



The application is for construction of 123 houses. Using an average of 2.5 persons per house indicates an increase to the current population of Upper Cumberworth of approx 300 persons. As the current population of the village is approx 600 , this equates to an increase of 50% over only a few years. There will consequently be a similar increase in the number of cars owned and used in the area.

I copy below an early day motion submitted in the house of commons on 5th February 2026 supported with 21 MP signatures stating that the NPPF is being used to target development in rural agricultural areas, and this risks the gradual coalescence of settlements, and the loss of distinctive rural and village character and calls on the Government to review the definition and associated guidance on grey belt.

'That this House notes that the December 2024 National Planning Policy Framework, and the December 2025 consultation version, defines the term grey belt planning applications as those on Green Belt land that does not strongly contribute to three Green Belt purposes which all relate to towns and large built-up areas, and excludes the green belt purpose c, namely safeguarding the countryside from encroachment from policy for determining such applications; further notes growing evidence that this town-focused test is shifting development pressure toward open agricultural land on the edges of villages and smaller settlements, contrary to long-standing settlement hierarchy principles designed to combat commercial pressures for unplanned development in the open countryside; believes that this risks the gradual coalescence of settlements, and the loss of distinctive rural and village character; calls on the Government to review the definition and associated guidance on grey belt; and also notes the importance of getting grey belt development right, so as to ensure that 150,000 social homes can be built per year, in well-connected locations, and that this will best be achieved by giving local communities and the councillors who represent them more, not less involvement in decision making.

Grey belt policy and the impact on villages and rural communities

EDM (Early Day Motion)2750: tabled on 05 February 2026'

I object to this application on the grounds identified in the above tabled motion, and that a 50% increase in the village population would destroy the village and its small local community.