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**STAITHES CONSERVATION APPRAISAL**

---

**January 2001**

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The North York Moors National Park Authority (NYMNPA) has commissioned a Conservation Area Appraisal as part of a Townscape heritage initiative – ‘The Spirit of Staithes’.
- 1.2 It has been compiled following site surveys, research, assessments of questionnaire returns and has had due regard to historic documentation relating to Staithes and the surrounding area. It has been produced in consultation with English Heritage and the NYMNPA.
- 1.3 Survey work was undertaken in January 2001 at the following times:-
  - Wednesday 17 January (late afternoon/early evening/night time).
  - Thursday 18 January (early morning through to late afternoon).
  - Saturday 27 January (early morning through to late afternoon).
- 1.4 This report is primarily concerned with the area designated as the Conservation Area (as defined in 1972) although reference will be made to surrounding areas and the boundary of the Conservation Area at various sections of the report.
- 1.5 Staithes lies within the North York Moors National Park and the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast.
- 1.6 The settlement of Staithes can be divided into two main areas – the lower older fishing village and the upper more recent area, which was developed in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The Conservation Area includes most of the lower older village.
- 1.7 We have approached our appraisal as a practical, succinct and factual account of the Conservation Area. Not every building, space or relationship has therefore be commented upon, but we have attempted in our approach to the survey work to identify issues or raise awareness of certain matters that may require particular attention either through detailed studies or policy provision.
- 1.8 In any form of survey work, judgements have to be made and there may be different views as to the basis of such judgements. We have had due regard to comments made by local residents in the return of survey questionnaires and also the ‘Planning for Real’ document, produced by the Staithes and Cowbar Residents Association (1999).
- 1.9 It is hoped that the views expressed in the report are considered to be well balanced and have been compiled in the spirit of providing an independent appraisal of the Staithes Conservation Area.

## **2. Planning Context**

- 2.1 The town lies within the North Yorkshire Moors and, as such, is subject to the policies of the adopted North York Moors Local Plan.
- 2.2 The North Yorkshire Moors was designated a National Park in 1952 and is administered by a Committee of the North Yorkshire County Council. The Committee's statutory duties include:-
- the preservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the National Park;
  - promotion of its enjoyment by the public; and
  - have regard to the social and economic well being of the local communities within the National Park.
- 2.3 The Proposals Map shows two policy allocations for Staithes, which relate to the conservation of the landscape.
- 2.4 The coastal area, including Cowbar Nab, Hartle Lane and Penny Nab, is allocated as a Conservation Area Coastal Habitat.
- 2.5 The inland area generally covering the old village of Staithes is allocated as Conservation Area Woodland Habitat.
- 2.6 The Plan's Village Inset Map for Staithes allocates the area of the old village of Staithes and Cowbar Nab as a Conservation Area and as such Building Conservation and Design policies of the Plan therefore apply (Policies BC2 – BC5).
- 2.7 Relevant extracts of the Plan have been appended to this document.
- 2.8 In development control terms, the Council has dealt with twenty-eight planning or listed building applications within the Conservation Area over the last five years. These applications have been for small-scale changes and alterations.



### **3. The Character of the Conservation Area**

- 3.1 The Staithes Conservation Area was designated in 1972.
- 3.2 It covers an approximate area of 15.0 ha (37.06 acres) and includes some three hundred and nineteen buildings within the main historic core of the Conservation Area. In total there are some 350 buildings including Cowbar Cottages.
- 3.3 Within the Conservation Area there are approximately eighty-one listed buildings representing some 25% of the building stock. Eighty-one buildings are classified as Grade II and 1 (Kirkhill House) Grade II\*
- 3.4 Staithes is shaped dramatically by the surrounding coastal topography.
- 3.5 Staithes means 'landing place' and the bay probably afforded early access to the nearby cliff top settlements of Seaton and Hinderwell.
- 3.6 The surrounding cliffs and headlands have restricted settlement growth. Development is therefore generally located on the lower slopes between Staithes Beck and Gun Gutter between the heads of these two valleys.
- 3.7 When these topographical factors are taken into account, the built form of the Conservation Area occupies an area of 4.4 ha (10.87 acres). This provides a density figure of 72.5 units per hectare (29 units per acre).
- 3.8 Although north-facing most of the settlement does not face the sea but nestles in the shelter of Cowbar Nab. The sheer shale cliffs rise to form a dramatic backdrop to those properties that lie on the north side of the Beck. The shale cliffs show signs of weathering and erosion caused by the combined forces of sea, wind and nesting gulls.
- 3.9 The settlement generally is grouped around small yards, narrow streets and passageways. The topography results in a settlement that lies at differing levels having an irregular layout pattern.
- 3.10 From upper vantage points the irregular arrangement of roof lines provide an interesting roofscape of immense townscape value with tightly packed roofs of red pantiles and grey slate. When viewed from lower areas the buildings climb up the slopes of the valleys almost on top of each other.
- 3.11 The settlement pattern has considerable overall townscape value without having a focus on any particular architectural building or buildings.
- 3.12 Most of the settlement is eighteenth century and nineteenth century. Many buildings are in the form of cottages built of stone and these characterise the lower part of the village, having the closest relationship to the sea and Beck. These properties were generally built as individual dwellings.

- 3.13 Later buildings on the upper parts of the High Street and valley slopes are generally of brick construction, often in terraces or groupings of buildings. These properties represent a phase of the Staithes development linked to its mining past and the advent of the railway.
- 3.14 Overall, however, Staithes can be described as a well-preserved fishing village retaining much of its eighteenth century and nineteenth century character.
- 3.15 The settlement only has two streets (High Street and Church Street) both of which are narrow and not suitable for general vehicular use.
- 3.16 The remainder of the village is accessed by a series of lanes and passageways and alleyways, which create a sense of enclosure.
- 3.17 One feature of the settlement is that by virtue of the fact of the tightly packed nature of the properties, many lack any form of gardens or formal amenity space associated with the properties. A number of dwellings have small rear yards that often back directly onto other properties adding to the high density.
- 3.18 There is also a lack of any obvious vegetation, trees, hedges, and landscaping and open areas. This is in part due to its coastal location as well as the nature of the built form of the settlement.
- 3.19 The environmental quality of the townscape when viewed overall is generally good, but there are a number of buildings and spaces in need of attention.
- 3.20 The Conservation Area has a considerable amount of local interest and historical association. Staithes has an historical link with Captain James Cook, who worked in the village prior to his career at sea as an explorer and navigator.
- 3.21 The growth of the settlement was however based around fishing and its role as a port. An old tradition was that families named their houses after their boats and many properties still exhibit unusual sounding house names, testament to the importance of the village's seafaring past.
- 3.22 Another tradition was that the houses were painted in the same colours as the family boat. There are a few examples in Staithes where this custom is maintained although many properties exhibit newer decorating styles and influences. It is also the link with fishing that gave rise to the custom of women wearing the 'Staithes Bonnet' to protect their hair from fish scales as they carried baskets of fish on their heads.
- 3.23 Staithes also benefited in the early nineteenth century from the rich mineral reserves that were mined in the locality. The advent of the railway brought further growth and prosperity to the town. The remnants of the stone rampart to the great railway viaduct that crossed Staithes Beck is still visible today.
- 3.24 Towards the end of the nineteenth century Staithes was the base for a group of impressionist painters, the 'Staithes Group' who lived and worked in Staithes. The settlement therefore has a rich and varied history, which add to the flavour and character of the Conservation Area.

- 3.25 The character of the area is generally peaceful. Descending Bank Bottom into the heart of the Conservation Area, where vehicular traffic is discouraged by virtue of the narrow streets and lack of car parking and manoeuvring areas, one is transported into the past.
- 3.26 There is a stillness and tranquillity which are as much a part of the Conservation Area's character as the buildings and landscape. At various locations the sound of the sea and gulls reinforce its strong relationship to the sea. The rushing of the Beck provides another key feature of the Conservation Area as do the coal burning fires of residential properties that provide an evocative atmosphere.
- 3.27 Staithes Beck forms the border between Scarborough Borough Council in North Yorkshire and Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council. Cowbar Lane and Northside nestle directly beneath the coastal cliff on a narrow shelf with room for only one row of houses and the road between the houses and the Beck.
- 3.28 The Cleveland Way National Trail, running from Helmsley to Filey, runs down Cowbar Lane and across the footbridge into High Street and then on to Church Street before leaving Staithes and heading towards Port Mulgrave. The footpath brings many ramblers through the village.
- 3.29 Staithes today has a number of problems. Many are rooted in the socio-economic base of its population. Changes in the fortunes of its past industries provided a legacy of high unemployment. Its economic base today relies on tourism but it lacks the profile of many of its coastal neighbours, Scarborough, Whitby and Robin Hoods Bay despite its history and attractive setting. This may in part be due to its remoter location.
- 3.30 The link with tourism whilst having a positive impact in bringing a much needed boost to the economy is, however, also having a negative effect. Many properties are now bracketed as holiday homes or holiday let cottages, which lie dormant and empty out of season waiting for the influx of summer visitors. It is estimated that some 62% of properties in Staithes are not a primary residence.
- 3.31 The lack of buoyancy in the economy of Staithes is reflected through a whole series of issues. Many are beyond the reach of the work involved in the Conservation Appraisal others are less so. The disposable income of residents to improve and maintain properties, the age and ability of residents to undertake repairs, access to information and improvements to environmental aspects of the Conservation Area are all important to the future well being of the Conservation Area.
- 3.32 At the time of our survey (January 2001) activity levels were generally low.



## 4. Location and Population

- 4.1 Staithes is located on the north-eastern edge of the North Yorkshire Moors National Park and is part of the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast.
- 4.2 The village lies approximately ten miles from Whitby and eight miles from Saltburn-by-the-Sea. Lofthouse is approximately four miles away whilst Helmsley, the location of the North York Moors National Park Authority offices is located approximately twenty-four miles to the south-west.
- 4.3 The village lies on the A174 Whitby to Middlesborough Road. The Conservation Area is accessed from the A174, via Staithes Lane.
- 4.4 The village is split onto two distinct parts. The newer part of the village lies directly adjacent to the A174 and focused around the Staithes Lane area.
- 4.5 The area to which this report relates is the older part of the village which lies on the coast and is defined by the Conservation Area Boundary.
- 4.6 The miners cottages located on Cowbar are within the study area. Whilst there is no direct road link the Cowbar is linked to the Old village by a footbridge across the Beck. Cowbar Lane provides access to the Lifeboat house and dwellings on the North Side from the A174.
- 4.7 Staithes lies within the parish of Hinderwell. The total population for the parish is 2,300 of which Staithes contains 1,219. The majority of the balance is located within Port Mulgrave. These figures are based on the mid year estimates for 1999 available at Scarborough Borough Council.
- 4.8 Due to the way in which census data is broken down geographically it is not possible to gain exact census data for the study area. However we have assessed the data available for the smallest geographical area, enumeration districts, FQ04 which includes the majority of the study site although Cowbar Cottages are excluded.
- 4.9 Some key indicators for the village are set out below for comparison with the averages for England and Wales:-

	FQ04 (%)	England & Wales (%)
Male Unemployed/on Government Scheme	17.5	12.4
Female: Unemployed/on Government Scheme	13.6	7.8
Households with no central heating	38.0	18.5
Households sharing/lacking bath/shower and/or inside WC.	6.7	2.1
Households with no car	38.7	32.4

Housing type: Terraced dwellings	63.5	29.8
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- 4.10 The data shown above provides a number of indicators for this report. Some of the findings set out below raise no surprises, such as the high percentage of terraced houses.
- 4.11 Other statistics such as car ownership levels and unemployment levels are not so obvious to the observer but none the less are important indicators which must be considered when assessing the environmental quality of the village with a view to defining future priorities.

## **5. Origins of Settlement**

- 5.1 Available research undertaken by local residents, as well as that produced by the North York Moors National Park Authority, suggests that Staithes could be built on the remains of a 12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century fortified site.
- 5.2 However, due to the complexity of undertaking such research, this report has not sought to unravel the early history of the settlement but to provide a summary of the town's history from the 1600s onwards to set the context for the consideration of the merits of the Conservation Area. For ease of reference the history has been broken down into a series of sub sections each summarising a significant period in the history of Staithes:-

### **Alum Mining**

- 5.3 From the latter part of the 1600's until the latter part of the 1800s alum mining brought employment to the village of Staithes. The Boulby Works began in 1680 and operated for one hundred and seventy years.
- 5.4 Alum was used in the textile industry, tanning industry and paper industries of the time and brought considerable prosperity to the village.
- 5.5 Whilst the miners were not well paid many were provided with a house and granted grazing rights for cattle and the use of land for the production of hay.
- 5.6 The alum industry also required boats to production materials to the quarries and to remove the alum. Most the boats involved were of a flat-bottomed construction to enable landings on the beach.
- 5.7 By the mid to late 1800s the industry was in decline due to the availability of cheaper materials and changes in the processes involved.

### **Staithes Port**

- 5.8 From the late 1700s until the late 1800s, Staithes was a thriving port town. Many boat owners lived within the village operating both merchant ships, undertaking both deep sea and coasting trade, and fishing boats.
- 5.9 Employment was also provided by the boat builders, sail makers; hook makers and fish curers and fish merchants.
- 5.10 However, with the advent of steam and iron and increased trawling by Scottish boats caused oversupply and a collapse in stocks. The impact of this upon fish prices caused the industry in Staithes to decline in the late 1800s.

## **Jet Mining**

- 5.11 From the mid to late 1800s, jet mining was evident in the village. It was not a large scale industrial activity but nonetheless a number of Staithes' residents made a living from mining the material for jewellery manufacturing.
- 5.12 However, much of this informal source of employment ceased in the late 1800s when Queen Victoria stopped wearing jet jewellery following her period of mourning for Prince Albert's death.

## **Ironstone Mining**

- 5.13 Between 1850 and the mid-1900s, Staithes maintained an income from ironstone mining which was extracted at the village and sent to Cleveland for processing. The ironstone industry also prompted the development of tramway and transport systems for transporting the raw materials. The Grinkle railway ran from 1875 until 1916 serving the mines and running on to Port Mulgrave where it would be exported from the harbour. By the late 1800s the ironstone was beginning to be exhausted and this coincided with the decline in fishing due to the unsuitability of the port.

## **The Railway**

- 5.14 The mining industry in Staithes brought with it the development of a railway in the late 1800s linking it with Teesside. The remains of the viaduct crossing the Beck although the line was closed in 1958.
- 5.15 It appears to have had a substantial impact upon Staithes. The advent of the railway corresponded with a decline in commercial activity in the town but also opened up the village to a wider catchment and most notably attracted artists, which became known as the Staithes Group an important British impressionist group.

## **Commercial Activity**

- 5.16 The village's mineral wealth and its growth as a port brought commercial activity.
- 5.17 In 1851 two shoemakers, tailors and dressmakers, five grocers, three bakers and two butchers operated from the town and in 1864 there were fifty-three businesses which were largely dependent on outside custom.
- 5.18 In 1861 a total of ninety people were listed as working in shops and businesses in Staithes. Employers included blacksmiths, boat builder, cooper, joiner, wheelwright and cartwright.
- 5.19 However, the arrival of the railway prompted the decline of the village as a commercial centre and traders gradually shut down due to the increased mobility of the population. As a commercial centre, the village has never recovered from this decline.



## **6. Uses/Activity**

### **Past**

- 6.1 In the past, the land uses prevalent in the village have been defined by the type of industry that is providing employment and wealth to the town. As such, at different times in its history the village has provided varying facilities such as the 'fish field' and boat building yards during the peak of Staithes success as a port to the railway station and remains of the viaduct in the late 1800s.
- 6.2 The industries located in and around Staithes were also integral in the village's growth as a residential settlement. Cottages and houses were built by the industrialists, those made wealthy by grasping the economic opportunities of the time and by the workers themselves. The Cowbar Cottages are a prominent example of the growth of the village being fuelled by the industry it supported.
- 6.3 All of the industries, to varying degrees, have shaped the physical development of Staithes and its land use patterns.

### **Present**

- 6.4 In terms of the core land uses within the village of Staithes little has changed in recent times. The decline in industry had had a marked effect as the buildings which supported the mining and fishing industries have all but disappeared.
- 6.5 However, the core of the village, the residential settlement, has remained. The last period of significant land use change is most likely to have been as a result of the arrival of the train which eroded the village's importance as a trading centre. This period saw the closure of many traders and service providers and the spaces which they once occupied are now likely to be occupied by residential dwellings.
- 6.6 Of course some commercial activity remains in the town, the butcher, various public houses and post office for example, still operate year round but the overriding use of the town is that of residential.
- 6.7 The residential use of the village has changed over time. Once occupied by those employed in the village, the dwellings are now likely to be occupied by second home owners or let only in the summer months to holiday makers.
- 6.8 As a consequence of the ad hoc growth of the village, which has arisen due to constraints placed upon available development land, a complex pattern of development has been created.
- 6.9 The developed aspects of this pattern have previously been highlighted but there are also a number of areas that provide a focal point for the village.



- 6.10 The bridge across the Beck, the area in front of Bank House, the jetty and Cod and Lobster and Seaton Garth are vital to the village's function and character and as important as its built form.
- 6.11 The areas provide informal recreational facilities for residents to meet.

### **Future**

- 6.12 That the village of Staithes will ever be returned to its former industrial glory is unlikely. However, although there are threats posed to the village's future by shifting land use patterns there are also opportunities.
- 6.13 The trend towards holiday home rental and second home ownership is unlikely to be reversed in the short term and is likely to continue unabated for some time.
- 6.14 However, through modern technologies and working practices it may be possible to secure greater employment opportunities and a more mobile population embracing communication innovation to enable working from any location may benefit the village as a whole.
- 6.15 Increasingly, people are spending less time in the office and more time working remotely from home, a trend set to continue.

## **7. Archaeology**

- 7.1 This record has not sought to research the complex archaeological background to the report site.
- 7.2 We are aware that there is a substantial body of anecdotal evidence relating to the early evolution of Staithes, but there has been insufficient research undertaken to substantiate such claims.
- 7.3 We have accessed the Scheduled Monuments Record and confirm that there are no significant listings for the village.

7.4

## **8. Setting of Conversation Area – Relationship to Landscape Open Countryside**

- 8.1 The setting of Staithes Conservation Area is dramatic. Set within a bay the town is moulded by its dramatic topography. Sea, land and buildings unite to form an inseparable whole.
- 8.2 The old town of the Conservation Area is largely hidden from view when approaching from the newer area of Staithes or coastal approaches.
- 8.3 It is best perhaps to start with a description to the approach to the Conservation Area in terms of the relationship between the old town of Staithes, which lies wholly within the Conservation Area, and the newer town of Staithes, which is divorced from the old town.  
  
Leaving the A174 main coast road, access to Staithes is gained via Staithes Lane through the newer part of the town.
- 8.5 This area is excluded from the Conservation Area. There is a large surface car park where visitors and a number of residents of the old town park due to the limited accessibility and parking facilities.
- 8.6 The car park is large and accessible but lies in a prominent location on the exposed plateau of the cliff top. It provides panoramic views of the surrounding area but not of the old town and the Conservation Area as this is hidden from view.
- 8.7 There are views west of the potash works, open farmland and a number of farms. To the north is a children's play area which at the time of our survey also included a number of traditional fishing boats (brightly coloured cobbles) on the periphery of the play area. These provided the first reference points to Staithes past and its close relationship with the sea.
- 8.8 Beyond the play area former barracks buildings have been converted to an education/recreational activity and resource centre ('trig point 49'). To the south east on the periphery of the car park is an access to a small trading estate. Public toilets and the former railway station building are visible.
- 8.9 To the south is a bank single concrete garages, the Captain Cook pub/hotel (under refurbishment) and a well kept war memorial.
- 8.10 In general terms however the car park is exposed, has no sense of enclosure, lacks any landscaping or peripheral vegetation and could benefit from environmental improvements.
- 8.11 The car park has no relationship to the historic part of Staithes.
- 8.12 The Tourist Information board could add much more to interest visitors and include more useful information.
- 8.13 Access from the car park to the start of the Conservation Area is characterised by a range of residential properties of varying styles ranging from late nineteenth century to mid twentieth century which lie either side of the approach road. Distant views are afforded of Cowbar Nab with a weather/communication aerial on top.

- 8.14 There is no single point at which the Conservation Area boundary becomes evident. The start of the Conservation Area is arbitrary and generally commences after a parking area to Beach May. At this point views are afforded into, and of, the Conservation Area.
- 8.15 Descending the steep narrow road into the town attractive stone sets provide pavement detail where there is a steep cliff bank on the right which emphasises views to the left over the stone wall with wooden rails.
- 8.16 Views are afforded over the stone wall down to Staithes Beck below. Uprturned fishing boats, derelict sheds, pigeon coups and allotment garden give an 'unkempt', if not traditional, introduction to the area.
- 8.17 The boundary of the Conservation Area excludes, at this point, a row of modern proprieties (with Georgian type features). The boundary then diverts to the north east running parallel to a public footpath 'The Old Stubble' which affords access to Mount Pleasant and the old town.
- 8.18 Two large properties, Staithes House and a large unnamed house, lie either side of the boundary. Both properties are prominent from a distance and sit very proudly on the skyline. The Conservation Area boundary then skirts south following the top of the Gun Gutter Valley past the Trig 49 centre and running to the top of the valley head of Lanning Garth.
- 8.19 To the west from the access road into the Conservation Area, the boundary arbitrarily crosses Staithes Beck then rises up the valley side adjacent to a public footpath which rises from stepping stones across the Beck.
- 8.20 The boundary then skirts around the perimeter of Cowbar Cottages. These properties are very prominent siting on the top of the valley side totally exposed. A residential property 'The Bungalow' has been improved and extended but is generally not in keeping with surrounding development. The addition of a large conservatory overlooking the valley of Staithes Beck detracts from the first impression of the general character of buildings in this locality.
- 8.21 The boundary then follows the northern edge of Cowbar Nab returning around the headland, which is very prominent and a dramatic backdrop to Staithes. This landscape area is very much a part of Staithes, and adds to its character and setting.
- 8.22 The Conservation Area then crosses the Beck at sea level to join the mainland at the slipway. It then follows the harbour wall around Seaton Garth continuing eastwards past built development to follow the foot of the cliffs as far as Penny Nab and Stairs Heap. The boundary then returns along the top of he cliffs, following Leech Bank around the top of the cliffs above Seaton Garth.
- 8.23 The boundary then diverts south and follows the valley sides of Gun Gutter terminating further south at Devils Breaches and Lanning Garth.
- 8.24 The topography of the area clearly sets the context for the old part of Staithes and the Conservation Area boundary, although arbitrary in places, has a close relationship to the landscape setting.

## 9. The Architectural Quality and Historic Quality of Buildings

- 9.1 Today, the buildings within the Conservation Area that make up the old part of Staithes are predominantly of eighteenth century and nineteenth century construction. The buildings are mainly of stone or brick often painted or rendered. Roofs are characteristically clay pantile (rustic red in colour) or slate (grey).
- 9.2 Many of the buildings exhibit particular architectural features and detailing such as vertical sliding sash windows or the Yorkshire horizontal sash. Doors are of a variety of styles and design but characteristically panelled or boarded. Some 1930s' doors exhibit stained glass or glazed panels in the doors or in fanlights above.
- 9.3 The street pattern and relationship of the buildings to spaces has altered very little contributing to Staithes well preserved look. The detailing of many of the buildings has changed over time. The lack of available space to extend properties or redevelop sites has benefited the preservation of Staithes but has also contributed to marked changes in the character of buildings within the Conservation Area. Changes have largely arisen from:-
- The replacement of worn out parts
  - The creation of additional space in the roof voids
- 9.4 This has resulted in:-
- Inappropriate scale dormer windows
  - Velux windows in roof areas
  - Replacement window casements
  - Replacement doors
  - Loss of cast iron rainwater goods and replacement by plastic (usually grey).
- 9.5 Many buildings require no more than a fresh coat of paint and general maintenance to restore them to their former appearance.
- 9.6 The overall condition of buildings is generally good. Some 88% of buildings are in a good to fair condition with only 10% considered to be in a poor state of repair. Only 2% of buildings would be classified as in a very bad condition. The Building Condition Survey of all three hundred and nineteen properties provides details.
- 9.7 Many of the poorest quality buildings are outbuildings, former stores/warehouses or garages. These have been neglected over time and although not part of the residential stock of buildings their appearance in the street scene has a negative impact.



9.8 The greatest percentage of buildings in the Conservation Area are residential properties (87%). Many commercial properties that once lined the High Street have all but disappeared and today only 6% of properties can be classified as being in commercial use (shop, Post Office, pub/hotel or office).

9.9 2% of properties are in religious or charity use and the remainder (5%) are outbuildings, warehouse or utility use.

9.10 For the purposes of our appraisal we have divided the Conservation Area into eleven zones. These zones are not to be considered as divisions within the Conservation Area but provide a structure for the consideration of the Area's value. It is very much the whole of the Conservation Area that provides its unique townscape value.

9.11 The zones have been designed purely as areas within which to review the relationship of buildings and architectural features for the purposes of reporting.

9.12 The 11 areas are:-

- Area 1 – Bank Bottom / High Street to Bells Bank
- Area 2 – High Street (Elliot's Yard to Bank House)
- Area 3 – High Street (from Marlborough House to Cod and Lobster Public House)
- Area 4 – Seaton Garth / Beach
- Area 5 – Church Street
- Area 6 – Gun Gutter
- Area 7 – Barrass/High Barrass/Mount Pleasant
- Area 8 – Passageways/courtyards north of High Street
- Area 9 – West of High Street/Beckside
- Area 10 – North Side/Cowbar Lane
- Area 11 – Cowbar Cottages

9.13 Detailed description and analysis of these areas is provided at *Appendix 1*.

9.14 In summary, the greatest percentage of listed buildings in the Staithes Conservation Area is to be found lining the High Street (accounting for almost 50% of the listed building stock of properties).

9.15 The condition and character of the Listed Building stock is generally good. In terms of the English Heritage Buildings at Risk Assessment there have been no listed buildings identified that fall in the categories of 'extreme risk' or 'grave risk'.

9.16 There are however a number of buildings (approx. 5% of the listed building stock) which are 'at risk'. These are:-

- Bethel Chapel (ID no. 6)
- Property left of Alma Cottage (Id no.41)
- Primitive School Rooms (Id no.75)
- Rear of Jennysteel Cottage (Id no 305)

9.17 16% of the listed building stock should however be monitored. Appendix F of the main Building Survey Report identifies on a map base those listed buildings "at risk" and those to be "monitored".

## **10. Contributions Made by Key Unlisted Buildings**

- 10.1 One of the principal factors that set the Staithes Conservation Area apart is that there are no individual buildings, which set a context for the Conservation Area.
- 10.2 Indeed the character of the Conservation Area results from its range of well preserved eighteenth century and nineteenth century buildings.
- 10.3 The very fact that so little redevelopment has occurred means the integral look and feel of Staithes has an overall uniformity. Unlike many other Conservation Areas newer developments have not punctuated the introduced in to the street scene.
- 10.4 The contribution of non-listed buildings is therefore paramount. It is these buildings which together with the listed buildings provide an extremely high townscape value.
- 10.5 Overall, Staithes does not suffer from patchiness in terms of the overall quality of townscape but there are areas on a localised basis where improvements can be made. The report considered three areas:-
- Individual Buildings
  - Groups of buildings
  - Spaces
- 10.6 The unlisted buildings, together with their relationship to the street scene, the listed buildings, passageways and courtyards add immensely to Staithes.
- 10.7 It would be true to say that with few exceptions one can not immediately pinpoint listed buildings from the unlisted buildings in the overall street scene. This gives Staithes its overall appeal and character.
- 10.8 Given the protection that is afforded to buildings with listed status it is therefore very much the case that the unlisted buildings which are more susceptible to change. If not managed, such change could result in damage to the fabric of the Conservation Area. The contribution of the unlisted buildings within the townscape requires added protection.
- 10.9 As the overall character of the Conservation Area is so uniform there may be merit in establishing an Article 4 Direction Order. This will remove permitted development rights and allow prior consideration to be given to alterations and proposals, which can be assessed against the fabric or relationship of properties.
- 10.10 The replacement of windows, doors together with proposals for alterations to properties with regard to extensions, additions of dormer windows or roof lights etc would all be assessed.
- 10.11 Any such scheme should be supported with clear information to residents on details and materials that are acceptable together with those that are not. Of utmost importance will be the assistance and accessibility to grant aid to help fund required improvements to the standard set by the Conservation Area.



- 10.12 Unlike listed buildings, some 32% of unlisted buildings have been identified which directly have a negative impact on the historic character or urban grain of Staithes. These largely result from the addition of inappropriately scaled features e.g. dormer windows, or the condition of properties following alteration/conversion.
- 10.13 Particular unlisted buildings, which detract from the character of the Conservation Area, are identified at Appendix M and N of the main Building Survey Report.
- 10.14 There are however a number of key groupings of unlisted buildings which are referenced at Appendix 1. These relate to
- i. Focal points i.e. those buildings, which lie at specific intersections in the street scene.
  - ii. Group value i.e. where a combination of buildings together adds weight to the character of a particular locality.

## **11. Character and Relationship of Spaces and Greenspaces**

- 11.1 The character and relationship of spaces is essentially what gives Staithes its high townscape value.
- 11.2 The collection of tightly packed buildings with alleyways, steps, slopes, pathways and courtyards provide a highly attractive combination of spaces all in scale and relationship to each other.
- 11.3 Overall, there are very few open spaces within the town but there are many enclosed spaces ranging from the enclosed areas of the High Street to the narrow passageways providing access to enclosed courtyards.
- 4 There is little differentiation between the public and private areas within Staithes. Many alleyways and courtyards are accessible but one does feel like one is encroaching upon people's private space. There are only three or four examples where gates/barriers have been erected to prevent access.
- 11.5 Buildings and hard finished surfaces dominate the overall character. There are few soft or green areas within the town.
- 11.6 There are very few trees, gardens or hedges, which give a characteristic urban, feel yet because of the scale and relationship these together to provide a totally acceptable form of development.
- 11.7 The more open areas of Staithes are defined and described in Appendix 2.

## **12. Extent of Negative Factors**

12.1 The extent of negative factors has been commented on at various sections of the report, together with plans. We have considered the extent of negative factors under three headings:-

- General Issues
- Buildings
- Spaces

### **General**

12.2 These are factors which affect the character of the Conservation Area but are not directly influenced by buildings or spaces. Their collective impact can create poor quality environments. A gradual programme of works may be required. Photographic records are reproduced at Appendix G and at Table 11 of the main Building Survey Report. These deal with:-

- Signage
- Estate Agents Boards
- Lighting
- Wirescape

### **Buildings**

12.3 These are referenced at Appendix 1. It also includes a range of non residential buildings e.g. the public toilets at Seaton Garth, the telephone box and air monitoring unit on the High Street. We also include a number of outbuildings and former garage/warehouse buildings in the Beckside area and North of High Street together with a range of public buildings e.g. Chapels etc..

### **Spaces**

12.4 The spaces in the Conservation Area are of critical importance to the look feel and character of the Conservation Area. There is a varying standard of streetscapes which affect a number of spaces, especially in the courtyards and passageways.

- Varying quality of streetscapes
- High Street Corner
- Slipway
- Mount Pleasant

- Royal George Yard
- Top end of Gun Gutter
- Gun Gutter Street Scene

## 13. Neutral Areas

- 13.1 As part of the Conservation Area Appraisal, we have considered the merit of neutral areas. These are areas which neither enhance nor detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation but where there might be potential for enhancement.
- 13.2 Generally these have been identified as the areas 'off pitch' from the main areas of activity or groupings of buildings. They are located on the upper slopes of Staithes. A series of steps and pathways of varying condition access the areas. The area is also characterised by the fact that they have very few listed buildings
- 13.3 The areas identified are:-
- Darlington Terrace
  - Broomhill
  - Mount Pleasant
  - Browns Terrace

## 14. Conclusions

- 14.1 The character of the Staithes Conservation Area is gained from its well-preserved range of eighteenth century and nineteenth century buildings.
- 14.2 The value of the Conservation Area is very much *area* based
- 14.3 The setting of the Conservation Area has a very close relationship with its coastal topography – there is a very strong link between the natural environment and built environment.
- 14.4 Listed Buildings are not immediately apparent within the overall townscape. This lends support to the fact that so much of Staithes is well preserved, with little redevelopment having taken place.
- 14.5 The overall result is a Conservation Area with a very high townscape value.
- 14.6 The limited opportunities for redevelopment or expansion have assisted the preservation of the built form of the settlement but this has also created pressure for change – replacement of worn out parts of buildings, desire to create more living space i.e. utilisation of roof space.
- 14.7 The unlisted buildings, which make up 74% of the building stock, require added protection. It is this range of buildings, which contribute significantly to the overall character of the Conservation Area and high townscape value.
- 14.8 Various environmental works are required to improve elements of the Conservation Area and its overall appeal.
- 14.9 Staithes still has a very active community although under threat from the number of second homes / holiday let accommodation. A careful balance has to be found between conservation and the needs of its local residents.

## 15. Recommendations

- 15.1 The recommendations suggested are varied. Some will be easier to action and implement than others. Some may have immediate effects; others may involve a schemes of works over a period of time before effects are seen. Much will depend on the ability of the residents of Staithes to support and assist works within the Conservation Area as well as access to all-important sources of funding for specific works.
- 15.2 Some of the recommendations may not be achievable but in working towards them they will hopefully assist with an improvement in the overall quality of the character of the Conservation Area.

### General

- 15.3 Balance the needs of local residents with measures for enhanced conservation.
- 15.4 Improve tourism profile of Staithes and develop a tourism strategy.
- Introduce better visitor information
  - Town Trail for Staithes
- 15.5 Improve car parking area –
- Environmental works
  - Differentiate between residents /visitor car parking
  - Improve visitor information at car park

### Conservation Area - General

- 15.6 Introduce Article 4 Direction Order
- 15.7 Draw up information to assist residents on impact of Article 4 Direction Order
- 15.8 Provide clear guidelines on what constitutes good or poor practice to
- 15.9 Information to assist with access to grant aid.

### Conservation Area – Buildings

- 15.10 Architectural design competition for Cobble Cottage/Beckside Cottage (former Co –op buildings) High Street
- 15.11 Removal of Public Toilets at Seaton Garth
- 15.12 Identify and encourage key use generators for vacant buildings e.g. Bethel Chapel / Primitive Schoolroom – art gallery, local craft workshops, community facility
- 15.13 Remove glass public telephone box and replace with appropriate telephone box.

15.14 Minimise impact of air monitoring unit in street scene.

**Conservation Area – Environmental**

15.15 Streetscape Works (cross reference to Building Survey Report)

15.16 Improve the quality of open spaces.

15.17 Gun Gutter environmental street scene enhancement

15.18 Beckside – co-ordinated environmental improvements

15.19 Seaton Garth improve slipway, surfaces and railings to harbour front

15.20 High Street – relay sections of cobbles.





## APPENDIX 1

### Area 1 – Bank Bottom / High Street

- 1.1 In this area there area approximately 10% of the listed building stock. It is also the main introduction to the Conservation Area for residents and visitors alike upon entering.
- 1.2 Descending Bank Bottom on the right hand side, Brown's Terrace rises off to the right. Brown's Terrace provides a pedestrian only access where the pantile roofs of the properties fronting Bank Bottom/High Street meet the footpath at first floor level.
- .3 Although this passageway contains no listed buildings it does include a number of properties that require improvement, in particular Newlyn (ID no 87), an unnamed house (ID no 220) and Acorn Cottage (ID no 224).
- 1.4 There are an attractive row of listed cottages (Lyn, Boulby and Hilda) which unlike many properties within the Conservation Area have front gardens which are paved in York flagstones. These eighteenth century cottages exhibit alterations such as modern windows and Lyn cottage with gabled dormer but also some good detailing such as the stained glass panel of a ship in the gabled porch to Hilda Cottage. With adjacent West View (although with large dormer windows) these properties have individual as well as group value.
- 1.5 Between Valley View Cottage and New York House steps and a pathway lead down to Beckside.
- 1.6 As one turns the slight curve in High Street still descending into the old town the dominant building immediately visible is the Bethel Chapel (Grade II). The building is vacant and for sale but showing signs of neglect and disrepair.
- .7 This mid nineteenth century chapel has a range of architectural features including a central doorway with a 6 panel double door and fanlight. The building has a two-storey façade to High Street but four-storey rear elevation.
- 1.8 It detracts from the street scene in its present condition. The Chapel acts as a focal point diverting the eye through the bend to another focal point where properties Belmont (A and B off High Street) and Westgate (listed) form a visually pleasing group of properties which interrupt the remaining view of High Street.
- 1.9 These buildings appear to be in generally good condition and have important group value, occupying a prominent location in the street scene.
- 1.10 Diagonally opposite these properties is the former Primitive Methodist Chapel dated 1880 which has been converted into a private museum - "The Captain Cook and Staithes Heritage Centre". Built in Ashlar Stone with slate roof the building occupies a prominent position with imposing façade fronted by wrought iron railings.

- 1.11 Adjacent is a vacant building in a very poor state of repair. The former Primitive Chapel Schoolroom is a building, which is in need of urgent repair and attention. The building is also exhibiting signs that structural repair is needed. The building is for sale.
- 1.12 Opposite the Heritage Centre is Bells Bank, which affords a view of the Shale cliff on the northern side of the Beck, which rises above the red pantile roofs of cottages in the Beckside area.
- 1.13 Turning the corner into High Street the road levels out.
- 1.14 Generally, properties in this locality have small rear enclosed yards often exaggerating the change in levels with adjacent buildings.

## **Area 2 – High Street (Elliot's Yard to Bank House)**

- 1.15 The High Street from the steps adjacent to the Primitive Schoolroom has a much more linear and structured form. The buildings and street scene are more uniformed with two to three storey properties either side of the narrow High Street. Many of the properties are of brick construction.
- 1.16 The High Street is also cobbled in part with blue set gutters although recent work undertaken by Yorkshire Water Authority has resulted in an uneven street finish.
- 1.17 Numerous alleyways and passageways divert off from the High Street via steps or slopes.
- 1.18 There is a high proportion of listed properties within this section of High Street (15% of the listed building stock). The former Staithes Newsagent (vacant) has a prominent frontage forward of the remainder of High Street properties, which generally lie in a terrace formation. The building has a pleasing relationship with the adjacent Glainsdale Cottage (listed) although this building suffers from the addition of a flat dormer window with large casement windows.
- 1.19 The building, which detracts from the overall character of the street scene, is the former Co-op building. The property is showing signs of neglect with moss/weeds overgrowing from the gutters. Immediate remedial works are required to improve the look of the property. Whilst a facelift may assist in the overall street scene no amount of improvement will be able to address the relationship of the single storey building (Cobble Cottage) and the adjacent three storey flats (vacant) which have an unappealing and unsatisfactory relationship.
- 1.20 Redevelopment may be a more appropriate solution in order to create a building of character and scale to replace the poor quality property.
- 1.21 Within the lower part of this section of High Street there are a number of commercial properties including the Black Lion Public House (listed), Gift Shop and Post Office.
- 1.22 The street scene terminates with a right hand bend. This creates a blind corner adding to a sense of anticipation. At this point the eye is drawn to the properties which terminate the street scene these being Bank House (under refurbishment). The adjacent art gallery shop

(listed) has a fine two-storey frontage with good proportions spoilt only by the introduction of six velux roof windows, which detract from the overall impressive frontage.

- 1.23 Between Middlesborough House and the 'takeaway café', is a narrow alleyway leading to the coastal path via the bridge over Staithes Beck.
- 1.24 On the opposite corner is Kippers Corner (listed) an attractive three storey property which may have at one time been a shop.
- 1.25 Rounding the corner into the continuation of High Street there is a small area of open land which comprises a modern telephone kiosk (BT glass box), a village notice board and an air monitoring unit.
- 1.26 This collection of installations utilises a small but important area of land within the overall street scene. The BT glass phone box should be removed and replaced with a telephone box more in keeping with the general locality. The air monitoring unit is unsightly in the street scene in what could be a usefully improved space. The air monitoring unit is only temporary but minimal works should at least be undertaken to reduce its impact within the Conservation Area in a prominent street scene location.

### **Area 3 – High Street**

- 1.27 This section of High Street has a less regulated feel with enclosed views, slight curve and gradual descent.
- 1.28 It also includes a range of commercial properties, residential and holiday let accommodation of varying character and condition within the street scene. Unoccupied properties show characteristic signs of non-occupancy which detract from the character of the street scene.
- 1.29 Within this section of High Street there is the highest concentration of listed properties (19% of the listed building stock) running generally from Bank House along the northern side of High Street.
- 1.30 There are however a high proportion of properties in this area requiring attention and repair. In particular The Anchorage (listed) has had a later two-storey bay window, which detracts from the character of the late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century building. Property (ID 41) is probably an early nineteenth century house with shop. This listed building is constructed in course stone but several years of neglect have left it in a very poor state of repair. It detracts from the overall character of the street scene especially when viewed from the steps that descend to the High Street opposite the building.
- 1.31 The focal point of High Street terminates at a slight bend in the street at Barrass Square, which draws the eye to the lower part of High Street.
- 1.32 Along the High Street are a number of alleyways, which lead off from the High Street. On the north side are Barbers Yard, Royal George Yard, Boat House Yard, a passageway under Mariners House, and Garth Ends. On the south side Slippery Hill and Barrass.

- 1.33 These important areas are key to the overall feel of the town and create a sense of interest and add to the tight compact nature of the townscape. Traversing the passageways and alleyways often gives rise to a completely different townscape often enclosed courtyards, narrow rows of cottages of different heights and different width buildings.

#### **Area 4 – Seaton Garth**

- 1.34 Seaton Garth represents the harbour area of Staithes. Seaton Garth has a more open area than the remainder of the village and there is a limited amount of car parking on the sea front.
- 1.35 It is likely that this area has been built out over time to create the landing area and manoeuvring areas in front of the original cottages, which will have fronted the beach and sea.
- 1.36 There are a variety of building styles cottages, guest houses and more recent development (ID 168/169) which although attempting to replicate the style of properties in the area appear out of scale due to its height of three storeys and the incorporation of dormer windows. The property has an uneasy relationship to adjacent properties and appears over dominant.
- 1.37 The locality hosts about 6% of the listed building stock. The collection of buildings in this area has good overall value tightly grouped together on the harbourside adding to the historical/nautical feel of the locality.
- 1.38 The harbour area also includes steps down to the beach area and a slip way for boats. To the rear of the properties fronting the sea the shale cliffs rise steeply behind.
- 1.39 The public conveniences located on the sea front in this area could be improved. The flat roof toilets are out of character with buildings in the general locality and require at minimum a pitched roof to introduce a better reference point to surrounding buildings but ultimately their relocation would be a priority. The public conveniences detract generally from the groupings of buildings in this locality particularly around Spendrift Cottage.

#### **Area 5 – Church Street**

- 1.40 Church Street has (albeit restricted) vehicular access. Church Street rises parallel to Gunn Gutter. Many passage ways link between Church Street to Gunn Gutter including Dog Loup which is said to be the narrowest street in Yorkshire.
- 1.41 Church Street contains a mix of fine larger sized properties, many of which are listed (containing approximately 13% of the listed building stock), but also contains a number of properties in need of repair and attention.
- 1.42 Properties mainly exhibit stone facades or painted render with characteristic red/orange pantile or slate roofs.



- 1.43 The street scene is dominated by a difference in level with the western side properties running at pavement level up the hill whilst on the eastern side properties are set at a raised level reached by a series of steps.
- 1.44 A number of properties still have brick out houses to their fronts.
- 1.45 In the lower part of Church Street is Captain Cook's Cottage where a plaque has been erected noting:-
- "The young James Cook received his first head of sailing ships in this harbour village where he worked as an assistant to William Sanderson Merchants for 18 months from 1745".*
- 1.46 Views up Church Street are dominated by the gable façade of the Mission Church of St Peter the Fisherman (listed).
- 1.47 Church Street begins to rise steeply with a fine imposing property, Kirkhill House. This Georgian, well proportioned, property is a grand residence and is the only Grade II\* listed building in the Conservation Area.
- 1.48 Further up Church Hill properties exhibit a mixture of repair and finishes. Penjara (listed) is an early nineteenth century property, recently refurbished. Part set back the stone built two-storey property is rendered to the front. The property has a recent pantiled roof.
- 1.49 Many properties contrast to this and are showing signs of deterioration. Sunny Cottage adjacent is unlisted but in need of repair. It has box dormers in its roof space out of proportion with the property. This detracts from the character of the building, which has some integral features in the overall street scene. Similarly Kyrenia which is adjacent is in need of repair.
- 1.50 Both these properties have brick built sheds/storage areas to the front.
- 1.51 On the other side of Church Street is St Heliers. This interesting property of unusual proportions is listed as having one single sash window on the Church Street side the property and two storeys to the Gun Gutter elevation emphasising the fall in levels between the two streets.
- 1.52 Adjacent is a passageway that leads to Gun Gutter.
- 1.53 Hillsover and Hilary Cottage adjacent to Kyrenia have similar proportions but modern double glazing detracts from Hillsover and both properties have box dormers in the roofs, which are out of proportion.
- 1.54 At the top of Church Street Felicity House and Felicity Cottage are the last properties where the street gives way to a track marked out with stone slabs. The path begins to rise steeply and forms part of the Cleveland Way public footpath. To the west the land falls away to Gunn Gutter Beck with an array of allotments deep in the valley of the Beck. Evidence of land slip and cliff erosion gives the area a rugged feel.

- 1.55 At the top of the rise the pathway joins the Cleveland Way public footpath which continues south and to the east. At this point the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area abuts the footpath.
- 1.56 Felicity Cottage is dominant in the foreground with dormer windows. As the view of Cowbar Nab the sea and a collection of pantiled roof tops provides a magnificent view from this point the property does not detract totally from the look of the coastal settlement hemmed in by the cliffs and sea.

### **Area 6 – Gunn Gutter**

- 1.57 For the purposes of this appraisal we include in this section the top of the slipway, the Cod and Lobster public house and the narrow alleyways which pass between properties leading through to Gunn Gutter.
- 1.58 At this point the buildings collectively form a focal point of high townscape value.
- 1.59 Collectively the narrow fronted perpendicular buildings face the harbour in whitewash, some exhibiting black boarded wooden shutters and some exhibiting old stone walling within the lower sections of the property.
- 1.60 These properties are particularly dominant from distant views gained from Cowbar Nab and have good group value.
- 1.61 Whilst One Slip Top and Sea Crest are listed the adjacent Briny Cottage is not.
- 1.62 Between Briny Cottage and 1 Slip Top (listed) a small alleyway provides access to four properties which include Rose of England (for sale) and No. 4 Karabuk. These properties are not listed but are showing signs of disrepair. New paint-work, doors and guttering may be required. 1 Slip Top Cottage which exhibits large shutters on gable end property window to top. Between 1 Slip Top and Sea Crest Cottage, (holiday let) there is a small passageway although a wooden barrier would appear to restrict general access.
- 1.63 Sea Crest Cottage adjoins Barrass Square and together provides an interesting combination of buildings with an historic feel. Sea Crest Cottage although listed has an unsightly dormer, which is highly prominent when viewed from High Street.
- 1.64 Gunn Gutter includes some 6% of the listed building stock. A number of interesting sandstone buildings, of three-storeys, are unlisted. The area has an old feel with exposed brickwork and stone work that exhibits interesting features. There are a series of empty/derelict cottages although a number including Bramla are currently being refurbished.
- 1.65 Gunn Gutter Cottage, Friendship Cottage appears to be occupied with evidence of recent building works having been undertaken. Bramble Corner Cottage, formerly Ye Cotte, has recently been refurbished and rendered in cream with exposed sandstone blockwork to windows. The general area also has a number of stone walls that would appear worthy of treatment/improvement.

- 1.66 The street has a very enclosed feel and a number of properties fronting Church Lane back onto Gun Gutter. A considerable amount of refurbishment and repair work was being undertaken at the time of our survey.
- 1.67 At the top end of Gun Gutter the lane ends with an open street. Steps off to the left rise to Church Street and the Beck disappears down a sink. At one time this valley was probably an open street with the stream acting as a drain down the middle.
- 1.68 Despite the general improvements in the area that have been undertaken the locality could benefit from a more co-ordinated approach that would also address street scene and street scene finishes. The overall character of this part of the Conservation Area is poor despite its obvious historic merit. Together the groupings of buildings are well related.
- 1.69 Wirework and street lighting work are particularly problematic in the street scene. Street lamp no. S69 is positioned in the centre of Hillside, an attractive but vacant property.
- 1.70 It was noted that a number of cast iron rainwater goods were being replaced with black plastic downpipes.

### **Area 7 – Barrass Square, High Barrass and Mount Pleasant**

- 1.71 Barrass Square is a large public open space at the focal point of several routes. It has a feeling of openness with mainly two storey buildings with small front yards opening onto an area of York stone paving.
- 1.72 A handrail runs up the centre of Barrass which slopes down to the bottom end of High Street which we understand was part of an environmental improvement scheme carried out by the National Park Authority in 1993.
- 1.73 High Barrass on the other hand is an enclosed pedestrian pathway with mainly three storey brick houses opening directly on to narrow passageways.
- .74 The area is characterised by a series of passageways; steps and slopes built in a compact format.
- 1.75 In general terms, the area, although having high townscape value with groupings of properties in similar architectural styles, has few listed buildings, just some 7% of the total listed building stock despite the number of properties in the area. Grimes Cottage and York House (an attractive property with stone steps rising to it) are the only listed properties at Mount Pleasant. 3 cottages on High Barrass (8 Bells, Pilgrims Cottage and two unnamed properties (ID no.200 and 199).
- 1.76 There are good vantage points over rooftops with the harbour beyond and the headland of Cowbar Nab.
- 1.77 Steps continue to rise steeply to an area generally called Mount Pleasant. There are cobbled steps in this section of the streetscape and a number of interesting 2/3 storey buildings.

## **Area 8 – Courtyards North of High Street**

- 1.78 The main three storey facades of properties in High Street have a good relationship and scale with the narrow cobbled carriageway given a strong sense of street enclosure.
- 1.79 This is contrasted when one accesses the various maze of passageways and courtyards from High Street to the north. These open into a series of yards and courtyards, which are often small and some represent no more than passageways between the rear areas and houses adjacent.
- 1.80 They have names such as Bank Yard, Barbers Yard, Royal George Yard, Boathouse Yard and Garth Ends, which may be indicative of former uses and/or residents. In parts access is provided to the Beck and views across to Northside.
- 1.81 A number of properties in this area are listed (representing about 13% of the total listed building stock). Properties are characteristically of stone construction with render. Most are of late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century with pantiled roofs. Many are included within listings for their group value. As the properties are so tightly packed and have a strong built relationship form to each other there is no real discernible difference between listed and non-listed buildings. A number of properties have had more modern additions – typically replacement doors / windows and balcony features.
- 1.82 The properties to the rear of High Street are more intimate and less structured than the formality of High Street and some are in need of repair and attention. The area around the Royal George Courtyard, which includes a number of small gardens, could benefit from environmental improvement works.

## **Area 9 – Beckside and Courtyards West of High Street**

- 1.83 Between High Street and Staithes Beck there is a drop in levels which gives added prominence to roofscapes and the relationship of buildings in the area when viewed from High Street.
- 1.84 In addition to a range of small cottages and larger residential properties there is a Church, a number of garages, small warehouse buildings and out buildings, some of which appear to be in very poor condition.
- 1.85 There are also a series of internal courtyards and passageways that link back to the High Street. The relationship and association of buildings in this locality provide the area with an interesting mixture of properties and architectural styles and differing scales. The area has approximately 10% of the listed building stock.
- 1.86 There are however many opportunities for improvement and repair. There are a number of buildings, which have fallen into disrepair especially at the southern end of Beckside behind properties, which front the High Street. These are clearly viewed from the stepping stones across Staithes Beck or from slightly higher vantage points.
- 1.87 A building just off Wesley Square (ID no. 273) which is derelict and in very poor condition is the subject of a planning application for redevelopment as a dwelling.



- 1.88 The area therefore provides some degree of flexibility to introduce new development reflecting the scale, character and traditional building materials of the area.

### **Area 10 – Northside and Cowbar Lane**

- 1.89 There are no listed buildings in the development on Northside or Cowbar Lane which contain a range of cottage style properties showing signs of modernisation alterations and additions. Generally properties suffer from the insertion of inappropriate windows (bay), dormers and extensions.
- 1.90 On North Side the Lifeboat Station and slipway is to be found.
- 1.91 Northside properties sit at a lower level on the bank to properties on the opposite side of Staithes Beck, which sit high on a retaining wall. Views afforded of the town at this point are interesting as many of the older properties exhibit interesting architectural features and detailing giving a very different sense of enclosure and relationship to the Beck than the approach from High Street.
- 1.92 Climbing Cowbar Lane wider panoramic views are afforded of the old town on the other side of Staithes Beck. Cottages, which line Cowbar Lane (Nos. 1-5), are generally in reasonable repair and condition. No. 6 Cowbar Lane is an attractive sandstone three-storey dwelling with white paint render and green paint-work and traditional style windows.
- 1.93 No. 7 Cowbar Lane is a property that has been subject to a number of alterations including the insertion of large patio style windows on the front elevation and a satellite TV aerial. This building is particularly visible from distant views from the other side of the Beck.
- 1.94 On Cowbar Bank there are two cottages in reasonable repair, which face directly across Staithes Beck looking over the rooftops of the old town. These properties have formal rear gardens and car parking area.

### **Area 11 - Cowbar Cottages**

- 1.95 At this point Cowbar Bank has a tight curve from which access is provided via a stile to Cowbar Nab (National Trust).
- 1.96 Cowbar Cottages sit in a prominent location on the top of the valley and are highly visible from various vantage points. They have an interesting configuration fronting gardens/allotment gardens. The fronts of properties numbered 2-12 face the rear of properties numbered 12-24 and a combination of gardens and allotments lie in between.
- 1.97 The properties were originally miners cottages to the alum mines although many appear to have had rear single storey extensions. None of the properties are listed.
- 1.98 Located on the southern end of Cowbar Cottages is The Bungalow, which has been extended including the addition of a large conservatory on the rear of the property.

## Appendix 2

### **The Beck**

- 1.1 An important aspect not only contributing to the history and form of the development of the village but also its character. The dramatic cliff sides rising up to Cowbar Bank provide an incised setting for the tidal stream. The Beck itself has a changing face at low and high tide.

### **Allotments**

- 1.2 Located along the valleys of Staithes Beck and Gun Gutter. These important areas are one of the few greenspaces and provide recreational areas for residents.

### **Mount Pleasant**

- 1.3 A fine viewing location in the town providing 360-degree views of Staithes. This exposed prominent location could be better utilised with environmental improvements to the seating area, and perhaps display information.

### **Seaton Garth/Beach**

- 1.4 This area is very special for the very fact it provides one of the only open areas of the town representing the lower plateaux of the cliffs and its relationship to the sea.
- 1.5 Seaton Garth opens out into an area of space that could benefit from some environmental improvement to the harbour railings and surface treatment.
- 1.6 The properties are set back with the shire cliffs rising behind but in the foreground there is an expansive area providing access to the beach and view of the harbour and sea beyond.

### **Cowbar Nab**

- 1.7 A prominent and dramatic backdrop to Staithes.
- 1.8 The cliff face shows evidence of severe erosion but its mass and impact on Staithes are integral features of the Conservation Area. It is an immediate reference point that pin points archive photographs and affords some of the best views of Staithes from its cliff top.
- 1.9 Severe erosion and damage to the cliff face by nesting gulls are particular problems.

### **North Side/Jetty**

- 1.10 This open area and part of the sea defences open out below Cowbar Nab to provide expansive views back of the town rising on the stone walls above the Beck and beach. More distant views are provided.
- 1.11 There are also a number of high quality panoramic views and vistas, as follows:

## **Panoramic**

### *From the viewing platform above Bank Bottom*

- 1.12 This is the first view of the Conservation Area when approaching from the carpark. The descending road leads the visitor into the town. A shale cliff on the right hand side diverts views over the stone wall into the valley Beck with allotment gardens, sheds and derelict buildings. Distance views of Cowbar Nab with views of rooftops in foreground.

### *From Cowbar Cottages*

- 1.13 There is a vantage point at the extreme apex of No. 12 which provides views of the Beck and roof tops across the old town. From this vantage point the public footpath which runs from the upper point of Staithes into the town (the Old Stubble) is visible across to Mount Pleasant. From the vantage point on the horizon is a large farmhouse and associated farm, which stand very prominent at the top end of Church Street.
- 1.14 Directly opposite on the horizon is a large white building Sea Cliff House with a large uninspiring property located behind. The larger property lies outside the Conservation Area but the relationship of these properties sitting prominent on the bank on the very edge of the Conservation Area do not have good relationship to the Conservation Area or the townscape quality of Staithes.
- 1.15 Looking due west the Cowbar Cottages and Bungalow face open moorland where the embankment of the railway and start of the former bridge cross the Staithes Beck are visible in the distance the Potash Factory and Chimney Towers are clearly visible.

### *From Cowbar Nab*

- 1.16 From Cowbar Nab excellent panoramic views are afforded of Staithes.
- 1.17 Mount Pleasant is clearly visible as a green mound of some height, which separates the town either side of the main headland i.e. Staithes Brook on the right hand side and Gun Gutter on the left hand side. From this vantage point the town has a more linear frontage as properties follow the harbour and Beck. The access road into Staithes town down Bank Bottom and High Street is clearly visible. Distant views are afforded of the farm located at ??, the Trig Point 49 and the large properties of Sea Cliff House.

### *From Mount Pleasant*

- 1.18 Mount Pleasant provides a good vantage point with panoramic views around the town. High Street is visible (the line of) and although the Beck is not visible Cowbar Cottages on the horizon are clearly visible.
- 1.19 From this vantage point which has a very useful view of roofscapes there are signs of repairs where slates are in need of repair. The vantage point also provides the opportunity of viewing newer roofs and pantile roofs but generally the compact nature of the town from this vantage point is very good.

- 1.20 There are numerous pathways and slopes and steps, which move in different directions down towards High Street. From Mount Pleasant one can also pick up the footpath of the Old Stubble which runs on the higher part of the cliff top back to Bank Bottom and the edge of the Conservation Area.

*From the top of Church Street*

- 1.21 The point provides excellent views down Church Street over the rooftops with the prominent cliff of Cowbar Nab acting as a protective shield to the nestling village below. Breakwater (East)
- 1.22 The area provides access to one of the harbour breakwaters from which picturesque panoramic views of the harbour and associated properties located on the edge of the sea walls are visible. Beyond the dramatic headland of Cowbar Nab rises steeply as a backdrop showing evidence of coastal erosion and weathering.

*Northside*

- 1.23 A low level view point that links the Beck and the main part of Staithes. The old properties that rise from the harbour walls have a close association with the sea and provide a contrast to the view gained from the other side of properties from High Street. The tightly packed cottages and former warehouse buildings create a sense of the past.

*From the bridge over the Beck.*

- 1.24 The bridge over Staithes Beck provides views upstream and down stream to the sea.

**Vistas**

High Street.  
Barbers Yard – Across the Beck  
Boathouse Yard Slip Way Barrass Square back to High Street  
Up Church Street  
Broom Hill  
High Street into Barrass Square  
Barrass Square down to Tom England's Slip Top Cottage.



**Notes**

- Tarmacadam
- In-situ concrete
- Concrete slab
- Stone flags
- Granit setts
- Traditional clay bricks
- Engineering brick
- Flints
- Brick paviments
- Concrete kerb
- Timber decking
- Random rubble
- Scourrier blocks
- Stone steps
- Concrete steps
- Brick steps
- Concrete gully
- Sand stone setts
- Steel sheet
- Stone kerb
- Stone cobbles/ scourrier blocks

Date Revision

Drawing No. **36917/04** Revise

Address:  
**STATTHES**  
**NORTH YORKSHIRE**

Title:  
**STATTHES**  
**PRINCIPAL SURFACING MATERIALS**

Client:  
**NORTH YORK MOORS**  
**NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

Date	Drawn by	AV	Scale
JAN 2001	File No.	36917	Scale



SEARCHERS SURVEYORS  
 PROPERTY ADVISORS

Plotter: Plotter 1, 200-1001 Street, Birmingham B1 1JH  
 Telephone: 0121-222 0777 Fax: 0121-222 0788  
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 All dimensions to be checked on site and used in preference to those given or scaled from the drawing, and must be brought to the attention of the Surveyor.

