

Friends Meeting House, Hartington Grove, Cambridge

91–93 Hartington Grove, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB1 7UB

National Grid Reference: TL 46675 56516



Statement of Significance

The meeting house has low heritage significance as an inter-war suburban house adapted to serve community purposes (including as a school). It has been much altered and extended.

Evidential value

The building is a relatively recent building constructed on former farmland. It is of low evidential value.

Historical value

As a relatively recent building this building has low historical value. Its associations with previous uses (a school and the local Conservative Party headquarters) are of some local interest.

Aesthetic value

The building has been much altered and extended. The original building is similar to many other inter-war suburban houses. It is of low aesthetic value.

Communal value

The building has spiritual value due to its current primary use as a meeting house. It also figures strongly in the memory of the local community, due its previous uses, as well as its current use by local community groups. It has high communal value.

Part 1: Core data

- 1.1 Area Meeting: *Cambridgeshire*
- 1.2 Property Registration Number: *0033010*
- 1.3 Owner: *Area Meeting*
- 1.4 Local Planning Authority: *Cambridge City Council*
- 1.5 Historic England locality: *East of England*
- 1.6 Civil parish: *Cambridge*
- 1.7 Listed status: *Not listed, not locally listed*
- 1.8 NHLE: *N/a*
- 1.9 Conservation Area: *No*
- 1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*
- 1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*
- 1.12 Date(s): *c.1920*
- 1.13 Architect(s): *Not known*
- 1.14 Date of visit: *10 July 2014*
- 1.15 Name of report author: *Johanna Roethe*
- 1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Cas Bottomley*
- 1.17 Associated buildings and sites: *None*
- 1.18 Attached burial ground: *No*
- 1.19 Information sources:

Butler, D.M., *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain*, 1999, vol. 1, p. 36
Cambridge City Council, planning database
Hartington Grove Quakers, 'History of our meeting', *Newsletter 146 (Oct/Nov 2010)*, 3–7
Hartington Grove Local Meeting, plans of 2003-4
Local Meeting survey by Elizabeth Megson, 2014 and 2015

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

2.1 Historical background

The building was bought by the meeting in 1983 for £86,000, partly funded by a bequest from John Theodore Boorman. It was built in c.1920 probably initially as a private residence but by c.1927 it was in use as a preparatory school with a single-storey extension to the front. In c.1960 it was extended again with a single-storey block to the rear. Prior to its use as a meeting house it had been used as the regional headquarters of the Conservative Party

(c.1972–83). In 1983–4, alterations were made by the architect David Hiblin to create a classroom, library, toilets and warden's flat for the Local Meeting. The meeting house opened on 14 October 1984. In 1987, planning permission was given for an extension (architect: David Hiblin). At the same time, internal alterations were made, which included the moving of the kitchen, and the installation of an internal stair. In 2003–4, alterations were made by the architect Patrick Ward; this included the remodelling of the internal stair, the enlarging of the kitchen and an extension which replaced a former garage which had been converted to a classroom.

2.2 The building and its principal fittings and furnishings

The meeting house originated as a dwelling built in c.1920, with several phases of extension between the 1920s and 2003–4. The former two-storey house (c.1920) is still legible, built on a nearly square plan with a hipped roof. The ground floor is faced in brick laid in English bond, with a rendered upper storey. To the southeast is a single-storey Fletton brick extension of the 1920s with a smaller east extension. To the northwest the extension of 2003–4 is of yellow brick in stretcher bond with a single-pitch roof. To the east, between the original house and the 1920s extension is a two-storey flat-roofed extension. A staircase extension fills the gap between the house and most recent addition.

The main meeting room is located in the 1920s extension (built for the school). This is an oblong room with a canted timber ceiling, which probably originally had sliding or folding doors in the centre, dividing it into two classrooms (photo bottom left). The other rooms have been modernised and no historic furnishings or fittings remain. The warden's flat on the first floor was not inspected during the site visit.

2.3 Loose furnishings

None of note

2.4 Attached burial ground (if any)

N/a

2.5 The meeting house in its wider setting

The neighbourhood of the meeting house is largely residential, a suburb of early twentieth-century houses. To the north east is a United Reformed church of 1926 with a hall (the predecessor church of 1904). The main views of the meeting house are from the street and the car park.

2.6 Listed status

The building is currently not listed and is not considered to be a candidate for listing. It is an inter-war suburban house of a common type which has been much altered.

2.7 Archaeological potential of the site

According to map evidence, the development of the area started between c.1888 and c.1903, having formerly been part of Jordan's Farm. Residential development was completed by c.1927 by which time the meeting house was already in use as a preparatory school. The archaeological potential of the site is considered to be low.

Part 3: Current use and management

See completed volunteer survey

3.1 Condition

- i) Meeting house: Good.
- ii) Attached burial ground (if any): N/a

3.2 Maintenance

The most recent quinquennial inspection (undertaken in 2011 by Cheffins) found no major problems. The meeting has enough money for routine maintenance and repair but for the forthcoming refurbishment and upgrading it may need external funding. It does not have a five-year maintenance and repair plan but is currently (2015) in the process of devising a maintenance strategy.

3.3 Sustainability

The meeting has used the Sustainability Toolkit for an initial calculation. The meeting has implemented measures to reduce its environmental impact. These include:

- Climate change & energy efficiency: insulating the meeting room roof, installing partial double glazing (ongoing programme), installing programmable zoned heating
- Resource use, recycling & waste management: cooperating with Council schemes
- Building maintenance & refurbishment: the meeting attends to these items routinely
- Wildlife, ecology and nature conservation: the garden provides green space within the urban area.
- Transport: There is a car sharing scheme and provision for cycling

The meeting does not have an Energy Performance Certificate but would consider obtaining one.

3.4 Amenities

The meeting has all the amenities it needs; these are all located in the meeting house. There is a resident warden who lives in the first-floor flat. There is a car park and covered bicycle parking with racks, as well as nearby bus stops.

3.5 Access

The meeting house has level access, an accessible WC and a hearing loop. There are no specific facilities for partially-sighted people.

3.6 Community Use

Friends use the meeting house for 4 hours per week. The building is available for community lettings for a maximum number of 306 hours per week. It is used for an average of 53 hours per week. The meeting has a lettings policy, which is operated at the warden's discretion. Excluded are users with extremist views. Quaker groups can use the meeting rooms free of charge. Charities may be offered concessionary charges. Users value the meeting house for its convenient location, availability of some parking on site, quiet, good atmosphere, reasonable pricing, and the variety of room sizes available.

3.7 Vulnerability to crime

No serious crime has taken place at the meeting house and the area has low crime levels. A recent incident of 'intrusion' at the meeting house was reported to the police. Unreported crime includes minor (non-destructive) attempts to break in. There is currently no established liaison with the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team and the meeting does not consider this to be necessary at the present time.

3.8 Plans for change

The meeting is currently (2015) planning the upgrading of existing facilities as well, potentially, improving the building's thermal performance.

Part 4: Impact of Change

4.1 To what extent is the building amenable or vulnerable to change?

i) As a Meeting House used only by the local Meeting: The meeting has all the facilities it needs and there should be no need for any alterations in the short term. There are no heritage constraints and the building could sustain further alterations.

ii) For wider community use, in addition to local Meeting use: The meeting house is already in use by local community groups and has all the required facilities to support these.

iii) Being laid down as a Meeting: In the event of closure, the building could be used for a secular use, e.g. as a community centre. Subject to planning permission, the site could be redeveloped.

Part 5: Category: 4