

Newcastle upon Tyne

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Organisation Name: Private individual (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: Jesmond Vale, currently part of South Jesmond. You propose to move it to Ouseburn and Shieldfield

I am writing with reference to your proposal to move Jesmond Vale from the current South Jesmond ward in Newcastle upon Tyne and put it into a new ward, Ouseburn and Shieldfield. I wish to object strongly to this proposal.

I am disappointed that the Boundary Commission – which I had presumed comprises staff with expert knowledge - has justified this plan on the lazy basis of a large road, the A1058, acting as a “strong boundary”. Had you visited the location, instead of relying on a digital inspection, you would surely have noticed a far stronger boundary ie the topography of the area.

Jesmond Vale, the area bounded by Rosebery Crescent, Churchill Gardens, Lansdowne Gardens and the gardens to the rear of Rosebery Mews and Rosebery Place/Nazareth Mews, sits on the edge of a steep hill which separates it from Sandyford and Heaton. Consequently, the only road access to and from Jesmond Vale connects it directly to Jesmond. The only way of gaining direct access to the areas with which you wish to bracket it (Sandyford and Heaton) is on foot, down steep slopes or steps.

Because of this topography and history, the GP practices, dentists, opticians, shops, schools, churches, library and leisure facilities on which Jesmond Vale residents mainly rely are all in the Acorn Rd and Osborne Rd central area of Jesmond. Moreover, because your proposal relies on the A1058 road as a boundary, you would be severing Jesmond Vale from the shops on its very doorstep at the Cradlewell. You would even be putting Holy Trinity Church in Churchill Gardens – an integral part of Jesmond Vale and just yards away from my home in Rosebery Crescent – into a different ward. This is clearly absurd. Please think again!

Jesmond Vale was built mostly around 1905. It was built on land known as Jesmond Park and was originally called Jesmond Park Estate so its links to Jesmond are historical. Much more recently – in 2023 – a Low Traffic Neighbourhood installed by Newcastle city council in Jesmond was scrapped, and its bollards removed, because of the difficulties it caused to local residents, including those in Jesmond Vale, trying to access

Jesmond's services. Under your proposals, Jesmond Vale residents would lose their voice in relation to the area on which they rely for vital daily amenities.

Instead, this area of predominantly owner occupied housing would be linked to some areas dominated by purpose build student accommodation blocks, by houses in multiple occupation and by rundown council housing. Since you have cited the views of politicians – the Liberal Democrats and Labour Party – as supporting this change, it is relevant to point out that under your plan Jesmond Vale is going to have great difficulty in getting its voice heard with local councillors, let alone in getting ward funding, since it will be competing against areas with different issues.

Looking ahead, I wish to make one further point. Your full document attached to your ward change proposals suggests that the new Jesmond ward will have 6 per cent fewer voters by 2029 while Ouseburn and Shieldfield will have 5per cent more. Why, on this basis, do you propose to move an area of dense population – Jesmond Vale – out of a ward forecast to suffer a drop in voters? This is a poor and ill thought out proposal. Please review and reverse it. Jesmond Vale needs to be in the new Jesmond ward. Thank you

Attached Documents:

None attached