



Annex Update No.7. November 2020

In July we went out to tender on the Annex project and received five tenders from local builders. The prices varied from £743,425 to £999,000. Even the lowest price was significantly above our Quantity Surveyor's (QS) estimate and the funds we had available, most likely due to the effects of Covid on the building industry and its suppliers. Subsequently, we had several meetings with the company that submitted the lowest tender – Derwent Valley Construction - with the aim of identifying potential savings. These included reducing the specification of some items, changing the design of the staircase, not fitting out the top floor room, not making an internal window in the wall behind where the musicians stand, not replacing the existing WC's with a new WC, tea station and storage area and retaining the columns in the hall, enabling savings of approximately £101,000 to be made.

The last two items – replacing WCs, storage and tea station (cost £10,000) and the removal of the columns (cost £37,000) were viewed as important elements of the scheme (particularly removing the columns) warranting further discussion against a background of an approach to the Circuit for an additional grant or loan. Initially it appeared that further support from the Circuit was possible and these two items were re-instated. Unfortunately, as time moved on, it was clear that further Circuit support could not be guaranteed and, in any event, a decision would not be made until several days after the deadline for us accepting the tender. Having regard to their responsibility not to burden the Church with loans it was unable to repay, Trustees felt obliged to revisit their earlier decision. In view of the likely financial shortfall, they reluctantly agreed that further savings had to be made and that the removal of the columns would not form part of the project. This brought the funding gap down to only £26,250. Taking into account grant applications pending or still to be made, this is a figure Trustees were comfortable with. The generosity of members in response to the recent appeal which raised an additional £25,000 is key in helping us get to this position.

The builder is due to start work on 30th November, after which there will be no access to the building until further notice. If all goes to plan, the work will be completed in July/August next year.

With thanks

David Hughes