

# Statement of Significance / Heritage Statement

St Anne's Church, Highgate

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## Introduction

This Statement of Significance has been prepared by HMDW Architects Ltd in collaboration with information from the PCC, and accompanies a Statement of Need

The purpose of the Statement of Significance is to explore the strengths and potential that the church holds for worship and mission, and to help those in the Faculty system advise the PCC and assess their plans for change.

In assessing significance, the following customary terminology has been used:

- **High** – important at national to international levels
  - **Moderate-High** – important at a regional, sometimes higher level
  - **Moderate** – usually of local value but classifiable as being of regional significance for its contribution to the building as a whole
  - **Low-Moderate** – of local value
  - **Low** – adds little or nothing to the value of a site or detracts from it
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## About the church

Parish	St. Anne Brookfield Highgate Rise
Dedication	St Anne
Benefice	Highgate – St Anne
Diocese	London
Address	Highgate West Hill, London, N6 6AP
Grid Reference	TQ 28262 86484
Local Planning Authority	London Borough of Camden
County	
Statutory Listing	Listed Grade II – Entry no. 1379061
Non-statutory designations of church contents	
Statutory designation for the churchyard and contents	First World War Memorial in grounds, Listed Grade II
Conservation Area	The building lies within the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area, and immediately adjacent to the Highgate Village and Holly Lodge Estate Conservation Areas.
Tree Preservation Orders	Under Conservation Area rules
Habitats and protected species and designations	Unknown
Any other designations	Unknown

## Part I: The church in its urban / rural environment.

### ***Setting of the Church***

*How does the setting of the church contribute to its landscape / townscape value and to its significance?*

The exterior, the spire in particular, has an important presence from viewing points around Hampstead Heath, and closer townscape views around Parliament Hill Fields, Highgate Road, Highgate West Hill, Swains Lane and Holly Lodge Estate.

### ***The living churchyard***

*What is the significance of the natural heritage of the site?*

The church grounds contains many trees and shrubs, that contributes to a much valued semi-rural atmosphere to the immediate surroundings.

### ***Social History***

*What is the historic and present use of the church and churchyard by the congregation and wider community? How does this contribute to its significance?*

The church was commissioned by Anne Barnett as a memorial to her brother Richard, a local businessman who was a director of the Meux “Horse Shoe” Brewery based on the current site of the Dominion Theatre. It was constructed at a time of increasing population, and the new church would provide 490 rented pew places and 111 “free seats” in a location that had been noted as an inconvenient distance from the District Church. Pevsner noted it as the “ambitious type of spired church as they were erected in the mid C19<sup>th</sup> in so many well-to-do suburbs”. Early charitable beneficiaries included schools in the wider area and missionary work. The demographic change brought on by the spread of the railways in the 1860's re-focussed this work to the education of the local poor through a mission house with a soup kitchen.

The poet John Betjeman was baptized here and lived on West Hill as a child. It is believed that the bells in the title of his autobiography “Summoned by Bells” may have been those of St. Anne's. The bells are one of only a few full peels of 8 hung for full-circle change ringing in North London.

The church currently nurtures a mixed congregation with links to St Michael's School, Highgate, and worships in the Anglican Catholic tradition. Ministry work includes study groups, social events, and offers Open Church for visitors on a regular basis.

### ***The church building in general***

*Provide a description of the church.*

The church was built in 1852-3 by William Cubitt and Company, though not thought to have had direct involvement of the company's notable namesake who was soon to retire. The company at that time had a prestigious workload on West End properties, and was official carpenter to the Metropolitan Board of Works.

The church is described by Pevsner, perhaps unfairly, as “dull apart from the sw tower and spire”. The author rated more the quality of the stained glass, executed by a wide variety artists.

The composition is in the Early English style and comprises a five-bay nave with clerestory and aisles, central West tower and spire, NE chapel, SE organ loft, and central chancel. The roofs are in recently renewed natural slate, with the overall form characterised by the aisle roofs being double pitched - as steep as the central nave - rather than shallow lean-to's. The slopes, set at a variety of heights make for a romantic roofscape when viewed from close quarters.

The exterior walls are in coursed rubble, with bath stone dressings, and bath stone to the spire.

The main entrance is to the west end directly through the base of the tower. The west end of the worship space was partitioned in the 1980's to form a narthex as part of a re-ordering that saw the removal of the pews and reconfiguration of the chancel in 1979.

## ***The church building in detail***

*Using the five-point classification system outlined in the introduction, assess the significance of either each historical phase of the building or of each area within it.*

- **High** – important at national to international levels
- **Moderate-High** – important at a regional, sometimes higher level
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Phase or Area	Significance
Exterior of church	Moderate-High
Nave, aisle and chancel	Low-Moderate
Vestry / Community rooms	Low-Moderate
Churchyard	Low-Moderate

## ***Contents of the Church***

*Provide a description of its contents and their significance. It is reasonable to group these if they form part of a complete scheme which is particularly significant*

Item or group of items	Significance
Stone reredos arcading	Moderate-High
Communion rails – wood, not fixed	Moderate
Altar table	Moderate
Heraldic Reredos screen, South Aisle	Moderate
Narthex screen by John Dutton (1980s)	Low-Moderate
Lectern (brass)	Moderate
Font (granite)	Moderate-High
Wooden chairs for clergy	Low-Moderate
Statue of St Anne (oak, c. early C17)	Moderate-High
Medallion of the Risen Christ (wooden sculpture)	Moderate
Wall Plaques	Low-Moderate
Organ (re-built and enlarged by Hill & Son of Islington in 1905)	Low-Moderate
Stained glass: Burlison & Grylls (1881), Edmundson (1863-4), F P Barraud (1858-9), Heaton, Butler & Bayne (1870 and 1874), Lavers, Barraud & Westlake (1862-3 and 1879), Lavers & Barraud (1861	Moderate-High

and 1872), O'Neill (1904), and Suanders & Co. (1874).	
Mural on Chancel east wall (early C20)	Moderate
Chancel ceiling – painted scheme by Keith Gibbs of Campbell Smith and Company (mid C20)	Moderate
Stations of the cross	Low-Moderate
Painting of Madonna and Child (unknown date and provenance)	Moderate
Chairs – wooden church chairs	Low
Floors – carpeted	Low
Nave Floor – timber	Low
Bells (thought to have inspired Betjeman)	Moderate-High
Clock	Moderate

### ***Significance for mission***

*What are the strengths of the building as it is for worship and mission? What potential for being adapted to new uses do the church and its setting already have with little or no change?*

The open layout of the worship space, and not having fixed seating - is highly adaptable to varied requirements in the pattern of worship or assembly events such as concerts or talks. The fabric is therefore generally quite safe from requiring alterations to structure or finishes to improve the amenity of the space.

In addition to worship, the church is currently used as a venue for fairs, concerts, school events, as well as filming and photo shoots. The church is well-served by the 1980s Narthex re-ordering, which neatly encompasses catering and WC facilities, leaving the main worship space unencumbered by piecemeal alterations. Future upgrades to the Narthex could easily maintain this arrangement and therefore leave the Nave untouched.

## Part II: The significance of the area affected by the proposal.

*This should “zoom in” and provide a description of the particular part of the church and / or its curtilage affected by the proposed scheme, the significance of these, and the potential impact of the proposed works. You can compile like this, building on the information assembled for Part I:*

- *First, identify the parts of the church and/or churchyard which will be directly or indirectly affected by your proposal. You may need to describe these in more detail than is provided in Part I.*

The works are confined to the provision photovoltaics to the south roof slopes.

- *Second, set out the **significance** of these particular parts, **low**, **moderate** or **high**.*

The significance of the exterior architecture of the roof slope is **moderate-high**. The roof slopes provide a defining characteristic of the building as a composition of parallel steeply pitched roofs set behind to the west tower and spire.

- *Third, describe and assess the **impact** of your proposal on these parts, and on the whole. Characterise impacts as either **low**, **moderate** or **high**.*

The installation of solar panels will have a **high** aesthetic impact on the south nave and chancel slopes, though due to limited viewing angles, the impact on the building overall will be **low-moderate**, from most viewpoints.

The installation will have a **low** impact on the roof from the point of view of building fabric issues, due to the method of installation described in the section below.

- *Finally, explain how you intend, where possible, to mitigate the impact of the proposed works on the significance of the parts affected and the whole. This should include an assessment of the environmental impact or effects of these changes.*

### Aesthetic mitigation

The installation is substantially mitigated by the dense screening from trees and vegetation around the south side of the site. Key vistas are considered below:

Wider view from the Heath

The roof slopes are screened by surrounding trees and buildings, and the landscape value of the spire within the setting would remain unaltered.

View from Parliament Hill Fields – intersection of Swains Lane and Highgate West Hill

The dense vegetation around the site conceals the affected roof slopes, including during the winter.



View from Swains Lane



The upper part of the nave roof is partially visible during winter, and screened from spring to autumn. This viewpoint will soon be concealed by a new multi-storey development replacing the single storey shops.



View from Highgate West Hill

The western end of the nave roof is visible through the trees during winter at the junction with St Anne's Close. The panels step away from this area that is overshadowed by the tower, shown below right.



The view is obscured during spring-autumn.



View from St Anne's Close



The nave slope is visible from several properties on both sides of the private road St. Anne's Close. The degree of visibility varies according to the seasons, as shown here.

The upper nave roof is higher than sight-lines from inside the immediately neighbouring properties.

These photographs show the most exposed vistas available from outside the properties. The effect of vegetation in the foreground will be enhanced from the shorter angled views from within the private gardens.

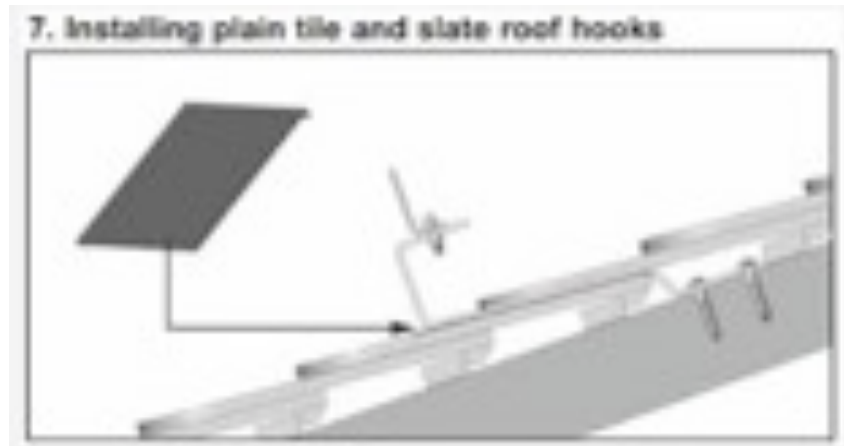


The photovoltaic panels are dark grey in colour, with a semi-sheen finish, with details shown in the accompanying product information. The drawing indicate the extent to which the affected roof slopes will be covered, the aesthetic consequences of which are described in the section below. An example of a similar installation, showing grey panels on a slate roof with fixings holding the panels at the same angle, is illustrated here.



**Technical mitigation**

The photovoltaics will be installed via clamps designed to be retrofitted to tiled roofs by being hooked over the battens and fastened through to the rafters. The hooks will support the framework that the photovoltaic panels are mounted on to. The fixings are installed with adapted flashings within the plane of the slates to ensure watertightness, which can later be replaced by new slates if reversing the installation. By using the system, the photovoltaic array will be easily reversed or upgraded to a different system without harm to the fabric.

**Environmental mitigation**

The installation is designed to address several environmental aspects:

- Local power generation
  - Discounted power costs arising from the feed-in tariff
  - Meeting wider energy reduction targets promoted by the Local Authority and Diocese.
- These points are noted in greater detail in the Statement of Need



## Sources consulted

- English Heritage *List Entry Description*
- Pevsner. *The Buildings of England: London 4: North*. Yale University Press 1998.

## Photographs



East view of Nave and Chancel (John Salmon)



West View of Nave (John Salmon)



Exterior – West elevation (John Salmon)

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