



DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

14 Union Road, New Mills, High peak, SK22 3ES.

ABSTRACT

Proposed installation of a rear first-floor balcony to existing flat (Use Class C3) within the New Mills Conservation Area.

Joshua McDonald

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Introduction

This statement supports a full planning application for a modest first-floor rear balcony at 14 Union Road, New Mills. The proposal is to create a small outdoor amenity space above an existing roof, serving the building's existing first-floor flat (Use Class C3).

The site lies within the New Mills Conservation Area, so the design has been carefully developed to respect the historic character of the building and its surroundings. The new balcony is a subordinate and sensitively designed addition, completely concealed from Union Road and any public viewpoints. In summary, the scheme provides enhanced amenity for the occupant with no adverse impact on heritage assets or neighbour privacy.

This statement outlines the site context, design approach, heritage and amenity considerations, and demonstrates how the proposal complies with High Peak Local Plan policies EQ6 (Design and Place Making) and EQ7 (Built and Historic Environment) as well as the NPPF (Sections 12 and 16).

Site description

No. 14 Union Road is part of a traditional stone terrace in New Mills town centre, falling within the New Mills Conservation Area. The building is two storeys in height with a shopfront at ground floor and a residential flat above. It has a coursed gritstone front facade and slate roof, contributing positively to the historic streetscape along Union Road.

In contrast, the rear elevation faces a private yard and parking area belonging to the applicant. This rear aspect is functional in character and completely hidden from Union Road or any public vantage point. To one side of the site is the New Mills Masonic Hall, which presents a blank side wall with no windows facing the proposed balcony. The immediate area's back elevations commonly feature utilitarian additions (for example, No. 20 Union Road has a black painted steel fire escape at the rear), indicating that metalwork structures are an established part of the rear vernacular. Given this context, the location and style of the proposed balcony are in keeping with the pattern of secondary elevations in the Conservation Area and will not affect the principal street scene.

As identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal (Sub-Area 1), rear elevations are functional and visually contained. The proposal affects only this secondary elevation and therefore preserves the significance of the Conservation Area.

Planning History.

- DET/2024/0013 - Conversion of first floor to a flat - Prior Approval is not required (13th June 2024)
- HPK/2024/0494 - Proposed change of use of the existing ground floor of the property into a mixed-use space, comprising a commercial premises (Class E) and a 1-bedroom residential flat (Class C3). – Approved 30/04/2025

(Older signage/advertisement consents omitted as not material to this proposal.)

Design:

Drawing / Document List

- Existing & Proposed Floorplans
- Site Location
- Design and access statement
- Existing & Proposed Elevations

Design and Heritage impact.

The proposal is for a small, first-floor balcony built atop the existing single-storey roof at the rear of No. 14. The balcony measures only 1.5 metres in projection, ensuring it remains a subordinate feature on the elevation. It will be created by raising the rear wall by approximately 0.5 metres (to the level of the main eaves) using natural gritstone coursed and pointed to precisely match the existing stonework. This low upstand serves as the balcony's base wall, seamlessly blending new construction with the old. The balcony platform will sit immediately behind this parapet, entirely within the building's footprint so that no part of the structure projects beyond the existing rear building line. As such, it does not alter the building's shape or silhouette when viewed from outside the site.

The balcony's guarding will consist of a simple black metal balustrade, with slender vertical rails and a minimal profile. At roughly 1.1 metres in height (meeting safety requirements), the railing will be finished in a dark, matte black tone. This recessive colour and traditional metalwork style ensure the balustrade reads as a discreet, functional element typical of historic service yards, rather than a bold modern addition. The floor of the balcony will be decked in timber or a neutral-toned composite, which is both in keeping with traditional materials and visually unobtrusive. All new elements stone, metal, and decking are high-quality, conservation-compatible materials chosen to complement the Victorian-era building.

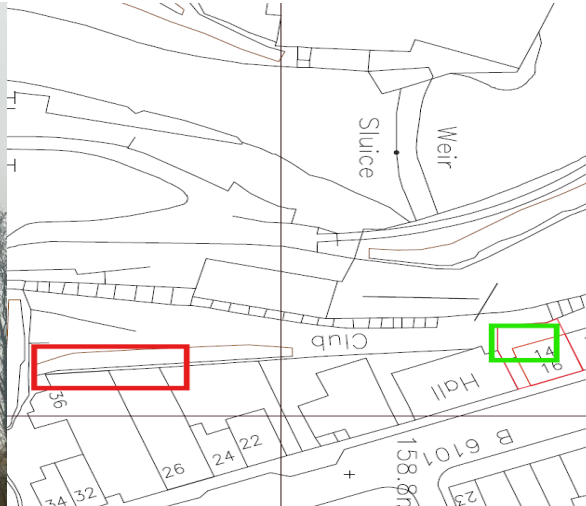
Access to the balcony will be provided through a new opening formed in the rear elevation. A pair of glazed timber French doors, painted in a heritage-appropriate colour, will be installed. The opening is designed to align with the proportions and rhythm of the existing building. The intervention is minor and reversible, if needed in the future, the balcony and doors could be removed and the wall reinstated with minimal damage to the original fabric. All fixings for the balcony structure will be made into mortar joints where possible, avoiding harm to the historic stone. No significant loss of original material is required for this proposal.

Overall, the design approach is restrained and respectful. The balcony remains tucked within the envelope of the building, appearing as a typical ancillary feature on a rear elevation. Its small scale and unobtrusive detailing prevent it from dominating the building's appearance. Because it is entirely to the rear and completely screened from public view, the character and significance of the New Mills Conservation Area will be preserved. The use of matching gritstone and traditionally styled metalwork ensures the new work harmonizes with the architecture. In essence, the proposal improves living conditions for the flat's resident without compromising the historic fabric or visual amenity of the area. This meets the statutory duty to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (per Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990) and satisfies the design and heritage objectives of Local Plan Policies EQ6 and EQ7.

Nos. 26–36 Union Road incorporate multiple rear-facing balconies overlooking the Torrs. These establish a clear precedent for modest rear amenity structures within this part of the Conservation Area, provided they are recessive and do not impact public views.



Nos. 26-36 Union Road rear



Map showing Nos. 26-36 Union Road balconies (Highlighted in red) in relation to proposed site (Highlighted in green)

Amenity

The balcony is for the private use of the first-floor flat only.

- Overlooking: Limited to the applicant's rear yard and service lane; no direct line of sight into nearby habitable rooms.
- Overshadowing: None, due to lightweight open form and modest projection.
- Noise: Use restricted to quiet domestic activity.

Accordingly, the proposal meets the amenity protection requirements of Policy EQ6.

Access

Access arrangements to the property remain unchanged. The balcony will be accessed internally via the new French doors, with no external stairs or public access. The structure and guarding will comply with Building Regulations (Approved Document K) for safety and minimum height (1.1 m balustrade).

Summary & Conclusion

This application proposes a small, well-detailed, and reversible rear balcony that enhances the amenity of the existing flat while preserving the building's character and the wider New Mills Conservation Area.

The design uses appropriate materials, maintains proportion and rhythm, and introduces no harm to heritage significance or neighbour amenity.

The proposal accords with High Peak Local Plan Policies EQ6 and EQ7, the NPPF (Sections 12 & 16), and the Section 72 duty. Approval is therefore respectfully sought for the installation of the proposed rear balcony.

Photos of site and surround



Rear elevation, Proposed balcony location



Side view, Proposed balcony location



Rear yard, area the balcony will overlook

End of statement

Sincerely,

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