

## Guidelines for Seeking Advice from the Church Architect

### Requirement to seek the advice of the Church Architect

The Rule 2:20 c) of the PCV Code states, the board **must** “obtain the advice of the Church Architect, on **such contractual terms as they agree**, when:

- i) there is any serious defect in any building; or
- ii) a new building is to be erected or purchased; or
- iii) an existing building is to be substantially altered.

Some boards have sought the advice of the Church Architect without knowing why they are seeking such advice, so that they can tick the box and say that they have satisfied the requirements of the Code and are surprised when they get an invoice from the Church Architect for providing such advice. This guideline has been prepared to reduce the chance of this happening in the future and to document the reasons for this requirement and in particular, what advice the Board should be seeking from the Church Architect.

### Church Architect can add Value to your Project.

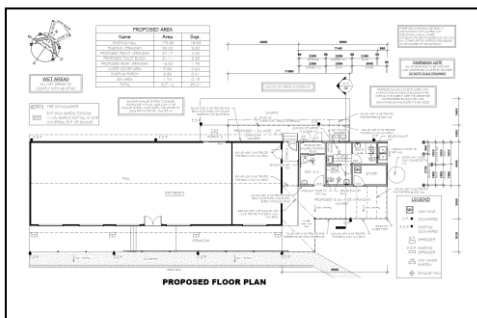
The experience and knowledge of the church architect is a valuable resource for the PCV and the requirement to seek his advice should be seen as an opportunity to enhance your project.

The following are some examples where the church architect has been able to value add to a particular project.

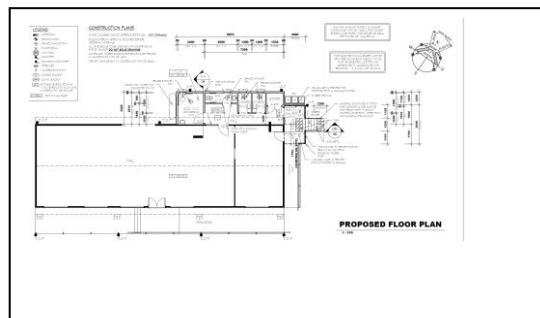
#### Example

Church wanted a toilet block and an area for storage.

#### Original Design



#### Amended Design after comments from CA



Original design went out to tender and was significantly over the funds allocated available for the project. After discussion with the Church Architect and the builder it was decided to start from scratch and come up with a completely different design which was able to be constructed with the funds available for the project.

Early discussion with the church architect would have saved the need to completely redraw the detailed plans and specifications for this project. It would also have saved time in delivering the project and avoid going to tender twice.

### Types of Assistance Available from the Church Architect

The Church Architect seeks to work collaboratively with Boards of Management to:

- Assist Boards to formulate a concept design for new and renovation building projects
- Assist Boards to consider all the issues that are involved in purchasing a building e.g.
  - Suitability of the proposed building for the intended purpose
  - Review of any pre-purchase condition surveys
  - Compliance issues e.g. disabled access, planning including heritage requirements, building regulations and car parking.
  - Subdivision requirements
  - Value for money
  - Adequacy of toilets
  - Maintenance requirements
  - Essential Safety Measures requirements
- Find innovative and cost effective solutions to site specific problems.
- Guide and assist Boards with their dealings with planning departments and building surveyors
- Identify and prioritise issues that the Board need to consider as part of the design and construction of projects.
- Provide advice to Boards in relation to engaging professional services for the various aspects of the design and construction of a building.
- Consider the visual implications of proposed capital works and the corresponding presence within the broader community
- Consider potential statutory planning issues
- Save congregations time and money by steering them away from in proposals that may be unrealistic from either a cost or statutory perspective

It should be noted that the Church Architect can be engaged by a Board to provide all architectural services for a particular project, not just provide advice. Such an arrangement is independent of the Building and Property Committee's work or involvement.

### **Engaging the Church Architect.**

Having determined what advice you are seeking from the Church Architect then the next step is to engage the services of the Church Architect on such contractual terms as agreed between the Board and the Church Architect.

This means that there needs to be a written agreement between the Church Architect and the Board detailing the advice being sought. The agreement should specify the extent of the advice being sought and in particular state:

- What information is being provided by the Board e.g. condition inspection report, plans, photos, reports etc.
- Timeframes for the provision of the advice.
- Whether a site meeting is required?
- How the advice is to be presented e.g. verbal report, email response or formal written report.
- How much the advice will cost and what are the breakdowns for that advice e.g. travel time and costs, meeting costs, report preparation costs, disbursements etc.

It should be noted that the cost of obtaining the advice will vary from project to project depending on the following matters:

1. The type of advice being sought e.g. whether the congregation are purchasing a property or undertaking building works or seeking advice on repair works.
2. What expertise exists within the congregation and the level of information that can be gathered and documented prior to seeking the advice of the Church Architect e.g. when purchasing a property, obtaining a pre-purchase condition inspection report will assist the Church Architect in making recommendations. Note the Church Architect does not provide this service. See “Pre-purchase Condition Inspection Guidelines” for assistance in obtaining such services.
3. The level of complexity of the project and the number of factors to be considered in providing that advice.
4. If a site visit is required, then the location of the project will have a direct impact on the cost of providing that advice. For rural congregations, it may be cheaper to get a local professional to carry out the site inspection and provide a written report that can be reviewed by the Church Architect.

### **Seeking Advice Early in the Project**

It is good practice, to seek the advice of the Architect early in the project, so that the Board can be sure that the concept for their project is sound and has considered all relevant matters before proceeding to detailed design or other phase further along in the building project.