

252 Finchley Road
London NW3 7AA

Heritage appraisal

July 2013

Consultancy for the
Historic Built Environment

KMIHeritage

Contents

1	Introduction	2
	Purpose	2
	The previous application	2
	Organisation.....	4
	Author	5
2	252 Finchley Road, St Andrew's Church and their context	6
	The development of St Andrew's Church	6
	252 Finchley Road	11
	Stained glass at St Andrew's	12
	The heritage context of the site and its surroundings	14
	<i>Listed buildings</i>	14
	<i>The Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area</i>	14
	Heritage significance.....	17
	<i>Definitions</i>	17
	<i>Evidential and historical significance</i>	17
	<i>Aesthetic significance</i>	18
	<i>Communal value</i>	19
3	The policy context	20
	The National Planning Policy Framework	20
	Local Policy: Camden Council's Local Development Framework.....	24
4	The proposed development and its effect	29
	The proposed scheme	29
	The effect on the character and appearance of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area	29
	The effect on the setting of St Andrew's Church	30
	<i>The effect on the church generally</i>	30
	<i>The effect on the stained glass of the church</i>	30
	General benefits of the proposed scheme	31
5	Compliance with policy and guidance	33
	The National Planning Policy Framework	33
	Camden's Local Development Framework	33
6	Conclusion	35
	Appendix A: Location	36
	Appendix B: List description of St Andrew's Church	38
	Appendix C: Other work by Douglas Strachan	39
	Appendix D: Research sources	40

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This heritage and urban design report has been prepared on behalf of Investland PLC in support of a planning application for the redevelopment of 252 Finchley Road, London NW3 7AA.

Purpose

- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to assess the proposed development against national and local policies relating the listed buildings and conservation areas.
- 1.3 This report should be read in conjunction with the drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by Parritt Leng.

The previous application

- 1.4 This report supports a second planning application for the redevelopment of 252 Finchley Road. A previous application (ref 2010/6836/P) was refused by the Council on 24 March 2011.

- 1.5 Reason 2 of the refusal of planning permission was:

The proposed building is considered to be unacceptable by reason of its height, bulk, mass and detailed design and the relationship that it has with the other buildings in the group of which it forms a part, contrary to policy CS14 (Promoting high quality places) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy; and to policy DP24 (Securing high quality design) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.

- 1.6 The officer committee report said, at Paragraph 6.4.5 that:
'The proposed 5 storey scale is considered acceptable on this site, subject to the appropriateness of detailing and materials of the design proposal'.

- 1.7 At Paragraph 6.4.6, the officer committee report said:

The proposed design scheme is considered sympathetic to the setting of the neighbouring listed St Andrew's Church. While the proposed 5 storey scale references its neighbour's ridge line at 254 Finchley Road, the proposed building steps down appropriately to relate to the church's elevation and detailing. This serves its role as a subservient and respectful neighbour to the Grade II listed St Andrew's Church. To the rear, the storeys are successively set back from the boundary with no.254 Finchley Road so that the massing of the building would be overbearing in relation to the neighbouring property. It is not considered that any impact on the light reaching the stained glass windows on the north-west elevation of the church would have a significant impact on the historical or architectural interest of the building.

1.8 At Paragraph 6.4.8, the officer committee report said:
'On the basis of the above assessment, the proposed residential development at 252 Finchley Road is considered to satisfactorily address the scale, building lines and massing of the Finchley Road streetscape context, the character of its neighbouring conservation areas and the setting of its neighbouring Grade II listed church. Conditions are therefore required to secure details of all facing materials and an on site sample panel of the proposed brickwork'.

1.9 However, the application was refused. An appeal (ref. APP/X5210/A/11/2160566) was subsequently dismissed on 1 February 2012. In dismissing the appeal, the inspector said at Paragraph 6 of the Decision:

The footprint of the proposed building accords with the set back of the existing building it would replace, which is followed by other buildings in this section of Finchley Road with the exception of the Church'.

1.10 At Paragraph 7, he said:
'The height of the proposal reflects that of the existing and adjoining buildings, with a set down at the south-east end to relate to the massing of the Church. The

design features an articulated façade with a vertical rhythm given by bays. The details and use of red brick would be compatible with the mix of building styles in the vicinity, and the proposal would not introduce new design elements that would be unsympathetic to the characteristics of the locality. The building would clearly differ from the existing house, and the scale would be emphasized by the opening up of the frontage area and the retaining walls to the sides. However, this would not be out of keeping with the existing street scene, including with respect to the depth of the building and in long views and having regard to levels. The proposal would preserve the settings of the Conservation Areas and the listed building in terms of the townscape context. In these respects the proposal would meet the standards of quality sought under policy CS14 of the Camden Core Strategy 2010 and policy DP24 of the Camden Development Policies 2010'

- 1.11 However, the inspector states in his Paragraph 10 that:
'...having regard to the third party submissions and consideration of the proposal including through the site visit inspection, I find that there is insufficient evidence to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage asset. In this context it is not possible to carry out the balancing exercise between harm and benefits as required by PPS5'.
- 1.12 The inspector concluded that:
'The potential harmful impacts on the significance of the neighbouring listed building and with respect to structural matters, and the inadequate information on these effects, outweigh the findings in support of the proposal'.

Organisation

- 1.13 This introduction is followed by a description and analysis of 252 Finchley Road and its context. Section 3 sets out the national and local policy and guidance relating to the historic built environment that is relevant to this matter.

Section 4 analyses the effect of the proposed scheme on heritage assets. Section 5 assesses the proposed development against policy and guidance. Section 6 is a conclusion. There are a number of appendices.

Author

- 1.14 The author of this report is Kevin Murphy B.Arch MUBC RIBA IHBC. He was an Inspector of Historic Buildings in the London Region of English Heritage and dealt with a range of major projects involving listed buildings and conservation areas in London. Prior to this, he had been a conservation officer with the London Borough of Southwark, and was Head of Conservation and Design at Hackney Council between 1997 and 1999. He trained and worked as an architect, and has a specialist qualification in urban and building conservation. Kevin Murphy was included for a number of years on the Heritage Lottery Fund's Directory of Expert Advisers.
- 1.15 Historical research for this report was undertaken by Dr Ann Robey FSA, a conservation and heritage professional with over twenty years experience. She has worked for leading national bodies as well as smaller local organizations and charities. She is a researcher and writer specialising in architectural, social and economic history, with a publication record that includes books, articles, exhibitions and collaborative research.

2 252 Finchley Road, St Andrew's Church and their context



Figure 1: St Andrew's Church, with No. 252 Finchley Road to the left [© Nigel Cox]

The development of St Andrew's Church

- 2.1 By the turn of the 20th century the population of the area to the south of Hampstead village around Finchley Road and Frognal was growing rapidly as new houses were built on previously undeveloped land. It was reported that there were many Presbyterians residing in the district (Hampstead was traditionally an area of nonconformity) and that there was a need for a new place of worship.
- 2.2 By 1899, a freehold site on the corner of Finchley Road and Frognal had been bought for £1,700 by members of the Presbyterian Church.¹ The site was sufficient for a church plus a lecture hall, class rooms and all the accommodation needed for a fully equipped

¹ LMA/4339/A/001- 1901 Yearbook

congregation. The lecture hall and classrooms were built first and were said to be almost complete by the end of December 1899 and to have cost £3000.² The ancillary buildings were planned in connection with the church which was to be built soon after and all were designed to be 'in harmony with the character of the surrounding neighbourhood'.³ A public competition had been held to design the church which was judged by the architect, John MacVicar Anderson, who out of the seven designs submitted awarded the first prize of £50 to R.S. Balfour & W.A. Pite.⁴ The church was designed to seat 750 people.⁵

- 2.3 The lecture hall opened for public worship on 29 April 1900 and at the time the accommodation was said to comprise 'one large public lecture room, a Minster's vestry, a committee room and a class room, together with offices. In 1903, when the church was still unfinished there were 137 attendees at the morning service and 57 in the evening – both services being held in the hall.⁶
- 2.4 At the end of 1901 tenders were submitted to build St Andrew's Church and the lowest tender of £10,480, submitted by Dove Bros. was accepted. The church was erected between 1902 and 1903 after some debate by the Building Committee over whether the church (in the style of late Gothic) was to be built in brick or stone. Although costly, stone was chosen as 'more durable'.⁷ The foundation stone was laid in June 1902 by the Earl and Countess of Aberdeen and by the end of the year progress was rapid with 13 stone arches completed, the walls

² By 1903 the Hall and the adjoining rooms including fixtures and fittings were said to have cost £3,882. 10s. LMA/4339/A/001-1903 Yearbook

³ LMA/4339/A/001-1901 Yearbook

⁴ William Alfred Pite (brother of Arthur Beresford Pite) and Robert Shekleton Balfour were in partnership in London from c.1894 until 1907 and were the architects of All Saints' Church, Ealing (1903), and enlarged the north aisle of Christ Church, Couch End (1906) as well as designing St Andrew's Presbyterian Church (1904)

⁵ LMA/4339/A/001-1902 Yearbook

⁶ 'Hampstead: Protestant Nonconformity', *A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 9: Hampstead, Paddington* (1989), pp. 153-158

⁷ LMA/4339/A/001-1902 Yearbook

nearly ready for the roof and ‘the roof timbers prepared for placing’.⁸

- 2.5 The congregation entered their ‘beautiful church’ to worship for the first time on 4 July 1903 and the cost was said to have been £20,000, including the organ. The Revd Roderick Macleod was the first Minister at St Andrews. The church was built with Monk’s Park and Stamford Stone walls and a green slate roof. The location of the building on a hilly site meant that the foundations were unusually deep.⁹ Internally the church was nearly square with the nave being unusually wide at 34 ft and the aisles were also wide (figure 2). The total length of the church was 86 feet, the width 63 feet 6 inches. The height of the nave to the ceiling was 35 feet. The church was lit by clerestory and west windows and when built it was said to be a fine auditorium.¹⁰ The spire – a striking part of the overall design - rose to 100 feet, with the vane representing St Andrew. Internally there was some decorative embellishment, including a platform made of Cippolini marble and a font of Caen stone and Verdi Attico marble. The pulpit, stalls, communion table, chair and console were of fumed oak.¹¹

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ LMA/4339/A/001-1903 Yearbook

¹⁰ *ibid*

¹¹ *idem*

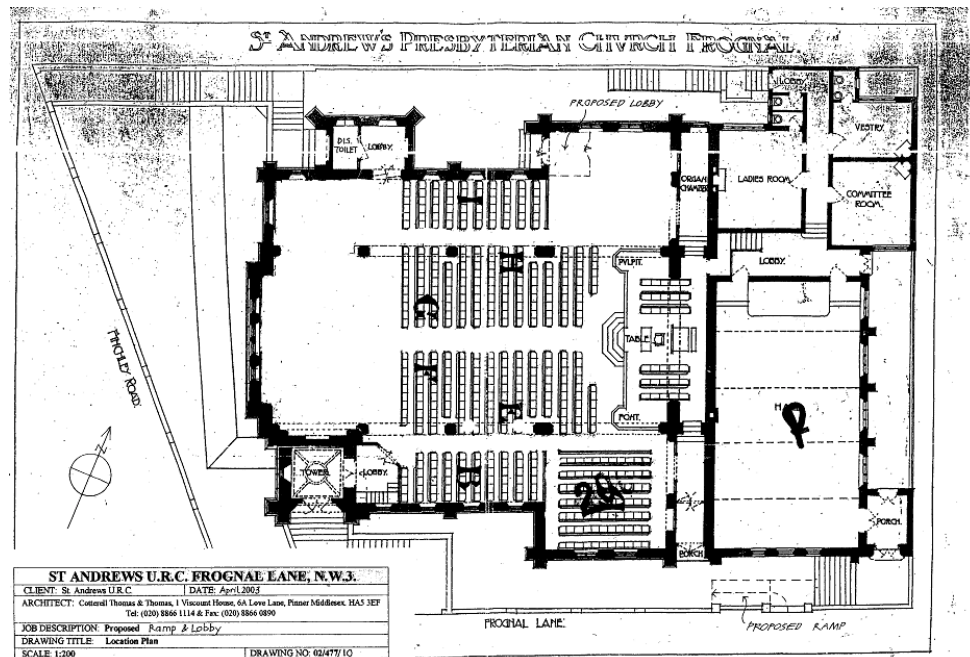


Figure 2: Plan of St Andrew’s Church, the Hall and Parish Rooms including Ladies Room, Vestry and Committee Room drawn in 2003 but based on earlier plans

- 2.6 Other internal features of St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church were part of a planned scheme including the wall hangings, the East End window, the antique Persian carpet and the seat cushions. New ‘improved’ electric lights were added in 1907-8 as a gift from parishioners’.¹²
- 2.7 When the church was being built the gable end of the hall – originally built of stock brick – was faced with Stamford stone to match the church, giving the whole exterior the ‘desired effect of one handsome edifice, well worthy of its prominent position’.¹³
- 2.8 In 1903 the grounds were planted with trees and boundary walls constructed. The total cost of the Church was said to be £10,615. As with many other Protestant churches, St. Andrew's was not constructed with stained glass. Windows were inserted later into the structure by various donors over a period of years. The first stained glass was put into the church in 1904, when ‘a beautiful

¹² LMA/4339/A/001-1908 Yearbook

¹³ LMA/4339/A/001-1903 Yearbook

circular window in the chancel and an equally fine one in the main entrance were designed and executed by Mr J Dudley Forsyth'.¹⁴ In 1905, Mrs Duffus a parishioner paid for another stained-glass window in memory of her son and husband.¹⁵ In 1909 the south transept windows were filled with stained glass.¹⁶



Figure 3: Aerial view of St Andrew's Church and No. 252 Finchley Road in 1920

2.9 In 1906 a piece of land to the rear of the hall was purchased for £804 for a potential extension, in the event the congregation was to grow.¹⁷ Over the first 25 years of its existence only minor works (repainting and decorating) were carried out to the church and adjoining buildings.¹⁸ By 1920, the trees and shrubs surrounding the church were flourishing as an aerial view shows (figure 3). In 1956 land at the rear of the church was used

¹⁴ LMA/4339/A/001-1904 Yearbook; J Dudley Forsyth was active in the early 20th century and particularly in the 1920s. His studio was in Finchley Road near to St. Andrew's Church and he was a manufacturer of stained glass rather than a designer. His glass was used in some windows in Westminster Abbey and the Baltic Exchange

¹⁵ LMA/4339/A/001-1905 Yearbook

¹⁶ LMA/4339/A/001-1995 Yearbook

¹⁷ LMA/4339/A/001-1906 Yearbook

¹⁸ LMA/4339/A/002; 003 Yearbooks 1910-1926

to house a large shed in which were placed two new oil tanks used for connection with heating the premises (figure 4).¹⁹

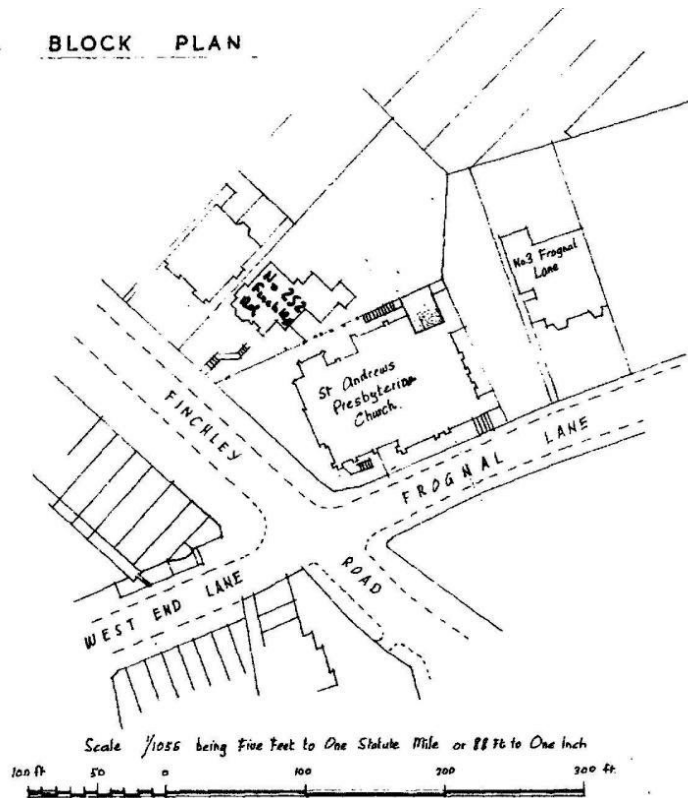


Figure 4: Site plan c. 1956

252 Finchley Road

- 2.10 No. 252 Finchley Road was designed as a large detached house in an Arts and Crafts style with a bay window, and was probably erected in the early years of the 20th century, before the outbreak of World War One. The house, which later became known as White Lodge survives today with some unsightly later additions.²⁰ Planning permission was obtained in about 1955 for the conversion of the property into three flats²¹ but it appears that the work was not carried out. When No. 252 Finchley Road was put up for sale in 1966 the house was described

¹⁹ Camden online Planning AR/TP/66755/52/6560/NW

²⁰ Camden online Planning CTP/F5/2/3/30141 additions and extensions in 1980

²¹ Camden online Planning TP/74485/C/3068

as ‘a beautifully modernised freehold residence’ with fine built-in furniture, a panelled entrance hall, a magnificent lounge with cocktail bar and an oak panelled billiards room with a double-garage and terraced garden.²²

Another detached house of a similar era survives at No. 254, which is also depicted in the aerial view of 1920.

Stained glass at St Andrew’s

- 2.11 As with many parishes, the First World War had a major impact on the congregation of St Andrew’s – not only did they lose friends and fellow-worshippers but also those who were actively involved in running the church. Like other churches they wanted to remember those who had died and a fitting way was through the erection of a memorial in the church. By 1920 over £300 had been collected for a memorial window to be placed into the church.²³ The window in the north transept ‘in honour of our members sacrificed in the war’ was formally dedicated in February, 1922. It is called *Sacrifice* (figure 5). The designer and craftsman responsible for installing the window was one of Britain’s foremost stained-glass artists, Dr Douglas Strachan (1875-1950) of Edinburgh.²⁴ Today he is regarded as one of the nation’s most important early 20th century stained-glass artists and is noteworthy for the originality, imagination and flowing colours of his designs. He was obsessed with apocalyptic events, which he depicted in a number of post-World War One memorial windows. He contributed 'The Evolution of the Peace Ideal' to the Palace of Peace at The Hague (now the United Nations International Court of Justice) and among his most significant works are the windows and sculptures for the Scottish War Memorial at Edinburgh Castle.

²² *The Times*, 22 June 1966

²³ LMA/4339/A/001-1920 Yearbook

²⁴ Strachan was born in Aberdeen and started as out as a political cartoonist for the Manchester Chronicle, but then became a portrait painter in London. He then turned to stained glass and never returned to painting. His works are listed in Appendix C

2.12 The windows at St Andrew's are not merely a form of colourful ornamentation. They were when conceived as vibrant illustrations and physical manifestations of 'God as Light and of Jesus as the Light of the World'. The memorial window at St Andrew's was so admired by the congregation that six further Strachan stained glass windows were put into the church in later years, including two in the south clerestory gifted by Lord Glendyne in 1923. Their subjects are the Nativity and the Sermon on the Mount.²⁵ The church was said to be 'enriched' by the gift.



Figure 5: Sacrifice by Douglas Strachan. The top panels depict Scriptural Sacrifice represented by Abraham offering up Isaac [Genesis 22] and David destroying Goliath [1 Samuel 17], the climax is the Sacrifice of Calvary [Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John]. The centre panels represent the horrors of war. The lower panels show discipline and pity (1922) {© St Andrews website <http://www.andrewsfrog.net/>}

²⁵ LMA/4339/A/003 1923 Yearbook

- 2.13 Peter Cormack, in *The Journal of Stained Glass*, said that 'there is probably no British stained glass artist who could match Strachan's ability to 'draw' with lead.' Strachan often made his windows in panels of pure colour which were then defined by areas of silvery white. His subjects come alive through swirling shapes in the glass and his use of rich colours especially blues, purples and greens, as well as oranges and reds. Alison M. Robertson, the Hon. Secretary of the Scottish Stained Glass Symposium and The Scottish Stained Glass Trust has said 'The left hand window, in warm reds and oranges, brings a radiant glow to counter the cool northern light. The right hand window in blues and greens draws on the nature of the light from a north facing window to emphasise the stark and chill realities of crucifixion and of war'.²⁶
- 2.14 Douglas Strachan was an important stained glass artist and St Andrew's contains a large number of his works from the 1920s and 1930s, including his important memorial window. Other London churches and institutions also commissioned Strachan to design glass for them and much of it was of very high quality. It was to be found in The Guildhall (The Whittington Window 1931), in St Columba's Church, Pont Street, in St Paul's Cathedral (the St Dunstan Window 1932) and a series of windows in Westminster School. However all were destroyed by enemy bombing action during the Blitz. The windows at St Andrew's are the only surviving Strachan windows in London.

The heritage context of the site and its surroundings

Listed buildings

- 2.15 The only listed building in the vicinity of 252 Finchley Road is the Presbyterian Church Of St Andrew, Finchley Road, listed on 14 May 1974 at Grade II. The list description is contained in Appendix B.

The Redington/Frogna Conservation Area

²⁶ Evidence at Planning enquiry

2.16 The site is located next to the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area. The conservation area was designated in June 1985, and extended in February 1988 and June 1992. An adjustment was made to its boundary with the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area in 2001. The most recent conservation area appraisal was published in 2004.



Figure 6: the boundary of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area on Finchley Road near the site of 252 Finchley Road (shown in red).

2.17 St Andrew's Church is located in Sub-area 7 of the conservation area, and the boundary of the conservation area extends westwards from the main body of the conservation area to specifically include the church site. The conservation area appraisal describes the church as forming 'an entrance to the conservation area'. The

appraisal document describes the character and appearance of Sub-area 7 in terms of the ‘consistent architectural style and character’ of the various houses that it mentions in the text, as typifying the general type of property found therein.

2.18 The boundary of the Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area excludes 252-270 Finchley Road. Directly opposite 252 Finchley Road the boundary of the West End Green Conservation Area excludes 465-485 Finchley Road and the buildings to either side of the entrance to the northeastern section of West End Lane at its intersection with Finchley Road.

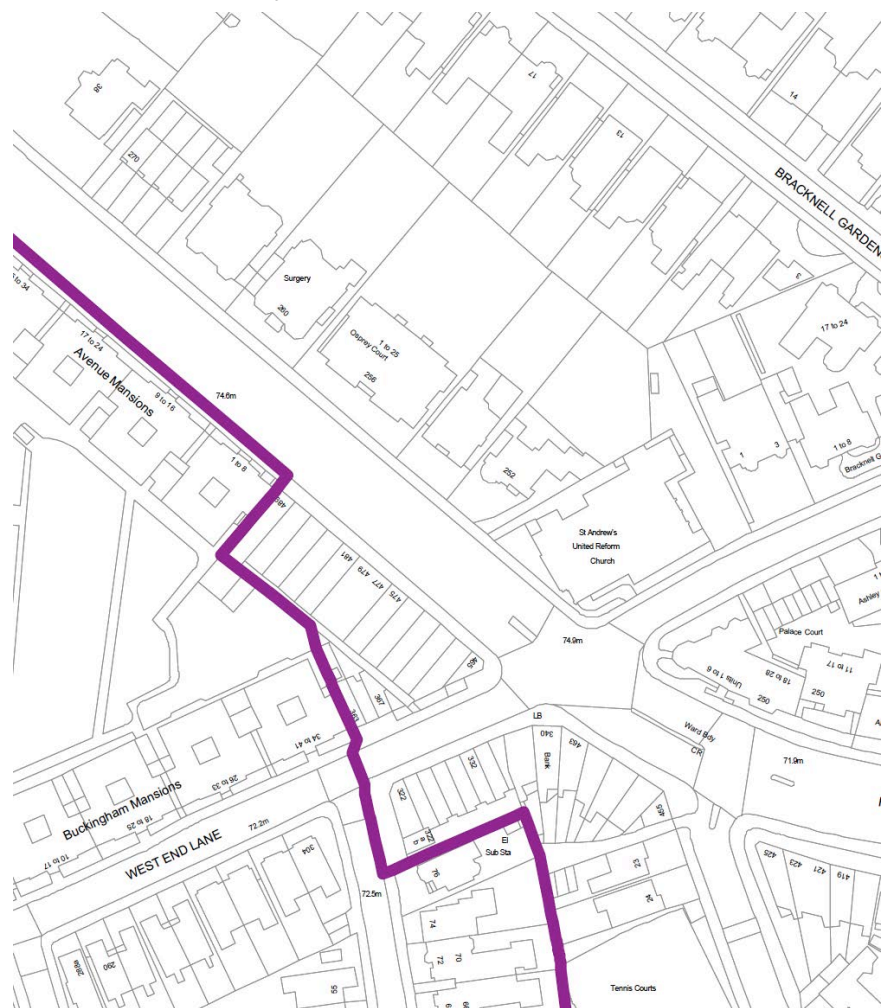


Figure 7: The northeastern boundary of the West End Green Conservation Area (in purple)

Heritage significance

Definitions

- 2.19 The listed church and the two conservation areas are ‘designated heritage assets’, as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The unlisted buildings within the conservation area that contribute to its heritage significance are ‘undesigned heritage assets’. ‘Significance’ is defined in the NPPF as ‘the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic’. The English Heritage ‘Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide’ that accompanies and explains the NPPF puts it slightly differently – as ‘the sum of its architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest’.
- 2.20 ‘Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment’ (English Heritage, April 2008) describes a number of ‘heritage values’ that may be present in a ‘significant place’. These are evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value.

Evidential and historical significance

- 2.21 Historical value is described as being illustrative or associative. The listed church and the unlisted buildings of any discernible historical quality within the conservation area help to illustrate in a meaningful way the evolution of this part of London. These older buildings, the historic urban grain and the area generally throughout the 19th and 20th centuries is highly illustrative of how our towns and cities changed in that period. It tells us about the transformation of the older city the expansion of London into new suburbs during the 19th century, and about social change and lifestyles in various periods. The area as a whole has historical associations with various important historical architects, developers and other figures.

- 2.22 More specifically, St Andrew's Church tells us about religious practice in Hampstead, about non-conformism and its demographic characteristics in the area, about the organisation and growth of the Presbyterian Church, and about the nature of its congregation. In terms of English Heritage's 'Conservation Principles' the building provides us with 'evidence about past human activity' and, by means of its fabric, design and appearance and notwithstanding the changes that may have occurred, communicate information about its past.
- 2.23 The existing building at 252 Finchley Road has no specific historic interest and any contribution it might make to the evidential and historical significance of the adjacent conservation area has been diminished by extensive alteration.

Aesthetic significance

- 2.24 St Andrew's Church is a listed building (i.e. a designated heritage asset), and thus has 'special architectural and historic interest'. This interest or significance is located in its internal and external appearance (particularly to the street); in its planimetric and volumetric qualities; and in its internal and external decorative features. For the reasons set out above, one of the key aspects the aesthetic significance of St Andrew's Church is the stained glass by Douglas Strachan. Though there have been some changes internally and externally (such as the ramp and balustrade to Froggnal Lane), this aesthetic significance is largely intact.
- 2.25 It is clear that, therefore, St Andrew's Church has 'architectural' and 'artistic interest' (the NPPF) or 'aesthetic value' ('Conservation Principles'). In respect of design, 'Conservation Principles' says that 'design value... embraces composition (form, proportions, massing, silhouette, views and vistas, circulation) and usually materials or planting, decoration or detailing, and craftsmanship'.

- 2.26 The Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area has heritage significance in that it contains buildings that have a consistent level of architectural quality from the main period of the conservation area's development. The boundary of the conservation area has been drawn to explicitly include buildings that possess quality and heritage interest, and to exclude those that do not – neither the Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area nor the West End Green Conservation Area include 252-270 Finchley Road or the properties on the western side of the Finchley Road south of No. 485 Finchley Road.
- 2.27 It is considered that, because the boundary of the West End Green Conservation Area does not run along Finchley Road opposite the site of 252 Finchley Road, the relationship between the site and the West End Green Conservation Area is, at best, marginal. The development of that site will therefore have little effect on the character and appearance of the West End Green Conservation Area conservation area.
- 2.28 The existing building at 252 Finchley Road has been heavily altered, and this has distorted and significantly reduced what minor architectural merit it originally had. It does not now have any notable aesthetic merit.

Communal value

- 2.29 St Andrew's Church clearly has communal value, as defined by 'Conservation Principles': it is a place of communal worship and its stained glass commemorates the sacrifice made by members of the community in wartime.

3 The policy context

3.1 This section of the report briefly sets out the range of national and local policy and guidance relevant to the consideration of change in the historic built environment

The National Planning Policy Framework

3.2 The legislation governing listed buildings and conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

3.3 On Tuesday 27 March 2012, the Government published the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which replaces Planning Policy Statement 5: 'Planning for the Historic Environment' (PPS5) with immediate effect.

3.4 Section 12 of the NPPF deals with 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'. It says at Paragraph 126 that 'Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment', and that

'In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;*
- *and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place'.*

3.5 The NPPF says at Paragraph 128 that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution

made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

- 3.6 A detailed description and analysis of the heritage significance of 252 Finchley Road and its context is provided in this report.
- 3.7 The NPPF also requires local planning authorities to 'identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal'.
- 3.8 At Paragraph 131, the NPPF says that:
- In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*
- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
 - *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
 - *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*
- 3.9 Paragraph 132 advises local planning authorities that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting'.

3.10 The NPPF says at Paragraph 133 ‘Good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning.’ Paragraph 133 says:

Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- *the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- *no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- *conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- *the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

3.11 Paragraph 134 says that ‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

3.12 Further advice within Section 12 of the NPPF urges local planning authorities to take into account the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset when determining the application. It says that ‘In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’.

3.13 Paragraph 137 of the NPPF advises local planning authorities to ‘look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably’.

3.14 Paragraph 138 says that:

Not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

3.15 The NPPF incorporates many of the essential concepts in the former Planning Policy Statement 5 ‘Planning for the Historic Environment’. PPS5 was accompanied by a ‘Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide’, published by English Heritage ‘to help practitioners implement the policy, including the legislative requirements that underpin it’. The ‘Guide’ gives, at Paragraph 79, a number of ‘potential heritage benefits that could weigh in favour of a proposed scheme’ in addition to guidance on ‘weighing-up’ proposals in Paragraphs 76 to 78. These are that:

- It sustains or enhances the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting;
- It reduces or removes risks to a heritage asset;
- It secures the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation;

- It makes a positive contribution to economic vitality and sustainable communities;
- It is an appropriate design for its context and makes a positive contribution to the appearance, character, quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment;
- It better reveals the significance of a heritage asset and therefore enhances our enjoyment of it and the sense of place.

3.16 Paragraph 111 of the Guide sets out the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that local planning authorities when making decisions must 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses' and 'pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance' of a conservation area.

Local Policy: Camden Council's Local Development Framework

3.17 The previous application was made prior to the adoption of the Council's Local Development Framework, and referred to the now-superseded Unitary Development Plan.

3.18 Camden Council adopted its Core Strategy and Development Policies on 8 November 2010. Core Strategy Policy CS14 deals with 'Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage' and says:

'The Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

'...b) preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens;....'

3.19 The commentary to the policy says:

'Our overall strategy is to sustainably manage growth in Camden so it meets our needs for homes, jobs and services in a way that conserves and enhances the features that make the borough such an attractive place to live, work and visit. Policy CS14 plays a key part in achieving this by setting out our approach to conserving and, where possible, enhancing our heritage and valued places, and to ensuring that development is of the highest standard and reflects, and where possible improves, its local area'

3.20 Regarding Camden's heritage, the Core Strategy refers to Policy DP25 in Camden Development Policies as providing more detailed guidance on the Council's approach to protecting and enriching the range of features that make up the built heritage of the borough

3.21 Policy DP25 is as follows:

Conservation areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will:

- a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;*
- b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;*
- c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;*
- d) not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and*

e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

Listed buildings

To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

e) prevent the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;

f) only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building; and

g) not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

Archaeology

The Council will protect remains of archaeological importance by ensuring acceptable measures are taken to preserve them and their setting, including physical preservation, where appropriate.

Other heritage assets

The Council will seek to protect other heritage assets including Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and London Squares.

3.22 The policy commentary regarding conservation areas says at Paragraph 25.6:

'The Council has a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area, whether they are listed or not so as to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. We will not grant conservation area consent for the total or substantial demolition of such a building where this would harm the appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention. Applicants will be

required to justify the demolition of a building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area, having regard to Policy HE7 of Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, Camden's conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans and any other relevant supplementary guidance produced by the Council'.

3.23 Similarly, the commentary regarding listed buildings says at Paragraph 25.12:

'The Council has a general presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings. Total demolition, substantial demolition and rebuilding behind the façade of a listed building will not normally be considered acceptable. The matters which will be taken into consideration in an application for the total or substantial demolition of a listed building are those set out in Policy HE7 of PPS5'.

3.24 The policy commentary also deals with the setting of listed buildings, and says at Paragraph 25.15:

'The setting of a listed building is of great importance and should not be harmed by unsympathetic neighbouring development. While the setting of a listed building may be limited to its immediate surroundings, it often can extend some distance from it. The value of a listed building can be greatly diminished if unsympathetic development elsewhere harms its appearance or its harmonious relationship with its surroundings'.

3.25 Policy DP24 seeks to secure 'High quality design'. It says:

'The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;

b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;

- c) the quality of materials to be used;*
- d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;*
- e) the appropriate location for building services equipment;*
- f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;*
- g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;*
- h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and*
- i) accessibility'.*

4 The proposed development and its effect

- 4.1 The proposed redevelopment of the site is illustrated in the drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by Parritt Leng.

The proposed scheme

- 4.2 The proposed scheme replaces the existing building at 252 Finchley Road with a new five storey building containing fourteen apartments. The bulk and massing of the proposed building has been designed to match that of the existing building and that of neighbouring buildings to the north. The new building aligns to the front and rear with 254 Finchley Road. Its height also reflects its neighbours, though the height of the proposal is reduced on the south eastern side to acknowledge the listed church. The architectural design of the proposal reflects the character and appearance of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area, and also echoes other large mansion blocks on the Finchley Road. The proposed scheme will use traditional materials.
- 4.3 As pointed out in the Introduction to this report, both Council officers and the appeal inspector were of the opinion that the architectural design, scale, building lines and massing of the proposed scheme were acceptable and did not cause any harm.

The effect on the character and appearance of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area

- 4.4 The heritage assets that are affected by the proposed development are the listed St Andrew's Church, the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area and the West End Green Conservation Area. As stated earlier, by virtue of the position of the site of 252 Finchley Road in relation to the West End Green Conservation Area, there will be a legible effect on that conservation area from the proposed scheme.

- 4.5 The proposed development will positively enhance the character and appearance of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area. It will replace a compromised existing building by a building of greater architectural quality that is consistent in style and appearance with many buildings in the conservation area. It will, in overall design, materials and detailing, complement the conservation area.

The effect on the setting of St Andrew's Church

The effect on the church generally

- 4.6 The appeal inspector acknowledged that the reduction in scale in the proposed scheme adjacent to the church would preserve the setting of the listed church (and the conservation area) in townscape terms. The proposed scheme will not cause any harm in terms of bulk and massing to the setting of St Andrew's Church; it reproduces the existing massing of buildings in this part of Finchley Road and takes specific steps to reduce its impact on the listed building beside the development site.

The effect on the stained glass of the church

- 4.7 The stained glass in St Andrew's Church is, as has been shown earlier, has undoubted significance. While the proposed scheme may reduce the amount of light reaching the stained glass windows on the north western side of the church, it will not do so by such an amount that the stained glass will no longer be appreciable or such that its significance is substantially harmed or lost. The glass will continue to be capable of appreciation and enjoyment, and will continue to play its part in the overall significance of the church. The proposed scheme does not build up to the boundary wall with the church, but - as the site section including the church shows - steps back from that boundary to permit light to reach the window openings in on the north western side of the church.
- 4.8 The appeal inspector's decision says that 'third party sources also confirm the importance of natural light from

the north to the legibility and appreciation of the windows'. This may be so, but the stained glass windows do not fundamentally require a situation where no building can be present in their vicinity for them to be appreciated – this is never a requirement for stained glass to be appreciated. They do not need an entirely open aspect to retain their significance, and the present situation, where the existing building at 252 Finchley Road already reduces the passage of light to the windows by a certain degree, is satisfactory.

- 4.9 There are many instances, such as in City churches, where stained glass is present in walls with other large buildings immediately adjacent, but where the significance of the glass remains appreciable. The proposed scheme will marginally reduce the amount of light reaching the windows, but that reduction, of itself, does not transform the circumstances of the stained glass and the listed church. Sufficient light from the north will continue to pass through the windows to allow them to be appreciated and their significance to be understood and enjoyed. The proposed scheme therefore does not cause any significant harm to the heritage significance of the stained glass windows. This glass, and the many other installations of Strachan's glass (see Appendix C), will continue to form part of the larger body of stained glass work throughout the country.

General benefits of the proposed scheme

- 4.10 The scheme allows a number of important things to happen that will improve the present circumstances of the site:
- The scheme will replace a building of relatively little architectural merit (when compared with other unlisted buildings in the adjacent conservation area) with a high quality new development;
 - The scheme is consistent with the residential and character of the area, but provides a better standard

and quality of residential accommodation in an architecturally sympathetic manner;

- The scheme improves the ground level street frontages – it creates a better boundary treatment, and this enhances the pedestrian experience, making the use of the streets around the site a safer and more pleasant experience;
- The scheme will provide affordable housing along with contributions towards highways improvements and education contributions.

5 Compliance with policy and guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.1 This report has provided a detailed description and analysis of the significance of 252 Finchley Road and its heritage context, as required by Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.2 The proposed scheme complies with Paragraph 133 of the NPPF - it certainly does not lead to 'substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset'. It also complies with Paragraph 134 for the reasons given in detail earlier in this report – the scheme cannot be considered to harm the conservation area or the listed church, but rather alter the circumstances of these heritage assets in a modest fashion that has a relatively small effect on their overall heritage significance. Any 'less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset' (Paragraph 134) that can be ascribed to the scheme is outweighed by the benefit deriving from a scheme that provides up-to-date residential accommodation in this part of the borough, which does so in an attractive and architecturally successful way, and which is accompanied by amenity, affordable housing and educational benefits.
- 5.3 However, it is our view that no meaningful harm is caused by the proposed scheme. The scheme very definitely strikes the balance suggested by Paragraph 134 of the NPPF – it responds to the listed building in a manner commensurate to its significance as a listed building by adjusting its design accordingly. This balance of intervention in the setting of the listed church versus effect on its significance is described in detail earlier.

Camden's Local Development Framework

- 5.4 In positively addressing the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, the proposed scheme also meets the requirements of Policies DP24 and DP25 of the

LDF in relation to listed buildings, conservation areas and the achievement of high quality design. The proposed scheme is certainly *not* ‘development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area’ and is *not* a proposal that would ‘cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

- 5.5 The proposed scheme demonstrably takes ‘account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans’ in its design, as required by DP25.
- 5.6 The scheme has very carefully considered the ‘character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings’, and the ‘the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed’ (Policy DP24), as is shown earlier in this report and in the Design & Access Statement.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed scheme has a number of clear benefits, outlined above. It demonstrably enhances the setting of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area, and has a negligible effect on the West End Green Conservation Area. Though somewhat closer to St Andrew's Church than the existing house at 252 Finchley Road, the proposed scheme steps back from the church on its south eastern side, and preserves its setting. This allows light to continue to pass through the stained glass windows, which (as this report shows earlier) are of undoubted heritage significance). While there may be a small reduction in the amount of light passing through these windows, this will be far from being such a reduction that the windows can no longer be readily and easily appreciated. When the benefits of the proposed scheme are taken into account, this small effect on the stained glass windows is clearly acceptable in heritage terms.

Appendix A: Location



Current Ordnance Survey (not to scale)



Aerial photograph (not to scale)

Appendix B: List description of St Andrew's Church

CAMDEN

TQ2585SE FINCHLEY ROAD 798-1/36/436 (North East side)
14/05/74 Presbyterian Church of St Andrew

II

Presbyterian church. c1902-4. By Pite and Balfour. Coursed, snecked rusticated rubble with Bath stone dressings. Slated roofs. Decorated style. 3-bay nave, aisles, transepts, sanctuary and tower with spire at south-west corner. Church hall extension at south-east end. INTERIOR: not inspected.

Listing NGR: TQ2568585372

Appendix C: Other work by Douglas Strachan

St Andrew's United Reformed Church (incl. War Memorial Window - 'Sacrifice'), Hampstead, London

All Saints, Jesus Lane, Cambridge

St Lawrence's Church, East Rounton, North Yorkshire (memorial window to Gertrude Bell)

Palace of Peace at The Hague, Netherlands

Humbie Parish Church, East Lothian

King's College Chapel, Aberdeen

Noble College, University of Aberdeen

St Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen

St Mary of Pity Chapel, Kirk of St Nicholas, Aberdeen

Holburn Central Parish Kirk,

Fraserburgh Old Parish Church (1906)

Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay South Kirk, Ayrshire

St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, Orkney (1912)

St Margaret's Chapel, Edinburgh Castle (1922)

Westminster College, Cambridge

Bothwell Parish Church, South Lanarkshire, Gilchrist Window, for Dr. Marion Gilchrist

St. Margaret's Church, Hoathly, Sussex

St Paul's Parish Church, Woldingham, Surrey

St. Thomas' Church, Winchelsea, East Sussex

St Michael and All Angels, Waterford, Hertfordshire

Paisley Abbey, Paisley

St John's Kirk, Perth, Scotland

University of Glasgow Chapel

University of Glasgow Bute Hall

Kilbrandon Church, Argyll

Appendix D: Research sources

London Metropolitan Archive

English Heritage

LB Camden Local Studies Archive

LB Camden planning online

The Times online

KMHeritage

72 Pymer's Mead
London SE21 8NJ
T: 020 8670 9057
F: 0871 750 3557

mail@kmheritage.com
www.kmheritage.com

© 2013