APPENDIX I

Conservation Appraisal

Conservation Appraisal for

Lismore Parish Church, Lismore

Munro Allison Architects, Edinburgh

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CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Lismore Parish Church was created from the ruins of St Moluags Cathedral in c.1750. The earlier cathedral itself was commenced in the 1250s likely on, or near, the site of the earlier Christian monastery set up by St Moluag in the sixth century.

The building is currently owned and managed by the Church of Scotland but has been identified as surplus to their needs after parish reorganisation. This report has been commissioned as part of the work to determine the potential of the church building to come into community ownership and management and is part of a larger options appraisal.

1.2 SCOPE OF STUDY

The report deals with Lismore Parish Church. It was commissioned by Lismore Church Futures Working Group, an organisation set up by the local community council. The report covers the church building and walls of the graveyard enclosure but does not include the gravestones and other monuments.

1.3 PURPOSE AND LIMITATIONS OF REPORT

This document is part of a feasibility project into community management and possible ownership of the Church building. It is not and should not be considered a full conservation plan.

No opening up of building or ground was carried out in the preparation of this report and access was not available to some areas, including attic and other voids. No high level access was available beyond visual access from surrounding ground levels, and therefore we cannot confirm if defects exists to areas not seen or able to be inspected.

1.4 ALTERNATIVE NAMES

The Parish Church is also known as St Moluags (St Moluacs) Cathedral as well as Kilmoig, Kilmolowag; Kilmaluag, which have all been used in early maps of the island.

1.5 LOCATION

The Parish Church sits to the north of the Island of Lismore, adjacent to the main road (B8045) which runs along the length of the island. Co-ordinates are: 56.53N, 5.48 W.

Lismore is an island which sits within Loch Linnhe, in the Argyll and Bute council area.

1.6 SETTING AND GENERAL ENVIRONS

The Church sits within a small, divided enclosure, within a landscape of farmland. The church 'land' is surrounded on three sides by graveyard (although these are owned by Argyll and Bute, not the church) with the east edge bounded by the main road. Beyond the immediate graveyards, there is another remnant of enclosure, possibly of the earlier glebe or vallum, which also includes land to the south east of the site and the old manse and garden (fig.1)

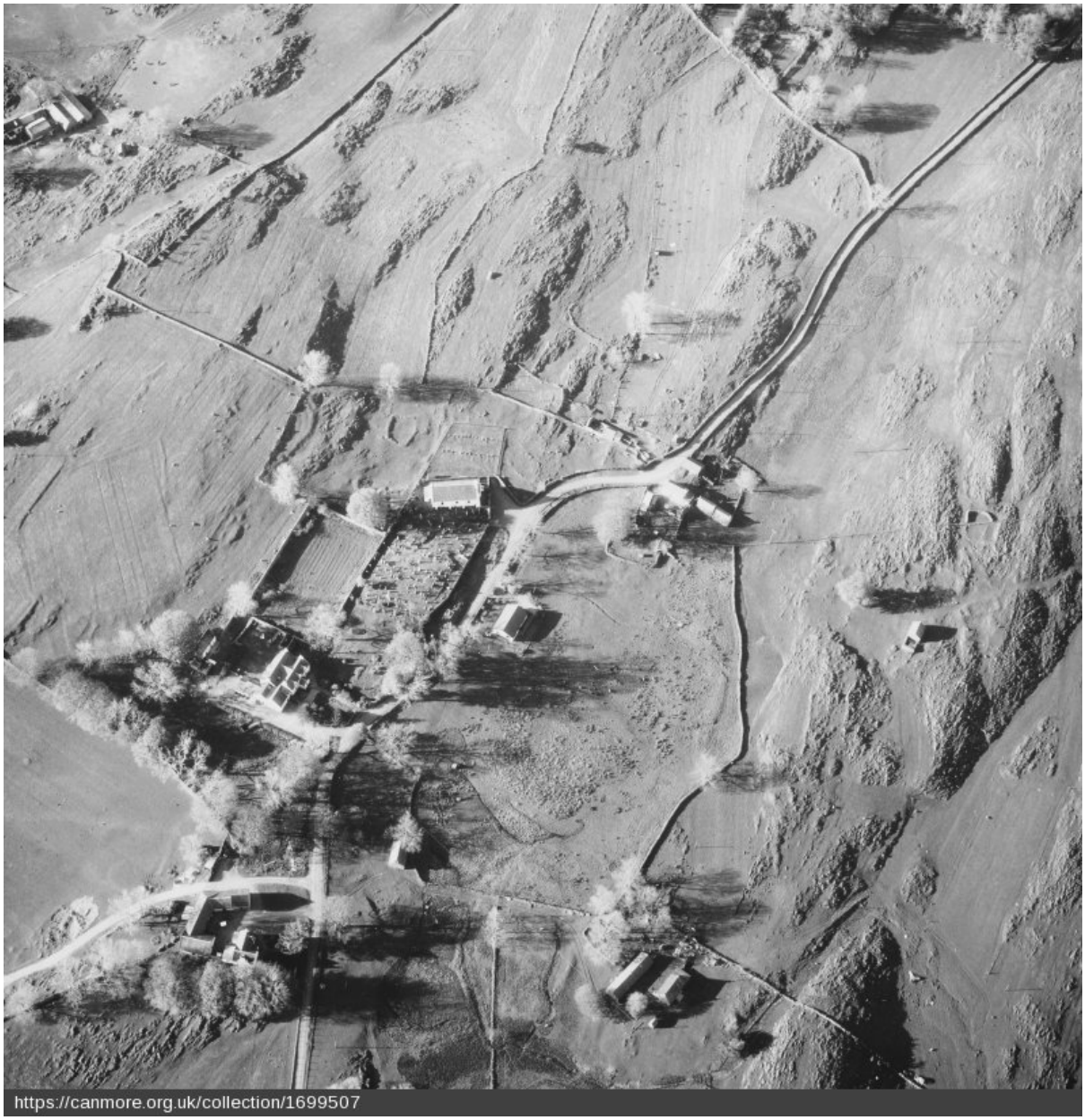


Fig 1: Aerial photograph of Lismore Parish church and environs

1.7 STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

Lismore Parish Church is a category B listed building. The ruins of St Moluags cathedral are a scheduled ancient monument (SM 286) and includes the church building below floor level and the wider site (fig. 2).

1.8 CURRENT OWNERSHIP

The building is currently owned and managed by the Church of Scotland. The graveyards are owned and managed by Argyll and Bute Council.

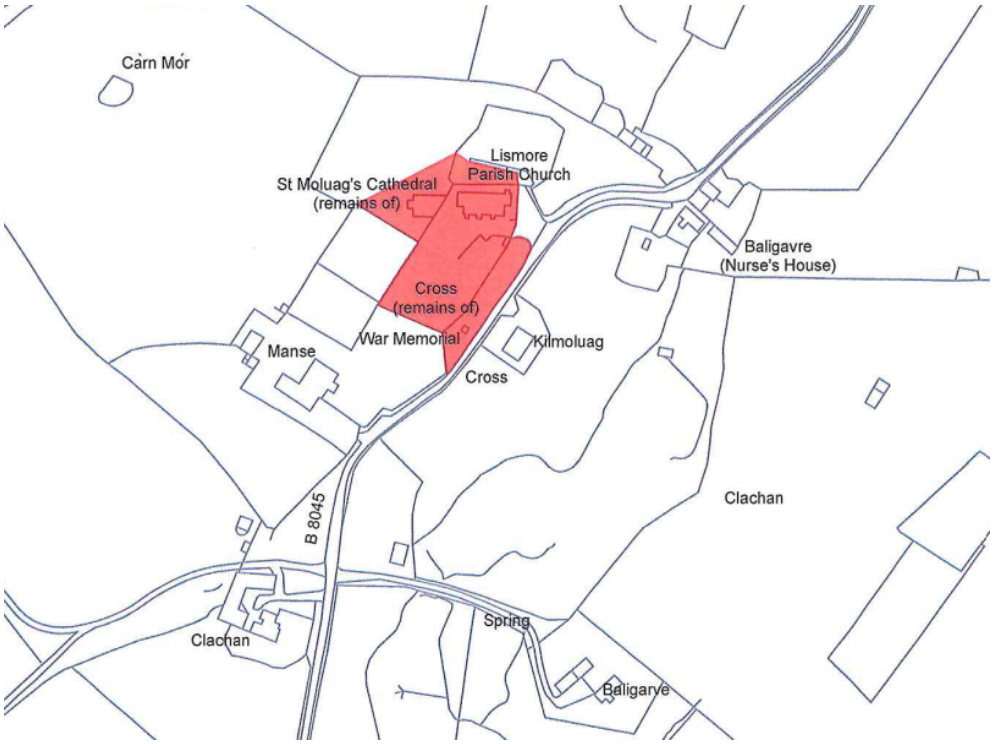


Fig 2: Extract of map from schedule SM no. 286.

1.9 SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank the staff and volunteers of the following organisations:-

-Architectural Heritage Fund.
-Ionad Naomh Moluag (Lismore Gaelic Heritage Centre)
-Canmore /Historic Scotland Environment.
-British Newspaper Archive.
-National Archives of Scotland.

In particular, the authors would like to thank the Lismore Church Futures group, especially Stephen Green and Douglas Breingan who generously carried out and provided much of the historical research on the church.

1.10 AUTHORSHIP

This report has been prepared by:

- Georgina Allison RIBA, RIAS: She has RIAS Conservation Accreditation at advanced level. She has over twenty years of specialist experience working with historic buildings throughout the UK and is teaches post graduate architectural conservation at the University of Edinburgh.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF BUILDING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The church is a single volume building which sits slightly above the road and is oriented east -west. It has a small porch and external stair to the east, and a small vestry outshot on the west. It has a pitched, slated roof and its walls are harled, with a bellcote to the east.

Although the initial impression is of a simple straightforward building, the archaeology of the site and the various reconstruction of the church mean that it is surprisingly complex.

2.2 EXTERIOR

2.2.1 General

The building is white painted and harled with what appears to be a cementitious render: it has various buttresses, primarily to the south but also on other elevations. A masonry bell cote with bell is on the east gable.

There are three distinct roofs within the building: the pitched and slated roof over the main body of the church; the east porch has a crenelated parapet and a flat roof and the vestry is a mono pitched slate roof. Windows are generally fixed, with several painted glass panels.

2.2.2 Main Church Roof

The main roof is slated in diminishing courses, with a typical west highland slate. It has a continuous concrete cope at each gable abutment, presumably with lead soakers to slates. The ridge is finished with a lead ridge roll.

The roof structure was renewed completely in the 1890s, when it was raised slightly at wall head level. Since then, the ventilators seen on photographs at that point have been removed, and additional down pipes have been added to west end in the twentieth century. These appear to discharge directly into the graveyard and are a likely source of additional water within the lower levels of the church walls. The slating is in poor condition, with many slipped and cracked slates. In addition, repairs to the upper section and east end have been done poorly with wide gaps and dissimilar slates.

2.2.3 Porch Roof

The porch roof is a flat roof sitting behind a crenelated parapet: it cannot be observed from ground level, although the damage to the ceiling below suggests that there has been significant failure of the roof covering (likely asphalt). A rainwater pipe discharges on the north side, into the lower level of the graveyard: the lower section of the pipe has been displaced.

2.2.4 Vestry Roof

The vestry has a slated monopitched roof, which abuts into the west wall of the church. It has slated verges, again with a smooth cement render to the wall at the underside. The roof is continuous over

the remains of the flue at the north edge, and there is a leaded abutment detail with cover flashing to the church wall. The lead abutment detail at the flue/north wall directs water downward onto the masonry where dark staining is evident. Slates are generally in fair condition, but many have chipped edges and repairs/ replacements have been carried out in thinner slates.

The vestry roof has a half round plastic rhone discharging into a cast iron down pipe at north end.

2.2.5 East Wall

The east wall is currently the entrance to the church, with an off centre porch and entrance steps (porch covered below, section 2.2.6) although it would originally have been the choir east wall.

The wall is cement harled and has an in situ concrete cope at the wall head, crowned with a bell cote (section 2.2.11). There are buttresses at each end of the elevation, although the northern one is partially covered by the porch.

At the upper level there is an arched recess, with a flat rendered section of wall within. In this plain wall is a double arched window and oculus. These windows contain the St Moluag and St Columba painted glass panels which have an outer protective section of glass within their timber frame (see also 2.3.11). All of the masonry recess edges are plain, and have no weatherings, mouldings or projections.

To the left of the entrance porch is a gated area of graves and monuments (section 2.4) several of which are attached directly to the wall of the church.

2.2.6 Porch

The porch is a cement harled single storey structure, with a rendered cornice (no evidence of stone joints behind) and five crenelations above (harled): at the south corner these are projected over a chamfered base. There is a single window, with coloured quarry leaded lights and a glass protective cover within a timber frame.

2.2.7 North Wall

The north wall is not buttressed as in the south, only with a single buttress to the east end. This is believed to be because of the earlier structure, possibly a vestry or sacristy which abutted this elevation (this single buttress may be the remains of the perpendicular wall of this earlier building as its width and profile is not the same as elsewhere). As elsewhere, the wall is cement harled, with a slight change in texture at wall head, and again a horizontal crack has appeared. At both outer windows, a vertical crack joins into this horizontal. In several locations, there is rust staining on the harl, one from corrosion of the rhone, but the other appears from below the wall head band. The outline of the north door (visible internally) is also visible through small cracks in the harl)

There is also a small opening to the east end at low level, noted as an aumbry.

There are three arched windows spaced along the façade, all of which have leaded glazing with glass/ sheeting over for protection. The central one has decorative painted glass, and the outer two have coloured quarries (see also 2.3.11).

To the west end, the wall is abutted with the cut down remains of a flue from the vestry, and the water run-off from the upper flashing of the vestry roof creates unsightly mould on north façade.

2.2.8 West Wall

The west wall is a gable wall, again with a harled finish and concrete cope wall head. Although its base would have been the internal dividing line between the medieval nave and choir, this history isn't obviously legible within the current wall. However, it may well explain the cracking pattern visible within the harl at each end, particularly the south: this would have been where the external north and south nave walls were cut back, potentially exposing some or all of their inner core, and certainly where they were tied into the new gable, the junction of which would be vulnerable to settlement cracks.

There are several features within the current wall: a circular window opening at the upper level; the vestry lean-to (section 2.2.9) and a group of corbels to the south end.

The circular window is plain, with no weathering or projections, and no splay to the reveal: there is a short 'cut' to the base, presumably to shed water, but the dark staining under suggests that it is ineffective. The window itself is a fixed timber frame with square quarries and circular border leaded light and with a protective outer face. The leaded light behind shows signs of slumping above and below the central ferramenta.

There are two corbel stones visible projecting from the wall, one of which has sheared off (we believe this is being held at the Heritage Centre for safekeeping). They have a quarter round profile to underside. Earlier photographs suggest a further corbel to the north, now covered by vestry.

2.2.9 Vestry Walls

The vestry wall is cement harled, again with a smooth cement render band at wall head, although originally this had a slated verge. There is a crack between the two finishes which is continuous on three elevations, and there are vertical cracks at each window.

On the north wall is a sash and case window with arched upper sash and straight rendered reveals. There is a similarly shaped window on the west wall, although this has a fixed casement, with simple coloured glass quarries, and chamfered, rendered reveals. There appears to have been either a blocked opening or a patch in the render on the left hand of the west wall. The south wall of the vestry has an arched door opening, with diagonally planked timber door and frame.

2.2.10 South Wall

As elsewhere, the south wall is cement harled and it is divided into three bays by the four surviving buttresses. Each bay has an arched window, fitted with leaded lights in a timber frame. The eastern most (addressing the internal gallery) is made from coloured quarries, with earlier horizontal astragals visible, and exposed to external face. Both of the others are single panels of glass over painted glass panels (see section 2.3.11).

The round arched south door of the earlier cathedral choir is in the middle bay, with deep hood mouldings and two carved headstops. The door opening has been harled over, presumably on some form of masonry infill.

At high level, the wallhead has been raised and there is a general horizontal crack running across the wall at the earlier wallhead, worse at the east. At low level, the ground is deeply uneven, with graves, head stones and flat gravestones at various levels and inclinations. Two rainwater pipes

discharge directly onto this surface (one at each end), with little hope of the rainwater dispersing away from the base of the wall. This is exacerbated by the buttress projections right next to the rainwater pipes.

As well as the harl cracking at the nineteenth century wall head, there are also some vertical cracks at weaker sections of wall (at windows and doors). While these cracks are likely to be cracks within the hard cement render caused by thermal movement, the wall behind should be carefully investigated to ensure that they do not project into the wall, especially as one of them goes through the south door moulding. They are also likely a source of concentrated moisture ingress into the building fabric.

2.2.11- Bell Cote

The bell cote sits at the apex of the east gable, although it was originally placed on the west end. The detail to its base has been simplified in the process. It appears (from ground level) to be a masonry structure, painted, with a pyramidal roof held on four columns. There is a bell in situ, apparently in working order.

2.3 INTERIOR

2.3.1 Porch

The porch interior is a simple corridor like space, with a plain plaster ceiling, plastered walls and timber match-boarded dado. The floor is painted concrete.

The ceiling has been roughly patched with plasterboard sheet to the south and there are also clear indications of water damage in the north. Generally, the wall plaster is in poor condition, with cracks and localised spalling through the paint.

The space is lit by a single window, made up of obscured and coloured leaded quarries, with blue border. These appear to sit in a timber frame and the reveal is awkwardly finished with a partially timber, partial painted dado. There are two banks of metal coat hooks.

There are two doors- the main church door and the door into the main space, both heavy timber and grained.

2.3.2 Church Nave: General

The church nave is a single space, with a gallery floor to the east end. It has a timber ceiling, with exposed trusses and boarding finish. There are fixed pews, and other timber fittings, over a partially carpeted timber floor. The walls are a mix of plaster and timber dado although individual stone elements have been left exposed.

For clarity the ‘church nave’ is the main or principal space within the existing church and was formerly the cathedral choir: the nave of the cathedral would have sat beyond this.

2.3.3 Main Church Nave: Roof/Ceiling

The timber boarded ceiling is coomed, obscuring the upper section of the hammer beam roof trusses. There are four independent trusses and two attached to gable walls, all of which sit on

exposed, simple stone corbels, and have some ironwork straps visible. The trusses are decorated with fretwork infill panels and have turned finials/ pendants to the hammer posts and beams.

All of the ceiling timber work is dark stained and varnished, with some mouldings painted out in black and there are two round ventilation grilles, presumably which fed into the former roof fans.

2.3.4 Main Church Nave: Floor

The church nave floor is timber boarded, with fixed carpet to circulations areas around the pews. There is one exposed stone monument set into floor under gallery stair and there is a small area of painted stone or concrete at the understair cupboard.

2.3.5 Main Church Nave: Gallery and Stair

The gallery has a stepped timber floor with downstand beam to nave and slanted timber boarded soffit. The downstand beam has two cast iron columns, possibly re-used from earlier 18th century interior. The L shaped stair is timber, with a carpet finish and a cupboard has been installed to the corner on the underside of the stair. The lower section has turned balusters, substantial handrail and ornate newel post, matching the pulpit carvings.

The gallery balustrade is panelled and the pews match those elsewhere in the church.

2.3.6 Main Church Nave: north wall

The north wall is generally plastered to its upper level, with a timber dado below. There are three windows, with plain plastered and chamfered reveals. Several large areas of plaster have failing paint finishes. Slightly to the east, there is a blocked masonry archway. The plaster appears to sit forward of this stone element, presumably as it has been strapped out and the finish has been awkward fitted around the carved headstops.

The pointed arch is an important survival from the cathedral, where it was the door to the now lost sacristy/vestry on the north side. It is a pointed arch, with outer hood mould ending in two carved heads, one with mitre and the exposed masonry to arch has visible masons' marks. An indent repair has been made in darker grey stone (or even cement). The infill panel to the masonry has been painted. The carved stone is showing evidence of salt damage, as is the infill panel and the paint finish above is failing.

The plaster is also failing where patched under the gallery where there is evidence of a small arch shaped repair.

2.3.7 Main Church Nave: South Wall

The south wall has a similar mix of finishes as the north: strapped out plaster and timber dado and three round arched windows. The 'cut out' feature is more extensive here as there are three stone elements exposed on this wall: a round arched opening, the sedilia and the piscina. The plasterwork is again painted with impermeable paint which is failing in several locations, showing a modern plaster finish behind, and the wall has several visible surface mounted wiring routes.

The arched opening again has a hood mould and headstops but is round in shape. The modern plaster does not butt up to this element but has been cut back square. From images and plans of this building it appears that the earlier door was in use up to the 1890 refurbishment of the church[1]. The infill is painted and is failing around a circular feature (inside and out). As the plain masonry around the arch is exposed here, we can see clear evidence of mould staining throughout the wall.

The sedilia and piscina sit very low to the floor, an indication of the change in floor level between cathedral choir and today's church. There are remnants of polychromatic decoration, likely eighteenth century.

All three windows have painted glass (see section 2.3.11).

2.3.8 Main Church Nave: east wall

The east wall is split in two by the gallery: the lower section is typical of the main space, with painted plaster above a timber dado. At higher level the wall paint is again failing, and the painted glass window (section 2.3.11) sits into a painted stonework frame, although painted is failing to this, especially at ferramenta.

2.3.9 Main Church Nave: west wall

The west wall is again plastered, with a timber dado, although this ends with a deep timber reveal just above floor level. There are two main features- the roundel window in the gable and the archway into the vestry. The roundel window has a plain plastered reveal, and at the lowest point there is a build up of dirt and mould, indicating either condensation or water ingress issues.

The archway below has exposed masonry, but unlike elsewhere, this appear not to be a finished surface, but a rough finish arch which was either covered with timber or plaster panels, or even potentially has had a more decorative arch removed. This would have been the main door to the church until 1890, so both could be possible. However, it is clear that the stonework now visible was not designed to be visible. The arch has modern infill [2] and a timber door with unusual, crossed architraves.

2.3.10 Main Church Nave: Fittings

The pews to the church are fixed and are of a standard design. There is also timber pulpit, communion table and chairs, all of which are matching to the gallery panelling and stair and likely to be from 1890s refurbishment.

There is also a modern hymn-board and electric organ and there are some loose elements such as timber collecting boxes and plates.

2.3.11 Main Church Nave: Painted Glass

There are five windows with painted glass panels, two to the north, two to the south and one to the east.

[1] Canmore image- SC007430000
[2] Carried out by Ian Lindsay and partners c.1956

St Columba and St Moluag (East), 1926-28[3]

This is a set of two arched windows, with central roundel, commemorating Beatrice wife of Angus Gregorson. They were designed and created by Mary Isobel Wood (1886-1975) and are fine and very early example of the Scottish modern style of stained glass. Mary Isobel Wood trained under Alexander Strachan at Edinburgh College of Art where she also taught[4]. Other stained glass by her includes the much later St Cuthbert at St Cuthbert's church, Edinburgh (1957). With a distinctive, subdued, pale palette and strong graphic quality it compares remarkably well with much of the later mid century glass in Scotland.

Her pupil Roland Mitton also carried out work in the church, the 1996 'Sower and the Seed' for the Wedd family and the 'Follow Me' panel from 1987.

There are two earlier panels in a later 19th century aesthetic style: 'Dorcas' and the 'The Good Shepherd' both from 1911 and by James Benson of Glasgow.

2.3.12 Main Church Nave: Monuments and Slabs

There is a floor set stone monument slab of considerable age just under the gallery stairs, with carved decoration and a second stone sits loose nearby again with carved face. One of these is recorded as Duncan Stewart of Appin's gravestone, but the provenance of this claim is unclear and they appear of an earlier date.

There are also two brass war memorial plaques with stained timber frames on east wall.

2.3.13 Main Church Vestry

The vestry is a plain space, plastered with coomed ceiling and finishes generally from second half of 20th century, including textured paint. The doorway and wall clashes with the western entrance arch to church.

2.3.14 Services

The church is heated by series of exposed hot water pipes run between and under the pews and a small electric panel heater in vestry.

Lighting is electric, with glass shades on pendant fittings fixed to roof trusses. There are also some speakers to west which are fixed to wall with surface wiring.

[3] The panel is dated by the date of death of Beatrice not by manufacture, so care needs to be taken about how early a work this actually is.
[4] https://www.visitstainedglass.uk/location/lismore-parish-church-isle-of-lismore-argyll-bute

2.4 Landscape, Setting

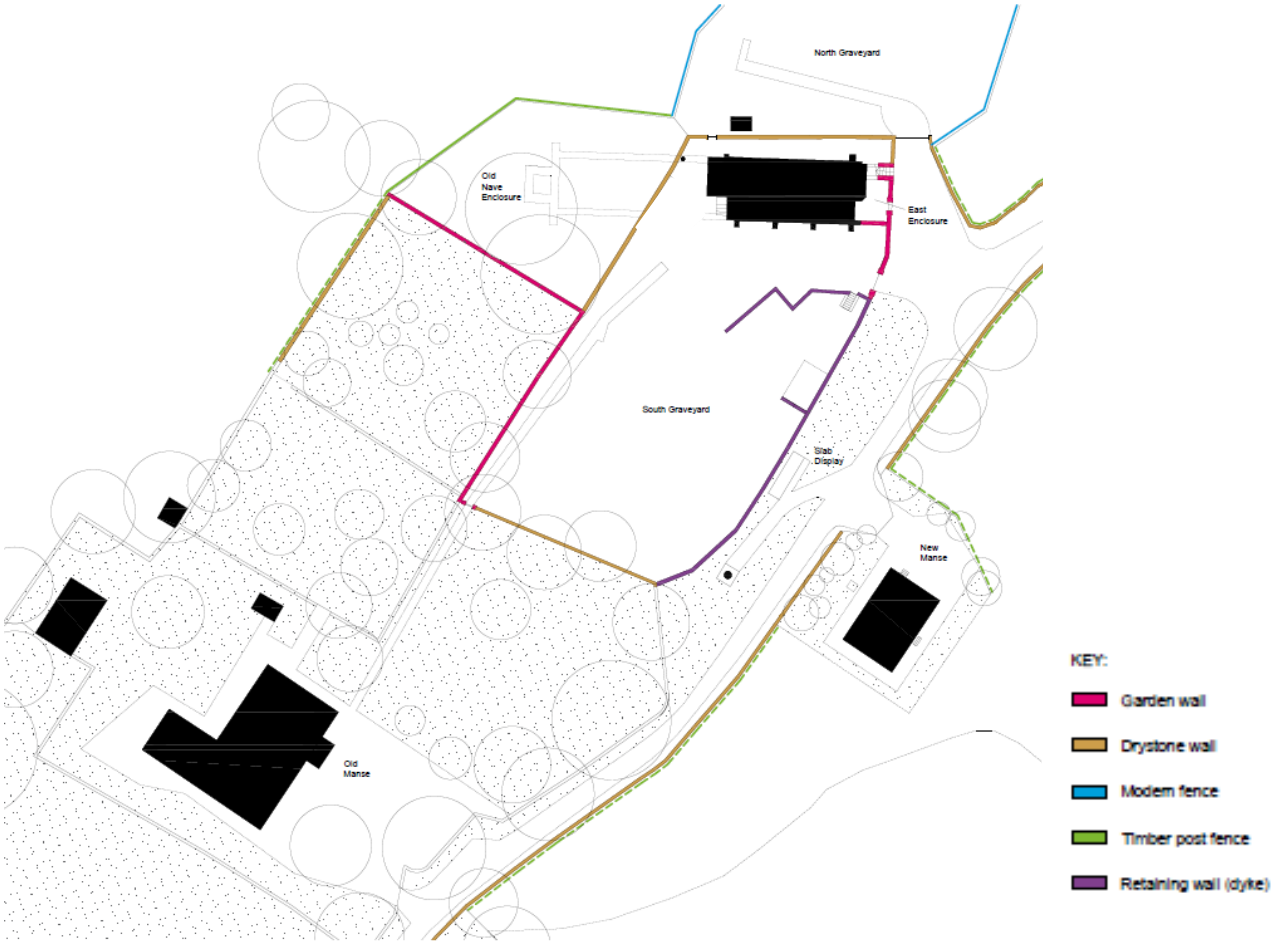


Fig 3: Site plan showing enclosure and boundary walls.

2.4.1 East Enclosure

The east enclosure separates into two sections: the porch with its entrance steps and a small area of monuments and graves to the south. The dividing footprint appears to have been generated by the external stair to the gallery which sat in a walled enclosure, both of which appear to have taken this form in the 1750s redevelopment.

The outer walls of this space are likely to be from this date on the east and south, and partially on the north, although the porch section is a later rebuilding (where harled). Both the north and south walls are of rubblework which partially retain the graveyards beyond. The east wall is also a rubble stonework wall but there are ashlar piers and a wrought iron gate to the graves section which sits approx. one step up form road level. This is the partner to the gate to the graveyard.

The grave section has harled walls with fixed wall monuments. A table gravestone sits at the lowest level, and there is a small brick (20thc.) upstand towards to the stairs.

2.4.2 North Graveyard

The north graveyard sits immediately to the north of the church in a narrow band defined by the church wall to the south and a drystone dyke to the north. It is fully enclosed at east end but has a

gate pier and wrought iron gate to the east end, which gives access to the north graveyard extension to the north. This is in very poor condition and partially collapsed, but certainly salvageable.

The north graveyard extension is modern (c. 1990s) grassed with metal grid panel fencing.

2.4.3 South Graveyard

The south graveyard sits elevated from the road: it is bounded by the church building to the north and by the boundary wall of the manse walled garden on the north-east edge, which predates the 1750s rebuilding of the church. This is extended over the nave area by a rubble work wall (much repaired and partially collapsed) and a similar rubble wall separates the manse gardens from the graveyard, both likely 18th century.

The eighteenth century glebe plans show the graveyard extending over the road, so it's likely that the walls towards the east, which are partly retaining, were built at a similar time as the road became a more fixed, dominant feature. There is evidence of wall building within the archives in the 1860s[5]

We therefore surmise that the wall along the roadside, including the pair of gates and the east enclosure of the church were built or rebuilt in the mid nineteenth century, with the other walls to the 'glebe' (as defined by the 18th century mapping of it) of an earlier date, dividing the graveyard from farmland to the west and north.

2.4.5 Old Nave Enclosure

The old nave enclosure is bisected by the eighteenth century field wall which separated the church graveyard from the farming land to the west and north. Since the recent nave excavations, a modern timber and wire fence has defined an area from the north-west wall of the manse garden to the north graveyard, which separates the remains from the wider field.

2.4.6 Gravestone Enclosure

A recent timber pavilion has been installed adjacent to the south graveyard boundary to protect and display some of the earliest and most important gravestones found.

[5] Parish records, 1866.

3.0 HISTORY OF THE BUILDING & SITE

3.1 LISMORE INTRODUCTION

As an island which sits in the middle of Loch Linnhe, at the base of the great glen and between the coasts of Morvern on the left and argyll on the right, Lismore has been an important staging point and border territory between kingdoms, earls and dukes.

Its fertility and location allowed for early settlement, with copious remain from bronze and iron ages.

3.2 LISMORE GEOLOGY

The geology of Lismore is also part of the history of the site. Unlike the majority of the West Highlands, indeed Scotland, the island is mainly a limestone formation. Although this was an important resource for building lime, needed for mortars, it also had advantages in 'sweetening' (deacidifying the soil) allowing better soil fertility and a wider range of plants to be grown than elsewhere in the region. Its name is believed to come from Lios Mor- meaning the great 'enclosure' or garden.

3.3 EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD (6th- 9th century)

During the 6 century there was a wave of Irish missionaries sent to the Western Isles. They often established bases in the small isles, allowing further trips via the great glen into the north and north-east and were responsible for the first wave of Christianisation of Scotland or, at least, its consolidation.[6]

The sites established in this era include Whithorn (St Ninian) and Iona (St Columba). Although much less well known, a teaching centre at Lismore was also established by St Moluag at a similar time. The two former monasteries have been heavily restored, particularly Iona in the 1920-50s, but Lismore has been far less studied, at least until recently: its importance is still not fully recognised. St Moluag also was responsible for establishing Mortlach and Rosemarkie in Rosshire, where he reportedly died and was buried in 592, but his remains were reputedly moved back later to Lismore. Lismore, Mortlach and Rosemarkie all later became the seats of the early bishops sees, suggesting their early importance. After St Moluag's death, the Annals of Ulster name abbots after him until the late 8th century.

Despite the later 12th century cathedral being named after him, the site is yet to be categorically linked to St Moluag's 'original' monastery, although there is a huge amount of archaeological evidence that some form of monastic settlement was on (or very close to) the site of the church. This includes: evidence of early burials; sanctuary stone; enclosure; high quality metalworking and other crafting; and food production[7] Most of the evidence to date has been found to the south of the church, but that may be more a result of that being where has been explored to date.

This early period was brought to an end by the arrival (or fear of arrival) of Vikings in the 9th century.[8] Lismore was eventually on the border of their established Kingdom of the Isles, but still part of the Kingdom of Scotland. Most monastic treasures are reputed to have been moved to the

[6] Richard Fawcett, Scottish Abbeys and Priories; Historic Scotland.
[7] Dr Claire Ellis, Society of Antiquaries of Scotland presentation, June2023: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hkB0tgaUcE
[8] Richard Fawcett, Scottish Abbeys and Priories; Historic Scotland.

safety in the Church's central bases of Dunkeld and Ireland, with outlying monasteries abandoned or reduced, until revived in thirteenth century.

The island of Lismore was clearly important even before St Moluag, with important bronze age cairns and brochs in several locations.

3.4 BUILDING OF CATHEDRAL 13-14th century

The Cathedral of St Moluag was a structure of the 13-14th centuries, required after the splitting of Argyll away from Dunkeld, by 1225. Whether this building was built over an earlier structure or in the vicinity, is at this point unclear, but the general site was certainly used for some form of religious community prior to the bishopric being established.

The cathedral was commenced in c. 1250 and eventually completed in the 14th century. From our current knowledge, based on some archaeological excavation, the current church was the choir of the building and the nave extended westward. From excavation of the nave, we know that there was a small room at the west end, possibly a tower and doorway has been identified near the south-west corner, and the north sacristy/ vestry was to the north of the choir. There were no transepts.[9]

There are a significant number of papal references to Lismore, with a reference in 1411 to allow the money from vacant benefices to pay for 'jewels ornaments books and repairs'[10]. However, in 1462 the bishop was also allowed to live in Glasgow, rather than on island.

3.5 REFORMATION & RESTORATION (16th and 17th Century)

After the Reformation Parliament and the dissolution of monasteries in Scotland c. 1560, it appears that the cathedral was retained as a bishop's seat for some time, in a form of Episcopalian worship until c. 1638, although the bishop appears to have been based elsewhere. According to James IV in 1512[11], the cathedral was described as ruinous.

3.6 CONVERSION TO CHURCH (18th Century)

In the mid eighteenth century the ruins of the cathedral were reconfigured into the Parish Church of Lismore. This involved creating the outer enveloped that we see today, reducing the height of the walls and creating an entrance in the west end. The wider glebe was also recorded in 1776[12], showing the graveyard prior to the road bisecting this, and clearly linked to the areas to the south which have been partially excavated. The church interior was centrally planned, based around the point of the pulpit and with worshippers being active participants, rather than the 'viewers' of the earlier catholic form of worship. The internal layout can be seen to show the political and social structure of the congregation.

Although we do not have detailed records of the original appearance for the church at this point, the church began to be recorded in the nineteenth century, including plans showing the layout of the

[9] Argyll Archaeology- Data Structure Reports :Nave Excavation & Phase Two Nave Excavation, Sept 2016 and March 2018
[10] Duncan and Brown- Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiological Society, 1957
[11] " " referencing Letters of James IV (SHS)
[12] https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/image-viewer/maps_plans/maps_plans-12796418_504778_RHP8187_PL787?search_token=72499184965ef48f766859 (requires account)

interior in a very typical centrally planned interior[13]. This drawing ties through with a series of photographs by Erskine Beveridge of the church, including the interior.[14]

The pulpit sat at the side of the south door (which appears to be in use) with a long central communion table. Galleries were on three sides; the one to the east had a separate outside stair, often called a latecomers' stair, but also seamen's stair (to allow early departures or late arrivals dependant on tides). Galleries and pews are also dedicated to families.

The ceiling appears plastered, with cooms all around. Interestingly, in the photo showing the interior of the east wall shows a set back of the wall, with a thickness change possibly suggesting an earlier wall rebuilt at higher level.

The exterior of the church shows a slightly lower roof, with verges, and the graveyard walls and east enclosure complete. They also show the earlier iteration of the west end wall, with its smaller windows and central arched entrance reached via the path from the old manse, through the south graveyard.

In 1866, the 'old graveyard is enclosed with a stone wall'. Given that the main road now goes through the old graveyard shown in 1776, it is likely that as the road was consolidated into something more than a path and that the graveyards would need to be protected somewhat, so these wall are the south boundary of the south graveyard. The northern walls date to the building of the old manse, c. 1740 as these enclose the formal gardens of this building.

3.7 RE-ORDERING (19th and early 20th century)

As with most church buildings of the established church in the late nineteenth century, the church was again re-ordered in line with the ecclesiological movement. Moving away from the more egalitarian central plan, and back to a more medieval linear plan, this distanced the Church of Scotland from its splinter churches after the great disruption and was based often on the interest and research into antiquarian and medieval survivals. As was the norm, aisles were created, the pulpit moved and the communion table placed more as an atlar would have been. The gallery was installed in the east and a new timber roof installed. This was 'gothic' in style, as was most of the joinery, in contract to the earlier classical style.

Drawings from 1894 survive, showing an earlier proposal, with a much larger increase in height of the walls, eventually not carried out but most existing features are already within this proposal.

It appears however, that the east enclosure caused some problems for the entrance., with the porch dog legging around the monument enclosure, using the foundation of the seamans gallery stair and creating the awkward relationship we have today, between the external stairs at the side of the enclosure and the central doorway needed by the formal axis of the revised interior.

The church was also fitted with a passive ventilation system, popular to help ventilate a fully occupied building but also one lit and heated by gas or oil lamps. These systems included the externally fitted wind driven fans seen on photographs which were connected to the grilles in the ceiling. There could also have been venturi type ductwork in the attic, maximising the air rate change and allowing a degree of control.

[13] https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/image-viewer/maps_plans/maps_plans-12796419_504779_RHP8188_PL787 (requires account)
[14] Canmore image reference SC 742999 https://canmore.org.uk/collection/742999

3.8 REVISITING (1920s onward)

As part of the antiquarian and ecclesiological movement in the nineteenth century, attention was paid to the very early monastic sites in Scotland. At Iona, significant restoration of the abandoned monastery[15] started in the late nineteenth century by the Duke of Argyll and the Church of Scotland but this was taken in a new direction by the Iona community formed in 1938.

Brown and Duncan carried out significant excavation of the church in the 1950s, exposing the original footprint and their findings were published in the Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiological society in 1957. Also in the 1950s, Iain Lindsay, a historic buildings architect, become involved with the church. He prepared a series of schemes for the church, looking again at the ordering of the church in the light of the archaeological 'discovery' of the nave. He proposed removal of the gallery and entrance porch; reinstating the primacy of the western door; and moving the pulpit to the east. These were never carried out, with a simpler scheme of repair apparently being the preferred option in 1956-7. The vestry arch and door alterations, with its distinct crossed architraves, was part of this scheme of works. The cement harl, internal plaster and possibly the dado (although this may have been simply cut back rather than replaced entirely) are likely to date from this scheme of works as is the re-slating and removal of roof fans.

3.9 DATING FABRIC AND ELEMENTS

The following drawings show the respective ages of elements of the building, showing the extent of original medieval fabric believed to survive, as well as highlight those areas which have been changed during the building's lifetime as a parish church.

Obviously, these drawings are at present estimates and may need revision after removal of the harl which is obscuring the majority of masonry and masonry detailing at present.

[15] With only a brief attempt at revival in 1630s, Iona was largely abandoned after the reformation- Mull Historical and Archaeological Society

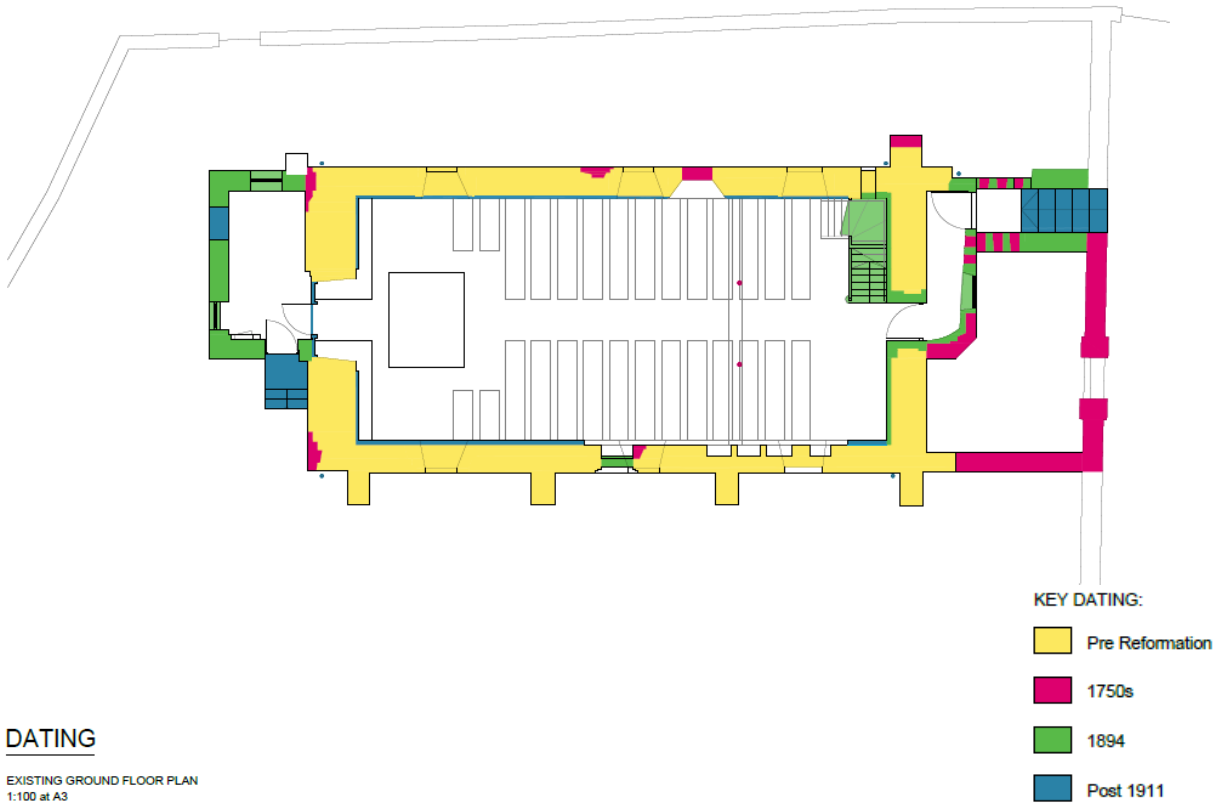


Fig 4: Approximate Dating Information for Ground Floor Plan

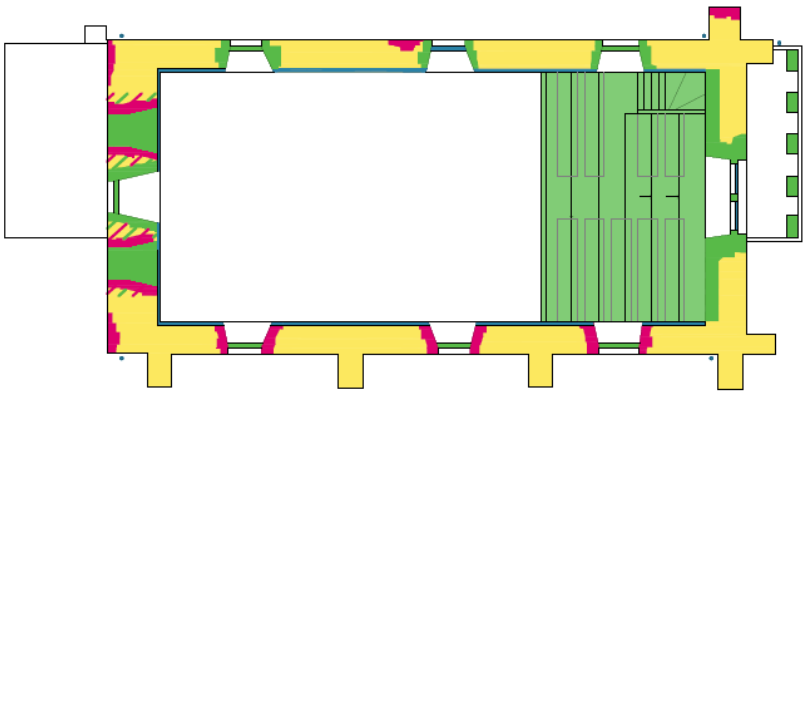


Fig 5: Approximate Dating Information of Gallery Level Floor Plan

Fig 6: Approximate Dating Information for Elevations

4.0 INITIAL STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 METHODOLOGY

Significance has been graded in accordance with the principles of the Burra Charter which provides the following definition of cultural significance:

> "Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects".[16]
>
> The following assessment of the cultural value of Lismore Parish Church is based upon analysis and understanding of the historical development of the site, including the tangible documentary and physical evidence, as well as intangible historical and social associations.

The assessment of significance establishes the importance of the building and its site as places of cultural heritage. In order to establish parameters for appropriate and sensitive change within the site, whilst respecting the historic fabric, the grading of significance helps to identify key elements of the building which are important or vulnerable to change, as well as those which may be of an intrusive nature – that is, those that adversely impact upon the appreciation of elements of greater significance and should be removed or changed.

4.2 GRADING OF SIGNIFICANCE: DEFINITIONS

Elements of ***EXCEPTIONAL*** Significance

An element of international importance, or a fine, intact (little altered) example of a particular period, style or type that embodies the importance of the building overall.

Elements of ***HIGH*** Significance

An element of regional or national importance, or a good example of a particular period, style or type with a high degree of intact original fabric or that contributes substantially to the importance of the building or site overall.

Elements of ***Moderate*** Significance

An element of local importance, or an element that contributes, but is not a key element, to the importance of the landscape or site overall.

Elements of ***Neutral*** Significance

An element which neither contributes, nor detracts from the importance of the landscape or site overall.

Elements of ***Negative*** Significance

An element which detracts from the overall significance of the landscape or site overall.

This information informs policies, or guidelines, which should be met in order to ensure that in any future changes to the landscape appropriate respect is paid to the site and its components.

[16] Marquis-Kyle P. & Walker M; The Illustrated Burra Charter: Good Practice for Heritage Places; Australia ICOMOS; 2004; p11

4.3 LISMORE PARISH CHURCH SIGNIFICANCES

4.3.1 Lismore Parish Church is of MODERATE to EXCEPTIONAL *architectural* significance: the individual level of each element's significance is shown below.

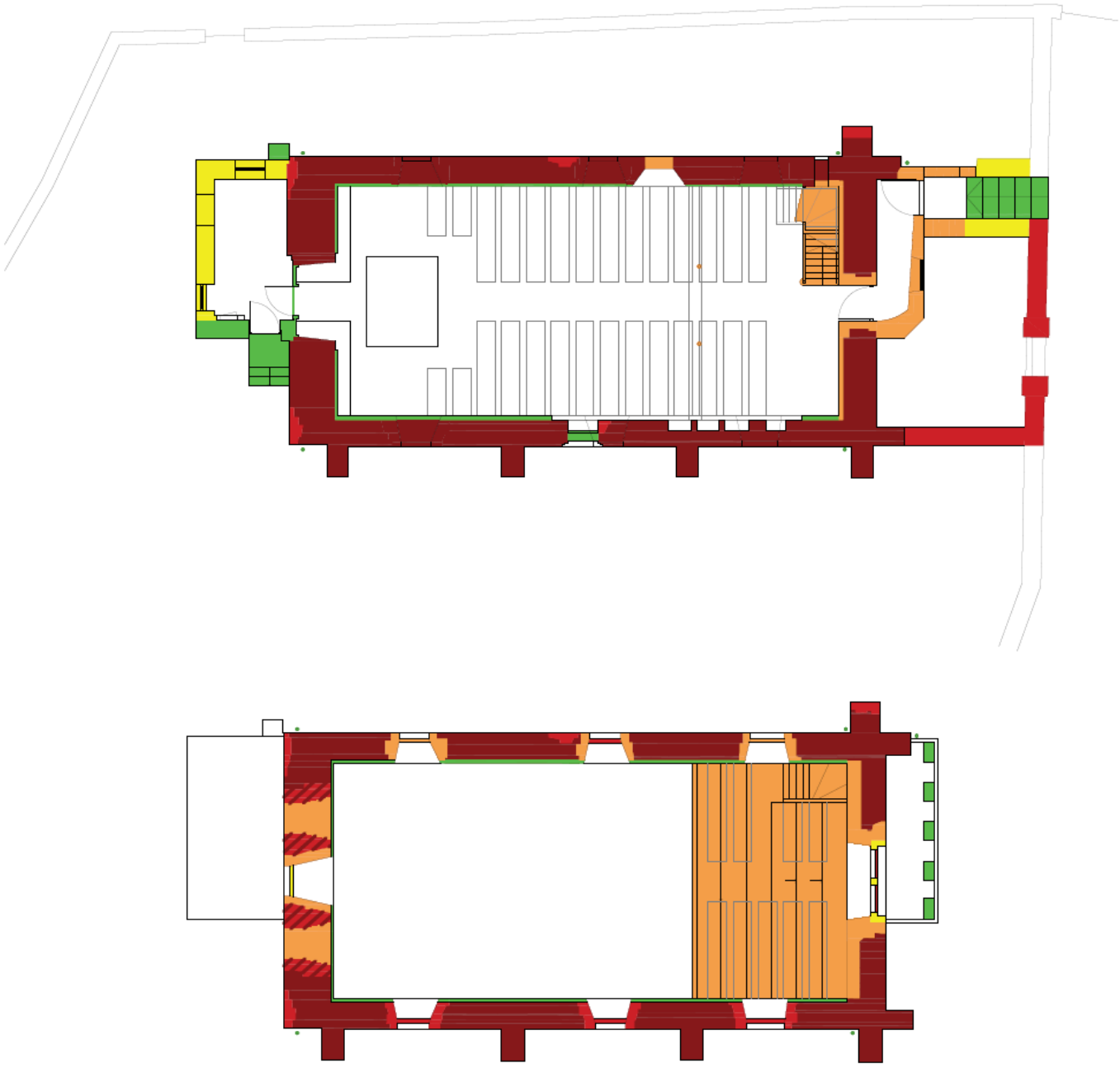
4.3.2 Lismore Parish Church is of HIGH *landscape landmark* significance and EXCEPTIONAL *cultural landscape* significance.

4.3.3 Lismore Parish Church is of EXCEPTIONAL *archaeological* significance.

4.3.4 Lismore Parish Church is of MODERATE *interior design* significance.

4.3.5 Lismore Parish Church is of EXCEPTIONAL *historical* significance owing to use, importance to island and inhabitants, and as centre of social change in early period.

Fig. 8: Significance of Enclosures and Boundaries



Figs, 9&10- Significance of Ground Floor Plan and Gallery Plan

Fig. 11: Significance of Elevations

5.0 SUMMARY OF CONDITION

5.1 PREVIOUS REPORTS

The last condition report was carried out by Todd and Taylor in June 2014.

5.2 HISTORY OF MAINTENANCE

The church appears to have been reasonably well looked after, with regular inspection and basic repairs although the repairs proposed in 2014 were not carried out.

5.3 DEFINTIONS

We have categorised repairs into four categories: IMMEDIATE, URGENT, NECESSARY and DESIRABLE.

IMMEDIATE means works that is required to be done as soon as possible, owing to a public (outside) health and safety risk, or works which will reduce significant risk to the building.

URGENT means works that are required to be done within the next 3-24 months to create a safe internal environment and prevent long term damage.

NECESSARY means works which will be required within 3-5 years.

DESIRABLE means works which are not strictly required but are of benefit, or that could be done efficiently alongside other works (e.g. using scaffold).

5.4 EXTERIOR FABRIC ISSUES

5.4.1 ROOF

The slated pitched roof to the church is in relatively poor condition, with many slipped and cracked slates. Localised repairs appear to have been carried out badly, with inappropriate slates of the wrong size and joints which are too wide. Given the age of the roof, it is likely that there is very little protection from any underlay.

The verges of the roof have a short 'cope' created with in situ concrete[17], and a mortar haunching to the slates. This has failed over a significant area. The ridge has a clipped lead roll and is in reasonable condition.

(for eaves, please see rainwater disposal below)

The vestry roof has a slated verge, but again slates are broken and slipped. Given the condition of the ceiling below, the flat roof of the porch is likely to be bitumen/ asphalt and have significant failures.

[17] There are no joints visible, and no cracking pattern to suggest joints in the substrate.

5.4.2 RAINWATER DISPOSAL

Rainwater from the main roof is collected in rhones, and fed into four rainwater pipes, one at each corner. These appear to discharge directly into the ground/ graveyard. For many of these, the pattern of gravestones, slabs, as well as the buttresses, do not allow a clear path for rainwater to be dispersed away from the building. There are also localised rhone cracks and missing sections which are discharging water onto the masonry wall below.

The vestry rhone is black plastic, a material with limited life compared with the cast iron system.

For traditional solid masonry walls, which are permeable by design, it is critical that sources of moisture are collected and dispersed effectively, which is not the case in the church: interestingly, before repairs in the 20th century, the rainwater was channelled to the east only, avoiding discharge into graveyards. Before the 1890s remodelling, these two pipes were actually on the front (east) edge of the buttress, allowing rainwater to be directly to the road. This was likely to have been changed when the slated verge (which allowed the rhone to project beyond the buttress) was replaced by the concrete cope.

We also note that the implication of the current climate crisis means that the church will need to deal with greater intensity and amounts of rainwater.

Given that the roof is proposed to be re- slated we also recommend that the rhones are altered to run to the east only, with new rainwater pipes

Recommendations

Immediate:	Ensure rhones and outlets are clear
Urgent:	Temporary 'shoes' to the rainwater outlets could divert water from the base of the walls, until such time as the roof can be replaced. Repair rhones where missing to north.
Necessary:	Full renewal of roof coverings, repairs to sarking, change in verge detail and new rainwater disposal system and including breathable underlay. Schedule of maintenance to ensure rainwater system kept in good order
Desirable:	Consideration of insulation within roof void, ensuring detailing and moisture/ temperature modelling to avoid condensation risk.

5.4.3 WALLS

The walls of the church are wide solid masonry construction, with a cement harl to the outer face and either a plaster or matchboarded lining to the interior. There are a few areas of exposed stonework internally, where there are surviving medieval features.

Where visible, the stonework appears heavily saturated, with intense patches of green and black mould growth internally. The paint and plaster linings (on battens) have started to fail internally, and it is obvious that the walls are saturated with excessive damp.

Externally there are several areas where the render has failed and either sheared off or started to disintegrate. There are a series of cracks within the render, some of which appear to be where the substrate changes, but some are also likely to be caused by thermal movement. However, these vertical cracks should be investigated once the cement harl is removed.

Cement harl and modern masonry paints are not sufficiently permeable to be suitable for use on traditional masonry and can encourage the build-up of moisture within the wall, as it cannot be easily evaporated from the outer surface during drying cycles. When cement render has cracks, these create areas behind which have concentrated rainwater penetration, leading to localised higher moisture levels and damage to the stonework behind. At Lismore, this has been exacerbated by the inappropriate design of the rainwater disposal system.

The cement harl should be removed and replaced with a breathable lime harl and limewash finish, but given the damp problems within the masonry, monitoring should be carried out before any new coating is applied and a sensible drying our period allowed for in repair schedule. This should also allow for time to adequately record the exposed stonework for archaeological purposes. Some stone consolidation (deep repointing, pinning, localised rebuilding) should be allowed for, particularly where there is a pattern of overlaid alterations (e.g. east and west gables).

Because of the projection of the carved stone doorways, an increase in the thickness of the render or wall to allow for some insulation is likely not viable. However, keeping walls dry should help with thermal comfort of the church.

As the masonry paint has been taken over the medieval carved work, a suitable qualified stone conservator should be employed to remove these coatings (as well as treat the salt/ mould damage to the interior surfaces).

5.4.4 WALLS & Ground levels:

There have been several ground and floor level changes in and around the church building, although inside and outside have been generally contiguous. From a purely technical/ construction point of view, removal of later infills or at least ensuring that the external ground level is not above the internal ground level and slopes away from the building, without lower pockets would likely be beneficial to the building and reduce excessive moisture. However, the age of the graveyard and likely hood of disturbing human remains (some relatively recent) means that this may not be viable or appropriate. The location & flow of groundwater should also be carefully considered before any alterations to levels and finishes are made (see also section 6.1.3).

Recommendations

Immediate:	
Urgent:	Removal of harl and internal plaster to allow moisture evaporation from building.
Necessary:	Recording, repair and consolidation of stonework behind harl and plaster Moisture monitoring Replacement of harl with traditional lime harl and lime wash [18]; replacement of internal plaster with lime. Schedule of maintenance to apply lime wash
Desirable:	Reduction in external ground levels, possibly localised or to eighteenth century levels. Any investigation into this will need scheduled monument consent.

[18] The wall repairs cannot be separated from the alteration to the rainwater system as this has such a fundamental effects on the excessive moisture content of masonry.

5.4.5 EXTERNAL DOORS

There are two external planked doors, both of which need overhaul and repair: these date from the 1890s scheme. If possible, these should be weather-sealed and redecorated.

Immediate:	Ensure locks in working condition with keys.
Urgent:	Repairs to doors and frames.
Necessary:	Weathersealing

5.4.6 WINDOWS

The windows are generally leaded panels, with a protective sheet of glass to outer surface held in painted timber frame. Some of the windows have decorative painted glass and the large roundel to the west has significant slump. A report should be commissioned on the leaded glass from a suitably qualified and experienced glass conservator. It is likely that the timber frames will need either renewed or repaired and protective glazing detail upgraded to ensure that there is no risk of moisture building up between panes.

Immediate:	
Urgent:	Minor repairs and paintwork to frames;
Necessary:	Conservator report on leaded lights and recommended work carried out.
Desirable	New detail/ glass to protective coverings to avoid strong reflections on the exterior to the church

5.5 INTERIOR

5.5.1 TIMBER ROOF and CEILINGS,

The main interior of the church has a timber boarded ceiling, partially coombed and a series of decorated roof trusses exposed to the underside of the ceiling. There are two decorated ventilation roundels in the ceiling. No access was gained to the attic space. All exposed timberwork has a stained and varnished finish.

Generally, the where exposed the roof structure appears in good condition, and the boarding to the ceiling is also in reasonable condition, although any timber within the roof structure in direct contact with the masonry of the walls should be inspected for any signs of rot.

There is a plaster ceiling to both the vestry and porch. The porch ceiling shows extensive water ingress, with plasterboard patches in places. If the porch is retained this should be renewed and timber structure repaired behind.

Immediate:	
Urgent:	Rot report should be commissioned, ideally when plaster is removed from walls and ceilings.
Necessary:	
Desirable:	-

5.5.2 PLASTERWORK

The main church walls have a plaster lining to upper levels, set forward of the masonry wall surface by 50-60 mm. This appears to be from the later half of the twentieth century and made of modern gypsum plaster[19] and is cut around the medieval stone features exposed within the wall. This has led to some salt build up and should be removed. It may be that the eighteenth century plaster coating survives partially intact (which would explain the lack of recording of these walls. Depending to the interior finish in the eventual building, a permeable lime based plaster should be applied, either on the hard or lined out on lath.

As with the harl, removal of the plaster finishes should be done as early as viable, to allow walls to dry out, problems with masonry behind identified and made good, as well as recorded before being replastered.

Modern plaster finishes on the hard have been applied to the vestry and porch walls and these should be replaced in lime either on the hard or on lath, if being retained.

Immediate:	
Urgent:	
Necessary:	Removal and replacement of plaster ceiling to vestry and porch and repairs to timber structure behind. Removal of the plasterboard to main church space and replacement with permeable plaster finish.
Desirable:	

5.5.3 FLOORING (see also sections 5.4.4 & 6.1.3)

The church floor finish is currently timber boards, which are believed to sit on the stone flagged floor of the eighteenth century church. Both of these sit above the medieval floor level, of which there is little evidence beyond extrapolating from previous archaeological investigation into the nave. There is a strong desire to investigate this earlier floor, and possibly even below the cathedral floor, but, from a technical standpoint, care must be taken to avoid a step down from the exterior to internal floor levels (or at least detail very carefully), and reduction in external ground levels is not straightforward. The condition, completeness, evenness, and fragility of any exposed floor needs to be balanced by the proposed new use of the church building.

The timber floorboards appear to good condition, but if the pews are removed, there is likely to be some damage and a patchy appearance.

There are two carved stones, sits under the gallery stair. One of these is reported as being the memorial slab of Duncan Stewart of Appin[20]- they are certainly of some age.

Immediate:	
Urgent:	
Necessary:	Repair and refinishing of existing timber boards.
Desirable:	Removal of timber floor and if viable, excavation of eighteenth century floor to expose medieval floor (and beyond?)

[19] Where visible
[20] Robert Hay. Lismore 'The Great Garden'. Although one of the stones displayed outside is identified as the Appin stone by Douglas Breingan

	likely need for new timber or stone floor installed after excavation

5.5.4 INTERNAL JOINERY

Beyond the timber ceiling (see section above), the main church space has a timber dado as well as the timber gallery structure and stair, both of which date generally from the 1890s scheme, although the dado panelling was altered in the fifties. Generally, these appear in good condition with no obvious moisture issues, although the dado could be removed with the wall plaster above to allow drying out of the masonry behind and ensure issues with timbers in direct contact with damp masonry.

The joinery around the vestry door should be removed and replaced with a simpler, more appropriate style if still required.

Immediate:	
Urgent:	
Necessary:	
Desirable:	Removal and reinstatement of timber dado after masonry dried out. Replacement of vestry door and architraves

5.5.5 FITTINGS

The main church is fitted with fixed pews, a communion table on a raised platform and a timber pulpit. These are generally in good condition but will significantly limit the variety of uses within the main space if retained.

Immediate:	
Urgent:	
Necessary:	
Desirable:	

5.6 M&E SERVICES/ ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The mechanical and electrical services have not been tested as part of this study: all systems should be tested and results implemented. Where appropriate and obvious, we have proposed works necessary, but further advice should be taken from a suitably qualified professional before further development works take place.

Where possible and viable, upgrading the thermal performance of the existing fabric of the building should be undertaken to reduce carbon and energy costs. However, traditionally built historic buildings do not benefit from blanket proposals and each measure (e.g. roof or attic insulation) should be looked at carefully as part of a holistic heating, ventilation and moisture control strategy tailored to the individual building, both its fabric and ways of being used.

5.6.1 VENTILATION

The church has no working mechanical ventilation system, although a passive system was installed in the 1890s scheme, with roof fitted, wind driven fans (and likely venturi fittings in attic) removing air vis ceiling grilles. It should be investigated whether these can be used in any M&E heating and ventilation upgrading, particularly if additional insulation is installed and greater ventilation consequently needed.

Immediate:	
Urgent:	
Necessary:	Energy efficient heating and ventilation strategy developed
Desirable:	

5.6.2 HEATING

The current heating system is belied to be from the 1970s.

Immediate:	
Urgent:	
Necessary:	Energy efficient heating and ventilation strategy developed Potential for renewable energy to be incorporated into scheme
Desirable:	

5.6.3 POWER and LIGHTING

The building has a functioning electrical system: this should be assessed for safety, and where required improved to modern standards and/ or potential new uses.

Immediate:	
Urgent:	Test all wiring and fittings and make safe as necessary
Necessary:	
Desirable:	Upgrade light and power fittings: use new energy efficient lamps and controls where possible. Use renewable source of power if viable

5.6.4 FIRE SAFETY SYSTEMS

One of the greatest risks to the fabric of the building (as well as users!) is fire. There should be a comprehensive fire safety strategy based on occupation type but a new fire detection system should be installed to ensure safety and security of building as well as people.

Immediate:	
Urgent:	Install temporary fire detection system.
Necessary:	Upgrade system to modern L1 standard
Desirable:	

6.0 CONSERVATION CONTEXTS-Constraints and Opportunities

6.1 USE

The site has been used for Christian worship for over a thousand years, as the probable site of the first monastery set up by St Moluag. Later, the cathedral was built reputedly over his grave and then, in the 1750s, the ruins of this cathedral were transformed into the Parish church. In the 1890s, the church was reconfigured again, removing the central pulpit, reorienting the entrance and creating a gothic-type interior.

Even prior to the introduction of Christianity, the wider site appears to have had a spiritual aspect, with an important cairn only a few hundred yards away.

Because of dwindling finances and worshippers throughout Scotland, the Church building has been deemed surplus to requirements (along with many other churches) and the Church of Scotland (its owners) is currently exploring options for disposal to the community.

In conservation terms, keeping the original use of the building is normally the first option that should be explored; avoiding loss of original fabric, as well as expensive and radical changes likely needed to convert to a new purpose: where this is not possible, options need to be explored that minimise the amount of loss of fabric as well as maintain the spatial qualities of the building and as much of the intangible heritage as possible. In church buildings, one aspect of its use is the very specific fittings needed (pulpit, altar, pews etc.) and their significance and possible removal needs to be carefully considered (see also section 4.1.5 below).[21]

The spaces created within the Lismore church are relatively simple, with a large principal volume, subdivided by the east gallery and supported by two ancillary smaller spaces to east and west (both of the 1890s). Interestingly, although a simple space whose volume derives from the medieval footprint, its approach, entrance and even internal orientation have been changed radically at each iteration of the building, and important entrances survive on each of the principal facades. The two ancillary spaces are relatively 'recent' and do not have the same significance as the main volume, whose main significance is the spatial volume created from the medieval walls[22]

There is still some wish to keep the parish church as a place of worship, but potentially in a different form; allowing a more pluralist form of community ownership and usage. Given that the greatest significance of the building is not in the church fittings (most are of relatively recent provenance) but in the spatial aspect of a community gathering space for significant events, a use based on a single open space with limited ancillary spaces is likely to be compatible with the building's heritage values. It should also be noted that the appearance of the building today is relatively recent and that significant, even radical, changes in the building's internal form, orientation and even external appearance have occurred through the centuries to accommodate variations in specific forms of worship.

6.1.2 USE: BUILDING v. MONUMENT

Any alteration to the exterior of a church building should generally be subservient to the main form and volume of the original building. However, in this case, given that the 'original' could be argued

[21] https://www.hrballiance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/places-of-worship-2012.pdf
[22] Although the porch appears to have been built up from the earlier gallery stairs, how much fabric of these was retained is undetermined – the footprint may well have been required to avoid disturbance of lairs and graves

to be the earlier cathedral, the situation at Lismore is more nuanced. Any adaptation needs to be conscious of both the significance of the Parish Church *and* the earlier and far more important Cathedral of St Moluag.

This duality in the significance of the building fabric needs to be carefully balanced. As a scheduled ancient monument, the remains of St Moluags cathedral, (and potentially even earlier), are not generally expressed within the building today, beyond a few specific features left exposed in the exterior walls. Furthermore, the condition of the nave below ground[23] strongly supports not exposing the remaining fabric, which further restricts how the sense of the scale of the earlier building could be made clearer. The important early medieval archaeological finds are also not adjacent to the church (thus far!). Both of these issues suggest that an interpretative landscape scheme (e.g. localised 'viewpoints' and ground treatments, as well as clearer and cleaner routes around church) may be the most appropriate way forward, although land ownership, rights of access and use would need to be resolved to allow this.

In addition, the above ground building, the 'parish church', is also a category B listed building: although not as important, it is still of value, and should not be sacrificed entirely to enable exposure and understanding of the cathedral.

However, there are several aspects of the church fabric which are of neutral or negative significance and any redevelopment should take the opportunity to remove these elements or to exploit and adapt them. One clear example is the vestry, where the outer wall conflicts with the earlier central arch of the west wall. Another would be the design of the porch, with its 'regency revival' parapet and awkward dog leg plan.

Also of negative significance is the cement harl, which should be removed from the building to allow better permeability of the masonry. This gives the opportunity to inspect, repair and record the masonry below. However, the masonry in its current form would not have been intended to be exposed and the building should be reharled in a traditional lime based mortar, obscuring the masonry but giving protection (and thus greater longevity) to it. The same issue is also relevant to the internal plaster.

Any re-development should therefore seek to allow greater exposure, recording and interpretation of the earlier fabric but not at the expense of the idea of a cohesive 'church building'.

6.1.3 USE: Floor and levels

The current internal floor level of the church dates from the 1890s, when the timber floor was installed over the 1750s floor. It is assumed that the relatively shallow gap under the floorboards means that eighteenth century floor survives (in some form) below. Moreover, the medieval floor level can be estimated from doors and previous archaeology as being c. 300-600mm below today's floor. Its condition, completeness and materials cannot be reasonably surmised at this point: however, its archaeological importance and the potential for significant finds is substantial.

Reducing the internal floor level within the church building would allow a better interpretation of the medieval fabric, especially elements such as the doorways and sedilia, whose current relationships with the floor are problematic, as well as the overall spatial volume. However, the latter is also compromised by the church roof as the earlier, pre eighteenth century level has only been estimated at some feet above the existing wallhead.

[23] See Dr Claire Ellis, Data Structure Report 2018

A significant reduction in the internal floor level might be beneficial to create a more level (and diverse/fair) access, but unless accompanied by a commensurate reduction in ground levels externally, this could create moisture differentials at the base of the wall, which could well lead to a very damp floor. Unless a medieval level/floor was covered over, its suitability for regular use (with its wear and tear, cleaning regimes and need for even(-ish) surfaces) is extremely unlikely.

In conclusion, then, a reduction in floor levels beyond the 1750s level would likely require removal of graves, a new floor surface (or limitations on use) and significant recording. Its benefit would be wider, simpler access, potential reduction in moisture levels, and greater understanding and potential for interpretation of earlier fabric.

It may be that localised excavation (both internally and externally) could be a compromise: a new floor covering could give a sound basis for activities, but its design might allow better interpretation of the earlier buildings and the ability to make the south door usable, which it appears to have been prior to 1890s work.

6.1.4 USE- The Historical Community

The intangible heritage of the parish church, particularly when part of a small island community for a long time, is hugely significant: as well as the location for celebration of significant events within islanders' lives (births, marriages and deaths), the graveyard also gives a physical link to previous generations, both for islanders and the island diaspora, with graves and memorial stones dating for over a millennium.

Although there is an understandable desire (from many parties) to excavate the immediate area at the church to expose the wall base and recreate proportions of the existing doors, this needs to be balanced with the sensitivity of moving of human remains, particularly those from the last few centuries. Selective excavation may be less damaging or sensitive at specific, discrete locations.

6.1.5 USE: Fittings

The church is fitted out with very specific fixed fittings and furnishings, with defined roles within a form of worship which has reduced in relevance for the current church management. Almost all of these fittings date from the 1890s and are locked in place. This creates an issue for any use beyond this defined pattern: given that the fittings are of moderate significance, their removal, or partial removal, is a likely necessity to allow a resilient and flexible community ownership of the building. Where viable and appropriate for the multitude of uses expected, these should be retained in localised locations such as the pews in a retained gallery, or at end or edge of a space.

6.2 LOCATION

6.2.1 LOCATION: Setting and Landscape

The church building is one of the most important buildings on Lismore and dominates the immediate landscape, creating both a physical and intangible landmark on the island. It is clearly visible from the single road, set within a wider manmade landscape shaped by the early cathedral, potentially even the earlier monastic use. There are a series of buildings and man-made structures outwith the immediate church and churchyard which are rich in important archaeological remains, not the least of which is the site of the cathedral nave to the west, but also include the wider glebe, and beyond that, the cairn, castle, and broch.

The location of the church was believed to have been chosen to link with other religious sites on the island, and this should be part of the interpretation of the building.

The wider island and setting with Loch Linnhe, Morvern and Argyll beyond also gives huge potential to enhance the interpretation of not just the immediate 'glebe' but also the wider setting of the Island of Lismore, an understanding its choice as the seat of the bishopric of Argyll (as well as the reasons why this was problematic!) and its political and social history.

6.2.2 LOCATION: Transport

The site sits immediately adjacent to the main road within Lismore, which runs the length of the Island and connects the church with both Ferry ports. The island is served by two ferries: a car ferry runs from Oban and a foot passenger from Port Appin. Given Oban's good public transport links, it is feasible to use public transport from Edinburgh and Glasgow to reach the island (via Oban). There is a walk or cycle of 2-3 miles from the Oban ferry terminus to the church.

This allows a potential use of the church by a wider community beyond the island which is not wholly dependent on cars and uses /events should ensure that public or other sustainable transport is used as much as possible. Although parking for more than a few cars may be viable in the short term (e.g. a burial) longer run events will need to consider the likely negative impact of car parking on the setting of the church. Even if temporary, how a large amount of vehicles could be accommodated without further damage to underground archaeology.

6.2.3 LOCATION: Accessibility

The main entrance of the current church building can only be accessed through a set of external stairs, which then lead into the 'chicane' created by the porch which gives access to the church in the centre of the east wall. As well as making access virtually impossible for users of wheelchairs and buggies, the narrowed changes in direction are also difficult for manoeuvring large items (furnishings, coffins etc.). The vestry provides a secondary entrance but again, this can only be access via very rough ground and/or external steps.

For any public use of the building (and indeed public funding of such a project), it is important that the building can be accessible to as diverse a group of people as possible, and so any redevelopment or changes to the church will need to examine the potential of altering the building to allow some form of level and clear access. Given that there are three major historic entrance ways, and that the church interior has been reoriented in the past, possible solutions to re-use these entrances should be explored.

It should be noted that a new entrance into the church beyond the previous doorways, would likely result in a significant loss of fabric from the medieval masonry under the harl and should be avoided.

6.4 CONDITION & REPAIR

6.4.1 Repair Philosophy

A clear repair philosophy based on the significance of the building and its individual elements needs to be prepared and agreed with all stakeholders before detailed repairs can be carried out. This should include clear objectives for the church building, its appearance and its use: this is particularly important when a building combines major rebuilding and reinterpretations in its past.

In general, repairs to original fabric should be carried out in a conservative manner and with careful planning, testing and modelling beforehand: this is particularly important when moisture sources and where routes through the building are being adapted. Given the level of moisture build up within the walls and the complexity of water movement, previous excavations and field drainage on the site, that a system of moisture monitoring should be instigated to ensure that the building is drying out as anticipated before any new finishes are installed.

6.4.2 Removal of Harl

The current harl appears to be cementitious in nature: this is very likely is causing damage to the masonry behind by trapping moisture and salts within the wall. It has also cracked vertically: although this could be because of the brittleness of cement renders, the wall behind needs to be fully inspected after removal to ensure that there are no structural issues.

Removal of the existing harl needs to be done particularly carefully to ensure that the masonry behind, including evidence of previous finishes, is not damaged. Given the excessive moisture content clearly visible on the interior of the church, the walls are likely to need a considerable period to 'dry out' before reharling in lime can be carried out. This period will also allow for the exposed masonry to be recorded and repaired, before being recovered.

6.4.3 Climate Crisis Adaptations

Although repairs should be generally conservative, given the current climate emergency, several issues should be considered, and carefully designed adaptations be adopted that improve the building capacity to cope safety with change, but also do not impact on the significance of the building.

Increase in rainfall (amount and intensity): often our historic buildings were not designed to cope with the anticipated increase in rainfall and its intensity. To avoid this, we need to ensure that the building roof and rainwater system are capable, especially when these need to be replaced. Rainwater pipes and rhones should be sized accordingly and management of the run-off needs to be well managed.

The additional rainwater also has impacts on the harl: this should be kept in good repair with regular limewashing and also careful detailing of verge details.

The verge detail at Lismore has changed regularly with concrete copes, etc. We suggest that a slated verge (for which there is evidence) would provide for better protection to the top of the harl than a traditional stone cope.

6.4.4 Conservator Works

There are several elements within the building which should be assessed and repaired by a suitably qualified and experienced conservator: these are:

- condition report and necessary repairs to leaded and painted glass panels
- condition report, repair and removal of cementitious finishes to the carved stones elements, externally and internally

6.4.5 Slate Types for full re-slating

Lismore parish church has suffered from patch repairs to its slated roof for a considerable period leading to a mish mash of different types, textures and colours. At this point, a new roof covering is required, both for aesthetic reasons and to ensure that the building fabric below is properly protected.

Ideally this should be second hand scots slates (west highland), laid traditionally in diminishing courses and with variable widths. Given the paucity of supplies and the size of roof, this needs to be carefully sourced to ensure a suitable number of larger slates are located. If this is not possible, any new slate needs to be chosen on its capacity to mimic this (as well as perform well in the exposed climate).

6.4.6 Training and Community Activity

Many of the repairs proposed at Lismore can, and should, be the subjects of traditional building skills training and workshops, both for the community and the wider industry. These skills are being lost and need to be encouraged and their significance understood within the wider community.

6.5 PLANNING CONTEXT

Depending on the extent of alteration of the church and its setting a variety of formal permissions will be needed before works can be carried out. Because of the complexity of being both a listed building and scheduled monument, early discussion of proposals are very much encouraged.

6.5.1 Ancient Monument Consent

As a scheduled ancient monument, any work which would affect or potentially affect the ancient monument needs permission from Historic Environment Scotland before works can commence. This is the most stringent category for protection of heritage structures and covers repair and investigative works as well as alterations. Further information is available from HES[24] .

6.5.2 Listed Building Consent

As a place of worship run by the Church of Scotland, Lismore Parish Church would have been covered by 'ecclesiastical exemption': so internal alterations would not need listed building consent. Although the exterior was also technically exempt, normal practice allowed for local authorities to determine external alterations.

However, once any location ceases to be a place of worship, listed building consent would be needed for any internal alteration, even those which the Church would have supported. For example, the removal of pews will need listed building consent (even if works is done by the Church

[24] https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=46d8502d-7059-416b-940e-aa25010211 2d

before sale, as the removal of pews signifies the end of worship, especially when the building, as here, is proposed for closure)[25]

Applications for listed building consent are dealt with by the local authority.

6.5.3 Planning Permission

Existing places of worship are considered to be in class 10 for planning uses: this means that a change of use (even without physical alteration) outwith this class would need planning permission. Other uses within this class (i.e. would not need planning permission for change of use) include: creche, day nursery, educational establishment or museum/ public library.

If physical alteration or additions to the exterior are proposed, planning permission may be needed in addition to listed building consent, dependant on the scale and nature of the works and local planning policies. Applications for planning permission are dealt with by the local authority.

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[25] https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationId=ae94333e-5827-40a2-b123-ab0c0113cee5