

Darlington

Personal Details:

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Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: Mowden

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a resident of Mowden, I would like to express my views on the proposed electoral boundary changes for Darlington. Whilst I am pleased that the existing Mowden ward is largely being retained, I am concerned by the proposal to include Pierremont Crescent, Pierremont Gardens and Woodlands Terrace within the revised Mowden ward rather than the proposed Pierremont ward.

These streets and the surrounding area are clearly part of the Pierremont community. Residents rely on the same local services, amenities and facilities and share a common identity with the wider Pierremont area. Excluding them from the proposed Pierremont ward would not accurately reflect established community boundaries or local identity.

Having read the Commission's draft proposals, I understand the rationale for including streets such as Thornbury Rise and parts of Carmel Road North within the proposed Mowden ward. Their proximity to the existing Mowden ward and the fact that several neighbouring streets off Carmel Road North are already associated with that community, provide a reasonable basis for the proposal.

However, the same argument does not apply to Pierremont Crescent, Pierremont Gardens and Woodlands Terrace. These streets are intrinsically linked to Pierremont through their geography, community ties and, in the case of the first two streets, even their names. The large, old Victorian houses are more likely to be converted into flats and apartments with potential associated issues of parking and infrastructure that are not as

prevalent in Mowden and residents in these streets are more likely to send their children to Abbey School rather than Mowden School. Their inclusion within Mowden would weaken the coherence of the proposed Pierremont ward and fail to reflect how local residents identify with their neighbourhood.

I also note that the Commission cites Carmel College as a natural boundary between the proposed Hummersknott and Mowden wards when justifying the transfer of Cardinal Gardens and parts of Nunnery Lane into Mowden. If Carmel College is considered a significant physical boundary, then the same principle should logically apply to Broadmeadows and Clare Avenue, both of which lie to the north of the college. Consideration should therefore be given to including these streets within the Mowden ward in order to create a more consistent and easily understood boundary.

In addition, I am concerned that the draft proposals do not fully recognise the importance of the town centre as a distinct community of interest. In the current economic climate, town centre businesses require effective and coherent local representation more than ever. While I appreciate that the town centre may not contain sufficient electorate to form a ward in its own right, there are neighbouring communities within the existing Park West and College wards, particularly around Southend Avenue and Abbey Road, that have strong connections to the town centre through proximity and shared concerns. These include issues such as parking availability, residents parking permits, traffic congestion, and the vitality of the local economy.

I therefore respectfully ask the Commission to reconsider the proposed boundaries and:

- Include Pierremont Crescent, Pierremont Gardens and Woodlands Terrace within the proposed Pierremont ward to better reflect established community ties and local identity.
- Consider including Broadmeadows and Clare Avenue within the Mowden ward in order to follow the natural boundary created by Carmel College more consistently.
- Give further consideration to the representation of communities, such as Pierremont, with their strong links to Darlington town centre when finalising the ward boundaries. Thank you for considering my comments.

Yours faithfully,

Attached Documents:

None attached