

York

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Organisation Name: City of York Council, Upper Poppleton Parish Council, Nether Poppleton Parish Council and Hessay Parish Council (Councillor)

Comment text:

Related subject: Rural West York - proposal to move part to Acomb West

Please consider the attached document, which is an objection to the proposed boundary changes to Rural West Ward. It reflects not just my views as a ward councillor but also as a resident of Poppleton since 1995, who cares very strongly about the area and the people who live in it.

Attached Documents:

- jah-objection-to-proposed-changes-to-ward-boundaries.docx

We would like to object to the proposal to move part of the Parish of Upper Poppleton from Rural West York Ward to a newly created Acomb West Ward.

We did not make any representations at the previous stage of the enquiry because we believed that the ward of Rural West York was clearly defined and no one would propose any changes which would jeopardise the boundaries of Upper Poppleton as clearly set out on our historic maps.

Our parish council meeting held on 8 June 2026, was attended by no fewer than 20 members of the ward who live in the affected area. They were very concerned to hear how the changes would affect them and made it quite clear that they felt part of Poppleton.

One resident said, “We use Poppleton Station, we go to the dentist in Poppleton and we visit the pubs in Poppleton. We are part of Poppleton”.

Another resident, who lived in Villa Court, which is not a new development, said that people in Villa Court have been part of Poppleton for years and feel part of Poppleton, not least because the bus gate in Low Poppleton Lane, forces them to drive towards Poppleton. The necessary detour around the bus gate means that Acomb is difficult to reach and no one living in Villa Court has ever felt any affinity to Acomb.

Some residents moved into Langley Gate to be close to their families who live in Poppleton and took advantage of a new supply of properties in Poppleton to move here.

Similarly, the residents of the rest of Poppleton consider this area to be a part of Poppleton. For example, considerable investment has recently been made to the Poppleton Centre, in part to ensure it has sufficient capacity to meet the needs of the new residents in Langley Gate and other planned developments.

Above all, the residents were unsettled because they did not really understand the longer-term effects of the change and, unfortunately, neither the ward councillor present nor any of us were able to reassure them on the worst of their fears.

This is why we invited a member of the boundaries commission to attend a parish council meeting, because we thought you are best able to explain the effect of the change. Unfortunately, this invite was refused despite our ward councillor being told that you would attend parish council meetings to get their opinions and those of residents.

From seeing your communication with Rufforth with Knapton Parish Council, we understand that there may be a Corporate Governance Review after the boundary changes have been agreed.

This all raises many questions:

- Will Upper Poppleton Parish need to be warded to reflect its division between two ward councils?
- If so, how would this be done, given that
 - The number of electors is still settling – some houses have not yet been completed and many residents have not yet registered to vote because there hasn't been an election since May 2024?
 - There is a long-held desire of Upper and Nether Parish Councils to combine into a single parish council, in which we expressed a desire not to create separate Upper and Nether parish council wards, but have all parish councillors represent all residents. We have been told this would be considered after the ward boundaries were agreed, but how will this be affected if the boundary moves?
- Would the CRG result in the historic boundaries of Upper Poppleton being ignored and redraw the boundaries to exclude properties moved to Acomb West and mean that the affected residents would no longer have a parish council to represent them?
- Because City of York Council collects data at ward level, would other boundaries eventually be redrawn to reflect the data, such as school catchment areas?
- Would the change adversely affect insurance costs and house prices for residents moved to Acomb West?

We believe that the proposed change raises a level of uncertainty and anxiety for residents, which both the residents of the affected area and the parish council consider unnecessary.

We consider it unnecessary for two reasons.

First, the aim of the ward boundary review is to align the ratio of electors to ward councillors across the city. This change reduces the ratio for Rural West York from -3% to -9%, which is contrary to the purpose of the review.

Second, you say there is a “defaced” boundary and so have redrawn the boundary to reflect community feeling and obvious landmarks. We would say

that the boundary is not “defaced” at all and is clearly shown on our historic maps. The development of the Langley Gate estate does not affect the ward boundary because it does not lie at the ward boundary, but sits back, behind part of Rufforth with Knapton Parish and the residents we have met firmly believe they are part of the Poppleton community.

The boundary as drawn is also illogical because it ignores two properties inside the ring road which remain in Rural West York.

We would therefore ask that you do not make any changes to the ward boundary to:

1. Remove any source of uncertainty and anxiety for residents in the affected area
2. To reflect the fact that residents of the properties affected consider themselves part of Poppleton and that residents of the rest of Poppleton consider everyone to be part of Poppleton.
3. To adhere to the primary purpose of the ward boundary commission to equalise the elector to councillor ratio and not make it more unequal.