

**Heritage Statement**

**Bay Ness Farm holiday cottage**

**At**

**Bay Ness Farm**

**Robin Hood's Bay**

**Whitby**

**YO22 4PJ**

NYMNPA  
07 APR 2015

## Heritage statement

Bay Ness Farm NZ953063

### Setting

The farmhouse consists of three low ranges of sandstone buildings, the older facing west and the newer, built up against its southern end and facing south. They form three sides of a large courtyard.

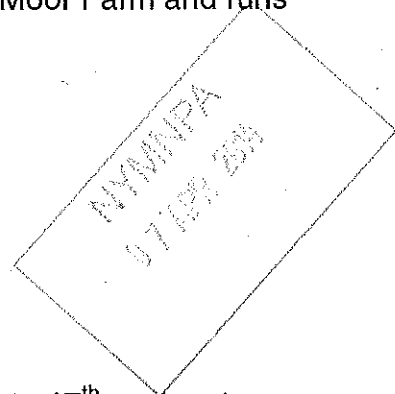
The whole complex lies in a slight hollow giving protection against the west (sea) winds above Ness Point, the northern end of Robin Hood's Bay cliffs. There is a sandstone quarry just to the north-east of the buildings much worked in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The farm is approached from High Lane, a small metalled road turning east off the main Robin Hood's Bay / Whitby road opposite the old church from which it turns off at Smails Moor Farm and runs into Bay Ness farmyard from the north.

### Significance

The property and associated out buildings are listed.

### Development

The older house at Bay Ness appears to date from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century to judge by the form of doorway, windows and roof-structure. It was certainly a three-unit building but the absence of fireplaces in the northern and central rooms makes certainty about the plan impossible. If a fireplace and stack have been removed it could not have been in the usual hearth-passage position, a little to the south of the front door since the blocked window of the central room would be too far to the north. An alternative position might have been against the cross wall between the central room and the present kitchen. However, the whole of that truss above tie-beam level is visible and there is absolutely no trace of any blackening from escaping smoke. A fireplace position against the gable wall of the northern house seems a very unlikely arrangement in a three-unit house. On balance it seems most likely that the stack in the south gable was the only one in the house. The present kitchen was a very large room and might be seen as the forehouse. The middle room which seems to have been much smaller was no doubt the 'hall' but a hall shorn of its functions as a general cooking and living room and on the way to becoming a classical 'hallway' in which the original stairs may well have been located. The northern room was almost certainly an unheated parlour. Of the upstairs rooms, only the rooms above the kitchen are undoubtedly properly floored and used for domestic purposes, as the beams, joists and gable fenestration show. The loft above the two rooms, if there was one, if there was one, was probably floored only with loose boards and used for storage purposes – the tie-beams show no evidence of seatings for floor-joists. If this interpretation is correct, the ground-plan of the house would have been very



'modern' indeed for the late 17th century, but there are certain refinements in the external stonework (false voussoirs above the front door and form of the kneelers) which suggests that whoever built the house was more in touch with developments in polite architecture than one might expect in this remote corner of Yorkshire.

The same might be said of the added range. The central lobby-entry plan form is almost unknown in the North York Moors area, although examples do occur in the Vale of Pickering to the south. It is essentially a lowland, Vale of York plan. The added range, although small, is remarkably well built with good architectural detail and good internal fittings. The form of the windows and the possibility of an original hooded stack would suggest a date not much later than 1730 or 1740. It may well have been built as a self-contained house, perhaps for a relative of the owner of the older building, with independent access from the yard. The present doorway from the kitchen of the older house has rather a contrived appearance and, as we have seen, there is reason to suspect that the two ranges were not originally connected at first floor level. In course of time the new range took over the functions of the forehouse and parlour and the older house was abandoned to agricultural uses except for the southern room which continued to function as a kitchen.

### Features

The older part of the house (on a south / north axis) is basically single-storey although the loft over the southern room has always been used as a bedroom and now being converted into a cottage. It stands on a prominent plinth and is constructed of large blocks of colitic sandstone laid to courses of roughly even height. The roof is covered with pantiles surmounted by a U-shaped stone ridge and it is terminated at the gables by stone copings. The copings are mould on the underside and held in place not by conventional kneelers but by a small V-trench cut into the stone of the cornice course. At the south gable end, the upper courses of which are constructed brick. A modern dormer has been inserted near the south end of the roof.

Of the front elevation only the north end is visible, the middle section being covered by an added lean-to outshot and the southern end by the newer house-range. The north and middle rooms of the house were used for agricultural storage and all internal partitions and fittings have been removed. The doorway has a massive stone lintel which is chamfered with a cyma stop and imitation voussoirs have been scratched on it. The door-jambs are quoined and chamfered on the north side but are hidden on the south by the added outshot. To the north of the doorway is a light recessed and mullioned stone window with holes for iron bars and mullions. The lintel and sill extend about 18 inches beyond the jambs as if to leave open the possibility of inserting further lights.

The north gable is largely hidden by the added farm buildings but the plinth continues round the gable proving that this was the original north end of the house. At the northern end the only opening is a dormer with wooden

shutters and further south a rough wooden doorway not quite in line with the front door. Both openings appear to be agricultural rather than domestic. The walling north of the door appears to have been renewed and is out of alignment with that south of the door. South of the door there is a low inserted larder window followed by a blocked two-light chamfered, recessed and mullioned window behind the north end of the southern room. Further south still there is an inserted modern window with projected sill. The south gable has been slightly truncated at the west end during re-construction associated with the building of the new range.

On the ground floor a single-light window adjoining the new range has some remains of a chamfered lintel and jamb. It is said to have been a door. Further to the east there is a large modern window; it is not possible to tell whether it replaces an earlier, smaller opening. On the first floor there is a modern two-light window set into the surrounds of an earlier mullioned window probably of three lights.

The original northern and central rooms of the house. The blocked window on the front of the central room is visible and appears to be of similar size and probably of similar character to the mullioned window north of the door. Thus there were certainly two rooms but there is no indication as to where the partition between them lay. Nor is there any trace of a fireplace in either. One would suppose that the middle room was the hall or forhouse and the northern room, to judge by the quality of the fenestration, a parlour. Above the windows in both rooms are large wooden sleeper beams, chamfered and stopped on the inside.

The two visible roof-trusses consist of pairs of large, slightly curved blades set to a very steep pitch and crossed at the apex. The ridge-purlin is held in the crossing and sets of purlins are supported by a high collar and pair of spurs respectively. Further down, a little above the tie-beams, pairs of thin spurs extend to the top of the wallplate. All these horizontal members are halved across the blades and pegged. The whole composition is clearly a cruck derivative and presence of redundant peg-holes in the truss blades suggests that they are cut-down full crucks. The older sections of the purlins are scarfed and pegged but later inserted lengths are merely overlapped.

The southern room is still in use as a kitchen but in quite recent times a larder has been created partly out of the northern end of the kitchen and partly out of the middle room. The room has a large blocked-in stack at the south end which is probably original since the copings on the south gable are shaped to accommodate a chimney at the apex. The fireplace is not placed centrally on the south wall which suggests that the rear of the room was partitioned off to form a small service room which would have been lit from the blocked mullioned window visible on the exterior of the house.

The stairs rise up along the back wall but since they partly cut across the mullioned window it is doubtful whether this was their original position. The floor of the room above is supported by a massive beam with a deep chamfer which has been cut off just inside the west wall. The old wall was evidently

pulled down when the new range was built and reconstructed to a lesser thickness – the same wall-thickness as the rest of the new range. From the central beam radiate a series of fine wide joists, roughly chamfered on both sides. They appear to be contemporary with the walling and suggest that this end of the house has always been storeyed.

The newer range is a practically self-contained two unit house with a central lobby-entry. It is now entered only via the kitchen of the old house but there is a blocked door on the north side leading into a lobby in front of the axial stack. The range is of one storey although the roof-space was probably always floored and there is a cellar under the western room.

The range appears to be of early 18<sup>th</sup> century date and perhaps 50 years or so later that the earlier house. The surrounds of the front windows have been much disturbed by modern improvements but they appear to be of the single-piece type associated stone mullions rather than with sliding sashes.

They do not however appear to have been recessed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century fashion and if there were mullions they were probably not splayed. Between the two front windows there is a single-light window (now blocked) besides the central stack. This can only be a fire-window and suggests that the stack was originally hooded at least on the east side. The door on the other side (facing the yard) has a deep chamfered lintel and quoined and chamfered jambs.

The roof, which is covered with pantiles, has copings at the west gable supported by deep cyma-moulded kneelers. There is also a partial coping at the junction of the two ranges which may suggest that the two houses were not originally linked at the first floor level. The central chimney-stack is constructed by brick. Inside this range no tie-beams are visible but there are a series of joists, identical in both rooms, running from the central stack to the end walls. They are finely chamfered but a little deeper and narrower than the joists in the kitchen of the older house. The roof was not fully visible but appears to consist of principle rafter trusses.

There are back-to-back fireplaces in the central stack which appears to be of stone. The fireplace surrounds are covered with rough panelling in the eastern room with a deep cupboard just to the south of the fireplace. The fireplace in the western room is relatively modern and may be later insertion.

The associated low range of farm buildings on the east and north side date from late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century and consist of a range of coursed squared sandstone out buildings with a mixture of pantiled roof with stone copings and metal roofing. These are 1 / 2 storey, 5 bays, with the eastern bay joining the northern range of buildings with the eastern range having 2 stable style-type doors under heavy stone lintels. Loading door in returned gable end, and this building has a very high corrugated metal pitched roof, this roof has had its slopped reduced using stone spine walls.

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Interior shows an upper cruck truss at north end, halved at the top with a collar. The modern tie beams now at eaves level, but sockets for earlier ties visible about 2 feet lower. The north wing is made of coarse squared sandstone in a variety of styles and concrete block with a "flat" metal roof, it no longer has its original roof, as that was replaced in the past with a "flat" metal roof and is not of special interest.

**Impact**

None these are repairs

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