

The 'Cathedral Gateway' Project

Background

The previous Dean was a driving force in obtaining the funding to acquire a vacant premise (a former public house opposite the Cathedral) when it came on the market in 2014, with a view to renovating the property for use by the Cathedral as a community-focused facility.

The property is held by the Dean and Chapter and does not appear on any PCC documentation, with no part of the project costs falling upon the PCC/congregation.

Since its acquisition, a number of different ideas have been considered for the ground level of the property. These ideas have included its use as an alternative to the current cathedral hall, offering improved facilities; an idea to develop the cathedral shop on a larger, more financially-viable scale with the inclusion of a coffee-shop; and as a conference facility for Cathedral/Diocesan use or as a centre for a community project. The remainder of the space could then be converted for letting purposes.

Development Plans

The plan was originally to raise finance and carry the project without outside involvement, either in the existing premises or, subject to the necessary approvals, after demolition and rebuilding.

Several alternatives were explored over the years but, for various reasons, none have prospered.

The premises have inevitably deteriorated since purchase and the new Dean will need to demonstrate the energy, vision and drive to take on this complex project. A lead on making a decision for its future use will be necessary; primarily, whether the project still seems valuable for the life of the Cathedral going forward.