

# St Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill

## London Borough of Camden

**HERITAGE ASSESSMENT | MAY 2022**

On behalf of SMC Youthwork



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Section 1

**Introduction.**

# 1 | Introduction

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, PRIMROSE HILL

- 1.1 This Built Heritage Statement has produced by Icen Projects to provide an appraisal of St Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill, Camden (henceforth 'the Site').
- 1.2 The building is Grade II listed and located within the Elsworth Road Conservation Area, within the London Borough of Camden.
- 1.3 This statement has been prepared to accompany development proposals, namely the replacement of the existing St Mary's Centre, creating a new home for Mary's Youthwork.
- 1.4 The assessment includes:
- 1.5 A review of the relevant legislative, policy and guidance framework;
- 1.6 an overview of the historical development of the Site and its surroundings;
- 1.7 A description of the Site and Assessment of significance, with contribution of specific areas to its special interest and Grade II listing;
- 1.8 A Description of the Proposals, and
- 1.9 An assessment of the impact of the proposed changes.
- 1.10 The existing Site and surrounding area were appraised during a site visit in May 2022. Research has been carried out at Lambeth Archives, through online research and digital archives, including the Survey of London.
- 1.11 The report has been produced by Icen Projects. Specifically, it is authored by Rebecca Mason BA (Hons) MSc MA IHBC; Associate, with review by Laurie Handcock, MA(Cantab) MSc, IHBC, Director.



Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan

Section 2

# **Planning, Legislation, Policy & Guidance.**

2 Planning, Legislation, Policy & Guidance

Legislation		National Policy						
2.1	Where any development may have a direct or indirect effect on designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure the proposals are considered with due regard for their impact on the historic environment.	<b>National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) (As amended)</b>	2.9	‘Significance’ is defined as ‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.’	2.14	Paragraph 199 states 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. It emphasises that the weight given to an asset’s conservation should be proportionate to its significance, and notes that this great weight should be given irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.		
2.2	Primary legislation under Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority or Secretary of State, as relevant, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.		2.4	In July 2018, the government published the updated National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”), which was again updated in February, June 2019 and July 2021. This maintains the focus on sustainable development that was established as the core of the previous, 2012, NPPF.	2.10	The ‘Setting of a heritage asset’ is defined as ‘The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.’	2.15	Paragraph 200 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.
2.3	Section 72(1) of the Act, meanwhile, states that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ‘In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.’</li></ul>		2.5	This national policy framework encourages intelligent, imaginative and sustainable approaches to managing change. Historic England has defined this approach, which is reflected in the NPPF, as ‘constructive conservation’: defined as ‘a positive and collaborative approach to conservation that focuses on actively managing change...the aim is to recognise and reinforce the historic significance of places, while accommodating the changes necessary to ensure their continued use and enjoyment’ (Constructive Conservation in Practice, Historic England, 2009).	2.11	Paragraph 192 requires local authorities to maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment.	2.16	Paragraphs 201 and 202 address the balancing of harm against public benefits. If a balancing exercise is necessary (i.e. if there is any harm to the asset), considerable weight should be applied to the statutory duty where it arises. Proposals that would result in substantial harm or total loss of significance should be refused, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss (as per Paragraph 201). Whereas, Paragraph 202 emphasises that where less than substantial harm will arise as a result of a proposed development, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
			2.6	Section 12, ‘Achieving well-designed places’, reinforces the importance of good design in achieving sustainable development, by ensuring the creation of inclusive and high quality places. This section of the NPPF affirms, in paragraph 130, the need for new design to function well and add to the quality of the surrounding area, establish a strong sense of place, and respond to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).	2.12	Paragraph 194 states that, when determining applications, local planning authorities should require applicants to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected and any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the significance of the asset and sufficient to understand the impact of the proposal on this significance. According to Paragraph 190, local planning authorities are also obliged to identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal and should take this assessment into account when considering the impact upon the heritage asset.	2.17	Paragraph 203 requires a balanced judgment for proposals that affect non-designated heritage assets, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
		2.7	The guidance contained within Section 16, ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’, relates to the historic environment, and developments which may have an effect upon it.			2.18	Paragraph 206 encourages opportunities for new development within, and within the setting of, Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, to enhance or better reveal their significance. It requires favourable treatment for proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset or which better reveal its significance.	
		2.8	Heritage Assets are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: ‘A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).’ Listed buildings and Conservation Areas are both designated heritage assets.	2.13	Paragraph 197 emphasises that 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.	2.19	Paragraph 207 notes that not all elements of Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites will contribute to their significance, but that, if harm to their significance is caused, decisions should follow the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 201 and 202, as appropriate.	

The Care of churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction measure (1991) and the Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Order 2010

2.20 Proposed works to a place of worship are exempt from the need for listed building consent by Ecclesiastical Exemption. The Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Order 2010 covers church buildings, their contents and anything fixed with them or their curtilage. Ecclesiastical Exemption applies to religious denominations that have demonstrated they have the necessary processes and requirements in place. St Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill is a place of worship under the Anglican Church, which has a Historic Church Committee within each Dioceses.

Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”) (Department for Communities and Local Government, last updated July 2019)

2.21 2.20 The guidance on Conserving and enhancing the historic environment in the PPG supports the NPPF. Paragraph 002 states that conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change that requires a flexible and thoughtful approach, and that neglect and decay of heritage assets is best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation.

2.22 2.21 Paragraph 006 sets out how heritage significance can be understood in the planning context as archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic, defined as follows: archaeological interest: As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. architectural and artistic interest: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture. historic interest: An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of

our nation’s history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

- 2.23 2.22 The PPG emphasises in paragraph 007 the importance of assessing the nature, extent and importance of a heritage asset in understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.
- 2.24 2.23 Paragraph 018 explains that, where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 194-196) apply. It goes on to state that whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest.
- 2.25 2.24 Harm may arise from works to the heritage asset or from development within its setting. A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.
- 2.26 2.25 The PPG also provides clear guidance in paragraph 020 on the meaning of ‘public benefits’, particularly in relation to historic environment policy, including paragraphs 193 to 196 of the NPPF. The PPG makes clear that public benefits should be measured according to the delivery of the three key drivers of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental outcomes, all of which are reflected in the objectives of the planning system, as per Paragraph 8 of the NPPF. Public benefits include heritage benefits, and do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

Strategic Policy

The London Plan

- 2.27 2.26 Regional policy for the London area is defined by the London Plan (2021), which has now been adopted (March 2021). The new London Plan deals with heritage issues in Chapter 7 Heritage and Culture, covering policies HC1 – HC7. The policies therein contained therein are of some, although minor, weight. London Plan Consolidated with Amendments. Heritage and Historic Environment policies in this plan are within Chapter 7 , London’s Living Spaces and Places – Historic environment and landscapes.
- 2.28 2.27 London Plan Policy 7.4 requires development to have regard to the form, function and structure of an area and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings. The design of buildings, streets and open spaces should provide a high-quality design response enhancing the character and function of an area.
- 2.29 2.28 London Plan Policy 7.6 notes that the architecture should “make a positive contribution to a coherent public realm, streetscape and wider cityscape. It should incorporate the highest quality materials and design appropriate to its context”.
- 2.30 2.29 Policy 7.8 ‘Heritage assets and archaeology’ establishes the following clauses regarding heritage assets in London:
- 2.31 2.30 Strategic: London’s heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.
- 2.32 2.31 Planning Decisions: Development should identify value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate. 2.32 Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail. .

Local Development Plan

London Borough of Camden Local Plan, 2017

- 2.33
- The London Borough of Camden’s Local Plan was adopted by the Council on 3 July 2017. Along with the Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) also form a key part of LB Camden’s Local Development Framework.
- 2.34
- Relevant heritage policies contained within Local Development Plan documents are as follows:
  - Policy D1 Design part (q)
  - Policy D2 Heritage.
- 2.35
- Policy D1 ‘Design’ requires high quality design that, relevant to this assessment:
  - ‘respects local context and character’;
  - ‘preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 Heritage’;
  - ‘comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character’;
  - ‘preserves strategic and local views’.
- 2.36
- Policy D2 Heritage states that ‘The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance 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 and locally listed heritage assets’.

Regarding Conservation Areas, the Council will:

- ‘require that development within Conservation Areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;
- resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area;
- resist development outside of a Conservation Area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that Conservation Area; and
- preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area or which provide a setting for Camden’s architectural heritage.’

The Council also will also ‘resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting

Camden Planning Guidance

Design Supplementary Planning Document (January 2021)

- 2.37
- This document supports the requirements for high-quality design set out in Camden’s Local Plan and the NPPF.
- 2.38
- It states that ‘Camden is committed to excellence in design and schemes should consider:
  - The context of a development and its surrounding area;
  - The design of the building itself;
  - The use and function of buildings;
  - Using good quality sustainable materials;
  - Creating well connected public spaces and good quality public realm;
  - Opportunities for promoting health and well-being
  - Opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area.’ (p.6)
- 2.39
- This guidance sets out in detail the principles for ‘design excellence’ in Camden.
- 2.40
- Regarding heritage, this guidance states that: ‘The Council will make a balanced judgment having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset/s affected. ’ Taking into account:
  - ‘The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of any heritage asset/s and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
  - The positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality and health and wellbeing;
  - The desirability of new development that affects heritage assets to preserve and enhance local character and distinctiveness.’ (p. 18)
- 2.41
- This is in line with Camden’s Policies D1 & D2.

Section 3

# **Historic Development of the Site and Surroundings.**

### 3 Historic Development of the Site and Surroundings

#### Methodology

3.1 The following historic development of the Site and its surroundings has been compiled using map regression. It is also drawn from secondary research, particularly the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2009).

#### Primrose Hill

- 3.2 Historically Primrose Hill was forested land before Henry VI gave the land to provost and fellows of the newly founded Eton college in the 15th century. Primrose Hill remained as open land until the mid 19th century, where the expansion of London resulted in encroaching development.
- 3.3 The 19th century saw a lot of plans for Primrose Hill, however none were ever realised. Whitbread's Map of London (1865) shows a plan for the layout of buildings which closely resembles the current plan, however there are parts which were also never realised. While King Henry's Road and Harley Road remain, in part due to early development at their north-eastern ends, the planned Bolingbroke Road and Wellesley Crescent (which largely followed the course of the modern Elsworthy Road and Wadham Gardens respectively) were never built and King's College Road (a reference to the Etonian origins of the land) was lost completely to development in 1901.
- 3.4 By 1920 the route of the London and Birmingham Railway was developed. The only development in the area consisted of large houses along the western side of Avenue Road to the north (from its junction with the old Primrose Hill Road, now Prince Albert Road, running round the northern edge of Regent's Park).
- 3.5 By 1934, the route of the London and Birmingham Railway is now shown as being tunnelled between Swiss Cottage and Chalk Farm. During this time residential expansion began to occur.
- 3.6 The 1866 OS Map, shows development to the north of the Eton and Middlesex Cricket Ground, with the 1871 Map showing more definition to the houses along Avenue Road.

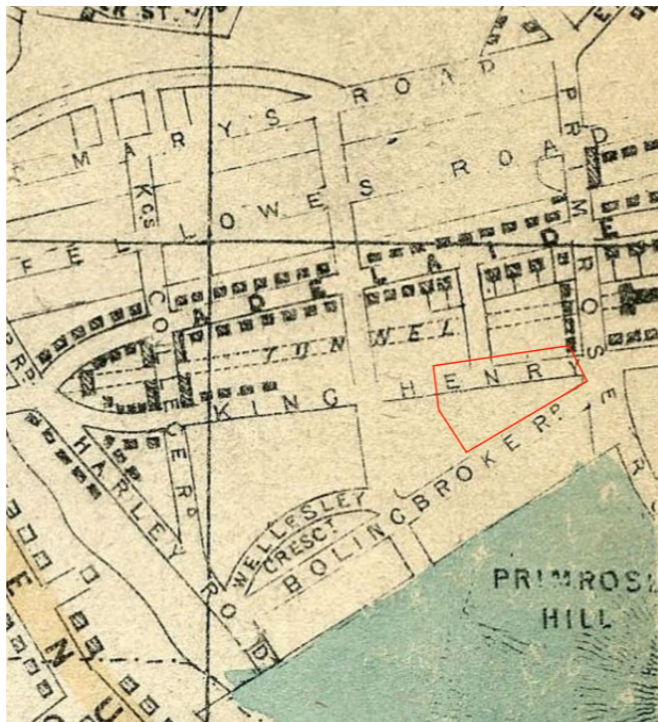


Figure 3.1 Whitbread's Map of London 1865



Figure 3.2 Charles Booth's Poverty Map 1886-1903



Figure 3.3 Bomb Damage Map 1945

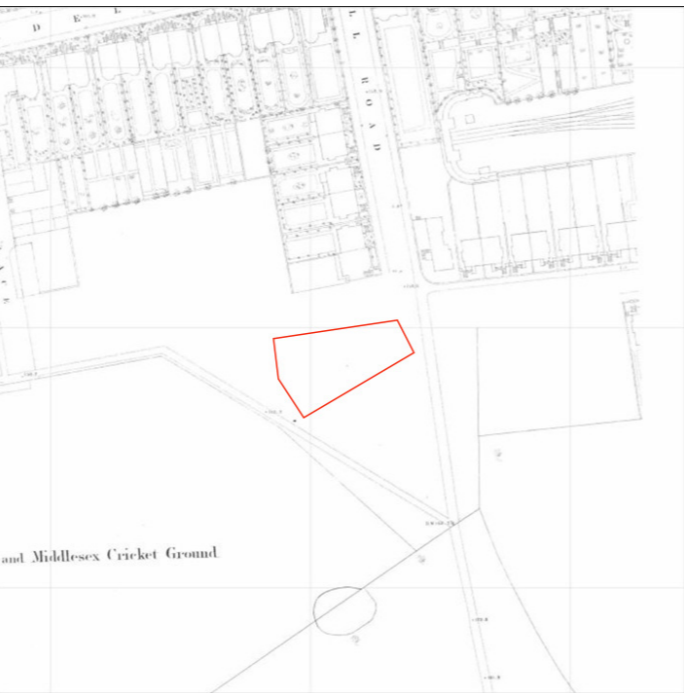


Figure 3.4 OS Map dated 1866. © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100035207



Figure 3.5 OS Map dated 1896 © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100035207

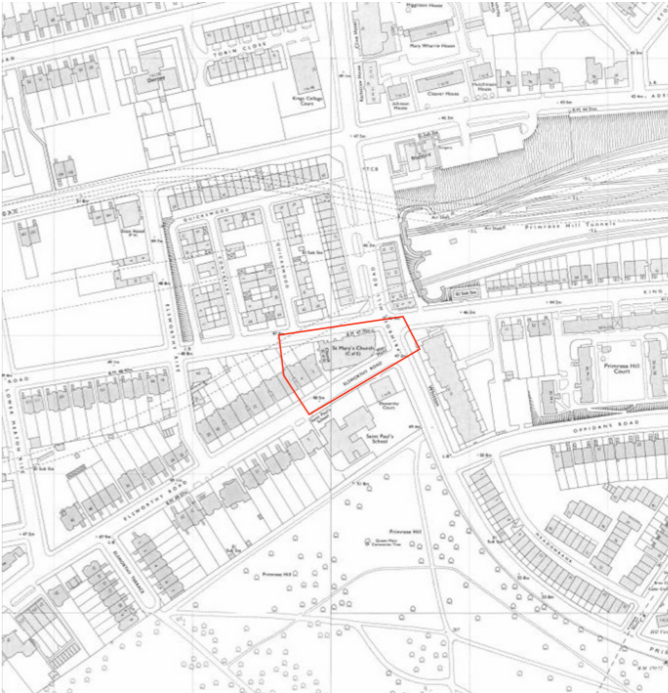


Figure 3.6 OS Map dated 1972 © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100035207

### 3 | Historic Development of the Site and Surroundings

#### ST MARY THE VIRGIN, PRIMROSE HILL

- 3.7 St Mary's does not appear on OS Maps until 1896, where its relationship to neighbouring buildings is reflective of the site today. This is confirmed by subsequent maps during the 20th century.
- 3.8 The area suffered minor bomb damage during WWII, resulting in one house, 43 Elsworthy Road, being replaced with a 1950s block of flats. The area has primarily only seen infill development and the subdivision of larger buildings since it was development at the turn of the century.



Figure 3.8 Interior view St Mary's dated 1903. St Mary's Primrose Hill, A Guide and History. London : Parish Church of St. Mary-the-Virgin, Primrose Hill, London, England], 1972.

#### History of St Mary the Virgin

- 3.9 In his book *Some London Churches*, Rev. E. Hermitage Day provides a clear description of St Mary the Virgin:
- 3.10 *Saint Mary's, Primrose Hill, stands well on a slightly irregular site, where two roads meet at an accute angle. Its apse is well seen and the pleasant curve of the ambulatory which girdles the apse is a notable feature of the exterior view.*
- 3.11 Writing fifty years after the Church was erected the description provides an insight into how the building was appreciated by a contemporary.
- 3.12 St Mary's was founded following a campaigning by George William Bell. Recognising the need for a place of worship to meet the growing local population and worshippers.
- 3.13 Previously Bell and George Bell had founded an 'industrial school for destitute boys' in Euston Road in response to the number of destitute boys on the street. In discussion with friends within the church, they felt the Church had a duty to respond to the social failings of the Industrial Revolution.
- 3.14 The building of St Pancras station resulted in the relocation of the boys home to the corner of Regent's Park Road and King Henry's Road in 1865. A Chapel was also provided so a hundred boys could be accommodated. However the with the growing population the Chapel could not serve the local residents and so a new site for a church was sought.
- 3.15 In 1870, the owners of the land, Eton College, were approached to donate a site for a permanent church. They gave the land of the present St Mary's, and a local member of the congregation, M.P Manning, was asked to design it. Construction began later that year in December 1870, and was completed in 1872. The church opened for worship with the title of St Mary the Virgin Primrose Hill with Mr Fuller as priest-in-charge. However, the church was not consecrated until thirteen years later in 1885 due to the Bishop of London opposing the Anglo-Catholic character of worship in the church.
- 3.16 It originally proved too difficult for the congregation to raise all the money required for Manning's full scheme therefore they settled for a scaled down version without the spire, narthex and west end. The south aisle, chapel, sacristy and ambulatory were added later in the 1890s following fundraising by Mr Spencer, Priest of St Mary's at the time.
- 3.17 The Church is akin to many late nineteenth century churches built around this time; built as a robust structure, there to serve God, but built quickly and on a limited budget as the build relied upon donations.
- 3.18 The spread of the Church reached the locality with a Parish Hall being constructed in Oppidans Mews in 1896, now demolished and Verger's Cottage in 1899.
- 3.19 The Church of St Mary's came into prominence in the early 20th Century due to the changes introduced by its third vicar, Percy Dearmer. Percy Dearmer was the vicar between 1901 and 1915 and was a lifelong socialist, advocating for public ministry of women and social justice.
- 3.20 Dearmer is well known for his publication of the influential work, *The Parson's Handbook*. The intention of the book was to establish Anglo-Catholic liturgical practices in the native English tradition (as opposed to Italianate). It was to help "remedying the lamentable confusion, lawlessness, and vulgarity which are conspicuous in the Church at this time" and was focused mainly on the art and beauty in worship. He implemented many of these English reforms whilst being at St Mary's, such as whitewashing the polychromatic brick of the chancel in 1906 and the rest of the church in 1914, singing of plainsong and hanging pictures and curtains.
- 3.21 In 1906, while still at St Mary's, Dearmer collaborated with renowned English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams to write *The English Hymnal*. He later worked with Vaughan Williams and Martin Shaw to produce *Songs of Praise* in 1926, and *The Oxford Book of Carols* in 1928.
- 3.22 The English Hymnal was described as the best collection of English hymns when it was published. It offered an alternative to Hymns Ancient and Modern and gained national popularity. The book reflected the hymns sung by Dearmer's congregation at St Mary. Both books are pivotal in the Church of England and have been credited with reintroducing traditional and medieval English music. They are notable for the first appearances of well known hymns such as Morning has broken, In the bleak mid-winter and He who would valiant.
- 3.23 During the wars, St Mary's suffered comparably to most London churches both in terms of its congregation and to the building itself. Many of the children were evacuated and the congregation dispersed with only a few remaining in the area. The building was damaged with holes in the roof of the nave and apse and many windows shattered.
- 3.24 In 1956-57, under the leadership of Rev George Boorne Timms, St Mary's formed a union with St Paul on Avenue Road. St Paul's was bombed and left derelict, resulting in the combined parishes worshipping at St Mary's.



Figure 3.7 St Mary's Primrose Hill, A Guide and History. London : Parish Church of St. Mary-the-Virgin, Primrose Hill, London, England], 1972.

### 3 | Historic Development of the Site and Surroundings

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, PRIMROSE HILL



Figure 3.9 Site photos taken by Dow Jones Architects

Section 4

# **Site Description and Identification of Assets.**

## 4 Site Description and Identification of Heritage Assets

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, PRIMROSE HILL

### Site location

St Mary the Virgin is located on Primrose Hill Road, between Elsworthy Road and King Henry's Road in the London Borough of Camden. The proposed extension to the church will sit on the site of the existing St Mary's Centre, to the east of the site.

The building is immediately abutted by residential buildings to the west, however is firmly within a wider residential context.

### Methodology

The assessment methodology used for assessing the significance of the identified heritage assets and their settings is based on the Historic England's Conservation Principles (both the published version by English Heritage in 2008 (ref.1) and the draft revised version by Historic England in November 2017 (ref.2)).

Identification of special interest and significance is based on the three heritage interests - historical, archaeological and architectural & artistic - the definitions of these interests are set out in the PPG and cited in section 2 of this report.

1. <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/imagesbooks/publications/conservation-principlessustainable-management-historicenvironment/conservationprinciplespoliciesguidanceapr08web.pdf/>

2. <https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/guidance/conservationprinciples-consultation-draft-pdf>






### Identification of Heritage Assets

The application site is a Grade II listed building, located within the Elsworthy Conservation Area. Within a 300m radius there are a number of other designated heritage assets.

- Primrose Hill tunnels (East Portal). Grade II\* NHLE: 1329904
- Primrose Hill Registered Park and Garden. NHLE 1001526

The significance of these assets is considered in the following section.



-  Site location
-  Elsworthy Road Conservation Area
-  Grade II Listed Building
-  Grade II\* Listed Building
-  Registered Park and Garden

Section 5

# **Assessment of Significance.**

5 Assessment of Significance

St Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill

- 4.1

Historic England’s document ‘Conservation Principles – Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment’ (2008) identifies a series of values that can be attributed to a heritage asset and which help to appraise and define its significance. Paragraph 3.3 of the document outlines that:

“In order to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider:

  - who values the place, and why they do so
  - how those values relate to its fabric
  - their relative importance
  - whether associated objects contribute to them
  - the contribution made by the setting and context of the place • how the place compares with others sharing similar values.”
- 4.2

In assessing the significance of the listed building it is therefore necessary to examine its origins, history, use, form, architectural design, layout, materials and relationship with surrounding buildings. In making this assessment, consideration has been given to its intrinsic architectural merit, its completeness, the extent of any alterations and their impact, the use of the building, its contribution to the character and appearance of the area and the degree to which the building illustrates aspects of local or national history.
- 4.3

As referenced, Historic England’s ‘Conservation Principles’ identifies values that can be attributed to a heritage asset. These have been examined in turn below.

Historical interest

- 4.4

The church displays historical value as one of the many churches built in North London during London’s 19th century urban expansion. The creation of the parish represented the establishment of the community in 1856 and the need for a place for the congregation to worship.
- 4.5

The Church also has a historical link to the industrial revolution and the change is social circumstance of the wider population. Namely the church was built in response to the growing number of homeless boys and the need to house and train them.
- 4.6

Historical interest is also found in the Church association with notable figures including Percy Dearmer. St Mary’s was the place of worship where he implemented his thoughts on liturgy and complied the English Hymnal. This work is of national importance, which connects St Mary’s with a wider community.
- 4.7

In summary, the Church holds some historic interest.

Communal

- 4.8

The Church has communal value being at the centre of Anglican worship within the parish. The Church reaches its immediate congregation through being a place of worship, whilst reaching the wider community through the services it offers.
- 4.9

The church has a strong historical connection to the community owing to its birth from the Boys Home and the growth of the congregation during the 19th century. The church has continues it social reach mission and is used for a broad range of activities including choir practice, community sports activites, public lectures, brewing, community meetings and by community support groups. This further raises its significance for the local community as a place where people from different backgrounds, ages and means can meet.
- 4.10

The church is also notable as the home of Mary’s Youthwork, who credit their location in a church building as contributing to their success. This work in the community further increases it communal value.
- 4.11

The building provides considerable communal value.

Evidential Interest

- 4.12

Architectural interest is found in the 19th century Gothic architecture St Mary’s displays. The building is primarily constructed of high quality soft red brick, Bath stone and Welsh slate, with architectural detailing contributing to its aesthetic quality. The church is recognised as being highly crafted both internally and externally. Several internal features were bequeathed to the Church and consequently are highly decorative and of substantial quality. All of which contributes to the architectural interest of the building.
- 4.13

Interest is also found in the complexity of the site and how the historic core was adapted to the change in boundary during the course of construction. The original design for St Mary’s was not realised but this adds interest in itself, to see how M.P. Manning adapted the design.
- 4.14

Interest is also found through the additions and extensions to the church principally in response to the needs of the Church and the services it offered. This provides evidence of the Church’s role in the community. However not all the additions are noted as being significant, with the additions to the east and west end detract slightly from the overall architectural quality of the church.
- 4.15

Overall the Church is of some architectural and artistic interest.

Phasing of the building

- 4.16

Overleaf the different phases of the building’s development are articulated in drawing form.
- 4.17

The original church consisted of a nave a north aisle, however the north aisle was demolished in the 1870s owing to subsidence. The north aisle was rebuilt to a different design and is identified in blue.
- 4.18

Between 1890-92 the sout aisle, sacristy, ambulatory and church hall were added. As identified the amendment to the site plan resulted in the southern additions not being built in accordance with the original design. Instead it was amended to respond to the reduced width of the plot, following the widening of Elsworthy Road.
- 4.19

The more contemporary additions have been to the east and west, with a parish room, kitchen and toilets added in the latter part ofthe 20th century.
- 4.20

The existing St Mary’s Centre dates from 2006 when it was built, replacing the Church’s ambulatory.

## 5 Assessment of Significance

### Development Phasing of St Mary the Virgin

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, PRIMROSE HILL



Figure 5.1 Drawings by Dow Jones Architects

# 5 Assessment of Significance

## Elsworth Road Conservation Area

- 5.1 The special interest of the conservation area derives from its character as a wealthy residential suburb, which has developed primarily during the 19th and 20th centuries.
- 5.2 Following the arrival of the railway urban development occurred from c. 1840's when major roads were built providing direct links to the centre of London. During this time Primrose Hill was acquired for public recreation. Both the infrastructure and public open space contributed to the residential growth.
- 5.3 The area grew during the later half of the 19th century, with speculative residential development of varying typologies being built. The area is characterised as being a 'garden suburb' with buildings relating to the landscape through generous gardens.
- 5.4 The appearance of the conservation stems from the variety of architecture deriving from typologies. Pairs of villas are typically 3 storeys, whilst terraces rise up to 4 storeys. Buildings are typically set back from the road by front gardens, with some incorporating lower ground floor levels.
- 5.5 In summary the significance of the conservation area derives from its growth as a wealthy residential suburb, with the built form and relationship with greenery and key contributor to its character and appearance.

## Primrose Hill Tunnels

- 5.6 The northernmost of the two Primrose Hill tunnels was completed in 1837 and was the first railway tunnel in London as well as one of the earliest in the country. Built for the London and Birmingham Railway Company the tunnels remain largely as built, despite their context having changed.
- 5.7 Significance is found in the tunnels forming part of a pioneering railway speculation, enhanced by the individuality of the tunnels construction. It was the first railway tunnel in London; the first nationally to negotiate the issue of competing claims for the use of land in an urban context; and the first tunnel to treat one of its portals architecturally.
- 5.8 The portal is also of more than special architectural interest for its proud, classical elevation which is indicative of the upmarket development Eton College hoped to undertake nearby.

## Primrose Hill

- 5.9 Primrose Hill has a unique character, separating it from Regent's Park which it neighbours to the south.
- 5.10 From the top of the grass hill some of the best views of London can be experienced, including the six protected views which form part of the London View Management Framework.
- 5.11 Historic interest is found in the sites connection with Henry VIII as the site was used as part of a great chase. The area's association with Eton College is also of interest as if the purchase of the site from the college to give public open space to the less fortunate residents of north London.
- 5.12 As a registered park and garden, its significance derives from its contribution to London's public open spaces, from which you can connect to the historic use, whilst appreciating the growth of the city.



Figure 5.2 Primrose Hill Tunnel East Portals under construction. (J H Nixon after J Cleghorn, CLSAC)



Figure 5.3 Aerial view of Primrose Hill from Google Earth Pro

Section 6

# **Description of Proposals and Assessment of Impact.**

6 | Description of Proposals and Assessment of Impact

Description of Proposals

- 6.1 A new home is required for Mary's Youthwork, a successful local organisation reaching vulnerable young people and children within the Parish. The nature of the service provided has evolved over its 15 years, resulting in the need for a new facility to support the local community.
- 6.2 In replacing the existing St Mary's Centre, located at the east end of the church, the new 2 storey building has an extended pitch roof with two new pitches on the south side.
- 6.3 The new building follows the established built line with a projection for the doorway, responding to the two existing trees, result in two small courtyards either side. The built line has been consciously designed to ensure the retention of the trees as they form an important element of the townscape. The primary entrance to the new centre is located between the trees, demarked by a double height space.
- 6.4 The materiality has sought to reflect the church, with the use of red brick and an oxidised copper roof. A mix of fenestration sizes has been included on the elevations, each simply detailed.
- 6.5 Internally the building will be connected to the church, with the new office connected to the vestry and St Mary's hall to the nave. Both are existing connections.



Figure 6.1 Model of the building in a view from the east.  
Down Jones Architects



Figure 6.3 Proposed North Elevation. Dow Jones Architects



Figure 6.4 Proposed South Elevation. Dow Jones Architects



Figure 6.2 Proposed East Elevation. Dow Jones Architects

# 6 | Description of Proposals and Assessment of Impact

## Consideration of Alternative Options

- 6.6
- In developing the scheme a number of different design options were explored prior to identifying the east of the site as the most appropriate. This is fully explored within the Design and Access Statement produced by Dow Jones Architects.
- 6.7
- Locations considered include the nave, the transept, within the crypt and in the undercroft following the lowering of the floor level. Options to extend existing structures were also interrogated, namely extending the vestry. Some options were also combined.
- 6.8
- Each option had advantages and disadvantages. If the use was to be located inside the Church there were concerns over how multiple uses could function concurrently and the required privacy given to the clients of the St Mary Centre. Additionally there were issues with natural light and needing to provide independent access especially as the Centre was working which young people.
- 6.9
- In considering an internal structure it was found that the space required took up too much space either in the nave or transept. In some placements the positioning of existing internal features, including the organ and position of the windows, restricted the scale of a new structure, with any new structure also blocking internal light.
- 6.10
- In considering the impacts of the proposed scheme, a single storey new building to the east was also considered, mindful that the impacts are likely to be reduced. A single storey structure could not accommodate a multi-purpose room, resulting in the main hall being required exclusively by St Mary's Centre, preventing use by other groups. Trees would also need to be removed to accommodate the floorspace. Additionally a separate entrance could not be provided.
- 6.11
- The proposed design has been found to be the most appropriate, not only for the St Mary's Centre, but also for the Church and the local community who use both facilities. The building will provide enough space for the outreach programme, an independent entrance and consultation rooms for one-on-one meetings. As such the proposal will provide invaluable space for the services the Church provides to the community.

## Assessment of Impact

### Removal of existing centre

- 6.12
- The existing St Mary's Centre, built in 2006, rebuilt the ambulatory. It has a circular footprint with the building housing a narrow band of accommodation that provides a disabled facilities, a small kitchen and a small counselling room. The building is not fit for purpose being cramped and poorly lit, and given the size of the building footprint, offers little usable accommodation.
- 6.13
- This building contributes no interest to the significance of St Mary the Virgin and is not considered to be of townscape merit. As such its removal and replacement is not harmful to the Church or its setting, including the Eldridge Road Conservation Area.

### Design

- 
- The design of the building responds to the historic core of the church, whilst referencing details found on the additions which surround the nave.
- 6.14
- The primary design detail is the form of the roof which has been designed to reference the geometry of the church hall, and sits alongside the main body of the church in a similar way to the church hall and the Lady Chapel. Appreciated in context with the irregularly shaped site, the roof makes a dynamic form which responds with changing views as you walk around the building. This not only creates visual interest from local views within the public realm, but compliments the glimpsed views of roof pitches along the elevation on the host building, which owing to the projects become screened or revealed depending on the view point. There is a clear synergy between the traditional and contemporary forms and the play on visibility.
- 6.15
- In terms of height the new building is lower than those which neighbour the addition. Moreover, the ridge of the peaks will be lower than the ridge of the roof of the main hall and lady chapel. This ensures the new structure is subservient to the host building and is contained within the canopy of the trees when viewed from the east.

- 6.16
- Towards the west of the proposed building, each pitched roof will have a hip to ensure that it meets the east wall of the church below the east windows. This is a sympathetic approach, ensuring no architectural detailing is impacted by the addition whilst allowing the building to read as a clear addition therefore aiding the evolution of the building. Additionally the form of the roof will mean that the new roofs cannot be seen from the chancel of the church. This maintained the historic outlook from within the church with is sensitive to the assets significance.

### Materials

- 6.17
- In keeping with the historic additions which have been added to the site, the primary material of the new building is in a red brick. In keeping the material palette simple, brick course detailing will pick up string courses and plinths found in the stonework of the brick church. The use of one material is a contemporary approach, but the subtle references to the architectural detailing found on the church embeds the structure to the host building, contextualising it.
- 6.18
- The use of an oxidised copper roof is appropriate as a traditional material found on ecclesiastical buildings. St Mary's roof has an extensive amount of oxidised copper, including on the south aisle roof, the turret roof and visible rainwater goods. Furthermore its subtle variation from the slate used on the historic core and lead used on the later additions, visually adding the new layer to the site's evolution.
- 6.19
- Large windows will provide generous light into the spaces as well as views in and out. This is a direct reference to the sense of scale felt inside St Mary's owing to the large windows serving the nave on the upper levels. Smaller windows reference the hierarchy to the fenestration found on the church, which typically has smaller windows at ground floor level.
- 6.20
- As such the material palette is appropriate for an addition to the heritage asset. They are of high quality, referencing the traditional materials of St Mary's whilst aiding interpretation of the sites development. Furthermore they compliment the local character and will ensure the building remains a features within the local townscape.

### Summary

- 6.21
- The proposals are considered to respect the local context and character of the area and comprise details and materials that are of high quality and compliment the local character. As such the proposals are considered to accord with the Council's Design policy D1.

6 | Description of Proposals and Assessment of Impact

Impact on St Mary the Virgin

Community		Proposed Extension	
6.22	The Church was built to serve the local community. It was founded in response to the community need and the social impacts of industrialisation. The congregation grew from the Boys School to Eton College providing the land and a Parish member designing the Church. Community is ingrained and integral to the founding of the Church and its development.	6.27	The new building has been sited so as to have minimal direct impact on the Church. It is located on the exact site of the existing St Mary's Centre, replacing a contemporary structure which does not enhance the significance of the heritage asset. As such the alteration is occurring in an area which has historically been subject to change, with no wider impacts on the Church. Existing access points between the two building are also being retained and reused, which is a sensitive approach.
6.23	It has continued to be a place for the local community, supporting them and being a place to come for help, guidance and assistance. As identified, the buildings significance lies in its functionality, its historic use over time, its architecture and it contribution to the development of the area, however significance is also derives from communal value formed out of the value the site has played continually to the local community.	6.28	At present the building appears as an isolated island, with there being little to no activation at the ground floor level owing to the detailed design of the existing structure. Siting the replacement building in this location allows for greater interaction with the streetscene, resulting in more engagement between the Church and wider area.
6.24	In considering the impact the proposals will have on the special interest of the listed building, the narrative has to be wider than the impact on built fabric and townscape. The heritage impact of the proposal derives from supporting and reinforcing the nature of the community work the Church does, allowing space for it to continue and reach varied groups with different needs. This builds upon the founding of the Church and its continued development and relationship with the community. Therefore the communal value of the building is enhanced by the proposals and consequently the overall significance of the church.	6.29	It is recognised that as a result of the height more of the apse will be screened in views from the east than by the existing structure. Firstly the contribution the apse has to the special interest of the building needs to be understood. The building is considered to be a 'workhouse' church; built to be functional, built based on donations and built quickly. Whilst there is embellishment in the architecture, this is not elaborate owing for the lack of funds at the time of construction and the need to build a Church suitable for its purpose. Therefore whilst the apse has more visual and architectural interest than other areas of the Church, it is not so decorative as to hold greater interest and should be understood as part of the development and architecture of the Church as a whole as opposed to a single element.
Existing St Mary's Centre			
6.25	The existing St Mary's Centre dates from 2006 and has been identified as a detracting element. By virtue of its design, form and architecture it does not enhance the significance of the heritage asset, nor does it actively engage with the public realm. It is considered to be a functional but unstimulating addition to the church.	6.30	In true elevation the apse will be screened to a greater degree than the existing, however in reality the existing trees provide screening. The current arrangement between the St Mary's Centre and apse can be enhanced and whilst the increased height will obscure more of the elevation in true elevation, it allows for an improved relationship with the host building where they meet. Furthermore the apse is appreciated in the round and not directly from one vantage point. This is reflected in the design which has responded to the need for the building to be appreciated in the round, owing to the prominence of the site and its visibility. Consequently, reducing the height towards the Church and including a hip to the roofline, results in the apse remaining visible in views from the north, south and south east.
6.26	As such its removal can be considered to be an enhancement to the heritage asset. Removing a detracting addition provides an opportunity for enhancement. This opportunity has been recognised as a chance to improve the facilities serving the local community.	6.31	If experienced kinetically, the proposed extension does not impact on the appreciation of the Church from the streetscape. If experienced on the west side of Primrose Hill Road, the extension will not appear larger than the existing structure and if viewed from King Henry's Road, owing to the width of the road the Chancel will still be readily apparent.
		6.32	The similarity in scale of the proposed building with the main hall and the Lady Chapel also contributes to the evolution of the church and how it has responded to the constraints of the site. Each structure reads as an individual addition as opposed to one mass which subsumes the lower level of the church. This not only adds visual interest, but aids in understanding and interpreting the development of the site, allowing the core to remain the primary focus.
		6.33	The architectural response of the proposed extension and the materiality is reflective of the host building, whilst being a contemporary addition. A distinct addition allows for the historic core of the Church to be appreciated, whilst contributing to the evolution of the Site. As such the proposed architecture is appropriate for the listed building. It is felt that a structure which is pastiche with the Church would prevent the core of the Church form being understood and a visual amalgamation of the historic additions, resulting in a detracting form. In this instance the removal of an existing detracting feature and the introduction of a well-defined architectural piece is an enhancement to the listed building.
		6.34	In summary, the proposed addition is replacing a modern unsympathetic addition to the Church with a contemporary piece of architecture reflecting of the heritage asset. The significance of the building derives from its architecture, but not from its architecture alone. The building has constantly been adapted, even during the course of its original construction and has responded to the change in site plan and the needs of the congregation. As such, the impact on the special interest of the building, resulting from obscuring a section of the church is not considered to be so harmful in the context of its significance as a whole.
		6.35	The Site has a strong connection with the Parish resulting from it being an example of a Church responding to the 19th century expansion of London and the social responsibilities of homeless boys. The building was founded to support the community and the congregation, which it has continued to do so through out its history. The special interest of the Church will be enhanced through the increased appreciation of the communal value to the Church has to the community, and therefore the historic significance of the Church. The proposals will allow the continuation of social out reach enhancing the historic relationship with the Parish and the communal interest embedded within the Church.
		Impact on Elsworthy Road Conservation Area	
		6.36	The proposed new building is will not harm the character and appearance of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area or its special interest, which derives from its character as a wealthy residential suburb, which developed primarily during the 19th and 20th centuries.
		6.37	The Church forms part of that development and the new building will be appreciated as part of the expansion and development of the church. The relationship between the Church and the local community also contributes to the character of the area and the continuation and strengthening of that link through the proposals is a benefit, both in terms of community out reach and greater activation with the streetscene.
		6.38	The Conservation Area Audit notes that new development should show consideration to the elevational treatment of buildings and where possible respect the traditional forms and rooflines found in the conservation area. This building does that, through its contextual massing, rooflines and material palette and brickwork detailing.
		6.39	As such the proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
		Impact on the setting of Identified Heritage Assets	
		6.40	Both Primrose Hill (Registered Park and Garden) and Primrose Tunnels (Grade II* listed) are located at a distance from the Site, with there being no intervisibilty between them. As such the proposed new building will have no impact on their setting.

# Section 7

## **Conclusion.**

# 7 Conclusion

- 7.1

This report has been prepared to accompany an application for a new St Mary’s Centre at St Mary’s Primrose Hill. It has been written with regard to Historic England Advice notes and relevant policy and guidance.
- 7.2

The assessment has considered the historic development of the Site and the surrounding area to demonstrate and inform an assessment of significance of the asset. Site visits have been undertaken, to identify the special interest of the listed building and an assessment of the proposals has been made.
- 7.3

The proposals have built upon heritage specific guidance to ensure the significance of the heritage assets is preserved.
- 7.4

As a result of the proposals it is considered that the special interest of the building will be preserved, with the intrinsic architectural and historic values associated within the building being maintained. The special interest of the Church will be enhanced through the increased appreciation of the communal value to the Church has to the community, and therefore the historic significance of the Church
- 7.5

Should the proposals be found to result in harm to the heritage asset, the NPPF directs 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use” (paragraph 202).
- 7.6

It has been demonstrated, both in this heritage statement and within the Design and Access Statement prepared by Dow Jones Architects, that the new building is the feasible means of providing the use and that any alternatives would have disadvantages either for the heritage asset or the service provided by the St Mary’s Centre.
- 7.7

As such the public benefits include, but are not limited to:

- A dedicated location for the St Mary’s Centre, which provides outreach and support to young people in the area.

- The creation of space for large group activities as well as for private counselling, and an office for the youth-work team. Consequently a range of services to tackle a range of situations.

- In providing a dedicated space for youthwork will allow other parish activities to develop, removing pressure from the nave and office.

- Dedicated access point to the centre which aids safeguarding and improves access to the whole building through the creation of new accessible spaces..

- Replacement of a structure which does not contribute to the significance of the church and its replacement with a building of high quality architectural merit.

- The building will be highly sustainable: it will have a timber structure and reuse existing foundations in order to keep embodied energy down; it will be highly insulated; and it will be heated with an air source heat pump and ventilated with a heat recovery system.

- Retention of the existing trees and new planting will be introduced around the bases of the trees.
- 7.8

Overall, therefore, the proposals are considered to be in alignment with the London Borough of Camden’s policies on listed buildings, heritage and design and are in alignment with the requirements of the NPPF Chapter 16.

# Appendix 1

## **References.**

# Appendix 1 | References

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, PRIMROSE HILL)

## Policy Documents

- London Plan (2021)
- Camden Local Plan 2017
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (GPA2) (Historic England, March 2015)
- National Planning Policy Framework, MHLCG, February 2019
- ‘Historic Environment’, Planning Practice Guidance, MHLCG, July 2019

## Primary and Secondary Sources

- National Heritage List for England <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search>
- Britain from Above <https://britainfromabove.org.uk/>
- Survey of London, Volume XL
- OS Historic Maps
- British Library Maps
- Camden Archives
- The National Archives
- Old Maps Online (historic maps) MAP of LONDON and its ENVIRONS 209 ([oldmapsonline.org](http://oldmapsonline.org))
- Romantic London (histroic maps) Introducing Horwood’s Plan (1792-99) – Romantic London
- St Mary’s Primrose Hill, A Guide and History. London : Parish Church of St. Mary-the-Virgin, Primrose Hill, London, England], 1972.
- Some London Churches by Rev E. Hermitage Day. 1913.

Appendix 2

# **Statutory List Entries.**

Appendix 2 | Statutory List Entries

St Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1329902

Date first listed: 14-May-1974

Statutory Address: CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, PRIMROSE HILL ROAD

CAMDEN

TQ2784SE PRIMROSE HILL ROAD 798-1/63/1336 (West side) 14/05/74 Church of St Mary the Virgin

Church. 1871-2. By Michael P Manning; built by Dove Brothers. c1891-2 south aisle and chapel added. Red brick with stone dressings. Slated roofs with lugged brick eaves cornice. Early French Gothic style. EXTERIOR: 3-bay aisled nave with clerestory and north transept, apsidal-ended sanctuary and south-east chapel. Main entrances on north elevation; western entrance with gabled portico, eastern with gabled hoodmould, both with brick moulded arches having bas relief tympana. Slightly pointed lancet windows. Gabled transept with 3 arcaded windows, plate tracery rose window and 3 linked lancets in apex. Chancel has 5 plate tracery windows flanked by buttresses; west end 3 arcades windows, plate tracery rose window flanked by oculi. INTERIOR: has wagon roof to nave and transept; chancel and south-east chapel are vaulted; aisles have flying buttresses. Columns with stiff leaf capitals. Features by local artists include stained glass by Clayton and Bell and CE Kempe, enamelwork by Henry Holiday, reredos and pulpit by GF Bodley, oak seating by Temple Moore. HISTORICAL NOTE: due to the High Church practices of the first incumbent St Mary the Virgin was not consecrated until 1885. From 1901-15 the vicar, Percy Dearmer, editor of the English Hymnal and Songs of Praise, made the church a showpiece of liturgical worship and good music. His reforms included whitewashing of the original red and black interior.

Primrose Hill Tunnels

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II\*

List Entry Number: 1329904

Date first listed: 14-May-1974

Statutory Address: PRIMROSE HILL TUNNELS (EASTERN PORTALS), PRIMROSE HILL ROAD

798-1/63/1338 PRIMROSE HILL ROAD 26-JUN-07 PRIMROSE HILL TUNNELS (EASTERN PORTALS)

II\* Pair of railway tunnel portals at the eastern end of the Primrose Hill Tunnels, 1837 (northern) and 1879 (southern), for the London and Birmingham Railway to designs by William Budden.

PORTALS: While the context of the Primrose Hill Tunnels has alterned dramatically, the structures themselves remain largely as they were built. The northern portal is the earlier, built in 1837, of stock brick and stone with stone dressings. It has a round-arched tunnel mouth with coved reveals of rusticated voussoirs and is crowned by a heavy modillion cornice with carved lion masks. The opening is flanked by massive stone piers on vermiculated stone pedestals with long and short quoins and console bracketed hipped capitals designed to appear as ridged lead roofs. Flanking the piers are quadrant brick wing walls, also with vermiculated stone podiums, and broken by channelled stone pillars crowned by segmental pediments. The southern portal, dating from 1879, faithfully replicates the design of the original portal down to decorative detail such as the lion masks. It differs only in size, being taller than the northern portal in order to retain the land rising up to Primrose Hill.

HISTORY: The northernmost of the two Primrose Hill tunnels was completed in 1837 and was the first railway tunnel in London as well as one of the earliest in the country. The tunnel was built for the London and Birmingham Railway Company and engineered by George Stephenson and Son; the portal was designed by William Budden, Stephenson’s assistant. A second tunnel, to the south, with a portal in the same design as Budden’s original, was completed in 1879 following the addition of a further two tracks to the line in 1846.

The land under which the tunnel was driven was the Chalcots Estate, owned by Eton College and largely rural in 1837. The College had begun to develop the area, beginning in 1830 with Adelaide Road which now runs alongside the railway track, and were originally opposed to the railway speculators’ proposals for fear of the averse affect of the cutting on the value of the land and subsequent house leases. The College’s reservations necessitated the very existence of the tunnel and determined its appearance. Unwilling to lose the building land to railway tracks, the College insisted on a tunnel, made by tunnelling and not ‘cut and cover’, despite the fact that the gradient of the land allowed track to be laid without one; the terms of the Act of Parliament of 1833 which gave permission for the railway stated that the tunnel should be constructed with sufficient strength for buildings to be erected at ground level. The College also demanded that the tunnel mouth should ‘be made good and finished with a substantial ornamental facing of brickwork or masonry to the satisfaction of the Provost and College’. The resulting portal cost £7,000 and differed from the Western Portal which was less grand.

The tunnel became a popular attraction and, before houses hemmed in the approach, the sloping sides of the cutting provided viewing points for members of the public eager to witness the coming and going of the trains and the portal itself. The scene is depicted in a watercolour by J H Nixon, after a painting by J Cleghorn of 1837 and a lithograph by C Rosenberg.

The London and Birmingham Railway, which opened in 1838, was one of the first intercity railway lines in the world, and (after the London to Greenwich Railway of 1836) the first major railway line to be built into London. The line was engineered by Robert Stephenson and started at Euston Station. The London and Birmingham Railway was one of the most significant engineering projects of the C19 and a landmark in pioneering railway technology world wide.

A second tunnel to the south was subsequently built and became operational in June 1879. The southern portal replicated the original in all but height.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANCE: As an early railway structure dating from 1837 and a part of one of the pioneering railway speculations, the London and Birmingham Railway, the northernmost Eastern Portal to the Primrose Hill Tunnel is of special historic interest. This inherent interest is considerably enhanced by the uniqueness of the tunnel’s construction: it was the first railway tunnel in London; the first nationally to negotiate the issue of competing claims for the use of land in an urban context; and the first tunnel to treat one of its portals architecturally. Comparison with the Western Portals (Grade II), at the opposite end of the two tunnels, emphasises the exceptional circumstances at the eastern end of the tunnel where the Eton College Estate demanded a grand architectural set-piece: the Western Portals are of a much humbler design. The portal is also of more than special architectural interest for its proud, classical elevation which is indicative of the upmarket development Eton College hoped to undertake nearby. There are similarities in design with Brunel’s portals to the Box Tunnel in the use of ashlar to imply strength, the classical features such as the treatment of the cornices and rusticated quoins, and the employment of quadrant arches to convey the sense of a grand entrance. The second portal, dating from 1879, is also of special interest for its intrinsic merit in that it represents the quick expansion of the railways in the mid-C19 and as an important component of the site.

Primrose Hill

Heritage Category: Park and Garden		
Grade: II	By the 1860s Primrose Hill had become a popular place for public meetings, demonstrations and rallies and, around this time, an area to the east was set aside as a Guards Drill Ground and a Refreshment Lodge was built to the west. By the turn of the century buildings surrounded Primrose Hill on three sides.	
List Entry Number: 1001526		
Date first listed: 02-May-2001		
Mid-C19 public park added to Regent’s Park in 1841.		THE PARK The steeply rising hill is laid to grass and cut by tarred paths which radiate across from points on the east and west perimeter paths and from the south-west and south-eastern corners. The paths to the south are largely decorated with ornamental trees, Primrose Hill lost many of its mature trees during the storms of 1987 and 1990. A path runs north-west from the south-eastern corner and continues, slightly to the east of centre, to the circular hard surfaced view point at the summit of the hill. From this point, which in the late C20 was marked with the points of the compass, the panorama of the city of London can be viewed. To the west, the roofs of the covered structures of Barrow Hill Reservoir are partially screened by trees as are the C 19 housing developments on the northern and eastern boundaries. To the north-west, below the western slopes of the hill sports pitches have been made. Below the southern slopes is a late C20 children’s recreation ground, built near the site of the gymnasium made in 1847.
HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT	In the year 2000 Primrose Hill remains the property of the Crown, and, along with Regent’s Park, is managed by the Royal Parks Authority as public park.	
	SITE DESCRIPTION	
Until mid-C 19 Primrose Hill was farmland with hedgerow boundaries and a few tree surviving from the ancient Middlesex Forest (William Gillespie and Partners p18). However since 1822 the owners, Eton College, had been planning to divide the hill into building plots. In 1829 plans were drawn up to develop the whole of the hill, the plans included new road links to the north but no offers were made for them. In 1831 a private individual leased the hill intending to sub-let it to the Royal Botanical Society and, in 1836, the London Cemetery Company made an application for land for a burial ground. Neither of these proposals was approved. Following a recommendation from the government, the Crown Commissioners, in 1838, offered to buy Primrose Hill from Eton College in order to form an extension of Regent’s Park and the site became Crown property in 1841. In the following year, after an Act had been passed securing the land as public open space, the public was freely admitted. The boundaries were marked by an oak fence and hedgerows were removed, a year later the bridge connecting Regent’s Park with Primrose Hill was completed and opened. A Gymnasium was built near to the southern boundary c1847.	LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES AND LANDFORM Primrose Hill is situated to the west of London, immediately to the north of Regent’s Park (qv GD1156) and clkm west of Euston Station. Green Park (qv GD1799) lies c3km to the south and Hampstead Heath c3km to the north. The 25ha of Primrose Hill rise steeply to a northern plateau before dropping down to the northern boundary. To the south, Primrose Hill is separated from Regent’s Park by Prince Albert Road and is bounded to the north by the backs of houses and school buildings in Elsworthy Road, with Primrose Hill Road, Regent’s Park Road and Albert Terrace making for the eastern boundary. The boundary to the south-west is largely made up from Barrow Hill, a covered reservoir made to supply water to the villas in and around Regent’s Park in 1828. The boundary to the north-west is made up from the backs of houses on Avenue Road. The site is enclosed with various materials including railings, brick wall, clipped hedges and shrubberies.	
In 1851 Primrose Hill, along with the parkland of Regent’s Park, was transferred, by means of the Crown Land Act, from the management of the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Chases, to the newly formed Ministry of Works. The new management soon tacked the problems of drainage and levels, especially in the north and west where ponds and hollows were considered dangerous to the public. The improvement work was carried out intermittently between 1851 and 1900 and included the laying of an extensive footpath system with lamps along the main routes and some new planting.	ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES Primrose Hill is entered from a number of points around the site. The entrance to the south-west, from Prince Albert Road, is guarded by brick built Primrose Hill Lodge (c1870). After standing empty for a number of years the Lodge was refurbished in the late C20. The grounds around the lodge are separated from the park by C20 iron railings.	



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