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?	Yes

I wish to formally object to the proposed housing development adjacent to the ancient woodland in Upper Cumberworth, Kirklees. This objection is based solely on ecological considerations, with particular emphasis on the function and importance of the surrounding habitats that support the long-term survival and integrity of the ancient woodland ecosystem.

Ancient woodlands are not isolated ecological units; they depend heavily on the quality and continuity of the surrounding landscape. The proposed development site forms part of the woodland's ecological buffer and contributes to a wider network of habitats that sustain its biodiversity. These supporting habitats play a critical role in maintaining stable microclimatic conditions, regulating hydrology, and enabling species movement.

The land surrounding the woodland acts as a transitional zone that protects the woodland interior from abrupt environmental changes. Development in this area would result in increased exposure to light, wind, and temperature fluctuations. Such edge effects can penetrate deep into the woodland, altering humidity levels and soil conditions that many ancient woodland species rely upon. This can lead to the decline of sensitive flora such as ancient woodland indicator species, as well as associated fungi, lichens, and invertebrates.

In addition, the surrounding land provides essential habitat connectivity. Many species dependent on ancient woodland—including mammals, birds, amphibians, and invertebrates—utilise adjacent habitats for foraging, dispersal, and breeding. Fragmentation caused by housing development would disrupt these ecological networks, isolating populations and reducing genetic diversity. Over time, this isolation can lead to localised species decline and weaken the resilience of the woodland ecosystem as a whole.

Hydrological impacts are also a significant concern. The undeveloped land adjacent to the woodland currently supports natural water infiltration and drainage patterns. Introducing impermeable surfaces, drainage systems, and altered land profiles would likely change water flow dynamics, potentially leading to either waterlogging or drying of woodland soils. Both scenarios can be highly detrimental to the specialised plant communities found in ancient woodlands.

Furthermore, the surrounding habitat supports pollinators and seed dispersers that are essential for the regeneration of woodland flora. A reduction in these populations due to habitat loss or disturbance would impair the woodland's natural regenerative processes, threatening its long-term viability.

In summary, the proposed development would not only impact the immediate footprint of the site but would also have significant indirect effects on the adjacent ancient woodland by degrading the ecological functions of the surrounding land. The loss of buffering capacity, habitat connectivity, and hydrological stability poses a clear risk to the woodland's health and persistence.

Given the irreplaceable nature of ancient woodland ecosystems and their reliance on the surrounding landscape, I strongly urge the planning authority to refuse this application on ecological grounds.