

Darlington

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Comment text:

Review Officer (Darlington)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
7th Floor
3 Bunhill Row
London
EC1Y 8YZ

Dear Sir,

I wish to express my strong objection, as a long-standing resident of Blackwell, to the draft proposals for local government boundaries in Darlington, specifically regarding the assessment of the Park West ward.

The draft proposals refer to Park West 'lack[ing] a clear centre, shared facilities or established identities', to which I fundamentally disagree and hereby provide evidence to the contrary.

1. Historical Identity.

Blackwell, comprising the majority of Park West ward, has existed for over 1,000 years. What was once a distinct Anglo-Saxon village, has

successfully retained its unique identity throughout the expansion of Darlington. Today, it remains a highly recognizable, cohesive community centered on the historic village footprint.

2. Robust Shared Facilities.

Our community identity is anchored by a vibrant network of shared institutions and facilities that serve local residents including, but not limited to:

- Two public parks, Green Park and South Park, [offering walking trails, a lake, and recreational fields, used to host for a myriad of personal, local and town-wide events and celebrations];
- One large national supermarket, plus two mini supermarkets [in Cleveland Terrace];
- Two upmarket hotels;
- Two Petrol Stations;
- Two educational institutions, Polam Hall, a co-educational Academy and St Augustine's Catholic Primary Schools ;
- Blackwell Grange [Stressholme] Golf Course;
- A large national wine retailer;
- Numerous Dental Surgeries;
- Blackwell Post Office;
- All Saints' and Darlington Baptist Churches;
- New Blackwell Lawn Tennis Club;
- Blackwell Meadows, a multi-purpose sports ground providing facilities for both rugby union and association football, the home Darlington RFC and Darlington FC and
- Blackwell Heritage Parkland.

These facilities provide physical evidence of a shared local identity and a clear community focus.

3. Strong Ties with Hummersknott.

The draft proposals overlook the deep and functional connections between Blackwell and Hummersknott. Our communities are naturally linked by shared environments such as Broken Scar Riverside Walk, Elm Ridge Church, and the environs of West Cemetery, by established pathways from Blackwell's local primary schools to Hummersknott Academy and Carmel College, serving families across both areas, infrastructure such as Coniscliffe Road, a direct, unifying artery between Blackwell and Hummersknott and local bus routes connecting residents across Park West and Hummersknott wards.

4. Proximity and Connection to the Town Centre

Additionally the proposals ignore the critical relationship between inner-ward areas—particularly around Southend Avenue and Abbey Road—and the town centre. Given current economic pressures, town centre small businesses need coherent, effective representation. Residents in these parts of Park West and College wards share acute, immediate concerns with the town centre, notably regarding parking pressures and peak-period traffic congestion.

Consequently, I urge the Commission to reconsider its assessment of Park West. Blackwell possesses a clear historical identity, distinct community facilities, and vital ties to both its neighbors and the town centre. Any final boundary arrangements must recognize and protect these established community realities.

Yours faithfully,



Grange Road
[Blackwell Ward]

Attached Documents:

None attached