

Friends Meeting House, New Earswick

White Rose Avenue, New Earswick, York, YO32 4AD

National Grid Reference: SE 60736 55145



Statement of Significance

The meeting house is a good example of a late-twentieth century domestic revival design, with a sympathetically designed extension, built 2002. The building is located at the heart of New Earswick, a model village built by Quaker Joseph Rowntree and designed by Parker and Unwin in the early 1900s.

Evidential value

This is a purpose-built structure of 1988, and the site is of low evidential value

Historical value

The meeting house is located within Joseph Rowntree's model village at New Earswick, laid out from 1901 and designed by Parker and Unwin. The building has medium historic significance as part of the overall development of Quakerism in New Earswick and has strong associations with the Rowntree family.

Aesthetic value

This modern building has medium aesthetic value and makes a neutral contribution to the character of the townscape.

Communal value

The meeting house has high communal value as a building developed for the Quakers which has been in use since it opened in 1988. The building provides a local community focus and its facilities are used by local groups.

Part 1: Core data

- 1.1 Area Meeting: *York*
- 1.2 Property Registration Number: *0000270*
- 1.3 Owner: *Area Meeting*
- 1.4 Local Planning Authority: *City of York Council*

1.5 Historic England locality: *Yorkshire and the Humber*

1.6 Civil parish: *New Earswick*

1.7 Listed status: *Not listed*

1.8 NHLE: *Not applicable*

1.9 Conservation Area: *New Earswick*

1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*

1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*

1.12 Date(s): *1988; 2002*

1.13 Architect (s): *Richard Fraser; Bramhall Blenkharn*

1.14 Date of visit: *25 April 2016*

1.15 Name of report author: *Emma Neil*

1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Stephen Parry*

1.17 Associated buildings and sites: *Not applicable*

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. II, pp. 718-719.

Helen E. Roberts, *Researching Yorkshire Quaker History: A Guide to Sources*, University of Hull, 2003, pp. 57.

Judith Hoyle and George Dow, Local Meeting Survey, January 2016.

University of Leeds, Brotherton Library, Special Collections, Carlton Hill Collection, York Monthly Meeting Estates Book, 1964 (MS/DEP/1981/2/YORK/1/40/1).

City of York Council, New Earswick Conservation Area Appraisal, 2001
<https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/3496/ca2onewearswickpdf>

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

2.1. Historical background

Joseph Rowntree, a Quaker chocolate manufacturer, purchased a site off Haxby Road in 1890 for his new factory, the Cocoa Works. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Joseph wanted to create a model village similar to that created by Cadbury in Bournville, Birmingham. In 1901, he purchased 150 acres at New Earswick near to his factory in Haxby Road; the architect Raymond Unwin designed the first phase of the model village 1902-1906. The architect Barry Parker was involved in the second phase of development during the inter-war years. The buildings in the New Earswick model village were very much influenced by the Arts and Crafts style with a mixture of small terraces and detached housing with gardens, laid out along tree-lined cul-de-sacs. In order to create a community village, public

buildings were built including the Folk Hall (1907) by Unwin which resembled the Mrs Howard Memorial Hall in Letchworth Garden City.



Figure 1: Folk Hall, New Earswick, used for Friends' meetings 1917-1988

From 1917, Friends rented a room in the Folk Hall for worship. Also in 1917, the New Earswick Friends First Day School was established which held weekend lectures and was active until 1969. It was not until 1988 that a new purpose-built meeting house was constructed to the west of the Folk Hall on the Village Green. The new meeting house was funded partly by the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Housing Trust and was designed by Richard Fraser FRIBA at a cost of £65,000. The meeting house was designed to include a small lobby area, cloakroom, library, kitchen, toilets, the main meeting room and a class and committee room.



Figure 2: New Earswick Friends Meeting House, 2001 (New Earswick MH Archive).

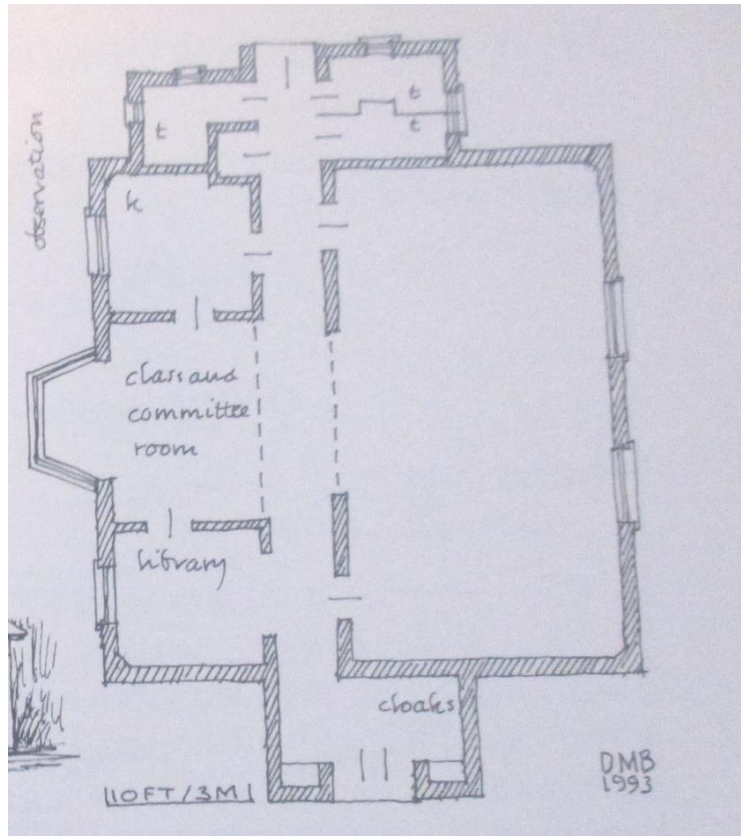


Figure 3: Ground floor plan of the meeting house prior to extension, as reconstructed by Butler (north is to the right: not to scale) (Butler (1999), vol. II, p.719)

By the beginning of the twenty-first century the membership of the meeting was steadily rising, following the opening of Hartrigg Oaks by the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust, so there was a need to extend the premises. Bramhall Blenkham architects designed several options, before the final scheme was chosen; the new extension, built in 2002, is to the south of the existing meeting house with a large meeting room and a new entrance to the meeting house.



Figure 4: Proposed Model for New Earswick Extension, Bramhall Blenkham Architects

2.2. The building and its principal fittings and fixtures

The meeting house was built from designs by Richard Fraser FRIBA and opened in 1988, and extended to the south in 2002 by Bramhall Blenkarn architects. The building consists of two elements, the ancillary accommodation (kitchen, WCs and the single room to the north has multiple uses as a library, small meeting room and class room) with the rectangular main meeting room adjoining the south elevation of the ancillary accommodation. The one-storey meeting house is built with red brick laid in stretcher bond and has a series of hipped roofs covered in pantiles. The ancillary accommodation is located in the original meeting house of 1988 and the east elevation forms the principal entrance into the meeting house, which was altered in 2002 to create a projecting hipped roof extension with double glazed doors flanked by floor to eaves single glazed windows; the north elevation has two gabled dormers, with tall 20-paned sliding sash windows and segmental headers. The west elevation consists of two slightly projecting gables which overlap each other with bricks laid diagonally below the eaves. The rear entrance is within the northern gable. The new meeting room of 2002 adjoins the south elevation, the roughly rectangular space has a hipped roof, two gabled dormers with 20-paned sliding sash windows and a timber planked doorway in between, to the east and west elevations. The southern elevation has eight clerestory windows.

The meeting rooms, kitchen, toilets and store rooms are accessed via a pleasant light and spacious lobby area. The lobby area is carpeted, and lit by roof lights. On the south wall is a recess which once formed an exterior window, infilled as part of the 2002 extension. Access to the meeting room is from the south via hardwood veneer doors, the room has a central suspended ceiling with sloping slides, and plastered and painted walls to the south. The room is well lit by windows from the south and west. The original meeting room of 1988 is now in use as a smaller meeting room / children's room and can be subdivided by a central sliding partition.

2.3. Loose furnishings

No furnishings of particular note.

2.4. Attached burial ground (if any)

Not applicable.

2.5. The meeting house in its wider setting

New Earswick is located approximately 2 miles south of York. The area was designated a conservation area in 1991, and forms part of the model village Joseph Rowntree created in the early twentieth century, designed by Parker and Unwin. The residential dwellings comprise short terraces and are built using local bricks and French tiles for roofing. Each property has front and rear gardens and are well planted, adding to the leafy suburban environment.

The meeting house is located in White Rose Avenue on a section of the village green. The meeting house fronts a large car parking area which is surrounded by twentieth century buildings including a GP to the west, a swimming pool to the north and to the east is the Grade II listed Folk Hall built in 1905-8 by Parker. The immediate boundary of the meeting house is defined by low hedges and small areas of garden surround the building.

2.6. Listed status

Not listed and not considered to be a candidate for listing.

2.7. Archaeological potential of the site

The archaeological potential of the site is low. The area prior to the meeting house being built was former agricultural land.

Part 3: Current use and management

See completed volunteer survey

3.1. Condition

- i) Meeting House: Good.
- ii) Attached burial ground (if any): Not applicable.

3.2. Maintenance

The last quinquennial inspection took place in January 2012. Of the recommendations, all works, which related to general maintenance only, have been carried out. The meeting has sufficient funds to maintain and repair the meeting house. There is a fifty year plan for the building.

3.3. Sustainability

The meeting does not use the Sustainability Toolkit, but did undertake an Environmental Audit in 2011 and 2013; the report recommended installing an air source heat pump and solar panels which have been considered and rejected as not suitable. The meeting has implemented the following measures to reduce its environmental impact. These include:

- Climate change and energy efficiency: Double glazing and energy efficient lighting.
- Resource use, recycling and waste management: the meeting house uses the local authority recycling scheme.
- Wildlife, ecology and nature conservation: the grounds are planted with trees and shrubs which provide wildlife habitats.
- Transport: Friends are encouraged to walk or cycle.

3.4. Amenities

The meeting has all the amenities it needs. These are all in the meeting house and include a kitchen, three toilets (two fully accessible and one with baby changing facilities), library and children's room. There is no resident warden. The meeting is served by a local bus service seven days a week. There is a large area of car parking which is shared with the Folk Hall and the swimming baths. Secure parking for bicycles is available.

3.5. Access

The meeting house is accessible to people with disabilities. There is level access into and throughout the building (with a small step at the rear of the property), two accessible toilets, a hearing loop and facilities for partially-sighted people. A Disability Access Audit was not conducted but the meeting house was designed with access as a priority.

3.6 Community Use

Friends use the meeting house for about 7 hours each week. The meeting house is theoretically available for community lettings for a maximum number of 72 hours per week and is used for an average of 12 hours each week. The meeting does not have a formal

lettings policy. However, the Friends give priority to Quaker groups who use the premises for free. The meeting has a Lettings Officer who manages lettings from commercial, registered charities and local groups. The meeting will refuse hirers wishing to serve alcohol and any activities connected with gambling; it is down to the discretion of the Lettings Officer regarding whether groups are included or excluded and determines activities as being acceptable. Users value the building for its cleanliness, the well-lit, accessible venue with good facilities, free parking and competitive rates.

3.7. Vulnerability to crime

There are no signs of general crime or anti-social behaviour at the site. There have been no incidents of heritage crime in recent years, however, the meeting house has been subject to the theft of lead in the past. The locality is generally well-cared for, has low crime levels, low deprivation and high community confidence. The meeting has does not have formal links with the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team.

3.8. Plans for change

The meeting are considering the installation of double doors between the circulation area and the library/children's room.

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 house currently has all the required facilities, and as a result of increasing members the meeting house was extended in 2002. New work would need to take account of the conservation area.

ii) For wider community use, in addition to local Meeting use: The meeting house has all the amenities required by its community users. New work would need to take account of the conservation area.

iii) Being laid down as a Meeting House: In theory the building could be adapted for an alternative use, such as for community use. There may be constraints on external alteration, redevelopment or changes to the grounds, as the site is within a conservation area.

Part 5: Category: 4