

Statement of Significance

Section 1: Brief history and description of the church building(s), contents, churchyard and setting

The land on which St Peter's is built was part of the Belsize House estate, which was sold and broken up for building in 1853. Smart classical semi-detached houses were built and the church planned to attract respectable well to do middle class residents. By this time, the 'pagan' classical style was not considered appropriate for Christian worship and St Peters was designed in Gothic style as the centrepiece of Belsize Square

The church was designed by W Mumford who saw the Nave completed and was then continued in 1875 by the better-known J P St Aubyn, who added the Chancel and Tower. It reads as a consistent whole with Kentish Ragstone dressed with Bath Stone linking it all together.

The interior has fine marble and tiled finishes with good ironwork and carved detail including the angel corbels to the roof structure and glass by O'Conner. The church retains many of its pews and a west gallery.

The churchyard is narrow to the north and south of the church building, opening up to the west and is a much-used recreation area. There are no burials.



St Peter's from the west



Interior of church from west gallery

Section 2: The significance of the church (including its contents and churchyard) in terms of:

i) Its special architectural and historical interest

ii) Any significant features of artistic or archaeological interest

St Peter's is particularly significant as the centrepiece of the Belsize Square Conservation Area. Standing at the west end of the space at the centre of the square its churchyard is a rare open space amongst the terraces of substantial houses and its tower and clock a local urban landmark.

The church building is listed grade 2 and is typical of a nineteenth century urban church built as part of a housing development in a well to do area. It still retains many of its high-quality finishes and fittings which document and give insight into the lives of the founder residents who embellished and endowed their church.

Section 3: Assessment of the impact of the proposals on the significance defined in Section 2

The proposal to insert an access hatch into the bottom section of one of the belfry louvre openings with a short ladder below it will have a modest visual impact, only being visible from certain vantage points from the west. In return it will give the great benefit of being able to see and maintain the valley gutter between the tower and nave as this has leaked for many decades due to the inability to see when it becomes blocked and to access it to clear it.



Location of Belfry opening to be altered to give access to valley gutter



Timber angel corbel beneath valley gutter where leaks occur