DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

OUTLINE PLANNING FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (ACCESS ONLY)

LAND AT

OLD WATER HALL, HUDDERSFIELD ROAD, MIRFIELD

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ARCHITECTURE

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2 - INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of an Outline Planning Application for the residential redevelopment of land at Old Water Hall, 29 Huddersfield Road, Mirfield. The application seeks approval for access only, with layout, scale, appearance, and landscaping reserved for later consideration.

The statement demonstrates how the proposal responds to planning policy, site constraints, and the pre-application advice received from Kirklees Council.

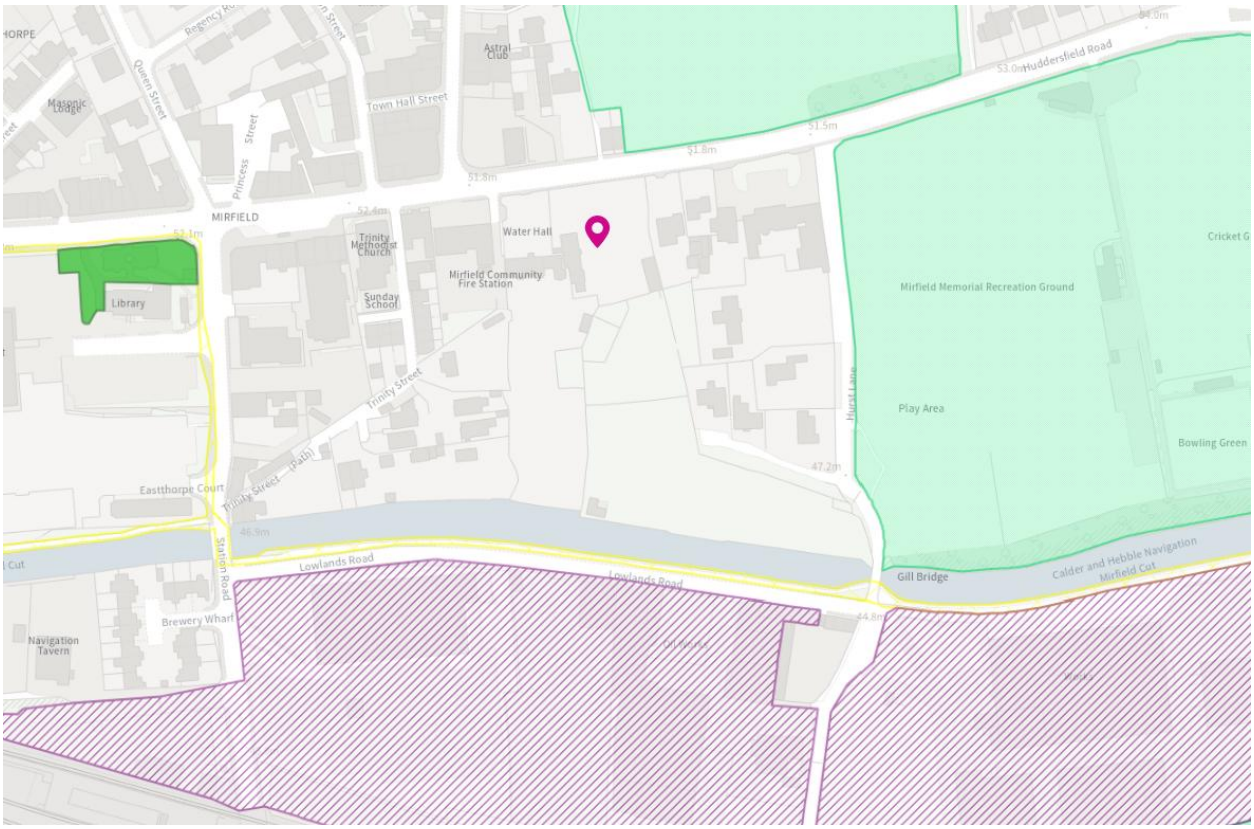


The proposal does not seek any change of use, subdivision, or conversion of existing buildings at this stage. All such matters will be the subject of future applications if required

3 – PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The statutory development plan comprises the Kirklees Local Plan (2019). Relevant policies include LP1 (sustainable development), LP2 (place shaping), LP3 (location of new development), LP7 (efficient use of land), LP11 (housing mix), LP20–22 (highway safety and parking), LP24 (design), LP27–28 (flood risk and drainage), LP30 (biodiversity), and LP33 (trees). Supplementary planning documents of relevance include the Highways Design Guide (2019) and Housebuilders Design Guide SPD (2021). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the overarching policy direction, particularly paragraphs 11, 124–132 and 174–182.

Kirklees Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, with the latest published figure showing 3.96 years. The 2022 Housing Delivery Test also confirms under-delivery. In this context, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, and the weight afforded to housing delivery is significant.



4 – SITE AND HERITAGE CONTEXT

The site extends to approximately 0.87 hectares, comprising Old Water Hall, associated gardens, outbuildings, and land sloping south to the Calder and Hebble Navigation. To the west lie Grade II listed buildings at Nos. 31 and 31a Huddersfield Road. The site is not within a Conservation Area but does contain mature trees and sits adjacent to a heritage setting. Pre-application advice raised concern regarding the relationship between new development and the listed buildings.

The outline nature of this application ensures detailed design can be secured at Reserved Matters stage with particular regard to materials, massing, and landscaping to protect the setting of heritage assets.



All existing structures are to remain in their current use as part of this outline application; no conversion or subdivision is proposed under this submission.

5 – ACCESS AND HIGHWAYS

Access is proposed from Huddersfield Road (A644). Visibility splays have been tested and require removal of two trees (T5 and G4) and adjustment of the boundary wall to a maximum of 1m in height behind the visibility line. The Council's Highways Design Guide requires unobstructed visibility above 0.6m, which cannot be guaranteed across third-party land. This necessitates limited tree loss to ensure safe and policy-compliant access.

Highways consultants have considered alternative strategies, including localised carriageway narrowing, but this remains subject to risk. The submitted scheme therefore represents a pragmatic compromise that prioritises highway safety in line with LP21, while minimising tree loss. The internal road and turning areas will be designed in full accordance with the Highways SPD at Reserved Matters.



6 – TREE AND BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

The arboricultural assessment undertaken in line with BS5837 confirms that most trees are of low value. The required removal of T5 and G4 is regrettable but unavoidable to provide access. No Tree Preservation Orders currently apply, although the Council has powers to serve new TPOs where trees are deemed to provide amenity value. To offset this, a comprehensive biodiversity-led planting strategy will be delivered at Reserved Matters.

Estrada Ecology's baseline assessment records 7.77 habitat units and 0.17 hedgerow units on site. To achieve a no-net-loss position and comply with BNG trading rules, provision must include at least 24 new native trees (outside private gardens), 90m² of mixed native scrub, and replacement hedgerows. With the retention of 38 out of 41 existing trees and the provision of new habitats within identified open spaces, the site can achieve policy compliance with LP30 and LP33 and can support the ambition of a 10% net gain in biodiversity.



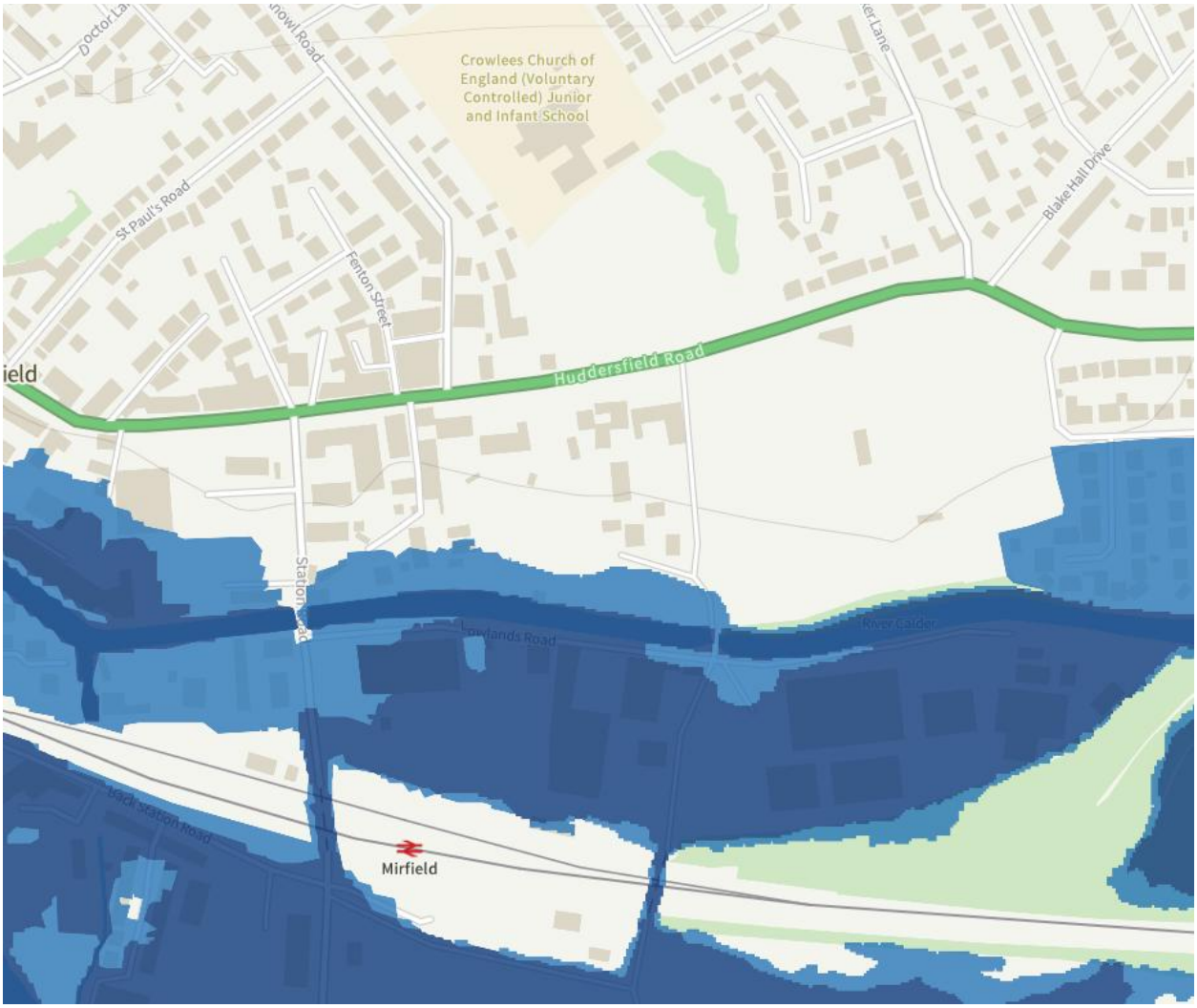
7 – LAYOUT AND DENSITY

The indicative site plan shows the potential for future new detached dwellings within the curtilage of the site. Existing buildings are shown for context only and do not form part of this outline proposal. The indicative layout equates to a low net density of around 10 dwellings per hectare, which is consistent with the character of the area and reflects the site's constraints, including the canal, mature trees, and heritage sensitivities. The revised layout reduces unit numbers compared to earlier iterations and provides a better housing mix, thereby aligning with LP7 and LP11.



8 – FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

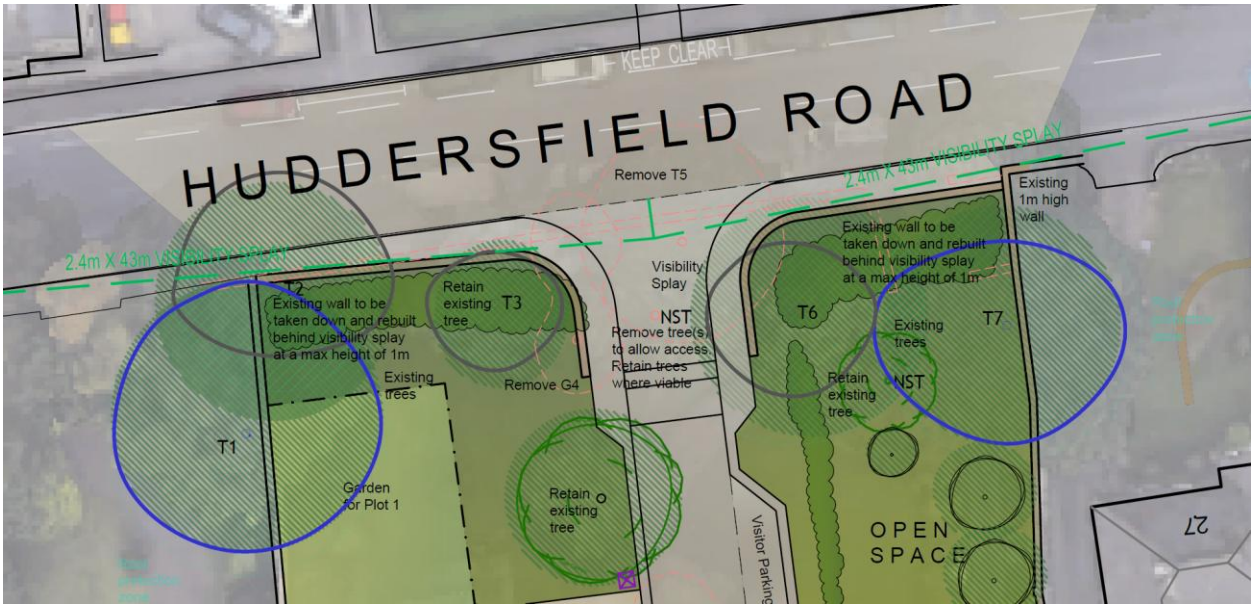
The southern portion of the site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The indicative layout avoids placing residential units in the highest risk areas, with garden space and habitat zones used to manage flood resilience. Detailed drainage strategies will be provided at Reserved Matters stage, ensuring compliance with LP27 and LP28. Opportunities for sustainable drainage will be explored, including permeable surfacing and habitat-based attenuation.



9 – BALANCING HIGHWAYS AND TREES

The central issue in the determination of this application is the balance between highways safety requirements and tree retention. Removal of T5 and G4 is necessary to deliver a safe access that accords with adopted highways policy. This limited tree loss will be mitigated through a biodiversity-led landscape scheme delivering more than is lost in both number and ecological value. The compromise ensures the development is compliant with both LP21 and LP33, while contributing positively to the district's housing land supply.





10 – CONCLUSION

This application seeks Outline consent for access only. No change of use, conversion, or subdivision of the existing dwelling or outbuildings is included within this application. These matters will be addressed under future full or reserved matters submissions as appropriate. It demonstrates a realistic and policy-compliant solution to providing safe entry from Huddersfield Road, while minimising and mitigating environmental impacts. The scheme strikes a careful balance between highways safety and tree retention, acknowledging the necessary removal of T5 and G4 but mitigating this loss through a robust biodiversity-led planting and habitat creation strategy.

The proposals have been informed by heritage sensitivity, ecological baseline assessment, and flood risk considerations, with further detail to be secured at Reserved Matters stage. The development will deliver new homes in a sustainable and accessible location, contributing positively to the Council's housing supply at a time when Kirklees cannot demonstrate a five-year deliverable supply.

In line with paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies. The benefits of the scheme, including new housing delivery, ecological enhancement, and improved use of underutilised land, clearly outweigh the limited harm arising from the necessary tree removal. On this basis, the application represents sustainable development and should be granted Outline Planning Permission.