

Friends Meeting House, Wokingham

28 Denton Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 2DX

National Grid Reference: SU 81346 68505



Statement of Significance

This is a house, probably built during the 1930s, which was converted to meeting house use in the 1960s. It has low heritage significance.

Evidential value

It is unlikely that the house could reveal any unique evidence about the past. It has low evidential value.

Historical value

The house is part of the inter-war development of Wokingham. It has low historical value.

Aesthetic value

The meeting house is typical for its period and has been altered over time. It has low aesthetic value.

Communal value

As a Quaker meeting house which is also in community use, it has high communal value.

Part 1: Core data

1.1 Area Meeting: *Mid-Thames*

1.2 Property Registration Number: *0012000*

1.3 Owner: *[Information not received]*

1.4 Local Planning Authority: *Wokingham Borough Council*

1.5 Historic England locality: *South East*

1.6 Civil parish: *Wokingham NPA*

1.7 Listed status: *Not listed*

1.8 NHLE: *N/a*

- 1.9 Conservation Area: *No*
- 1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*
- 1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*
- 1.12 Date(s): *c.1930s*
- 1.13 Architect(s): *Not established*
- 1.14 Date of visit: *22 September 2015*
- 1.15 Name of report author: *Johanna Roethe*
- 1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *John Hayes*
- 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, p. 20

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

2.1 Historical background

The meeting was started in 1951. In 1963, the present building was bought for about £3,500 and converted to use as meeting house and self-contained flat (architect: H. Godwin Arnold). It opened in 1964. (According to map evidence, the house was built between 1933 and 1961, and slightly later than the rest of the street which was built up by 1933.) A detached timber building for the children's classroom was built in the garden at some later point (recently replaced).

2.2 The building and its principal fittings and fixtures

The main elevation faces southeast. The two-storey house of oblong plan is built of brick which is rendered. The hipped roof is tiled. There are chimneystacks on either side. The front elevation has a tiled lean-to canopy on carved brackets above the ground floor. At the centre of the front elevation are the door to the upstairs flat and a leaded window, flanked by the door to the meeting house to the left and a canted bay window at the far right. Above are two three-light windows with tile lintels. To the rear, the main roof comes down lower than to the front. On the ground floor are a modern sliding door and two windows with tile lintels and sills. The first floor has a central gabled dormer beside a smaller flat-roofed dormer. The lobby, kitchen and toilets are to the left (southwest) on the ground floor, while the meeting room is to the northeast. The latter was formerly two separate rooms and has a blocked chimney breast. The upstairs flat was not visited.

2.3 Loose furnishings

None of note

2.4 Attached burial ground (if any)

Not applicable

2.5 The meeting house in its wider setting

The meeting house is located in a largely residential street near the centre of Wokingham. Most of the houses date from the inter-war period.

2.6 Listed status

The building is not listed and is not considered to be a candidate for listing.

2.7 Archaeological potential of the site

Denton Road was laid out in the inter-war years on the site of a saw mill. The site is considered to have medium archaeological potential.

Part 3: Current use and management

[Volunteer survey not received]

3.1 Condition

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

3.2 Maintenance

The most recent quinquennial inspection was undertaken in 2010 by Edge Architecture.

3.3 Sustainability

Information not received

3.4 Amenities

Information not received

3.5 Access

There are steps to the front entrance but there is ramped access to the garden door.

3.6 Community Use

Information not received

3.7 Vulnerability to crime

Information not received

3.8 Plans for change

Information not received

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 facilities required by the meeting and no major changes are required.

ii) For wider community use, in addition to local Meeting use: No information about community use has been received.

iii) Being laid down as a Meeting: Should the meeting house cease to be used, the building could easily be re-converted to full residential use.

Part 5: Category: 4