

## ***Friends Meeting House, Golders Green***

*17 North Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London, NW11 7AD*

*National Grid Reference: TQ 25503 88563*



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

***The meeting house was built in 1913 to the designs of the Quaker architect Fred Rowntree. The building is an attractive product of the Edwardian Age and is based loosely on the 1688 meeting house at Jordans in Buckinghamshire. The building has been relatively little altered and is of high heritage significance.***

### ***Evidential value***

***The building has suffered remarkably few alterations since it was built and offers little in the way of archaeological evidence of past change, so it is of medium evidential value.***

### ***Historical value***

***The meeting house was built in 1913, and belongs to the early twentieth-century development of Hampstead Garden Suburb. For this and as a design by Fred Rowntree the meeting house is of high historical value.***

### **Aesthetic value**

***The meeting house is an attractive simple arts neo-vernacular building of 1913 designed by Fred Rowntree for the Hampstead Garden Suburb community, which has retained much of its original character and is of high aesthetic value.***

### **Communal value**

***The meeting house is fairly well-used by local groups and is of high communal value.***

## **Part 1: Core data**

1.1 Area Meeting: *North West London*

1.2 Property Registration Number: *0006420*

1.3 Owner: *Six Weeks Meeting*

1.4 Local Planning Authority: *London Borough of Barnet*

1.5 Historic England locality: *London*

1.6 Civil parish: *Hampstead NPA*

1.7 Listed status: *II*

1.8 NHLE: *1359059*

1.9 Conservation Area: *Hampstead Garden Suburb*

1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*

1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*

1.12 Date(s): *1913*

1.13 Architect (s): *Fred Rowntree*

1.14 Date of visit: *18 August 2015*

1.15 Name of report author: *Neil Burton*

1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Alison Tyabji*

1.17 Associated buildings and sites: *Members of the Golders Green meeting have a right to burial at Jordans*

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. 1, p. 395

Slack, Kathleen M, *Chronicle of Hampstead Garden Suburb* (1982)

Local meeting survey by Alison Tyabji 2015

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

### 2.1. Historical background

The meeting was settled in 1910 and the meeting house was built in 1913. Apparently the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trustees expected to see a more conspicuous building, like Edwin Lutyens's Anglican church with its prominent spire and his domed Congregational chapel. Instead, Fred Rowntree produced a small and simple building which was clearly inspired by the meeting house at Jordans in Buckinghamshire. In 1955 a small addition was made to the rear of the building for a classroom. The meeting house was originally reached from North Square by a narrow pathway but in 1972 some additional land in front of the meeting house was acquired, which is now laid out as a garden.

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

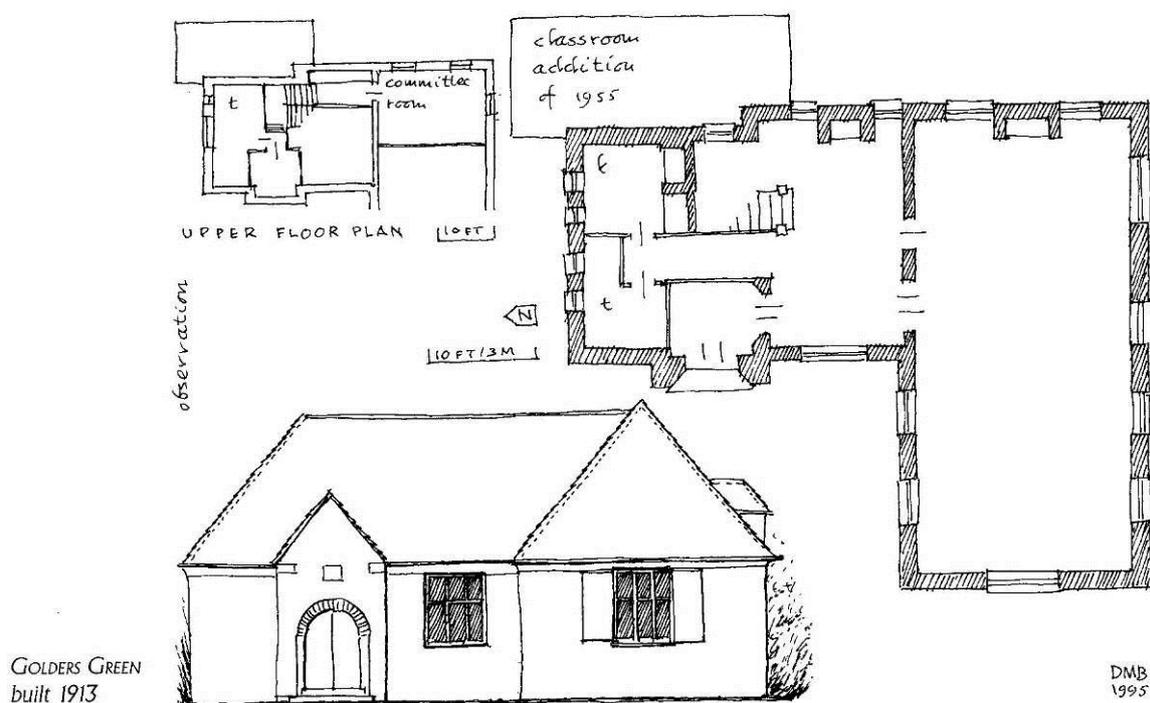


Fig.1 The ground plan and perspective view of the original building from *Butler* vol 1 p. 395

The meeting house is in a simple vernacular style and Rowntree's design was clearly inspired by the 1688 meeting house at Jordans in Buckinghamshire (*qv*). The building is L-shaped on plan with the meeting room in one arm and the entrance and ancillary spaces in the other. The walls are faced with red brick laid in English bond and the tall pitched hipped roofs are covered in tiles and have coved plaster eaves. On the main front is a projecting gabled brick porch with a round headed doorway and a datestone above inscribed 'Anno Domini 1913'. To the right of the porch is a rectangular three-light window with timber mullions and transoms. To the right again is the meeting room range which has a similar three-light window in its end wall, with the addition of timber shutters. The side walls of the meeting room have two-light mullion and transom windows. On the rear elevation the service range is of two storeys, with dormer windows in the roof. Inside the building, the service range has seen some alteration, but the original stair and other fittings survive. The main meeting room has a panelled timber dado and a deep coved plaster ceiling. Towards the rear (east) end of the meeting room is a cross-beam which may mark the position of an original screen.

The space beyond the cross beam has a fireplace and a low ceiling to accommodate a committee room on the floor above.

### 2.3 Loose furnishings

There are some old chairs which may be part of the original 1913 furnishings.

### 2.4. Attached burial ground (if any)

None.

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

The meeting house is a low retiring building off one corner of the central square of Hampstead Garden Suburb, which is dominated by Lutyens's Anglican church in the centre with its prominent spire and his domed Free Church.

### 2.6. Listed status

The building is properly listed at Grade II.

### 2.7. Archaeological potential of the site

The meeting house was built on a greenfield site with low archaeological potential.

## **Part 3: Current use and management**

*See completed volunteer survey*

### 3.1. Condition

i) Meeting House: The meeting house is in good condition. The last QI was made in October 2014 (not seen). Significant works identified in the survey, chiefly asbestos removal, have not yet been carried out but quotes have been obtained and authorisation is awaited from Six Weeks Meeting. Most works from the previous (2004) QI have been carried out. Subsidence monitoring is ongoing.

ii) Attached burial ground (if any): N/A

### 3.2. Maintenance

The local meeting works within the Six Weeks Meeting budget. Once the current priority work has been approved the meeting will be able to draft the next 5-year plan.

### 3.3. Sustainability

The meeting has used the Sustainability Toolkit in the past and has implemented measures to reduce environmental impact. Waste is recycled; new carpets and blinds have improved insulation; new and more efficient space and water heaters have been installed. The building does not have an EPC.

Outside the meeting house, the garden, which borders ancient woodland, supports native flower species.

### 3.4. Amenities

The meeting has access to all the amenities it needs in the present building (kitchen, WCs and small meeting rooms). There is no car park but unrestricted street parking is available

at present. Bikes can be placed behind bolted side gates. There is a daily loop bus service connecting with the nearest tube station.

### 3.5. Access

The meeting house is approached down steps from the street (with a newly-installed central handrail). There is also uneven paved ramp access from the street to the approach path and two shallow steps to the meeting house. The ground floor spaces of the building are level but the WC is down steps and is not adapted for disabled people. A Sennheiser infrared wireless hearing system is awaiting update or replacement by a new hearing loop. A Disability Access Audit was completed in 2004. All the recommended changes have been made (subject to the constraints of listed building control).

### 3.6 Community Use

Friends use the building for an average of 4-5 hours per week. The building is theoretically available for lettings for 90 hours per week (3 rooms x 30 hours per week) but it is impractical to have all the rooms in use at the same time because increased lettings would require more frequent attendance of the lettings manager and the building is let to other users for about 12 hours per week. The meeting house is available for free to LM business meetings and to some LM groups with a spiritual or religious purpose. Users value the meeting house for the quiet contemplative rooms; many users note a 'special atmosphere'.

### 3.7. Vulnerability to crime

The area is generally well cared-for, with low crime levels, low deprivation and high community confidence. There has nevertheless been some crime in the past. Lead was stolen from the rear roof in 2004 and some old chairs were stolen from the building in the 1990s. There has also been anti-social behaviour (rough sleepers, lighting fires in the porch, misuse of the grounds). This has been addressed by a temporary wire gate at the street entrance to the grounds, soon to be replaced by a permanent metal gate. The crimes were reported to the police and Friends have developed a liaison with the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team.

### 3.8. Plans for change

The meeting is awaiting approval for a new iron gate at the entrance to the garden (see 3.7 above). There are currently no other 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:* there has already been some minor change to the interior and more might be done without undue loss of special character.

*ii) For wider community use, in addition to local Meeting use:* the scope for substantial change is quite limited, partly because the building is listed and part of its internal character comes from the small spaces of the original plan.

*iii) Being laid down as a Meeting House:* the building could doubtless serve another, secular, use.

## **Part 5: Category: 2**

## Part 6: List description (s)

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

List entry Number: 1359059

Location

FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, NORTH SQUARE NW11

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

| County                   | District | District Type  | Parish |
|--------------------------|----------|----------------|--------|
| Greater London Authority | Barnet   | London Borough |        |

Grade: II

Date first listed: 18-Mar-1965

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 199019

List entry Description

Summary of Building

Details

1. 5004 NORTH SQUARE

Friends Meeting House TQ 2588 26/89 18.3.65

II

2. Dated circa 1913. Architect Fred Rowntree. Single storey, purple brick, Quasi Dutch C17 style, L shape plan, the projection hipped. Transomed casement windows, the principal one with external wood shutters. Projecting gabled porch with semi-circular arched opening and recessed panel above containing date stone "Anno Domini 1913". Coved plaster eaves.

Listing NGR: TQ2550388563