

# Statement of Community Involvement

Reliance Precision - Penistone Road,  
Lepton



December 2024

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# Introduction

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been prepared by Royal Pilgrim Communications to support the planning application by Reliance Precision Ltd to expand their headquarters in Lepton.

Pre-application public consultation and stakeholder engagement has taken place to inform the planning submission. The public consultation was hybrid with an in-person drop-in exhibition and website with feedback survey being available to residents.

## The proposals

Local specialist engineering company, Reliance Precision, would like to improve its facilities through improvements to its Lepton facility.

To support future growth, a significant investment is proposed, which will provide modern facilities, create new jobs, and allow the company to build upon their success as a specialist engineering company and local employer. The plans include:

### **Rowley Mills**

- New three storey entrance building. High quality design with natural stone, wood cladding and curved green roof.
- Two storey rear extension to increase manufacturing and office space.
- Additional parking spaces, including accessible, electric vehicle chargers, and cycle parking.
- Enhanced woodland around the site, securing a 10% biodiversity net gain.

### **International House**

- Enacting the previously approved redevelopment of this site from 2022.
- Creating new flexible space for light industrial and office uses.
- A new pedestrian island on Penistone Road.
- Operations will remain separate and there will be limited traffic between sites.

Following the acquisition of International House, Reliance is submitting a combined planning application covering both sites. As part of the longer-term expansion plan, Rowley Mills and International House would function as separate, standalone parts of the Reliance operation.

## The site

The proposed development site is Reliance Precision's headquarters which is located off Penistone Road in Lepton. International House is located across the road.



## About Royal Pilgrim Communications

Royal Pilgrim Communications is a communications consultancy dedicated to delivering inclusive community and stakeholder consultation to support planning applications and development projects. We have supported a range of development projects and provided public consultation and stakeholder engagement support to help ensure communities are informed and able to contribute to schemes.

## Consultation process

### Consultation is Key

National and local government encourage developers to consult with local communities and stakeholders before submitting a planning application.

Consultation and communication with local communities is an important element of the planning process. It is important that local communities are made fully aware of proposals affecting their area and are provided with opportunities to view any plans and discuss issues with the developers or their professional team. This process should also enable the community to provide feedback.

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 40 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) 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 41 states the local authority should:

*'...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.'*

## Kirklees Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

Kirklees Council's SCI outlines expectations of itself in local engagement:

*2.15 Consultees will be informed of the nature and scope of the consultation and any additional locations prior to the start of the consultation period/event to raise public awareness. Details will be available on the website. Where possible summary leaflets will be produced for documents being consulted on.*

*2.18 The following methods may be used for consultation and engagement. The methods chosen will be tailored to the specific stage and will be proportionate to the importance of the document. Each method has pros and cons, and stating these will help us to decide the best combination of methods. We will work with our corporate communications team to identify the most effective channels of communication. This may include the use of local media by preparing press releases to circulate to local newspapers and radio stations or working with newspapers to prepare articles or advertisements to raise awareness and promote issues. For example, in the case of neighbourhood plans, the council must assist in publicising a neighbourhood area boundary or a proposed neighbourhood forum, and this will be done through the local press/media, as well as posting on the Council's website.*

## Consultation

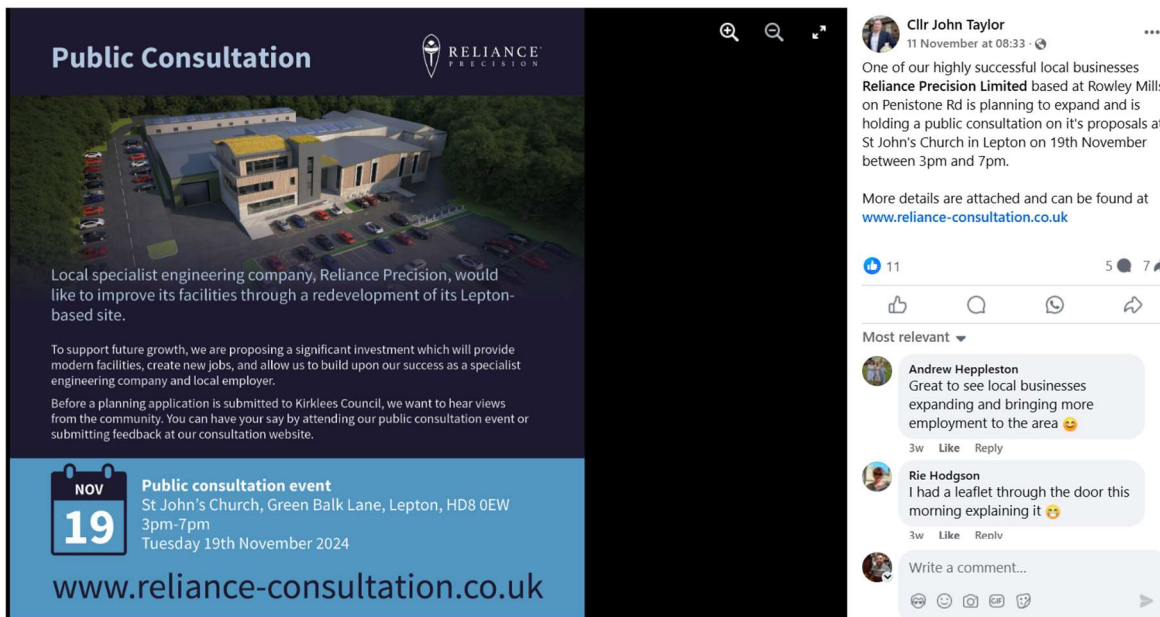
### Informing residents, stakeholders and the public

The public consultation was advertised via a community leaflet (Appendix 1) which was distributed to approximately 4,111 households near the site. An additional neighbour letter was distributed to circa 50 neighbouring roads to ensure neighbours could learn about the consultation. (Appendix 2).

The public consultation was also advertised with media coverage:

- <https://huddersfieldhub.co.uk/reliance-precision-plans-significant-expansion-with-the-creation-of-80-new-jobs/>
- <https://www.thebusinessdesk.com/yorkshire/news/2131615-plans-revealed-for-once-in-a-generation-engineering-firm-expansion>
- <https://www.insidermedia.com/news/yorkshire/engineering-firm-consulting-on-expansion-plans-highlights-once-in-a-generation-opportunity>

The consultation was also publicised via Cllr John Taylor's Facebook page (image below).



## Stakeholders

A range of stakeholders were notified of the consultation including:

- Almondbury ward councillors
- Kirkburton ward councillors
- Huddersfield MP
- Ossett and Denby Dale MP
- Kirkburton Parish Council
- Lepton Village Preservation Society
- Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce
- Huddersfield Civic Society
- Kirkburton and Highburton Community Association
- Neighbouring landowners/promoters
- Neighbouring businesses.
- Other stakeholders were notified via the community leaflet and neighbour letter.

A meeting took place with the Almondbury ward councillors and a ward councillor attending the public drop-in exhibition. Further stakeholder meetings will take place.

## Consultation event

A public drop-in exhibition took place on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024 (3-7pm) at St John's Church, Green Balk Ln, Lepton, Huddersfield HD8 0EW. Residents were able to discuss the proposals with the project team, review public consultation banners (Appendix 3) and provide feedback via a survey form.

Around 30 residents and stakeholders attended the drop-in consultation. Feedback received was overwhelmingly positive, with residents welcoming the investment, new jobs, and continued success of Reliance Precision.



*The public consultation event (19<sup>th</sup> November 2024).*

### Consultation website

A public consultation website was launched as the leaflets were distributed to residents: [www.reliance-consultation.co.uk](http://www.reliance-consultation.co.uk). The website was then updated with further information on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The website includes information about the proposals and a feedback survey. The website will remain open through the post-submission phase.

## Feedback

### Feedback summary

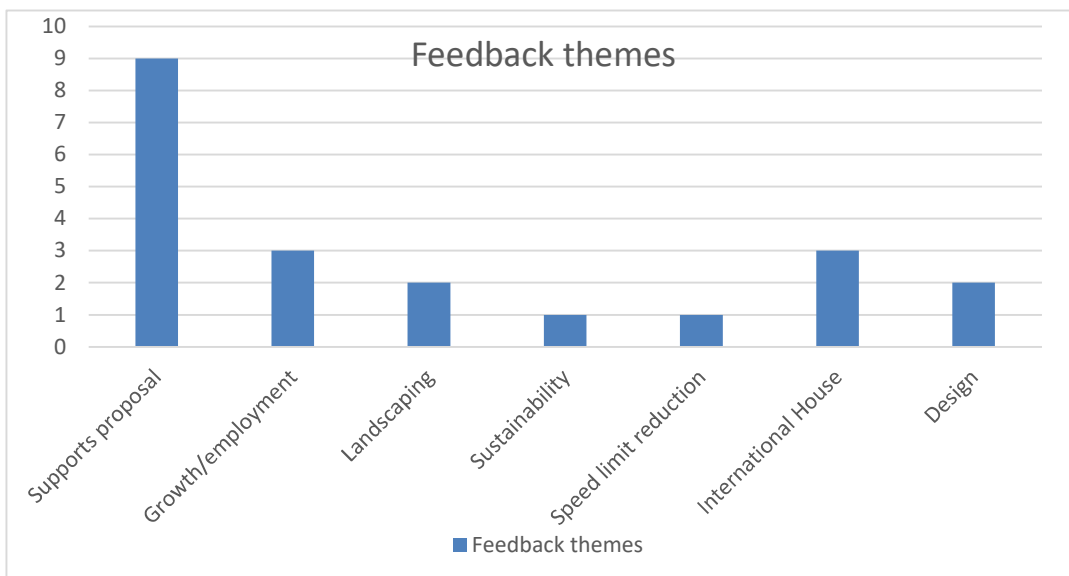
To date, 9 pieces of feedback have been received to the public consultation including from the public drop-in exhibition and via the online feedback form.

The feedback surveys included a general 'comments' box. The feedback received is as follows:

Feedback response	Feedback themes
Proposal looks good & it is refreshing to see a local company thriving, their current site at Rowley Mills has been well landscaped & makes the premises look 'hidden away'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports proposal</li> <li>• Design</li> </ul>
A well-considered plan. No issues. Thank you for doing a consultation and considering the neighbourhood in the design. Good luck!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports proposal</li> <li>• Design</li> </ul>
This is the type of project that fully needs supporting for the benefit of the village of Lepton. It is the only major employer in the vicinity. Please can it be progressed efficiently and smoothly for the benefit of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports proposal</li> <li>• Growth/employment</li> </ul>
Good to see someone showing development in local precision industry. Can only be good for local community and retention of local engineering skills. Long may it continue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports proposal</li> <li>• Growth/employment</li> </ul>
I have seen your plans for expansion. It is great news that you will be able to expand into International House. I feel you have	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports proposal</li> </ul>

gone over and beyond to engage with the public and engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International House proposal</li> </ul>
So very pleased to hear that the field will be kept as is. No building, just green space. Hope you buy the corner field too. No more houses thank you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports proposal</li> <li>• Field retention at International House</li> </ul>
Plans - if they stay as discussed with the public today, will not be detrimental to the existing residents in the area. Retaining the field fronting Woodsome Road as green will enhance the area amid the current housebuilding plans locally. You have our support for your expansion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports proposal</li> <li>• Field retention at International House</li> </ul>
We like the look of the expansion proposals, nice environmental integration. We would strongly support the proposal to reduce the speed limit for pedestrian crossing safety. I believe there could be quite a few opportunities to explore enhanced natural lighting in the factory, solar panels and potentially geothermal heat pumps to reduce the net energy bill. Good luck and best wishes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports proposal</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Speed limit reduction</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> </ul>
<p>I would like to support the proposed redevelopment of Rowley Mills and International House. Reliance have appointed a knowledgeable team who are well aware of the challenges of the sites and the fact that they are in a rural setting.</p> <p>Thought has been taken to enhance woodland and landscaping along side greatly improved facilities on the combined sites. It is encouraging to see the company looking to the future with positive proposals for growth and I wish them well.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports proposal</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Growth/employment.</li> </ul>

### Consideration of key issues



The dominant feedback theme has been the overwhelming support for the proposals. Every response received to the public consultation was supportive of the proposal with focus on welcoming additional employment, the success of a local business, and the design of the proposals including landscaping.

Several respondents mentioned previous residential development in Lepton and welcomed that the International House proposal will retain a significant portion of the site as green land. One respondent mentioned sustainable energy including solar panels and heat pumps, and these are discussed in the Design and Access Statement.

## Conclusion

A hybrid pre-application public consultation has taken place regarding the proposals from Reliance Precision including an online website with feedback and an in-person public consultation event. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with respondents clearly valuing Reliance as a specialist local employer who wishes to expand and create new jobs.

Stakeholder engagement has also taken place regarding the proposals, and this will continue throughout the planning process.

Engagement with the local community will continue and feedback will be accepted and considered.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: Leaflet



**RELIANCE**  
PRECISION

## Public Consultation



Local specialist engineering company, Reliance Precision, would like to improve its facilities through a redevelopment of its Lepton-based site.

To support future growth, we are proposing a significant investment which will provide modern facilities, create new jobs, and allow us to build upon our success as a specialist engineering company and local employer.

Following the acquisition of International House, we would like to submit a combined planning application covering both sites. As part of our longer-term expansion plan, Rowley Mills and International House would function as separate, standalone parts of the Reliance operation.

Before a planning application is submitted to Kirklees Council, we want to hear views from the community. You can have your say by attending our public consultation event or submitting feedback at our consultation website.



### Public consultation event

St John's Church, Green Balk Lane, Lepton, HD8 0EW  
3pm-7pm  
Tuesday 19th November 2024



## Key benefits



**Job creation**



**Enhanced apprenticeship training programme**



**Facilitates investment in high-tech processes**



**Biodiversity net gain**



**Enhanced woodland and landscaping**



**Sustainable building design**



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[www.reliance-consultation.co.uk](http://www.reliance-consultation.co.uk)

## APPENDIX 2: Neighbour letter

Dear Resident,

### **Public consultation – proposed facility improvements, Reliance Precision.**

Local specialist engineering company, Reliance Precision, would like to improve its facilities through a redevelopment of its Lepton-based site.

To support future growth, a significant investment is proposed which will provide modern facilities, create new jobs, and allow the company build upon its success as a specialist engineering company and local employer.

Following the acquisition of International House, a combined planning application would be submitted, covering both sites. As part of the longer-term expansion plan, Rowley Mills and International House would function as separate, standalone parts of the Reliance operation.

Before a planning application is submitted to Kirklees Council, we want to hear views from the community.

You can have your say by attending our public consultation event (details below) or submitting feedback at our consultation website: [www.reliance-consultation.co.uk](http://www.reliance-consultation.co.uk).

### **Public consultation event**

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024 (3-7pm) at John's Church, Green Balk Ln, Lepton, Huddersfield HD8 0EW.

I hope this update is helpful. If you have any questions on the above, please contact me at: [matt@royalpilgrim.com](mailto:matt@royalpilgrim.com) or 0800 089 0361.

Yours sincerely,

REDACTED

**Matthew Joy**

**Royal Pilgrim Communications**

## APPENDIX 3: Consultation banners



### Welcome

Local specialist engineering company, Reliance Precision, would like to improve its facilities through a redevelopment of its Lepton-based site.

To support future growth, we are proposing a significant investment which will provide modern facilities, create new jobs, and allow us to build upon our success as a specialist engineering company and local employer.

Following the acquisition of International House, we would like to submit a combined planning application covering both sites. As part of our longer-term expansion plan, Rowley Mills and International House would function as separate, standalone parts of the Reliance operation.

Before a planning application is submitted to Kirklees Council, we want to hear views from the community. You can have your say by completing a feedback form or submitting feedback at our consultation website.



#### The development sites

- **Rowley Mills** – established site for 40 years.
- **International House** – developed site with manufacturing building and car park. Paxman Scalp Cooling will vacate International House by the end of 2026 and move to another location. Planning approval has already been granted in 2022 to redevelop this site. Our proposal will retain and enact this approval.
- Both development sites can be considered 'grey belt' – whilst not allocated for employment allocation, they are almost entirely developed and established as manufacturing sites.
- Trees and shrubs line both sites, protect views and enhance landscaping.

You can also view the proposals and leave feedback by visiting [www.reliance-consultation.co.uk](http://www.reliance-consultation.co.uk)



### Our expertise

- Founded in 1920, Reliance Precision is a family-owned engineering company.
- We specialise in the design, manufacture, assembly and test of highly complex components and sub-assemblies that play a critical role in the performance of the final application.
- We are an established supplier to a diverse range of global markets.

#### A local employer

**Specialist employer** – we employ 210 people at our Huddersfield site.

**Apprenticeships** – established scheme for young engineers. 21 apprentices enrolled currently. 25% of workforce are current or former Reliance apprentices.

**Local success story** – around £17m GVA (money generated) per year, supplying businesses and supporting wider jobs in the economy.



#### Key expansion benefits

**Job creation**

**Biodiversity net gain**

**Enhanced apprenticeship training programme**

**Enhanced woodland and landscaping**

**Facilitates investment in high-tech processes**

**Sustainable building design**

You can also view the proposals and leave feedback by visiting [www.reliance-consultation.co.uk](http://www.reliance-consultation.co.uk)



## Proposals

### Elevations

#### Rowley Mills



Existing Elevation



Proposed Elevation

The proposed extension to Rowley Mills has been sensitively designed to fit into the landscape and reduce impact on the skyline.

The enhanced buildings would be more sustainable, provide new design space, employee canteen, office spaces, and unlock new jobs.

We are seeking feedback on the look and design of the proposed buildings, ahead of planning submission.


#### International House



Existing Elevation



Proposed Elevation

You can also view the proposals and leave feedback by visiting  
 [www.reliance-consultation.co.uk](http://www.reliance-consultation.co.uk)



## Next steps & feedback

Thank you for reviewing our public consultation materials. Please take the opportunity to provide feedback. Your views are valuable to us and will be considered as part of the planning process.

Following the submission of a planning application, residents will be able to review the planning documents and provide comments to Kirklees Council.

Contact us


 [matt@royalpilgrim.com](mailto:matt@royalpilgrim.com)

 0800 089 0362

## Timeline

The below timeline is subject to change due to the many variables during the planning process.

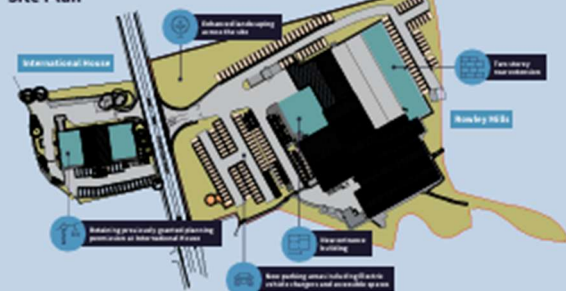


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## Proposals

### Site Plan



### Rowley Mills


-  New three storey entrance building. High quality design with natural stone, wood cladding and curved green roof.
-  Two storey rear extension to increase manufacturing and office space.
-  Additional parking spaces, including accessible, electric vehicle chargers, and cycle parking.
-  Enhanced woodland around the site, securing a 10% biodiversity net gain.



Rowley Mills

### International House

-  Enacting the previously approved redevelopment of this site from 2022.
-  Creating new flexible space for light industrial and office uses.
-  A new pedestrian island on Penistone Road.
-  Operations will remain separate and there will be limited traffic between sites.

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
## Proposals


### Landscaping proposals



- 1** New trees and native shrub planting to create character and enhance biodiversity.
- 2** Green frontage to screen views from Penistone Road.
- 3** Strengthened green spaces along the site boundaries to enhance wildlife habitat corridors.

### Landscaping and biodiversity

-  A comprehensive programme of landscaping improvements including tree planting and boundary treatments.
-  Our proposals will increase the overall number of trees and shrub planting on the site.
-  Boundary tree planting will help to further shield views to and from the site.
-  We will protect all trees with TPOs (Tree Preservation Order). Our proposals aim to deliver a biodiversity net gain.

You can also view the proposals and leave feedback by visiting  
 [www.reliance-consultation.co.uk](http://www.reliance-consultation.co.uk)