

## Buildings and Mission – Where Next in the Process?

For a church pastor/priest/vicar/leader, changing your buildings to make them more effective can seem like leading your people into a jungle. There are all kinds of predators in there! Who do you trust?

Last time we set out a process to consider how effective your buildings are in service of your mission. If you missed it it can be found [here](#). So now you have a clear Mission Identity, you may have discovered that your present buildings are holding you back and an architect has said that your place has great opportunities. They've suggested some ideas. What now?

Hugh Watson of Moores Legal says:

### **Have the right team**

*Before you start any major building project make sure you have the necessary experience and resources. If you and your team are not experienced in running procurements, there are a range of architects, project managers and other consultants who can help. To find the right person for the right job check for experience on projects similar to your project and seek people who understand and reflect your values, priorities and objectives.*

In most cases the architect is selected and appointed first. Your architect will be your own professional advisor and lead consultant in the process, designing your building and coordinating each of the other specialists that will be needed. You can expect your architect to be your champion in seeking planning permission, building code approval, selecting an appropriate and good value building contractor, and managing the building contract on your behalf through to completion.



*The skill of the architect encourages the curiosity of the newcomer*

This is a long relationship, often reaching to several years, so careful selection is important. It is not simply the experience of the firm you should be looking for but the individuals that the firm will allocate to your project; In particular your project architect. For a large project (\$3m - 10m) an architect's practice might establish a small team of 3 to 5 people to handle the work, possibly co-opting another couple of people when needed. However most of the time, your project will be driven by one or two architects.

The US Catholic Bishops Conference\* provides some advice in selecting an architect:

*The quality of the building project depends more on the architect than any other person.*

*The most important quality of an architect is that he (or she) be a good designer.*

*The character of his (or her) heart must be appropriate to the Christian faith.*

*Fees should not weigh heavily on the choice. The possible difference in architectural fees is a tiny part of the short and long-term cost of buildings. One doesn't look for the least expensive lawyer or surgeon in a hard case and one shouldn't look for a cheap architect.*

Next time - Obtaining Permits and Approvals

Hugh Watson can be contacted at 03 9843 2185. Fred Batterton's book "[Making Property Serve Mission](#)" is available worldwide as [ebook or paperback](#)

\* *The Environment For Worship, Edited by National Conference of Catholic Bishops and The Catholic University of America, Publications Office US Catholic Conference 1980, pp 63–65*

