

**Retrospective Planning Application
For Rear Timber Balcony
No 2 Laurel Bank
Foxhouses Road
Whitehaven
CA28 8AA**

HERITAGE, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

1. Introduction

This statement has been prepared in support of a retrospective planning application for the construction of a timber balcony to the rear of no 2 Laurel Bank.

The site lies within the designated Conservation Area of Corkickle, Whitehaven, and therefore particular regard has been given to heritage impact, design quality, and neighbouring amenity.

The purpose of this statement is to:

- Describe the site and its context
- Explain the design principles of the development
- Assess the impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- Access considerations
- Consider the impact on neighbouring properties, including overlooking

2. Site Description and Context

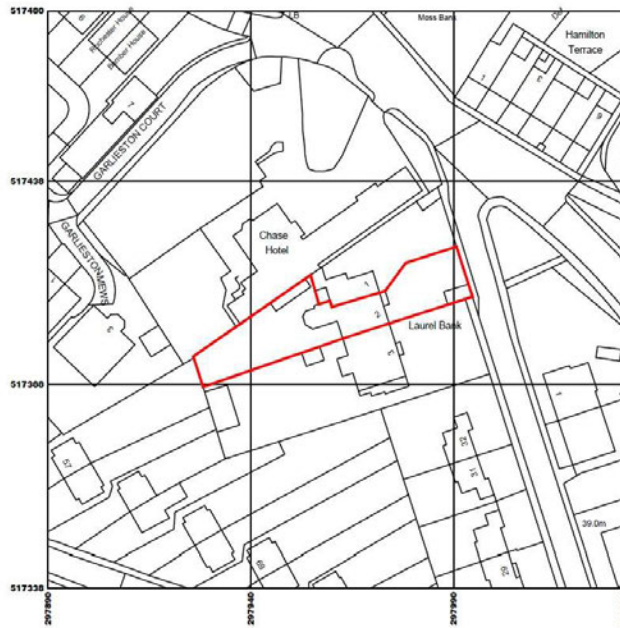
The application property is a residential dwelling located within a Conservation Area characterised by Victorian/Edwardian housing, consistent building lines, traditional materials and mature landscaping.

The property is a Victorian townhouse attached on both sides with residential properties and has a substantial rear garden area commensurate with that of no 3.

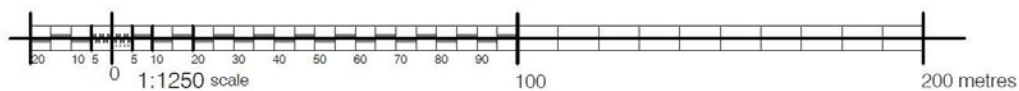
The property is over four storeys with a basement area to the rear with the rear garden at a lower level to the front of the property

The surrounding area is primarily residential in nature although to the north is Chase Hotel.

The balcony has been constructed to the rear elevation and is not visible from the public highway. Views of the structure are limited to the immediate neighbouring properties.



LOCATION PLAN 1- 1250



Location Plan

3. Planning Context

In considering this application, regard has been given to:

The proposal has been considered against:

- the duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to preserve or enhance conservation areas;
- relevant policies of the Copeland Local Plan 2013–2028, particularly:
 - Policy DM27 (Built Heritage and Archaeology)
 - Policy DM18 (Domestic Extensions and Alterations)

These policies require development to:

- respect local character;
- protect residential amenity;
- avoid unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy.

The duty under Section 72 of the Act requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

4. Design Principles and Proposal

The development comprises a rear timber balcony positioned at ground floor level, providing outdoor amenity space. Whilst the balcony is at ground floor level internally, the projecting balcony at its furthest point is 2350 mm above the external ground level.

The balcony is accessed internally from an existing ground floor door off the kitchen and external timber steps.

The side of the balcony facing the neighbouring boundary wall is between 2474 and 2625mm off the boundary wall as noted on drawing no 1962.02

The balcony replaces a previous metal access stair and landing which was also accessed from the ground floor kitchen door.

There is a small section of garden timber decking that has also been formed on the north side that replaces an existing patio that was in a poor state of repair



Photo 1- View of previous metal stair accessed from existing kitchen door

5. Scale and Form

The balcony is set at the same level as the previous access stair and , whilst larger than the previous structure, extends predominately into the rear garden.

The new timber steps to the south side are 2674 mm off the stone boundary wall , as noted on drawing no 1964.02.

This section of the boundary wall has also benefited from previous additional timber screening built off the top of the wall together with some vegetation.

6. Materials

The use of timber provides a lightweight and visually recessive structure with a natural finish which reflects traditional materials commonly found in rear garden settings.



Photo 2 -Timber balcony as built

7. Access

The development does not alter access arrangements.
It is used solely as private amenity space and does not affect public access or parking.

8. Visibility and Visual Impact

The balcony is located on the rear elevation and is not visible from public viewpoints. As such, its impact on the wider Conservation Area is minimal.

The design avoids ornate or incongruous detailing, instead adopting a simple and functional form. The lightweight structure and detailing is present in many external garden spaces.

9. Impact on Heritage Significance

The significance of the Conservation Area is primarily derived from the uniformity of front elevations, rooflines, and streetscape character.

As the balcony is situated to the rear and is not publicly visible, it does not detract from these key elements of significance.

Rear alterations are common within the area and typically have a limited effect on heritage value.

As such, we consider that the proposal preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area because the balcony:

- is located entirely to the rear of the property
- does not affect the principal elevation or street scene
- does not alter historic fabric of significance

10. Residential Amenity and Overlooking

The potential for overlooking has been considered.

The balcony introduces an elevated extended platform; however:

- Existing mutual partial overlooking between the rear window to the kitchen is already present together with rear windows to the property overlooking the neighbouring garden.
- The south side of the deck is 2625mm off the boundary wall at its furthest point and faces an existing greenhouse on the adjoining properties garden
- The existing stone boundary wall has been previously increased in height with a timber trellis with additional vegetation growing behind between the main rear wall to the two houses and the greenhouse.
- The balcony is modest in size.



Photo 3 -Existing view to neighbour from kitchen window



Photo 4 -Existing screening to neighbouring property



Photo 5 -Balcony as viewed from west side



Photo 6 -Balcony as viewed from lower rear garden

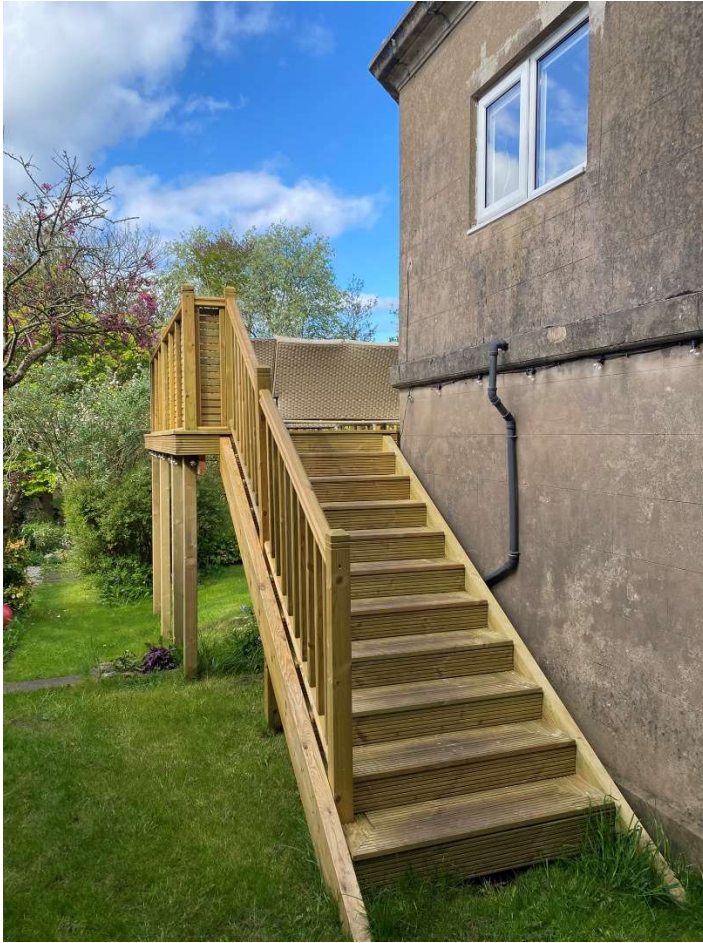


Photo 7 – View of external steps to south side of deck with existing window to kitchen facing neighbouring property

11. Conclusion

The retrospective planning application for the rear timber balcony

- preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area
- is modest, well-designed, and visually contained
- results in minimal overlooking

The development is therefore considered to comply with both local and national planning policy and should be granted planning permission.



Swarbrick Associates (uk) Ltd
Chartered Architects
40 Aglionby Street
Carlisle
CA1 1JP



Web: www.swarbrickassociates.co.uk

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