

8th February 2022

Planning Department,
Kerry County Council,
County Buildings,
Tralee, Co. Kerry.

also

Damien Ginty,
Senior Planner, Planning Policy Unit,
Kerry County Council,
Rathass, Tralee,
Co. Kerry V92 H7BT



Re: Former Presbytery, Ardea, Tousist, Co. Kerry – Our Clients Edmond & Ian Cahill
Submission – Draft County Development Plan

Dear Sirs

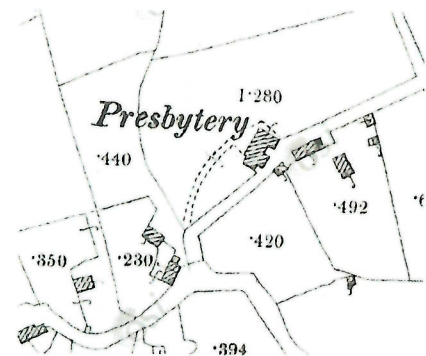
We have been asked by our above-named Clients to write to you on their behalf in respect of the above, and according hereby make this submission.

In essence, this submission demonstrates that the building in question is, in the first place, not original, in the second place by no means representative of any tradition in the area or of any intrinsic design value, thirdly that if the property has any historic value, it is in the more original outbuildings, not the rebuilt house, and lastly that if the desire (which we would say is misplaced anyway) is to see the building brought back into use and not let go to ruin, “listing” the building could, in this particular case, actually be counterproductive.

We would expand on these points as follows:

Not Original:

The text of the document received from you states that the older OS maps “confirm that a substantial building occupied the site since prior to the famine”. This is probably correct, but it in no way confirms that the building as now existing is the original building – in fact, the maps show that it is not the same building. The 3 OS Extracts below are (from L>R), the “Historic 6” First Edition (1841), the “Historic 6” Last Edition” (1901 Revision)) and the “Historic 25” (1896). All show, more or less, a similar building being very rectangular (as opposed to square) and with a single East facing Projection on the oldest map, and a second East Facing Projection added on the other two

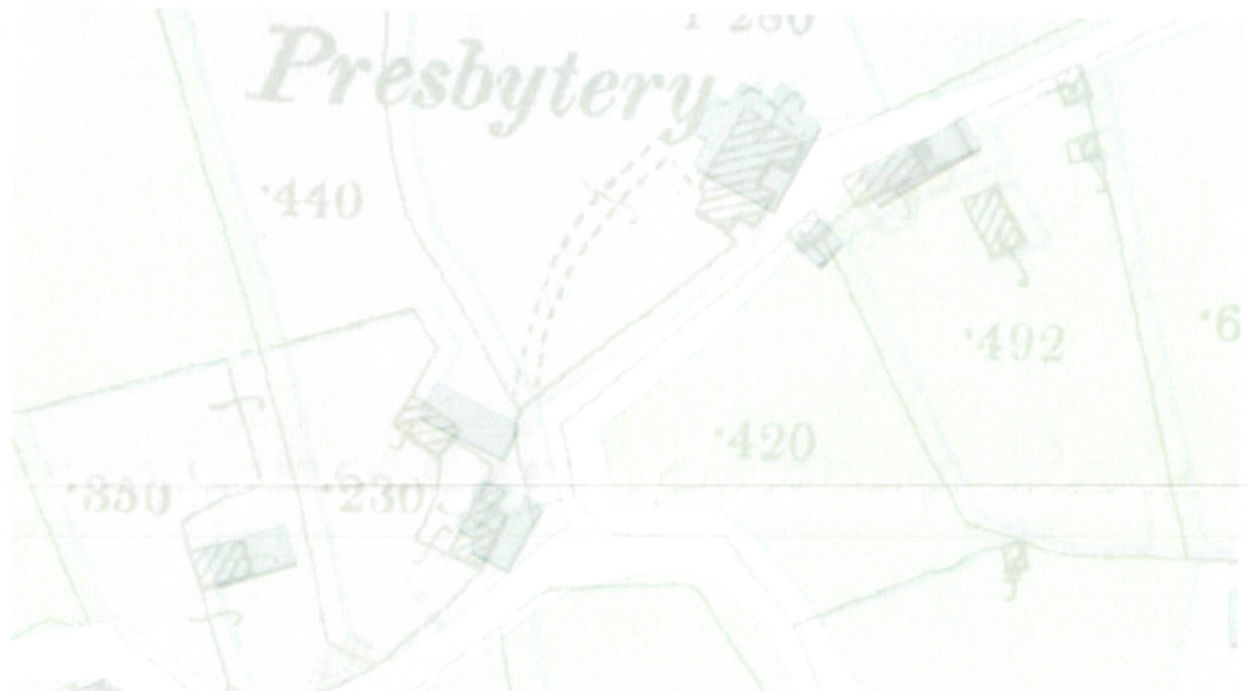


However, current OS Maps (see Right) show a substantial building (although definitely not the same – see below), but with an entirely dif

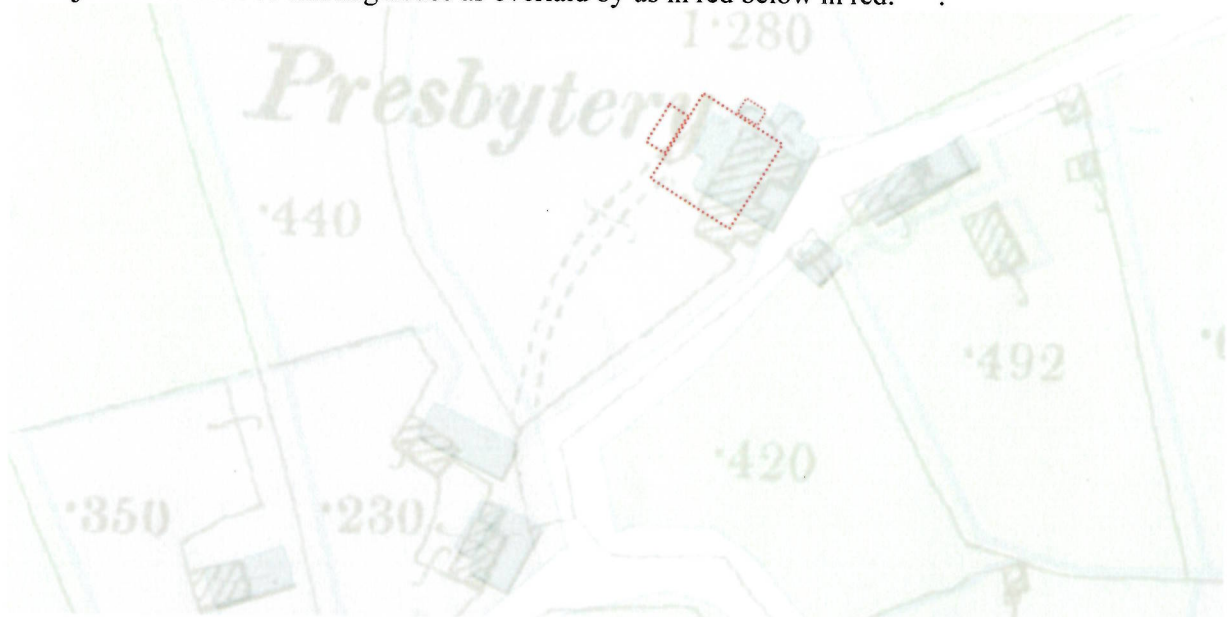
As the orientation of the building is unaltered, the different outline the different outline might just be explainable by additions/subtractions, but while the bathroom “projection” on the on the North-Eastern gable and possibly the North-West facing “porch” are probably extensions, all evidence on site indicates that the square main block was built as a single Block, and is not in any way an amalgamation of old and new.. More importantly, however, the location of the existing building is significantly different to the earlier building. Shown below is a screen grab



from the very helpful recently- available OSI facility for overlaying different map versions one over the other. The two versions shown are the Historic 25” version (buildings hatched) and the current edition map (buildings shaded, also detail generally greyer). Note that the overlay is not perfect, as the entire of the new detail is Shifted slightly (c 4.>5m) to the East relative to the older detail under)



It can readily be seen that the current building is almost square in basic outline, m as opposed to the very obviously oblong basic outline in the main block of the older building, and that it is in a different location., with a significant move to the North. However, if the offset is corrected, the move is even more significant –see adjusted location of existing house as overlaid by us in red below in red.



We would therefore point out that the existing 2-bay main block was constructed “de novo” in one operation, and that none of the original building on site was retained. In addition, the type of construction would indicate to us a construction date of just before the introduction of concrete/concrete blocks, making it probably less than 100 years.

Not Traditional or of Intrinsic Design Value:

The house has a stark and austere outline & shape, very far removed from the vernacular in the area. It is also not a good example of anything of consequence, and we see very little justification for it being listed.

Outbuildings:

There is some evidence that the overall property was in use in its early years for provision of some form of relief for the locals by providing what might today be termed an “Enterprise Center” of sorts, and that some of the outbuildings may even have been used for some form of supported accommodation and for relief/support of the less fortunate. It may be relevant in this regard that the cluster of buildings near the entrance, shown on the 1841 Map, are gone by 1901. However, all of this was well before the construction of the existing house, and “listing” same would have no relevance to that aspect of the property.

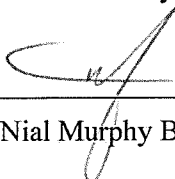
Counterproductive Effect of Listing:

Our Clients applied for Planning Permission to demolish it and rebuild a replacement house in recent years (Register No, 20/176). They were, ultimately refused permission, primarily on the grounds that the existing house was deemed worthy of retention and could be economically put back into use. At the time, we contested that view, and also warned, even then, of the depleting means of our clients, who had inherited the property some years previously, but did not have clear title to the property, and indicated that their advancing years and depleted finances due to the delays and legal fees incurred due to title issues could put them in a position of not being able to develop the property, and that it might need to be sold. It is telling that, 2 years on, nothing has changed except that the house has deteriorated further.

The Council will no doubt say that the personal position of landowners is not a factor to be taken into account in any decision that they might reach, and that, viewed in isolation, might well be true. However, the simple laws of economics apply to all. In this context, as already noted, the building has a stark and austere outline & shape, and is not in any way attractive. Should it be listed, then the possibility of anyone, either our clients or a prospective purchaser, taking on the renovation of what is hardly a trophy home in circumstances where compliance with full conservation measures would be required (and have to be paid for) could very well ensure the very preservation that listing would be intended to ensure would instead be ruled out due to the prohibitive expense involved in restoring what is at best a very ordinary house. The Council have (as the recent refusal shows), the power to decide what happens on the house, listing or no. We would suggest that retention of the non-listed status, wherein the Council could allow interventions not possible on a listed building, represent the best chance of ensuring the survival of this house, and that listing, far from ensuing this outcome, could, by imposing straight-jacketing and expensive restrictions/requirements on any renovation, easily instead ensure that it would not be renovated.

In conclusion, we would strongly suggest that, in the particular case of this house, as the house is not in fact the original building that it was thought to be, it should not be listed, and separately, that if the replacement house does have any heritage value, it would be best served by not listing it, as the resultant cost of restoration might, perversely, ensure its demise.

Yours sincerely, for J. & N. Murphy Ltd.,



(Nial Murphy B E, Director).