



Designation Consultation

This designation consultation is open for comment until 24/07/2024

Give us your comments

Historic Environment Scotland consult with those who are directly affected by designation proposals – including owners, occupiers and tenants – and with the planning authority.

We also welcome comments from interested persons or groups.

When we consult about a designation case we will have carried out research and set this out in a **report of handling**. This report is an assessment produced for consultation and it sets out our view, including a proposed decision. The assessment is not intended to be a definitive account or description of the site or place. We consider the comments received before we take a final decision.

We consider comments and representations which are material to our decision-making, such as:

- Your understanding of the cultural significance of the site or place.
- Whether sites or places meet the criteria for designation.
- The purpose and implications of designating the site or place. We consider whether these are relevant to the case.
- Development proposals related to the site or place. Where there are development proposals, we consider whether to proceed with designation in line with our designation policy.
- The accuracy of our information.

You can find more guidance on providing comments and how we handle your information on our [website](#).

Information on how we treat your personal data is available on our [Privacy Notice](#).

How to make a comment

Please send your comments to designationconsultations@hes.scot and provide us with the case reference. You can also make comments through our [portal](#) by clicking on the link 'email your comments about this case'.

If you are the owner, occupier or tenant or the planning authority please email us at: designations@hes.scot.

If you are unable to email your comments please phone us on 0131 668 8914.



Case information

Case ID	300039847
Name of Site	St Mary The Virgin Episcopal Church, Port Glasgow
Postcode (if any)	PA14 6HB

Local Authority	Inverclyde Council
National Grid Reference	NS 33871 73372
Designation Type	Listed Building
Designation No. and category of listing (if any)	N/A
Case Type	Designation

Received/Start Date	18/08/2019
Decision Date	Pending

1. Proposed decision

Previous Statutory Listing Address	N/A	Previous category of listing	N/A
New Statutory Listing Address	St Mary The Virgin Episcopal Church including adjoining hall and rectory, and boundary wall, Bardrainey Avenue, Port Glasgow (LB52608)	New category of listing	C

Our assessment using the selection guidance shows that the building meets the criteria of special architectural or historic interest. The proposed decision is to list the building at category C.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

There is no previous review of this building for listing.



2.2 Development Proposals

The building has been the subject of the following development proposal:

- 20/0024/IC | Replace the roof of the main church and hall in a water proofing membrane system Protan SE 1.6. Rainwater pipes and gutters to remain as existing. | St Mary's Rectory Bardrainney Avenue Port Glasgow PA14 6HB

The application was submitted on 11 February 2020, and approval granted by Inverclyde Council on 22 March 2020.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

We received a proposal to designate St Mary The Virgin Episcopal Church on 18/08/2019. (Designations applications are published on our portal and will be available to view during the lifetime of the case and until 3 months after the case is closed.)

The applicant provided the following information and views in their application:

- The church is of a distinctive design and not without architectural merit.
- The church has suffered from water ingress. Future roof repair may be required.

We visited the church on 16/10/2019. We have also referred to photographs taken following the change to the roof covering in 2021.

3.2 Assessment of special architectural or historic interest

We find the building meets the criteria for listing.

We carried out an assessment using the selection guidance to decide whether a site or place is of special architectural or historic interest. See **Annex A**.

The listing criteria and selection guidance for listed buildings are published in Designation Policy and Selection Guidance (2019), Annex 2, pp. 11-13, <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy>.

3.3 Policy considerations

Further information about development proposals and designation is found in Designation Policy and Selection Guidance, pp. 7-8.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy>. Our policy states:



“We consider the individual circumstances of each case. In deciding whether to designate a site or place or amend an existing designation while there are ongoing development proposals, we will consider:

- the implications of designation on development proposals;
- the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the site or place; and
- the extent to which plans have been developed for the site or place – where these are particularly advanced, we will not normally list or schedule.

“Where it is highly likely that a site or place no longer meets the designation criteria, we may consider removing the designation to avoid unnecessary regulatory processes.

While we were initially made aware of the possible replacement of the church roof, we did not have detailed evidence about the nature or status of these proposals. As the works to the roof are now complete, we are proceeding with a consultation on a proposal to list.

4. Consultation

4.1 Consultation information

Consultation period: 03/07/2024 to 24/07/2024.

We have consulted directly with the owner(s) and the planning authority.

The consultation report of handling is published on our portal for comment from interested parties.

4.2 Designation consultations

Comments we consider

We will consider comments and representations which are material to our decision-making, such as:

- Your understanding of the cultural significance of the site or place and whether it meets the criteria for designation.
- The purpose and implications of designating the site or place. We consider whether these are relevant to the case.
- Development proposals related to the site or place. Where there are development proposals, we consider whether to proceed with designation in line with our designation policy.
- The accuracy of our information.



Comments we don't consider

We do not consider comments and representations on non-relevant/non-material issues, such as:

- Economic considerations
- Abusive or offensive remarks
- Whether you personally like, or do not like, a proposal

Our video about consultations explains how you can comment on our designations decisions, and what we can and can't take into account when considering your views. <https://youtu.be/ZlqU51tRA6g>.

Dara Parsons

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Heritage Directorate
Historic Environment Scotland

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ANNEX A

Assessment of special architectural or historic interest

1. Building or site name

St Mary The Virgin Episcopal Church including adjoining hall and rectory, and boundary wall, Bardrainey Avenue, Port Glasgow

2. Description and historical development

2.1 Description

A Scottish Episcopalian church, built in 1982-84 to designs by Frank Burnet, Bell and Partners. It includes an adjoining, asymmetrical interlinked arrangement of church hall, offices and rectory, of pale orange brick construction, forming a Z-plan. The building is located on a rocky outcrop in a residential area of Port Glasgow.

The church hall and offices adjoin to the north of the church. The rectory adjoins the complex to the northwest and is set around a recessed courtyard area.

The church has a distinctive A-frame roof structure, rising to a gabled peak to the east elevation. There is an apsidal sanctuary projection with a lean-to roof light at the east end and a smaller, lower baptistry projects from the west end. The former bronze-coloured, standing seam roofing panels were replaced by a grey membrane covering in 2021. The rectory retains its bronze roof panelling (2024).

The interior of the church and church halls (seen 2019) have dark stained woodwork, including a steam moulded and glued, laminated timber frame roof structure which appears as the massive hull of an upturned boat. A glazed waffle-grid screen separates the northside chapel. There are exposed, reconstituted stone block walls and dark timber parquet floors. The vestibule has a timber-panelled ceiling and louvred windows.

There are some features salvaged from the earlier church of St Mary The Virgin (located near Newark Castle). These include a carved altar, carved font, a stone dated 1856, an eagle lectern and carved timber pews. Stained-glass windows from the earlier church are set within later 20th century surrounds. The names of those killed in the two World Wars appear on the front of the choir stalls. The small side chapel (Epiphany Chapel) to the north has stained glass representing the Three Kings and an icon of the Virgin and Child.

There are plain brick gatepiers and a brick boundary wall with stone coping at the south entrance to the church from Bardrainey Avenue.



2.2 Historical development

The church opened in 1984. It replaced an earlier Episcopal Church of St Mary the Virgin, with parsonage and schoolhouse (built 1856-7 and located near Newark Castle), which was demolished in 1977 as part of the A8 dual-carriageway development scheme.

Strathclyde Regional Council met the cost of the new church, which was designed by Frank Burnett, Bell and Partners in 1982 (*The Scotsman*, 1982). A condition was placed that the stained-glass windows and some of the dedicated furniture and fittings from the old church should be incorporated into the new building.

The metal roof covering in bronzed finish was replaced with a grey plastic membrane covering in 2021. The roof light above the altar was also replaced at this time.

The church complex is otherwise little altered and continues to operate as a place of worship (2024).

3. Assessment of special architectural or historic interest

To be listed a building must be of 'special architectural or historic interest' as set out in the [Planning \(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas\) \(Scotland\) Act 1997](#). To decide if a building is of special interest for listing we assess its cultural significance using selection guidance which has two main headings – architectural interest and historic interest (see Designation Policy and Selection Guidance, 2019, Annex 2, pp. 11-13).

The selection guidance provides a framework within which judgement is exercised in reaching individual decisions. The special architectural or historic interest of a building can be demonstrated in one or more of the following ways.

3.1 Architectural interest

The architectural interest of a building may include its design, designer, interior, plan form, materials, regional traditions, and setting and the extent to which these characteristics survive. These factors are grouped under two headings:

3.1.1 Design

Dating from 1982-84, the design of the church complex has linked geometric forms, pared-back detailing, and a bespoke, modular plan-form. These are features typical of modern church architecture that was first developed in the early post-war period from the 1950s onwards. Influenced by liturgical reform, Modernist architectural planning and the availability of new materials, this new design treatment for churches became widespread and increasingly standard by the 1970s.



The design of St Mary The Virgin Episcopalian Church is also typical of many churches of the late 1970s and early 1980s that were built after the initial experimental phase in post-war church architecture. The brick construction, irregular plan form and modular components are characteristic of this period.

The church is set apart from others, however, by the quality of its interior. The high, A-frame roof structure of the main body of the church creates a tall and distinctive internal space, which is evocative of boat hull. The design motif of a boat resonates with the local area which is known for its shipping and ship building industries but also represents symbolic Christian references.

Exposed, pale concrete block walls contrast with the dark-stained timber ceiling, and the effect of the simple, pared-back materials is enhanced by combined natural and artificial light. Additional interest comes from the integration and display of salvaged fixtures and fittings, including the stained-glass windows of the previous St Mary The Virgin church.

The building is an unusual example of a later 20th century church design by Frank Burnet, Bell & Partners. This architectural practice was established in 1961 but derived from earlier practices originating from Frank Burnet (1846-1923). William Douglas and James Rennie were the senior partners at the time when the St Mary The Virgin Episcopal Church was designed and built.

While the replacement of the bronze-coloured, raised seam roof cladding lessens the authenticity and completeness of the building, especially when seen from higher view points, the complex is otherwise little-altered.

3.1.2 Setting

The church complex stands within landscaped grounds on an elevated site beside Kilmacolm Road in the eastern part of Port Glasgow. Access is from Bardrainney Avenue, and the wider setting is a residential area. The setting has not changed significantly since the church was completed in 1984.

The church has prominence within its suburban setting due to its high A-frame roof, and its distinctive architectural design. This prominence within a suburban setting is typical of the building type.

Adjoining the church are a hall, offices and rectory and there is a boundary wall to the site. These are all of the same date, materials and design - together they form a good group of ecclesiastical structures that enhance the special interest of the church.

3.2 Historic interest



Historic interest is in such things as a building's age, rarity, social historical interest and associations with people or events that have had a significant impact on Scotland's cultural heritage. Historic interest is assessed under three headings:

3.2.1 Age and rarity

Churches are a prolific building type, with thousands of examples surviving across Scotland. Those dating from the post-war period are not rare and a significant number survive and remain in use as places of worship.

Built in 1982-84, St Mary The Virgin Episcopal Church post-dates the main phase of post-war church construction and innovation that accompanied the development of Scotland's New Towns and the expansion of suburbs in the decades after the Second World War. By the 1980s, fewer new areas of housing were being built and the period of architectural innovation for new churches was largely over. New churches from this time – often built as replacements - tended to be smaller and more utilitarian in design (Hume, scotlandschurchestrust.org.uk).

While St Mary The Virgin Episcopal Church is not of a rare building type, its design quality for this period, particularly of the interior, is unusual.

3.2.2 Social historical interest

Social historical interest is the way a building contributes to our understanding of how people lived in the past, and how our social and economic history is shown in a building and/or in its setting.

Because they are found in every community, all churches by their nature will have some level of social historical interest but will not be of special interest for this reason alone.

Built to replace the earlier St Mary's in Port Glasgow, the design and construction of this church to an integrated design, incorporating fixtures from the older church, reflects continuity of local provision for a place of worship.

3.2.3 Association with people or events of national importance

There is no association with a person or event of national importance.

4. Summary of assessment

St Mary The Virgin Episcopal Church including adjoining hall and rectory, and boundary wall, meets the criteria of special architectural or historic interest for the following reasons:



- For its high-quality interior design, incorporating fixtures and fittings salvaged from its predecessor building.
- As a little altered example of a church of the later modern period that retains all its original ancillary components and setting.

5. Category of listing

Once a building is found to be of special architectural or historic interest, it is then classified under one of three categories (A, B or C) according to its relative importance. While the listing itself has legal weight and gives statutory protection, the categories have no legal status and are advisory. They affect how a building is managed in the planning system.

Category definitions are found at Annex 2 of Designation Policy and Selection Guidance (2019) <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy>.

5.1 Level of importance

The building's level of importance is category C.

Buildings listed at category C are defined as 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest which are representative examples of a period, style or type.'

Taking into account the prolific building type and later alteration to the roof covering, category C is the most appropriate level of listing.

6. Other Information

N/A

7. References

Printed Sources

Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (1987) *Scottish Architecture in the Nineteen Eighties*.

Walker, F A (1986) *The South Clyde Estuary - An Illustrated Architectural Guide to Inverclyde and Renfrew*. RIAS, Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, p.109

Close R, Gifford J, Walker FA (2016) *The Buildings of Scotland: Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire*, Yale University Press: London, p757.



Online Sources

St Mary's Port Glasgow – History - <https://portglasgow.church.scot/other/history/>
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<https://www.scotlandschurchestrust.org.uk/church/st-mary-the-virgin-port-glasgow/>
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<https://scotlandschurchestrust.org.uk/blog/post-war-churches-in-scotland/> Originally
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Dictionary of Scottish Architects – Frank Burnett Bell and Partners - [Dictionary of
Scottish Architects - DSA Architect Biography Report](#)
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[Episcopal Church Takes To The Hills | The Scotsman | Wednesday 21 July 1982 |
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Other Information

N/A

8. Indicative Map

A map of the proposed listed building is attached separately.