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This is an electronic version, as promised by Jeremy, of the information he provided at church on 19th November in hard-copy booklet format Some minor amendments which he made have been incorporated and it is here formatted in >imprint< "house-style"

Christ Church Centre St Albans Project:

New Roof with Interior Redesign

Where we are up to: October 2023

Summary of decisions so far

The flat roof with parapets of the original Christ Church building has long been in urgent need of attention.

During 2022/2023 the PCC, steered by two sub-committees, elected to:

- Replace existing Church roof & parapet with a mono-pitch roof
- Remove structural elements from the existing building
- Allow an interior redesign
- Follow a "Design and Build" strategy

Crucial to these deliberations has been the centrality of this part of the building as a *worship space*.

Also there has been a constant desire to:

- Not repeat the failure of previous attempted solutions
- Keep cost and faith in synch, believing in God's provision
- Think through all issues carefully, not rushing to quick solution

How did we reach these decisions?

Back in late 2021/early 2022 two informal meetings took place with different architects (Tim Medlycott and Jeremy Follett met firstly with Stephen Marchant and then Kevin McGann). With site visits, and time inspecting the roof, we were convinced of:

1. The complexity and range of the leak situation
2. The fundamental correctness of previous analyses (reached over many years and many repair attempts)
3. The need for a radical solution

The first Roof Working Party was set up by PCC in January 2022. Its membership was comprised of people all of whom worship at Christ Church with:

- Some having expertise in building, finance and planning
- Some being involved with the successful new build 2008-2011
- Rev Jeremy Follett as chair – he was not involved in either new build project or previous roof projects

Given this, we carefully considered other options, which in the end we rejected namely:

- A fuller repair to existing roof than previously managed
- A “knock down and start again” rebuild
- A possible “two storeys” extension

The approach used in previous building projects

There is a “traditional route” for a building project which we have pursued in the past which starts with this sequence:

- Talk to architect(s) about our needs and wants
- Select an architect after presentations
- Get drawings from architect, which we pay for
- Negotiate changes to the plans, which we pay for
- Take the estimated cost, and tender to builders
- Employ builders

This route worked supremely well in **2008-2011** with the Rebuild project. The selection process to choose an architect was unanimous and unambiguous: Ralph Allen was the preferred option and his professional experience with Churches, his manner and his proposed plan all combined successfully to produce a plan we were whole hearted about.

A phase 2 for this Rebuild project was proposed at the time but it was hazy and so the PCC chose to keep the two plans separate.

However this traditional route failed in **2015**:

- The appointment process lacked clarity, with ambiguity over the range of architects who were looked at and the uncertainties within the plans of what was/wasn't possible.
- The choice of Ralph Allen Associates was then made on basis of our previous experience with them. Unfortunately Ralph himself was in the process of retiring so another, less experienced architect took over.
- We paid close to £9000 for architect's drawings which proposed several different

solutions. However the most satisfactory of these appeared overly complex and cost an estimated £1.1M – the architect himself advised “knock down and rebuild” was a better option potentially being nearly as cheap.

So with this latest project it was decided to:

- Spend time making sure we fully understood all the issues, both material (leaky roof) and spiritual (this is a worship area not a community hall)
- Not spend further money until we were confident of our approach both materially and spiritually
- Pursue the alternative “Design and Build” route which is more relational and involving

Design and Build

On 12th September 2022 PCC received the findings of the first Roof Working Party. The proposal included a recognition that an *IDEAL* solution is the best starting point even if, ultimately, we need to be more *REALISTIC*. The PCC then made these decisions:

After due consideration of the Working Party’s proposals, the PCC voted as follows:

1. Disregard the cheapest option of a like-for-like flat roof – proposed by Jeremy, 11 in favour so a unanimous decision.
2. Disregard the most expensive option of a complete rebuild – proposed by Paul, seconded by Sue, 9 in favour, 2 abstentions.
3. Consider the *IDEAL* solution - proposed by Jeremy, 11 in favour so a unanimous decision.

A second Roof Working Party (still current) was then formed with a slightly different set of people all of whom are Christ Church worshippers but contain a mix of professional building and ecclesial skills (Jonathan Carter, Gillian Donald, Debbie Dorman, Jeremy Follett (chair) and Tim Medlycott). This group prefer the Design and Build option which is not necessarily *cheaper* but:

- *It is* more cost-effective– we get more of what we genuinely want
- The relationship with the construction company is a 2-way dialogue from the beginning
- By involvement with the complete design process they become “part of our organisation”.

Choosing ORION

We considered two D & B construction companies both of whom visited and spent a long time talking through our situation and how they thought they could be useful. We were looking for particular attributes in the companies:

- A careful listening to what we were saying rather than an imposed solution
- A desire for “reasonable cost”, neither dirt cheap or over priced
- Trustworthiness, telling us the truth and delivering on promises
- A mutual “comfortableness” in a working relationship
- A general willingness to share in other values we hold

With these considerations it was unanimously agreed by the Roof Working Party that

we would prefer to work with ORION.

It is important to note that ORION have:

- Already ticked these boxes
- Freely and generously given of their time and experience
- Previously worked with Tim (but there is no professional advantage for him here)

12th June 2023 this statement was included in the PCC minutes:

Roger, our contact with Orion, a roof structure specialist company and one of the 2 firms that we have been in contact with who have visited twice (the other company visited us once), has a good grasp of our requirements, the scale of the project and our budgetary limitations and is working with his Quantity Surveyor to provide us with rough costings in the first instance. He has impressed the working party by his understanding and thoughtful approach and has been prepared to do a lot of preliminary work without charge, keeping us in the loop. By contrast the other company would likely have taken a much less nuanced approach in terms of solution and costings.

Alongside the selection of a D & B construction company, the Roof Working Party also visited 3 interior design companies in Clerkenwell. Because a new pitched roof enables the dismantling of complex structural elements in the old part of Christ Church Centre, there is freedom to redesign the interior. This necessitates consideration of:

- Shape and direction of worship area
- Toilet facilities
- Kitchen facilities
- Heating and lighting
- Storage space
- Rooms and other, adaptable spaces
- Sound and vision
- Suspended or open ceiling
- Floor covering

The visits to Clerkenwell demonstrated how we can combine **definite building options** with other **mobile solutions**. So, for instance, whilst we can easily build permanent storage spaces, other mobile room dividers, with chairs and tables, can all be set up for a variety of uses but with the possibility of relocation as our needs change or our clarity increases.

The Proposal

ORION produced a detailed report making various proposals which they presented to the Roof Working Party on Friday 13th October 2023. Provided free of charge this report included:

- Initial sketch for a mono-pitch roof
- Sketch for removal of structural elements to the interior
- Choices concerning materials to be used
- Choices of phases for full project
- An estimated cost

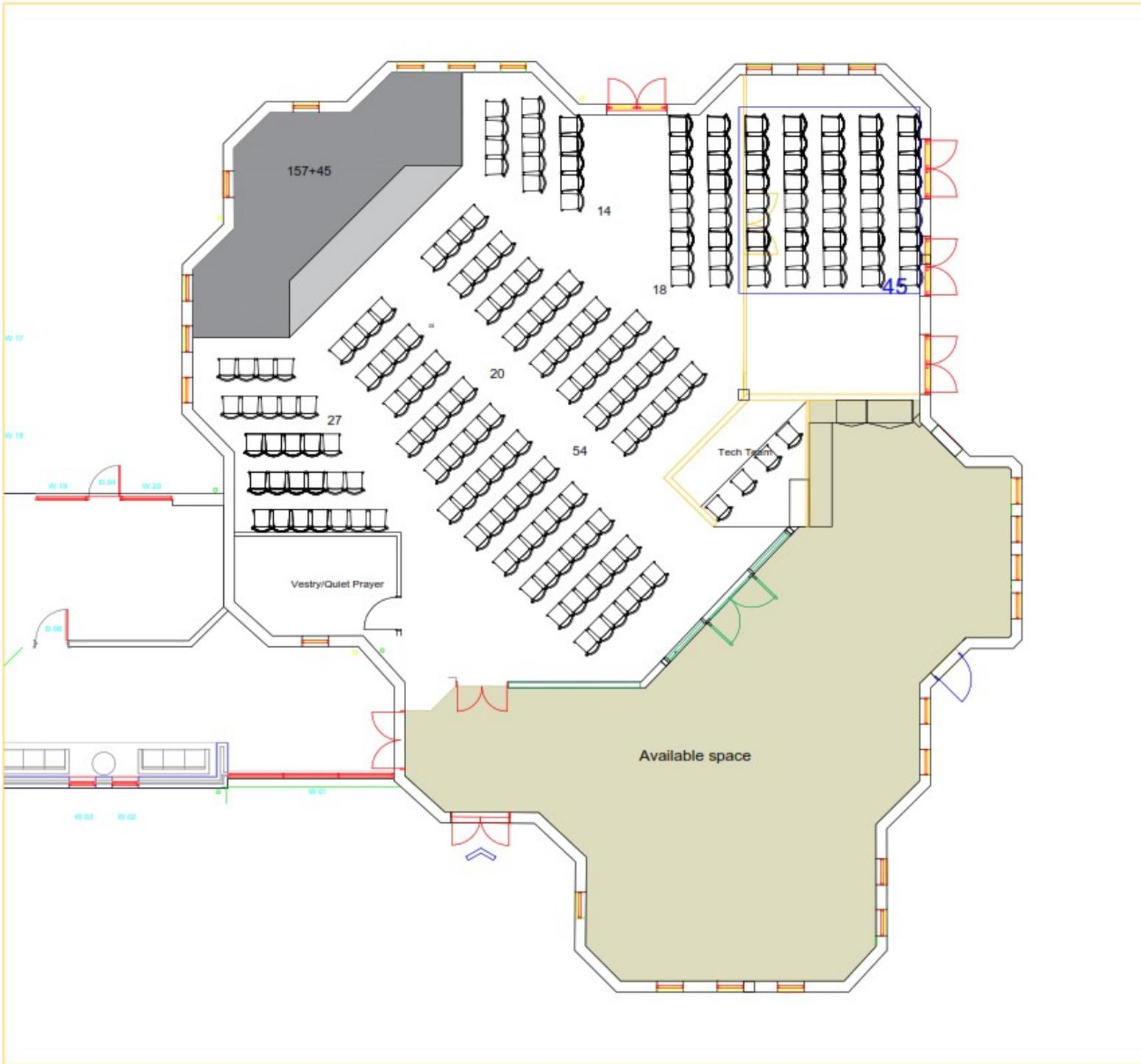
Meeting on Saturday 21st October 2023 the PCC examined these initial plans in depth. After careful discussion PCC agreed to release up to £40,000 undesignated funds from the General Fund to pay for the next preliminary stage of proceedings. They also agreed:

- To engage ORION for architects drawings
- To engage ORION for preliminary investigations into the site foundations
- To present drawings and results to whole church for approval

This is where we are up to (end of October 2023). The Roof Working Party are aware that people will have many necessary questions of clarification. These include matters of:

- Viability of the amount we will need to fund raise
- Consultation concerning interior redesign
- The speed at which we proceed

Each of these we will address publicly as time goes on. In the meantime if you have specific questions please email Debbie (enquiries@ccstalbans.org.uk) or Jeremy (jeremy@ccstalbans.org.uk).



Sketch of possible interior layout