

Case Name: Mitcham War Memorial, Lower Green West

Case Number: 1442303

Background

Mitcham 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	1448269	Mitcham War Memorial	Listing	Add to List

Visits

Date	Visit Type
none	No Visit / Data from other sources

Context

The memorial is situated on Lower Green opposite the Grade II-listed Mitcham Parish Rooms. It is within Mitcham Cricket Green Conservation Area. There are no known threats to the memorial.

Assessment

CONSULTATION

The owner, the local planning authority, the Historic Environment Record (HER), interested parties and War Memorials Trust were invited to comment on the factual details of the case as part of the consultation process.

The applicant replied with some minor factual corrections to the report and these have been 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 Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings (DCMS, March 2010) sets out how the Secretary of State determines whether a building or structure is of special interest and merits listing. 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 elegant example of the wheel-head cross type of war memorial, which is enhanced by well-executed carved details to the cross and plinth and the addition of the sculpted bronze swords. It stands in a prominent position on the Green and commemorates those from the local community who died during the First World War. The memorial also has group value with the Grade II-listed Mitcham Parish Rooms.

An inscription was added commemorating those who lost their lives in the Second World War and this adds to the historic interest of the memorial.

Overall, it is considered that the memorial has special architectural and historic interest and meets the criteria for listing.

In recommending the extent of listing, we have considered whether powers of exclusion under s1 (5A) of the 1990 Act are appropriate, and consider that they are, which is clear in the proposed List entry.

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. Mitcham War Memorial is therefore recommended for listing at Grade II.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

Mitcham War Memorial, which is situated on Lower Green, 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 this local community, and the sacrifice it has made in the conflicts of the C20;

Architectural interest:

- * An elegant wheel-head cross memorial with well-executed carved details and sculpted bronze swords;

Group value

- * For its relationship with the Grade II-listed Mitcham Parish Rooms.

Countersigning comments:

Agreed.

Paul Jeffery

24th July 2017

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: Mitcham War Memorial

List Entry Number: 1448269

Location

Lower Green, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3UD

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

County	District	District Type	Parish
Greater London Authority	Merton	London Borough	Non Civil Parish

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed:

Date of most recent amendment:

Legacy System Information

This section only relates to older records, created before the introduction of the National Heritage List for England in 2011.

Legacy System: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy Number: Not applicable to this List entry.

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.

List Entry Description**Summary of Building**

First World War memorial, unveiled on 21 November 1920, with Second World War additions

Reasons for Designation

Mitcham War Memorial, which is situated on Lower Green, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Historic interest:

* As an eloquent witness to the tragic impact of world events on this local community, and the sacrifice it has made in the conflicts of the C20;

Architectural interest:

* An elegant wheel-head cross memorial with well-executed carved details and sculpted bronze swords;

Group value:

* For its relationship with the Grade II-listed Mitcham Parish Rooms.

History

The aftermath of the First World War saw the biggest single wave of public commemoration ever with tens of thousands of memorials erected across England. This was the result of both the huge impact on communities of the loss of three quarters of a million British lives, and also the official policy of not repatriating the dead which meant that the memorials provided the main focus of the grief felt at this great loss. One such memorial was raised at Mitcham as a permanent testament to the sacrifice made by the 588 members of the local community who lost their lives in the First World War.

Proposals for a war memorial in Mitcham commenced in early 1919 with the parish churchyard chosen as the original location. However, this proved an unpopular choice and a temporary memorial was erected on a different site, the Lower Green, for Peace Day on 19 July 1919. Subsequently, it was determined by the War Memorial Committee that a permanent memorial should be erected on the Green and the local community were asked to submit the details of those who died in the First World War; 552 names were originally received. The memorial was unveiled on 21 November 1920, by Major General Sir Herbert Edward Watts at a ceremony attended by 5,000 people.

The memorial was restored in 1962 and an additional panel added with a dedication to those who died during the Second World War.

The current set of railings surrounding the memorial was probably erected around 1950.

Details

First World War memorial, erected in 1920, with Second World War additions.

MATERIALS: Portland stone, bronze.

DETAILS: Mitcham War Memorial is situated on Lower Green opposite the Grade II-listed Mitcham Parish Rooms.

The memorial is of Portland stone and takes the form of a wheel-head Latin cross with a tapering, four-sided shaft. The cross shaft terminates in a square foot of classical design with a Greek key pattern carved into two sides atop a narrow square block. The cross rises from a square plinth with a decorated band to the top, surmounted by a cavetto with cornice. Rectangular panels project from the cavetto to all four sides. The vertical edges of the plinth are chamfered with inverted bronze swords affixed; each sword hilt has six studs down the centre and the pommel is a sculpted St Edward's crown. The plinth has a three-stage moulded foot and stands on a five-stepped, octagonal base.

All four sides of the plinth carry the names of the 588 members of the local community who died during the First World War. The principal inscription is to the south face of the plinth, beneath the decorated band and reads: TO THE MEN OF MITCHAM/ WHO FALLING, CONQUERED/ IN THE GREAT WAR 1914-1919. Directly above on the panel in the cavetto is the dedication: THEIR NAME LIVETH/ FOR EVERMORE. All lettering is incised.

Resting against the plinth foot is a stone panel, added in 1962, with the Second World War inscription in raised lettering: AND/ TO THE MEMORY/ OF THE MEN, WOMEN/ AND CHILDREN OF MITCHAM/ WHO LOST THEIR LIVES/ IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR/ 1939 – 1945. Directly below, on the uppermost step of the base, is a further panel (added later) with a final dedication: AND THOSE KILLED/ IN OTHER CONFLICTS.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: The memorial is enclosed by metal railings*.

* Pursuant to s1 (5A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') it is declared that these aforementioned features are not of special architectural or historic interest.

Selected Sources

Websites

Mitcham History Notes, accessed 02 June 2017 from
<https://mitchamhistorynotes.wordpress.com/buildings/listed-buildings/locally-listed-buildings/war-memorial/>

War Memorials Online, accessed 02 June 2017 from
<https://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/134315/>

War Memorials Register, accessed 02 June 2017 from
<http://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/12194>

Other

'Letter to the Editor [re: location of memorial]', Mitcham and Tooting Mercury, (9 May 1919)

'Letter to the Editor [re: names received]', Mitcham and Tooting Mercury, (21 November 1919)

'Unveiling of Mitcham's War Memorial', Mitcham and Tooting Mercury, (26 November 1920)

'War Memorial Committee Decision', Mitcham and Tooting Mercury, (7 November 1919)

Mitcham News and Mercury (12 October 1962)

Map**National Grid Reference:** TQ2747068595

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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 - 1448269_1.pdf