

# Supporting Documentation

## Sandiway St John the Evangelist – Pews and handrails

### Note to parish

This bundle includes all the supporting documentation to your faculty application as required under Rule 5.5 of the Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2022.

### List of documentation

Item	Description	Page
<i>Overview</i>		
1	Schedule of Works or Proposals from the Petition for Faculty logged 3 November 2022	2
2	Statement of Significance uploaded 3 November 2022	3
3	Statement of Need dated October 2022	11
<i>Proposals</i>		
4	Pew and radiator proposal received 1 September 2022	55
5	Drawing number 01 Location Plan as Existing and Proposed, Details of Pulpit Step Guarding and Chancel Step Handrails of Kepczyk Pearce Sanderson dated October 2022, uploaded 3 November 2022	59
6	Photographs of pews, received 7 March 2023	60
<i>Correspondence</i>		
7	Correspondence between DAC office and parish dated from 1 September 2022 to 7 March 2023	61
<i>Consultation</i>		
8	Correspondence between DAC office and consultees dated from 15 December 2022 to 28 March 2023	65

Caroline Hilton, DAC Secretary

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27 June 2023

**We petition the Court for a faculty to authorise the following-**

*Please describe the works or other proposals for which a faculty is sought in the way recommended by the Diocesan Advisory Committee in its Notification of Advice.*

**SCHEDULE OF WORKS OR PROPOSALS**

The requirement is to remove the front two rows of pews from the nave (totalling four pews) and move the two pew frontals to their respective new positions.

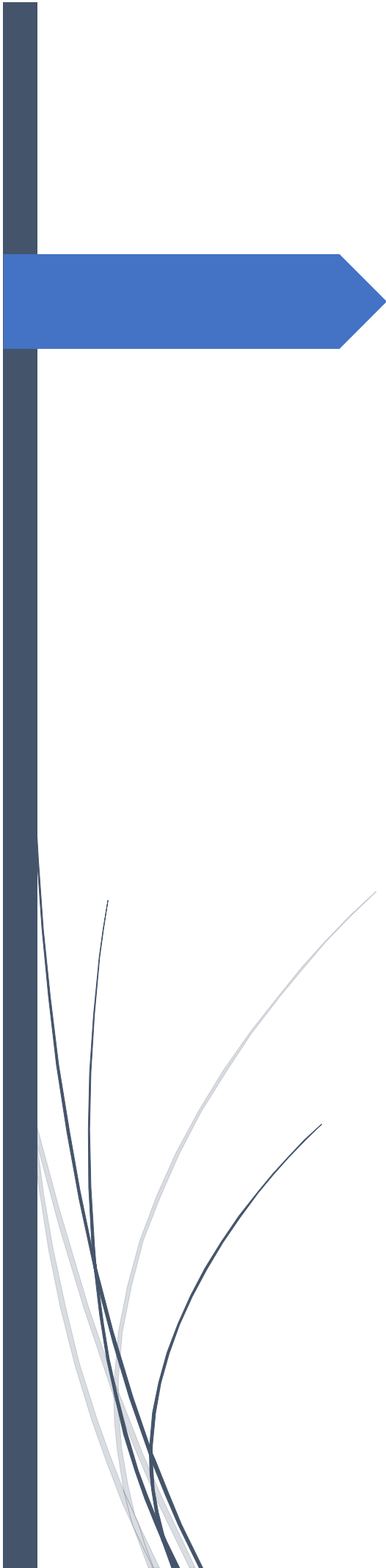
The two radiators currently at the front of the pew frontals will also require relocating to the side of the adjacent nave walls. The heating pipework connections will need to be capped off at floor level from their original positions and the radiators connected back into the heating circuit adjacent to their new positions along the nave walls.

Following the above changes, it will be necessary to introduce an additional timber handrail to make safe access up to the exposed pulpit steps.

Once complete, the church will carpet the resulting open areas on either side of the main church aisle and replace the aisle carpets to match.

This package of work forms part of the Phase one activity for the Heritage Building Project at St.John's Sandiway.

*Copies of the Standard Information Form and any drawings, plans, specifications, photographs or other documents showing the proposals must be provided with this petition.*



# St John the Evangelist Heritage Building Project

Statement of Significance

Version 3.0.0

John Goulden  
[Jgoulden22@icloud.com](mailto:Jgoulden22@icloud.com)

## Section 1.1 St John's Church Building History and Description

St. John the Evangelist, Sandiway is a beautiful village church designed and built by John Douglas in 1903, who was born in the village in 1830. The tower was a later addition being completed in around 1911.

The church is a grade II listed building (list entry number 1287518) and the lychgate is separately listed as grade II (list entry number 1227730).

The church is on the busy Norley Road (CW8 2JU) and is set in a garden surrounded by trees, laurel hedges and rhododendrons. The front boundary either side of the lychgate is separated from the road by an attractive red sandstone perimeter wall. There is no churchyard. The church is also built from Cheshire sandstone and is a significant and attractive landmark in the village. The church is approached through a lychgate to the north facing porch.

Inside the church there are two rows of pews with a single central aisle. John Douglas was part of the Oxford Movement, with a strong focus on the altar and as a result, there is no allowance of space for social interaction or group work and the design of the church conveys an expectation that visitors are expected to sit down and face the altar.

To the front of the church, on the left there is a beautifully carved oak pulpit built by John Sewell of Chester in 1904; on the right side there is a brass eagle lectern made in 1902. The chancel is up two steps and has a bank of ornately carved choir stalls on either side. The Lord's Table is a simple table covered by white cloth and a frontal, separated from the chancel by a plain rail and kneelers. The organ is a two manual pedal organ, electrically blown, built by Wadsworth Bros in Manchester 1902.

The Baptistry at the west end of the church has a carved stone font with oak cover. The stone font has not been available for use for some time due to a H&S trip risk. There is also a Della Robbia plaque in the Baptistry along with brass plates in memory of those from the village lost in world wars.

Throughout the church there are stained glass windows depicting Biblical characters and events.

There is no internal toilet facility or baby changing facility in the church building. A single toilet is present in the Bier House building located in the church grounds.

The church heating system is dated, inefficient and expensive to run.

Catering facilities located in the Baptistry, are limited to a table with free-standing urn and kettles, without storage space, accessed by a six-inch step. There is no handwashing or washing up facility and no hot water supply present in the church.

The church hall is an 8-minute walk away from the church, across a very busy crossroads. Parts of the pavement enroute to the church hall are narrow and uneven.

## Section 1.2 Church Building Overview and Historic England Record

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number:1287518

Date first listed:18-Jul-1986

Statutory Address: CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, NORLEY ROAD



## Location

Statutory Address: CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, NORLEY ROAD

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: Cheshire West and Chester (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Cuddington

National Grid Reference: SJ 60579 71144

## Details

CUDDINGTON C.P. NORLEY ROAD SJ 67 SW (South Side) Sandiway 4/28 Church of St John the Evangelist - GV II

Church: dated 1902 by and partly at the expense of John Douglas. Tower completed some years later as his memorial. Irregularly coursed tooled red sandstone with ashlar dressings. Lakeland slate roof. 4-bay nave and taller 3-bay chancel, south porch, vestry and 3-stage west tower. Perpendicular style nave. Decorated elements elsewhere. Gabled porch has a carved inscription over a 4-centred arched door. Nave has pairs of 2-light rectangular windows with panel tracery and a continuous label mould. Between nave and chancel is a triangular headed buttresses with an angel on the face. Chancel has a corbel table and a mixture of simple 2 and 3-light 4-centred arched windows. Figure of St John in niche. 5-light east window with flamboyant but uncusped tracery. The north side has a slightly different pattern of windows. Tower has diagonal buttresses and a plain 3-light west window

above which are 5 strip pilasters that rise to the top of the tower, where they form cusped heads, the central pair being over louvred bell openings. Embattled parapet. On the south side of the tower is a door to a projecting stair turret which ends at the 2nd stage. Interior: The nave has a moulded cornice and the pairs of nave windows are divided by a freestanding octagonal pier. Arch-braced collar trusses are carried on heavy corbels. Tower arch over an octagonal font and a Della Robbia (Birkenhead) panel in the wall. Chancel has an arcade of Perpendicular openings to the organ console which carries a carved and figured organ case. Quaint 2-seat sedilia and aumbry. Panelled roof with foliage bosses over the sanctuary.

Listing NGR: SJ6057971144

### Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: 402168

Legacy System: LBS

### Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Lychgate to St John Evangelist's Church

### Section 1.3 Lychgate Overview and Historic England Record

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1227730

Date first listed: 18-Jul-1986

Statutory Address: LYCHGATE TO ST JOHN EVANGELIST'S CHURCH, NORLEY ROAD

### Location

Statutory Address: LYCHGATE TO ST JOHN EVANGELIST'S CHURCH, NORLEY ROAD

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: Cheshire West and Chester (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Cuddington

National Grid Reference: SJ6057371166

### Details

SJ 67 SW 4/27

CUDDINGTON C.P. NORLEY ROAD (South Side) Sandiway Lychgate to St. John Evangelist's Church

II

GV

Lychgate: c1902 by John Douglas. Irregularly coursed red sandstone with ashlar dressings. York stone roof. Gabled gateway with broad 2-centred arched entrance under a label mould with a hollow chamfered rib on a simple corbel. Similar opening with squat buttresses to the rear. 4 ribs carry the

roof. Small lights to either side are deepened inside to form seats. It contains a pair of wooden gates framed into 2 rectangular panels of diamond sectioned, pointed bars.

Included for group value.

Listing NGR: SJ 60573 71166



### Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

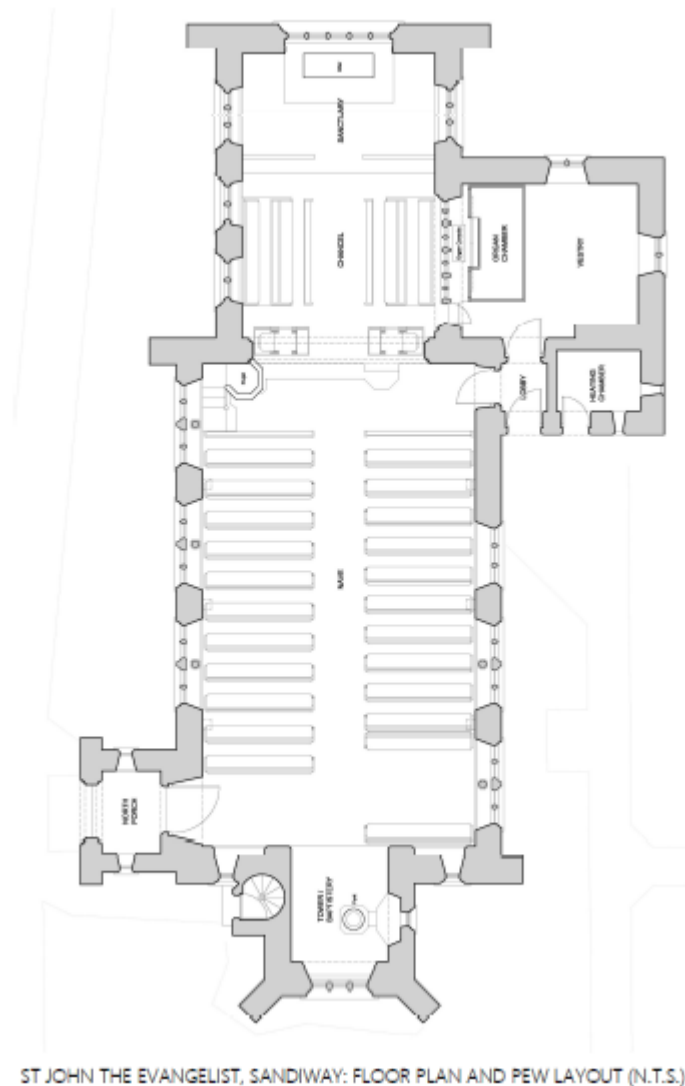
Legacy System number: 402167

Legacy System: LBS

### Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

## Section 1.4 Existing Church Building Floor Plan View



## Section 2 Architectural and Historical Significance

St John's is one of 40 churches designed by John Douglas, 33 of which are still in use as churches. It is of moderate significance as an example of his work.

In 1986 the church gained a Grade II listed building status. The listing identifies the following significant features overleaf:

### External:

- Irregularly coursed sandstone construction with Lakeland slate roof
- Perpendicular style 4 bay nave and taller 3 bay chancel
- Gabled porch with carved inscription over 4-centred arched door
- Buttresses with angel carving between nave and chancel

### Internal:

- In nave, moulded cornice and freestanding octagonal piers between windows
- Arch-braced collar trusses carried on heavy corbels



- Tower arch over octagonal font, with Della Robbia panel on wall
- In chancel, arcade of perpendicular openings to organ console, with carved and figured organ case; 2-seat Sedilia and aumbry; panelled roof with foliage bosses over sanctuary

### **Section 3      Assessment of Impact of Proposals on Significance**

There are no proposals to structurally change anything at the east end of the church and there will be minimum change to the internals of the nave.

#### **Impact of upgrading heating: LOW**

The impact of upgrading the heating and adding further heated space in the form of the Heritage Annexe would be of low impact on the architectural features of the building. Choices about fittings should be made to ensure they would be as unobtrusive as possible.

#### **Impact of upgrading lighting: LOW**

The impact of upgrading to controllable LEDs would be of low negative impact on the architectural features of the building. We are engaging a lighting consultant to assess the light requirements to avoid unnecessary dark spots from poorly focussed downlights and to also re-assess the up lighting to achieve better presentation of the architectural features present in the church. The intention is also to move to lower powered LEDs with reduced failure rates and in turn reducing the need for replacement of filaments that require high level ladder access. Choices about fittings should be made to ensure they would be as unobtrusive as possible.

#### **Impact of a permanent ramp: LOW**

In addition to a permanent accessibility ramp into the proposed Heritage Annexe as a side entrance into the building, the church will also introduce a permanent ramp into the main front entrance of the building. The chosen design layout will be as compact and discreet as possible so as to preserve the appearance of St.John's using materials of construction that will keep the impact to an absolute minimum.

#### **Impact of glass door: LOW**

The addition of a glass door at the entrance to the front porch, outside the existing wooden door, will have minimal impact on the view of the church from the outside. Again, tasteful selection of materials and design will be needed to ensure that the new door is in keeping. Any design etched into the glass would need to echo the theological message of the church.

#### **Impact of re-instatement of the Baptistry: NONE**

The clearing of the existing Baptistry space of all unrelated stored items, the removal of the aged carpet, the professional cleaning and sealing of the original tiled sub-floor will all allow the Baptistry to once again be brought back into use and present its character and heritage for all to see without any risk to the church.

#### **Impact of handrails at the chancel steps: LOW**

The addition of removable handrails at the chancel steps would clearly have a visual impact on the church interior when looking towards the altar. This would need to be minimised with careful and sensitive selection of the design materials.

#### **Impact of removing a limited number of pews: MEDIUM**

Removing the front two rows of pews to provide more space for accessibility, limited flexible seating, space to improve the difficulties in wedding and particularly in funeral services will clearly have some impact on the way the church looks on entry. By limiting this change to just the front two

rows, the important needs of the church are met without excessive change that would otherwise undermine the architectural layout of the church.

**Impact of introducing pew cushions: NONE**

The impact of replacing the existing pew runners with more comfortable base cushions for all remaining pews, choir pews and ministry seats would be minimal. The material colour would be consistent with the formal church colour and shade. The cushion material will meet the necessary requirements for church seating in respect of serviceability.

**Impact of building a Heritage Annexe onto the south nave wall: MEDIUM**

There would be no visual impact from the front of the church and limited impact from either side of the church as the Annexe would be sensitively built between the Vestry wing and the inner Tower buttress. This means that the Annexe would not be seen from the front of the church and with very minimal extension beyond the existing Vestry building line, the Annexe would have minimal impact from either side of the church. The main visual impact would be for those with gardens backing onto the church garden. There will be some use of the church garden with occasional outdoor services or events such as a summer cream tea. To offset this, the design appearance and materials of construction will be sympathetic to the existing building.

**Impact of re-purposing the existing Bier House: VERY LOW**

Re-purposing the existing Bier House building to an office and store will maintain the heritage of the John Douglas outbuilding whilst maximising the benefit of its presence on the site and support our ECO commitments. There will be very limited visual change to outside appearance of the building.

## **Section 4 Sources**

Cooper, T. , and Brown, S Ed's. (2011) Pews, benches and chairs: Church Seating in English Parish

Churches from the Fourteenth Century to the Present. The Ecclesiastical Society.

Historic England. Church of St John the Evangelist, List Entry Summary - 1287518.

Hubbard, E. (2014: revised ed.) The Work of John Douglas. Jeremy Mills Publishing.

Pevsner, N. (1971) Cheshire (Pevsner Architectural Guides: Buildings of England). Yale University Press.

## **Section 5 Architects consulted**

Graham Holland (under previous vicar)

Duncan Sanderson (for 2019/2021 proposals)

Duncan Sanderson (for this 2022 project proposal)



# STATEMENT OF NEED

## HERITAGE BUILDING PROJECT

St. John's Church, Norley Road Sandiway CW8 2JU

October 2022

J Goulden

## 0. Table of Contents

0. Table of Contents .....	1
1. Summary .....	3
a) Overview of the Parish.....	3
b) Congregation.....	3
c) Church Services & Activities currently held in St. John's Church Building.....	4
d) Church Services & Activities currently held in St.John's Church Hall .....	5
e) Public Activities currently held in St.John's Church Hall.....	6
f) Church Financial Position.....	6
g) Maintenance and the Quinquennial Report.....	6
h) Heritage Building Project Financial Position .....	7
2. List of Needs.....	8
a) What is Required ? .....	8
b) Architects Brief.....	8
3. Design Proposals.....	11
4. Why do we need it? Why now? .....	24
a) Introduction .....	24
b) Attracting new people so the church family grows, especially families.....	24
c) Enhancing Mission .....	25
d) Enhancing Liturgical space and benefitting the Ministry of the church .....	26
e) Improving how we run as a church.....	27
f) Maximising effective usage of BOTH the Church and the Church Hall.....	27
5. Alternatives Considered.....	30
a) Why construct an Annexe if you can accommodate the changes within the existing body of the church? .....	30
b) Looking at Different Design Approaches .....	30
c) Could the Required Facilities be provided in the Church Hall? .....	30
6. Justification .....	32
a) No Alternative Space Available .....	32
b) Achieving the Benefits AND Preserving our Heritage.....	32
c) Mitigating Impact.....	33
7. Evidence for the need.....	34
a) 2018 Open Consultation .....	34

## 0 - Table of Contents

b)	Ongoing Consultations .....	37
8.	Environmental Sustainability .....	39
a)	Reducing our Carbon Footprint .....	39
b)	Change in Energy Usage.....	39
c)	Sustainable design .....	39
d)	ECO Benchmarks .....	39
e)	Impact on flora and fauna in the church garden .....	39
f)	Influencing others and reducing impact on the environment.....	39
9.	Appendices.....	40
a)	Summary of the Project Work Phases .....	40
b)	Plans and Drawings .....	41
c)	References .....	43
d)	Architects consulted .....	43

## 1. Summary

This Statement of Need follows the structure defined by Chester Diocesan Advisory Committee and the summary below is intended to offer a quick overview of St.John's project plans.

St.John's Church has an active, well committed and engaging congregation who share a wonderful grade II listed church, built in 1903 by famous architect John Douglas in his home village of Sandiway where he was born.

The church site has a grade II listed lychgate and has a Bier House at the rear in the church garden. There is no churchyard at this church.

St.John's also has a church hall located further along Norley Road, but separated by a very busy cross road junction. The church hall has been generally modernised with an Ark café adjacent to its main function hall and adjacent kitchen and has an accessible ramp and all-access toilets. The church hall has regularly committed bookings by local groups including the Sandiway Pantomime group, local food hub and the Ark is a local charity committed enterprise open once weekly.

The Heritage Building project at St.John's church is focussed on the needs of today, its people and its potential church attenders which have proven to be held back by limitations at the church.

Our church building currently fails to meet the needs of children, families and less mobile people who would like to go regularly to our church, but do not. The current layout lacks the facilities they need and expect in a location where they need them to be. The improvements made in the church hall have helped for some but not for everyone who prefer to be in the church in a safe and welcoming environment and desperately wish to do so, but are held back.

All visitors to the church appreciate the brilliance of its architecture and historical record and the warmth that it offers, but we are currently unable to offer its welcome and relevance to all unless we introduce some updating to physically allow access (space and accessibility) and include elements which are today expected (indoor facilities, drinks, socialising).

We are also aware of our church building's heritage and wish to protect that. The most effective solution is to limit internal changes to the church building to a critical minimum so as to preserve our heritage, but add an Annexe to the rear of the church building to satisfy the multi-functional demand and modern requirements that families expect.

The church also wishes to celebrate its heritage as a John Douglas heritage centre in the village which is surrounded by his designs.

The proposals will help St.John's church to further open its door, extending its welcome to all and removing any 'barriers' that are currently preventing that happening.

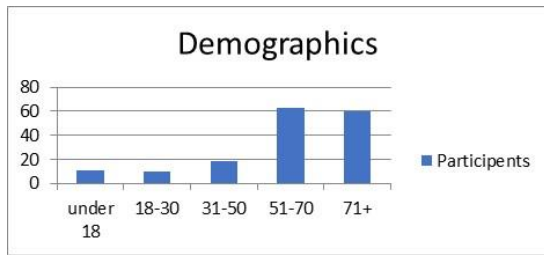
### a) Overview of the Parish

The parish has a population of circa 6,000 and is still growing due to the building of new estates. There are a number of businesses within the parish, including two parades of shops, a Post Office, several working farms, Blakemere Village craft & leisure centre. The village also has a library, dentist surgery and a veterinary practice. There are three care homes in the village, two primary schools and a variety of leisure facilities.

There are three churches in the village: St.John's, a Methodist church and a Gospel church, which all come together for occasional ecumenical services.

### b) Congregation

St.John's currently has 179 people on its electoral roll (2022 figure). We received 164 responses to our 2018 consultation survey and this reflected the following age profile:



**c) Church Services & Activities currently held in St. John's Church Building**

St. John's holds a range of services, from very traditional to the modern which reflects the diverse tastes and background of the church membership. This table shows the services and activities which are currently held at St. John's church, their frequency and attendance and highlights those where the church building currently constrains its success and growth:

Day	Time	Service	Average Attendance	Current Constraints		
				Accessibility	Welcome to All	Operational Space
Every Thursday	9:30am	A peaceful, said communion service	23	●		
Every Saturday	10am-12pm	Open for visitors, fellowship and support, basic refreshments served	25	●	●	●
1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	8:30am	Said Communion	15	●	●	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	8:30am	BCP Choral Matins	22	●	●	
1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	10:15am	Muddy Church (April-Sept)	40		●	
Occasional Sundays	10:15am	Family praise (usually in Hall, except for special occasions and Pantomime season, 3 weeks in Jan)	50	●	●	
1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	6:30pm	BCP Choral Evensong	25	●	●	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	6:30pm	Celtic Holy Communion	30	●	●	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	6:30pm	Take 40 – a reflective 40 minute service	38	●	●	
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	6:30pm	Celtic Holy Communion	30	●	●	
As Required		Special services – Christingle, Christmas, Easter and Harvest	80-150	●	●	●
18 in 2022		Baptisms	50	●	●	
1 in 2022		Weddings	100	●	●	●

## 1 - Summary

8 in 2021 10 in 2022		Weddings Funerals / Memorial services	100 60	● ●	● ●	● ●
1 <sup>st</sup> Monday monthly	12- 1:00pm	Lunchtime Concerts (limited to small choirs, ensembles that will fit in the chancel) plus soup at the Church Hall	45	●	●	●
Annually	Over two days	Prayer Weekends	Average 120	●	●	●
5 per year		Lent Discussion groups	25-30	●	●	●
Weekly		Midday Reflection (Lent/Advent)	12	●	●	●
3 per year		Care Home services	10	●	●	●
6 per year		PCC Meetings	18	●		●
Annually		Gift Day	Average 120	●	●	
Annually		Come & Sing	Average 60	●	●	●
Annually		Heritage Open Day	70	●	●	
Annually		Easter & Christmas experience for schools (5 classes across the week)	140	●	●	

The church does not currently leave its doors open unattended during daylight hours at present, but the PCC have agreed to open from January 2023.

### d) Church Services & Activities currently held in St.John's Church Hall

Our church hall is located across a busy main cross-road junction and further along Norley Road from the church building.

We have a range of services and activities which are held in the church hall for adults, children and young people, but also hire the hall out to the members of the public as a revenue stream to the church. The church services and activities are tabled as follows:

Day	Time	Service	Average Attendance
1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tues	7-9:30pm	St.John's Bible Study Group	6
1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday	2:30pm	Mother Union meeting with speaker	24
Wednesday	1:45pm	Arts & Craft Group	12
Thursdays	1-3pm	Praise & Play	12
2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Saturday	3pm	JIMS: Informal music group	12
1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday Other Sundays	10:15am	Family Praise with communion Morning praise all-age or with Junior church	50
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	4pm	Youth Group – (venue unavailable Oct-Jan)	10
6x per year		Church social events	70
1 <sup>st</sup> Monday Monthly	1pm	Soup Lunches for lunchtime monthly Church Concerts	45



All of the above activities take place in the church hall as there currently is insufficient space in the church building for them. Family Praise at 10:15am is held in the church hall to make it accessible to those who require wheelchairs, with pushchairs or have young children who want to move around during the service.

The church hall is the **only** space where we can separately accommodate the children's group in parallel with the adult service and for them to comfortably re-join the main service towards the end. From early October to January, inclusive, when the village pantomime group use the hall for rehearsals on Sunday afternoons, the Youth Group have to meet in one of the leader's houses. In the last nine days of January the Pantomime group use the Church Hall throughout the day and evening and therefore the Family Praise service is also moved to the Church. Morning worship also takes place in the church for Harvest, Mothering Sunday, Easter and Christmas.

#### e) Public Activities currently held in St.John's Church Hall

The church hall is also available for community hire and is currently used by the following groups and individuals on a regular basis:

- ✓ The Ark community café every Friday 9am – 2pm
- ✓ Tots Café every Friday 9am – 2pm
- ✓ Cuddington and Sandiway Toddler group Wednesday mornings
- ✓ Pantomime group rehearsing twice a week October to end January (plus every day in the last 9 days of January)
- ✓ Local NCS Food Hub (Monday evening plus Tuesday)
- ✓ Official space allocated for Citizen's Advice Bureau client use
- ✓ Various keep fit classes (Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday evenings)
- ✓ Art class (Thursday mornings)
- ✓ Badminton (Thursday evenings)
- ✓ Individual children's parties (afternoons currently averaging twice per month)

#### f) Church Financial Position

St.John's is supported by a significant proportion of planned giving. It is important that our assets are used to the full and in the case of the church hall that we are then able to maximise our income generation for the church in order to be able to pay the parish share and all necessary running costs. It is important that **both** the church and the church hall are an accessible place of worship as well as a significant community hub for the local area. Part of that undoubtedly includes maintaining and celebrating the heritage that is present particularly in the church building and relevant to so many in the local area.

#### g) Maintenance and the Quinquennial Report

Our last Quinquennial report was in 2020 and the major issue that remained outstanding was the need to address the tower roof repair. The fundraising volunteers have raised around £ 54,000 towards the work, the latest estimate to complete the work is around £ 68,000. There is sufficient money in the reserves to proceed with the repairs, the faculty is now passing through final notification period and the project is expected to commence this year 2022.

Other remaining items on the report, which are of less priority and scale, will be assessed and prioritised against our available maintenance reserves going forward.

#### **h) Heritage Building Project Financial Position**

This project will rely upon considerable effort to seek the necessary grant funding and giving to meet the costs of such a development which at pre-detail stage was estimated to be around £ 650,000 ex VAT.

The church has intentionally split the project programme into two phases, firstly to achieve the critically important, less complicated and more affordable changes, whilst the remainder including the construction of the Heritage Annexe, targeted into a second and longer term phase.

The project team will be operating diligent planning and cost control to drive the project safely forwards whilst protecting the church finances as we progress.

The July 2022 Gift Aid day was dedicated to the Heritage Building Project. It was well attended and apart from the positive response on funding, was a useful opportunity to share our revised proposals and discuss 1:1 with individuals who were interested in our plans.

Further funding events are scheduled and will continue as our Heritage Building Project continues to progress along with efforts to achieve grant funding opportunities to support us in this important venture.

## 2. List of Needs

### a) What is Required ?

St John's has a two-part mission statement: "To worship God and to share his love with others". The church desperately needs change to make the building accessible to all, comfortable and aligned with today's expectations, in terms of comfort, openness but also in respect of newer approaches to engage the wider village and allow the church to prosper. The changes must not negatively impact the wonderful architecture and furnishings that we hold, but should also allow us to promote our heritage which is important to the wider communities not just the congregation. The following needs reflect this statement:

#### **Improve Accessibility into the church building**

1. Space for wheelchair users, mobility aids and those with children's buggies or prams to attend services and be fully included within the congregation
2. Sufficient space to lead at funerals and weddings
3. Permanent access for all disabled visitors and those with pushchairs
4. More comfortable seating for all, but especially our elderly and infirm
5. Easier access to the altar for those with mobility issues

#### **Improve Our Welcome to All**

6. A welcoming entrance to the church
7. Modern, comfortable, heated, fully accessible toilet and baby changing facility within the building
8. Facilities for preparing and serving refreshments safely and within Health & Hygiene standards
9. Space for those staying for refreshments to be able to socialise with each other

#### **Maximise and Improve Our Church Operating Space today and to Allow Us to Grow tomorrow**

10. Space to allow alternative service formats: eg, Family Praise, Open Church
11. Space for children/young people to use for age-appropriate activities during the service
12. Space to allow for meetings or activities
13. Sufficient space for the choir to robe/disrobe before and after services
14. Efficient heating
15. Efficient and effective lighting
16. Be able to re-commission the existing stone font to allow its use for all future Baptism services
17. Provide better church office and storage space
18. Sufficient space and means to present and celebrate the architectural heritage of St John's church not just with our existing visitors but for the whole village and wider interest groups

### b) Architects Brief

The Heritage Building Project will require limited pieces of work within the existing church building which will involve removing two rows of pews from the front of the nave, fitting handrails to chancel steps and pulpit. There will be a requirement to introduce a permanent ramp and glass doors to the outer front porch of the church and internal re-configuration of the Bier House outbuilding which is located in the rear south garden. However, the larger reordering work will involve the construction of a Heritage Annexe onto the rear south nave wall (see Figure 1). The Annexe will include a multi-use open space, a servery and toilets and baby changing facilities.



**FIGURE 1 - SOUTH NAVE WALL WHERE THE ANNEXE WILL BE CONSTRUCTED**

There should be no visual change to the primary public views of the church from the Conservation Area roadway on Norley Road and as the annexe will also be discreetly built onto the rear (south) nave wall there will be no interruption from the east roadway view from Hadrian Way.

The Annexe will be well lit, bright and airy incorporating red sandstone finish which is sympathetic to the existing structure. There will be large opening glazed doors/windows looking out over the church garden to the south to allow the church services to also be held in the church garden.

The materials of construction, design and workmanship will be of a high standard and

quality. Full design details of the intersection with the existing nave wall will be required along with details of the rainwater drainage and route and connection of the foul water drainage. The design should ensure that maintenance is kept as simple and inexpensive as possible and especially considering the potential of leaf clearing from gutters and gullies due the number of trees in the surrounding areas.

The entrance into the Annexe from the west will be easily accessible without steps and wide enough to admit a wheelchair, disability motor scooter or a twin baby buggy. The outside area between the west door and the existing north door leading into the nave will be clear of obstructions as it will be both a walkway and emergency exit from the church building.

The existing external face of the south nave wall will be cleaned and preserved to retain the aged stone finish within the annexe.

The existing processional route from the vestry into the east end of the nave will be retained and will be directly linked to the annexe.

A processional route from the west end of the nave will also be formed via a glass door configured into the west most window void and created with adequate accessway width to allow wheelchairs, motorised disability scooter and children's double buggies to enter the nave from the annexe (see Figure 2).

The congregation require one all access toilet with baby changing space and two separate toilet cubicles to be included in the annexe.

The servery will need adequate counter space to serve people quickly.

There will be storage for approximately 70 settings of mugs, plates, cutlery, etc. There will be a separate handwash sink from the regular kitchen sink, an oven, microwave, dishwasher, fridge, Coffee maker, and Induction hob.

The open area of the annexe will be capable of supporting up to 40 people seated which apart from use as an after service social meeting space, will also offer space for alternative service formats and for groups of children and young people for example school visits at Easter and Christmas, one off visits to support R.E. Curriculum and visits from uniformed organisations. The space will support a venue for our formal church meetings but also for public related meetings and will enable groups such as Mother's Union to move out of the church hall (freeing up the church hall to enable further income generation for the church). The annexe space will be used for the children services and also by the choristers for robing/disrobing and it will therefore be necessary for a room separator to be installed to allow such flexibility.



**FIGURE 2 - PROPOSED LOCATION OF GLASS DOOR OPENING INTO ANNEXE**

## 2 - List of Needs

The annexe will also provide a means of presenting a reflection on the heritage of the building and the village via wall mounted digital screen presentations. It will allow the church to open a John Douglas Heritage centre for the public, which is particularly relevant as Norley Road is the birthplace of John Douglas and Sandiway has considerable number of homes designed by John Douglas. It is essential that the annexe is able to be open or closed independently from the church space. It is expected that by converting the existing boiler room into a serviceable cupboard space, there will be sufficient storage for cleaning equipment and other sundries. Good ventilation will be important, particularly on damp days where the annexe is in full use.

### 3. Design Proposals

#### Improve Accessibility into the church building

1. Space for wheelchair users, mobility aids and those with children's buggies or prams to attend services and be fully included within the congregation

Design Proposal: Remove the front TWO rows of pews from the nave

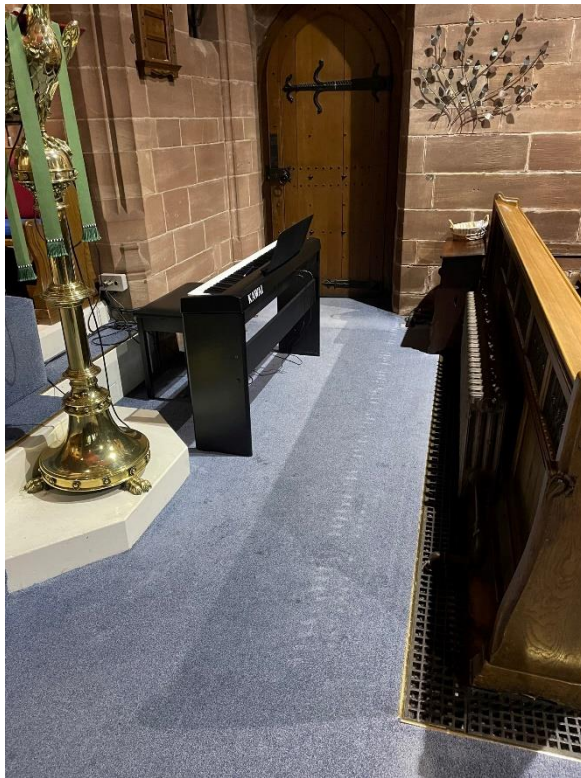
Project Phase: ONE

The main front entrance into the church has a porch step but does not have an accessible ramp. The only access ramp into the church is currently via the rear door to the vestry and into the east end of the nave via an angled corridor. Once into the church the space at the front of the nave is extremely narrow between the chancel steps and the pew frontal panel. This space also has to support the church piano and therefore means that any larger wheelchair or disability motor

scooters are not able to reach the main aisle and cannot therefore rotate to exit whilst the piano is in use.

At present, members of the church with mobility difficulties are forced to take the service from the front north-south aisle, looking across the nave with an impeded view and in full view of the whole congregation. Alternatively, those with smaller wheelchairs have to take the service from the centre aisle or from the back of the church. It is important to mention that we have one disability motor scooter user who also has the embarrassment of automated beepers sounding when he attempts to reverse or manoeuvre. There are other disabled users who would love to come to church but feel they are unable to do so.

As the disabled user is forced to sit in the front aisle without free space around him or her, this also demonstrates a **critical H&S emergency risk** should the church need to suddenly evacuate. In such an emergency, the congregation would be unable to safely access the emergency exit.



**FIGURE 3 - EXISTING FRONT OF NAVE ENTRY/EXIT AISLE WITH PIANO IN USE**



We need to be able to use the piano at the front of the nave to lead worship (as well as the organ). There is currently insufficient space to do this without blocking the fire exit as explained above and there is no space to add further musicians either.



**FIGURE 4 – VIEWS SHOWING THE DIFFICULTY OF HOLDING MUSICAL EVENTS AND THE IMPACT THIS HAS ON ACCESSIBILITY AND H&S ON THE ONLY RAMPED EMERGENCY EXIT THAT CURRENTLY EXISTS IN CHURCH**

The limited space at the front of the nave also impacts both wedding and funeral services.

Wedding services require space for a number of people to take part in the proceedings at the chancel steps and space is very restricted in this area of the church. This continues to be challenging for the ministry team to smoothly manage and particularly when our disabled members are forced into the front walkway in close proximity.

Funeral services are limited by the physical space to rotate the coffin (it has to be shuffled rather than rotated in one) and also are affected by the lack of clear space past the coffin. Members of the public who step up to the lectern to speak, some of whom suffer mobility issues awkwardly need to steady themselves on the coffin as they pass by. Also, the Minister has to delicately squeeze past the coffin in order to lead the procession back out of the church.

At present, mourners with mobility difficulties in wheelchairs are either forced to sit alongside the coffin or are forced to sit at the very back of the nave if they are able to do so. Neither of these scenarios are acceptable.

The DAC acknowledged in their visit report in July 2021 that there is a lack of sufficient space at the front of the nave for funerals and weddings and observed the difficulty with accessibility into the front of the nave.

It is clear that removal of **some** pews will be necessary to update the church to meet its accessibility responsibilities and practical operating needs. Arriving at the most effective removal plan has involved careful consideration, balancing all the above critical needs without undermining the John Douglas heritage that this beautiful church displays. The following explains how we have progressed and thought through this requirement

**Can we avoid the removal of pews from the nave?**

The church has a clear picture of its needs to operate, to grow and to open the church to all and has considered and shared a number of approaches over recent years in an attempt to meet these needs. The DDA requirements have heightened the necessity to update the layout of the church to make the church building open to all in our community as it currently does not meet minimum accessibility standards and the lack in space determines that we **must** remove some pews. That said, it is important that any change to the historical layout within the nave should also be limited to what is absolutely necessary and to what is required for today's congregation.

**Remove ALL pews from the nave?**

Earlier proposals have considered the removal of ALL pews from the nave, introducing freestanding chairs to offer a fully accessible and flexible service space, convert the Baptistry into a refreshments Servery and developing an extension to the south side of the church to provide children's teaching space/chorister dressing and storage.

The church shared these proposals with the local community at a church building consultation in October 2018 which included our congregation and some individuals who did not currently attend St.John's but were interested in any future outcomes. There were 164 responses from the survey and this showed an 80% support for removal of all pews, whilst a further 8% preferred to retain some of the existing pews.

The earlier proposal to remove all pews would have met the majority of the needs to operate but having listened to the DAC feedback, the PCC recognised and accepted that a different approach was necessary to sensitively preserve the John Douglas heritage within this church building.

In 2021, we reviewed the possibility of removing a number of pews from both the front and the rear of the nave, leaving the centre block untouched. We concluded that this approach would still negatively impact the John Douglas layout and that we should take a more focussed approach. Our revised proposal is therefore to remove four pews which will explicitly meet the critical needs.

**What are the critical requirements that can only be resolved within the existing church building and how can we limit any impact on the heritage of the church building?**

In follow up, we felt it necessary to re-appraise our proposal and do so with a greater sensitivity, not just to preserve the John Douglas heritage, but to celebrate that important part of our history as a John Douglas Heritage Centre.

It is clear that the church cannot continue to operate safely, meet the open church requirements and meet its accessibility responsibility without opening some space to the front of the nave.

With that positioning in mind, the church is presenting a solution which meets the critical requirements but importantly does so without unnecessarily impacting the heritage of the church building by limiting the internal changes to an absolute minimum.



By removing the limited number of rows of pews, we can achieve the following critical requirements:

- I. Accessibility into the nave.
- II. Resolve the H&S risk for emergency exiting.
- III. Provide sufficient space to operate, in particular funeral services including space for the movement of the coffin and clear and safe access around it.
- IV. Provide sufficient space around the front aisle for wedding services
- V. Provide further flexibility to widen the beneficial use of the church including wheelchairs, children's buggies, children seating (carpeted floorspace) and limited individual seating for those with particular physical difficulties.

The majority of the other needs will be accommodated within an attached Heritage Annexe in a tasteful connection of the old to the new (the Servedy, all access toilets and baby changing, meeting space, choir robing space, space for children's church activities, etc.). By removing the limited number of pews and moving all of the 'other' requirements into the Heritage Annexe we are able to meet the above **five** critical requirements in the main body of the church.

#### **How can we meet these requirements...**

##### **Removing ONE row of pews at the front of the nave?**

The church has looked at removing ONE single row of pews on either front side of the nave, but this would not be a cost effective improvement as the limited space gained would only effectively widen the north-south aisle without adequate benefit. Use of the resultant space during a service would mean that the wheelchairs/motorised scooters would project forward into the front aisle, but more critically, the space would still not allow clear rotation of a coffin without multiple movements and there would still be insufficient space to walk past the coffin during the service and particularly so for those with mobility issues. There would still be insufficient space for the Minister to clearly walk past the coffin and effectively lead the procession back out of the church.

Space for the church piano and other instrumentalists who perform at our monthly church mini concerts is also required. By removing one row of pews, there would still be insufficient space to support these events.

This change would also require the church to replace the existing radiators with shorter versions at additional cost and apart from the resultant net reduction in heating output, by changing to a smaller radiator, we would be in danger of requiring further changes to other radiators around the nave in order to ensure a matching or best appearance to satisfy or complement the John Douglas architecture. This would be seen as an unnecessary use of funds which all parties would appreciate are already difficult to meet in a climate where the church must economise and focus its expenditure to the absolute necessary needs of the church.

##### **Our Proposal - Removing TWO rows of pews at the front of the nave?**

The optimum change is to remove the front TWO rows of pews which will sufficiently meet the needs of the church without excessively impacting the look and history of the John Douglas design and in doing so benefit from an increased church attendance and operability. The

respective featured oak pew frontal panels will be moved pro rata to meet the resultant front row of pews and the radiators currently located adjacent to the pew frontal panels will move to the side nave walls.

The newly opened space will be carpeted along with the main church aisle.

Considering the impact that removing two rows of pews would have on the church capacity ?

By removing the two rows of pews, that would in theory reduce the capacity of the church by 24 seats if the space was then not used. In reality the net reduction is far less as ?

We are including those with mobility issues who currently have to remain uncomfortably in the front aisle and along with their respective attendants on a separate chair = 6 people

- We are able seat those with physical difficulties who struggle with pew seating on a separate chair = 6 people
- The open carpeted space would better support the children who attend our church with a comfortable carpeted and flexible floor space and could be used for storytelling and drama within worship = 6 people

The above numbers represent our current known position before beneficial growth and therefore demonstrate that the removal of two rows of pews will only slightly reduce our capacity but provide the church with a considerable practical gain by doing so.

Here is a table of comparison that captures the pros and cons of pew removal that has also formed the basis of our optimum approach to this change.

Critical Requirements	Remove Pews		
	1 Front Row	2 Front Rows	Remove None
Resolve operating problems at Funerals	X	Yes	X
Resolve operating problems at Weddings	Yes	Yes	X
Improve accessibility for scooters/wheelchairs	X	Yes	X
Resolve the H&S emergency evacuation risk	X	Yes	X
Better accommodate child buggies/families together	Yes	Yes	X
Performance space for church piano and instrumentalists at worship and concerts	X	Yes	X

This approach is therefore the most expedient way forward sensitive to our responsibilities and effective in its proposed outcome.

This also aligns with the DAC comments from their site visit in July 2021, which suggested to the church that we assess the possibility of removing a few pews to minimise the impact on the significance of the worship space as anything more than a few pews would weaken the John Douglas heritage.

### **Improve Accessibility into the church building**

#### **2. Sufficient space to lead at funerals and weddings**

Design Proposal: Remove the front TWO rows of pews from the nave

Project Phase: ONE

As referred in the pew removal analysis, the limited space at the front of the nave also impacts wedding and funeral services.

Wedding services require space for a number of people to join in the proceedings alongside the Minister. This continues to be challenging for the ministry team to smoothly achieve.

Funeral services are limited by the physical space to rotate the coffin (it has to be shuffled rather than rotated in one) and also are affected by the lack of clear space past the coffin. Members of the public who step up to the lectern to speak some of which suffer mobility issues awkwardly need to steady themselves on the coffin as they pass by. Also, the Minister has to delicately squeeze past the coffin in order to lead the procession back out of the church.

At present, mourners with mobility difficulties in wheelchairs are either forced to sit alongside the coffin or are forced to sit at the very back of the nave if they are able to do so. Neither of these scenarios are acceptable.

The removal of the front two rows of pews will resolve these issues.

### **Improve Accessibility into the church building**

#### **3. Permanent access for all disabled visitors and those with pushchairs**

Design Proposal: Build a permanent All-Access ramp at the front main (north) porch

Project Phase: ONE-A

As stated earlier, there is only one ramped access into the church and this is at the rear door into the vestry corridor and into the east end of the nave. We recognise the need for a ramp to the main (front) entrance into the church.

99% of those polled at our 2018 survey were in favour of introducing a permanent ramp to the front of the church.



**FIGURE 5 - MAIN FRONT PORCH**

As already stated, we have looked at introducing a ramp into front North porch and have explored a temporary ramp to provide a more immediate solution, which would be easily affordable and provide the necessary accessibility until incorporating a permanent side ramp or indeed a permanent more expensive front ramp can be funded. The temporary proposal failed to gain approval.

We now have an architectural design for a permanent ramp which would at the same time introduce glass doors to the front porch which would meet our welcoming and open church requirements and which has received in principle support by the PCC. The cost to deliver the permanent solution is

much more expensive and even when considering any economies of approach, will need separate grant funding support to make it happen.

#### **Improve Accessibility into the church building**

4. More comfortable seating for all, but especially our elderly and infirm

Design Proposal: Provide modern pew base cushioning to all remaining pews

Project Phase: ONE – WORK COMPLETE

The debate over pew seating removal also has a comfort requirement when speaking to our congregation and it has been voiced by many as their disapproval for the pews remaining in place.

Having studied the optimum pew removal plan against all of the respective factors, we have now in 2022 introduced modern purpose made pew cushioning for the remainder of the pews in the church. This work has been completed and the feedback has been exceptionally supportive of our approach by which we have achieved significant improvement in comfort levels without undermining the heritage of the building.

#### **Improve Accessibility into the church building**

5. Easier access to the altar for those with mobility issues

Design Proposal: Handrails to be fitted to the chancel steps and Pulpit steps

Project Phase: ONE



**FIGURE 6 - VIEW OF CHANCEL**

We will introduce two fixed handrails onto the chancel steps to assist with access onto the chancel and up to the communion rail. The handrails will be set wide apart (aligned with the choir stall frontals) to maximise the step width to support a minimum of two people side by side and also to not disrupt the view of the chancel from the nave position.

There will also be a newly formed handrail to access the pulpit safely which will be necessary once the front rows of pews have been removed from the nave.



**FIGURE 7 - VIEW OF EXISTING PULPIT ACCESS**

### **Improve Our Welcome to All**

6. A welcoming entrance to the church

Design Proposal: Glass doors to be fitted to the outer porch of the church main entrance

Project Phase: ONE-A

Combined with the opportunity to introduce an accessible ramped entrance through the main north door of the church, we propose to include glass doors to the outer edge of the porch. This will allow the church to choose to leave the existing oak door open and provide a more open and warm welcome to anyone visiting our church, but at the same time be able to retain some level of protection from the cooler and damp weather conditions.

The feedback from the 2018 open consultation showed a 95% positive support for implementing glass doors to the church.

NOTE: This change can only be implemented at the same time as the construction of a permanent ramp.

### **Improve Our Welcome to All**

7. Modern, comfortable, heated, fully accessible toilet and baby changing facility within the building

Design Proposal: All-Access toilets and baby changing will be designed into the proposed Annexe

Project Phase: TWO

We plan to include an all-access toilet with baby changing facility and two further individual toilets into the proposed Annexe room design. The design layout enables these facilities to be discreetly accessed via the new doorway from the rear of the nave and provide what today is seen as an absolute minimum to welcome members of the public to attend any service, meeting, function or to simply visit our Heritage Centre.

It is clear that by including these facilities into the newly formed and heated Heritage Annexe that this would offer a much more appealing solution to the public and a much more practical solution than earlier proposals to add a single toilet into the vestry or update the existing toilet within the external Bier House building.

### **Improve Our Welcome to All**

8. Facilities for preparing and serving refreshments safely and within Health & Hygiene standards

Design Proposal: A dedicated servery to be designed into the proposed Annexe

Project Phase: TWO

We currently have one cold water supply into the church building which is located in the vestry. There is no hot water washing provision. We have continued to manage this position for some time, using flasks and kettles, but the Health & Safety aspect, highlighted by the pandemic,

means that we have to resolve this issue if we wish to offer safe and welcoming support to our congregations and church visitors.

We plan to introduce a small servery into the Annexe which is safe and fit for purpose with facilities for handwashing and hot water for washing utensils to meet Health & Hygiene standards. This revision supersedes the 2018 and 2021 proposals involving the use of the Baptistry as a servery space.

The 2018 open consultation reviewed the need to introduce a small kitchen into the Baptistry and this showed 92% of respondents in favour of doing so. There were naturally some concerns with the content of the kitchen from the risk of noise disruption to the church and also the need to retain a consistent appearance throughout the church.

It was believed at the time that there was a need to move the existing historic font from the Baptistry and into the nave to allow the church to once again safely use the font for all Baptisms. Taking the above point into a review, the church has now proven that the Baptistry once cleared of all unrelated items, would perfectly and safely operate as it was intended. The Baptistry has now been re-commissioned is in full use and sits proud in the heritage as it was intended.

The servery will include kitchen items which would visibly detract from the look and feel of the John Douglas layout. The operation of the servery would also induce background noise that would make it difficult to maintain the quietness in the main body of the church building.

The introduction of the new Annexe would therefore offer the best solution for locating a servery.

The servery would provide support for:

- ✓ After service socialising and fellowship
- ✓ Saturday Open church
- ✓ Church meetings
- ✓ Public group meetings
- ✓ Heritage open day visitors
- ✓ Drinks and snacks to support a wider use of the church and annexe (including our monthly concerts & soups lunches)

#### **Improve Our Welcome to All**

9. Space for those staying for refreshments to be able to socialise with each other

Design Proposal: A multi-use space to be designed into the proposed Annexe

Project Phase: TWO

The church looked at the possibility of including after service fellowship and refreshments within the main body of the church. Along with the practical issues of including a servery within the church, the socialising/drink preparation and safe space to serve it was not practical within the body of the church with fixed pews remaining in place. The introduction of the Annexe will provide the space for a dedicated servery to comfortably and safely serve the congregation and church visitors in a welcoming and open space, that can easily be maintained and kept clean. The

proposed space will accommodate minimum 40 people seated in an open and welcoming social area.

**Maximise and Improve Our Church Operating Space today and to Allow Us to Grow tomorrow**

10. Space to allow alternative service formats: eg, Family Praise, Open Church

Design Proposal: A multi-use space to be designed into the proposed Annexe

Project Phase: TWO

The decision to retain the majority of the pews makes it impractical to attempt to accommodate alternative service formats in the nave due to the lack of physical space.

The introduction of the Annexe will provide a multi-function open area that will support a number of alternative service formats which are currently not achievable within the nave.

We have established a Muddy Church service using the church garden which takes place on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in the month between April and September inclusively. The introduction of the Annexe with the opening glass doors will support and further enhance the programme.

**Maximise and Improve Our Church Operating Space today and to Allow Us to Grow tomorrow**

11. Space for children/young people to use for age-appropriate activities during the service

Design Proposal: A multi-use space to be designed into the proposed Annexe

Project Phase: TWO

The multi-use space in the Annexe will support our requirement for children/young people church and creche activities.

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12. Space to allow for meetings or activities

Design Proposal: A multi-use space to be designed into the proposed Annexe

Project Phase: TWO

The multi-use space in the Annexe will support our regular church meetings such as PCC, Standing Committee, Ministry team, Youth Group, etc. which are currently held in main body of the church and currently require the use of the main full lighting and heating. The Annexe will also be ideal for our Lent courses and the Home Group, which is currently forced to operate from the church hall. This would once again free up the church hall for further public bookings and maximise our income generation potential.

**Maximise and Improve Our Church Operating Space today and to Allow Us to Grow tomorrow**

13. Sufficient space for the choir to robe/disrobe before and after services

Design Proposal: A multi-use space to be designed into the proposed Annexe

Project Phase: TWO

The choir has up to 38 members and prior to the pandemic the choir were using the vestry for robing/disrobing in a space that at pre-Covid times was far too small. The Annexe space will provide sufficient choir robing/disrobing space for before and after main services. Using this

space, the design of the Annexe is such that the choir will be able to process from either end of the nave and do so without queueing outside when the weather or light is poor. As a multi-use space it will be necessary for the Annexe to have a flexible room separator.

**Maximise and Improve Our Church Operating Space today and to Allow Us to Grow tomorrow**

14. Efficient heating

Design Proposal: Update the heating system

Project Phase: TWO

The existing heating system will be reviewed with the possibility of replacing the boiler with a more efficient solution. The current boiler is quite old and would not necessarily support the addition of the Annexe into the heating circuit and so a replacement is both needed and would ultimately improve our ECO standing by reducing our carbon emissions. Furthermore, introducing a new boiler into the church building with an Annexe would allow the ability to control the heating of each space separately, reducing the need to always heat the large church space when it was not required to do so. Again this approach will support our ECO standing going forward.

**Maximise and Improve Our Church Operating Space today and to Allow Us to Grow tomorrow**

15. Efficient and effective lighting

Design Proposal: Improve the internal lighting of the church

Project Phase: TWO

The current lighting within the church building uses a large number of inefficient high wattage filament bulbs, which can suffer sudden failure and require high ladder access to replace.

We plan to replace all the internal light fittings with controllable efficient LED units. This work will involve a lighting consultant who will assess the true requirements in respect of down-lighting dark spots, the most appropriate up-lighting method as part of our plan to celebrate and 'show off' the John Douglas design. He will also consider the most appropriate simplified means of controlling our lights particularly as the church moves forward with its opening times during the day and without staff attendance. This all adds to our drive for an improved ECO standing at St.John's.

**Maximise and Improve Our Church Operating Space today and to Allow Us to Grow tomorrow**

16. Be able to re-commission the existing stone font to allow its use for all future Baptism services

Design Proposal: Re-commission the existing Baptistry

Project Phase: ONE - WORK COMPLETE



As mentioned in an earlier section of this document, by introducing the Annexe which will include a servery, the need to relocate the historic font away from the Baptistry has now been avoided.



The area has now been cleared to dedicate the Baptistry to its sole use, the historic floor tiles have been cleaned and sealed and the Baptistry now stands proud in the heritage that surrounds it – a much admired restoration of a John Douglas feature and now fully commissioned!

**FIGURE 8 – BAPTISTRY RESTORATION COMPLETE AND IN USE**

#### **Maximise and Improve Our Church Operating Space today and to Allow Us to Grow tomorrow**

##### **17. Improve the church office space and overall storage for the church**

Design Proposal: Re-purpose the interior space in the Bier House for Office and Storage

Project Phase: TWO

The existing John Douglas designed Bier House is located to the rear (south side) of the church garden and currently holds limited office hardware and office storage with the second half of the building currently built as a single toilet block.



**FIGURE 9 - EXISTING BIER HOUSE AND VIEW SHOWING THE CURRENT POOR TOILET FACILITY**

By creating a new all-access toilet and baby changing and two further toilets all **within** the proposed Annexe, the proposal is to re-order the internal space of the existing Bier House to accommodate both a usable church office space and organised church storage space. This is

absolutely necessary to ease the space requirements in the Vestry. The external appearance of the Bier House shall not be changed to once again focus our attention to the heritage of this John Douglas designed outbuilding.

**Maximise and Improve Our Church Operating Space today and to Allow Us to Grow tomorrow**

18. Sufficient space and means to present and celebrate the architectural heritage of St John's church not just with our existing visitors but for the whole village and wider interest groups.

Design Proposal: Implement a John Douglas Heritage centre at St.John's

Project Phase: TWO

Sufficient space and means to present and celebrate the architectural heritage of St John's church not just with our existing visitors but for the whole village and wider interest groups. We intend to make the church open to all and formally include the interest groups that wish to look at the history of John Douglas architecture in the church, the village and wider, taking advantage of the fact that Norley Road Sandiway was John Douglas birthplace which surrounds the church with private properties also designed by the architect. The main church building will be preserved and presented within the Annexe offering digital screen presentations and the social space open for use.

The DAC visit report following a July 2022 visit to St.John's was supportive of the church's proposal for a John Douglas information point being created and introducing a digital display to present and maintain information. It also suggested that the display could be touchscreen and include parish notices as well as heritage information.

The digital presentation will also include a series of heritage videos to be available online for access by schools and other interested parties.

## 4. Why do we need it? Why now?

### a) Introduction

Our thinking about mission and outreach has changed over the years, heavily influenced in the first instance by the Mission-Shaped Church movement and further by *Re-Pitching the Tent* and *From Anecdote to Evidence* (see Resources section).

In October 2018, we conducted a survey across all our congregations, with additional input from a few individuals not attending church but interested in the outcomes. We received 164 responses.

We will again consult fully on our revised plans, but we would hope that by retaining the majority of the fixed pews, this would be seen by those few who previously objected as a positive design proposal that has sensitively re-considered the changes to a level that is acceptable to many.

In 2021 the church project team took a fresh re-appraisal of all comments made including previous objections and looked at how best we could make all the beneficial changes but do so without undermining our John Douglas heritage. Focussing on the absolute critical needs of change from within the existing church building we have arrived at a conservative, measured and sensitive approach to the re-ordering of the church building. By removing two of the front rows of pews, re-commissioning the Baptistry and introducing an Annexe we will have secured all round improvements to meet our needs without unduly impacting the heritage of the John Douglas architecture.

St.John's has a vision of being an accessible and inclusive church, present at the centre of our wider community and serving that community well.

We plan to maintain and use both our church building and church hall. It is vitally important that our church is an accessible place of worship, whilst also celebrating our heritage as a listed building of significance within the local area.

This proposal is essential for the following:

### b) Attracting new people so the church family grows, especially families

It is important to have toilets, baby changing facilities and refreshments all within the building and we plan to achieve this with the proposed Annexe which will serve the internal church space and outside activities in the church garden.

The Annexe will provide a multi-functional space which will allow the children to attend the family services in the church and be able to move into the Annexe for the age-appropriate teaching.

We also need the main worship space to be more flexible to accommodate families (children, buggies and prams) to sit together. Along with the introduction of the new Annexe, the proposed removal of the front two rows of pews in the nave will comprehensively support these requirements and help us to achieve the following:

- Allow for better support for young families, as flexible seating allows for space for buggies, prams, so parent and children can stay in the main church service.

#### 4 - Why do we need it? Why now?

- Important to provide baby changing facilities and toilets within the heated building. We have experienced rejection to using the current outbuilding toilet and baby changing space. One mother understandably point blank refused to change her baby's nappy within the available space when she looked in the room. We are aware of a number of individuals who decline the opportunity to stay or take refreshment as they are conscious of the effect of their diuretic medication and intend to avoid the necessity to visit the current facility.
- Improve Health & Safety - At present everyone attending church has to cross the busy main cross road between Weaverham road and Norley road to access the church hall (see Figure 8).



**FIGURE 10 - VIEW OF BUSY ROAD JUNCTION  
BETWEEN CHURCH AND CHURCH HALL**

This is a busy uncontrolled road junction for any age, but not safe for children or the elderly to cross without individual supervision. The project proposal is to accommodate at least the younger age group of children into the Annexe to keep the families safe. The changes in the church building will also remove the need for the congregation to negotiate this busy junction as they currently have to traverse between the church and the church hall to fully attend some services with follow on activities.

Missional activities are also important in attracting more people into church, see as follows:

#### c) Enhancing Mission

Our calling to serve the community is currently restricted by the fixed configuration of the building and lack of facilities with suitable heating and lighting. Church volunteers who minister to those in need on a Saturday morning, and at other times, have spoken about the difficulty created by having to sit in a straight line on fixed pews for emotional conversations. The open space in the proposed Annexe will allow individuals to discreetly meet in a quiet closed space and resolve the concern that our volunteers have reported.

The Saturday morning opening has been a real success, running just for a couple of years and attracting around 25 people every week prior to the Covid pandemic. It typically attracts older people, many of whom have mobility issues, requiring mobility aids and wheelchairs. Our very limited space at the back of the church means that we are at capacity and are unable to welcome more people to join or expand the Saturday opening to other days/times. The proposed Annexe will resolve this issue and allow us to grow this well received mission, by offering larger, open, heated space with an all-access entrance and flexible seating.

The 2018 open survey asked, without offering any prompts, what other activities people would like to see in church if it were re-ordered. Of the 134 regular attendees responding, 98 offered

suggestions about a range of possibilities, including more church open time, meetings and community events, talks or courses, school activities, different forms of worship and concerts. An accessible and reordered church would allow us to continue to grow our offering to the community. The proposed changes in this Statement of Need would meet those requirements and allow this vibrant team to grow this church in Sandiway.

**d) Enhancing Liturgical space and benefitting the Ministry of the church**

Relocating the existing font was originally seen as a way forward in St.John's to begin using the historic font for all Baptisms after a number of years using a portable substitute. The open consultation feedback was that the font was inaccessible, and not inclusive for families and friends attending. The belief was that the original layout was unsafe and may be better used as a server, but pleasingly a full re-appraisal has delivered a more heritage focussed solution to the problem which has been completed in the first stages of the Heritage Building Project. The Baptistry has been cleared of all unrelated items, the carpet has been removed revealing the original tile floor which has been cleaned and sealed and the font will remain in the Baptistry as it was intended. It is now safe to use, is now in use and has sufficient access to support families in its original location and appearance.

Improved access to the altar is important. We need handrails to allow people with limited mobility to climb the chancel steps without the indignity of support from sidespeople. This proposal will deliver handrails onto the chancel front steps which will enable full access to communion rail.

The large church choir of up to 38 members struggle to use the small vestry to robe/disrobe before and after services. The impact of the Covid pandemic has resulted in choristers having to arrive in their robes and more recently post Covid have been robing in the rear church garden, which is of course limited by weather conditions. The proposed Annexe will have sufficient space for the choir to robe/disrobe and the project team will assess the optimum approach for storage of choir robes, books and music going forward.

It is accepted and understood that we have fixed pews which represent an important part of our John Douglas heritage. There have been proposals over the years which have presented the need to remove all of the pews from the nave and replace these with comfortable chairs. The open consultation in 2018 resulted in a high majority of support for removing the pews, but without total support by all across the board it has necessitated a complete re-think of approach. We have already invested in pew cushions which have improved the comfort levels for the congregation and taken away some of the objections. The 2022 proposal demonstrates an accessibility and heritage based solution as the most effective way forward for St.John's. The flexibility that is required in this design proposal is as follows:

- So that wheelchair, motor scooter users can attend services without being placed in the aisle, locked in the front north/south aisle or isolated at the back of the church.
- So those with disabilities are able to be with their family and friends rather than being isolated by their limited mobility.

#### 4 - Why do we need it? Why now?

- Providing scope to develop the musical provision, for example with piano, guitar, percussion to play at selected services. The piano is regularly used and doing so, it blocks the entry/exit walkway at the front of the nave.
- Those staying for refreshments may do so in a safe, open and welcoming space enabling each to socialise together. Serving hot drinks to rows of people located in the fixed pew seating is unsafe.
- Be able to respond to different liturgical needs, such as with Maundy Thursday, where we want to be able to move worship from one station to another. A larger free space at the chancel steps will enable more creative presentation to the congregation.
- Be able to hold meetings/activities, including PCC meetings, Standing Committee meetings, ministry team meetings in the Annexe enabling greater cross-discussion.
- Be able to use the church space more economically, especially when meeting families as they plan their wedding or in delicate preparation for a family funeral, using a discreet but warm and welcoming space in the Annexe.
- To hold the Lent course in Annexe and enabling greater cross-discussion.

This statement's 2022 project solution is designed to meet all the above requirements.

#### e) Improving how we run as a church

It is difficult to hold church meetings due to the lack of suitable space. We have to hold our church meetings (PCC, Standing Committee, etc) in the church building where cross-discussion is not practical and having to heat the whole church to do so. A more flexible space with zoned heating in a smaller space than the main worship area of the church will help the church team immensely and at the same time apply a more economic approach to our energy consumption. The proposed Annexe will satisfy that need.

We currently utilise a part of the external brick Bier House as our 'Parish Office' which is located on the south side of the church garden. The Bier House is split into two with one side for the office and the other for an all-access toilet. There is no efficient heating present but there are power supplies present for the lighting, photocopier and desktop computer. The Heritage Project will re-design the internal space in the Bier House to house a new office space and church storage (replacing the single external toilet block as the Annexe design will include an all-access toilet, baby changing and two separate toilets). The proposed internal re-design will not change the outer appearance of the John Douglas designed outbuilding.

#### f) Maximising effective usage of BOTH the Church and the Church Hall

We will be able to relocate the following activities from the Church Hall to the new Annexe as soon as the Heritage Project building work is complete:

- Church home Group
- MU Meeting
- Arts and crafts group

#### 4 - Why do we need it? Why now?

- JIMS informal music group
- Youth Group

Relocating the above activities will immediately free up the capacity of the Church Hall for community groups and paid hire on a regular basis.

#### **10.15am Sunday Worship**

Has taken place in the Church Hall since 2007 as the facilities offered a better environment for intergenerational worship that could be accessed by all. We have continued to invest in facilities at the Church Hall and this now has a well-equipped kitchen, broadband, café meeting space, toilets and access ramp in addition to the main hall. Most importantly it has space for a children's group to meet in a dedicated space on a Sunday morning in parallel to the main worship service.

#### **Will 10.15am worship relocate to church when the annexe has been completed?**

This is a difficult question and no decision has been made as some younger members of the congregation have only experienced worship in the Church Hall and this is their preferred service. This is also the service that has attracted most new members in recent years.

Muddy Church on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month is an all age service (April-September) that has successfully been established in the Church grounds. Muddy Church uses our outdoor space as the backdrop for interactive worship, but now requires facilities for making refreshments and sheltering from inclement weather on site. (The Church Hall is too far away.) An Annexe with doors onto the garden would be ideal.

When the Annexe is complete, we will begin a consultation with the 10.15 congregation to determine whether they would like to move back into the church building for other services. However, without the Annexe and improvements to access this will be impossible; there is currently insufficient meeting space for children's groups, limited accessibility and inadequate facilities to make refreshments at church.

If 10.15am service remained permanently at the Church Hall, there is still sufficient need from congregations at evening services, visitors to Saturday morning Open Church, occasional offices, lunchtime concerts, schools' work, heritage work, and church meetings to justify the changes proposed within our development plan outlined below. It will also allow us to determine our pattern of worship for the Sunday morning service at a later date.

#### **Sustaining two buildings**

It is important to clarify the purpose of the church in order to sustain its use in years to come. The church building will be used for the following:

- Sunday evening and midweek worship (with at least one service each Sunday in church.)
- Festival Services – Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Christingle,
- Weddings, baptisms and funerals
- Saturday morning open church
- Schools work

#### 4 - Why do we need it? Why now?

- Concert venue
- Heritage centre, celebrating the work of John Douglas and a focus for local history.
- Weekday opening to the wider community



## 5. Alternatives Considered

### a) Why construct an Annexe if you can accommodate the changes within the existing body of the church?

Apart from the obvious changes such as accessible space, space to operate effectively and sensitively, the remainder of the requirements, such as a servery are not items that are best suited to what is a compact quiet church space and has no room to accommodate indoor accessible toilets. The flexibility to operate and the need to separate and accommodate children's services within the same nave space with fixed pews is not feasible. The presence of fixed pews makes it harder to re-organise the space in the nave without meeting constant and justified rejection as it so easily detracts from the John Douglas architectural intentions.

So clearly extra space is required rather than attempting to shoehorn the needs into the existing church space.

### b) Looking at Different Design Approaches

Over the years there have been a number of attempts to re-order the church employing quite different approaches to design. An early design proposal in 2008 involved a large extension to the rear of the church, but it was clear that apart from the considerable build costs, the overall result should it have progressed forward, would have been out of balance with the church building rather than complementing the church building.

In 2019, the proposal was to create a small extension to support elements of the needs, but largely, by removing all pews from the church, was aimed at resolving the bulk of the functional and accessible needs all within the nave itself. This may have received strong support from the congregation, but was not seen by all as harmonious with the John Douglas heritage and significantly did *not* include an indoor toilet.

The 2022 proposal in this Statement of Need looks to resolve the needs of the church without negatively impacting our John Douglas heritage, with minimal change within the existing church building and introducing an Annexe which satisfies the needs within an extension of subservient proportion rather than one of dominance.

### c) Could the Required Facilities be provided in the Church Hall?

A kitchen, all access toilets and entrance ramps are already present at the church hall, however that provision is not in the right place. There is a considerable distance (160 metres) between the two buildings and that includes a very busy, poorly lit and uncontrolled cross road junction between Norley Road and Weaverham Road which is unsafe particularly for families with young children. That distance really makes a difference at the end of a service and particularly in the dark evenings and colder months, where many of the congregation would leave for home rather than follow on to the Hall.

There is evidence that a number of the older congregation are not attending the church due to this and other constraints at the church and are not attending the church hall either.

## 5 - Alternatives Considered

The church hall has an important role in furthering St.John's outreach objectives, however, it is clear that the church building itself needs to extend and accommodate the basic needs of churchgoers and visitors for it to continue to operate.

We must also consider our existing and future commitments for the church hall so as to maximise and grow its contribution to the church finances. With the current dependence on the church hall for mixed use of church and public bookings and events, paid booking opportunities with commensurate funds are regularly being lost.

## 6. Justification

### a) No Alternative Space Available

The church hall is nearing its capacity: see earlier list of regular bookings. We are therefore restricted for expanding activities and services for children, young people and older people that need more flexible space and facilities. This inhibits our potential for growth, mission and ministry.

By removing the front two rows of pews from the church as a targeted approach, we will achieve the most of our immediate accessibility issues in the church, our ability to welcome families together, improve the ministry operating space for weddings and funerals without unnecessarily undermining the John Douglas architectural heritage within the church. In addition, by introducing the Annexe, we are then able to satisfy the majority of the other requirements which would not work well in the original church setting, but as described are very relevant to the success of this church today and for years to come.

### b) Achieving the Benefits AND Preserving our Heritage

With these proposals enacted:

1. St.John's would be physically accessible for all – we are called to be inclusive.
2. We could go ahead with more open times, courses such as Alpha, parenting classes, drop in advice sessions and more activities for young people and become a John Douglas Heritage Centre.
3. We can continue to grow our heritage activities so we are truly a John Douglas Heritage centre and plan to use the servery in the Annexe to provide refreshments to support our heritage events.
4. Liturgical freedom would increase, for example for Open Church and Muddy Church.
5. St.John's would be an inviting, non-threatening, comfortable space for all.

Where we are faced with a direct choice between preserving heritage in its entirety, or sharing God's love with all, we choose the latter. Museum or Mission? That may be the choice, however, with the Heritage Building Project we do not need to face a direct choice. We have identified our critical needs, accommodated these into the existing church building without undermining the heritage and for those elements which would undermine the history, we have proposed that they are incorporated into the new Heritage Annexe. Furthermore, rather than losing the significance of our church history, we have chosen to celebrate our heritage with the strategy that the church will be promoted as a John Douglas Heritage centre. That way the museum becomes the mission and is open and available to the broader interest groups.

After many years of prayer, research and debate, we have been encouraged by the forward-thinking views of the questionnaire responses, which have confirmed to us a will for change. We want to preserve the best of the hundred+ year old building we have inherited, enhance it for current day expectations of comfort and styles of worship and see it at the heart of the community, so that God's mission for this village continues and flourishes.

We are fully committed to maintaining both buildings (church *and* church hall) as a Parish, but without improvements to the church, it inhibits the use that we can make of the beautiful John Douglas building and jeopardises its future survival in this village.

**c) Mitigating Impact**

We are aware of a degree of impact that some of the proposals have on elements of the church interior and have re-shaped our way forward to recognise the beauty of what is already there and preserve as much of it as possible whilst meeting our missional needs.

The proposed Annexe cannot be seen from the main Norley road or main entrance. It is discreetly designed onto the south nave wall between the tower and the projecting vestry and will not be visible from the adjacent side road (Hadrian Way) and therefore is sized and sited to minimise the visual impact from either street scene.

The Annexe is appropriately sized for today's requirements but will also engage missional growth with what it offers for its congregation and visitors. It is not intended to replace the church hall, but to complement it. The Annexe is intentionally sized not to dominate the main church building, but to complement it.

We recognise and accept the importance of retaining as many of the fixed pews which are undoubtedly of high significance and we are confident that by applying the balanced approach of removing the limited rows only, and placing all other needs into the multi-functional space of the Annexe that we are not undermining the important heritage of this church, but by that approach are able to take this church forward for generations.

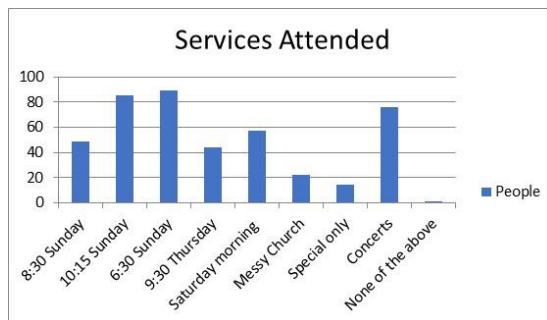
## 7. Evidence for the need

### a) 2018 Open Consultation

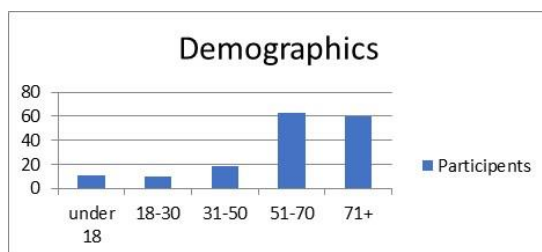
In 2018 we were at a stage where the church had prepared plans for re-ordering which were based upon the very same needs as today, but with a differing approach to achieve resolution. The 2018 proposals did require the construction of an extension to the church building, but involved much more change within the existing church building itself. In particular this included removing all pews to satisfy the needs of accessibility, seating comfort, alternative service scope, alternative activities. Also, the approach presented the moving of the font into the west end of the nave and constructing a small servery into the Baptistry space.

These proposals were shared with the congregations and other members of the community who were not church members but were interested in any outcome. The survey from this allowed the church to understand what the community's reception to these changes and needs would be and these are summarised below:

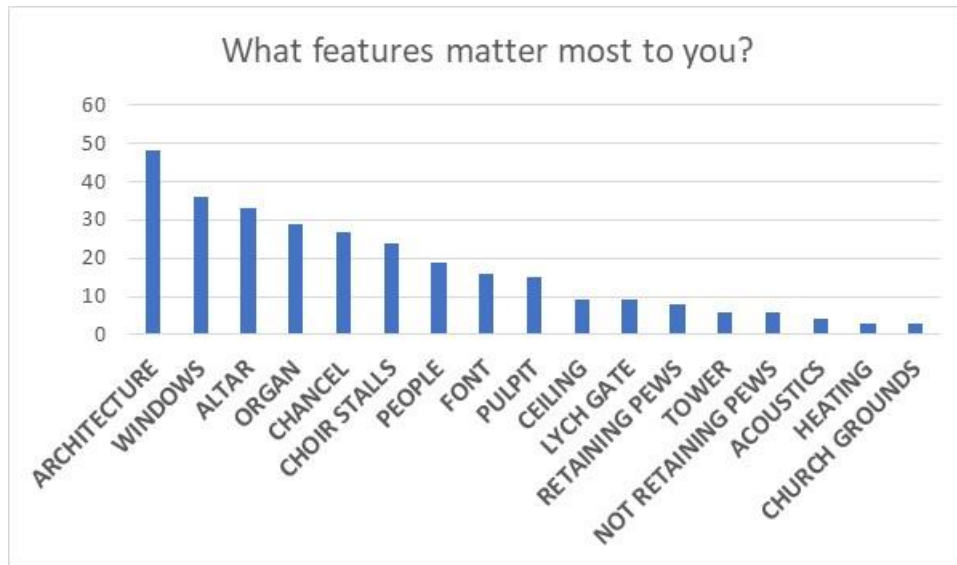
There were 164 people who participated in the initial survey and this showed that they were pretty evenly spread across the attended services. The survey was well received, as people were generally pleased to be consulted and that decisions had not yet been made. What was very clear was how deeply people cared about St.John's church.



The age profile of the respondents was predictably showing heavier weighting to the 50+ years age range:

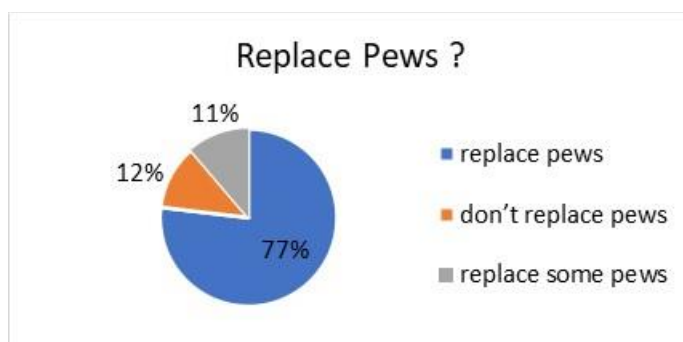


When questioned on what matters most to the individual, the architecture, its windows, altar, chancel and organ scored the highest. Interestingly, the matter of retaining or removing pews was not high in the index from the majority of the people polled in the survey.



As you can see above, that pews either way were not of high interest to the individuals compared with other aspects of the church building.

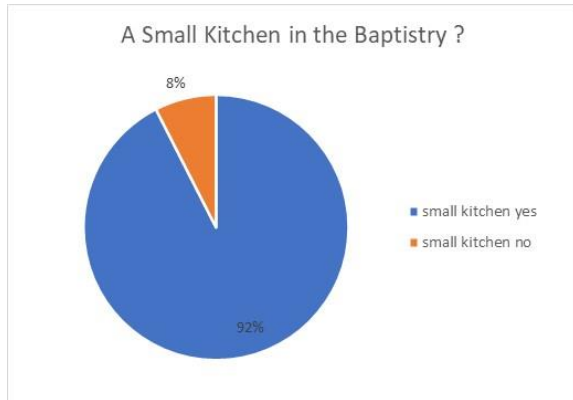
Then considering the specific question of replacing pews, a 77% majority were in favour of doing so versus a 12% wishing the church not to replace any pews at all, so some resistance to removal was present.



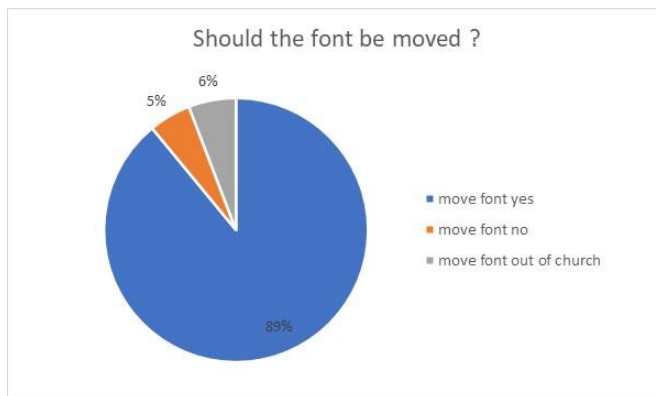
However, it is important recognise that removing all pews does bring other issues into consideration, such as what chairs will replace the pews, how will they look, their weight, how long will they last and how practical would it be to manage the transition between needing many out to few out depending on what service/activity is next scheduled. Also considering chair storage, how can we effectively store the chairs that are not in use and indeed on that very point, the survey showed a split 59% to 41% for and against dedicated storage cupboards.

The suggestion of introducing a small servery into the Baptistry was strongly supported. It did also introduce many opinions on what should or should not be included in the servery and that we ensure that the look and feel are in keeping with the church and avoid unnecessary background operational noise.

## 7 - Evidence for the need



The question of moving the font out of the Baptistry was raised and of course was done so in the belief that the church was unable to safely use the existing font in its current position which had been formally recorded a number years ago following a near miss incident (since proven to be incorrect and invalid). The survey response was a high 89% in favour of the move, but it is important to relate to the point made on its previous non-use and that the kitchen facilities being suggested, are easily seen as a very practical and necessary improvement which would have driven that higher opinion.

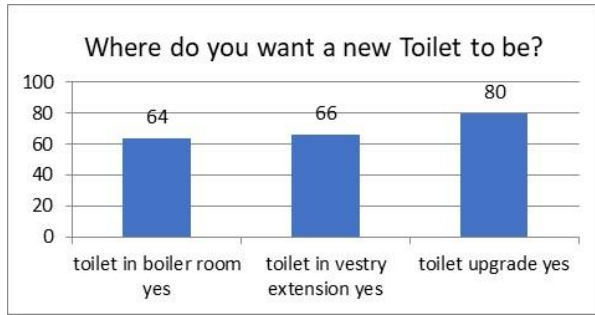


The introduction of a permanent ramp to the front porch (yes=99%) along with glass doors to the outer front porch (yes=95%) were all well received and without major contention other than a slight concern about design appearance of a ramp with handrails to the front of the church.

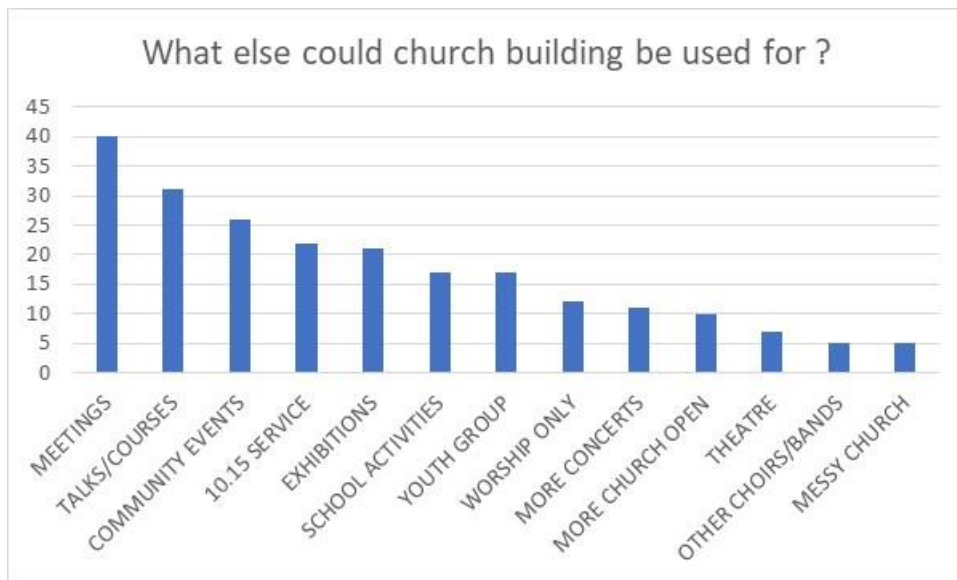
Strangely there was a divided opinion about whether the current toilet in the external Bier House should be modernised or a new one created.

It was clear that people did not want to walk in full view of the congregation to access the toilet. The 2022 design proposal overcomes this problem with access to the Annexe indoor toilets provided via doors at the back of the nave.

## 7 - Evidence for the need



And finally, we asked the participants what else could the church building be better used for and the end scores highlighted more use for meetings, talks/courses and more community events.



All of the above comments and scores were then considered alongside the 2019 proposal. There was contention particularly with the pews, even though there was a positive support from the people who returned the survey.

### b) Ongoing Consultations

In 2021 the newly formed Heritage Building Project team looked again at the proposals following detailed discussion with the Diocesan Advisory Council.

This 2022 Statement of Need follows that guidance fully and accompanies a new proposal which radically limits the internal changes in the church to an absolute minimum and moves all other solutions to our requirements outwards into the proposed Heritage Annexe.

The 2018 consultations were necessary, remain relevant and can only bolster the support and confidence having further reduced areas of concern into the 2022 scheme.

The project team presented this proposal to the Archdeacon and DAC Secretary in March 2022 receiving encouragement to continue to develop the scheme.



The latest project proposals have been presented to the PCC, followed by similar presentations to the congregations as a formal release of the Heritage Building Project in May 2022. The feedback from the congregations and visitors has been very supportive and has been seen as “*achievable*” and has raised excitement in the members that “*it now will happen*”.

There have been and continue to be updates shared with the PCC, individuals at church and via the church magazine, the Sandiway Round Tower village magazine and the village website.

The Heritage Gift Day in July 2022 was a well-attended and successful event which enabled direct contact with the open day attendees (both the church family and local visitors) to share and explain our plans.

The church team have checked for any existence of a formal John Douglas Society, but confirm that **no such society exists**. However, we are very keen to become a centre for John Douglas heritage and have already taken steps to begin working on digital heritage with a series of short You Tube videos focussing on architectural features of the church. The first is already available, easily accessible for schools and other interested parties.

The church has shared the latest 2022 plans, including the removal of the two front rows of pews and re-instatement of the existing Baptistry with a local historian/author who has specific interest in John Douglas architecture and who has published information on the works of John Douglas. The new proposals in particular regarding the approach to minimise changes to the nave and baptistry were well received by him.

Further updates for our congregation and wider interest groups will now follow.

Our architect will shortly be preparing drawing information sufficient for engagement with formal bodies to achieve outline approvals.

## 8. Environmental Sustainability

### a) Reducing our Carbon Footprint

The Annexe will be designed to be energy efficient, making use of modern insulation, heating, low wattage ELD lighting, audio visual, cleaning and water heating equipment.

### b) Change in Energy Usage

The Heritage Building Project will reduce the carbon footprint of St.John's by allowing more conservative use of lighting and heating and avoiding whole heating of the large church building when only required by small groups and for shorter times. So effectively even though we increase our use, we do so in a more efficient way.

### c) Sustainable design

The design layout of the Annexe will make good use of its natural light, including Velux rooflights and allow the natural light from the Annexe being on the south (sunny side) to flow into the church building via the existing south nave windows. These are currently covered with Perspex security protection which has faded and deteriorated over time, but once extended into the Annexe we will be able to remove the perspex to increase the light transfer possibilities.

The design will conform to current building regulations for heating, ventilation and insulation standards. The windows and bi-fold doors will be constructed in quality materials with sound airgap insulation properties.

### d) ECO Benchmarks

The church has recently received its certificate for ECO Bronze status and the expectation is that we improve our rating still further by adopting good principles as we progress the Heritage Building Project.

### e) Impact on flora and fauna in the church garden

The Annexe will only impact a small area of the existing church garden and will not negatively impact our natural opportunities for the wildlife, plants, grasses and hedging.

There is no evidence of bird nesting sites on the south building line.

There is no evidence of the presence of bats or any other protected species of fauna.

### f) Influencing others and reducing impact on the environment

Where possible, means such as door closers will be installed to reduce waste from heat loss. Short toilet flushes will be included and water tap designs will be chosen with automatic cut-off to reduce unnecessary water usage.

Water for drinks will be heated in a fixed and well insulated appliance to avoid the inefficient and dangerous use of tea urns.

## 9. Appendices

### a) Summary of the Project Work Phases

#### **Project Phase ONE**

Reinstate and recommission the Baptistry (COMPLETED 2022)  
Introduce new pew cushioning to all retained pews (COMPLETED 2022)  
Remove front TWO rows of pews, reposition frontal panels and radiators  
Introduce handrails to the chancel steps  
Introduce additional handrail to the pulpit  
Carpet the open space generated from the removal of pews  
Re-carpet the rear, front and main aisle

#### **Project Phase ONE-A**

Introduce an accessible ramp to the front porch along with glass doors to the outer porch

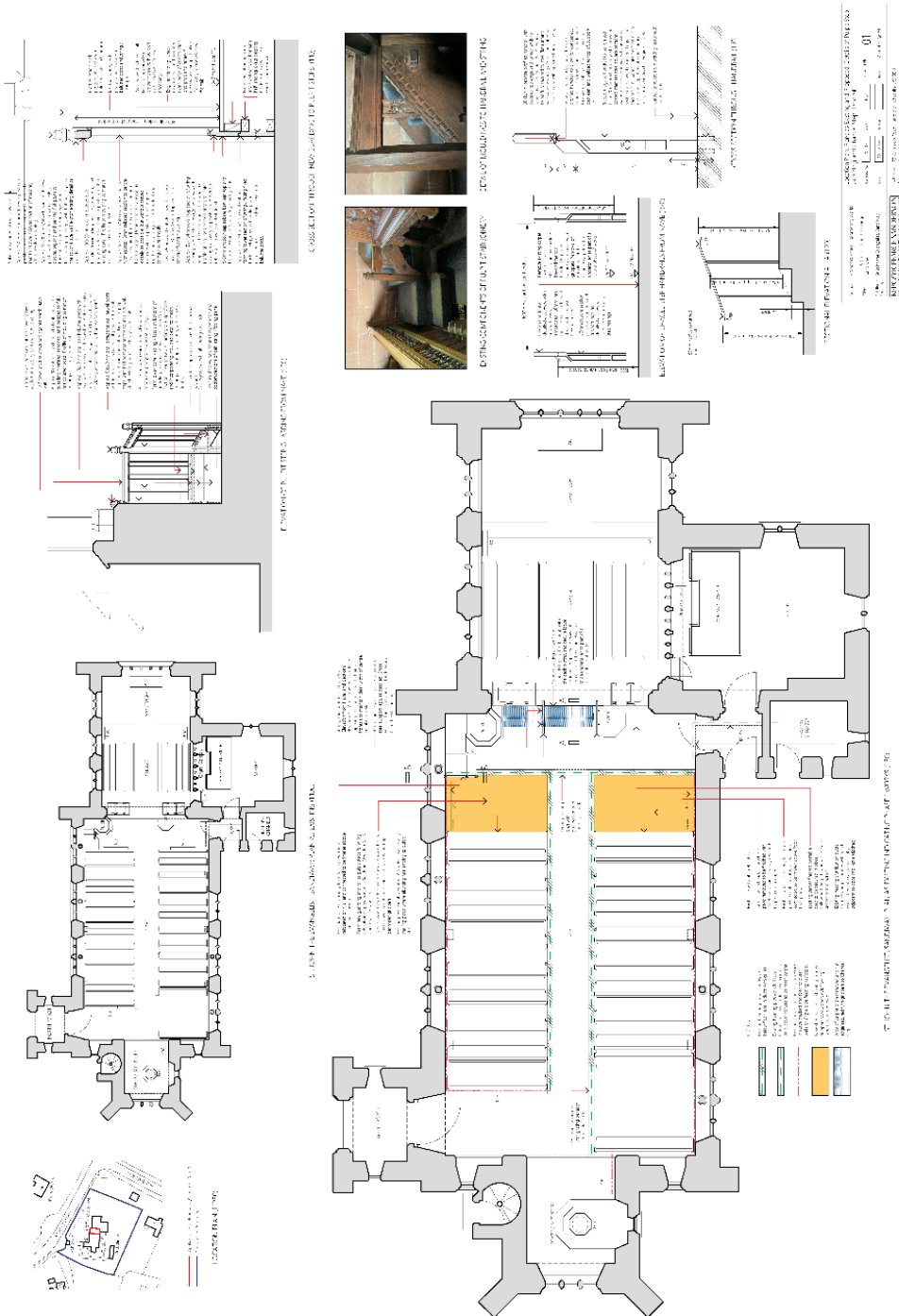
#### **Project Phase TWO**

Construct and fit out a Heritage Annexe onto the rear outer nave wall  
Re-purpose the existing boiler room into storage space  
Introduce a new wall mounted boiler into the Vestry replacing the existing boiler  
Re-purpose the Bier House into a Church office and storage space  
Launch the new Heritage Centre as a community facility

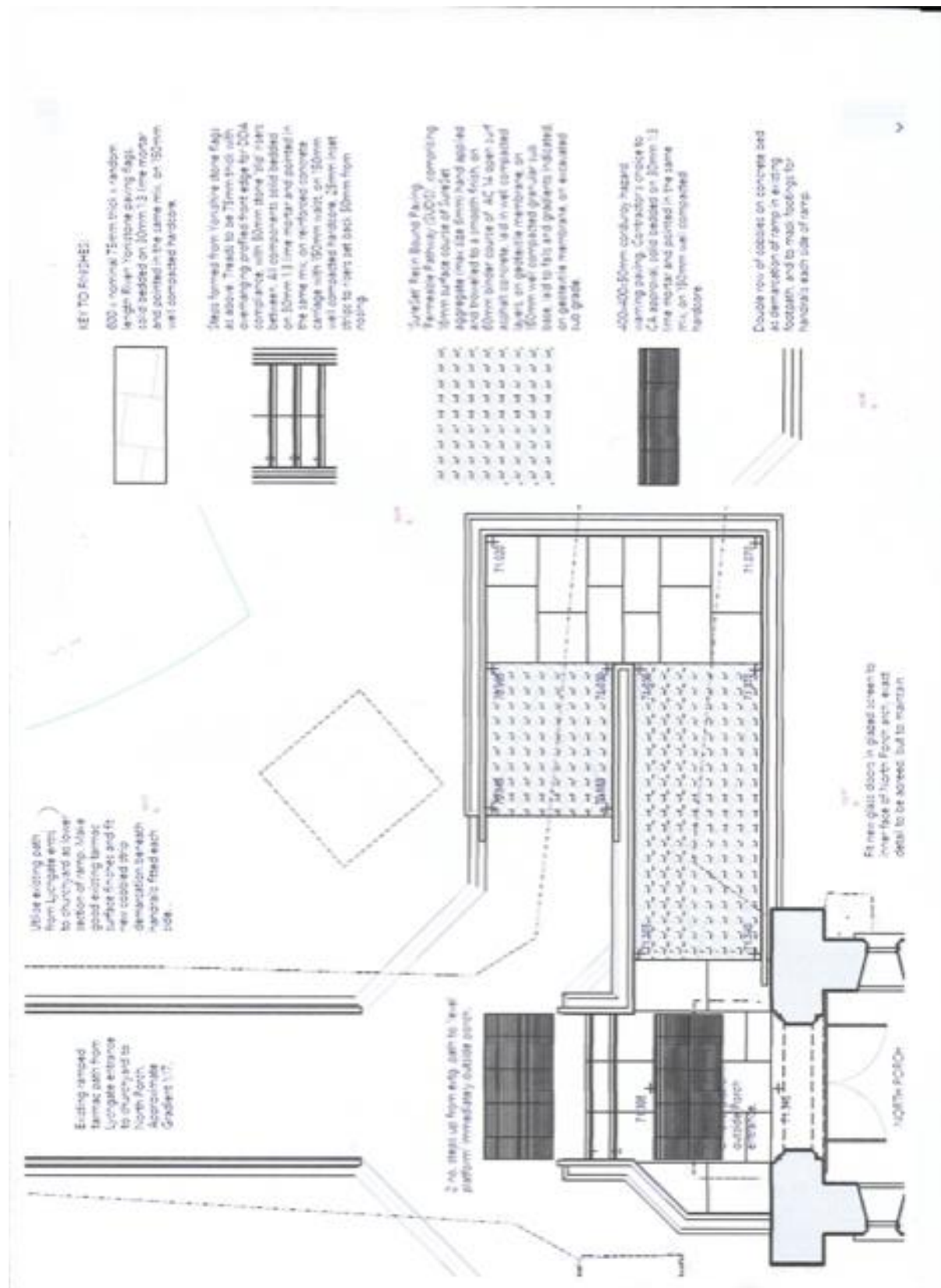
## b) Plans and Drawings

The following drawings have been provided by our Architect (Duncan Sanderson, Kepczyk Pearce Sanderson) and further drawings will be included as we progress the project through the respective RIBA project stages.

### Proposed Removal of Front Two Rows of Pews and Handrails to Chancel and Pulpit:



Proposed Plan for a Permanent Ramp and Glass Doors to the Front North Porch Entrance:



c) References

Church Growth Research Programme (2014) *From Anecdote to Evidence: Findings from the Church Growth Research Programme 2011-2013*. Church of England

Church Growth Research Programme (2015) *From Evidence to Action*  
<http://www.fromevidencetoaction.org.uk/>

Cooper, T., and Brown, S Ed's. (2011) *Pews, benches and chairs: Church Seating in English Parish Churches from the Fourteenth Century to the Present*. The Ecclesiological Society.

Cray, G. ed. (2004) *Mission-Shaped Church*, Church House Publishing

Giles, R. (2004) *Re-pitching the tent: the definitive guide to re-ordering your church*. Canterbury press, Norwich.

Royal Academy of Arts (2014) *Sensing Spaces: Architecture reimagined*. (Exhibition demonstrating the impact of layout and design of space on the experience of the visitors.)

Penton, J. (2008) *Widening the eye of the needle*. Church House Publishing.

d) Architects consulted

Duncan Sanderson (Kepczyk Pearce Sanderson)

As the first phase of the Heritage Building Project, this faculty request is to remove and dispose of the two front rows of pews from StJohn's church in order to greatly improve the accessibility of the church building.

We have members of the village with accessibility needs who either attend StJohn's regularly or those who would like to attend but have stated reluctantly that they are unable to do so as they find it difficult to access the building.

The removal of the front two rows of pews would create an open carpeted space on either side of the centre aisle to meet the DDA requirements and allow the church to safely support and welcome those with disability into the church.

Currently our only accessible route into the church is via the rear Vestry door which has a basic ramped entrance, however, once into the nave, a disability scooter user is unable to turn around or proceed beyond the south east walkway between the front pew and the chancel steps. The person can only reverse the scooter to exit the church.

By removing the front two rows of pews and re-siting the modesty panels we will instantly provide an accessible space to operate and at the same time allow the current walkway between the pews and chancel step to fully meet H&S emergency evacuation requirements (the walkway is currently being used by a member of the congregation who uses a motorised disability scooter and when manoeuvred into position, the alternative emergency exit route via the rear Vestry door is then severely compromised for both the individual and the rest of the congregation and should there be incident impacting access through the front door, it would be extremely difficult to guarantee the safe evacuation of the congregation through the rear exit).

This modification to the nave layout will require the radiators currently attached to the modesty panels to be moved to the adjacent nave walls (one radiator on either side wall)

This will entail the following modifications to the central heating pipework:

- Cap off the existing supply and return points that feed the radiators in their existing positions.

- Remove and modify the existing 3-coil pipes that traverse along the nave walls and introduce tee connections to supply the radiators in their new position.
- Fit the radiators onto the nave walls above the 3-coil pipes and make connections into the circuit.

The work will require a full drain down of the heating water circuit. Once complete the system will be refilled including inhibitor and then leak tested.

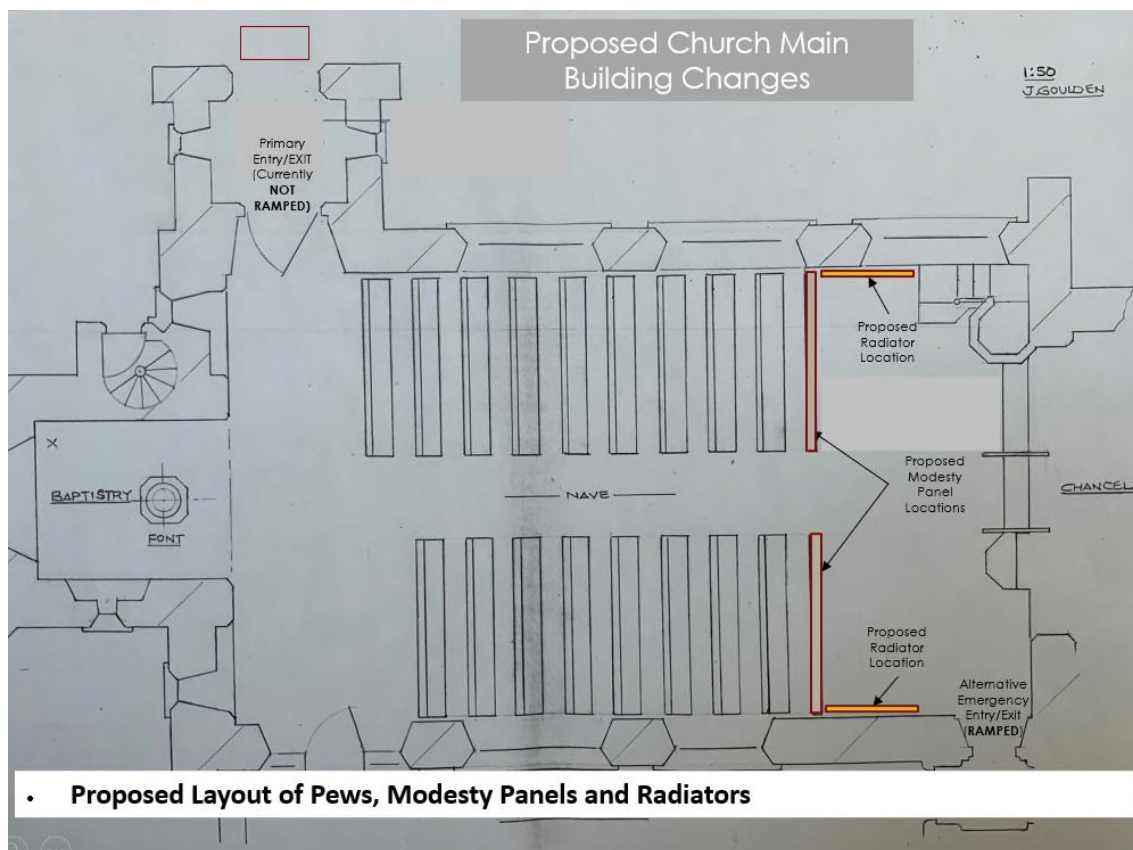
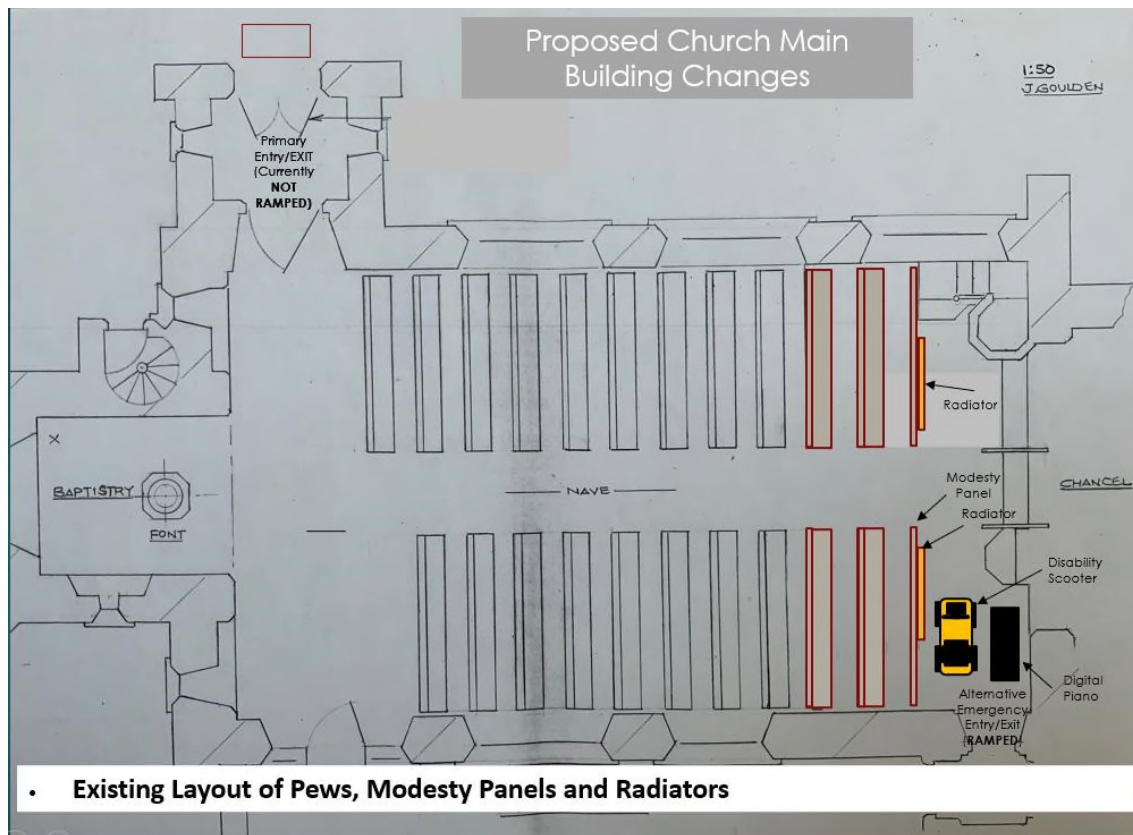
The engineer has visited the site yesterday to inspect the proposal and has confirmed that the approach is the most expedient. His assessment is that the work will take two weeks to complete. Duncan Sanderson is also fully aware of the proposal.

The engineer has offered an almost immediate window of availability to make the changes for StJohn's and the earliest that we are able to carry out this work would also be beneficial to avoid the heating being unavailable for two weeks as the season's temperatures begin to fall.

Whilst it would be better to perform these changes during the warmer weather and the engineer's availability is also possible, our **overriding concern** relates to the current H&S risk that is posed by the frequently blocked escape route at the front of the nave.

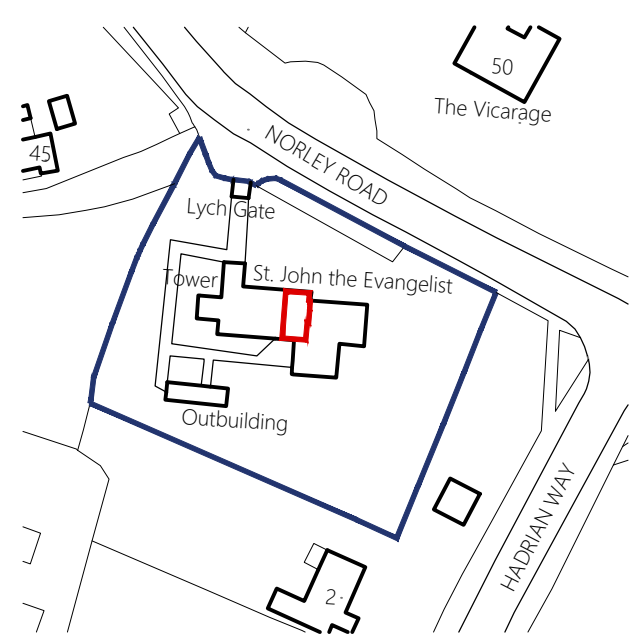
The before and after proposals which display the critical points raised are shown attached in the two Jpeg images along with two images of the existing pews taken from the front of the nave.





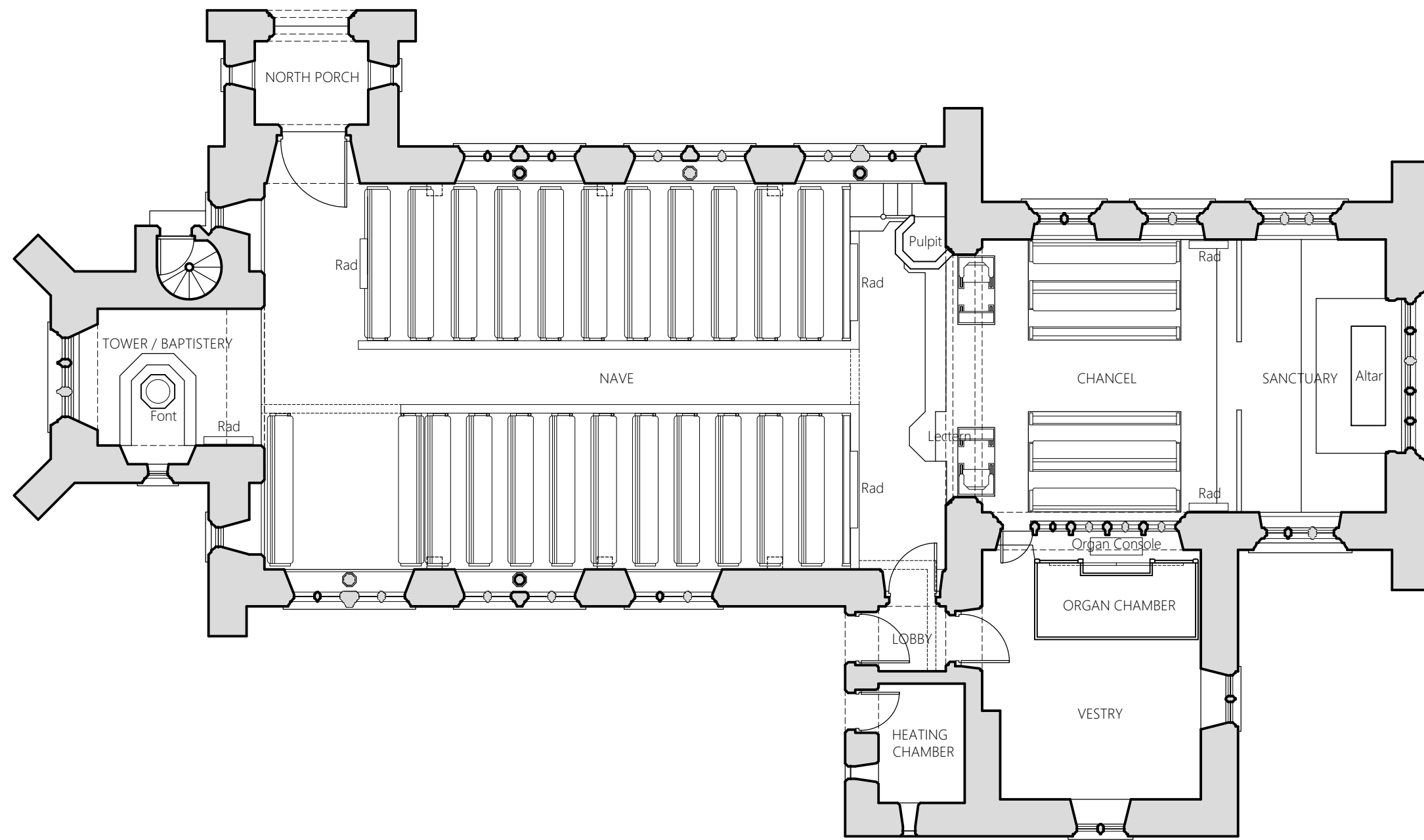




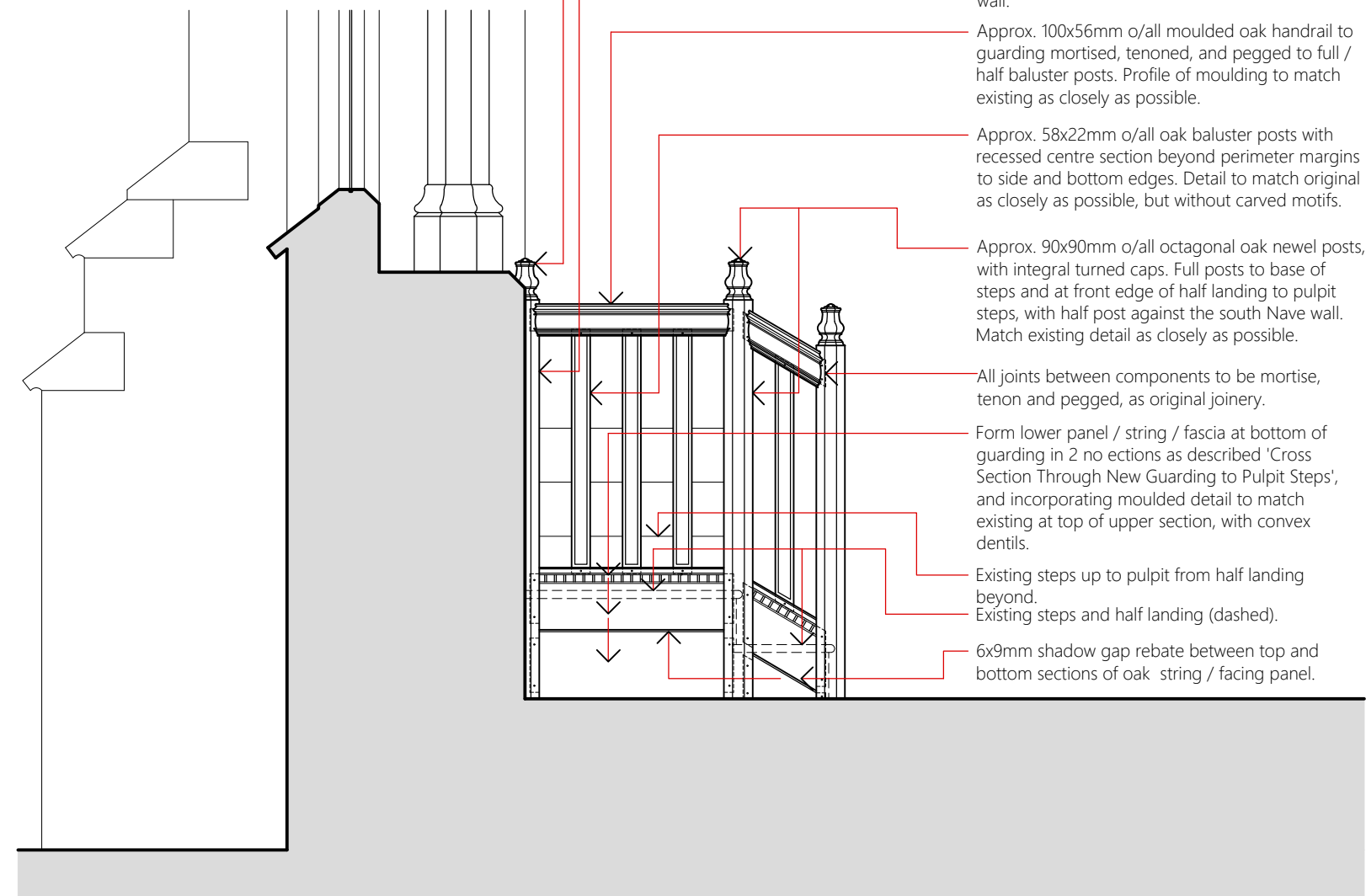


Application Site Boundary (Approx 31.20 m2)  
Church Site Boundary

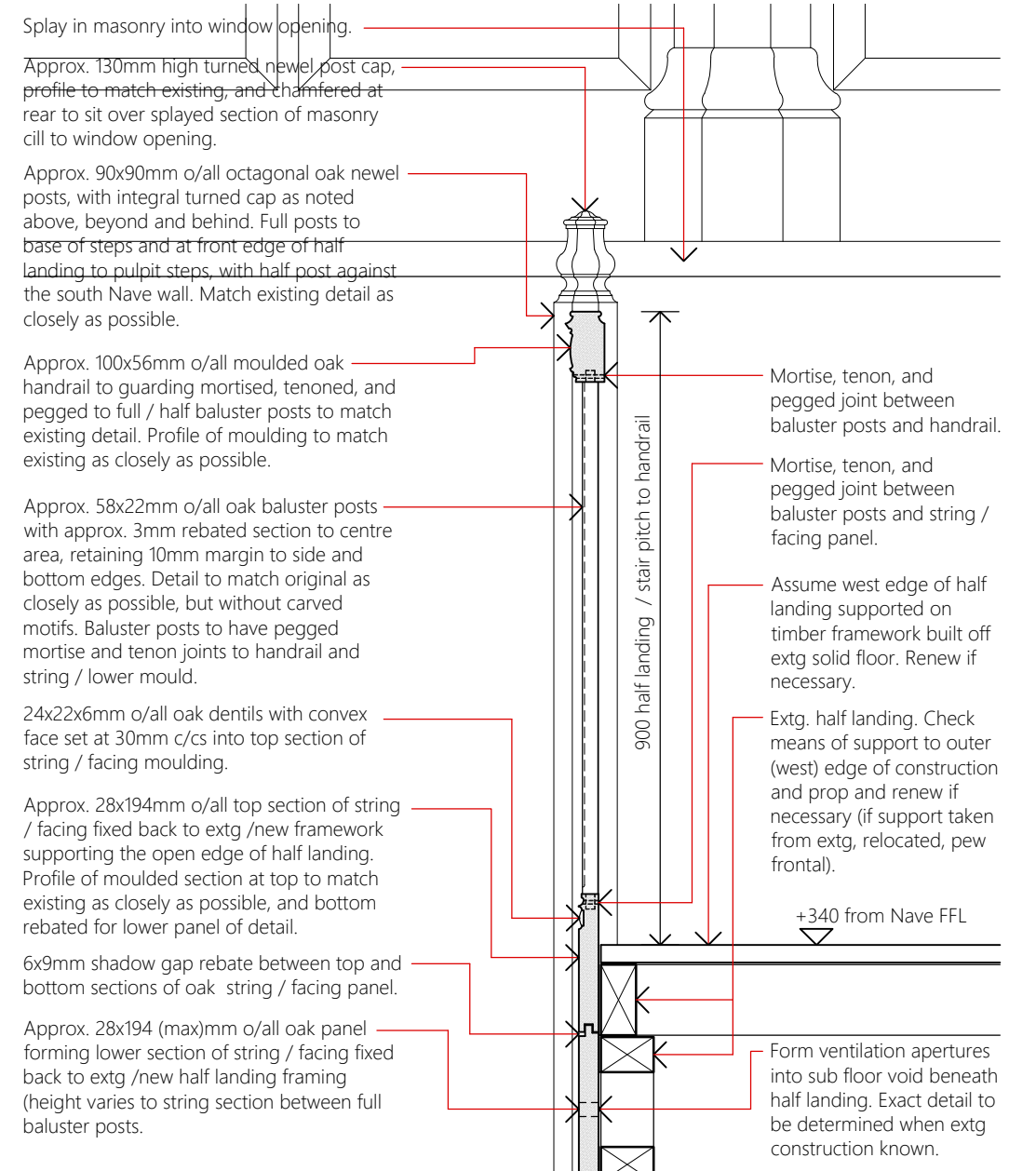
LOCATION PLAN (1:1250)



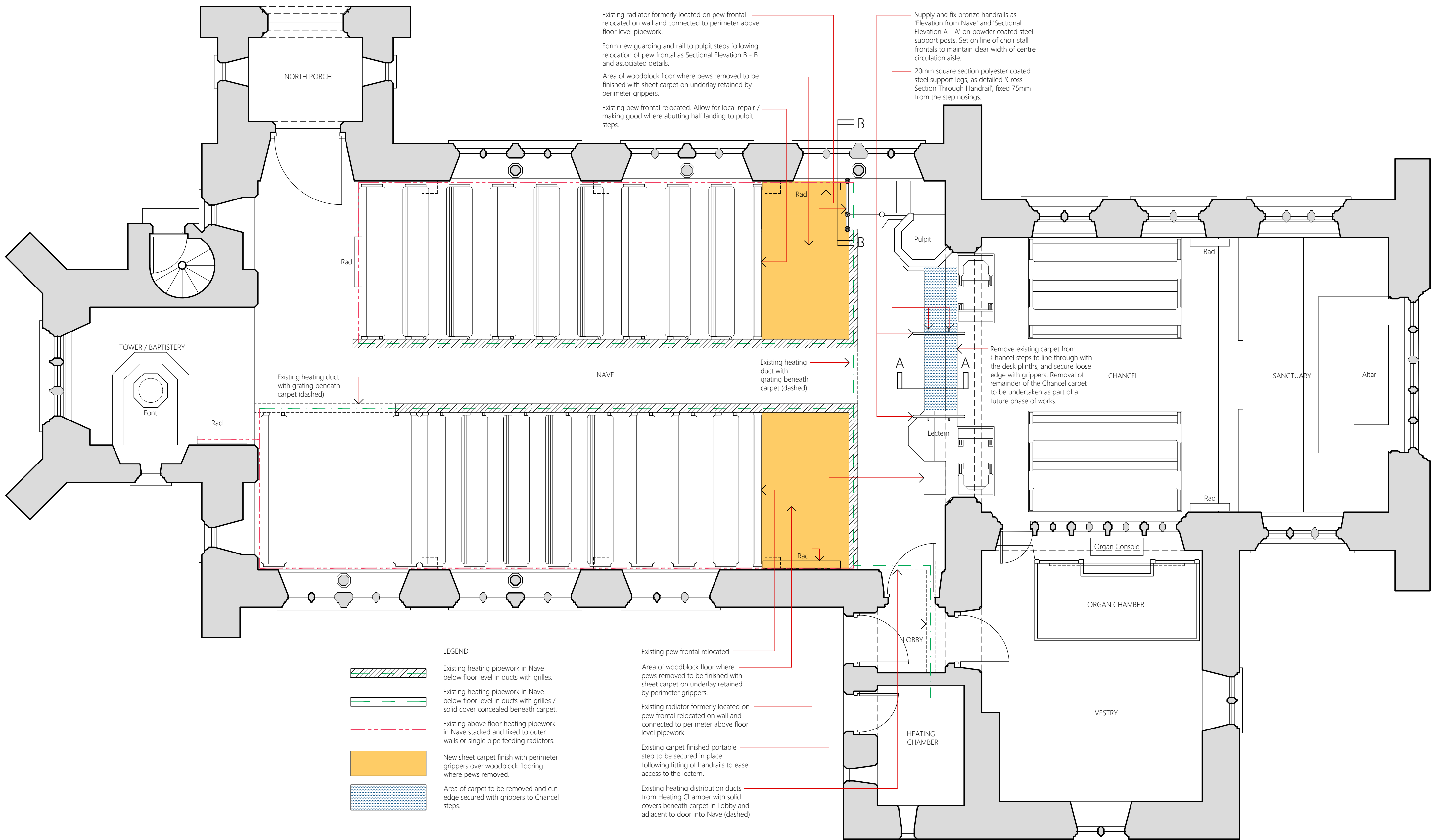
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, SANDIWAY: PLAN AS EXISTING (1:100)



ELEVATION OF PULPIT STEP GUARDING FROM NAVE (1:20)



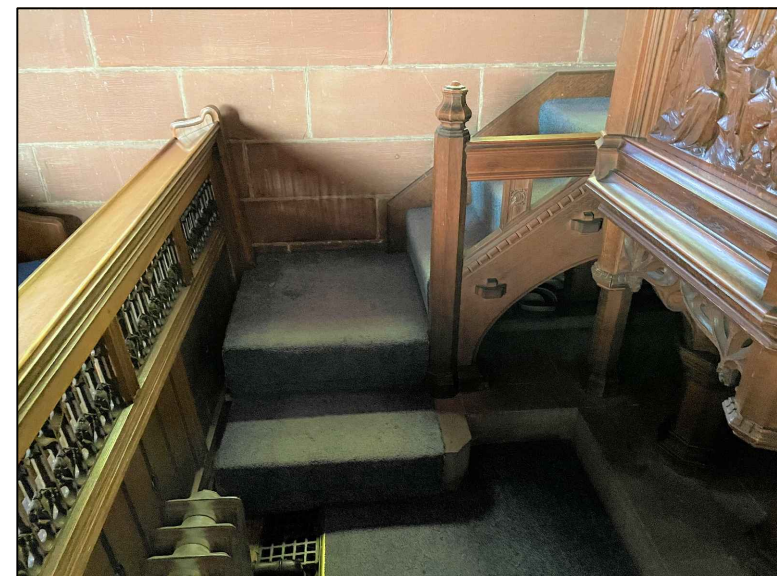
CROSS SECTION THROUGH NEW GUARDING TO PULPIT STEPS (1:10)



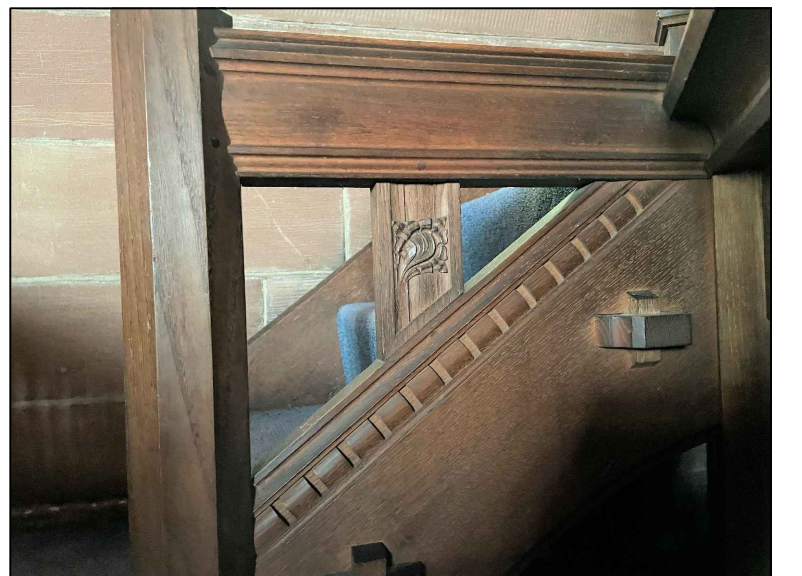
LEGEND

- Existing heating pipework in Nave below floor level in ducts with grilles.
- Existing heating pipework in Nave below floor level in ducts with grilles / solid cover concealed beneath carpet.
- Existing above floor heating pipework in Nave stacked and fixed to outer walls or single pipe feeding radiators.
- New sheet carpet finish with perimeter grippers over woodblock flooring where pews removed.
- Area of carpet to be removed and cut edge secured with grippers to Chancel steps.

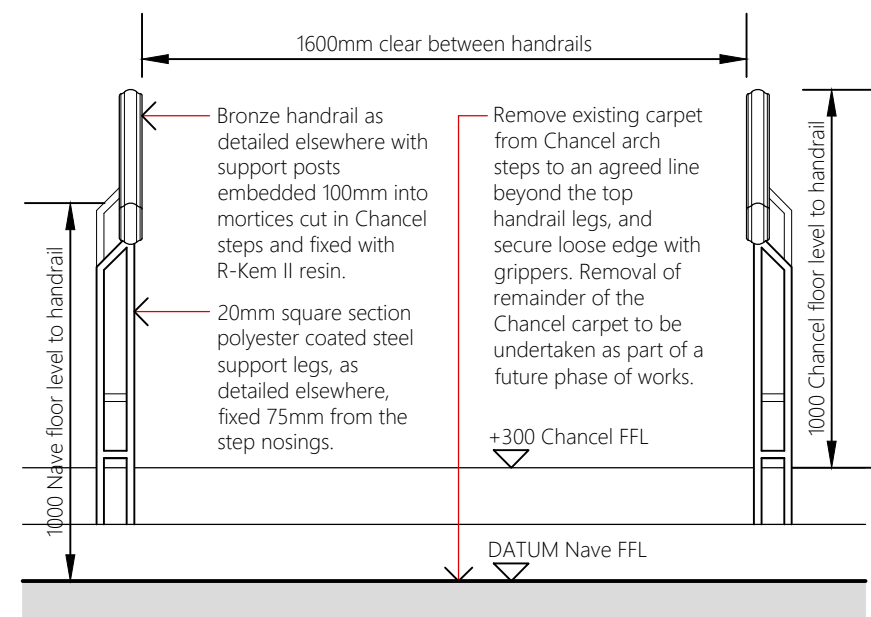
- Existing pew frontal relocated.
- Area of woodblock floor where pews removed to be finished with sheet carpet on underlay retained by perimeter grippers.
- Existing radiator formerly located on pew frontal relocated on wall and connected to perimeter above floor level pipework.
- Existing carpet finished portable step to be secured in place following fitting of handrails to ease access to the lectern.
- Existing heating distribution ducts from Heating Chamber with solid covers beneath carpet in Lobby and adjacent to door into Nave (dashed)



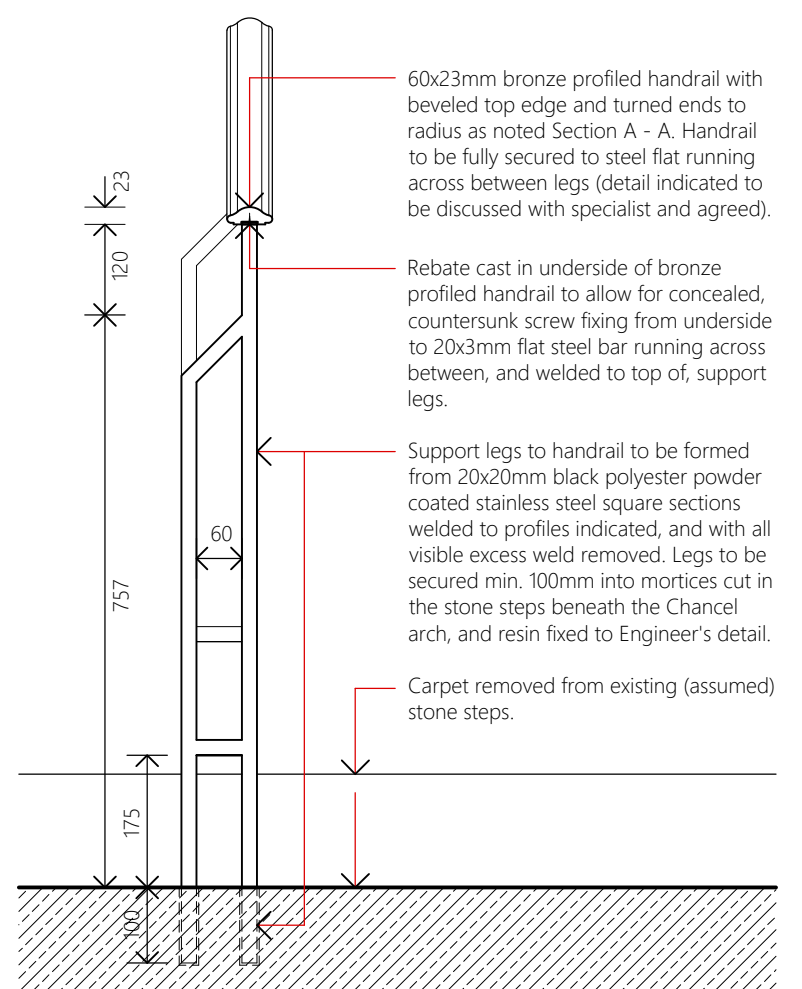
EXISTING COMPONENTS OF PULPIT STAIR JOINERY



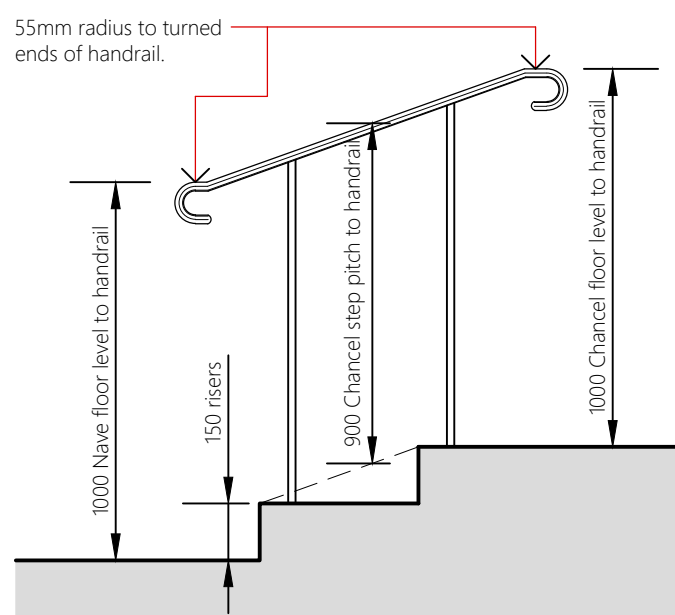
DETAIL OF MOULDINGS TO HANDRAIL AND STRING



ELEVATION OF CHANCEL STEP HANDRAILS FROM NAVE (1:20)



CROSS SECTION THROUGH HANDRAIL (1:10)



SECTIONAL ELEVATION A - A (1:20)

Contract	Proposed Phase 1 Reordering Works	Location Plan, Plans as Existing and Proposed, Details of Pulpit Step Guarding and Chancel Step Handrails
Client	The PCC of St. John the Evangelist, Sandiway	Contract No. 2053B Drawn FDS Drawing No. 01
Building / Structure	St John the Evangelist, Sandiway	Date Oct 2022 Revision Scale As noted @ A1
KEPCZYK PEARCE SANDERSON ARCHITECTS, SURVIVORS & HISTORIC BUILDING CONSULTANTS		Address: 75 Wilmslow Road, Handforth, Cheshire SK9 3EN Tel: 01625 400103





## Sandiway St John - pew removal - Correspondence with parish and others

Attachments are listed according to the numbering on the supporting documents list

- [Attachments in blue are included within the proposals section](#)

Date	Message
<b>01/09/2022</b> To: Katy Purvis From: John Goulden  <b>With attachment</b>	<p>I enclose the outline description and reasoning for the proposal to dispose of the first two rows of pews in St John's church Sandiway. Thank you for all your help with this and we appreciate the opportunity for the proposal to be considered in this format to meet next weeks DAC committee meeting.</p> <p>If there are any concerns or omissions with the outline, please don't hesitate to call me.</p> <p><a href="#">4) Pew and radiator proposal</a></p>
<b>15/09/2022</b>  To: John Goulden From: Katy Purvis	<p><b>DAC Advice</b></p> <p>I am writing to let you that at its meeting of 9 September 2022 the DAC considered the proposal for removal of front pews and re-siting of radiators and wished to offer the following informal advice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Committee sympathised with what the parish was proposing for the improvement of accessibility and wanted to help them work towards achieving their aims.</li><li>2. On the basis of not prejudicing any further proposals in the future, the parish may wish to consider whether removing one pew on each side with new smaller radiators along the walls would provide the necessary space.</li><li>3. The parish will need to provide architect's drawings of the proposals, for example including the treatment of the floor.</li><li>4. The Committee appreciated the challenges posed by the existing heating pipework and that care would be needed in putting in the re-sited heating equipment. Details of how this will be dealt with should also be provided (to be drawn up by the architect)</li><li>5. A carefully written Statement of Needs would be required including details of where the pews will go and whether the remaining seating would be sufficient.</li><li>6. As this building with its fittings has particular significance and local sensitivity due to its John Douglas heritage, the parish should carry out local consultation regarding this proposal. The parish should also explain to the John Douglas Society how their proposal would increase usage and appreciation of the building.</li><li>7. Statutory consultees will also need to be consulted and this will be carried out by the DAC office</li></ol> <p>If you have any queries please do let me know, I can talk to you about any of the above in more detail if you need any help</p>

<p><b>15/11/2022</b></p> <p>To: Katy Purvis From: John Goulden</p>	<p>I know we have already had a telephone discussion to respond and align with the advice points raised by the DAC on 9th September 2022 (regarding the request to remove two rows of pews from the church) when we prepared our faculty submissions in the first week in November, but for avoidance of doubt and to assist with any queries that may still be necessary, I would like to re-state the responses for clarity as follows:</p> <p>Point a)</p> <p>No local action necessary.</p> <p>Point b)</p> <p>See analysis contained in Statement of Need version 1.0d Section 3.1 page 14</p> <p>Point c) and d)</p> <p>See multi view scale architect's drawing (2053B 01 Phase One Plans as Existing and Proposed) attached to Faculties 2022-079430 and 2022-079448 showing before and after details for the removal of pews, repositioning of frontal panels and radiators, explanation of floor changes to carpeting and fitment of handrails to chancel and pulpit.</p> <p>Point e)</p> <p>Statement of Need for the proposed Heritage Building Project is attached to both Faculties 2022-079430 and 2022-079448 and this document includes the impact that the removal of two rows would have against our current seating availability. See analysis contained in Statement of Need version 1.0d Section 3.1 page 14 and 15.</p> <p>Point f)</p> <p>Local consultation was carried out in 2018 and this was against the 'less heritage sensitive' proposal involving the removal of ALL pews from the nave. The data from the consultation is recorded in Statement of Need Version 1.0d. in Section 7 a) page 34, "2018 Open Consultation" and also includes in Section 7 b) page 37, a summary of the "Ongoing Consultations" that have and continue to take place.</p> <p>Reference to the absence of any official John Douglas society is also noted in Statement of Need Version 1.0d. Section 7 b) page 38.</p> <p>Point g)</p> <p>No local action necessary.</p>
<p><b>14/11/2022</b></p>	<p><b>DAC Advice</b></p>

<p>To: John Gouldon, Ruth Mock From: Katy Purvis</p>	<p>I am writing to let you that at its meeting of 18 November 2022, the DAC considered the proposal for the removal of front pews and re-siting of radiators, and wished to offer the following informal advice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. It commended the parish on the work they had carried out in enhancing and developing the supporting documentation</li> <li>b. The statutory consultees should now be consulted and the DAC office would carry this out on behalf of the parish. The consultation, whilst primarily concerning the pew removals, would also include the details of the proposed handrails so that a complete and honest picture of the set of proposals was being presented</li> </ol> <p>In response to the formal application for the handrails, the Committee resolved, subject to there being no queries or objections arising from the consultation with Statutory Consultees regarding the overall interior proposals (the most sensitive element being the proposed pew removals), to recommend the scheme, with the following proviso:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The works to be under the direction and subject to the inspection of the Scheme Architect</li> </ol> <p>The Committee also wished to offer the following informal advice:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The proposed handrail has stainless steel and powder coated legs. This seems a rather unnecessary specification since the rail is inside and will not get wet so it may be a costlier option than is needed. It is suggested that the parish consider mild steel painted matt black as this would be cheaper and look more natural.</li> <li>b. It was suggested that while the faculty application process was ongoing and until the work has been done, the parish could manage the situation by, for example having sidespeople on hand to assist those who may struggle with the chancel step.</li> </ol>
<p><b>01/03/2023</b></p> <p>To: John Goulden From: Caroline Hilton</p>	<p>I am writing to let you know that at its meeting of 17 February 2023 the DAC considered the feedback of The Victorian Society and the Church Buildings Council, and the Committee resolved, <i>subject to the Church Buildings Council being provided with details of the significance of the pews and photographs of them and them not then objecting to the proposals</i>, to recommend the scheme with the following proviso:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The works to be under the direction and subject to the inspection of the Scheme Architect</li> </ol> <p>If you can provide those details the DAC office will forward those details to the Church Buildings Council on behalf of the parish.</p>
<p><b>07/03/2023</b></p> <p>To: Caroline Hilton</p>	<p>As agreed, I enclose a couple of images showing the typical pews that we wish to remove from the church (effectively the front two rows only).</p>

<p>From: John Goulden</p> <p><b>With attachments</b></p>	<p>It is important to note that we recognise the importance of the two ornate carved pew frontals - the frontals will be repositioned against the retained resultant front rows.</p> <p>It has been suggested that the pews may have links to John Douglas, however I am not able to specifically verify that provenance. We have therefore taken a cautious approach with our building changes by limiting the removal of pews to an absolute minimum in order to satisfy the necessary access for those with difficulty and disability, opening the operating space sufficient for funeral services and other church functions that are clearly struggling with the current layout.</p> <p><a href="#">7) Photographs of pews</a></p>
<p><b>27/06/2023</b></p> <p><b>File Note</b> of telephone conversation between John Goulden and Caroline Hilton</p>	<p>Just to confirm (as previously verbally understood), that the carpet will continue to be blue.</p>



## Sandiway St John - Correspondence with consultees

Date	Message
<p><b>15/12/2022</b></p> <p>To: Historic England, The Victorian Society, CBC</p>	<p><b>Request for Formal Consultation under Part 4.5 of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2019 - Sandiway: St John the Evangelist (609130) ref 2022-079448</b></p> <p>Reference 2022-079448 concerning Sandiway: St John the Evangelist (Church Code 609130).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• e-nwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk</li> <li>• casework@jcnas.org.uk</li> <li>• consultchurchbuildingscouncil@churchofengland.org</li> </ul> <p>FOA The Victorian Society, Historic England and Church Buildings Council</p> <p>Sandiway St John (Grade 2 / 1903) Removal of two rows of pews and associated work</p> <p>You have been invited under part 4.5 of The Faculty Jurisdiction (Amendment) Rules 2019 to consult on the above Faculty Application. A response to the consultation will be taken into account if it is received within 42 days of the date of this email.</p> <p>The deadline for your response is 26/01/2023.</p> <p>The proposals comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of the front two rows of pews from the nave (totalling four pews) and move the two pew frontals to their respective new positions.</li> <li>• Relocation of the two radiators currently at the front of the pew frontals to the side of the adjacent nave walls. (The heating pipework connections will need to be capped off at floor level from their original positions and the radiators connected back into the heating circuit adjacent to their new positions along the nave walls.)</li> <li>• Introduction of an additional timber handrail to make safe access up to the exposed pulpit steps.</li> <li>• Introduction of handrails to the chancel steps</li> <li>• Carpeting of the resulting open areas on either side of the main church aisle and replace the aisle carpets to match.</li> </ul> <p>You will see from the Statements of Needs and Significance that this suite of proposed works to the interior of the church building form a phase of a wider project.</p> <p>Please see the following uploaded documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of Significance</li> <li>• Statement of Need</li> <li>• Plans as existing and proposed</li> </ul>
<p><b>19/12/2022</b></p> <p>To: OFS</p>	<p>Thank you for consulting the Church Buildings Council regarding the proposals at Sandiway, St John the Evangelist.</p>

<p>From: CBC</p>	<p>The Council was grateful for the comprehensive statements and has no objection to the introduction of handrails. The Council is unlikely to object to the removal of two pews; however, their significance has not been assessed and no photographs of the pews has been provided. It is therefore not possible to take a view on the acceptability of their removal.</p> <p>The Council does not consider carpet to be a suitable floor covering in churches as it is overly domestic, and many are not breathable either causing or exacerbating issues with damp and damaging the underlying floor surface. The Council understands that some carpet is pre-existing and was pleased to note that it is intended to remove this from the Chancel step. However, it cannot support the introduction of any new carpet.</p> <p>The Council noted the future reordering and extension proposals with interest and looks forward to seeing these in the future.</p>
<p><b>26/01/2023</b></p> <p>To: Caroline Hilton From: The Victorian Society</p>	<p><b>RE: Sandiway, St John the Evangelist (Grade II*, John Douglas, 1902); removal of two benches, relocation of frontals and radiators, introduction of handrails, carpeting</b></p> <p>Our ref: 179765</p> <p>Thank you for consulting the Victorian Society on this proposal. We are grateful for the opportunity to comment. I am glad to say that we are broadly content to defer in this case to the advice of the DAC, and certainly do not wish to raise any formal concerns over the loss of the two rows of benches proposed for removal. It is an enormous relief to read that wholesale pew removal is no longer being pursued. We are glad, too, that the bench frontals will be appropriately re-sited, and in so doing their intrinsic interest, practical purpose and group value with the benches preserved.</p> <p>We do though wish to take this opportunity to request as part of the reordering works that the parish removes the carpet from the chancel. The DAC will be aware that carpet is generally considered inappropriate in nationally important church interiors, and the carpet here provides a perfect example of why that is so: not only does it detract greatly from a really high quality historic interior, but it will in time become tatty and worn, compounding its detrimental effect and locking the parish into a cycle of costly replacement. While there is no mention of the floor beneath the carpet, I think we can safely assume that there is a high quality historic floor surface under there, entirely concealed from view (and potentially suffering harm by being covered with carpet). We therefore urge the parish with the DAC's support to explore the removal of the chancel carpet.</p> <p>I refer to the high quality of the historic interior, and I would in closing offer the view that this building is under-listed. It is now acknowledged that the C19 is not adequately represented on the national heritage list, and this appears a prime exemplar of this. I wonder whether the parish would consider the possibility of seeking to get the building upgraded to II*. This would not only provide formal recognition of the building's</p>

	<p>high level of historic and architectural interest, but would critically unlock significantly increased opportunities for grant funding for future phases of fabric repair and restoration. The Society would be happy to provide a letter of support for any upgrading application.</p> <p>I trust that these comments are of assistance to the parish and the DAC.</p>
<p><b>23/03/2023</b></p> <p>To: CBC From: Caroline Hilton</p> <p><b>With attachment</b></p>	<p><b>Sandiway St John - Removal of front pews and re-siting of radiators – Application Ref: 2022-079448</b></p> <p>Further to your feedback that you provided on 19/12/2022 regarding the above scheme, the parish have provided the note below and photos regarding the pews. I would be grateful if you can let me know if there is any further comment you wish to make.</p> <p><i>Email of John Goulden of 07/03/2023 (listed in Correspondence) with photographs of pews</i></p>
<p><b>28/03/2023</b></p> <p>To: Caroline Hilton From: CBC</p>	<p>Thank you for this.</p> <p>These are lovely pews, quite Arts and Crafts. The Council is glad that a significant number will remain and is content with the removal of two pews and the relocation of the frontals.</p> <p>The Council's comments on the carpet still stand.</p>