



**DURSLEY TABERNACLE  
SPECIAL CHURCH MEETING  
SUNDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH**

**TO DISCUSS PLANNING APPLICATION FOR  
DEVELOPMENTS TO  
THE PARSONAGE AND UPPER HALL**

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#### TO DISCUSS PLANNING APPLICATION FOR DEVELOPMENTS TO THE PARSONAGE AND UPPER HALLS

##### 1. History

- I. In 2010 our church adopted the Vision 2020 mission plan which outlined a strategy for growth in the church over the coming decade. Among many items (some of which have already been achieved) was the issue of refurbishing the main church kitchen and the upper hall, to improve facilities for church fellowship and allow more opportunities for outreach in the community.
- II. In the summer of 2011 the Synod offered to provide the pastorate with a more suitable manse. This was finally purchased in December 2012. Since the beginning of last year a working group consisting of Carole Allen, Nick Franks, John Harris, Steve Hubbard, Emma Irvine, Lionel Jones and Liz Swanwick have been tasked with finding an alternative use for the Parsonage. In consultation with the Church Meeting it was decided to go into partnership with the Town Council and convert the ground floor of the Parsonage for the provision of a new Youth Centre for Dursley. An architect was chosen by representatives from the Tabernacle, the Youth Forum and the Town Council to produce plans for a planning application. After much consultation, these have now been drawn up and need the tacit approval of the church meeting; hence the special church meeting that will be held after morning worship on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March.

##### 2. The Plans

- I. ***The Parsonage***
- II. The Parsonage ground floor will be isolated from the rest of the house by the removal of the staircase. The front rooms will remain the same, with one room equipped as a lockable conference room with tables and chairs and another as a meeting room/den. The present kitchen will be enlarged, by the removal of some interior walls, to provide a cafeteria/large meeting space with an open kitchen. The kitchen will take up the present church vestry and cupboards. A church office, for photocopier, records, safe, stationary, library etc., will be relocated elsewhere, either in the back rooms of the church's upper hall or the upper floors of the Parsonage. Toilets will be provided at the side of the Parsonage, including an accessible toilet. Ramped access will approach the front door of the Parsonage from the main street, giving the building a sense of self containment and allowing access for people with disabilities.
- III. The upper floors of the Parsonage will be accessed by creating a door through from the upper hall and also via the toilet block/lift area. Two exits are required for fire safety reasons. Some suggestions for how these rooms may be used include storage, church office, meeting rooms, chapel area.

#### **IV. *The Upper Hall***

- V. If the upper floors of the Parsonage are being used, then it will be essential that a safe fire exit route is created through the toilet block area and down the stairs from the upper hall. To ensure that opening doors do not obstruct this exit, a lobby will have to be created in the back corner of the upper hall under the existing lighting box.
- VI. The consensus from the consultation evenings is that the church kitchen should stay where it is without being reduced in size, but be upgraded into a catering kitchen which is fully compliant with all the health and safety regulations. Thus the church would have the capacity to offer hospitality of the highest standard to larger groups of people. Good access to the kitchen has always been a problem with the stage in its current location. There were also many people who expressed a desire for a larger hall space to take advantage of catering options in the upgraded kitchen and to improve the facilities on offer for those wishing to use the church for baptisms, weddings and funerals. Increased flexibility of space would also support a greater variety of church and social functions.
- VII. During the consultation process, however, a number of people expressed their concerns about the loss of the stage, and there is clearly a strong desire within the church that there should be continued opportunities for staging productions by the Tabard Players and other users from the church and wider community.
- VIII. The church elders have consulted extensively to try to resolve the dilemma of the conflicting demands on the layout of the upper hall. The plans drawn up show the removal of the permanent stage, thereby enabling full access to the kitchen, with a serving hatch and also better access down a central corridor to the back rooms and outside to the church garden. However, the church elders are recommending to the church that the provision of appropriate temporary staging, with suitable sound and lighting facilities, should be an integral part of this phase of the development if the new hall is to be used to its full advantage. In recognition of the contribution of the Tabard Players to the life of the church over many years, their expertise is already informing the consultation about the most appropriate modular stage, sound and lighting options and the church elders hope they will continue to stage their productions in the hall with new and flexible facilities which will be adaptable for all users.

#### **3. Access**

- I. Whilst building regulations and fire safety are complied with in the plans, there is an issue of ensuring the best access to the cafeteria in the Youth Centre, and also to the upper hall, for those with limited mobility. The plans therefore include provision for ramped access to the back of the upper hall, in effect continuing the new ramp from the Community Rooms. This would open up the rear of the church hall, providing better access to the new church office and other upstairs rooms, as well as easier escape for those with mobility issues.
- II. With the refurbishment of the Parsonage ground floor, the intention is that coffee and fellowship after morning worship will transfer to the cafeteria in the Youth Centre, rather than in the cramped and noisy environment of the reception room. Consequently the church may wish to consider how to provide internal disabled-friendly access to the Parsonage from the church sanctuary if the less mobile are not to be excluded from

fellowship at that time. Initial proposals to provide better access via the kitchenette area have been rejected because of the loss of facilities for flower arranging which this would involve. During the consultation, we have been reminded by a fire safety consultant that the church reception room is to be kept clear enough to function as a key emergency escape route for the church and upper hall at all times. The provisional plans therefore show a proposal for ramped access through the church reception room to the level of the existing ground floor toilet, kitchenette and the link to the new Youth Centre. This would ensure that the reception room is prioritised as a safe escape route from the lower floors while providing improved access around the building.

#### **4. Costs**

##### ***I. Essential costs of Stage One:***

- II. The church elders suggest that these plans are dealt with in stages. The first stage is to ensure the Youth Centre goes ahead and the Parsonage ground floor becomes a self-contained facility separate from the rest of the building. Whilst the Town Council are paying for all the developments on the ground floor of the Parsonage, inevitably there are some costs for us. We will have to pay for the creation of new doors into the Parsonage upper floors from the upper hall. We will also have to pay for our share in the costs of separating out the utilities and the sound proofing of the Parsonage kitchen ceiling/upper hall floor. However, the main cost to us at this stage will be the provision of a new heating system. A new gas-fired boiler is proposed. It will provide heating both to the Parsonage and the upper hall, with the heating to be provided on a 'zonal' basis (i.e. only heating the parts of the building that are needed at any one time). We recognise that this will provide much needed heating to our upper hall, kitchen and back rooms. We have the option of only paying our part of the boiler costs at this stage and delaying the installation of the upper hall heating system to a later date. However, the church elders feel that this would be a good opportunity to provide adequate heating at last to our upper halls and encourage the church to agree to this development. The essential costs of making the change to the Parsonage, including heating would be in the region of £20,000.

##### ***III. Costs for other stages of development***

- IV. The elders suggest that the rest of the plans are tackled as and when funds become available. In order of priority, we suggest that the next development would be the renovation and equipping of the kitchen, the upper hall and the rooms at the rear of the hall.
- V. A third stage would create a second entrance into the upper floors of the Parsonage, enabling the use of those rooms. This would also entail the creation of a lobby in the upper hall to comply with fire regulations.
- VI. A fourth stage would tackle the issues of access to the upper hall and the new cafeteria area in the Youth Centre.
- VII. The Quantity Surveyor estimates that if all this work is done professionally it could exceed £150K. At present the unrestricted and uncommitted church reserves stand at approximately £40,000 with £43,000 in the Cater Associated Fund, from which the church could take an internal loan.

- VIII. The church elders have nominated Carole Allen to act as Appeal Co-ordinator for the whole project. It is our suggestion that we have a gift appeal after Easter to our members and friends for the first phase of this development, namely the costs connected with separating the ground floor of the Parsonage and providing heating to the upper hall and associated rooms.

## 5. The Benefits

- I. As part of the Vision 2020 Mission plan we adopted our mission statement: *called to be God's people, transformed by the gospel, making a difference to the world*. We recognise that we are not our own but called by God, recognising we are all His people and responding to His call to love God, our neighbour and ourselves. We are not in church for our own comfort and pleasure but to seek that deep satisfaction of being transformed by the gospel of Jesus and to make a difference in His name. There is always a cost when you do that! However we also acknowledge that there will be significant benefits.
- II. Whilst we have always seen our extensive buildings as a blessing and a burden we hope that the developments in the Parsonage will bring blessing primarily to the young people in our town. If we can play a part in that we can only pray it may glorify God.
- III. We too will benefit from the improved facilities and access to the Parsonage, being able to use them on Sunday and at other times in the week when not in use for the youth centre. Improved heating in the upper halls would be much appreciated by the various groups and activities that use those spaces. An improved kitchen and hall would hopefully offer many more opportunities for hospitality, events, entertainments and hiring. Temporary staging would offer flexibility for all sorts of groups. Better access would care for those who find steps difficult

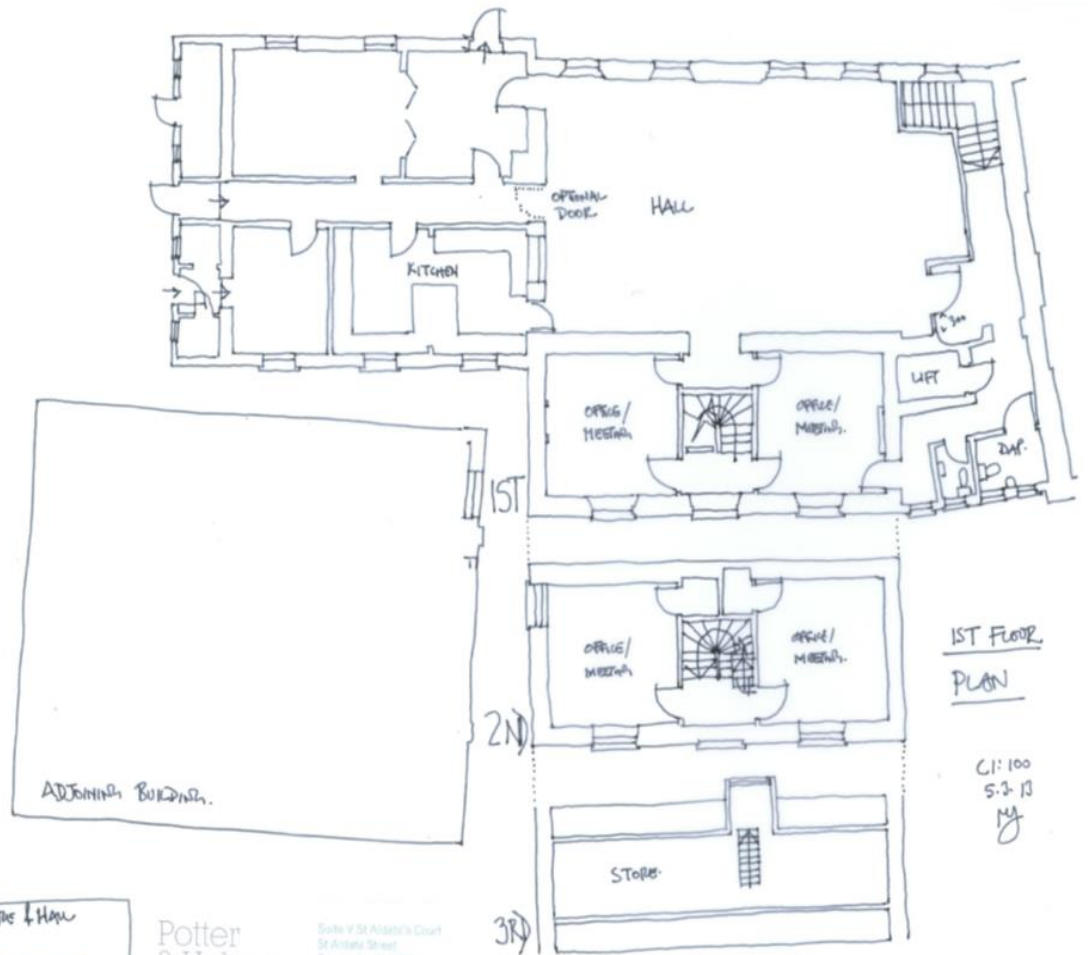
## 6. A Decision on Planning Application

It is our hope that the church meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup> will accept these provisional plans for planning application. We wish to stress that we seek general agreement to these plans rather than binding agreement to pursue the whole project; planning consent permits you to do the work whenever you wish, but does not mean you have to do the work. The Church Meeting will always debate each phase more thoroughly as we progress before binding decisions are taken. The financial provisions for each phase will also have to be in place before we can proceed. At this point the only binding agreement would be to make the changes to the ground floor of the Parsonage, the heating system and the new entrance to the upper floors of the Parsonage via the upper hall.

Please speak to any member of the working group or your elder, or the minister, if you have any concerns or questions about these matters before March 17<sup>th</sup>.

Yours in Christ Jesus

The Minister and Elders of Dursley Tabernacle



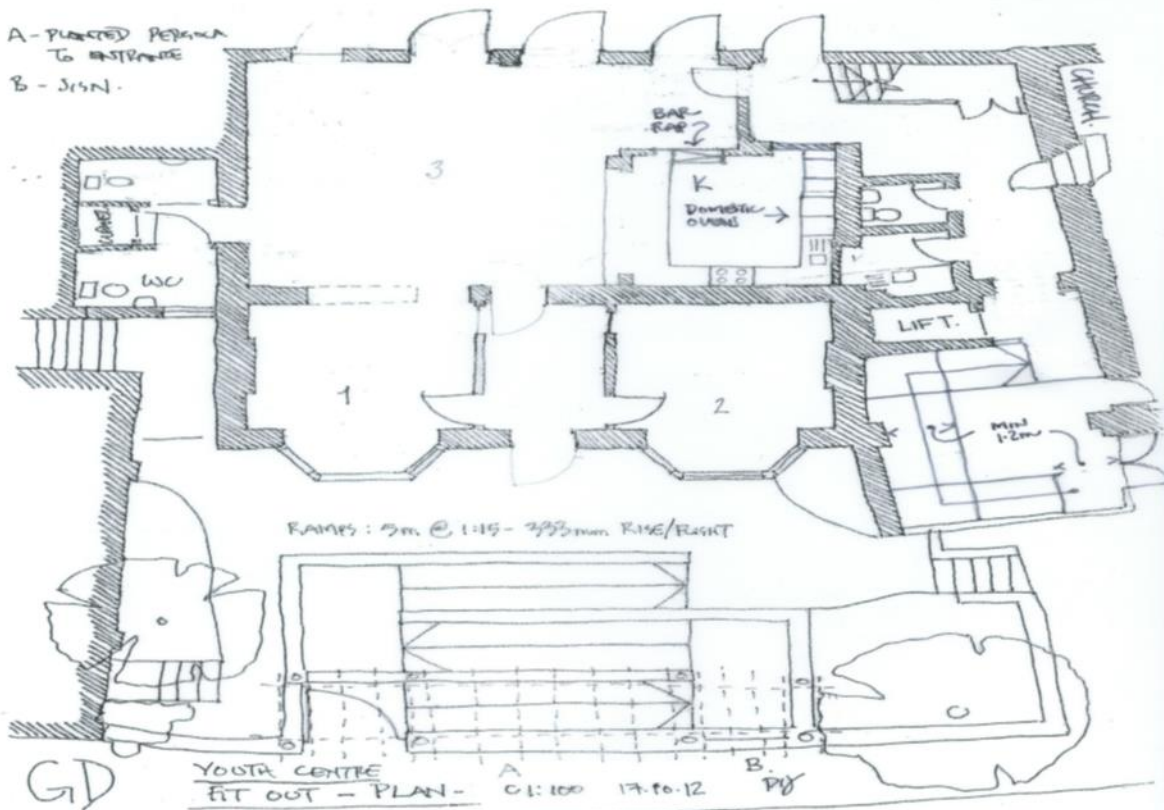
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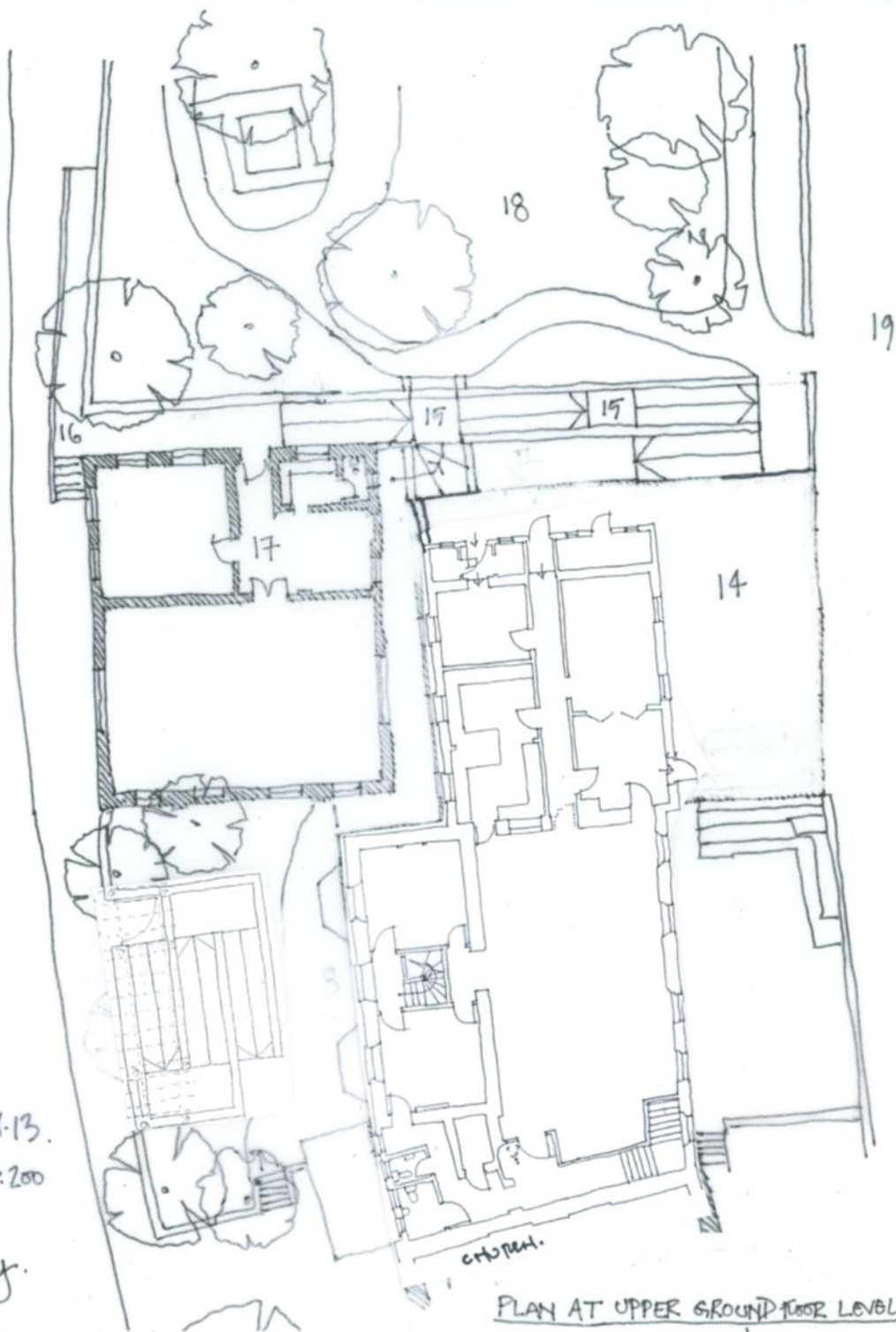


OPTION 1  
23.01.13  
REV A 31.01.13 CD  
REV B 06.02.13 CD  
REV D 05.03.13 PH

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