

Address:

### About the application

Application number: 2025/93572	
What is the application for?:	Outline application with all matters reserved, bar vehicle access into the site,
Address of the site or building:	Land South of, Barnsley Road, Upper Cumberworth, Huddersfield, HD8 8NN
Postcode:	

### User comments

Type of comment: An objection	
Do you wish your comments to be published on the website anonymously?	No
<p>Please redact my name and address. I strongly object to this proposed development, and I would like to explain my reasons clearly below:</p> <p>This site is not well located in sustainability terms. Access to services, employment and facilities without a car is very limited. Denby Dale is over 2km away, and the main walking route along the A635 is, in my experience, unsafe. I am an active, able and confident 36-year-old man, yet I find walking this narrow footpath uncomfortable and dangerous due to the speed and proximity of passing vehicles. I avoid it wherever possible. Public transport in the area is also unreliable. It is difficult to see how children could safely walk this route to school, and the idea of them waiting along the A635 for the bus to take them to school / college on a narrow pavement raises genuine safety concerns.</p> <p>Having lived in Upper Cumberworth for 12 years, I have seen first-hand how much busier the roads have become. An additional 123 houses could mean 150 or more extra vehicles, adding to congestion, road noise and pollution. Junctions that are already difficult — such as the crossroads in Upper Cumberworth and near the Sovereign — would become even harder to navigate safely. This is before taking into account the recently approved quarry at Bromley Farm, which is expected to generate over 120 additional HGV movements per day, and the steady traffic to and from the recycling centre 5 days a week. I also note that the developer's traffic survey appears to have been undertaken on a day when the recycling centre was closed and during a school holiday, which does not reflect typical conditions.</p> <p>Speeding is already a problem through Upper Cumberworth, particularly on weekends and summer evenings. Motorcycles and cars frequently exceed the limit along the stretch next to the proposed development. Increasing traffic in this environment inevitably increases the risk of serious accidents. I believe the traffic assessment does not present a fair or complete picture of reality.</p> <p>An additional 123 homes could bring around 300 more people into a village that has</p>	

An additional 125 homes could bring around 300 more people into a village that has very limited facilities — essentially a post office and little else. Local services are already stretched, and this level of growth would place further strain on infrastructure that has not kept pace.

The site is designated as Green Belt land in the adopted Local Plan. The proposal does not fall within any recognised exception for appropriate development in the Green Belt and would harm its openness. The Government's National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that new development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it falls within specific categories such as agriculture, limited infilling or brownfield redevelopment. Housing need alone does not amount to the "very special circumstances" required to outweigh Green Belt harm.

There are also serious concerns regarding the impact on ancient woodland. Upper Dearne Woodlands are recorded as natural ancient woodland, since 1600 AD. This makes them ecologically irreplaceable. The woodland is protected by a blanket Tree Preservation Order and supports a rich range of wildlife.

National policy (paragraph 180(c) of the National Planning Policy Framework) states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons. Guidance from the Woodland Trust reinforces this strong presumption against harm.

The application shows houses built as close as 15 metres from the woodland edge. Given the age and sensitivity of this habitat, this proximity risks damaging root systems and disturbing fragile ground ecology. It is also notable that the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is set to adopt a 50-metre buffer to ancient woodland from March 2026, recognising the need for greater protection. Ancient woodland, once damaged, cannot be recreated.

The site also supports a wide range of wildlife, including bats — which regularly fly through my garden for much of the year — as well as owls, lapwing, curlew, skylark and rare wood ants, a keystone species essential to the local ecosystem.

Development of this scale would introduce lighting, noise, dust and increased activity, all of which would disturb these species and erode the biodiversity that currently exists. This would also greatly affect local residents of Upper Cumberworth for a number of years while building happens, many of whom, including myself, chose to live here for the rural benefits to their mental and physical health.

There is also evidence of archaeological remains of a medieval or post-medieval fulling mill within the woodland. These remains form part of the area's historic fabric and connect us to the communities who lived and worked here in the past. Once lost, that heritage cannot be replaced.

Finally, the setting of the Upper Cumberworth Conservation Area must be considered. Its appraisal identifies the open, panoramic views across the valley and surrounding Green Belt as central to its character and significance. Development in this location would fundamentally alter that setting.

My objection is not made lightly. I understand the need for housing, but it must be delivered in appropriate and sustainable locations. In this case, the cumulative impact on road safety, infrastructure, the Green Belt, ancient woodland, biodiversity and heritage would be significant and irreversible.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully ask that this application be refused.