

North Hertfordshire District Council

Personal Details:

Name:

E-mail:

Postcode:

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

I object strongly to the proposed abolition of Arbury ward and its replacement with a large cumbersome ward. The new proposal will see the distinct needs of the rural villages as well as urban residents obscured, and councillors will struggle to provide fair and equal representation for all 11 parishes, undermining local democracy. Your report states that both the Council and the Conservatives put forward identical proposals in this area, yet the local knowledge contained in those proposals appears to be disregarded. Arbury is a distinctive ward covering five rural villages and 1525 electors. It will be replaced by a large amorphous ward of 11 parishes, where the ward will be dominated by residents, who feel they are part of Baldock, understandably concerned by Baldock issues and services. The look, feel, community identity and issues of the rural areas are very different. It is highly likely to lead to a failure in representation of one community or the other. The new ward will be divided physically by the A505 a busy dual carriageway. The report states that this does not "necessarily" have to divide communities, but the reality is that it does. These are two distinct sets of villages. The only way to move from one end of this new ward to the other will be by a junction with no lighting, crossing four lanes of traffic and a central reservation. Residents of Great Ashby recall the difficulties they experienced when they were lumped in with new developments, and Arbury residents do not want to suffer the same difficulties only for it to be realised belatedly that what might look plausible on paper does not work in reality. As an Arbury resident, I know it is very easy to take for granted the value of good representation which we currently benefit from with the current structure but confronted with these proposals and the reality of that loss I must voice my objection. I support the alternative proposal to allocate an extra councillor to Baldock East and incorporate the new Baldock development and hope you will leave both Arbury and Weston and Sandon as they are.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded