

Property forum - Samoan community Strathmore
5 March 2017 - 7 contributors from their wider community meeting

For the Samoan community in Strathmore their homes are small. Good Shepherd hall is not just a place where they celebrate Mass with others in the community. The hall is used for birthdays, 21sts and other celebrations. It is a place where those that have died can be visited and prepared for their funeral. It is the home of the extended family community, including those now overseas. The community at Good Shepherd has been hit hard by the split in the Samoan community. But youth in particular see it as being "in their blood", "where we grew up" and suggest "it's not about the money, our hearts are in this place". It is seen as a base from which the community can grow again.

The community sees the hall as being crucial as a place to provide a focus for bringing the Alotu back together and they can see some progress being made on this now. They are hopeful this will occur, but think it would be very difficult if the hall was removed. They also intend the hall to be used as a place for youth programmes, which they are beginning to work on.

What if the hall was relocated elsewhere? – while that would be nice, if closure had to happen, it is definitely a second best option, as the location of the building in Strathmore is very important. The hall is seen as being well built and not requiring much maintenance, the community can look after it. Rather than it going elsewhere, can those people come to Strathmore? The Samoan community doesn't mean to sound selfish, it is just worried that if the hall is taken away, they will be lost, the community will fall apart. Each community should be doing fundraising including raffles to meet their needs.

What if the unused land was sold? - being able to keep the hall would be a blessing. Work could be done on bringing the Samoan community together and more work could be done to engage youth.

What if everything was sold? - Forty years ago the Catholic Samoan Community was born. Our children attend St Anthony's, Holy Cross, St Patrick's primary schools. Also St Pat's, St Catherine's and some St Mary's colleges. We come from different villages in Samoa, attending Mass at Good Shepherd we become to know each other, next the Aulotu was established. Good Shepherd was like home away from home. Good Shepherd nurture our children into good citizens and learn about the faith. No one get into trouble with the law, because of all the times we spent with them. Sunday School, Youth Clubs, talks with the priest. Aulotu gathering involving the children. Good shepherd is a blessing to the Samoan Community. As you say the Samoan community is very important to you, if you really mean what you say we would like the Good Shepherd crucifix to be present at St Anthony's church. Faith, love, caring, sharing, kindness, helpful, proud to be Catholic and our once a month Samoan Mass saying in our language all happening at Good Shepherd for forty years. So whatever you decide for the

future of Good Shepherd, one thing we ask in memory of Good Shepherd for the Samoan community THE CRUCIFIX. 'God grant the Samoan community the serenity to accept the things they cannot change'