

Heritage Design & Access Statement

Millbrook
Underbank Old Road
Holmfirth
HD9 1AS



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This document has been prepared on behalf of the client by Cube PSL Ltd – Building and Surveyor specialists.

1. Introduction

This Design and Access statement is a supplementary document that seeks to support Planning Permission for the proposed replacement of all existing timber fenestration at Millbrook, Holmfirth with UPVC timber effect fenestration.

Proposal

The proposed works involve a comprehensive performance upgrade of all windows, and some doors to all elevations of Millbrook within the existing structural openings.

Use

No change to use - C3

Location

Millbrook, Holmfirth is located within the Underbank Conservation area. A compact historic hillside settlement with strong industrial-heritage roots, preserved architecture and a characteristic steep-valley form. The Underbank Conservation Area was designated in 1981.

[Kirklees MC - Planning Services - Underbank Conservation Area Map](#)

Address

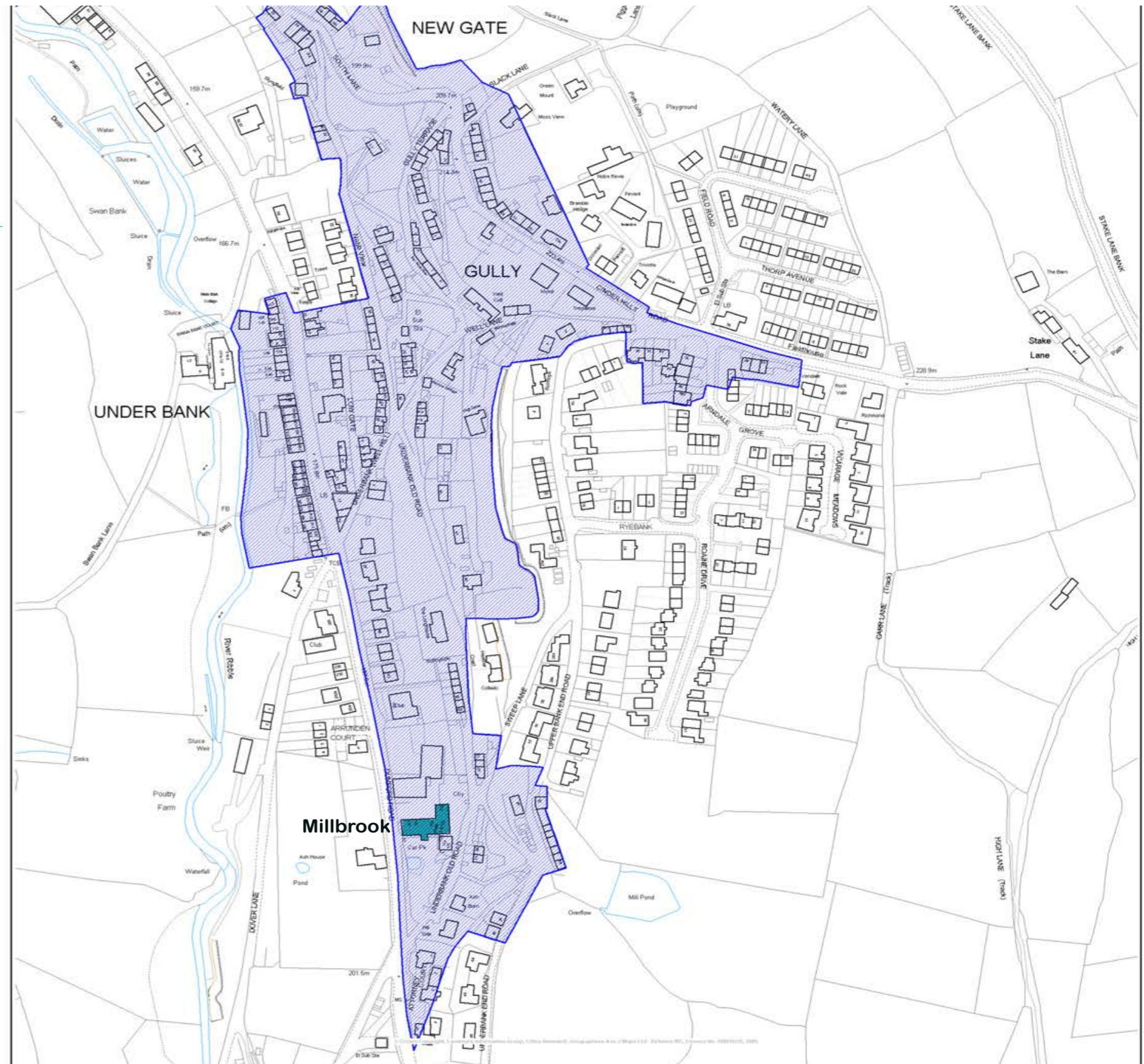
Millbrook, Underbank Old Road, Holmfirth, HD9 1AS

Access

Pedestrian access will not change. The Building will remain in use throughout the works with minimal disruption to the occupiers unless works are to there specific windows.

Highways Impact

The vehicular and transport links will remain unchanged. The proposal will have no impact on the current highway/emergency vehicle access.



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2. Site Context and Heritage Statement

Historical Context

The origins of the Underbank Conservation Area trace back to the late eighteenth century, when Holmfirth began to expand rapidly as part of the wider industrial growth within the Holme Valley. As the textile industry took root along the river at the valley floor, housing began to climb the steep hillsides above, forming the distinctive settlement now known as Underbank. The first dwellings appeared as simple stone-built cottages arranged in terraces, often constructed directly into the slope of the hill. During the early to mid-nineteenth century, the textile industry boomed, and the mills of Holmfirth and its neighbouring hamlets expanded significantly. The demand for workers brought a surge in hillside housing, and Underbank grew as a community of mill workers and tradespeople. Houses built during this period were typically constructed from locally quarried stone with stone-slate roofs, sometimes featuring mullioned windows and simple classical proportions typical of the early industrial vernacular of West Yorkshire. In 1852, the Holme Valley was devastated by the collapse of the Bilberry Reservoir, which sent a destructive flood wave through Holmfirth. Although Underbank's elevated position spared it from the worst physical damage, the disaster profoundly affected the town's economy and community. By the mid- to late nineteenth century, Underbank had reached much of the extent that defines it today. Its terraces, ginnels, and steep cobbled roads created a self-contained community with a strong visual and social identity.



Underbank, Holmfirth - 1854

Brief Overview and Planning History

Underbank Mill was constructed in the late 1800s during the height of Britain's textile manufacturing era. It served as a working cloth mill for nearly a century, remaining in operation until the 1970s. The mill was part of the region's rich industrial landscape, contributing to local employment and economic growth throughout much of the 20th century.

Underbank Mill is a fine example of late Victorian industrial architecture, characterised by robust stone construction, multi-storey massing, and large regularly spaced windows designed to maximise natural light for textile production. The mill's architectural form and materials reflect both its industrial function and the craftsmanship of the period.

Although the original industrial machinery has been removed, the mill's structure and external elevations remain largely intact, preserving the building's historic character and visual prominence within the local setting. The mill forms an important reminder of the area's industrial heritage and contributes positively to the historical identity of the community.

The mill was successfully converted into residential accommodation in the early 2000's, providing new life for a historically significant building. The conversion respected and retained key architectural features, including the stone façades, window opening sizes, and overall structural form, ensuring that the historic character of the mill remains evident. At the same time, a new block known as the Pond House was constructed, comprising three apartments over three stories.



Underbank, Holmfirth - 1892

Application 2024/91403

116 Underbank Old Road

Installation of replacement UPVC Patio Door (within a conservation area)

May 2024

Decision - Approved.

Application 2024/92332

110 Underbank Old Road

Replacement of existing rear gable window (within a conservation area)

Aug 2024

Decision - Approved.



South Elevation - 116 Underbank.

3. Design Statement - External- Existing

External Appearance Existing

North Elevation

The North Elevation features a generally regular uniform arrangement of timber mock sash windows to the lower ground, ground, first and second floor. There are also some ad hoc fixed light windows accommodating larger structural openings and arched head openings.

The North facing Elevation also includes 1110 Underbank Elevation however no works are proposed to this part of the building.

East Elevation

The East facing Elevation mainly includes 116 and 110 Underbank Elevations and no works are proposed to this part of the building. 2no Fixed light timber windows to second floor.

South Elevation

The South elevation features a generally regular uniform arrangement of timber mock sash windows to the lower ground, ground and first floor. Along the second floor there are 6no top hung casement windows (non sash style) There are also some ad hoc fixed light windows accommodating larger structural openings.

The South facing elevation also includes 116 Underbank Elevation however no works are proposed to this part of the building.

West Elevation

The West Elevation consists of 1no gable end elevation along Dunford Road featuring various sized timber mock sash windows, and 2no top hung casement windows. The elevation also includes 3no timber framed double door sets and 2no timber frame fixed lights to the second floor.

The West Elevation also consists of 1no elevation set back (rear wing) featuring 2no timber mock sash windows to the first floor and 3no UPVC sliding sash windows to the second floor.



North Elevation



West Elevation



South Elevation



East Elevation

4. Design Statement - External Proposed

External Appearance Proposed

The current windows are a mixture of older timber-framed mock sash units in varying states of wear. Replacing all windows with a phased approach matching timber-effect uPVC mock sash units will ensure uniformity in style, proportion, and finish across the entire building. This creates a more coherent and visually harmonious façade, enhancing the overall character and appearance of the property.

Modern timber-effect uPVC mock sash windows are designed to closely replicate the appearance of traditional timber sash joinery, including profile detailing, glazing bar configuration, and colour finish. This allows the property to retain its original architectural character while benefiting from modern materials.

Unlike timber, which requires regular repainting and is prone to rot, warping, and weathering, uPVC provides long-term durability with minimal maintenance. This ensures the windows remain in good condition over time, preserving the building's external appearance and avoiding the incremental visual decline that arises when timber frames age unevenly.

Timber-effect uPVC windows offer superior thermal performance and airtightness compared to the existing aging timber units. Improving the insulation of the building reduces heat loss, lowers energy consumption, and contributes positively to environmental sustainability and ongoing running costs.

Modern uPVC mock sash windows incorporate improved locking systems, strengthened frames, and high-performance glazing options. This offers a meaningful upgrade in security and acoustic performance without altering the building's external visual character.

Replacing all windows together (phased approach) using a single specification offers economies of scale and ensures consistent installation quality. Timber alternatives would involve significantly higher long-term maintenance costs, whereas uPVC provides a stable, cost-effective solution.

[Refer to Window Schedule for further Detail.](#)

Specification

The Liniar Casement Window with top hung openable sash and mock sash horns.

Material - Timbergrain UPVC

Glazing Thickness - 28mm - Cavity - 90% Argon Fill

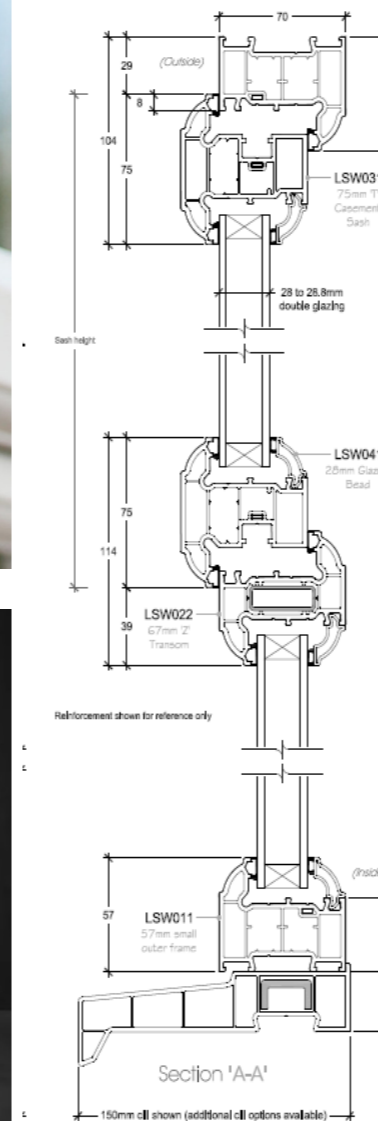
U Value 0.81 W/m²K



Typical Section - NTS



Visual Impression - Typical Window Replacement



Typical Section - NTS

This application seeks approval for replacement of all windows identified in drawings however the replacement will be phased subject to condition and necessity to replace.



Retain high quality Timber effect UPVC sliding sash windows to West Elevation



Unsympathetic modern additions.

5. Local Plan Policies & Conservation Area

Kirklees Local Plan - Strategy and Policies

LP24 Design

The proposal to replace all windows is in accordance with Policy LP24 (Design) of the Kirklees Local Plan, as it promotes high-quality, sustainable, and well-considered design that enhances the character and performance of the building. The replacement of windows will respect the existing form, materials, and appearance of the property while improving energy efficiency and occupant comfort, consistent with LP24's objectives for sustainability and good design. By upgrading to modern, durable, and low maintenance materials, the proposal supports the policy's emphasis on environmental performance, amenity, and long-term adaptability, ensuring the development remains in keeping with the character of the area while contributing positively to the built environment.

LP35 Historic environment

The proposal involves the replacement of all existing windows within their current structural openings with new high-quality timber-effect uPVC sash-style units. The existing window proportions, glazing pattern, and sash design will be retained to preserve the architectural rhythm and appearance of the building.

Although the property lies within a designated Conservation Area, similar uPVC sash-style windows have been approved and installed on adjoining properties, forming part of the established character of the street. The proposed replacement windows will therefore not harm the significance or character of the Conservation Area and will maintain its coherent appearance.

The use of timber-effect uPVC will provide enhanced thermal performance, reduced maintenance requirements, and improved long-term sustainability. This approach aligns with Policy LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan, which seeks to conserve the significance of heritage assets while supporting climate change adaptation and the sustainable use of existing buildings. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the aims and objectives of Policy LP35 and to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

NPPF (December 2024)

The fundamental importance of understanding-based heritage conservation is further enshrined in the National Planning Policy Framework, which requires the significance of a heritage asset to be described at a level of detail proportionate to its importance (NPPF, para 189 & 190).

Defining the Contribution to Significance

The level of contribution that the key values of that component make to significance are assessed based on a set of criteria:

Intactness – are the key values complete or intact? Is the component original, historic or modern?

This considers the integrity and authenticity of the component and whether the key values are complete or intact. This can relate to tangible and intangible values including form, design, materials, use, function, techniques, setting and spirit of place. At the Town Hall, one of the most important contributions to significance is whether the key elements are original Waterhouse-designed components, whether they have been altered or are later additions. The main periods of construction are set out below for clarity:

- Original: Original fabric, details, layout or intent, as designed by Alfred Waterhouse or his office from inception of the building in 1868 up to his death in 1905. Some very early alterations, such as the installation of safes and the amended WC provision will fall into this category.
- Historic: Early 20th century changes to the site and building up to 1945. Considerable alteration occurred to the Town Hall during the inter-war period, as the civic use of the building evolved and the City Council expanded. Door openings were added and fixed furniture was installed.
- Modern: Changes made to the building after 1945, and up to the present day are classified as modern. These can range from 1960s alterations to 21st century office use.

The Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Section 16 imposes a duty on the local planning authority such that "In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".

A similar duty Section 66 applies in relation to granting planning permission which impacts on a listed building or its setting. As a minimum, therefore, the impact of development proposals on the listed building should be neutral to not engage the presumption within the Act against the grant of permission.

The proposals would preserve both the building and its setting. Therefore the presumption against the grant of planning permission within the Act is not engaged.

6. Summary

Summary

The proposals above will have no impact on the original or historical character and appearance of the exterior of the Building.

The proposals will have no material effect on the internal original or historical architectural fabric, as works are focused only to modern fabric (1990 upgrades)

The effect of the proposals will be to upgrade the aesthetic appearance of the entrance lobby and hallways only and improve functionality of the ground floor space.

NPPF (December 2024)

The proposal does not involve harm to the listed building and would be beneficial in its effects.

It is therefore our view that in terms of the NPPF there is no “harm to the significance of the heritage asset(s)”. Therefore the requirement to test and balance any harms and benefits as outlined in paragraph 194 is not triggered.

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