

Friends Meeting House, Huddersfield

Church Street, Paddock, Huddersfield, HD1 4TR

National Grid Reference: SE 13063 16285



Statement of Significance

Huddersfield meeting house has high significance as an early nineteenth-century meeting house of simple but refined design. The building together with the adult school have a largely intact interior with historic fittings. It has an attractive setting within the burial ground.

Evidential value

The site is composed of different phases and the fabric has the potential to yield further evidence about the history of the site and a better understanding

of how the buildings have changed. The headstones in the burial ground and the relocated seventeenth century headstones could extend knowledge and understanding of this historic Quaker community. The site has high evidential value.

Historical value

The site has high historical significance reflecting local Quaker history since 1770. The building is historically interesting as an example of a nineteenth-century structure combining a meeting house, adult school, and whilst the stables no longer exist the mounting block is retained. Collectively the group of buildings along with the burial ground has high historical value.

Aesthetic value

The exterior of the building is of modest architectural ambition with a little decoration and internally retaining some historic internal joinery. The grounds are highly attractive in the local scene. Overall, the building and site have medium aesthetic value.

Communal value

The meeting house was built for Quaker use and is also a valued community resource. The building is used by a number of local groups and has a high communal value.

Part 1: Core data

- 1.1 Area Meeting: *Brighouse West Yorkshire*
- 1.2 Property Registration Number: *0024440*
- 1.3 Owner: *Area Meeting*
- 1.4 Local Planning Authority: *Kirklees Council*
- 1.5 Historic England locality: *Yorkshire*
- 1.6 1.6 Civil parish: *Huddersfield*
- 1.7 Listed status: *Not listed*
- 1.8 NHLE: *Not applicable*
- 1.9 Conservation Area: *No*
- 1.10 Scheduled Ancient Monument: *No*
- 1.11 Heritage at Risk: *No*
- 1.12 Date(s): *1812; 1898; 1995*
- 1.13 Architect (s): *Not established; Joseph J Woods; Stephen Slator*
- 1.14 Date of visit: *5 April 2016*
- 1.15 Name of report author: *Emma Neil*
- 1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Deryck Hillas*
- 1.17 Associated buildings and sites: *Adult school*

1.18 Attached burial ground: Yes

1.19 Information sources:

David Bower and John Knight, *Plain Country Friends: The Quakers of Wooldale, High Flatts and Midhope*, Wooldale Meeting, 1987

David M. Butler, *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain* (London: Friends Historical Society, 1999), vol. II, pp. 804-805

Helen E. Roberts, *Researching Yorkshire Quaker History: A Guide to Sources*, University of Hull, 2003, pp. 47.

University of Leeds, Brotherton Library, Special Collections, Carlton Hill Collection, Plans of FMH and FBG (MS/DEP/1979/1/HUD/1/12) and Huddersfield Adult School Plans (MS/DEP/1979/1/HUD/1/13)

Deryck Hillas, *Local Meeting Survey*, January 2016.

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

2.1. Historical background

There were only a small number of Quakers recorded living in Huddersfield at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The Brooks of Row family from Lockwood attended Meetings at Wooldale, whilst other Friends from the area attended Meetings at High Flatts or Lane Head. By the mid-eighteenth century due to travel distances Friends were beginning to attend Meetings at Brighouse and Pontefract. The growth of Quakers in Huddersfield coincided with the industrialisation of the town and resulted in a plot of common land being enclosed which was then used to build a meeting house in 1770. The Meeting was known as the Paddock Meeting until 1804 when the Meeting was renamed to Huddersfield. In 1812, a new meeting house was built to the south of the meeting house. The meeting house of 1770 was then used as a women's meeting house and school room. A burial ground plan dated 1867 shows a stable and mounting block to the entrance of the site.



Figure 1: Present meeting house (left) and meeting house of 1770 (right) (Huddersfield MH Archive)

The original meeting house of 1770 was demolished in 1898 and replaced by an adult school. The new adult school was designed by Joseph J Woods and other individuals / companies involved with the building included; Allan Haigh (mason), H. Hollingworth & Son (joiners), John Robinson & Son (plasterers), Alfred Bower (slater), J.W. Broadbent (electrician) and Richard Heaton (painter). At the same time the adult school was being constructed the meeting house was extended to the south of the east range with a one storey small extension to accommodate the male toilets. In addition a veranda was also built across the south range of the meeting house and adult school with a glass roof to connect the two buildings together. To the north of the adult school, a lean-to was also built to accommodate an apparatus room which has since been demolished. The adult school provided a large assembly room, kitchen, ladies toilets at ground floor level and three classrooms, secretary's room and library at first floor.

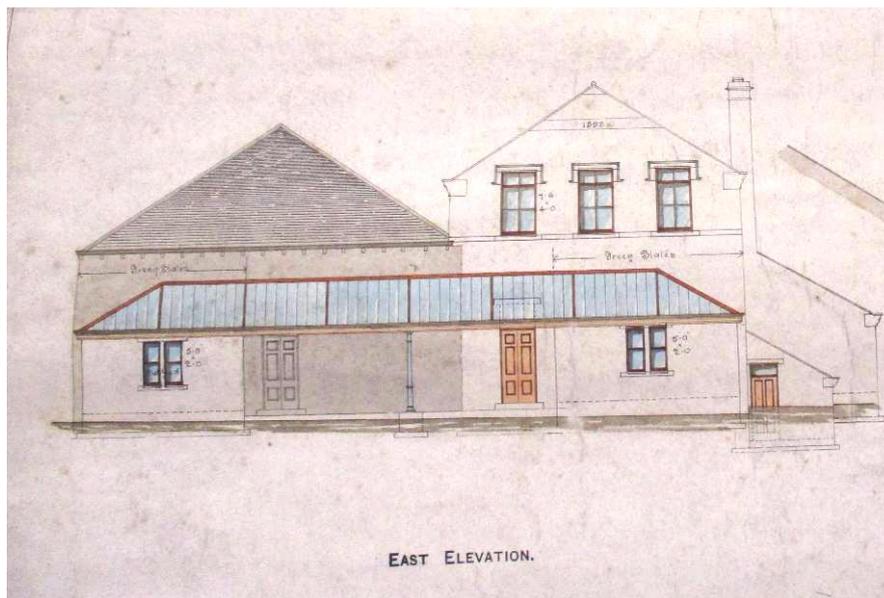


Figure 2: Plan of proposed Adult School
(Brotherton Library, Special Collections, MS/DEP/1979/1/HUD/1/13)

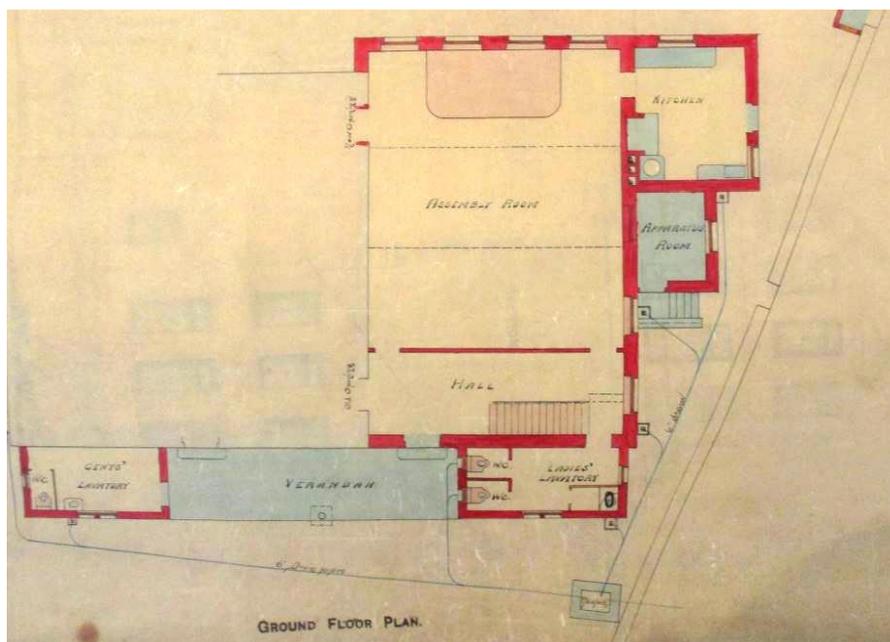


Figure 3: Ground Floor Plan of proposed Adult School
(Brotherton Library, Special Collections, MS/DEP/1979/1/HUD/1/13)

In 1966 the stable block at the entrance of the site was demolished and the area is now used as car parking. The mounting block still remains. By the mid-1990s Friends spent approximately £100,000 to improve and refurbish the buildings. The following works were undertaken; the once open veranda was enclosed with stone and glazing, a ramp was provided for improved access into the building, the ceilings in the adult school were lowered, the kitchen was relocated to a new partitioned area to the south of the assembly hall (the George Fox room) in the adult school, the stonework to the meeting house was cleaned and the gravestones were relocated to the edges of the burial ground. The windows were replaced with double glazing and the central window to the south was altered to form a fire exit.

2.2. The building and its principal fittings and fixtures

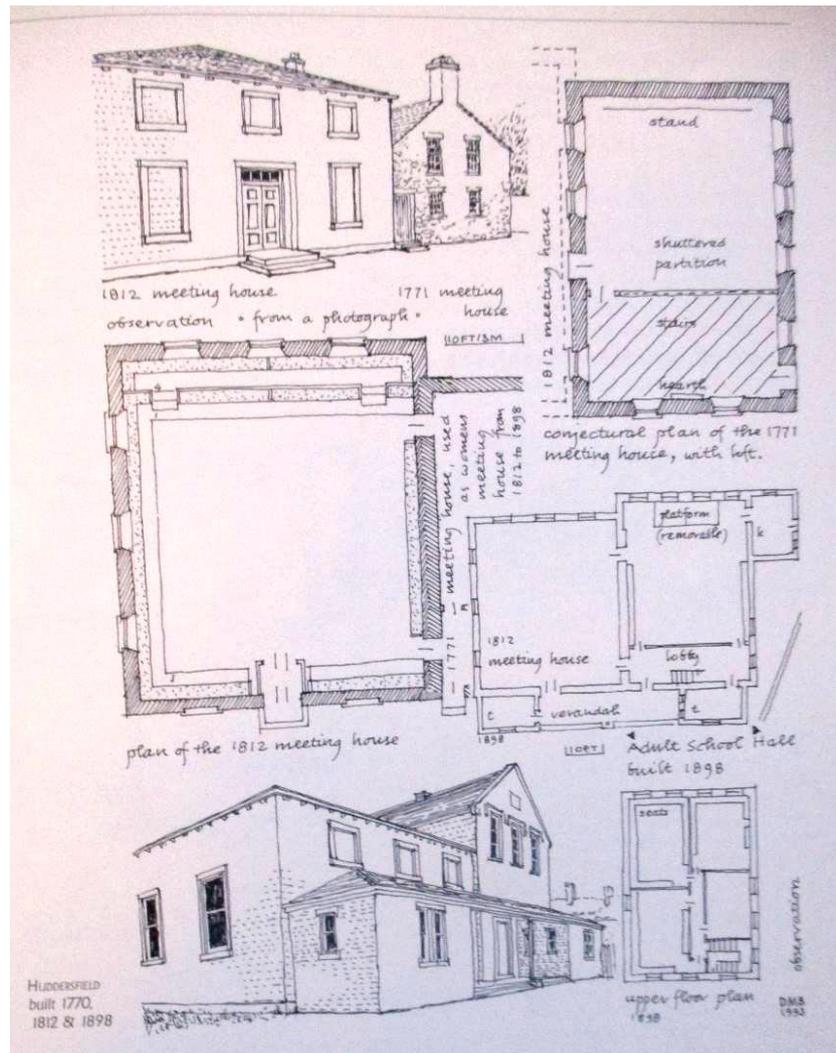


Figure 3: Ground floor plan (not to scale) and perspective (Butler, *The Quaker Meeting Houses of Britain*, 1999, vol. 2, p. 805)

The meeting house was built in 1812 and extended in 1898 with an adult school designed by Joseph J Woods. The one-storey meeting house is rectangular in plan and was built using ashlar stone with stone window surrounds and corbels. The hipped roof is covered with stone slates. All windows are double glazed with timber frames. The entrance elevation of the meeting house faces east, this elevation has three 1-light windows under the eaves now infilled and to the south of this elevation a single-storey extension of 1898 and a glazed lobby area dating from the twentieth century links the meeting house and adult school together. The original double-door to the meeting house is retained with three fielded panels to each

door, brass door knobs, a 4-light rectangular fan light and neighbouring this is a large window opening which has been infilled with stone. The south elevation consists of two 1-light windows with the central window altered to provide a fire exit from the main meeting room. The west elevation is formed of three large 1-light windows. The adult school adjoins the north side of the meeting house built in 1898.

The adult school is a two-storey building built using coursed stone. It has a pitched roof laid with stone slates, and coped gables. The east gable end provides the main entrance into the building. In the apex is a date stone and three sliding sash windows with hood moulds at first floor. The north end of the eastern elevation of the school has a one-storey projection which provided toilet facilities and the rest of the elevation sits within the glazed lobby area. Similarly, to the meeting house the school retains its original double door with 3 raised and fielded panels, brass door knobs, a glazed rectangular fan light and above the door is a stone hood mould. The west end gable is formed of four 6-pane windows at first floor and four 8-pane windows at ground floor. The north elevation has a chimney stack in gable and a mixed fenestration; with 6-pane and 4-pane windows. A former lean-to under the ground floor window of the third bay has been demolished which accounts for the altered brickwork on this elevation. To the west of the northern elevation is a single storey projection which once formed the kitchen area and is now used as storage.

The main meeting room can be accessed from either the glazed entrance lobby to the east or from the hall of the adult school to the north. The walls of the meeting room are lined with pine panelling to dado height, and fixed seating is located on a platform to each wall. The west wall contains a raised two-tier stand and has shaped bench ends. The room is well lit from windows to the south and west. An internal porch is located to the south wall and two panelled doors to the west. The main assembly hall in the adult room has tongue and groove panelling, partitions insertion to the east to form a new kitchen and store room and a lowered ceiling. The doorways to rooms off the hall all have simple moulded architraves with 5 panelled doors, the top panel of some of the doors are glazed. The walls have tongue and groove panelling and to the south are evidence of where the former coat hooks were located. To the northeast corner is a dog-leg with half landing staircase with turned balusters and finials on the newel posts. The rooms on the first floor (apart from the Elizabeth Fry room) have fitted benches with tongue and groove panelling which concaves round the corners and decorative vent covers.

2.3. Loose furnishings

In the main meeting room, the seating consists of modern chairs and open-backed pine benches with blue tufted cushions. Some of the arm rests have been replaced with an iron arm rest.



Figure 4: Historic benches in the meeting room

2.4. Attached burial ground

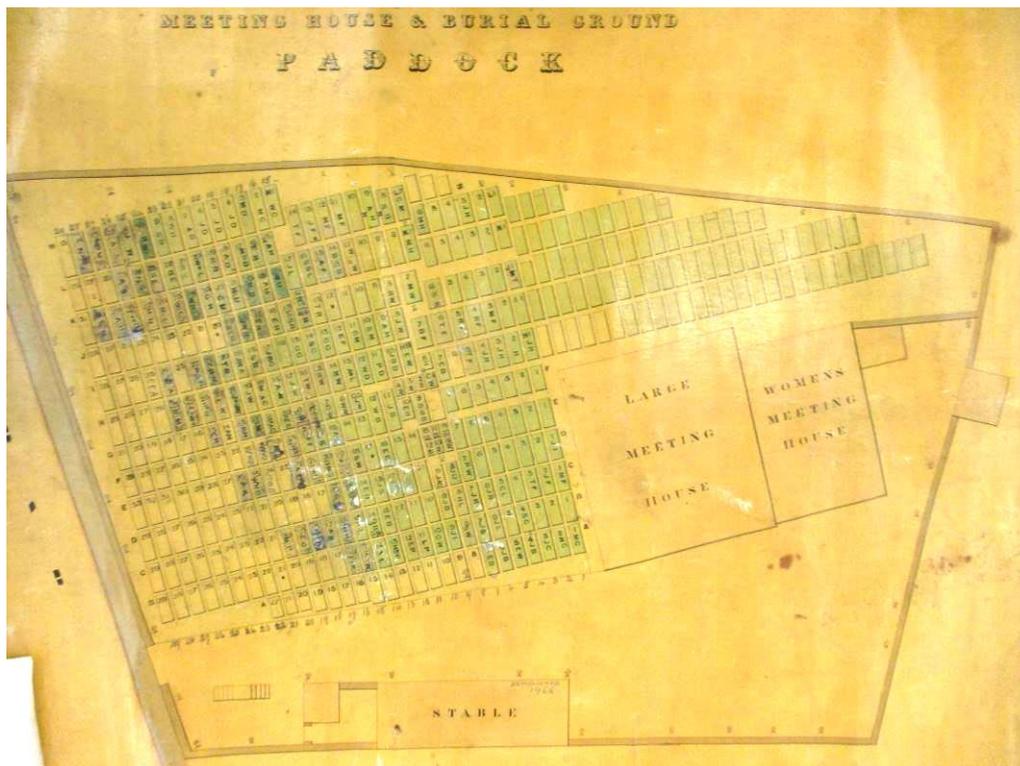


Figure 5: Plan of Huddersfield burial ground
(Brotherton Library, Special Collections, MS/DEP/1979/1/HUD/1/12)

The burial ground is no longer in use for burials and is located to the west and south of the meeting house. The headstones have been laid flat and moved to the boundaries of the meeting house for ease of maintenance and to allow for the area to be used for outdoor events. Edging stones and rows of stone markers with letters and numbers have been retained. The date range the burials cover or where the records are kept are not known at present. Within the enclosed veranda are gravestones which date from the 1600s, some were relocated from Brighouse burial ground.

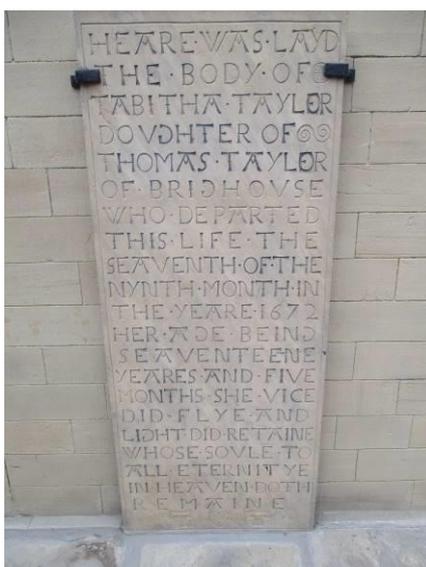


Figure 6: Gravestone of 1672



Figure 7: Gravestone of 1694



Figure 8: Relocated headstones



Figure 9: Stone markers

2.5. The meeting house in its wider setting

Paddock is approximately 1 mile west of Huddersfield town centre. The area is a mixture of residential and commercial properties. To the east of Church Street are stone terraces with shop fronts at ground floor and to the west of the street the nineteenth century terraces are predominately residential. Directly opposite the meeting house is Church View House, a municipal tower block built in the late 1960s or early 1970s. Church Street runs to the south of the meeting house and is the main entrance to the building whilst Quaker Lane runs to the west and High Street to the north of the building.

The meeting house, adult school and burial ground are bounded by a stone wall with half rounded coping stones. The site once contained stables which were demolished in the 1960s and the area now used as a car park. However a mounting block remains to the southeast corner of the site which dates from the eighteenth century. The burial ground forms a large space to the south of the meeting house and the headstones have been relocated to the boundaries of the site. To the west of the building is an electricity generator and peace garden.



Figure 10: Mounting block

2.6. Listed status

Not listed. Collectively the buildings represent a multiphase site with its earliest fabric dating from the eighteenth century (mounting block). The different phases of extension and improvement provide evidential value in terms of understanding the evolution of the site. The meeting house and adult school retain their historic plan form, even though some details have been lost or are obscured the historic fittings and furnishings contribute to its character. The buildings may be a marginal candidate for listing, and early discussion with Historic England is recommended should changes be proposed. The building would merit consideration for inclusion on Kirklees Council's local list.

2.7. Archaeological potential of the site

The West Yorkshire Archaeological Advisory Service was consulted and no Historic Environment Records are associated with the site. The adult school was built on the foot print of a former meeting house which was built in 1770 and demolished in 1898. The site and burial ground is considered to have 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): Optimal/satisfactory.

3.2. Maintenance

The last quinquennial inspection took place in November 2012 (George Pickles of Pickles Architects). It found the building to be in generally good condition for its age. Of the recommendations, all urgent and other works to be carried out within two years have taken place. The Local Meeting has enough money for repairs and maintenance. There is a five-year maintenance and repair plan.

3.3. Sustainability

The meeting does not use the Sustainability Toolkit. It has implemented measures to reduce its environmental impact. These include:

- **Climate change and energy efficiency:** Electricity is supplied by Good Energy through the Renewable Energy Group Buying Initiative (REGBI scheme), retrofit undertaken twenty years ago to standards above the building regulations in operation at that time.
- **Building maintenance & refurbishment:** Undertaking timber treatment using safer Boron based treatments and use of Auro natural paint.
- **Resource use, recycling and waste management:** Composting of organic waste with large composting area, ecological cleaning materials sources, and separation of kitchen waste for recycling.
- **Wildlife, ecology and nature conservation:** the grounds are well planted with trees and shrubs which provide wildlife habitats. No pesticide is used in the garden.

- Transport: a survey relating to transport was undertaken as part of carbon foot printing. The results recommended minibus group travel which has been explored but not considered practical at this time.

The meeting does not have an Energy Performance Certificate but might consider obtaining one.

In addition to the above the Meeting has also undertaken carbon foot printing work, and given the relatively low use and carbon emission per capita the Meeting has a strong focus on awareness training and political campaigning rather than focus on the building fabric. To raise awareness among Friends workshops have taken place surrounding the Canterbury Commitment, transport survey and a fossil free divestment festival. The Meeting were instrumental in setting up the Renewable Energy Group Buying Initiative, which has since been adopted nationally.

3.4. Amenities

The meeting house has all the amenities it needs. This includes a meeting room, four class rooms, kitchen and WCs. There is no resident warden.

The meeting house is served by a local bus service. On-site car parking is available for 18 cars and there is no secure parking for bicycles.

3.5. Access

The meeting house is accessible to people with disabilities. There is level access to the ground floor only, an accessible toilet, and facilities for partially-sighted people. Friends are in the process of installing a new hearing loop system. A Disability Access Audit has not been conducted.

3.6 Community Use

Friends use the meeting house for about 6 hours per week with additional use for bible classes and committee meetings. The building is theoretically available for community lettings for a maximum number of 156 hours per week. It is used for an average of 39.5 hours per week. The meeting has a formal lettings policy. Political parties and groups whose values are not in keeping with Quaker values are not allowed to use the meeting house. The use of the meeting house for free is available to groups with strong Quaker links, for example, Town of Sanctuary and Holiday School Reunion. Users value the building for its good location, privacy, well priced and the availability of car parking.

3.7. Vulnerability to crime

No heritage crime has been recorded, and the area is generally well cared-for and has low levels of crime and deprivation. The Friends have developed a liaison with the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team.

3.8. Plans for change

No future 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: At present the meeting house fulfils the needs of the Meeting.

ii) For wider community use, in addition to local Meeting use: The adult school is currently well used for community use and has the facilities to support this including a large meeting room at ground floor and four smaller meeting rooms at first floor.

iii) Being laid down as a Meeting House: In the event of closure the meeting house could in theory be converted for alternative uses, but it would not be easy to find ones which retain the character of the building. Demolition would be regrettable as the building is a local community heritage asset.

Part 5: Category: 2