Friends Meeting House, Capel

142-144 The Street, Capel, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 5EN

National Grid Reference: TQ 17469 40451

Statement of Significance

The meeting house is a brick building of 1724 with an attached cottage of a slightly later date which has been extended several times. There are burial grounds to the front and the rear. Overall, the building has high significance.

<u>Evidential value</u>
The building is relatively little altered and has the potential to reveal further information about its past use and development. It has high evidential value.

<u>Historical value</u>
The building has high historical value as an early eighteenth-century Quaker meeting house with attached burial grounds.

<u>Aesthetic value</u>
The meeting house has medium aesthetic value, as a simple vernacular building with a little altered interior.

<u>Communal value</u>
As a Quaker meeting house with attached burial grounds (one of which is still in use), the meeting has high communal value.

Part 1: Core data

1.1 Area Meeting: *West Weald*

1.2 Property Registration Number: *0015890*

1.3 Owner: *Friends Trusts*

1.4 Local Planning Authority: *Mole Valley District Council*

1.5 Historic England locality: *South East*

1.6 Civil parish: *Capel*

1.7 Listed status: *II*

1.8 NHLE: *1028737*

1.9 Conservation Area: *Capel*

1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*

1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*

1.12 Date(s): *1724*

1.13 Architect (s): *Not established*

1.14 Date of visit: *11 September 2015*

1.15 Name of report author: *Johanna Roethe*

1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Jonathan Myall*

1.17 Associated buildings and sites: *attached cottage*

1.18 Attached burial ground: *Yes*

1.19 Information sources:

Butler, D.M., *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain*, 1999, vol. 2, pp. 582-3
Coke, C., 'A short history of the Capel Meeting House', leaflet, 2008
Lidbetter, H., *The Friends Meeting House*, 1979, p. 14
Stell, C., *An Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting-houses in Eastern England*, 2002, pp. 319-20
Local Meeting survey by Jonathan Myall, September 2015

Part 2: The Meeting House & Burial Ground: history, contents, use, setting and designation

2.1. Historical background

There were Quakers in the area in the late seventeenth century. In 1673, a burial ground was acquired from Richard Bax at whose house, Pleystowe Farm, meetings were held from c.1655 to 1724. (This burial ground was in use until 1849.) In 1704, a plot of half an acre was leased in Capel's main street for use as a new burial ground. In 1724, the present meeting house was built on the site. The contract between Richard Bax and Richard Peter with the bricklayer Thomas Lucas is dated 21 May 1724. A lean-to cottage may have been part of the original building (Butler) or added in the late eighteenth century (Stell). In the nineteenth century, the door to the meeting house was moved and the leaded windows replaced by sashes (since

replaced by casements). The cottage was altered and extended several times in the late nineteenth century and in c.1903. In 1974-75, it was further extended and the entrances to both buildings were enclosed in a single porch. The rear extension (housing toilets and a small kitchen for the meeting room) may also have been built at the same time.

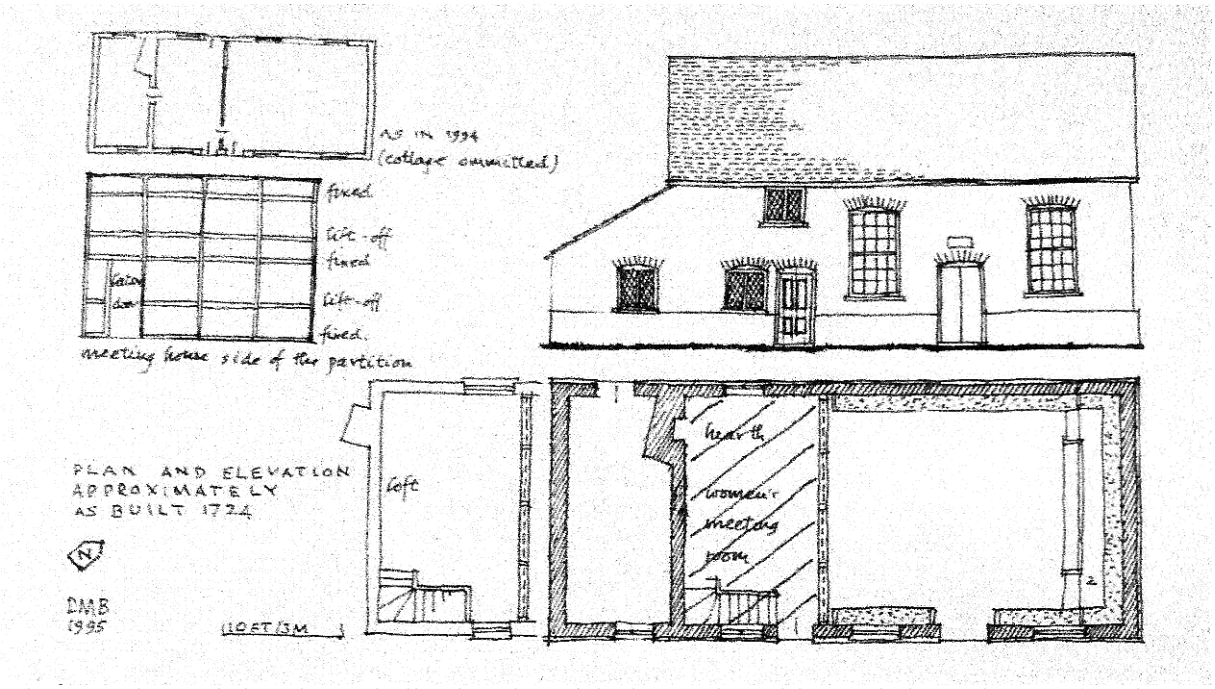

Figure 1: Plan and elevation as built, elevation of the internal partition and plan as in 1994 (southeast is at the bottom; not to scale) (Butler, *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain*, 1999, vol. 2, pp. 583)

2.2. The building and its principal fittings and fixtures

The main elevation faces southeast. The meeting house has an oblong plan with a small extension to the rear. The materials are red brick with glazed headers laid in Flemish bond, with a base of dressed and tooled stone. The pitched roof has handmade clay tiles and the two gables are tile-hung. The front elevation has a lean-to porch in the angle of the meeting house and the cottage. There are two tall timber casement windows under segmental brick arches. Similar arches above blocked openings indicate the positions of the original door and a window further west. Above the blocked door is a weathered stone which originally may have had an inscription. Above the porch is a small two-light window to the former gallery. The east wall has a blocked window under a segmental arch. The rear elevation has two short pivoting windows above the flat roof of the extension. The west bay has a first-floor window above a door and a ground-floor window. The rendered extension has two small windows to the toilets beside a larger kitchen window, with doors in the side walls.

The porch contains the current door to the meeting room beside a disused plank door into the adjoining room and a leaded two-light window. The meeting room has dado panelling to three walls, with the ministers' and elders' stand on a dais at the east. This comprises two fixed benches, which are raised one and two steps, respectively. Both benches have shaped side panels. The west wall is a timber partition with alternate rows of fixed and removable panels. A former door in the partition is now disused. The room on the other side of the partition (formerly the women's meeting room, then the adult school) and the gallery above it are now part of the cottage (not inspected). The rear extension contains a kitchen and two toilets.

The attached cottage occupies a cross wing to the west of the meeting house. It has a two-storey gabled wing to the front. However, this does not extend the full depth of the building. Behind it is the original lean-to tiled roof with a flat-roofed and tile-hung dormer of the

1970s. There are two chimneystacks: one beside the gabled front, and one to the rear. The interior was not inspected.

2.3 Loose furnishings

There are seven open-backed benches with curved armrests. One further bench in the porch has turned supports to the armrests. Stell also mentioned one early eighteenth-century coffin stool (not seen).

2.4. Attached burial ground (if any)

The attached burial ground was acquired in 1704 and is still in use. The burial ground in front of the meeting house is reputedly the older one; it has no headstones but a historic postcard clearly shows the burial mounds. The burial ground behind the building is still in use. It has 33 headstones from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day. The earliest surviving headstone is that for Mary Dale who died in 1861.

2.5. The meeting house in its wider setting

The meeting house is set back from the main street. There is a gate with a pathway through the garden to the meeting house, parallel to a drive for the cottage. A community orchard was recently planted on part of the garden to the east, by a group of Quakers and Anglicans. The meeting house and cottage make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

The historic burial ground at Pleystowe Farm (south of Capel) has Quaker burials from between c.1673 and 1849. It is no longer in Quaker ownership and its exact location is not known.

2.6. Listed status

The meeting house and cottage are correctly listed at grade II. The list entry needs to be amended to the correct date (1724, not 1725), and to reflect the dates of the cottage more accurately.

2.7. Archaeological potential of the site

It is not known if there was a building on the site before 1724. The site has high archaeological potential due to the presence of burials.

Part 6: List description(s)

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

Name: FRIENDS COTTAGE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

List entry Number: 1028737

Location

FRIENDS COTTAGE, 144, THE STREET

FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, 142, THE STREET

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

County	District	District Type	Parish
Surrey	Mole Valley	District Authority	Capel

Grade: II

Date first listed: 29-Sep-1987

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

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

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 290222

List entry Description

Details

CAPEL C.P. THE STREET TQ 14SE (West Side) 8/108 No 142 and 144 Friends Meeting House and Friends Cottage II

Friends Meeting House, now part cottage. 1725 with late C19 extensions to left. Red/brown brick with blue headers to right, orange/red brick to ground floor left with tile hanging above. Plain tiled roofs. Originally rectangular in plan, now T-shaped, with gable end extension projecting to left. Two storeys with one stack to right of wing and to left end of old meeting house. Blocked fenestration of old meeting house visible, new fenestration of two large, mullioned and transomed windows under cambered heads to right, rising through full height. One first floor window to left over pentice-roofed brick extension across the ground floor in angle with wing. One 3-light window to first floor left, 4-light window and projecting square window on ground floor. Doors to left hand return front of extension and in brick pentice to right of wing. Listed mainly for historical interest.

Listing NGR: TQ1746940451