

Friends Meeting House, Gildersome

75 Street Lane, Gildersome, LS27 7HX

National Grid Reference: SE 24332 29076



Statement of Significance

The meeting house has high significance as a good example of a meeting house dating from the mid eighteenth century. It has an attractive setting with a coach house and stables fronting the street and a burial ground to the rear. The historic interior preserves its historic character and appearance with the retention of original fittings and features.

Evidential value

The meeting house has high evidential value for its fabric which includes an interesting collection of joinery fittings from the eighteenth century. During the nineteenth century gravestones were discovered and there is potential for further gravestones, the burial ground has high archaeological potential.

Historical value

This has been a site of Quaker worship since 1756. It retains much of its historic layout and a number of original or early features, including in the meeting room; the Elders' stand, dado panelling, panelled shutters and in the school room wrought iron hooks for the panelled shutters, tables and benches with ink wells. The simple headstones of the burial ground remain and two seventeenth century gravestones are located in the school room. The meeting house and burial ground have high historical value.

Aesthetic value

The main frontage of the coach house and stables to the street provides an attractive entrance into the site via a stone arch. The meeting house has a plain and simple exterior whilst internally retaining much of its historic fittings including panelled shutters and dado panelling. Twentieth century additions to the cottage detract slightly from the character of the group of buildings. Overall, it has high aesthetic value.

Communal value

The meeting house was built for and remains in primarily Quaker use. It makes a positive contribution to the local street scene and is opened each year as part of Heritage Open Days, and as such is appreciated by local people who may not be users of the building. The building and burial ground embody Quaker values of simplicity. The meeting house has medium communal value.

Part 1: Core data

- 1.1 Area Meeting: *Leeds*
- 1.2 Property Registration Number: 0032810
- 1.3 Owner: *Area Meeting*
- 1.4 Local Planning Authority: *Leeds City Council*
- 1.5 Historic England locality: *Yorkshire*
- 1.6 1.6 Civil parish: *Gildersome*
- 1.7 Listed status: *II*
- 1.8 NHLE: *1250653*
- 1.9 Conservation Area: *No*
- 1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*
- 1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*
- 1.12 Date(s): *1756*
- 1.13 Architect (s): *Not established*

1.14 Date of visit: *15 March 2016*

1.15 Name of report author: *Emma Neil*

1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Gordon Appleyard*

1.17 Associated buildings and sites:

Cottage (1810)

Stable and coach house (1849)

1.18 Attached burial ground: *Yes*

1.19 Information sources:

David M. Butler, *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain* (London: Friends Historical Society, 1999), vol. II, pp. 798-799.

Peter Leach and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Yorkshire West Riding* ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp.277.

Helen E. Roberts, *Researching Yorkshire Quaker History: A Guide to Sources*, University of Hull, 2003, pp. 41-42.

Ancient Gravestone in Gildersome Burial Ground, *The Friend* (vol 6), 1848

University of Leeds, Brotherton Library, Special Collections, Carlton Hill Collection, Gildersome Burial Ground MS/DEP/1979/1/PLA/20

Peter Rice, *Local Meeting Survey*, January 2016.

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

2.1. Historical background

During the seventeenth century Friends from Gildersome travelled to attend worship at the Leeds Meeting. By 1705, a Meeting was being held twice a month in the area presumably in local Friends homes. Land was purchased in 1709 for a meeting house which was built in the same year. In 1756 land was acquired from John Reyner for £35 on a site opposite Street Lane; a new meeting house with burial ground was built here and the former meeting house was sold. The site of the meeting house expanded; a cottage was constructed to the west of the meeting house in 1820, and a gatehouse, coach house and stables which front Street Lane were built in 1849.

2.3. Loose furnishings

There are two sets of different open-backed bench designs, those with armrest supports and those without. In the school room is a central table containing inkwells, an unusual feature.



Figure 2: Two styles of open-backed benches



Figure 3: Table with inkwells.

2.4. Attached burial ground (if any)

The burial ground is still in use for burials and is located to the east of the meeting house. It is enclosed by a stone wall and is well planted with mature trees and planting. The burial ground has a uniform character with a central row of small round headed headstones with basic information inscribed according to Quaker tradition and further headstones to the entrance of the burial ground. Burial records are located in Brotherton Library Special Collections at the University of Leeds. Located in the school room are two gravestones dating from 1662 and 1667. These were uncovered in 1848 when work was being carried out to remove the foundations of an old fence wall near the meeting house.

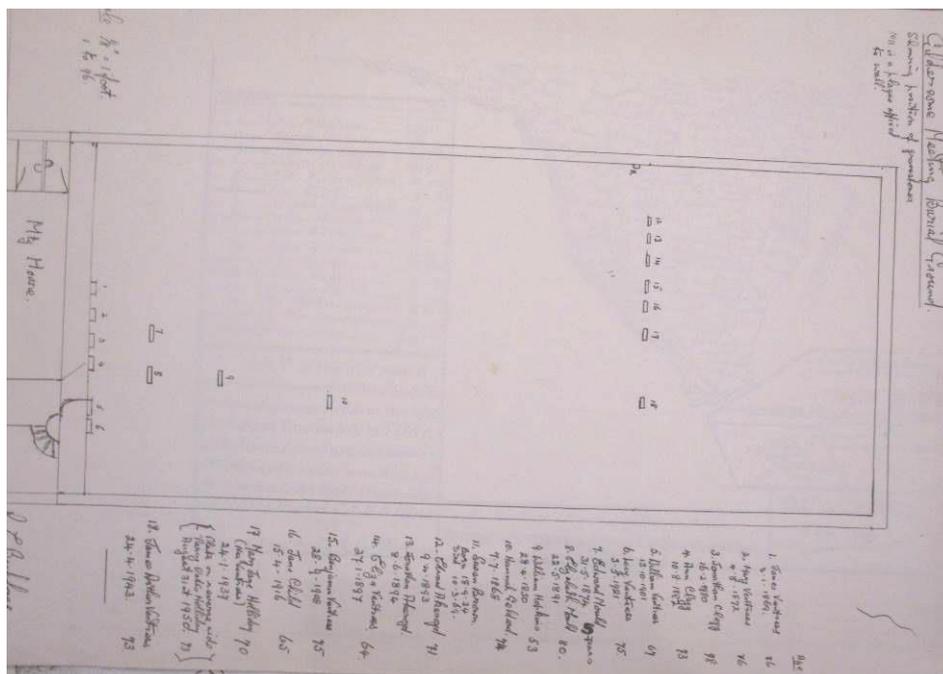


Figure 4: Gildersome Burial Ground, nd. North is to the right.
(Brotherton Library, Special Collections, MS/DEP/1979/1/PLA/20)

2.5. The meeting house in its wider setting

Gildersome is a village which lies five miles southwest of Leeds city centre. The meeting house is set back from Street Lane and is screened from the road by the coach house and stables built in coursed sandstone. Access to the meeting house is via the entrance arch of the coach house. The stables retain a fine set of original timber stalls and sloping hay racks, stone floor and a hit-and-miss ventilator window. Between this range and the meeting house is a one storey cottage which has been altered over the years, with additions to the rear and a conservatory to the south. To the south of the meeting house is a rockery garden which leads to the burial ground to the east.



Figure 5: Stables

The meeting house falls in an area which is predominantly residential with nineteenth century stone short terraces to the south, and on the opposite side of Street Lane is a row of maisonettes with commercial premises at ground floor and areas of 1930s residential development. A detached burial ground is located in Morley, Bruntcliffe Lane.

2.6 Listed status

The meeting house is correctly listed at Grade II. The list description should be revised to acknowledge that the two seventeenth century gravestones have now been relocated into the school room. As a result of the other buildings on the site pre-dating 1948 they are listed under the curtilage rule. However, the stable and coach house may be suitable candidates for listing in their own right. The stables represent a rare example of a Quaker stable with good quality original stalls still in-situ.

2.7. Archaeological potential of the site

No former buildings were present on site prior to the present meeting house being built. Overall, the archaeological potential of the site, including the burial ground, is considered to be medium.

Part 3: Current use and management

See completed volunteer survey

3.1 Condition

- i) Meeting House: Good
- ii) Attached burial ground (if any): Optimal/generally satisfactory

3.2 Maintenance

The last quinquennial inspection took place in June 2013 (Peter Rice, architect RIBA). It found the building to be generally in good condition. Of the recommendations listed in the report, basic maintenance to the cottage and installation of loft insulation has taken place. The Local Meeting has enough money for repairs and maintenance along with access to the Leeds Area Building Futures Fund. There is no five-year maintenance and repair plan however Friends are beginning to implement the recommendations as noted in the quinquennial inspection. The quinquennial report details the work that has been undertaken since 2000, and each year the Meeting have been repairing different aspects of the buildings on site including; repairs to meeting house windows, repairs to external walls of stables in 2007 and repairs to the coach house following storm damage to the roof in 2012.

3.3 Sustainability

The meeting does not use the Sustainability Toolkit, but it has implemented measures to reduce its environmental impact. These include:

- Climate change and energy efficiency: installation of loft insulation.
- Building maintenance and refurbishment: beginning to undertake work included in the quinquennial inspection.
- Wildlife, ecology and nature conservation: the grounds are well planted with trees and shrubs which provide wildlife habitats.

3.4 Amenities

The meeting has all the amenities it needs. Kitchen facilities are located in the school room whilst the toilets (including one fully accessible) are accessed externally in a lean-to to the north of the meeting house. There is a resident warden, whose cottage is located west of the meeting house. The meeting house is served by local bus services. There is no parking on site but parking is available along the nearby roads. Secure parking for bicycles is available in the garage.

3.5 Access

There is one small step to the front entrance. Inside, there is level access within the main meeting room and an internal step into the school room. There are no specific facilities for the partially-sighted and no hearing loop installed. There is level access to the toilets (including one fully accessible). A Disability Access Audit has not been conducted.

3.6 Community Use

Friends use the meeting house for 2 hours per week. The building along with the small meeting room above the entrance arch in the stables are theoretically available for community lettings for 80 hours each week. Whilst there is great potential for the building to be let there is currently little demand or use. There is no lettings policy. The buildings are opened to the public each year in September as part of Heritage Open Days.

3.7 Vulnerability to crime

The meeting house has been subject heritage crime in the past; stone slates from the roof have been stolen on two occasions in 2001 and following the theft in 2002 the roof was covered in a like-for-like stone. There have been no incidents of anti-social behaviour at the site. All crimes have been reported to the police. The locality is generally well-cared for, has low crime levels, low deprivation and high community confidence. Friends have developed a liaison with the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team.

3.8 Plans for change

There are no future plans for change.

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 local Meeting considers that it has all the facilities it needs. Any changes to the meeting house itself should be restricted to minor adaptations as further losses of historic features would damage the character of the interior.

ii) For wider community use, in addition to local Meeting use: The building has the facilities it needs to accommodate wider uses. However, there is no demand for local community use at the moment.

iii) Being laid down as a Meeting House: It would be regrettable if the building could not continue in use by Friends. Should the meeting be laid down, a new and sympathetic use would need to be found which would allow for the retention of the joinery fittings in-situ. In addition, the coach house and stables should be retained including the original stalls.

Part 5: Category: 2

Part 6: List Description

Name: **GILDERSOME FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE**

List entry Number: 1250653

Location

GILDERSOME FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, STREET LANE

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

County:

District: Leeds

District Type: Metropolitan Authority

Parish: Gildersome

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 30-Apr-1982

List entry Description

SE22NW LS27 STREET LANE SE2429 MORLEY (east side) 1/44 Gildersome 30.4.82
Friends' Meeting House

- II

Friends' Meeting House. c1756. Ashlar, stone slate roof. Single storey. 4 bays of sash windows with lintels and projecting sills. Set either side of the 1st window doorways with tie-stone jambs. Shaped gutter brackets. Stack to left gable.

Attached to front are two C17 gravestones from earlier graveyard and meeting house on a different site. They are inscribed:

" HEAR . LYETH . THE and " HERE . LYETH . THE . BODY . OF . THOMAS . BODY . OF . ANTHONY . JEFFERSON . WHICH . GASSON . WHO . DYE DEPARTED . THIS . D . THE 29 OF FEBRUARY LIFE . THE . 27 . OF . 1669 . OF AGE . 79 " THE , 12 . MONTH . CALLED ADAR 1662 "

Interior: retains Elders' Gallery with raised-and-fielded panels and same to division wall to schoolroom at rear.

Listing NGR: SE2433229076