

Worcester

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Comment text:

Email submission - see attachment

Attached Documents:

- New Electoral Arrangements for Worcester - Further Draft Rec.docx

New Electoral Arrangements for Worcester - Further Draft Recommendations May 2023

Response to Electoral Commission from [REDACTED]

I have a long-term knowledge of the part of Worcester, particularly Battenhall, which is the subject of your latest proposals and I feel they are misguided. I am resident at [REDACTED], which is close to the railway line and Red Hill School. I have owned this house for 5 years. Previously we lived with my mother in [REDACTED]. That is where I grew up, and my family lived there for over 60 years.

My main concern is the movement of the Foxwell Street area into Nunnery. Your report refers to it as the Cromwell Crescent area (para 27) but the majority of residents are in the streets of Foxwell St, Cannon St and Livingston St, at the bottom of the hill. It is a distinctive area but I do not feel it is "isolated from the rest of Battenhall". Rather, to place it in Nunnery would be to bracket it with an area with which it has little shared identity and feels more physically remote from.

While the railway line does present a barrier, it is easily crossed on the London Road bridge or on Red Hill Lane. The historic and physical boundary is the main London Road itself. The barrier of this busy road is exaggerated by the steep hill and the wooded banks of the road cutting, and by the wooded slopes behind it. The areas in question have always associated themselves with the southern and lower side of the road, with Battenhall. Nunnery is perceptually and in practice up the hill and the other side of the main road. In character, it is a newer and different part of the town.

The Foxwell Street area has easy access to the local Battenhall facilities down London Road: the local Tesco Express store and other shops, the pub (the Worcester Arms), Red Hill Primary School, St Martins church are all an easy walk down London Road.

The large allotment plot on Foxwell Street is an important Battenhall resource, accessed by residents by a footpath access from Red Hill Lane

Schooling is worth emphasising to show the links with wider Battenhall area— children from the areas in question walk down London Road to get to Red Hill school, as did my younger siblings and nephews. That school serves Battenhall. Nunnery has its own primary schools. Moreover the old Red Hill Primary (where I went) is still visible on Foxwell Street, just across the railway line from the present school.

I would also comment on two further issues.

Woolhope and Bolston Roads and the others named in Para 26 have long been associated with Cathedral ward and should remain there. Just as Nunnery is separated from Battenhall by the hills and slopes created by the Severn river terraces, so do these streets separate themselves from Battenhall by the steep gradients that edge the city centre. The Cathedral itself is in sight from many homes in this area, and they are very close to it. It is not a good argument to cite parking permit proposals as a shared issue with Battenhall – that is only an passing issue and in any case, parking issues are common across all residential areas in the central area.

Finally, you request comments on Wych Elm Close. In my view that should remain in Fort Royal, as it is very much separated from the Nunnery area by the steep wooded hill behind it. Where there are strong topographical boundaries, they should be followed by the local electoral boundaries.