

REPORT

Date	01/09/2015
Revision 001	01/09/2015
Author	Leighton Carr
Subject	Outlining the design development of the current scheme as at 1 st September 2015

Introduction

This short report outlines issues and influences that have shaped the design development of the sketch scheme presented to a statutory consultation panel which included the DAC in January 2015, and presented now to the DAC for informal comment.

The history of the RENEWCHRISTCHURCH project goes back ten years but is only in the past eighteen months that a scheme has been developed that works well with the context of the building as well as the with the aspirations of the current church family.

Since consulting with statutory bodies in January this year the design team and the church team have worked closely to bring more detail to the scheme. The main factors that have impacted the scheme are as follows:

Church consultation and briefing

The church RENEW team ran a full consultation within the congregation in March this year to ensure that the project had addressed current aspirations of the church members and leadership. The RENEW team received over 200 individual and comprehensive views through questionnaires, interviews and meetings. The essential points to come out of that consultation were these:

1. **Modernise** - the project should modernise the spaces and systems while respecting the existing architecture
2. **Community** – the project should make the building open and widely accessible to the whole community in the parish and wider community, both during the day and in the evenings
3. **Hospitality** – that the building should allow hospitality to be provided to people of any age or physical ability, from the congregation or from the community
4. **Flexibility** – that the building can be used by different groups at different times to allow community uses as well as church uses to run simultaneously

Vision development

Partly in response to the consultation and partly as a result of discussions among leadership and PCC groups, the vision was developed to offer clarity to the project and to identify a clear strategy for creating an ‘open all day’ resource for the people of Clifton. The diagram below showed how the vision has been simply communicated to the team and the congregation.

This vision has subsequently been developed further by naming spaces: the first floor community space is now defined as the **‘Christ Church Village Hall’**, located on Christ Church Green; the ground floor is called **‘The Venue’**, reflecting the wider uses for arts and performance expected alongside Sunday worship; the lower ground floor has been identified as the **‘Christ Church Family Centre’** building on its current daytime community use for pre-school and toddlers, and the general church focus on marriage and parenting courses.

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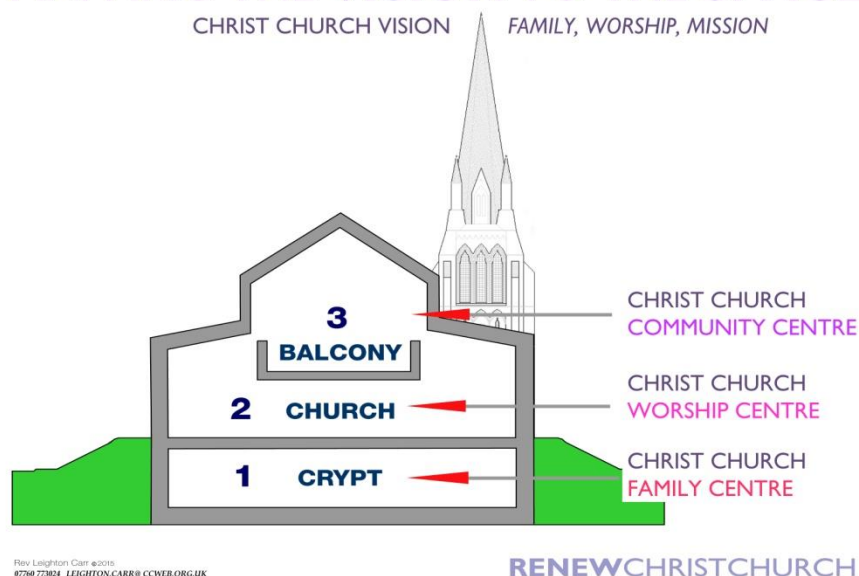
RENEWCHRISTCHURCH

Improving Presence • Improving Function • Improving Space
transforming the building for a new season of growth

Christ Church Clifton

MAPPING THE VISION TO THE SPACE

CHRIST CHURCH VISION FAMILY, WORSHIP, MISSION



Statutory consultations

The statutory bodies consulted in January 2015 were very encouraging about the new design. Several particular points were made which have informed the evolution of the design to its current layout.

1. There was broad agreement that the pews remaining in the church were neither of a high quality nor of great historical significance and no objections were raised to their removal
2. The specific observation was made by the Church Buildings Council that the first floor might be better considered as a space that connects to the fabric in some way rather than as a freestanding 'pod'
3. The location of the ramp for disability access in the west bank of the church was questioned because of its impact on the views of the west end of the church from Christchurch Green.

Function and costs

As the consultation was being carried out and the vision was evolving, the RENEW team and the professional design team interrogated the sketch scheme to review functionality, aesthetics and costs. A number of significant observations arose from this process:

1. **On function**
 - a. The location of the lift, the large semi-circular staircase and the coffee bar in the nave severely restricted the desired free flowing and open use of ground floor space
 - b. The freestanding 'pod' at first floor level offered no sound proof ceiling over the proposed entry foyer, which would lead to noise interference between circulation and worship spaces

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- c. The first floor 'pod' was shown as a board room but in fact could accommodate over 100 people for a range of uses.
- d. If used for 100 people the enclosed first floor 'pod' would need to be highly serviced and highly engineered

2. On Aesthetic

- a. Development of design of the first floor 'pod' showed that the engineering requirements to support the pod would significantly alter the slim-line aesthetic proposed in the sketch scheme¹

3. On costs

- a. The sketch scheme presented in January 2015 was accompanied by an outline budget. As specific building items were investigated in more depth it became clear that the real costs were rising significantly. This was particularly true of the first floor 'pod'.

Clarifying the brief

The response of the Christ Church RENEW team to the four areas outlined above - Church consultation² and briefing, Vision development, Statutory consultations and Function and costs – was to clarify the brief for the professional team. The new brief has some key elements among which some of the most significant are:

1. The access, spaces and flow should be organised to allow for 'open all day' public use with permanent hospitality offered in a coffee bar³
2. Sufficient flexible breakout space to accommodate Sunday and midweek arts activities
3. A prioritised community access point should be considered using the south (tower) entrance to a fully equipped first floor space or 'Village Hall' where fully equipped' means:
 - a. adequate WC provision for a variety of public evening uses
 - b. separate kitchen facilities for community use on the first floor with dumb waiter to serve food to ground floor level
 - c. suitable vertical circulation including lift access from a secure lobby to allow simultaneous evening use on first floor and other uses on ground and lower ground floors
4. Reconfiguration of lower ground floor to allow adequate WC and kitchen provision for general use, including full access for buggies and wheelchairs to existing north east entrance

¹ See Mann Williams Drawing attached which shows final sectional profile of the 'pod'

² A full version of the consultation report is attached, along with File Note 006, which identifies how the current scheme meets concerns raised in the consultation.

³ As an example of current demand and use, between 400 and 500 people, many of them parents and children from the local community, visited the drop in 'Cream Tea' held in the church on bank holiday Monday 31st August 2015.

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Synthesis and resolution

The current scheme submitted with this report is an exciting evolution of the initial sketch scheme that reflects the many influences brought to bear over the last six months. In its broad organisation it offers the church and the parish community a well ordered and elegant group of spaces:

Ground floor – The Venue:

The west entrance with a new smaller draught lobby brings visitors into an open church space. On the left (north) is a large open area set up as a community café and on the right (south) is a new screen wall containing a serviced area and secure lobby to the first floor.

The community café has additional overflow space on the first floor accessed by a new staircase on the west end. The serviced area to the south includes new WCs and a new lift on a secure lobby for access to the first floor.

The new layouts allow for a usual Sunday capacity of 450 congregants, plus a further 50 seated in the café area, with a maximum of 700 seats on ground and first floor if all areas are fully used.

The south entrance through the tower is a dedicated community and evening use entrance. This allows the first floor to be used without requiring access to the church. At entrance level an evening user can access WCs, a secure lift lobby, and a new staircase to first floor.

At the east end the 1980's additions will be removed creating a smaller dais and greater level floor area in the nave.

First Floor – Community Space:

The first floor 'pod' proposed in the sketch scheme has been replaced by a full width floor plate extending from north to south external walls, and extending eastwards into the nave to the same point as the sketch scheme 'pod'.

The first floor divides into secure and open areas. The open area is over the north aisle and is an overflow breakout space over the coffee area. This space can also be used for overflow seating for larger services.

The secure areas are accessible from the south entrance and are available for separate evening use by the community or church family. The main central space is flexible and can seat either 120 people for small performances, or around 70 people around tables, or it can be divided into four meeting rooms. This first floor area is served by a new fully fitted kitchen and in certain circumstances the space can open onto the open gallery space in the north aisle offering further breakout spaces.

Lower Ground Floor – Family Centre

The reconfiguration of the upper levels requires changes to the lower ground level. This is a highly used area of the church, and the changes proposed improve the WC provision, the storage, the kitchens and the access arrangements, particularly for children and people with disabilities.

Rev Leighton Carr • September 2015
Associate Minister • Christ Church Clifton