

## ***Quaker Meeting House, Dorchester***

*8 Holloway Road, Fordington, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1LF*

*National Grid Reference: SY 69796 90675*



### ***Statement of Significance***

***A meeting house adapted in 1978 from a public house built in 1925. The exterior is largely unchanged but the interior has seen some alteration. The building is of medium heritage significance overall.***

### ***Evidential value***

***The building was previously a pub, occupying the site of an earlier pub and is of medium evidential value.***

### ***Historical value***

***The site was apparently occupied by a pub for many years before the erection of the present pub building in 1925 and this past use gives the site at least medium historical value.***

**Aesthetic value**

***The building is a pleasing and typical example of inter-war public house architecture and is of medium aesthetic value.***

**Communal value**

***The meeting house has been used by Quakers since 1978 and also by other local groups. The building has high communal value.***

**Part 1: Core data**

1.1 Area Meeting: *Dorset & South Wiltshire*

1.2 Property Registration Number: *0000050*

1.3 Owner: *Area Meeting*

1.4 Local Planning Authority: *West Dorset District Council*

1.5 Historic England locality: *South West*

1.6 Civil parish: *Dorchester*

1.7 Listed status: *Not listed*

1.8 NHLE: *N/a*

1.9 Conservation Area: *Dorchester*

1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*

1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*

1.12 Date(s): *1925, refurbished 1978, rear addition 2009*

1.13 Architect(s): *Original architect not established, 1978 refurbishment by R. A. Campbell, rear addition by A. P. Stainer*

1.14 Date of visit: *11 July 2016*

1.15 Name of report author: *Neil Burton*

1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Margaret Barker*

1.17 Associated buildings and sites: *Two garages opposite the meeting house*

1.18 Attached burial ground: *No*

1.19 Information sources:

*Atfield, Jim, The Early History of Quakers in South Dorset: the story of the Weymouth and Dorchester meetings from 1656-1760, 2000*

*Butler, D.M., The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain, 1999, vol.1, p.148*

*Local Meeting survey by Linda Wood, March 2015*

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

### 2.1 Historical background

A cottage and garden was bought in 1712 on the north side of Pease Lane for a meeting house and burial ground. The meeting had effectively closed by the mid-1740s. The property was leased to tenants in 1764 and sold in 1840. The building had been demolished by 1920. A new meeting began in 1941 and in 1978 the former Union Arms public house in Holloway Road, Fordington, a building of the mid-1920s, was purchased from the Eldridge Pope Brewery company and adapted to serve as a meeting house with a flat for a warden. A small addition was made at the rear of the building in 2009. The property also includes a section of the steeply-sloping bank down to the river Frome across the road from the meeting house.

### 2.2 The building and its principal fittings and fixtures

The former public house is in a simple neo-vernacular style. The walls are faced with render, above a red brick plinth laid in Flemish bond, and the roof is covered with plain tiles. The building lies parallel to the street with a tall pitched roof overall. The main street front is of one and a half storeys. The ground floor openings are arranged symmetrically, with two door openings, with moderne surrounds typical of the 1920s, each flanked by three-light timber mullion and transom windows. In the centre of the front is a tall cross-gable rising to the height of the main roof, with a six-light casement window to the upper floor. The gable is flanked by flat-topped dormers with three light windows. The exposed east end wall has a single door at the rear with a small two-light casement over. Across most of the rear elevation is a modern single-storey flat-roofed extension. The rear roof slope has a central flat-topped dormer with a four light window. The full-width of the slope above the dormer is now covered with solar panels. The interior has been thoroughly modernised and no trace of the previous use is evident. The meeting room is a simple space with a modern wood-block floor, plain plastered walls and a flat ceiling.

The ground behind the meeting house is bounded by a tall brick-faced embankment to the adjoining property. To the east the rising ground is laid out as small garden platforms. Across the road in front of the meeting house is a steep grassed bank sloping down to the River Frome. This is part of the meeting house property and Friends are responsible for the upkeep of the river bank.

### 2.3 Loose furnishings

The only item of heritage interest is a single open-backed timber bench (pictured bottom left above), apparently from the Meeting House at Leighton Buzzard (*qv*) in Hertfordshire, where similar benches can still be found. They probably all date from c1813 when the Leighton Buzzard meeting house was enlarged.

### 2.4 Attached burial ground (if any)

None

### 2.5 The meeting house in its wider setting

Holloway Road is an old thoroughfare on high ground immediately south of the River Frome, in the Dorchester inner suburb of Fordington. The street has a mixture of modest nineteenth and twentieth-century houses and old industrial buildings now converted to residential use.

### 2.6 Listed status

The meeting house is not a candidate for either the statutory or the local list.

## 2.7 Archaeological potential of the site

The present building was erected in 1925 on the site of an earlier pub of the same name. The site has medium archaeological potential.