

Milton Keynes

Personal Details:

Name: Mrs Donna Moore

Email: [REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

Organisation Name: Stantonbury Parish Council - Clerk (Representative of parish/town council)

Comment text:

Related subject: Stantonbury Ward and Wolverton Ward.

Objection to the Boundary Change Proposal:

We strongly object to these proposals in the way they affect the estates within Stantonbury Parish.

We note that no arguments have been made to support the merging of the Stantonbury ward estates of Bradville and Oakridge Park with rural villages like Hanslope and Castlethorpe.

Further, we note that there no arguments made to move Blue Bridge and Bancroft Park from Wolverton ward to Bradwell ward or Bancroft from Stantonbury ward.

This proposed boundary change fails to meet essential criteria:

1. Reflecting Community Identity: Bradville and Oakridge Park are integral to the Milton Keynes urban system, while the rural villages north of Milton Keynes have very little in common with them. These areas are disconnected geographically, with no pedestrian paths linking them. The proposal disregards community identities, and the rural villages' priorities do not align with those of urban estates like Bradville and Oakridge Park.

2. Effective Local Government: The changes undermine effective governance. The medical services in these areas are linked to different health authorities (Northampton for Hanslope vs. Milton Keynes for Oakridge Park and Bradville), which will lead to divided campaigns and messaging.

Public transport links are also poor, making travel between these areas difficult and inefficient.

3. Community Engagement: Bradville and Oakridge Park are well-integrated with surrounding estates like Stantonbury, sharing schools, medical facilities, community centres and other amenities. We have hosted numerous local events without significant participation from the rural communities. The proposed changes will dilute the strong sense of community we've built, within Stantonbury Parish, which will be fragmented further by the introduction of additional and different ward boundaries. The estates of Bancroft Park and Blue Bridge share little with those within the newly drawn Bradwell ward but have practical and historical connections to Wolverton. There are no local facilities within Blue Bridge and Bancroft Park and that together with the lack of a bus route means that residents use the public library, shops and other commercial enterprises in Wolverton as it is feasible to walk to those. There is also a link between the Roman Villa ruins at Bancroft Park and MK Museum at Wolverton (and indeed the Windmill in Bradville).

As for Bancroft, the residents are within walking distance of the community centres in Bradville, - the Mathiesen Centre and the Community Hub.

4. Parish Governance: If this proposal goes ahead, it will weaken the cohesion of Stantonbury Parish, potentially leading to its abolishment or partial dismemberment, as part of the upcoming Community governance process. This threat will disrupt local governance - including likely impinge on our ongoing parish 4 year planning process. It will also invalidate aspects of our existing Stantonbury Neighbourhood plan, which is not due for review until 2031. This will also confuse residents making it harder for councils, both MKCC and parish to communicate effectively with their communities. It could also affect the future of staff employment within the parish.

5. Existing Boundaries: Bradville and Oakridge Park are distinct and well-defined areas, with clear geographical boundaries. Bradville, in particular, is undergoing regeneration, which is a massive disruptive change to those residents affected and both existing Stantonbury ward councillors and the parish council have a deep understanding of the issues arising. Bradville also has its own long-established Residents Association, while Oakridge Park, a newer estate, has a different set of issues, including its proximity to popular with visitors, Parks Trust land.

6. Council Representation: The proposal reduces councillor representation for Bradville and Oakridge Park while increasing it for other areas, despite the growth in properties within these estates. This change is unnecessary and will make it more difficult for parish councillors to serve the needs of both estates effectively, in terms of numbers and geography.

7. Ward / Parish working together

The current arrangements of two MKCC wards covering different parts of the parish, while not ideal, does make it possible for Stantonbury Parish Council and our city based ward councillors to work together to try to improve the lives of our community, because both wards have similar profiles. To change that arrangement to exclude Wolverton ward, replace Stantonbury ward with the new Great Linford ward but most of all the addition of a third new largely rural ward of Hanslope and New Bradwell will increase the difficulties of doing so.

Conclusion: The proposals to move our various estates into three newly constituted wards, is impractical and does not serve the best interests of

our local communities.

The proposal to abolish Stantonbury ward in particular with its hiving off of Bancroft, Bradville and Oakridge Park is particularly regrettable. We, the Stantonbury Parish Council, strongly oppose these boundary changes.

The Boundary Commission should instead consider building an urban MKCC ward around Stantonbury parish by keeping the existing ward and possibly, invite New Bradwell to move to it. It like Bradville and Oakridge Park has a lot more in common with the estates within Stantonbury parish than the rural centres of Hanslope and Castlethorpe.

Yours sincerely
Kevin Smith
Chair, Stantonbury Parish Council

Donna Moore
Clerk, Stantonbury Parish Council

Attached Documents:

None attached