

ADDRESS

Shaftesbury Hall, HERBERT ROAD, WOOD GREEN

Parish WOOD GREEN

Case UID: 166239

District HARINGEY County GREATER LONDON

Date First Listed:

Formerly Listed As:

RECOMMENDATION

Adviser: Ms H Parham

Outcome: No, do not

Recommended Grade:

NL 30-JUN-2008

Advice Text: After examining all the papers on this and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for listing are not fulfilled.

CONTEXT

We have been asked to assess Shaftesbury Hall. Herbert Road. Bounds Green for listing, The owners of the site are currently appealing against the refusal of an application for planning permission to demolish the building and build a charity centre and flats. The building is not in a conservation area.

HISTORY

Shaftesbury Hall is a 'tin tabernacle', a small prefabricated church constructed from corrugated iron. 'tin tabernacles' were erected in great numbers from the 1850s as swelling populations, particularly in newly developed railway suburbs, required places of worship, often for the intervening period before funds could be raised to build a brick or stone church. Most tin tabernacles were eventually superseded by a permanent church and were demolished but some continued in use as parish halls.

Shaftesbury Hall dates from 1885 and was built by a Baptist congregation. The building, and indeed the road on which it stands, does not appear on the edition of the Middlesex OS map of 1879-83 but by the 1896 edition rows of terraced houses had been built upon the former farmland, development no doubt hastened by the arrival of Bowes Park Station in 1880. The hall was also the nucleus of Bounds Green Board School, who held lessons here in the 1880s. Shaftesbury Hall does not appear to have been superseded by the construction of a permanent church building, a not uncommon occurrence in non-conformist congregations who placed less importance on building architecturally impressive churches than Anglicans and Roman Catholics did not close for use as a place of worship until 1954.

DESCRIPTION

Shaftesbury Hall is a typical 'tin tabernacle', most likely selected from a suppliers catalogue, delivered in a 'flat pack' and erected on the site. Its appearance bears some resemblance to design No. 279 from the catalogue of William Cooper Ltd of 751, Old Kent Road, who were one of the principal providers of corrugated iron buildings in the late C19 and early C20. Shaftesbury Hall is a timber framed building on a brick plinth, externally clad with galvanised and corrugated iron, and lined with tongue and groove boarding inside. The simple rectangular structure has a replacement pitched asbestos roof with decorative timber bargeboards and small oculus in the north and south gable ends. There is a southern porch, also with a decorative bargeboard, and further rooms at the northern end, as well as a modern extension. The church has pointed arched windows, most retaining their timber Y-tracery, which identify the building's original purpose as a place of worship. The interior is largely unaltered, although the king post roof has been supported by iron tie beams and collars, which may be later additions. Some of the original joinery, for example a cupboard in one of the vestry rooms and the porch door, survive but original altar, pulpit and seating (which may never have been fixed) are not in situ.

ASSESSMENT

Tin tabernacles were built in their thousands in the second half of the C19 and a reasonable number survive, as photographs in a recently-published book (Ian Smith. Tin Tabernacles: Corrugated Iron Mission Halls, Churches and Chapels of Britain. 2004) illustrate. While their surviving numbers are becoming increasingly smaller, at least seven are already listed and others are preserved in museums, including the Chiltern Open Air Museum and the Avoncroft Museum of Buildings. When considering adding further tin tabernacles to the statutory list, the benchmark in terms of design quality must be set quite highly, as relative rarity and survival of features are not sufficient factors in their own right to warrant listing. At the same time, the inherent humble character of the type means that decisions must be taken in relation to other surviving temporary or prefabricated buildings, and not through comparisons with permanent, architect-designed, stone or brick churches. Those tin tabernacles that have been listed tend to have one or more distinguishing factors, such as a spire or tower, a complete set of interior fittings, stained glass windows, or an unusual history.

Shaftesbury Hall, like all tin tabernacles, is a survival from a period of expanding suburbs and fervent religiosity and is of some historic interest locally as a building related to the development of Bounds Green in the 1880s. Its design, however, does not compare well to other surviving tin churches in particular those that are listed. Unlike St Monica's, Melbourn, East Yorkshire, which has transepts and broach spire, Shaftesbury Hall is not a complex composition; nor does it have its fittings like St Matthew's Church in Lincoln; Cambridge Hall in Kilburn, London has arcading nave aisle with cast-iron columns with moulded capitals. The tin church on Shrubland Road, Dalston, London is relatively plain, but this is listed as a very early example of a tin tabernacle dating from 1858. As Shaftesbury Hall is not a rare survival, nor a particularly early example of a tin tabernacle, architectural distinction in comparison to other prefabricated churches is required for a positive listing recommendation. Yet Shaftesbury Hall is quite simple in plan, composition decoration and has been altered by a modern brick extension and the replacement of the roof covering with corrugated asbestos. It therefore does not meet the criteria for listing.

SOURCES

'Tottenham: Protestant Nonconformity'. A History of the County of Middlesex Volume 5: Hendon, Kingsbury. Great Stanmore, Little Stanmore, Edmonton, Enfield, Monken Hadley, South Mimms, Tottenham (1976), pp. 1355-364.

Ian Smith. Tin Tabernacles Corrugated Iron Mission Halls, Churches and Chapels of Britain, 2004

Conclusion: Shaftesbury Hall does not have special architectural or historic interest.

Reasons For Designation Decision:

Shaftesbury Hall is not recommended for listing for the following principal reasons:

- tin tabernacles were built in their thousands in the second half of the C19 and a reasonable number survive, so is not a rare survival nationally;
- the building is quite simple in plan, composition and decoration and does not compare well to other surviving tin churches, in particular those that are listed;
- there have been significant alterations to the building including a modern brick extension and replacement corrugated asbestos roof.

VISITS: 26-JUN-0008 Full inspection

COUNTERSIGNING First Countersigning Adviser: Ms D Keate

Comments: Agreed. This modest structure has interest in the local context, but does not meet the criteria for statutory listing.

Second Countersigning Adviser: Ms E Gee Comments: Agreed also. 'Tin tabernacles' are often charming and characterful survivals, for their vernacular urban form and indicative of the expanding populations served, for these reasons, this one is of local interest but it is not special in a national context (such as for early date. intactness or architectural embellishment.)

HP Director: