

NEW HOUSE

REAR OF 353
SOOTHILL LANE
BATLEY
WF17 6ES

Design Access Statement
May 2026



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1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction & Brief

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1.1 Introduction

This Design Access Statement has been prepared by njArchitects and is in support of the Planning Application for the construction of a single new self-build dwelling at the rear of 353 Soothill Lane, Batley WF17 6ES.

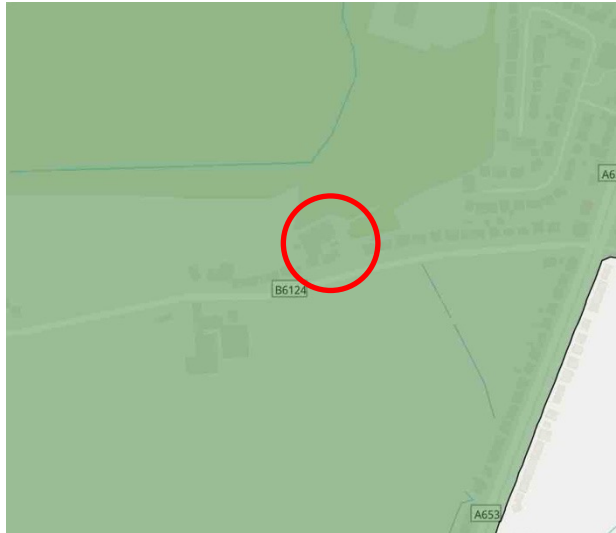
The purpose of this Design Review is to outline the proposal and illustrate how the proposed development of a single dwelling will re-use a redundant grey belt site within the green belt, whilst being sensitive to the character and privacy of the neighbouring buildings and countryside setting.

The application site comprises of a derelict redundant commercial building and associated hardstanding. As such it is previously developed, The site is within the greenbelt.

The landowners seek to make best use of this derelict and redundant parcel of land through redevelopment.

1.2 Brief

The brief is for a self-build new detached dwelling for the construction and occupation of the landowner's daughter and her family. This will enable them to live close to their parents to support multi generation living.



Location within the Greenbelt



Aerial Plan



2. SITE

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2.1 Site

The site is located within the greenbelt and is previously developed.

The site boundary for the application is as the red line indicated opposite. This includes the extent of the built elements, hard standing and access as indicated. The extended ownership covers the area indicated hatched red. The access is owned by a third party with the clients having access and maintenance rights over the land including the existing vehicular drive and gates.

There is a PROW running across the site – BAT/48/10.

The land hatched red, is also within the ownership and is cleared but does not form part of this application.

The site for the new self-build house is very unusual, beautiful, and challenging: a 0.41 acres plot within the official settlement policy boundary yet containing a cluster of low-grade industrial structures, located to the rear of an established residential cluster.



PROW – BAT/48/10.

Extract from Kompas – Kirklees Council Planning Mapping

3. PLANNING

History & Policy

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3.1 Planning History

There is a single consent under the Planning history for the site and a withdrawn application. They are both historic and the consent was not utilised and has lapsed. It is however a precedent.

2006/62/93651/E1

Conversion of vacant building to form 4 no. dwellings –
CONSENTED

3.2 Local & National Policy

- LP 1 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- LP 2 – Place Shaping
- LP 3 – Location of New Development
- LP 7 – Efficient and Effective Use of Land and Buildings
- LP 20 – Sustainable Travel
- LP 21 – Highway Safety
- LP 22 – Parking Provision
- LP 24 – Design
- LP 28 – Drainage
- LP 30 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- LP 33 – Trees
- LP 51 – Protection and Improvement of Local Air Quality
- LP 52 – Protection and Improvement of Environmental Quality
- LP 53 – Contaminated and Unstable Land

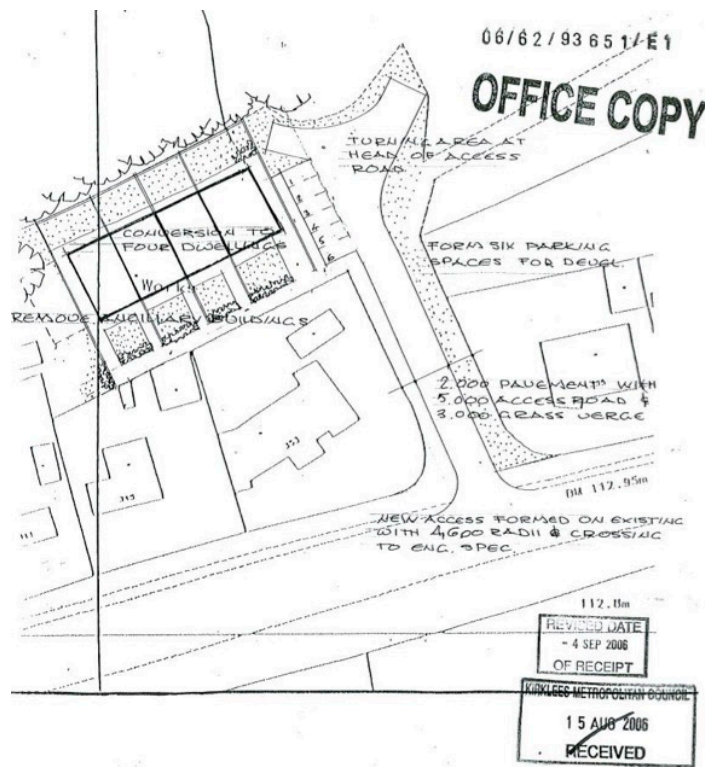
National Planning Policy Framework:

Other material planning considerations:

- Housebuilders Design Guide SPD
- Highways Design Guide
- Biodiversity Net Gain Technical Advice Note
- National Design Space Standards

NOTE

- The proposed development lies within a coal mining area.
- The public right of way BAT/48/10 crosses/abuts the site.



soothill lane _ site layout.1-500

Extract from Kirklees Council Planning Consent

3. PLANNING

Grey Belt

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3.3 Grey Belt Development

The recently enshrined "grey belt" designation was introduced in the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework as an exception to the existing green-belt, no-build rules.

Under this label, lower-performing areas of green-belt land are allowed to be released for development if proposals can be shown not to be 'inappropriate development'.

NPPF and Green Belt policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Green Belt are fundamental components of England's planning system, each playing a critical role in shaping how land is used and developed.

The Green Belt golden rules are among the many changes introduced in the updated 2024 NPPF. Fundamentally, these rules aim to increase development on Green Belt land while ensuring it is approached in a thoughtful and sustainable manner.

For decades, the Green Belt has been a fiercely protected barrier to urban sprawl. Whilst the development of a single house does not come under the new "Golden Rules" they are relevant in that by allowing controlled development under strict conditions, the golden rules challenge the historical approach and signal a shift toward prioritising practical solutions to development within the green belt to assist the housing crisis.

The framework acknowledges the reality that some parts of the Green Belt may not be as ecologically or socially valuable as others, creating opportunities to repurpose underutilised or degraded land for urgently needed housing. The site for our proposed new dwelling is such a site.

Our proposal comes under Para 154 of the NPPF which defines exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It states that, besides specific uses (agriculture, sport, etc.), limited infilling or redevelopment of previously developed land (brownfield) is allowed if it does not exceed the openness of existing development or cause substantial harm to it. The core requirement is that new development must not cause greater harm to the openness of the Green Belt, which is crucial for determining if development is "not inappropriate".

The plot of land for the proposed house was previously consented for residential development and does not cause greater harm.



Location within the Greenbelt



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A Coal Report is submitted in support of the application.



3. PLANNING

Ecology, Flood, CIL

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3.5 Ecology

Self-build projects in the UK must adhere to national and local ecological planning policies, primarily focusing on sustainability and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). While self-builds previously enjoyed a blanket exemption from BNG requirements, this is changing in 2026 as councils transition to an area-based small-sites exemption.

In England, the Environment Act dictates that developments must deliver at least a 10% improvement in biodiversity. Historically, projects of 9 dwellings or fewer on sites under 0.5 hectares were exempt. However, with a new 0.2-hectare area-based exemption taking effect, the dedicated self-build exemption is being phased out. The plot for the development is 0.166 hectares, which means it is exempt from biodiversity enhancement.

Therefore, no Biodiversity Net Gain Statement and Matrix is submitted with the application.

3.6 Flood

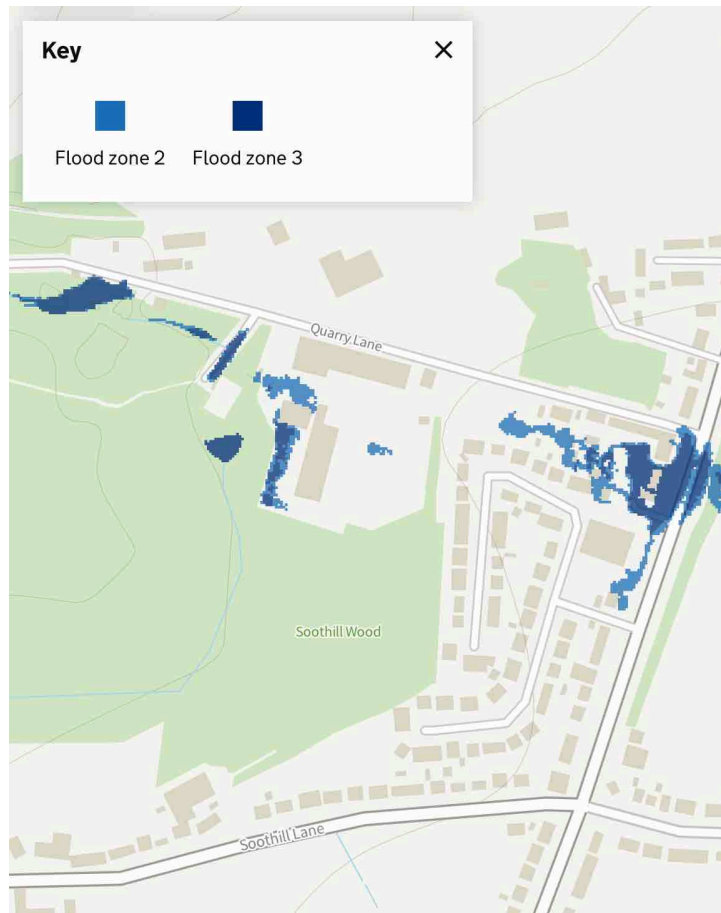
The application site is within Flood Zone 1 which signifies areas with the lowest probability of flooding and therefore residential development would be deemed acceptable in this flood zone. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) will be a statutory consultee for the application and given the zone identified, no flood report has been prepared for this submission.

3.7 Drainage

The existing drainage serving the site will be utilised for the new house as indicated on the Site Plan.

3.8 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Self-builders are largely exempt from CIL charges. The applicant in line with policy requirements, will apply for an exemption before starting work and submit supporting evidence within six months of project completion



Extract From Environment Agency Flood Map.

3. PLANNING

Highways

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3.9 Highways

With reference to Highways Residential Design Guide, Private Drives, and the Highways Design Guide.

Crossing

It is intended to utilise the existing crossing.

Visibility Splays

Soothill Lane is a 30mph road - the standard visibility splay requires a sight line of 43 meters in both directions from the centre of the access point. A splay will be established 2.4 meters back from the carriageway at the centre of the driveway, and the other two lines will run for 43 meters along the road edge, both to the left and right. The existing footpath and verge at the entrance is deep so there is no requirement to re-align the existing walls or fence/planting. There are no obstructions higher than 0.6 meters within this area.

Access Width

The new entrance is 5.2m wide to allow vehicles to enter the site whilst one exits. The minimum width of the shared private drive serving up to three dwellings is 3.2m wide. We propose a drive up to 5.5m wide in compliance and to ensure adequate safe width is provided. We may propose a passing place if we narrow the drive down. We will need to prove a larger vehicle can enter the site and turn.

Refuse

Refuse will be brought to the highway by the residents. A refuse collection point is located as indicated on the Site Plan, along the access drive. Bins will be then brought to the highway.

Parking & Turning

Adequate private parking for residents and visitors and turning for a medium fixed axle delivery vehicle which will continue to service the retained industrial building is provided.



4. PROPOSAL

Site Plan

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4.1 Site Plan as Proposed

Site extends to the boundary of the consented 2006 scheme.

The existing buildings on the site are in poor condition, visually intrusive and the one proposed to be replaced by the new dwelling is functionally redundant, but still count as built form in green-belt terms

We have carefully sited the new home on the footprint of the existing building and hardstanding areas, so the comparative impact is as minimal as possible.

The site layout has been designed with an open gap between the buildings, to avoid a terracing effect and to maintain visual permeability – all with the ambition of minimising impact on the landscape.

This also provides a maintenance path to the side of the retained unit.

The result is a modest intervention that replaces dilapidated, redundant structures and hardstanding, safeguarding the green belt, allowing the retention and refurbishment of the existing linear industrial unit and securing the sites long-term future.

The property recognises the privacy of the owners and has through orientation and the location of the entrance and windows, given protection to the public areas of footpath and allotments. The house predominantly faces the open countryside to the west.

Generous private amenity space is afforded to the new house.

The reformed 5.5m wide access road – separate footpath and grass verges – all as the previous consent, add to the quality improvements of the site..

A turning head for a fixed axle commercial vehicles (not articulated) and domestic vehicles is provided.

Visitor parking for the Industrial Unit and residence is also provided.



Sketch Concept Masterplan

4. PROPOSAL

Floor Plans

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4.2 Floor Plans as Proposed

Use

The proposed house design is in keeping with the needs of contemporary living. It sits comfortably with the surrounding area, and the scale and massing has been carefully considered to ensure a harmonious relationship.

There will be no overbearing, overlooking, or overshadowing issues with the neighbouring properties.

Amount

The proposed house has a Gross Area 275m² / 2,950sqft.

There is sufficient and generous private amenity space for the occupants.

Layout - Design

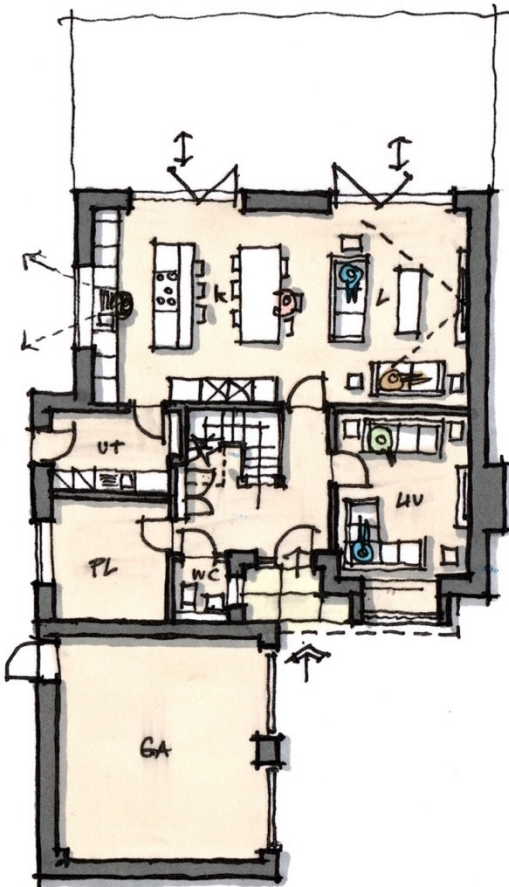
The architectural approach has been to design the proposed house as an integral element of the urban form as it now exists.

The proposal has little if any impact upon the surrounding properties.

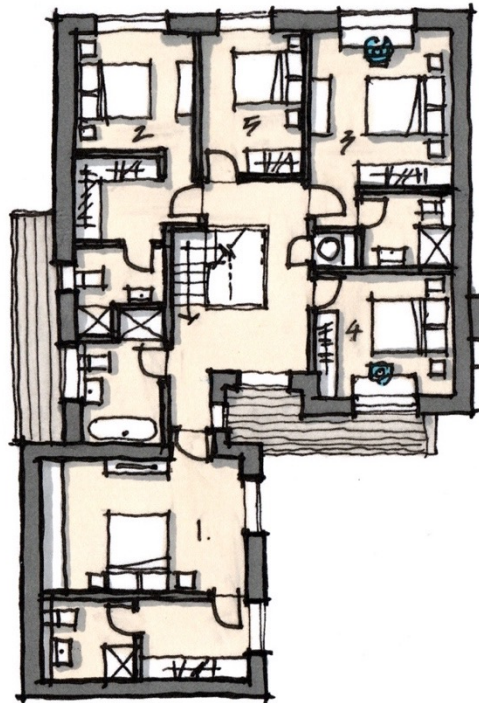
The new house creates a quality addition to the area in a respectful and logical manner.

The internal layout is designed to deliver 21st Century living spaces which take full advantage of the ability to maximise daylight and views, whilst maintaining privacy.

Note: The sketch floor plans opposite represent the concept design which has been refined further for the application. See submitted drawings for the refined and detailed plans.



Ground Floor – Sketch
Concept



First Floor – Sketch
Concept

4. PROPOSAL

Elevations

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4.3 Elevations as Proposed

The residential buildings in the area are an eclectic mix of forms, styles and materials. As such there is no defining aesthetic. A palette of high quality yet understated materials has been chosen to resonate with the context whilst providing a rich and tactile experience. The limited materials represent a warm contemporary palette, creating a clear connection between the proposal and neighbouring buildings.

The sketch elevations opposite were early studies which reflect the tonal range proposed, but which have been refined to a more contemporary brick and slate envelope, as the submission drawings.

Form

New development will utilise traditional vernacular building forms and use distinctive materials.

Roof

We propose natural slate tiles.

Many local domestic buildings in Soothill Lane have chimney stacks situated either at the gable or part way along the ridgeline. We have expressed the chimney on the gable wall.

Windows

Examples of all types of windows are to be found locally. The proposed windows are composite with an aluminium face, specified for their thermal efficiency, durability, and sustainability. Aluminium, being fully recyclable and low maintenance, compliments the buildings robust material palette.



4. PROPOSAL

Elevations

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External Walling – Buff Brickwork – Cream mortar.

4.3 Materials

The residential buildings in the area are an eclectic mix of external materials.

Walling

The external facades are to be constructed using a premium, light-textured buff cream brick.

This choice of material introduces a contemporary architectural expression while remaining highly sympathetic to the local vernacular.

This material has been carefully selected to reflect the natural tones and varied palette of the surrounding built environment.

The lighter coloration serves to break down the massing of the building, providing a visually attractive, layered facade.

The selected brick offers excellent weathering properties and tonal variation, ensuring the dwelling adds to the long-term visual quality and character of the area.

Together with the highly insulated envelope and passive design strategies, the material choices underpin a scheme that is not only environmentally responsible but architecturally rich, enduring and rooted in its urban context.

4. PROPOSAL

Sustainability

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4.4 Sustainability

An integrated approach to sustainability has considered natural a fabric first approach to the design considering ventilation, passive cooling, heating, internal daylight levels, home- working, community and ecology. Smart metering will be provided to allow the clients to understand and control their energy usage.

Low carbon and embodied energy building materials and low energy features will be used where possible. The home will be constructed with walls exceeding the Building Regulations. An abundance of windows that let in natural light and fresh air help moderate the internal environment.

The house will be heated via Air Source Heat Pump and underfloor heating. The living dining space and living room have provision for highly efficient wood burners. The potential for integrated water heating will be explored during the detail design stage.

The house will have an electric car charging point, rainwater butt and installed PV panels to the large roof at the rear, linked to a home battery within the garage, compliant with the recommendations of the National Housing Standards Review.

Framing will be manufactured off site to reduce waste, packaging and time. Wood used extensively in the timber framing of the houses will be from sustainably managed northern forests. All insulation will CFC and HCFC free, with water-based paints used where possible, and any coating and preservative treatments factory applied wherever possible.

Local contractors and subcontractors will be employed on the project to reduce the project's carbon footprint.

The scheme will create a comfortable healthy home which will be affordable to run, contributing to eliminating/reducing fuel poverty, future proofing the home for the demands of our changing climate.



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