be undertaken.
- › Local schools could undertake biodiversity projects at the graveyard such as bulb planting, tree and shrub planting, bird and bat box monitoring.

## 5. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

### 5.1 Construction and Siting of Bat and Bird Boxes

[How to build a bat box | The Wildlife Trusts](#)

[Bat Boxes - Buildings, planning and development - Bat Conservation Trust \(bats.org.uk\)](#)

[Putting up your box - Bat Boxes - Bat Conservation Trust \(bats.org.uk\)](#)

[Build a bird box \(rspb.org.uk\)](#)

[How to build a nesting box for birds | The Wildlife Trusts](#)

### 5.2 Wildlife Friendly Planting

[Best Trees for Birds & Wildlife in the UK - The RSPB](#)

[Pollinator-friendly-planting-code-temporary-draft.pdf \(biodiversityireland.ie\)](#)

[All-Ireland Pollinator Plan » All-Ireland Pollinator Plan \(pollinators.ie\)](#)

### 5.3 Grassland Management

[Practical advice on managing wildflower meadows - National Biodiversity Data Centre \(biodiversityireland.ie\)](#)

[Pollinator How to Guide 4 wildflower.indd \(biodiversityireland.ie\)](#)

[www.wildflowers.ie](#)

### 5.4 Mosses and Lichens

[Irish Lichens - Index](#)

[LichenIreland - a website about the Lichens of Ireland \(habitas.org.uk\)](#)

### 5.5 Public Awareness and education

[People and Nature - The Galway County Biodiversity Project \(galwaycommunityheritage.org\)](#)

[Galway City Biodiversity Website - Galway City has a particularly diverse range of natural habitats \(galwaybiodiversity.com\)](#)

[Galway County Council](#)

[Biodiversity in Schools](#)

[Education - Irish Wildlife Trust \(iwt.ie\)](#)

6.

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CIEEM (2018) Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK And Ireland Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine.

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EC (2002) Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. European Commission.

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European Communities (Conservation of Wild Birds) Regulations, 1985, SI 291/1985 & amendments – <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie>.

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European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, SI 94/1997, SI 233/1998 & SI 378/2005 – <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie>.

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National Biodiversity Data Centre website <http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/>

NPWS Protected Site Synopses available on <http://www.npws.ie/en/ProtectedSites/>.

NRA (2009b). Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna during the Planning of National Road Schemes. Dublin: National Roads Authority.

NRA [2009a] Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Roads Schemes. Dublin: National Roads Authority

Wildlife Act 1976 and Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000.







# Appendix C

Archaeological Report & Survey





October 2022

# Archaeological Monitoring at Issertkelly S(12) Notification

Recorded Monument GA114-097001 – 3

Prepared at the request of

**Howley Hayes Cooney Architects**

for

**Galway County Council**

Aras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway

Community Monuments Fund Ref; CMF22 – 02 – GA001



Bernadette Doherty & Dr. Rory Sherlock

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### Acknowledgements

*Bernadette Doherty, Consultant Archaeologist and Rory Sherlock, Sherlock Archaeology would like to acknowledge Mathieu & Mitchell Heritage Contractors for their sensitivity and professionalism during works at Issertkelly. Sincere thanks to Lucy O'Connor, Grade 1 Conservation Architect, Howley Hayes Cooney in the management and supervision of works and preparation of a Conservation Management Plan; The National Monuments Service Archaeologist Christine Grant for her prompt response to changes in scope of works for this project, and all at NMS, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for funding through the Community Monuments Fund 2022. Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer, Ita Gordon Planning Department, Dave O'Loughlin, Angela Quinn & Maria Finn Environment Services Galway County Council were also instrumental in assisting with the completion of this project.*



## 1 Introduction

Issertkelly Church and Graveyard is located in South East Galway. It is a Galway County Council owned graveyard, taken care of by the local community. The graveyard is very well maintained, however, the church remnants had been heavily overgrown with ivy. This has caused wall collapse. The ivy had very much taken over the structure, creating a haven for wildlife and possibly nesting birds. A site visit was carried out in 2021 with Christine Grant, NMS and Galway Community Archaeologist Bernadette Doherty. A report forwarded to Galway County Council Heritage Office and Environment Section recommending that a Conservation Management Plan be carried out.

Galway County Council were successful in their grant application for Community Monuments Funding 2022 from the National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage. Under Stream 2, Howley Hayes Cooney were procured to prepare a Conservation Management plan with archaeological input from Dr. Rory Sherlock, Structural Engineering John Britton Consultants and MKO Ecological Services. In order for a full assessment of the structure to progress, trimming of ivy was carried out under S12 Notification, monitored by Sherlock Archaeology. Following an on-site assessment, it was agreed that propping of the southern wall was required to maintain its stability until capital works could be funded. It was also recommended to insert eco-plugs (filled with biocide) into the ivy root systems to inhibit regrowth and kill off remaining ivy slowly.

Following a pre-works survey carried out by MKO Ecological Consultancy, site clearance of overgrowth was carried out by Mathieu & Mitchell Heritage Contractors. Monitoring of works were carried out over two phases. Sherlock Archaeology monitored the initial trimming of ivy and overgrowth to allow a full assessment of the upstanding structure. A full photographic record and aerial footage of the site was carried out. Bernadette Doherty carried out a second phase of monitoring during the clearance of overgrowth within the church, insertion of eco-plugs and propping of the south wall of the church.

## 2 Historical Background

Isert Kelly Church, Co Galway, is a medieval church located in the townland of Isertkelly North within the civil parish of Isertkelly, Co Galway. The placename *Isert Kelly* is derived from the Irish *Díseart Ceallaigh*, wherein ‘díseart’ is a ‘hermitage’ and Ceallaigh is the name of a person associated with the site. The element *díseart* is common in Irish placenames and the Placenames Database of Ireland ([www.logainm.ie](http://www.logainm.ie)) lists 86 examples, including:

<i>Irish Placename</i>	<i>Anglicised version</i>	<i>County</i>
<b><i>Díseart Ceallaigh</i></b>	Isertkelly	Galway
<b><i>Díseart Nuan</i></b>	Estersnow	Roscommon
<b><i>Díseart Chiaráin</i></b>	Isertkieran	Tipperary
<b><i>Díseart Aonghais</i></b>	Dysartenos	Laois
<b><i>Cnocán an Dísirt</i></b>	Mount Desert	Cork
<b><i>Cill an Dísirt</i></b>	Killadysert	Clare
<b><i>Cill an Dísirt</i></b>	Killydesert	Donegal
<b><i>Cill an Dísirt</i></b>	Killadiskert	Leitrim

In this short list of examples, the first four appear to include personal names, while the remainder specify locations (little hill of the hermitage, church of the hermitage), but it is interesting to note the many ways in which *díseart* can be corrupted through anglicisation.



*Plate 1: Isert Kelly Church from the southeast (September 2022)*

The placename alone suggests that an early medieval ecclesiastical site, probably a hermitage or small monastery, was once located in the area of Isertkelly, which is located between Kilchreest, Ardahan and Gort in the limestone lowlands of south Co Galway. The ruinous remains of the church at Isert

Kelly appear to represent a relatively large 12<sup>th</sup>- or 13<sup>th</sup>-century parish church, but it is quite possible that this church was built upon the site of a pre-existing early medieval monastery or hermitage. There is clear evidence for a deserted settlement to the north of the church – this can be seen on oblique aerial images of the site taken for the CUCAP collection<sup>i</sup> in the 1970 and it is still evident at ground level too – and these earthworks may represent activity contemporary with the parish church, but they could, in addition, represent earlier activity too.

The church at Isert Kelly may predate the arrival of the Anglo-Normans into the area in 1235, but it certainly became a focal point in the small McHubert Burke lordship that developed in the area after that date. Their first castle, built in the mid-1200s at Castleboy, was located almost 2km south of the church, an unusual arrangement at a time when many Anglo-Norman caputs were established beside existing ecclesiastical centres, a local example being Ardrahan. In the early 1400s the McHubert Burkes built a new castle, Isert Kelly Castle, less than 500m from the church and this castle was their principal seat for an extended period, being described as the residence of *‘McHubert cheif of his sept’* in 1574<sup>ii</sup>.

It is unclear when the church at Isert Kelly fell into disuse, but the ecclesiastical parish of Isert Kelly lost its independent status in the early 1700s, suggesting the church may have fallen out of use at that time, or possibly earlier. Civil parishes, which are indicated on Ordnance Survey maps from the mid-1800s and were used as areas of local administration, differ from modern Roman Catholic parishes in most areas, but in many cases the civil parish is co-terminus with the Church of Ireland parish and, indeed, with the medieval parish which predates them both. In this way, the civil parish, as defined in the nineteenth century, can offer a window into the human geography of medieval landscapes and the civil parish of Isertkelly is unusual in several respects. Firstly, it is composed of just nine townlands, in comparison to a county-wide average of just over 39 townlands per parish. Secondly, while most parishes form a single land unit, Isertkelly parish is separated into two discrete blocks, with eight townlands grouped together around Isert Kelly church and an outlying townland, Ballygarraun, forming an exclave to the east. Thirdly, Isertkelly parish did not survive into the modern period as an independent Church of Ireland parish, since it was united with the nearby parishes of Killinan, Kilchreest, Killogilleen, Killora and Kilthomas to form the *‘Killinane Union’* in 1726. This amalgamation, by order of the Privy Council, certainly downgraded the status of Isertkelly, but it made sense in the context of the time – the six old parishes had just 125 townlands between them and, furthermore, while their total population in 1834 was 9,149, only 267 of that number (2.9%) were members of the Church of Ireland<sup>iii</sup>.

## **2.1 Recorded Monument Details** (accessed via [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie) & by e-mail National Monuments Service Archives.

**Recorded Monument Number:** GA114-097001-

**Classification:** Church

**Townland:** ISERTKELLY NORTH

**Location:** ITM 551523/712564

**Description:** At the N end of an irregularly shaped graveyard (GA114-097003-) in gently undulating pastureland. This very poorly preserved rectangular church (24m E-W; 9.8m N-S; wall T 1.25m) is probably of medieval date. On initial inspection in October 1982 all that survived was the overgrown W half of the N side-wall and W gable, as well as most of the S side-wall. It was built of well-cut and mortared limestone blocks. A doorway was evident towards the W end of the S wall along with a window further to the E; both had been robbed of most of their cut stone. The OS Letters (O'Flanagan 1927, Vol. 1, 504-5) describe the doorway as being 'in the curvilinearly [sic] pointed style' and the window as 'pointed'. A chamfered mullion, reused as a grave-marker, may indicate that it was of two lights. On re-inspection in January 2010, a c. 8m length of the E end of the S wall had fallen inwards into the church, which was densely overgrown with ivy. A carved window head fragment was noted lying at the E end of the S wall. A settlement cluster (GA114-097002-) is associated. (Holt 1910, 138),

The church measured 9.8m N-S, x 24m E-W. The walls average 1.25m in thickness.

Compiled by: Galway Archaeological Survey, UCG      Date of upload: 19 February 2020

**Recorded Monument Number:** GA114-097002-

**Classification:** Settlement

**Townland:** ISERTKELLY NORTH

**Location:** ITM 551459/712654

**Description:** In 1982 during the archaeological survey of the county there were a large number of earthworks in the field to the North West of the church and graveyard, Isertkelly North. There appeared to be two concentrations of earthworks. To the south east, nearest the church there appeared to be a number of possible house sites and banks. To the North there appeared to be a number of possible housesits within a rectangular banked enclosure. As the site was depicted as a village in the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey Map it is presumed this is a late clachan. (Figure 4)

(P Holland, 1982, Courtesy of NMS Archives)

**Recorded Monument Number:** GA114-097003-

**Classification:** Graveyard

**Townland:** ISERTKELLY NORTH



**Location:** ITM 551523/712540

**Description:** Associated with a church (GA114-097001-), which occupies its N end, this irregularly shaped graveyard (c. c. 49m NW-SE; 40m NE-SW) is enclosed by a boulder-built stone wall. Access is via a gateway at SSW. Most of the inscribed headstones date to the 18th and 19th centuries but numerous graves are marked by plain block headstones. Close to the SE corner of the church one grave is marked by a cut-stone mullion fragment from a window from the church.

Compiled by: Olive Alcock

Date of upload: 19 February 2020

## 2.2 References:

1. Holt, E.W.L. 1910 An abridged transcript of the Ordnance Survey Letters relating to parishes in, or partly in, the Barony of Dunkellin Co. Galway. Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society 6, 123-69.
2. O'Flanagan, Rev. M. (Compiler) 1927 Letters containing information relative to the antiquities of the county of Galway collected during the progress of the Ordnance Survey in 1839. Typescript in 3 vols. Bray.

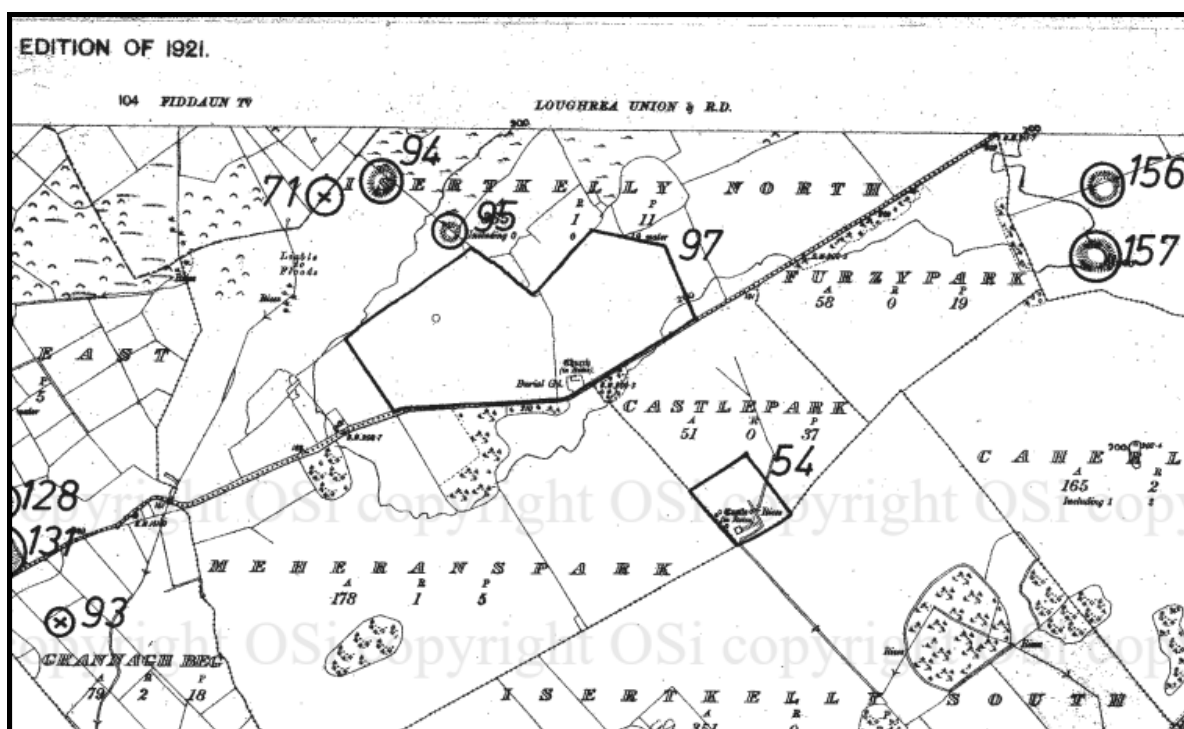


Figure 2: RMP Map of Galway Sheet 114 showing the location of Recorded Monument GA114: 097 (Sourced [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie))

## 3 Description of Works

Initial Notification was forwarded to The National Monuments Service by Lucy O'Connor, Howley, Hayes, Cooney Architects to enable the clearance of vegetation at the site. Howley, Hayes Cooney

Architects were procured by Galway County Council to prepare a Conservation and Management Plan for Issertkelly Church and Graveyard. Galway County Council secured funding under Stream 2, Community Monuments Fund 2022. The site was considerably overgrown. Assessment of the structure was only possible on clearance of heavy overgrowth. A pre-works ecological, bird and bat assessment were carried out by MKO Ltd. Mathieu & Mitchell were deployed to carry out the trimming of ivy and removal of heavy vegetation and these works were monitored by Sherlock Archaeology.

A second phase of works were notified to the National Monuments Service outlining the following proposed works to be monitored by B. Doherty.

Temporarily prop the remaining upstanding wall of Issertkelly which is in danger of imminent collapse.

Clear the ground cover within the nave part of the ruin, in order to identify any graves in this area. Note there will be no excavation of earth undertaken within this process. However loose stones may be moved / relocated in the process. These stones will not be moved off site.

Install eco-plugs in the roots of vegetation growing, now trimmed back on the structure. Eco-plugs are applied locally to the plant roots and are a very controlled form of biocide. This application of eco-plugs will limit vegetation regrowth in the following years.

#### 4 Report Extract John Britton Engineer (Conditional Survey)

A significant lean to the southwest corner of the south facing wall was observed and using a spirit level, this was measured to be approximately 300mm out of alignment over 3.9m in height. For stone walls to remain stable under self-weight, the centre of gravity should lie within the middle third of the base of the wall. Based on measurements taken onsite, it would appear that the centre of gravity for this wall is outside the middle third, as shown in Appendix A, and is in imminent danger of collapse. A section of the wall to the west of the arched doorway should be propped until such a time that conservation work can be carried out on the structure. Galvanised props should be installed to prevent the wall from moving further out of alignment. Since the site is a graveyard, excavation for prop foundations cannot occur and in order to resist the horizontal thrust from the props, ballast can be provided by stacking blocks at the base of the prop. This method is flexible in that props can be positioned in and around existing graves. The props will need temporary fixings at the top of each prop, in the form of stainless steel rods, which will be fixed into the masonry joints (Figure 5). The rods will be 16mm diameter and will fit within the masonry joints. These rods will be removed, along with the propping, at a later date to facilitate full repair / rebuild of the wall as required.

## 5 Monitoring

The first phase of monitoring was carried out by Sherlock Archaeology in August 2022, when Mathieu & Mitchell were deployed to trim ivy on the upstanding walls of Issertkelly Church. Vegetation was removed off site by hand, onto a trailer in the adjoining field. Care was taken and hand held tools were used throughout the process. Ivy was not pulled and was left within the joints. A Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP) was brought to the graveyard to allow the ivy to be cut on the upper sections of the church walls and the deployment of this machine within the graveyard was monitored by Sherlock Archaeology. Aerial photography was subsequently captured by Paul Naessens which was then forwarded to the conservation architect for analysis, while Sherlock Archaeology also attempted, with limited success, to create orthomosaic images of the church walls, the remaining ivy causing this process to be quite problematic.

A second phase of archaeological monitoring of site clearance was then carried out by Bernie Doherty over three days. Eco-plugs (filled with biocide) were inserted into the roots of ivy which are still intact within the joints of the walls of the church (Plate). Holes were drilled into the root system at various intervals (Plate). The eco-plugs were then inserted, which will allow a slow release of the biocide into the roots. This should prevent regrowth of ivy while maintaining the structure in its current state.



*Plate 2: The deployment of a MEWP within the graveyard was monitored by the archaeologist*



*Plate 3: Aerial photograph showing detail of south wall freshly exposed after the trimming of ivy*

Clearance of overgrowth within the interior of the structure was carried out by hand. Scythe, loppers and secateurs were used to cut grass and saplings. These were raked and gathered by hand. While a lot of the heavy grass had died away owing to the time of year, a considerable amount had to be disposed of off-site by the contractor. A jeep with a trailer was brought into the adjoining field and the waste material was transferred off site.

Six recumbent grave-slabs were uncovered, these are numbered 1 to 6 for ease of reference. Their locations are outlined in **Error! Reference source not found..**





*Plate 4: Location of slabs within the church interior, numbered #1 to #6*

**Slab #1** is a cross-incised stone located adjacent to, and parallel with, the interior of the northern wall. Writing on the top (eastern extent of the slab) depicts the following:

170II  
 PRAY FOR THE  
 SOVLE OF BRY  
 NE RVOAN ?? (N backwards)  
 AND H\*R\*V\*BEI  
 M\*R\*I\*C/O ?

(\* is inserted where what looks like a small diamond is carved between the letters)

The arms of the crucifix are encircled. The base of the shaft of the cross is on a stepped pedestal. A carving of an anvil is located under the southern arm of the cross, suggesting a blacksmith is laid to rest here. The edge of the slab is chamfered and the whole slab is sloping from north to south, measuring c.1.2m in maximum length. The wording was recorded by O'Keeffe 1838.





*Plate 5: Looking northwest showing Slab #1 recently uncovered adjacent to north wall (previously recorded by O'Keefe, 1838)*



*Plate 6: Detail showing the inscription*



*Plate 7 Anvil on Stone Slab #1 (Recorded by O'Keefe 1838)*

**Slab #2** is located c.4m from the door, lying in an east west orientation, with a simple crucifix, not fully exposed. Measures 1.56m in (exposed) length.

**Slab #3** measures 1.92m in length and c.0.5m wide, lying in E/W orientation. A crucifix is incised, arms of which within a circle. The shaft of the cross continues down to the eastern end to a stepped pedestal. Located in the middle of the church.



*Plate 8 Looking west showing Slab #2*



*Plate 9 Looking west showing Slab #3*

**Slab #4** c.1.75m length, 0.48m wide. The arms of a crucifix visible outside the circular curvilinear design. The shaft continues to a stepped pedestal then continues beneath the pedestal to the end of the stone, creating a cross effect.

**Slab #5** Recumbent slab with geometric design within an outlined square at the western extent/ head of the slab. Writing along the length of the southern extent, not legible. What looks like a plough and spade at the base indicating a tiller/farmer. The slab appears slightly splayed. Located directly east of Slab #4.

**Slab #6** Recumbent slab, broken and cracked – markings not finished. This was possibly discarded then re-used as a burial marker at a later date. Stepped pedestal evident at the eastern end. Some curvilinear design at the head/west end of the stone. Rounded side towards the north but this does not continue fully to the south. Located close to the eastern wall remnants of the church.





*Plate 10 Looking west showing Slab #4*

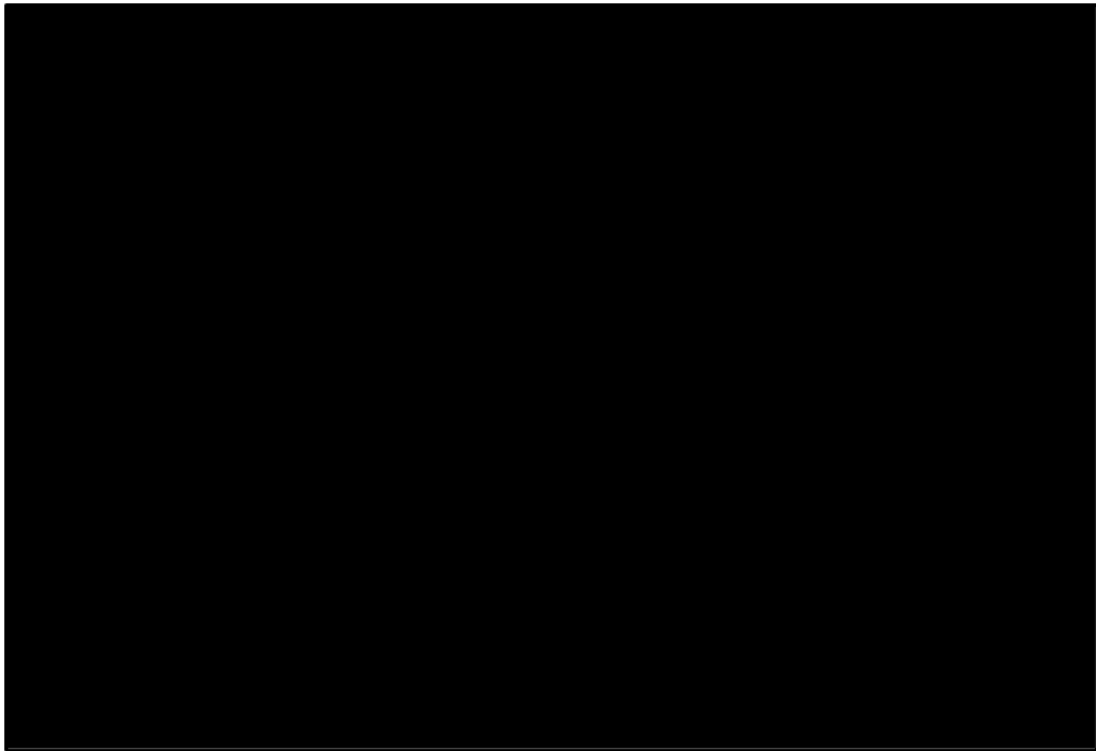


*Plate 11 Detail showing curvilinear design Slab #4*



*Plates 12 & 13 Detail on Slab #5 – geometric design and spade and plough? (Triangle) detail at eastern extent*





*Figure 3: Composite image of O'Keeffe's three cross-slab illustrations from Isert Kelly from 1838*



*Plates 14, 15, 16 The same three cross slabs recently uncovered during monitoring of clearance works October 2022*

Propping of the south wall was carried out under archaeological supervision. It was an overcast and windy day. A protective layer of terrem was laid on the ground and stone was brought in using a wheelbarrow. A platform for cement blocks was created. The stone was compacted by hand, using a plank to ensure level surface. Note that a whacker was not used for fear of vibrations disturbing ground beneath. Cement blocks were carried by hand and placed on top of the platform. Scaffold was



then propped against the blocks. S (12) Notification to NMS was updated to include the insertion of steel pins to stop any slippage of scaffolding. Steel pins were inserted at appropriate locations within voids on the wall. These shall be easily removed when required. The site was fenced off. Further signage shall be erected by Galway County Council in the coming days to ensure the public are aware of the unsafe nature of the site.



*Plate 17 Looking north east showing terram on surface to protect ground beneath stone base. Plate 18 Stone on terram.*



*Plate 19: Looking North showing south wall propped as per specifications from John Britton, Structural Engineer, approved by NMS, Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage*

## 6 Recommendations

Safe disposal of ivy stems and roots must be adhered to in the event of removal at a future date. Consideration for eco-plugs within the ivy stems must be taken into account.

Special care must be taken in the protection of grave slabs on site. The fallen masonry may have damaged similar grave-slabs.

Any future works must take into consideration the possibility of further grave markers within the church and underneath the rubble. A method statement shall be required in the event of the removal of fallen masonry. These are very large composite ex situ blocks of masonry, still semi-intact.

Sampling of mortars could be carried out in advance/during future works. This would determine the composition and enable advice on future works.

Any consolidation works at this site must be carried out under archaeological supervision with consent of the minister.

Recording of graves could be carried out under the guidance of Galway County Council Heritage Office. Survey 123 enables the community to carry out recording of graves after appropriate training is given. A map of the graveyard may be prepared and erected on site to enable visitors find a specific grave.

The graveyard map should outline the location of architectural fragments re-used as grave markers. A number of architectural fragments are evident throughout the grave-yard.

3D photogrammetry on memorials may enable legibility of grave markers.

Future study/Geophysics/ Ground Penetrating Radar may identify associated clachan in the adjoining field (with permission of the landowner).

## 7 Conclusion

Archaeological monitoring of overgrowth revealed six recumbent inscribed slabs. Four of these had previously been recorded by O'Keefe, 1838. The date on one of the stone slabs 1702 would support the view that the church had been in dis-use for some time when it was united with the nearby parishes of Killinan, Kilchreest, Killogilleen, Killora and Kilthomas to form the 'Killinane Union' in 1726.

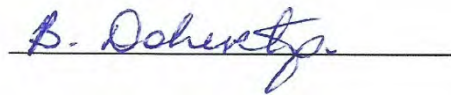
The south wall is in a vulnerable state of preservation. The propping is a short term preventative measure. Falling masonry from the upstanding south wall is a danger to the surrounding grave markers and visitors. Fencing has been installed to inhibit visitors. Galway County Council Area Office have committed to erecting further signage at Issertkelly alerting the public of the dangers.



A full graveyard survey is recommended. This will enable the recording of all memorials within the graveyard, preferably with input from the local community. Local knowledge is paramount in identifying the locations of graves in any old graveyard.

***Please note that recommendations contained in this report are subject of approval by The National Monuments Service,***

***Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.***



***Bernadette Doherty***

***[dohertybernadette0@gmail.com](mailto:dohertybernadette0@gmail.com)***

***086 1003888***

***Rory Sherlock, Sherlock Archaeology***

***[rory@sherlockarchaeology.ie](mailto:rory@sherlockarchaeology.ie)***

***0872867061***



*Plates 20 & 21 Looking North west showing church before and after ivy trimming .*



*Plate 22 Insertion of Eco-plugs by Mathieu & Mitchell.*



*Plate 23 Example of eco-plug within ivy root stem*





*Plate 24 An upright incised stone is located within the church to the south east of slab #1. A double circle is obvious, and possible incision of a vertical shaft of cross, but arms not obvious.*



*Plate 25 Example of an architectural fragment in use as a grave marker.*

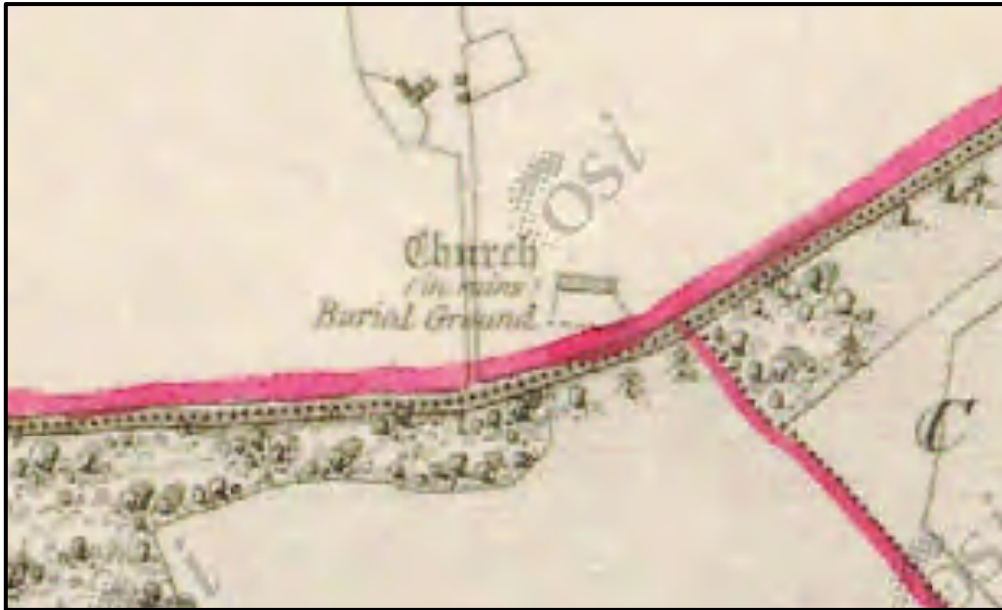


Figure 4: Location Map (extract from OS 6" map - 1st ed. from 1837)  
(Ordnance Survey Ireland Licence No. CYAL50292372 – ©Ordnance Survey Ireland / Government of Ireland)



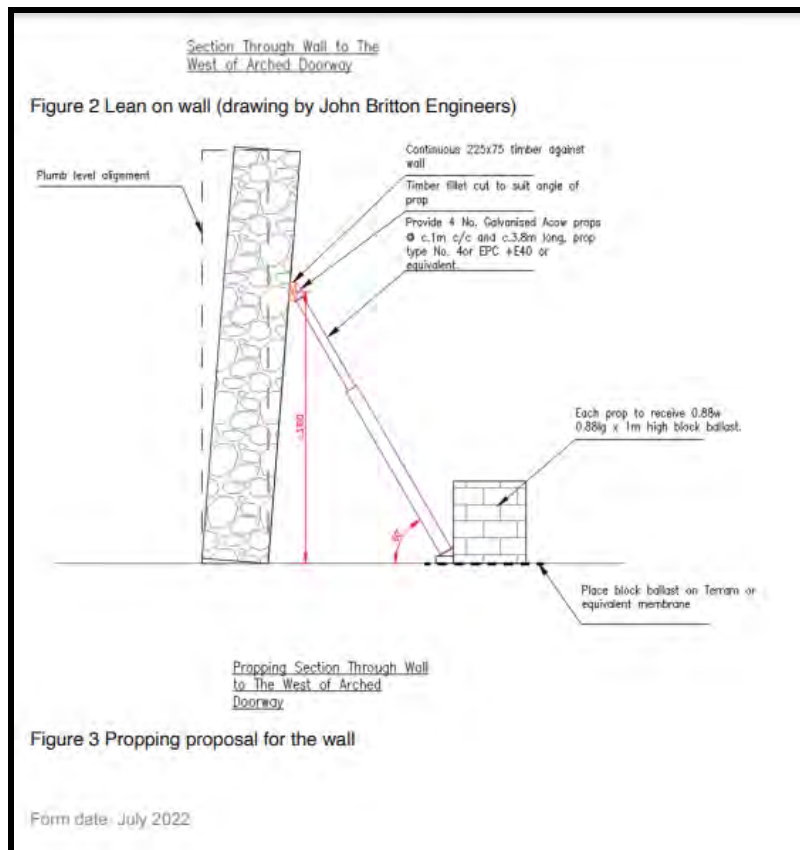
Plate 26: Plate Aerial View of site (Courtesy of Paul Naessens)





**Figure 4** CUCAP 1970 Aerial Photograph of Issertkelly Graveyard and surrounding settlement (by e-mail from NMS Archives October 2022)





Extract from S(12) Notification showing the proposal to prop the wall as prepared by Howley Hayes Cooney Architects and John Britton Engineers

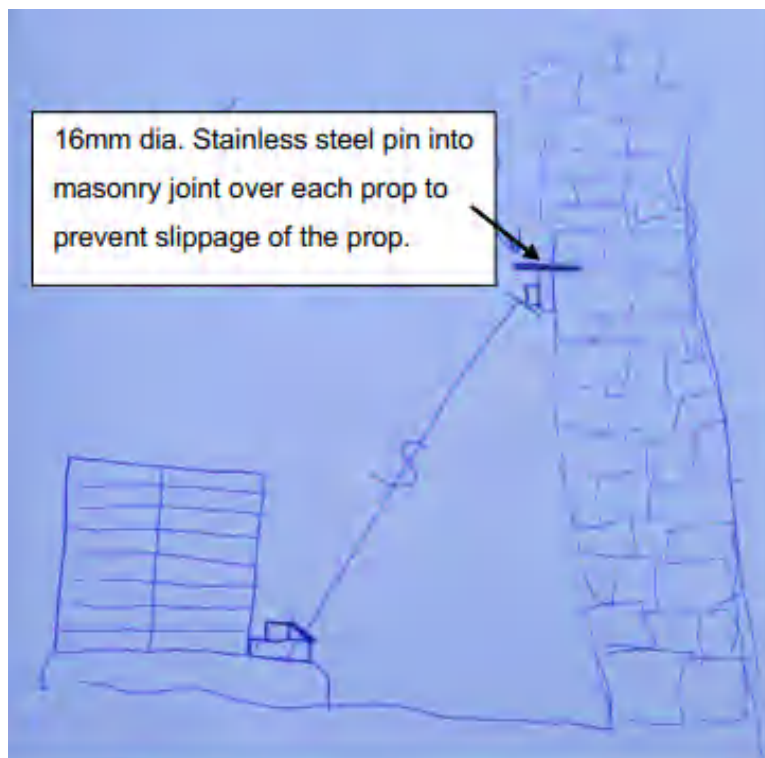


Figure 6 Sketch showing the requirement for insertion of steel pin into masonry joint as updated to NMS October 2022

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- <sup>i</sup> Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography, 1970, Photo: BND044, available at <https://www.cambridgeairphotos.com/location/bdn044/>, accessed 21 October2022
- <sup>ii</sup> NOLAN, J. P. 1900-1. Galway Castles and Owners in 1574. *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*, B, 109-23.
- <sup>iii</sup> Kearney, G. 2016, 'Tracking Parochial Families in Killinane and Kilconickny, County Galway: Local History Using Parish Registers & Gravestone Inscriptions', available at <https://www.ireland.anglican.org/news/6401/tracking-parochial-families-in-killinane>, accessed 21 October2022

# Appendix D

Ministerial Notifications





An Roinn Cultúir,  
Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta  
Department of Culture,  
Heritage and the Gaeltacht

## Notification Form

**Notification to the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under section 12 (3) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 (Recorded Monument) and Notification under section 5 (8) of the 1987 Act (Register of Historic Monuments)**

This notification form must be completed and submitted to the National Monuments Service AT LEAST TWO MONTHS before any work is carried out at an archaeological/historic structure or site included in the Record of Monuments and Places or Register of Historic Monuments.

The completed notification form may be forwarded to: Director, National Monuments Service at [nationalmonuments@ahg.gov.ie](mailto:nationalmonuments@ahg.gov.ie) and marked “*Notification under the National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2014*”

or posted to:

Director  
National Monuments Service  
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht  
Custom House  
Dublin 1  
D01 W6X0

**1. Notification by:**

Name:

Lucy O'Connor

Address:

Howley Hayes Cooney Architects  
19 Rock Hill  
Dublin

Telephone:

+353 1278 4644

Email address:

lucy@hhcarchitecture.ie

## 2. Recorded/Registered Monument

Record of Monuments and Places/Register of Historic Monuments Ref. No (e.g. CL001-001--):

GA114-097001-

Name of Monument:

Issertkelly Church & Graveyard

Location (Townland and County):

Issertkelly North, Co.Galway

ITM Reference\*:

M 51567 12531

\* The Archaeological Survey of Ireland uses mapping provided by OSI: this utilises the Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM) co-ordinate system. This replaces the former Irish Grid referenced mapping. If possible, please supply ITM coordinates. Users may derive the ITM co-ordinates from the mapping component of the National Monuments Service website [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie).

## 3. Owner Details (complete as appropriate)

### A. Local Authority

Name:

Galway County Council

Address:

Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway,  
Prospect Hill,  
Galway

Telephone:

091 509000

Email address:

mmannion@galwaycoco.ie

Director of Services/Authorised Officer:

Marie Mannion

OR

B. Private Owner

Name:

N/A

Address:

Telephone:



Email address:

--

#### **4. Works**

Purpose of Proposed Works

It is proposed to carry out vegetation management to facilitate visual survey of the ruin, and further inspect the effects of weathering, erosion, and neglect.

The works will include the careful trimming of all vegetative growth from the masonry walls to facilitate inspection. No roots embedded into the walls will be removed at this time. No joints or works to the masonry will be carried out at this time.

Description of proposed works (continue on separate page, or attach documentation, as required):

It is proposed to carry out conservation works at Issertkelly Church and graveyard comprising:

- Removal of vegetative growth from all masonry walls – cutting back to face of wall only, to approx. 2 inches from wall face.
- No vegetative roots to be removed from the masonry joints
- No vegetative roots to be removed from the wall base or close to the upstanding walls
- No disturbance to the historic masonry joints or the face of the masonry – vegetation trimming / cutting will cease if there is any potential disturbance to masonry.
- Loose / dead vegetation to be carefully cut back / removed by hand where possible
- Photographic record of the walls to be completed prior to vegetation removal and photographic record to be taken immediate following removal of the vegetation.

All works will take place in accordance with the principals of the Burra Charter and the document “The Conservation and Repair of Masonry Ruins”, published by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

All works will be monitored by archaeologist Dr Rory Sherlock onsite for the duration, and a final site report will be completed and submitted to the National Monument Service following completion of the works.

## 5. Items to be included

Please ensure the required documentation (including the following items) is enclosed with your notification:

- a. OS map, at either of the following scales, marking the location of the site:

Rural 1:5000/1:10000

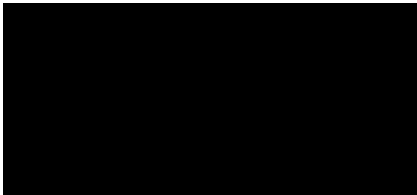
or

Urban 1:1000

- b. Name and contact details of relevant professionals e.g. archaeologist
- c. A description of the works proposed (see 4 above) including an archaeological assessment where appropriate
- d. Written confirmation of owner's permission
- e. Any reference numbers associated with the project e.g. the heritage project reference number assigned by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and any planning application reference number (where available) assigned by the relevant planning authority

**Important Note: It should not be assumed that this notification form has been received by the National Monuments Service until you have received confirmation in writing to that effect.**

Signature:

	
---	--

Date:

27<sup>th</sup> July 2022

**Archaeologist:**

Dr Rory Sherlock

m: 0872867061

e: [info@sherlockarchaeology.ie](mailto:info@sherlockarchaeology.ie)

w: [www.sherlockarchaeology.ie](http://www.sherlockarchaeology.ie)

**Conservation Architect:**

James Howley / Lucy O'Connor

Howley Hayes Cooney Architects,

19 Rock Hill, Blackrock

Telephone : 089 6031309

Email : [lucy@hhcarchitecture.ie](mailto:lucy@hhcarchitecture.ie)



Fig 1 View of Issertkelly church & graveyard

Form date: July 2022





Site Location Map showing Issertkelly Church and Graveyard – Recorded Monument

GA114-097001-

(Ecclesiastical site)



An Roinn Cultúir,  
Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta  
Department of Culture,  
Heritage and the Gaeltacht

## Notification Form

**Notification to the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under section 12 (3) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 (Recorded Monument) and Notification under section 5 (8) of the 1987 Act (Register of Historic Monuments)**

This notification form must be completed and submitted to the National Monuments Service AT LEAST TWO MONTHS before any work is carried out at an archaeological/historic structure or site included in the Record of Monuments and Places or Register of Historic Monuments.

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or posted to:

Director  
National Monuments Service  
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht  
Custom House  
Dublin 1  
D01 W6X0

**1. Notification by:**

Name:

Lucy O'Connor

Address:

Howley Hayes Cooney Architects  
19 Rock Hill  
Dublin

Telephone:

+353 1278 4644

Email address:

lucy@hhcarchitecture.ie

## 2. Recorded/Registered Monument

Record of Monuments and Places/Register of Historic Monuments Ref. No (e.g. CL001-001--):

GA114-097001-

Name of Monument:

Issertkelly Church & Graveyard

Location (Townland and County):

Isertkelly North, Co.Galway

ITM Reference\*:

M 51567 12531

\* The Archaeological Survey of Ireland uses mapping provided by OSI: this utilises the Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM) co-ordinate system. This replaces the former Irish Grid referenced mapping. If possible, please supply ITM coordinates. Users may derive the ITM co-ordinates from the mapping component of the National Monuments Service website [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie).

## 3. Owner Details (complete as appropriate)

### A. Local Authority

Name:

Galway County Council

Address:

Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway,  
Prospect Hill,  
Galway

Telephone:

091 509000

Email address:

[mmannion@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:mmannion@galwaycoco.ie)

Director of Services/Authorised Officer:

Marie Mannion

OR

B. Private Owner

Name:

N/A

Address:

Telephone:



Email address:

--

#### **4. Works**

##### **Purpose of Proposed Works**

It is proposed to temporarily prop the remaining upstanding wall of Issertkelly which is in danger of imminent collapse. It is also proposed to clear the ground cover within the nave part of the ruin, in order to record any graves in this area. Note there will be no excavation of earth undertaken within this process. However loose stones maybe moved / relocated in the process but these stones will not be moved off site.

It is proposed to install eco-plugs in the roots of vegetation growing, or now trimmed back on the structure. Eco-plugs are applied locally to the plant roots and are a very controlled form of biocide. This application of eco-plugs will limit vegetation regrowth in the following years.

Description of proposed works (continue on separate page, or attach documentation, as required):

It is proposed to carry out conservation works at Issertkelly Church and graveyard comprising: The ruins consist largely of a c.5m high south facing stone wall measuring 800-900mm in width containing an arched doorway. Structural support is now immediately required to the ruin.

Summary from Structural engineer (John Britton Engineers) below:

A significant lean to the southwest corner of the south facing wall was observed and using a spirit level, this was measured to be approximately 300mm out of alignment over 3.9m in height. For stone walls to remain stable under self-weight, the centre of gravity should lie within the middle third of the base of the wall. Based on measurements taken onsite, it would appear that the centre of gravity for this wall is outside the middle third, as shown in Appendix A, and is in imminent danger of collapse. A section of the wall to the west of the arched doorway should be propped until such a time that conservation work can be carried out on the structure. Galvanised props should be installed to prevent the wall from moving further out of alignment. Since the site is a graveyard, excavation for prop foundations cannot occur and in order to resist the horizontal thrust from the props, ballast can be provided by stacking blocks at the base of the prop. This method is flexible in that props can be positioned in and around existing graves. **The props will need temporary fixings at the top of each prop, in the form of stainless steel rods, which will be fixed into the masonry joints. The rods will be 16mm diameter and will fit within the masonry joints. These rods will be removed, along with the propping, at a later date to facilitate full repair / rebuild of the wall as required. Any repair / rebuild works will be dealt with under separate notifications.** See sketch proposals in Appendix A.

Clearing back of ground cover will be undertaken within the nave, with no ground excavation or disturbance of below ground conditions.

All works will take place in accordance with the principals of the Burra Charter and the document “The Conservation and Repair of Masonry Ruins”, published by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

All works will be monitored by archaeologist Bernie Doherty onsite for the duration, and a final site report will be completed and submitted to the National Monument Service following completion of the works.

#### **5. Items to be included**

Please ensure the required documentation (including the following items) is enclosed with your notification:

- a. OS map, at either of the following scales, marking the location of the site:

Rural 1:5000/1:10000

or

Urban 1:1000

- b. Name and contact details of relevant professionals e.g. archaeologist
- c. A description of the works proposed (see 4 above) including an archaeological assessment where appropriate
- d. Written confirmation of owner's permission
- e. Any reference numbers associated with the project e.g. the heritage project reference number assigned by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and any planning application reference number (where available) assigned by the relevant planning authority

**Important Note: It should not be assumed that this notification form has been received by the National Monuments Service until you have received confirmation in writing to that effect.**

Signature:


---

Date:

19 <sup>th</sup> October 2022
-------------------------------

**Archaeologist:**

Bernie Doherty

m: 086 1003888

e: g.c.archaeology@gmail.com

**Conservation Architect:**

James Howley / Lucy O'Connor

Howley Hayes Cooney Architects,

19 Rock Hill, Blackrock

Telephone : 089 6031309

Email : [lucy@hhcarchitecture.ie](mailto:lucy@hhcarchitecture.ie)

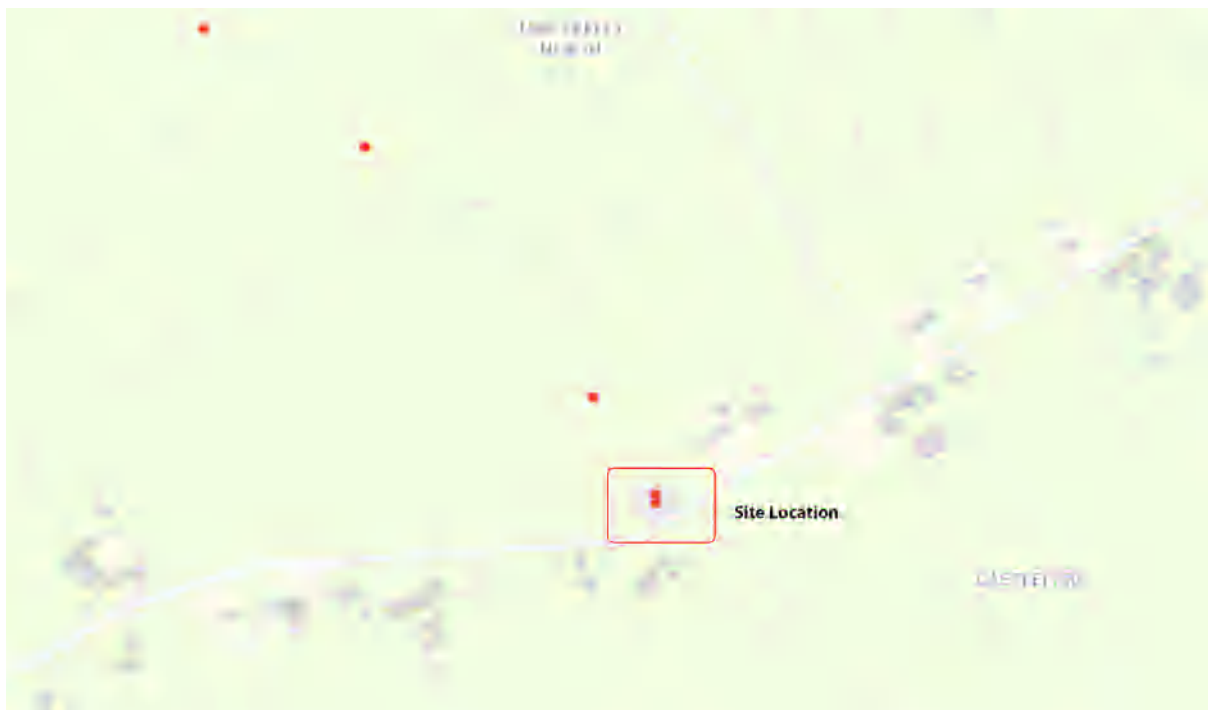




Fig 1 View of Issertkelly church & graveyard



Figure 2 View of the wall post vegetation removal



Site Location Map showing Issertkelly Church and Graveyard – Recorded Monument

GA114-097001-

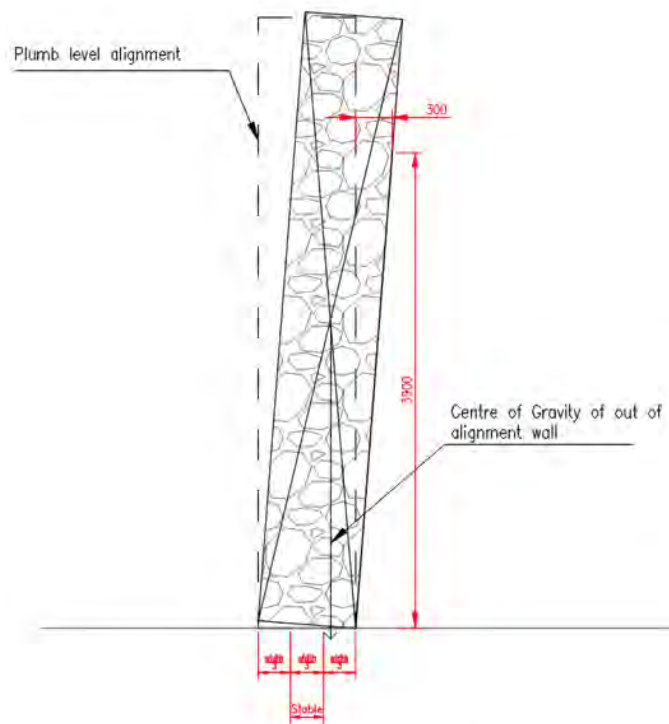
(Ecclesiastical site)



## APPENDIX A



Figure 1 Lean on the wall is evident



Section Through Wall to The  
West of Arched Doorway

Figure 2 Lean on wall (drawing by John Britton Engineers)

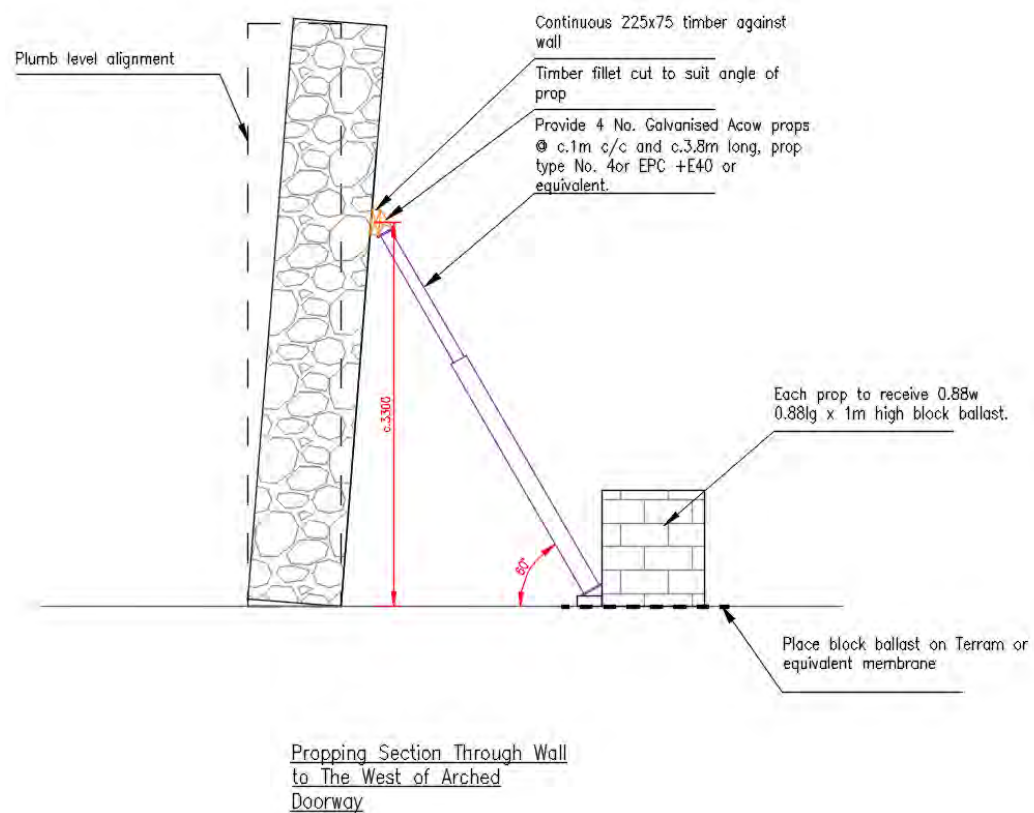


Figure 3 Propping proposal for the wall





Figure 4 Location of propping

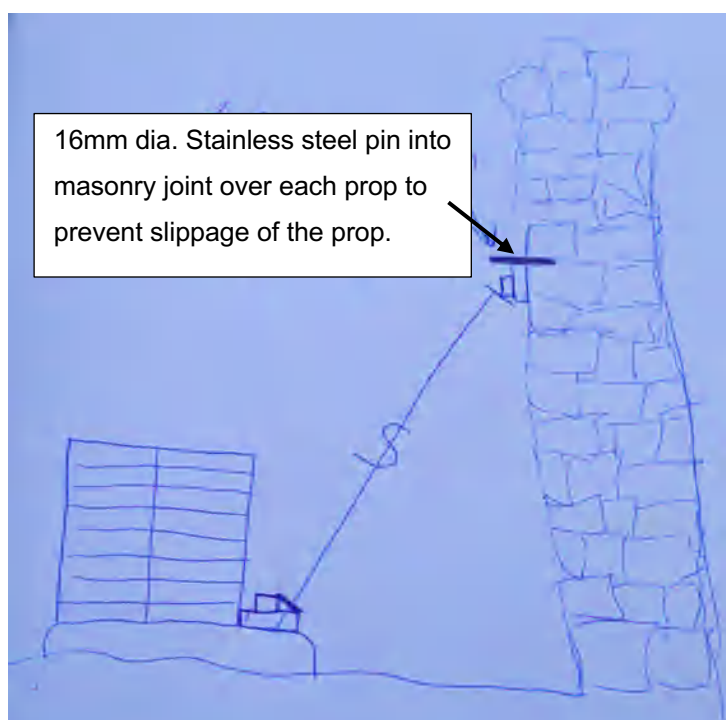


Fig 5 – sketch from contractor showing the insertion of a stainless steel pin

Form date: July 2022



An Roinn Cultúir,  
Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta  
Department of Culture,  
Heritage and the Gaeltacht

## Notification Form

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or posted to:

Director  
National Monuments Service  
Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht  
Custom House  
Dublin 1  
D01 W6X0

**1. Notification by:**

Name:

Lucy O'Connor

Address:

Howley Hayes Cooney Architects  
19 Rock Hill  
Dublin

Telephone:

+353 1278 4644

Email address:

lucy@hhcarchitecture.ie

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GA114-097001-

Name of Monument:

Issertkelly Church & Graveyard

Location (Townland and County):

Isertkelly North, Co.Galway

ITM Reference\*:

M 51567 12531

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## 3. Owner Details (complete as appropriate)

### A. Local Authority

Name:

Galway County Council

Address:

Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway,  
Prospect Hill,  
Galway

Telephone:

091 509000

Email address:

[mmannion@galwaycoco.ie](mailto:mmannion@galwaycoco.ie)

Director of Services/Authorised Officer:

Marie Mannion

OR

B. Private Owner

Name:

N/A

Address:

Telephone:



Email address:

--

#### **4. Works**

Purpose of Proposed Works

<p>It is proposed to temporarily prop the remaining upstanding wall of Issertkelly which is in danger of imminent collapse. It is also proposed to clear the ground cover within the nave part of the ruin, in order to record any graves in this area. Note there will be no excavation of earth undertaken within this process. However loose stones maybe moved / relocated in the process but these stones will not be moved off site.</p>
--

Description of proposed works (continue on separate page, or attach documentation, as required):

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All works will take place in accordance with the principals of the Burra Charter and the document "The Conservation and Repair of Masonry Ruins", published by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

All works will be monitored by archaeologist Bernie Doherty onsite for the duration, and a final site report will be completed and submitted to the National Monument Service following completion of the works.

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- a. OS map, at either of the following scales, marking the location of the site:

Rural 1:5000/1:10000


or

Urban 1:1000

- b. Name and contact details of relevant professionals e.g. archaeologist
- c. A description of the works proposed (see 4 above) including an archaeological assessment where appropriate
- d. Written confirmation of owner's permission
- e. Any reference numbers associated with the project e.g. the heritage project reference number assigned by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and any planning application reference number (where available) assigned by the relevant planning authority

**Important Note: It should not be assumed that this notification form has been received by the National Monuments Service until you have received confirmation in writing to that effect.**

Signature:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in dark ink. The signature appears to be 'John J. O'Connell'.

Date:

4<sup>th</sup> October 2022

**Archaeologist:**

Bernie Doherty

m: 086 1003888

e: [g.c.archaeology@gmail.com](mailto:g.c.archaeology@gmail.com)

**Conservation Architect:**

James Howley / Lucy O'Connor

Howley Hayes Cooney Architects,

19 Rock Hill, Blackrock

Telephone : 089 6031309

Email : [lucy@hhcarchitecture.ie](mailto:lucy@hhcarchitecture.ie)

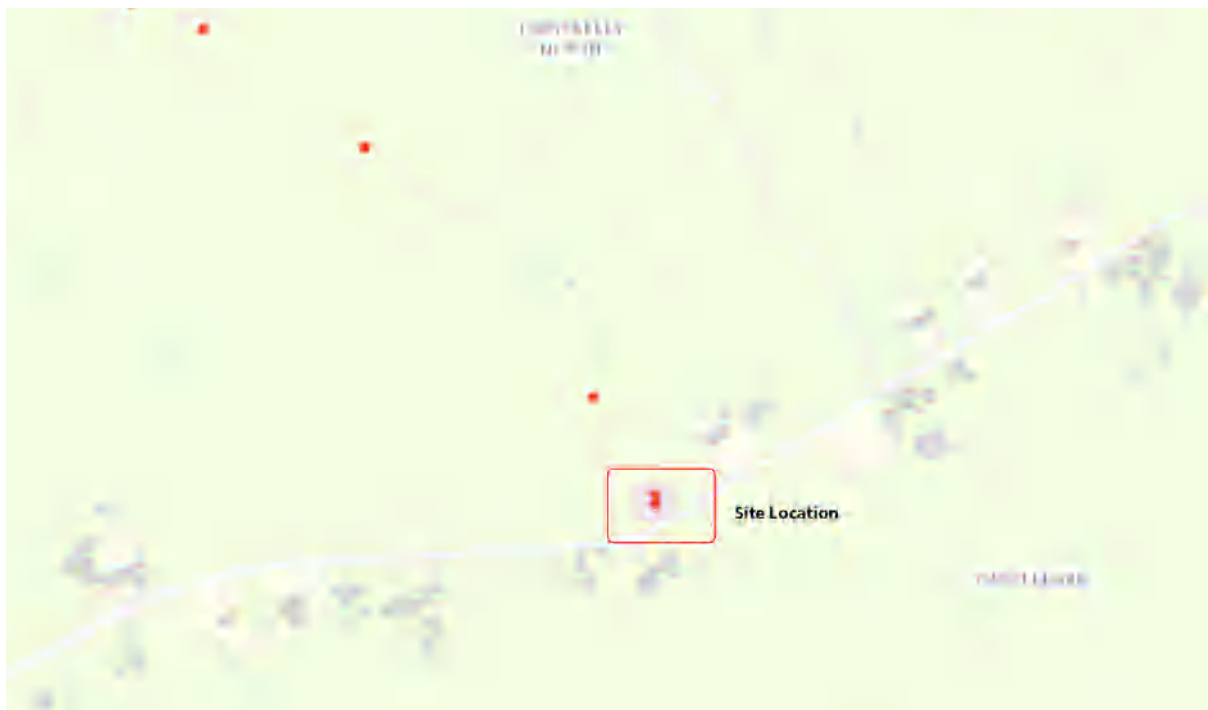


Fig 1 View of Issertkelly church & graveyard





Figure 2 View of the wall post vegetation removal



Site Location Map showing Issertkelly Church and Graveyard – Recorded Monument

GA114-097001-

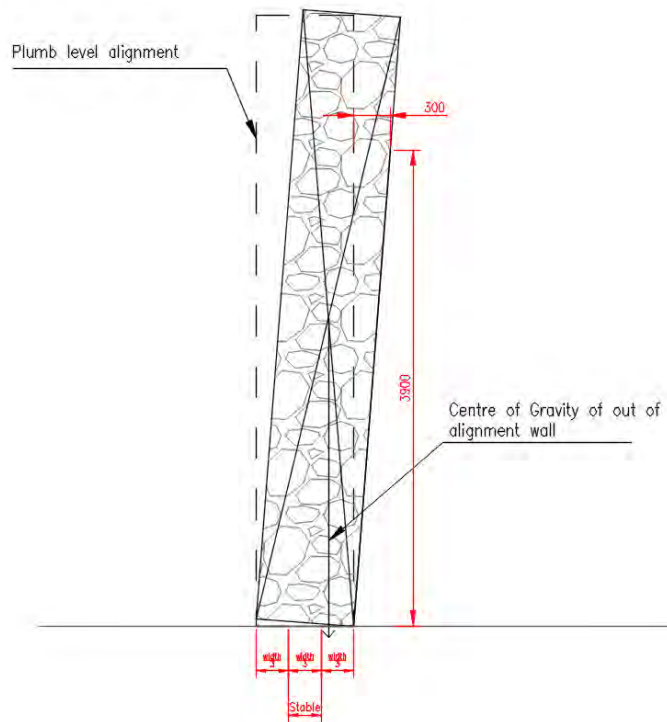
(Ecclesiastical site)



## APPENDIX A



Figure 1 Lean on the wall is evident



Section Through Wall to The West of Arched Doorway

Figure 2 Lean on wall (drawing by John Britton Engineers)

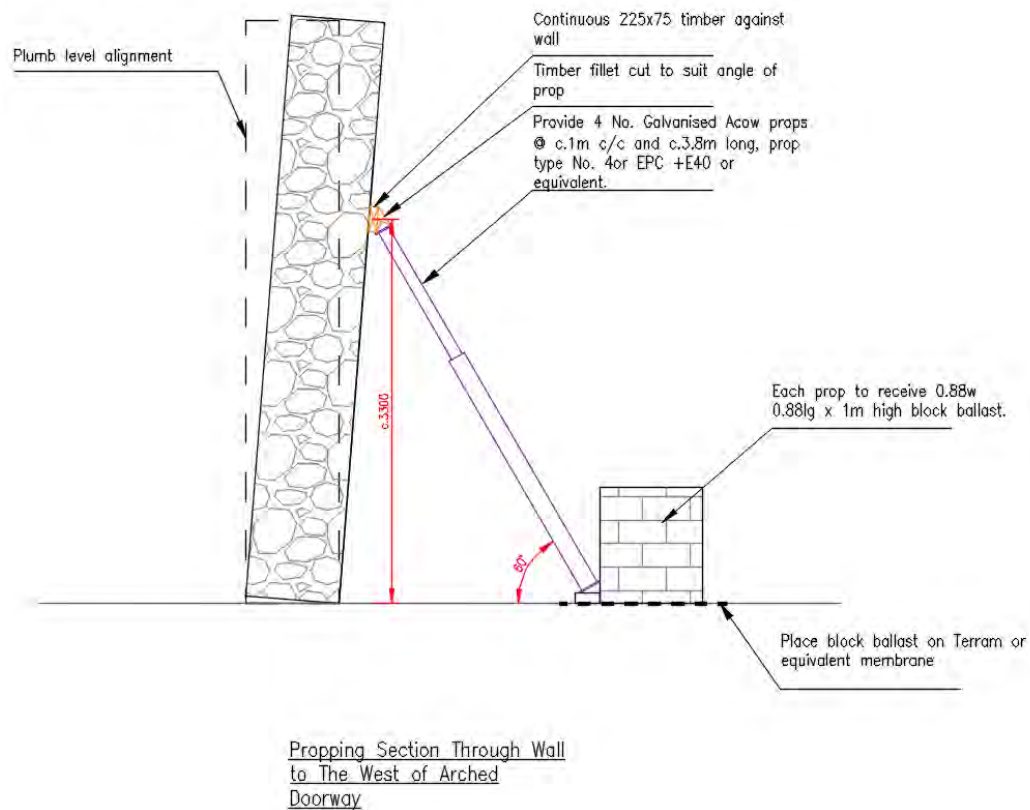


Figure 3 Propping proposal for the wall





Figure 4 Location of propping





An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht  
Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage

Lucy O'Connor  
Howley Hayes Cooney Architects  
19 Rock Hill  
Blackrock  
Dublin  
Email: lucy@hhcarchitecture.ie

24.8.22

Our ref: NM06229

Re: Proposed removal of ivy at Recorded Monuments GA114-097001- Church and GA114-097003- Graveyard, Issertkelly, Co. Galway.

Dear Ms. O'Connor,

Thank you for notice submitted regarding proposed work at Recorded Monuments GA114-097001- Church and GA114-097003- Graveyard.

The notice pertains to the requirements of section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 only and the work outlined in the papers dated 29.7.22.

The National Monuments Service has examined the papers submitted and we recommend as follows:

The National Monuments Service will have no objections to the trimming of ivy on Issertkelly Church as described in the notification documents. There should be no ground disturbance during trimming and removal of vegetation. The trimmed ivy should be removed from the graveyard for disposal. It is noted that the removal of ivy will be monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist. If there are any changes to the current proposals please consult with the National Monuments Service before proceeding.

Furthermore, if appropriate, please contact the National Parks and Wildlife Service of this Department and the Forest Service to ascertain any requirements they may have. This response does not confer any authority to carry out the work other than with the owner's permission and in compliance with all other statutory requirements.

Please do not hesitate to contact this office should you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Christine Grant  
Archaeologist  
On behalf of the  
National Monuments Service

**National Monuments Service, Custom House, Dublin 1**  
**Email:** nationalmonuments@housing.gov.ie



Lucy O'Connor  
Howley Hayes Cooney Architects  
19 Rock Hill  
Blackrock  
Dublin  
Email: lucy@hhcarchitecture.ie

14.10.22

Our ref: NM06336

**Re: Proposed works at Recorded Monuments GA114-097001- Church and GA114-097003- Graveyard, Issertkelly, Co. Galway.**

Dear Ms. O'Connor,

Thank you for notice submitted regarding proposed works at Recorded Monuments GA114-097001- Church and GA114-097003- Graveyard.

The notice pertains to the requirements of section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 only and the work outlined in the papers dated on 4.10.22 and 13.10.22.

The National Monuments Service has reviewed the documentation submitted. We will have no objections to the works, as itemised below, provided that are in line with good conservation practice and that there will be no ground disturbance. All works shall be monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist.

1. The installation of temporary props to support the south wall of the church as per details submitted.
2. The application of eco-plugs to the remaining ivy of the church.
3. Additional clearance of vegetation within the nave of the church to properly record gravestones. Vegetation and roots should not be pulled but cut to ground level only.
4. Relocation of loose surface stones to facilitate recording of gravestones within the nave of the church. Any earth-fast stones should not be moved. Any relocated stones should be stored securely on site.
5. A report on the archaeological monitoring should be submitted to the National Monuments Service.

If there are any changes to the current proposals please consult with the National Monuments Service before proceeding.

Furthermore, if appropriate, please contact the National Parks and Wildlife Service of this Department and the Forest Service to ascertain any requirements they may have. This response does not confer any authority to carry out the work other than with the owner's permission and in compliance with all other statutory requirements.

Please do not hesitate to contact this office should you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,



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Christine Grant  
Archaeologist  
On behalf of the National Monuments Service

# Appendix E

Cost Estimate for Works



## ISSERTKELLY CHURCH - PRICING SCHEDULE

### OUTLINE SCOPE OF WORKS

The purpose of the works is to stabilize the structure, with a focus on the most urgent structural works under Phase 1. It should be noted that further works are required to the monument.

<b>1.0</b>	<b>PRELIMINARIES</b>	
1.1	Allow for all access, signage and scaffolding required to complete the works	€8000
1.2	Allow for clearing site after completion. Waste from the works should be removed from site upon completion of the works.	€1500
1.3	Photographic survey of structures prior to commencement, during and upon completion of the works	€500
1.4	Allow for covering role of PSCS for duration of project and in accordance with the preliminary H&S Plan included in the tender.	€1500
1.5	Contractor to allow for power, water and welfare facilities on site.	€3500
1.6	Protection to historic masonry as required.	€1500
1.7	Clean up of works area and removal of all waste matter to appropriate, registered waste site.	€1250
	<b>TOTAL PRELIMINARIES</b>	<b>€13000</b>

<b>2.0</b>	<b>Issertkelly Church</b> Single cell ruined church with remaining portions of upstanding walls.	
2.1	Clear off all remaining vegetation from the wall faces of the structure.	€4500
2.2	Remove 3 rooted tree stumps from the wall top, and remove remaining vegetation across the wall tops.	€3000
	<b>TOTAL VEGETATION WORKS</b>	<b>€7500</b>

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Masonry Works</b> <b>All works under archaeological supervision / monitoring as required by the National Monuments Service</b>	
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3.1	Infill of masonry to entrance reveals to stabilise the entrance way in the south wall. Infill with found masonry on site as selected by the archaeologist.	€1500
3.2	Repointing of the voisseur arch on the inner face.	€750
3.3	Remove temporary propping from the wall and carefully dismantle approx. 10sqm of wall (from top down) and set aside for rebuild. Wall to be fully photographed on both sides and all facing stones removed to be numbered and tagged, to ensure they are reinstated in the same location when rebuilt.	€10000
3.4	Reconstruct the south west corner of the church to provide structural stability to the rebuilt portion of wall. Allow for reconstruction of 5sqm of wall in this location using found stone on site.	€7500
3.5	Consolidate the wall tops of the south wall with rough racking (lime mortar) using found stones on site.	€3500
3.6	Allow for 3 days on site sorting stone under supervision of the archaeologist to allow for recording of stone on site.	€2500
	<b>TOTAL MASONRY WORKS</b>	<b>€35000</b>
	<b>TOTAL PRICE</b>	<b>58500€</b>

Howley Hayes Cooney Architecture are recognised for their work in both contemporary design and for the sensitive conservation of historic buildings, structures and places. Over a thirty year period, the practice has been responsible for the conservation and reuse of numerous buildings of national and international cultural significance, many of which have received RIAI, RIBA, Irish Georgian Society, Opus or Europa Nostra Awards. Under the Conservation Accreditation System, implemented by the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland, the practice is accredited as a Conservation Practice Grade 1 while director James Howley and associate Lucy O'Connor are Conservation Architects Grade 1 (or the UK equivalent.) Howley Hayes Architects have, to date, been responsible for approximately three hundred conservation plans, reports and feasibility studies for clients such as the Heritage Council, the World Monument Fund, the Office of Public Works, the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the Law Society of Ireland, the Alfred Beit Foundation, Red Carnation Hotels, Killarney Hotels, Liebherr International and Diageo PLC, together with numerous local authorities and private clients.

