

Friends Meeting House, Sawley

Sawley Road, Sawley, Clitheroe, BB7 4RS

National Grid Reference: SD 77268 46688



Statement of Significance

The building is of high heritage significance as a purpose-built 18th century meeting house which retains early fittings in their original configuration. The building has an attractive rural setting in front of a burial ground. Later alterations have been undertaken with sensitivity so that the character of the building has been preserved.

Evidential value

The building is constructed using traditional Pennine materials and techniques. The fabric of the building and the burial ground have potential for yielding further evidence about the history of the building and the community which built it. The building and site have high evidential value.

Historical value

The meeting house is historically associated with a local network of Friends, in particular members of the Ecroyd family, who set up meetings in the area during the eighteenth century, and were probably involved in designs for the building. The survival of the original historic layout and the early fixtures adds to the significance of the building which has high historical value.

Aesthetic value

The attractive Georgian building was built using traditional materials and methods typical of the date and Pennine location. The interior retains original or early furnishing. The burial ground is managed as a garden. As a whole the site has high aesthetic significance.

Communal value

The meeting house is primarily in Quaker use, however it is regularly opened to heritage groups. The building is a key structure in the conservation area and has medium communal value.

Part 1: Core data

1.1 Area Meeting: *Pendle Hill*

1.2 Property Registration Number: *0032730*

1.3 Owner: *Area Meeting*

1.4 Local Planning Authority: *Ribble Valley Borough Council*

1.5 Civil parish: *Grindleton*

1.6 Historic England locality: *North West*

1.7 Listed status: *II*

1.8 NHLE: *1072149*

1.9 Conservation Area: *Sawley*

1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*

1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*

1.12 Date: *1777*

1.13 Architect (s): *The design may have been drawn up by Richard and Henry Ecroyd and Richard Marriott*

1.14 Date of visit: *17 May 2015*

1.15 Name of report author: *Clare Hartwell*

1.16 Name of contact made on site: *Ian McHugh*

1.17 Associated buildings and sites: *Attached cottage*

1.18 Attached burial ground: *Yes*

1.19 Information sources:

Butler, D.M., *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain* (London: Friends Historical Society, 1999), vol. 2, pp. 825-826

Rooksby, D. A., *And Sometime upon the Hills a Guidebook to Places of Quaker Interest in Cumbria, North Lancashire, the Yorkshire Dales and the Pennines* (Donald Rooksby, 1998) p. 1-2

The Conservation Studio, 'Sawley Conservation Area Appraisal', Ribble Valley Borough Council, 2005

<http://sawley.pendlehillquakers.org.uk/>

Dandelion, B.P. Local Meeting Survey, February 2015

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

2.1. Historical background

The meeting seems to have moved from Newby and taken a house in Sawley in 1742. Land for a new meeting house was obtained in 1775, according to some sources as the gift of a local farmer. The plan for the building was drawn up by Richard Ecroyd, Henry Ecroyd and Henry Marriot. The same people seem to have been involved in acquiring land for the Crawshawbooth meeting (q.v.) and a Richard Ecroyd obtained the licence for the meeting at Marsden (q.v.) earlier in the eighteenth century. The building was erected in 1777, incorporating a dwelling. This cottage was extended in 1907-8. A further extension was made to the rear (north side) of the building in order to provide kitchen and WCs in 2002. A detached children's room of lightweight timber construction was added in 2007.



Figure 1. The meeting house and detail of the stand (Butler, 1999, p.826)

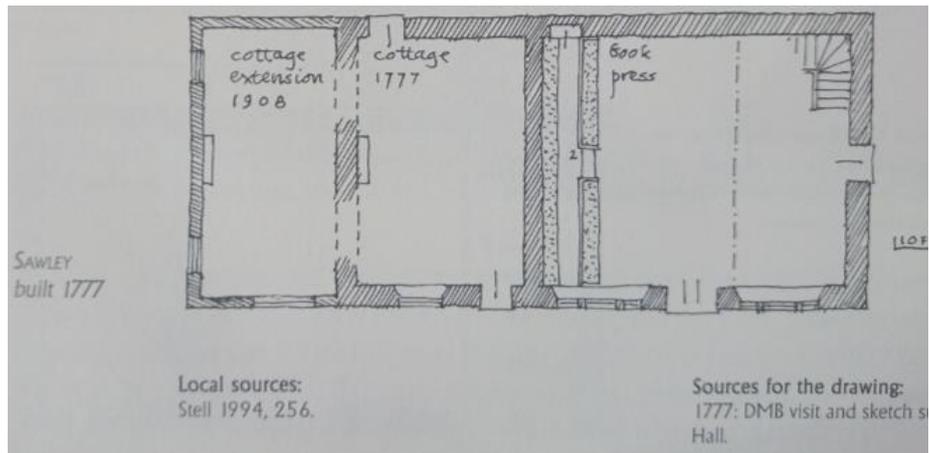


Figure 2. Plan of the meeting house (Butler, 1999, p.826). Not to scale. North is at the top

2.2. The building and its principal fittings and fixtures

The meeting house was built in 1777, extended in 1908-9 and again in 2002. The original design may have been drawn up by local Quakers Richard and Henry Ecroyd and Richard Marriott. The building is constructed of squared watershot limestone with sandstone dressings and quoins, with a stone slate roof. The extensions are finished in pebble-dash. The linear building has the tall single-storey meeting house to the east and the cottage to the west. The meeting house range is a single volume with a gallery on the east side and extended by a rear lean-to range. The cottage attached to the west is of two storeys. The south, front elevation of the meeting house has a central door flanked by a tripartite sashed window with glazing bars, plain stone surround and square mullions. The double doors have raised and fielded panels within a plain stone surround with a semi-circular head with keystone and fanlight with radiating glazing bars. The east gable wall of the meeting house has a door in a plain stone surround and a pair of two-light windows on the first floor with plain stone surrounds and square mullions. There is stone chimneystack at the apex. The extension on the north side of the building has a shaped lean-to roof and white-painted joinery of traditional design.

The cottage has a plain doorway with a flat head and a sash window on each floor in plain stone surrounds. An extension of 1908-9 is attached on the west side, with chamfered quoins of imitation stone. On the first floor is a two-light mullioned window with plain stone surround. On the ground floor is a French window with plain stone surround. The west side has a single ground-floor window and a brick chimney in the gable.

Inside, the meeting room has a stand along the west side of the room with a fixed pine bench with raised and fielded panelling to the back, and a central step flanked by fixed settle-style benches with high panelled backs. There is a book cupboard with a panelled door built into the wall at the north end of the stand. The two original doors have L-shaped hinges. A doorway in the north wall is of twenty-first century date and leads to the extension of 2002 which incorporates a kitchen and WCs. The main room is subdivided by a gallery along the east side which is reached by a timber staircase in the north-east corner of the space. The stair has simple stick balusters, plain handrail and a plain newel. The gallery has a simple stone fireplace in the east wall. It is closed in by a partition with raised and fielded hinged shutters, with L-shaped hinges, so that the spaces can be thrown together.

2.3 Loose furnishings

There are a number of large pine benches of simple design with shaped ends, matching the profiles of the fixed furnishings and probably of the same date. They form a good historic ensemble.



Figure 3. Benches and fixed furnishings

2.4. Attached burial ground

The attached burial ground is maintained as an ornamental garden, but some headstones survive. The burial records are kept by the meeting treasurer, and the date range of interments is from circa 1800-1895. There is a policy for the care and maintenance of the ground.

2.5. The meeting house in its wider setting

Sawley is a largely stone-built village of dispersed type which stands close to the banks of the River Ribble and incorporates the remains of Sawley Abbey. The meeting house is located on the north side of the river to the west of the main part of the settlement. It is set back from the road and reached by a short cul-de-sac serving a small group of buildings. It is within the Sawley Conservation Area which was designated in 1971. The Conservation Area Appraisal of 2005 identifies the building as one of key importance in the area.

A painted cast-iron sign is mounted on a wall at the corner pointing to the meeting house. This sign is one of the features which adds character to the conservation area.



Figure 4. Signage on the approach to the meeting house

2.6. Listed status

The meeting house is listed grade II. Although it has been extended, the core building is largely of late eighteenth century character with a complete plan-form and ensemble of interior fittings and furnishings. The building could therefore be considered for upgrading to grade II*.

2.7 Archaeological potential

The Historic Environment Record does not identify any other remains or finds associated with the site, which is outside the area of the scheduled monument associated with Sawley Abbey, however further research may be required to establish if any ancillary abbey remains could be associated with the subsurface archaeology. The site therefore has high archaeological potential.

Part 3: Current use and management

3.1. Condition

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

3.2. Maintenance

A five-year maintenance and repair plan has been drawn up, and a QI was undertaken approximately five years ago, though a copy was not available at the time of the survey.

3.3. Sustainability

The Sustainability Toolkit has been used and the meeting has implemented the following measures:

- Climate change & energy efficiency: Curtain across meeting house, new roof insulation, green electricity supplier
- Resource use, recycling & waste management: All paper recycled

- Wildlife, ecology and nature conservation: Nesting boxes etc. in garden

3.4. Amenities

The meeting has the facilities it needs, with a kitchen and WCs in the extension at the rear of the building.

3.5. Access

The building has a disabled parking space and level access throughout the ground floor as well as a fully accessible WC. There is a hearing loop and bold signage designed to assist those with impaired vision. There is little other parking available and the Sunday bus service stops about one mile away. Car sharing is being promoted by the meeting.

3.6 Community Use

The meeting house does not have a lettings policy and there are no lettings *per se*, however there is strong interest in the building from heritage groups and individuals. The building is regularly opened to visitors.

3.7. Vulnerability to crime

The meeting house is situated in a well-cared for area with low levels of crime and no incidents of heritage crime or anti-social behaviour are recorded.

3.8. Plans for change

Following the recent extension and the new children's room, there are no immediate 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 only: Recent additions and the new children's room seem to have met the needs of the meeting, however minor additional changes could be accommodated within the later extensions.

ii) For wider community use, additional to local meeting use: There would be scope for use by small groups, but the accommodation is limited and there is little parking available.

iii) As a consequence of being laid down as a meeting house and passing into secular use: It would be most regrettable if closure took place. Any new use would need to preserve the exterior appearance, interior fixtures and volumes, and the quiet historic character of the building.

Part 5: Category: 1

Part 6: List description

Name: FRIEND'S MEETING HOUSE AND HOUSE ADJOINING TO SOUTH WEST

List entry Number: 1072149

FRIEND'S MEETING HOUSE AND HOUSE ADJOINING TO SOUTH WEST

County/District	District Type	Parish
Lancashire	Ribble Valley District Authority	Grindleton

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 16-Nov-1954

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

SD 772 466 GRINDLETON

SD 74 NE

7/107 Friends' Meeting House and house adjoining to south-west 16.11.1954 GV II

Quaker meeting house, late C18th. Squared watershot limestone with sandstone dressings and stone slate roof. Meeting house, to the right, of one storey with gallery. House of 2 storeys. Meeting house has a tripartite sashed window with glazing bars, plain stone surround and square mullions on each side of the door. The double door has raised and fielded panels and a plain stone surround with a semi-circular head with keystone, rising above a lintel. The fanlight has radiating glazing bars. The house has a bay to the left of its door having sashed windows with glazing bars and plain stone surrounds. To its left are projecting quoins, matching those at the right of the meeting house. To the left is a C19th extension having chamfered quoins of imitation stone. On the 1st floor is a 2-light window with plain stone surround and square mullion. On the ground floor is a French window with plain stone surround. The left-hand gable has a brick chimney cap. The right-hand gable wall of the meeting house has 2 2-light windows on the 1st floor with plain stone surrounds and square mullions. Below is a door with plain stone surround. Interior. The meeting room has fixed pine benches of raised and fielded panels at its left-hand side. At the right is a wide gallery, formerly used by women and children, having a front of raised and fielded panels, some of which open as shutters.

Listing NGR: SD7726846688