

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?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<p>I wish to formally object to planning application 2025/93572 concerning land south of Barnsley Road, Upper Cumberworth, Huddersfield, HD8 8NN. My objection is based on the serious and unacceptable impact the proposed development would have on the adjacent ancient woodland known as Stephens Wood, together with the wider ecological harm that would arise from developing this Green Belt site.</p> <p>Ancient woodland is recognised as one of the country's most valuable and irreplaceable habitats. Once damaged, it cannot simply be recreated elsewhere. Stephens Wood forms an important part of the local natural environment and provides significant ecological, landscape, and environmental value within this rural area. Development immediately adjacent to such woodland poses substantial risks, even where the woodland itself is not directly built upon.</p> <p>The proposed development would inevitably increase disturbance and pressure on Stephens Wood through noise, lighting, human activity, domestic pets, and increased traffic movements. These indirect effects are well documented and can severely degrade the ecological condition of ancient woodland over time. The outline nature of the application leaves uncertainty regarding the eventual scale, layout, drainage arrangements, and proximity of built development to the woodland boundary, making it impossible to fully assess the extent of likely harm at this stage.</p> <p>The field currently acts as an important buffer between the woodland and surrounding development. This transitional green space helps protect the woodland from external pressures and maintains its rural setting. Building on this land would erode that protective buffer and expose Stephens Wood to urbanising influences. The introduction of housing and associated infrastructure would alter local microclimates, increase surface water runoff, and potentially impact root protection zones and soil conditions that support woodland health.</p> <p>There are also likely to be important protected and priority species associated with Stephens Wood and the adjoining field margins. Ancient woodland habitats commonly support bats, owls, corvids, hedgers, hedgerows, insects, and amphibians. The</p>	

support bats, owls, songbirds, badgers, meadowhogs, insects, and amphibians. The adjacent field provides valuable foraging and commuting habitat that contributes to the wider ecological network surrounding the woodland. Development would fragment these habitats and reduce biodiversity connectivity across the landscape.

Particular concern should be given to increased artificial lighting. Light pollution from housing, roads, and vehicle movements can have a damaging impact on nocturnal wildlife species, especially bats which rely on dark corridors between feeding and roosting areas. The currently dark rural setting around Stephens Wood would be permanently altered by this proposal.

National planning policy is clear that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists. In this case, no exceptional justification has been demonstrated. Housing development on a Green Belt field adjacent to ancient woodland cannot outweigh the long-term environmental harm that would result.

In addition to ecological concerns, the proposal would damage the rural landscape character that currently complements and enhances the woodland setting. The openness of the Green Belt surrounding Stephens Wood contributes significantly to its visual and environmental quality. Encroachment into this countryside setting would diminish the natural character of the area and undermine the purpose of Green Belt protection.