

DC Admin

From:
Sent: 19 February 2026 18:59
To: DC Admin
Subject: planning application UPPER CUMBERWORTH 2025/60/93572/E

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objection to proposed development on Barnsley Road Upper Cumberworth
UPPER CUMBERWORTH 2025/60/93572/E

Please find attached comments.
Thank You,

399 Wakefield Road, Denby Dale, HD8 8QD

Here is the text in case it is more convenient.

Objections to planning application Upper Cumberworth 2025/60/93572/E

Land off Barnsley Road upper Cumberworth

The reports which accompany the application fail to adequately take allowance of the effects which the proposed development would have on the historical heritage and archaeological remains on the land immediately adjacent.

Adjoining, and downhill of the proposed development is Stephen Wood, part of the woods conservation area which has been managed by Upper Dearne Woodlands Conservation Group on behalf of Kirklees Council and Wavin/Hepworth Canova Clay since 1999.

In 2014 Professor Ian Rotherham and Dr Mel Jones from Sheffield Hallam University visited the woods and pointed out to us the likely existence of a historic watermill very close to the boundary of the site.

Between 2014 and 2019 this was excavated by a joint group of members of the conservation group and Huddersfield and District Archaeological Society, supervised by John Cross, the President of HDAS. Our conclusions were that these was the remains of a pre-industrial revolution watermill probably associated with a woollen industry, most likely a fulling mill. This feature has now been recorded by the West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service in a HER monument report dated 23 06 2023 and archived under HER number MWY20313.

(West Yorkshire Archaeological Advisory Service have the full report or I can be contacted for more details)

It is unusual in this area that a probable mediaeval watermill associated with a textile industry has survived without being built over during the industrial revolution. Hence it is important to preserve it.

Although we excavated the walls of the mill, we did not excavate the areas which were likely sites of the wheel and historical machinery because these were waterlogged and were the places where particularly important and vulnerable archaeological remains were to be expected.. This has been left preserved in situ for the future.

In addition, the excavation discovered an ancient spring that had been modified for human use during a probably similar historical period. The group decided not to excavate this for similar reasons, leaving this for future investigation by investigators with superior technological resources.

These important historical resources need preserving carefully for posterity.

It is also likely that this watermill was superseded by another one situated among the farm buildings at Lane Head farm. It is highly likely that the complex of buildings within the lane head farm complex included watermill workings and associated works which probably superseded the Stephen Wood Mill. (grid reference 207087) This was visited in recent decades by archaeologists from Sheffield University department of archaeology; however nothing appears to have been recorded in HER or on the internet. Remains of the presumed headrace exist further up the Park Dike at GR 203085.

The tail race would have carried the used water towards what is now Stephen Wood. These water channels are likely to have passed through the site of the proposed development.

The desk based assessment by North Star Archaeology did not identify any evidence of prehistoric activity on the site or its vicinity.

However a piece of probably Neolithic Flint arrowhead was found while excavating the Stephen Wood archaeological site. It must have come from either the immediate vicinity or from further upstream in Park Dyke. It would appear from its crazed surface that it was probably part of a flint arrowhead that I've been lost or damaged in a fire. This suggests that there had been prehistoric activity within the study area and possibly within the site.

A heritage asset is defined in the NPPF as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest.

It is not reasonable to state that the Stephen Wood Mill is a 'relatively common phenomenal nationally or regionally' because if it were a Medieval or pre-industrial fulling mill then it is very rare for these to survive in the Yorkshire area because the vast majority of similar Mills were built over and destroyed during the industrial revolution.

It is important to realise the potential for historical works associated with the Stephen Wood watermill (and that of the Lane Head Farm complex) to exist in the land intended for development, particularly within the southern part of the site. Any development of the site would almost certainly be destructive.

It is stated that they likely impact on the Stephen Wood watermill would likely be slight. This proposal to change farming land into a suburban housing development is certain to generate a considerable amount of extra drainage and run-off which could not avoid but be led into Stephen Woods. Although the developers may insist that they would smooth the flow, the total would still increase the likelihood of damaging floods and erosion in the woods. This seems irresponsible when immediately downhill are these historical remains which should be being carefully preserved.

Obviously the increased footfall caused by a large number of houses would also put tremendous environmental pressure on this area of vulnerable wildlife. It has been reported that the tail race below Stephen Wood Mill (fed only by springs) had the highest variety of marine invertebrates in the woods, and therefore the purest water; a major commercial development would be certain to disrupt this.

Please reject this application.

Thank You,

399 Wakefield Road, Denby Dale, HD8 8QD

Co-ordinator Stephen Wood Mill archaeological excavations.

399 Wakefield Road ,Denby Dale, HD8 8DQ