

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000 (As Amended)
SECTION 5

CHIEF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. CE/PERD/697/2024

Reference Number: EX36/2024

Name of Applicant: Alfred Beit Foundation

Nature of Application: Section 5 Referral as to whether “(a) restoration of traditional lime render to the gateway, (b) restoration of traditional lime render to the flanking walls, (c) re-slating of pitched roof (d) repair and repointing of granite stone façade, (e) cleaning & repair of six limestone lion finials, (f) restoration of wrought iron gates” is or is not development and is or is not exempted development

Location of Subject Site: Russborough House, Blessington, Co Wicklow

Report from: Edel Bermingham (SEP)

With respect to the query under Section 5 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as to whether

- (a) restoration of traditional lime render to the gateway,
- (b) restoration of traditional lime render to the flanking walls,
- (c) re-slating of pitched roof
- (d) repair and repointing of granite stone façade,
- (e) cleaning & repair of six limestone lion finials,
- (f) restoration of wrought iron gates at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow is or is not exempted development within the meaning of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Having regard to:

- a) The Conservation Assessment and details submitted with the Section 5 Application,
- b) Architectural Heritage Protection : Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- c) Record of Protected Structures Ref 09-09 Russborough Entrance Arch
- d) Triumphal arch flanked by pedimented, side gates.
- e) Sections 2, 3, 4 and 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Main Reasons with respect to Section 5 Declaration:

- i. The proposed works to the entrance gateway, associated features and flank wall would come within the definition of development having regard to the provisions of Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended).
- ii. The proposed works to the entrance gateway, associated features and flank wall would come within the scope of Section 4(1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) being works of maintenance which would not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure , and the works would not materially affect the character

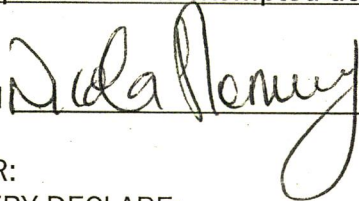
of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Recommendation

The Planning Authority considers that

- (a) restoration of traditional lime render to the gateway,
- (b) restoration of traditional lime render to the flanking walls,
- (c) re-slating of pitched roof
- (d) repair and repointing of granite stone façade,
- (e) cleaning & repair of six limestone lion finials,
- (f) restoration of wrought iron gates at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow is development and is exempted development as recommended in the planning reports.

Signed



Dated 16th day of May, 2024

ORDER:

I HEREBY DECLARE:

That

- (a) restoration of traditional lime render to the gateway,
- (b) restoration of traditional lime render to the flanking walls,
- (c) re-slating of pitched roof
- (d) repair and repointing of granite stone façade,
- (e) cleaning & repair of six limestone lion finials,
- (f) restoration of wrought iron gates at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow is development and is exempted development within the meaning of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 (as amended).

Signed:



Senior Engineer
Planning, Economic & Rural Development

Dated 16th day of May 2024



Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin Wicklow County Council

**Pleanáil, Forbairt Eacnamaíochta agus Tuaithe
Planning, Economic and Rural Development**

Áras An Chontae / County Buildings
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DECLARATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 5 (2) (A) OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 AS AMENDED

Applicant: Alfred Beit Foundation

Location: Russborough House, Blessington, Co Wicklow

CHIEF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. CE/PERD/697/2024

A question has arisen as to whether "(a) restoration of traditional lime render to the gateway, (b) restoration of traditional lime render to the flanking walls, (c) re-slating of pitched roof (d) repair and repointing of granite stone façade, (e) cleaning & repair of six limestone lion finials, (f) restoration of wrought iron gates at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow" is or is not exempted development.

Having regard to:

- The Conservation Assessment and details submitted with the Section 5 Application,
- Architectural Heritage Protection : Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- Record of Protected Structures Ref 09-09 Russborough Entrance Arch
- Triumphal arch flanked by pedimented, side gates.
- Sections 2, 3, 4 and 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Main Reasons with respect to Section 5 Declaration:

- The proposed works to the entrance gateway, associated features and flank wall would come within the definition of development having regard to the provisions of Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended).
- The proposed works to the entrance gateway, associated features and flank wall would come within the scope of Section 4(1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) being works of maintenance which would not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure , and the works would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

The Planning Authority considers that "(a) restoration of traditional lime render to the gateway, (b) restoration of traditional lime render to the flanking walls, (c) re-slating of pitched roof (d) repair and repointing of granite stone façade, (e) cleaning & repair of six limestone lion finials, (f) restoration of wrought iron gates" at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow is development and is exempted development as recommended in the planning reports.

Signed: 
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
PLANNING DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT

Dated 16th day of May 2024





Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

Pleanáil, Forbairt Eacnamaíochta agus Tuaithe
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Romy Kanitz
Sheehan & Barry Architects
88 Ranelagh Village
Dublin 6
D06 Y2W6

15th May 2024

RE: Declaration in accordance with Section 5 of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 (As Amended) -EX36/2024 - Albeit Foundation, Russborough House, Blessington, Co Wicklow

A Chara,

I enclose herewith Declaration in accordance with Article 5 (2) (A) of the Planning & Development Act 2000.

Where a Declaration is used under this Section any person issued with a Declaration under subsection (2) (a) may, on payment to An Bord Pleanála of such fee as may be prescribed, refer a declaration for review by the Board within four weeks of the date of the issuing of the declaration by the Local Authority.

Is mise, le meas,

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
PLANNING DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT.



WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Planning Department

Section 5 – PLANNING REPORT SECTION 5 APPLICATION

Ref: EX36/2024
Name: Alfred Beit Foundation
Development: (a)restoration of traditional lime render to the gateway,
(b) restoration of traditional lime render to the flanking walls,
c) re-slating of pitched roof
(d) repair and repointing of granite stone façade,
e) cleaning & repair of six limestone lion finials,
(f) restoration of wrought iron gates at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow
Location: Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow

APPLICATION SITE:

The subject site is that of Russborough House, located within the Russborough Estate which is located in the townland of Russborough between Ballymore Eustace and Blessington. The Estate is access off the L8363 Local road that bound the site to the northeast. The site is bounded by the N81 to the southeast and the Kildare Border to the north and west.

Russborough House is described as a detached seven-bay two-storey over basement Palladian style mansion, built 1741-48 to designs by Richard Castle, with quadrant Doric colonnades linking to seven-bay two-storey pavilion wings, themselves linked to outbuildings by walls with rusticated arches topped with cupolas. The walls are of dressed granite, with a central feature to the main block consisting of a pediment supported by four three-quarter Corinthian columns with swag mouldings between the capitals, whilst the wings have three-bay breakfront centres with Ionic pilasters. Each of the three blocks and the colonnades has a parapet surmounted with urns, and behind each parapet is a slated hipped roof with broad granite chimneystacks to the main blocks. Within the colonnades are arched niches with Classical statues. The entrance consists of a largely glazed timber door with semi-circular fanlight-like eyebrow window above, and is reached by a grand flight of stone steps with the piers of the balustrade topped with urns and heraldic lions. The windows are generally flat-headed and filled with three over three and six over six timber sash frames. Cast-iron rainwater goods. The house is surrounded by an extensive, but largely unadorned, demesne and approached at a right angle from the main avenue to the north-east.

PLANNING HISTORY:

There is an extensive Planning history associated with the site; the facility is permitted for use as an attraction with gardens, a café, car parking etc.

Section 5 References :

EX 56/2022
EX 48/2020
EX 61/17
EX 48/17
EX 15/14
EX 61/16

HERITAGE:

Protected structures/ NIAH

PS REF: 09-08 Russborough Country House-
One of the most important houses in Ireland, designed by Richard Castle for the Earl of Milltown. Complex Palladian composition and superb craftsmanship. (National monument)

NIAH ID: 16,400,503- Detached seven bay two storey Palladian style mansion built 1741-48.

PS REF: 09-09 Russborough Entrance Arch
Triumphal arch flanked by pedimented, side gates.

NIAH ID: 16,400,504- Classic style gate screen (constructed in granite) at main entrance to Russborough House built c.1745.

Monuments

WI005-067- Designated landscape feature.

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT:

Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Section 3(1) of the Act states the following in respect of 'development':

"In this Act, 'development' means, except where the context otherwise requires, the carrying out of any works on, in, over or under land or the making of any material change in the use of any structures or other land."

Section 2(1) of the Act states the following in respect of the following:

'works' includes Any act or operation of construction, excavation, demolition, extension, alteration, repair or renewal..."

Section 4 sets out the types of works that while considered 'development', can be considered 'exempted development' for the purposes of the Act.

Section 4 (1) (h) is relevant for the purposes of this declaration:

"development consisting of the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any structure, being works which affect only the interior of the structure or which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of neighbouring structures."

Section 4(2) makes provision for ministerial regulations to set out further exemptions. The 2001 Planning Regulations as amended derive from this section and designate further works as being exempted development for the purposes of the act.

Details Submitted in support of Application:

- Supporting letter.
- Application form.
- Site location plan.
- Conservation Assessment

ASSESSMENT:

The applicants seek confirmation that the following are development and are exempted development at Russborough i.e.

- a) restoration of traditional lime render to the gateway,
- (b) restoration of traditional lime render to the flanking walls,
- c) re-slatting of pitched roof
- (d) repair and repointing of granite stone façade,
- e) cleaning & repair of six limestone lion finials,
- (f) restoration of wrought iron gates at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow

The submitted conservation report identifies the works, the approach to such works, and the overall methodology to be implemented to carry out such works, including usage of skilled personnel, and restoration of traditional lime render. The overall works/ approach would accord with the Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

The first assessment must be whether or not the proposal outlined above constitutes development within the remit of Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2001. In this regard, Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act provides that:

“development” means, except where the context otherwise requires, the carrying out of any works on, in, over or under land or the making of any material change in the use of any structures or other land.

It should be noted that Section 2 of the Act defines works as:

“works” includes any act or operation of construction, excavation, demolition, extension, alteration, repair or renewal and, in relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, includes any act or operation involving the application or removal of plaster, paint, wallpaper, tiles or other material to or from the surfaces of the interior or exterior of a structure.

I am satisfied that the proposal would involve works to the existing structure and therefore the proposal does constitute development.

The second stage of the assessment is to determine whether or not the proposed works would be exempted development under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) or its associated Regulations.

Having regard to the details set out in the conservation report, it is considered that the proposed works are for maintenance and would not materially affect the external appearance of the gateway structure and flanking walls so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of neighbouring structures. It is considered that the works come within the scope of Section 4(1) (h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Section 57 (1) provides that notwithstanding section 4(1) (h) and any regulations made under Section 4(2), the carrying out of works to a protected structure, or a proposed protected structure, shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of –

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

Having regard to the details submitted, The proposed works would not materially affect the character of the protected structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, therefore in this instance section Section 57 (1) does not apply and the works are within the remit of Section 4(1)(h).

The proposed works are considered to be exempt.

Recommendation :

With respect to the query under Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), as to whether :

- a) restoration of traditional lime render to the gateway,
- (b) restoration of traditional lime render to the flanking walls,
- c) re-slatting of pitched roof
- (d) repair and repointing of granite stone façade,
- e) cleaning & repair of six limestone lion finials,
- (f) restoration of wrought iron gates at

at Russborough House, Blessington is exempted development under the provisions of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)/ Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The Planning Authority considers that the proposal:

- a) restoration of traditional lime render to the gateway,
- (b) restoration of traditional lime render to the flanking walls,
- c) re-slatting of pitched roof
- (d) repair and repointing of granite stone façade,
- e) cleaning & repair of six limestone lion finials,
- (f) restoration of wrought iron gates at

is development and is exempt development

Main Considerations with respect to Section 5 Declaration:

- a) The Conservation Assessment and details submitted with the Section 5 Application,
- b) Architectural Heritage Protection : Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- c) Record of Protected Structures Ref 09-09 Russborough Entrance Arch
- d) Triumphal arch flanked by pedimented, side gates.
- e) Sections 2, 3, 4 and 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Main Reasons with respect to Section 5 Declaration:

i. The proposed works to the entrance gateway, associated features and flank wall would come within the definition of development having regard to the provisions of Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

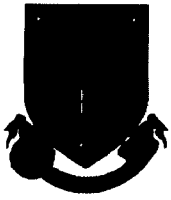
ii. The proposed works to the entrance gateway, associated features and flank wall would come within the scope of Section 4(1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) being

works of maintenance which would not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure, and the works would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

Edel Dunnington SEP.

14/5/2024

Issue declaration as recommended
Myl J. W/L SS
16/05/24



Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

Pleanáil, Forbairt Eacnamaíochta agus Tuaithe
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Suíomh / Website: www.wicklow.ie

MEMORANDUM

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

TO: Dara Keane **FROM: Nicola Fleming**
Assistant Planner **Staff Officer**

**RE:- Application for Certificate of Exemption under Section 5 of the
Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended).
EX36/2024**

I enclose herewith application for Section 5 Declaration received 29th April 2024.

The due date on this declaration is 26th May 2024.



Staff Officer
Planning Development & Environment





Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

Pleanáil, Forbairt Eacnamaíochta agus Tuaithe
Planning, Economic and Rural Development

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MEMORANDUM

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

TO: Deirdre Burns **FROM: Nicola Fleming**
Heritage Officer **Staff Officer**

**RE:- Application for Certificate of Exemption under Section 5 of the
Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended).
EX36/2024**

I enclose herewith application for Section 5 Declaration received 29th April 2024.

The due date on this declaration is 26th May 2024 and Dara Keane is the Planner assigned to the file .



Staff Officer
Planning Development & Environment





Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

Pleanáil, Forbairt Eacnamaíochta agus Tuaithe
Planning, Economic and Rural Development

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30th April 2024

Mr. David Averill
Director
Sheehan & Barry Architects
88 Ranelagh Village
Dublin 6
D06 Y2W6

RE: Application for Certificate of Exemption under Section 5 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended). – EX36/2024 for Alfred Beit Foundation at Russborough House, Blessington, Co. Wicklow

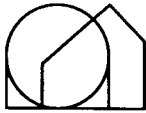
A Chara

I wish to acknowledge receipt on 29/04/2024 details supplied by you in respect of the above Section 5 application. A decision is due in respect of this application by 26/05/2024

Mise, le meas

Nicola Fleming
Staff Officer
Planning, Economic & Rural Development





Sheehan & Barry
Architects

Sheehan & Barry Architects,
88 Ranelagh Village,
Dublin 6, Ireland.
D06 Y2W6

t: +353 (1) 496 2888
e: post@sbl.ie
w: www.sheehanandbarry.ie

26th April 2024

Wicklow County Council,
Planning Department,
County Buildings,
Whitegates,
Wicklow Town,
A67 FW96

**Re: Main Entrance Gate, at Russborough House, Blessington Co. Wicklow (RPS No. 09-09)
Application for Section 5 Declaration**

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am the Conservation Architect retained by the Alfred Beit Foundation in relation to conservation works proposed at main entrance gates of Russborough House in Blessington, County Wicklow.

I enclose a completed Application Form for the Section 5 Declaration of Exempted Development together with the required supporting documents relating to the repair and maintenance works proposed to the main entrance gate to the east of Russborough House. The gate is a protected structure (RPS re. 09-09).

The enclosed conservation assessment and methodology of the proposed works are in accordance with the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines, the relevant Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage Advice Series, and best conservation practice.

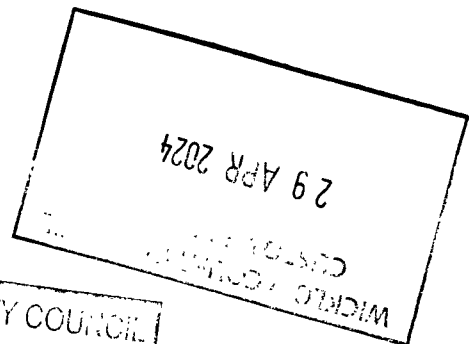
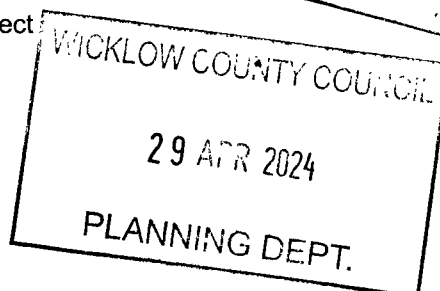
As some of the works listed in the enclosed report are urgent repair works in order to retain the buildings historic fabric, I would be most grateful if you could omit works from the declaration deemed to be non-exempt.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to visit the church, or if there is any aspect of this application that you wish to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

Romy Kanitz
MRIAI, Grade 2 Conservation Architect

Encl. Section 5 Application Form
Fee cheque of €80
OSi Site Location Map
Plan & Elevation Drawing
Conservation Assessment



Sheehan & Barry Architects Ltd., t/a Sheehan & Barry Architects.
Company Reg. No. 525849 VAT No. IE 3038449PH

Directors: David Sheehan FRIAI, Denis Looby FRIAI, David Averill FRIAI, Ros Críostóir MRIAI

Wicklow County Council
County Buildings
Wicklow
0404-20100

29/04/2024 10 27 54

Receipt No L1/0/328571

SHEEHAN & BARRY ARCHITECTS

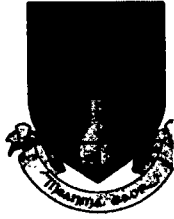
PLANNING APPLICATION FEES	80 00
GOODS	80 00
VAT Exempt/Non-vatable	

Total 80 00 EUR

Tendered
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**APPLICATION FORM FOR A
DECLARATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000 (AS AMENDED) AS TO WHAT IS OR IS NOT
DEVELOPMENT OR IS OR IS NOT EXEMPTED DEVELOPMENT**

1. Applicant Details

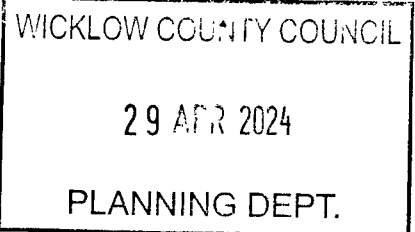
- (a) Name of applicant: **Alfred Beit Foundation**
Address of applicant: **Russborough House
Blessington, Co. Wicklow**

Note Phone number and email to be filled in on separate page.

2. Agents Details (Where Applicable)

- (b) Name of Agent (where applicable)
**Mr. David Averill, Director
Sheehan & Barry Architects**
Address of Agent : **88 Ranelagh Village, Dublin 6, D06 Y2W6**

Note Phone number and email to be filled in on separate page.



3. Declaration Details

- i. Location of Development subject of Declaration
Russborough House, Blessington, Russborough House
- ii. Are you the owner and/or occupier of these lands at the location under i. above ?
Yes/ No. **YES**

iii. If 'No' to ii above, please supply the Name and Address of the Owner, and or occupier
N/A

iv. Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act provides that : If any question arises as to what, in any particular case, is or is not development and is or is not exempted development, within the meaning of this act, any person may, on payment of the prescribed fee, request in writing from the relevant planning authority a declaration on that question. You should therefore set out the query for which you seek the Section 5 Declaration

The applicant, the Alfred Beit Foundation, wish to apply for a Declaration in accordance with Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 for:

- a) Restoration of traditional lime render to the gateway.
- b) Restoration of traditional lime render to the flanking walls.
- c) Re-slating of pitched roof.
- d) Repair and repointing of granite stone façade.
- e) Cleaning and repair of six limestone lion finials.
- f) Restoration of wrought-iron gates.

Please see attached *Conservation Assessment* in support for this submission for further detailed information.

v. Indication of the Sections of the Planning and Development Act or Planning Regulations you consider relevant to the Declaration

The definition of 'works' in the Planning and Development Act 2000-2002 includes "construction, excavation, demolition, extension, alteration, repair or renewal and, ... , includes any act or operation involving the application or removal of plaster, paint, wallpaper, tiles or other material to or from surfaces of the interior or exterior of a structure."

Under Section 57 of the 2000 Act, the works to be undertaken in this project will address the 'renewal' of non-historic cementitious render and the 'removal' of remnants of historic render to the entrance gateways and flanking walls; it will address the 'repair' of historic stone façade elements of the main entrance gate including the limestone finials; and it will address the 'repair' of the pitched, slated roof and the wrought-iron gates.

Any or all of the proposed works listed above have the potential to materially and visually affect the character of the protected structure.

It is our opinion, that the restoration of the traditional lime renders (a and b)

can be considered as reinstatement of the historic design intend, and maintenance of the historic fabric underneath. The proposed works to the pitched slated roof (c), the granite stone façade (d), and the carved limestone finials (e) can be considered as maintenance of the historic material, with the intend to prevent the loss of and/or damage to historic fabric. We consider the works to colonnades as urgent repair works necessary to prevent the loss of and/or damage to historic fabric. The restoration of the wrought-iron gates (f) are considered to better the appearance of the historic structure.

Please see attached *Conservation Assessment* in support for this submission

vi. Does the Declaration relate to a Protected Structure or is it within the curtilage of a Protected Structure (or proposed protected structure) ?

Yes - RPS No.: 09-09

vii. List of Plans, Drawings submitted with this Declaration Application

Site Location Map – scale 1:2,500 @ A3

Plan & Elevation 2507_11.4_101 – scale 1:200 @ A3

Conservation Assessment

viii. Fee of € 80 Attached ? **Yes**


Signed : _____ Dated : **26.04.2024**

Romy Kanitz, Senior Architect, Grade 2 Conservation,
for and on behalf of Sheehan & Barry Architects

Additional Notes :

As a guide the minimum information requirements for the most common types of referrals under Section 5 are listed below :

- A. Extension to dwelling - Class 1 Part 1 of Schedule 2
- Site Location Map
 - Floor area of structure in question - whether proposed or existing.
 - Floor area of all relevant structures e.g. previous extensions.
 - Floor plans and elevations of relevant structures.
 - Site Layout Plan showing distance to boundaries, rear garden area, adjoining dwellings/structures etc.

B. Land Reclamation -

The provisions of Article 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) now applies to land reclamation, other than works to wetlands which are still governed by Schedule 2, Part 3, Class 11. Note in addition to confirmation of exemption status under the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) there is a certification process with respect to land reclamation works as set out under the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Agriculture) Regulations 2011 S.I. 456 of 2011. You should therefore seek advice from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

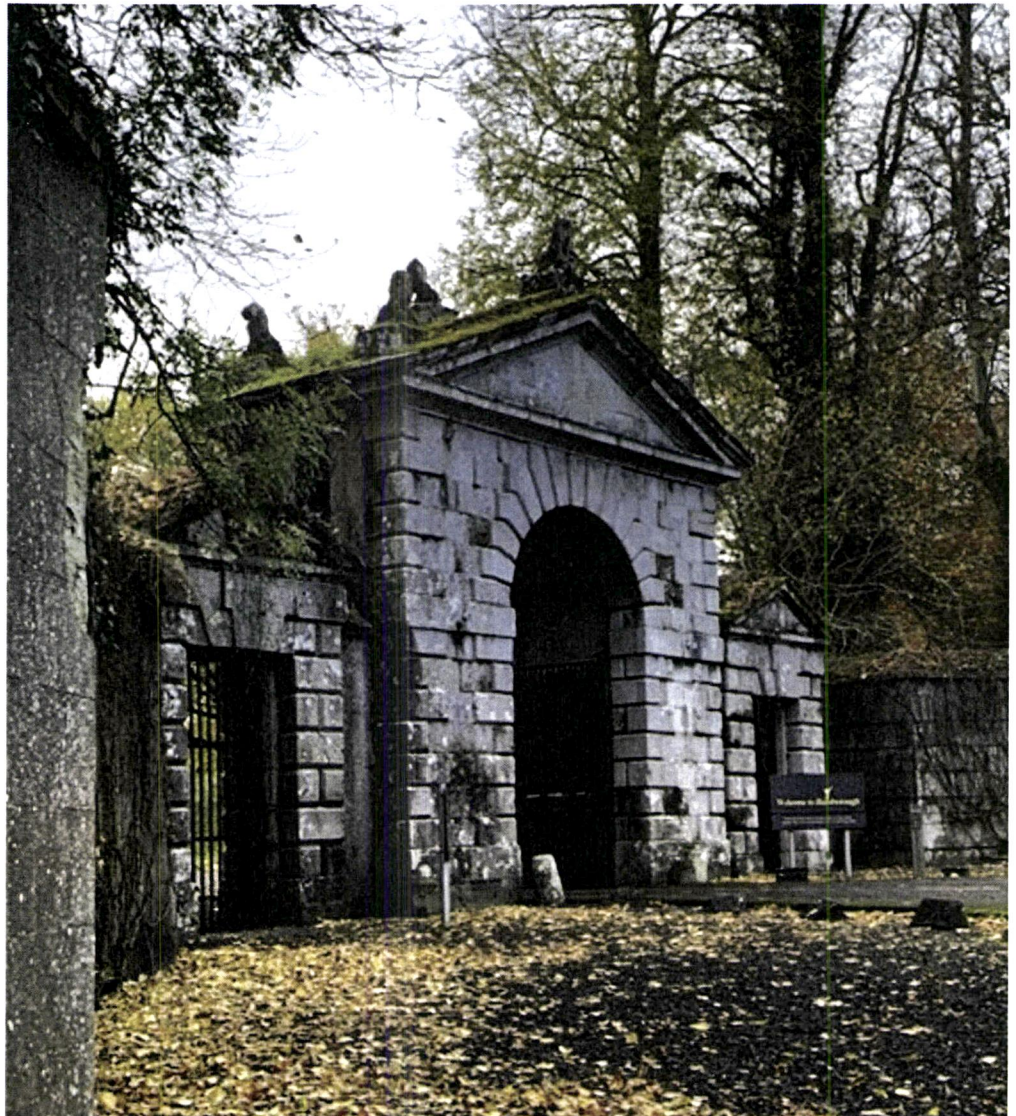
Any Section 5 Declaration should include a location map delineating the location of and exact area of lands to be reclaimed, and an indication of the character of the land.

C. Farm Structures - Class 6 -Class 10 Part 3 of Schedule 2.

- Site layout plan showing location of structure and any adjoining farm structures and any dwellings within 100m of the farm structure.
- Gross floor area of the farm structure
- Floor plan and elevational details of Farm Structure and Full details of the gross floor area of the proposed structure.
- Details of gross floor area of structures of similar type within the same farmyard complex or within 100metres of that complex.

Section 5 Application Conservation Assessment

at
MAIN ENTRANCE GATE,
To Russborough House
Blessington, Co. Wicklow



On the Instruction of:
The Alfred Beit Foundation

CONTENTS

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1. INTRODUCTION

Instruction & Brief

This Conservation Assessment has been prepared on the instructions of The Alfred Beit Foundation to accompany the Application for Declaration, addressing the relevant heritage issues arising from the repair and maintenance works proposed for Russborough House.

The assessment of the impact the proposed works may have on the protected structures has been made by Romy Kanitz, Grade 2 Conservation under guidance by David Averill, Grade 1 Conservation Architect of Sheehan & Barry Architects following visual inspection prior to the design development.

This report has been prepared in line with the approach outlined in the Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011). The impact the proposed works may have on the protected structure have been assessed, considering Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. Any or all of the proposed works have the potential to materially and visually affect the character of the protected structure.

This document addresses the works proposed to secure the fabric of the east colonnades of Russborough House, and the quadrant wall in Anne's Garden. The scope of works is summarized in brief herewith:

- a. Restoration of traditional lime renders to the gateway.
- b. Restoration of traditional lime renders to the flanking walls.
- c. Re-slating of pitched roof.
- d. Repair and re-pointing of granite stone façade.
- e. Cleaning and repair of six limestone finials.
- f. Restoration of wrought-iron gates.

This assessment document includes a brief outline of the historical background of the site and the buildings. The background, methodology and specification for each element of the proposed works is described in some detail.

Location

Russborough House and Demesne is situated in County Wicklow, south-west of Blessington town, and about 30km south of Dublin city. The site is located west of the Blessington Lakes, and is separated from the water reservoir by the N81 connecting Dublin and County Carlow to the south. The demesne borders on County Kildare to the immediate west.

The Main Entrance Gate is located at the eastern boundary of the demesne. A straight avenue leads up to Russborough House (RPS No.: 09-08) itself, which is located in the central part of the demesne.

Protected Structures Status

Under the current *Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 – Record of Protected Structures*, **Russborough House is listed as a Protected Structure.**

RPS No.:	09-09		
NIAH No.:	16400504	NIAH rating	national
		Categories of Special Interest	Architectural, Artistic

Russborough House & Demesne does not lie within an Architectural Conservation Area, or an Area of Archaeological Potential or Significance.

It lies in the vicinity of Poulaphouca (Blessington) Reservoir, as Special Protection Area and Proposed Natural Heritage Area. The site is part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Blessington Lakes Area) and the Western (N81) Corridor Area Landscape.

Due to its proximity to Blessington the demesne lies besides the Outdoor Recreation and Tourist Hub, and Destination Towns of Blessington & Baltinglass.

2. HISTORY & ARCHITECTURAL APPRAISAL

2.1 Historic Background

The Heritage Council Conservation Plan (2005) states that 'Russelltowne' was first mentioned in the mid-16th century, specifically as 'Thomas Russell's land' in the *Archbishop Alen's Register* and in the *Crede Mihi*. Variations of the name appear in several documents relating to the area over the centuries, from 'Russelleiston' in 1541 to 'Russelston' in 1583 (both in *The Calendar of Fiants*). The County of Wicklow map by William Petty dated 1685 (see Fig.01) shows the area as 'Rufelltowne'.

In the late-seventeenth century John Graydon acquired most of the lands of 'Russellstown', and building a house there by 1714 sited south of the present mansion. 'Russelltown House' was lost below the Poulaphuca Reservoir when it was flooded in 1937-39. In 1741 Joseph Leeson II purchased large parts of the Russelltown lands from the heavily indebted Graydon family. His Palladian style house, built 1741-51 to designs by Richard Castle – then the leading classical architect in Ireland – comprises a grand central block with generous wings and magnificent curved colonnades. The main architectural composition consists of Wicklow granite façades and decorative elements. The wider formal architectural composition included fully-integrated stables, offices, kitchen yards, staff accommodation and associated farm structures to corresponding hierarchal architectural expression. A 1752 map by Noble & Keenan (see Fig.02) shows the estate as 'Leeson's Esq', bound by the Liffey River in the south, the road to Ballymore in the north. A three-bay house with two tower-like wings is shown, which most likely is not an accurate depiction.

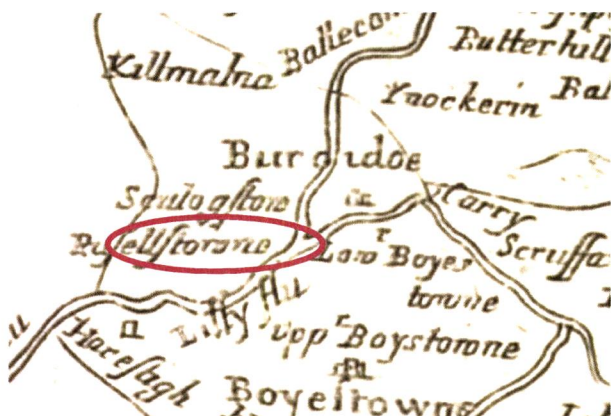


Fig.01: detail from "The County of Wicklow" map by William Petty, 1685

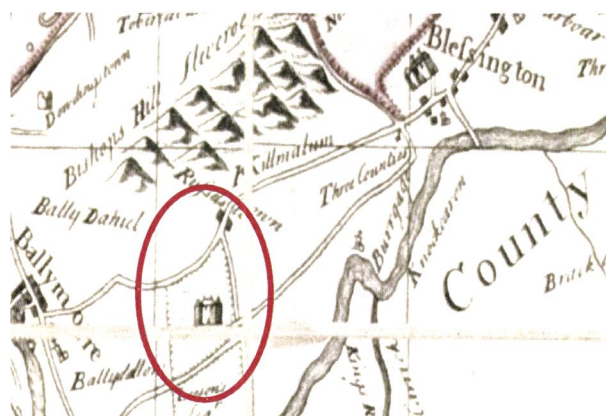


Fig.02: detail from "County Kildare, Section South" map by Noble & Keenan, 1752

Joseph Leeson II became an MP for Rathcormack in 1743 until 1756, when he advanced to the Irish peerage of Baron Russborough. In 1760 he was promoted to viscount in 1760, and ascended to 1st Earl of Milltown, the title taken from the townland in County Dublin in 1763. He became a Privy Councillor in 1770, and in 1772 took on the role of Governor of Wicklow.

Following his death in 1783, his son Joseph III succeeded him as 2nd Earl of Milltown. A map by Alexander Taylor from that year (see Fig.03) shows the depiction of the house central block within the wooded estate of 'Rufsbóró'.

The map by Arthur R. Neville from 1800 (see Fig.04) shows the 'Russborough' estate with its main building, depicted as three-bay two-storey gable ended house with single storey wings either side, set within the undiminished woodlands. The elevational depiction is not to be taken as a realistic or truthful illustration of the mansion, but as a symbol or icon to show a stately-sized home.

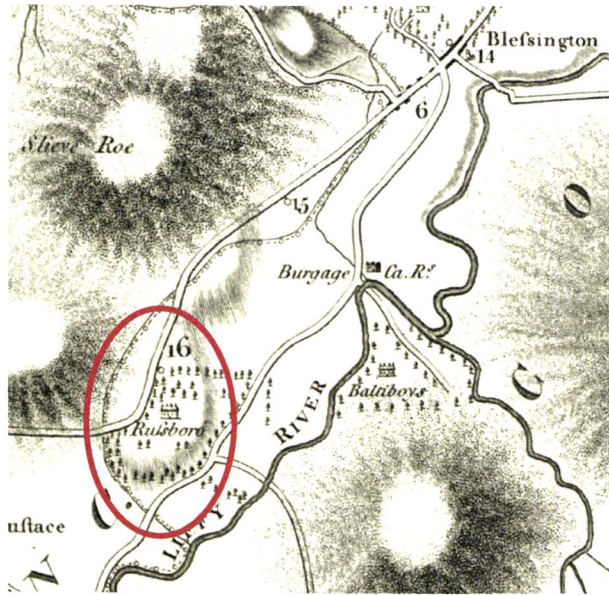


Fig.03: detail from "A Map of County Kildare – Sheet 6" by Alexander Taylor, 1783

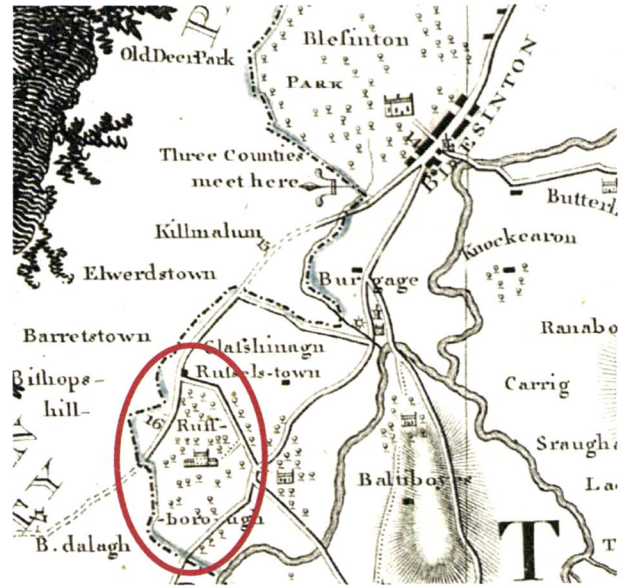


Fig.04: detail from "Map of County Wicklow" by Arthur R. Neville, 1800

The first accurate detailed published map dates to 1840 (see Fig.04), based on the Ordnance Survey Ireland from 1837-38. It depicts a formal but less geometrical landscape layout with softer outline and simple curved lines, than the 1760 map by John Rocque (see Fig.07). The estate lands south of the Blessington Road is shown as a more naturalized landscape.

The 4th Earl of Milltown died in 1866, and his successor the 5th Earl shortly thereafter in 1871. With the marriage between the 6th Earl of Milltown and Geraldine Evelyn Stanhope in the same year, the financial situation at Russborough improved due to the substantial dowry. As the marriage was childless, the younger brother Henry became the 7th Earl when Lord Milltown died in 1890. Henry died only one year later in 1891 as the last Earl of Milltown. Widow Countess Geraldine Milltown continued living at Russborough until her death in 1914, where she played an important role in protecting the legacy. She acquired the heirloom and donated it to the National Gallery of Ireland, where it forms part of the national collection within the Milltown Wing since 1906. The second edition of the Ordnance Survey Ireland maps shows the estate relatively unchanged, although the formal landscape has become even more less geometrical. The map shows a tram station nearby, following the extension of the Dublin & Blessington steam tram to allow for tourists and visitors to access Poulaphuca and the riverside pleasure grounds of Russborough. The line was closed in 1927.

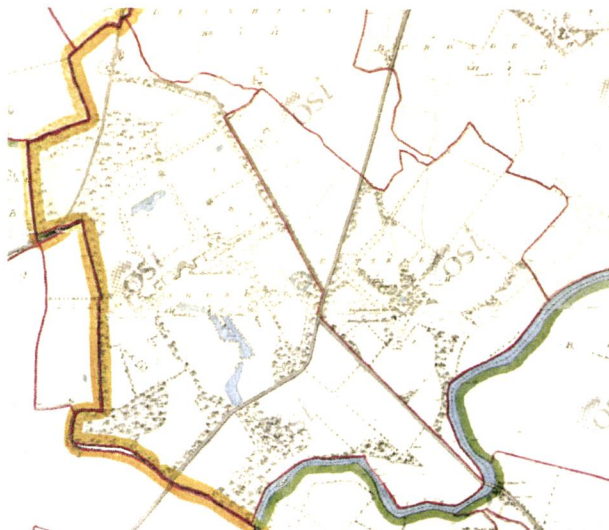


Fig.05: detail from 1st edition 6" OSi_map 1840



Fig.06: detail from 2nd edition 25" OSi_map 1903

Russborough House and Demesne were inherited by Edmund Russborough Turton, grandson of the 4th Earl. He retained the estate as well as a considerable staff of household, gardening and farm workers to maintain Russborough as his second seat. The house and demesne got through the years of national unrest, the War of Independence (1919-21) and the Irish Civil War (1922-23) fairly intact. Sir Edmund Russborough Turton's widow offered Russborough House & Demesne to the newly founded Free-State upon his death in 1929. The offer was declined, and Russborough and its 600 acres were subsequently sold in May 1931 to Captain Denis Bowes Daly. Daly, a captain of the cavalry regiment, 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars, and grandson of the 2nd Lord Dunsandle, married in 1932, and the family settled in Russborough. They maintained, and improved the house and estate, with a keen eye for conservation of the mansion. In 1939 the Liffey Reservoir Scheme was implemented, flooding the valley and thus creating the Poulaphuca Reservoir, better known as Blessington Lakes. Financial difficulties in the late 1940's resulted in the sale of some of the lands.

Daly eventually sold Russborough House & Estate to Sir Alfred Beit at an auction in October 1952. Sir Alfred Lane Beit, nephew and heir to Alfred Beit the co-founder of the diamond mining company Wernher, Beit and Co., was married to Clementine Freeman-Mitford, first cousin of the renowned Mitford sisters. The Beits were living in South-Africa at the time of the purchases, but relocated to Russborough immediately, and made it their principal home. Russborough flourished in the tradition of the great Irish country houses, providing a perfect setting for the display of one of the most important private art collections of Europe. Following the transfer of the estate to the Alfred Beit Foundation in 1976, which opened the house for the public, the Beits lived in the west wing until their respective deaths.

Today, the Alfred Beit Foundation owns Russborough and a major part of the Russborough demesne and landscape, comprising some 230 acres. The Alfred Beit Foundation was established in 1976 as a Registered Charity by Sir Alfred and Lady Clementine Beit. It is entrusted with the development, management and care of Russborough. Its principal purpose is the advancement of education in fine arts for the benefit of the public, together with the long-term preservation of Russborough, its art collections, gardens and parklands.

2.2 Architectural Appraisal

Russborough House is considered one of the best-preserved eighteenth-century buildings in Ireland, and possibly the greatest Palladian mansion in the country. Richard Castle (or Cassells) a renowned architect of the time was commissioned to design the Palladian-style country house. The formal architectural composition consists of a seven-bay, two-storey over a raised Basement, central block which is flanked by curving quadrant Doric colonnades to lower seven-bay two-storey pavilion wings; all constructed in granite from the local Golden Hill quarry (Wicklow granite). These themselves are linked to outbuildings by screen walls with arched gateways with cupolas creating two formal yards, the stables to the east and the offices and kitchen to the west. In the first phase a formal landscape was laid out around the house, possibly by Joseph Smith, which included ramped and turfed terraces, the canal to the north, a less geometric lake to the south, the walled garden to the east, and 'nearly 22,000 trees planted that year'¹. The first visual depiction of the demesne's layout, the main architectural composition, and the associated built structures, is available on the 1760 John Rocque Map:



Fig.07: detail from "An actual Survey of the County of Dublin" - map
By John Rocque, 1760

The 1827 publication by G.N. Wright describes Russborough as follows: "Two miles from Blessington is Russborough, the magnificent seat of the Earls of Milltown. The demesne is extensive and well wooded, and the grounds have an expanded prospect of mountain and lowland. The house which is entirely of cut stone, is considered one of the most noble residences in the kingdom; it consists of a centre, connected with wings by colonnades, of the Ionic order, behind which, in twelve niches, rest statues of heathen deities. On the left are Jupiter, Ceres, Hercules, Bacchus, Venus and Saturn; and on the right, Diana, a dancing Faun, Tragedy, Comedy, Mercury, and Apollo. Upon the balustrade, on each side of the steps in front, are large lions supporting heraldic shields, and on the upper pedestals, superb Grecian urns. The front building, including the entrances to the offices, forms a façade of 700 feet in length, of great elegance and

¹ Minute Book of the Royal Dublin Society, entry for 10th February 1742

magnificence. The design is by Mr. Cassels, architect of Powerscourt-house, and of many public buildings in Dublin."²

Lewis Topographical Dictionary from 1837 describes Russborough similarly: "... the elegant seat of the Earl of Milltown; the mansion, erected after design by Mr. Cassels, architect of the Bank of Ireland, is in the Grecian style, consists of a centre and two wings, connected by semicircular colonnades of alternated Ionic and Corinthian pillars, and presenting a noble façade of hewn stone 700feet in extent; ..."

The main gate in the east boundary wall is part of the original architectural composition by Richard Castle and is an important piece of classical architecture when considered on its own merits. It signifies the entry to one of the finest and best preserved country estates in Ireland, and must be considered as a vital part of that cultural patrimony. The house is surrounded by an extensive, but largely unadorned, demesne and approached at a right angle from the Main Gate, itself a masterpiece of classical form consisting of a central triumphal arch surmounted by a pediment flanked by pedestrian gates of matching but diminished form and scale.

The central carriage gateway is formed of a central triumphal arch of boldly expressed quoins and voussoirs supporting a plain pediment capped by miniature rampant lions on base blocks enlivening an otherwise understated but robustly expressed composition. The central archway springs from a raised plat band which corresponds to the top course of stonework of the two symmetrical pedestrian gates. These are separated by a plain connecting wall and 'echo' the form of the central archway in miniature. Their plain pediments are carefully proportioned and placed so that the angle of the central pediment is visually continued in the side gates. The central keystone of the two side gates is expressed as an indented form giving these flat headed arches an energy enlivening the rusticated stonework. The gateways are constructed of random rubble masonry with Ashlar facing to front and rear, which is vermiculated on the pedestrian gates. The side elevations and reveals are finished in a smooth lime render, ruled Ashlar to the central gateway. Within each reveal of the central gateway is a curved and arched niche, a wall feature of door height.

The double gates are of wrought ironwork folded back into a full recess so that they do not project when open and otherwise of understated detail befitting this typically solid and masculine Richard Castle detailing. The side gates have wrought-iron flat bar screens. The gates retain the original jostle stones, used to prevent damage to the gates itself by restricting the width for passing carriages.

The composition is extended by broad sweeping flanking walls finished in an Ashlar ruled render on the road facing elevation, and a harled render finish on the estate facing elevation. Both sections are capped with a rounded rustic stone capping.

² A Guide to the County Wicklow : by G.N.Wright, Printed for Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy; and W. Wakeman, D'Olier Street, Dublin, 1827 - 2nd edition, page 159-160

3. CONSERVATION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

3.1 Background and General Condition

The curving screen walls either side of the tripartite entrance gateway are constructed of random rubble masonry. Historically the finish would have been lime-based render, executed as a harling to the 'interior' and most likely a ruled Ashlar to the 'exterior' elevation. Remnants of the harled lime-render with a reddish limewash remain on the internal face, which otherwise has been entirely lost. The exterior wall face is covered with an unsuitable cementitious ruled render. The haunching of the wall is also of unsuitable cement mortar. The current cement-based render is deemed effectively failing to the full extent of the curved walls following a detailed examination. A detailed investigation of the random rubble stone masonry will be carried out to assess the structural integrity of the walls, and implement necessary repair works accordingly.

The rendered side elevation and connecting screen walls of the carriage gate are finished with an inappropriate cement-based render, which is heavily stained in large areas and failing in others. The 'interior' façades of the carriage and pedestrian gateways retain their lime-render finish, which has been excessively patch-repaired with unsuitable cement-based mortar.

The central gateway has a pitched roof, covered with heather-blue natural slates. The gable is capped with granite stones. The pediment contains limestone finials depicting sitting lions on a stone base placed at the eaves and the apex of the pediment. The side gates have pitched roofs which are covered with granite flags; these roofs are unadorned. There is excessive moss growth to the entire roof. Sycamore saplings have established within a number of joints in the granite coping/barge. A detailed investigation of the roof finishes will be carried out to assess the current slating condition, and implement necessary repair works accordingly.

The granite Ashlar façade, barges and cornices were subject to various patch repairs in the late 1980s which included localised repointing in sand and cement. The pointing has cracked in several areas, and has become dislodged or missing in many other areas. This is causing staining to granite and rendered façades. Damage to the external edges of the cornice has also occurred. Black staining and weathering is evident on all six decorative lions.

The double gates were altered for automatic operation, including installation of the hydraulic bars to the internal face of the gates. The original scroll-work overthrow has been removed and is stored on site in the forge. Previous repair works included the use of mild steel welding and excessive cleaning. Much of the paint coating is failing, which is contributing to corrosive deterioration.

3.2 Brief Description of Proposed Development

The proposed development consists of the restoration and repair of the main entrance gate, including the stone façade and roof elements, the flanking wall's render, and the historic ironwork. In detail the proposed works include the following:

- a. Lime Render – Gateway : removal of existing render, starting from top down; localised masonry repointing and repair where necessary, and re-render of the wall with lime-based mortar to:
 - ruled Ashlar finish to the central gateway.
 - float (smooth) finish to side gateways.
- b. Lime Render – Flanking Walls : removal of existing render, starting from top down; localised masonry repointing and repair where necessary, and re-render of the wall with lime-based mortar to:
 - a harled finish to internal face of flanking walls.
 - ruled Ashlar finish to external face of flanking walls.
- c. Re-slating : removal of vegetational growth; cleaning and detailed inspection of roof covering; timber repair works where necessary; re-fitting existing slates to central pitched roof.
- d. Re-pointing : removal of existing pointing, cleaning and detailed inspection of stonework; stone repair works where necessary; re-pointing using lime-based mortar to all existing stone elements in gateway façades and roofs.

- e. Limestone Finials : detailed inspection and cleaning of all urns remaining in situ and their in-situ repair where necessary.
- f. Ironworks : removal of existing paint layer; reinstallation of original overthrow; redecoration of ironwork.

The proposed measures are considered necessary repair and maintenance works providing structural integrity and the security of original fabric, and/or the reinstatement of traditional appropriate material and fabric. These works have been carefully considered to minimize their effect on the character of the protected structure, or its special interests, as well as their material and visual impacts.

3.3 Conservation Impact Considerations

Russborough House has been in continuous occupation, and has benefitted greatly from the careful stewardship of its past and present owners, and their on-site employees. The grounds are secure, and very well maintained, the house-keeping of the original architectural composition is carefully managed. Since the Alfred Beit Foundation has taken on the stewardship of Russborough House and Demesne, a substantial program of maintenance works to the external and internal fabric of the built structures has been undertaken. Elements of the protected structure which are beginning to fail and/or break down have been identified in various conservation management plans, and their visual condition assessments.

The detailed proposals as described below take into account best practice principles in conservation, as required by the current Wicklow County Council Development Plan and the guidance issued by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht – e.g., the requirement to repair rather than replace, the application of sympathetic and appropriate materials and techniques. These proposed works are deemed urgent remedial and repair works to maintain the historic structure's character, and to prevent the loss of, and further damage to, historic fabric.

All works to be carried out in accordance with Section 4. - Conservation Methodology of this report.

a. Lime Render - Gateway

The side façades of the central gateway and its connecting screen walls are currently finished in an unsuitable ruled Ashlar sand-cement render, which is not of historic value. The 'interior' elevations of the gateways are currently finished in a lime-based render with extensive sand-cement patch repairs. The proposed works will positively impact the material and visual character of the protected structure.

Mitigation Measures:

- New render mortar to be natural hydraulic lime.
- Pointing mortar to random rubble masonry (where necessary) to be natural hydraulic lime.
- Ruled Ashlar render finish to all faces of central gateway, i.e., side and interior façades, barrel and screen walls.
- Smooth render finish to all faces of side gateways, i.e., gate reveals and soffit.
- Conservation lime plasterer to be appointed for the works.

b. Lime Render - Flanking Walls

The broad sweeping flanking walls are currently finished in an unsuitable ruled Ashlar sand-cement render to the road face, which is not of historic value. The 'interior' elevation facing the demesne is currently finished in remnants of a historic lime-based harled render, which is profoundly weathered. The proposed works will positively impact the material and visual character of the protected structure.

Mitigation Measures:

- New render mortar to be natural hydraulic lime.
- Pointing mortar to random rubble masonry (where necessary) to be natural hydraulic lime.
- New lime-based haunch to top of wall.
- Ruled Ashlar render finish exterior face of wall.

- Harled render finish to interior face of wall.
- Conservation lime plasterer to be appointed for the works.

c. Re-Slating

The pitched roof of the central carriageway is currently finished with natural slates, which are heavily overgrown by moss and other vegetational growth. The proposed works will positively impact the material and visual character of the protected structure.

Mitigation Measures:

- Existing roof slates to be salvaged, re-dressed and re-used.
- Replacement slates to be matching heather-blue natural slates.
- Replacement slates only when necessary, i.e., broken slate, weathered slate.
- Conservation roofer to be appointed for the works.

d. Repointing

The external front and rear staircase retain their original material and appearance, albeit previous unsuitable re-pointing material is present. The proposed works will not adversely impact the material and visual character of the protected structure.

Mitigation Measures:

- New pointing mortar to be natural hydraulic lime.
- New pointing to be slightly recessed to retain fine joint pattern.
- Conservation stone mason to be appointed for the works.

e. Limestone Finials

The obvious staining, and possible deterioration, of the six finials distract from their identifiability as carved lion statues. The proposed works will positively impact the material and visual character of the protected structure.

Mitigation Measures:

- Sandblasting not permitted as cleaning method.
- Lime based mortar to be used for minor repair works.
- New graft repairs – only when necessary – to match surrounding fabric in material, texture and colour.
- New bedding and pointing mortar to be natural hydraulic lime.
- Conservation stone mason to be appointed for the works.

f. Ironwork

The wrought-iron gates have been automated including alterations with inadequate mild-steel welding, and the removal of the historic overthrow removed. The proposed works will positively impact the material and visual character of the protected structure.

Mitigation Measures:

- Sandblasting not permitted as cleaning method.
- Reinstatement of original scrolled overthrow.
- Redecoration using compatible and protective paint systems.
- Conservation blacksmith to be appointed for the works.

4. CONSERVATION METHOD STATEMENT

a. Lime Render – Harled Finish

- The work is to be carried out by skilled conservation personnel like a specialist plaster conservator. All external render will be applied using best practice. The weather and temperature will be monitored daily.
- Removal of vegetational growth is to precede the repair works. Removal of any redundant fittings or fixtures to be carried out prior to the repair works.
- Removal of the remaining render using handheld tools, i.e., a hammer and a chisel, to chip away at the render. As large areas of the cementitious Ashlar render are delaminating the use of a brush may be sufficient.
- Following a detailed inspection structural repair works, e.g., crack stitching, or pinning, may become necessary. All works to be specified and detailed by conservation engineer to best conservation practice principles. Preparation of the surface to include removal of any loose mortar joints, clean-down of the brick masonry and dampen down the area for render application.
- A number of harled render samples will be prepared using natural hydraulic lime and different gradings of sand for approval by conservation architect and client.
- A scud-coat coat is to be applied to form a key with the brick masonry. This is to be followed by a scratch-coat. This coat is to be of a weaker mix than the previous.
- Following the drying out of the scratch coat a coat of wet dash is to be applied to the wall using a harling trowel, and to be flattened with a wooden float by pressing lightly. When firm to the touch, another coat of wet dash is to be applied. The wet dash mortar mix is to have a high lime-to-sand ratio, local rounded sands.
- The new render will be protected to stop it drying out too fast in sunlight or strong winds, and to protect it from heavy rain and frost.

b. Lime Render – Ruled Ashlar Finish

- The work is to be carried out by skilled conservation personnel like a specialist plaster conservator. All external render will be applied using best practice. The weather and temperature will be monitored daily.
- Erection of temporary reinforced scaffold forming crash-deck and storage space will be necessary for the works relating to the gateways.
- Removal of vegetational growth is to precede the repair works. Removal of any redundant fittings or fixtures to be carried out prior to the repair works.
- Removal of the remaining render using handheld tools, i.e., a hammer and a chisel, to chip away at the render. As large areas of cementitious render are present increased caution is required during the preparation works.
- Following a detailed inspection structural repair works, e.g., crack stitching, or pinning, may become necessary. All works to be specified and detailed by conservation engineer to best conservation practice principles. Preparation of the surface to include removal of any loose mortar joints, clean-down of the brick masonry and dampen down the area for render application.
- A number of ruled Ashlar render samples will be prepared using natural hydraulic lime and different gradings of sand for approval by conservation architect and client.
- A scud-coat coat is to be applied to form a key with the random rubble stone masonry.
- Following the drying out of the scud-coat the dubbing-out coat will be applied on defaced areas or in areas with large amounts of damaged joints. In areas where any large hollows in the joints these will need to be pinned to reduce the mass of the mortar. This coat is to be of a weaker mix than the previous.
- Following the drying out of the dubbing-out coat the first straightening coat is applied. This coat will be a weaker mix than the previous. Depending on the wall surface two to three straightening courses will have to be applied, with sufficient drying out time between each coat.
- The finish coat is finally applied when the wall has been sufficiently straightened. The render will be scoured with a wooden float once it has sufficiently begun to stiffen.
- The lines will be cut with a V-shaped tool to ensure a robust and sharp profile.

- The new render will be protected to stop it drying out too fast in sunlight or strong winds, and to protect it from heavy rain and frost.

c. Re-Slating

- The works is to be carried out by skilled personnel with previous experience of conservation-based roofing and/or associated works.
- Erection of temporary reinforced scaffold forming crash-deck and storage space.
- The proposed vegetational removal is to focus on root-taking specimen attached to the protected structure. This is to include moss, wall-climbers, and saplings. All plant growth is to be trimmed and/or clipped back, leaving the deep-seated roots in place so that they can be treated further and as to not dislodge stone and mortar. Woody stems to be painted with a suitable root killer, larger stumps to be treated with glyphosate plugs. Removal of died back root systems only to commence in tandem with masonry consolidation works.
- The existing natural slates are to be carefully stripped. The salvaged slates are to be stored according to type, size and thickness to allow for their re-instatement.
- The rafters, purlin, and wallplates are to be thoroughly checked, and appropriately treated against, for any decay or insect infestation once the roof slates have been lifted.
- Any rotten or defective timber is to be cut back, and a splice repair is to be made using sound, tanalised timbers from matching species. The profile or size of the existing timber members will not be altered.
- The pitched roof is to be re-slating using re-dressed salvaged slates mixed in with new natural Welsh slates. The replacement of existing timber battens may be necessary.

d. Re-Pointing

- The work is to be carried out by skilled conservation personnel like a specialist stone mason. All repair and reinstatement work will be applied using best practice.
- Erection of temporary reinforced scaffold forming crash-deck and storage space.
- The proposed works will be preceded by cleaning the stonework using a weak solution of biocide to kill of vegetation and / or algae on the original stone to allow for detailed inspection. Solution to be washed off using clear water. To be cleaned off a further two times with water and an ecological washing-up liquid.
- A detailed inspection of the stonework is to be carried out prior to the repointing works to assess the condition of the stonework. Necessary repair works are to be carried out applying repair-over-replacement principle.
- Hairline and thin cracks will be checked for the presence of iron cramps. Where iron cramps are detected, the stone will be cut along the crack and lifted out to facilitate the removal of the cramp. A stainless steel Helibar, bedded in epoxy, will be embedded in line of the removed cramp. The cut stone will then be dowelled back and glued into place. The joints are to be made good using a limestone repair mortar.
- Locations where there are multiple cracks will be assessed to determine if the individual fragments are sufficient in size to be pinned and glued back into place. Where this is not possible, a stone graft will be carried out using matching granite / limestone. Missing sections of stone will be replaced using a graft repair of matching granite / limestone. A sample of the proposed new graft repair will be presented to the conservation architect for review, and approval.
- Irregular, wavy or shallow fractures visible, shallow areas of erosion and shallow indents should not be repaired, and to remain as found. Deeper indents, where a graft repair would involve unnecessary loss of original stone, will be repaired using a granite / limestone mineral repair mortar.
- Re-pointing of masonry using a lime putty-based mortar suitable for use with ashlar stone. A sample of the proposed new pointing will be presented to the conservation architect for review, and approval.

d. Limestone Finials

- The work is to be carried out by skilled conservation personnel like a specialist stone mason. All repair and reinstatement work will be applied using best practice. Access to high-level, parapet urns via mobile lifting crane and telescopic boom lift.
- The programme of stone repairs will be preceded by removal of moss and algae growth, and cleaning of every finial using a weak solution of biocide to kill of vegetation and / or algae on the original stone, to allow for detailed inspection. Solution to be washed off using clear water. To be cleaned off a further two times with water and an ecological washing-up liquid.
- A detailed inspection of the stonework is to be carried out prior to the repointing works to assess the condition of the stonework. Necessary repair works are to be carried out applying repair-over-replacement principle.
- Repairs to be carried out in-situ. Temporary removal of each finial in accordance with the agreed sequence number for conservation works, only where condition is unstable or where at risk of moving and deemed a health and safety risk.
- Hairline and thin cracks will be checked for the presence of iron cramps. Where iron cramps are detected, the stone will be cut along the crack and lifted out to facilitate the removal of the cramp. A stainless steel Helibar, bedded in epoxy, will be embedded in line of the removed cramp. The cut stone will then be dowelled back and glued into place. The joints are to be made good using a limestone repair mortar.
- Locations where there are multiple cracks will be assessed to determine if the individual fragments are sufficient in size to be pinned and glued back into place. Where this is not possible, a stone graft will be carried out using matching limestone. Missing sections of stone will be replaced using a graft repair of matching limestone. A sample of the proposed new graft repair will be presented to the conservation architect for review, and approval.
- Irregular, wavy or shallow fractures visible, shallow areas of erosion and shallow indents should not be repaired, and to remain as found. Deeper indents, where a graft repair would involve unnecessary loss of original stone, will be repaired using a granite / limestone mineral repair mortar.
- Where the condition of parts of the finials is beyond repair, the carving of new sections may be necessary. Replication of decorative elements to be carved by hand.
- New stainless-steel dowel fixings to be attached to the base of finials for fixing to top of parapet stone.

5. CONCLUSION

The Alfred Beit Foundation continues its commitment to Russborough House & Demesne as a unique historical, cultural and visitor asset, and is seeking to explore ways to improve the presentation of the house and in particular the conservation of its fabric.

The proposed works relate to the a) Restoration of traditional lime render to the gateways, b) Restoration of traditional lime renders to the flanking walls, c) re-slating of the pitched roof, d) Repair and re-pointing of granite stone façade, e) Cleaning and repair of limestone finials, and f) Restoration of the wrought-iron gates.

The report identifies a number of maintenance and conservation works. Some works can be regarded as urgent repair works required to protected surviving historic material, for example the repair works to the stone façade / roof elements and the pitched roof. Other works aim to re-instate the historic design intend, for example the render and wrought-iron gate restoration works. These works can be classed as development consisting of the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any structure, including works defined as *'repair or renewal ... to or from the interior or exterior of a structure'*. It is our opinion that the works described herein will not materially or visually alter the historic character of the protected structure.

In summary, the proposed works accord with established good conservation practice, and will not significantly impact on the character, setting or fabric of the protected structure, subject to the adoption of the conservation methods proposed herein.

Photographic Record

a) renders to gateway

A.01

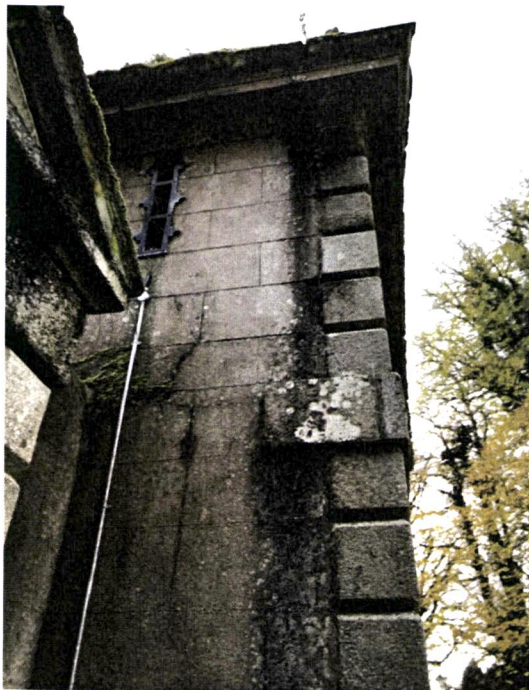


Overview

Central carriage gateway, north elevation – estate facing

Original random rubble stone wall with late-twentieth century ruled Ashlar sand-cement render, and original granite quoins.

A.02



Close-up

Central carriage gateway, north elevation – estate facing

Obvious heavy staining from leaking stone eaves joints.

Visible wet spots indicating boost render with water ingress and accumulation.

A.03

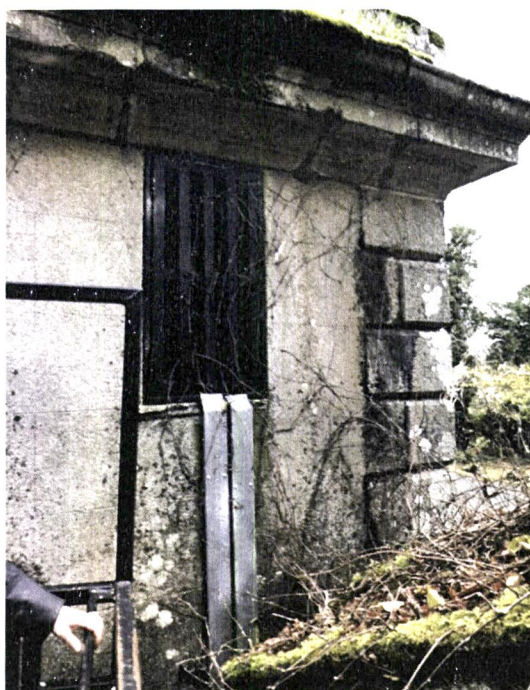


*Close-up
Central carriage gateway, south
elevation – estate facing*

*Obvious heavy staining from
leaking stone eaves joints.*

*Visible patches indicating boast
render with water ingress and
accumulation.*

A.04



*Close-up
Central carriage gateway, south
elevation – estate facing*

*Example of staining pattern at
eaves level.*

A.05



*Close-up
Central carriage gateway, estate
facing – looking south
Barrel vaulted arch with ruled
Ashlar sand-cement render.*

A.06



*Close-up
Central carriage gateway, estate
facing – looking south
Example of arched round wall
niche, with obvious render patch
repair.*

A.07
a b



*Close-up
South pedestrian gateway
Example of saturated and failing
plaster to gate reveal.*

A.08
a b



*Close-up
North pedestrian gateway
Example of saturated and failing
plaster to gate reveal.*

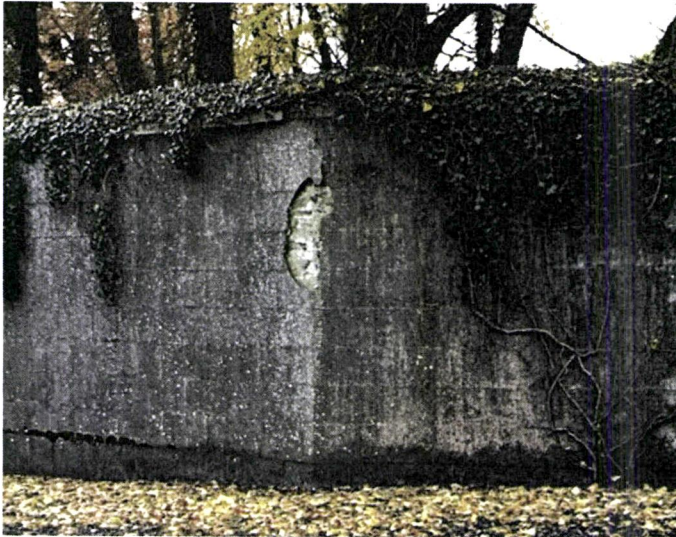
b) renders to flanking walls

A.09



*Overview
North flanking wall, road elevation
Original random rubble stone wall
with late-twentieth century ruled
Ashlar sand-cement render and
sand-cement haunching.*

A.10



*Close-up
North flanking wall, road elevation*

Large-scale boasting of unsuitable cementitious render, including delaminated areas.

Heavily overgrown with climber and ivy.

A.11



*Overview
North flanking wall, estate elevation looking south*

Remnants of historic lime render, and brick wall remains form historic gate lodge.

Original random rubble stone masonry construction exposed.

A.12



*Overview
North flanking wall, estate elevation looking north*

Remnants of historic lime render, and brick wall remains form historic gate lodge.

Original random rubble stone masonry construction exposed.

A.13



Overview
 South flanking wall, road elevation
 Original random rubble stone wall with late-twentieth century ruled Ashlar sand-cement render and sand-cement haunching.

A.14



Overview
 North flanking wall, estate elevation looking north.
 Structurally damaging climber and ivy growth.
 Original random rubble stone masonry construction exposed.

A.15



Overview
 North flanking wall, estate elevation looking south.
 Structurally damaging climber and ivy growth.
 Original random rubble stone masonry construction exposed.

c) c pitched roofs

A.16



North pedestrian gate

Double pitched roof with granite flag covering – heavy moss growth.

A.17



South pedestrian gate

Double pitch roof with granite flag covering – heavy moss growth.

A.18

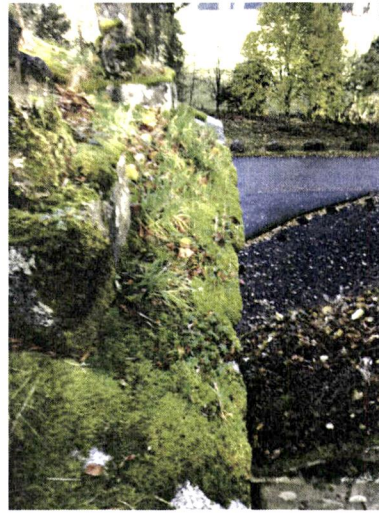
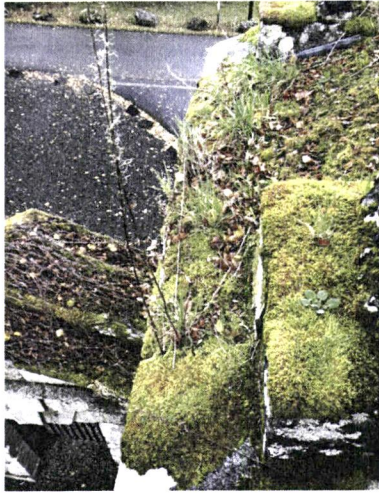


North pitch, central carriage gateway

Double pitch roof with natural slate covering, granite parge stone and granite pediment – heavy moss growth.

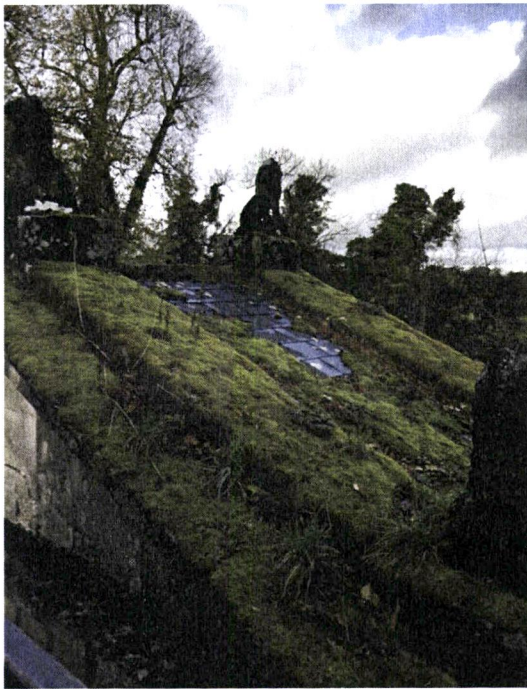
A.19

a b



- a) *North eaves central carriage gateway*
- b) *South eaves central carriage gateway*

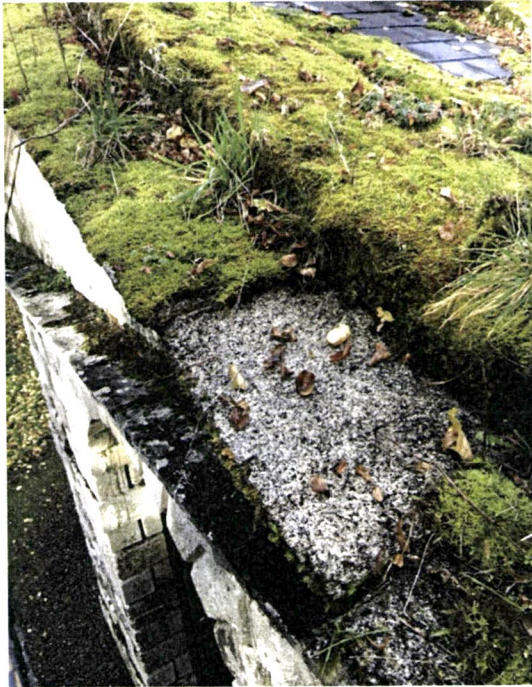
A.20



South pitch, central carriage gateway.

Double pitch roof with natural slate covering, granite parge stone and granite pediment – heavy moss growth.

A.21



South pitch, central carriage gateway.

Close up of granite pediment and barge stones with vegetational growth.

A.22



South pitch, central carriage gateway.

Close up of vegetational growth.

d) granite stone façade

A.23



Overview of tri-partite main gate front elevation, road facing.

Vermiculated granite Ashlar and plain pediment to both pedestrian gates.

Central triumphal arch of granite Ashlar with quoins and voussoir supporting plain pediment.

A.24



Close-up of granite Ashlar facing to south pedestrian gate.

Heavy staining from failing pointing, lichen and moss growth are clearly visible.

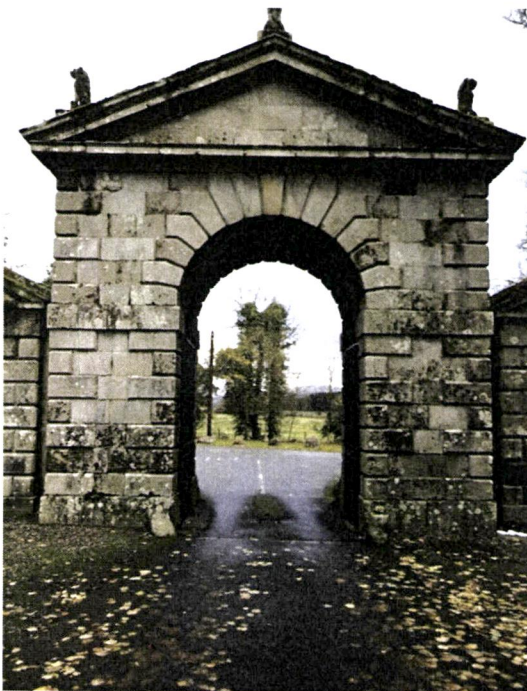
A.25



Close up of granite pediment to south pedestrian gate.

Heavy staining, failing pointing, lichen and moss growth, climber overgrowth are all clearly visible.

A.26



Close-up of granite Ashlar facing to central carriage gateway.

Heavy staining from failing pointing, lichen and moss growth are clearly visible.

A.27



Close up of granite pediment to central carriage gateway.

Heavy staining, failing and cementitious pointing, lichen and moss growth are all clearly visible.

A.28

a b



Close up of granite eaves(south pitch) to central carriage gateway.

Heavy staining, failing pointing, lichen and moss growth, climber and vegetational overgrowth are all clearly visible.

A.29

a b



Close up of granite Ashlar (road facing) to central carriage gateway.

Heavy staining, failing and cementitious pointing are all clearly visible.

A.30



Close up of granite Ashlar (road facing) to central carriage gateway.

Heavy staining, failing and cementitious pointing are all clearly visible.

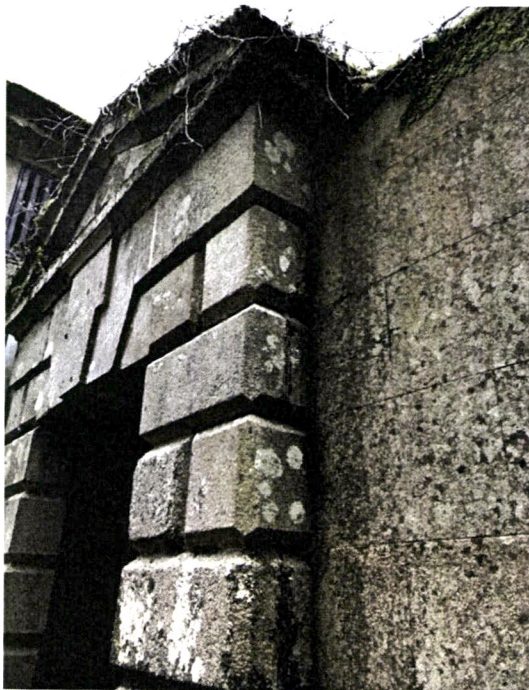
A.31



Close-up of granite Ashlar facing to north pedestrian gate.

Heavy staining from failing pointing, lichen and moss growth are clearly visible.

A.32



Close up of granite Ashlar to north pedestrian gate.

Heavy staining, failing pointing, lichen and moss growth, climber overgrowth are all clearly visible.

e) limestone lion finials

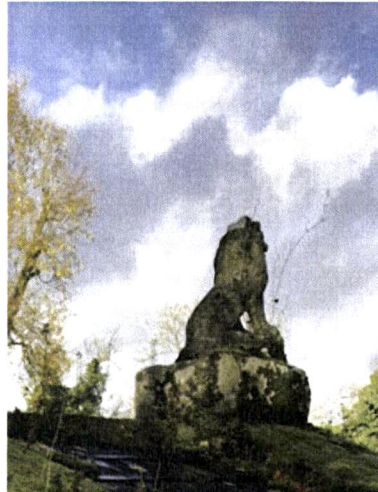
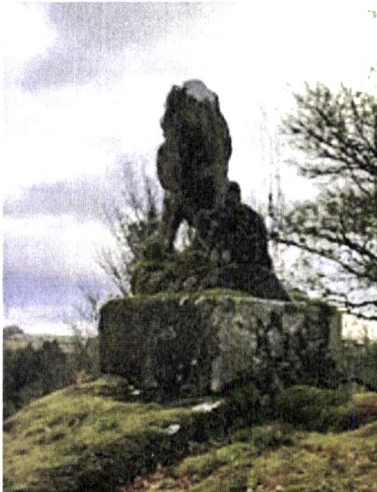
A.33



Eaves finial on road-facing elevation, north pitch.

A.34

a b

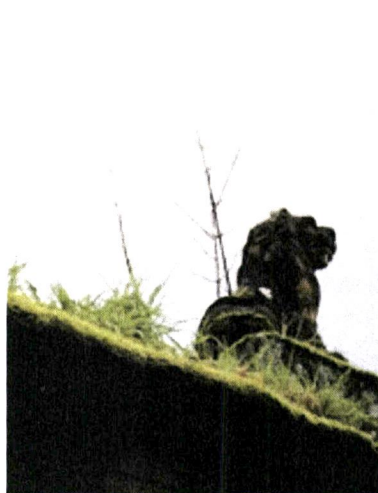


Apex finial on road-facing elevation.

- a) *looking south.*
- b) *looking north.*

A.35

a b



Eaves finial on road-facing elevation, south pitch.

Sycamore saplings clearly visible.

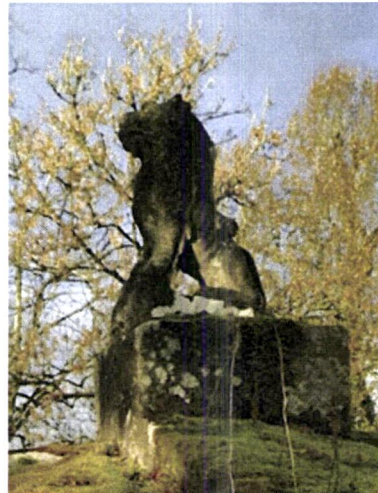
A.36



Eaves finial on estate-facing elevation, north pitch.

A.37

a b



Apex finial on estate-facing elevation

- a) looking south.
- b) looking north.

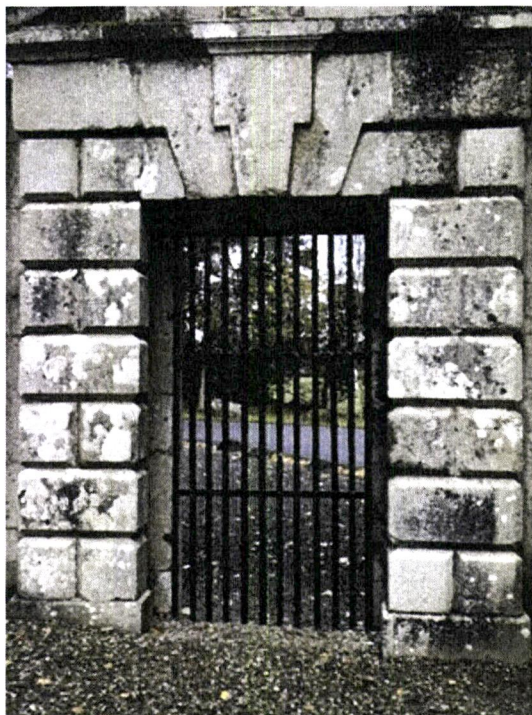
A.38



Eaves finial on estate-facing elevation, south pitch.

f) wrought-iron gates

A.39



Original flat-bar wrought-iron single gate of south pedestrian gate – locked, closed position.

A.40



Original round-bar wrought-iron double gate of central carriage gateway.

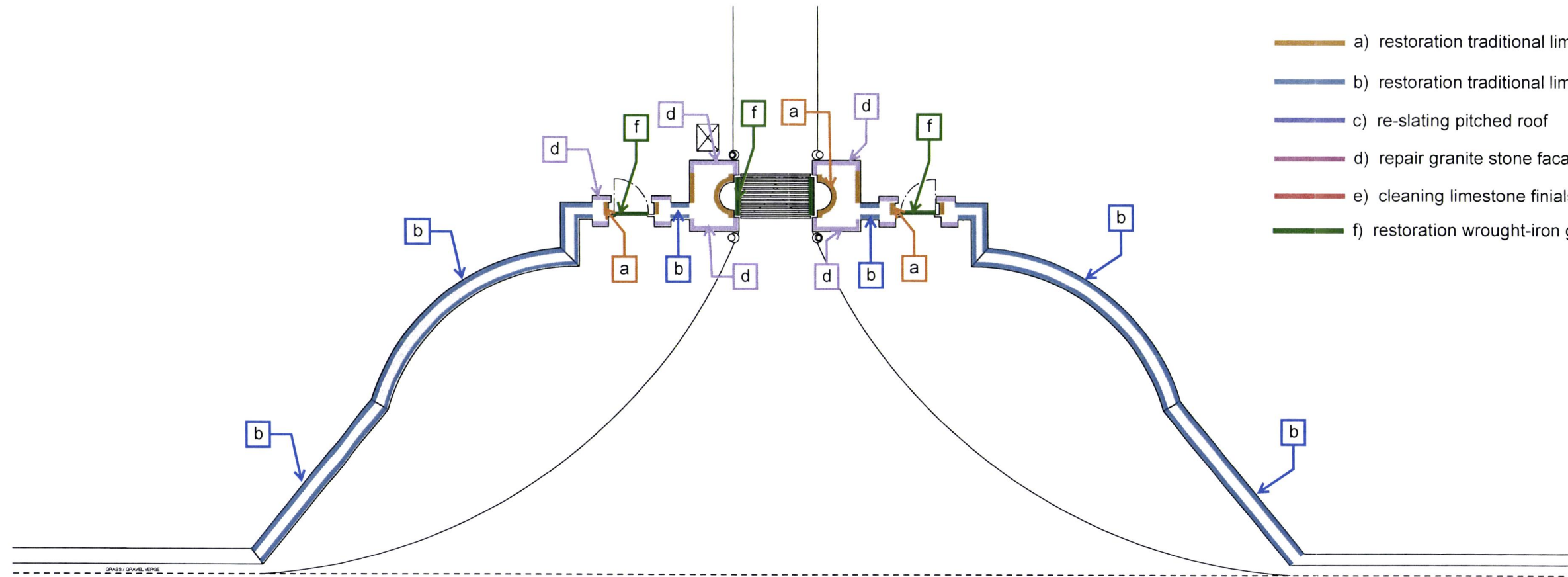
Original decorative scrolled overthrow removed (stored on site).

Hydraulic arms of gate automation system clearly visible.

A.41

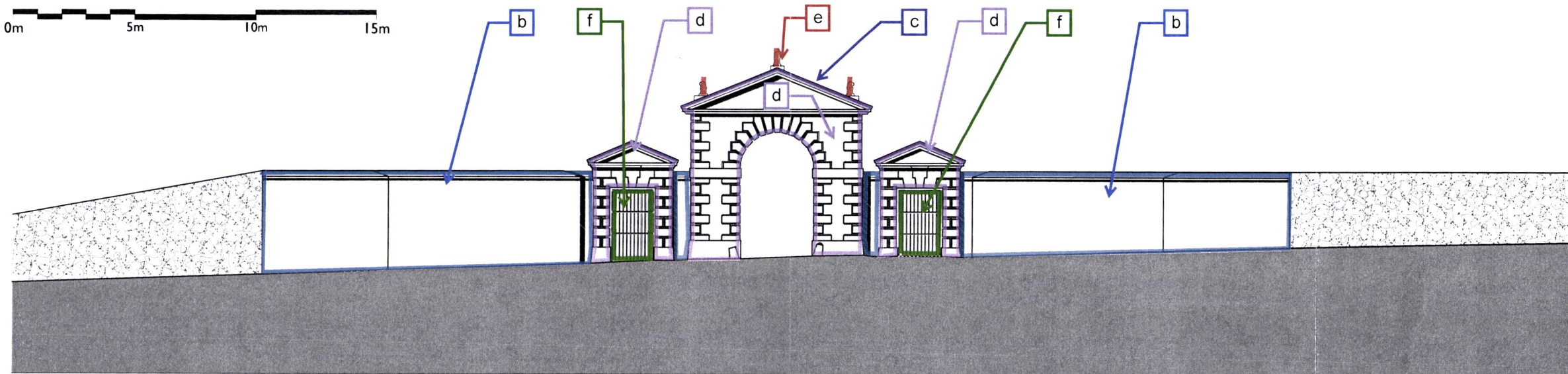


Original flat-bar wrought-iron single gate of north pedestrian gate – locked, closed position.



- a) restoration traditional lime render
- b) restoration traditional lime render
- c) re-slating pitched roof
- d) repair granite stone facade
- e) cleaning limestone finials
- f) restoration wrought-iron gates

01
101 Plan of Main Entrance Gate
1:200 @ A3



02
101 Elevation of Main Entrance Gate
1:200 @ A3



sheehan + barry

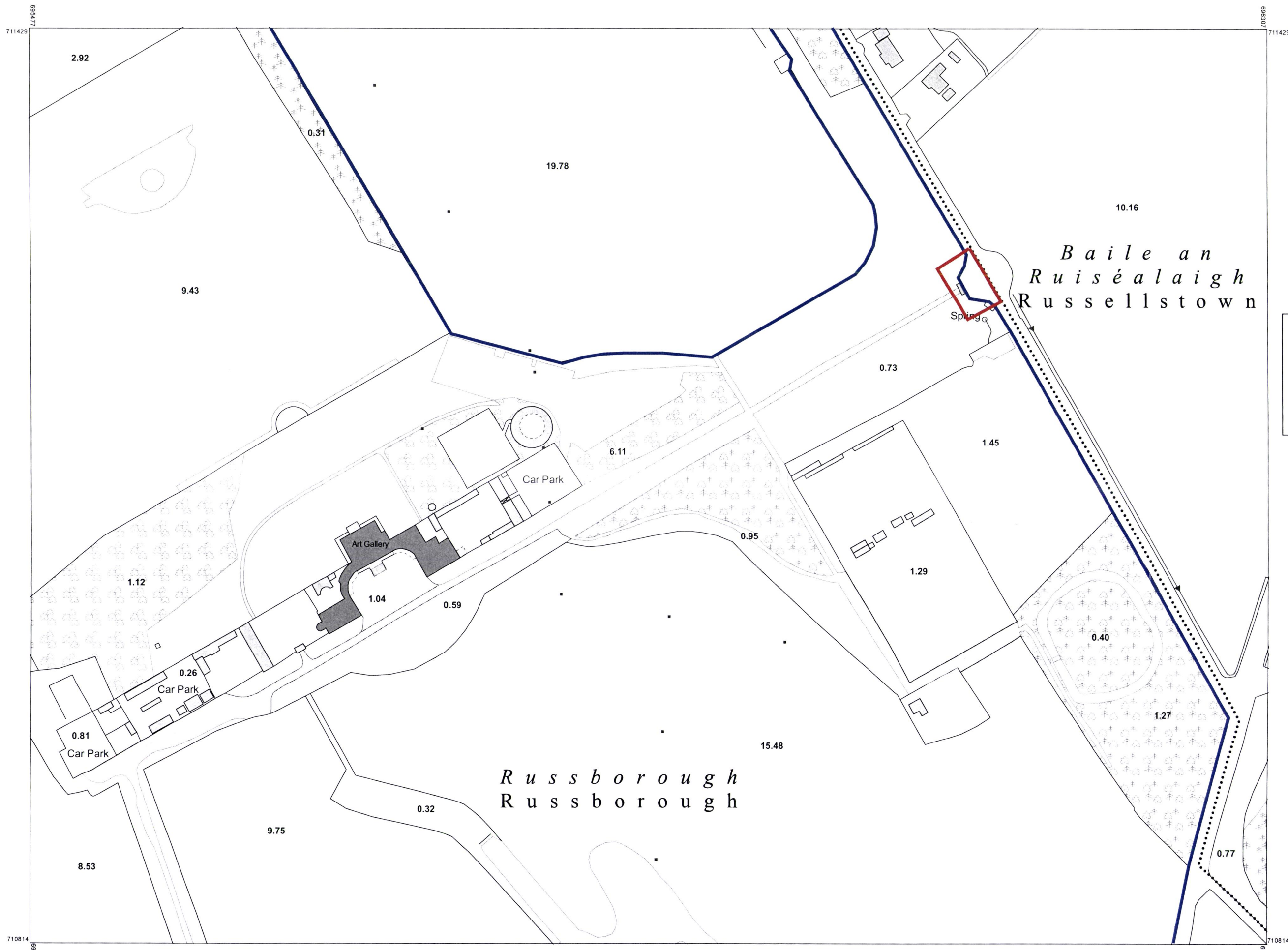
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 E: post@sbl.ie

PLANNING

JOB	Refurbishment of Main Entrance Gate	DWG No.	2507_11.4_101
LOCATION	Russborough House	DRAWN	26/04/2024 BY RK/HL
	for Alfred Beit Foundation	SCALE	1:200 @ ISO A3
TITLE	Plan & Elevation of Main Entrance Gate		
REV	REVISION DESCRIPTION	REVISION DATE	REVISED BY

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KEY

- outline of site
- outline of further lands under applicant's ownership
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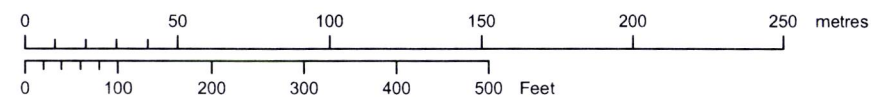
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