

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

ERECTION OF
NEW DWELLING

AT LAND TO REAR OF
49 HOPTON LANE, MIRFIELD



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2 - INTRODUCTION

This statement supports a revised planning application for a single detached bungalow within the existing residential plot to the rear of No.49 Hopton Lane. The scheme has been redesigned following previous consultee feedback, with the layout now driven by the site's primary constraint, the woodland and retained trees.

The design approach is simple: provide a modest, well-considered home that meets the clients' needs as they age, whilst protecting the woodland setting and avoiding the common "pressure creep" issues that can arise over time.

3 - PROPOSAL

Mr and Mrs Auty are elderly and are planning ahead. The purpose of the proposal is to provide a bungalow that supports safe, independent living as their needs change over time.

There is limited stock of bungalows available locally, and this has been designed around the clients' requirements rather than as general speculative accommodation. The layout includes:

- an artist's studio for Mrs Auty, and
- a small study/workshop for Mr Auty.

These spaces form part of day-to-day living and support wellbeing and independence.

The immediate area contains a mix of stone and brick dwellings, and the proposal has been designed to sit comfortably within that local character rather than reading as an "estate" or suburban house type.

Design response

- The proposal is a low-profile bungalow form, which helps it sit down within the plot and reduces visual dominance when viewed from neighbouring properties.
- The massing is broken up with simple roof forms and articulated elevations to avoid a single large block.
- A clear emphasis is placed on natural materials and a restrained palette, aligned with the semi-rural edge character of Hopton Lane.

Materials

- Natural walling stone used as a primary facing material to reflect the local stone-built context.
- Brick used selectively (including a rustic-style brick chimney) to pick up the mixed stone/brick character of nearby properties.
- Blue slate roof to provide a traditional, locally familiar roof finish.
- Solar panels integrated on the roof plane as part of the dwelling's sustainability credentials, designed to sit as a coherent element rather than an afterthought.

Sustainability and "working garden"

- The scheme retains the greenhouse and allotment, reinforcing the practical, low-impact way the site is used and managed.

4 – LONG TERM WOODLAND STEWARDSHIP

The applicants have looked after the woodland associated with the site for many years and have planted a considerable number of additional trees during their ownership. This is important context for the planning balance: the woodland is not an incidental backdrop to the proposal — it is a valued asset that the applicants have actively invested in and maintained over a long period.

This revised scheme is intended to sit comfortably alongside that legacy, and the design decisions have been taken specifically to protect the woodland and retained trees.

5 – RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS TREE CONCERNS

Previous comments raised concerns about potential impacts on mature trees / woodland and the need for the development to be genuinely informed by arboricultural constraints. That is exactly what has driven the redesign.

The proposal has been adjusted to:

- remove the garage entirely,
- avoid tree root protection areas as far as reasonably possible, and
- reduce both construction activity and long-term domestic pressure at the woodland edge.

In practice, the aim is to keep built form, excavation, and day-to-day activity where it can be managed without threatening the health and longevity of the woodland and retained trees.

6 – WOODLAND TPO's

The site includes woodland subject to Tree Preservation controls. The revised layout has been designed to avoid encroachment into the woodland and to keep both construction activity and long-term domestic pressures away from protected root zones.

As part of this approach:

- there is no vehicular access proposed to the dwelling itself,
- there is no “domestic drive” created through sensitive areas, and
- no storage, level changes, mixing, or works are proposed within protected areas other than what will be expressly controlled through the submitted arboricultural details.

This is a deliberate “avoid and protect” strategy rather than a scheme that relies on future mitigation after the fact.

7 – ACCESS, PARKING AND MOVEMENT

The way the site works in practice is a key part of the tree protection strategy.

There is an existing no-dig / geo-grid path on site. This path is not to be used by dwelling vehicles.

Instead:

- parking will be provided off the existing tarmac drive, and
- the occupants will walk a short distance to the bungalow.

This is a conscious design decision to prevent soil compaction and repeated vehicle loading close to sensitive rooting areas. It also prevents the gradual “pressure creep” that can occur over time on woodland sites where vehicles start to edge closer to the door, deliveries create informal turning, or garden areas quietly become hardstanding.

8 – ECOLOGY

The application is supported by the appropriate ecological work and adopts a precautionary approach. Where required, the applicants are content for standard planning conditions to secure practical measures during construction, including:

- biodiversity protection controls during works,
- any necessary sensitive lighting measures, and
- protection measures at the site boundary / woodland edge.

9 – SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN CREDENTIALS

The bungalow is intended to perform well in use and reduce operational energy demand. The proposals incorporate:

- solar panels,
- an air source heat pump, and
- a dedicated plant room to accommodate servicing requirements.

The wider domestic “green” elements that the applicants already use and value will also be retained, including the existing greenhouse and allotment. habitat creation.

10 – SUMMARY AND PLANNING BALANCE

This is a modest, carefully designed bungalow that meets a clear personal need. The revised scheme has been shaped specifically to respond to previous concerns and avoid typical woodland-site risks by:

- removing the garage and reducing built form pressure,
- avoiding root protection areas as far as reasonably possible,
- keeping vehicles away from sensitive areas (parking off the existing tarmac drive and walking to the dwelling),
- reinforcing the applicants’ long-term woodland stewardship, and
- delivering a low-carbon home with meaningful green credentials while retaining the greenhouse and allotment.

On that basis, the applicants consider the revised scheme to be a responsible form of development that protects the woodland setting and can be supported through the planning process.

Response to Previous Consultees

1. Trees (Kirklees Tree Officer)

Previous concern: Potential harm to woodland / protected trees (incl. woodland TPO) and lack of an arboriculture-led design response supported by a full BS5837 package.

What has changed in this revised scheme

- Garage removed to reduce built form pressure and avoid any reliance on construction close to root protection areas (RPAs).
- Vehicle movements taken away from the woodland edge: parking is retained off the existing tarmac drive and the dwelling is accessed on foot only, specifically to prevent long-term compaction and “pressure creep”.
- The site layout has been refined to avoid RPAs as far as reasonably possible and to ensure the dwelling is not dependent on a vehicle route through sensitive ground.

What is submitted / how impacts are controlled

- Updated arboricultural documents (Tree Survey / AIA / AMS / TPP) to be issued to match the revised layout and demonstrate compliance with BS5837.
- Commitment to standard tree protection process:
 - protective fencing installed prior to commencement,
 - no storage/mixing/excavation within protected areas unless explicitly agreed within the approved arboricultural details,
 - arboricultural monitoring/supervision as required.

Planning balance point

- The applicants have a long-standing record of woodland stewardship and additional tree planting, and the revised layout is specifically designed to protect that long-term investment.

2. Ecology (Kirklees Ecology Team)

Previous concern: Further information required prior to decision (PEA) and construction-stage safeguards (species protection, invasive species management, lighting), plus BNG position to be confirmed.

What has changed / how concerns are addressed

- A precautionary approach is embedded in the proposal to protect habitats and species during construction.
- The applicants accept the need for standard ecological controls and are content for these to be secured via condition where appropriate (e.g. construction biodiversity controls and sensitive lighting).

What is submitted / how impacts are controlled

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal provided.
- Commitment to a CEMP (Biodiversity) to cover working methods and protections (including any required checks, exclusion zones, timing, and ecological supervision where needed).
- Sensitive lighting principles to avoid impacts on ecological networks.

3. Highways (Kirklees Highways Development Management)

Previous position: Acceptable in principle, using the existing access with suitable on-site parking/turning and an appropriate bin presentation point.

What has changed in this revised scheme

- The revision strengthens the highways position by reducing vehicle movement beyond the established driveway parking area and keeping the last section to the dwelling as pedestrian access, which also supports the tree protection strategy.

What is provided

- Parking retained off the existing tarmac drive.
- Bin storage / presentation arrangements maintained.
- No new vehicle access formed to the dwelling entrance.

Summary of the Resubmission

This revised scheme has been intentionally reworked to address consultee concerns, with the key design move being the removal of the garage and the shift to parking on the existing drive with foot-only access to the dwelling. This reduces both construction risk and long-term domestic pressure on protected trees/woodland, while maintaining an acceptable access and parking arrangement and enabling standard ecological safeguards through submitted information and/or conditions.