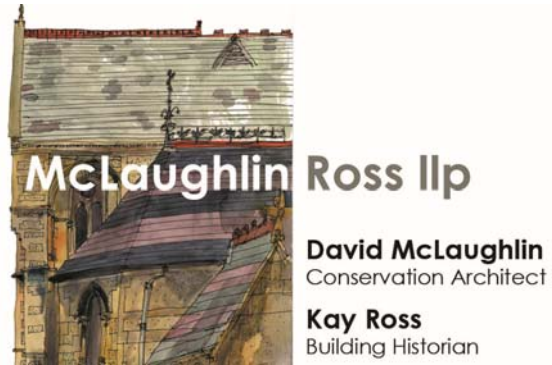




**Christ Church Downend**

**Learning to Live the Life**



# **Statement of Need Christ Church Downend**

## **June 2016**

McLaughlin Ross llp  
Members David McLaughlin and Kay Ross  
Registered in England and Wales, Limited Liability Partnership Number OC315256  
Registered Office 4 Springfield Cottages, Brewery Hill, Upton Cheyney, BS30 6NA  
VAT Registration number 923 8793 86

## Christ Church, Downend Statement of Need contents

section	topic	page
	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3 - 4</b>
<b>Section 1</b>	<b>General information</b>	<b>5 – 9</b>
	<b>Basic facts</b>	<b>5 – 6</b>
	<b>General Information</b>	<b>7 – 9</b>
<b>Section 2</b>	<b>What do you need?</b>	<b>10 – 11</b>
<b>Section 3</b>	<b>The proposals</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Section 4</b>	<b>Why do you need it and why do you need it now?</b>	<b>11 – 22</b>
4.1	<b>Why do we need it?</b>	<b>11 – 13</b>
4.2	<b>Why do we need it now?</b>	<b>14</b>
4.3	<b>What is the evidence of the need?</b>	<b>15 – 18</b>
4.4	<b>How is the proposal contributing to the need for environmental sustainability?</b>	<b>18 – 21</b>
4.5	<b>What other options to meet the need were considered, taking section 4.4 and the impact identified in the Statement of Significance into account?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Section 5</b>	<b>Justification</b>	<b>24 – 42</b>
5.1	<b>Addendum to Statement of Need – Response to DAC Comments (November 2013) – information only; partly superseded</b>	<b>24 – 32</b>

<b>5.2</b>	<b>Addendum to Statement of Need – Response to CBC Comments (August 2014) – information only; partly superseded</b>	<b>33 – 38</b>
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Further Addendum to Statement of Need – Response to South Gloucestershire Council Faculty objections</b>	<b>39 - 41</b>
<b>5.4</b>	<b>Further Addendum to Statement of Need – Review of amended proposals against Historic England (English Heritage) comments</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>Church Buildings Council advice on Statements of Need</b>	<b>43 – 44</b>
<b>Appendix 2</b>	<b>The Vision for Christ Church, Downend: A Sacred Space – a Public Place</b>	<b>45 – 47</b>
<b>Appendix 3</b>	<b>Christ Church, Downend: A Sacred Space: A Place of (or a centre for) Community, Creativity and Spirituality</b>	<b>48 – 49</b>
<b>Appendix 4</b>	<b>Imagining a month at Christ Church Downend</b>	<b>50 – 51</b>

## **Introduction**

**The purpose of this Statement of Need is to explain the needs of the Parish and community of Christ Church, Downend to realise the witness and mission of the Church in Downend and its environs.**

**This Statement of Need was prepared by the Reverend Jonathan Vickery, Vicar of Christ Church, Downend and David McLaughlin, Conservation Architect, McLaughlin Ross llp with additional information from Linda Farrow, Matt Harrison, Vicki Cullimore and the Landscape Architecture team at White Design, and subsequent input from members of the ‘Building for Life’ Team at Christ Church Downend.**

**The first draft of this Statement of Need was prepared in September 2011 and was based on the Church Buildings Council’s earlier advice on Statements of Need. The Statement of Need was subsequently amended in May 2013 and the Parish prepared a detailed response to the Bristol DAC’s comments in November 2013. These comments are set out for information purposes in section 5.1 below.**

**As a result of the introduction of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 the Church Buildings Council (CBC) was subsequently consulted. A site visit with the CBC, parish and the architects took place in July 2014. The CBC's advice and the Parish's detailed responses of August 2014 are set out for information purposes in section 5.2 below.**

**The Statement of Need was further amended by Christ Church Downend in October 2015, and again in June 2016, to reflect a series of amendments made to the Faculty application to address comments raised by South Gloucestershire Council and other consultees. An overview of these amendments and their rationale is provided in section 5.3.**

**It should be noted that the responses contained in section 5.1 and 5.2 are in part superseded by subsequent changes to the scheme designed to address ongoing comments and concerns raised by consultees. They have been retained within this Statement of Need in order to provide a comprehensive overview of the 'journey' which has taken us to the scheme the subject of the current application for a Faculty. We have indicated those elements of the responses which are no longer relevant to the revised proposals.**

## Section 1: General information

### Basic facts

**Parish:** Downend

**Dedication:** Christ Church

**Benefice:** Christ Church, Downend

**Diocese:** Bristol

**Address:** Christ Church, Downend Road, Downend, South Gloucestershire, BS16 5UF

**Grid ref:** ST6496576496

**Local Planning Authority:** South Gloucestershire

**County:** South Gloucestershire

**Statutory Listing of church:** Grade II

extract from Images of England:



© Mr Mike Martin

IoE Number: 28781

Location: CHRIST CHURCH, DOWNEND ROAD (south side)  
KINGSWOOD, SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Photographer: Mr Mike Martin

Date Photographed: 07 April 2002

Date listed: 15 July 1981

Date of last amendment: 15 July 1981

Grade II

**Statement of Need: Christ Church, Downend**

© McLaughlin Ross llp August 2014 www.mclross.co.uk

The Images of England website consists of images of listed buildings based on the statutory list as it was in 2001 and does not incorporate subsequent amendments to the list. For the statutory list and information on the current listed status of individual buildings please go to The National Heritage List for England.

5118EX-MANGOTSFIELD UD DOWNEND ROAD (south side) Christ Church ST 67 NW 1/185

1. 5118 EX-MANGOTSFIELD UD DOWNEND ROAD (south side) Christ Church ST 67 NW 1/185 II 2. 1831, by Oliver Greenway, local architect. Chancel 1914. Coursed pennant rubble with ashlar dressings, slate roof (chancel tiled), west end has coped gable with side pinnacles and a 2-light belfry with a pierced spirelet, angle buttresses and 2 side lancets. Central 3-light pointed window with intersecting tracery. Tudor arch doorway with panelled doors and carved spandrel. Five bay nave with ashlar parapet, 3-light lancets with intersecting tracery and headstops to labels. Dividing buttresses. Two bay chancel and tower vestry to north-east. Tower chapel to south-east. Rose window to east. Most prominent feature is panelled screen on roof above chancel arch with side belfries and pierced spirelets. Interior: wide auditorium type.

<http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk/Details/Default.aspx?id=28781&mode=adv> accessed 7 August 2011

**Statutory designation for structures and objects within churchyard:** not applicable

**Conservation Area:** not applicable

**Scheduled Monument:** not applicable

**Tree Preservation Orders:** The trees in the churchyard are subject to a Tree Preservation Order dated April 1994 made by the former Kingswood Borough Council. Following Local Government Reorganisation in April 1996 the local planning authority is now South Gloucestershire Council.

**Any other designations:** not applicable

## General Information

### How many people live in the parish/ village/ town?

Approximately 27,000

### What different type of services take place in the church each week/ month and how many people attend each of the different services on average?

**Morning Worship**, 9.15am – Common Worship with traditional hymns (Morning Worship on 1st and 3rd Sundays, Holy Communion on 2nd and 4th, and Breakfast with communion on 5th Sunday) at Church Centre, Quakers Road, Bromley Heath, Bristol, BS16 6NH. Average attendance: 35 – 40

**Morning Worship**, in nave and chancel, 10.30am - contemporary, creative worship. All Age worship on 1st Sunday and Holy Communion on 2nd Sunday of the month, morning worship all other Sundays (including Parade services at Festivals). Refreshments are served in church immediately after service, and the majority of the congregation stay for this. Average attendance: 150 – 200.

A Crèche is available, held in the meeting room at the eastern end of the church; average attendance: 7.

Worship activities and teaching for Children are held in the adjacent school / church hall at this time:

- Sparklers 3 – 5s: average attendance 10 – 15
- Connect 5 – 11s: average attendance 20 – 25
- Youth Groups: average attendance 20 - 30

**Evening Worship**, 6.30pm - reflective, unhurried worship. Holy Communion on 1st and 3rd Sundays, Celtic Evening Worship and Service of Prayer for Healing and Wholeness on 2nd and 5th Sundays – times for stillness and reflection. Average attendance: 30 – 40. Typically held in chancel area.

### Mid-week

**Monday Morning Prayer**, 9.15 – 9.45am. Average attendance : 5. Typically held in reception area prayer corner.

**Tuesday Open Church** 9am – 3pm Range of prayer, meditation, bible readings and refreshments served through the day Average 15- 30

**Wednesday Prayer and worship**, 7am. Average attendance: 12

**Wednesday Messy Church** 4.30 – 6.30 All ages/families together in Church and Parish Hall. Average attendance 90 (last Wednesday of the month)

**Thursday Holy Communion**, 9.30am. Average attendance: 40 – 50

**How many people are on the electoral roll?** 296

**What is the age profile of the congregation?**

0 – 95 – very mixed with significant number of young families.

**What children's provision is there? On Sundays and midweek? How many children attend these activities?**

Children's provision for Sunday services is as set out above. On the first Sunday of each month, the children remain in church for all age worship where the teaching and message is presented with the younger members of the congregation in mind.

**Tuesdays** Tower Club After School gathering for 4 – 7 year olds. 3.45 – 5pm Parish Hall  
Average attendance: 20 children

**Fridays**

Jigsaw: 'church' for preschoolers and parents/carers in Church 9.45am-11.30am.  
Average attendance: 15 children with a parent.

**Youth at Christ Church**

**Ignite Youth Groups**

Thursdays 6.30-7.45pm in Youth Hub for 10 to 13 year olds. And 8 – 9.15pm for 13 to 18 year olds. Social evening with structured faith based programme Average attendance: 80

**faith@Christ Church**

Is for young people aged 11+ that meets during the 10.30am service at Christ Church. Creating ways to nurture faith, to pray and to stimulate thought about the big issues of life. Average attendance: 15-20 .

**Elev8**

Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 7.30 – 9.15pm 13 – 18 year olds Average attendance: 10  
Wednesdays; 6.30 – 7.45pm Small group/Bible Study for 10 – 13 year olds Average attendance: 12

Taking a deeper look at areas of life that are challenging, confusing and exciting for teenagers today and applying Biblical teaching to their lives through prayer

**Drop in** after school on Fridays (3.30 – 5pm) Gathering in Youth Hub Average attendance: 20 – 25

In addition we run Youth weekends and mission trips, participate in the Noise (social action weekend) and teach sex and relationship education in local schools.

**Is the church normally left open during daylight hours?**

**Tuesday Open Church** 9am to 1pm

Open regularly 9am – 12 noon Thursdays

Some staff and clergy are based in the church building during weekdays



**What other activities happen in the church alongside prayer and worship?**

Public concerts; Theatre productions; School events eg Leavers' services, educational visits; Craft Group; Jigsaw; Flower arranging classes; music group practices; Youth band practices; Mothers' Union meetings; Meetings of small groups eg Church Wardens and clergy; PCC meetings; Prayer Ministry training; regular meetings with staff and parishioners.

**What is the financial position of the church (eg reserves, payment of quota).**

Parish share is paid in full £115,000 in 2015.

Reserves are adequate.

**Are funds available now?** Enough funds are in place to pay for work currently being undertaken on priorities for Quinquennial Inspection work (especially the south parapet gutter which has now been completed). The refurbishment of the adjacent parish hall and the creation of a Youth Hub has been completed and paid for. Architects' and consultants' fees up to RIBA Stage E for the proposed re-ordering of the church building have been paid in full. At 30 September 2015 there was 301,542.66 in the Building4Life fund.

As part of our Building 4 Life initiative we have committed to financing the building of a church for our mission partners in Moldova. This is happening alongside our project in Downend. To date we have been able to give £46,000 for this work through Transform Europe Now (TEN) and a member of our congregation has given an additional £60,000.

**Or have funds been applied for or are being applied for?**

A full fundraising programme will move forward once costs and concept designs have been agreed. The sum of £220,000 was raised including grants for the refurbishment of the adjacent church hall and creation of the Youth Hub. This part of the overall project was completed in September 2013. We are expecting to receive very shortly the proceeds of the sale of a property which will amount to approx. £295,000; in addition, a legacy to the church of £40,000 will be used for this project (due in 2016) and a further £70,000 has already been pledged by church members. This means that we will have approx. £705,000 ready to pay for the building work *before* we invite other church members to give to the project and apply for grants and explore further funding opportunities.

**When was the last Quinquennial report? What were the major issues which were highlighted? Are you on top of these issues?**

The last Quinquennial Inspection Report is dated June 2016 by Richard Pedlar of Richard Pedlar Architects (RPCA Ltd). All the work from 2010 has been undertaken with the exception of the flat roof repairs to the south side of the church extension. Government funding for the latter has been applied for. The main item highlighted in the 2016 inspection is the need for rewiring the electrical system. This will be done in conjunction with the building project. There were no other major works identified.

**Do you have a maintenance plan?**

Yes, five year asset management plan actively in use.

## Section 2: What do you need?

Please briefly explain your proposal.

You may find it helpful to divide the needs up into areas such as:

- **Facilities:** We need to eliminate the different floor levels that are a hazard especially for those with physical disability or restricted mobility and create an area that is fully integrated in its functionality. This will include an improved welcome area (the hub) which leads into the other areas of the church and which has greater flexibility of use, including the potential to be used for 'overspill' seating within busier services. We need improved kitchen facilities as the current provision is extremely small and cramped.

We need to provide improved toilet facilities at both ends of the church which provide adequately for the needs of the disabled, those with restricted mobility, and parents with young children.

- **Space:** We need a space where those coming into Christ Church immediately feel a sense of the sacred. We need a large space for 300+ people that is adaptable enough for acts of worship of different genres, community events and conferences. This will require the removal of the pews which are not part of the original fabric, and their replacement with high quality stackable chairs, thus affording the option of a number of different seating configurations. Alongside this we need a number of more intimate spaces for prayer and small groups, as well as shared workspaces primarily for staff. We need to provide well-equipped, safe spaces for our children's ministry and for community groups. We also need to improve and refurbish the existing single storey extension to the rear (east end) of the church and to improve its layout / configuration in order to increase its flexibility of use. We need a peaceful outside space for reflection and conversation for anyone to enjoy anytime.

We need to make the best use of our available space within the limited footprint of the existing church and propose to bring back into active use the room on the north side of the building situated to the rear of the organ which was until recently used for storage, and is now being used on a temporary basis as an office for the vicar. This has the potential to create a chapel which could be used for personal prayer / reflection and small services. We also propose to make good use of an area of poor quality outside space on the northern side of the building which contains the external steps to the crypt and which is currently subject to misuse particularly outside of daylight hours, which affords the potential for a small-scale extension to create additional usable space to help address the needs identified above.

- **Access:** We need to provide a new access to the church from the car park which is close to and has a sense of connection with the entrances to the Church school and Family Health Centre. It must be easy to use for those with disability or restricted mobility, and be well lit. As set out above we need to create a level unrestricted access throughout the building and eliminate the current restrictions on movement caused by level changes especially within the eastern part of the building.

- **Liturgy:** We need to be able to make 'liturgy live' by using it creatively in contexts that are most appropriate to its style and content. We need to have the capacity to make

the most of symbols and the power of the creative arts as vehicles to express worship and to communicate effectively in a less word-dependent culture. For this to become a reality the church needs to have a timeless quality that transcends any one style or period of architecture ie is classical in its form and function.

- **Other:** We need to install energy efficient heating and lighting systems to improve the internal amenity for users of the building and reduce our carbon footprint.

## **Section 3: The proposals**

**If you have prepared a brief for your architect explaining what you want to achieve, then you could append this for reference.**

See the extract from **The Vision for Christ Church Downend** in **Section 4.1 below** and the full text of **The Vision for Christ Church Downend** in **Appendix 2 for the brief to the architect.**

## **Section 4: Why do you need it and why do you need it now?**

### **4.1 Why do you need it?**

**How will this proposal help the ministry of the church?**

#### **The Vision for Christ Church Downend**

Christ Church has for almost 200 years been a place of worship for the people of Downend and beyond. The church has been cared for by succeeding generations who have seen fit to make some significant alterations to the building as its purpose has developed in a changing culture.

We are sensing God's call now to develop and extend the mission of Christ Church in a way that contributes to the building of community, the celebration of creativity and the nurturing of Christian Spirituality. However, the Parish Church is no longer fully 'fit for purpose' nor is it able to accommodate the ways that we see the church developing in the years ahead.

## **Christ Church: A Sacred Space – a Public Place**

There are 3 major aspects to the vision for the church –

- 1. Community: Open hospitality and building relationships**
- 2. Creativity: Uncluttered simplicity and vibrant expression**
- 3. Christian Spirituality: Going deeper with God and engaging with life**

### **Key Concepts**

The key concepts for the project, emanating from the consultation process, seek to describe the type of spaces which we believe Christ Church could provide:

- **Adaptable space** – where large, medium and small gatherings all fit well;
- **Simple space** – where the design of the building does not limit its uses;
- **Sacred space** – which speaks of the nature of God;
- **Worship space** – providing a setting for creative expressions of worship;
- **Intimate space** – making one feel at ease;
- **Gathering space** – providing a hub for meeting and milling;
- **Uncluttered space** – with no mess, not bitty, simple and open;
- **Beautiful space** – which speaks to the senses and feeds the soul;
- **Integrated space** – where people feel connected wherever they are;
- **Outside space** – which realises its potential;
- **Safe space** – for those of all ages and those with disabilities;
- **Sustainable space** – reflecting God's care for creation.

### **How will it enhance the liturgical space and services?**

The re-ordered church building will give us the ability to have different types of service within the different spaces including very small services in the new chapel area. Opportunity for more expressive forms of worship currently limited by fixed seating arrangements eg Use of large floor space in nave to create various types of labyrinth.

### **How will it help small group work and midweek meetings?**

The re-ordered church building will create a number of flexible spaces within the church which have the potential to accommodate different numbers of people, be used for different types of events and potentially concurrently. The new south access will enable the garden room etc to be used independently of the wider building giving significantly greater flexibility in the use of the church building.

### **How will it help the mission of the church?**

The potential for the church to be open during the week as part of mission within the wider community – facilitated by the improvements at the eastern end of the church building and its new south access will allow this part of the building (accessed from the car park and existing community facilities) to be opened on their own. This will allow staff members and volunteers to have office space located in the church creating a 'hub of life' throughout the week. Christ Church will become the central base for Christians Against Poverty (NE Bristol Office), a major facet of our mission in the local community.

The vision of Christ Church is 'learning to live the life.'

This is expressed in 3 dimensions of relationship – up towards God; in towards each other and out towards the world. The proposals envisaged would enhance every aspect of this vision:

Up – worship becomes more interactive and communication more meaningful;

In – fellowship becomes deeper and more relational;

Out – mission becomes more connected to the life of the community.

Our passion is to see God's people equipped for his purposes in the world, living out their faith in the whole of life. To this end Christ Church could become a centre in the deanery/diocese along the 'minster model' of ministry, with the ethos of the monastic mission centres of the early Celtic communities.

In addition, the decision taken by the PCC to tithe all the giving for this project (where legally possible) to help resource the Christian Church in Moldova with whom we have a close link through Transform Europe Now has resulted in a new church being built in one of the poorest villages in the poorest nation in Europe. It is also a source of blessing to Christ Church as we seek to give in response to God's generosity to us.

### **What new groups of people will be drawn into the life of the church?**

Once Christ Church is perceived as a place that has the capacity to be more than just a place of worship the need for good quality facilities in the area suggests that a high number of groups would be interested. This could include groups such as the History Society, Community Council, Bristol Stroke Foundation, Hope's Place (counselling), relaxation/meditation groups etc. The intention is also to improve the existing meeting rooms / function rooms within the south and eastern part of the church such that they could be used for community events, children's parties etc.

**Appendix 4, 'Imagining a month at Christ Church, Downend'** sets out the great potential of the re-ordered church building to accommodate such a wide range of uses in response to the needs of the local community as well as the Deanery and Diocese.

### **What new activities and events will be able to take place in the church?**

Messy Church, Diocesan training events and conferences, in-service training of teachers/social workers, toddler groups, Marriage Course, National Conference for Diocesan Advisory Committees! etc.

### **How will it help your financial situation?**

Through the new potential of the church to host such groups/events the fees from the hire of the church or parts of the church would be significant. And as members of Christ Church see impact of these things the motivation to give to resource God's work would also no doubt increase and enable its mission to expand further.

## 4.2 Why do you need it now?

**Describe any recent changes which have taken place which have led to the need arising, for example**

- **in the church congregation:** The process of consultation regarding the sorts of changes envisaged has been going on for more than 10 years, and is really the next phase of re-development that began when Jo Vickery was appointed vicar in 2002 and the decision to re-order the chancel and improve access to the west door was put into action. Since then the church has grown steadily, both in numbers and in its demographics – many more families are now part of the church. A range of ways of worshipping has been developed eg Celtic Evening Worship and Creative Evening Prayer. There is a growing desire among the church to make full use of the many creative gifts that exist. It is as if we are being seriously constrained by a building that was fine for the type of worship that was appropriate in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but now no longer has real relevance in the contemporary context. We are trying to be a parish church in a building that was never designed to be a parish church!
- **in the local area:** The population of our parish has rapidly grown to over 27,000 people in recent years, with more housing currently being built in Emerson's Green and further planned growth within the surrounding area. With improvements in transport links and increased accessibility via different transport modes, people are coming to Christ Church from well outside the parish boundaries (48% of the Electoral roll live outside the parish). In such a densely populated area the potential for mission and evangelism is huge, and the church building needs to be fit for this purpose.
- **in the church building:** The 2010 QI revealed important work that needed attention. Work has already been undertaken for lead gutter and roof repairs to the south parapet gutter; some repointing work to the south wall and flat roof repairs on the south side remain to be completed. The 2016 report highlighted the need to renew the electrical system. This work is seen as running alongside the re-ordering of the church to both maintain and extend its outreach ministry and set Christ Church in good order for succeeding generations.
- **in the financial situation:** We were bequeathed two legacies in 2011 (£17,700 and £24,800) that helped to fund the initial stages of the project. The members of the PCC gave £18,000 as a sign of commitment to the work and an additional promise of £180,000 was given by a church member in 2012. Some of this has been used to fund the fees to stage D. Ultimately, the church will become more vibrant and grow in numbers and income from direct giving and also benefit from the additional income from users of the building which will contribute to funding ministry and mission in the community and beyond.

## 4.3 What is the evidence for the need?

Please explain who has been consulted. This may include:

- church members
- wider parish
- potential user groups
- voluntary and statutory organisations
- amenity societies
- Diocesan bodies

Please outline the results of your consultations and the dates that they were made.

The consultation at Christ Church, Downend has been on-going for almost 10 years. We have now reached the end of the Stage D design and with energy and enthusiasm are now ready to take the project forward.

### Consultation History:

**2005 - Architects CPL were commissioned by Christ Church Downend** to undertake an option study to consider the feasibility of reordering or extending both the church building and the Parish Hall

**March 2008 - CPL held a consultation meeting.** Questionnaire. 31.6 % response rate

- Outcomes - Results were too qualitative, concerns over finance and the accuracy of the brief requirements
- Consultation suggests that work is also desperately needed at North Street Hall
- Recommended that a quantitative methodology may provide better data the next time

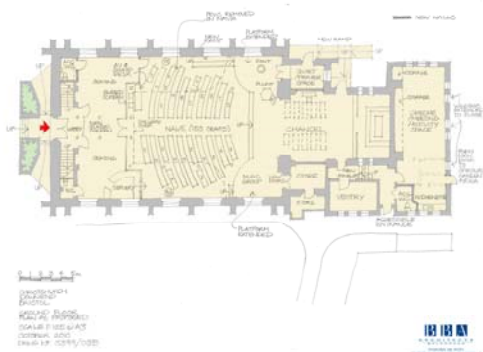
**April 2008 'An opportunity to comment'**

**November 2008 - Consultation Process II – report produced for project steering group**

- 58% response rate (responses were rated 1-4 with 4 agreeing the most)
- 52% agreed with the need of providing a flexible space (70% 3 or 4)
- 40 % agreed that light, colour and materials were important (61% 3 or 4)
- 51% agreed that removal of pews on ground floor was important (68% 3 or 4)
- 35% agreed that the balcony area needed to be more welcoming with safer and more comfortable seating (59% 3 or 4)
- 35% agreed that it would be good to make the windows larger and put doors out onto the patio area in God's church (60% 3 or 4)
- 52% agreed to reconfigure the teaching rooms and upgrade the toilet facilities (81% 3 or 4) (50% 3 or 4) for removing screens and doors
- 72% agreed to expand kitchen and toilet area to provide better facilities to improve external signage to church, lighting, notice boards (77% 3 or 4)
- 83% (3 and 4) agreed to the need to upgrading the hall, roof, kitchen and general refurbishment

(For more information, please see general conclusions in November 2008 consultation documentation)

## October 2010 - comments on the new plans produced by BBA



- Generally the majority of comments were positive, one of the main concerns relates to the size of the music group stage on the right and accessibility to the room behind
- Many members of the congregation were slightly unsure about moving the prayer room to the room that is currently used for storage. (Although, there is external access here which would be helpful when the main church is closed)
- Some people suggested that they would like the kitchen/servery to be big enough for jacket potatoes and soups (would like to do more catering)
- Flexible seating was an important consideration for the majority if the congregation. Many felt that it was also particularly important to focus on sustainability issues.
- **Notes from meeting at church Sunday 8 May 2011 - consultation**
- May be a good idea to move the stage slightly back
- Pulpit is slightly controversial (50/50 split). May work if it was on moveable wheels?
- Move organ as it stands
- Possibility of putting music group to the left hand side of the stage, which means we could still keep the access to the back rooms free on the right hand side
- Area at front in entrance is useful, we just need to make more of the notice boards etc as at the moment they are very hidden. Need more of a feature to pull you through?

## May 2011

White Design & McLaughlin Ross llp were appointed by the Parochial Church Council as architects and conservation architects respectively for the re-ordering of Christ Church, Downend.

As part of the consultation process within the Church, White Design reviewed the consultation documentation from 2005 through to May 2011. A new consultation process with church members began with White Design using a website to share information with members of the Buildings Team and Parochial Church Council. This has proved to be an invaluable tool and has allowed White Design to upload drawings for the PCC to comment on. At the beginning of the design process White Design received valuable thoughts and opinions from the congregation at an organised consultation event in which comments were used to refine and progress the design. It is essential that members of the congregation feel part of the design process and continue to engage with the congregation.



Oct 2011 - Stage C proposals completed. Presentation to PCC on 19 October 2011.

Consultation meetings were held at the church with the Bristol DAC on 03.12.2012 and 03.10.2013

Consultation meetings were held at the church with the PCC on 03.10.2011 and 02.12.2012 when the Stage C report was presented to the PCC

Consultation meetings were held at the church the with the Client's Building Team on 03.10.2011, 08.05.2012, 20.11.2012 and 16.01.2013.

### **Consultation workshop with the DAC, Amenity Societies, English Heritage and consultation with the Church Buildings Council**

A consultation workshop took place with the Bristol DAC, Victorian Society and English Heritage on the Stage D proposals and the Statement of Significance and the Statement of Need as part of the consultation process under the Faculty Jurisdiction. The Georgian Group were invited to attend but did not respond.

As a result of the introduction of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2013 the Church Buildings Council (CBC) was subsequently consulted. A site visit with the CBC, parish and the architects took place in July 2014. The CBC's advice and the Parish's responses are set out in section 5.2 below.

### **Consultation with South Gloucestershire Council, September 2015 and June 2016**

Further to the formal objections raised by South Gloucestershire Council's (SGC) Conservation Officer to the Faculty application submitted in September 2014 (letter from Robert Nicholson, Conservation Officer, dated 16 December 2014) further amendments have been made to the proposals to address SGC's principal areas of concern. Updated plans indicating proposed amendments, together with an accompanying commentary, were forwarded to SGC for comment in August 2015, and an indication received of 'in principle' support for the amended proposals, subject to confirmation on receipt of revised plans (email from Robert Nicolson dated 2 September 2015). Following some further minor adjustments as a result of additional comments received after re-consideration of the amended proposals by the DAC in January 2016, the detailed plans were forwarded to SGC in May 2016. The attached formal consultation response (refer to section 5.3) was received on 10 June confirming the SGC Conservation Officer's support for the revised proposals.

### **Please confirm whether proposed new partnerships / activities are aspirational or committed, and whether there is any opposition to your proposals.**

The consultation process has shown that there are varying views on some elements of the proposals but the PCC and DAC consider that there is sufficient support to proceed. Unpopular elements of previous schemes have been dropped.

The key areas of concern previously raised by third parties, in particular SGC but also Historic England (HE - formerly English Heritage) and the Church Buildings Council (CBC) related to the removal of the side galleries. These are now proposed for retention. Other previous issues of concern raised by SGC relating to changes in levels (with

associated modifications to the main entrance doors) and the loss of the pulpit have also been addressed in the amended proposals.

Considerable effort has been put into securing a solution that overcomes third party concerns yet still delivers the Vision outlined above. The Building for Life Team, in consultation with the project architects, White Design, have carefully considered the steps necessary to resolve the issues raised by SGC, HE and CBC, and the amended proposals are the result of a lengthy and thorough process of review, evaluation and revision. We believe that the amended proposals achieve a positive compromise between delivering the Church's Vision to create a place of worship that is a hub of life at the heart of the community, and which makes the best and most efficient use of the space we have available to us, whilst giving due weight to the architectural and conservation issues that the re-ordering proposals have raised.

**What market research has been undertaken? You may wish to include the results of surveys or community audits, letters from potential user groups as appropriate. Please supply a business plan if it has been prepared. What contingencies are prepared if the predicted levels turn out to be too low or high?**

Please refer to consultations outlined in section 4.3.

#### **4.4 How is the proposal contributing to the need for environmental sustainability?**

**How is it reducing the carbon footprint, contributing to the Church's commitment to reduce to 20% by 2050?**

Reducing the carbon footprint starts by considering a design that uses existing fabric efficiently and reduces the need for energy through thoughtful passive design principles. Reusing and extending the life of Christ Church is in itself a reduction in carbon emissions by reducing the need to build a new building of worship. The measures specified will need to work with the existing structure and wall construction to ensure a complementary enhancement to the environmental benefits of a church building, such as exposed thermal mass, lots of natural ventilation and therefore cool summer environment.

Performance and aesthetics are also extremely important and materials need to be selected with regard to these parameters to achieve a thoughtful approach to reducing carbon emissions. This requires experience and professional judgement to reach decisions appropriate to Christ Church's culture, beliefs and budget.

The proposals have given due consideration to passive design principles (e.g. orientation, natural ventilation, optimising daylight and detailing for air-tight construction). Further consideration will be given to core principles of sustainability as the project moves to the detailed design and specification stage. The design team's emphasis on sustainability will ensure we consider form, materials, light, ventilation, acoustics, energy use and waste, in a holistic way, while consideration will also be given to the external environment in particular the soft landscape around the building to ensure a synergistic approach with due regard to enhancing visual appearance and biodiversity.

The design proposal will develop a replicable, resourceful and measured strategy to Christ Church in Downend to reduce the carbon footprint of their poorly performing asset within the constraints of its listed status by:

1. Implementing building fabric improvements at roof and floor level and integrate lobby improvements at all entrance and egress points.
2. Assess the current electrical consumption through existing fittings and equipment and reduce consumption through improved control, efficiency and understanding of use patterns.
3. Provide these enhancements in as cost effective way and as sensitively as possible relative to the historical and listed environment to ensure future replicability. and provide a more relevant space for worship to the changing needs of a growing congregation.

### **Would the proposed changes increase or reduce the carbon footprint of your church? If increase, why is this necessary and will it be offset?**

The brief set out to reduce the carbon footprint of the church where possible. Employing passive design principles to buildings as a starting point to minimise material and energy impacts from the outset. Through development of the energy strategy the design team have thoroughly considered the existing site conditions and planning considerations. The design approach looks to minimise the building's impact on the environment. Reducing the carbon footprint starts by considering a design that uses existing fabric efficiently and goes on to specify materials as close to their natural, unprocessed state as possible and as close to their site of origin and production as possible. The design at Christ Church responds to natural environmental solutions for example maximising the natural light through the removal of the existing pews within the nave and creating floor length windows in the Garden Room. A simple change that will have a significant effect on the carbon emissions of the church will be the introduction of better controls and zoning for the heating systems. Currently when any part of the church is in occupation the whole building is heated.

### **How do the design, materials, water and waste handling address sustainability?**

The Christ Church project will consider water recycling where possible (for flushing toilets etc), low embodied energy materials (and some carbon negative materials such as Cross Laminated Timber if possible), and pre-fabrication construction methods which reduce construction waste. Part of our strategy involves an analysis of the site itself for potential energy and material opportunities, reducing the amount of embodied carbon entering the site. Sustainably sourced materials will be used where possible and we will seek to minimize the use of high-embodied energy materials where possible.

### **Design approach**

The proposal incorporates a range of technologies to help deliver the idea/proposal each with equivalent and comparable market alternatives. The main areas of the strategy where competing technologies/ market alternatives are evident are outlined below.

Breathable insulation / hydroscopic insulation: i.e. materials that respect the historic and existing solid wall construction. Warmcell is proposed for the roof level insulation and the benefits of blown solutions are currently more favourable. If access can be provided for installers to access the roof void safely, other solutions may become more viable.

Warmcell offer guarantees on the breathability and thermal performance of their products and will provide WUFI calculations as required to test the risks associated with interstitial condensation. Pavtherm, Diffutherm and Ecological Building Systems all provide breathable insulation and panel products but are not blown solutions.

User Controls: The design will incorporate simple but effective controls that can also provide useful building information to the church wardens, vicar and other key users of the building. Our team has experience of using and developed relationships with Acis, Hab Shimmy and other Building Information Systems and will seek to understand the most appropriate level of sophistication relevant to the building type and users. Basic thermostatic controls and zoning will be integrated initially with the benefits of other systems explored and developed as necessary.

### **What benchmarks does it meet, e.g. BREEAM?**

The client is very keen to reduce their carbon footprint in the physical building, which includes the embodied energy in the construction and the overall energy performance of the building.

Where possible the building will be used as an education tool to its users which will be key in ensuring good performance of the building. This will be developed alongside the Church. The design looks at social, economic and environmental sustainability. The building will aspire to meet Part L 2B Building Regulations. With particular reference to Building Regulations Part L2B 2010, Page 10/11, clauses 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 and 3.14 deal partially with places of worship and compliance. Our design team are well versed in BREEAM and whilst formal accreditation is not sought we will target the most appropriate credits alongside the overarching passive design approach and employment of low embodied energy materials.

### **How has sustainable use and future reuse been planned for?**

The design at Christ Church is for flexible and adaptable space, allowing for multipurpose spaces throughout the existing building structure. With removable chairs, we have allowed for greater flexibility of use than present. The main worship space in particular can be arranged in a number of different ways. Further smaller flexible spaces are proposed to cater for existing needs and to accommodate future community groups and activities that may not be formed yet, allowing for a more robust longevity and maximum use of the building's facilities.

### **How would it impact on the flora and fauna of the church and churchyard?**

Existing established flora and fauna at Christ Church will be maintained and added to, as part of the landscape scheme.

The proposed landscape design will affect a very localised area at the new south entrance. There are on-going plans for the landscape area by the church that involve the development of a small community garden to the east end of the church on an existing area of recently laid standard turf and waste ground. The wider grass and scrub areas will not be affected by the works and all retained trees will be protected according to BS5837: 2012.

## **How will the changes help the building cope with the potential future impact of Climate Change, eg heavier rainfalls?**

Possible heavier rainfalls may have adverse impacts on rainwater run-off and therefore may impact on existing infrastructure (adding to the risk of flooding). The scheme will aim to implement rainwater harvesting to reduce water consumption and mitigate rainwater run-off into the existing infrastructure. Porous materials in the landscape will also be explored to manage over ground water run-off. We will test the flow rates achieved through the current rainwater goods and determine whether adaptation is required now or potentially in the future.

## **How can your proposals influence the way people use the building so that environmental impacts are reduced?**

Visitors and congregation members (and the wider community) who use the church building will be exposed to a number of sustainable features, helping to educate relevant environmental subjects, such as rainwater harvesting and potential energy generation (for example PV panels).

White Design will also work with us on how to make not only the visible aspects of the sustainable story within the proposal accessible to all members of the congregation but also the invisible elements too.

These may include how the natural ventilation systems work or, for example, where the materials have come from that are used in some of the new and existing elements of the church. We are also considering preparing some embodied carbon calculations to demonstrate visually aspects of carbon use within the church and those that the congregation may use within their own lifestyles as a comparison

Exposing some of the sustainable materials (such as Cross Laminated Timber, which derives from recycled off-cuts/timber mills to form stable building materials) allow visitors to become exposed to innovative and environmentally sensitive building methods that are not just relevant to today and the future, but also relevant in terms of a suitable building method in the realm of successful conservation. The two new extensions look to use stone which will be locally sourced where possible. We are currently looking at the Forest of Dean as a local supplier.

## **Is the proposal part of your long term environmental strategy?**

The proposal is to implement a major step change in the environmental strategy for the church. These proposals are not only about the reordering of the church but how the church can move into a sustainable future. With regards to environmental strategy the reduction of carbon and energy use is imperative to not only reduce the impact on the environment but also on the on-going running costs of the church. We want to make Christ Church a vibrant, viable and sustainable church at the heart of the parish.

## **4.5 What other options to meet the need were considered, taking section 4.4 and the impact identified in the Statement of Significance into account?**

These may include:

- larger or smaller schemes
- different designs
- locating the scheme/proposal in a different part of the church building
- not making a change at all
- providing a management solution rather than a change in the fabric
- using a different building in the wider community eg school, community hall, another church.

### **What were the pros and cons of each option?**

We are working with the existing building fabric at Christ Church, therefore the size of the scheme and location have already been determined.

We feel that in order for the church to work as a cohesive space for worship, administration and community activities, we need to consider the whole of the building fabric within the new design. The church no longer fully meets the needs of the present day users in its current form. The main worship space will remain in the same location but the services that help facilitate this space will be designed more efficiently and effectively to create a better unity and relationship to the main worship space.

There is already a strong management team at Christ Church that is making the most of the current building fabric and its limitations. This team will continue to support the design throughout the new design process to make sure the new building is managed in a cohesive and successful way.

Christ Church currently work closely with the existing parish hall which is regularly used for children and youth on Sundays and for a huge range of community groups during the week. Improvements were needed to the parish hall, which have now been successfully completed. The redevelopment of the church is the next stage in the project.

We have been through a number of design iterations with regard to our reordering proposals over recent years, as indicated in the summary of consultation contained in section 4.3. We have considered, and discounted, a more fundamental reordering proposal that would have changed the orientation of worship and the main entrance way to the building and which would also have resulted in more significant changes to the internal fabric. We have also, more recently, reviewed our previous proposals to remove the side balconies following concerns raised by consultees, and have made some other adjustments to the scheme including a revised solution to resolving the issue of levels and access throughout the building. This has meant that we do not have to change the existing access arrangements at the western end of the church or alter the doors. We also now propose to keep the pulpit.

The above changes have been reviewed by the Conservation Officer at South Gloucestershire Council who has offered his support to the revised proposals. Copies of this correspondence are contained in section 5.3. We are also confident that these amendments will address previous concerns raised by English Heritage (now Historic

England) and the Church Buildings Council which primarily related to the removal of the balconies.

Having made these further adjustments to our proposals, all involved with the project are now keen to secure the necessary consents from the Diocese of Bristol in order to move forward with the plans, and transform the vision into reality.

## Section 5: Justification

This Section contains, in chronological order, the various responses previously submitted to address comments raised by the DAC and consultees (including the Church Buildings Council, Historic England (formerly English Heritage) and South Gloucestershire Council, via the process of engagement over the past four years.

Whilst some of the comments have now been otherwise addressed (for example those relating to the removal of the balconies, now proposed for retention) and some aspects of the responses are therefore no longer reflective of the current position, the entire suite of responses is provided for information purposes as a means of demonstrating the significant process of consideration, review and revision that has been undertaken by the Parish in order to achieve the design solution that now forms the basis of the revised Faculty application.

The general comments regarding the need for the proposals, as outlined in section 5.1.1 below, are still applicable to the amended proposals the subject of the revised Faculty submission. The comments and responses in section 5.3 provide an overview of the latest amendments made to overcome South Gloucestershire Council's concerns, and also identify the way in which these amendments address those concerns previously raised by Historic England, and as such are reflective of the current submission. All other comments are partially superseded, and we have indicated via the use of 'strikethrough' text those elements of our previous justifications that are no longer relevant to these proposals.

The residual comments set out our case for the re-ordering proposals and should be read in conjunction with the overall covering statement submitted in support of the revised Faculty application.

### 5.1 Response to DAC Comments (November 2013) (partially superseded)

This Addendum to the Statement of Need for Christ Church Downend (May 2013) has been prepared in response to comments made by the DAC as detailed in the minutes of the meeting dated 13<sup>th</sup> September 2013 forwarded by email from Janet Saxon on 19/9/2013. We have responded to each of the main comments raised by the DAC in turn.

#### 5.1.1 Need for the Proposals

We understand that concerns have been raised in respect of the significance of aspects of the existing building and the need for the proposed changes, with a request that we provide increased justification regarding the linkages between the benefits of the changes as a result of the growing outreach of the church in Downend and the proposed loss of fabric. The DAC have requested that Christ Church re-visit the Statement of Need to ensure that the need is established, rather than a wish, given the impact upon the building. We have provided additional clarification on this below.

Christ Church Downend has been described as a 'vibrant community' which seeks to reach out to its local community and the needs of the wider world. It is a growing church with a vision focused on living life to the full and inspiring others to live that life wherever they are.



In a recent sermon Kathy Prosser, our Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, put it like this:

*“..... If we hold up the mirror to ourselves, to Christ Church what do we see? It's good to be encouraged by the presence of growth in many aspects of our Church community life together....we have a clear vision statement and a strategy to grow the resources needed to fund our mission... We know of those among us who are actively and compassionately responding to our world news, ...we have street pastors among us, volunteers of the soup run, an employee at the Methodist Centre for those with addictions and who are homeless, we reach out locally to those in debt through CAP and to those who are ill, sick and lonely. We are taking communion to people at home and in residential settings; we have the outreach of Open Church, Thursday communion, fellowship and prayer groups... we are impacting the world of business and local government through our witness in the work place, we reach out across the world in Zambia, Kenya, Clarens school, Moldova, Eastern Europe, to the persecuted church worldwide... we are about to launch the Youth Hub with the intention to reach out to young people, so they have a place to chill rather than a place on a street corner with alcohol and drugs close by, we have an active spiritual ministry for children and we are reaching out to families in love and building up the family unit helped by Tracie's and Anita's ministries among us ... and there are many other things not mentioned, so much generosity and fruit growing. There is much to be thankful for which reveals the generous and loving God to our community.....”*

The changes to the church building will indeed play their part, directly and indirectly, in the ongoing life and work of Christ Church and the parish it serves. Crucially, they will enable the space within the building to be used more efficiently, more flexibly, and to fulfil a greater range of needs over the working week than at present. Some examples of the ways in which the proposed changes to the church fabric will help cater for the existing and future needs of Christ Church and its congregation are listed below:

- **Flexibility and adaptability within the main worship area** - the removal of the pews and balconies within the main worship area will result in a more adaptable and flexible space, able to be used for a variety of types of worship and cater for a range of congregation sizes, by allowing variations in the orientation of worship and the arrangement of seating. This more flexible space will also allow the main church area to be used on occasion for other appropriate activities such as concerts and other performances, events for the 7 schools in our parish, or meetings where a large space is required. We are currently constrained to an east-west orientation within the main worship area, and whilst this format is suitable and appropriate for much of the time, there are many occasions when a more adaptable and flexible space would allow more creative expressions of worship, or a better experience for those who come. As an example, the church has been used on several recent occasions for concerts or other performances (e.g. Stuart Townend concert, performance by African Choir) and the existing configuration restricts the ability of those at the periphery (in particular at the rear of the western balcony or the within the side aisles) to gain a full view of the performance and performer(s). By opening up the nave area there is greater potential for the focus of the event (be it worship, ministry or performance) to be shifted towards the centre of the space, surrounded by a congregation /audience better able to appreciate and experience it.
- **Improved welcome and hospitality areas** - the proposed changes to the welcome areas, including the upgraded lobby and catering facilities within the main western entrance, and the creation of an ancillary entrance to the south, will improve the welcome experienced by existing and new members of the

congregation and the hospitality offered both during and after services. The new south entrance will allow more convenient access for the significant number of people who approach the church from the North Street car park and provide weekday access to the ancillary meeting spaces within the south and east of the building (see below). With respect to hospitality, it is impossible to provide refreshments other than basic teas / coffees due to the cramped and potentially dangerous kitchen facilities which cannot comfortably accommodate more than one person at a time. A new kitchen area / servery will vastly improve our hospitality not only after Sunday services, but during the week with the potential to prepare light meals as well as drinks for a variety of events (meetings, drop-in, groups etc).

- **Improved accessibility for all** - the proposed accessibility improvements, the key element of which is the reconciliation of the floor levels throughout the building, are considered crucial to offering an inclusive and safe environment for all users, not only in compliance with the DDA but also as an integral part of ensuring that church activities are accessible to all including the mobility impaired, the elderly, and families with small children. There are currently multiple level changes within the church building and there have been previous incidences of trips and falls near stepped areas. We need to ensure that, as part of any improvements to the building fabric, we create a hospitable and welcoming environment where people can move around freely and without harm.
- **Better use of limited space** – as a growing church with a variety of activities, both associated with Sunday services and during the week, we have a requirement for a range of spaces. We have a constrained footprint and hence the reordering proposals are aimed at making the optimum use of available space. Our strategy includes the creation of a chapel /personal prayer space within the area behind the organ currently used for storage, a modest extension within an underused and neglected space on the north side of the building to accommodate a new vestry, thus freeing up existing space on the south side for meeting space, and the refurbishment of other well used but run-down areas, in particular the ‘Garden Room’ to the rear of the church. In developing our proposals we have focused upon how best to make the limited available space best suit our existing and future needs.
- **Greater weekday use** – one of the main considerations behind the refurbishment, improved configuration and increased flexibility of the ancillary spaces to the rear (east) and south of the church is the ability of this area, accessed from the new south entrance, to be used independently of the main church building, for smaller gatherings, meetings and weekday activities, as well as hospitality / ministry to the wider community during the week. This is of particular significance for expanding our outreach as both the Parish Hall and the Church Centre at Quakers Road are already fully booked every day and evening all through the year.
- **Improved energy efficiency** – the proposals for improving thermal efficiency within the building are aimed at reducing our annual fuel expenditure as well as creating a more sustainable building for current and future generations. The figures White Design have given show a 20% reduction in energy consumption which would equate to a reduction of £1,155.17 per annum off our current annual energy costs of £5,5775.96 (Their document is attached). We have provided more detail regarding the energy strategy in section 3 below.

### 5.1.2 Removal of the Side Balconies

We understand that the removal of the two side balconies was the subject of debate by the DAC, who have asked Christ Church to reconsider the gallery issue, especially given the concerns raised by English Heritage. The DAC note that the side balconies are not considered by the parish to be useable or needed, however they consider them to be an important aspect of the historic fabric of this church. This has since been discussed at length again at PCC level and at a special site meeting with members of the DAC on 4<sup>th</sup> November. This is clearly a complex issue and the case for their removal needs to be taken along with the many other factors that drive the scheme. We are very conscious of their historical significance. However, the hope is that by only removing the side balconies and retaining the west balcony it will be possible for future generations to see how the story of Christ Church has evolved in the light of liturgical developments and the re-imagined vision for mission in the Church of England.—

In seeking to demonstrate the case for their removal the following points are offered:

- **Fitness for purpose**— the side balconies were originally intended to increase seating capacity at upper floor level at a time when the original tall pulpit was routinely used for teaching and the chancel had not been extended. The sight lines on pages 47 to 50 of the Statement of Significance demonstrate how restricted the view from these areas is now that focus of worship and teaching has changed due to liturgical developments over recent decades. The side balconies are rarely used as seating for services, largely as it is difficult for people to engage with the service due to the restricted view of the chancel area, and the non-existent view of the sanctuary or the font from the north balcony. The balconies themselves pose significant health and safety issues especially with small children moving around the building. We have considered in detail with our architects the possibility of retaining part of the side balconies, but it was clear that the same issues of providing good sight lines for those other than in the front seats would remain, and it would maintain the west/east orientation of worship.—
- **Alternative uses**— we have considered the possibility of alternative uses of the side balcony areas as part of our strategy to make the best use of available space. However, our architects were clear that, 'it is not a practical solution to keep the side balconies for a meeting/ office space'. The balconies are not large enough to create functional space (e.g. meeting space) and a level floor area would need to be created which would require structural alterations and floor raising.— The existing balustrade would also need to be raised by approx. 800mm to provide an appropriate safety solution which could increase the sense of enclosure and, depending on the design solution, could increase the restriction of natural light, described below.—
- **DDA issues/ Inclusivity**— the balconies are accessed via the stone steps adjacent to the western entrance.— There is no DDA access to the balconies at present which is not a problem so long as they are used as an overflow for seating only. However, if the side balconies were to remain and used as office/meeting space, a lift would be required if they were to be accessible to all, which would need to be installed in the welcome space.— The layout of the church has been designed with careful consideration and a resulting lift would have to be positioned in the location of the two proposed disabled toilets.— This would significantly affect the layout of the whole ground floor plan, resulting in a requirement for a complete re-design.— This would also add significant cost to the project.— Furthermore, the proposed increase in floor level within the main worship area which represents

part of the DDA improvements outlined in Section 1 above would result in the spaces beneath the balconies becoming even more claustrophobic.

- **Restriction of light and bisection of windows** — the side balconies bisect the gothic detailing of the original side windows and severely restrict the natural light which would otherwise flow into the nave. Their removal would reveal the full profile of the windows as well as allowing additional light (and warmth) into the church. The Georgian character of the church would thus be enhanced.
- **Restriction of views from the side aisles** — the balconies and their pillars restrict the ability of those seated in the side aisles at ground floor level to see what is happening at the front of the church including the projection screen, a fact accentuated by the raked nature of the balcony floors. Those sitting at the sides need to rely on printed sheets for worship and other information during the service, which can restrict full participation and engagement in the service leading to those members of the congregation feeling slightly marginalised / side-lined from the main proceedings. With the digital revolution in communication this issue is becoming even more significant.
- **Compatibility with wider proposals for main worship area** — as we have indicated above, we consider that the removal of the side balconies is intrinsic to the wider strategy for the creation of a more flexible worship space within the nave, enabling a variety of formats and orientations of worship, with the associated benefits described in Section 1 above. We would not be able to achieve this degree of flexibility if the side balconies were to remain due to the constraints posed by the pillars and the low level of the raked ceilings. It would mean that the potential use of Christ Church would be significantly extended to include, for example:
  - Café style church
  - Messy Church
  - Pre-school church — we currently run 'Jigsaw' in the Reception area and Chancel, but with more than 40 coming now we do not have space to grow
  - Alpha Suppers, Harvest Suppers, Marriage Courses etc
  - Worship in the round — A recent survey conducted among our young people asked the question: What would make church appropriate for you? One of our new 12 year olds felt that 'a child friendly Church was important. She was keen to see the worship being led in the middle of the Church, with seating all around'.
  - Use of creative expressions of worship — flags cannot be waved under balconies!
  - Holiday Clubs — our Children's Worker has written, 'Our very first Holiday Club six years ago was held in church, but never again! It proved just too constrictive. For many of these children it would be the only time they came inside a church.'
  - Conferences — Both the Willow Creek Association and London Institute for Contemporary Christianity have asked Christ Church to hold day events this year for the Bristol Area, but we could not offer the facilities needed. With the proposed changes in place, we would have been able to do so.

In summary, while we recognise that the side balconies form part of the historic fabric of the church, as outlined above they detract from some other aspects of the church fabric (most notably the original gothic windows) and to that end represent purely functional items fitted for necessity to enable a larger number of people to be accommodated when the church was used in a different manner to today, rather than an intrinsic and aesthetically pleasing element of the building's design.

We note the alternative suggestion made by the DAC that the balconies could be retained with glazed frontages and increased raking in a similar manner to the approach adopted by Trinity Church in Cheltenham. Increasing the raking would make the seats very high at the top, with the outcome that more light would be excluded from the building. There would still be no view into the chancel area, and very restricted views into the nave from the back pews. This option could also give rise to design issues associated with the alignment of the reconfigured side balconies with the west balcony seating which is to be retained in its existing form. Those issues outlined above in respect of DDA accessibility would remain relevant, and the desired flexibility at lower level would not be achieved.

We have included below a selection of snapshot images of Wadesley Parish Church in Sheffield, which was built as a chapel in 1832 and became a parish church in 1857. The church building was completely renovated in 2002-3. The side balconies were removed and the back balcony extended over new facilities in the shape of an extended welcome area, quiet room and kitchen. Box pews were replaced with chairs. The photos show the 'before' scenario indicating a configuration similar to that at Christ Church Downend, with side balconies cross-cutting the original windows and fixed seating constraining the use of the worship area at ground level. The 'after' shots show a lighter, airy and more flexible worship area with a more ambient feel. In the case of Christ Church Downend this is likely to be increased due to the fact that the church is not inhibited by floor to ceiling pillars as with the church in Wadesley.

### **Wadesley Church, Sheffield: 2002-3 Re-ordering including removal of side balconies and pews**



### 5.1.3 Energy Efficiency

The DAC note that there are proposals for creating a thermally efficient building, which they acknowledge may be laudable, but consider that the link between the need for this and the impact upon the building fabric needs greater clarification.

~~We have attached for reference a summary of the energy and carbon savings which are predicted to accrue as a result of the proposed thermal efficiency improvements. The proposed insulation / ventilation improvements to the floors and roof are estimated to provide an 80% improved heat ratio for gas, whilst the proposed electrical improvements, including the installation of LED fittings, are predicted to result in a minimum 10 to 25% energy saving. In summary, the total carbon saving for the improved scheme is estimated to equate to 5.01 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.~~

Not only would this make the building more environmentally friendly but would also result in considerable savings to the cost of heating and lighting the church on an annual basis. We consider it important to take the opportunity to implement these measures as part of the re-ordering process to maximise the opportunities presented by the proposed works, as part of a holistic approach towards upgrading the fabric of the church whereby environmental stewardship and sustainability are considered alongside functionality, flexibility and accessibility.

The impact of these measures upon the building fabric has been minimised by designing them to be implemented alongside the wider suite of proposed changes such that they can be installed as part of the overall re-ordering process. These measures include:

- ~~• Improved summer (cool) and winter (preheated) ventilation by implementing sub-floor improvements in connection with the proposed changes to floor levels required for DDA;~~
- ~~• Use of reclaimed wood from pews for wooden panelling employed in ducted air solution to better dissipate radiant heat throughout the nave;~~
- ~~• Increased solar gain resulting from the removal of the side balconies as described above;~~
- Improved roof insulation installed from within the roof; and improved insulation within lobby areas as part of improvements to welcome space;
- ~~• The increase in additional light as previously described will reduce the need for artificial lighting.~~

### 5.1.4 Consultation

Finally, the DAC's response includes comments that more might be made within the Statement of Need regarding the consultation with the wider community outside the church itself. We have provided below an overview of the consultation process undertaken to date.

Proposals for the re-ordering of Christ Church are part of an ongoing process, but were progressed in earnest in 2005 with the commissioning of CPL Architects to undertake an Options Study to identify the future needs of the congregation and its surrounding community, and to progress a series of recommendations as to the possible ways in which these could be addressed. As part of this process, CPL provided an in-depth statistical analysis of the local community's demographics and its socio-economic profile

as well as undertaking a comprehensive consultation exercise involving a series of interviews with 70 members of Christ Church across the age ranges.

More direct involvement with the wider community came in 2011 when we took an active role in the formation of the Community Plan through Downend and Bromley Heath Parish Council. The Plan reflects the priorities expressed by local residents and it looks ahead at what can be done to develop, sustain and improve Downend and Bromley Heath as a healthy, safe and lively place in which to live, work and play over the next decade.

The Community Plan responds to Key Findings from many different consultations, including a detailed questionnaire sent to every household in the Parish. It was found that across the age range there were requests for more places and safer places for young people to meet.

The first stage of our Church Building Project responds directly to this need – the upgrading of the Parish Hall and the provision of a bespoke ‘Youth Hub’. This has been completed (Oct 13) at a cost of £220,000. Half of these funds have come through the giving of the members of Christ Church, the other half from grants.

The Community questionnaire also found that there was desire for venues where parents and grandparents with younger children could socialise. This provision is, in part, offered by Christ Church now, but the vision for re-developing the church itself is rooted in our desire to see the church building becoming flexible enough and safe enough to be able to host a whole range of ways that families can come together in meaningful, creative ways each day of the week.

Another aspect highlighted in the Plan was wide support for more open spaces and places to sit. We have responded to this in our plans for the landscaping of the Churchyard and the development of our Spiritual Garden, linking it in with what will become the Garden Room with its full length windows and doors that open out into the Spiritual Garden. However, probably the most distinctive contribution to the life of the community around us is the unique capacity we have at Christ Church to offer a place of calm and quiet, a place to slow down and reflect. We want to offer a sacred space which is accessible to all. Our emphasis on hospitality in the design brief comes from a commitment to provide a welcoming environment and one where beauty and peace can ‘feed the soul’. Therefore, the designs include for example the new ‘chapel’ or personal prayer space as well as a much larger kitchen with the provision for people to come and meet together over a coffee or a light meal.

When we discussed these ideas informally with members of the Parish Council in 2012 we were encouraged to take them forward. The Parish Council has given £15,000 to Stage One of the project, and when a member of the Parish Council came to look at the church in advance of the Council’s meeting to consider our planning application, there was a very positive response.

The vision and design concepts have also been shared with the two Church Schools linked to Christ Church at Governing Body level and personally with the head teachers. Both schools use the church regularly for worship, school visits and by way of the ‘Experience Journeys’ when we host over 300 children each year as they explore the meaning and significance of one of the Christian Festivals. Again, we have had encouragement and support, especially as without pews we shall be able to accommodate a lot more children safely seated on the floor in church, and use the building in far more creative ways than is possible at present.

### 5.1.5 Summing Up

We hope that the above offers a good insight into the rationale for what we are seeking to achieve within our re-ordering project, and the way in which it will contribute to the needs of our congregation and wider community. However, the lasting significance of what we are doing now is the legacy it will leave for future generations. The building is no longer fit for a 21st century society. One of our PCC described it as a 'tired old lady'! It is only a matter of time before the sorts of changes we believe are integral to its future vitality are carried out. We cannot stay where we are; we need to move forward and we sense God's call to do it now.

The design team have already spent a significant amount of time on the design proposals to make sure they work well and meet all of the requirements of the Brief for use by our growing congregations and our expanding youth and children's work. In doing so, we have sought to achieve an appropriate balance between preserving the heritage of the building and making the best use of available space. We cannot deliver the changes needed to take the exciting opportunities the future brings without making alterations to the building fabric. We have, as part of the design process, considered more radical changes that would have had a more significant effect upon the fabric of the building, but following internal consultation, much discussion, and prayer, have settled upon the proposed package of measures as representing the most pragmatic means of securing the space we need whilst minimising both the impact on the building and the project cost. We have also sought to retain and enhance aspects of the historic fabric wherever we can – for example the retention of the western gallery with its pews, ~~and the reuse of the current wall panelling as part of the proposed heating / ventilation strategy.~~

We have previously discussed our emerging proposals with members of the DAC and received positive encouragement to proceed in the manner outlined. We hope that this additional information gives the DAC confidence that the proposed alterations to the building fabric can be honestly justified, and enables you to commend them to the Chancellor of the Diocese.



## 5.2 Response to CBC Comments (August 2014) (partially superseded)

### Church Buildings Council

28 July 2014

David McLaughlin  
McLaughlin Ross llp  
4 Springfield Cottages  
Brewery Hill  
Upton Cheyney  
BS30 6NA  
(by email: david@mclross.co.uk)

Christina Emerson  
Acting Senior Church Buildings Officer  
Church Buildings Council

Dear David,

### **Downend, Christ Church (Diocese of Bristol) Proposed reordering**

My thanks to you, Matt and the parish for your warm welcome during our visit on 8 July. The Council considered this case at its recent meeting, and I am now able to set out its advice.

The Council noted that the parish wishes to carry out an extensive reordering to include:

- Reorganisation and installation of facilities in the 1960s extension
- Removal of the pews and replacement with chairs
- An extension to serve as an entrance lobby to the south of the chancel
- An extension to serve as a vestry to the north of the chancel
- Creation of a new prayer room
- Improved access
- Installation of new heating
- Removal of the north and south galleries.

The council further noted that the average attendance at the contemporary Morning Worship service on Sundays is 150-200 and the earlier Holy Communion service attracts around 12 people. There is an evening service on Sundays and one on most weekday mornings. During the Sunday services there is a crèche in the church and a number of children's groups gather in the adjacent Church Hall.

Outside of these times the church is open for 2 days every week and for activities such as concerts and theatre productions. The west end, which was subdivided in 1988, hosts regular community activities but the Church Hall and nearby Church Centre are extensively used and this arrangement will continue: the parish's vision for the reordered nave being driven primarily by a desire for greater engagement with God and worship rather than the need to provide an additional location for community activities.

- **RESPONSE: The Parish's Vision for the reordered nave and associated works throughout the church is driven by multiple aims which seek to enable the space to be used more efficiently, more flexibly, and to fulfil a greater range of needs over the working week than at present. While the creation of an improved worship space is a driving factor, there is also a strong desire to optimise the use of this space for events which will attract**

the wider community. The Parish consider that flexibility and adaptability within the main worship area are fundamental to the mission and witness of the Church in Downend. The removal of the pews and ~~side balconies~~ within the main worship area will result in a more adaptable and flexible space, able to be used for a variety of types of worship and to cater for a range of congregation sizes, by allowing variations in the orientation of worship and the arrangement of seating. This more flexible space will also allow the main church area to be used on occasion for other appropriate activities such as concerts and other performances, events for the 7 schools in our parish, or meetings where a large space is required. As an example, the church has been used on several recent occasions for concerts or other performances and the existing configuration restricts the ability of those at the periphery (in particular at the rear of the western balcony or within the side aisles) to gain a full view of the performance and performer(s). By opening up the nave area there is greater potential for the focus of the event (be it worship, ministry or performance) to be shifted towards the centre of the space, surrounded by a congregation /audience better able to appreciate and experience it.

The Council thought that the proposal to reorganise the 1960's extension at the east end was sensible. This is showing its age and repairs to alleviate a significant damp problem are being undertaken as part of the works. The window openings in the east wall will be made larger but as these do not allow access to the exterior the fact that there are graves close by should not pose a problem. However, careful consideration should be given to the detail of the window frames.

- **RESPONSE: Comments noted.**

The Council did not object to the removal of the pews on the ground floor. The nave was partially depewed when the west end was reordered and the pew doors were removed some time ago. While the pews are of decent quality and add to the character of the historic interior they are not in themselves of particular significance and the parish has made a strong case for their removal. The Council was pleased to note that the parish has recognised the importance of providing good quality replacement chairs but would advise against 'refinishing' the west gallery pews to match these.

- **RESPONSE: Comments noted. We have given further consideration to the west gallery pews and will leave these substantially unchanged, aside from minor repairs where necessary.**

The parish wishes to create a new entrance on the south elevation by opening up an existing blocked doorway and constructing a glazed lobby. Externally this will replace what is currently a rather unsightly fenced off area. The new entrance will allow level access to the new meeting areas at the east end, and allow these to be used on a stand alone basis when the rest of the church is closed. The Council did not think that this aspect of the proposals was controversial but considered that it would be important for the parish and its architect to integrate the landscaping proposals with the plans for the building itself in order to ensure that these worked together seamlessly. In particular, the creation of a new path to this entrance, and the need for circulation space around it, would impact on several graves in the immediate vicinity.

**RESPONSE: The Parish and its architect and landscape architect are reviewing this in light of the CBC's comments and the earlier advice of the Bristol DAC.**

There is a large sycamore tree in the vicinity and an arboricultural assessment has been conducted. The Council thought that the Method Statement was thorough and would allow the parish to do most of what it could to protect the tree, given its situation. The full BS 5837 requires

that complete protection should be erected around the tree. Clearly, in this instance, it would not be possible – but there should be some more protective fencing between the tree and the proposed extension (protecting as much of the canopy as possible) and more of the root protection area to the south east should be fenced off. It is highly unlikely that the extension will have no impact on the sycamore and therefore a regular survey of the tree – and any other trees affected by the works – should be written into the recommendations as they might well become a hazard in the future. The Council also noted that there appears to be a tree to the south of the sycamore which has no protection. There is a reference in the report to the fact that works to or removal of ‘one or two yews’ may be necessary but yews will respond well to careful pruning which would be preferable. The parish should also be clear on the fact that all the trees will be covered by Tree Protection Orders.

**RESPONSE: The Parish is indeed aware that all the trees in the churchyard are covered by Tree Protection Orders. As noted in section 4.4 above, all retained trees will be protected according to BS5837: 2012.**

Returning to the reordering of the building itself: the Council understood that the parish wished to create a new north vestry and prayer room: the proposal is for a new vestry to be constructed within the external recess to the north of the chancel which is currently used to access a small basement room. An existing door in the north elevation would provide access. While the Council thought that the proposed design (which is to be subservient to the main building and finished in a similar local stone) and location were sensible, it was concerned that the need to raise the cill of the window immediately to the west would make the proposed prayer room in the north east corner of the nave dark and potentially claustrophobic. The Council thought that this might be addressed in part by glazing the external timber door.

**RESPONSE: The Parish and its architect have given careful consideration to the treatment of this existing window and the raising of the cill. While it is recognised that there will be some light loss, we do not consider that the lighting of the proposed prayer room will be unduly compromised by the raising of the window cill. Furthermore we have considered various options for improving light to this small room, including the CBC’s suggestion of part glazing the external timber door which we agree is a good suggestion. We will also be moving the organ and its frame back slightly towards the chancel to create more space in the prayer room. As part of the detailed specification we are also looking to install a glazed soundproofed panel above the organ which would allow borrowed light from the chancel. We could also investigate the possibility of installing light tubes within the ceiling of this room, should additional light be necessary. However, given the function and purpose of the room, a lower level of light would not necessarily detract from its use for private prayer and reflection or small prayer group meetings.**

Improved access: the proposal here is to both raise the floor of the nave and lower that of the existing east end extension to create level access to all areas of the building except the chancel. External access via the west end will be by way of new steps and a switch back ramp. There is already a ramp in situ but this does not meet the latest DDA requirements and the parish are keen to remedy this. However, the Council agreed with the Local Authority that the proposed arrangement would sit uncomfortably with the symmetry of the west elevation and that two ramps, ideally extended further back in order to avoid the need for switch backs, would be preferable. Glass balustrades would be intrusive and difficult to keep clean and a simple steel handrail of traditional design mounted on a low wall with similar detailing to the exterior masonry would be preferable. A sensible approach would be the key here as DDA compliance is desirable but not essential.

**RESPONSE:** ~~The Parish consider that inclusive access for all is fundamental to the mission and witness of the Church in their community. Therefore achieving DDA-compliance is an essential part of our vision. We have already given considerable thought to the visual appearance of the proposed new access arrangements, in particular the issue of symmetry, to ensure that we improve our 'welcome' while at the same time achieving a design solution which is appropriate to this main building frontage and its surrounding context. In this regard, as the main pedestrian access to the west of the building is offset from the centre building line, with a diagonal path leading from the main road, the building is not viewed from 'front on' when approaching by foot, and the proposed access solution has been carefully designed to be orientated towards the user, with both the curved steps and the ramp flowing naturally from the footpath approach from Downend Road. Two ramps extended further back in order to avoid switchbacks as suggested by the CBC would, in fact, preclude access around the perimeter of the church building and restrict further the current limited vehicle access for those needing greater access to the church building and for wedding cars and funeral hearses. We do however agree with CBC's suggestion that a simple steel balustrade would be preferable to a glass finish and will amend our plans to reflect this.~~

New heating system: the heating scheme proposed is an ambitious one, driven largely by the fact that the parish had originally hoped to qualify for a grant. However this is no longer in the offing and the Council thought that while the core scheme of under floor heating boosted by radiators should be retained, other elements such as the proposal to move the historic panelling forward from the walls in order to accommodate radiators behind it might be contentious and costly.

**RESPONSE:** The Parish are reviewing the proposal to move the historic panelling forward from the walls with their consultants in response to the CBC's advice and in view of the fact that circumstances have changed since this was originally proposed.

Removal of the north and south galleries: the parish would like to remove the galleries to the north and south, leaving only that at the west end. The primary motivation for this aspect of the proposals would appear to be an aesthetic one based on a vision of a bright, open worship space. While the Council empathised with the desire to make the church a place where all would feel at ease (the parish already welcomes those with dementia, for example, to simply come and sit in the nave) it did not think that the removal of the galleries was necessary to achieve this or that the effectiveness of new worship styles would depend on the removal of historic references in the building (a number of churches such as that in Jesmond use their galleries effectively). Nor did the Council concur with the assessment of the galleries as being of only low to moderate significance as they are part of the narrative of the building, the removal of which would change the scale of the space enormously.

**RESPONSE:** ~~Christ Church, Downend was built in 1831 – a time when a preaching ministry was the main focus of the Church's worship before the Oxford Movement – with a large nave with a very shallow chancel with galleries round the north, south and west walls and high box pews in the nave with an extremely tall pulpit.~~

~~The galleries functioned in conjunction with the original pulpit which was set at a significant height so that the preacher could see everyone and everybody could see the preacher. The north and south galleries are now redundant for worship of today – the original pulpit is no longer in place. The focus of the principal acts of worship is the front of the chancel (lengthened in 1913) where worship is led by a well-established music group and where today's preaching ministry takes place, the preacher standing on the chancel floor. One cannot see the chancel from the~~

~~north and south galleries. We have explored other options for the effective use of these galleries with the project architects but the balconies are not large enough to create functional space (e.g. meeting space) and a level floor area would need to be created which would require structural alterations and floor raising.~~

~~The significance of the north and south galleries is significantly reduced because the context of their use has changed significantly and the original pulpit on which their functionality relied upon is no longer in place.~~

~~It should also be noted that the primary purpose of the removal of the side balconies is one of functionality rather than aesthetics. The presence of the side balconies severely inhibits visibility from the far sides of the worship area due to the raked ceilings and, to a lesser extent, the intermittent pillars which support them. The removal of the side balconies will improve visibility and increase the potential for more flexible use of the worship area creating opportunities for different seating configurations and alternative orientations to suit different events, rather than being confined to the east-west orientation to which we are currently restricted. The creation of a more adaptable and flexible space would allow this area to be used for multiple service styles and wider activities as described in the response to the first point above. Furthermore, while the improvements to light are also considered to be an important benefit, they do not provide the primary rationale for the balconies' removal.~~

~~The proposal to remove the side balconies is one that has been considered thoughtfully and after much discussion, with careful consideration having been given to the implications for the fabric of the building and its heritage. An earlier proposal to remove the balconies in their entirety was reconsidered following initial comments from consultees, with the proposals amended to retain the west (and still functional) balcony space. However, the removal of the side balconies is intrinsic to the wider re-ordering proposals, which include the levelling of the floor area throughout the building as previously noted. The proposed height increase at ground floor level within the nave would be difficult to achieve if the side balconies were to remain, as the restrictions on visibility for those in the side aisles would be increased and a more constrained space created beneath the balcony areas. If this element of the re-ordering proposals were to be abandoned, we would therefore need to reconsider the whole strategy for re-ordering the nave with consequent implications for achieving an unrestricted level access throughout the whole building.~~

The building is already well lit as the nave windows extend above and below the galleries. The slim supporting columns do not interfere with sight lines and their removal would not afford the parish any greater flexibility than would be achieved by removing the pews. The introduction of portable AV schemes would ensure that those seated to the rear under the galleries were fully included in worship. In addition, the Council thought that the parish needed to be clear as to its seating requirements as the depewed nave and west balcony might not in fact provide sufficient capacity on occasions such as Christmas if the galleries were to be removed. Any safety issues in the galleries could be addressed by the introduction of a simple steel handrail adjacent to stepped areas. For these reasons, the Council did not feel able to support this aspect of the parish's plans, considering that it would result in significant harm to the significance of the building without offering the parish a clear functional benefit.

~~RESPONSE: The Parish consider that the removal of the side balconies is intrinsic to their wider strategy for the creation of a more flexible worship space within the nave, enabling a variety of formats and orientations of worship, with the associated benefits described in Section 5.1 above. The Parish would not be able to achieve this degree of flexibility if the side balconies were to remain due to the constraints posed by the pillars and the low level of the raked ceilings. The removal of the side balconies would mean that the potential use of Christ Church would be significantly extended.~~

~~Having regard to capacity, our project architects have calculated that 300 people could be accommodated in the nave and retained balcony area, with the potential for at least an additional 50 if we used the chancel for additional seating. This should provide adequate capacity for our regular Sunday service congregations whilst also offering room for growth. For the annual Carols by Candlelight Service we propose this year to introduce two services to maximise the opportunity for people to attend, and this is not an uncommon practice in churches for specific occasions where congregations exceed the standard capacity, irrespective of building size.~~

The Council hopes that these comments will be useful to the parish and would welcome the opportunity for further comment in due course.

Yours sincerely

Christina Emerson (Mrs)  
Casework Officer

Cc. Jo Vickery, Christ Church  
Janet Saxon, Bristol DAC (by email)  
Matt Harrison, White Design (by email)  
Stuart Mee, English Heritage (by email)

Supporting over 16,000 cathedral and church buildings of The Church of England

Cathedral and Church Buildings Division, Archbishops' Council,  
Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ

Direct line: 020 7898 1864 [christina.emerson@churchofengland.org](mailto:christina.emerson@churchofengland.org)

[www.churchcare.co.uk](http://www.churchcare.co.uk)

## 5.3 Response to Objections to Faculty (October 2014)

The following provides a tabular summary of the key issues raised by South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) in its formal objection to the Faculty application submitted in October 2014 (letter from Robert Nicholson, Conservation Officer, dated 16 December 2014) together with Christ Church Downend's response and, where relevant, proposed modification to the reordering proposals. These amendments were subsequently agreed in principle with Robert Nicholson (refer to email dated 2 September below). Following a review of the detailed plans the subject of the proposed Faculty resubmission of July 2016, Robert Nicholson confirmed his support for the revised proposals.

Objection Point	CCD Response
Modifications to historic entrance doors to accommodate the increase in floor level	We are now proposing a revised solution to resolving the issue of levels and access throughout the building (see separate point on levels and flooring below). This would result in no change to the levels at the entrance threshold, and thus no requirement to modify the existing entrance doors, which should therefore overcome this objection point.
Removal of the balconies and associated implications for historic significance	<p>We have given careful consideration to this point. As part of this process we have visited Trinity Church in Cheltenham, as recommended by the CBC, to view the way in which they have adapted and modernised their balconies. Whilst we maintain that the objective for the proposed removal of the balconies went far beyond simply increasing light levels within the church, we recognise that, in order to move forward with this project, we are unlikely to be able to achieve this element of our re-ordering proposal without incurring significant costs and delays to timescale given the objections raised. We are therefore proposing a revision to this aspect of the proposals which would leave all three galleries in situ.</p> <p>We are keen to ensure that the side balconies can be used productively, and to that end propose to upgrade the seating within these areas via the removal of those pews in poor condition and replacement with better quality alternatives from the ground floor (see also point below). We intend to remove the back row of seating to each of the side balconies and reduce the floor height at the back of each gallery to create a wider walkway. We also propose to create a flexible space at the far end of each of the side balconies closest to the chancel where viewing is at its most restricted. These areas could be used for informal gathering, storage or other ancillary uses. Within these areas we propose to rationalise the levels to be consistent with that of the rear walkway described above, to create a more usable space.</p>
Loss of the pews in their entirety	We propose to relocate some of the better quality pews from the ground floor to the retained side balconies as indicated above. We would also consider further (at detailed design stage) the potential for sympathetic re-use of some of the remaining pews. Examples could include the creation of bench seating within the chapel area, and / or the installation of panelling around the servery area using wood recovered from the dismantling of the pews at ground floor level. Given the proposed revision outlined above which would see the retention of the balconies, the concerns raised by SGC regarding the cumulative effects of the loss of the pews coupled with the loss of the balconies should no longer remain. We trust that SGC would not

Objection Point	CCD Response
	retain their objection to the loss of the ground floor pews in isolation, given the considerable efforts that have been made to address the other concerns which they have raised regarding the proposed re-ordering.
Loss of pulpit	We are proposing to simplify the works at the east end of the nave. This would result in leaving the dais in place without modification, rather than cutting it back to create a level access to the chapel as previously proposed. A ramped solution can be made available for those who require it. Leaving the dais in its existing position would also mean that the pulpit could also be retained in situ.

### Other Proposed Amendments - Levels and Flooring

We have given further consideration to the optimum solution for reconciling the levels throughout the church having regard to comments made by third parties. We are now proposing an alternative option whereby the flooring surface currently in place within the entrance area is carried through into the nave with the installation of a thin screed over the top of the existing floor, allowing carpet tiles to be fitted above, rather than the raised wooden floor previously proposed. This would obviate the need to change the access arrangements at the western entrance, and this lower impact solution would also mean that there would be no need to alter the west entrance doors, or the mouldings / panelling within the nave. The existing dais would be retained in the vicinity of the pulpit and proposed chapel as indicated above. There would be some minor modifications to the levels proposed to the rear of the church (south corridor / garden room) to ensure consistency with the slightly amended levels within the nave.

### Subsequent Correspondence with South Gloucestershire Conservation Officer

From: Robert Nicholson <Robert.Nicholson@southglos.gov.uk>  
 Sent: 02 September 2015 10:41  
 To: Jonathan Vickery  
 Subject: RE: Proposed amendments to Christ Church Downend re-ordering

Dear Jonathan,  
 First of all many thanks for the opportunity to comment on the latest proposals.

Overall in my view the proposals are significant improvement but it would be helpful to have a set of plans without all the superseded annotation.

The only issue for me remains the removal of the pews. Although I understand the need for their removal, I would still maintain the character of the building would benefit from some partial retention of the Victorian pews within the main part of the church. However, with the partial retention of the pews within the balconies ( along with the balconies themselves) and the pulpit and all existing panelling being retained, unlike before we are not looking at a total elimination of all the historic woodwork within the church and so in light of all material considerations, I would be happy to support your proposals in principle.

Prior to formally confirming in writing, as noted above, it would be helpful to receive a set of amended plans what did not contain all the annotation which I presume is now redundant.

In light of this I would suggest we don't have to meet next Monday as discussed, but if you disagree them please let me know and we can meet as planned.

Regards,

Rob

**Rob Nicholson**  
 Senior Planning and Conservation Officer  
 Environment and Community Services





Fri 10/06/2016 17:05

Robert Nicholson <Robert.Nicholson@southglos.gov.uk>

RE: Proposed amendments to Christ Church Downend re-ordering

To  Martin, Ruth

Hello Ruth.

Many thanks for the opportunity to review and comment on the updated proposals and sorry for the delay in getting back to you.

In response to the revised proposals, the proposed scheme of reordering for Christ Church Downend is considered to be a significant improvement on the proposals contained within the previous Faculty application. Unlike the previous scheme, in my view what is now being proposed can be considered to help preserve the historic interest and significance of the interior of this grade II listed building and as thus is far more acceptable.

It remains however regrettable that we are still losing the pews within the main worship area, but the justification for their removal has been previously made and so although my view remains that they should be retained insitu, I do understand and accept the case for their loss. I would though note the retention of pews at first floor level will at least help ensure their loss is not total and along with the retention of the balconies and other features now to be retained, the previous concerns regarding cumulative loss of internal character and significance has been addressed or mitigated against. Notwithstanding the exemptions in place for internal works to Christ Church, in the context of the National Framework I would suggest that the loss of the pews would cause "less than substantial harm" but this harm would be outweighed by the public benefit that would result through the considered continued and intensified use of the building. Therefore I don't perceive there being any conflict between the proposals and the guidance laid out within the national framework.

Externally I would though again suggest further consideration is given to the landscaping to the south, especially in and around the extended southern entrance. We also never concluded on how the new garden room would impact on the existing graves which are located in close proximity to the eastern elevation.

These are though just matters of details which I'm sure can be picked up at a later date. The main point is that to my mind the updated proposals no longer represent what I had previously considered to represent substantial harm to the significance of this designated heritage asset. Consequently, in light of their considered acceptability I would be happy to support the updated proposals

I also would commend all involved on the steps that have been made to address the previous concerns expressed.

I trust that this is of assistance.

If there are any queries regarding this matter,

Regards,

**Rob Nicholson**  
Senior Planning and Conservation Officer  
Environment and Community Services

☎ 01454 863536

☎ 01454 863440

🏠 South Gloucestershire Council

PO Box 2081

Bristol

BS35 9BP

**Statement of Need: Christ Church, Downend**

© McLaughlin Ross llp August 2014 www.mclross.co.uk

## 5.4 Review of amended proposals against Historic England comments (July 2013)

Historic England (formerly English Heritage) were consulted as part of the initial design process and submitted a formal consultation response in July 2013. The key points can be summarised as follows:

- The external proposals do not raise any concern;
- No objection to the removal of the pews;
- Preference for the pulpit to remain as a feature of significance to the historic functioning of the church, but do not intend to raise this issue further;
- Considerable concerns regarding the removal of the side galleries and would strongly advise that their removal is reconsidered.

Their concluding comments were as follows:

*“To summarise, we are broadly supportive of the proposals as a well thought out approach to ensuring the future beneficial use and operation of the church. On the whole, the areas where there is loss of historic fabric or features are not considered significant enough to warrant an objection, save for the removal of the side galleries which we do not support...”*

Historic England have not been reconsulted on the revised proposals, however it can be seen that the revisions address points 3 and 4 in the list above (loss of the pulpit and the side galleries) which were the two issues with which reservations were expressed. We consider therefore that Historic England’s concerns have been overcome as a result of the revised proposals.

# **Appendix 1: Church Buildings Council advice on Statements of Need**

**The Church Buildings Council's current advice on Statements of Need is set out below:**

## **Section 1. General information**

This should provide an overview of the parish and the current use of the building.

## **Section 2. What do you need?**

Briefly explain your needs (not your proposals). Append any brief for your architect.

## **Section 3. The proposals**

Set out what you are proposing to do in order to meet the needs set out in section 2.

## **Section 4. Why do you need it and why do you need it now?**

Justify your proposals by explaining why you can't meet your needs without making changes. Also include anything which may have prompted the proposals.

## **Section 5. Justification**

If the proposals are likely to harm the significance outlined in the Statement of significance, explain how the proposals would result in public benefits which outweigh such harm (public benefits include matters such as liturgical freedom, pastoral wellbeing and putting the church to viable uses that are consistent with its role as a place of worship and mission).

[http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/statements\\_of\\_significance\\_and\\_need\\_forms\\_in\\_word.docx](http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/statements_of_significance_and_need_forms_in_word.docx) accessed 10 July 2014

**The first draft of this Statement of Need was prepared in September 2011 and was based on the Church Buildings Council's earlier advice on Statements of Need as set out below:**

## **STATEMENTS OF NEED: GUIDANCE FOR PARISHES**

The Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2000 define a Statement of Need as “a document which sets out the reasons why it is considered that the needs of the parish cannot be met without making changes to the church building and the reasons why the changes are regarded as necessary to assist the church in its worship and mission”.

A Statement of Need should accompany a faculty application and balance the separately prepared Statement of Significance, guidance for which can be found at: <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/legal.php>.

A Statement of Need should be a document which serves both the parish and those who are involved in the faculty process. It should be a tool for the parish, enabling the PCC to focus its vision and agree on what it seeks to achieve. For others, such as the DAC, CBC and English Heritage it serves to provide easily accessible information to help assess the scheme which is being proposed for a faculty.

In short, Statements of Need are the parish's opportunity to explain, justify and rationalise the proposals to all interested parties, having regard to the Statement of Significance and impact of the proposed change. Consider that some people will not have the opportunity to visit the church and will need to base opinions on the information you provide in these supporting Statements.

Bearing this in mind, you are strongly encouraged to ensure that the Statement is factual, informative, clear and concise. Try not to be emotive or over-dramatic. The facts of the situation should speak clearly for themselves.

The following note sets out a way of presenting a Statement of Need in order to cover all the relevant information. You may need to adapt this to suit the particular needs of your parish.

Church Buildings Council

October 2002, revised March 2007, July 2010

Church House, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3NZ

## **Appendix 2: The Vision for Christ Church, Downend: A Sacred Space – a Public Place**

Christ Church has for almost 200 years been a place of worship for the people of Downend and beyond. The church has been cared for by succeeding generations who have seen fit to make some significant alterations to the building as its purpose has developed in a changing culture.

We are sensing God's call now to develop and extend the mission of Christ Church in a way that contributes to the building of community, the celebration of creativity and the nurturing of Christian Spirituality. However, the Parish Church is no longer fully 'fit for purpose' nor is it able to accommodate the ways that we see the church developing in the years ahead.

### **Christ Church: A Sacred Space – a Public Place**

There are 3 major aspects to the vision for the church –

- 1. Community: Open hospitality and building relationships**
- 2. Creativity: Uncluttered simplicity and vibrant expression**
- 3. Christian Spirituality: Going deeper with God and engaging with life**

#### **Key Concepts**

The key concepts for the project, emanating from the consultation process, seek to describe the type of spaces which we believe Christ Church could provide:

- **Adaptable space** – where large, medium and small gatherings all fit well;
- **Simple space** – where the design of the building does not limit its uses;
- **Sacred space** – which speaks of the nature of God;
- **Worship space** – providing a setting for creative expressions of worship;
- **Intimate space** – making one feel at ease;
- **Gathering space** – providing a hub for meeting and milling;
- **Uncluttered space** – with no mess, not bitty, simple and open;
- **Beautiful space** – which speaks to the senses and feeds the soul;
- **Integrated space** – where people feel connected wherever they are;
- **Outside space** – which realises its potential;
- **Safe space** – for those of all ages and those with disabilities;
- **Sustainable space** – reflecting God's care for creation.

## What might we be able to do?

### Community

- Create a major resource for the life of our community
- Make spaces outside and in for anyone to sit and reflect, to enjoy some stillness, or chat with a friend
- Open the doors during the week for people to come in to a space that feels welcoming, where they can be met by church members/staff who are happy to talk with them, take them to spaces to be still and pray, or play to with their children, listen to music, draw and paint, read, have a coffee etc.
- Display leaflets signposting ways to access support e.g. carers, debt, health etc and
- Make available CC Welcome packs/Parish link/ maps of local walks etc
- Run DVDs introducing CC/an introduction to Christianity
- Invite local groups to meet in different spaces (toddlers, crafts, community council etc)

### Creativity

Set up reflective corners and prayer stations - in place all the time

- Build a Wall of Expression – images expressing emotions, hopes, fears, dreams and questions
- Stage exhibitions from local and international artists/schools/playgroups/community groups
- Put on workshops for creative arts – dance/performance/music/photography/visual art etc
- Hold seminars on creativity in worship/teaching/family life/gardening etc
- Host Christian Arts Festivals using inside and outside spaces, including school and cricket ground
- Host Concerts and Theatre productions
- Develop worship that engages all the senses and expresses the vibrant life of the Spirit

## **Christian Spirituality**

Use the flexible spaces in ways appropriate to traditional or contemporary forms of worship

- Hold conferences to envision, encourage and equip for 'living the life' e.g. Leadership Summit and workshops on 'How to ..... be still, listen, resolve arguments, celebrate life as gift etc
- Create a small space with simple things for prayer and personal reflection
- Set up Labyrinths outside and inside (at times!)
- Model Sustainable Living – use of materials, energy, environmental conservation etc
- Have a Story Board - testimonies of people we know whose lives God has changed

Some of these things we know will be possible. Many others have yet to be imagined and some will only be 'seen' when the re-developed church is being used. Please do add to these possibilities as your imagination is fired.

## Appendix 3: Christ Church, Downend: a Sacred Space a place of (or a centre for) Community, Creativity and Christian Spirituality

What might this look like?

### Community

*'I was a stranger and you welcomed me' (Matthew 25; 35)*

- Coffee: Sofas and seats (Starbucks style)
- Listening to Classic Albums
- Watching films and reflecting on themes
- Library to read and access internet
- Interactive times for children/youth
- Outside space to sit and listen
- Get Connected:  
Opportunities corner/computer – to volunteer/community involvement/find a job  
Meet people and build networks/Text/email/Facebook
- Prayer box/book/board/candles/cards
- Signposts eg alcohol/depression/support of carers/marriage & divorce

*'The farmer sows the word.'* (Mark 4; 14)

- Notice boards
- Things people notice – cross or Christian symbol on church wall/banners/external lighting
- Publicity and literature to community
- Story of Christ Church/Christianity on rolling DVD
- Web sites with links
- Haven House and Halls

*'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst'* (Matthew 18; 20)

- Gathering for worship – small and large gatherings
- Gathering for prayer – 'opus dei' – 30 minutes morning, noon and night
- Gathering of different denominations/community groups
- Gathering at different levels – local churches/deanery/diocese
- Meeting to form relationships/networks/sharing of ideas/dream new ones



## **Creativity**

*'In the beginning, God created ....' (Genesis 1; 1)*

- Beauty for brokenness – aesthetics and uncluttered simplicity
- The Wall of Expression – images expressing emotion, hopes, fears, dreams
- Reflective corners/prayer stations
- Workshops for creative arts –  
dance/performance/crafts/art/music/drama/photography
- Exhibitions from local and international artists/schools/playgroups/church groups
- Lunchtime concerts/evening performances
- Arts festivals – mini Greenbelt using Cricket ground and School/Edinburgh fringe
- Seminars on creativity in worship/schools/gardens/homes
- Messy church

## **Christian Spirituality**

*'Come to me' (Matthew 11; 28)*

*'Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and teaching them how to obey all I have commanded you. And I am with you, always.'* (Matthew 28; 19, 20)

- Envision for mission: Encourage and equip for living the life where you are
- Growing Spaces: 'How to ... Workshops' – be still, meditate, relax, listen, celebrate etc
- Sustainable Spirituality – engaging with justice, poverty and the integrity of creation seen for example – swift boxes, cycle racks, renewable sources of energy for heating/lighting
- Silent Space – small chapel with simple things (sound proofed with ipod dock/CD player)
- Labyrinth – outside/inside
- Displays and details of Retreat/Healing Centres
- Displays and maps of beautiful walks within 20 miles
- Story Board – testimonies and photos of real people whose lives God has changed

## Appendix 4: Imagining a month at Christ Church, Downend

Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
<b>Week 1</b>			
Monday		Jigsaw (church for pre-schoolers)	Bring & Share Supper for Home Groups
Tuesday	Open Doors Coffee Bar	Pilates	Alpha Supper
Wednesday	RE Visit from Local School	Lunchtime concert	Worship Group practice
Thursday	Holy Communion & coffee	Toddlers	The Marriage Course
Friday	An Experience Journey		Deanery Leadership Training Evening
Saturday	Exhibition of work by local artists throughout the day		Theatre Performance
Sunday	Worship for all ages & refreshments	Ecumenical service for local churches	Labyrinth Journey
<b>Week 2</b>			
Monday		Craft Group	How to ..... Learn to forgive
Tuesday	Open Doors Coffee Bar		Alpha Course
Wednesday	Care for the Family Day Conference		Worship Group Practice
Thursday	Holy Communion & coffee	Toddlers	The Marriage Course
Friday	Open Doors: Music & Meditation		Candlelit Vigil for Victims of Earthquake
Saturday		FA Cup Final on big screen	Youth Band Gig
Sunday	Worship	Open Doors: A Silent Space	Celtic Evening Worship
<b>Week 3</b>			
Monday		Jigsaw	Baptism Preparation Evening
Tuesday	Open Doors Coffee Bar	Pilates	Alpha Course
Wednesday	Course for Teachers in Church Schools run by Diocese of Bristol		Worship Group Practice
Thursday	Holy Communion & Coffee	Toddlers	The Marriage Course
Friday			Big Band Concert
Saturday	Festival of Creative Arts	Creative artists in the Community	Classic Albums revisited
Sunday	Worship		Holy Communion

<b>Week 4</b>			
Monday	Pram Service	Craft Group	Parenting Course
Tuesday	Open Doors Coffee Bar	Messy Church	Alpha Course
Wednesday	Christians Against Poverty National Conference		Worship Group Practice
Thursday	Holy Communion & Coffee	Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club	The Marriage Course
Friday	Barnabas in Schools Retreat Day		African Choir and drumming
Saturday	Christian Resources Exhibition		Café Church
Sunday	Worship Special - workshops		Prayer Space