

## ***Quaker Meeting House, New Milton***

*30 Whitefield Road, New Milton, Hampshire, BH25 6DF*

*National Grid Reference: SZ 24213 95120*



### ***Statement of Significance***

***The meeting house is a utilitarian building of c.1900 which originally may have been a stable. It was acquired and converted to Quaker use in 1981-82. It has low overall heritage significance.***

#### ***Evidential value***

***The meeting house has been much altered and extended over time. It has low evidential value.***

#### ***Historical value***

***The building was part of New Milton's development after the arrival of the railway. It has medium historical value.***

#### ***Aesthetic value***

***The meeting house is a functional building which has been much altered over time. It has low aesthetic value.***

#### ***Communal value***

***The building is primarily a Quaker meeting house but is also in use by local community groups. It has high communal value.***

### **Part 1: Core data**

- 1.1 Area Meeting: *Bournemouth Coastal*
- 1.2 Property Registration Number: *0007910*
- 1.3 Owner: *Area Meeting*
- 1.4 Local Planning Authority: *New Forest District Council*
- 1.5 Historic England locality: *South East*
- 1.6 Civil parish: *New Milton*
- 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): *around 1900 (acquired in 1981)*

1.13 Architect(s): *Not established*

1.14 Date of visit: *3 June 2016*

1.15 Name of report author: *Johanna Roethe*

1.16 Name of contact(s) made on site: *Anne Tyler*

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. 235

'History of New Milton Meeting House', typescript provided by C. Hall

Local Meeting survey by Christopher Hall, June 2016

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

### 2.1 Historical background

The building was bought in 1981 for £24,000 and converted for use as a meeting house (architect: Gordon Robbins of Cheshire Robins Design Group). This involved inter alia the addition of a lobby, and the removal of the loft floor. The new meeting house opened on 8 May 1982. According to map evidence, the building had been built between c.1898 and c.1909, either in conjunction with the railway or, more likely, as a stable for the house in front. (Faded lettering on the side and rear elevations advertise stabling, a coal merchant and a railway agent. However, these may not necessarily be related to the building's use as the railway site is at a lower level (which appears to have always been separated from Whitefield Road by a footpath) and there are no signs of former openings in the blank wall now facing the railway.) During the Second World War, the building was part of the headquarters of the New Milton Home Guard. Before 1954 it was a private residence, and from 1954 until 1981 a Christian Science church. An extension had been added in 1954; further small-scale extensions have been added since, including the glazed lobby of 1981-2.

### 2.2 The building and its principal fittings and fixtures

The meeting house is an L-plan building. The original part to the north has an oblong plan, while later extensions are at an angle to the southeast. The first extension is the present kitchen under a pitched roof; later extensions to the east and southeast have flat roofs. The most recent extension is a small flat-roofed and brick-faced block to the west of the original building (replacing a corrugated-iron shed). The materials are brick, which to the older part was originally only one 'skin' deep until a cavity wall was created by adding another 'skin'. The southeast extension is of brick to the east, with largely glazed walls to the entrance to the southwest. At the south end of the extension is the library room with a brick base and a timber fascia over the windows. The pitched roofs are covered with concrete tiles; there are also several solar panels. A dormer window is a later addition to the original building which was probably installed during the residential use of the building. The east elevation is largely blank, with two windows to the extensions. The north elevation has no windows. Fragments

of advertisement inscriptions are visible on the north and east elevations spelling out 'Garage/good stabling/carriage...' (east) and 'coal merchant & railway agent' (north).

The full-height meeting room is in the older part. (The former attic or loft floor was removed in 1981-2.) It is lit by the dormer, two rooflights, one window to the south, and a glazed emergency exit door to the west. There are two roof trusses which have tie beams with cross-braced queen posts. To the west is a small store room. Two doors lead from the meeting room into the kitchen at the northeast and the entrance lobby which connects all parts of the building. The ceiled kitchen is lit by a rooflight and one window to the east. Beyond are two toilets, including one accessible to people with disabilities. At the far end is the library room with a corner window.

### 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 behind 28 Whitefield Road, a residential house in separate ownership which is in poor condition. To the north, the meeting house is separated from the former railway goods yard by a fenced footpath (in existence by 1909).

### 2.6 Listed status

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

### 2.7 Archaeological potential of the site

The immediate area was fields before the construction of the Brockenhurst to Christchurch railway line which prompted the development of New Milton north of Old Milton. The station at New Milton opened in 1886. Whitefield Road was laid out around c.1900 and the house in front of what is now the meeting house had been built by c.1909. The site has low archaeological potential.

## **Part 3: Current use and management**

*See completed volunteer survey*

### 3.1 Condition

i) Meeting House: Poor. There has been serious water ingress where the pitched and the flat roofs meet. The meeting is planning works to remedy this. There is also a damp patch on the outside of the rear wall, due to a split gutter.

ii) Attached burial ground (if any): Not applicable

### 3.2 Maintenance

The last quinquennial inspection report dates from July 2012 (John T. Robinson of Smith Robinson Higley, chartered surveyors). Some of the recommended actions have been implemented, and some areas are being monitored. The local meeting has enough money to maintain and repair the building. There is no five-year maintenance and repair plan (other than the QIR).

### 3.3 Sustainability

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

- Climate change & energy efficiency: installation of solar panels
- Resource use, recycling & waste management: heating only used when needed, recycling of paper and glass
- Building maintenance & refurbishment: double glazing, low energy lighting

An Energy Assessment & Advisory Report has been prepared by Christchurch Surveyors Lt (EPC rating: 194G).

### 3.4 Amenities

The meeting has all the amenities it needs. These are all in the meeting house. There is no resident Warden. The meeting is accessible by public transport. There is limited parking on site but no secure parking for bicycles.

### 3.5 Access

The meeting house is accessible to people with disabilities. There is level access, an accessible toilet, a hearing loop and facilities for partially-sighted people. No Disability Access Audit has been conducted.

### 3.6 Community Use

Friends use the meeting house for 4-16 hours per week. The building is theoretically available for community lettings for a maximum number of 36 hours per week. It is used for an average of 6 hours per week. The meeting does not have a written lettings policy but considers each application individually. All lettings are free, in return for a donation. Users value the building due to its central location, size and the stackable seating, as well as for being quiet and warm.

### 3.7 Vulnerability to crime

The rear elevation is covered in graffiti. There has been no general crime or other incidents. The locality is generally well-cared for and has low deprivation. There is currently no liaison with the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team and the meeting is not considering making contact.

### 3.8 Plans for change

The meeting is considering ways to extend the building to create a larger meeting 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 amenities required by the local meeting, apart from a larger meeting room. The local meeting has in the past attempted to reach an agreement with the owner of 28 Whitefield Road and a housing association to redevelop the site with a ground-floor meeting house and affordable flats above. However, this fell through due to the economic recession.

*ii) For wider community use, in addition to local Meeting use:* The meeting house is relatively well used for its small size. It has all the facilities needed by its users.

*iii) Being laid down as a Meeting:* Should the meeting close or decide to sell the building, it could be converted to an alternative use. However, a more likely outcome would be the redevelopment of the site, possibly in conjunction with the plot in front of it.

**Part 5: Category: 4**