

St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Property Project FAQs

The following are some questions and answers that relate to the property project. If parishioners have other questions please send them to the parish office and we will answer them and add them to this list for everyone to consider.

Q When will St Andrew's and St Benedict's churches close?

No date has been set for closing our churches. This will depend on a number of things and further information. If we decide to refurbish or demolish St Peter and Paul's we might decide to retain St Andrew's and / or St Benedict's until the work at Johnsonville is completed.

Q What will be developed on the Johnsonville site?

Parishioners will be invited to participate in a process to discuss what we do with the Johnsonville site. This will consider what we do with the existing buildings, what we would like to build, how this could be staged and what it will cost.

Q What will happen to St Andrew's and St Benedict's?

There are a number of options for both sites including sale, development and leasing. These will be investigated and the options will be evaluated with consideration of how much it will cost to develop Johnsonville and how we will fund this from debt or the proceeds from sale of St Andrew's and St Benedict's.

Q The letter from Cardinal John noted the funding of a new church should be "built without debt as a priority" how will this be done?

The proceeds from the sale of St Andrew's and St Benedict's should be sufficient to develop the Johnsonville site. An alternative could be to lease or develop these sites to provide an asset and ongoing revenue to fund any debt required from building at Johnsonville. These options will be investigated.

Q The letter from Cardinal John noted other parishes have used halls and other accommodation while they redevelop their church. Will we do this too?

If we close St Andrew's and St Benedict's before we build a new church this might be necessary. We will approach other churches and schools to consider options. No decisions have been made yet.

Q The letter from Cardinal John noted the Council of Priests discouraged the parish being a social housing provider. Is this being considered?

No decisions have been made about parish land being used for a social housing or anything else. Various organisations have expressed interest for different purposes which will be investigated.

Q If property is being sold does Mana Whenua have a right of first refusal to purchase the property?

The Archdiocese requires parishes to consult with Mana Whenua if property is going to be sold. This is not a right of first refusal but is a requirement to understand the history of the property and whether Mana Whenua have an interest in the property that should be considered by the parish.

Q When will boundary changes be reviewed with other parishes?

Discussions will be held with other parishes about boundaries when we know when we will close St Benedict's. Regardless of where the parish boundary is, parishioners can attend Mass and participate in parish activities wherever they choose.

Q How will the parish support St Benedict's school when the church is closed?

St Benedict's school made submissions during the property review. These included suggestions as to how the school community might be assisted in the event that St Benedict's church were to close. The suggestions included assistance with transportation of students to any future church for Mass and liturgies, provision for a sacred space at the school, assistance for school Masses/liturgies to be held at school or using other local churches and halls. The parish will take these suggestions into account and will have further discussions with St Benedict's school.

Q How will the parish support the Catholic education network in the future?

The parish will contribute to the review of Catholic schools and consider how we support the recommendation of the review as we develop our property plans. This might include providing some facilities on Johnsonville site for St Brigid's school.

Q Who will make the decision about property.

The parish is responsible to consider options for our property. The Leadership Team will establish a Governance Group to provide oversight of the process. Parishioners will be asked to participate in the evaluation of options before the LFT seek approval from the Archbishop on the recommended option. The Archdiocese Board of Administration and Council of Priests will provide the Archbishop advice on the parish's proposal.

Q Will consideration be given to providing a small chapel / sacred space at the Newlands or Khandallah areas?

The provision of a gathering place that can be used for prayer and other liturgical functions as well as a space for meetings has been floated and will be considered along with other ideas for the sale / development / leasing of the Newlands and Khandallah sites.