

St Michael's Highgate, London N6

Conservation Plan • Revision 01 • **DRAFT WIP** • September 2021

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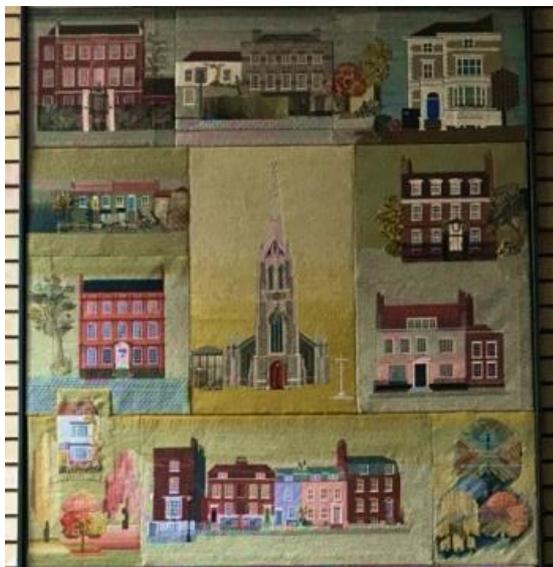
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Revision History

Rev	Description	Author	Reviewer	Date
00	Issued for initial review to PCC, historian Roger Sainsbury's	HP	SK	21.07.2021
01	Issued for wider consultation	SK	SK	28.09.2021



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Conservation Plan

This document is a Conservation Plan which explains the significance of the church of St Michael's Highgate, identifies how that significance is vulnerable and sets out policies for retaining that significance in its daily use, current and any new management regime or alteration. It is a working document which, regularly reviewed, can provide a sound framework for the management of this significant place.

This Conservation Plan is not a definitive account of the history of St Michael's, nor does it catalogue every aspect or part of its fabric. It is intended to be used as a primary resource and management tool for those involved with developing proposals or making decisions about the use, maintenance, management and future of the church.

British Standard BS 7913:2013: Guide to the conservation of historic buildings states that Conservation Plan is also known as Conservation Management Plan which should be created on the principle that a historic building cannot be protected through management without a thorough understanding of what makes it important and why.

The BS states that the document should be created by following the steps below.

- a) Understand the heritage assets.
- b) Assess and articulate their significance - Why are they important?
- c) Define issues, risks and vulnerabilities that may potentially affect that significance.
- d) Establish appropriate conservation management policies to address the issues, risks and vulnerabilities that have been identified - How could the historic buildings and their significance be harmed and any impact mitigated?

1.2 Documents, sources and further reading

St. Michael's Highgate, A History: Roger Sainsbury, St Michael's Church 2014

Place Services, Essex County Council and Historic England's, 'London Borough of Camden Archaeological Priority Areas Appraisal', October 2018
<https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/planning/apa-camden/>

British History online, Church of St. Michael's, Highgate <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/middx/vol6/pp172-182>

St Michael's Highgate website <https://stmichaelshighgate.org/about/history/>

Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal
<https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/7610500/Highgate.pdf/6995d361-b1c5-5650-4414-9669232073e1>

The Architectural History Practice Limited (2006) Commissioner's Churches. Inspection Reports Volume 1: First Grant Churches in London
<https://facultyonline.churchofengland.org/church-heritage-record-st-michael-highgate-623401>

British History online, Old and New London (first published by Cassell, Petter & Galpin, London, 1878) Vol. 5, Edward Walford, Highgate, pt.2: <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/old-new-london/vol5/pp405-428>

1.3 Authorship

The Conservation Plan was edited by Sarah Khan, RIBA SCA AABC MA GradDiplCons(AA)Dist; Partner, Roger Mears Architects. Sarah is Accredited in Building Conservation (AABC), as well as

accredited with the RIBA as a Specialist Conservation Architect. She specialises in work to historic buildings of all grades in both the public and private sectors.

The CMP was prepared by Hedy Parry-Davies GraDiplCons(AA), ARB, Conservation Architect.

2.0 Understanding the site and the building

2.1 Location

St Michael's church is situated in the London Borough of Camden's Highgate Conservation Area (CA), specifically, in its Sub-Area 1, Highgate village, which was designated in May 1968. This CA is positioned on the Borough's north eastern corner, and borders Haringey's Highgate CA.

Sub-Area One forms the historic 'core' of the Conservation Area, developed along the major roads which crossed the high ground to the north of London. This area has the most intense development within the Conservation Area, rich in form and detail. It has all the elements expected of a village with a shopping frontage in the High Street, grand houses, simple cottages, public buildings and a central square.

The village of Highgate lies at the top of Highgate Hill, 129.2 m. above sea level and 4.8 m. below the highest point of London, in Hampstead, to the West. The highest parts of the hills are covered by sand and gravel while the lower reaches gradually change to London Clay. The area has many springs, streams and ponds.

2.2 Curtilage

St Michael's, Highgate is set back from South Grove on the crest of Highgate Hill, facing south-east and, with its spire, dominating the skyline. It stands higher than any other church in London. As you enter you are all but level with the cross on top of St. Paul's Cathedral.

2.3 Views

Due to the elevated position of Highgate Village there are many glimpses of distant views. When looking south from Fitzroy Park, Highgate West Hill and Swain's Lane there are outstanding views of London sitting in the Thames Valley with the hills of Crystal Palace and the North Downs beyond. An essential part of the character of Highgate Conservation Area is the open aspect.

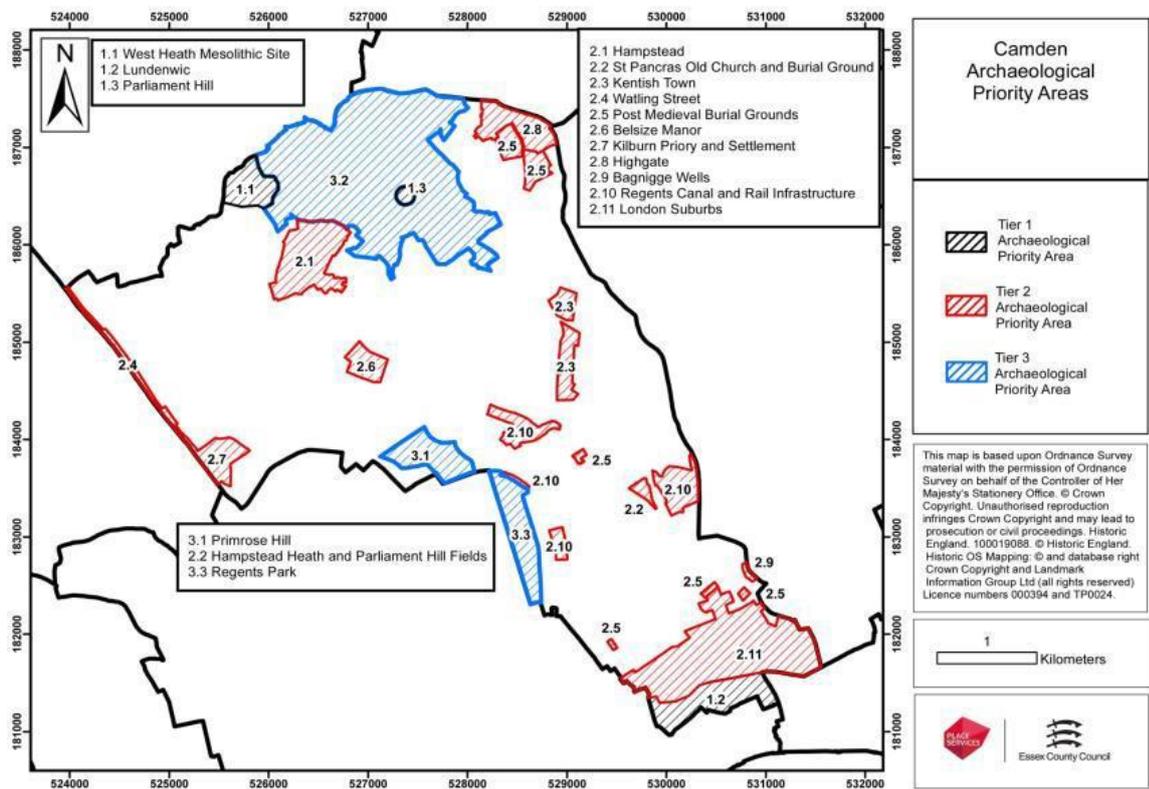
From Waterlow Park there is a panorama reaching across from the City to the Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead. On the western side of the Conservation Area the Heath makes an important backdrop closing the vista at the end of Merton Lane, Millfield Lane and Fitzroy Park. Looking into the Conservation Area from the Heath close to Hampstead Lane, Athlone House can be seen sitting in an elevated position with the spire of St. Michael's Church beyond the trees.

Highgate West Cemetery lies to the south of St Michael's Church. David Ramsey, the landscape designer, laid out serpentine roads and footpaths leading upwards through the burial area to the remarkable buildings and terrace just below the church.

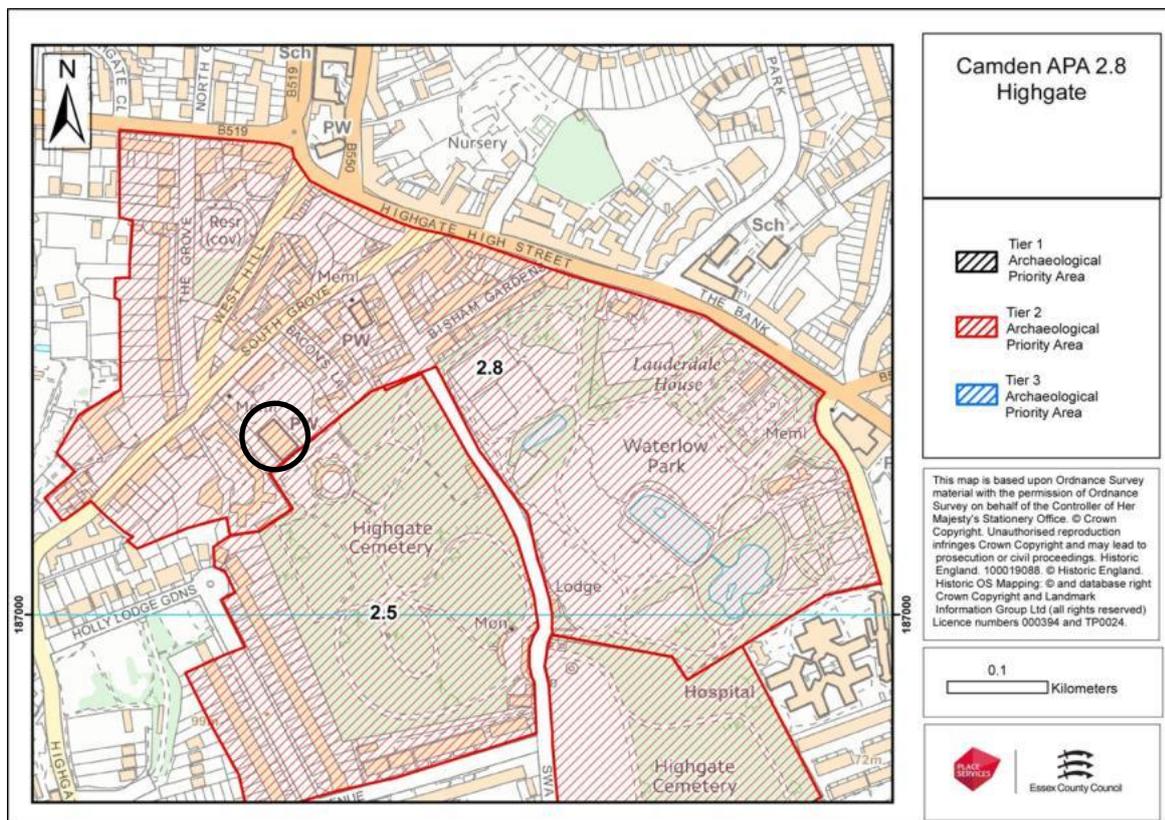
2.4 Archaeology and Early History

The Borough name 'Camden' is taken from Camden Town which was the name given to a small village by the Earl of Camden before 1791. The Borough of Camden was made up of a number of historic settlements which sprung from manorial estates with early medieval origins. Densely settled occupation, however, mainly existed after the seventeenth century with an influx of people moving to the less crowded areas around central London. This was encouraged by the arrival of Regents Canal, built in 1812, to link the Paddington arm of the Grand Junction Canal with the Thames at Limehouse.

In October 2018, Place Services of Essex County Council and Historic England have produced an Archaeological Priority Areas (APA) Appraisal for Camden Council. The site of St Michael's falls within APA 2.8 which is classified as Tier 2, as it has the potential to contain a range of medieval and post-medieval settlement deposits associated with the historic settlement and welfare institutions such as Lauderdale House and Gardens.



Camden Archaeological Priority Areas



Camden Archaeological Priority Area 2.8. St Michael's church site is highlighted

2.4.1 Prehistoric (500,000 BC to 42 AD)

The spreading of London across the borough's landscape has doubtless removed or obscured prehistoric sites leaving relatively few traces. There is some evidence for later prehistoric activity in Camden, again to the north of the Borough, between Hampstead Ponds and Highgate Ponds. Here lies an Early/Middle Bronze Age bell barrow on the spur of the hill. Although previously excavated, the site remains as a scheduled monument. Dating evidence for Bronze Age activity has been recovered just to the south of the monument. Iron Age remains within the Borough are sparse, a possible occupation site may be indicated from pottery and tools found in the Vale of Heath and isolated finds have been recovered from across the Heath.

2.4.2 Medieval (1066 AD to 1549 AD)

A number of new settlements came into being in the C12 to C13 in Highgate, as a result of a new road through the Bishop of London's deer park, and Kentish Town which developed from the moated manorial site of Cantelows. Battle bridge was possibly a medieval hamlet which grew up around the bridge over the River Fleet.

Records for the beginnings of the settlement known as Highgate can be dated to c.1318, when it was recorded that the owner of the parkland, the Bishop of London, placed a toll on movement through the estate. When the new road was created in 1386 to replace the old highway between London and Barnet, a gate was also installed to introduce and manage a new toll on traffic in and out of the centre. It was this gate which the medieval settlement is named after. The gate was dismantled in 1769 due to its low archway. The focal point of the 'high gate' gave rise to a hermitage which, for a long time, stood in the centre of the settlement.

In the C15, the proximity of Camden to London and Westminster and its rural surroundings attracted rich and eminent residents. Camden became affluent in the medieval period due to its use as a stopping place for royalty and became well known for its rich properties particularly at Hampstead, Highgate and Kentish Town.

2.4.3 Post Medieval (1540 AD to present day)

The C16 saw Highgate become a popular location for high status housing. The settlement grew along the main road, its height and detachment from the poor conditions of central London made it a favourite for institutions of welfare. Highgate School, which can trace its origins back to 1565, though built in 1871 and is still in use today. From 1565 to 1871, Sir Roger Cholmeley's Free Grammar School was in place. The grammar school was small, but the local people did use the school chapel for worship. For this reason, the 1578 building was rebuilt to a larger scale, and it was the 1822 petition to rebuild to yet a greater size which generated opposition, leading eventually to the building of a parish church.

The area's connections with the capital meant it was an ideal commuter area for high-ranking professionals and merchants who created fine houses overlooking London. Lauderdale House, which exists south east of Highgate settlement, was built in 1582 with extensive later additions to the structure. It is possible that this land originally belonged to Sir Richard Cholmeley's Free Grammar School. A formal garden was laid out c1700 of which significant elements survive including a massive brick retaining wall with beehives and an earthwork prospect/temple mount. The house was occupied up until the early C19 when it was leased to St Bartholomew's Hospital as a convalescent home. In 1889 Lauderdale House was given, along with its associated 29 acres, to London County Council for the enjoyment of Londoners by Sir Sydney Waterlow. The building now houses an arts and education centre and the garden is a very early example of terraced landscaping. Below ground archaeological remains from the C17 have been recovered from the area suggesting there is potential for medieval building remains.

Recent excavations from 2018 have led to the discovery of a preserved C17 cellar at St Michael's church in which the grave of the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge was found. An earlier excavation also revealed a medieval ditch complex and C16 Brick clamp on the site of Highgate School.

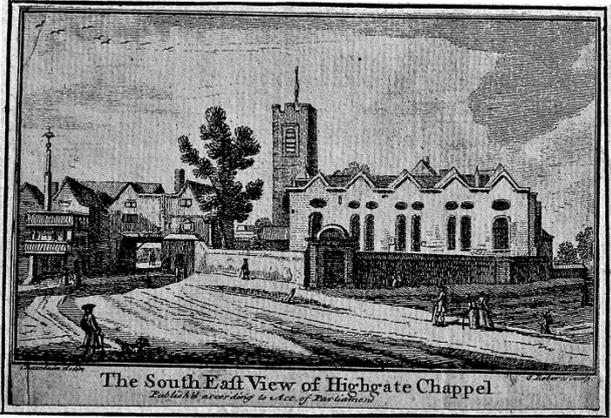
In the mid-C18 John Rocque's map depicts a village with three plan-form elements: a central cluster of houses around and encroaching onto a green and two regular rows along the roads heading north and east. The rows are presumably later extensions from the green-based medieval core.

The various excavations at Highgate, as well as the evidence from cartographic evidence and standing buildings, suggests that the original medieval settlement may be preserved within the area. This potential is especially important due to the unusual nature of Highgate's development as a settlement, maintaining its separation from London until the mid-C19. Its unique position as a centre for welfare institutions as well as its continuity of place and layout from the early medieval settlement makes the archaeological remains and their setting incredibly important to the local area.

2.5 History of the current church Commission

The viability of building St Michael's church is rooted in one of the Church Building Acts, under which six hundred churches were built in the nineteenth century. The first Act of Parliament passed on 30 May 1818 (58. Geo. III. C. 45) "for building and promoting the building of additional churches in populous parishes as a solution to the increasingly inadequate church accommodation found in the expanding cities and towns of England and Wales." (Church Building Commission). The subsequent Acts were amendments to this legislation. Under the Act, a fund of £1 million was established and the Commission for the Building of New Churches was created.

Prior to the current church, there was a small hermit's chapel in Highgate which existed perhaps in the 1350s and 1360s and certainly in 1387, its keeper being responsible by 1464 for repairing roads. Miracles at Highgate attracted great devotion in 1464, when the pope granted an indulgence to those who would support the chapel, which was dedicated to St. Michael. Local inhabitants, in both Hornsey and St. Pancras, used it for worship in 1503. In that year the vicar of St. Pancras led a procession to Highgate, presumably to assert his own rights. The hermits were appointed by the Bishop of London, who in 1540 made a lease of the former hermitage along with the great park. He gave the chapel and 2 acres to Cholmley's school in 1565 but in 1577 the Crown granted the chapel, as a concealed chantry, to John Farnham. Farnham soon sold his title to Roger Puleston, the school's receiver general, who in turn conveyed it to the governors.



The south-east view of Highgate Chappel.



*The old Chapel, Highgate, 1830.
(Old and New London, 1878)*



The school chapel was a substantial brick building with a square tower also of brick, though it had a timber roof supported on oak columns. It was enlarged a number of times and, there being no church, it was a place of worship for local people as well as for the school. By the 1630's the chapel was used as a parish church, where baptisms, marriages, and burials were performed. In 1639 it served the inhabitants on Highgate Hill who otherwise would have to go to Hornsey or St. Pancras.

For 250 years it sufficed to serve the whole community, but early in the 19th century extensive repair was necessary and considerable enlargement was required to hold the growing population.

By 1820 there were but a few pupils at the school and the headmaster focused his attention more on the chapel and the local community than on school-mastering. In 1822 a bill was put before Parliament to empower the school governors to pull down the chapel and build a new one to meet the needs of the local community.

The proposal was met by forceful opposition. This would be, it was claimed, a misuse of charitable school funds. The Times, in a leading article, thundered against this measure and the bill was thrown out. The dispute ran for many years. Court proceedings were taken and eventually, on 13 April 1827 the Lord Chancellor, Lord Eldon, gave judgment that the chapel and its burial ground did in fact belong to the school, and a new church should be built elsewhere in the village.

It was ultimately decided, and the decision legalised by Act of Parliament in June 1830, that the Governors should pay £2,000 towards the creation of a new church, on consideration of adequate sittings being provided for the scholars, free of charge; that the endowment for the preacher of the Cholmeley Chapel be transferred to the Incumbent of the new Church; that the Cholmeley Burying-ground should also be annexed to the new Church.



The Act to demolish the chapel and allow the Governors to contribute towards a new church (Highgate School Archive)

The project was taken over by the Commission for the Building of New Churches and St Michael's parish was formally established in 1834.



Ashhurst House c. 1820 (British History)

The chosen position for the church was the site of Ashhurst House which had been built in 1696 as the seat of Sir William Ashhurst, Lord Mayor of London in 1694. The semi-derelict house was

demolished in 1830 to make way for the church. The entrance courtyard was retained, and is now the forecourt to St Michael's. An engraving of 1716 shows extensive formal gardens to the south-east of Ashhurst House. The rubble from the house demolition still lies in the church under-croft where may also be seen the remains of the old wine cellar.

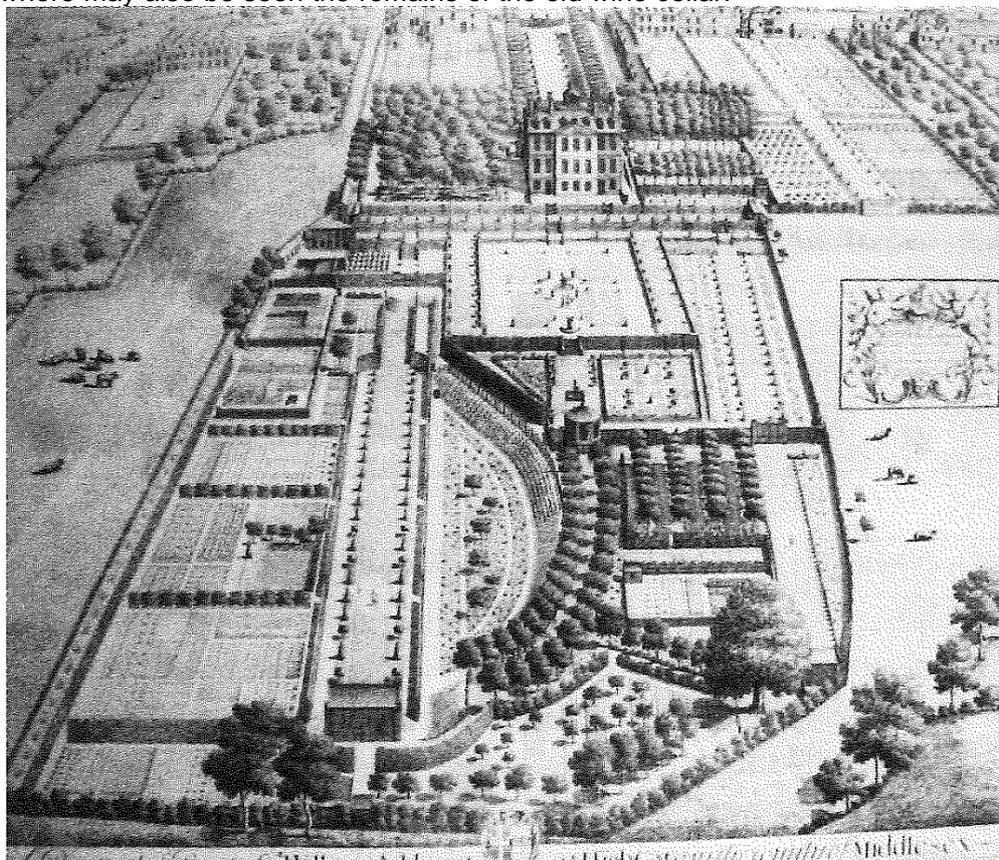


Illustration showing the site of Ashhurst House and grounds viewed from the south, the extensive gardens now occupied by Highgate Cemetery (west) established in 1839.

2.6 Design and Construction

2.6.1 The Architect's appointment

The Church Commissioners acted as clients, but the School Governors were the driving force behind the project for the new church, and they set out to appoint the architect through a design competition. Although it is not known how many architects submitted their designs, Charles Barry's outline plan, dated April 1830 is still held at the Highgate School archives. The date on the drawing indicates that the choice of architect was made early in 1830 and that the initial application to the Commissioners in 1818 and their conditional grant of 1822 were made without benefit of a design. Vulliamy, having been preferred by the school, wrote on 19 June 1830 to George Jelf, the Secretary to the Commission:

"Agreeably to the directions of the Trustees of the Highgate Free Grammar School, I beg to lay before His Majesty's Commissioners for building New Churches, the plans of the Design that has been selected for the new church at Highgate."

Lewis Vulliamy (1791-1871) was of Swiss extraction, his grandfather, father and brother were notable clockmakers. His uncle, however, was an architect and Lewis initially worked in his practice. He was a former pupil of Sir Robert Smirke (1780 – 1867) with a nationwide practice ranging from churches to country houses and institutional buildings. His London work includes the headquarters of the Law Society in Chancery Lane (1831) and the street front to the Royal Institution in Albemarle Street (1838).

In developing his own extensive practice, Vulliamy became known principally for the design of prestigious houses, in particular, Dorchester House, Park Lane (demolished to make way for the hotel) and Westonbirt House in the Cotswolds (now a school). In 1836 he exhibited his design for the new Houses of Parliament at the Royal Academy. At the same time as he was designing St Michael's, he must have been also at work on Christ Church, Woburn Square (no longer standing) - for this was consecrated just a few weeks later.



Vulliamy's design for Christ Church, Woburn Square, 1831.

In this Woburn Square context, he was referred to as the Crown Architect, though no record has been found to confirm this. Indeed, Port (M. H. Port in '600 New Churches') explains that the 'Consulting', 'Attached' or 'Crown Architects' (as they were variously named), were retained to advise the Office of Works and were three in number: John Nash, John Soane, and Robert Smirke.

As to Vulliamy's personal character, according to his great-grandson's report in the church archive:

*"He was clearly a difficult fellow, described by my father as a "dry, dour, fussy man. He was not so much respected as dreaded by his family ... he disliked his children".
... He was extremely industrious and served his clients with great loyalty, but found the time to sue his brother in the Court of Chancery for about seven years over their father's will. He was clearly well versed in the arts and the sciences and befriended, for instance, Prosper Merimee, Faraday and Gericault. He was ultra conscientious (he was checking drawings the day before he died) and, although somewhat quarrelsome and doubtless not an easy man, he was in the true sense of the word a professional."*

Vulliamy designed 15 other churches for the Commissioners, among which St Bartholomew, West Hill, Sydenham 1826–31, listed grade II* is closest to St Michael's in plan form. It was constructed from 1827-1832 for the sum of £10,311.15s.4d.

Others included St John, Richmond, 1829–31 (granted £3,133) grade II; St Peter, Bethnal Green, 1840–41 (£500), grade II; All Saints, Ennismore Gardens, 1848–49 (£2000), Grade II*; St James-the-less, Bethnal Green, 1840–42 (£500), grade II.



St Bartholomew, West Hill, Sydenham, 1895



2.6.2 Project development

Vulliamy's secular buildings and churches were all uniquely designed, and at St Michael's he pioneered the Gothic Revival style, particularly its use on a public building. Having presented his proposals to the Commissioners who had the authority to accept or reject it, they in fact opted for a compromise in order to reduce the construction costs. This is evident from a letter of 5 July 1830 written by George Kinderley, the School Secretary to Mr Jelf at the Commissioners, complaining about

"... the determination of His Majesty's Commissioners to alter the plan for Highgate Chapel by omitting all above the battlements of the tower, all the pinnacles of the battlements and all the crocketed pinnacles." Kinderley pointed out that a large proportion of the costs were to be met by public subscriptions for the original design, funds that could be withdrawn if the design was to be altered in this way. The original scheme was carried out with fairly minor alterations.

During the design process, the architect of the Office of Works required the nave walls to be thicker, and then Vulliamy himself suggested some internal alterations. The west gallery was to be made less deep which would result in improved visual and aural connection to the pews below. He also added two iron columns to support the children's gallery. The number of seats were still greater than the Commissioners dictated. The latter accepted these alterations, and Vulliamy's estimate of £7,600 for the construction.

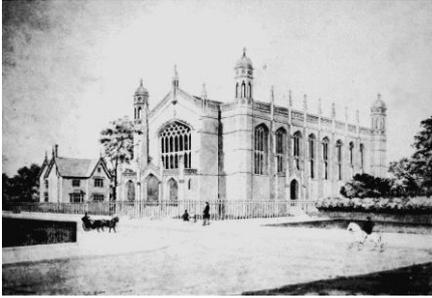
Unfortunately, all bids were higher than that figure, and the Commissioners suggested to replace the architect. In turn, Vulliamy recommended the firm of William Lewis Cubitt (who went on to built the railway stations at Kings Cross and the Great Northern Hotel in the early 1850's, among many other projects) who would construct the church for the estimated figure. On 15 February 1832 the Cubitt's wrote to the Commissioners:

*"My Lords and Gentlemen,
We are willing to build and finish the new church at Highgate agreeable to the drawings and specifications of Lewis Vulliamy Esq for the sum of Seven Thousand Six Hundred Pounds. We subjoin the names of our sureties."*

The contract completion date was May 1832, but in fact the church building was completed on 6 February that year. The 11 months construction period compared very favourably with other buildings of this magnitude, and Vulliamy argued that the extra costs involved were more than offset by the savings gained through the speed of construction.

The church actually stood unused for eight months prior to consecration was a peculiar under the jurisdiction of St Paul's cathedral, but it is unclear how its status was changed to bring it within the diocese of London. Roger Sainsbury ascertained that it was not done via an act of Parliament.

The church accommodated 1527 seats, seven over the Commissioners' brief. At the total cost of £8171, this meant a cost of £5 7s per seat, compared to £8 per seat of Vulliamy's St Barnabas in Kensington (listed grade II).



St Barnabas, Addison road, 1826–9. Exterior c. 1860

The Commissioners for Building Churches contributed £4,811, the Incorporated Society for Church Building (ICBS) £500. The Governors of the school contributed £2,000. The remainder was raised by subscription. In recognition of the school contribution, Governors and boys had seats reserved for them in the new church. Reflecting the history, the arms of Bishop Grindal and of Roger Cholmeley (now much eroded) were carved into the corbels of the hood mould to the west door.

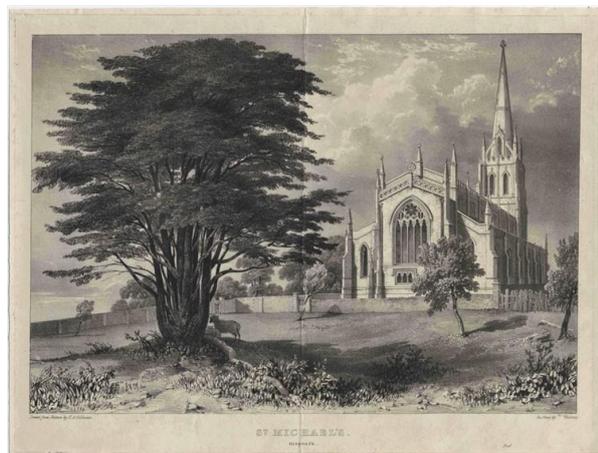
Due to the geographical position of the church partly within the parish of St Pancras which was peculiar to the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral, the church could not be consecrated upon completion in February 1832. A new Act of Parliament amending the Church Building Acts themselves on 11 July 1832 and enabling the land of St Pancras to be moved into the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London, finally regularised St Michael's own jurisdiction. With the consecration of the new church in November 1832, the chapel became redundant and it was demolished in 1833.

2.6.3 Church Design

Church exterior



View from the west, E.T. Dolby (The Parish Church of St Michael, Highgate Guidebook)



View from the east, c1832



Vulliamy's early Sketch, in RIBA V&A Archives. (PB971/12/I-III)



View from the West, Engraving in RIBA V&A Archives. (PB971/12/I-III)

The church building is of pale stock brick with Bath and Portland stone dressings and consists of an aisled and clerestoried nave with three galleries to north, south and west, western tower with octagonal spire, and chancel. Vestries, community activity rooms and administrative spaces are accommodated in a large basement. The nave, with its octagonal piers, is light and spacious. Buttresses and crocketed pinnacles adorn both the spire and the body of the building, increasing its resemblance to Vulliamy's demolished Christ Church, Woburn Square.

The main view of the church is from the north-west (liturgical west). The tower is buttressed in stages to its full height and is flanked by buttressed lean-to aisles, the latter having large lancets with ogee surrounds. The west doorway is in the base of the tower, a Perpendicular-style arch with square hoodmould and enriched spandrels. Above is a three-light traceried window with ogee surround, and above that the belfry with twin lancet openings and a third lancet above. The octagonal spire is enriched by pinnacles, small flying buttresses and a cross finial. The aisles have two-light windows between stepped buttresses. The east elevation is seen from the cemetery and is dominated by Street's big five-light window, its Perpendicular tracery replacing Vulliamy's Decorated original.

In April 1831, when Vulliamy's drawing was exhibited at the Royal Academy, the journalist, Mr E J Carlos commented in *The Gentleman's Magazine* that, "*The spire of this church is a chaste and elegant design.*"

Soon after completion, the Monthly Supplement of *The Magazine of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge* of April 30 to May 31, 1832 reported that:

"...in the course of last autumn, a tall Gothic spire had sprung up on the summit of Highgate Hill. This is the spire of Highgate church, which has been just completed, and which is an honourable monument of the taste of Mr. L. Vulliamy its architect. It is impossible to imagine a more beautiful site than that chosen for the church, or a style of building better adapted to the situation. The interior is extremely neat and commodious. The old chapel of Ease, which stands near gate-house, was a very small and inconvenient place of worship."

In the same year the *Mirror* wrote:

"The whole is of fine whitish brick, finished with stone. The style of the architecture is that usually, but unsatisfactorily, termed Gothic it has a host of buttresses, pinnacles, crockets and finials. The ornaments of the principal entrance, and the window above it, are among the best portions; the spire, with its stone-framed piercing is remarkably neat; and the church is altogether superior to most of the miscalled Gothic churches of our times. The original iron entrance gates, and brick jambs, surmounted with eagles, enclose a small plot of lawn, and the walk to the principal entrance to the church."

In 1835, the writer Thomas Cromwell enthused about the new St Michael's:

"It stands in the parish of St Pancras, was erected in 1832, and is decidedly one of our best specimens of modern church building. The north elevation, opposite the Grove, Highgate, comprising the tower and principal entrances, has a striking effect, and is rendered particularly pleasing by the novel and graceful manner in which the aisles recede from the tower on either side, so as to

present an unusual variety of faces. The interior also deserves much praise. A rich window of stained glass decorates the south end; it was executed at Rome, and successfully imitates the old style in its figures which fill its principal compartments."

In 1859 Samuel Lewis (publisher of topographical dictionaries) wrote:

"The church is dedicated to St Michael, and is a very elegant specimen of the later English style, with an enriched tower and crocketed spire. The east window is embellished with painted glass brought from Rome, and the church contains many handsome monuments brought from the old chapel, together with a tablet inscribed to the memory of Samuel Taylor Coleridge."

Later on, opinions were more critical. In 1878 Edward Walford (1823–1897) wrote in the 5th volume of his 'Old and New London':

"The new Church of St. Michael stands at some little distance from the site of the old chapel, on the summit of the hill, overlooking the cemetery on the one side and Highgate Grove on the other; and, as we have stated in the preceding chapter, it occupies the site of the old mansion built by Sir William Ashurst, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1694. It is a poor and ugly sham Gothic structure, though the spire looks well from a distance. It was built from the designs of Mr. Lewis Vulliamy, and was thought to be a wonderful triumph of ecclesiastical art when it was consecrated in 1832. At the end overlooking the cemetery is a magnificent stained-glass window, representing the Saviour and the apostles, the gift of the Rev. C. Mayo, many years preacher in the old chapel. It was executed in Rome. The border contains several coats of arms from the windows of the old chapel. There are a few interesting monuments removed hither from the former edifice; but that which is most worthy of notice is a tablet erected to the memory of Coleridge..."

In 1880, Rev Daniel Trinder (1828-1888), the then incumbent oversaw the demolition of the east wall to create the extension of the church by one bay, to create a new chancel sympathetic in design to the original church.

The 1989 Parish Centre building/ church hall to the east end of the north side is sensitively annexed to the church using buff coloured brickwork and slender structure. Its extensive glazing to the west and east facades lends it transparency that retains some of the views to the cemetery beyond, and a measure of detachment and contrast from the Victorian church.

Church Interior



Interior, 1832 (St Michael's Church website)

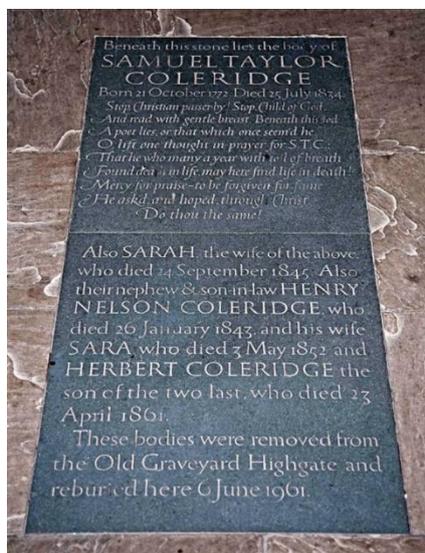
Plans of churches to be funded by the Church Commissioners, had to be approved by the Commission; and their stipulations conformed to the 'High Church' principles of the day, representing a decisive moving away from the 'preaching box' principles that had governed much Georgian church and chapel architecture. The Commission were determined the new churches should instead give appropriate architectural expression to the rites of Holy Communion and Baptism; and that these sacraments should not be visually subordinated to pulpit preaching. Hence, the Commission insisted that the communion table should be set apart in a shallow eastern apse or sanctuary behind a communion rail; and raised on three steps so as to be visible from all seats in the church. Larger churches should have galleries along the sides and west end, to provide the required seating capacity; the largest Commissioners Churches could seat a nominal congregation of 2,000. Except in the side galleries, all seats should face (ritual) east. The baptismal font should be at the west end of the church, accommodated within a christening pew. The pulpit and parson's reading desk were normally to be set at the east end of the church, on either side of the sanctuary. Pews in the body of the nave were expected to be subject to pew rents but the Commission insisted that a substantial proportion of seating, in the galleries and on benches in the aisles, should be free.

At St Michael's, the original nave seating was divided into three elements, with two walkways. The central block of seating was formed as open benches and offered free seat. The other aisles consisted of box pews.

There were galleries along the whole length of the north and south walls and a wide gallery at the west end. In this layout the ground floor seating extended to the east end of both aisles. There was a stone altar but no place for a choir and the organ was destined to be in the west gallery. Almost every other feature had given way to a maximisation of the number of seats. There were even upper-level galleries at the west end, evidence for which is in the record of their removal.

The Incorporated Church Building Society's rules were changed in 1863 to require a clear central passage in the nave; as will be seen, St Michael's responded to this in 1879.

Monuments



Coleridge monument (St Michael's church website)

The most important monument in the church is the slate slab in the central aisle in memory of Coleridge, his wife, and their daughter with her husband (Coleridge's nephew) and her son. It has on it memorial words written by Coleridge himself when he knew he was dying. The original grave of Coleridge was in the burial ground at the top of the High Street, but when the new school chapel was built in 1868 it overhung the Coleridge vault which then became neglected. A fund, much of it from the United States of America, was raised by an English novelist, Ernest Raymond and on 6th June 1961 Coleridge's remains were reburied in the crypt of St. Michael's. The Poet Laureate, John Masefield, gave the address at the unveiling of the stone.

Coleridge certainly worshiped in the church in the eighteen months that elapsed between the consecration and his death.

On the north wall there is an additional memorial to Coleridge and to Dr. James Gillman and his wife with whom Coleridge lived in Highgate for the last nineteen years of his life.

The majority of the memorial plates in the church are in memory of those killed in the Great War (1914-1918). The parish war memorial Cavalry Cross is near the entrance from the street to the church forecourt. The Cavalry was designed by Mr. Percy Lovell, executed by Mr. Martyn. There is a memorial tablet commemorating the names of the fallen, and a book of remembrance just outside the South chapel.

At the West end of the church there are a number of C18 memorials from the old chapel. The most noteworthy is above the west gallery, the memorial to John Schoppens (1720), a wealthy Dutch merchant who was naturalised by Act of Parliament of Charles II. His daughter married a John Edwards and they lived in Ashhurst House, the site of the current Church. John Edwards (his son having pre-deceased him) left Ashhurst House to his grandchildren who joined with their children to sell the site to the Church Building Commissioners in 1830. A memorial (1761) to John Edwards and his wife is in the tower room over the porch of the church.

Under the gallery on the South and on the West walls are other memorials removed from the old chapel: Sir Edward Gould who endowed the almshouses; Rebecca Pauncefort wife of the man who built them and Samuel Forster; but these have antiquarian interest only. Some monuments of later date than 1832 are especially noteworthy. They include inscribed memorials to George Kinderley, the barrister who succeeded in getting St. Michael's built, to Dr. James Gillman, who took Coleridge into his care and to Coleridge, written by Gillman.

The Organ



Photo taken June 2021

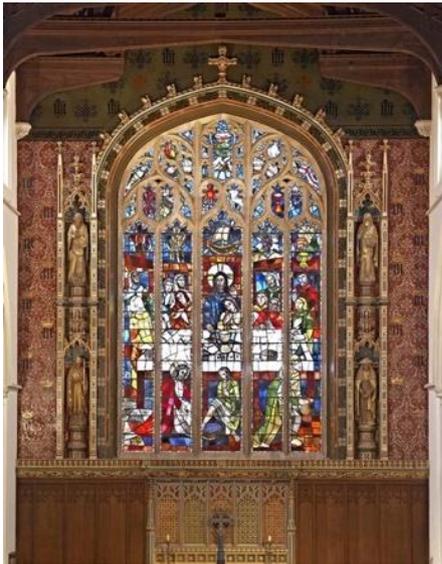
The first organ at St Michael's was installed in the west gallery, in 1842 by Messrs. Gray & Davidson at a cost of £700. It was paid for mainly by a double pew rent for one year. In 1859 it was cleaned and lowered to a new position in the gallery. Again in 1873 the instrument was cleaned and modernised.

After the enlargement of the church in 1881, the introduction at the east end of a surpliced choir, with 18 boys in addition to the men, accentuated the distance between organ, choir and congregation. A report, circulated to all parishioners in 1883, recommended a new, or almost new organ, in the east end behind the choir. In 1885, Hill and Davidson provided such an organ.

In 1911, following the complete breakdown of the organ on several occasions, Messrs. Brindley & Foster were contracted to rebuild and enlarge the instrument. In 1958 a further rebuild was undertaken by the firm Rest Cartwright which included a detached console on the north side of the Altar with the player facing west.

By 1977 the organ was a sad and dim reflection of its former character. Thus in 1985 the decision was made for a comprehensive rebuild incorporating the best of the old pipe-work into the new organ seen today. The builders Nicholson of Malvern, by careful design were able to contain the organ within one bay. The organ contains 58 draw-stops and 2523 pipes. The instrument was cleaned, and slightly enhanced in 2011.

Stained Glass and other Windows



East window (St Michael's church website).



Photo taken June 2021



Photo taken June 2021

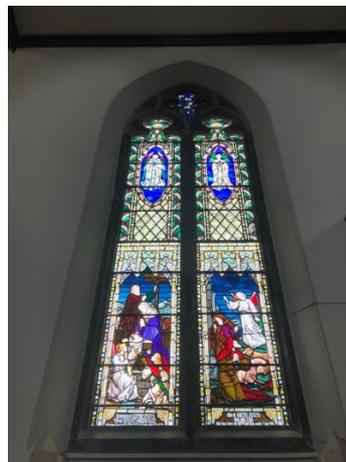


Photo taken June 2021

An East window was in the original design, although there was no Chancel, only the Sanctuary. The first window represented the Entombment and the Ascension and was given by the assistant minister of the old chapel. The reordering by Street created a larger window in the Perpendicular style, initially filled with clear glass. In 1889 a Tree of the Cross window, by Charles Eamer Kempe (1837-1927), a noted stained-glass artist, was installed. Kempe worked in the office of ecclesiastical architect George Fredrick Bodley (1827-1907) at All Saints Church, Cambridge where he also learnt from William Morris (1834-1896) the aesthetic principles of medieval church art, particularly stained glass, and to develop his sense of how to use it to colour the interior of churches.

In 1944 a flying bomb in Waterlow Park shattered this window; some rescued fragments were re-erected in the north aisle window. The present East window, from 1954, is one of the last

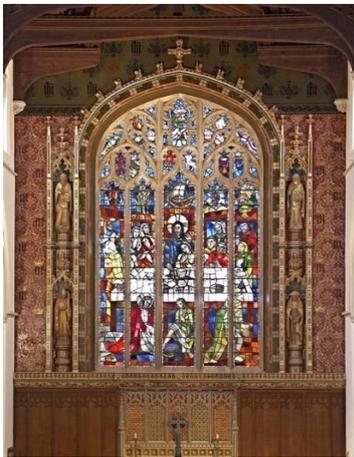
achievements of Evie Hone (1894-1955). It represents the Last Supper, the washing of Peter's feet and the creeping away of Judas with his money bag. Above in the tracery of the window are numerous symbols of the passion and of the Christian church.

Eva Sydney Hone RHA was an Irish painter and stained-glass artist. She is considered to be an early pioneer of cubism, although her best known works are stained glass. Her most notable pieces are the East Window in the Chapel at Eton College, which depicts the Crucifixion, and 'My Four Green Fields', which is now in the Government Buildings in Dublin.

The St Michael's glass window was sent by air from Dublin and erected under the supervision of Mr A. P. Robinson, the Church Architect, by builders Dove Brothers. Miss Hone died soon afterwards and never saw it installed.

The windows in the north and south walls are much plainer; the majority are in clear glass. This, of course, is because nearly all the glass in these walls was blown out by the land mine which landed in the adjacent garden in September 1940.

The East wall and Sanctuary



(St Michael's church website).

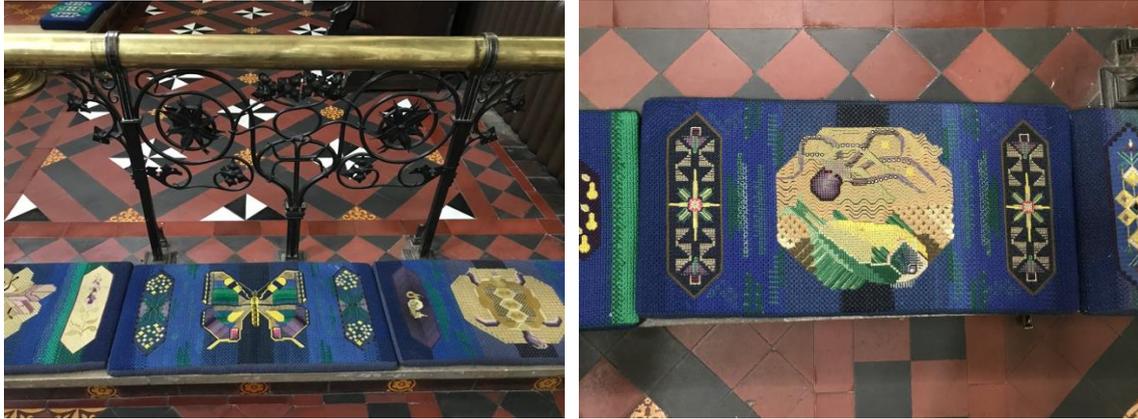


June 2021

The decoration of the East wall in 1903 was the work of Temple Moore (1856-1920), a pupil and associate of George Gilbert Scott. Moore was the third eminent Gothic Revival architect to contribute to St Michael's church. The wall colouring and the retablo with its cross, and the four carved figures of Saints of the early Church make a frame enhancing the splendour of the sunlit window. The Saints are Athanasius (signifying the Faith), Augustine of Hippo (care of the poor), Chrysostom (preaching), and Jerome (the translator of the Bible). In 2011 this wall decoration was cleaned and restored by means of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of 'The East Wall Project'.

In the Sanctuary is the Episcopal Seat from the firm of the famous wood-carver Thompson of Kilburn, Yorkshire, whose personal mark was to feature a carved mouse on each piece of furniture.

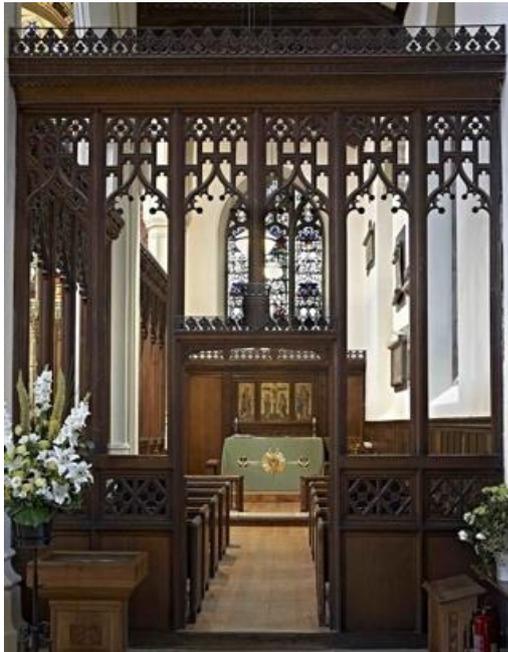
The fine sets of choir cushions together with the Altar frontals and all the other embroidered work were designed by Miss Sylvia Green and stitched by members of the parish.



Embroidered cushions, June 2021

The South Chapel

The South Chapel is architecturally the richest part of the church, and therefore, highly significant. In the chapel on the South side, the window (1906) by Charles Kempe shows St. Michael slaying the wyvern. Fortunately, this window survived the WWII bomb damage. The fine oak screen separating the chapel from the choir was designed by Arthur D Sharp and erected in 1905. The west carved oak screen and the reredos were by Temple Moore in 1906. The painting on the Oak reredos is thought to be by Henry Milner, a friend and collaborator of Temple Moore. This chapel is still very much as originally designed, which enhances its significance. Oak altar rail with gates, oak flooring and eight oak double seats were added in 1925, in the memory of Lady Elliot.



(St Michael's Church website)

2.7 Historical developments in the Church

The internal layout of the church that was built to Vulliamy's design became increasingly impractical. The lack of space for a choir; the organ, though not installed initially, was too remotely placed in the west gallery when introduced in 1842; there was negligible vestry or other administrative space; almost every square inch was filled with seating regardless of whether there was any line of sight to pulpit or lectern.

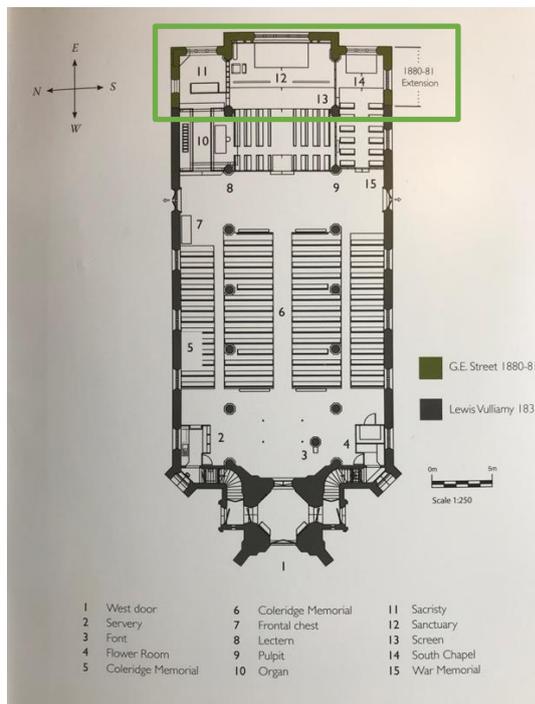
Most of the work done inside the church subsequently, has been directed towards remedying these original shortcomings.

As noted earlier, the organ was installed in 1842 in the west gallery. It was built by Gray and Davidson within a deal case. The materials and position were approved by Vulliamy.

The pulpit was installed in 1848. It was set quite high to enable the preacher to speak directly to the occupants of the gallery as well as to those in any other part of the church. In the eighteen thirties when the church was built the sacrament of the word was deeply cherished, but towards the end of the nineteenth century the importance of music and ritual came to be more and more widely appreciated. This was no doubt partly a result of the influence of the Oxford Movement, an influence which extended to parishes throughout England and not least to urban churches which would have called themselves strongly Evangelical.



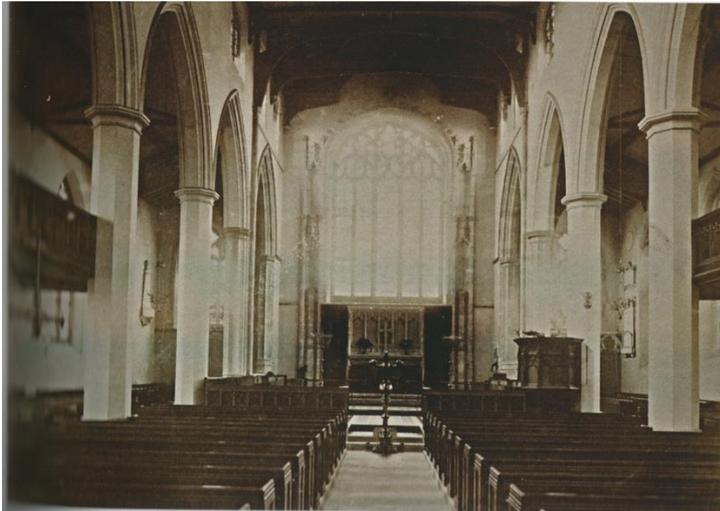
The Pulpit, June 2021



Plan showing GE Street's alterations (St Michael's Church Guidebook)

In 1879, Rev Daniel Trinder (1828-1888), Incumbent from 1878 till his death a year later, initiated two phases of major alterations in the church. The first, of 1879 included major redecoration, reseating of the nave and aisles, heating and ventilation.

The second phase of 1880 saw the demolition of the east wall to create the extension of the church by one bay, and improvements in the basement for use of vestries and other administrative purposes. The brass eagle lectern was also installed during that time.



G. E. Street's interior (R. Sainsbury)



The lectern, June 2021

Both phases of this significant work were carried out by the important architect George Edmund Street (1824-1881) - the designer of the nave of Bristol Cathedral and of the Royal Law Courts in the Strand. From 1844 Street was assistant to George Gilbert Scott, and in 1849 he set up his own practice. In 1852 he moved to Oxford, where he published his highly influential book on Gothic architecture '*Brick and Marble in the Middle Ages: Notes of a Tour in Italy*' (1855).

All new windows were to be glazed in plane, cathedral glass (most likely due to cost), and the two clerestory windows in the new bay are of a different design to the original high-level windows.



The Font, June 2021



Note clerestory windows in the 1880 extension.

The east window was reglazed in 1888 as a memorial to Mr Trinder who died in Gibraltar on 2 April 1888. Charles Eamer Kempe was selected to prepare the design (see Stained Glass above). His design of 'The Tree of the Cross' window was exhibited at the near-by Literary and Scientific Institution of 1839.



Example of Kempe's stained glass. (Kempe Trust website)



Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution, June 2021

Street's sanctuary was further embellished in 1903 by another major Gothic Revivalist, Temple Lushington Moore (1856-1920), who added the present statuary and stencilled decoration. Temple Moore's first significant commission was in 1886 when he won the competition for Peterborough, All Saints, built in a refined, Bodleyesque style. In 1890 he secured the important position as church architect to Sir Tatton Sykes of Sledmere, the greatest of all C 19 church-building squires. In 1905 Moore returned to create a chapel with screens and panelling in the east end of the south aisle.



Reredos with Running Vine cornice above, June 2021

Bomb damage during WWII destroyed or damaged much of the stained glass in the east window. According to St Michael's Parish magazine of 1948, the Kempe window had some "*outstanding negative virtues. You could sit in church and disregard it.*" (St Michael's Highgate, Roger Sainsbury). The Incumbent at that time, Rev Preb Harry Edwards BD (1906-1984) prioritised structural repairs of the building but also initiated the reglazing of the east window. This led to the installation in 1954 of a new stained glass window by Evie Hone. For more information on the east window see 'Stained Glass' above. The window was installed in December, and Harry Edwards wrote: "*We have the finest modern window in London. This was said to me by the art critic of a famous newspaper. No Doubt this is one of the happiest week-ends of my life...*"

Harry Edwards also succeeded, in spite of some of the congregations' objections, to remove some of the pews at the west end of the church to ease egress from the building, to increase the area for baptisms and for displaying literature and prayer books.

This area was further improved by the following Incumbent, Rev John Fielding MA, DT, DE (1929-) who succeeded Edwards in 1973. In 1980 ten pews were removed to provide a meeting area, but alterations to provide desired kitchen facilities were not carried out at that stage.

During the early 1980's the Parochial Church Council and the congregation of St. Michael's Church felt the great need to provide a new Church Hall adjacent to the Church itself. This was necessary for the broader social and educational aspects of Parish life.

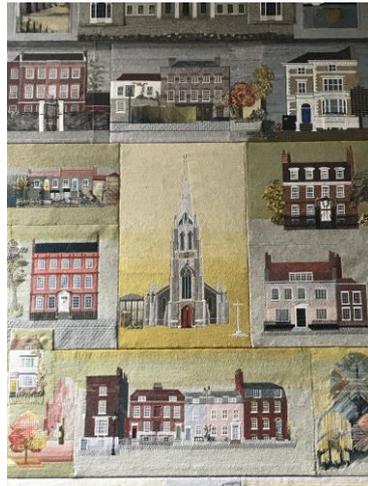
Having looked at the various options including the use of the area under the Church itself, the decision in 1985 was to build on the North side of the Church. The finances were raised through the selling of the old Church hall next to St. Michael's school and by a wide appeal to the congregation and residents of Highgate.

Melville Poole the Architect, who was a member of the Parochial Church Council and was keen to design it, was chosen for the project in preference to Martin Caroe, the Church Architect. The latter assumed he would be appointed and did not present to the Committee. The new Parish Centre was completed in 1988.



Parish Centre, June 2021

This building has added greatly to the life of St. Michael's Church. Knowing the needlework skills in Highgate, the Architect anticipated that the high brick wall of the staircase would be the right place for an embroidery to bring warmth and contrasting colour and texture to the building. Sylvia Green and the St. Michael's Embroidery Group decided that the embroidered panel should depict the Church surrounded by characteristic buildings in the village and by such landmarks as Highgate Cemetery and Kenwood House.



Embroidered panel and detail, June 2021

Melville Poole died within a few months of the completion of the work. His name and the names of all those who worked on the building are recorded in a mural plaque by the entrance of the new extension.



Mural plaque dedicated to Melville Poole Architects, June 2021

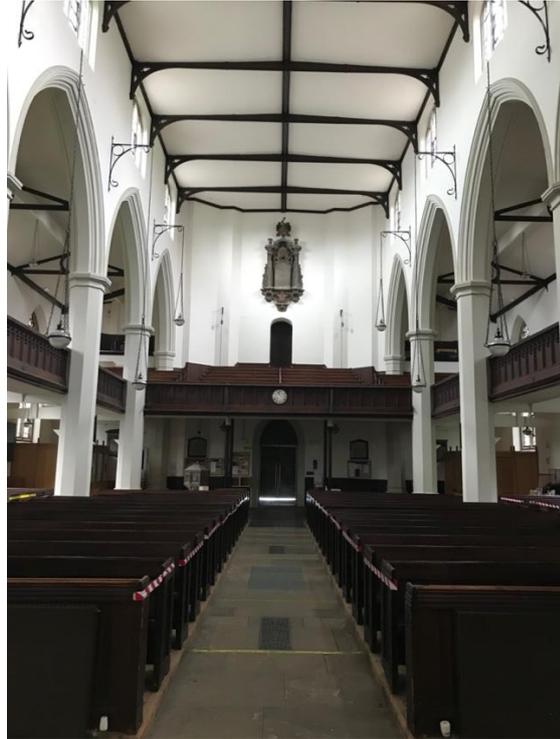
During the Incumbency of Rev Dr Jonathan Trigg, further pews were removed from the west end of the church to provide a servery, flower room and book store. Constructed in oak, these enclosures have the character of large scale furniture rather than room divisions, so they do not detract from the original character of the interior as a single clear volume.

This extensive work was carried out in the early months of 2011 by the church architects Caroe and Partners. In addition to work at the west end, the east wall was cleaned and restored and the whole building was redecorated. As a result of the major phase of work, the church was taken off the Historic England's Heritage-at-Risk register.

The practice was established by William Douglas Carøe (1857–1938), an early Brother of the Art Workers' Guild. Its London office has now recently closed.



View towards the chancel, June 2021



View towards the west, June 2021



View towards the north gallery, June 2021



View towards the south gallery, June 2021

In 2020, re-ordering to the basement was carried out to create new Parish offices, choir vestry etc. and improve the hall facilities. The hall roof was re-roofed to improve lead details, which resulted in a slight change in original profile of the roof.

3.0 Statement of significance

A Statement of significance distils what is important about the place and why, and to whom it is important. The value and importance of a heritage asset can derive from its rarity, its history, its innovative, scientific and technical nature, its architecture, culture and its value to the community. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 recognises in Section 16. 'Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations'. It defines Significance in Annex 2: Glossary, 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.'

Historic England, in its document *'Historic England 2019 Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 1'* follows the NPPF in its categories for assessing the heritage asset, which would also be used in this document, namely: the archaeological, architectural, artistic and historical interest.

Suggested levels of significance here are as follows:

Exceptionally significant: internationally significant aesthetic, cultural, evidential or communal significance; exceptional areas/elements such as primary elevations or workmanship; nationally and/or internationally important associations with people or events; unique and intact elements of highest quality; unquestionable group value.

Highly significant: nationally important historic or architectural features; high quality of workmanship; potential for nationally important archaeology; largely intact and/or rare examples of a particular building type or technique; important positive group value.

Significant: Formal, heritage or aesthetic significance, architectural character or notable features, including areas with potential for significant enhancement; some group value; surviving decorative features of historic or architectural interest.

Low significance: Little or no architectural or heritage significance or area of lost significance.

Not significant: Of no heritage interest

Detrimental: Features or areas that detract from a building's significance

3.1 Formal designation and statutory listing

The church was listed grade II* on 10 June 1954. The listing citation is in Appendix B.

3.2 Archaeological significance

Highgate is an example of a secondary medieval settlement established on the edge of a historic parish and a large tract of woodland. It has been continuously settled since the medieval period and thus has the potential to contain medieval and post-medieval settlement remains of archaeological interest. Such deposits present a potential opportunity to assess the buried evidence of historic settlement, which can provide an insight into changing settlement and land use patterns, as well as evolving lifestyles in the medieval and post-medieval periods. The presence of high-status buildings affords an opportunity to discover substantial structural remains and with associated artefactual and environmental evidence. The modern street pattern still reflects that of the original settlement.

Remains of the early 18th century designed landscape in Waterlow Park contribute to the significance of this registered historic park.

3.3 Architectural significance

In 2006 The Architectural History Practice Limited surveyed the condition of Commissioners'- granted churches for English Heritage, and documented their findings and assessments in two volumes entitled 'Commissioners' Churches Research Project Stage Two, 2006'. St Michael's Church is included in their 'Inspection Reports Volume 1: First Grant Churches in London'. Their Statement of Importance concludes:

"St. Michael's is a handsome Gothic building which still retains something of its original internal character, despite several alterations. The church occupies a very prominent position on the top of a Highgate Hill and is a significant local landmark, particularly from the South. It was also an important visual element in the layout of Highgate Cemetery and was taken into account in the latter's design". They assessed the building's listed status as commensurate with its significance.



Church interior, June 2021

Historic England's basis for their grade II* designation is thus summarised:

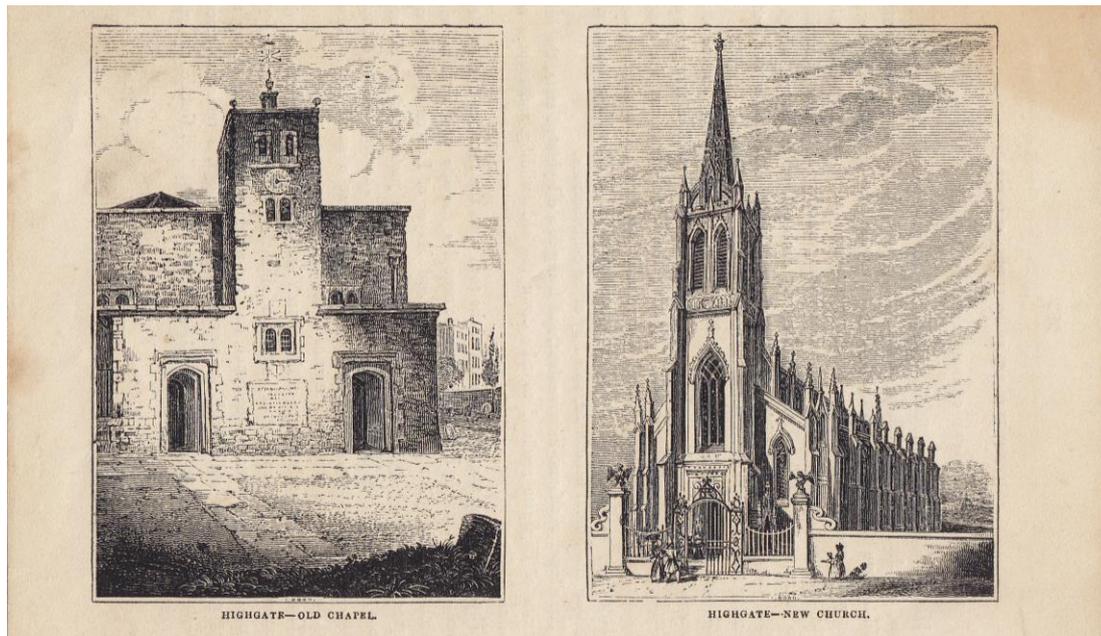
“St Michael's Church, of 1830-2 by Lewis Vulliamy with further work of 1879-81 by GE Street and 1903 by Temple Moore, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * Architectural interest: a particularly large and ambitious church of the 1830s, incorporating work by three leading architects of the Gothic Revival; * Artistic interest: the east wall and window form an unusually rich ensemble that combines high-quality decorative and artistic work of several periods; * Group value: as part of an important cluster of listed buildings at the junction of South Grove and Highgate West Hill; also as a focal point within the Grade I-registered Highgate Cemetery.”*

We would thus summarise, that from the outset and throughout the life of the church, the choice of architects and building style were paramount to the congregation, the PCC and those that commissioned them. Significance is not necessarily about the originality of the asset and keeping it unaltered. St Michael's is an example of a building that has been altered in a sensitive manner by successive important architects that have retained its Gothic Revival character both externally and internally. Therefore architecturally, the Church is very significant.

3.4 Artistic significance

Similar to its architecture, the church has been commissioning important artistic fittings and fixtures throughout its history that maintain St Michael's high significance. These include the east wall and its stained-glass window, and screens that were all detailed in a previous chapter. Modern contributions such as the embroidered cushions and panel add to the impact that the church interior has, and express the importance of the artistic content to the community, and the pride in its character. In our opinion, the artistic value is highly significant.

3.5 Historical and cultural significance



The site of St Michael's Church, as well as the building itself are of exceptional significance as part of the historic development of Highgate, and are also part of its educational and cultural history. Highgate school is an important hub for the local community.

When Highgate cemetery was created in 1839, views of St Michael's were exceptionally significant, and the church was made the focal point in the layout of the cemetery. The latter was established under the 1836 Act of Parliament which created The London Cemetery Company. Stephen Geary, an architect and the company's founder, appointed James Bunstone Bunning as surveyor and David Ramsey, renowned garden designer, as the landscape architect. The sum of £3,500 was paid for seventeen acres of land that had been the grounds of the Ashhurst Estate, descending the steep hillside from Highgate Village. Over the next three years the cemetery was landscaped to brilliant effect by Ramsey who laid out serpentine roads and footpaths leading upwards through the burial area to the remarkable buildings and terrace just below St Michael's Church.

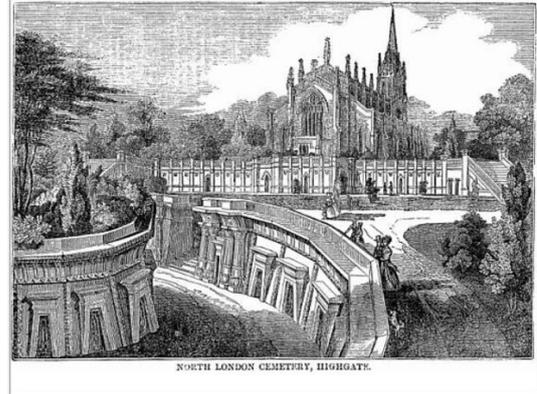
The exotic formal planting, complemented by the unique architecture of both Geary and Bunning secure Highgate as the capital's principal cemetery. It was designated by Historic England in 1987 as Grade I in the Heritage Category of Park and Garden.



Current views of St Michael's church from Highgate Cemetery



LONDON Highgate Cemetery 1858.
Illustrated News of the World



View from Highgate Cemetery. Wood engraving, 1838.



View of the entrance to the Egyptian Avenue in Highgate Cemetery with St Michael in the background. Pencil/wash, 1839. LMA



View from the Church towards Highgate Cemetery. June 2021

4.0 Significance analysis/ capacity for change

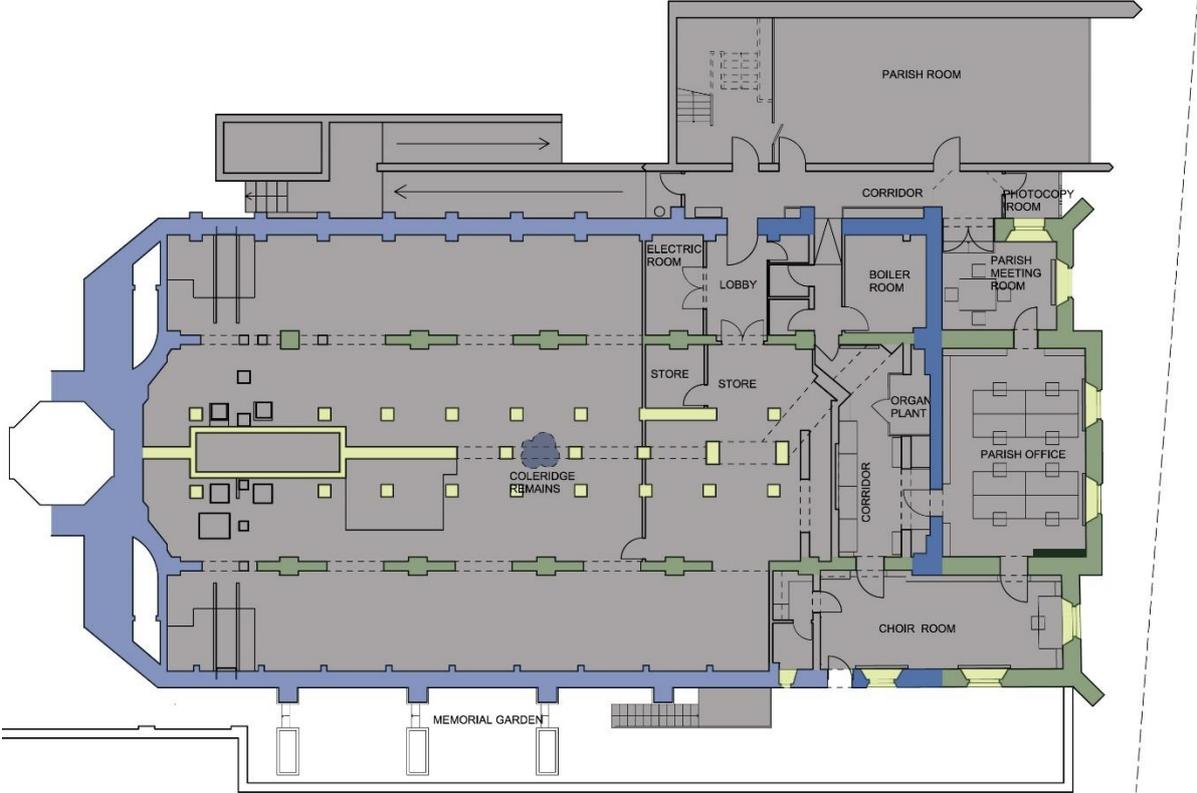
The significance analysis is a means to express the tangible effect of the statement of significance together with observational and technical issues and is a relative analysis within the building/heritage asset, based on understanding the place through scholarly research and on visual inspection.

The analysis is presented as floor plans coloured to show the relative significance of spaces based on inspection on site and consideration of historic drawings showing where past alterations have taken place. This form of presentation enables comparison with any proposals for change.

The categorisation of significance can also inform decisions on proposed changes so that these are proportionate and relative to overall proposed interventions. The categories used in this analysis are as described in the Statement of Significance.

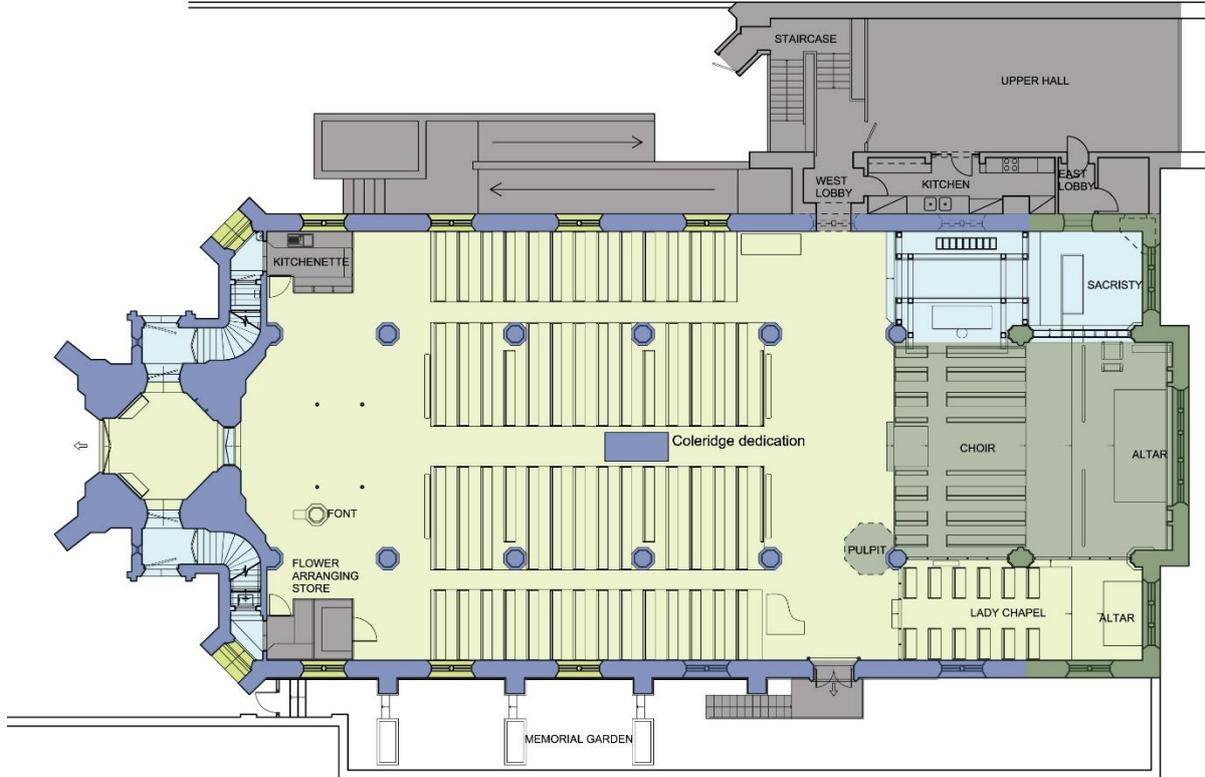
- Exceptionally significant
- Highly significant
- Significant
- Low significance
- Not significant
- Detrimental

Colour Key: Significance mark-up

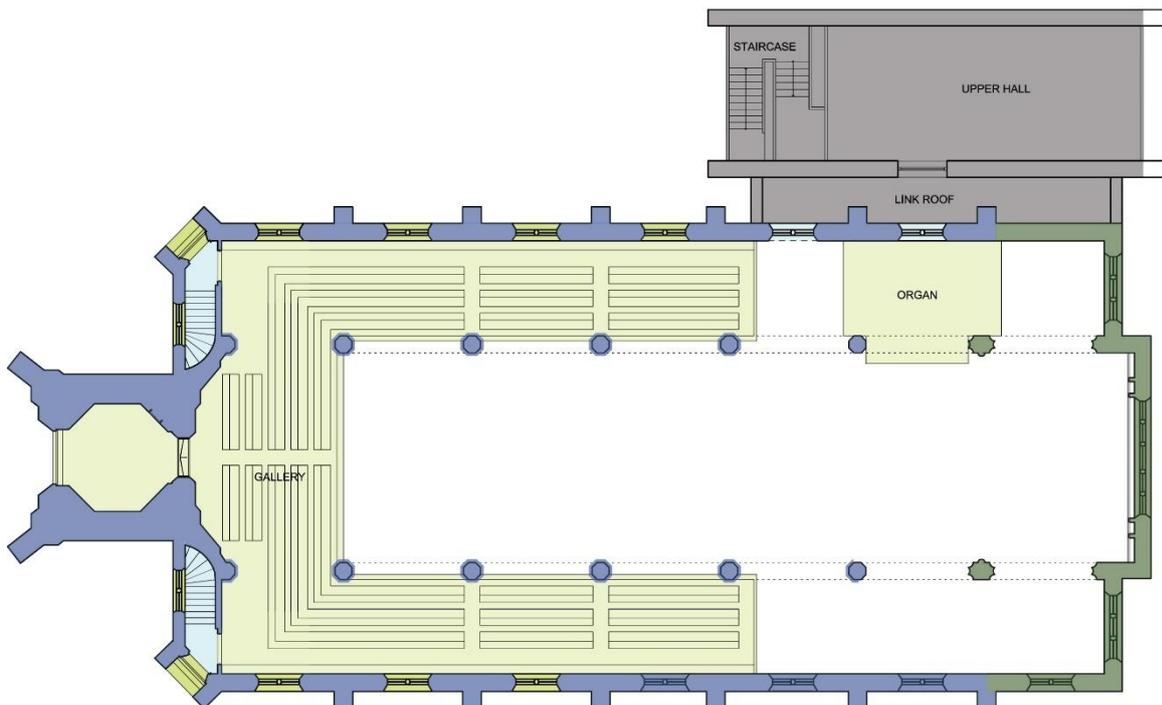


Basement Plan: Significance mark-up

- Exceptionally significant
- Highly significant
- Significant
- Low significance
- Not significant
- Detrimental

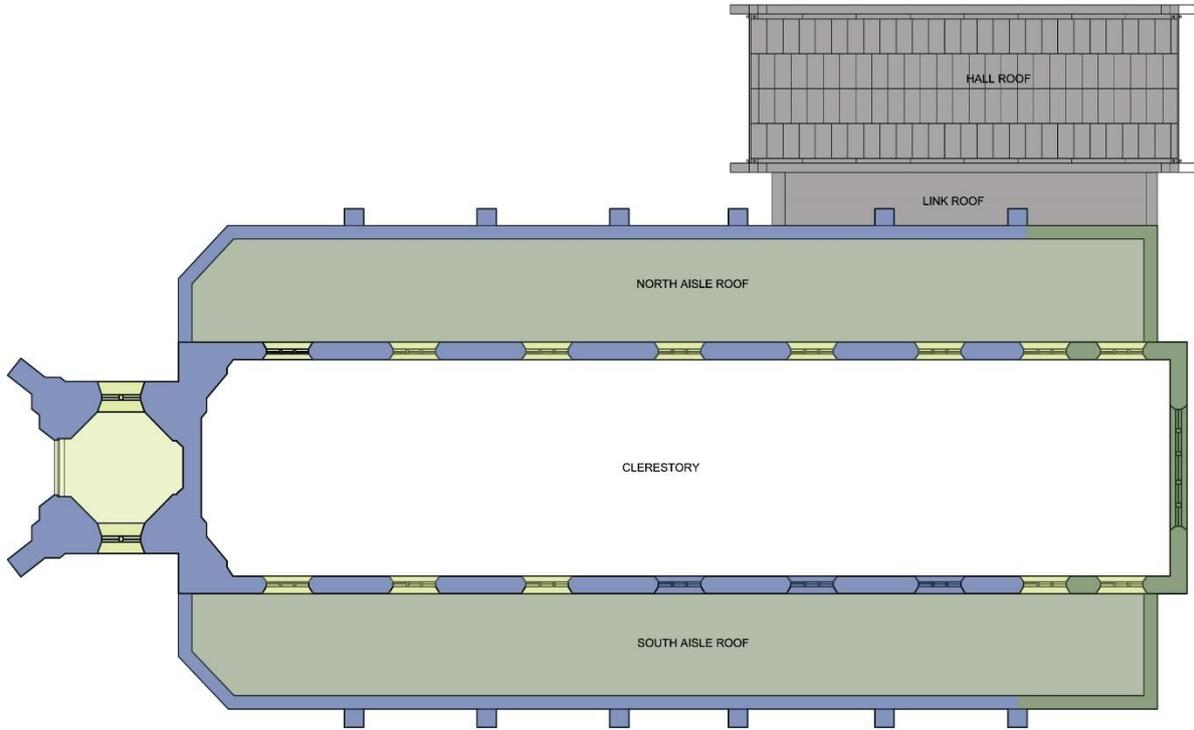


Ground Floor Plan: Significance mark-up

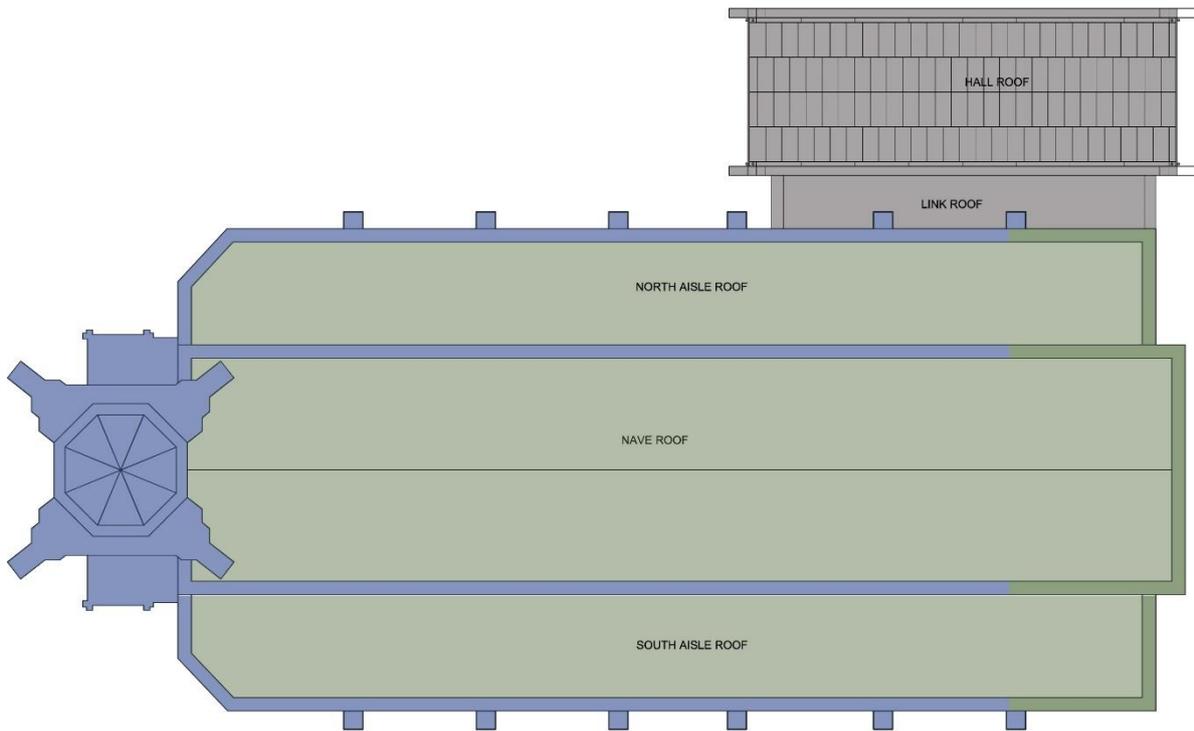


Gallery Floor Plan: Significance mark-up

- Exceptionally significant
- Highly significant
- Significant
- Low significance
- Not significant
- Detrimental



Clerestory Floor Plan: Significance mark-up



Roof Plan: Significance mark-up

5.0 Vulnerabilities and Conservation Policies

St Michael’s Highgate is Grade II* listed. Buildings of this designation are particularly important buildings of more than special interest. Only 5.8% of listed buildings are Grade II*. Owing to the building’s historic, cultural and architectural importance, its listing, and prominence within its environment, it requires high standards of maintenance and care.

Any works which affect the nature or character of the listed building, both inside and out, and including all items fixed to the building, will require Listed Building Consent from the Local Planning Authority, Camden Council, who will be advised by Historic England. Failure to have Listed Building Consent (LBC) before carrying out works requiring LBC is a criminal offence.

British Standard BS 7913 Guide to the conservation of historic building, recognises that there are conflicting pressures that need to be balanced when making decisions to conserve historic buildings, and has expressed the conservation process thus:

Drivers for Change (Need)

- Economic
- Economic regeneration
- Change of use
- Social
- Legislative change
- Change of owner/tenant
- Planning policy
- Environmental change
- Building vulnerable
- Condition
- External pressure



Informed Viewpoint (Understand Significance)

- Survey Assessment and Consultation
- Historic building surveys
- Condition survey
- Landscape character and context
- Environmental
- Nature conservation
- Local economy/employment/housing and infrastructure
- Consult with relevant agencies, community and specialists



Develop Brief and Proposals

- Determine appropriate solution.
- Specify works required.
- Specify any recording or mitigation.
- Consider future maintenance requirements



Agree Solution

Statutory Approvals, may include Listed Building or Monument Consents or Faculty approvals.



Works Phase

Ensure works are undertaken by those with appropriate competence and knowledge.



Post Project Review



Arrange for Regular Maintenance

Maintenance by competent persons.
Periodic inspections by appropriate professionals.

Pressure for Change

A building is a tool, and unlike a monument or an archaeological deposit, will inevitably need to be changed and adapted to maintain its use.

The concept of beneficial use is important; loosely described as the use which requires least change while maintaining the income flow necessary to maintain the building. Often the optimum beneficial use is the original design use. Historic England recognises that “*Very few significant places can be maintained at either public or private expense unless they are capable of some beneficial use*” (Conservation Principles policies and guidance). NPPF 2018 Para 196 states that proposed changes that may harm a designated heritage asset should be weighed against securing its optimum viable use.

The general condition of the building is good but it faces challenges such as accessibility, ancillary facilities and poor presentation of the Coleridge memorial.

Policies for the Conservation of the building

The following table has a list of ‘Issues’ in its first column which are specific areas of vulnerability that have been identified. These can range from the global (Climate change) to the very local. The second column has ‘policies’ which are a general statement in response to the issue. As issues change over time - some may be resolved, and new ones will emerge - the responses and policies will change. For these reasons it is important that this section is treated as a live document with regular reviews and updates and is responsive to changes in relevant legislation.

The conservation of a building may be defined as the management of change, in a sustainable manner that passes on the cultural value to future generations. Historic England defines Conservation “*as the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations.*” (EH Conservation Principles policies and guidance)

The following policies will generally deal with tangible factors which most often relate to technical issues or external influences that can have a deleterious impact on the significance of the building if left unresolved or unattended. It is also important to recognise the potential cumulative deleterious effect of small changes, such as inadequate cleaning, lack of redecoration, poor lighting, poor signage etc., which can reduce users’ respect for a building and lead to future degradation.

The policies are subdivided into 5 types: general policies for the building as a whole; policies which directly relate to the four main aspects of significance; policies for the management of major changes to the building; policies for maintenance and life cycle issues and finally, policies for operational management.

1.0 General

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
1.1	Maintaining the building in beneficial use, capable of sustaining and enhancing the building. In this case a functioning church with cultural, community and family events and gatherings.	Policy 1.1 Maintain active beneficial use and occupancy of the buildings following accepted national and international conservation principles and local policies.	Follow Historic England's guidelines on understanding Conservation. Require relevant personnel to read the Conservation Plan and keep it as a shared, live document.	Church & PCC
1.2	Appropriate use. Damage can be caused to important original and valuable historic finishes where buildings are inappropriately used or are used in too intensive a manner.	Policy 1.2 Ensure that historic and vulnerable areas are not over-crowded, and that levels and types of use are controlled to prevent damage through heavy wear and tear.	Standards of the highest order should be maintained in the most important spaces, and use levels should be controlled. This policy covers not only occupation by people, but also control of the proliferation of services.	Church & PCC
1.3	The exterior of the building contributes significantly to the quality of the surrounding area. This means that particular attention should be given to maintaining the exterior and setting of the building in good condition and great care should be taken when considering any proposal for change.	Policy 1.3 Respect the richness of the architecture of the building including buildings within the curtilage which reflect some historic accretion and change. Recognise that additions, alterations and earlier interventions may have acquired a significance of their own and may be of good quality. Elements that may not appear to be of interest may be important for reasons that are not immediately apparent. Give due regard for presentation and public perceptions.	Whenever possible and feasible, employ methods that will enhance the setting of these buildings for better public appreciation by informing users and visitors about their heritage value and history.	Church & PCC
1.4	Sensitivity/ Significance: while the effects of the listing of the building apply to all of the building, inside and out, and	Policy 1.4 Changes to the historic fabric should be directed to less sensitive areas of the building and change to more	Refer to significance analysis drawings in the main report and update them as fabric is opened up. Record ill-considered and detrimental	As above + consultants

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
	to all fittings attached to the building, the implementation of the controls arising from the listing of the building should be applied proportionately to the significance/sensitivity of the area or fabric concerned.	sensitive areas should be a justified and well-designed exception. Removal of detrimental aspects of the building is in itself an enhancement of the building. Ill-considered interventions should be removed when possible.	interventions. Identify opportunities for reinstatement/enhancement as part of on-going and future works programmes.	
1.5	External influences which cannot be controlled but may require a response: - Climate change – both heating and cooling loads may increase. -Atmospheric pollution – damage to external fabric. -Security considerations. -Changes in the legislative framework.	Policy 1.5 Specialist impact assessments should be commissioned which also take into account external factors that may make the building vulnerable, for example expectations for climate change and rising seasonal temperatures and more severe weather-related events. Security requirements that may have a detrimental impact on its setting.	Annual reviews to be captured and inform Maintenance register and update the Conservation Plan.	Church & PCC
2.0 Areas of Significance				
2.1	Archaeology The building stands within Archaeological Priority Area Tier 2. It was built on site of Ashhurst House, part of the Ashhurst Estate where Highgate Cemetery was also formed. Therefore, the site is less likely to contain significant archaeological remains.	Policy 2.1.1 Seek guidance prior to disturbing existing ground conditions. Policy 2.1.2 Carry out archaeological investigation where there is likely to be significant disturbance to the ground or standing buildings.	Consult up-to-date documents assessing local archaeology such as Camden's Archaeological Priority Areas Appraisal October 2018. Alternatively, commission specialist desk-based assessments (DBA) of archaeological potential. The DBA should aim to inform on previous impacts on the archaeological resource. Analysis should: - Identify the presence of any known or potential buried	Church, PCC, Church Architect & Consultants

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
			<p>heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals and describe their significance.</p> <p>-Assess the likely impacts arising from the proposals on the significance of the buried assets.</p> <p>-Provide recommendations for further assessment where necessary of the heritage assets affected, and/or mitigation aimed at reducing or removing completely any adverse impacts upon buried heritage assets and/or their setting.</p>	
2.2	<p>Architectural issues As St Michael's is most likely to remain in its beneficial use as an ecclesiastical building, it is less likely to be affected by damage to its structure and fabric.</p>	<p>Policy 2.2 Create identifiable areas or zones for use as ancillary accommodation in the less sensitive areas of the building and maintain the integrity of the more sensitive areas and rooms.</p>	<p>Identify areas of less significance in the building such as the Crypt and develop schemes to accommodate ancillary activities and staff in appropriate environments.</p>	<p>Church & PCC + consultants</p>
2.3	<p>Artistic/Aesthetic issues Attitudes towards decoration and colour schemes change and oscillate over the years.</p>	<p>Policy 2.3.1 Respect and maintain the artistic and aesthetic heritage of the building even when it is not to current taste.</p> <p>Policy 2.3.2 Carry out paint analysis of remaining original scheme to inform of past and future decorative schemes</p>	<p>Internal and external artwork: Develop a programme of cleaning and repair. Agree a specification for external cleaning and decoration to be reviewed with Historic England, the local planning authority and specialist consultants before tendering any work.</p>	<p>Church, PCC, Church Architect, & Consultants</p>
2.4	<p>Historic Significance This does not appear to be under threat and is well</p>	<p>Policy 2.4 Provide and maintain up-to-date interpretation and explanation of the building.</p>	<p>For Specifiers and contractors: Incorporate Historic Significance Statement in tender documentation and in</p>	<p>Church & PCC</p>

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
	recorded in a number of publications. Original records such as drawings, manuscripts, models and objects associated with the building's construction are valuable documents and evidence of the cultural significance of the building.		Contractors' induction workshops. For the Public: Publish up-to-date guidebooks and abbreviated histories of the building to inform visitors in paper format and online. Consider providing off-site secure store for original documents and objects and keep copies on site.	
2.5	Cultural significance The church has undergone few changes. Identifying and recording these changes to the fabric is an important part of maintaining a cultural memory of social change.	Policy 2.5 Maintain a record of all works carried out to the building in a central archive to be located on site. Provide an electronic, indexed catalogue to enable access and management of the archive.	Records to be integrated in the O+M manual process and become part of project completion sign-off. Provide space and resources for the archive on site, which should be both paper-based and digital. Consider providing off-site secure store for original documents and objects and keep copies on site.	Church, PCC, Church Architect, & Consultants
2.6	Setting	Policy 2.6 The setting of the building is of high significance and should be maintained. Where change is considered, such change must demonstrate enhancement of its setting through a Heritage Impact Assessment.	Commission specialist Heritage Impact Assessment when considering alterations and development within the churchyard. Planning applications for development around the curtilage of the church should include a Heritage Impact Assessment.	Church, PCC, Church Architect, & Consultants
3.0 Managing Change				
3.1	General The two guiding principles in conservation of historic buildings are firstly minimum intervention, and secondly, where	Policy 3.1.1 Seek to absorb the need for change or expansion in the least sensitive and historic areas, and primarily in basement areas,	Maintain and develop, in detail, the sensitivity analysis of the building. Create and maintain a coordinated approach to the management of development within the	Church, PCC, Church Architect, & Consultants

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
	<p>alteration is unavoidable, change as little as possible. Where new work is required, it should aspire to the highest quality of design and execution. This neither implies nor precludes working in traditional or new ways, but design should always be guided by the assessment of significance. All proposals for change must be justifiable in the context of local and national policies and legislation for the historic environment. Irreversible intervention may be justified if it relates sensitively to the significance of the building, if it provides new information about the past, reveals or reinforces the values of a place or helps sustain those values for future generations – so long as the impact is demonstrably proportionate to the predicted benefits.</p>	<p>and within the less sensitive areas of the building.</p> <p>Policy 3.1.2 Prior to any major programme of work, carry out a detailed feasibility study to establish the full conservation implications to ensure that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The interest of the building is fully considered; -That the proposal is absolutely necessary in scale and degree; -That other less intrusive options have been eliminated. -That the proposals do not pose possible difficulties for future operations, protection of the fabric, or practical maintenance and management. <p>Policy 3.1.3 Ensure that any proposed work is of the highest design quality. New work should be at least equal to the quality of existing spaces, materials, detailing and finishes. The integrity of the existing architecture should be respected, and new work should be visually complimentary without being over intrusive.</p> <p>Policy 3.1.4 Ensure that new work can be easily maintained and will</p>	<p>church and curtilage that is shared and accessible.</p> <p>Within areas of high significance, the work should be reversible with minimal impact for damage.</p> <p>New work should be readily identifiable.</p> <p>Ensure that any benefits that will be gained are maximised and proportionate to the degree of intervention.</p> <p>Establish a clear vision for the future and ensure that the new work does not create constraints on future use.</p> <p>Engage with Historic England and the City Council's pre-application process.</p>	

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
		<p>age and weather well in keeping with the existing buildings.</p> <p>Policy 3.1.5 Wherever new and old work meet, consideration should be given to how the interface is detailed to cause minimum impact. Detailing the structural and architectural interventions is an area where design quality is crucial.</p>		
3.2	<p>Security The imperative to upgrade protection of a building that attracts crowds of people both around it and visiting its interiors as well as audiences attending events is understandable and defensible. However, there is a risk that over time, other considerations including protection of the historic fabric and its setting may be overlooked or side-lined as reliance is increasingly placed on physical measures to counteract possible extreme circumstances.</p>	<p>Policy 3.2 Ensure that the impact of security measures on the historic fabric is assessed by a specialist with knowledge of the behaviour of historic structures, and the requirement is justified by an appointed specialist security consultant. Where possible, security measures should be constructed in a reversible manner so that they can be removed when redundant.</p>	<p>Appoint a specialist security consultant to the design team to act as an informed interface with the security services.</p>	<p>Church, PCC, Church Architect, & Consultants</p>
3.3	<p>Changing Technology: Performance-related operational, IT & Communications pressures</p>	<p>Policy 3.3 Obtain a comprehensive analysis of operational requirements to inform proposals for efficient management of</p>	<p>Ensure insertions of equipment and infrastructure are unobtrusive. If necessary, obtain a survey of current insertions of technical equipment and cabling</p>	<p>Church, PCC, Church Architect, & Consultants</p>

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
	The church hosts a diversity of events, and hires out rooms to a variety of commercial and community groups, including children's and toddler groups, choirs, fitness classes and tutoring groups. These may require technical infrastructure that was not envisaged when the church was built.	infrastructures required for the diverse uses.	into the building's fabric. The survey should also contain specific vulnerabilities and significance analyses.	
3.4	Improving inclusive access This includes step-free access into the building's curtilage from adjoining streets; step-free access into the church and to all areas within the building; Accessible seating and WCs.	Policy 3.4 Obtain a comprehensive access strategy and develop it to meet current legislation. Provide clear and consistent signage and way-finding strategy.	Update Inclusive Access reports to comply with changing legislation. Record any incidents or difficulties. Provide specific induction and assistance for those with particular difficulties.	Church, PCC, Church Architect
3.5	Fire escape and evacuation The historic doors may not have sufficient fire resistance and increasing the occupation of the building will require review of all evacuation routes.	Policy 3.5 The Fire Strategy for the building should be coordinated with the Conservation Plan and agreed with HE and Camden Council.	Maintain a Fire Strategy in accordance with current regulations.	Church, PCC, Church Architect
3.6	Temporary performance-related fittings and equipment Equipment and fittings used on a temporary basis in relation to events staged in the church can cause permanent damage to its original and historic fabric.	Policy 3.6.1 Obtain a comprehensive analysis of productions operational requirements to inform proposals for efficient management of productions infrastructures. Policy 3.6.2 Information, induction and training are to be provided to those engaged upon hiring the church on	Information setting out guidelines and limitations for each relevant area of the building, as well as specifications, access, technical and production information must be provided to all hirers. Adherence to these and other guidelines, as well as their effectiveness, should be monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure appropriateness.	Church, PCC, Church Architect

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
		a recurring and one-off bases. They are to be monitored regularly to ensure they remain appropriate, relevant and comprehensive.		
4.0 Maintenance and life-cycle				
4.1	<p>General Regular, cyclical maintenance is necessary to counter the effects of natural change and deterioration. Maintenance should be timely and proportionate to identified risks. Repairs and refurbishment should be sustainable in the long term. Generally speaking, the greater the level of significance of part of a place or building is, the greater the level of care is needed. But in all cases, it is essential that the building is maintained in a weather-tight condition. Good conservation practice requires like-for-like matching of materials and methods of construction and detailing whenever repairs are carried out (this is a statutory requirement). 'Holding' repairs and strengthening are preferred to wholesale replacement wherever possible, providing there is a commitment in the</p>	<p>Policy 4.1.1 To prevent unnecessary deterioration and avoid repair costs, ensure that programmes for routine inspection and cyclical maintenance are strictly adhered to and ensure that recommendations are acted upon. Preventive maintenance programmes should prioritize required work and be comprehensive, timely and adequate. This requires forward planning and clear lines of responsibility. Policy 4.1.2 Where repair work is required, it should only be carried out once there is full understanding of the existing fabric, based on specialist surveys and investigations. Specialist knowledge and professional expertise should be sought. Policy 4.1.3 Ensure that personnel responsible for maintenance and repair work are familiar with the need for high standards and the</p>	<p>A Forward Maintenance register should be produced and managed by the Church and advised by the Church Architect.</p> <p>There are many repairs to the external fabric/ masonry that are needed. A plan for repairs to the building fabric should be included.</p>	Church, PCC, Church Architect

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
	<p>long term to monitor and continue to repair as necessary. Methods of repair should be chosen that are least invasive. Modern techniques should only be used where there are known conservation benefits for doing so, based on sound technical knowledge. Where modern materials are to be used, these should have known compatibility with existing materials to avoid undesirable side effects.</p>	<p>statutory requirements relating to repair of listed buildings. Ensure that only experienced qualified contractors, specialists, and craftsmen are employed for the execution of work involving repair and new build.</p> <p>Policy 4.1.4 Establish procedures for recording work carried out and monitor repairs after execution to ascertain efficacy of results and stability of repairs.</p> <p>Policy 4.1.5 Where work requires scaffolding, this should be installed without causing damage to historic elevations.</p>		
4.2	<p>Specification of materials and standards of workmanship for both repair and new work requires specialist technical expertise, particularly where traditional materials and skills are required. Economies made in specifying materials may not be cost-effective in the long term, where they may result in reduced durability, or increased maintenance levels. For repair works, material selection should always be</p>	<p>Policy 4.2.1 Carry out research into materials before any removal, restoration or repair of the original fabric. Original designs and specifications should be respected where these are available and remain acceptable for current use.</p> <p>Policy 4.2.2 Conservation work should aim to achieve a long life span, approaching 60-year life span where practical, subject to a reasonable level of</p>	<p>Policies to be written into works specifications and monitored. Undertake consultation with HE and LBC for specialist conservation work. Use accredited professionals and craftspeople where possible and when available.</p>	<p>Church Architect, consultants</p>

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
	informed by documented evidence, investigation, site inspection or laboratory testing.	planned forward maintenance.		
4.3	Roofs	Policy 4.3.1 Maintain roofs in a watertight condition at all times. Ensure that safe access is possible to all roof spaces and gutters so that regular inspections can be carried out. Keep all parapet gutters clear of debris and plant growth. Act immediately to carry out repairs whenever leaks or blockages are found.	Regular inspections are to be carried out by the quinquennial architect and their team.	Church, PCC, Church Architect
4.4	External elevations-masonry repair and cleaning All the elevations are exceptionally important for their architectural quality and for their historic and cultural associations.	Policy 4.4.1 Ensure routine re-pointing of open joints. Policy 4.4.2 Carry out specialist repair of brickwork and stonework. Replacement materials must be very well matched for colour, size and texture, and lime-based mortar mixes should be used based on original mixes, using similarly sourced sand selected for grain size and colour. Fill cracks with lime-based mortars and on no account should the cracks be enlarged. This should become part of maintenance plan.	Stipulated in specifications and tender documents.	Church Architect
4.5	Rainwater goods It is essential that rainwater goods are	Policy 4.5.1 Maintain rain-water goods in working	Ensure regular frequent cleaning is embedded in maintenance plans.	Church Architect

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
	kept in good order at all times.	watertight condition at all times. Policy 4.5.2 If applicable, establish a base plan identifying all internally run downpipes for regular inspection of internal finishes in these areas.	Add to building plans	
4.6	Lightning Protection	Policy 4.6 Lightning protection systems to be annually inspected and tested by an external contractor		Church and Church Architect
4.7	Windows and external joinery and glazing Lack of maintenance leading to decay and unnecessary repairs	Policy 4.7.1 Preserve original joinery, glazing and ironmongery where possible. Repair rather than replace joinery. Policy 4.11.3 Keep all glazing and stained glass clean at all times.	Stipulated in specifications and tender documentation. Incorporate into church building manual	Church Architect Church
4.8	Front doors and entrances Whether in use or otherwise, these entrances remain sensitive nonetheless, either because they are fundamental to the original architectural composition and internal planning, or because they contribute to the familiar setting and appearance of the historic elevations. The subsidiary entrances should not be left in a neglected appearance.	Policy 4.8.1 Regularly clean entrance steps. Prevent deterioration of finishes in currently redundant entrances. Policy 4.8.2 All historic doors, ironmongery and door furniture should be protected and preserved.	Incorporate into church building manual	Church
4.9	Internal architectural	Policy 4.9.1 Protect and care for all such decorations	Employ conservation techniques when repair is necessary. Stabilise	Church, Church

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
	<p>finishes to ceilings and walls It is important to monitor the condition of finishes, especially older ones; where the plaster key may have been damaged, unexpected sudden failure can occur, with some risk to occupants and/or historic objects.</p>	<p>equally, irrespective of their age and maintain finishes in good condition. Policy 4.9.2 Always seek to avoid disturbing historic plaster. Policy 4.9.3 Avoid or minimise the use of surface trunking and cabling. Policy 4.9.4 Recover and reuse where possible fallen or broken historic fabric. Policy 4.9.5 Avoid or minimise the use of surface trunking and cabling.</p>	<p>all plaster ceilings and fill localised hairline cracks during redecoration. Consider a delivery heating system that allows for localised control of temperature and humidity. Dirt levels within the buildings should be controlled by careful routine cleaning to prevent dust accumulation. Dusting methods should be employed that do not accidentally snag or chip finishes. Monitor and record all plaster falls. Retain any fragments for reinstatement. It is better to wait until specialist repairs can be carried out, rather than to attempt to make short-term repairs of a poor quality. If ceilings become saturated because of leaking pipes, and there is a risk of falling plaster, it is preferable to prop the ceiling and re-fix the plaster when dry, rather than remove the plaster altogether. Always minimize the need to cut into skirtings and re-use existing holes wherever possible. If new socket outlets are required, they should be grouped and located to be least visible.</p>	<p>Architect and consultants</p>
4.10	<p>Floors and floor coverings</p>	<p>Policy 4.10.1 Maintain all stone floors in good condition and limit work to historic floors to only that which is absolutely essential for structural reasons, or for conservation purposes. Policy 4.10.2 Avoid fixing new floor</p>	<p>Seek advice from Church Architect, HE and DAC when major intervention to historic floors is proposed</p>	<p>Church, PCC, Church Architect</p>

	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
		covering onto original and historic floors. Policy 4.10.3 Protect floors during any programme of works.	Stipulate in tender documents	
4.11	Monuments, Memorials It is essential that monuments and memorials are maintained. This includes internal as well as churchyard monuments. Some, like the Cavalry Cross War memorial, as well as Coleridge's grave in the crypt, are in need of attention.	Policy 4.11.1 Maintain all monuments in good condition and allow public access to all monuments	Employ conservation techniques when repair is necessary. Seek advice from Church Architect, HE and DAC when repairs or re-interpretation of monuments are proposed	Church, Church Architect
4.12	Services, data and telecommunications It is essential that the quality of important spaces, is not eroded by visible surface-run trunking or cabling, free-standing fans, convector heaters, and air-conditioning units	Policy 4.12.1 Introduce a cable management strategy tailored to each area of the buildings. Policy 4.12.2 Remove redundant services and make good special finishes	Consult with specialists early in the design process of new interventions	Church, Church Architect
5.0 Operational management				
5.1	General It is good conservation practice that copies of all documents relating to maintenance, repair and alteration are maintained in a dedicated archive for future reference. In addition, it would be good practice to maintain a continuous log of all factual findings related to the	Policy 5.1.1 Maintain a cumulative and accessible record of decisions and actions about significant work, together with copies of reports, surveys, drawings etc which relate directly to works to the buildings. The archive should be comprehensive, well-structured for ease of reference	Designate a well organised and appropriate space for archiving records and documents. Keep an up-to-date index of all historic drawings, images and models related to the buildings and fixtures.	Church and PCC

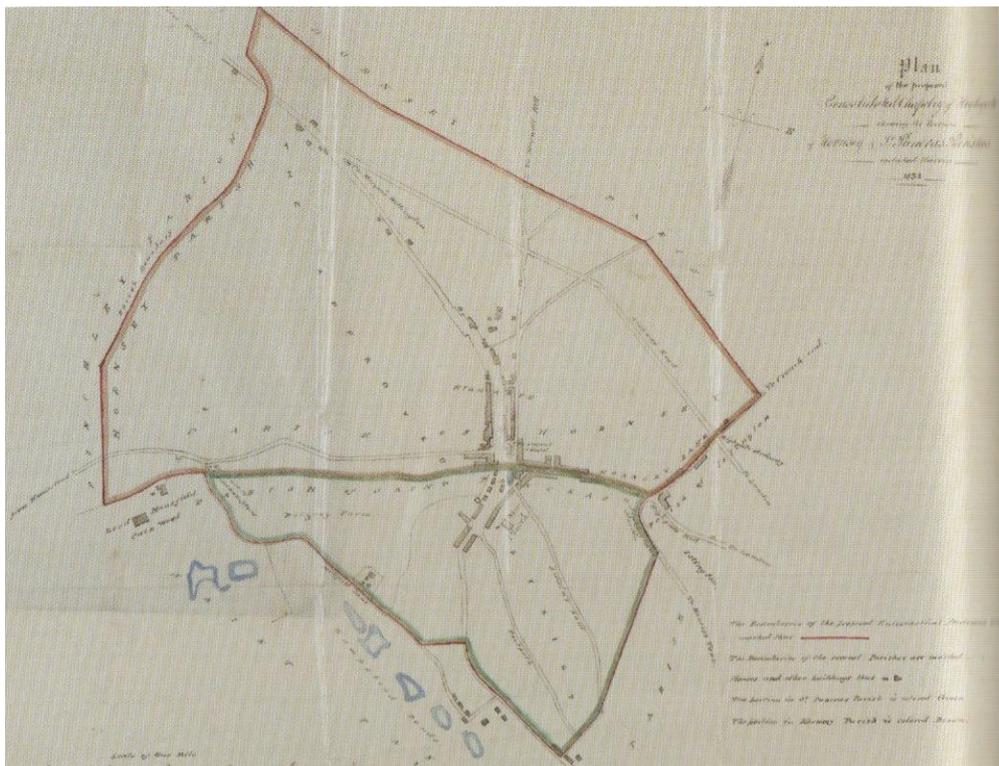
	Issue	Policy	Management	Responsibility
	<p>buildings, which are made during any programme of works.</p> <p>It is also good practice that the existing fabric is recorded before and during any work of repair, alterations, removal or demolition. This is especially important for those parts of the buildings which are ordinarily covered up, or are not exposed, or below ground.</p>	<p>and readily available. A 'log-book' of ongoing work should be established.</p> <p>Policy 5.1.2 An inventory should be established that records details of existing finishes and fixtures so that they may be properly evaluated and maintained.</p>		
5.2	<p>Periodic reports</p> <p>The building has quinquennial inspections made by the church Architect.</p>	<p>Policy 5.2 Periodic inspections should include review and update of the Conservation Plan.</p>	<p>Feed inspections' recommendations into a Forward Maintenance register or similar plan of Works.</p>	<p>Church and PCC</p>

Appendix A:
Historic maps, images and additional photographs

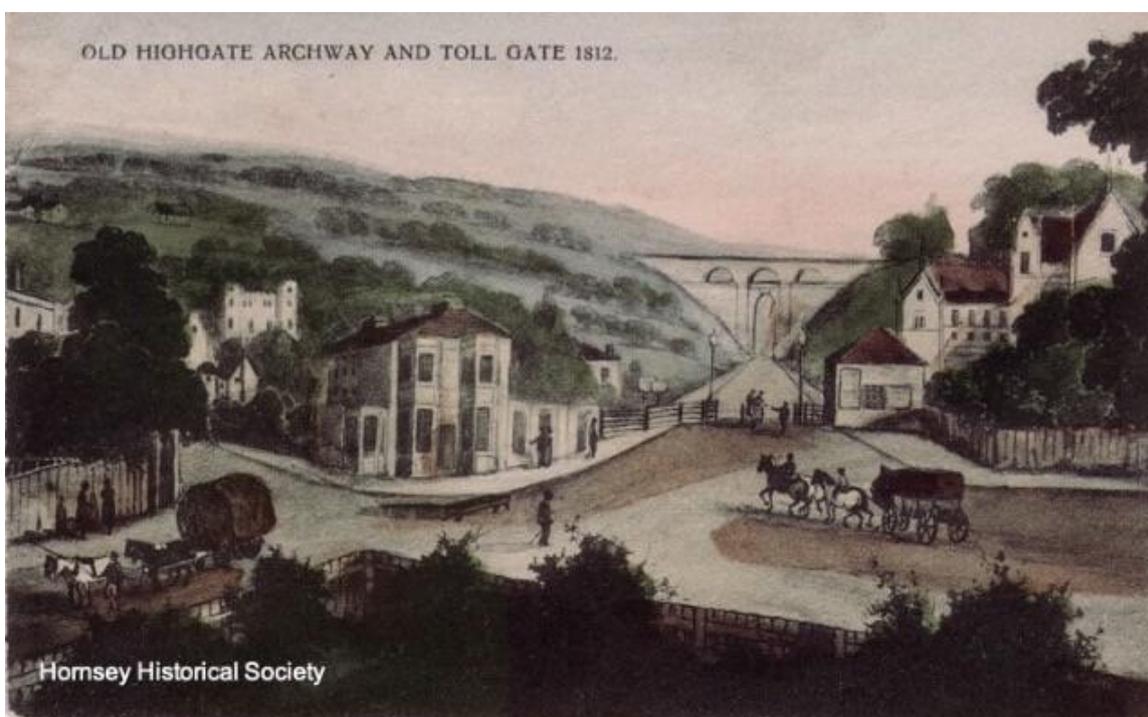


Highgate in 1873

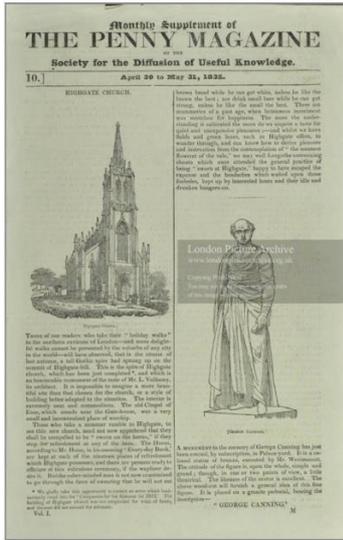
Detail of map, 1873 (British History online)



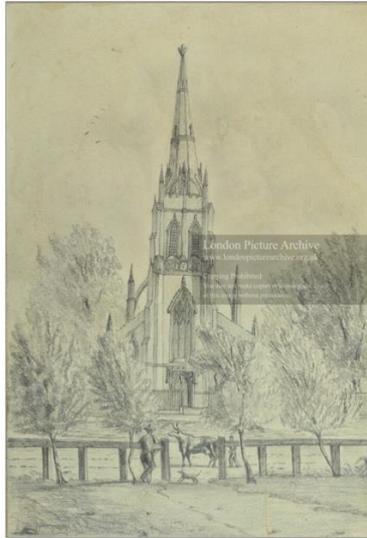
The consolidated district of St Michael, Highgate, 1832. Land from the parish of Hornsey edged red; that from the parish of St Pancras edged green. (R. Sainsbury)



Old Highgate archway and toll gate, 1812, Hornsey Historical Society



The Monthly Supplement of the Penny Magazine of April 30 to May 31, 1832. LMA



Michael's Church, South Grove. Pencil drawing by N. Davis, 1850 St. LMA



View of the Fleet River running through a valley with St Michael's, Highgate in the distance, seen from Fortress Terrace in Kentish Town. Watercolour by A. Crosby, 1845. LMA



Highgate Cemetery and St. Michael's church, postcard, c1900 (R. Sainsbury)



View of Highgate Cemetery from St Michael's Parish Centre, June 2021



View of Highgate Cemetery from St Michael's church, June 2021

Appendix B: Listing Citation

The Listing entry was amended and enhanced following Roger Sainsbury's research published in the book 'St Michael's Highgate: A History'.

Summary

Parish church, 1831-2 by Lewis Vulliamy, reordered and extended 1879-81 by GE Street, with further work by Temple Moore from 1903.

Reasons for Designation

St Michael's Church, of 1830-2 by Lewis Vulliamy with further work of 1879-81 by GE Street and 1903 by Temple Moore, is listed at Grade II* for the following principal reasons: * Architectural interest: a particularly large and ambitious church of the 1830s, incorporating work by three leading architects of the Gothic Revival; * Artistic interest: the east wall and window form an unusually rich ensemble that combines high-quality decorative and artistic work of several periods; * Group value: as part of an important cluster of listed buildings at the junction of South Grove and Highgate West Hill; also as a focal point within the Grade I-registered Highgate Cemetery.

History

St Michael's is the successor to the old Highgate Chapel - originally a hermitage chapel established by the Bishop of London in the C11, refounded in the 1560s by Sir Roger Cholmeley as a charity grammar school (now Highgate School) incorporating what was effectively a chapel-of-ease for the growing village of Highgate. By the early C19 the building had, despite various enlargements, become too small for this latter purpose, but a proposal to rebuild it as a parish church was opposed as a misuse of charitable funds. The dispute was eventually resolved in 1830 by an Act of Parliament: the old chapel reverted to the school (by whom it was rebuilt in its present form in the 1860s), and the Commissioners for the Building of New Churches undertook to finance the construction of a new parish church elsewhere in the village.

The site chosen, about 300m south of the old chapel, was that of Ashhurst House, a mansion built in 1694 for a former Lord Mayor of London. This was demolished in 1830 to make way for the new church; its remains are still visible in the undercroft, and parts of its garden walls and gate-piers also survive. The architect appointed by the Commissioners was Lewis Vulliamy (1792-1871), a former pupil of Sir Robert Smirke with a nationwide practice ranging from churches to country houses and institutional buildings; his London work includes the headquarters of the Law Society in Chancery Lane (1831) and the street front to the Royal Institution in Albemarle Street (1838). The new St Michael's was designed to seat 1500, and was built in 1831-2 by William and Lewis Cubitt at a cost of £8,171. The east end overlooked the site of the future Highgate Cemetery, laid out from 1836 using the church as a focal point.

Though in an advanced Gothic Revival style, Vulliamy's church was arranged in the manner of a Georgian preaching-box, with galleries, box pews running the full length of the nave and aisles, and only a shallow recess for the sanctuary. This layout sat ill with the more elaborate liturgy of the mid-Victorian church, and from 1879 the interior was reordered: open benches with a centre aisle replaced the box pews, and a raised quire was created in the eastern bay of the old nave. In the following year the north and south galleries were shortened and the body of the church was extended eastward by a full bay, creating a cruciform space with a two-bay chancel containing an enlarged sanctuary. This work, complete by the beginning of 1881, was carried out under the great Victorian architect GE Street (1821-81), then in the last year of his life and still engaged in the building of his secular masterpiece, the Royal Courts of Justice on the Strand.

Street's sanctuary was further embellished in 1903 by another major Gothic Revivalist, Temple Lushington Moore (1856-1920), who added the present statuary and stencilled decoration. In 1905 Moore returned to create a chapel with screens and panelling in the east end of the south aisle. Bomb damage during WWII destroyed or damaged much of the stained glass and led to the installation in 1954 of a new east window by Evie Hone. The mortal remains of the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, buried at the old chapel in 1834, were re-interred at St Michael's in 1961. Subsequent developments have included the building of a church hall alongside the north aisle in 1988, and the reordering of the west end in 2011 by Caroe and Partners.

Details

MATERIALS: London stock brick with dressings of Bath and Portland stone.

PLAN: Vulliamy's original church comprised a (liturgical) west tower and a six-bay aisled and galleried nave with a short sanctuary recess at its east end and - to accommodate the steep slope - a low undercroft beneath. The works of 1879-81 saw the galleries cut back to form a crossing, a raised choir inserted in the easternmost bay of the old nave, and a further full bay, accommodating an enlarged sanctuary with vestries and a parish room beneath, added to the east end of the building. The eastern ends of the north and south aisles now contain, respectively, the organ chamber (with a small sacristy beyond) and the Lady chapel.

EXTERIOR: the main view is from the north-west (liturgical west). The tower is buttressed in stages to its full height and is flanked by buttressed lean-to aisles, the latter having large lancets with ogee surrounds. The west doorway is in the base of the tower, a Perpendicular-style arch with square hoodmould and enriched spandrels. Above is a three-light traceried window with ogee surround, and above that the belfry with twin lancet openings and a third lancet above. The octagonal spire is enriched by pinnacles, small flying buttresses and a cross finial. The aisles have two-light windows between stepped buttresses. The east elevation is seen from the cemetery and is dominated by Street's big five-light window, its Perpendicular tracery replacing Vulliamy's Decorated original.

INTERIOR: the interior is a single aisled space of seven bays. Tall arcades with plain octagonal piers support a low clerestory and a flat plaster ceiling (renewed after damage in WWII) with shallow ornamental brackets; the aisle ceilings have triangular cast-iron trusses. Raked galleries with tracery fronts extend across the western bay of the nave and through the first four bays of the aisles. The sixth bay is a raised choir, with a raised, encaustic-tiled floor, low chancel screens, pulpit and stalls (see below). Slender wall-shafts mark the transition to the eastern (sanctuary) bay, added by Street in 1880-1 and marked out by the distinctive form of its clerestory (three-light Perpendicular windows rather than triple lancets) and ceiling (pitched rather than flat, with exposed boarding and heavy moulded tie- and hammer-beams). The east window has an enriched surround with big leafy crockets and a cross finial, and is flanked by two tiers of canopied niches. The upper part of the wall is richly stencilled in red, green and gold, part of the Temple Moore scheme of 1903.

FITTINGS: these mostly belong to Street's 1879-81 reordering and replace the original late-Georgian fittings. The nave PEWS are plain with moulded top rails and square ends. The octagonal stone FONT has reliefs of angels alternating with heraldic shields. The entrance to the choir is marked by low timber SCREENS with blind-traceried fronts; to the right is an elaborate wooden PULPIT, originally of 1848. The ORGAN with its carved case and gilded pipework dates from 1885 (with several later rebuildings), and replaces an earlier instrument in the west gallery. The chancel seating comprises four rows of plain oak CHOIR STALLS with simple ogee frontals, and a BISHOP'S CHAIR of 1958 by the firm of Thompson of Kilburn. The ALTAR RAILS are of brass, supported on decorative iron brackets. The east wall has a painted stone REREDOS flanked by oak panelling (the latter installed in 1937) and surmounted by a rich vine-scroll CORNICE (added by Temple Moore in 1903). The niches above have painted and gilded plaster STATUES (also of 1903 by Moore) representing the Greek and Latin Fathers: SS John Chrysostom, Athanasius, Augustine and Jerome. The south chapel is enclosed by carved openwork SCREENS (that to the chancel of 1905 by Arthur Sharp, that to the aisle of 1906-7 by Moore) and has a carved REREDOS, again by Moore with gesso panels of the Crucifixion and Annunciation by Henry Victor Milner.

STAINED GLASS: the east window of 1954 is by Evie Hone and depicts the Last Supper. It replaces a war-damaged window of 1880 by CE Kempe, the surviving fragments of which were re-installed in the east window of the north aisle. The corresponding window in the south chapel is also by Kempe, and depicts St Michael and the Dragon. There are a number of further windows by various artists, including (in the fourth bay of the south aisle) a series of New and Old Testament scenes designed by Richard Rivington Holmes and made by Lavers and Barraud.

MONUMENTS: the church contains a number of C18 and early C19 wall monuments from the original Highgate chapel. They include a pair of identical Neoclassical tablets commemorating the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his friend, the surgeon James Gillman. Coleridge's reburial at St Michael's in 1961 is recorded on a memorial slab in the centre aisle.

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