

February 7 2026

Planning Application: 2025/60/93572/E

Dear sir/madam,

I am writing in relation to the above planning application recently submitted for 123 houses on Barnsley Road in Upper Cumberworth.

Before moving on to my objections I would like to challenge the assumption that more housing is needed in this specific area. I am aware of national targets leading to a rush to build new houses, but it is important to consider if we are building houses where they are most required. According to Rightmove, as at the date of this letter, there are over 900 houses currently for sale within a 5 mile radius of Upper Cumberworth. 300 of them are in the range below £250,000, which could potentially be classified as starter homes. Therefore, it would appear that we are not dealing with a situation of short supply at any price point in the immediate locality. There are properties in the Vivly Willows development in Denby Dale that have currently been on the market since May and August 2025. Again, this would indicate that there is not a backlog of pent up demand for additional property in the immediate area.

In addition to this point, my concerns regarding the proposed development are on the following grounds:

Ecological and water/drainage management damage: the proposed site is home to a number of protected trees and plays an important part in the Stephen Wood ancient woodland eco system. Green belt is a one time asset that should not be seen as an opportunity for opportunistic developers to maximise their profits. Changes to national planning policy, combined with the Local Plan requiring update have created an opportunity for these companies to put in multiple speculative planning requests. The short window of opportunity means that many, such as this one, are ill considered and inappropriate.

To develop and essentially concrete over such a large area that currently acts as a natural water soak up would result in excess water flowing into Stephen Wood and increasing the flood risk there and further downstream in Denby Dale. The field currently has a significant natural water culvert running diagonally across it that does not appear

on the developers plans. If this is interrupted then water problems will likely materialise elsewhere.

Increased road traffic and pedestrian safety : because of the very limited public transport options the likelihood is that most of the proposed new residents will rely on their cars for transport to and from work and for other purposes. Assuming that most will be two car households, this will significantly increase traffic on Barnsley Road and would likely add to the traffic on Cumberworth Lane and Carr Hill Road that are increasingly used as rat runs to avoid the build up of traffic at the Sovereign intersection at peak times. Both roads have sections with narrow or no pavements and are becoming increasingly dangerous for pedestrians. School children waiting for the bus on Barnsley Road just below the Cumberworth Lane intersection are particularly at risk if traffic volumes increase significantly. The zebra crossing by the Star public house has been the site of several accidents in the 20+ years that I have lived in the village and the proximity to the bus stop is therefore concerning. In addition, the recently approved quarry application at Bromley Farm will add to more HGV traffic on Barnsley Road. This combination of increasing traffic and greater congestion at the Sovereign and the surrounding road system will undoubtedly increase the risks for all road users and pedestrians.

Pressure on local amenities/utilities: the addition of 123 houses will add to the increasing pressure on all local amenities and utilities. It is already challenging trying to get an appointment at Shepley Surgery and with an aging population this is set to get worse. It can now be challenging to park in Denby Dale and the queues at the Post Office in Upper Cumberworth mean it can often take 10-15 minutes to get served. This is entirely due to volume of users as opposed to the excellent service provided by our village post mistress. The village has well documented water pressure issues and the burst water pipes on Barnsley Road are a seemingly weekly occurrence. Adding in an additional 300-400 additional people into creaking utilities and stretched services seems to be recipe for disaster. I note from the application documentation that Yorkshire Water have stated that they would not be supporting the application because it was not on the local plan and couldn't be accommodated within the existing water infrastructure.

Changing the nature of the village: the village is not against development per se. Over the 20+ years I have lived in the village there have been over 30 new properties added to the village. These have been a combination of brown field industrial sites re-purposed for residential properties and larger properties having additional/multiple properties built in their grounds. This organic growth has been welcomed by the village. However, to add 123 properties in such a short period of time would fundamentally change the nature and scale of the village beyond recognition. Increasing road congestion will

reduce the quality of life for all local residents. Air quality within the village will also likely suffer.

I would like to see the currently extensive supply of brown belt land within Kirklees exhausted before we even consider green belt land grabs such as this. There are apparently over 100 brown belt sites that could provide over 4500 homes within Kirklees alone. I think it would make more sense to focus on these sites and leave the green belt alone.