



I strongly object to the proposed housing development in Upper Cumberworth.

My main concern is that this development is completely out of keeping with the village and the surrounding countryside. This is protected Green Belt land and once it is built on, that loss cannot be reversed. I share the concerns raised by the CPRE that this proposal would erode the separation between neighbouring settlements and gradually change the rural character of the area beyond recognition.

I am also extremely concerned about the impact on the local environment, particularly the risk to Stephen Wood and the surrounding ancient woodland. Ancient woodland is irreplaceable and cannot simply be recreated elsewhere. The proposed buffer zone is clearly inadequate and both the Forestry Commission and Woodland Trust have stated that the plans fail to properly protect the woodland or meet national planning policy requirements. Increased traffic, pollution, footfall and drainage problems will inevitably place additional pressure on an already sensitive habitat.

There are also serious concerns about whether the village infrastructure can cope with a development of this scale. Yorkshire Water has formally objected because the sewer network does not currently have the capacity to support it, raising concerns about flooding, pollution and public health risks. It makes no sense to approve a major housing development where the essential infrastructure is not even in place.

Traffic is another major issue. Wakefield Road and the roads through the village are already busy, with speeding and congestion regularly causing concern for residents. Adding 123 houses will only increase traffic levels further and have a significant impact on road safety and daily life within the village.

I am also very concerned by the archaeological significance of the site. The West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service has identified the potential for prehistoric, Roman and medieval remains, as well as possible links to historic Lane Head Farm. Their recommendation for further investigations before any planning decision is made shows that this land may contain important heritage assets that could be permanently damaged or lost.

Taken together, these concerns paint a very clear picture. This development would damage the environment, place further strain on infrastructure, increase traffic problems and harm the historic and rural character of Upper Cumberworth. The objections raised by organisations including Yorkshire Water, the Forestry Commission, the Woodland Trust, CPRE and WYAAS strongly reinforce the concerns already held by many local residents.

For these reasons, I urge the council to refuse this application.