

## NIEA Property Evaluations

### Background

NIEA is currently engaged in the Second Survey of all of Northern Ireland's building stock to update and improve on the first List of buildings of special architectural or historic interest which began in 1974. The second survey is due to be completed by 2016.

In considering whether to include a building as Listed, the Department (NIEA) takes into account the architectural and historic interest of a structure and is also given the power to consider:-

- any respect in which its exterior contributes to the architectural or historic interest of any group of buildings of which it forms part; and
- the desirability of preserving, on the ground of its architectural or historic interest, any feature of the building which consists of a manmade object or structure fixed to the building or which forms a part of the land and which is comprised within the curtilage of the building.

Should the Department (NIEA) decide to list, this places certain responsibility on the owner, for example, a listed building has to be maintained in a way appropriate to its character and cannot be altered or demolished without prior approval.

The summary below is taken from the NIEA property evaluation and details the evaluation in relation to the class of listing proposed.

1. **A Chapel at Dominican College, 38 Fortwilliam Park, Belfast NB26/46/003B** – A very good example of a modernist chapel dating from 1964 to designs by architects William Bready and constructed by P.F. Kerr of Belfast. Situated at Dominican College, Fortwilliam it features an unusual wedge-shaped plan form, accommodating school oratory to east and main chapel to west with curved walls and two single storey flat-roofed curving corridors connecting the chapel to the school building to N. The imposing swept curvilinear roof references the work of Le Corbusier in Ronchamps and the prominent Irish architect Liam McCormick. The interior of the chapel has remained intact since its construction and boasts a series of impressive vertical floor to ceiling stained glass windows by Daniel Braniff and furnishings that compliment the clarity and elegance of the architect's design. The building is located within the large grounds of the Dominican College to the N side of Fortwilliam Park on a site including Walton House (listed under HB26.46.003 A).

Proposed NIEA listing - **B2**, Extent of proposed Listing – **Chapel** (currently not listed).

2. **B Cavehill Methodist Church, 92-114 Cavehill Road, Belfast HB26/44/067** – An idiosyncratic two-storey rustic red-brick hipped roof church in eclectic modern style dating from 1955-57 to designs by the architects Young and Mackenzie. One of the few Methodist Churches designed by the firm, one of the leading architects to the Presbyterian Church in Ulster and a late example of their work, which is typically more classical in style. Cruciform plan with a three-stage hipped roof tower to E and single-storey hipped roof Hall to SW. Featuring a distinctive tower to the centre of the principal elevation with a swept hipped roof, diamond-patterned cast stone openwork and copper spike. The church retains a fine interior with original panelled walls and original alter furniture. The building occupies a prominent site fronting onto Cavehill Road and has group value with Newington Presbyterian Church (HB26/48/010A) another 1950s Young and MacKenzie church designed in a similar idiom, and located nearby on the Limestone Road.

Proposed NIEA listing – **B2**, Extent of proposed Listing – **Church and hall** (currently not Listed)

3. **C Newington Presbyterian Church, Limestone Road, Belfast HB26/48/010A** – 20th - century semi-detached rustic brick Presbyterian Church of rectangular plan facing north-west. Built 1951 to the designs of Young and MacKenzie, one of the leasing architects to the Presbyterian Church in Ulster. It is a good example of their later work, which is typically more classical in style. Four-bay nave to north-east side have projecting gable to east; bell tower and single storey entrance porch to north-west. Attached to Newington Church Hall (HB26/48/010B) to south-west. The building is dominated by an austere four-stage bell-tower., ‘Art Deco’ in style, with recessed upper-stage. The church retains a fine interior with much of the original ‘Art Deco’ detailing largely intact. Located on an elevated site on the south-west side of the Limestone Road, together with the adjoining church hall (HB26/48//010B) and community buildings adjacent, the building makes a positive contribution to the character of the local area and has group value with Cavehill Methodist Church (HB26/44/067), another 1950s Young and MacKenzie church designed in a similar idiom, and located nearby on the Cavehill Road.

Proposed NIEA listing – **B2**, Extent of proposed Listing – **Church and Walling** (currently not Listed)

4. **D Newington Presbyterian Church Hall, Limestone Road, Belfast HB26/48/010B**- A five-bay single-storey brick church, built c. 1955 to the designs of Young and MacKenzie on rectangular plan and attached to Newington Presbyterian Church (HB26/48/010A). The building retains its internal and external appearance and its original ‘Art Deco’ style doorways, stage area and leaded glass windows. It forms one of a group of structures surrounding Newington Presbyterian Church. The adjoining community hall was re-built by the local community and is of some technological significance due to the size of the concrete beams to the roof. The school house, dating from the first phase of buildings on site c. 1897, to the south of the complex retains some original features including the roof structure which comprises of original timber trusses and later steel ties. The building has group value with the attached church and is of architectural, historic and social interest having served the local community since the mid-twentieth century.

Proposed NIEA listing – **B2**, Extent of proposed Listing – **Church halls and former schoolhouse** (currently not Listed)

5. **E Blackstaff Mill, 77-129 Springfield Road, Belfast HB26/31/008** – Although of utilitarian design, this mill complex is of architectural interest because of its scale, massing and embellished brickwork so typical of later 19th century flax spinning mills. The three-dimensional relationship of the floors, both within and between the two main blocks, is also of interest, as is the positioning of the engine room on the gable. The fireproof jack-arch system of the ceiling of the Old and New Mills are of structural interest. The timber and metal roof of the Old Mill also contrasts with the reinforced concrete of the New Mill. The heightening of the Old Mill and the New Mill extension can all be read in the buildings’ fabric and reflects the enlargement of the premises (and its economic success) over the first 50 years of its life. The survival of the adjoining chimney also gives it a degree of group value.

Historically the complex is also of significance. Its inception reflects the boom in Ireland’s linen industry in the mid - 1860s as a consequence of the American Civil War and resultant cotton famine. Its association with the Malcomsons, a prominent Irish Quaker family, and one of the foremost industrialists in Ireland at that time, is also of note. Although many of the doors and windows have been reframed, most of the original wall and roof fabric survives. The mill is also of social and economic significance, having given employment to many generations in the locality. An increasingly-rare survival of many such spinning mills which once operated throughout West Belfast, it is also of local interest.

Proposed NIEA listing – **B2**, Extent of proposed Listing – **Old Mill, New Mill and Engine House** (currently not Listed)

6. **F Former Short Brothers HQ, Airport Road, Belfast HB26/07/014** – Three-storey, 19-bay steel framed, 20th century industrial office building with red-brick cladding constructed in 1941, possibly by the architects Hobart & Heron. Constructed as the Headquarters for the Belfast Branch of Short Brothers, aircraft manufacturing business, it was originally a two-storey structure and was raised to three-storey in 1945 when a further two-storey block was erected to the north-west. A good example of a twentieth century administration building with features typical of the era including, a flat concrete roof, red-brick cladding with pilaster-style detailing to building frame and windows with multiple horizontal glazing bars. The central entrance bay has a pedimented gable two-story limestone entrance screen with ‘Art Deco’ style ‘Giant Order’ and geo-metric detailing and the building retains original ‘Art Deco’ staircases internally. Despite the original metal windows being replaced and the interior having been modernised, the building retains its essential character. Located on the north side of Airport Road in the new Titanic Quarter and still in use by the aircraft manufacturing industry, it is an important part of the industrial, economic and social heritage of Belfast.

Proposed NIEA listing – **B2** Extent of proposed Listing – **Offices** (currently not Listed)

7. **G Portmore Trading Estate, 310 Newtownards Road, Belfast HB26/07/013**  
Architecturally, this four-storey mill is typical of late 19th and early 20th century spinning mills, being constructed of brick, having regular fenestration to all floors, and a modicum of embellishment in the brickwork’s detailing. A significant amount of the mill’s fabric appears to be original and largely intact. The various floors were used for sequential parts of the spinning process. The engine room indicates how the machinery was driven and the fact that it abuts the mill indicates the direct drive between engine and machinery. Its structural system is also of interest as it appears to comprise flat concrete ceilings supported on exposed I-beams, as opposed to the more common brick jack arches.

Historically, the mill is of interest in being of relatively late date; most of Belfast’s spinning mills date from the mid/late 1800s and its link with the Jaffe Brothers and Mackies are also of note. The mill is of economic importance in giving employment to local people for many decades. Now converted into small units for various business enterprises and being one of the few spinning mills on the Co. Down side of the Lagan, it is of significant local interest.

Proposed NIEA listing – **B2**, Extent of proposed Listing – **Mill, Engine House, weighbridge, cobbled yard & walling** (currently not Listed)

8. **H Imperial Buildings, 70-74 High Street, 19-21 Skipper Street, Belfast HB26/50/313**- A four storey, with attic, commercial building, designed by W.J. Gilliland in 1907. The Baroque style of the predominantly brick building is unusual, with robust proportions and articulation of the facade including fine stonework details. It is a good example of the type representing the ongoing commercial development of the city centre in the early Twentieth century, as well as a survival from the Belfast Blitz. It is also a good example of the work of a noteworthy architect.

Proposed NIEA listing – **B2**, Extent of proposed Listing – **Shops and Offices** (currently not listed)

9. **108 North Street & 1 Gresham Street, Belfast HB26/50/321** – Three-storey stucco corner block built as the Gas Showrooms, c 1908, reputedly designed by James Gable. Embellished by the application of heavy mouldings and decorative motifs the building represents the aspirations of the Gas Company in the new century. Also of interest as a new building type – showrooms – reflecting the continued expansion and progress of the commercial centre of the city.

Proposed NIEA listing – **B1**, Extent of proposed Listing – **Shop** (currently not Listed)

**Note:**

Listed buildings in Northern Ireland are divided into four categories:

**Grade A**

Special buildings of national importance including both outstanding grand buildings and the fine, little altered examples of some important style or date.

**Grade B+**

Special buildings that might have merited A status but for relatively minor detracting features such as impurities of design, or lower quality additions or alterations. Also buildings that stand out above the general mass of grade B1 buildings because of exceptional interiors or some other features.

**Grade B1 and B2**

Special buildings of more local importance or good examples of some period of style. Some degree of alteration or imperfection may be acceptable.