

Standing Building Survey
Netherton Church
Bridge of Cally
PERTH & KINROSS

BW07



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**STANDING BUILDING SURVEY
NETHERTON CHURCH
PERTH & KINROSS**

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Illustration 1: Site location plan

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Illustration 4: Principal exterior elevations

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ABSTRACT

Mr Richard Wilson commissioned Alder Archaeology to undertake an archaeological survey of a recently decommissioned parish church at Netherton, Bridge of Cally. A change of use was proposed for the building, which would include the creation of a small office. The work (site code BW07) was undertaken on a single day, March 25th 2014, in overcast weather conditions. As required by Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust,, this comprised photographically recording the building fabric, both external and internal elevations and any features of interest; a full description of the building was also provided.

1 Background

1.1 Introduction

Mr Richard Wilson commissioned Alder Archaeology to undertake an archaeological survey of a recently decommissioned parish church at Netherton, Bridge of Cally. A change of use was proposed for the building, which would include the creation of a small office. The church is centred on NGR NO 14392 52172. The work (site code BW07) was undertaken on 25th March 2014 in overcast weather conditions. The requirement was to photographically record the building fabric, both external and internal elevations and any features of interest; a full description of the building was also to be provided.

The work was designed to satisfy the archaeological condition on development application references 13/01624/FLL and 13/01625/LBC.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this survey was to record the extant building prior to any alterations resulting from the development.

1.3 Reporting

The present document has been prepared as the final report on this archaeological standing building survey. Copies will be sent to the client, The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust Historic Environment Record.

1.4 Planning and Curatorial Issues

This survey is the final part of a programme of archaeological work designed to satisfy the outstanding archaeological condition on the planning consent for this development.

1.5 Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Mr Richard Wilson and Mr & Mrs Fairclough of Netherton Smithy for their assistance and guidance throughout this project. Thanks and acknowledgements are also due to Norman A MacLeod, Surveying and Architectural Services of Blairgowrie, for providing plans and elevation drawings of the church. Mr Wilson funded this survey.

2 Details of Work

2.1 The Site (Illus 1)

The hamlet of Netherton lies approximately half-a-mile to the north-east of Bridge of Cally, to the north of Blairgowrie. The settlement stands alongside and to the north-east of a deep river gorge, containing the Black Water river, a tributary of the Ericht, which is crossed at this point by the Strone Bridge (Strone House lies to the south), a stone-built road bridge linking Bridge of Cally with Drimmie to the east.

The Black Water formerly served as a boundary between the parishes of Kirkmichael and Rattray, while Netherton itself lay within the large combined parishes of Persie and Glenshee. The church served the local area until 2010; it is now owned by Mr Wilson.

2.2 Archaeological Potential

Land was bequeathed for “publick worship” in 1856 by Robert Chalmers. A church was first constructed at Netherton as a United Free Church of Scotland Mission in 1872, before being altered in 1891 (with the addition of a belfry) and incorporated into the Church of Scotland in 1928. It is a category C (S) listed building, having been rescheduled from category B in 2006; other C-listed buildings nearby include Netherton Mill (a former woollen mill) and The Smithy, while the Strone Bridge is B-listed. The church is recorded in the NMRS database as site number NO15SW 62 (NB- the RCAHMS map incorrectly labels a building across the road from the church as the site).

2.3 Archaeological Method

A full photographic record was made of the external and internal elevations of the church, together with any features of specific interest. The photographic record is summarised in Appendix 1. The camera used was a Nikon D50 digital SLR. One-metre long ranging rods were used for scale in most of the photographs taken. Views of each of the main elevations were taken, sometimes comprising several shots working along the wall to take in the entire elevation, where architectural or topographical constraints prevented this being done in a single shot. Closer shots of specific features were also taken, of windows or fittings, for example. Finally, a series of general, longer-range views were recorded to show the building in its local setting.

2.4 Results of Investigations

The main external elevations and interior rooms discussed are attached as illustrations courtesy of Norman A MacLeod, surveyor. The main architectural features are described here.

3 Architectural features

3.1 Exterior

General

The church occupies an elevated platform immediately to the north-east of a narrow river terrace on which stands a former woollen mill. In its present form, dating from 1891, the building is single storey on a rectangular plan of neo-Gothic design, aligned approximately north-north-west to south-south-east, with a small porch in the south-east corner and a larger vestry and former session house extending from the western side. The nave or main building measures 8.40m west-south-west to east-north-east and 17.50m north-north-west to south-south-east. It is largely of roughly-dressed or undressed rubble construction, with stugged freestone dressings and quoins. Much of the rubble wall surface has been lime-rendered, with this particularly noticeable in the upper third of the gable ends. A small but prominent belfry stands on the roof of the southern end of the building, bearing the date 1891 inscribed below the bell, with a small fleche further to the north topped by a weathervane. The roof is covered with weathered grey slate, with leaded ridge and additional leading extending around the

belfry and fleche; the fleche itself is also partly lead-covered and houses a vent for the heating system.

South elevation

The main constructional elements are as described, with lime render visible on much of the wall surface and particularly across the gable. The belfry, in the form of a single Gothic arch topped with an ornate iron finial, may have been added to the original roof, as its 1891 date inscription suggests. A key feature of the main elevation is a large (2.30m across at base, 3.60m tall) tripartite window arch in Gothic style with moulded freestone tracery. The window frames support a lead lattice containing mostly plain glass, save for a red-stained border and azure corner squares and tips.

Porch

At the south-east corner of the main building stands a small porch 2.10m west-south-west/east-north-east x 3.50m north-north-west/south-south-east with a flight of three steps leading within. Immediately south of the porch, affixed to the wall of the main building, is a brass memorial plaque honouring the men “of the parishes of Persie and Glenshee who served in the Great War and in memory of the following who fell...”, together with an addition for 1939-45. This plaque is one of four originally distributed amongst the churches of Glenshee, Persie, Cray and Netherton, of which three survive (source: The Scottish War Memorials Project). The porch itself contains a double-door entrance flanked by a cast-iron drainpipe and recent handrail, set in a chamfered ashlar doorway. Like the main building, it has a steep-sided roof of grey slate. At the top of the steps, each of a single slab of dressed stone, a moulded half-step or lip provides a close fit for the wooden slat doors. The dressed stone gable end of the porch, which forms its east elevation, is crowned with a spiked iron finial with triangular stone faces at each side of the roof base. Beneath the finial is a single Gothic window arch 0.80m across at base, containing a lead diamond lattice frame holding plain glass, again with a red-stained border as in the south window of the nave.

West elevation

Occupying the third quarter of the length of this side of the building, a two-storey adjoining side building projects westwards towards the Black Water; this was formerly a vestry and was also possibly used as a session house during the Free Church period. South of the vestry, two gothic-arched windows, with mouldings of stugged freestone and ashlar, provide light for the nave. As with the main window in the south of the nave, they comprise lead diamond lattices holding plain glass with a red border around the edge of the window. Each arch measures 1.15m across at base, the window itself 0.85m across, with a square vent panel set into the upper third of the window. A vent has also been cut into the base of the wall 1.30m beneath each window; it is presumed these form a system with the boiler room beneath the vestry and an outflow vent in the roof fleche, which postdates the 1891 alterations. A third window, of identical design, construction and dimension, is sited to the north of the vestry, again with a vent in the wall beneath.

Vestry/Session house

The vestry extends 5.10m from the west wall of the nave. It is a two-storey building 5.85m wide with a boiler house and lavatory formerly occupying the basement storey, which is set into the side of the raised terrace on which the church stands. The basement door opens onto the river terrace, with steps to the west giving access to the mill on the lower terrace and outbuildings further north. The vestry as a whole is of plainer construction than the main church and may be a later addition (probably from 1891). Door and window settings and quoins are of rough-dressed blocks without moulding. The south elevation features a single rectangular window of plain sheet glass, with a prominent rectangular sill slab measuring 1.15m in length. A wood-slat door beneath a transom window stands flush with the nave, atop a three-flight set of steps similar in appearance to those at the porch. The west elevation is without windows in the upper storey; the basement features two small (0.60m wide) rectangular sash windows to either side of the central wood-slat door. A dressed stone chimney stack stands at the gable apex. The north elevation includes a narrow (0.62m wide, 1.80m high) sash window, again of sheet glass, but is dominated by the drainpipe running across the greater length of the wall.

North elevation

As with the south elevation, render covers much of the surface, particularly the gable. A simple finial, in the form of a small disc, stands on the roof ridge at the gable apex; below it is a handsome tripartite window arch, of similar gothic design and tracery to that in the south elevation but containing a series of stained glass floral patterns and a central figure of Christ the Good Shepherd. The arch measures 2.00m across the base on the exterior and is 3.00m tall. Immediately to the north of this end of the building is a small family burial ground, within the boundary wall of the church grounds.

East elevation

The porch and war memorial plaque have already been described. North of the porch, three evenly-spaced Gothic window arches, of identical design, construction and dimension with those in the west elevation, proceed along the main wall from south to north. To the east of the nave, the boundary wall of the church grounds faces the road running through Netherton.

3.2 Interior

General

The church features plain whitewashed interior walls and varnished pine furnishings, floorboards and ceiling. Pine panelling extends throughout the porch, nave and vestry from floor to a height of 1.10m (lower around some windows).

Porch

Entering through the porch, the nave is accessed via an internal door. The porch contains coat hooks and a white-painted stone memorial plaque to Robert Chalmers and commemorating the 35 years of “publick worship” up to 1891.

Nave

Both the northern and southern ends of the nave are raised, with the southern end at the rear containing two rows of pews with a central division- ie, four benches in all with a forward screen. The northern platform is dominated by a large, ornate Victorian pulpit in carved pine, with two staircases- one at each side of the central lectern, contained in a projecting bay. A wooden altar of much later date is positioned before the pulpit, within the raised area and screened from the body of the nave by a wooden rail in front of the pews. Nine pews are contained in rows in the main body of the nave, with side aisles but no central division. Two more pews are sited to the west of the pulpit; to the east of the pulpit is a modern piano, beneath a wooden wall plaque in memory of George Mitchell Forman of Cloquhat and his wife Helen Fowler Scougal. While most of the nave features bare floorboards, the aisle carpeting having apparently been lifted, the raised altar area is carpeted in front of the pulpit. The nave ceiling is barrel-vaulted, of varnished pine construction with the beams supported on carved, rounded stone corbels projecting from both main elevations. The ceiling boards are arranged to create a herringbone pattern, with each of the four bays into which the ceiling is divided featuring a central square vent with a carved floral lattice.

Vestry/Session house

Accessed via a connecting passage from the nave as well as an external door on the south side of the same passage, the vestry features the same wood panelling as throughout the rest of the building and a wooden mantelpiece framing the fireplace (currently boarded up). A wall cupboard is formed in an alcove in the south-west corner next to the fireplace. A recent lino floor-covering has been mostly removed, exposing pine floorboards, while the walls above the wood panelling are currently papered. A freestanding wooden font currently stands against the north wall of the vestry.

Boiler house

Situated beneath the vestry but accessed from outside, the internal walls are bare, of the same rubble construction as most of the building fabric, with prominent render. The floor is of rough cobblestones, somewhat uneven. The boiler stands against the south wall, with lagged pipes taking up much of the ceiling space. A partition wall of modern brick has been constructed in the north-west corner, forming a toilet cubicle, the inner walls and floor of which have been concreted; a repair in brick and cement is visible around the entrance to the boiler house. A disused pew stands in one corner of the boiler house, numbered "14", which perhaps indicates it came from the side of the altar now occupied by the piano, as "15" and "16" stand on the opposite side of the pulpit.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 General

Netherton Church is a building of considerable aesthetic value and local importance, by virtue not only of its handsome construction and visually pleasing proportions but also its situation alongside other buildings of local historical interest in a striking natural setting. While not of great antiquity, it has played a central role in its community, as witnessed by its war memorial and other commemorative plaques. The presence of the small family burial ground close to the north end of the church increases the sensitivity of the site; however, the personal connections of the current owner to the church and its history will ensure it continues to be treated with respect and care.

4.2 Recommendations for Further Work

Alder Archaeology Ltd considers that this photographic survey and descriptive record discharge the archaeological condition on planning consent for the proposed development. However, the final decision rests with Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust.

5 Bibliography

Strachan, D, 19/11/2013, 'Terms of Reference for Standing Building Recording: Installation of a septic tank and change of use of vestry and church to mixed use of office, meeting and wedding venue: Netherton Church, Bridge Of Cally, Blairgowrie' Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust

Appendix 1 Photographic Register

<i>Image No</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>View</i>
BW07001	External, south elevation , nave (porch visible)	NNW
BW07002	External, south elevation, full width minus session house	NNW
BW07003	External, south elevation, west end with session house/vestry	NNW
BW07004	External, east elevation, south end with war memorial	SSW
BW07005	External, war memorial, detail	SSW
BW07006	External, south elevation, east end, porch	NNW
BW07007	External, west elevation, south end	ENE
BW07008	External, west elevation, south window of session house boiler room, detail	ENE
BW07009	External, west elevation, north window of session house boiler room, detail	ENE
BW07010	External, west elevation, session house upper story and chimney	ENE

BW07011	External, west elevation, session house boiler room door and windows	ENE
BW07012	External, south elevation, west end, session house	NNW
BW07013	External, south elevation, session house door and steps, detail	NNW
BW07014	External, south elevation, session house window, detail	NNW
BW07015	External, east elevation, porch window, detail	SSW
BW07016	External, east elevation, south end with porch	SSW
BW07017	External, east elevation, mid-section (windows)	WSW
BW07018	External, east elevation, mid-section (roof)	WSW
BW07019	External, east elevation, south end, fleche and belfry	WSW
BW07020	External, east elevation, nave windows	WSW
BW07021	External, east elevation, north end	WSW
BW07022	External, north elevation, location shot	SSE
BW07023	External, north elevation, stained glass window, detail	SSE
BW07024	External, north elevation, north end of nave	SSE
BW07025	External, north elevation, session house	SSE
BW07026	External, west elevation, north end of nave	ENE
BW07027	External, west elevation, north end of nave, window, detail	ENE
BW0728	External, west elevation, north end of nave, window, detail (minus number board and scale)	ENE
BW07029	External, corner of west and north elevations	SE
BW07030	External, corner of north and east elevations	S
BW07031	External, north elevation, porch	SSE
BW07032	External, steps down from session house to river terrace/mill	SSE
BW07033	Internal, porch, plaque to Robert Chalmers, detail (minus number board and scale)	NNW
BW07034	Internal, porch, plaque to Robert Chalmers, detail	NNW
BW07035	Internal, porch window, detail	ENE
BW07036	Internal, porch window, detail (minus number board)	ENE
BW07037	Internal, porch, doorway into nave, detail	WSW

BW07038	Internal, nave from rear of church	NNW
BW07039	Internal, nave from altar	SSE
BW07040	Internal, nave, stained glass altar window	NNW
BW07041	Internal, altar and pulpit	NNW
BW07042	Internal, nave, west elevation from pulpit (oblique general view)	S
BW07043	Internal, nave, east elevation from pulpit oblique (general view)	W
BW07044	Internal, nave, west elevation, north end of nave, window, detail	WSW
BW07045	Internal, nave, west elevation, north end of nave and doorway into session house	WSW
BW07046	Internal, nave, west elevation, middle window and doorway into session house (minus number board and scale)	WSW
BW07047	Internal, nave, west elevation, mid-section, ceiling	Up/WSW
BW07048	Internal, nave, west elevation, middle window	WSW
BW07049	Internal, nave, west elevation, south end of nave, ceiling	Up/WSW
BW07050	Internal, nave, ceiling from rear of church	Up/NNW
BW07051	Internal, nave, ceiling, decorative/vent panel, detail	Up
BW07052	Internal, nave, general view from S corner	N
BW07053	Internal, nave, general view from porch doorway	NNW
BW07054	Internal, session house entrance, centenary plaque (out of position), detail	NNW
BW07055	Internal, session house north elevation, font	NNW
BW07056	Internal, session house NW corner	NW
BW07057	Internal, session house south elevation	SSE
BW07058	Internal, session house SE corner and door	SE
BW07059	Internal, session house west elevation	WSW
BW07060	Internal, session house, east elevation and door	ENE
BW07061	Internal, session house, oblique view of east elevation	NE
BW07062	Internal, session house, east elevation north end	ENE
BW07063	Internal, nave, east elevation, south end	ENE
BW07064	Internal, nave, east elevation, mid-section	ENE

BW07065	Internal, east elevation, north end	ENE
BW07066	Internal, east elevation, oblique view of north end	NNE
BW07067	Internal, nave, plaque to George Mitchell Forman, detail	NNW
BW07068	Internal, altar step, east side of nave	NNW
BW07069	Internal, altar step, west side of nave	NNW
BW07070	Internal, pulpit steps, east side of nave	NNW
BW07071	Internal, nave, pulpit	NNW
BW07072	Internal, pulpit steps, west side of nave	NNW
BW07073	Internal, nave, pews to west of pulpit	NNW
BW07074	Internal, pews at rear of church, east side of nave, oblique view	SE
BW07075	Internal, pews at rear of church, west side of nave, oblique view	SW
BW07076	Internal, nave, west elevation, south end window	WSW
BW07077	External, location shot, porch and road	NNW
BW07078	External, location shot, retaining wall towards Strone Bridge	SE
BW07079	External, south elevation, corner with west elevation (general view minus scale)	N
BW07080	External, corner of south and west elevations	N
BW07081	External, burial ground	WSW
BW07082	Internal, session house boiler room, west elevation	ENE
BW07083	Internal, session house boiler room, north elevation, east of brick wall	NNW
BW07084	Internal, session house boiler room, south elevation	SSE
BW07085	Internal, session house boiler room, west elevation	WSW
BW07086	Internal, session house boiler room, former toilet	ENE
BW07087	Internal, session house boiler room, former toilet	WSW
BW07088	External, general oblique view of west elevation, minus number board and scale	N
BW07089	External, location shot, south elevation	NNW
BW07090	External, location shot, oblique of south elevation	NW
BW07091	External, location shot, oblique of east elevation	W
BW07092	External, location shot, corner of east and north elevations	SW

BW07093	External, location shot, church with cottage opposite	S
BW07094	External, location shot, church from hill by Smithy	S
BW07095	External, location shot, church from road next to old woollen mill	N
BW07096	External, belfry	NNW
BW07097	External, location shot, Strone Bridge from road outside church	SW
BW07098	External, location shot, church and old woollen mill from road	WSW
BW07099	External, location shot, church and old woollen mill from road	N
BW07100	External, Strone Bridge, church and old woollen mill from road	N

Appendix 2 Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Perth & Kinross
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Netherton Church
PROJECT CODE:	BW07
PARISH:	Blairgowrie
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	C Fyles
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Alder Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Standing Building Recording
RCAHMS NO(S):	NO15SW 62
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Former parish church (Church of Scotland, previously United Free Church)
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	Site centred on NO 14392 52172
START DATE	25 th March 2014
END DATE	25 th March 2014
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Mr Richard Wilson commissioned Alder Archaeology to undertake an archaeological survey of a recently decommissioned parish church at Netherton, Bridge of Cally. A change of use was proposed for the building, which would include the creation of a small office. The work was undertaken on a single day in overcast weather conditions. As required by P&KHT, this comprised photographically recording the building fabric,

	both external and internal elevations and any features of interest; a full description of the building was also provided.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr Richard Wilson
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRS	
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Alder Archaeology Ltd, 55 South Methven Street, Perth PH1 5NX
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	RCAHMS (intended)
EMAIL ADDRESS:	director@alderarchaeology.co.uk

Illus 1

Standing Building Survey
at
Netherton Church
Bridge of Cally
Perth & Kinross
Site Location

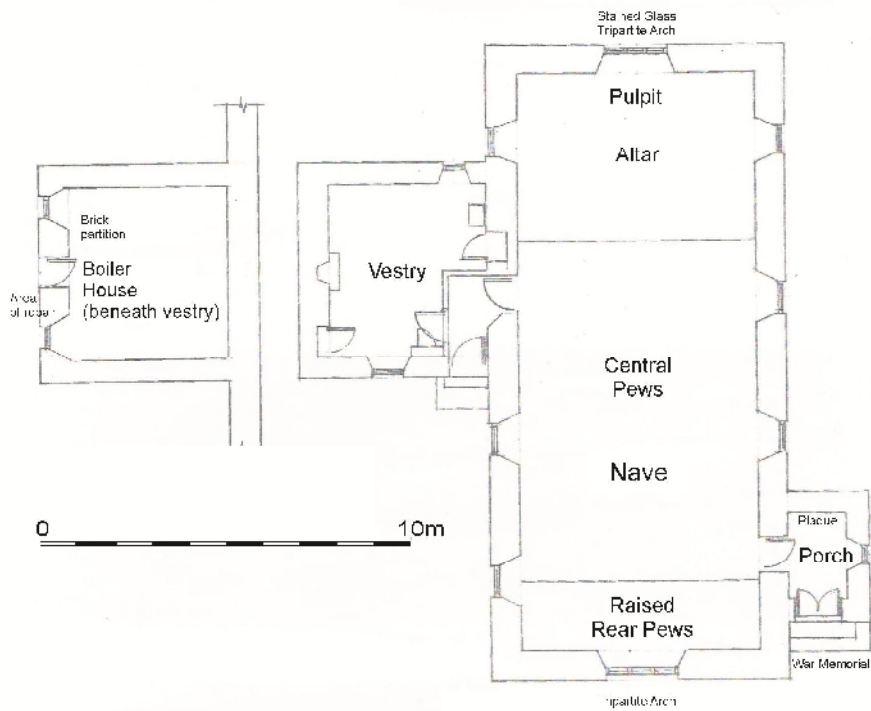


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BW07

Netherton Church, floor plan

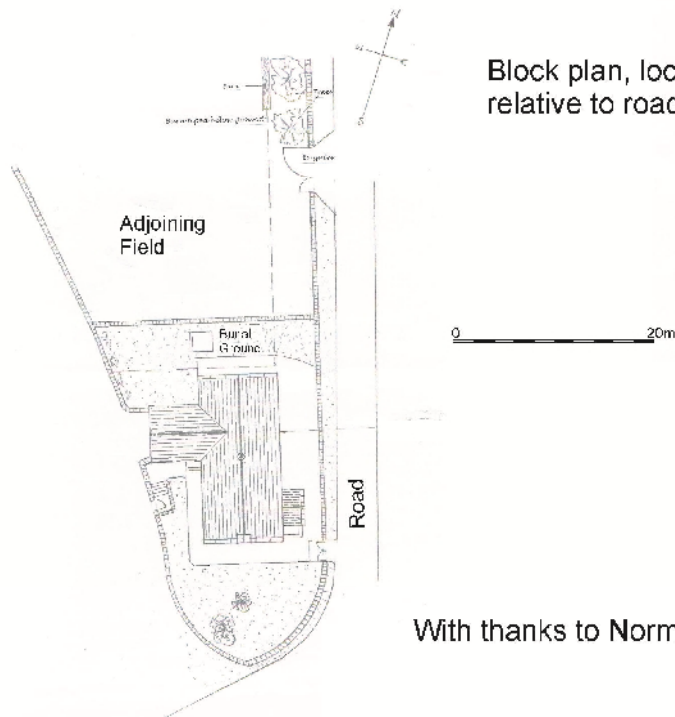
Illus2



0 10m

Block plan, location relative to road

Illus3



0 20m

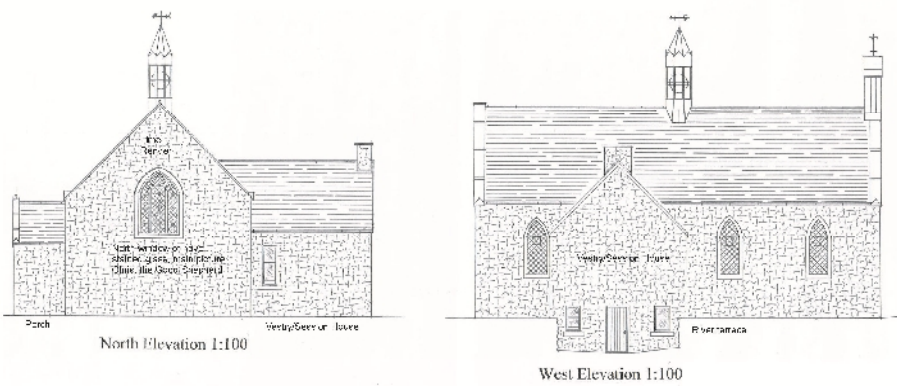
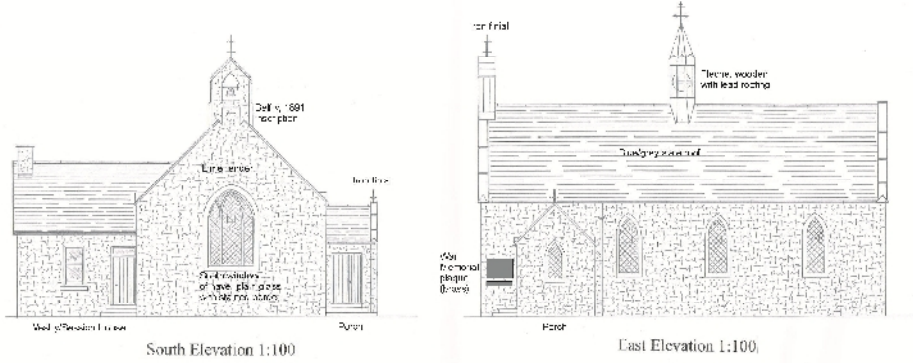
With thanks to Norman A MacLeod, Surveyors

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Netherton Church, principal external elevations

Illus4



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