

**St Katharine's**

**The Danish Church in London**

**Heritage Summary**

**Prepared for St Katharine's, the  
Danish Church in London**

**November 2015**



Fig 1. Location plan of St Katherine's, the Danish Church in London (ABA)

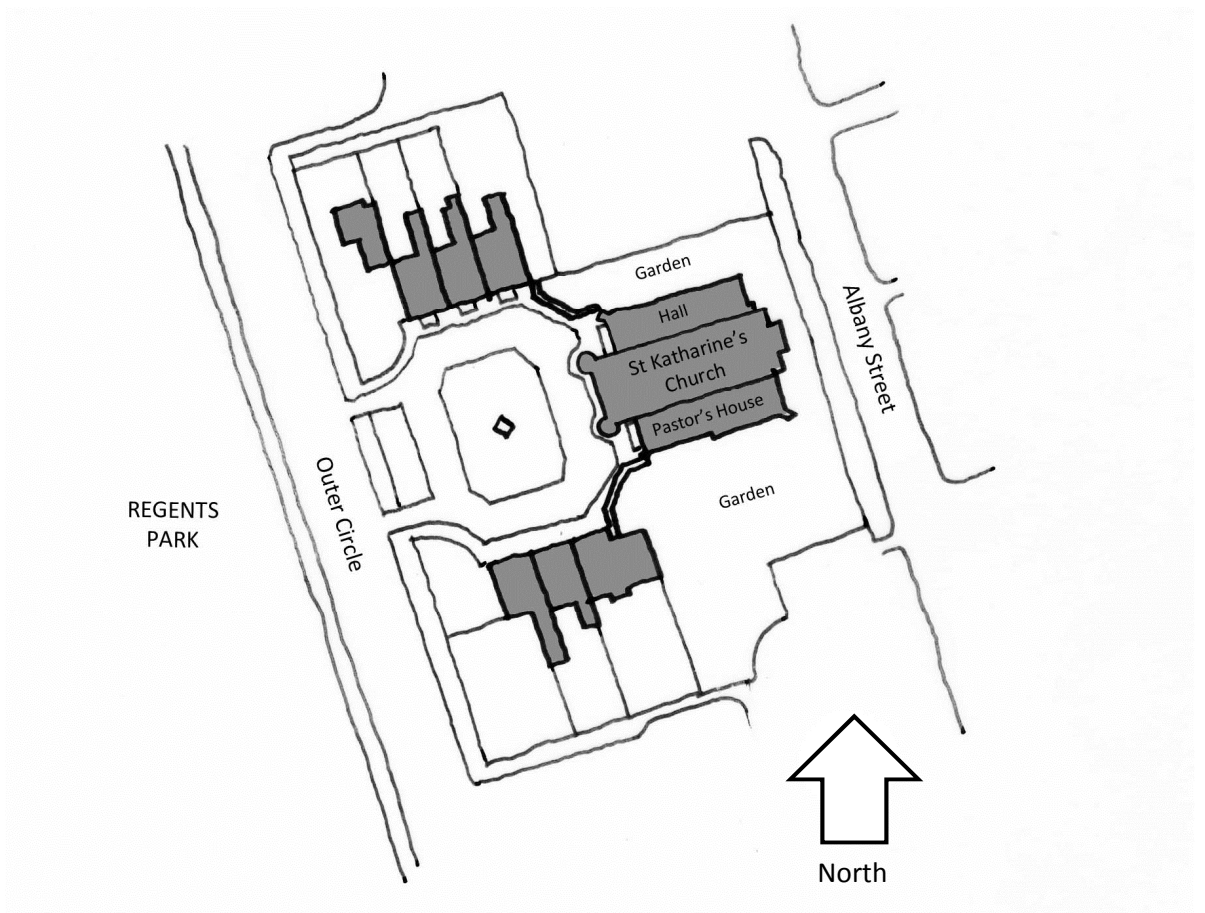


Fig 2. Site location plan (ABA)

## St Katharine's, the Danish Church in London

### Heritage Summary

#### 1.0 Introduction

##### 1.1 Background

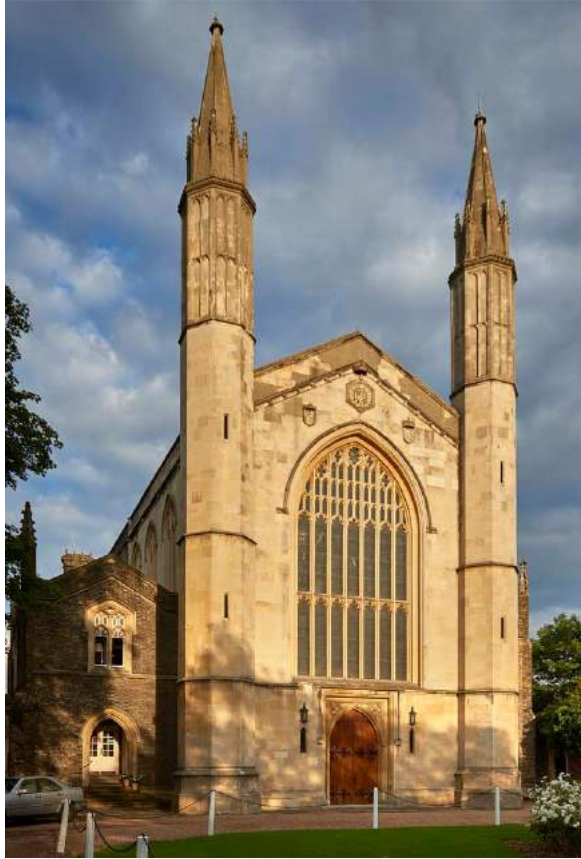
St Katharine's church, on the north-eastern edge of Regent's Park (Fig. 1), was completed in 1828 as an Anglican chapel for the Royal Hospital of St Katharine, a religious hospice. The chapel was at the heart of a wider complex that made up the hospice, with directly adjoining buildings, residential wings, forecourt and gardens. The hospice has ancient origins starting as the Hospital of St Katherine, founded in the twelfth century near the Tower of London. Since 1952, St Katharine's (the church) has been the Danish Church in London, a Lutheran church offering religious, social and educational services to London's Danish community as well as anyone else interested in Danish language and culture.

Today, while the church is regularly attended and its facilities are well used, the building's west elevation (Fig. 3) and sections of the north and south façade are in a very poor condition. Constructed of a Gault brick core with a Bath stone facing, the stone layer is too thin and the iron cramps connecting the stone sections and fixing back to the brick are too close to the surface. Water penetration has caused the cramps to rust leading to the failure of sections of the stone elevation (Figs. 5 – 7). The stone decay is alarming in terms of the danger it poses to the congregation and visitors as well as the degradation of the building. For this reason the church has been placed on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register this year. Repair works are urgently needed.

In light of this the church is making a first round application to the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) Grants for Place of Worship in England. This heritage summary, written by Alan Baxter Ltd (ABA), is part of the information for the first round submitted by the Danish Church in London. This report is an initial account of the historic origins, development and existing status of the church today. It also summarises the general significance of this heritage asset and makes a conclusion about its importance and need for repair. Appendices include the Historic Environment Record (HER) search results as well as the statutory list description. This document should be read alongside the other reports prepared by London Stone Conservation (LSC), Malcolm Fryer Architects (MFA) and Andrew Morton Associates (AMA) included as part of the submission. Archaeology is not considered as part of this report.

##### 1.2 The Site

The church is located on the outer circle of Regent's Park and stretches back to Albany Street. It is part of the Crown Estate and within the London Borough of Camden. The church is at the centre of what is known as St Katharine's precinct. The church building, the Church Hall to the north, and Pastor's House to the south along with the gardens faced by screens belong to the Danish Church (Fig. 2). The rest of the precinct is under separate ownership; the residential buildings are privately occupied and the forecourt to the church is looked after by the Crown Estate. The main entrance to the church is on the west-elevation, making the stone failure directly above the door all the more worrying for those entering and exiting the building. In contrast to the decaying exterior, the interior of the church is tidy and well maintained (Fig. 4). Please see the LSC report for a more detailed description of the masonry and MFA's outline condition survey for a full description of the church.



**Fig 3. The church's west end (St Katharine's)**



**Fig 4. Interior of the church (St Katharine's)**



**Fig 5. A view of the stone failure on the west end due to rusting cramps (ABA)**

### 1.3 Designations

The church is statutorily listed grade II\*, first listed 10 June 1954 and most recently amended 11 January 1999. The church is within the Regent's Park Conservation Area of the London Borough of Camden (the Council). The church is specifically mentioned in the Conservation Area Appraisal prepared by the Council. The Regent's Park Conservation Area adjoins two others: the Primrose Hill Conservation Area to the North and the Camden Town Conservation Area to the east.

The church adjoins Regent's Park, which is grade I on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens for its special historic interest. The church adjoins or is in the immediate vicinity of several other listed sites; attached to the north and south are No. 4 the Pastor's House and No. 5 the Church Hall, that along with the attached screen walls are all listed together grade II\*. The other buildings in the precinct, the accommodation buildings at Nos. 1 - 3 and 6 - 9, are listed grade II\*. The monument in the courtyard is listed grade II\* while the railings and lamps to the precinct forecourt are grade II. Several buildings in the wider vicinity have been locally listed by the Council.



**Fig 6. A detail view of the failing stone and rusting cramps (ABA)**



**Fig 7. A view of the footings with decayed surface stone (ABA)**



Fig 8. Rocque's Map of 1746 (ABA)

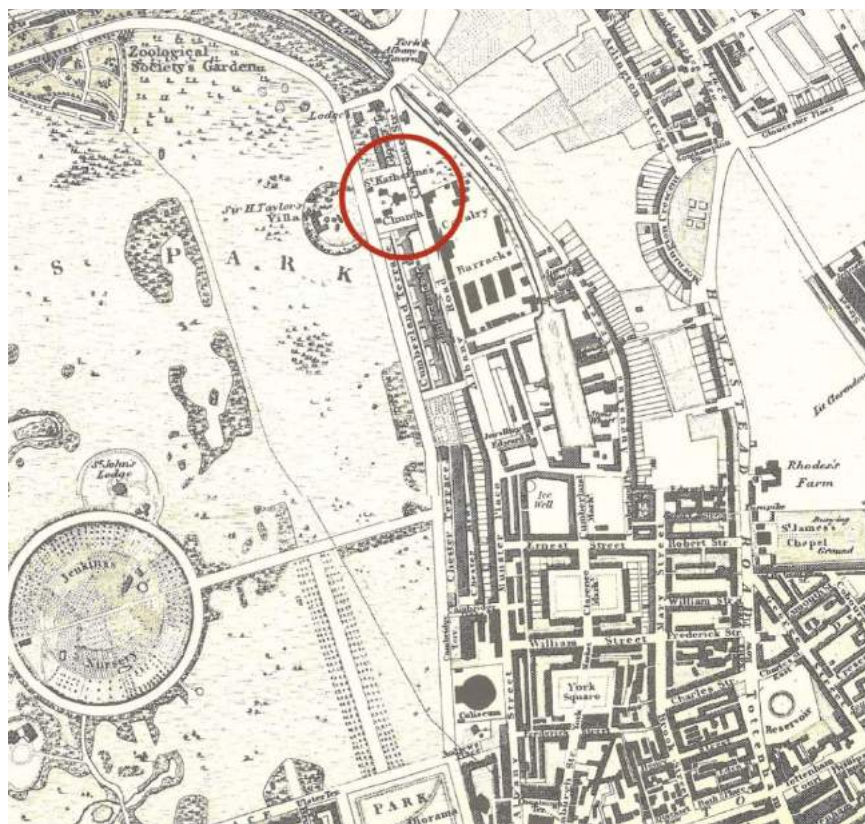


Fig 9. Greenwood's Map of 1826 (ABA)

## **2.0 History**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The Church of St Katharine church originated as the worship space for the Hospital of St Katharine by the Tower, a religious community and charitable accommodation complex that was built in approximately 1148. Rather than a 'hospital' in the modern and medical sense, the Hospital of St Katharine by the Tower provided spiritual and physical care for the poor. It had an appointed Master and was staffed by women and men from religious orders. Established by Queen Matilda, wife of King Stephen, it was located to the east of the Tower of London. At its height it was a large precinct that accommodated almost two thousand people and had its own factories, breweries and even a prison. It was patronised by every subsequent Queen of England. In 1825, the precinct was demolished – despite strong opposition – to make way for St Katharine's Dock. The chapel and complex were rebuilt where they exist today, albeit on a much smaller scale.

### **2.2 Rocque's Map of 1746**

Prior to the arrival of St Katharine's, the site of the church and complex consisted of open fields, crossed by country roads and walking tracks. Rocque's Map of 1746 (Fig. 8) shows the area uninhabited, located half way between the dense Georgian city of London to the south and the village of Hampstead to the north. Regent's Park was founded in 1814 and led to the construction of grand terraces of housing.

### **2.3 Greenwood's Map of 1826**

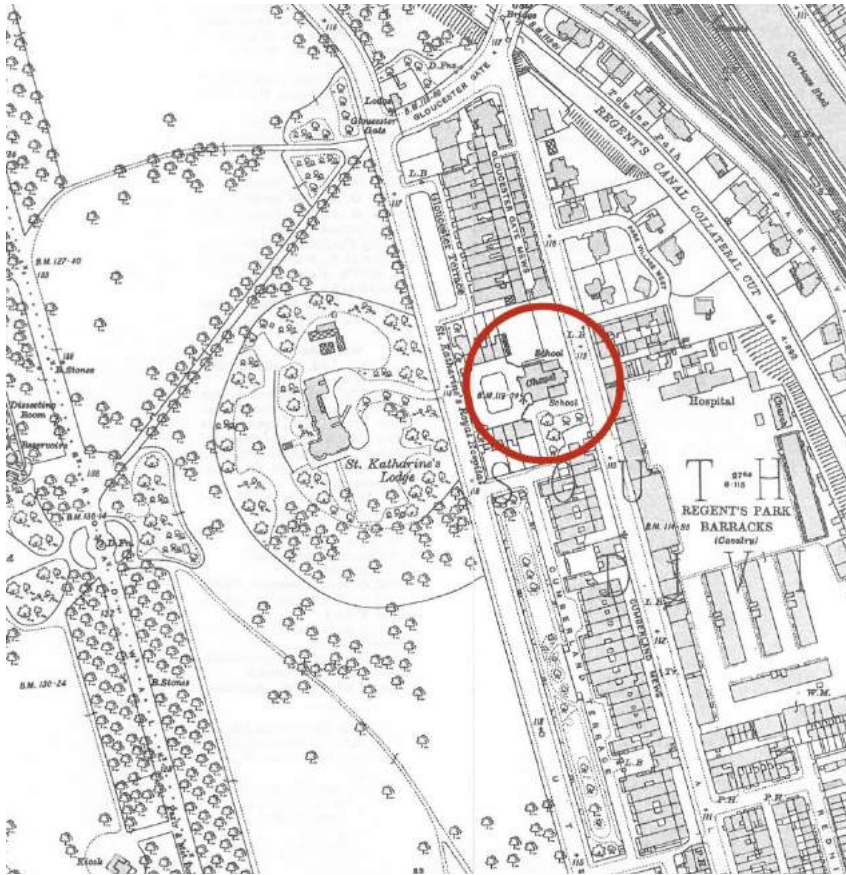
With the demolition of St Katharine's mediaeval precinct in the East end, the architect Ambrose Poynter was appointed to design and build a new precinct for the Hospital of St Katharine's at Regent's Park. An example of Poynter's early work, the church and adjoining building have been described as a rare example of a Palladian-Gothic style, combining the Gothic of the architecture with the Palladian layout of the adjoining wings. In Greenwood's Map of 1826 (Fig. 9) the church appears finished but the wing buildings have yet to be completed. Elements of the demolished chapel of St Katharine in the East end – including church fittings and monuments – were salvaged and reinstated in the new church.

### **2.4 Ordnance Survey 1913**

St Katharine's complex of buildings was completed by 1828. The 1913 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig. 10) shows the precinct with large gardens to the north and south of the church, and the buildings adjoining the church are listed as schools. The accommodation wings to the north and south are drawn as individual terraced houses. Records suggest they were shared by men or 'brothers' occupying the north and women or 'sisters' living in the south. The Master of the Hospital of St Katherine lived in St Katharine's Lodge opposite the precinct.

### **2.5 Ordnance Survey 1991**

St Katharine's Lodge received a direct hit during the Second World War and was subsequently demolished. The church had only general blast damage and was repaired. By 1952, St Katharine's church was disused and was given to the Danish community. However, it was not the first Danish church as the community had a dedicated place of worship on Wellclose Square in the East End since the late seventeenth century. This church was demolished in 1921. Some of its salvaged fittings – in particular four important statues by the seventeenth century sculptor Caius Gabriel Cibber – are in St Katharine's church today. The 1991 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig. 11) shows the precinct as it stands today, with the church, attached buildings and gardens to the north and south in the ownership of the Danish church in London.



**Fig 10. Ordnance Survey Map of 1913 (ABA)**



**Fig 11. Ordnance Survey Map of 1991 (ABA)**



### 3.0 Significance

Assessing 'significance' is the means by which the cultural importance of place and its component parts are identified and compared, both absolutely and relatively. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – the Government's guidance on planning in the historic environment – places the concept of significance at the heart of the planning process when dealing with historic buildings. The NPPF defines 'significance' 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. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence but also from its setting'*

The assessment of significance in terms of specific interest is essential to enable the effective conservation and management of heritage assets. Overall, St Katherine's church is a highly significant building, the character and appearance of which is desirable to preserve and enhance. This is confirmed by its grade II\* listed status.

Archaeology was not part of this assessment but it is possible that some historic remains survive below ground and assessment should be considered at the next stage of any project. Architecturally, St Katharine's church has special interest as an example of a building in the Palladian-Gothic style by a named architect (Fig. 12). Artistically, the church interior has historic items, salvaged from the lost medieval church of St Katharine and the demolished Danish church in Wellclose square. Historically, the church is highly significant, representing the history and development of the Hospital of St Katharine and its twelfth century origins. It is also a record of the history of Lutheran Christian worship by London's Danish community. Most importantly, the church is highly significant because it continues to be a place of worship – the function it was built for on the site almost two hundred years ago.

Regrettably, the significance of the church is being damaged by the poor condition of the stone work to the west elevation. A sensitive program of repair and sympathetic conservation is urgently needed; this will better reveal its significance.



**Fig 12. A detail view of the church's west elevation (St Katharine's)**

## 4.0 Conclusion

Nearly two centuries of weathering, water ingress and inappropriate cementitious mortar mean that St Katharine's west end is in a very poor condition. The church's addition to the Heritage at Risk Register reflects the urgent need for remedial work. The ongoing decay and the arrival of another winter which may exacerbate the rate of masonry degradation make the necessity all the more pressing. Funding for the repair is being sought from the HLF in order to repair, make safe and better reveal the significance of this hugely important heritage asset by making it safe, sound and visually pleasing.

## 5.0 Sources

- Cherry, B. and Pevsner, N. 1991. *The Buildings of England London 3: North West* (Yale University Press: London)
- Fabricius, Poul-Erik (ed). 1992. *Den Danske Kire i London 1692 – 1992* (Unibank: London)
- Lovell, P. (ed). 1938. *Survey of London Volume 19: The Parish of St Pancras Part 2* (London County Council: London)
- Thompson, J. 2011. *Regent's Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy* (London Borough of Camden: London)

**Prepared by** Boris Bogdanovich  
**Reviewed by** Susannah Brooke  
**Issued** November 2015

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GLHER Report 12013  
 The Danish Church, NW1  
 TQ 28640 83287  
 100m radius

17 September 2015

-  Archaeology
-  Archaeological Find Spot
-  Building
-  Listed Building
-  TDP & TAS
-  Maritime Archaeology
-  Registered Parks & Gardens
-  Scheduled Ancient Monuments
-  World Heritage Sites
-  Archaeological Priority Area
-  Event Location
-  Event Location (Not fully recorded on the GLHER database)
-  Requested Search Area

Scale (at A4): 1:1,500

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# List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

**Name:** THE DANISH CHURCH

**List Entry Number:** 1245872

## Location

THE DANISH CHURCH, ST KATHERINES PRECINCT

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

**County:** Greater London Authority

**District:** Camden

**District Type:** London Borough

**Parish:**

**National Park:** Not applicable to this List entry.

**Grade:** II\*

**Date first listed:** 10-Jun-1954

**Date of most recent amendment:** 11-Jan-1999

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# Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

**Legacy System:** LBS

**UID:** 477947

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# Asset Groupings

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

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# List Entry Description

## Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

## Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

## History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

## Details

CAMDEN

TQ2883SE ST KATHARINE'S PRECINCT 798-1/82/1517 (East side) 10/06/54 The Danish Church (Formerly Listed as: ST KATHARINE'S PRECINCT The Danish Church, No.4 (The Pastor's House), No.5 (St Katharine's Hall))

GV II\*

St Katharine's College Chapel, now the Danish Lutheran Church in London. 1826-1828. By Ambrose Poynter. For the Royal Hospital of St Katharine. Restored 1969. Grey brick with stone dressings; west end with stone facing. Tall, collegiate type chapel in Perpendicular style of 7 bays. Attached to and flanking the church, No.4 The Pastor's House and No.5 St Katharine's Hall (qv). EXTERIOR: west end gabled with octagonal corner turrets having arrow slit windows, enriched above the roof line and terminating in spires. Pointed arch doorway with wooden door and square-headed label with enriched spandrels and stops. Above this, a tall 7-light traceried window. A hexagonal clock surmounted by a crown and flanked by coats of arms in the apex of the facade. North and south facades with a high, tall 3-light traceried window to each bay, above which the cornice and blocking course. East end with similar traceried window to west end. INTERIOR: simple and whitewashed, with two figures of Moses and John the Baptist late C17 by Caius Cibber brought from the former Danish Seamen's Mission in Commercial Road E14; former church fittings and monuments dispersed c1950 between the Tower of London and St Katharine's Foundation, Butcher Row E14. HISTORICAL NOTE: St Katharine's College Chapel was built to replace a chapel forming part of the religious hospice, founded in 1148 by Queen Matilda and later known as the Hospital of St Katharine, on a site next to the Tower of London; in 1825 the original site was made into St Katharine's Dock. The patronage of the chapel had always rested with the Queen of England; Queen Alexandra, Danish wife of King Edward VII, granted it to the Danish community in London. (Survey of London: Vol. XIX, Old St Pancras and Kentish Town, St Pancras II: London: -1938: 101-115).

Listing NGR: TQ2864783281

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## Selected Sources

### Books and journals

'Survey of London' in Old St Pancras and Kentish Town The Parish of St Pancras Part 2: Volume 19 , (1938), 101-115

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## Map

### National Grid Reference: TQ 28647 83280

The below map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - [1245872.pdf](#) - Please be aware that it may take a few minutes for the download to complete.



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