



I have lived in Carr Hill Road, Upper Cumberworth, since 1980. I wish to register my strong objection to the proposed development.

The fields between Barnsley Road and the woods are designated Green Belt. Building here would close off the tract of beautiful open country that runs down from Birds Edge to Upper Cumberworth and irreparably diminish the rural setting. There is a danger that the particular character of the whole area, which consists of an archipelago of villages to the south of Huddersfield, will begin to be eroded.

I am particularly concerned about the harmful effects of the development on the ancient woodlands it abuts. These are part of a precious, interconnected habitat that runs across the wider area through a 180-degree arc to the south. The presence of houses on this site would harm local biodiversity. It would also impact the Upper Cumberworth Conservation Area, and heritage assets in the woods. I am equally concerned about the impairment of their amenity value. My wife and I frequently walk there. When they were young, our three children and their friends played there, as do children living in the village now. Two of our children still live nearby and often walk there with our grandchildren. When our other child comes to see us, so does he.

I am also very concerned about the increased pressure such a development would put on local services. Our GP practices are already overstretched. There will be a need for more school places, at the village school and at Shelley College.

The development will significantly increase the number of cars on local roads, especially with the opening of the quarry across the road from the site. Traffic often has to queue at the junction of the A635 with the A629 at The Sovereign Inn and at the top of Carr Hill Road. In both places there have been bad accidents. Carr Hill Road has pavements only at its lower end. Parking in Denby Dale is already inadequate for the number of cars using its services. What is more, public transport provides only a limited alternative.

There are also existing issues about water-management. Replacing a large area of open farmland with built structures and their associated hard surfaces will inevitably increase run-off across the surrounding ground and consequent damage. The heavy and persistent rainfall caused by climate change will only exacerbate this.

The application should be refused. This land should not be built on. Rather than choosing to destroy forever such a beautiful rural area, the Council should seek to meet its housing needs by making full use of existing Brown Field sites. In this way, it will improve the attractiveness of the wider Kirklees area, for both new and existing residents.