

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, 294 BANBURY ROAD, SUMMERTOWN



The Church has group value with the building to the south



West end window with Perpendicular stone tracery



Art Nouveau stained glass window to East End



Bell tower

1. WHAT IS IT? Is it one of the following?	Tick
a building or group of buildings	✓
a monument or site (an area of archaeological remains or a structure other than a building)	
a place (e.g. a street, park, garden or natural space)	
a landscape (an area defined by visual features or character, e.g. a city centre, village, suburb or field system)	

2. WHY IS IT INTERESTING? Is it interesting in any of the following ways?	Tick / Rank
Historic interest – a well documented association with a person, event, episode of history, or local industry	✓
Archaeological interest – firm evidence of potential to reveal more about the human past through further study	
Architectural interest – an example of an architectural style, a building of particular use, a technique of building, or use of materials	✓
Artistic interest – It includes artistic endeavour to communicate meaning or use of design (including landscape design) to enhance appearance	✓
<p>What is it about the asset that provides this interest?</p> <p>Historic interest – The church has historic, social, philanthropic, architectural significance. It is a building of considerable distinction and makes an important contribution to the character of Summertown.</p> <p>It was linked with Mansfield College which was a nationally important centre of Non-Conformism and Congregationalism. Originally built as a church for the Congregational church and completed in 1893, it was built for the growing Congregational population in Summertown and indeed in greater Oxford.</p> <p>It was designed by the Oxford firm Kinglerlee which designed and built important Oxford buildings (see below) Kinglerlee designed and built Oxford buildings such as the Old Fire Station thus the firm's expertise was demonstrated and an architect was not required. Unusually there are two substantial halls attached to the rear, 1901 (Kingerlee), 1902 (N Capel builders), and 1909 (G Innes builders).</p> <p>Architectural and Artistic interest – <i>'It is a building of considerable distinction and makes an important contribution to the character of Summertown'</i> (Oxford Architectural and Historical Society).</p> <p>The west door is solid timber with ironwork strap hinges which have elaborate curled elements. Although there is only one main door, there are two doors coming off the main lobby (or narthex). The lobby has fine encaustic geometrical tiles. The hammerbeam roof is of high quality. The floorboards may be original and certainly the pews with their name card holders and cast iron umbrella holders appear original. The organ dates to c.1899. The craftsmanship is of the highest quality as expected of Kinglerlee.</p> <p>Its character inside is of a very open space, achieved by the wide and high quality hammerbeam roof and the lack of aisles or columns or side chapels. There is no decoration, as befits non-Conformism with its roots in puritan origins and plainer approach.</p> <p>(There are some cracks in the front porch which is stable timber raking shores to the front elevation. This could be stitched in.)</p> <p>The design relies mostly for its effect on plan form, materials, steeply pitched clay tiled roofs, excellent craftsmanship and reflect the beliefs of the congregation. The Congregationalists and the United Reformed Church moved away from a hierarchical</p>	

structure (as in the older, established Anglican church). This shown by the open character of the interior.

3. WHY IS IT LOCALLY VALUED? Is the interest of the asset valued locally for any of the following reasons?	Tick / Rank
Association: It connects us to people and events that shaped the identity or character of the area	✓
Illustration: It illustrates an aspect of the area's past that makes an important contribution to its identity or character	✓
Evidence: It is an important resource for understanding and learning about the area's history	✓
Aesthetics: It makes an important contribution to the positive look of the area either by design or fortuitously	✓
Communal: It is important to the identity, cohesion, spiritual life or memory of all or part of the community	✓

How is the asset locally valued as heritage?

Association and **Communal** – The church has been in use continuously from 1893 in its original use. It is an important community centre, providing halls for community groups and classes. It is very integrated within the local community.

Oxford has strong Non-Conformist links locally to this day.

It remains largely as originally built, still in its original use. Given that in 1838, Congregationalists first began to worship in Summertown, this is a long history given that Summertown began to develop as a suburb by the 1870s. The previous Congregational church was in Middle Way.

Illustration and Evidence: it illustrates the growth of a strong Non-Conformism and also illustrates the designs of the Kingerlee firm and of the importance of Mr T H Kingerlee. Illustrates national changes in religious practices in the late 19th century.

The church was built by the building firm of T H Kingerlee and Sons of Oxford whose name appears on the City Engineer's deposited plans. Significantly, Mr T H Kingerlee was Deacon of George Street Congregational Church and a strong and active Congregationalist. He also became a local Magistrate and Mayor, was very prominent in Oxford thus there is strong cultural significance.

Aesthetics: has well-designed stained glass windows. The west front door is original, has two leaves and forms an important part of its significance.

Press coverage included very favourable comments on the design and the assistance of Kingerlee, "greater attention having been paid to solidity of construction than to elaborate ornamentation... Mr. Kingerlee has generously furnished the drawings and details, which have given great satisfaction, and relieved the church of considerable anxiety and expense".

The church addresses the main road and is set back, with low brick walls and piers; the missing railings are shown in a historic photograph as elaborate.

Communal: important to the history of Oxford religion and local activities (see below).

4. WHAT MAKES ITS LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE SPECIAL? Do any of the following features make the heritage significance of the asset stand out above the surrounding environment?	Tick
Age ... Is it particularly old, or of a date that is significant to the local area?	✓
Rarity ... Is it unusual in the area or a rare survival of something that was	✓

once common?	
Integrity ... Is it largely complete or in a near to original condition?	✓
Group value ... Is it part of a group that have a close historic, aesthetic or communal association?	✓
Oxford's identity ... Is it important to the identity or character of the city or a particular part of it?	✓
Other ... Is there another way you think it has special local value?	✓
<p>How does this contribute to its value?</p> <p>Age – built 1893 onwards at a time of significance for Oxford religions.</p> <p>Rarity – a rare survival in mostly modern Summertown.</p> <p>Integrity – mostly in original condition with original west porch, pews and furniture.</p> <p>Group value - it has strong group value with the Twining House to the south, which is also constructed of red brick with stone dressings and also has a tall steeply pitched roof.</p> <p>Oxford's identity – The church has an important role in telling the story of the development of non-conformist religion in Oxford, particularly in north Oxford. The church is also an important community asset.</p> <p>The church is a rare survival of pre-1879s Summertown when the village became more a suburb of the city.</p> <p>Other – the church was built by the building firm T H Kingerlee.</p> <p>The church was built by the building firm of T H Kingerlee and Sons of Oxford whose name appears on the City Engineer's deposited plans. Significantly, Mr T H Kingerlee was Deacon of George Street Congregational Church and a strong and active Congregationalist. He also became a local Magistrate and Mayor, thus there is strong cultural significance.</p> <p><u>Thomas Kingerlee</u> was a Liberal on Oxford city council. In 1895 he stood for election as Liberal Member of Parliament for Oxford, but was beaten by the Conservative Viscount Valentia.</p> <p>In 1898 Kingerlee was elected Mayor of Oxford (for 1898/9).</p> <p>The arms of Kingerlee were added to the wall of the Lord Mayor's Parlour when he served as Chief Magistrate.</p> <p>As a strong Congregationalist Kingerlee backed the "Committee for securing Oxford out-relief for the deserving and aged poor in suitable cases" in 1900.</p> <p>Kingerlee was made an Alderman in 1906.</p> <p>He was elected Mayor of Oxford a second time.</p> <p>Mr T H Kingerlee died in 1929. His two sons and grandsons took over his business, and the Kingerlee building firm still survives today. It was at Lamarsh Road from 1964 to 1999, when it moved to Kidlington.</p> <p>Kingerlee's building business grew in Oxford, where he built the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1885: City Isolation Hospital (later the Rivermead) in Cold Harbour ▪ 1886: Brookside House, Headington (now Headington Junior School) ▪ 1886: the original New Theatre 	

- 1894: Elliston & Cavell (now Debenhams)
- 1896: Fire Station in George Street
- 1900: Victoria Buildings, Park End Street (the "Old Jam Factory"), listed building
- 1903: Wesleyan Church, Cowley Road (designed by Stephen Salter)

Kingerlee was also responsible for many additions to schools and colleges, thus the firm's influence on Oxford has been extensive.

In 1902 he built the houses in Helen and Henry Road, which were named after two of his children.

http://www.oxfordhistory.org.uk/mayors/1836_1962/kingerlee_thomas_1898_1911.html History of Thomas Henry Kingerlee (1842–1929).

Both Kingerlee and Mansfield College were very generous with money and time.

Congregationalism in Oxford:

<http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/580/1/hopkins10Mphil.pdf>

'Congregationalism in Oxford. The growth and development of Congregational Churches in and around the city of Oxford since 1653', by Michael Hopkins.

A thesis submitted to The University of Birmingham for the degree of Master of Philosophy.

This thesis contends that the growth and development of Congregationalism in Oxford was different from elsewhere because of the presence of both the University of Oxford and Mansfield College. It explores fully the progress of Congregationalism in Oxford during the three hundred and fifty years from the Puritans in the English Commonwealth until the beginning of the twenty-first century. It considers these developments in the light of the national background and explains how they are distinctive, rather than representative, through the story of the New Road Meeting House, George Street and Summertown Congregational Churches in particular, and the other suburban and village Congregational chapels in contrast to other towns and cities with Congregational colleges.

Congregationalism in Oxford is a distinctive story that has never before been told in one work. That story is one of strong Puritan traditions going back to the Commonwealth, firmly rooted in both the town and the University; exceptional co-operation in the eighteenth century; a total failure on the part of the churches to respond to the abolition of the university tests, resulting in split efforts in the town and the University; and an over concentration upon forming churches in each community, without always having a proper mission there. The witness of the Congregational tradition was strong, but efforts were divided in the face of unrecognised opportunities, which left it much weaker, as the United Reformed Church, to fight the challenges of the secular age in the twenty first century.

However there can be no doubt that the story of Oxford Congregationalism is unique. The wider picture of Congregationalism is clear, and the Oxford story is quite distinctive. Without the University things would have been very different. Without Mansfield things would have been very different.

Summertown, in stark contrast to the other Congregational churches, developed a new model of church that was a great success before the United Reformed Church, when St. Columba's took that place. The ecumenical advances at Summertown and Blackbird Leys were well

ahead of their time, driven by Congregationalists. Oxford's Congregationalists, in the presence of the University and of Mansfield, reshaped their landscape such that it was very different from the national picture of Congregationalism from the eighteenth century until the end of the twentieth. Without doubt Oxford Congregationalism was, and is, unique. - Michael Hopkins, p 148, op cit.

Notes

Although no architect was involved in the design of the church, this does not diminish its significance.

Although two front doors can usually be found in Congregational churches and in other Non-Conformist churches, possibly one for females to enter and one for males to enter, it is interesting that in the URC church in Oxford that there is one front door to the narthex and two inner doors opening to the nave.

In 1838 Congregationalists first began to worship in Summertown, and a house was registered for worship in the village in 1840.

Middle Way was, in the early 19 century, called George Street, later becoming Middle Way. Note that George Street was known earlier as George Lane.

The Oxford Times of 17 June 1893 covered the opening ceremony.

Uses for the halls different kinds of meetings including a boys club, and Congregational Band of Hope and Total Abstinence Society.

Twining's Grocery shop to the south at Banbury Road was built in 1902 for Mr Twining (unlisted). (Did he donate the land for the church?)

Historic photo of Cowley Road in about 1900, with the Cowley Road Congregational church on the left. This church was established as a mission from the Congregational Chapel in George Street in 1868/9, changing its name to Tyndale Church in 1955. It was closed in 1962, and demolished in 1963.

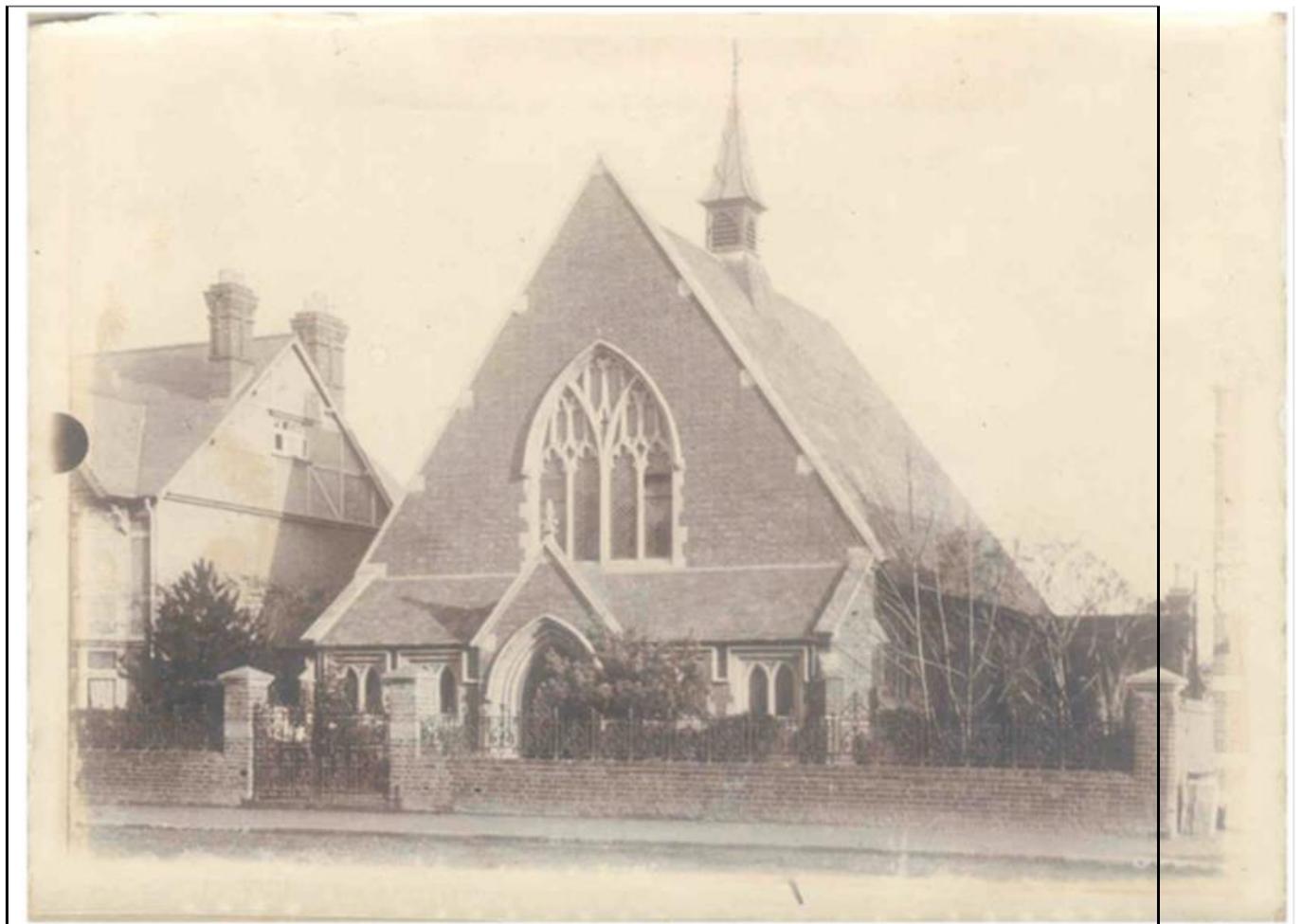
Bibliography and Sources

City Engineer Deposited Plans, Oxford Town Hall.

'Congregationalism in Oxford. The growth and development of Congregational Churches in and around the city of Oxford since 1653', by Michael Hopkins. A thesis submitted to The University of Birmingham for the degree of Master of Philosophy.

'The Changing Faces of Summertown and Cutteslowe', Julie Kennedy.

Oxford Architectural and Historical Society, letter dated 22 February 2016 as consultee, response to planning application 16/00181/FUL.



Historic photograph showing the church in its original form with the front walls, piers and railings, from 'The Changing Faces of Summertown and Cutteslowe', Julie Kennedy (Photograph undated.)

Welcome to the nominations form for the Oxford Heritage Assets Register

What the form is for

The nomination form asks you to demonstrate how your candidate asset meets the criteria for inclusion on the Oxford Heritage Assets Register (the criteria are set out on the next page). The criteria ensure registration as a heritage asset is the most appropriate means to manage your valued feature of the environment.

Registration does not mean an asset will be preserved in its current state in perpetuity. Planning policy allows change to heritage assets that conserves or better reveals their significance or, where change requires their loss, replaces the benefit to the public that they provide. The information provided in support of your nomination will help determine what forms of change might be acceptable. Saying "it's important and must never change" won't tell us what we need to know to manage your heritage asset in the future.

Tick or rank?

In answers to Questions 2 – 4 you can rank the interests, values and significance your candidate asset provides to show which you consider the most and least important to its significance; i.e. 1st (most important) – 4th (least important).

Alternatives

If your candidate asset does not have significance that merits inclusion on the register but does contribute to the valued character of the local environment, consider preparing a character statement for the area using the Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit. This identifies features that contribute positively to local character and opportunities for enhancement. It may help to identify other ways that change can contribute to the quality of the local environment and its sense of place.

Where the use of land, buildings or places now or in the recent past, furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community (and this is not an ancillary use), it may be considered to be an asset of community value (community asset), for which the government has made provision in the Localism Act 2011. Regulations give communities the opportunity to identify assets of community value and have them listed and, when they are put up for sale, more time to raise finance and prepare to bid for them. The Council is maintaining a list of community assets. Nevertheless, there may be examples where land is considered to both qualify as a community asset and heritage asset, in which case it will be necessary to distinguish which features of their value and significance are relevant to each designation.

Sites and buildings in conservation areas

Conservation Areas are 'designated heritage assets' as defined by the government's planning policy and receive a higher level of protection than locally registered heritage assets, including legal restrictions on demolition and some permitted development rights. Nevertheless, they are designated locally and reflect the local value of these areas as heritage assets. Features of the historic landscape within conservation areas that would be considered to have a significance meriting consideration in planning decisions would be considered to contribute to the significance of a conservation area and therefore are considered to be part of a designated heritage asset. As such, we will not consider them for inclusion on the Oxford Heritage Assets Register.

What happens next?

We will prepare a list of candidate heritage assets, which will be presented to the public (including the owners of candidate heritage assets) for consultation. Any responses received from the public will be placed with the nomination form and will be included in the report made to the review panel.

A panel of councillors, council officers and local experts will review the candidate assets nominated to ensure they meet the criteria. The information you provide in answering the questions will be essential for the panel's consideration of your candidate's significance. If they are uncertain, you may be asked to provide further information. Where the panel consider that a candidate has met the criteria they will recommend that the Council include them on the Oxford Heritage Asset Register.

In some instances the review panel may decide that the candidate does not meet the criteria to be included as a heritage asset but might be appropriate for consideration as a community asset. If this is the case, you will be asked to consider making an application for the inclusion of your asset on the Council's list of community assets, which may require additional or different information.

The Criteria:

Registered Heritage Assets must meet all of the four following criteria:

Criterion 1. They must be capable of meeting the government's definition of a heritage asset.

Demonstrate that your candidate is able to fall within the government's definition of a heritage asset; i.e. a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape.

Criterion 2. They must possess heritage interest that can be conserved and enjoyed.

Identify the properties of your candidate asset that need to be cared for as heritage – this is its *heritage interest*. This might include physical things like its appearance and materials, as well as associations with past people or events. Consider whether the physical features of the candidate asset help to illustrate its associations. The four types of heritage interest listed are recognised in national planning policy.

Criterion 3. They must have a value as heritage for the character and identity of the city, neighbourhood or community because of their heritage interest beyond personal or family connections, or the interest of individual property owners.

Tell us why or how the heritage interest you identified in your answer to Question 2 is of local value - this is its *heritage value*. The types of heritage value suggested on the nomination form are based on national guidance by English Heritage.

Criterion 4. They must have a level of significance that is greater than the general positive identified character of the local area.

Tell us what raises your candidate's heritage value to a level that merits its consideration in planning. Many features of the historic environment are a valued part of local character that should be managed through policies relating to townscape character in the local plan. Registered heritage assets should stand out as of greater significance than these features for their heritage value. The suggested options listed on the nominations form are based on national best practice. If you think your candidate asset has special local significance for another reason please state what it is.

Criteria adopted By Oxford City Council 17.12.12