

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

AT LAND ADJACENT CLIFFE FARM,
BURN ROAD, BIRCHENCLIFFE



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2 - INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access statement has been produced on behalf of the applicant, North Park Homes Ltd. This statement forms part of a Reserved Matters Planning Application for the Residential Development at Cliffe Farm, Burn Road, in pursuant to the Outline Planning Approval 2019/94051.

This document provides background information on the matters taken into account in formulating the design and explains parts of the development in relation to the site's surrounding area.

This statement comprises initially of a description of the proposed development and its location.

Secondly, the site appraisal examines the physical context. The design solution for the site has been based on an understanding of the site and the appraisal forms a fundamental evaluation process.

This statement will touch briefly on the planning considerations, however the bulk of this will be dealt with by a separate planning statement.

The design principles are dealt with under section 6, addressing the physical characteristics of the scheme and how these inform the various design principles.

Access is touched on under Section 7, explaining the approach that has been adopted and considered the most appropriate, the application will be further supported by additional highways documents produced by Paragon Highways.

Finally, the statement will offer a conclusion that outlines how the proposed development conforms to good design principles.



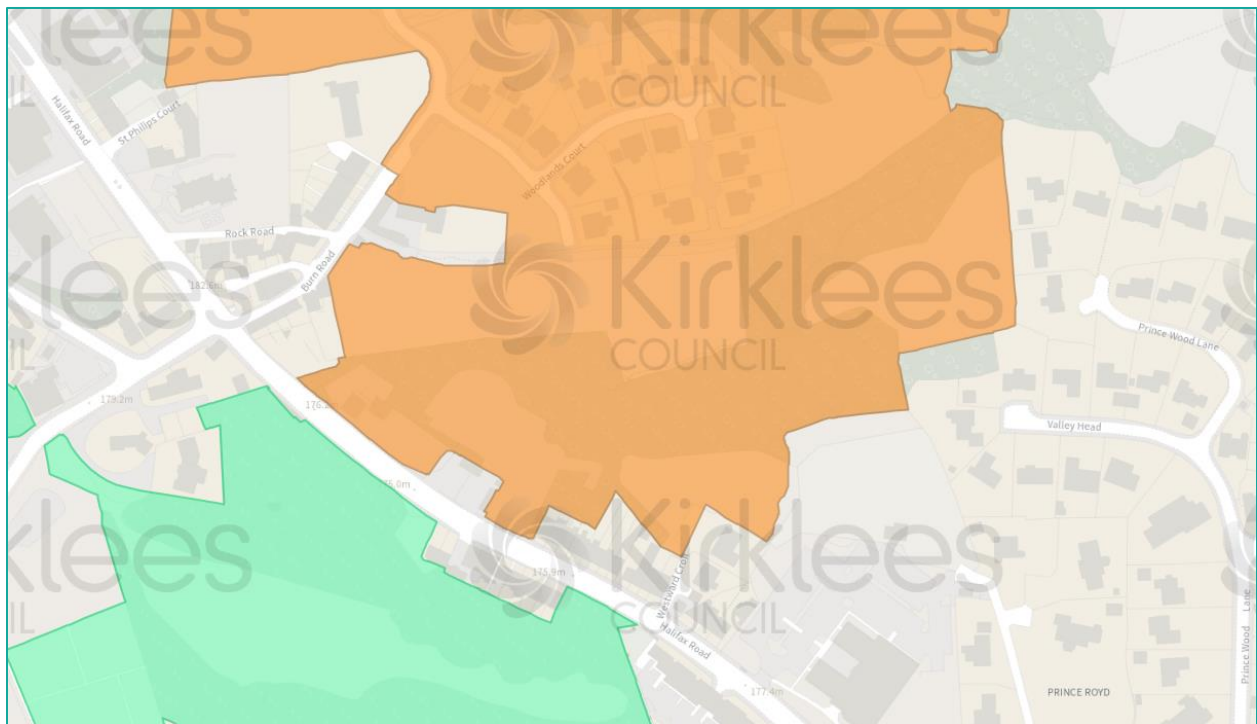
Above: Aerial of application site

3 - PROPOSAL

This Reserved Matters Application continues the established principles approved under the Outline Planning Permission for the erection of up to 39 dwellings. Our presented layout demonstrates 26 dwellings and justification for reaching that number is explained within this document.

The site is shaped in a 'T' configuration, with an existing highway named Woodlands Court, currently serving a recent housing development that runs up to the site boundary. The site is located on the eastern side of Halifax Road in Birchenccliffe, with direct links to Huddersfield Town Centre and easy access to the M62.

The site is part of a housing allocation under HS35 within the Kirklees Local Plan.



Above: Kirklees Local Plan

The principle of development has been established in the Outline and previously the allocation stage, this Reserved Matters presents a layout for 26 dwellings. The applicant is aware of the negotiations that took place during the course of the outline process and understands that the description was amended to state Up To 39 dwellings in order to satisfy LP7 of the Local Plan in terms of density. The outline demonstrated a layout for 35 dwellings with the applicant previously providing justification for underachieving the density criteria. In our proposals, we have explored various ways to increase the density and ensure that LP7 can be achieved, however, this often led to a cramped and undesirable layout with significant abnormal issues arising due to the topography of the site.

Arriving at the presented layout has been a process of balance in terms of consideration for the Kirklees Local Plan Policies, Highways requirements, particularly for gradients on a sloping site such as this, Highway Structure implications for the consideration of retaining walls, bankings due to the topography and Biodiversity requirements.

The below draft layout gives an indication of our starting point and how we were considering an increased section of highway further east and west into the site, unfortunately due to the levels and to achieve the required gradients of 1 in 40 cross fall or 1 in 20, the road would be approximately 3m below existing ground levels at either side, not only was this considered unviable for this site, but it would also introduce the requirement for 80 meters worth of Highway Retaining wall, both to our new road and Burn Road, of which would not only create significant logistical issues, maintenance concerns, but also introduce considerable costs including commuted sums.



Above: Initial draft layout

Furthermore the layout needed a turning head suitable for a refuse vehicle more central than the site entrance due to the requirements for refuse wagons and to ensure that bin carry distances are kept to a minimum.



Above: Location of Cliffe Farm, Burn Road, Birchenclyffe

The residential development is an extension of existing recent residential developments and proposed allocated developments within Birchenclyffe, the design attempts to continue the natural flow of dwellings, whilst incorporating recent policies changes, this includes the desired mix listed within LP11 of which has been used as guidance.

4 - SITE APPRAISAL

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises the importance of good design in the planning process. Good design, the guidance states is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute to making places better for people.

Inclusive design, the guidance emphasises, goes beyond the mere architectural and visual appearance of buildings; it should also ensure connectivity between people and places and integration of new development into its natural or built surrounds.

High quality and inclusive design should create well-mixed and integrated developments that avoid segregation. Good design should ensure places function well and that developments add to the overall character and quality of the area, not just for the short term, but for the lifetime of the development. Good design will emerge from a full understanding of the site and its surroundings. This section describes the site and the surrounding area, and then appraises the factors that contribute to the character and appearance of the area, and the key factors that should influence design on the site.

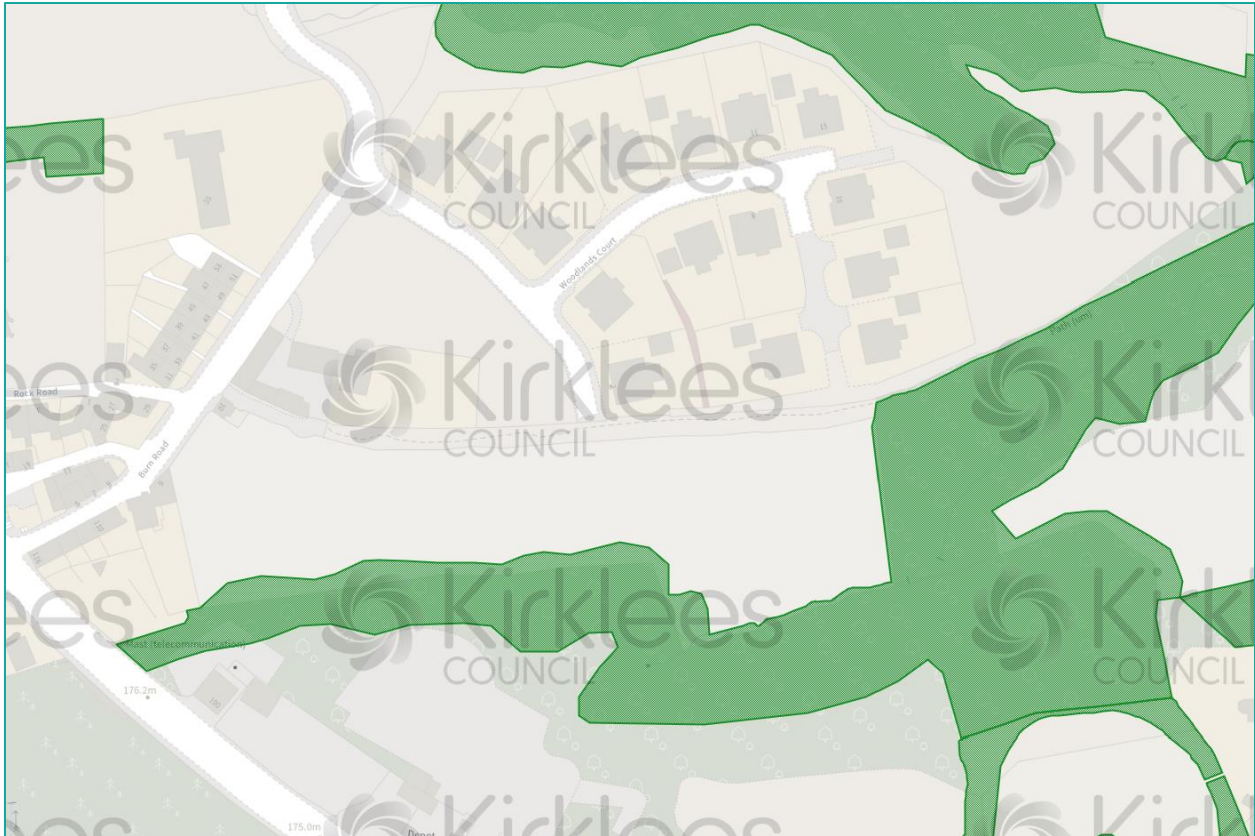
The application site is situated on eastern side of Birchencliffe, set within a housing allocation and positioned nearby recent housing developments, as well as a woodland to the east and south of the site.

The site occupies a location with extensive views to the South and East, with the site topographically being extremely steep in certain areas, with undulating ground, containing various features such as a ribbon of trees to the south, a nearby watercourse, a public footpath that is bordered by drystone walls.



Above: Approach from Woodlands Court

The site forms a barrier to some degree between the built-up residential setting to the north and the natural tree line to the south and east, creating a buffer between the more commercial developments associated with Halifax Road. And whilst nearly all of this land is allocated as housing land, much of the trees benefit from TPO orders, serving as a permanent natural barrier.



Above: Kirklees TPO Map

This tree line has been considered within the design process, allowing us to naturally continue the buffer, manage the ground levels sensitively and also provide a wildlife corridor, adding to the biodiversity value of the site.

The tree line to the east is also considered with the design, as the levels drop off significantly nearest the eastern boundary, therefore we have maintained a distance between the eastern tree line and our proposed plots, to firstly allow us to naturally slope the ground down, provide an area of a natural surface water attenuation solution, and boost the ecological potential of this area.

The North and Western elements of the site are presently mainly grassed fields, although the levels are still challenging in these areas and whilst a reasonable density has been proposed, we have attempted to tie this in with sensible solutions to manage the topography, such as gradual banking slopes, gabion retaining structures and stone boulders, hopefully offering a more appropriate and aesthetically pleasing appearance rather than a large towering retaining wall.

5 – DESIGN INFLUENCED BY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

In terms of planning policy influencing the design, we feel the proposed development on the site appears to be in general conformity with the development plan.

The proposed development in this case can give rise to a significant enhancement to the local environment, this can be seen in the inclusion of the wildlife corridor to the south of the site, the retention of the existing PROW and the use of natural solutions for infrastructure.



Above: Site topography, with the boundary actually further south than the fence position.

The Kirklees Local Plan and associated policies gave rise to various challenges, of which we feel we have balanced well to arrive at the enclosed layout.

It is considered that the area to the south we have denoted as wildlife corridor and existing habitat proves unviable for development due to the topography, tree positions and required retaining structures for new dwellings and highway structures, in addition we also confirm that the area currently used for the PROW is to remain in the existing landowners ownership and therefore both these areas of land, highlight below, should ideally be omitted from the developable area.

On this basis we have calculated the developable site area as approximately 0.9h and therefore consider the proposed density to be 29 dwellings per hectare, whilst this is not quite in line with policy LP7 and the recommendation for 35 dwellings per hectare, we would argue that the site abnormalities and topography, provide sound justification for the reduce quantity to provide a design and layout that can be delivered.



Above: The red outline denotes what we consider to be the developable area. Shown an early layout which was discarded due to level and topography issues in relation to the highway.

The provision of an adoptable highway, along with the shallow gradients, bin carry distances, refuse turning area, created a predicament that had considerable impact on the layout. This has resulted and a reduction in adoptable highway. Consultations have taken place with Building Control in regards to Bin Carry distance, since these cannot be achieved for certain plots, it was deemed a satisfactory shortfall in lieu of providing adequate plots, a considered highway design, refuse area and parking.

Having had significant experience with the requirements for Kirklees Structures, it was at the forefront of our minds to ensure that any retaining features near to the highway were simplified or designed out where possible, obviously on a site with difficult topography such as this, we were challenged but we felt that keeping dwellings and infrastructure away from the western boundary, reducing the overall stretch of adoptable highway, and allowing areas where the ground can be battered at a 22.5deg angle, would allow us to manage the amount of Highways retaining structure.

Policies associated with the housing mix and density have been taken into account, and along with the above and other policies, we have balanced each element, whilst still providing a varied spread of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings.

6 - DESIGN

This section considers the design issues relating to the development arising from the site appraisal of the previous section. It specifically covers those topic areas required to be included within Design and Access statements.

A) Use

The application proposes residential development on the site. The site currently has a housing allocation and benefits from an Outline Planning Approval. We consider that the residential use is accepted and established.

B) Amount

26 dwellings are shown on our Reserved Matters Layout. The Outline Approval is described as Up To 39, and the indicative layout presented 35 dwellings. Much of the numbers associated with the outline submission, related to the overall site area and the density of 35.5 dwellings per hectare required under Kirklees Planning Policy.

Having delved further into the site constraints and considered the viability of developing the sites topography, we consider that the developable site area is actually less and should be considered to be 0.9h, with the residual site area retained for the PROW and the ecological enhancement area, using this developable site area brings the proposal of 26 dwellings to 35.5 dwellings per hectare, to which we consider to be within acceptable tolerance of the Kirklees Density Requirements.

The proposed mix of dwellings is listed below;

Ref	Type	Sq. ft.	Amount
A	3 Bedroom detached with detached garage	1145	2
B	4 Bedroom detached with integral garage	1525	2
C	3 Bedroom semi detached & Terraced plots	880	5
D	3 Bedroom semi detached	870	6
E	2 Bedroom semi detached	755	6
F	4 Bedroom detached with detached garage	1730	5
TOTAL			26

We feel that this is in line with Kirklees Policy LP11 – Housing Mix and Affordable Housing which offers some guidance on the starting point for proposed mix.

C) Layout

The layout had previously been indicated on the outline submission and this agreed form has been followed due to the established principles and to carry through the comments and negotiations that were addressed during the outline process.

The layout for 35 dwellings however, did not take into account much of the site constraints and the reality of the site levels. The indicative layout did also not appear to comply with Kirklees Highways policy, particularly in terms of turning area distances, and achievable gradients.

However, we have built upon the principles, retaining feature corner plots, providing a spread of dwellings throughout the site, and whilst managing the levels, we are attempting to ensure a less camped layout can be achieved with parking positioned to the side of each dwelling where possible to reduce the appearance of vehicles on the street scene.



Above: Proposed site layout as included within the application documents

Where possible dwellings have been positioned reasonably close to the highway, to offer a less vehicle orientated layout, putting the dwelling and the front garden space on

display rather than their cars, where this is not possible, landscaping and planting has been used to break up the parking spaces.

The retention of the footpath in its existing form allows for the semi-rural appearance to the layout, whilst the adopted road will inevitably provide a sense of urban development, the footpath offers balance by maintaining it's current rural form, with the existing drystone walls.

The conclusion of the proposed layout has come about from an extensive design phase, considering various other options to arrive at a design that is considered most appropriate for the setting and provides a good mix and efficient use of space and management of the ground levels.

Various design team meetings encouraged discussion and evolution of the design to address any negative impact the layout was projecting and tighten up areas to ensure the development offered a balanced proposal, achieving the optimum outcome.

It is considered that the proposed development in this case adopts a form and layout that is sympathetic to the overall character and appearance of the locality, balancing the urban and rural characteristics.

Provision for parking and turning is noted in the proposed site layout with sufficient space for accommodating bin storage areas.

D) Scale

The proposed dwelling are of a two storey design with pitched roofs, the characteristics of these dwellings will associate well with local properties, they will not overly dominate and it is not an intention to introduce out of place three storey dwellings, or provide dormers in and amongst. It is considered that the simplistic nature of these two storey dwellings, with well proportioned elevational features will create an attractive setting, whose scale will not compete or stand out too distinctively from the natural environment.



Each plot and dwelling type provide a suitable mix and with each type being a considered step up, with 2 bedroom, 3 bedroom and 4 bedroom dwellings, however each are of a scale that associate well with each other. These dwellings also sit well within their plot and are allocated sufficient parking and garden space, of which neither are overly dominant on the street scene or natural surrounding environment.

It is felt that the design provides an opportunity for the character and appearance of the locality to be enhanced without adding design gimmicks that can be associated with attempts to maximise floor space.

E) Landscaping

A landscaping design has been prepared by FDA Landscape and accompanies this application.

Ecology has been considered extensively by Knight Sky Ecology and in partnership with FDA Landscape, a scheme is presented that will enhance the ecological value of the site and conjunction with a high-quality landscaping scheme.

Boundaries to the plots gardens are to be timber fences between gardens, post and rail to the rear and natural stone boulders or gabions to the southern retaining structure. The drystone wall to the PROW is intended to be retained. These elements provide high quality boundary treatments throughout.

Hardstanding surfacing has been considered with the impact of the natural environment in mind, these are to be of a permeable surfacing.

A biodiversity scheme is included within the proposals, these improvements will adapt the currently low quality and monoculture grassland, taking advantage of opportunities to provide a mosaic of habitats with the provision of a substantial sized swale, new tree planting, improving the existing habitats and rewilding. The benefit to the biodiversity that this will bring, whilst balancing the nature of the development proposals is considered a positive response.

F) Appearance

The dwellings have been designed to blend in well with the proposed layout, and whilst the dwellings are often considered the main event within the street scene, care has been taken to ensure that the appearance of each is balanced by the location and positioning in conjunction with parking and planting.

Each dwelling will be constructed using walling stone, with Artstone heads and cills. Roofs are to have dark grey concrete tiles, with the roof pitch designed at 35 degrees.

****Addendum – 29/02/24**

Design alterations have been incorporated to reflect the existing architecture and context set by the Harron Homes scheme.



The properties will benefit from feature stone lintels, low cill levels and water tabling, these features take guidance from the adjacent dwellings and continue the theme throughout the site.

Detached plots may benefit from a bay window with a flat roof arrangement, this takes guidance from the porticos established by Harron Homes scheme and inspired by other local schemes of a similar nature.



The stone will match the Harron Homes scheme, using Marshalls Cromwell.



7 - ACCESS

Access to the site is via an existing highway, to which an extended element of adopted road is proposed. The access point forms a good quality access and allows for the road to take a gentle gradient east and west.

The access crosses over the existing PROW, however care has been taken to retain the PROW as close as possible to its existing circumstances, the drystone wall will be retained where feasible and the new road will cross over on a small element of the footpath.

Vehicle Tracking has been incorporated into the site layout, ensuring sufficient turning space for a Fire Tender vehicle on private drive, as well as providing sufficient space for the Kirklees Refuse Vehicle to comfortably turn and exit the site in a forward gear.

Each dwelling has been accommodated with a bin store and collection point. To keep travelling distances convenient for occupants and refuse vehicle personnel, a turning head has been positioned to the west of the site in order to comply with Highways Policies.

Parking spaces for each dwelling have been considered in terms of amount and location, ensure each dwelling has the requisite space for the number of bedrooms, whilst also providing landscaping to screen the parking spaces from view. Visitor parking is provided within the highway and private drives.

The proposed development does not include any physical or social barriers to accessibility.

The site topography offers challenges for the proposed adoptable highway and therefore the amount of proposed highway has been kept to a minimum, this allows us to serve the remaining dwellings with a slightly steeper private drive.

The design considerations in relation to the terrain and provision for access to local amenities and facilities makes the development equally accessible to all, including those with physical impairments. The proposal appears to comply with relevant development plan policies with regard to accessibility.

Access to buildings is dealt with under the Building Regulations, and is not specifically covered in this statement. It is not considered that there are any exceptional access issues arising in this case. The development will be designed to ensure that there will be full disabled access to the property from parking spaces.

8 - CONCLUSIONS

The proposal has been subjected to an extensive design evolution, working with a team of consultants and experts to prepare a scheme that balances the various design and sensitive planning considerations.

The principle of residential development has already been established and this proposal has considered the constraints of the site in more detail. Not without its challenges, the site and proposed layout has undergone a process of elimination, and whilst we initially attempted to use more of the available site area, it is clear that doing this would not be a sensible approach and would include difficult infrastructure and engineering processes.

Throughout the process of design, the relevant Kirklees policies and procedures for each department have attempted to be balanced, and whilst not everything can be perfectly achieved on any layout, an acceptable balance can be seen on this proposal, including the provision of a reasonable density, good mix of house types, appropriate gradients, turning space and the appropriate response to managing the site levels and use of retaining structures.

Each proposed dwelling has been accommodated with a garden, parking and some plots benefit from garaging. Dwellings provide active frontages onto the highway, with a managed design for vehicle locations, to ensure that the street scene is not overly dominated by cars.

The changes to the existing footpath are minimal as are associated with the formation of the new road, the remaining footpath will be retained as well as the drystone walls, providing a contrast between the new development and the existing rural appearance of the PROW.

We consider that the proposals should be considered acceptable, having worked with team of consultants to arrive at a scheme that balances the various requirements of all considered parties and departments. This is clearly a sensitive site and a sensitive approach has been taken to provide a sensible housing mix of good design and of an acceptable density that taken a sensible precaution towards the topography of the levels.

ADDENDUM

LAYOUT EVOLUTION

In response to Mr. N. Hirsts comments on 6th February 2024, this section elaborates on the evolution of the layout and reaching the number of dwellings proposed.

We initially looked at a layout for 36 dwellings to satisfy the density and make best use of the site, unfortunately various restraints cropped up during this design process.



Above: Initial site layout with various constraints

HIGHWAY IMPACT

The adopted highway would need a shallow gradient, and this would create a large, 4m high retaining wall adjacent the highway and near Burn Road, as well as around the turning head. Considering discussions on similar scenarios with Kirklees Structures and the potential safety issues arising from the CDM regulations, it was considered unviable, and we sought to design out the 4m high retaining walls by reducing the adopted highway and introducing sections of private drive at a steep gradient, thus reducing the overall amount of plots possible due to Kirklees Highways requirement for no more than 5 dwellings off a private drive.

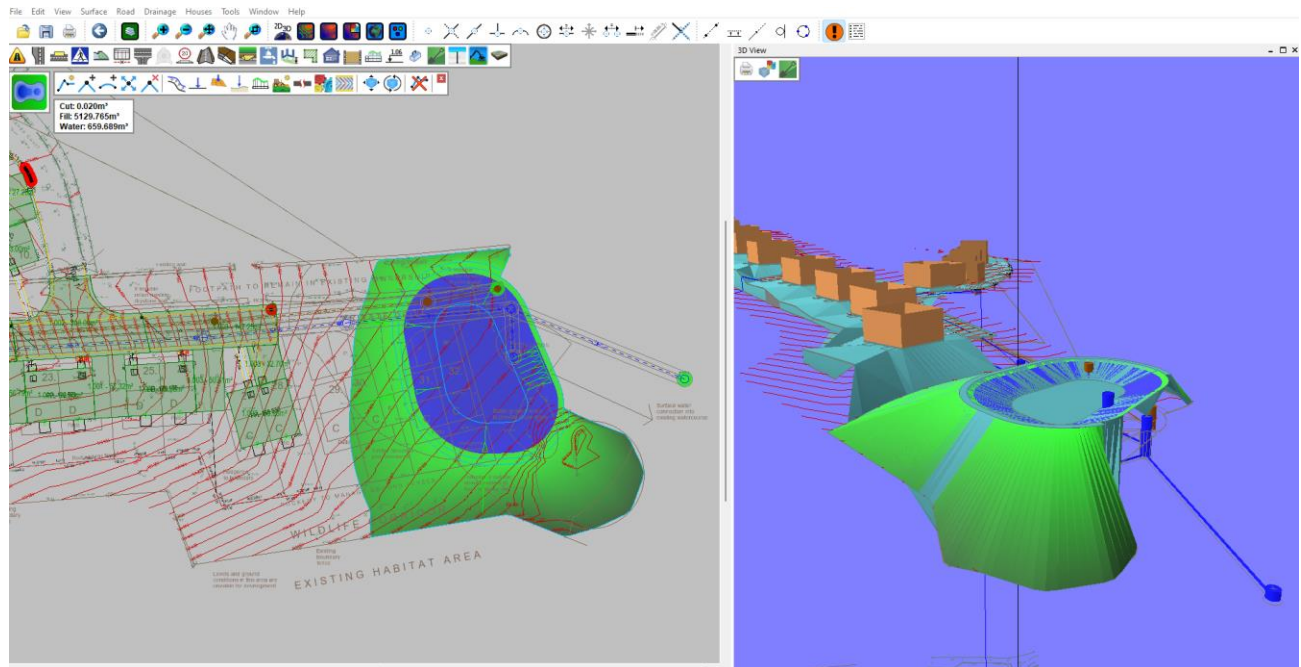
TREE IMPACT

Pushing the dwellings back to accommodate the highway and provide sufficient parking, garden space and ensure accessibility for 36 dwellings meant that we we're getting closer to the TPO tree line, furthermore, to manage the steep topography of the site, we needed to provide retaining structure, that we opted to propose as a natural rock face, unfortunately the more dwellings we squeezed on, the closer this encroached into the root protection zone.

DRAINAGE IMPACT

During this process, we have attempted to accommodate a natural surface water attenuation scheme. This has proved difficult due to the levels and the size of the attenuation required when using a natural option such as a pond or swale.

Our attempts to accommodate such a proposal for the dwellings proved complex, the engineering works required to provide a pond or swale were extensive, creating conflicts with the tree root zones and potential creating a safety hazard due to the steep banking formed to ensure the pond was level.



Above: Feasibility work for a pond attenuation scheme

REFUSE TURNING

Incorporating the large oversized refuse vehicle turning also impact the amount of dwellings. According to Kirklees policy, Home owners are required to walk no further than 30m to carry their refuse to collection point, and a refuse vehicle can reverse no further than 20m. These restrictions dictated the position of our turning area and when balancing the previous site constraints, the only viable option was to have the turning area central to the site.



Above: Previous revision of the site layout