

Friends Meeting House, Ilkley

Queens Road, Ilkley, LS29 9QJ

National Grid Reference: SE 11650 47319



Statement of Significance

The meeting house has medium heritage significance, as a Victorian building which was remodelled in the late 1960s and sensitively extended in 2000-1. The aesthetic character of the building reflects the local vernacular and makes a positive contribution to the conservation area.

Evidential value

This is a purpose-built structure, built on land formerly owned by the Middleton family. Its archaeological and evidential value is low.

Historical value

The meeting house retains some of its historic internal layout but most of the fittings have been removed or covered over. The building has medium historical value.

Aesthetic value

The meeting house has medium aesthetic value, it is a good example of local Victorian architecture, designed by well-regarded architects and retains much of its exterior detail. The interior of the meeting house has been diminished slightly by twentieth century alterations, but the recent extension is well-designed. The building makes a positive contribution to the conservation area.

Communal value

The site remains in primarily Quaker use, but is also a valued community resource being used by a local nursery. The building has high communal value.

Part 1: Core data

1.1 Area Meeting: *Leeds*

1.2 Property Registration Number: 0019630

1.3 Owner: *Area Meeting*

1.4 Local Planning Authority: *Bradford Metropolitan District Authority*

1.5 Historic England locality: *Yorkshire and the Humber*

1.6 Civil parish: *Ilkley*

1.7 Listed status: *Not listed*

1.8 NHLE: *Not applicable*

1.9 Conservation Area: *Ilkley*

1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*

1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*

1.12 Date(s): *1869; 2000-1*

1.13 Architect (s): *Maxwell and Tuke of Bury and Bradford; Paul Foxley of Foxley Architects*

1.14 Date of visit: *16 March 2016*

1.15 Name of report author: *Emma Neil*

1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Martin Ford, Oliver Pickering and Brian Sayer*

1.17 Associated buildings and sites: *Not applicable*

1.18 Attached burial ground: *No*

1.19 Information sources:

Dorothy Bohlmann, *Notes on the history of Ilkley Meeting*, 1969

David M. Butler, *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain* (London: Friends Historical Society, 1999), vol. II, pp. 806.

Peter Leach and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Yorkshire West Riding* ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp.340.

Oliver Pickering, *The Early History of Ilkley Quaker Meeting*, 2016

Helen E. Roberts, *Researching Yorkshire Quaker History: A Guide to Sources*, University of Hull, 2003, pp. 49.

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

2.1. Historical background

The First Publishers of Truth, William Dewsbury, Christopher Taylor and Gervases Benson preached in the West Riding area during the early 1650s. Following their visit to Bolton-in-Craven a number of new meetings were settled in the area, one of which was Beamsley. Friends travelled to this new meeting from Bolton, Addingham and Beamsley. A meeting house was built in 1689 and the meeting was known as Farfield. By 1816, a decline in membership resulted in Friends renting premises in Addingham and the meeting was renamed Farfield and Addingham. At this time Ilkley was a small village; its later growth was associated with Ilkley's role as a dormitory town for Bradford and Leeds, and the construction of the railway. Following the closure of Addingham Meeting in 1862 the Ilkley Meeting was settled from Addingham Meeting, where Friends would meet in rented premises. It was during this time that the estate of the Middleton family was sold which allowed for a plot of land on Queens Road to be purchased in 1868 for a new meeting house. The meeting house was designed by Messrs Maxwell & Tuke of Bury and Bradford and cost approximately £1,200.

A description of the building is included in Bohlmann (1969):

The accommodation comprises a meeting room, with gallery to seat 200 persons. The ceiling is of plaster, slightly panelled with ornamental ring and sunlight in the centre. The whole woodwork inside is slightly varnished and has a very simple and chaste appearance...(May 27 1869)

The meeting house was unchanged until 1957 when a false ceiling was introduced concealing the original gallery and further alterations were made in 1968 to the caretaker's house, to incorporate it into the meeting house. This allowed for the creation of an enlarged lobby area, a library, new cloakrooms and two class rooms on the first floor. In 1973, architect James H Ashcroft of Leeds undertook a feasibility study for the meeting, to consider an extension to the west for a library and play room and also a flat above the main meeting room. None of these proposals were implemented.

The needs of the Meeting were changing by the beginning of the twenty-first century when there was a requirement for flexible space. Alterations were made to the former caretaker's living quarters and an extension was built in 2000-1 to provide a garden room with new kitchen facilities, to the designs of Paul Foxley R.I.B.A..

2.2. The building and its principal fittings and fixtures

The meeting house was built in 1869 to the designs of Messrs Maxwell and Tuke of Bury and Bradford in a gothic revival style and extended in 2000-1 by Paul Foxley. The meeting house is roughly T-plan and is built using coursed squared stone, with ashlar dressings to windows, coped verges, cornices and kneelers. The pitched roofs are covered in Welsh grey slate and the extension to the south-east is flat roofed with felt. The main entrance faces north towards Queens Road; with the gable end of the main meeting room, flanked by two projecting gabled wings; two storey former caretaker's cottage to the east and a single storey former schoolroom to the west. Connecting the two wings in front of the central gable is a lobby area beneath a lean-to roof. The central entrance doorway has a moulded stone surround and columns with foliated caps. Either side of the entrance are sash windows with stone moulded surrounds (one sash has been replaced), and the gable to the meeting room has a stone rose window in the apex. The east and west wing gable ends each have paired ground floor

windows (formerly sashes) with a central column with foliated caps, with a 3-light mullioned on the first floor of the east wing. The south elevation of the west wing has a 2-light mullioned window with a small flat roofed outbuilding in front. The south end of the east wing has a 2-light window at first floor level. The 2001 extension abuts the ground floor; designed in a contemporary style this has full height windows to the south and glass blocks to the east, with a projecting feature wall finished in render coloured blue that extends to the patio area.

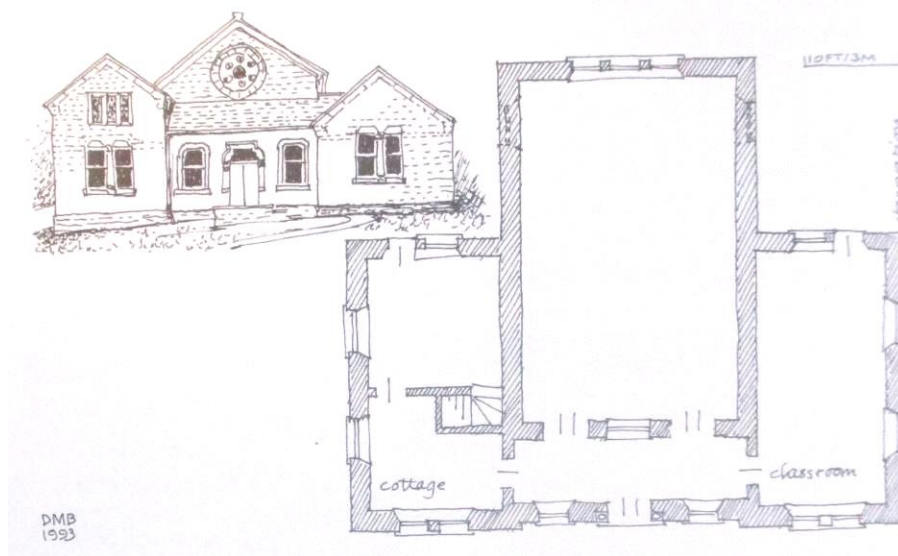


Figure 1: Ground floor plan (not to scale) and perspective
(Butler, *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain*, 1999, vol. 2, p. 806)

The east elevation of the two-storey former caretaker's cottage in the east wing has two 1-light windows either side of a fire exit door. The west elevation of the former school room has two window openings. The side elevations to the central meeting room range have three 1-light windows to the west and one 1-light window to the east, which once lit the gallery area. The rear gable of the main meeting room has a triple window to the upper level, with an inserted triple window below, also providing a rear doorway.

Internally, the entrance leads into a lobby area providing access to the WC facilities and the library. The library is lit by a large window to the north wall facing towards the lobby area, which according to Butler's observations was once a door opening. This room provides access to the 2001 garden room extension, the main meeting room and the staircase to the first floor. The main meeting room is well lit from the windows to the south, the walls are plastered and plainly painted. The floor is laid with vinyl and the room has a tiled suspended ceiling. The northwest corner of the room features a slight projection which provides access to the store room and former school room which now provides facilities for the nursery, including basic kitchen facilities. On the east wall is an alternative entrance into the 2001 extension known as the garden room, which provides a light, modern and airy meeting room. Above the suspended ceiling in the main meeting room is a large unused space which still retains the original sloping ceiling with plaster panel mouldings and the roof truss.



Figure 2: Upper level of the main meeting room (Brian Sawley, 2009)

2.3. Loose furnishings

Throughout the meeting house, there are open-backed pine benches with turned front legs, dating from the nineteenth century.



Figure 3: Open-backed pine bench

2.4. Attached burial ground

Not applicable.

2.5. The meeting house in its wider setting

Ilkley is located 12 miles north of Bradford and 17 miles northwest of Leeds. The meeting house is located in Ilkley Conservation Area designated in 1971. Queens Road is predominately residential, many of the buildings date from the Victorian and Edwardian era and are built in a Gothic style using local stone. The main characteristics are two-storey

gable-fronted properties with some properties containing belvedere towers. The northern side of Queens Road includes residential properties dating from the late twentieth century. The grounds of the properties are well planted with trees and planting which add to the mature landscaped character of the area.

The meeting house is elevated and set back from the road, with a ramped path leading to the entrance, with a steel handrail. The gardens to the north and south of the property are well maintained and mainly feature low level planting with some trees. The site is bounded by a low stone wall with weathered stone copings and gate piers located to the northeast corner. The meeting house makes a positive contribution to the historic character of the conservation area.

2.6. Listed status

Not listed. Internally, the meeting house has been much altered and is therefore not considered to be a future candidate for listing, but it may merit inclusion on a local list for its historic and architectural value.

2.7. Archaeological potential of the site

The West Yorkshire Archaeological Advisory Service was consulted and no Historic Environment Records are associated with the site. No former buildings were present on the site prior to the present meeting house being built. Overall, the archaeological potential of the site is considered to be low.