

Agenda Item	7.4
Report No	PLS-83-22

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** South Planning Applications Committee  
**Date:** 20 September 2022  
**Report Title:** 21/04872/LBC: Grantown on Spey Parish Church  
Inverallan Church, Grant Road, Grantown-on-Spey, PH26 3JH  
**Report By:** Area Planning Manager – South

### Purpose/Executive Summary

**Description:** Alterations to church to create flexible sanctuary for worship and use as a concert/performance venue, including associated meeting rooms and activity spaces, toilets, stairs and lift, provision of social enterprise cafe, alterations to window to create new door and side screens with terrace access

**Ward:** 20 – Badenoch and Strathspey

**Development category:** Local

**Reason referred to Committee:** Request from Elected Members

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal does not accord with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is unacceptable in terms of applicable material considerations.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to agree the recommendation to **REFUSE** the application as set out in section 11 of the report.

## 1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 The application is for listed building consent for various internal and external alterations to the church so that it can be used as a community venue with a performance venue and café alongside the existing ecclesiastical use. The associated planning application is dealt with by a separate application (21/04869/FUL).
- 1.2 The alterations proposed include:
- removal of pews, heating and thermal insulation installed below the floor (nave/central part of ground floor)
  - creation of Café terrace (southeast of building, accessed from the café space), with associated alteration to southeast facing window to form door to terrace
  - Community changing suite for use by special needs visitors to the town, and building users (nave/ground floor)
  - Internal meeting rooms and activity spaces for church use community clubs and activities (northeast transept and first floor spaces)
  - Ancillary toilets, lift and stairs
  - Installation of 20kV solar solar panel array (southwest facing roof)
  - Air source heat pump located to the rear (west elevation)
- 1.3 Pre-Application Consultation: None
- 1.4 Supporting Information: Design Statement
- 1.5 Variations: Amended design to the external door opening

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The Category B Listed Inverallan Church is located to the west of Grant Road in the centre of Grantown on Spey enclosed by woodland to the rear and side. The site is within the Grantown on Spey Conservation Area.

## 3. PLANNING HISTORY

- |     |            |  |                       |
|-----|------------|--|-----------------------|
| 3.1 | N/A        | 21/04869/FUL - Alterations to church to create flexible Sanctuary for worship and use as a concert/performance venue, including associated meeting rooms and activity spaces, toilets, stairs and lift, alterations to window to create new door and side screens with terrace access. | Pending Consideration |
| 3.2 | 04.03.2020 | 19/00598/FUL - Erection of four houses.  | Application refused   |

#### 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

##### 4.1 Advertised: Listed Building Consent

Date Advertised: Listed Building Consent 09.12.2021 (Strathspey and Badenoch Herald) and 10.12.2021 (Edinburgh Gazette)

Representation deadline: 30.12.2021

Timeous representations: 1

Late representations: 0

##### 4.2 Material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

- a) compliance with the Development Plan and other planning policy;
- b) detrimental impact on the Category B listed building;
- c) siting, design and materials.

##### 4.3 All letters of representation are available for inspection via the Council's eplanning portal which can be accessed through the internet [www.wam.highland.gov.uk/wam](http://www.wam.highland.gov.uk/wam).

#### 5. CONSULTATIONS

##### 5.1 **Historic Environment Team** – Object. In general terms the proposal is positive and the Historic Environment Team welcome and support the proposal to secure new and positive uses for the building. However, it is unable to support the installation of photovoltaic panels to the principal (and prominent) roof slope of the Category B listed building within the Grantown on Spey Conservation Area as it would adversely impact the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Recognise that renewable technologies in a heritage context can be an important component in securing the long-term future of historic buildings, however it is important that they are carefully and discreetly located so as not to compromise the special architectural interest, character and appearance of the listed building. In this case there do appear to be alternative options such as the rear southwest facing slope of the nave. This is a much less prominent and less visible part of the roof and would likely be a suitable and supportable location for PV panels. It is also worth noting that there are opportunities to sensitively and discreetly install other renewable technologies, such as air source heat pumps.

##### 5.2 **Historic Environment Scotland** – No objection. Whilst not objecting, Historic Environment Scotland noted that this should not be taken as support for the proposal as they raised significant concerns regarding the proposed external door and solar panels. They considered the new doorway would alter the church's architectural balance to the exterior and the solar panels would be a noticeable modern intervention on a prominent elevation of the historic Category B listed building within the Grantown on Spey Conservation Area.

## **6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY**

The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the application

### **6.1 Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (2021)**

- 2 – Supporting Economic Growth
- 3 - Design and Placemaking
- 7 - Renewable Energy
- 9 - Cultural Heritage

Strategic Settlements: Grantown on Spey

### **6.2 Cairngorms National Park Guidance:**

- 3 - Design and Placemaking (non-statutory guidance)
- 7 - Renewable Energy (non-statutory guidance)
- 9 - Cultural Heritage (non-statutory guidance)

Strategic Settlements: Grantown on Spey

## **7. OTHER MATERIAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

### **7.1 Scottish Government Planning Policy and Guidance**

Scottish Planning Policy (as amended December 2020)

National Planning Framework 3

Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement (May 2019)

Historic Environment Circular 1 (April 2019)

Historic Environment Scotland – Managing Change in the Historic Environment  
Guidance Note Series

## **8. PLANNING APPRAISAL**

8.1 Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

8.2 Section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that, “In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works, the planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”.

### **Determining Issues**

8.3 This means that the application requires to be assessed against all policies of the Development Plan relevant to the application, all national and local policy guidance and all other material considerations relevant to the application.

## **Planning Considerations**

- 8.4 The key considerations in this case are:
- a) compliance with the development plan and other planning policy
  - b) impact on the listed building, and
  - c) any other material considerations.

### **Development plan/other planning policy**

- 8.5 The site is located within the Grantown on Spey Settlement Area as defined within the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (2021). The objectives of the settlement, as outlined within the Development Plan, include the protection of parts of the village which are important to its character and setting.
- 8.6 Policy 3 Design and Placemaking, requires that development be sympathetic to the traditional character, vernacular and distinctiveness of the surrounding area, while encouraging innovation in design and use of materials. Alterations to building stock should respect the design, massing, proportions, materials and general visual appearance of the area, as well as the building's setting.
- 8.7 The policy outlines, amongst other things, that proposals must demonstrate sensitive siting and design that respect the traditional pattern and character of the area as well as the amenity of neighbours. It supports the principle of converting existing building stock where the conversion works maintain the style and character of the original building.
- 8.8 Grantown on Spey Conservation Area, Policy 9: Cultural Heritage is also relevant. This requires that development have no adverse effect on a listed building. The layout, design, materials, scale, siting and use of any development should be appropriate to the character and appearance of the listed building and its setting. Where development would result in a significant adverse impact, the proposal must demonstrate the effect is clearly outweighed by social and economic benefits and minimise and mitigate any adverse effects on the listed building or its setting through appropriate siting, layout, scale, design and construction.
- 8.9 Where development would result in a significant adverse impact, the proposal must demonstrate the effect is clearly outweighed by social and economic benefits and minimise and mitigate any adverse effects on the listed building or its setting through appropriate siting, layout, scale, design and construction.
- 8.10 In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works, the planning authority require to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Scottish Planning Policy establishes that "Change should be sensitively managed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the fabric and setting of the asset, and ensure that its special characteristics are protected, conserved or enhanced" [para 137].

- 8.11 Provided that the siting and design of the proposal does not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the listed building, then the development would comply with the Development Plan.

### **Impact on the listed building**

- 8.12 The proposal will reconfigure the interior of Inverallan Church to provide a flexible space capable of supporting a contemporary ministry along with a venue for hosting concerts and community events. The existing pews will be removed with new heating and thermal insulation installed below the floor. The proposal will create a range of internal meeting rooms and activity spaces with ancillary toilets, tea points, lift and stairs. The proposed café will include an additional outdoor decking area for customers and will be run as a social enterprise to support the church services and other events in the performance space.
- 8.13 A second floor will be created within the 2 transepts enclosed by floor to ceiling glass walls. The window on the southeastern elevation is to be amended to create a new door to access the new café from the proposed outdoor deck seating area. Following discussion with the Historic Environment Team the design for the new door was improved and is now compatible with the style/composition of the window above. These alterations are considered still to retain the essential character of the building.
- 8.14 The installation of the air source heat pump will have no significant effects on the building. However, the solar panels, which will be located on the principal elevation of the building, are not considered to be a sympathetic addition as evidenced by the consultation response from the Council's Historic Environment Team and the comments made by Historic Environment Scotland. Where renewable energy technologies are proposed, it is important they are carefully and discretely located so as not to compromise the special architectural interest, character and appearance of the listed building. In this case, alternative locations were discussed with the agent and applicant such as the rear southwest facing slope of the nave or ground mounted panels on the grounds to the rear of the church. Both locations would be less prominent on a less visible part of the roof and would likely be supported by the Historic Environment Team. Whilst the concerns were acknowledged the applicant was unwilling to amend this particular element of the proposal.
- 8.15 Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy 9: Cultural Heritage which seeks to ensure that new development conserves and enhances the cultural heritage of the Cairngorms National Park. Whilst the proposed alterations will enable the property to meet modern requirements and therefore secure its future continued use, for the most part the changes proposed can be appropriately managed without significant adverse impact on the building's character, but not so with regard to the solar panels.
- 8.16 Overall, the proposal is not considered to meet the requirements of the statutory test of s14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as it does not have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

## **Other material considerations**

8.17 None

## **Non-material considerations**

8.18 None

## **9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 It is considered that the installation of photovoltaic panels to the roof of the Category B listed building within the Grantown on Spey Conservation Area will introduce a prominent, incongruous, contemporary feature that will adversely impact the special architectural and historic interest of the historic building. Whilst there is general support for renewable technologies within heritage contexts these should be carefully and discretely located so as not to compromise the special architectural interest, character and appearance of the listed building. It is disappointing that alternative locations and design solutions were not agreed following discussion with the agent and applicant as there is general support for the proposal to secure new and positive uses for the historic building.
- 9.2 The proposal is contrary to Policy 9: Cultural Heritage of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (2021) as it does not conserve and enhance the cultural heritage of the National Park. The social and economic benefits are not considered to outweigh the impact on the building, particularly as alternative solutions may be possible in this case.
- 9.3 Accordingly, it is not considered that the proposal has “special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses” as required by Section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 9.4 All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal does not accord with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is unacceptable in terms of applicable material considerations.

## **10. IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Resource: Not applicable
- 10.2 Legal: Not applicable
- 10.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Not applicable
- 10.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: Not applicable
- 10.5 Risk: Not applicable
- 10.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

## 11. RECOMMENDATION

**Action required before decision issued** N

Notification to Scottish Ministers N

Conclusion of Section 75 Obligation N

Revocation of previous permission N

**Subject to the above actions**, it is recommended to **REFUSE** the application for the following reason.

1. The layout and siting of the photovoltaic panels does not make a positive contribution to the heritage interests of the site or wider area, and is therefore not considered to be sensitively sited on the Category B listed building and accordingly does not pay “special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses” as required by Section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 and is therefore contrary to the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan policy 9 Cultural Heritage.

Signature: David Mudie

Designation: Area Planning Manager – South

Author: Roddy Dowell

Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.

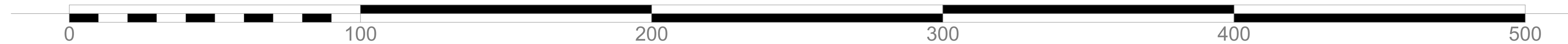
Relevant Plans:

- Plan 1 - Location Plan 101 REV B
- Plan 2 - Site Layout Plan 102 REV A
- Plan 3 - Proposed Floor Plan 104 REV A
- Plan 4 - Elevation Plan 105 REV A
- Plan 5 - Section Plan 106
- Plan 6 - General Plan Internal 109
- Plan 7 - New Door Plan 107 REV B





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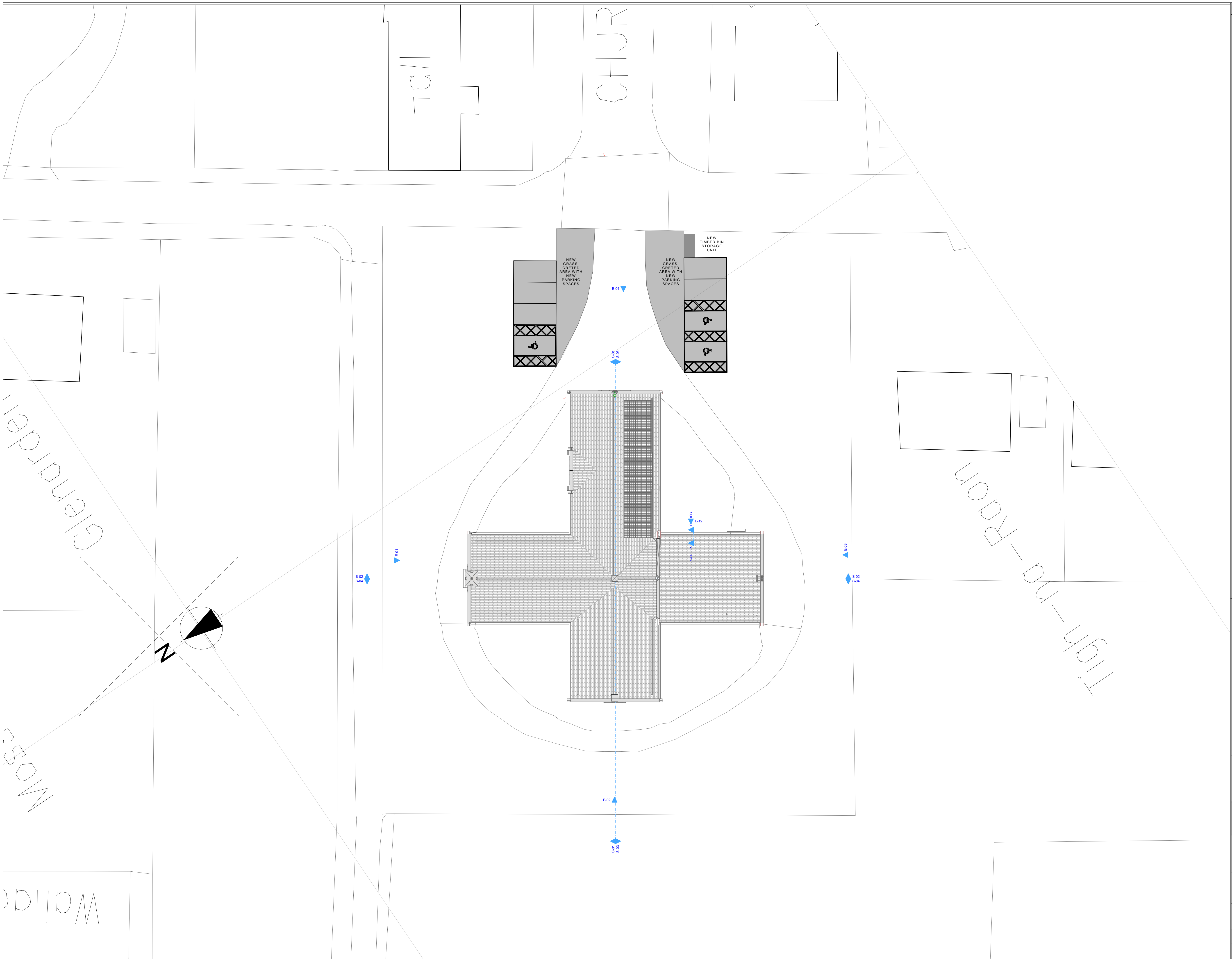


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16.09.21	PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION	TJP	RWW	RWW	
Rev	Date	Description	Drawn	Check	App'vd
Scales @ A1	1:1000	Originator Office <b>WBA</b>	Originator No. <b>1070</b>		
Status	Purpose of Issue * PLANNING APPLICATION				
 <small>London House 3rd Floor Suite 20-22 East London Street Edinburgh EH7 4BG T: +44 (0)131 556 5646 www.westonburnett.com</small>					
Project	<b>Inverallan 20/20</b>				
Layout Title	<b>LOCATION PLAN</b>				
Client	<b>Inverallan Parish Church</b>				
Drawing Number					
Project	Originator	By	Drawing Number	Rev	
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1:200	WBA	1070

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Project  
**Inverallan 20/20**

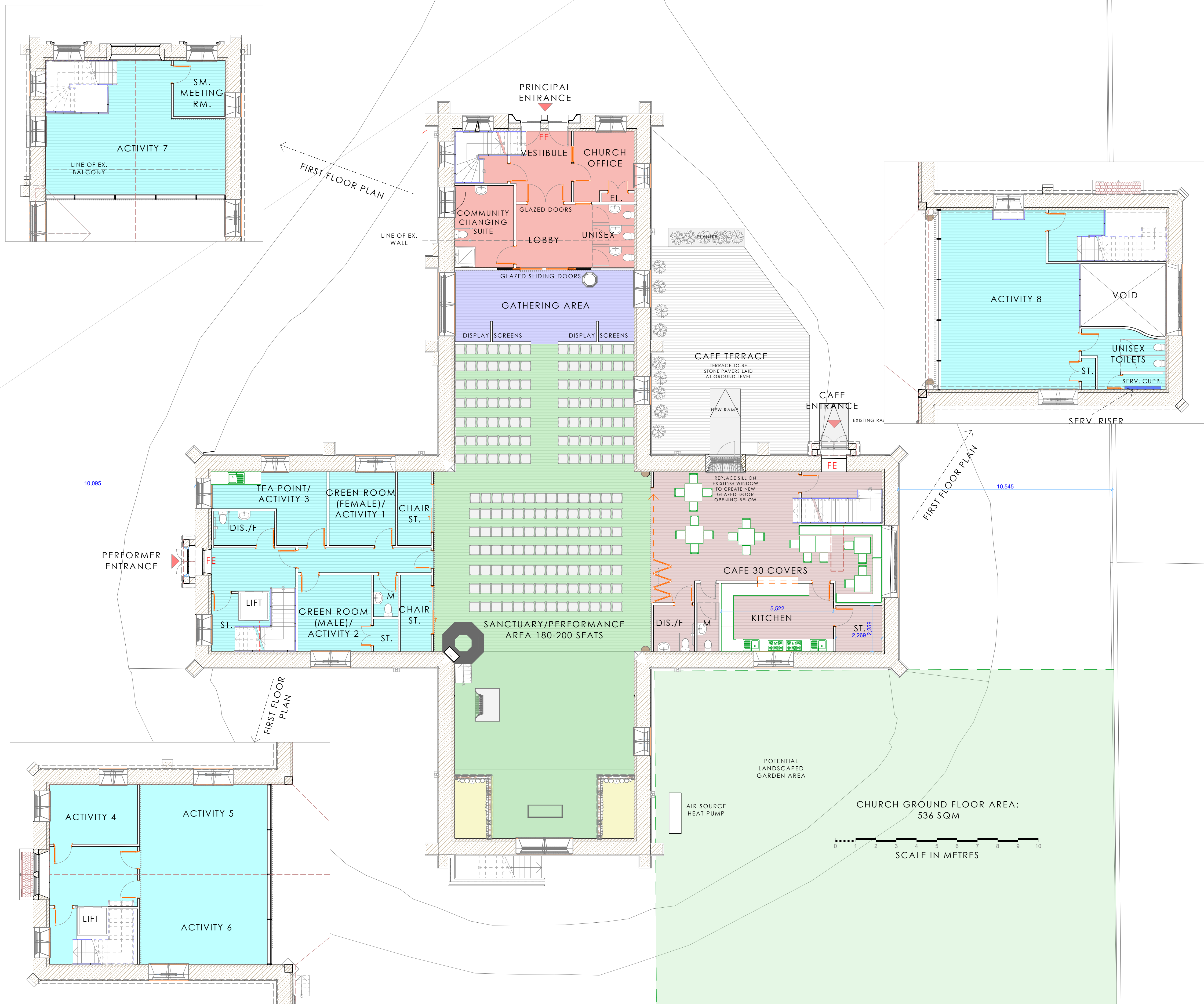
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Client  
**Inverallan Parish Church**

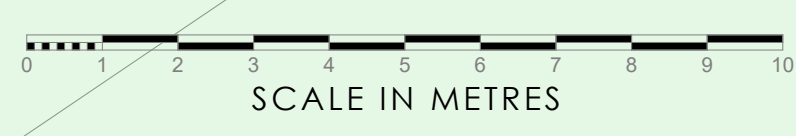
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CHURCH GROUND FLOOR AREA:  
536 SQM



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	PLANNING APPLICATION				
<p><b>WBA</b></p> <p>London House                  3rd Floor Suite                  20-22 East London Street                  Edinburgh                  EH7 4BG                  T: +44 (0)131 556 5544                  www.watsonburnett.com</p>					
Project		Inverallan 20/20			
Layout Title <b>PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS</b>					
Client <b>Inverallan Parish Church</b>					
Drawing Number					
Project	Originator	By	Drawing Number	Rev	
IPC	WBA		104	A	





NORTH EAST ELEVATION



NORTH WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION

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Project

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**ELEVATIONS**

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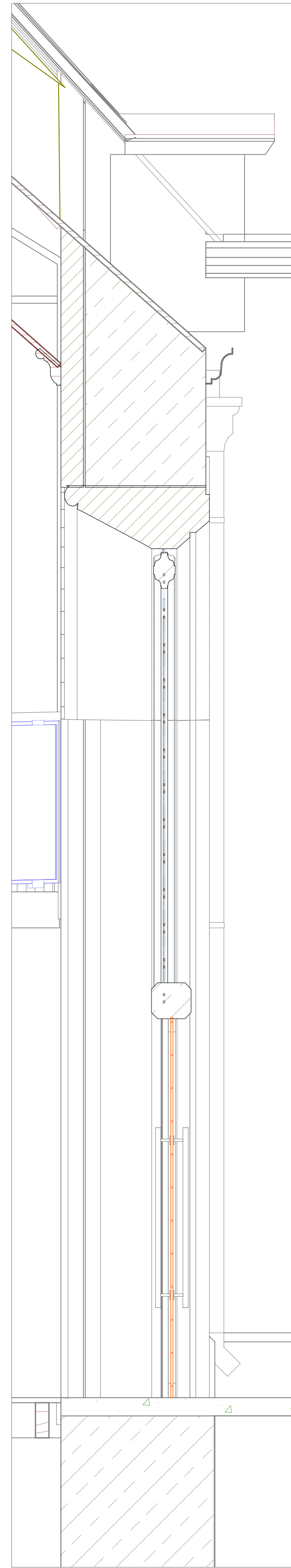
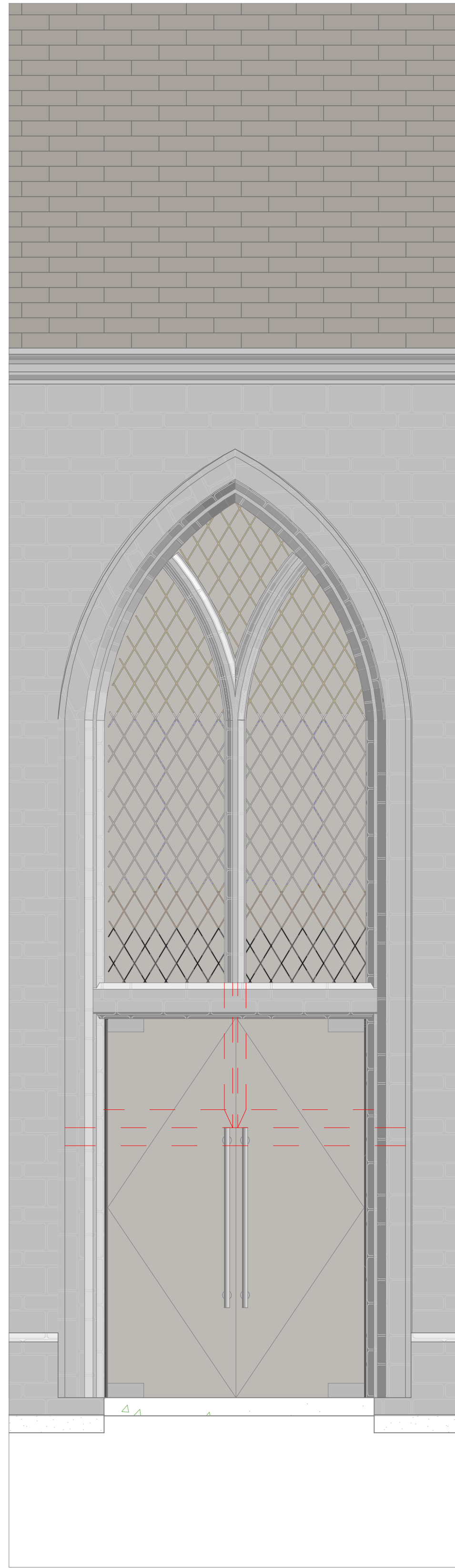
MAIN NAVE PERSPECTIVE SECTION  
 LOOKING NORTH EAST



MAIN NAVE PERSPECTIVE SECTION  
 LOOKING SOUTH WEST

16.09.21	PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION	TJP	RWW	RWW	
Rev	Date	Description	Drawn	Check	App'vd
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Project	Inverallan 20/20				
Layout Title	SECTIONAL PERSPECTIVES				
Client	Inverallan Parish Church				
Drawing Number					
Project	Originator	By	Drawing Number	Rev	
IPC	WBA		106		

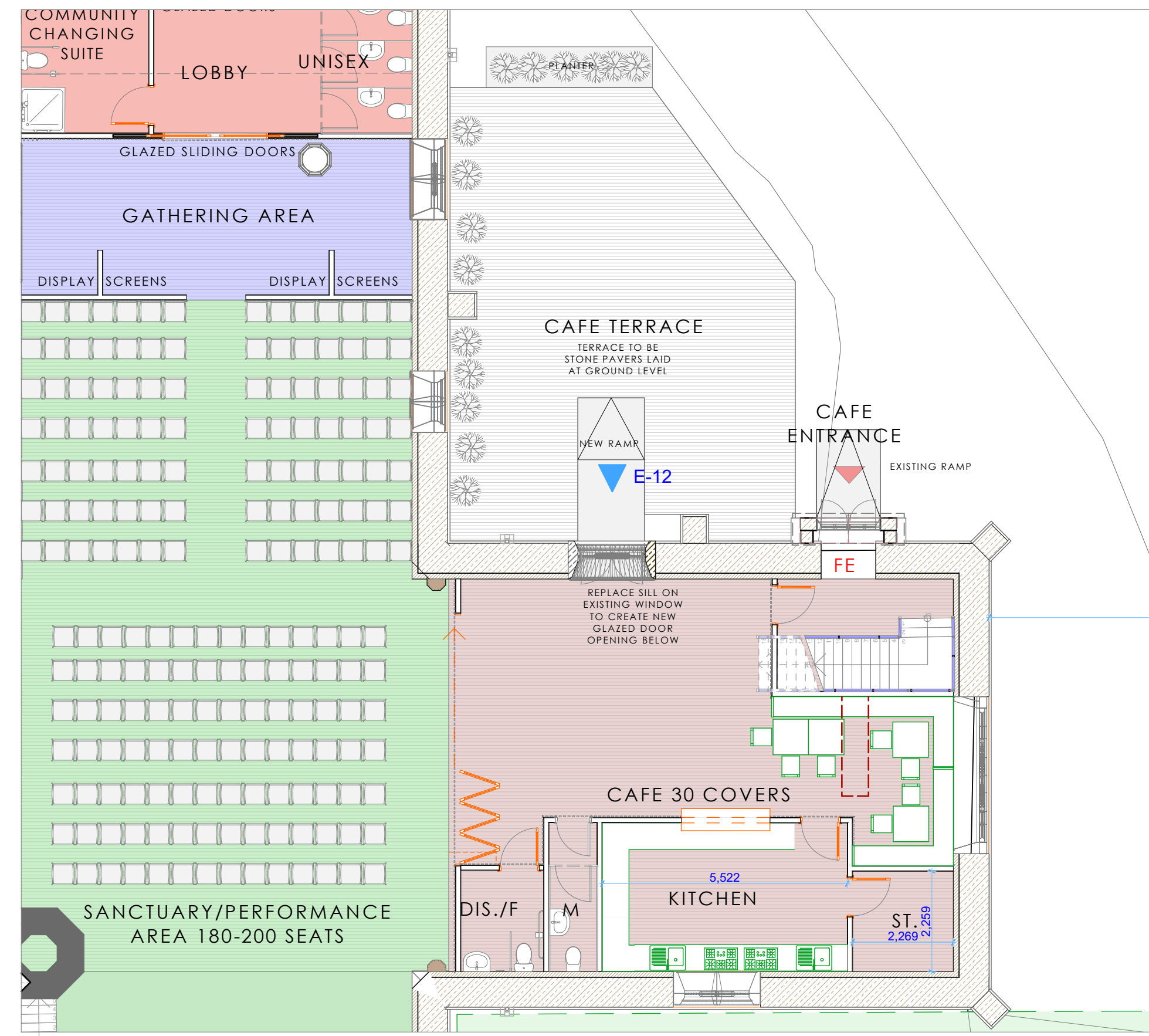




**NEW DOOR 1**

NEW DOOR TO BE PLACED BELOW EXISTING WINDOW OPENING WITH STONE LINTEL INSERTED ABOVE TO MATCH EXISTING STONEMWORK. EXISTING SILL SHOWN RED DASHED IN ELEVATION. THIS WILL REQUIRE COMPLETE REINSTALLATION OF THE EXISTING WINDOW

CONCRETE PLATTS TO BE INSTALLED AT GFL TO ALLOW FOR LEVEL ACCESS OUT WITH DISABLED RAMP TO PROPOSED NEW DOOR



**KEY PLAN**

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B	23.11.21	PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING RESPONSE	TJP	RWW	RWW
A	16.09.21	PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION	TJP	RWW	RWW

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1:20, 1:100  
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Project  
**Inverallan 20/20**

Layout Title  
**NEW DOOR 1 DETAILS**

Client  
**Inverallan Parish Church**

Project	Originator	By	Drawing Number	Rev
IPC	WBA		107	B



