



PARISH CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT FAQs

- 1. We have heard that the development will adversely affect the wooded common land that surrounds the proposed development with the loss of trees and the special feel of the area.**

The proposed development does not use any of the existing wooded common land that surrounds the church owned site. Within the church owned site that is mostly open land, the proposed design has been developed to minimise the impact on trees within this area. However, our aim is to ensure that this number is as near zero as possible.

As part of the design process a full Arboricultural assessment has been commissioned and submitted as part of the pre-application enquiry. These plans are awaiting initial feedback from the Local Authority Planning Department, and therefore there needs to be further discussions with the Tree Officer. Where the site is screened by smaller plants these would be maintained, subject to the Parish Council's plans for maintenance of the woods on the common land that they look after. We will continue to liaise with the Parish Council to co-ordinate on these matters.

We have also commissioned ecological reports that assess local ecology and biodiversity, and proposes recommendations to ensure these are not negatively impacted by the development. Again, the terms of this and its implementation will be overseen by the local authority.

The building is being sensitively designed, maximising the use of natural materials, to enhance its setting surrounded by woodland. The three proposed homes on North Road reflect the existing buildings on the road both in character and their relationship to the road.

- 2. Do you feel that the Scale of Development is appropriate for this site?**

The proposed development is larger than the existing parish centre on the site. The new facility is around 2.6 times larger (including the provision of dedicated space for Maryland Pre-School). The primary reason for the increase is that currently St Leonard's church community numbers around 200 individuals and the historic parish church is simply too small, and the facilities too limited for this number of worshippers. The rental of space at the Beacon School is seen as a "stop gap" solution by the church whilst a longer-term solution is found. Sensitive development of church owned land appears to be a reasonable solution. especially when one considers the condition of the existing parish centre.

- 3. Are you planning to stop using the Current Parish Church?**

There are no plans to change the current pattern of services at the existing parish church which take place at 8am and 10am on Sundays. These are a vital part of St Leonard's mission to serve the community. In addition, by building the new centre first and then building on the site of the existing parish centre, operations and uses of the parish centre can remain largely unaffected during the construction process.



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4. How are nearby residents likely to be affected by increased Parking and Traffic?

The transport analysis, which the development team has commissioned, suggests that the impact on local roads of traffic, which the revised usage of the site may cause, will be minimal. Using the current congregation and the number of cars that are used as a guide on a normal Sunday, we would expect around 50 cars to park on site. On the days in the Christian Calendar when the whole church meets as one, we would expect around 70 cars on site. Using the same ratio of people to cars, if the main hall were full then around 95 cars would need to park. The scheme provides parking for up to 115 cars.

We are working with our transport consultant to ensure that there will be sufficient parking provided on site for all uses of the site that are proposed. There is a separate issue of commuters travelling from Amersham station and parking in the surrounding streets. Whilst we can see that this is an issue for local residents, this issue is not one we are able to resolve as it involves parking on the public highway the County Council has responsibility for.

5. The Drawings presented in Consultations seem to be changing – why is this?

At this stage in the project all the information we are sharing reflects the design process to date. There will be changes to the design as this process is not yet completed. Some will be due to changes the client wishes to see, some from advice received from Chiltern District Council planners and some from feedback from the community. For instance, following public consultation the size of the main hall has been reduced from 430m² to 320m² and the capacity reduced from 350 to 275. A further example is the building being moved westwards to allow for the retention of 2 mature trees close to Glebe Way.

6. How may I be affected by the Lighting and Security of the Site outside hours?

The design is currently at a stage where these issues are yet to be resolved in detail. However, the architect's brief is that the solutions must respect the woodland surrounding the site and minimise the impact on surrounding residents, whilst maintaining proper security for the buildings and site.

7. Proposed Usage of the Site in the evenings and weekends

The primary purpose of the building is its use by the church community and other local community groups. Members of these groups will be renting the building for a variety of purposes. There are no plans to develop a "commercial letting" strategy for the building. By this we mean maximising the rental income from the building by renting it out as much as possible. In addition, there are no plans for St Leonard's to have an "alcohol licence" for the building. The church is very clear that the building will not be used beyond a certain time in the evening. St Leonard's church are sensitive to the location and current thinking is that any activity will need to be finished by 10pm with the site closed by 11pm, but this is still to be finalised.