

ST MARY'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

RECTORY GARDENS, HORNSEY
LONDON, N8 7PJ

DESIGN STATEMENT

FOR SIGNAGE PLANNING APPLICATION

OPENSTUDIO ARCHITECTS

JUNE 2026

openstudio architects
architecture furniture landscape
50 Great Portland Street
London
W1W 7ND
tel: 020 7580 5885
www.openstudioarchitects.com
info@openstudioarchitects.com

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION	
1.1 DESIGN PROPOSAL SUMMARY	p. 3
2.0 RECTORY GARDENS SITE AND CONSERVATION AREAS	p. 5
3.0 EXISTING BUILDING AND CONTEXT	
3.1 SITE LOCATION	p. 6
4.0 DESIGN ISSUES AT RECTORY GARDENS	
4.1 EXISTING SOUTH FACADE	p. 7
5.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS	
5.1 DESCRIPTION OF WORKS	p. 8
5.2. SIGNAGE DESIGN & FUNCTIONAL BENEFITS	p. 9
6.0 CONCLUSION	p. 10
7.0 LIST OF ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS	p. 11

1.0 SUMMARY

Design proposal summary

Openstudio Architects have produced this Design Statement on behalf of their client St Mary’s Church of England Primary School located at Rectory Gardens, Hornsey, N8 7PJ to support a planning submission for proposed signage to the existing main school building.

Currently the school is housed across two sites (Nursery-Year 2 at Church Lane, with Years 3-6 at Rectory Gardens). The junior school building at Rectory Gardens is currently underutilised. Alongside a Local Authority need for a SEND facility, this has resulted in a decision to consolidate both schools onto the Rectory Gardens site, allowing the Church Lane school to become a LA-run SEND facility.

Planning permission (Ref. HGY/2026/0557) has already been granted for a series of minor alterations to the existing school building required to facilitate this consolidation. The approved scheme includes measures to address longstanding overheating issues on the south-facing façade through the installation of a new canopy and façade screening system.

The purpose of this application is to seek consent for signage to the south façade of the school building. The proposed signage is intended to:

- Establish a clear and cohesive identity for the consolidated school, complementing the approved canopy and façade screening works;
- Strengthen the school’s presence within the local context by improving its visibility, legibility and recognisability as a key educational and community asset; and
- Enhance the appearance of the prominent south façade through a carefully integrated and proportionate signage scheme.



2.0 RECTORY GARDENS SITE AND CONSERVATION AREAS

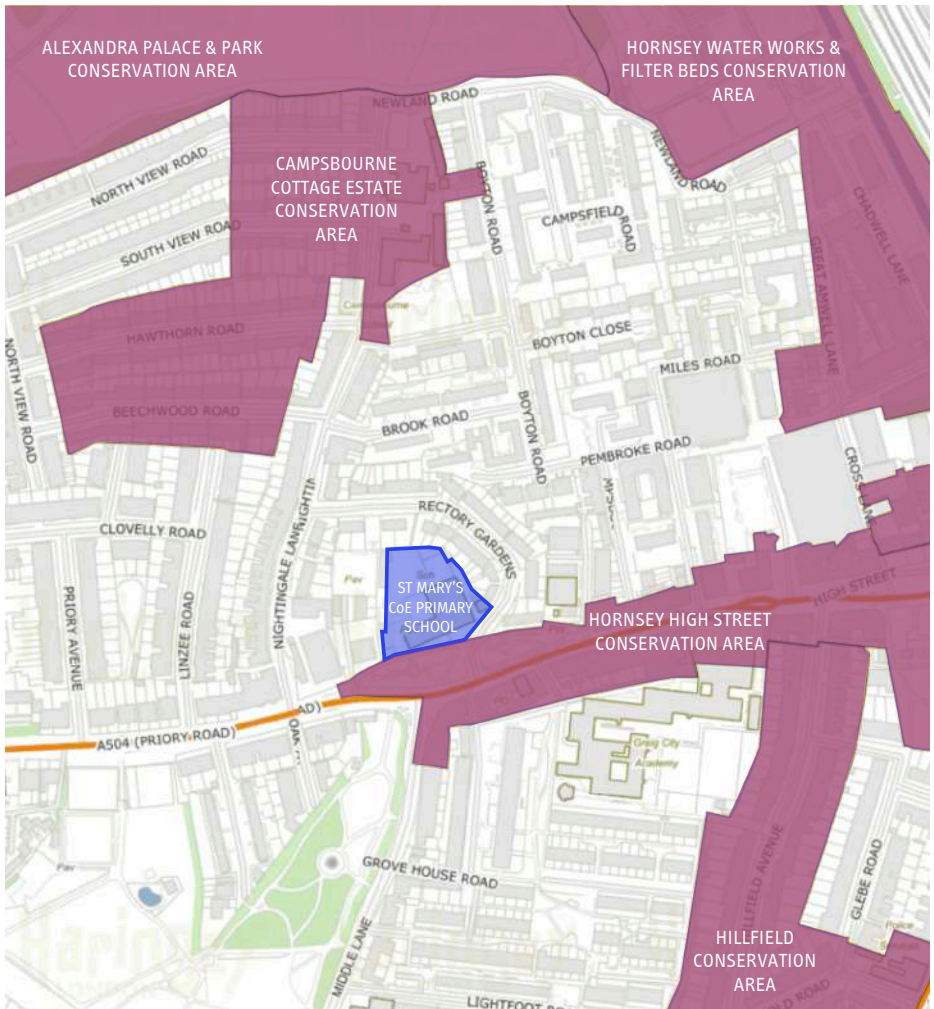
St Mary's Church of England Primary School is unlisted and is not located in a conservation area.

The school borders and overlooks the Hornsey High Street Conservation Area which is located directly to the south and south-east of the site.

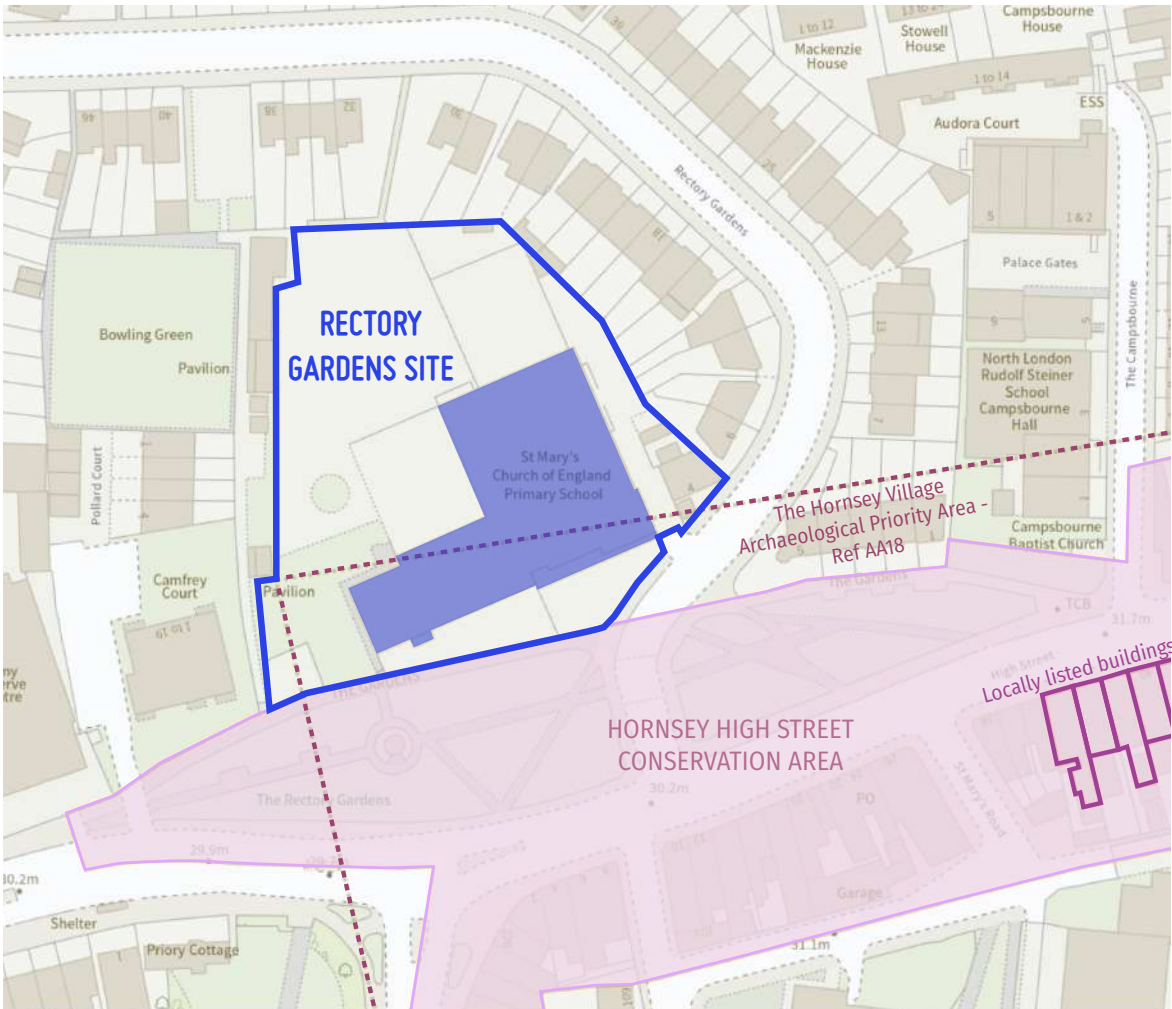
The Hornsey Village Archaeological Priority Area – Ref. AA18 overlaps onto the southern most part of the site.



1

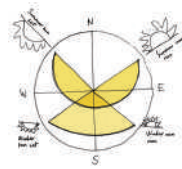


2



3

- 1 View of the south facade overlooking the Rectory Gardens and the High Street
- 2 Context map showing conservation areas
- 3 Haringey plan showing conservation areas



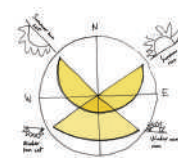
3.0 EXISTING BUILDING AND CONTEXT

3.1 Site location

The Rectory Gardens School is located within a large, utilitarian 1960s building that is characteristic of its era in terms of design. The building comprises a uniform concrete-framed structure arranged on a repetitive grid over ground, first and second floors, with extensive areas of metal-framed south-facing glazing. Originally designed as a secondary school, the building retains a large-scale and institutional character, particularly along its southern elevation.

To the south of the site are the Rectory Gardens and the High Street which are both located within the Hornsey High Street Conservation area. To the east and north of the site are located 2-3 storey terraced houses with rear gardens that border onto the school property. To the west of the site two apartment buildings of 4 stories are located: Camfrey Court which overlooks Rectory Gardens and Priory Road to the south and the newer Pollard Court located adjacent to the bowling green with rear gardens backing onto the bowling green alley.

The Hornsey Bowling Club is located to the north west of the site with a pedestrian access path to the south onto Rectory Gardens that runs parallel to the school's west boundary.



- 1 Aerial photograph of the site & surrounding area
- 2 Aerial view from south
- 3 Aerial view from west
- 4 Aerial view from north
- 5 Aerial view from east



1



2



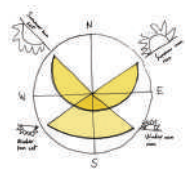
3



4



5



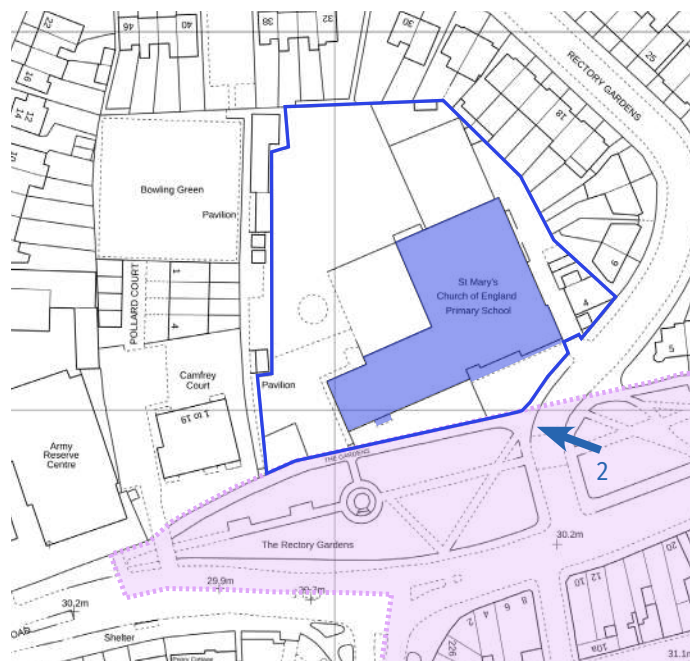
- 1 Street view of south facade from Hornsey High Street
- 2 View of south facade from Rectory Gardens

ST MARY'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL SOUTH FACADE

VIEW OF ALEXANDRA PALACE BEYOND



1



2

4.0 DESIGN ISSUES AT RECTORY GARDENS

4.1. EXISTING SOUTH FACADE

APPROACH & VISIBILITY

The school's principal south-facing elevation fronts onto Rectory Gardens and Hornsey High Street within the Hornsey High Street Conservation Area. Visible from both the gardens and the High Street, albeit partially screened by mature trees, the building occupies a prominent position within the local townscape.

LACK OF IDENTITY

The existing façade is characterised by a long, rectilinear three-storey form with extensive glazing and a flat roof. The repetitive rhythm of glazing across the elevation, combined with inconspicuous ground-floor entrances and limited signage, results in a lack of visual identity and legibility. Despite its prominence, the building does not clearly communicate its function as a primary school.

While planning permission has been granted under reference HGY/2026/0557 for façade canopy and screening works to address overheating and enhance the appearance of this prominent elevation, the building still lacks clear, appropriately scaled signage to complement the approved façade improvements and establish a cohesive identity.

5.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

5.1. DESCRIPTION OF WORKS

This application seeks consent for the installation of signage on the south façade.

The proposed signage forms part of the wider programme of improvements to the school and is intended to complement the approved façade works by establishing a clear and cohesive identity for the consolidated EYFS and primary school.

The signage will improve the building’s visibility, legibility and recognisability as an educational facility, while enhancing the appearance of this prominent elevation through a carefully integrated and proportionately scaled design.

The proposed signage comprises two complementary elements located at the prominent south-west corner of the south elevation, aligned with the existing coloured façade panels.

1. UPPER SIGNAGE - “ST MARY’S N8”

The upper signage comprises individual flat-cut green powder-coated aluminium letters mounted on horizontal steel support rails fixed back to the façade’s structural

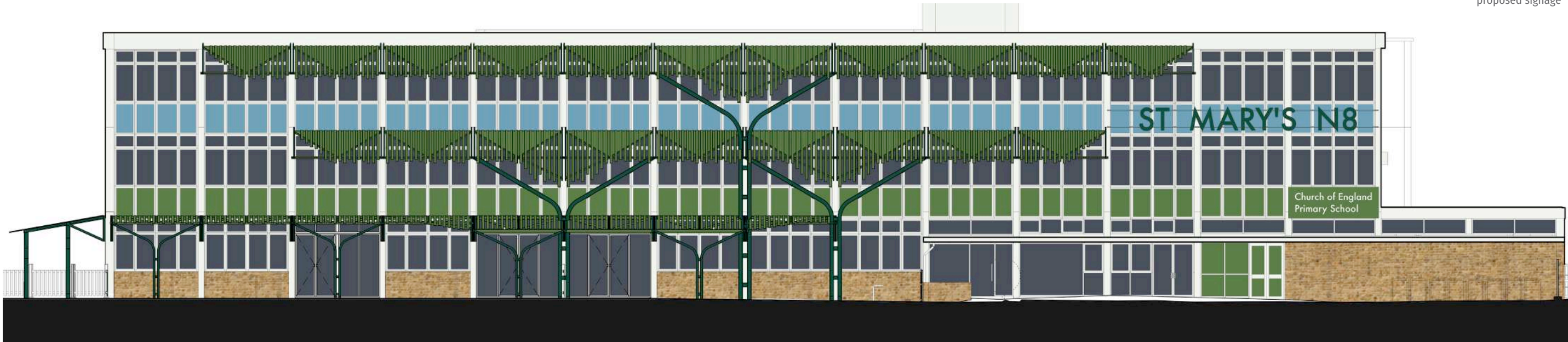
columns. Sized to sit within the existing coloured panels and spanning the final three glazed bays at second-floor level, the non-illuminated signage occupies the most prominent part of the elevation, maximising visibility while remaining proportionate to the scale and rhythm of the façade.

2. LOWER SIGNAGE - “Church of England Primary School”

The lower signage comprises a smaller green powder-coated aluminium panel with white lettering, mounted on concealed support rails fixed back to the façade’s structural columns, with all fixings concealed from view. Positioned within the final glazed bay at first-floor level, it provides a clear secondary layer of identification at a smaller scale.

Together, the signs complement the approved façade canopy and screening works, creating a clear and cohesive identity for the school while respecting the character and proportions of the existing building.

1 View showing permitted facade works and proposed signage



Existing



Permitted

Reference:
HGY/2026/0557



Proposed



5.2. SIGNAGE DESIGN AND FUNCTIONAL BENEFITS

The proposed signage has been designed to complement the approved façade canopy and screening works (Ref. HGY/2026/0557), forming part of a coordinated enhancement strategy for the south elevation.

The signage proposal incorporates the following design features to ensure a high-quality and sensitive addition to the south elevation:

- Position and scale of the signage respond to the existing façade composition, aligning with the coloured panels and established floor levels to achieve a balanced and integrated appearance.
- The signage will be fabricated from green powder-coated aluminium, matching the approved colour palette of the façade canopy and screening works (Ref. HGY/2026/0557). This will provide a durable finish and recyclable material while reflecting the school’s ethos of growth and flourishing.
- The larger upper-level sign incorporates cut-out lettering, introducing depth and visual interest that complements the approved canopy and screening works and helps to soften the building’s utilitarian character.
- The signage will be non-illuminated and, by virtue of its design and materials, will preserve the character and appearance of the Hornsey High Street Conservation Area and will not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties.
- The proposal will not affect the operation of the surrounding road network. The installation of clear, appropriately scaled signage will enhance the legibility and recognisability of the school, improving wayfinding for drivers, pedestrians and visitors.

The proposed signage serves multiple functions:

- The signage establishes a clear identity for the newly consolidated EYFS and primary school.
- The proposal improves visibility, legibility and wayfinding, creating a more welcoming environment for pupils, parents, staff and visitors.
- Together with the approved façade improvements, the signage creates a cohesive visual identity and makes a positive contribution to the wider streetscape.

1 View of existing building
2 View showing permitted canopy & facade screening system
3 View showing permitted facade works and proposed signage

6.0 CONCLUSION

This application seeks permission for the installation of non-illuminated signage on the south façade as part of the wider programme of improvements to the school.

Planning permission (Ref. HGY/2026/0557) has already been granted for alterations to the Rectory Gardens building to facilitate the consolidation of the two schools, including a new canopy and façade screening system to address overheating in south-facing classrooms and enhance the appearance of the principal elevation.

The proposal comprises two complementary elements located at the prominent south-west corner of the elevation and aligned with the existing coloured façade panels: upper-level “ST MARY’S N8” lettering formed from individual green powder-coated aluminium letters mounted on discrete support rails, and a smaller first-floor panel displaying “Church of England Primary School” in white lettering on a green powder-coated aluminium background.

The signage has been carefully integrated with the approved façade works to improve the building’s visibility and legibility, establish a clear identity for the consolidated EYFS and primary school, and enhance the appearance of this prominent elevation.

The scale, design, materials and positioning of the signage have been carefully considered to ensure that it integrates sensitively with the building and surrounding streetscape, resulting in no adverse impacts on highway safety, visual amenity or the character of the surrounding area.

7.0. LIST OF
ARCHITECTURAL
DRAWINGS

SITE LOCATION PLAN: STM_PE_00: SITE LOCATION PLAN 1:1250

PERMITTED DRAWINGS

STM_PE_01: PERMITTED SITE AND CONTEXT PLAN 1:250

STM_PE_02: PERMITTED SITE ELEVATIONS 1:100

STM_PE_03: PERMITTED 1F AND 2F PLANS 1:50

STM_PE_04: PERMITTED SOUTH FACADE ELEVATION AND SECTION 1:50

PROPOSED DRAWINGS

STM_PP_01: PROPOSED SIGNAGE - SITE AND CONTEXT PLAN 1:250

STM_PP_02: PROPOSED SIGNAGE - SITE ELEVATIONS 1:100

STM_PP_03: PROPOSED SIGNAGE - 1F AND 2F PLANS 1:50

STM_PP_04: PROPOSED SIGNAGE - SOUTH FACADE ELEVATION AND SECTION 1:50