

Louise Harrington

An Bord Pleanála Oral Hearing PL 53.214338,  
Re-ordering the interior of St. Colman's Cathedral, Cobh

With regard to the submission made by McCutcheon Mulcahy Consultants dated 9 November 2005, in respect of the above I would like to clarify the following.

I met Mr McCutcheon in my office on May 9<sup>th</sup> to advise on the making of a valid application as far as planning regulations in respect of protected structures affected the proposal. For such a large building it was necessary to agree just how much information would be necessary to show the impact of the proposal on the protected structure. I did not discuss the merits of the proposal. I had one pre-planning meeting on the proposal.

Subsequently, I wrote to Mr McCutcheon to confirm our discussion. I advised that the drawings shown to me were satisfactory – meaning that they were adequate in terms of the regulations. I enclosed documentation on a re-ordering scheme in Skibbereen as an example of another church that had undertaken public consultation and re-ordering. In that case the architects included designs for new items in the pro-cathedral. This documentation was intended as reference material which I thought might be of use in the making of an application for Cobh and in the consultation process which Mr McCutcheon had advised what to take place over the summer.

I spoke to Professor O'Neill to clarify that it would not be necessary to submit small scale drawings for the entire cathedral. I advised that I was happy with the proposed documentation that was to accompany the application.

After the application was submitted, I did advise that I required no further clarifications because I was not of the opinion that the file should be deferred for further information. I did not advise Mr McCutcheon or Professor O'Neill of my recommendation during the course of my deliberations on the file as this would have been inappropriate.

Mr McCutcheon speculates that I discussed confidential documents with a member of the Pugin Society and thereafter 'changed my attitude'. As the attached emails will illustrate I specifically refused to discuss the matter or even visit the cathedral with said Pugin Society member. Instead, I referred the enquiry to Mr McCutcheon himself. I would like this clarified for the record.

I deal with church communities all over Co. Cork. I am acutely aware of their needs as working dynamic congregations. The Cloyne HCAC (Historic Church Advisory Committee) could verify this. Furthermore, it would be impossible to do my job with a 'narrow art-historical' viewpoint. In this application, I considered carefully the liturgical requirements but made my recommendation on balance of what I felt were the other requirements of the Act. Finally, for the purposes of clarification, chapter 5 of the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government's *Architectural Guidelines for Planning Authorities* is the same as the guidelines originally published in November 2003 by the Minister.

Louise Harrington  
Cork County Council Heritage  
Millview House  
Travellers' Way  
Millview House  
CORK  
IRELAND

17 February 2006

**ENGLISH HERITAGE, GOVERNMENT HISTORIC ESTATES UNIT  
ANNUAL TOUR, CORK AND COBH, 2005**

Dear Louise

You and my friend Freddie O'Dwyer were essential contacts for the small trip which the government historic estates unit at English Heritage made last year to make to Cork, Cobh and Kinsale. Although both you and Freddie knew of my expertise on EW Pugin, I remember that, conscious of your role in the pre-application consultation, you declined to accompany the group on its visit to St Colman's cathedral on 8 July; nor did show us the scheme drawings. Instead, through your good offices, these were shown to me at an 8AM meeting at my hotel in Kinsale by one of the partners of McCutcheon Mulcahy.

Yours sincerely

Dr Roderick O'Donnell, FSA,  
Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings  
Government Historic Estates Unit

**Louise Harrington**

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**From:** O'DONNELL, Rory [Rory.O'Donnell@english-heritage.org.uk]  
**Sent:** 17 February 2006 11:28  
**To:** Louise Harrington  
**Subject:** Cove inquiry

Dear Louise.

Because a reference to you and in in the applicants submission, I thought I might send you the attached .

Rory

## Louise Harrington

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**From:** Louise Harrington  
**Sent:** 07 July 2005 15:06  
**To:** 'brian@mcmplanning.com'  
**Subject:** Cobh Cathedral

Brian

Sorry I missed you this morning. I wanted to advise you that a party from English Heritage (the division for overseeing state-owned properties) are visiting the Cork city area this weekend. I have also telephoned Canon John Terry, Kanturk, of the Cloyne HCAC and left a message to advise him that the group would visit the cathedral. The group is to visit a number of sites. En-route they also plan to visit Cobh Cathedral. They had asked to meet with yourselves to see the proposals for the re-ordering. As this was not possible at such short notice, I have suggested that they would go to the Cathedral by themselves. The party includes a prominent member of the Pugin Society. Perhaps had more planning of this particular item been possible from their side then your client may well have welcomed the opportunity to have the party met and informed on the proposals. In the absence of such an arrangement I could not discuss the drawings for the proposals or provide same. I trust this is in order.

Regards  
Louise

Brian McCutcheon  
McCutcheon Mulcahy  
2-3 Crawford Business Park  
Proby's Quay  
Co. Cork

13 May 2005

*Re.: Proposals to re-order Cobh Cathedral*

Dear Brian

Further to our meeting on Monday in relation to the above, I wish to advise you of the following.

It would appear to me that the main issues to be the subject of your client's planning application are:

1. bringing forth the sanctuary area
2. swapping the mortuary and vestry areas
3. bringing forward of the cathedra
4. removal of pews
5. bringing back of altar railings to the crossing and transept piers.

I understand from our discussion that the artwork of the lectern, altar table and ambo are to be part of a separate planning application.

With regard to the architectural conservation requirements for the planning application you should refer to sections 22 and 23 of the 2001 Planning Regulations. Further to our discussion I would also recommend clarification of the dates of items to be moved or removed. The current plan drawings of the sanctuary area are satisfactory. Drawings to the same scale would be required of the elevations for the (proposed) sanctuary area. Illustrations by way of a photographic record of the interior and exterior nave elevations will suffice because no work is to be carried out in these areas. Documentation should include an adequate historical appraisal of the building with particular reference to the sanctuary area of the cathedral. Finally, I note some concern about the contrast of the proposed stone floor and the existing decorative stonework.

I enclose a copy of the brochure produced by St. Patrick's Cathedral in relation to re-ordering as agreed.

Yours Sincerely

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Louise Harrington  
Conservation Officer

CC. John O'Neill, Director of Planning Service, Denis Deasy, SEA, Páraig Lynch, Town Clerk, Cobh Town Council.