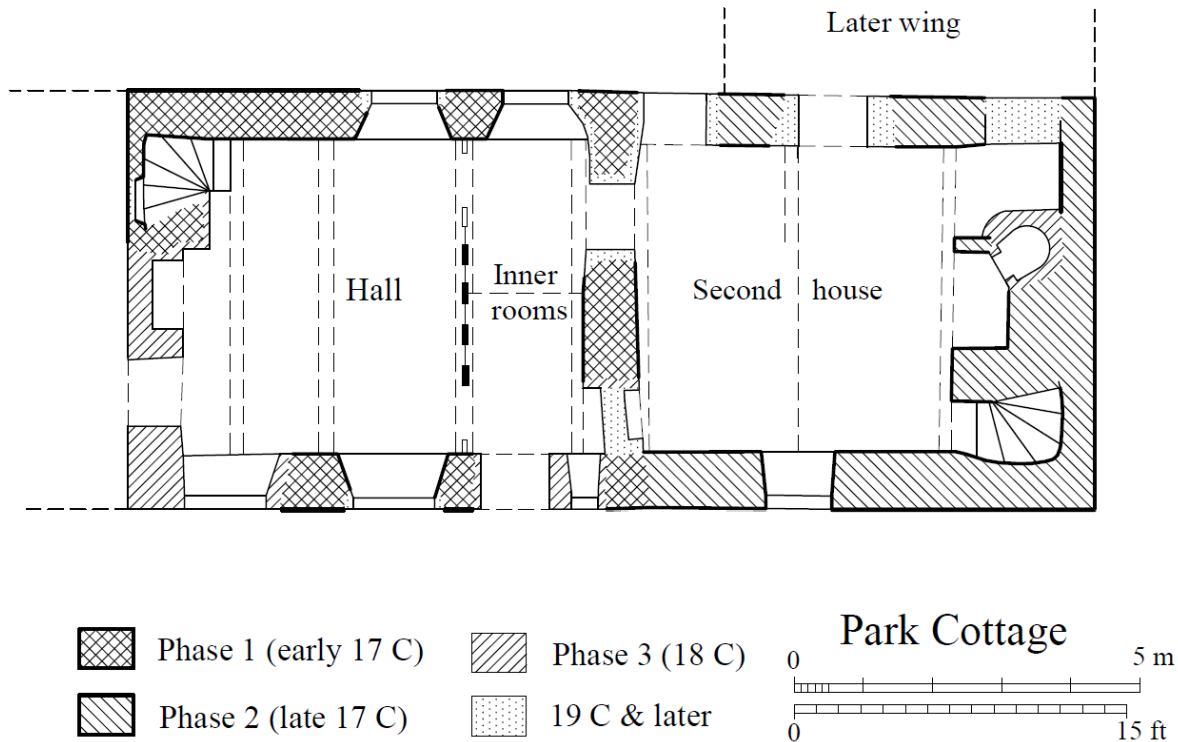


Name: Park Cottage

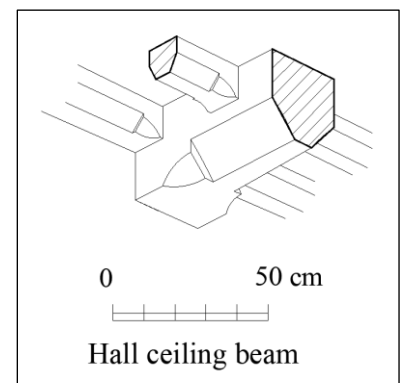
OS grid ref: SO 286 012

Parish: Trevethin Location: Pontypool



Description: An attractive listed building that once formed part of the now rebuilt Pen-y-garn farm, on the edge of Pontypool Park. It consists of a lengthy downhill-sited range, aligned roughly north to south, the walls built from local stone rubble, with later additions distinguished by more squared-off blocks. The low slate roof is crowned by several dormer windows. The tithe map of 1841 shows it as a simple rectangular block; however, by 1900 Ordnance Survey maps indicate cross-wings on either side of the building, so that it had a T-shaped plan. All signs of the east wing (at the front of the house) have been removed; but the rear wing (at the back) was rebuilt in the 1980s as a kitchen. There is also a more modern extension at the south end of the range. These additions are not shown on the above plan.

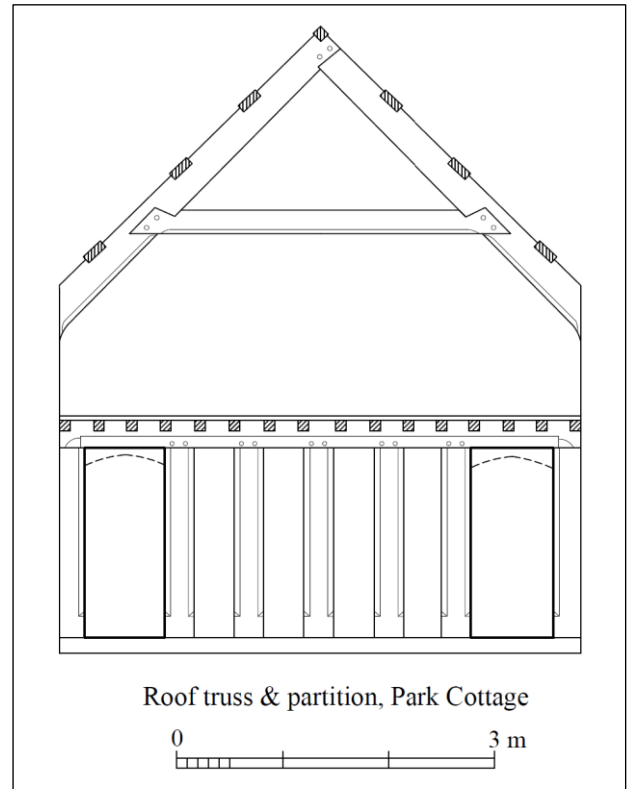
The house formerly consisted of two separate cottages, and is therefore an example of the 'Unit System' group, where there is more than one self-contained dwelling on the same site. The two parts were subsequently merged into one. Although there has been extensive alterations, many early features still survive inside. The older house is at the downhill end of the range and comprised a **hall** and pair of **inner rooms**. The present doorway is clearly a late alteration as it opens into what was one of the inner rooms, and probably takes the place of a window. The original entrance must have been elsewhere, probably in the downhill gable, a common arrangement in these parts. However, almost the entire gable has been rebuilt (perhaps in the 1700s) and the original large and deep inglenook has been replaced by a smaller and shallower fireplace. The end beam above it has been reset further into the hall, and the joists correspondingly shortened. The rest of the ceiling appears to be intact, and consists of main beams with 16 joists, all having medium chamfers with hollow-&-fillet stops. The windows have also been altered, but some retain their original low, wide splays, and one has a roughly chamfered timber lintel.



The **inner rooms** are separated from the hall by a partially intact post-&-panel partition, which has diagonal stops at the base, and appears to have had thin door heads which have been lost. The east room now serves as the entrance lobby, and has a blocked recess that once led into the second house. The west room has an enlarged window and another inserted doorway. The end beam above it is supported on a timber corbel.

The winding stair in the hall has been greatly affected by the rebuilding so that a wooden flight now leads up to the loft, and there is a blocked window part way up. There are two upper cruck roof trusses, with dovetail-jointed collars and three rows of trencled purlins. The inner sides of the trusses have narrow chamfers. The further truss now supports a modern partition, and a doorway has been broken through the gable wall into the adjoining house.

The **Second House** lies at the uphill end of the range. It is a single chamber with a beamed ceiling with medium chamfers and plain stops. The joists are concealed by a plaster ceiling (which has been overlaid with modern joists). The room is now entered from an inserted doorway in the west inner room of the hall. There is an additional entrance into the modern kitchen, and it seems that the window in the rear wall was a doorway at one time. However, there is clear evidence of a blocked opening in the corner of the fireplace recess, so it would appear that the second house had a lobby-entry plan. There is a large fireplace in the upper gable with orthostat stone jambs, and a timber lintel with hollow-&-fillet stops. A small bake-oven has been inserted into one side, cutting through one of the stone slabs, and projecting into the lobby in a semi-circular projection of neatly squared stone blocks. On the other side of the fireplace there is a deeply curving stair with timber treads leading to the upper floor. This level has been considerably modernised, and the single truss appears to be late; it has a collar bolted to the side and through purlins. The base of the original chimney, with a prominent line of stone flashing, can be seen below the existing roofline.



Development: The house originated as a modest dwelling of hearth-passage plan (below left), probably of early- or mid-seventeenth century date; to which a Second House, of lobby-entry plan, was added at the upper end (below right) later in the same century. The lobby-entrance was afterwards blocked when a large oven was inserted into the upper fireplace, and the hall inglenook was rebuilt on a smaller scale. These changes are all distinguished by the use of squarish stones, and may be eighteenth century in date. Subsequently, doorways were cut through into the Second House, so that the two dwellings effectively became one. The Second House appears to have been re-roofed at this time. Further alterations after 1841 included the two cross-wings added to the upper end of the range, but of these only the rebuilt kitchen survives.

