

Site Development Project Timeline

Redeveloping the **West Mersea Free Church** site

October 2011

Church meeting

The deacons have been gathering quotes hall windows which are in a poor condition The quotes all tended to be around £3000-£4000 each. The cracks in the foyer may be due to the trees on the south boundary and we have a quote to have the trees lopped or removed.

March 2012

Crack survey in church building & hall taken because of concerns over cracks in main church building.

March 2012

Church meeting

We have had a survey of the buildings because of the cracks in the foyer, church and hall. We have already removed some trees on our side of the boundary on the south side of the church and reduced some others. The report only arrived today and there has been no time to study it. The surveyor gave a verbal report, he thought more trees may have to come down and the drains needed a report on them as they could contribute to the problem. He didn't think the buildings were in danger of falling down!

April 2012

Asbestos survey as part of health & safety

July 2012

Church meeting

There are problems with the windows in the hall. They are beyond repair on the south side and will need replacing before next winter. Cost at about £240 per window (there are 9). The windows will look similar and the concrete sills will stay and be repaired. The brick work also needs some repair.

October 2012

Church meeting

The windows in the hall are to be replaced at a cost of £3186. Window sills to be refurbished at the same time. We next need to look at the wooden panelling. The drains on site have been filmed and we are awaiting the results. Some trees have been pollard, 2 are to come out and possibly the hedge, cost so far £1000 + vat, the fencing to be reinstated in the future. The council are coming to check the trees at the back of the hall on their ground.

October 2012

New windows fitted in back hall. During this the north and south were identified by the window installer as bowing, having no wall ties and wooden 'seams' were rotting.

Feb 2013

Special church meeting

The hall is need of repair and the cost is likely to cost at least £18,000. However, this cost does not take into account replacement flooring and heaters nor does it take into account the flat roof at the back which is long overdue work. Do we repair or replace with new. The different groups who use the church have been asked for their views, a costing is being done by the builder who did the windows and found the problems. There is no danger at present in using the hall. Thoughts from the meeting. Do we need a building. How much do we want to spend on an old hall. We have a large number of young people to accommodate. The leadership are getting items ready for discussion at a future meeting. Do not forget corporate prayer.

March 2013

Jason's 'pyramid' design was shown to leadership as a possible new hall.

April 2013

Church meeting

Pyramid plan' shown to church as an example of a new build. The meeting was shown an idea of the size to scale on a site plan. Not much grass would be left, and no outside space for the youth, could it be double storey? Of course planning would be needed and they may stipulate its position and size. We could say we can't afford it and repair the old hall or we could contact architects about plans for a new hall. This is all part of the vision. Grants may be available for certain types of projects.

June 2013

Special church meeting Condition of the hall discussed. It was proposed that the deacons should be given permission to spend up to £5000 on professional advice and plans from an architect. This was agreed by a show of hands. It was then suggested that we get a second opinion from a structural engineer on the work that was needed on the back hall – because there was a general consensus for this, it was decided to obtain this second opinion.

July 2013

NFM Building inspection in back hall – confirmed there were cracks and movement in the back hall.

July 2013

Church meeting

Structural engineer reported that as well as the problems with the bottom of the walls we also had problems with the top of the walls going outwards, this being caused by the weight of the new tiles put on the hall roof some 30 years odd ago. The flat roof at the back was also past its useful life and would need replacing soon. It was asked if the leadership would contact Christian architects, someone with a knowledge of churches. All the groups who use the

church had already been asked to list what they would like the new hall to contain to help their groups.

September 2013

Architect selection. 3 different architects contacted, after meeting, we decided upon Archangel as our chosen one for our feasibility study.

October 2013

Church meeting

Meeting informed There was short list of three to be contacted regarding moving forward with ideas and plans for the hall. One declined and two meetings have been held to speak with the other two. They both came at it from different perspectives. Recommendations would be given to the Deacons. The short list were all Christians.

February 2014

Site dev team formed

February 2014

Special church meeting

informed that a Christian architect had been appointed and the need for a quantity surveyor. The meeting agreed for cost of site survey on top of the feasibility study costs.

March 2014

Site survey carried out by JTW

From building inspection result we performed a drainage survey. The result of this was in part to pollard trees because roots were damaging main church building.

April 2014

Site dev team & Church leadership meet Archangel for a presentation in which they discussed both the theology of buildings as well as initial concepts of buildings on the site.

June 2014

Started to visit other local churches who have built halls in recent past.

July 2014

Met with council planners for informal discussion about options regarding the site.

September 2014

Demographic investigation carried out

October 2014

Due to concerns we performed a 'grave survey'. Survey, where it was possible to carry out, showed no remains.

January 2015

Second site survey took place to ensure church building was in good structural condition should we wish to build new hall as an extension to it. Result was it would be ok.

March 2015

We receive from Archangel 'Side extension' concept diagram.

May 2015

VAT investigations – regarding if VAT charged to extensions or not – result: complicated, need further investigation when plan in place.

May 2015

Church meeting

Presentation made on the latest work of the Site Development Team looking at possible options for a side build/extension.

The meeting divided into groups for a 10 minute discussion on three questions a. Our group feels positive about the general layout of the sketch design, b. Our group feels optimistic about the church funding the project, c. Our group feels this is part of God's vision for our church.

These were to be scored as 1 strongly agree 2 agree 3 disagree 4 strongly disagree.

Average results from the groups, 1. was 1.9 2. was 2 3. was 1.4

July 2015

Church meeting

Meeting considered the options that the Site Development Team had work on. Giving time for the church to think and pray about these ready for the next meeting in November.

The decisions given in the meeting were:

Decision 1 Do you believe it is God's plan for our church to continue with the "site-dev project" using either of Archangel's Option A or B? YES or NO

Decision 2 – (only to be taken should decision 1 receive more than 50% 'Yes' votes)

Which of Archangel's options do you believe should be the starting point to continue with?

OPTION A or OPTION B

July 2015

Received an alternative extension concept from church member to build on back rather than side of church

Received other concerns about side build and car parking

November 2015

Alternative concept presented by church member. A vote was taken by a show of hands, 12 people (of the 21 voting members present) were for the proposal to progress the ideas put forward. The meeting agreed to the further cost of drawings by the architect.

January 2016

Received concept rear build sketch from Archangel

February 2016

Elders call church to “time of prayer”

24th April 2016

Day of prayer

25th April 2016

Leadership team meet to discuss way forward. A clear sense that God was saying all buildings to be replaced.

26th April 2016

Heather calls Rob with ‘prophetic dream’ part of which Rob could interpret (Pam)

Rob visits Pam who he believes is in the dream

Pam says she never would have thought this herself but believes God told her that we should start again with buildings

May 2016

Church meeting

Meeting made aware of recent prayer activity and day. Meeting voted on the three presented options The 3 options were voted on in reverse order.

31 for the 'Investigate something else'

0 for the 'Investigate back extension'

1 for the 'Investigate side extension'

June 2016

On recommendation EBA we met with Ivan King, a Baptist minister, who has previously worked as consultant to churches with building projects.

July 2016

Online questionnaire was sent out to churches who have previously and are currently working on church building projects to see if we could learn from them.

July 2016

Church meeting

informed that the site development team had reduced in size so the deacon and elders would step in and Simon Kings report just arrived, encourage us to look into partnerships.

September / October 2016

Site development team officially disbanded (due to number of members) and responsibility of work passed on to Deacons and Elders.

October 2016

Church meeting informed of the questionnaire outcome and the church were encouraged to pray in homegroups and other meetings.

February 2017

After unavoidable delays, due to sickness, the site development team meet again.

Outcome:

- Keep online record of site development work
- Review and consider possible community building partners

April 2017

Following a deacons' site development meeting:

- Should we have possible partners – refer discussion to church meeting
- Should we have a site dev lead? – refer discussion to church meeting
- Mission should drive what we do not a unique selling point even if the later pays grants

April 2017

Site development information is published on the church website (www.merseafree.church).

July 2017

It is proposed that responsibility for managing the site development project is given to Colin Tucker, who has experience in this field from his work with the Methodist Church.

November 2017

Colin is unanimously voted in by church membership to become the new site development leader. Assuming this responsibility has meant other tasks, such as risk assessments, will need to be completed by other individuals in the church.

The church is asked "What facility does Mersea Island need that it hasn't already got?", to which suggestions included a swimming pool, soft play area, a residential/nursing home, a police station and youth club facilities.

In the July-November period, some of the deacons met with the clerk of the West Mersea Town Council for community support with the project.

January 2018

The Deacons, alongside the site development project leader investigated two of the proposed ideas, and have obtained further details about project feasibility. The focus is now turning to funding the project through grants and community partnerships.

April 2018

The site development continues to be discussed and progressed through Deacons meetings each month, with the responsibility to continue investigating different options for the project, including community partnership opportunities. The site development lead has, with the help of the Deacons, looked at a number of potential options, many of which have ceased to progress, although one contact who was involved with Luff House (Frinton) shared some expertise on various types of homes, sheltered accommodation and similar facilities, and the viability of such a project taking place on the church premises is now taking place.