

## Declaration

In accordance with Part IV, Section 57 (2) of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 2000 (as amended).

### Louth County Council:

This declaration specifies what works would, or would not, in the opinion of the planning authority materially affect the character of the protected structure, or any element thereof, and, as a result, require planning permission. Under the Act, protection extends to the entire structure including its interior and the land lying within its curtilage. It also extends to any other structures lying within the curtilage of the protected structure, to their interiors and to all fixtures and features that form part of the interior or exterior of any of these structures. Where specified in the Record of Protected Structures, protection may also extend to any other feature within the attendant grounds of the protected structure.

Nothing in this declaration exempts works that would not otherwise be exempt from a requirement for planning permission. Changes of use or intensification of the current use may require planning permission. If in doubt, the owner/occupier should consult the planning authority for further advice before commencing any works.

This Declaration may be referred to An Bord Pleanála for review within 4 weeks of its issue, upon payment of the requisite fee in accordance with Part IV, Section 57 (8) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as amended.

<b>Applicant Name:</b>	Martin Mc Court & Mark Meehan		
<b>Status (i.e. Owner or Occupier):</b>	Unoccupied		
<b>Date of Request for Declaration:</b>	15/06/2024	<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	27/08/2024
<b>Decision Due Date:</b>	04/09/2024	<b>Previous Declarations:</b>	Yes - Reference LHS23-02
<b>Date of Issue of Declaration:</b>	28/04/2024		

**Address:**

**Location:**

Name of Building: The Widows Houses

National Grid co-ordinates: E 305865 N 295271

Address 1: Castlebellingham

O.S. Map Type:

Address 2: Co Louth

Map Sheet:

Address 3: A91K682

Site Number:

**Protection Status:**

Under the Planning and development Act 2000 (as amended)

/ N

**Details:**

Record of Protected Structures:  N

LHS 015-010

Architectural Conservation Area:  N x

Under the Planning and development Act 2000 (as amended)

Record of Monuments and Places:  N x

Zone of Archaeological potential:  N

Preservation Order or Temporary P.O.:  N x

NIAH Registration No.:

13826012

### Introduction:

The referrer has sought a section 57 declaration as per the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in respect of works being carried out to The Widows Houses, Castlebellingham.



### Protection Status:

Under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Record of Protected Structures is set out in the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 (as varied).

The Widows Cottages are identified as a Protected Structure and are described in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage as an:

*Pair of semi-detached multiple-bay single-storey with half-dormer attic former estate worker's houses, built 1826/7, now in use as private houses. Gabled projecting bay to east, gabled breakfront central bay, porch extension to west gable built 1864, dormers to north elevation, half dormers to south. Pitched slate roofs, clay ridge tiles, red brick Tudor style chimneystacks with diamond corbelled flues, cast-iron moulded gutters on painted timber projecting fascias, painted timber bargeboards, finials to east and west gables and to gable of projecting bay. Uncoursed rubble walling, projecting tooled limestone plinth, recess in north elevation of projecting bay with tooled limestone surround and decorative modillions with religious Della Robbia-revival plaque. Pointed arch and round-headed window openings, red brick block-and-start jambs, brick arches, painted timber hood mouldings, painted tooled stone sills, cast-iron Y-traceried casement*

*windows. Round-headed door opening to main entrance, red brick block-and-start jambs, brick arch, painted timber hood moulding, painted timber vertically-sheeted double doors, Y-traceried fanlight, approached by tooled limestone steps; pointed arch door opening to east elevation of projecting gable, painted brick block-and-start surround, painted timber vertically-sheeted and half-glazed door c. 1975, Y-traceried fanlight; square-headed door opening set in round-headed recess to west elevation, painted timber vertically-sheeted double doors. Single-storey brick porch extension to west elevation dated 1864, pitched slate roof with fish scale patterning, lead-capped ridge, painted timber decorative bargeboard to gable over doorway, cast-iron gutters, cast-iron downpipes; red brick walling with projecting tooled limestone plinth, red brick corbel course to eaves; square-headed window opening on west elevation with fixed light to six-pane timber window; square-headed door opening surmounted by flush limestone pediment with triangular overlight and carved inscription "John III.16, John XIV. 6, Acts IV.12", painted timber vertically-sheeted door, limestone threshold. Approached by cobbled path, adjacent to church to south; garden to east, west and north of building, yard to rear south) abutting church boundary wall.*

The NIAH appraisal states:

*Two of a group of similar houses, possibly designed by William Vitruvius Morrison and known as the Widow's Houses, this group was built to accommodate the widows of Castlebellingham estate employees. The finely executed detailing in this exquisite pair remains largely intact. The high quality design and craftsmanship is indicated by details like the Gothic windows, lattice glazing, decorative bargeboards and finials. A unique and valuable contribution to the architectural heritage of County Louth.*

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### Planning History:

<b>Development Address</b>	The Widows Houses Castlebellingham Co.Louth CASTLEBELLINGHAM DUNDALK
<b>Applicant Name</b>	Martin & Valerie McCourt
<b>Application Status</b>	APPLICATION FINALISED
<b>Decision Date</b>	02/09/2019
<b>Decision</b>	CONDITIONAL
<b>Development Description</b>	Planning permission for extensions and modifications to existing 4 dwelling houses to provide 2 dwelling houses. Protected structure LHS-015-010 and LHS-015-011/ NIAH 13826012. Works to include all ancillary and associated site works.
<b>File Reference</b>	18753

**Section 57 Declaration Reference LHS23-02** - Declaration advised that proposed works were development that was exempted development.

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### Description of the Structure:

The site comprises of a pair of semi-detached multiple-bay single-storey with half-dormer properties situated immediately to the north of a church and associated graveyard. The site is situated within Castlebellingham ACA on lands zoned B1 Town/Village Centre as per the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027, as varied, which has the objective "To support the development, improvement and expansion of town or village centre activities."

### Referral Question:

**Would works materially affect the character of the protected structure and as a result, require planning permission?**

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The Section 57 application includes a Conservation Method Statement detailing works proposed.

The proposed works entail:

- Remediation of retaining brick and stone wall partly collapsed, a lower second of wall will be shuttered as per planning application 18753, rebuilding upper section in red brick using lime mortar as per original wall.
- Repairs to windows latches and sealing, repair and replace missing doors
- Repair to lime and lathe plaster internally
- Repair of stairs and joinery
- Removal of concrete floors, reinstating quarry tiles
- Repair Fireplaces and front fence railings
- Repair joinery & benches

### Legislative Provision

Section 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) states 'that notwithstanding Sections 4(1)(h) and any regulations made under Section 4(2), the carrying out of works to a protected structure, or proposed protected structure shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of:

(a) the structure; or

(b) any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Section 68 of the Act stipulates that the carrying out of any works specified in a notice under section 59 (1) or 60 (2) shall be exempted development.

Section 57 (5) of the Act stipulates that if the declaration relates to a protected structure that is regularly used as a place of public worship, the planning authority (or the board)

(a) in addition to having regard to the guidelines and recommendations referred to in subsection (4), shall respect the liturgical requirements, and

(b) for the purpose of ascertaining those requirements shall –

(i) comply with any guidelines concerning consultation which may be issued by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, or

(iii) If no such guidelines are issued, consult with such person or body as the planning authority (or board) considers appropriate.

### Assessment

The Planning Authority has considered the works to The Widows Houses, Castlebellingham which involve the works outlined above with '*Description of Proposed Works*' and in the submitted Conservation Method Statement.

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The applicant has also submitted a Conservation Method Statement and detailed drawings for the proposed chimney works, both of which have been prepared by Emmet Holland Architect, Grade 3 Conservation Architect.

The Conservation Method Statement has included a full photographic inventory of all works proposed.

The Conservation Statement has detailed that works will be undertaken by bricklayers, glaziers & plasterers with experience in the field of conservation.

New and replacement materials e.g. rainwater goods, bricks, paint on railings, timbers on stairs are to be approved by the conservation architect before use. The method statement has outlined the approach where the first option is to repair, reinstate and repoint in preference to replacement and only to replace where necessary. In certain locations original features are missing including ironmongery on internal doors, this is to be replaced with similar. Method for the repair of windows has been detailed.

Method in the preparation of materials including lime has been detailed in the statement. It has also been detailed that the structural stability of the building is to be ensured during repair works and no work involving the preparation of mortar will occur during cold weather as this may impact structural integrity.

An internal concrete floor is to be replaced as part of the proposed works. This concrete floor is not an original feature of the building, and the replacement should not detract from the integrity of the protected structure.

The statement has detailed existing works on site that have occurred to date (as agreed under a previous Section 57 declaration) such as the restoration of the external chimney and this is considered to be of a high standard.

In summary, when considering the proposed works involving:

- Remediation of retaining brick and stone wall partly collapsed
- Window latches & sealing
- Repair and replace doors
- Repair to lime and lathe plaster
- Repair stairs
- Removal of concrete floors, reinstating quarry tiles
- Repair Fireplaces
- Repair railings
- Repair joinery & benches.

I am satisfied, based on the information contained within the Conservation Method Statement, that whilst the proposal meets the definition of works as defined in Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), that these works involve the maintenance, improvement and alteration of this structure which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure and do not materially affect the character of the protected structure, or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest

**Recommendation:**

I hereby recommend that a Declaration of Exemption be granted for the development described above, for the reason(s) set out hereunder.

**WHEREAS** the question has arisen as to whether the proposed works would or would not materially affect the character of protected structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest at The Widows Houses, Castlebellingham, Co. Louth, A91 K682.

AND WHEREAS Martin McCourt & Mark Meehan requested a declaration on the question from Louth County Council on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2024.

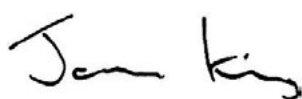
AND WHEREAS Louth County Council in considering this referral, had regard particularly to –

- a) Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
- b) Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
- c) Section 4 (1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
- d) Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended,
- e) The Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities,
- f) The special interest pertaining to the protected structure in question and
- g) The nature and extent of works set out in the referral question and associated documentation.

AND WHEREAS Louth County Council has concluded that –

- (i) The stated works to the protected structure comprise of “works” as defined in Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended);
- (ii) The stated works would not materially affect the character of the protected structure, or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest,
- (iii) The stated works consist of the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement and alteration of this structure which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of neighbouring structures and
- (iv) The said development, therefore, comes within the scope of section 4(1)(h) and Section 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

**Signed by Inspector**



James King (Assistant Planner)

**Signed by Planning Authority Officer**



Joanna Kelly (Senior Planner)

**Date:** 28/08/2024

**Date:** 28th August 2024

**LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ORDER**

**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (as amended)**

**Section 57 Declaration – Works to a Protected Structure**

**Chief Executive's Order No:** 645/2024

**Reference No:** S57 LHS24-03

**Date Application Received:** 15<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Description:**

The Proposed works entails:

- Remediation of retaining brick and stone wall partly collapsed, a lower second of wall will be shuttered as per planning application 18753, rebuilding upper section in red brick using lime mortar as per original wall.
- Repairs to windows latches and sealing, repair and replace missing doors
- Repair to lime and lathe plaster internally
- Repair of stairs and joinery
- Removal of concrete floors, reinstating quarry tiles
- Repair Fireplaces and front fence railings
- Repair joinery & benches

**Name of Applicant:** Martin McCourt and Mark Meehan

**Location of Development** The Widows Houss, Castlebellingham, Co. Louth

**WHEREAS** the question has arisen as to whether the proposed works would or would not materially affect the character of protected structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest at The Widows Houses, Castlebellingham, Co. Louth, A91 K682.

AND WHEREAS Martin McCourt & Mark Meehan requested a declaration on the question from Louth County Council on the 15th of June 2024.

AND WHEREAS Louth County Council in considering this referral, had regard particularly to –

- a) Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
- b) Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
- c) Section 4 (1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
- d) Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended,
- e) The Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities,
- f) The special interest pertaining to the protected structure in question and
- g) The nature and extent of works set out in the referral question and associated documentation.

AND WHEREAS Louth County Council has concluded that –

- (i) The stated works to the protected structure comprise of “works” as defined in Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended);
- (ii) The stated works would not materially affect the character of the protected structure, or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest,
- (iii) The stated works consist of the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement and alteration of this structure which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of neighbouring structures and
- (iv) The said development, therefore, comes within the scope of section 4(1)(h) and Section 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

SIGNED:

  
Joanna Kelly  
Senior Planner

Dated: 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024

**ORDER:**

In pursuance of the powers conferred upon the Council by the above Act, I concur with the above recommendation and I hereby direct that a **Section 57 Declaration of Exemption be Granted** for the works, as described above.

**LCP Order No. 645/2024**

**Reference No. S57 LHS24-03**

**SIGNED:**   
**Thomas McEvoy**  
**Director of Services**

**Dated: 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024**

To whom this function has been delegated in accordance with the provision of Sections 154 of the Local Government Act 2001 by Order no CE.S.335/22 dated the 01st day of September, 2022.



## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (as amended) REQUEST FOR SECTION 57 DECLARATION

The above Act provides that notwithstanding section 4(1)(a), (h), (i), (j), (k), or (l) and any regulations made under section 4(2) of the Act, the carrying out of works to a protected structure, or a proposed protected structure, shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of—

(a) the structure, or

(b) any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest

As an owner or occupier of a protected structure you are entitled under the above Act to make a written request to the Planning Authority to issue a Declaration as to the type of works which it considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure or of any element (as set out in Section 57(3) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended) of that structure.

In order to allow for consideration of this request, please supply the following information:

1. Name of Applicant:	Martin Mc Court & Mark Meehan		
2. Address of Protected Structure: Yes	Eircode: A91 K682		
The Widows Houses, Castlebellingham, Co. Louth.			
3. Correspondence of Protected Structure: (if different from 2 above)			
4. NIAH Ref. No.	13826012	Louth RPS Ref. No.	LHS-015-010 & LHS015-011
5. Is the structure owner occupied or rented?	Un-occupied.		
6. If rented, state name and address of owner:			
7. Use of structure (residential, commercial etc.) –			
8. Has a Declaration been sought previously?	Yes for HSF 2023		
9. Are you aware of any (1) previous planning application/s or (2) enforcement proceedings pertaining to this site? (If so, please give details):	18753		



**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (as amended)  
REQUEST FOR SECTION 57 DECLARATION**

**10.** Please provide a brief description of the nature and scale of the development proposed (both internal and external) in particular the works that you are seeking a declaration for

Remediation of retaining brick and stone wall partly collapsed, a lower second of wall will be shuttered as per planning application 18753, rebuilding upper section in red brick using lime mortar as per original wall.

Repairs to windows latches and sealing, repair and replace missing doors

Repair to lime and lathe plaster internally

Repair of stairs and joinery

Removal of concrete floors, reinstating quarry tiles

Repair Fireplaces and front fence railings

Repair joinery & benches

Please note that the accuracy and relevance of the Declaration made by the Planning Authority is informed by the information furnished by the applicant. Any deviation from the information provided may require the re-consideration of the declaration.

**11.** Please provide a Site Location Map to the scale of 1:1000 clearly identifying the structure and boundaries to which this application refers. The subject structure should be outlined in **red** and overall landholding to be outlined in **blue**

I wish to apply for a declaration from Louth County Council as to the type of works as outlined above, which may or may not require permission in the above named structure.

Signed: 

Date: 15/06/2024

Daytime contact telephone number: 

It should be noted that the Council is normally obliged to issue this declaration within three months (12 weeks) of a request being made.

You will be contacted within this period to arrange an appointment for a suitably qualified person to carry out a detailed survey of the internal and external features of the structure.



**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (as amended)  
REQUEST FOR SECTION 57 DECLARATION**

**Please Return Completed Form To:**

Conservation, Planning Dept., Louth County Council,  
Town Hall, Crowe Street, Dundalk, A91 W20C

Email: [conservation@louthcoco.ie](mailto:conservation@louthcoco.ie)



Louth County Development Plan 2009 - 2015.  
Record of Protected Structures.

I. D. No.	Map Sheet	Address	Name	Description	Notes	NIAH No. see buildingsofireland.ie
Lhs015-001	15	Bawn	St Mary Mansfieldstown	Church	Ruined in 1640, rebuilt 1691, single cell rubble stone church.	
Lhs015-002	15	Stabannan	Catholic Church	Church	Mid C19 gothic revival church by WH Byrne. Freestanding gable-fronted Roman Catholic church, built 1887. Rectangular-plan, three-stage tower to south-east with broached spire, gable-fronted porch to west, single-storey sacristy to north-east, gabled chancel to north.	13901502
Lhs015-003	15	Williamstown	Williamstown House	Country House	1856-1860, Italianate house by William Calbeck, five-bay, two-storey on semi-basement. L-plan, single-bay three-storey over basement return to north, broken pedimented breakfront over projecting portico to south, lean-to single-storey return to north-east	13901511
LHS015-003B	15	Williamstown House Farmyard Complex, Kilsaran	Williamstown House Farmyard Complex	Farmyard Complex	Ranges of brick and stone former outbuildings, built c. 1860, now in domestic use. Multiple ranges of one- and two-storey buildings incorporating multiple-bay two-storey house to north-west, extension to south elevation south range	13901512
Lhs015-004	15	Castlecourt, Castlebellingham	Castlecourt	Office	Detached five-bay two-storey former stableyard, built c. 1730, now used as outbuildings to hotel. Originally U-plan, courtyard infilled with single-storey lean-to buildings, single-bay central pedimented breakfront.	13826004
Lhs015-005	15	Castlebellingham	Bellingham Castle	Hotel	Castellated house, from 1712, remodelled 1798, 1834, 1843, and late 19thC, Detached multiple-bay two-storey over basement former country house, now in use as hotel.	13826003
Lhs015-006	15	Castlebellingham	The Widows Houses - House 3	House	Detached multiple-bay single-storey with half-dormer attic gabled former estate worker's house, built c. 1830, now in use as private house. Rectangular main block, gabled projection to east with single-storey hipped-roof bay window, gabled porch projection.	13826011
Lhs015-007	15	Castlebellingham	The Widows Houses - House 4	House	Detached two-bay single-storey with half-dormer attic stone former estate worker's house, built c. 1830, now a private house. Neo tudor with diagonal set stacks, oriel diamond pane window and ornate bargeboards. L-plan, single-storey gabled porch to west.	13826010
Lhs015-008	15	Castlebellingham	The Widows Houses - House 5	House	Detached neo-tudor, multiple-bay two-storey over basement former estate worker's house, built c. 1830, now in use as private house. Rectangular-plan main block, projecting gable-fronted bay to south, two-bay north wing with single-storey gable-fronted entrance porch to east.	13826009
Lhs015-009	15	Castlebellingham	Bellingham Castle Gate House	Gate Lodge	Freestanding castellated entrance gate screen, built c. 1820. Identical east and west elevations, central single-bay two-storey castellated block with carriage arch, flanked by single-bay three-storey castellated towers and single-bay single-storey castellated screen walls to north and south.	13826005
Lhs015-010	15	Castlebellingham	The Widows Houses - Terraced Cottage 1	House	Pair of semi-detached multiple-bay single-storey with half-dormer attic former estate worker's houses, built 1826/7, now in use as private houses. Gabled projecting bay to east, gabled breakfront central bay, porch extension to west gable built 1864.	13826012
Lhs015-011	15	Castlebellingham	The Widows Houses - Terraced Cottage 2	Cottage	Neo tudor, one of a pair of semi-detached multiple-bay single-storey with half-dormer attic former estate worker's houses, built 1826/7, now in use as private houses.	13826012
Lhs015-012	15	Castlebellingham	Striped Brick House	House	Detached single-bay two-storey gable-fronted house, built c. 1900, yellow and red brickwork in striped patterns on ground floor. Ornate bargeboards.	13826019

# Conservation Method Statement

## The Widows Houses, Castlebellingham, Co. Louth



*Photograph dated 1880 -1917 - Lawrence Collection, National Library of Ireland*

**Prepared for** Mark Meehan  
**Project** Restoration Works  
**Site Address** The Widows Houses, South Gate, Castlebellingham, Co. Louth  
**Prepared By** Emmet Holland  
Emmet Holland Architect Limited  
Unit 7, Adelphi Blvd., Dundalk, Co. Louth

**Date of issue** January 18th 2024



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### 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE METHOD STATEMENT

This Method Statement has been prepared to accompany a 2024 Historic Structures Fund Application. The application refers to a wide range of proposed conservation works including:

- Remediation of retaining brick and stone wall partly collapsed
- Window latches & sealing
- Repair and replace doors
- Repair to lime and lathe plaster
- Repair stairs
- Removal of concrete floors, reinstating quarry tiles.
- Repair Fireplaces
- Repair railings
- Repair joinery & benches

The report has been prepared by Emmet Holland, an Architect accredited in Conservation at Grade 3 with the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (Membership Number: 15016).

#### Planning Approval

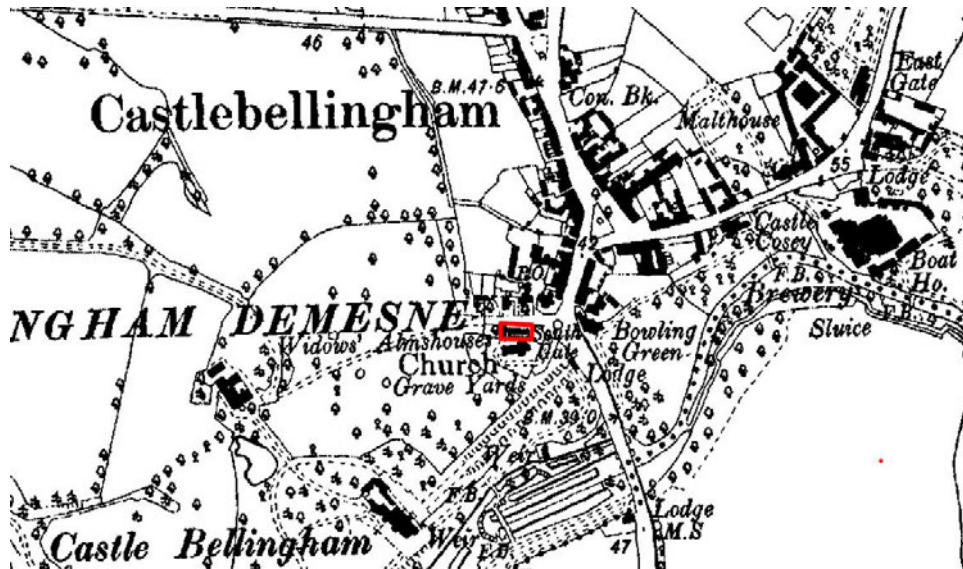
Planning approval for development at this site, including works proposed within this report, was granted under Application Ref. 18753. Planning conditions attached to the Approval relate to the conservation of the existing building. This method statement is for the purposes of the 2024 Historic Structures Fund Application, and while it takes cognizance of the Planning Approval and conditions therein, it is not intended to serve as a method statement for the purposes of compliance with the planning conditions. Compliance with the conditions of the Planning Approval must be agreed separately with the Local Authority.

#### Date of assessment and limitations of the Method Statement:

The building was assessed and photographed on 15th January 2024. Opening up of works did not form part of the assessment.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

The building was constructed in 1826/7 by Sir Henry Bellinham to accommodate the widows of Castlebellingham estate employees. The Widows Houses are a terrace of four small stone-built houses, storey-and-a-half in height, with a double-pitched slated roof, dormer windows and a number of projecting bays to the north and east (which appear to be later additions). This is a delightful building with many fine details largely intact. The building is a protected structure under LHS-015-010 & LHS-015-011.



*Extract from Historic 6" Ordnance Survey, surveyed 1835. Widow's House outlined in Red.*

Essential conservation works were undertaken in 2023, in part funded by the Historic Structures Fund. These works included re-covering of the roofs, repair & restoration of rainwater goods, restoration of eaves, and the faithful reconstruction of the ornate brick chimney stacks, replicated from a high quality historic photograph. These works have been successfully undertaken to a very high standard. The building is protected from the elements with the remediation of the roof, and the intricate chimney stacks have been reinstated to crown the building.

The works proposed within this Method Statement seek to continue and build upon the high quality of conservation works undertaken thus far. The focus of this phase is the conservation of the particular architectural detail essential to the character of the building and therefore entails a wide ranging suite of conservation methods.



*Conservation works so far, showing new chimneys*



*Chimney restoration as part of HSF grant 2023.*

### 3.0 PROPOSED WORKS

#### 3.1 Roofs

To the west of the house there is an interesting series of outdoor spaces comprising of a courtyard and a covered walkway connected to the graveyard to the rear of the dwellings. Existing guttering at this location is defective, of poor quality and in need of replacement. An effective system of rainwater drainage is essential for the continued conservation of the building. It is proposed to fit new/renewed/salvaged cast iron type gutters and downpipes throughout this area.

Conservation Architect is to approve samples of rainwater goods, in writing, before work is started.



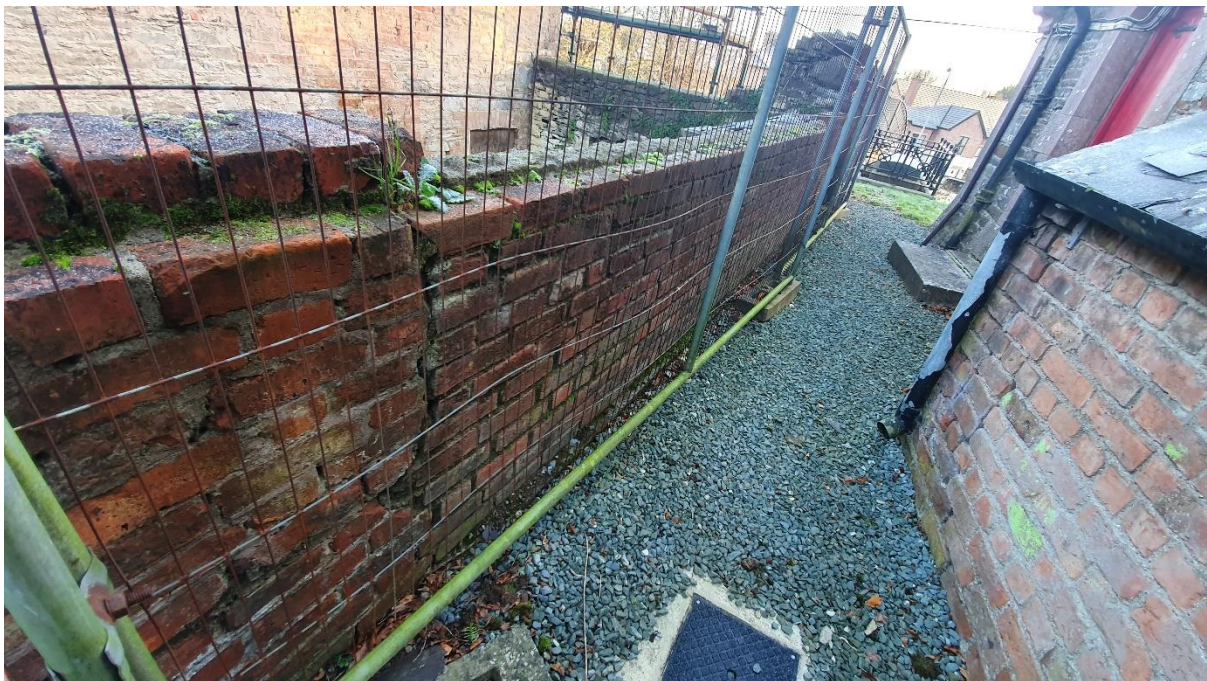
*Gutter to be replaced*

### 3.2 External Walls:

The boundary wall between the subject site and the adjacent church graveyard acts as a retaining wall, whereby the ground level of the graveyard is approx. 1.8m higher than the ground level to the rear of the Widow's Houses. This is an important feature within the curtilage of both protected structures and conservation of same will be of benefit to both.



*Photo showing blockwork section of retaining wall*



*Crack in wall, viewed from church side, missing brick coping*

The bottom half of the wall is of uncoursed random rubble construction, with the upper half being mostly of brick construction. The brick part is in a poor state of repair, there are missing bricks, large cracks, blown faces and one section has been rebuilt in concrete blockwork. It is proposed that a

detailed survey of the brickwork be undertaken, the brickwork carefully removed where the damage is excessive, and rebuilt to match existing. Bricks to be salvaged from the wall and reused where possible. Repointing and repair may be a more appropriate measure for parts of the wall, further to assessment. Lime mortar to be used throughout.

Use samples to ensure that any new bricks match closely all visual characteristics and features of the existing/original. The Conservation Architect is to approve samples of bricks, in writing, before work is started.

Bricklayers:

Before commencing work, employees carrying out brickwork are to produce evidence of a successful experience in the use of lime mortar and bricklaying to a protected structure.

Structural stability:

- a) The contractor shall be entirely responsible for structural stability during the works and shall arrange that sufficient temporary supports be used as work proceeds to keep the structure stable until work is completed.
- b) In places where the contractor considers temporary bracing to be necessary he shall design it himself making sure that it does not interfere with work on site or in any way weaken or impair the serviceability of the structure.
- c) The contractor is to submit full details of temporary work proposals to the Architect prior to the commencement of works.

Lime:

Mixing pointing and bedding mortar using hydraulic lime:

Generally comply with BS 5628 Part 3, Section 4 in respect of batching, mixing and use of mortar. Lime and sand are to be protected and kept dry before use. Once opened, a bag of lime exposed to air will weaken the hydraulic set. Use an approved colouring agent, if necessary, to achieve a mix to match the colour of adjacent work. Mix lime and sand in the proportion of 1: 3 unless specified otherwise.

After mixing, hydraulic lime mortar should be treated similarly to cement mortar and used within an hour or so.

All batching is to be carried out by volume, using clean containers and ensuring that contents are levelled with a clean straight edge across the top of the containers. Allow for bulking if the sand is wet.

Mixing is preferably carried out using a roll pan or paddle mixer. If a conventional cement mixer is to be used the mortar will be prone to balling. The following procedure will reduce the risk of balling.

Put a small amount of water into the mixer whilst not rotating and then add the appropriate quantity of lime.

- a) Switch on the mixer and allow the lime to be turned to wet slurry.
- b) Add sand to the slurry, together with more water and mix for 15 - 20 minutes. Do not overfill the mixer as this will prevent proper mixing. At first the mix should appear to be rather dry but will become "fattier" as mixing time lengthens.
- c) After 20 minutes have elapsed the final water can be added to obtain the correct workability.

Cold weather protection:

No work involving the preparation of mortar or the laying of brickwork or stonework shall be undertaken when the temperature is 5 degree centigrade falling or below 4 degrees centigrade when the temperature is rising.

Water to be clean and uncontaminated.

Protection:

All work is to be protected from the frost and rain with hessian sheets for a minimum of 7 days or until the mortar has cured if longer. In warm weather the work is to be protected with hessian sheets which should be kept moist at all times to avoid curing occurring too quickly.

Damage due to weather:

Any work affected by the weather is to be cut out and replaced at the contractor's expense

Safety:

Pay regard to the Health & Safety requirements by wearing gloves, goggles and protective clothing when working with lime.

### **3.3 Windows & Doors**

Windows generally consist of small diamond shaped glass panes held by putty within an iron framework bounded by timber frames. The exterior of the windows have been fully restored in 2023 as part of the previous Historic Structures Fund. Missing/broken panes were replaced, putty repaired and exterior of frames cleaned and repainted. This improved the weathertightness of the building envelope as a priority of the first phase.



*Exterior of windows restored previously*

It is proposed as part of this method statement that the interior window restoration be completed and the windows returned to full working order.

Glaziers:

Before commencing work, employees carrying out restoration works to existing windows and external doors are to be specialist glaziers and window restorers. Evidence of successful experience in the window restoration to a protected structure to be provided.



*Latches not functioning on many windows.*



*Existing condition of interior of windows*

Works to windows:

Remove any loose paint, putty & dirt from the interior of cast iron window frames.

Repair in-situ and replace decayed or damaged timber.

Lightly sand the metal frame.

Wash the frame and glass with a non-ionic detergent.

Once the frame has dried out, paint the frame with a white metal primer.

Repair all window latches so that they are in good working order.

A number of casements are seized, to be repaired so that they operate properly.

Casements to be draught sealed by applying a silicone foam rubber sealant in the gap between casement and frame. The casement edges are temporarily lacquered or taped beforehand so that the sealant adheres only to the non-treated frame sides. Take care to select a non-corrosive sealant.



***Broken pane at external walkway***

Works to windows at the external walkway:

Remove any loose paint, putty & dirt from the window frames.

Repair in-situ and replace decayed or damaged timber.

Lightly sand the frame.

Wash the frame and glass with a non-ionic detergent.

Once the frame has dried out, paint the frame with a white metal primer.

Cut & glaze the missing panes with restoration glass & putty.

Apply new putty to the external side where it is missing to ensure a weatherproof seal.

Works to doors:



***Two out of four rear external doors remain***

The ground floor has four identical openings to the rear, each of which housed an external doorway. Two of the external doors remain, which are a ledged & sheeted door with three glass panes.

Inspection of existing door frames and door leaves. Timber to be repaired rather than replaced where possible.

Strap hinges and latches to be repaired and re-used. Missing ironmongery to be replaced to match original.

Cut & glaze the missing panes with restoration glass.

Using the existing doors as a template, replicate two new doors to replace the missing external doors. In this manner the reconstruction of the missing doors can be based on sound physical and historical evidence.

### 3.4 Interiors

#### Stairs:

There are four staircases in varying states of disrepair. Defects including broken spindles, broken treads and missing balustrades have compromised the safe use of the stairs.



#### *Balustrade and spindles missing*

Detailed inspection of each stair for structural issues and signs of decay/insect damage. Timber to be repaired rather than replaced where possible. Stairs may require strengthening, detail of any such intervention to be agreed with Conservation Architect prior to undertaking the works.

Missing stair parts to be replicated to match existing construction, including methods of fixing.

#### Floors:

The existing ground floor construction is predominantly a modern concrete floor. It is proposed that this be replaced with a fully insulated concrete floor and damp proof membrane/radon barrier. This buildup will provide the opportunity to install insulation and underfloor heating throughout the ground floor. This type of radiant heating distribution is ideally suited to historic buildings high thermal mass, whereas heating using convection (eg radiators) is less effective at maintaining comfort levels. It also provides an opportunity to unobtrusively introduce a heating system into the building.



***Modern concrete floor at ground floor, original quarry tiles can be seen below staircase.***

There are fragments of original flooring evident at the westernmost house, where an area of quarry tiles remain. It is proposed to replicate this flooring type throughout the ground floor.

A number of areas at first floor have damaged floorboards and are unstable.

Opening up of works in selected places to assess floor joists.

Timber to be repaired rather than replaced where possible. Damaged timber to be removed / and new timber spliced.

Ceilings:

Ceilings are badly damaged in a number of areas at ground floor & first floor.

Plasterers:

Before commencing work, employees carrying out lime plastering are to produce evidence of a successful experience in the use of lathe & lime plaster to a protected structure.



*Damaged lathe and plaster ceilings*



Inspect existing lathes and fixings.



***Arch in ceiling at window head to be reinstated***

Retain existing lathes where possible, re-nailing where necessary. Plaster repairs can be undertaken to existing laths providing they are in good condition.

Replacement laths should match the original as closely as possible and be spaced approximately 8-10mm apart with ends butt-jointed and nailed on a supporting timber with the joints staggered at regular intervals of between 600 and 900mm to minimise cracking. Riven laths, (not sawn lathes), to be used for ceilings.

Refer to section on Lime at 3.2 above regarding mixing, batching and handling of lime generally.

Lime plaster to be applied to lathes in 3 coats as follows:

First Coat - Mix of sharp and soft sands, chalk lime putty (or NHL 2) and horse hair. Ensure horse hair evenly distributed throughout the mortar. 10mm thick layer, pushed into and across the pre-wet laths at a 45 degree angle to the laths. Plaster left to steady up before being scratched in a diamond pattern ensuring the scratches not running along the laths. Leave to set hard but protected from heat and draughts. Any cracks that appear in the first coat should not be rubbed out as this may damage the nibs of the plaster behind the laths.

Second Coat - The intermediate or float coat will be applied similar to the first coat but without horse hair. You Wet down the first coat with a fine mist before spreading a 7mm coat. Lightly scratched in preparation of the finish coat.

Finish Coat - A mix of lime putty and fine silver sand. Wet down the surface before application with a fine mist spray. Allow time for the water to absorb then apply a coat of approximately 2mm. When slightly stiffened up apply a further 2mm coat and trowel to a smooth finish with a steel trowel.

#### Fireplaces



Rub down rust and dirt. Clean cast iron using white spirit and burnish with wire wool,

The iron can be polished back to black using suitable metal polish eg. Stovax Traditional Black Grate Polish

Cracked tiles to be repaired where possible. Replacement of missing parts to be confirmed with conservation architect in writing.

Hearths to be cleared away for inspection.

#### Painting & Decorating

Works to include painting all internal joinery, window frames, walls and ceilings.

Carefully remove/strip away all loose existing finishes & lightly sand.

Walls & ceilings to be painted using a breathable paint suitable for use on limer plaster in historic buildings (eg. Auro natural paints).

### 3.5 Other Works

#### Iron Railings



*Deformed steelwork*



*Corrosion and flaking paint.*



*Small iron pedestrian gate*



*Overlapping bowtop railings*

The first of the widows houses nearest to the main road is bounded to the front by an attractive pair of piers, gates and low level interlocking bowtop railings. These features are most likely a 20<sup>th</sup> century addition, and form part of the evolution of the character of the building. It is likely that the main gates and railings are of mild steel, while the small pedestrian gate is of ironwork and does not seem to match the other railings and gate. It is possible that the installation of the small pedestrian gate pre-dates the railings and it may have been added at the same time as the extension.

Remove gates and railings, to be carefully blast cleaned by specialist steel fabricator, starting at a low pressure and gradually increase.

Remaining steel/iron onsite to be cleaned down by hand using wire brush, chisel & sandpaper.

Deformed and bent railings to be reshaped.

Paint using two coats of a zinc-based primer, one or two base coats of micaceous iron oxide (MIO), one or two top coats of gloss paint. Samples to be provided and colour to be agreed with Conservation Architect.

## Benches

An unusual feature again to the covered walkway/ small courtyard area to the east of the building is the provision of two external benches in a sheltered area.



*Additional support required to bench*



Existing timber to be retained. Sand down to remove paint finish. Patch repair damaged areas. Provide additional support to underside of bench to conservation architects detail.

Prime and repaint, finishing with two top coats of gloss paint.

## Lime & Lath Soffitt

Prior to conservation being undertaken in 2023, there were remains of lime and lath soffits evident at the eaves. It is proposed that this treatment be reinstated through the soffits.

Again, employees carrying out lime plastering are to produce evidence of a successful experience in the use of lathe & lime plaster to a protected structure.

Lime mix used to be appropriate for use externally at soffits.

#### 4.0 ON-SITE SUPERVISION AND MONITORING

Monitoring of the works to be undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced building conservation professional. An inspection plan to be agreed in writing with the building owner and communicated to the relevant contractors. Inspection and monitoring will be undertaken at the following critical stages for each element (eg. roof, eaves & rainwater goods) :

- Inspection/Assessment at initial opening up/preparation of the element of works.
- Monitoring of works to each element (items 3.1 – 3.5 above).
- Inspection of completed works to each element.

The building owner is to provide adequate notice of the above stages to the conservation architect that they might arrange inspection.

General ongoing onsite supervision relative to each element of the works is to be provided by competent persons from within each relevant specialist contractor.

As detailed throughout the method statement above, samples of proposed materials to be provided to the Conservation for approval, in writing, prior to works commencing.

#### 5.0 OUTLINE PROGRAMME OF WORKS

DATE	STAGE
March 2024	Provisional approval granted by Local Authority
April 2024	Mobilisation and commencement
April 2024	Repair of retaining wall. Remove existing concrete floor and install insulated floor build-up.
May 2024	Windows repaired. Lath and plaster work underway External door design complete and ordered. Repair internal joinery and staircases. Repair first floor. Repair/reinstate external doors to rear.
June 2024	Lime and lathe to Soffit. Repair fireplaces Repair benches and elements at covered walkway (guttering & roofing)
July 2024	Repair boundary railings. Internal finishes.
August 2024	Works complete.

## 6.0 ESTIMATED PROJECT COST

<b>Works</b>		<b>Approx. cost € ex. VAT</b>
External wall - upper section in red rick		8,300
Stained Glass Windows - restore working/openers and inside paint work		4,300
Interiors - Repairs to lime/lath render ceilings up and down stairs		11,100
Interiors - joinery repair / rotten floor		5,100
Exterior/Roofs - Lime and lath to soffit		3,800
Interiors - Repair and paint of stairs		3,000
Interiors - Repair and clean fire places		2,100
Interiors - remove internal concrete floors and reinstate original tile floors		14,700
External rear doors (most missing)		6,800
Interiors - Repairs to bench, windows at entrance alley way to graveyard/widows houses.		6,300
Repair orante fence along front		4,250
Painting and decorating		3,200
Preliminaries		6,100
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>€79,050</b>
<b>TOTAL CONSTRUCTION</b>		<b>€79,050</b>
Vat @ 13.5%	13.5%	<b>€10,672</b>
<b>TOTAL CONSTRUCTION INCL VAT</b>		<b>€89,722</b>
<b>Professional Services</b>		
Architect Services		€6,500
PSDP		€400
Vat @ 23%		<b>€1,587</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>€8,487</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>€98,209</b>

Prepared by:



Dated: 19.01.2024

Emmet Holland MRIAI



#### **Disclaimer**

*The reports will be based on a visual inspection only.*

*External condition will be assessed from ground level only.*

*Parts of the fabric which are inaccessible or concealed will be excluded from the assessment (e.g. where roofs or roof spaces were not accessible, floor boards or coverings not lifted, walls or ceilings not opened up, heavy furniture not moved, etc).*

*Aside from comments, inspections will not involve a detailed survey of the functioning or safety of chimney flues or presence of asbestos material.*

*Aside from comments on the risks of timber decay, inspections will not involve a detailed survey for timber damp, decay or insect infestation.*

*Inspection of services will be limited to a superficial visual inspection, excluding any testing for function or safety.*

*Searches in relation to title, planning issues or statutory approvals will be excluded.*

#### **References;**

<https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/resources/>

Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage guidance

<https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2019/10/Architectural-Heritage-Protection-Guidelines-for-Planning-Authorities-2011.pdf>

Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage Advice Series

- Maintenance
- Bricks
- Iron
- Windows
- Roofs
- Energy Efficiency