

Enabling Development - What Can it Enable?

Land is valuable. Developers speak about having a "land bank". This is undeveloped property that they will eventually develop for profit. In some cases this will be vacant land and in others it may have some buildings on it at present. Whilst much of the property owned by the Christian Church is in full use, there is also a lot that is minimally used and this can be described as the Church's Land Bank. The Church is collectively one of the largest landowners in the world.

If there is a lot of value locked up in the Church's land bank, could it be serving the mission of the church better if it was released? What could it be doing?

A very basic level, could it be feeding the poor? It could certainly be used to build new facilities to revitalise the work of the church in the community. It could be used to repair decaying but valuable heritage buildings, extending their useful life and continuing not just their significance but importantly, maintaining a weatherproof place to meet. It could be used to purchase a new location for a youth centre in a more needy location. Perhaps the proceeds can be used for acquiring land and building a new church complex in an urban growth area.

The funds could be used for other things such as funding more staff to meet some specific local mission need or perhaps it could be used to build a church, a clinic or even a hospital in the Developing World.

It is always worth any church community reconsidering its own specific mission goals, identifying these and considering how best to enable this in the future. Alongside sacrificial giving it can consider whether to realise some value from its *land bank* or *property bank*.

There is another consideration beyond simply financial value. Can the enabling development positively enhance the work of the church? If it accepts a lower than market price it might enable affordable housing to be built. Getting value is vital and respects our predecessors who left it to us.

In any event the new development should be planned enhance the life of your ongoing adjacent church. The church needs to control this before releasing the land. This can bring a double benefit, income and revitalised activity.

Next time - Enabling Development - What happens if you ignore the opportunity?

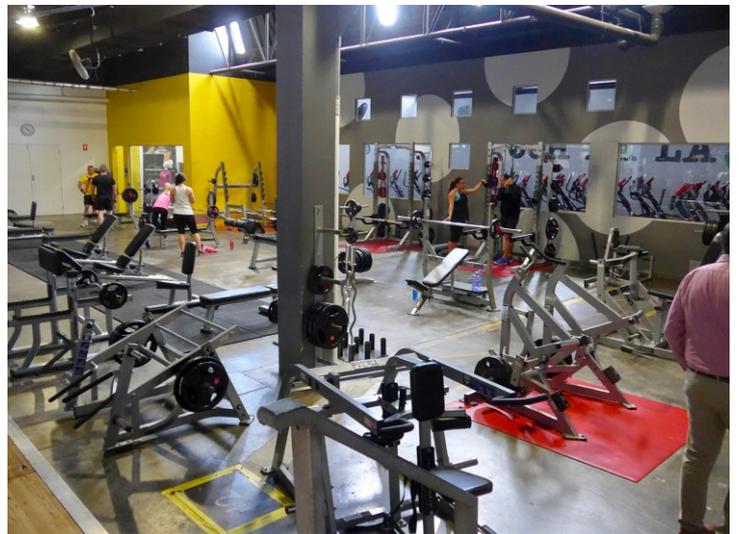
..and then following:

How can we be responsible? Do we still need fundraising? What can we learn from experience?

More comments about the book: [Making Property Serve Mission - Rethinking the Church's Buildings for the 21st Century](#) from reviewers

"This is an enormously useful book for anyone thinking of building the new church or altering an old one. it covers the whole range of issues that will be encountered. These include reasons for doing so, how to start, how to manage, how to finish, personnel involved, fundraising and problems likely to be encountered.

Cornelis Wegman - Tasmanian Anglican



Door Of Hope Church in Launceston sold their original building and bought a vacant 100yr old warehouse that was 10 times the size needed for church. Now this leased gym engages the community as does the children's centre, conference centre, car repair training workshop, storage facility, cafe and emergency housing. It also has space for the church community..

