

***Friends Meeting House, Leyburn***

*7 Grove Square, Leyburn, DL8 5AE*

*National Grid Reference: SE 11117 90651*



***Statement of Significance***

***The meeting house has medium heritage significance as a Victorian domestic building which was converted for use as a meeting house in the 1980s.***

***Evidential value***

***The meeting house has an overall low level of significance for evidential value. The North Yorkshire County Council Historic Environment Record has not identified the site for any archaeological interest.***

***Historical value***

***Little is known about the builders or architect of 7 Grove Square and there is little information about the former occupiers of the building. As a typical nineteenth century building built in the local vernacular and converted for Quaker use in 1980s, it has medium historical value.***

***Aesthetic value***

***The meeting house has medium aesthetic value. It is an attractive nineteenth century domestic building which retains much of its original external architectural detail. It makes a positive contribution to the conservation area.***

**Communal value**

***The building has been in use as a Quaker meeting house since 1984 and a venue for community groups. The meeting house has medium communal value.***

**Part 1: Core data**

1.1 Area Meeting: *Wensleydale & Swaledale*

1.2 Property Registration Number: *0032460*

1.3 Owner: *Wensleydale & Swaledale Quaker Trust*

1.4 Local Planning Authority: *Richmondshire District Council*

1.5 Historic England locality: *Yorkshire*

1.6 Civil parish: *Leyburn*

1.7 Listed status: *Not listed*

1.8 NHLE: *Not applicable*

1.9 Conservation Area: *Leyburn*

1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*

1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*

1.12 Date(s): *Nineteenth century*

1.13 Architect (s): *Not established*

1.14 Date of visit: *7 April 2016*

1.15 Name of report author: *Emma Neil*

1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Edna Rossiter*

1.17 Associated buildings and sites: *Not applicable*

1.18 Attached burial ground: *No*

1.19 Information sources:

David M. Butler, *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain* (London: Friends Historical Society, 1999), vol. II, pp. 744.

June Hall, *Step by Step round Quaker Sites in Wensleydale*, Unicorn Projects: Leyburn, 2001.

Helen E. Roberts, *Researching Yorkshire Quaker History: A Guide to Sources*, University of Hull, 2003, pp. 54.

Jan Reed, *Local Meeting Survey*, January 2016.

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

### **2.1. Historical background**

The beginnings of Quakerism in Leyburn coincide with visits by the First Publishers of Truth, Gervase Benson and John Blayking. In 1653 a meeting was settled and at the time was known as Coverdale meeting. Friends met in each other's homes and records identify early meetings taking place at Richard Geldart's, who converted to Quakerism following preaching by Richard Robinson of Countersett. The meeting name was changed to Leyburn at some time between 1704 and 1738. By 1738 the meeting had ceased and in 1796 Friends from Richmond and Swaledale meetings began to meet in Leyburn. This too was short lived and the meeting once again closed in 1821, with the remaining Friends joining the Aysgarth meeting.

Aysgarth and Carperby meetings combined during the nineteenth century and a meeting house was built in 1864. The name of the meeting varied between Aysgarth, Carperby or both, but by 1967 was known as Aysgarth meeting. The Friends of this meeting began to meet in Leyburn from 1984 following the closure of the Carperby meeting house. A decision was made by the Friends to purchase 7 Grove Square, a nineteenth century semi-detached house to serve Friends in Lower Wensleydale and Swaledale, Richmond, Bedale and district. The house was altered for Quaker use. In c2000 work was undertaken to dry-line the west wall of the meeting room and remove the chimney breast (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Removal of chimney breast c2000 (Leyburn MH Archive).

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

The meeting house was built as a two-storey semi-detached dwelling in the late nineteenth century. It is built in coursed stone, with carved stone corbels, ashlar stone dressings and quoins. The pitched roof is laid in Welsh slate. The principal elevation faces south and the ground floor has a canted bay window with sash windows. The entrance to the east of the bay has a 6-panelled door with rectangular over-light and stone lintel. The first floor has two sash windows; like the ground floor, these have smaller panes to upper sash, with stone sills and lintels. The west elevation is blind with a red brick chimney stack in the gable wall. The north rear elevation has two sash windows with the same detailing as those to the south elevation. Abutting the main building is a shallower pitched projection aligned north to south and a further shallower building (outbuilding) abuts this.

The lobby leads into a small corridor with doorways to rooms off the hall with simple moulded architraves and 4-panelled doors, which lead to the main meeting room to the west,

ancillary facilities to the north and the staircase to the first floor. The staircase has a turned newel post with ball finials and turned balusters. The main meeting was formerly two rooms, combined by removing the dividing wall to provide a larger meeting space. The walls are papered and plainly painted, with moulded ceiling cornice and the floor is covered in carpet. The ceilings are plastered with two ceiling roses. The chimney breast was removed in c2000, leaving the upper section on corbels. The room is well lit from the bay to the south and from a window to the north. The rear of the room to the north provides access to the ancillary facilities. The first floor contains two meeting rooms and ancillary facilities to the north end.

### 2.3. Loose furnishings

The meeting house contains a clock from Carperby meeting house which was relocated to Leyburn following the closure of the former meeting house in the 1980s.



Figure 2: Clock from Carperby meeting house

### 2.4. Attached burial ground

Not applicable.

### 2.5. The meeting house in its wider setting

Leyburn is a market town located at the east end of Wensleydale in the Yorkshire Dales, and is approximately 17 miles east of Hawes. The meeting house is located within Grove Square which consists of mainly residential properties and provides a visually important setting to several of the town's more important buildings, within the Leyburn Conservation Area. To the west of the meeting house is the Grade II listed Grove Hotel dating from 1757 and to the east is the Grade II listed 4 and 5 Grove Square dating from the mid eighteenth century.

The meeting house is bounded by a small stone wall to the south of the property which is shared with the adjoining property with a hedge between the two front gardens. To the rear of the property there is a tall stone wall to the west and hedges to the east. A large garden with planting is located to the north of the meeting house along with a small area for parking.

### 2.6. Listed status

Not listed and not considered a future candidate for listing.

## 2.7. Archaeological potential of the site

The meeting house was built in the late nineteenth century as a dwelling and it is not known whether it replaced an earlier building. Its archaeological potential is low.