



3rd August 2022

The Review of Wychavon
Local Government Boundary Commission of England
PO Box 133
Blyth
NE24 9FE

Dear Sir,

I apologise for this late response to your current proposals in respect of the Parish of Wick in your review of representation in Wychavon District Council.

It was of great concern and a little hurt when I first learnt of your change in direction. Since first elected in 1958 as Worcs. C C for Pershore, this will be the third time that Wick's location has changed. Hitherto, Wick has sat happily represented in the Fladbury Ward with common interests, as it had in the Elmley Castle Ward.

The current proposal is much more serious and endangers the protection that the river has hitherto provided. I will provide irrefutable proof of the influence a common name can play in addressing forward planning consideration.

The affinity of Wick, with Fladbury, Charlton and Cropthorne was decided at the end of the Ice Age, leaving meanders of Grade I land, still actively farmed over sand and gravel deposits.

Up until the 60's there was a common interest between the growing and marketing industries, in the two wholesale, vegetable markets (one co-operative) that Pershore possessed. No market gardens, orchards or agricultural buildings, All have gone to extending urban development.

The production of the Worcs. County Council paper on mineral deposits in the county caused great concern. It showed on one map an area of sand and gravel in Wick, Fladbury, Cropthorne and Charlton. This resulted in the above named villages coming closer together at public meetings at Cropthorne village hall. A matter yet to be resolved.

The content of this paper created much concern, addressed collectively by the parish councils working together and shared public meetings in Cropthorne.

The second serious concern over current planning considerations is the future of Pershore College, set up to provide higher education qualifications in horticulture. Pershore is the name of the college, but the location is Avonbank in the parish of Wick. This no longer so and administered from Warwickshire.

An application for consideration in the South Worcs. Development Plan review is for 15 acres to turn to light industrial use. Presented by Wychavon District Council at a public consultation as part of Pershore, repeated in recent publications.

I sight this to illustrate that the name becomes the criteria for forward planning consideration.

All forms of Public Administration is at an all-time low. There is a marked reluctance to serve on parish councils – Wick has two vacancies and Elmley Castle has three co-opted members since the last election. Currently 10 villages have vacancies advertised. Unless there are to be further reviews Wick and pershore will be represented by two different county councillors and two different MPs.

I make no proposals as to further boundary changes at this late stage but I do ask that you show sincerity to your second consideration to consider affinity and common interest within a Ward.

Finally, I draw your attention to para 64, page 2

Equalities: I read with interest your formal statement of satisfaction “that no adverse equality impact will arise as a result of the outcome of this review”. I would draw your attention to how you arrived at your proposals for Broadway.

After further conversation with Liz Eyre, Broadway Member, it is evident that Wick problems begin in Broadway!

Para 42 – Page 14

I would urge you to read every word while I extract some statements. For if what is promoted was a justification to split the Broadway area and that those Pershore / Wick are not sustainable.

“The Council supported by the Liberal Democrats, Conservative This allows a single member ward with good equality for the bulk of Broadway village neighbouring parishes to form a ward with a more clearly rural identity these two wards offer a better reflection of community identity we propose these two wards”

The only thing is that it seems the second ward disappears. “We have adopted this proposal and propose two wards “

But you don't. Elmley Castle is pulled apart.

The wording is an indication of an approach that shows little recognition of community importance.

Para 23 " it would be desirable to place Great Comberton, Little Comberton and Elmley Castle in the same ward".

Not to be placed but to remain. Remain where they have been for fifty years since Wychavon was created.

If, the justification for the decision in respect of Broadway has any validation then to put Wick into a three member ward of 3,000 is hallow and dishonest.

I am not seeking support to rewrite the whole proposals but I am seeking recognition and support in the grossly unfair and undemocratic way that Wick has been treated. You gave no indication until your revised report, and consultation within weeks of completion that Wick was under threat.

There is an implied reference of acceptance of the above in the last words in Para 25 on which I still hang some hope.

Para 25 "we retain an open mind on these proposals " If this is really meant you must accept that the only recommendation at this late stage, that can be made is that Wick remains in Fladbury ward for the next four years. I know it goes against all the rules in the numbers game, but in reality it harms nobody.

It neither alters the number of members and it leaves Wick where it is and does not affect the aspirations of the other parishes.

I plead with you that you allow the river to continue to be the divide that nature intended.

To submerge an electorate of 370 – 380 into a three member ward of 6,500 – 7,000 is urban denomination in the extreme.

Yours faithfully,

Malcolm C Meikle MBE

Hon. Alderman Wychavon District Council

Parish Cllr for Elmley Castle, Netherton and Bricklehampton

Past Wychavon District Cllr for Elmley Castle Ward 1976 – 1999, and Fladbury Ward 1999 - 2007