

# Case Name: St Augustine's Edgbaston War Memorial

## Case Number: 1429432

### Background

St Augustine's Edgbaston War Memorial is being assessed for listing as part of Historic England's First World War Commemoration project.

### Asset(s) under Assessment

Facts about the asset(s) can be found in the Annex(es) to this report.

Annex	List Entry Number	Name	Heritage Category	HE Recommendation
1	1430856	Edgbaston War Memorial at St Augustine's Church	Listing	Add to List

### Visits

Date	Visit Type
none	No Visit / Data from other sources

### Context

The memorial stands to the south of the Grade II\*-listed Parish Church of St Augustine of Hippo, within Edgbaston St Augustine's Conservation Area. There are no known threats to the memorial.

### Assessment

#### CONSULTATION

The owner, the local authority, the Historic Environment Record (HER) and War Memorials Trust were invited to comment on the factual details of the case as part of the consultation process. The owner replied, supplying images and historical information that is reflected in the proposed List entry. No other responses were received.

#### DISCUSSION

War memorials attract considerable public interest and will warrant serious consideration for designating, especially during the centenary of the First World War. The Historic England Listing Selection Guide for Commemorative Structures (April 2011) states that, unless compromised by alteration or of little design interest, there is a presumption in favour of listing all war memorials.

This is an unusual example of a war memorial, designed by JH Morcom. The combination of Classical form with features in Art Deco style has resulted in an elegant and striking monument, standing in front of the Grade II\*-listed Parish Church of St Augustine of Hippo. Commemorating those parishioners who died in both the First and also the Second World War, the memorial was specifically intended to eschew religious symbolism in order to be as widely-relevant to all the bereaved. Overall, it is considered that the memorial has special architectural and historical interest and meets the criteria for listing.

We have considered whether powers of exclusion under s.1 (5A) of the 1990 Act are appropriate, and consider that they are not.

#### CONCLUSION

After examining all the records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for listing are fulfilled. Edgbaston War Memorial at St Augustine's Church is therefore recommended for listing in Grade II.

#### REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

Edgbaston War Memorial, situated beside the Parish Church of St Augustine of Hippo, is recommended for listing at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- \* Historic Interest: as an eloquent witness to the tragic impact of world events on the local community, and the sacrifice it made in the conflicts of the C20;
- \* Architectural interest: a competition winning entry by notable designer JH Morcom;
- \* Sculptural interest: a well-executed monument, elegantly combining Classical form with Art Deco style;
- \* Group value: with the Parish Church of St Augustine of Hippo (Grade II\*-listed).

#### **Countersigning comments:**

This memorial meets the criteria for listing.

PAS

10 November 2015

**Annex 1****List Entry****List Entry Summary**

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

**Name:** Edgbaston War Memorial at St Augustine's Church

**List Entry Number:** 1430856

**Location**

St Augustine's Church, Lyttelton Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B16 9JN

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County	District	District Type	Parish
	Birmingham	Metropolitan Authority	Non Civil Parish

**National Park:** Not applicable to this List entry.

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:**

**Date of most recent amendment:**

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**Legacy System Information**

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

**Legacy System:** Not applicable to this List entry.

**Legacy Number:** Not applicable to this List entry.

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**Asset Groupings**

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

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**List Entry Description****Summary of Building**

First World War memorial, 1921, with later additions for the Second World War.

**Reasons for Designation**

Edgbaston War Memorial, situated beside the Parish Church of St Augustine of Hippo, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- \* Historic interest: as an eloquent witness to the tragic impact of world events on the local community, and the sacrifice it made in the conflicts of the C20;
- \* Architectural interest: a competition winning entry by the notable designer JH Morcom;

- \* Sculptural interest: a well-executed monument, elegantly combining Classical form with Art Deco style;
- \* Group value: with the Parish Church of St Augustine of Hippo (Grade II\*-listed).

## History

The war memorial was the product of a competition organised by a local committee soon after the end of the First World War. The committee specified a memorial that did not overtly reflect any religious denomination, despite being situated beside the church. The winning design, chosen by Sir Whitworth Wallis (1844-1927), who was at the time the curator of Birmingham City Art Gallery, was by JH Morcom. In his Faculty Petition of 13 May 1921, the Reverend Rosslyn Bruce wrote, 'The proposed monument does not represent an urn but rather a column. It is surmounted by the symbolic flame, representative of eternal life. The angels hold wreaths of laurel and the whole embodies the severest simplicity. The purpose has been kept that the view of meeting the wishes of many bereaved parents of many differing "denominations" to whom symbolism means little.'

The original design included a York stone pavement, an enclosing hedge, and two stone bollards each carved with four swords in reverse. This part of the design was not completed. The Faculty was granted on 24 June 1921. The memorial cost £640 and was unveiled on 28 July 1921.

Joseph Henry Morcom ARCA (1871-1942) worked first for a local firm of stonemasons in Wales, later securing a position with Norbury, Paterson & Co of Liverpool. In the early 1890s he enrolled at Liverpool School of Architecture and Applied Art. By 1904 he was Assistant Modelling Master at the School and in 1910 was appointed Modelling Master at Leicester School of Art. Four years later he bought Pearson and Shipley, a firm of stonemasons and monumental sculptors, which he renamed The Plasmatic Company. He was responsible for a number of other war memorials, including those at Quorn, Aylestone, and for Cortonwood Colliery.

## Details

The memorial stands in front of the Parish Church of St Augustine of Hippo (Grade II\*), to the south side of the church. Built in Portland stone, it comprises a two-stepped base surmounted by tapering, square, stele. A pedestal, slightly stepped back, on top of the stele bears carved wreaths on each side. Standing on the pedestal a tapering pillar carries an eternal flame. Each side of the pillar is carved with a robed figure, holding wreaths and with palm leaves carved at each arris.

On the upper part of the front of the stele the principal dedication reads IN HONOURED MEMORY/ OF ALL THOSE WHO WENT/ FROM THIS PARISH AND/ FELL IN THE GREAT WAR/ 1914-1919/ AND/ 1939-1945. Below at the foot of the stele is carved FOR GOD AND COUNTRY. The commemorated names are carved on the remaining three sides of the stele.

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## Selected Sources

### Websites

Imperial War Museum, War Memorials Archive, accessed 15/10/2015 from  
<http://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/51951>

**Map**

**National Grid Reference:** SP0378586135



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The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - 1430856\_1.pdf