

St. Kevin's Parish Hampton Park Building Project 12th October 2025

In 2019, at the request of parishioners, Fr Des, the then Parish Priest, formed a Parish Vision Team to engage with the community and facilitate the construction of a new Parish Centre, which would include the redevelopment of the Parish Office and additional Spaces for small gatherings, ensuring the long-term viability and mission of the Church. COVID-19 impacted the project's progress, which was subsequently restarted in 2023-2024.

The initial Brief

- Demolish the current Parish office and build the new centre.
- Construct a new parish office
- Construct a gathering space for 70 to 100 people
- Construct storage space for the Social group, the Youth group and Vinnies

To preserve the current site of the parish office for the future mission of the Church in Hampton Park, other options were considered in consultation with Dao Tran from the Archdiocesan Property office. Some ideas were proposed by Dao for discussion with the vision team, the Parish Pastoral Council, the Finance Committee, and the social committee (for fundraising purposes). These initial ideas included i) foyer renovations and the relocating of the toilets, ii) integrate the Parish office with the Church, iii) move the grotto to the front of the Church to better utilise the space in front of the church, iv) relocate the adoration chapel.

- i) The construction of the Parish office at the site of the current grotto implies the grotto needs to be relocated. As part of the construction, it is intended to use as many stones as possible from the current grotto. The benefit of the move includes increased visibility and access to the office for our parishioners.
- ii) Adoration Chapel. The current chapel will be converted into a room for prayer groups to meet and pray. The new chapel will be moved to the school side of the Church. Improved security and location will make it easy to access the chapel 24/7 and safe for parishioners. The new Chapel will include access to a toilet for parishioners who use the Chapel afterhours.
- iii) The memorial chapel will also be incorporated into the new grotto space creating a integrated prayer space and more space for future needs of the parishioners.

Design Process

The Vision Team and Parish Finance Team have been actively involved in discussions regarding the plans for the chapel, Grotto, and church expansion. The Vision Team, alongside Fr. Fabian and Dao Tran from the Archdiocesan Property and Building office, have discerned the current proposal to relocate the Grotto and Chapel to accommodate an integrated Parish Centre. Vision Team Meeting Minutes Dated 08th Sep 2024, 10th Oct 2024, and 07th Nov 2024 are saved in the Parish Office. The proposals were also discussed with the Parish Pastoral Council and Finance committees at the monthly and quarterly meetings, and the minutes of these meetings are recorded in the parish office.

These plans were shared with the Social Group to help with fundraising and presented to parishioners at all Masses for feedback. Initial Plans from the Architect, along with costing, have been published on the Parish Notice board outside the Church since November 2024.

Parishioners were given many months to offer feedback by speaking to the members of the Vision Team, the members of the Parish Pastoral Council, the Parish Priest, or use of the suggestion box in the Church foyer to share your views.

Before advancing to the Design and Schematic Phase of the complete project; that is to construct the New Parish Centre, to relocate the Grotto to front of the Church, to relocate the Adoration Chapel, to Refurbish the Foyer and relocate the toilets, Parishioners of St. Kevin's were asked to vote in support of going ahead with the whole project or put it all on hold. A ballot was taken at all the weekend Masses 22nd & 23rd March 2025. The ballot papers were counted after each mass in the presence of a member from the Vision Team, Parish Pastoral Council, Finance Team and two Parishioners randomly chosen at each mass. All these have been signed by all present and documented and kept in the Parish Office. An overwhelming majority of parishioners agreed with this decision. The project then advanced to the Design and Schematic Phase.

Additions to the Current Project:

As part of the discussions with the parish committees it was determined there was a need for more gathering spaces for Children's Ministry, Youth Activities, Legion of Mary, Catechism classes for Children to mention a few. To facilitate this a proposal was put forward to utilise the space on the choir side of the Church and an undercover area. These two new spaces will also support the overflow for large masses at Christmas and Easter liturgies, support fundraising activities such as food sales and youth activities.

When the project is completed, we will have the following spaces including the original brief:

- The foyer partitioned to allow two groups to meet at the same time with a capacity of up to 100 people for mass. This space could be used for prayer meetings, wakes, and for fellowship after Mass.
- A prayer room for a group of up to 10 people
- A new integrated meeting room for groups of up to 100 people near the Choir side of the church.
- An undercover outdoor area for small groups
- A Grotto relocated to a more prominent space with an integrated Memorial Chapel.
- An Adoration Chapel with increased capacity and toilet facilities for after-hours use.
- An integrated Parish Office
- Three secure storage spaces for the youth group, the social group and the Vinnies team
- The current office site will be preserved for future development to support the future mission of the Church.
- Compliant undercover wheelchair access to the Church.

At the September Parish Pastoral Council meeting, it was decided to disseminate information in a Q&A format to the parishioners of St. Kevin's regarding the building project.

Why Do We Need to Relocate the Grotto?

Currently, the Grotto is situated in a secluded location and lacks adequate lighting, thereby compromising the safety of our parishioners. It is a disadvantage for parishioners who prefer to visit the Grotto at their own convenience. Over the last year, a lady was attacked in front of the Grotto. We have also had three break-ins and thefts, posing an increased threat to the safety of our parishioners.

The Grotto that was built approximately 20 years ago by dedicated parishioners has served us well. The Grotto requires significant repair, as it leaks considerably during inclement weather. There is also no proper drainage for the water to flow out. This could cause health concerns and slipping hazards. Repairing only masks the problem; hence, relocation and a new build are the

most viable options going forward. The Grotto needs to be moved to facilitate the incorporation of the new Parish Centre and relocation of the restrooms, meeting current OHS requirements.

Where is the new location of the Grotto?

The Grotto will be built on the traffic island in front of the Church. This will provide an opportunity for parishioners to visit the Grotto to and from the Church. This will also make it safe for the primary school children of St Kevin's to visit the Grotto. Plans are in place to utilise as many stones as possible from the current grotto in the construction of the new one.

Moving the Grotto to this location will enable a larger memorial wall to be built around the Grotto, allowing past parishioners to be remembered through the placement of a plaque in their honour.

When will the new grotto be built?

The plans are being drawn up by the architect and construction will commence in the first quarter of 2026.

Why is the Grotto locked at certain times?

The grotto is being locked for the safety of the parishioners and to prevent vandalism to the statue of Our Mother. The events of the last year only support this view. With the construction of the new grotto, there will be new improved secure access to the church, grotto and chapel.

What happens to the land where the current Grotto sits?

The land in the current area will be used to construct the new parish office, reception, Priests' meeting rooms, Parish Pastoral Council and other ministry meeting rooms. This will also include all facilities as required by law to fulfil government requirements for offices. New toilet facilities will also be built incorporating DDA requirements as required.

What is happening to the current adoration chapel?

The current chapel will become a room for prayer groups to meet and pray.

What is the current amount raised for the Grotto?

As of September 2025, the funds raised for the Grotto and Chapel stands at 56,308.55. This includes all amounts raised as donations, recycling of cans and bottles and extra collections at masses.

Total Cost of the Project

Initial costing on the project, which was a rough estimate given by the Architect, was 2,442,120. Considering the included additional meeting space and undercover area and the rising costs the appointed Quantity Surveyor has estimated the cost of the project to be approximately 4,008,303.

The above cost estimate and the repayment plan have been reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee and has the full support of the Parish Pastoral Council. All the money we have been saving from Thanksgiving, Donations and Fundraisers going forward will service the Loan that we will be borrowing.

Costing and Plans are displayed in the Church Foyer.