

Title of Report:	Building Preservation Notice (BPN) Request: Ballywillan National School (Quigley's Cottage), Magheraboy Road, Portrush.
Committee Report Submitted To:	PLANNING COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	27th March 2024
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership
Outcome	Our elected members work collaboratively and make decisions on an evidence led basis and in line with its policies.
Lead Officer	Principal Planning Officer

Budgetary Considerations: Not applicable in this case	
Cost of Proposal	
Included in Current Year Estimates	
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals. Not applicable in this case.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present an updated report relating to a Building Preservation Notice (BPN) request on the Council owned former Ballywillan National School (Quigley's Cottage), at Magheraboy Road, Portrush.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 On 10th May 2022 the Council received correspondence from Portrush Heritage Group (PHG) seeking a BPN on the above property (see Appendix 1). Following research and consultation with the Department for Communities: Historic Environment Division (HED) a report was brought before the 23rd November 2022 Planning Committee for decision. Members resolved to seek further information prior to making any final decision on the BPN request.
- 2.2 Council planning officials wrote to DfC seeking a more detailed examination of the history of the building and site.

3.0 Building Preservation Notice (BPN)

- 3.1 The Council has a responsibility under the Planning Act (NI) 2011, the “Act”, to protect and conserve the historic environment for the benefit of our present and future generations. The Council has powers under S.81 & 82 the Act to serve a BPN if it appears that the building is of special architectural or historic interest and is in danger of demolition or significant alteration. A BPN is a form of temporary listing. It provides statutory protection to an unlisted building for a 6-month period, within which time any works to the building will require listed building consent. The building must meet the following tests to be considered eligible for a BPN:
- It is of special architectural or historic interest; and
 - It is in danger of demolition or alteration in such a way as to affect its character as a building of such interest.
- 3.2 It is normal procedure for planning officials to consult with HED on a BPN request, asking them to consider the likelihood of permanently listing the subject building. However, in this instance, Portrush Heritage Group had already commenced this process by submitting an application to list directly to HED.
- 3.3 In considering a listing HED normally:
- take into account any information forwarded to them by Council, e.g the “Listing Query Report Form” (see Appendix 2);
 - record the structure;
 - consider the building against published listing criteria, available to view at: <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/criteria-scheduling-historic-monuments-and-listing-buildings-special-architectural-or-historic> ;
 - undertake statutory and non-statutory consultations; and
 - make a final decision.
- 3.4 The BPN legislation is carefully written to make clear that its test is one of initial assessment and that detailed research and assessment can be carried out later. This lower test allows for swift action, should it be required. If it appears to a Council that an emergency BPN should come

into force, it may, instead of serving the notice on the owner and occupier of the building, affix the notice conspicuously to some object on the building. Only emergency BPNs are a delegated function under the Council's current Scheme of Delegation. Further information on BPNs is available to view at: <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-councils-building-preservation-notices>

4.0 Compensation Payable

4.1 It is important to have due regard to the potential for compensation claims when considering the serving of a BPN. The guidance states that there are two circumstances in which it may occur, as follows:

a) Upon revocation of an existing planning permission:

A BPN can be served on a building even if there is an existing planning permission for its demolition or alteration. However, should the building be subsequently listed, Listed Building Consent (LBC) will then be required for any proposed works in relation to the existing permission. If LBC is not granted for such works the current planning permission may have to be revoked and the applicant may seek compensation from Council for losses.

To avoid this scenario a building will not normally be considered for listing once planning permission, which will affect its special architectural or historic interest, has been granted and is still valid, or while works which have received such planning permission are under way. It should be noted that if a Council is actively considering serving a BPN in this circumstance, then the exceptional nature of the case should be highlighted in the request for listing submitted to HED.

b) Should the building fail to merit statutory listing:

Compensation may also be payable for losses incurred due to the serving of a BPN if, after consideration, the structure is not listed, i.e. any loss or damage directly attributable to the effect of the notice.

5.0 The Site

5.1 The building in question sits on a roadside site along the southern side of Magheraboy Road, to the south of the settlement of Portrush. The building is enclosed by the surrounding graveyard and lies within the protected setting of a scheduled monument (ref. LDY003:013) - the ruins of Ballywillan Old Church. The building also lies opposite the current Ballywillan Cemetery (see photographs at Appendix 3).

- 5.2 The building, known locally as 'Quigley's Cottage' is currently under the ownership of the Council. Much of the original fabric of the building appears to have been lost to more recent renovations.
- 5.3 The building is not currently listed and does not lie within a Conservation Area/Area of Townscape Character; therefore consent would not currently be required for its demolition. Further details are set out in Appendix 2.

6.0 HED – Competent Authority

- 6.1 Following a request by Members to seek further information from the Department planning officials re-consulted HED in relation to this building.
- 6.2 In summary, an assessment of whether the building has 'special' architectural or historic interest has now been undertaken by HED (the competent authority). Through the Listing request process and in response to Council consultation HED query whether the current building is this actual schoolhouse, due to its small form and dimensions, instead believing that the current building represents a later remodelling of the fabric of the old school building (only in a smaller form, and now resembling a small lodge/graveyard caretaker house), or is a new building built entirely from scratch.
- 6.3 HED confirmed that, following further research and consideration, they remain of the opinion that this building does not merit listing.
- 6.4 Given the building's location within the setting of a scheduled monument this would have a bearing on any future proposals. HED also provided a link to publication 'Guidance on Setting and the Historic Environment' which sets out further details on this matter. It may be viewed online at: <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-setting-and-historic-environment>

7.0 Consideration of BPN Request

- 7.1 The Listing Query Report Form attached at Appendix 2 sets out the Council's preliminary assessment of the building, as is required at this stage.

8.0 Recommendation

- 8.1 IT IS RECOMMENDED that Members agree to the Head of Planning writing to Portrush Heritage Group advising that a BPN will not be served on this building.

Appendices:

Appendix 1:- BPN Request

Appendix 2:- Listing Query Report Form

Appendix 3:- Site Photographs

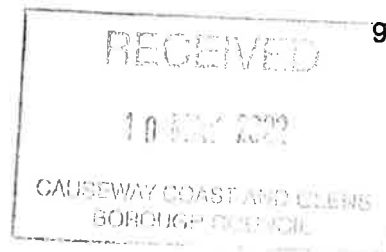


Portrush Heritage Group

Registered with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC108470

16 Carneybaun Road
Portrush
Co. Antrim
BT56 8JB
9th May 2022

The Chief Executive
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council
66 Portstewart Road,
Coleraine,
Co. Londonderry
BT52 1EY



Dear sir/madam,

BALLYWILLAN NATIONAL SCHOOL, MAGHERABUOY ROAD, PORTRUSH

Portrush Heritage Group wishes to apply to have this building protected through the issue of a Building preservation Notice by Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council. This building is of significant historical interest in the Portrush area and is deserving of being listed, protected from demolition or development and preserved for the future. An application to have this building Listed as a Building of Special Historic Interest has been sent to Department of Communities.

The building is Ballywillan National School, Portrush (also known by Causeway Coast & Glens Council as "Quigley's Cottage")

Location: The building is located on the Magherabuoy Road, Portrush, Co. Antrim nearly opposite the original entrance gates of Ballywillan Cemetery. Its location is marked on the attached maps.

Ownership: Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council.

This former school building should be listed as it is important historically due to its original use as a place of education, its connection to and co-location with the (now ruined) Ballywillan Church, its place in the social and economic history of Portrush and it being the oldest School Building still standing in the Portrush area. J Bleakly in the Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland for the Parish of Ballywillan refers to it as *Ballywillin Parish School* and states that it was established in 1829. The school would have been integrated into the new National Schools system introduced into Ireland from 1831 thus explaining why it appears on mid-nineteenth century maps as "National School".

This was the first proper school in the Portrush area and would have remained in use until 1853 when two new schools, male and female were established adjacent to the new Holy Trinity Church on, what is now, Main Street. These schools continued in use until the opening of the new Kelly Memorial School in 1896 on Victoria Street. This school closed in

1957 when the new Portrush Primary School on Crocnamac Road was opened and pupils transferred to it or to Carnalridge Primary School.

The building was used for some time as a store for the council graveyard workers and was restored some years ago to its present condition. The building is rectangular in plan, constructed of random rubble basalt. The original widow openings are rectangular but have been infilled at the top with red brick to create a *lancet* window shape. This change may have occurred when the council refurbished the building, however, we have no evidence to prove this. Prior to being used as a store the name of the building used by the Council i.e., *Quigley's Cottage* would seem to imply that the building was used as a residence.

The door of the building opens directly unto Magherabuoy Road and the building is enclosed on three sides by the graveyard of the, now ruined, *Ballywillan Parish Church*.

The co-location of this building with the former Ballywillan Parish Church imparts an importance given the long history of that church. Believed to date to the 12th or 13th Century and described in Lewis' Topographical Dictionary of Ireland 1837 as "an ancient, spacious and handsome edifice in the early English style, and is said to be the only one in the diocese or county, built prior to the Reformation, in which divine service is now performed". It continued in use until 1843 when a new church was built in Portrush. The graveyard surrounding the Church and School contains many interesting graves including that of Dorothea Ross reputed to be the illegitimate daughter of King James II conceived during a stopover he made in Ballymoney on his way to the siege of Derry. Although denied by the King it is worth noting that her gravestone is said to have been erected by Queen Anne, her half-sister. On the headstone is the Stuart Coat of Arms and a Fleur de Lys. Also buried there are six military personnel from the First World War which is unusual in that government policy was to bury and commemorate such individuals in Imperial War Cemeteries near to where they were killed rather than returning them to the UK.

References:

The Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland for the Parish of Ballywillan inform us, in "Fair Sheets" prepared by J Bleakly dated 26th October 1835:

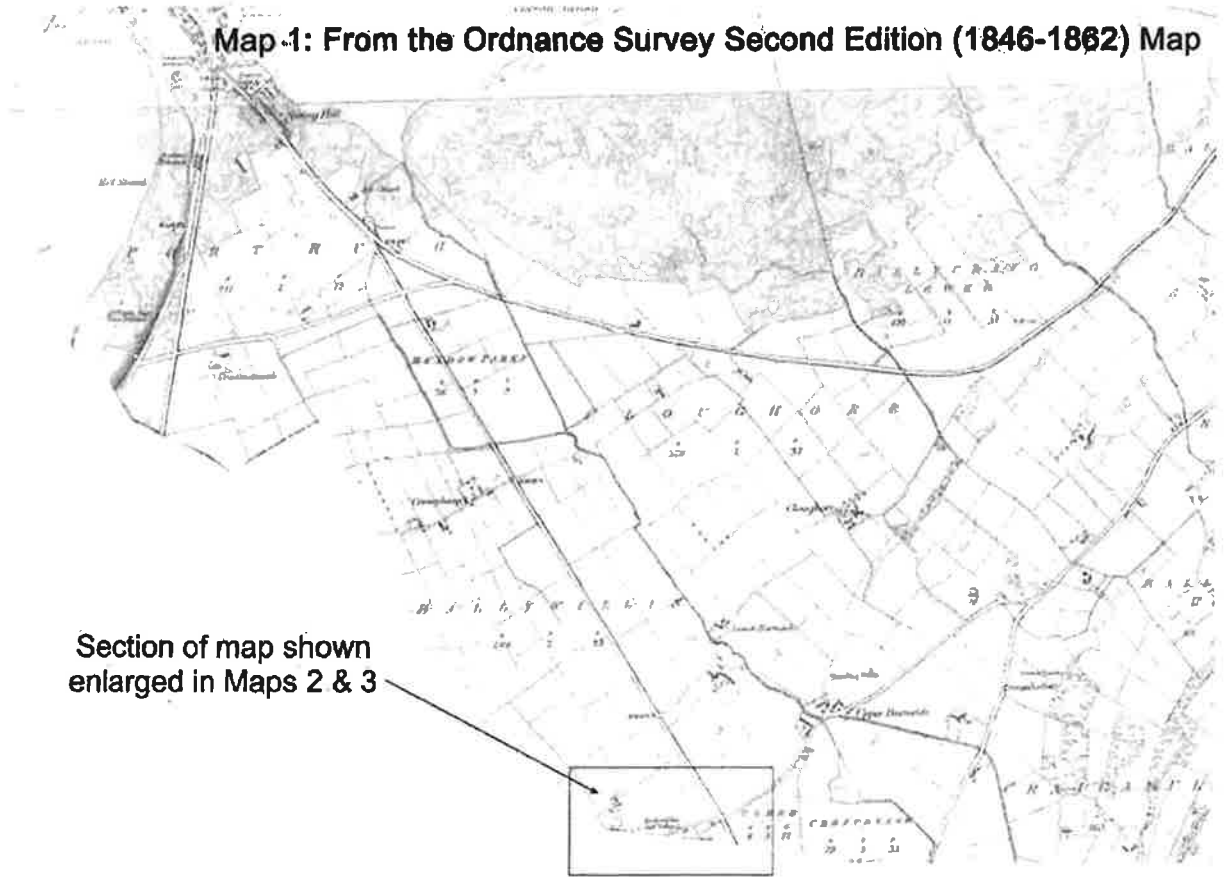
Ballywillin parish school, situated near the old church and on the leading road from Coleraine to Bushmills, a good house, slated, 32 and a half by 16 feet inside, established in 1829; income for the last quarter the master received from the Revd. William Mill, rector of the parish, 15 pounds, from pupils 4 pounds; expenditure: fuel provided by the children, house built by subscription and cost 70 pounds, viz. 15 pounds collected through the parish, 55 pounds from the Revd. William Mill; intellectual education: books published by the Association for Discountenancing Vice; moral education: visited by the clergy of the Established Church; number of pupils: males, 9 under 10 years of age, 6 from 10 to 15, 15 total males; females, 8 under 10 years of age, 10 from 10 to 15, 2 above 15, 20 total females; total number of pupils 35, all Presbyterians; master James Greer of the Established Church.

And in "Fair Sheets" prepared by Thomas Fagan in June 1838 under the heading "Social Economy – Schools":

Ballywillin <Ballywillan>, master James Harton, Established Church; pay school, 3s 4d and 4s 2d per quarter annual income; schoolhouse stone and lime, would cost 20 pounds; number of pupils by the Protestant return: 11 Established Church, 14

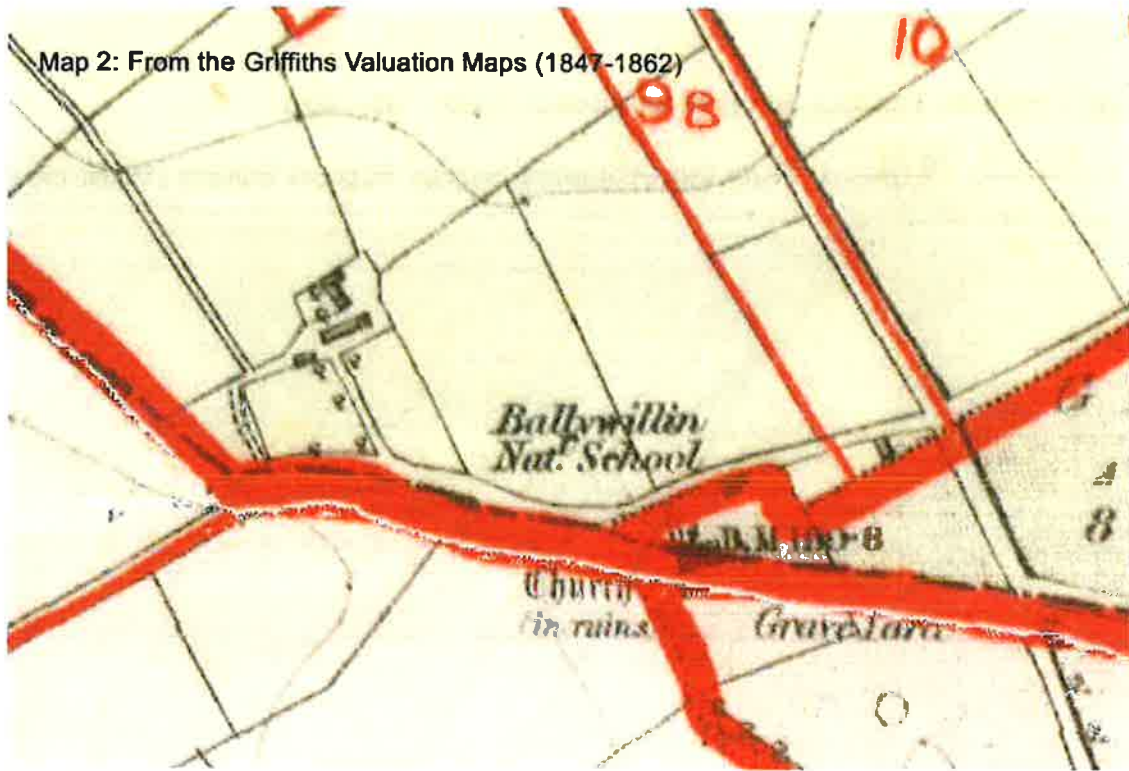
Presbyterians, 2 Roman Catholics, 27 males, 13 females; incumbent gives 2 pounds, parish school.

Map 1: From the Ordnance Survey Second Edition (1846 – 1862) Map



Section of map shown enlarged in Maps 2 & 3

Map 2: From the Griffiths Valuation Maps (1847 – 1862)



Map 3: From the Ordnance Survey Second Edition (1846 – 1862) Map

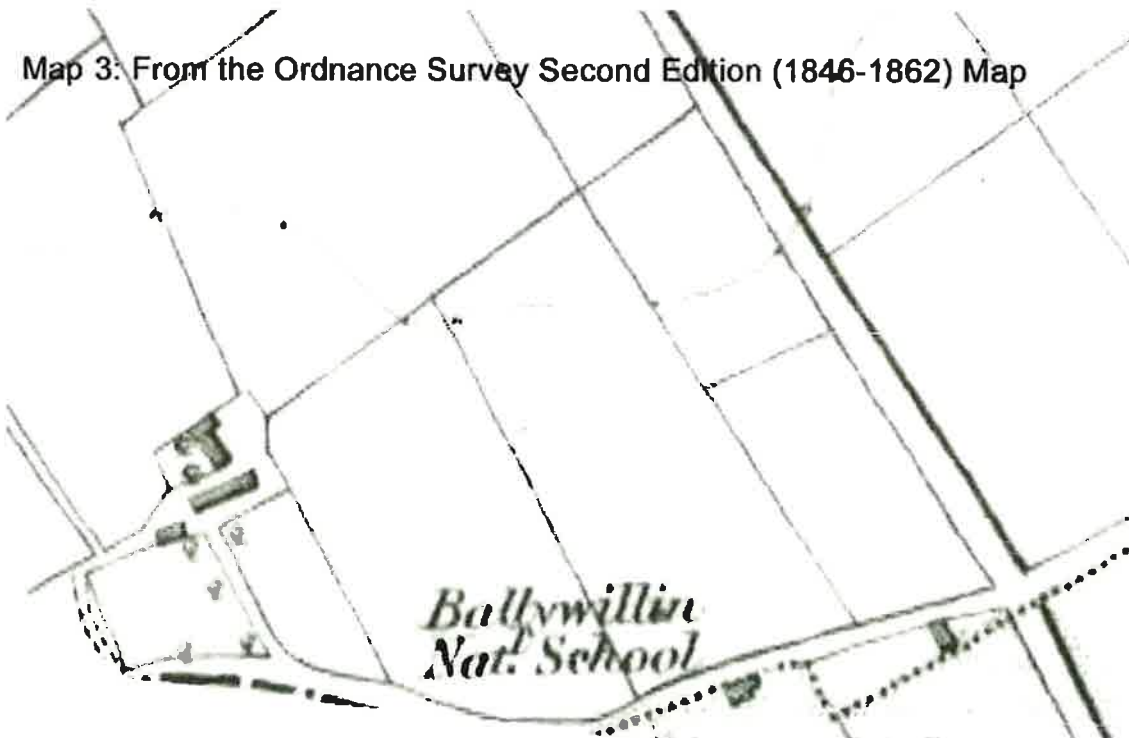


Image 1: Ballywillan National School



If you have any queries or require further clarification on any aspect of this application please do not hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED]

Yours,

[REDACTED]

John Moore

Vice-Chair

Appendix 2

Listing Query Report (updated 060324)

Building Name:	Former Ballywillan National School (Quigley's Cottage) Magheraboy Road, Portrush.		
OS Map No:	6-14	IG Ref:	C8707, 3873
Apparent Current Use:	Vacant/unknown		

The current (council owned) building is located on the site of the Former Ballywillan National School (reference HB03LQ090).

The schoolhouse was built around 1832 and is shown on the site in the 1855 OS map. It closed c.1870. A dwelling on site (later occupied by the Quigley family and known as 'Quigley's Cottage') was first recorded in the valuation books in 1875. The Department for Communities: Historic Environment Division (HED) query whether the current building is this actual schoolhouse, due to its small form and dimensions, instead believing that the current building represents a later remodelling of the fabric of the old school building (only in a smaller form, and now resembling a small lodge, possibly used for the graveyard caretaker), or is a new building built entirely from scratch.

The current building is located along Magheraboy Road adjacent to Ballywillan Cemetery and lies within the protected setting of a scheduled monument of Ballywillan Old Church (ref. LDY003:013). The building has been subject to alterations in recent years with much of the original fabric lost (see photos attached at Appendix 3).

Evaluation

Key criteria for listing are 'Architectural Interest' or 'Historic Interest' and the overall test for a building to be listed is that this interest must be considered 'special'.

Architectural Interest

In relation to the above, it is evident that the building has been much altered over the years with the loss of detail and original elements, having been replaced with inappropriate features. The existing architectural attributes would not be a prime or good example of a particular period, particularly given the lack of quality in the external detailing and finishes. Whilst the building's modest proportion and frontage have some positive architectural attributes, the building, as a whole, is lacking the necessary architectural interest, quality and character required for listing. The building does not provide significant architectural interest and therefore cannot be considered 'special' in this regard.

Historic Interest

The building was likely constructed in the late Nineteenth Century and is not known to be the work of an important architect. The building also appears to have been

significantly altered with many unsympathetic features added in recent years with the loss of historic fabric. Whilst the site has had some previous level of local community and social history, having previously served as a school, the current building appears to either represent a later remodelling of the fabric of the old school building (in a smaller form) or is a new building built entirely from scratch. The current building is therefore not of definitive quality and character and would not be described as 'outstanding' for its time with special Historic Interest.

Department for Communities: Historic Environment Division (HED)

It is important to consider that HED has responded to both the Council and to the Portrush Heritage Group advising that they will not be considering the listing of this property.

Recommendation

In light of the above information, it is considered that the building does not exhibit special architectural quality or historic interest to satisfy the listing criteria.

Considered by council planning authority on: 06/03/24

Checklist	Yes	No
Building appears to satisfy the listing criteria		X
Building has permission to demolish or significantly alter the building		X

Decision

Do not serve a BPN.

Signed: 

Position: Principal Planning Officer

Date: 06/03/2024

Appendix 3: Site Photographs





