

**Sent:** 13 February 2026 09:49  
**To:** DC Admin  
**Subject:** Upper Cumberworth 2025/60/93572/E

I have lived in Upper Cumberworth for 64 of my nearly 67 years. I have already witnessed the impact large developments can have on a small village. When Dearnfield and Hollybank estates were built, the size of Upper Cumberworth changed dramatically in a short space of time. I started at Upper Cumberworth Junior School at aged 4.5yrs, with only a handful of pupils in attendance, by the time I left (aged 11) the school population had risen to around 100. That level of rapid growth places clear strain on local resources.

Over the same period, I have observed noticeable changes to the surrounding woodland and countryside. Despite the sterling efforts of the Dearne Valley Woodland Group, the steady increase in daily footfall has widened pathways and placed an increasing pressure on wildlife habitats. The coverage of bluebells in the woods have decreased significantly, frog and toad spawn have also declined at an alarming rate and water voles are no longer seen there. Hairy wood ant nests, once in abundance, now appear to be reduced to only a handful, as a key woodland species, their decline is concerning and indicates a wider ecological pressure.

Drainage is also a major concern, surface water and raw sewage already travel down Park Lane from Birdsedge via the surrounding fields, and blockages occur frequently. This results in discharge into fields & towards the River Dearne. As the birthplace of the River Dearne, it would be devastating to see further pressure placed on the infrastructure that risks pollution at the source of the river.

The Green Belt field in question is agricultural land and beyond its landscape value, is used by farmers (someone who works tirelessly for long hours to feed us all for very little profit). The land is not unused space, it provides agricultural, environmental and landscape functions that would be permanently lost if developed.

The land also serves as an important pathway and habitat for wildlife either in the area or simply passing through it. In recent years, deer have used the field as a nursery, often using the space to raise & feed her fawn(s) and could be seen regularly in the mornings before returning to the cover of the woodland. The same piece of land also provides an important stopping off point for wild geese migrating South for the winter. Flocks of them can be seen in the Autumn time regularly feeding on the corn stubble to help them on their way.

The A635, which is the main road through the village, is on its knees with potholes, poor surfacing and repeated utility works (Yorkshire Water!). An additional 123 dwellings will almost certainly generate a substantial increase in cars using this road making their daily commutes. The Sovereign Crossroads and Carr Hill Road to A629 junctions are already accident black spots and further development would only add to these already existing issues.

The strain on local amenities is also of concern with local doctors, dentists, schools etc already stretched to breaking point with the ever-growing communities.

If we all remember the old adage *that 'we don't inherit this world from our Grandparents, it's only loaned to us by our Grandchildren'*

Let's leave some green space for them.