

Christ Church Kincardine O'Neil

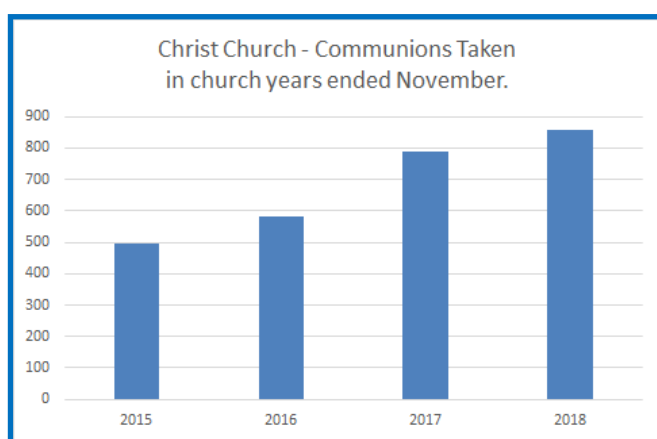
Brief History

Christ Church is a category "C" Listed attractive small Episcopal church to the west of Kincardine O'Neil village. The Gothic church was built in 1866 and was probably the last building designed by William Ramage. The listing refers to the nave and chancel under a roof with a single ridgeline, embellished with cresting and a belfry (restored in 2006) with a fine collection of mainly Victorian stained-glass windows. In September 2002 the Church gained permission [S020774PF] for full planning approval for the demolition of a chimney, replacement of rooflights, the reconstruction of the entrance porch and an extension to form a small church hall. The congregation subsequently removed the chimney, replaced the rooflights and carried out the reconstruction of the porch, but the funds for the hall extension were never met at that time.

Over 40 years ago Christ Church had a reredos behind the altar. Both stood one step higher than currently. The top step and reredos were removed in order to allow the altar to be moved forward and permit the priest to circulate around it. The reredos was dismantled and has been stored by the church ever since.

Use of the Church

Whilst many Churches across the country have seen a decline in their congregations over the past number of years, Christ Church has experienced the opposite - a small but very active and growing congregation with 119 people attending the Christmas Carol service in 2019 and 91 attending the Christmas Day service. More recently an All-ages service on 1st March 2020 was attended by 60 people. This has driven the need to have modern facilities in order to maintain and encourage the congregation to flourish and attract community user groups and encourage young members to be involved with the Sunday school and youth choir etc.



Issues to be addressed

The Church currently has no toilet facilities, no kitchen and no meeting space for user groups other than within the Church itself, which with its traditional fixed pews limits any flexibility, and has a shortage of any form of storage.

Toilets: The lack of toilets is a real issue for some adults who cannot attend church without them. Their absence greatly restricts the options for operating the junior choir and toddler singing groups.

Meeting Space: When the congregation is larger than about 12 which is most Sundays, it is impossible easily and safely to distribute coffee or refreshments after the service when the only gathering space is the 5' wide aisle.

Kitchen: There being no kitchen the coffee has to be brought by Thermos, and cups etc cannot be washed up. There are currently no hand-washing facilities.

Disease Prevention: In the current coronavirus pandemic the lack of handwashing facilities is a clear problem which this proposal would remedy.

Energy and Efficiency: Being constructed with exposed stone walls it is also a challenge to maintain a level of heating for the comfort of user groups.

Delivering a Community Benefit: It should be stressed that the proposed hall would be available as an easy-to-heat, reasonably sized meeting room for community use. Such a facility is currently lacking in Kincardine O'Neil.

Storage: Storage needs would be met.

Client Requirements

Looking back at the original 2002 proposal it was immediately apparent that something of that size would no longer be a practical proposition and the brief from the Congregation was to design a separate small multi-purpose hall annex to address the shortcomings of the church as noted above; to facilitate a broader use of the building by achieving a flexible space for multi-use such as Sunday school, after-church social events, choir practice and local community groups to name but a few.

A new hall would avoid any difficulty in altering the external appearance of the church or losing the traditional internal layout of the church and would have the added advantages of a new-build, and benefit from having a well-insulated construction, which would be easy to heat and maintain. The design proposal for the new hall had also to allow for the opportunity to rescue and reinstate the historic reredos to become a focal point for the hall and which could also serve as an altar should that role be required.

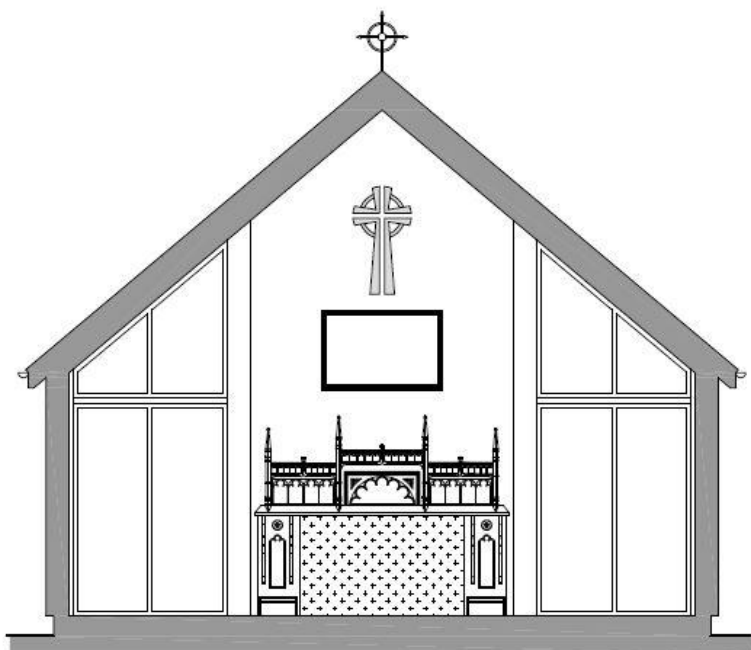
Design Proposal

Whilst several design options were considered during the feasibility stage, the proposal decided upon as best to meet client requirements is a simple, economical, detached building under a single ridgeline to reflect the main church building and with a similar roof pitch to the entrance porch of the Church. The building would sit parallel with the church with the main gable being orientated facing west onto Pitmurchie Road [this was proposed in the 2002 design albeit on a smaller scale]. Locating the hall to the north of the church limits the visual impact from the main A93 North Deeside Road and allows easily accessible access from the existing car parking area, whilst minimal impact foundations would maintain the existing beech hedge and trees. Internal accommodation would include a small multi-use hall, toilet facilities, a small kitchenette and storage. In contrast to the traditional church materials it was considered that a contemporary palette of timber cladding, glazing and natural slate roof finish be utilised. It is proposed that the central section of the west

gable would project slightly from the main hall, a design response to the porch extending from the church; the recess thus formed internally would house the original historic reredos with a large screen above which could relay events from the church on occasions of overflow and which could be easily screened off, if required, for use by other user groups. Externally this solid timber lined element to the gable flanked by glazing would create a vertical element to reflect the narrow, tall gable of the church.



Figure 1 Reredos currently in storage



Reredos set within recess in gable of hall.



Main View from west approach to the Village from A93



View from Pitmurchie Road



View from the church Car Park.

