

Saint Brigid's Information Relating to the Archdiocese Property Review

PURPOSE

The St Brigid's (SB) Board of Trustees (the Board), wishes to contribute to the Parish of St Francis of Assisi property review process, and have prepared the below information for the Archdiocese and Cardinal John to consider.

BACKGROUND

Between 2013 and 2017, the Church carried out a parish amalgamation process, resulting in the reduction of the number of parishes from 47 to 22.

This was in response to the general Parish environment of:

- Too many churches and presbyteries for Mass count, and for the number and age of the priests
- Some churches requiring large sums of money to address their earthquake resilience and general maintenance
- Pope Francis and the Synod challenging all Parish's to be more outward-looking and to better serve those who are marginalised or disadvantaged.

Since then the Archdiocese has continued to experience pressures that compounds this situation, which carries major implications for the future.

The Archdiocese has advised the Parish of St Francis of Assisi that it will undertake a property review process in response to these ongoing pressures.

Thomas Davis from the Parish Leadership Team has engaged the Board and requested information that will contribute to the Archdiocese property review. The Archdiocese property review will include options for Cardinal John to consider that are likely to be strongly influenced by commercial outcomes, especially since there are other churches in the Parish. The options will likely include:

- Selling some or all properties
- Redeveloping existing properties
- Developing a new property
- Status Quo: Continuing repairs and delaying any decision for a period of time.

IMPACT ON ST BRIGID'S

The Community, St Brigid's Board of Trustees, St Brigid's school management and teachers, and parents of children attending St Brigid's, understand, empathise with, and can relate to, the Church's position and review announcement. While everyone wishes to work with the Archdiocese for the best possible outcome for all Parish communities and Catholics, the news has been a shock

to many. The likely consolidation across St Benedict's, St Peter and Paul's, and St Andrew's in some form means change to many, which as we know is not always welcome.

St Brigid's school is no different and while the Board would ideally like the current arrangements and use of St Peter's and Paul's to continue, we understand this may change.

The below information, compiled by the Board seeks to provide additional context for the Archdiocese, that may assist with the/any decision making processes, and to work with the Archdiocese as positively as possible to find the best solution(s).

The Board, through the Chair, Dean O'Shaughnessy, is available at any time to further discuss the review and any content in this document. Particularly, if more specific criteria is released around the review, the Board would be happy to further engage.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

In commenting to the Archdiocese about the property review, the Board thought there was value in engaging with parents of the school, to help provide a range of community views.

Information about the St Francis of Assisi review had been disseminated through a Parish bulletin, and following this, St Brigid parents were asked the questions set out in the table below. There were approximately 110 responses from parents to each question.

#	Question	Answer
1	Does your family have a connection to the Parish of St Francis of Assisi?	Yes 76%
2	If you or your family are attending church, which church do you attend most often?	St Peter & Paul's: 68% Out of Area: 17% St Andrew's: 10% St Benedict's: 5%
3	Your child is building a connection with St Peter and Paul's church through a number of school activities. Does your child talk about attending school masses, liturgies and singing?	Yes 92%
4	How important is it to have a church within walking distance of the school?	Very important: 61% Somewhat important: 29% Not important: 4%
5	Would you reconsider sending your child to St Brigid's if St Peter and Paul's church was closed?	Yes 37%

Selected parent comments (from approximately 35) providing key community context, from the responses, included:

- The children spend a lot of time at the church, even dances and other school events are held at the hall there. They already have to rely on community facilities because of the lack of room at the school itself. It just makes another logistical nightmare for the school to have to deal with if the church was closed. Also, Challenge 2000 is right next to the church and they are involved with the liturgies for the children. I think the church is an important community hub for the suburb and the school and its part of Johnsonville's character.

- I think St Peter's and Paul is a great resource to have for St Brigid's, particularly for holding other events when we don't have a school hall. It is also very accessible by public transport
- As we don't have a school hall the importance of having another space that the children can gather together as a school or team that is close to school is very important.
- It would be a shame if St P & P church closed, but we believe the Archdiocese will do what's best for the Parish as a whole. Everyone's needs across the Parish should be considered
- I completely agree that we should be focusing on the marginalised in our parish, instead of paying excessive funds to keep churches open. I vote for St Andrews to be closed.
- Having the church as part of school and with interacting activities help my kids feel more integrated in the community. And it is one of significant factors that made us to enrol them there
- St Peter and Paul's Church is an integral part of the community. I believe this Church has a critical role in the community and the students at St Brigid's School. It is also very important to have a Church nearby as it represents and service the community in many ways.

ST BRIGIDS CAPACITY

St Brigid's has approximately 330 pupils and is pretty much at full capacity. The school can take 5% of non-preference pupils which equates to 16, and currently has 8 enrolled - so the vast majority are those of the Catholic faith which we expect would continue. Without further infrastructure investment there are no plans to increase the role limit.

Across year groups, numbers vary from year to year, but this does not impact overall role numbers.

As with any school, families move, and in recent times several have taken advantage of cheaper housing in other areas of Wellington. We do not think this is a trend that will impact St Brigid's in the long term.

All year groups extensively use the local Community centre and St Peter and Paul's facilities. This includes - fortnightly assemblies and other activities, weekly liturgies, masses, and fortnightly singing.

It must be said the community centre and use of St Peter and Paul's', are great assets for the school and community to use.

The Board undertakes regular dialogues as to whether infrastructure investment into the current school grounds, could result in a hall that would also assist for rainy day activities, other special needs, and more afterschool care. It is highly unlikely significant infrastructure can be/will be added to the school grounds.

DIRECT ST PETER AND PAULS USE

Use	Term One	Tem Two	Total
Weekly liturgies	8	8	16
School singing	5	5	10

All school Masses and Liturgies	3	2	5
Church practices	6	4	10
Other	4 full days		4
Total	26	19	45

Forecast use for Terms 3 and 4 (numbers not available) is for numbers slightly higher than this. Two school discos and three Kapahaka practices will also use the hall.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

MAINTENANCE

All Church maintenance information is unknown except from what is published by the Archdiocese. The main theme seems to be increasing costs and particularly, the potential cost of roof replacement at St Andrew's which would be significant.

RATES AND VALUES

Church	Area m2	Annual Rates \$ ¹	Land Value \$	Capital Value \$
St Peter & Paul's	2,601	6,562	2.31m	3.3m
St Benedict's	1,050	5,741	1.24m	3.1m
St Andrew's	9,054	3,332	1.95m	3.6m

OPTIONS

Below are options listed in the 'BACKGROUND' section with comments for the consideration of the Archdiocese and Cardinal John. Note the considerations are, in the absence of independently sourced data, fairly subjective.

a) Selling some or all properties

St Andrew's: With its superior space of 9,054m² being very attractive to property developers, and with high and growing anticipated maintenance costs, the sale of St Andrew's would likely produce the highest \$ amount that could be used for investment elsewhere. It is as such, an attractive option. Due to the housing development opportunity the potential \$ amount would likely be much higher than the rated \$3.6m

St Peter and Paul's: Johnsonville is a sought after area for housing and the 2,601m² space would allow a number of houses or other significant investment. As it would allow fewer

¹ Source: Wellington City Council rating base

housing opportunities than St Andrew's and with Newlands also being a desirable area, the sale of St Peter and Paul's while generating a good \$ return, would likely be considerably less than a potential sale of St Andrew's or St Benedict's.

St Benedict's: The highly prized area of Khandallah would likely gain a significant premium with any sale, certainly more than St Peter and Paul's, despite the smaller overall area (1,050m² compared to 2,601m²).

b) Redeveloping existing properties

Given the general Church pressures listed above, redeveloping all the properties or even investing large amounts in ongoing maintenance seems counterintuitive.

With St Andrew's allegedly requiring expensive roof repairs it is difficult to see a positive return-on-investment if this was undertaken, unless the sale of one of the other Church's to support this, occurred. While St Andrew's has good area for parking, this is not the only need, and for any increased patronage at St Peter and Paul's the school grounds could be used. Any increase in parking and attendance requirements at St Benedict's would seem problematic and likely lead to lowering attendance, which would not be desirable.

c) Developing a new property

This is a legitimate option but that space would need to be found and there are very few, if any, open parcels of land, or connected parcels for sale (source: TradeMe property) that would seem sufficient for this purpose.

The advantage of sourcing new land – for a build - would be continuation of the three existing churches while this was built (assuming any were not sold to support the build).

As tabled above, the option to redevelop one the existing churches, and make it fit-for-purpose, would appear to be a better one.

d) Status Quo: Continue repairs and delay any decisions

As in c) above, this is also a legitimate option. If there are any issues in applying any of the Property Review criteria or if the options being most strongly considered, does not align to long term strategic planning, then maintaining the status quo is of course an acceptable option.

While the issue of St Andrew's roof will need to be considered – as that is a big ticket item – ongoing maintenance could manage all the properties in the short term, until the Cardinal is ready to make a decision.

BOARD COMMENT

The Board understands the Church's position to review its property with the potential result of property consolidation, and supports the view of ensuring the spiritual needs of the marginalised and disadvantaged can be met.

Ideally the Board would like to see any available proceeds being reinvested into the Parish to ensure the community has fit-for-purpose, future-proofed Church facilities that the Community can use, feel part of, and be proud of.

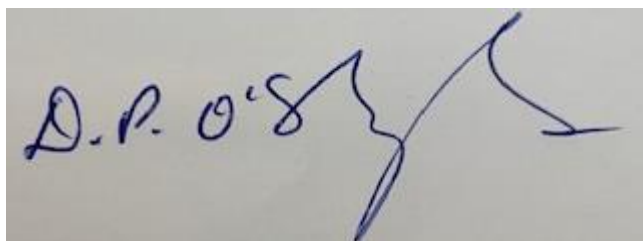
The connection between the school and the church is an important one.

As the central point of the Parish, and taking into account the need to service existing constituents, and manage future growth, establishing a new Church and community facilities on the St Peter and Paul's site appears to be a good option. While that development was being undertaken (approximately two years), existing St Peter and Paul's constituents could avail themselves of the churches on either side, St Andrew's and St Benedict's. Once built and established, the sale one or both of the St Andrew's and St Benedict's suggests the best return for the Archdiocese. The sale of either one would likely generate more funds than the sale of St Peter and Paul's, so would add value overall.

St Brigid's school would need some support for school religious engagement, but nothing seems insurmountable in that space.

Purely for information alignment purposes, Board would like to understand how the property review and any longer term vision for the Parish fits in with any Archdiocese long term strategy or strategic plan, and further clarifying the roles of the laity and priests would also be useful.

The Board looks forward to receiving any comment from you, and engaging further.

A handwritten signature in blue ink on a light grey background. The signature reads "D.P. O'Shaughnessy" in a cursive, slightly stylized font. The letters are connected, and there is a long, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Dean O'Shaughnessy

Board Chair.