

# Statement of Community Involvement

Rowley Lane, Lepton

Farnley Estates  
14 July 2020

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared by Royal Pilgrim Communications on behalf of Farnley Estates. It forms part of a suite of documents in support of an outline planning application which seeks approval for a new residential development on land off Rowley Lane, Lepton.

### The Site

1.2 The site is allocated (as part of site HS2) within Kirklees Council's Local Plan, which was adopted in February 2019. The planning application seeks approval for site access and up to 75 two, three and four-bedroomed properties, alongside public open spaces and generous landscaping.

1.3 The project is being led by Farnley Estates, a property management company based in Huddersfield.

### The Importance of Consultation

1.4 Developers are encouraged to consult with local communities and stakeholders by both national and local government before submitting a planning application. Public consultation allows local residents, and other stakeholders, the ability to comment on development proposals affecting their area. Consulting communities also allows residents the opportunity to discuss issues with the development team before a planning application is submitted.

### National Planning Policy Framework

1.5 Paragraph 39 of the NPPF (2018) places emphasis on improving communication and engagement at pre-application stage. It advises that:

*“Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.”*

Paragraph 40 states the local authority should:

*“Have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications. As Paragraph 41 suggests, ‘The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefit.’”*

## Kirklees Council's Development Management Charter

1.6 Kirklees Council's Development Management Charter expects applicants 'to agree the extent and type of pre-application consultation' with officers.

1.7 The engagement strategy developed has paid close attention to the Development Management Charter and applies the principles contained within it for our consultation activity.

1.8 It is important to note that the consultation strategy undertaken was designed with the current COVID-19 outbreak in mind and the approach was agreed with Kirklees Council's planning officer.

## 2 CONSULTATION PROCESS

2.1 The ongoing COVID-19 outbreak ruled out the potential for a physical public consultation event. Instead, the focal point of the public consultation was a bespoke website ([www.newhomesforlepton.co.uk](http://www.newhomesforlepton.co.uk)).

2.2 The dedicated website enabled people to view full details of the proposals, with an FAQ section and provided an opportunity to comment via an online feedback form. It also contained contact details for the development team, via a freephone 0800 number and email address. This website will remain live until a decision is made on the subsequent outline planning application.

2.3 Consultees unable to view the proposals and/or provide feedback online, were offered the opportunity to request a paper copy through the freephone number. A number of local residents made use of this and were provided with a copy of the full website, a feedback form and a freepost envelope.

### Public Engagement

2.4 Neighbouring residents were informed of the consultation on the proposals and invited to visit the website via a door to door letter drop. Residents of Woodsome Drive, Woodsome Park, Woodsome Road, Penistone Road (nearest properties), Rowley Lane up to and including Hermitage Park, Clough Park, Clough Drive and Beldon Brook Green, all received a copy of the letter which can be found at Appendix 1. The letter was distributed on 12 June 2020.

2.5 Further letters were issued over the following days to residents on Clough Way, Ashford Manor, Ashford Court, Dogley Lane and Dogley Villa Court.

2.6 In response to a request from a ward councillor, additional letters were sent on 20 June to residents on Whitegates Grove, Jumble Wood, Penistone Road (Fenay Bridge).

2.7 A total of 231 letters were issued to neighbouring residents.

## Stakeholder Engagement

2.8 Key politicians, individuals and groups were identified as having a potential interest in the proposals. These include:

### Political

- Cabinet Member for Housing & Democracy, Councillor Cathy Scott
- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Councillor Peter McBride
- Almondbury ward councillors, Alison Munro, Paola Davies and Bernard McGuin
- Neighbouring Kirkburton ward councillors, Bill Armer, Richard Smith and John Taylor
- Barry Sheerman, MP for Huddersfield

The political stakeholders identified above were contacted in advance of the public launch of the consultation. We provided details of the proposed development, our suggested consultation activity and offered an opportunity to discuss the proposals with the development team. Councillors were also offered the opportunity to view the dedicated website the day before its public launch.

### Local Stakeholders

- Rowley Lane Junior School
- Neighbouring businesses, including Woodsome Hall Golf Club
- Kirkburton Parish Council

The local stakeholders identified above were contacted directly via letter (or email as appropriate) which outlined the proposals and provided details of the public consultation. Local stakeholders were offered the opportunity to discuss the proposals via phone call or video conference if necessary. A further 12 letters or emails were issued to local stakeholders.

One neighbouring business provided a detailed response raising specific concerns relating to their premises and operations. This has been considered by the development team.

The local campaign group, Green Alert in Lepton (GAIL), were also met with (see below).

2.9 A virtual meeting was held on 2 July 2020 including all three Almondbury ward councillors and two representatives from the local campaign group GAIL (Green Alert in Lepton). Topics discussed included:

- Request for a wider masterplan to include sites HS2 and HS3, to enable residents to understand how development will proceed in a co-ordinated way and also to understand the phasing of works, especially the provision of the new roundabout on Penistone Road

*It was confirmed that such a masterplan would be submitted with the outline planning application. It was also confirmed that phasing was needed in order to provide the funding required to pay for necessary infrastructure works which enable the wider development to proceed.*

- Impact on highways and highways safety

*A detailed transport assessment and road safety audit will be submitted as part of the planning application.*

- Potential heritage impact on Woodsome Hall

*In terms of the impact on Woodsome Hall or Castle Hill, this part of the HS2 site cannot be seen from either heritage asset.*

- Location of the site access on Rowley Lane

*The access road is positioned on Rowley Lane, below the former railway line. Visibility at the junction will be improved as part of the proposals.*

- Provision of affordable housing

*As this is an outline application for the landowner, who is not a specialist scale housing provider, we cannot confirm what the developer's intentions will be. However, Kirklees Council's policy is for 20% on-site provision, but it is possible that a specialist developer may want to instead provide the affordable contribution off-site. This would only be done in agreement with the local authority and secured through the planning process.*

## Media Release

2.9.1 A media release promoting the website and outlining the proposals was issued to local media and coverage was secured on 18 June 2020. See Appendix 2.

## 3 WEBSITE

3.1 A dedicated website was set up: [www.newhomesforlepton.co.uk](http://www.newhomesforlepton.co.uk). The website was spilt into the following tabs for ease of navigation:

- The site
- Our proposals
- Further phases
- Next steps
- FAQs

3.2 The website included an online form for visitors to provide feedback.

3.3 Paper copies of the website have been issued to those not wishing to or unable to use the website. These have been accompanied by a paper feedback form and FREEPOST envelope in order for feedback to be sent without cost to the consultee. To date, these have been issued to five people on request.

## 4 FEEDBACK

### Feedback Received

4.1 The website has attracted around 1,600 visits from just over 1,200 unique visitors. To date, 70 people have submitted a feedback form, either via the website, via the FREEPOST envelope provided on request or by email.

Although not compulsory, the feedback form asked respondents to provide their name, address and postcode, telephone number and/or email address and how they would like to be kept informed of progress or whether they preferred not to be contacted.

Respondents were then asked to provide any general comments about the proposals in a free text box and continuation sheets if required.

### Feedback Summary and Response

4.2 Comments received have been primarily focused on a range of common themes. We have also received a number of responses from people supporting the proposals, or interested in purchasing a property on the site, including first-time buyers.

4.3 Many of the feedback comments were also discussed with ward members and the local campaign group on 2 July 2020. Therefore our response to the following issues are covered above (pages 4 and 5):

- Need for a wider masterplan of other developments
- Provision of highways infrastructure and timing of
- Impact on highways safety and capacity
- Potential impact on heritage assets
- Location of site access

In addition, the following common themes have also been identified during consultation:

- Site drainage

*The site includes provision of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System which will ensure that water run-off is regulated. This will be agreed with the Lead Flood Authority as part of the planning process.*

- Impacts on local ecology

*A report has been produced by a professional ecologist which considers potential impacts and suggests mitigation methods. This will accompany the planning application.*

- Loss of greenfields instead of focusing on brownfield development

*The site is part of allocation HS2 in the Local Plan, which means it has already been identified for housing development. The Local Plan process removed the site from the Green Belt.*

- Noise impacts – long-term and during construction

*These are considered in the relevant reports accompanying the planning application. Construction will be regulated by a Construction Management Plan to be agreed with the local authority ahead of construction works starting on site.*

- Realignment of Rowley Lane

*Phase 2 of development, which will see development of the remainder of the HS2 site east of the former railway line and HS3 site, will require significant highways infrastructure improvement. For the purposes of this consultation we have shown that this may include a roundabout and link road which can be accommodated on our site. It is likely that a new roundabout will require the realignment of Rowley Lane close to its junction with Penistone Road. If this is the case, then a cul-de-sac is likely to be created to preserve access for existing properties. The precise details of this will be agreed at an appropriate stage.*

- Active travel/cycling

*Our Transport Assessment considers all modes of transport. The site will link to the existing pedestrian routes and cycle networks, where possible.*

## Further Engagement

4.4 People were given several ways in which they could provide their feedback, or to find out more information, including:

- Feedback form (hard copy, with FREEPOST return envelope)
- Feedback form (website)
- Email address
- Freephone (0800) telephone number

4.5 Engagement is continuing, and feedback will be accepted from the community throughout the planning process and amendments made to the scheme where possible and appropriate. As this is an outline application, feedback will be used to inform any future Reserved Matters planning application.

## 5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Comprehensive pre-application consultation has been undertaken in relation to this planning application and engagement has been open and transparent.

Main issues from local residents were identified. Comments received during this pre-application consultation have been considered and shared with Farnley Estates and their advisers.

All interested parties and stakeholders will be kept informed as the plans progress.

## APPENDIX 1: Neighbour Letter



To the occupier

Public consultation notification

**Please open**

12 June 2020

Dear Resident,

**Development proposals - land off Rowley Lane, Lepton**

I am writing on behalf of the landowner to inform you about development proposals for land on the corner of Rowley Lane and Penistone Road, Lepton.

The landowner intends to submit an outline planning application for up to 75 new homes on the site, offering a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties. The proposed development will be accessed from a new junction on Rowley Lane and will also benefit from public open spaces and new landscaping across the site.

The site is allocated for new homes within the recently adopted Kirklees Council Local Plan. In addition to new housing, the site has been designed to accommodate a potential new roundabout and link road which will be required by further housing which will be built at a later stage. Please note that this potential new roundabout, link road and further housing are not the subject of this particular planning application.

Before we submit a planning application, we would like to engage with the local community to allow any queries to be raised and to obtain feedback prior to finalising the proposed development.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, we are unable to hold a public consultation event. Instead, details of the proposals can be found on the website [www.newhomesforlepton.co.uk](http://www.newhomesforlepton.co.uk). To comment on the proposals, simply click on the 'Feedback' tab on the website. Or you can email me using the address below.

If you prefer, please call me by Freephone on **0800 198 1235** and I will send you a pre-paid envelope and a feedback form through the post.

I hope you find this information useful. If you have any questions about the proposals, please do contact me on **0800 198 1235** or [scott@royalpilgrim.com](mailto:scott@royalpilgrim.com).

Yours sincerely



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## APPENDIX 2: Media Coverage

Y News > West Yorkshire News > Lepton

# Fears new Huddersfield housing plan will cause more problems on danger road

Residents living near the site have been urged to have their say

SHARE



48 SHARES



COMMENTS

By [Tony Earnshaw](#) Local Democracy Reporter  
18:41, 18 JUN 2020

NEWS

People living near land at [Lepton](#) in Huddersfield earmarked for housing are being urged to have their say on plans via a virtual public consultation.

Up to 75 two-, three- and four-bedroom family homes are earmarked for a nine-acre (3.65 hectare) site at the corner of the A629 Penistone Road and Rowley Lane.

The scheme would also involve the creation of a new roundabout on Penistone Road and a new access road into the estate from Rowley Lane.

A spokesman for the landowner said: "Before we submit a planning application, we'd like to consult with the local community."

However due to restrictions around Covid-19 it will have to be within a virtual format.

The Lepton site forms part of [Kirklees Council's controversial Local Plan](#).

Local councillors urged residents potentially affected by the project to respond.

Clr Alison Munro (Lib Dem, Almondbury) said she had been pressing the developers to move beyond a leaflet drop and to hold virtual meetings.

She added: "It is only right that people feel they can have their say, which is important as there are so many issues with the site.

"The developers have declined so far to do this, which is not good enough.

"Any development here will not protect or enhance the setting of Woodsome Hall, a Grade I-listed building, a part of our local heritage and considered by the Government to be of the highest significance.

"Additionally the accumulation of traffic at the Penistone Road/Rowley Lane junction will cause immense problems.

"I am therefore urging people to respond."

Her ward colleague Clr Bernard McGuin (Conservative) raised concerns over problematic access and increased traffic.

He said: "The area was designated in Kirklees' Local Plan as a place where building can take place.

"However when the planning inspector did this she said that there had to be a joined-up plan to connect this area with two areas above.

"This potential development fails to meet that recommendation.

"It is also suggested that there should be an access road off Rowley Lane.

"This, at the moment, is totally unacceptable because there is no pavement on that side of the road.

"There is also a blind bend.

"Traffic at the moment backs up Rowley Lane and the development fails to account for a need to create a roundabout to create an egress and access to any development between Penistone Road and Lepton Great Woods.

"In other words they are hoping to make a quick profit on this area without creating the needed infrastructure.

"If they put in a formal planning application I would hope that it would be rejected on these grounds."

Kirklees' Local Plan, which will see tens of thousands of new homes built in the borough, was adopted in February 2019.

An order from the Government, the Local Plan includes 31,000 homes, many of which will have to be built within the green belt, as there is insufficient non-green belt land in the borough.

It equates to building 1,730 homes per annum in the borough.


The consultation can be found at:  
[www.newhomesforlepton.co.uk](http://www.newhomesforlepton.co.uk)

APPENDIX 3:Website

# NEW HOMES FOR LEPTON

[Home](#) [The site](#) [Our proposals](#) [Further phases](#) [Next steps](#) [FAQs](#) [Feedback](#) [Contact us](#)

## NEW HOMES FOR LEPTON



Indicative image

**These proposals seek to establish planning approval and access arrangements for 75 much needed new homes on land off Rowley Lane, Lepton.**

The housing will be a mix of 2, 3 and 4 -bedroomed

**Consultation**

Before submitting an outline planning application, the landowner would like to consult with the local community.

## APPENDIX 4: Feedback Form

# FEEDBACK FORM

## NEW HOMES FOR LEPTON

**Name:**

**Address & Postcode:**

**Email:**

**Comments:**

**Privacy policy:**

The data you provide is being collected by Royal Pilgrim Communications (who can be contacted on 0113 335 0033 or [emily@royalpilgrim.com](mailto:emily@royalpilgrim.com)). The lawful basis for processing this data is Legitimate Interests for the purposes of this consultation, to gather your opinion on the proposal and to enable us to contact you regarding the project in the future. You can opt out of any contact, by ticking the box below or by contacting us at any time. You do not have to provide any personal data in order to comment on this proposal. We will not publish or share your personal data with any third parties. A copy of the comments that you make regarding the proposal will be provided to the local planning authority as part of the planning process and so that it can note the comments made, but no personal data will be shared, other than any personal data you choose to put in the comments box. Your personal data will be stored securely for the life of the project, which will be until the development is complete or a decision has been made not to go ahead with the project. You have the right to access, amend, object and remove the data we hold at any time. If you have a complaint, you can contact us or the Information Commissioner, whose contact details are available on their website [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

Please tick here if you would not like us to contact you about this project