

Friends Meeting House, Lincoln

1 Park Street, Lincoln, LN1 1UR

National Grid Reference: SK 97375 71331



Statement of Significance

The meeting house was built in 1689, enlarged in 1717 and altered internally in the 1850s but still retains a great deal of its original character. A new meeting house built on the attached burial ground in 1910 now serves as a hall. The complex of buildings is of high heritage significance.

Evidential value

Both the 1689 and the 1910 meeting houses were apparently built on burial grounds. The interior of the older building still contains elements of the original arrangements and overall the buildings are of medium evidential value.

Historical value

A reasonably well-preserved example of a late seventeenth and early eighteenth century town-centre meeting house with substantial early nineteenth century additions, the buildings are of high historical value.

Aesthetic value

The pebble dashed and red brick exterior of the building is attractive and the interior of the original meeting room still preserves something of its original character. The building is of high aesthetic value.

Communal value

The meeting house has not been in continuous use (no meetings were held between the 1770s and 1890s) but there is long tradition of use by both Quakers and other community groups and the buildings has high communal value.

Part 1: Core data

- 1.1 Area Meeting: *Lincolnshire*
- 1.2 Property Registration Number: *0006060*
- 1.3 Owner: *Area Meeting*
- 1.4 Local Planning Authority: *City of Lincoln Council*
- 1.5 Historic England locality: *East Midlands*
- 1.6 Civil parish: *Lincoln*
- 1.7 Listed status: *II*
- 1.8 NHLE: *1388732*
- 1.9 Conservation Area: *Cathedral and City Centre*
- 1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*
- 1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*
- 1.12 Date(s): *1689; 1910*
- 1.13 Architect (s): *original builder not established; 1910 additions by F W Lockwood*
- 1.14 Date of visit: *11 February 2016*
- 1.15 Name of report author: *Neil Burton*
- 1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Andrew James*
- 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 pp.367-8
Stell, Christopher, *Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting houses in Eastern England*, English Heritage, 2002, pp.215 -6

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

2.1. Historical background

Land in what is now Park Street appears to have been in Quaker occupation since the 1650s (Stell) and used as a burial ground since 1667. A new meeting house was built on the land in 1689. The main meeting room was at the east end of the building with a smaller room with a gallery over at the west end and the main entrance in the centre of the south front (see fig.1). There was also a dwelling for a caretaker at the rear (north side) of the building. In 1716 the gallery was provided with shutters and altered, 'to make the garret more convenient for a meeting room for women Friends' and in 1717 the main meeting space was enlarged by the addition of a lean-to on the north side of the building with a triple arched opening to the meeting room.

No regular meetings were held in Lincoln between 1775 and 1893 and the meeting house was leased to other users, but the internal arrangements and furnishings appear to have remained unaltered until the mid-nineteenth century. Two drawings now in the meeting house show the main meeting room in 1855 (figs.2 & 3). Immediately afterwards the front of the gallery was closed-up and the space below the western loft or gallery combined with the main meeting room. The original entrance door was closed-up and a new entrance was made further west.

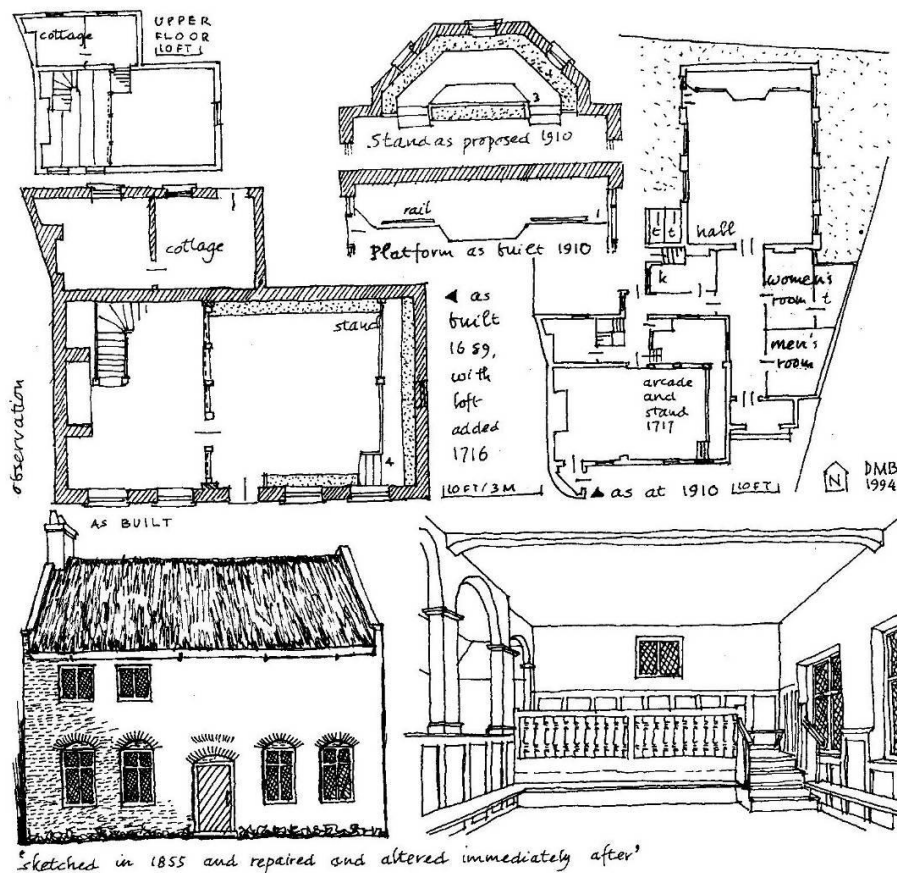
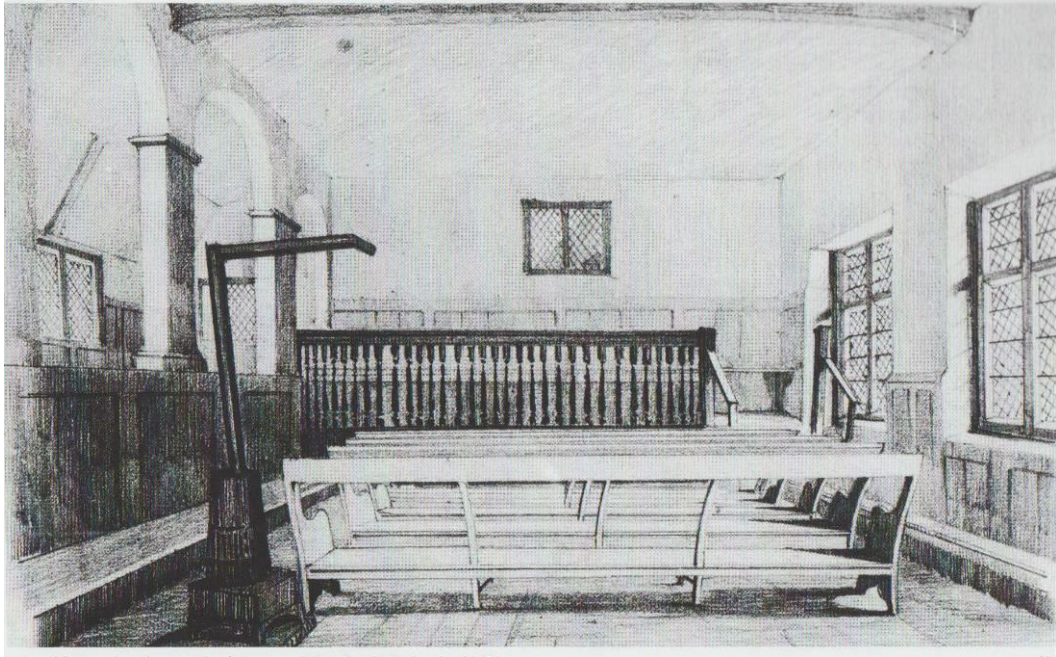
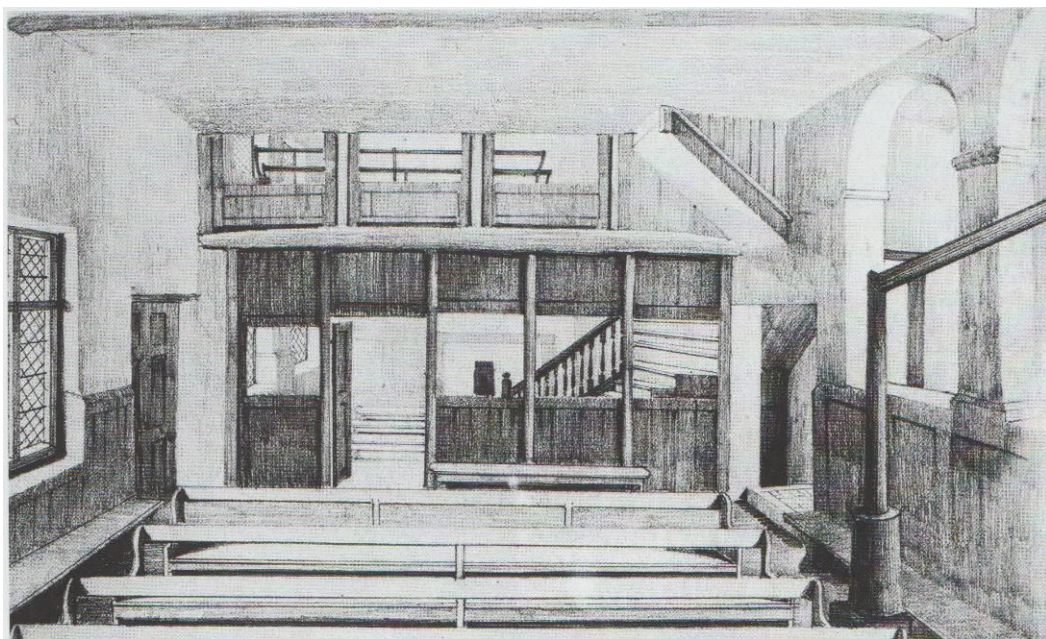


Fig.1 The original plan (top left) and elevation (bottom left), with the plan of the complex as enlarged in 1910 (top right). Butler 1999 vol.1 p.367.

In 1904, following a Typhoid epidemic, all public halls in Lincoln were required to improve their sanitation and a new meeting house was built on the burial ground space between the existing meeting house and St Martin's churchyard to the north. The new building opened in 1910 and could seat nearly 150 people. The architect was Frederick William Lockwood (1840-1917), an English Quaker, who practiced in Belfast but retired to Yorkshire c1900. The old building was not demolished and from the 1960s it became once again the main meeting house. The 1910 building was later refurbished to provide additional rooms.



Figs 2 & 3, views of the east and west ends of the meeting room in 1855, immediately before the alterations to the west end (from original drawings in the meeting house)



2.2. The building and its principal fittings and fixtures

The original building is rectangular on plan with walls of brick covered in pebbledash and a pitched roof now covered with pantiles. The old building has lean-to additions on the north side beyond them to the north is the new meeting house of 1910. The main (south) front of the old building has three rectangular sashes on ground floor with a door at west end and two small first floor windows at the eastern end. There are further small windows in the end gables. At the rear of the building is a catslide roof covering lean-to additions with twin dormer windows on the west side lighting what is now a residential flat. Attached to eastern end of the old building is red brick gateway with inscription FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE 1910 which is now the main entrance to the whole complex. The 1910 building to the north is built of red brick laid in English Garden Wall bond with timber triple windows on both sides.

The main meeting room now occupies the whole of the ground floor of the original building. The floor-covering is modern woodblock. The walls are plain-plastered with a panelled painted timber dado; if there were once perimeter benches as shown by David Butler in his plan of the building, they have been removed. The plain plaster ceiling has three chamfered cross-beams. The ceiling is lower at the west end to accommodate the former loft above, now part of a residential flat. Against the lower section is the base of a stair, which is shown on the 1855 drawing

At the east end of the meeting room is a dais or minister's stand, much renewed, with a heavy timber balustrade of late seventeenth or early eighteenth century date. The stand links to a small gallery space on the north side which opens into the upper part of the main meeting room by a triple arcade; the piers and arches which date from 1717 are crudely formed, presumably of brick, plastered. This north eastern space now links to the corridor leading from the main entrance to the 1910 building. The original internal arrangements of these later parts shown on David Butler's plan (fig.1) have been altered, but the 1910 meeting room remains a single space and the Edwardian character of the later building remains essentially unchanged.

2.3. Loose furnishings

There are a few timber benches which may be Victorian, but they do not correspond to the benches shown on the 1855 drawings.

2.4. Attached burial ground (if any)

None. According to David Butler, the 1910 meeting room was built on the burial ground space.

2.5. The meeting house in its wider setting.

The meeting house complex stands in a quiet part of the lower town on the southern half of an island site. The northern half of the island is the former churchyard of the Anglican church of St Martin with Victorian gravestones and mature trees. Park Street on the west side of the island has a mixture of modest two storey early-nineteenth century houses modern student residences and council offices; Beaumont Fee on the east side, which is one of the main artery roads through the one-way system, has several red brick Victorian institutional buildings connected with St Martins parish.

2.6. Listed status

The building is properly listed at Grade II.

2.7. Archaeological potential of the site

The site has high archaeological potential.

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 meeting has abandoned Quinquennial Inspections in favour of annual inspections by the Area Meeting property adviser who is a qualified architect. The interior of the whole building was refurbished in 2015, with listed building consent. The cost of the works (£55,000) was funded by the Area and Local Meetings. Income from lettings is sufficient to cover routine maintenance.

3.3. Sustainability

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

- unit gas heaters have been replaced by a central; heating system, reducing costs by 33%
- All accessible roof spaces have been insulated and most windows have been given secondary glazing.

Neither the meeting house nor the first floor flat have an EPC and the meeting would not consider obtaining one.

3.4. Amenities

The meeting has all the amenities it needs in the meeting house - including meeting rooms of different sizes, a well-equipped kitchen, toilets an archive room and various ancillary storage spaces. There is no warden, but a Resident Friend lives on site.

The meeting house is in central Lincoln, a short walk from the railway station and buses. There is on-site parking for 6 cars but no secure parking for bicycles. There is a public car park 100metres away.

3.5. Access

There is a ramp to the main entrance and level access throughout the building. There is an accessible WC and a hearing loop, but no specific facilities for partially-sighted people. A Disability Access Audit has not been carried out

3.6. Community Use

Friends use the building for 6 hours per week. The three meeting rooms in the building are available for community lettings for a maximum number of 120 hours per week and is used for approximately 40 hours per week. Lettings are regulated by the Premises Committee. Users value the central location, comfortable surroundings, resident Friends support and modest charges.

3.7. Vulnerability to crime

There has been some occasional anti-social behaviour at the site (a broken window) and there is some anti-social noise from students and from the homeless centre opposite the meeting house. There has also been some heritage crime. A small amount of lead was stolen about 5 years ago. The Police were informed of the broken window but otherwise have not been involved. The area is generally well cared-for and has high community confidence, but Lincoln suffers from some deprivation and the meeting house suffers the usual town-centre problems.

3.8. Plans for change

There are no plans for change. It is considered that the 2015 improvements meet the current needs of the Meeting.

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 interior has seen several changes. There is probably some scope for further internal change, subject to listed building constraints.

ii) For wider community use, in addition to local Meeting use: as above, there may be scope for minor alterations, subject to listed building constraints.

iii) Being laid down as a Meeting House: the building has a good central location and could probably find another use if the meeting were laid down.

Part 5: Category: 2

Part 6: List description

Name: **FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE**

List entry Number: 1388732

Location

FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, PARK STREET

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

CountyDistrict District Type Parish

Lincolnshire Lincoln District Authority

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 02-Oct-1969

List entry Description

LINCOLN

SK9771SW PARK STREET 1941-1/11/304 (North side) 02/10/69 Friends' Meeting House
(Formerly Listed as: PARK STREET (North side) No.1 (Friends' Meeting House)

II

Friends' Meeting House. 1689, altered C18, with additions to north and east, 1910. Roughcast and brick, with pantile roofs and rear wall stack. Plinth, renewed brick coped gables. 2 storeys plus garrets, 3 bays. Catslide roofed outshut at rear. South front has to left an angled porch with curved coped wall and half-glazed door, C19. To right, 3 glazing bar sashes, that to left being larger. Above, to left, two 2-light casements. To right again, a set back gabled entrance to 1910 addition. INTERIOR: meeting room has panelled dado, and at the east end a dais with C17 turned balustrade. North side has a C18 round headed arcade, 3 bays. 3 chamfered beams. West end has an altered dogleg stair with winder, square newels, and turned balusters matching those of the dais. Upper flight has square Classical style balusters. Principal rafter roof with single collar. (Buildings of England : Lincolnshire: Pevsner N: Lincolnshire: London: 1989-: 502).

Listing NGR: SK9737471330

Selected Sources

Books and journals

Pevsner, N, Harris, J, Antram, N, The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire, (1989), 502

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