

## Church of Scotland, Strontian

### Condition of Building

#### 1. General

Strontian Parish Church was built as a Parliamentary Church under the commission to Thomas Telford. It was built to the design of William Thomson, one of Telford's surveyors in the Highlands and completed on 9th March 1829, at a cost of £1502.10/8 (In six years time it will be the bicentennial).

The building was altered in the early twentieth century. The roof was lowered and reconstructed, internal walls added and the bell-cote constructed. This means it is unlike other Telford churches.

The building stands within the church grounds beside the Strontian River. The SEPA flood risk map indicates a high likelihood of flooding adjacent to the river, and medium to low risk closer to the church. The building itself is on the edge of the flood risk area.

No asbestos was recorded in the building, however the inspection was non-invasive. Prior to carrying out major works an asbestos survey should be carried out.

It is possible that bats are present in the roof. Alterations requiring planning consent are likely to require a bat survey and works to the roof should be carried out in such a way as to avoid disturbing bats.

The floor area of the building is approx 148 sq m. It is not Listed.



*View from west*

The church yard contains a number of graves which significantly restricts the possibilities for extending the building or adding new buildings within the grounds. In the past, car parking has taken place informally along the public road, however the minimal provision on site may be an issue for any change of use. This should be tested by a pre-application enquiry to Planning.

## 2. Description of Building

The church is 'T' plan in form with an entrance porch on the south side. The main body of the building comprises the church space to the east and a smaller meeting room on the west side. Within the 'T' wing on the north side is a vestry, small kitchen and w.c. The roof is of West Highland slates and the walls of masonry construction.



*South elevation*



*View from north*

### 3. Condition

#### Roof

The existing roof is of graded Ballachulish slates on sarking boards on timber trusses. There is a zinc ridge fixed over a previous lead ridge flashing, and lead valley gutters.

The slates are small in size and have probably been re-dressed in the past. As a result the head lap appears to be short and the roof is vulnerable to water ingress due to driving rain. In addition the slates are uneven and there are a number of slipped or missing slates. In the north-east corner there is an area of severely damage roofing with a number of missing slates.

The roof requires re-slating which would also be an opportunity to install a breathable underslating membrane, and renew flashings as necessary. Ballachulish slates are difficult to source, and it is likely that re-slating would be in Spanish slates.



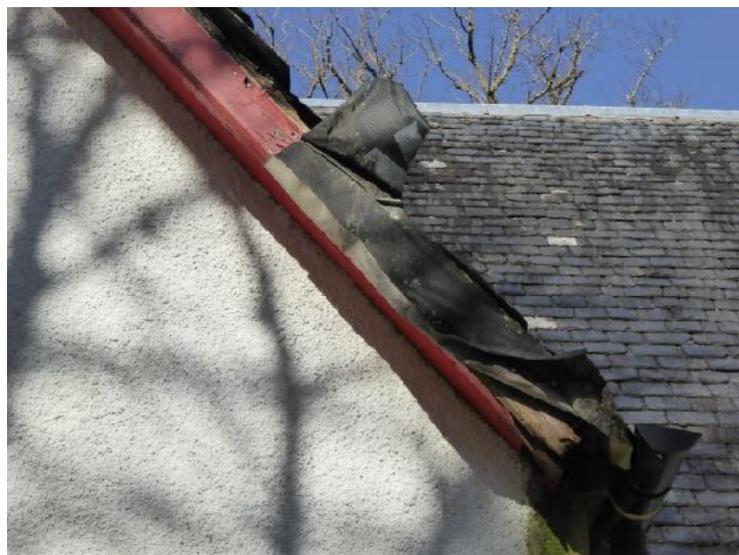
*Defective slating at porch*



Slating to main roof



*North east corner*



*Verge at east gable*

### Roof Structure

The roof structure comprises collar trusses of 60 x 160mm rafters and ties supporting timber sarking boards. The sarking is damp in patches suggesting widespread periodic water penetration.

There is minor woodworm infestation.

The roof space has no insulation. It has limited provision for ventilation.



### Rainwater goods

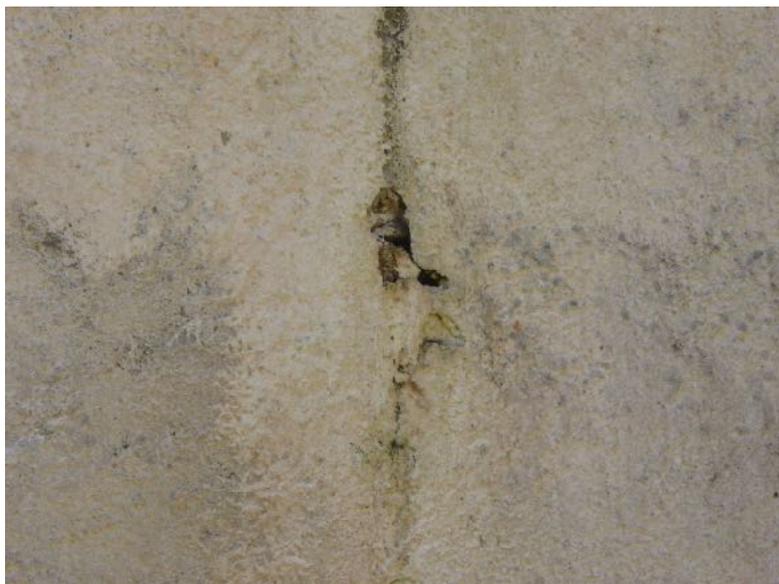
Gutters and downpipes are cast iron generally in moderate condition. There is a tendency for the gutters to block with leaves from the many surrounding trees and they require re-painting and minor making good.

### External walls

The walls are of masonry construction comprising granite blocks with sandstone dressings. The stonework is exposed on the south and west elevations and has render finishes on the north and east sides. There is minor cracking to pointing on the west side of the porch, and defective render on the north side of the main church and at low level in various locations. There is no evidence of a damp proof course in the walls.



*Cast iron gutters*



*Defective render north elevation*

### Bellcote

The west end of the church has a bellcote constructed in dressed sandstone. It was noted that the gable wall internally, shows significant damp staining and high moisture meter readings. There is a lead cover piece at the bell opening and damp staining below the chamfered stone blocks on either side.

All flashings and pointing should be checked here and and new lead flashing over exposed stonework considered.



*Leadwork at bellcote*



*Bellcote*

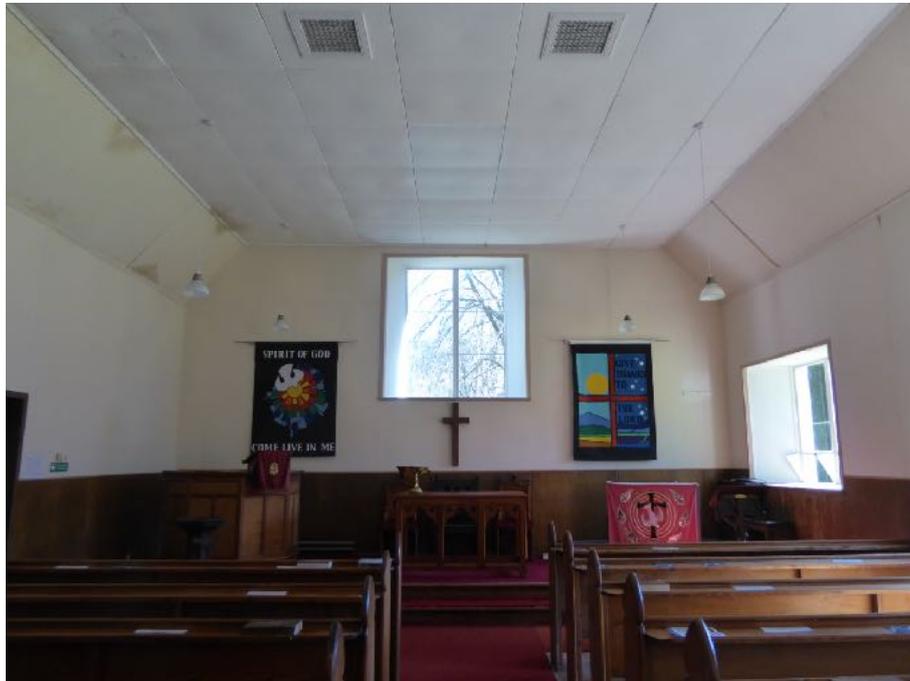
### Internal Walls

The main church space is lined with a plywood dado and fibreboard lining above, and to ceilings. This shows evidence of damp staining. Any combustible linings should be treated with fire retardant paint finishes.

The dividing wall between church and vestry is brick-built and load bearing.

The vestry has timber 'V' lining with fibreboard above, again showing signs of damp. The kitchen and w.c. also shows damp stained and damaged linings. The meeting room has a lowered ceiling with a roof-light to admit light from the high level window. The gable wall here shows significant damp ingress as noted above. Condition of lintels was not inspected.

There is no evidence of insulation in any wall linings.



*Main space looking east*



*Damp staining on ceiling*



*Meeting room looking west*



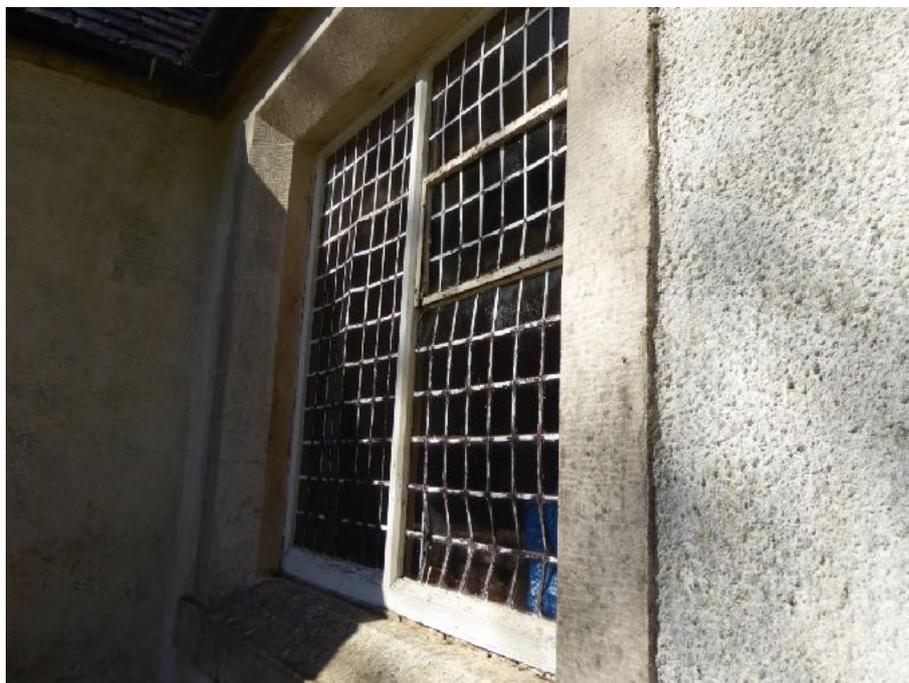
*Damp marking on west gable*

#### Windows and doors

The windows in the main church space are Crittal type metal framed single glazed windows, in moderate condition.

The windows to the vestry and kitchen are timber framed with small leaded lights. The lead comes are buckled and the opening hopper rusted. Stone cills are vulnerable to water ingress. The main door at the entrance porch and rear door to the vestry are of painted timber boarding. These are in moderate condition though show some signs of wear.

It would be reasonable to assume all windows would be replaced as part of any major refurbishment.



*Damage to window at vestry*

#### Floor

Floors generally are suspended timber, with some areas of solid concrete. The solum was not inspected, however it was noted that there is a relatively small amount of sub-floor ventilation and it is likely that the solum is not sealed with a damp proof membrane, and the floor is uninsulated.

Installation of a new DPM would also provide radon gas protection.

#### Decoration

The building is in poor decorative order throughout.

#### Services

There is an electricity supply with modern consumer unit and meter in the rear entrance area. Heating is by electrical panel heaters and tubular heaters. Hot water is provided by instantaneous water heaters. The property has a water supply and drainage connection. There is no fire alarm present.

It is assumed that all internal services would be renewed if the building is refurbished.

#### External

There is a stone boundary wall on the main road side and post and wire fencing elsewhere. The stone wall requires minor repair. The fence is in poor condition.

Entrance paths are formed in gravel. The grounds are laid to grass and have a number of graves. Grass cutting and grave stones will require regular maintenance and upkeep.

There are a number of mature trees within the church yard. These should be checked by a suitably qualified arboriculturalist.



*Stone wall at road frontage*



*View from north west*

## Summary of Work

Outline schedule of work required to bring existing building up to a reasonable standard, but not including any significant alterations to layout. Indicative costs are included. These are very much approximate at this stage subject to confirmation of scope of work, timing etc. Costs do not include VAT which may be applicable.

Reslate including vapour permeable roofing membrane, sarking repairs, roof ventilation flashings

£70,000

Repair external timber verge boards

£5,000

Woodworm treatment

£2,000

Repair rainwater goods and discharge to soakaway

£3,000

Render repairs and repair cracks generally

£4,000

Bellcote repairs to flashings

£4000

Replace windows

£20,000

Insulate roof

£8,000

Reline internally including new framing and insulation to walls

£17,000

Take up existing floor

£3,000

New solid floor including damp proof membrane and insulation. DPC to walls

£15,000

Re-wiring

£10,000

New electric heating system

£8,000

New plumbing throughout

£8,000

Re-decoration internal

£12,000

Re-decoration external

£6,000

External works to path and grounds

£3,000

External surface water drainage

£4,000

Repair boundary wall

£4,000

Replace fencing

£4,000

Tree maintenance

£5,000

Total £215,000