

St. Peter's, Great Asby

REORDERING OF THE PEWS IN THE SOUTH AISLE NEEDS STATEMENT



Summary

1: The PCC has been actively considering various revisions to its patterns of worship, and to its parish 'offerings' of other events (including fund-raising), since early 2023. One of the issues identified early in those considerations was the desirability of having some more reasonably flexible space in the Church – and the present Faculty application has grown out of that work. The Church, and the parish community, need such space, both for a range of community focussed events and for a somewhat greater variety in forms of worship. That need can be well provided by reordering the South Aisle, principally by the substantial repositioning of the pews, while preserving the overall "look" of the Church.

2: In addition to discussions at several PCC meetings, we have held (a) two open meetings for local residents, and (b) informal discussions on-site with our architect, and with the Reverend Stewart Fyfe (now an Archdeacon, previously our Rural Dean). All those consultations were broadly in favour of some such reordering.

3: The photographs below show the present arrangement of the South Aisle:-



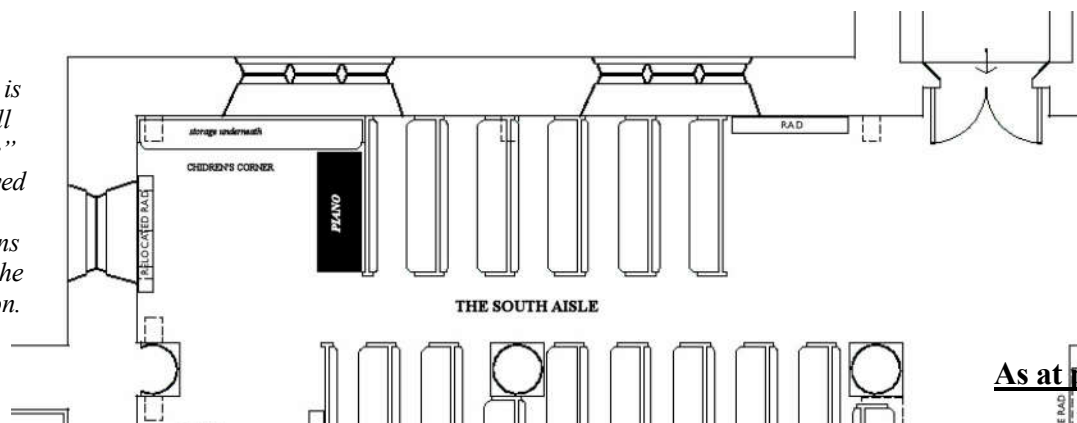
seen from the Lectern



and from the West end

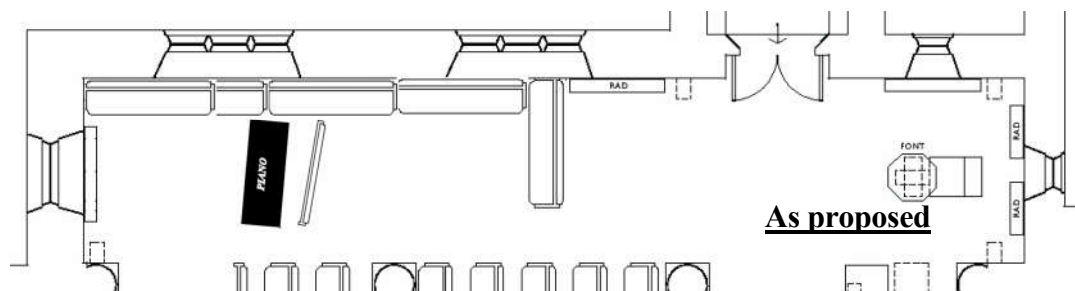
and the plans below & overleaf show the aisle as at present, and as envisaged:-

NB: the piano is mobile, but will normally "live" & may be played for worship & social occasions from roughly the current position.



As at present

TE 51



A complete plan of the Church, and some additional photographs, accompany this statement.

Challenges

a) **The Pews Themselves.** We are somewhat uncertain about exactly how well all the pews will survive their detachment from the wall (as far as we know, they are the original 19thC pews - and until work is started it is difficult to be sure about exactly how they were fixed/fitted to the wall), but our intention is to use them all (*i.e.* no sale or disposal). If all goes well, we should have at least one whole pew spare - in which case we propose to place it (facing “backwards”, as it were) immediately behind the rear pew on the North side of the Nave. We have assumed that we dare not plan to use a spare "half-pew", but should rather work on the basis that we may find that we need a spare pew piece of one sort or another to make a sound tidy job of the re-ordering.

b) **The Hot Water Pipes.** We both intend & require to have functional hot water pipes along the wall (essentially more or less as at present - see separate photographs) so as to feed the radiator near the main door (*i.e.* no change is planned in the heating system). The hot water fed radiators (some with fan blowers) are a 20thC modification to the original heating arrangements (which was a stove just inside the front door behind the back pew in the South Aisle). The pipes were installed - so far as we can tell - so as to involve minimum interference with the pews, but there was clearly some. So there may have to be some consequential modifications - but, so far as is reasonably possible, the existing pipes will simply remain in place (effectively under the reordered pews), albeit being isolated & drained while the work is undertaken (if essential, some replacement piping may be required, but we are not planning on that basis).

Notes

i): The Church has recently been given a piano, which is currently being fitted with the necessary “dollies” to make it reasonably movable within the Church. It has already been used for worship – and as well as playing an appropriate role in musical “events” enables us to choose between organ & piano for worship.

ii) Our direct work with children is currently mainly with our occasional Messy Church sessions, but we also work closely with and through the village School (which is directly supported by NISCU, sometimes using the Church), so that all the school pupils visit the Church several times during the year, and on some visits use the existing ‘Children's Corner’.

iii) An extract from the relevant PCC Minutes will be found overleaf.

Community Consultation

The village community has been kept informed of our intentions. We shall need their continued support during what is now proposed, not least to replenish Church funds as we move forward. Accordingly, short notes have already appeared (and will continue to appear) in the Parish magazine – *Asby Matters*.

Funding

As noted, the necessary funds to get started on this work are currently available.

Extract from PCC Minutes

After extended discussion, the meeting agreed unanimously,

- a) that the (recently gifted) piano be equipped (after taking advice) with appropriate “dollies” (so that it can be readily moved), although its usual position in the Church would be where it is currently placed: and that a suitable piano stool be acquired;
- b) that the book rack in front of the foremost pew in the South Aisle be no longer a fixture, but be converted to a movable free-standing “divider” for use as appropriate;
- c) that all the pews in the South Aisle be removed from their present fixed positions, and (1) the rearmost pew be converted to a movable pew, normally secured in more or less its present position, but capable of being moved when appropriate to free up more space; (2) the other pews be fixed in a continuous row, so far as is possible, with their backs to the wall of the South Aisle - thus freeing up most of the South Aisle space for a wider range of Church activities;
- d) that suitable means be made for the heat from the pipework to reach the room, so as not to be trapped behind the pews when they are moved; this could be by removing panels underneath the benches, which look to be additional pieces of wood, easily removable: and
- e) that the appropriate application for the necessary Faculty be made.