



I am writing to object to the proposed development of 123 houses on Barnsley Road, Upper Cumberworth. Although I am relatively new to the village, having moved here recently with my family, one of the main reasons we chose to settle here was because of the countryside setting, the openness of the Green Belt, and the peaceful rural character that Upper Cumberworth still retains.

This proposal would fundamentally change the nature of the village. A development of 123 houses is completely out of scale with the size and character of Upper Cumberworth and would represent a major urban expansion rather than a natural or sympathetic addition to the community. The site currently provides an important green buffer and contributes to the openness that Green Belt policy is specifically designed to protect.

I am particularly concerned about the impact on the nearby ancient woodland. Ancient woodland is an irreplaceable habitat that has developed over hundreds of years and supports a wide variety of wildlife. Even if the woodland itself is not directly built on, the effects of such a large housing estate beside it would inevitably damage the surrounding ecosystem. Increased noise, lighting, traffic, domestic pets, air pollution, and human activity would place considerable pressure on wildlife and disturb habitats that cannot simply be recreated elsewhere.

The countryside around Barnsley Road is one of the defining features of the village. Since moving here, I have already seen how valued these green spaces are by residents, walkers, cyclists, and families. The proposed development would replace fields and natural landscapes with dense housing, roads, and infrastructure, permanently altering the rural setting that makes Upper Cumberworth attractive and unique.

There are also serious concerns regarding local infrastructure. Barnsley Road already experiences congestion at busy times, and the surrounding roads are narrow and not designed to cope with a significant increase in traffic. An additional 123 households would inevitably place pressure on road safety, parking, drainage, schools, GP services, and other local facilities. From what I have observed since moving here, village services are already limited and stretched, and I do not believe the infrastructure is capable of supporting development on this scale without major negative impacts on existing residents.

Furthermore, allowing such a substantial development within the Green Belt risks setting a damaging precedent for future applications. Green Belt land should only be released in exceptional circumstances, and I do not believe this proposal demonstrates the very special circumstances required to justify such harm. Once this open land is lost, it cannot be restored.

While I understand the need for housing, developments should be directed towards more sustainable and suitable locations that do not sacrifice protected countryside, damage ancient woodland, or overwhelm small rural communities. Smaller-scale developments that genuinely reflect the character and capacity of the village would be far more appropriate than a large estate of this size.