

Derby City Council

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I have attached a document to my submission.

Uploaded Documents:

Download (https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1658408425_Boundary+Commission+Submission.docx)

I am writing to you today to express my support for the draft proposals that you, the Independent Boundary Commission, have drawn for the Oakwood, Chaddesden and 'Derwent' Wards.

Oakwood

Oakwood is the newest neighbourhood in this area, built primarily in the 1980s and 90s. As a result of it being so new, it has quite a clear identity, but this has always been blurred by the boundaries drawn for the ward.

Many who live there are residents who moved to Oakwood shortly after it was built; there is also a transient population who move as their children reach school age and find there is no secondary school nearby that they wish to send them to.

I believe you are correct to place the streets you have selected: Morley Road and its streets and the eastern section of Wood Road and its streets, into Oakwood Ward. These areas are alike and the boundaries in this area have always been blurred, but residents in these houses will use Oakwood's Central Shopping Parade, Leisure Centre, Library, Woodland and Park, more than they would use similar facilities in Chaddesden.

You noted that you felt assured in your proposals; I believe it is right that you do. While you may come under some pressure from councillors in Chaddesden Ward who do not support this, I hope that you do not change your mind and stick to your decision.

I was however expecting the whole of Wood Road, or at least the side closest to Oakwood Ward, to be included in the Oakwood Ward. I believe Wood Road could remain within Oakwood Ward without disrupting the proposals; Perhaps you could consider this.

Derwent

The 'Derwent' Ward, which I place in quotation marks, is, and always has been, a figment of imagination. It has never existed in any recognised geographical or locational form, except for a river outside the ward. It is purely an electoral ward which some people were placed in, while others were placed in 'Chaddesden Ward.'

It is, in essence, Chaddesden 'overspill.' Residents living there were just not drawn into the 'Chaddesden' Ward-segment of the 'Chaddesden Neighbourhood.' The areas, to my knowledge, were constructed at similar times.

The boundaries drawn in this area, separating 'Chaddesden' and Derwent' wards, could have been drawn anywhere. The ones we have are simply the ones chosen. I have however always thought it odd that half of Chaddesden Park Road is not in 'Chaddesden Ward;' it must confuse residents.

I believe you have made the right decision to abolish this ward and replace it and will discuss thoughts on the replacement below.

Chaddesden Ward

The 'Chaddesden' Ward, which I live in, was oddly named. While no one can doubt that the majority of the area in 'Chaddesden Ward' is in the 'Chaddesden Area,' so much of the 'Chaddesden Area' is

not in 'Chaddesden Ward.' The vast majority of Derwent Ward's streets have Chaddesden Addresses but are not in the 'Chaddesden Ward,' yet are in the 'Chaddesden Area.' This has never been logical, can cause much confusion and is not repeated in areas like Allestree, Mackworth or Chellaston.

I assume this occurred because the Chaddesden Area is too big for just three councillors, while Oakwood and Spondon are the correct size, and a 3+ councillor ward is not something done, with large areas like Chaddesden reduced into smaller areas by drawing said boundaries.

Aside from my support for the transfer of aforementioned streets to the Oakwood Ward, the remaining streets and properties of the Chaddesden and 'Derwent Wards' are so identical in nature that it matters little where the lines are drawn.

Thus, I come on to your proposals for the Chaddesden Area, having already expressed my support for the Oakwood and Spondon Wards as you propose them, with the proposal of Wood Road joining Oakwood.

Breadsall Hilltop and Chaddesden North

While this is not the Ward name you propose, I believe this is what the ward should be called.

Breadsall Hilltop has, for a long time, existed within 'Derwent' Ward, within 'Chaddesden Area,' within which is a ward with the same name as the whole area. This situation causes confusion.

Under your proposals, Breadsall Hilltop is finally given an identity with correct boundaries, something residents in the area will no doubt support. The area you propose be moved from Oakwood and into Breadsall Hilltop is very much part of Breadsall Hilltop. In antithesis, the 'Western Oakwood' area once proposed to enter Breadsall Hilltop would have split their community, they have an Oakwood identity and shouldn't be moved.

However, the new ward may benefit from being named Breadsall Hilltop and Chaddesden North, especially as 'East' and 'West' are the other proposed Chaddesden Wards, as the area is part of the 'Chaddesden Area.'

Chaddesden West

I don't have much comment on Chaddesden West Ward. I feel this ward is sensibly named, has a sensible boundary line, especially your decision to go behind houses on Reginald Road South instead of mixing between wards, which should limit potential confusion in this area.

However, there seems to be a misnomer on Highfield Lane, where two properties are in Chaddesden West, far from other Chaddesden West properties on this side, which are after Nottingham Road Cemetery. All the other houses on the street are in Chaddesden East, as is most of the surrounding area. Moving these properties into Chaddesden East should be considered.

Conversely, while there would have been logic in placing Saint Albans School into Chaddesden West, and many residents in Chaddesden West will send their children to school there, this would have meant an awkward boundary line including Ismay Road in Chaddesden West, when it is clearly a street which should be in Chaddesden East.

Ultimately, I support the boundary lines for Chaddesden West but would suggest the amendment on Highfield Lane.

Chaddesden East

I believe the proposed 'Chaddesden East' Boundaries are the right proposals for our area. Once the areas to the north have rightly been allocated to Oakwood Ward, and a few sections of the Western side of 'Chaddesden Ward' have been moved into 'Chaddesden West,' and Highfield Lane has been, hopefully, added in its entirety to the ward, the Chaddesden East ward is an appropriately drawn, concise and neat ward.

The 'American Estate' (Roosevelt Avenue, John F Kennedy Gardens and others) and the 'Irish Estate' (Kildare Road, Foyle Avenue and others) are both the epitome of Chaddesden East and have been kept together, as has the area linking them together, including Valley Road, Sanderson Road and Parkside Road.

We are also absolutely in favour of your decision not to split Chaddesden apart through 'Chaddesden Park,' as was once suggested.

This boundary, I believe put forward by one of the opposition parties locally, is one I am glad did not make it into your draft proposals as it would have been illogical, messy and confusing, especially regarding events or projects on the park.

Two and Three Councillor Wards

Given that Derby currently has 17 wards, all of which are represented by three local councillors, I was surprised that your draft proposals are not for four three member wards to replace the four three member wards we currently have in the North-East of the City.

Initially, as I read through the report, I expected to be suggesting that you should return to a four three-member ward system.

However, I changed my mind about this, as your proposals make the voting process much simpler for the electors in these wards to understand, especially as the city moves to an 'all out' election system, as opposed to the 'thirds' election system it previously had.

Given that your proposals for the 'Greater Chaddesden Area' are that we transition from two electoral wards to three electoral wards, I understand the justification in that we have two councillors per electoral ward rather than three.

The 'Greater Chaddesden Area' clearly is not big enough to justify being represented by nine elected members, but is big enough to be represented by six, and thus your draft proposals seem ideal for the area.

There is also a much-preferred simplicity in the three electoral wards covering the 'Greater Chaddesden Area' all having the same number of councillors, and thus the entire electorate having the same number of votes per individual, given our community is so interconnected and reliant on one another.

If one side of Nottingham Road were to have three votes and another side have two votes or a single vote, or the ward had two three members and a one member made out of areas that were not Chaddesden, or if Oakwood or Spondon were cut down to two councillor wards and areas moved about in Chaddesden to create anything other than residents in the either two or three wards covering the 'Greater Chaddesden Area' having the same number of votes, this would create confusion, misunderstanding and uncertainty when it came to local elections.

This is especially important given that the elections will no longer be every year, and instead every four years, so any accidentally spoilt ballot is graver and longer lasting; given that the winning candidate in the Chaddesden Ward won by 16 votes in 2015, and 90 votes in 2016, while the 'Derwent' Ward was decided in 2016 by just 3 votes, this is all the more important.

With a history of such tight margins, which would likely be repeated in the Breadsall Hilltop and Chaddesden North, Chaddesden West and Chaddesden East wards, the voting process must be incredibly simple. Two votes in Chaddesden Area wards is the way to achieve this.

Whilst I know you do not make decisions based on political impacts, I am hopeful that these Chaddesden Area seats, which may be politically marginal seats, will help increase turnout, as every vote will count. This will also encourage our local councillors to work hard rather than rest on their laurels.

I support the draft proposals you have formulated for all the reasons I discuss above.

With kind regards

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