



Ballycumber Folly

Conservation Works 2019

Creative Ireland, Irish Georgian Society, Follies Trust, Offaly County Council

Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme
2017-2022



Irish
Georgian
Society



THE
FOLLIES TRUST



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council

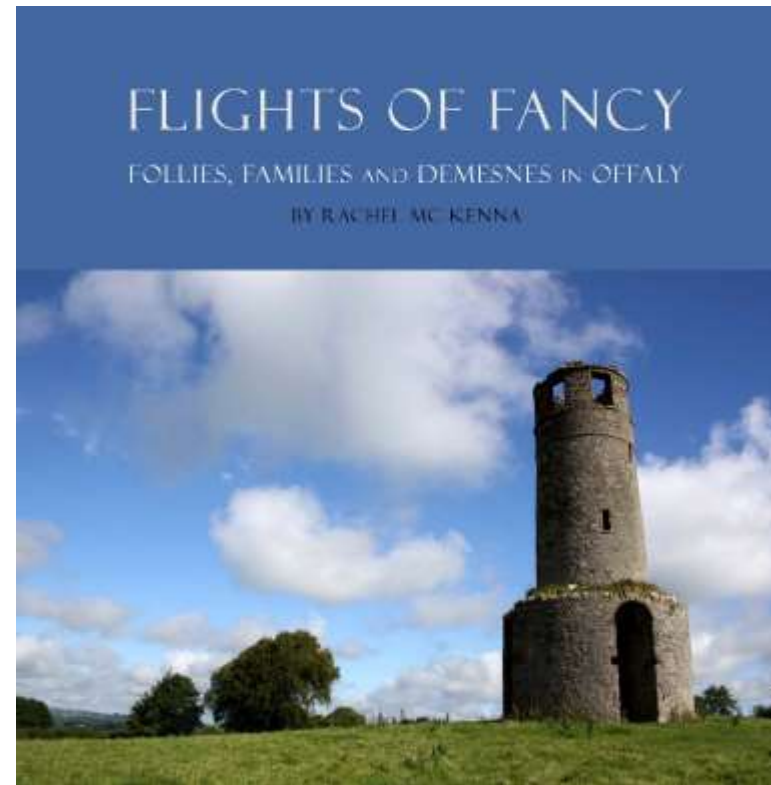
RMcK 2019



Drone footage 2018_1120

Background

- Ballycumber Folly formed part of a survey of 11 Follies in Offaly carried out by Howley Hayes in 2013, commissioned by Offaly County Council with assistance from the Heritage Council
- Ballycumber House and Folly formed part of the publication *Flights of Fancy, Follies; Families and Demesnes in Offaly*, 2017





Ballycumber Folly 2013

Ballycumber history

John Warneford Armstrong of Ballycumber estate was part of a long line of Armstrongs.

- **Andrew Armstrong (GGF 1669 - 1717)** - to his eldest surviving son,
- **Warneford Armstrong (GF 1699 - 1767)** - to his son George,
- **George Armstrong (F 1734 - 80)** – to his son John Warneford.
- **John Warneford Armstrong (1770 - 1858)**

The date of its construction has not been determined but has been estimated at circa 1830. This date would place the folly within the time of **John Warneford Armstrong (1770 - 1858)**. Perhaps it was designed to celebrate the return of John Warneford Armstrong to the family home in 1826.

Conceivably it may have been built by his grandfather Warneford Armstrong during the remodelling of the house giving it a far earlier date of around 1766.



John Warneford Armstrong, portrait courtesy of Henry Lamb, Woodfield House

Setting

The folly at Ballycumber is set within a designed, naturalised landscape, to the rear of the house.

Described by Howley Hayes as: *‘The visual impact of the flying buttresses is particularly striking creating an attractive and varied silhouette. ...a fine example of its type and most likely a relatively early example of an ornamental garden building in Ireland.’*



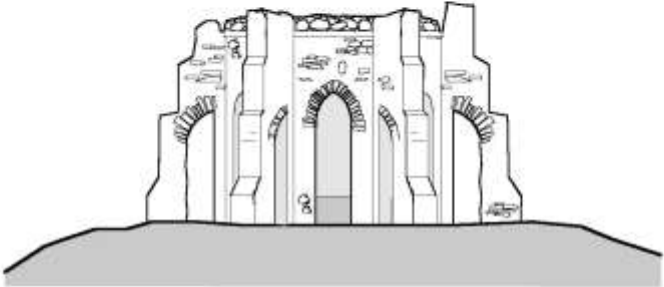
1838 Ordnance Survey
Detail—redrawn

‘It has an interesting and unusual form, creates an impressive eye catcher in the landscape and provides excellent views from within.’

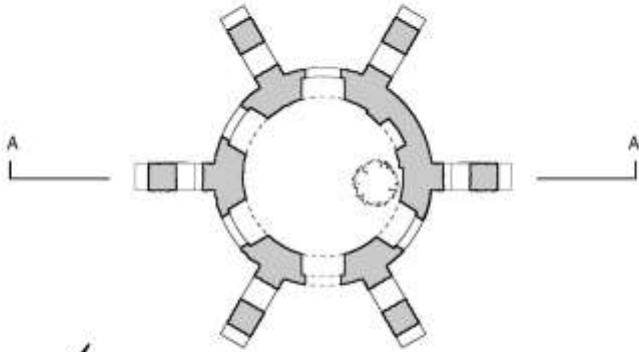




BALLYCUMBER FOLLY



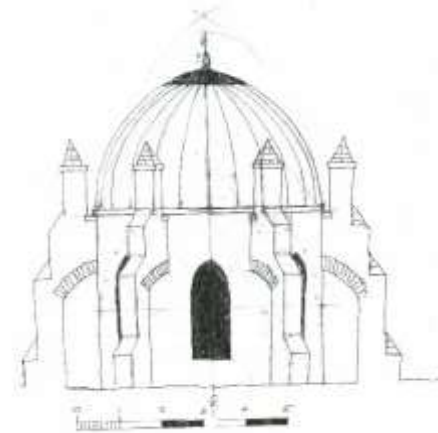
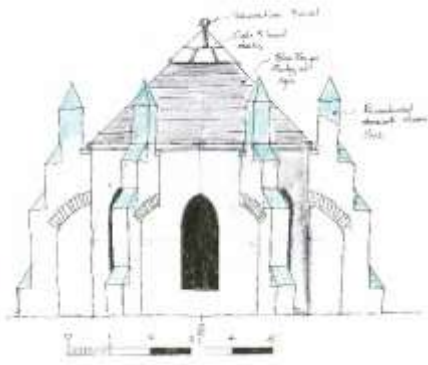
SOUTH EAST ELEVATION



PLAN



Process



- In 2018 the owner commissioned a report on proposed repairs to the folly carried out by Southgate and Associates
- Works commenced on site in July 2019 with Clancy and Partners
- Phase 1 Repair existing, 2019
- (Phase 2 Options for roof reconstruction)
- Funding was secured as follows to carry out Phase 1:
 - Owner
 - Creative Ireland
 - Irish Georgian Society
 - The Follies Trust
 - Offaly County Council



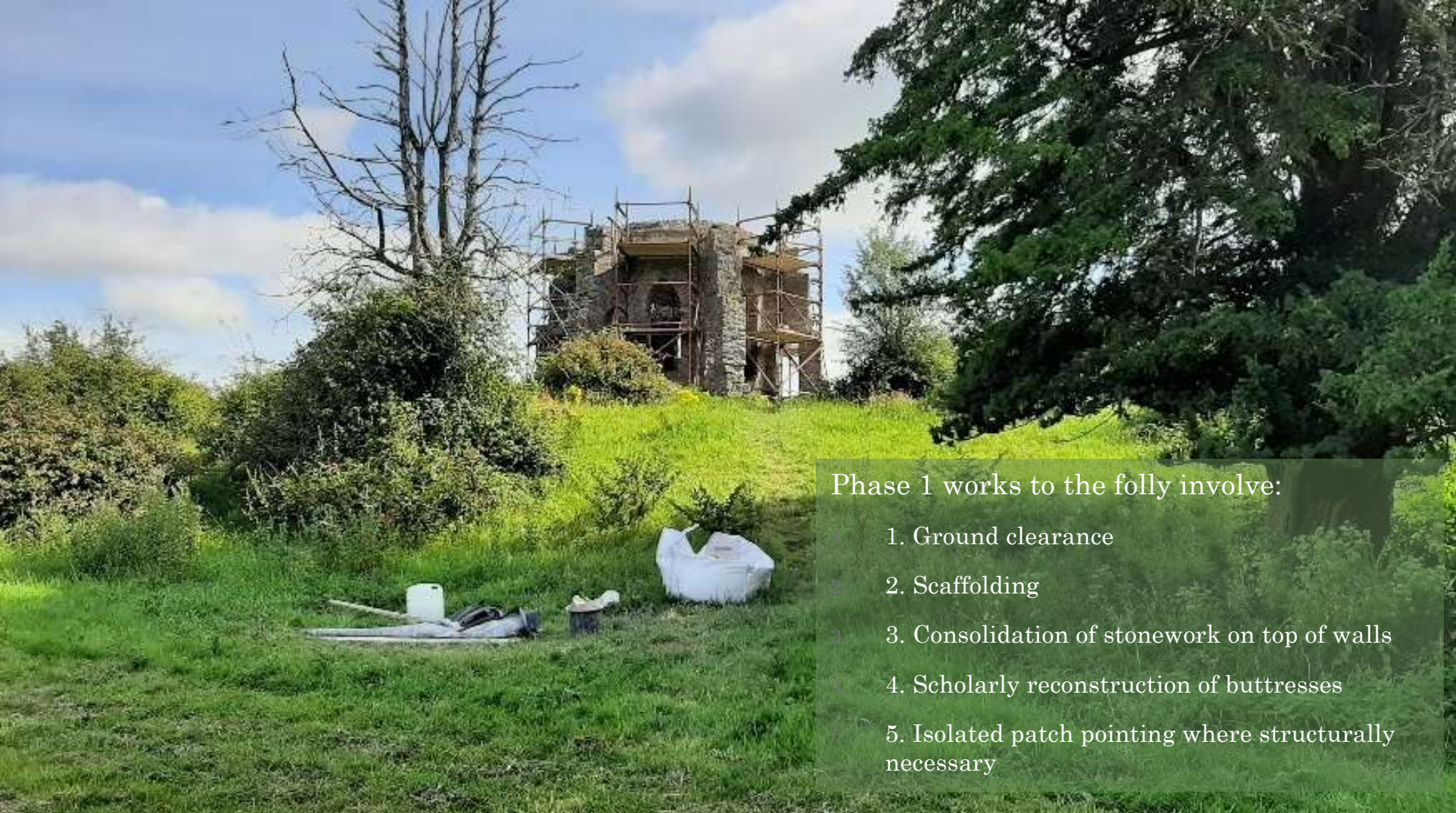
Follies Trust Visit

2019_0613



Heritage Week – Tour of House + Folly

2019_0821



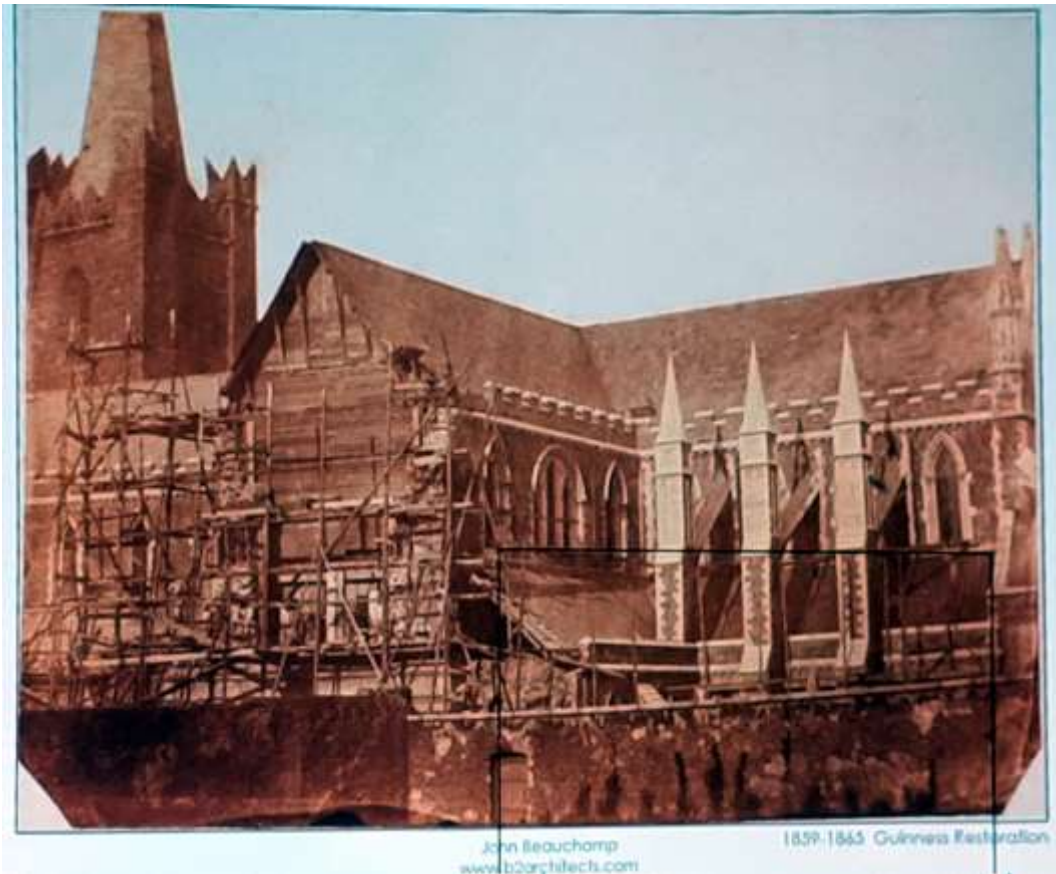
Phase 1 works to the folly involve:

1. Ground clearance
2. Scaffolding
3. Consolidation of stonework on top of walls
4. Scholarly reconstruction of buttresses
5. Isolated patch pointing where structurally necessary

2019 Programme of works

Extract from Report by Southgate Associates

Batty Langley Lodge, Castletown Estate, Leixlip. Bellevue Gothic Cottage, Lawrencetown, Co. Galway – built possibly circa 1782 with other Gothic aspects of estate. One of few examples of flying buttresses used in garden buildings in Ireland.



1. Ground clearance – internal and external



2. Vegetation removal and Scaffolding



3. Consolidation of stonework



Drone footage 2018_1120 + Site photos 2019_0801



Consolidation

Drone footage 2018_1120



Consolidation

Site photos 2019_0918



Consolidation and Buttress repair

Site photos 2019_1003



Consolidation and Buttress repair

Site photos 2019_1022



- Vegetation growth and mortar loss
- Works involved treating and removing ivy



- Deterioration to the stonework eaves level
- Deep pointed with lime mix and pinning stones to match



- Mortar was pressed and recessed and pigmented with burnt umber to match original pointing.



Chimney – unblock and repair



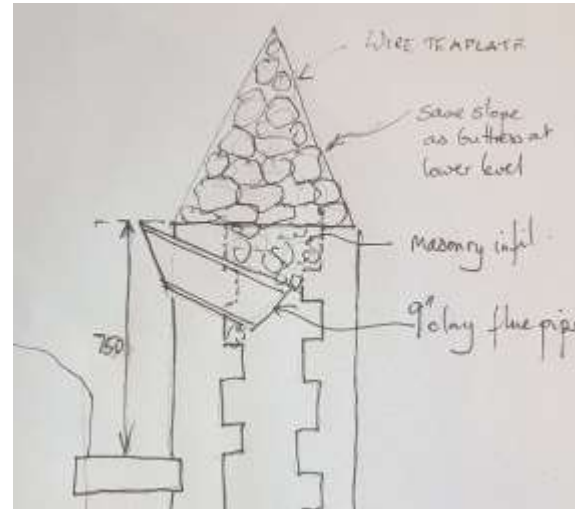
Chimney and flue (through buttress)



4. Buttress repair



Pinnacle + flue methodology





2019_1003

Progress to date

RMcK 2019



Capping and Buttress repairs

Drone footage 2018_1120



17 September 2019



03 October 2019



20 November 2018



22 October 2019



View through doorway towards river 2019_1022 (+ former internal view)



External doorway (river elevation) 2012_1212



External doorway (river elevation) 2019_0918



External doorway (river elevation) 2019_1022

