

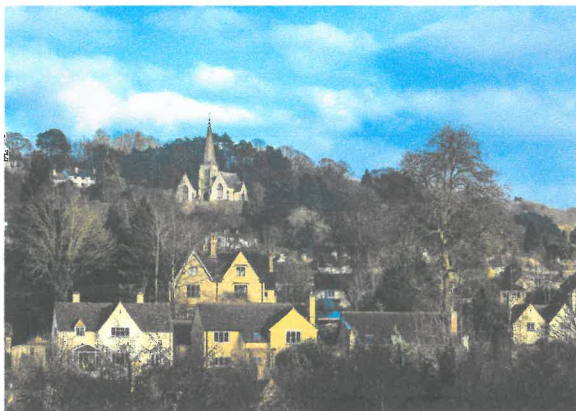


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**Proposal for The Chapel of Rest, Bisley Road Cemetery, GL5 1HQ.  
 For meeting with Stroud District Council, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019.**

**Ownership and leading up to this point**

The Chapel of Rest at Bisley Road Cemetery, consecrated on September 1<sup>st</sup> 1856 is now an empty Grade 2 listed building sitting in its surrounding tarmac apron and currently owned by Stroud District Council. It has been unused since the Town Council Green team moved to a different depot. Surrounding the Chapel is the lovely laid out old cemetery with fine trees and an abundance of wildlife, now owned by Stroud Town Council and run as a nature reserve.



This is certainly a lovely and iconic building, seen from across the valleys as a focal point of Stroud and one that is deeply appreciated by the local residents. It is of fine quality ashlar stone with pitched (mostly) stone roofs and a central three storey tower surmounted by a broach spire. There are two chapels, north and south and decorated tracery windows, now fully blocked in.

Trustees from Stroud Preservation Trust since May of this year and the first community meeting have been closely involved and active in thinking through the feasibility of a building project that would benefit the building, use the Trust's expertise and work for the community.

We have met several times with community members at both formal and informal meetings; we have talked with Stroud Town Council about the issues and their original feasibility study. We have gathered information from STC and SDC (for which thanks), visited the site several times and worked on financial options and possibilities.

There is still much to do but we want to make the case for Stroud Preservation Trust acquiring the Chapel of Rest as an asset transfer so that we can offer the best quality, long term option for this lovely building.

**What the Chapel of Rest would gain from an organisation like Stroud Preservation Trust:-**

Firstly the 8 Trustees are well placed to address the issues of this building that will, inevitably, have a considerable conservation deficit. They have a wealth of experience between them:

**Anne Mackintosh** is a founder member and was project manager for several of the early projects. She is also an astute financial organiser and legal negotiator.

**Camilla Hale** has extensive experience in fundraising and recently raised £125k for Lansdown Hall; was closely involved in Stroud Town's Neighbourhood Development Plan and chairs the

South West Heritage Trust Network of Preservation Trusts. She is also a Stroud Town Councillor and well networked with local groups.

**Steve Hurrell** managed all the services and preparation for the Goods Shed and as a trust we raised funds, renovated the Goods shed building and transferred the Network Rail lease to Stroud Valleys Artspace.

**Chris Gill** is a retired Chartered Surveyor and has put together the potential costings for the Chapel looking at all the roof evidence and previous estimates from the Quattro feasibility study.

**Rachel Russell** led the Local Heritage Asset list for Stroud and has worked for English Heritage.

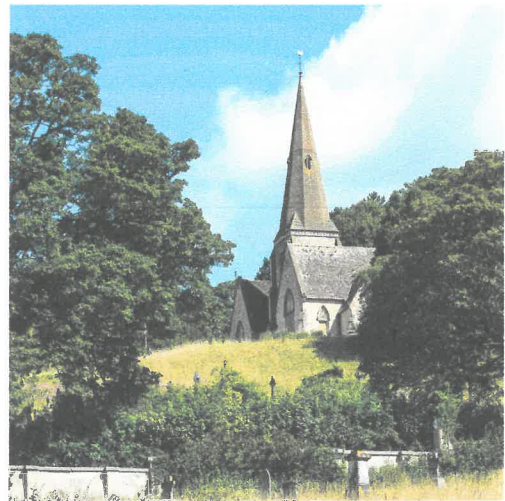
**Hugh Barton** is Emeritus Professor of Planning, health and Sustainability for the West of England University and was the principle author of Stroud Town's NDP.

**Jon Lowe** specialises in historic value assessments. He is a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeology and has been advising on sites ranging from Westminster Abbey to Battersea Power Station.

**Andy Davy** is a RIBA chartered architect and Local Authority Building Control partner. He has worked a great deal in the historic building sector and has a commitment to best energy values in all his projects.

As a team we are well placed to move this project forward, with the support of Stroud District Council. We have an excellent track record of previous projects. We have a real commitment to quality renovation build while preserving the essence of the building itself, its context and its community engagement. The conservation deficit on this building is high. If it is to be brought into contemporary use with a focus on community and quality Stroud Preservation Trust with its ability to raise grants and donations is the organisation to take on this building.

Stroud Preservation Trust also has strong links with community organisations with whom we could work closely to provide an integrated and well thought through community space. Because of the natural surroundings, views and southern aspect of the community 'face' we are particularly interested to work with well being organisations such as Compassionate Stroud, conservation cafe's, social prescribing groups and environmental programme.



### **Cost estimates**

Bruton Knowles estimated costs of renovation and conversion in May 2016, and Adams Fletcher made a further set of estimates in February 2017. We have used the latter as the basis for our upper estimate of costs, supplemented where apparently incomplete by Bruton Knowles figures. There is no allowance for inflation or funding costs. The lower estimate is one we have prepared this year, with new minimum necessary building cost estimates prepared by our professional surveyor trustee. We have made identical assumptions for both lower and higher cost estimates in relation to preliminaries, contingencies, fees, and interior conversion and services. In order to make our own estimates for conversion and services a detailed design feasibility study would be necessary.

The cost of interior conversion made by Adams Fletcher (and used in both estimates) is based on the plan drawn up by Quattro Architects date January 2017. The design assumes that the northern chapel is converted to a spacious two-bedroom house, with first floor living space; and the southern chapel is converted into multi-use space on two floors for office, exhibition and teaching potential. Clearly if more complex uses were desired – for example two apartments in the north chapel - then costs would probably be higher.

<b>Building works costs (to nearest thousand pounds)</b>	<b>SPT minimum estimates (K)</b>	<b>Adams Fletcher estimates (K)</b>
Roofs, total	110	177
Windows, doors and external walls	49	74
Drainage	12	11
Interior floors and wall damp management	15	11
Interior conversion to new uses	185	185
Services	49	49
<b><i>Building costs total (a)</i></b>	<b>420</b>	<b>507</b>

Preliminaries - scaffolding, etc	46	56
Contingency	47	56
Developers profit	0	62
Professional fees	70	84
VAT	117	141
<b><i>Total work</i></b>	<b>700</b>	<b>906</b>
Stated purchase price	150	150
<b><i>Grand total (excluding funding costs)</i></b>	<b>850</b>	<b>1,056</b>

### **Future use and potential income**

We have done preliminary work on future options, consulting residential estate agents and investigating office rentals. We have assumed future users could benefit from limited parking and patio space at the north end of the tarmac area. Our preferred option would be rather similar to the Quattro scheme, with the northern chapel converted to the two-bedroom house, and the southern chapel converted into short-term let serviced offices on the first floor, and a multi-use space below, including loos and kitchen, which would be available for rent by office workers or community groups, and would be suitable for exhibitions and educational activities connected with the unique cultural and biodiversity heritage of Stroud's cemetery. An alternative would be to develop the north chapel as two apartments, and the south chapel as apartment upstairs and multi-use space downstairs. We do not think an apartment on the ground floor in the south chapel would be appropriate as it would be surrounded by very public circulation, play and social space and this is a building invested in by the local community and community use is an important part of anything that we plan.

Initial very tentative income estimates from these two options are:

1. Sale of two-bed house - £350K; capital value of 8 short-let serviced office spaces (allowing for some vacancy, interest payment at 10% and cost of servicing) - £72K. Modest income from letting the multi-use space assumed to be invested for long-term maintenance of the spire. TOTAL VALUE: £422K

## 2. Sale of three apartments - £600K; Multi use space as option 1. TOTAL VALUE £600K

On top of the development costs there are also several areas of professional need as part of the feasibility studies that will require funding (and there are limited but some potential grant bodies that might help with this). These studies include services of all kinds, tracing them, analysing their capacity and asking for implementation plans and costs covering – sewage, water, electrics, bats, internet, phone landline, cleaning, damp and optional ideas for restoration of the windows.

Other considerations for our actions would be also to consult with STC for any terms and conditions from their cemetery ownership point of view. Visit other chapels of rest run by trusts like ours. Contact potential users to assess interest in flats as a rental option.

### **Conclusion**

There is a great deal still to do and for a Trust like ours with the need for fundraising it will take an estimated two to two and a half years to complete – but what a boost for the area, what an asset for the local community and what a triumph for everyone involved to deliver this potentially wonderful project.