

Sunderland

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Comment text:

Please see attached the Sunderland Conservatives' proposals for warding arrangements in Sunderland, ahead of today's deadline for submissions.

Best wishes,
Antony

Attached Documents:

- 2023 Local Gov Boundary Review - Sunderland - Conservatives Submission.pdf

SUNDERLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW: CONSERVATIVE PARTY PROPOSALS

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INTRODUCTION

Sunderland City Council's warding arrangements are being re-examined, two decades after the last review took place. A considerable amount of housebuilding within key areas of the city – particularly in the south of Sunderland – mean that the city's population has grown to such an extent that some current wards are significantly larger than others – and projected to grow further still. This development is not always piecemeal: in some cases, it is part of a strategy that is designed to forge new communities and the ward proposals we propose here are conscious of what these new communities will look like when completed.

The first phase of the boundary review determined that Sunderland should continue to have 75 councillors elected in thirds. That means that 25 wards are required.

Taking this into account, the average number of electors in each ward should therefore be 8,847. Given the 10% +/- allowance that the Commission will consider acceptable, the total number of electors in a ward may be between 7,963 (-10%) and 9,691 (+10%).

However, this figure is not straightforward or uniform – and it is necessary to explain why before moving onto our warding proposals.

Sunderland Conservatives consider there to be four distinct areas within Sunderland:

- **North Sunderland** – which is separated from the rest of the local authority area by the A19 to the west and the River Wear to the South. This is what Sunderland City Council considers its North Area. It includes (to refer to current ward names): Fulwell, St Peter's, Southwick, Castle, and Redhill.
- **South Sunderland** – these are wards which are south of the River Wear, with the A19 to the West and the sea to the East. The current wards within this area are Barnes, Pallion, Millfield, Ryhope, St Michael's, St Chad's, St Anne's, Doxford, Sandhill and Hendon.
- **Coalfields** – the historic towns and villages that border County Durham and are separated by the A19 to the East and the River Wear to the West/North. The current wards (which forms the Coalfields Area Committee) are Shiney Row, Copt Hill, Hetton and Houghton. In our view, the W01 polling district (in the current Washington East) also belongs to this area.
- **Washington** – this is separated from the rest of Sunderland by Nissan/the A19 and the River Wear. Washington borders neighbouring local authority areas. We see Washington as being the areas within the South, Central, West and North Wards. The W02-5 polling districts of the current Washington East Ward also belong to this area.

Whilst we are aiming to achieve an average of 8,847 electors per ward (i.e. perfect electoral representation), the natural boundaries that divide the city into four mean that this figure needs to be localised to each quadrant. We have added up the projected number of electors within each of these four areas, then divided them by the current number of wards in those areas to generate a localised average.

This is necessary to allow us, when designing warding arrangements, to respect the natural boundaries that divide them (especially the River Wear).

Table 1 shows our workings.

Name of Area	Projected no. electors (2026)	Current no. wards	Localised Average
North Sunderland	42,653	5	8,531
South Sunderland	90,526	11	8,223
Coalfields	42,195	4	10,354
Washington	42,601	5	8,520

Table One: Electors in each of the four areas of the city

When dividing the projected number of electors in the four areas within the local authority (as we have defined them), it is clear that:

- North Sunderland and Washington’s localised averages fall comfortably within the range accepted by the Commission.
- South Sunderland’s localised average falls within the range accepted by the Commission, but it is not as close to the average as North Sunderland and Washington.
- Coalfields’ localised average greatly exceeds the higher end of the acceptable range and, therefore, the number of projected electors means that this area cannot continue with just four wards.

To resolve this tension, one of three things must happen with respect to future warding arrangements:

- A)** South Sunderland, as we have described it above, must lose a full ward – and the 10 remaining wards within this area must accommodate 9,053 electors, on average;
- B)** Find a way to create a ward which crosses the A19, following on the precedent that both the current St Anne’s and Doxford Wards already cross the A19, in order to ‘bridge the gap’ between the Coalfields and South Sunderland;
- C)** Create a ward which spans the River Wear and takes in areas of Washington (e.g. Teal Farm) on one side and areas of Coalfields (e.g. Penshaw and Offerton) on the other, in order to increase representation in the Coalfields.

After careful consideration of these options, we have proposed warding arrangements based on solution B.

We rejected option A because we did not consider it sensible to have nine wards in South Sunderland which were all nearing the +10% threshold. We are conscious from our involvement in the Council's internal boundary working group that the city centre wards in South Sunderland – Hendon, Pallion and Millfield in particular – have a lot of residents in HMOs, rented and temporary accommodation who are not registered to vote. Whilst these people are not registered to vote, they are still entitled to contact a councillor and place demands upon the Council's services and, by extension, shape the ward councillors' priorities. We concluded, therefore, that some of these wards would have an acceptable number of electors, but a disproportionate number of residents in total when accounting for those not on the electoral roll.

We also rejected option C. As part of our explorations to implement this solution, we considered whether a Teal Farm and Peshaw Ward would be viable, taking in Peshaw/Offerton and St Paul's/Mount Pleasant to the South of the Wear. This, however, suffers from the fundamental problem that there are just two points at which the river can be crossed and one of them – a footbridge – is down a long country lane and not easily accessible. This is not an area which, if presented as a ward, could be easily travelled around – either by electors or councillors – and it would therefore fail to comply with the effective and convenient governance criterion.

CRITERIA AND METHODS

In addition to proposed wards being roughly the same size in terms of the number of electors, Sunderland Conservatives understand that the Local Government Boundary Commission wishes to see warding arrangements which meet the following principles:

- **Effective and convenient governance** – the Council can conduct its business effectively; three member wards to be elected in thirds; appropriate names; wards are a size that make them reasonable for a councillor to represent; external boundaries of the local authority are not crossed; ward names reflect the communities within and are recognisable to local people.
- **Community interests and identities** – wards are designed around existing residents groups, social hubs, areas of economic activity; transport links; medical facilities; leisure services; existing parishes. They are bound by shared interests and concerns.
- **Easily identifiable boundaries** – natural features such as roads, rivers, woodland, walkways, railway lines provide well known and easily recognisable boundaries between wards.

We offer, under each proposed ward, a commentary on how our proposals achieve these.

Resident Engagement

During the first phase of the boundary consultation, Sunderland Conservatives ran an online resident survey in preparation for the second phase on warding arrangements.

This survey was shared via Facebook, Next Door, in resident groups online and promoted as a paid Facebook advert to enhance engagement. The survey asked residents a series of questions about the area in which they lived, what that area is called, where it begins and ends, and what its local, distinguishing features are.

109 residents responded to the survey. Key findings include:

- **Not a single resident** described their community using one of the existing 'St...' descriptors – i.e. when asked to name the place they lived, nobody said 'St Anne's', 'St Chad's', etc.

- Residents in Washington **strongly oppose** association with Sunderland and see Washington as distinct. Washington residents **do not support** the use of the generic terms 'north', 'south' etc in the current ward names.
- Residents in **Grangetown** and **Hollycarrside** do not consider themselves to be in Ryhope (but are both in the Ryhope Ward, at least in part) and residents in **Tunstall** do not associate themselves with Silksworth.
- Residents in the Coalfields associate themselves with living in **Houghton** even if they are not in the Houghton Ward. Several of these respondents identified a closer relationship with **Durham** than with Sunderland and two highlighted the significance of the DH postcode, rather than the Sunderland (SR) or Newcastle (NE) postcodes used elsewhere in the local authority area.
- Residents on the **Broadway** said that they had no connection with South Hylton/Pennywell.
- A **St Gabriel's** resident strongly opposed any association with Pallion.

We also reached out to resident associations and community groups to seek their input on our proposals and, subsequently, their endorsement for our final plans. Almost all the groups we consulted with initially agreed to then endorse our proposals, as presented here.

Approach to Ward Names

At present, most of Sunderland's wards have one-word names (e.g. Barnes, Castle, Sandhill) and several are named after parishes (e.g. St Anne's, St Chad's, St Michael's). In our ward proposals, we have opted to move away from both of these conventions:

- We feel that too many current ward names do not accurately capture most of the communities represented within the ward. We have therefore opted for ward names which consist of the two largest settlements / villages / communities within the ward.
- In an increasingly secular and multicultural city, we do not feel that parish names are an appropriate way of identifying a community, because the recognition of these parishes as geographic locations is limited among residents.

In naming wards, we have adopted the following style guide: where a proposed ward name contains two community names, both of which are single words, then these are listed alphabetically (e.g. 'Lakeside and Sandhill' or 'Burdon and Moorside'), but where one of the community names contains more than one word, we put the single word first (e.g. 'Hendon and City Centre' or 'Silksworth and Doxford Park').

PROPOSED WARDS: 2026 ONWARDS

The Sunderland Conservatives propose the following warding arrangements (listed alphabetically). All these wards' electorates are based on the projected figures provided by Sunderland City Council (as amended, to correct the original publishing error) and are comfortably within 10% of perfect electoral equality.

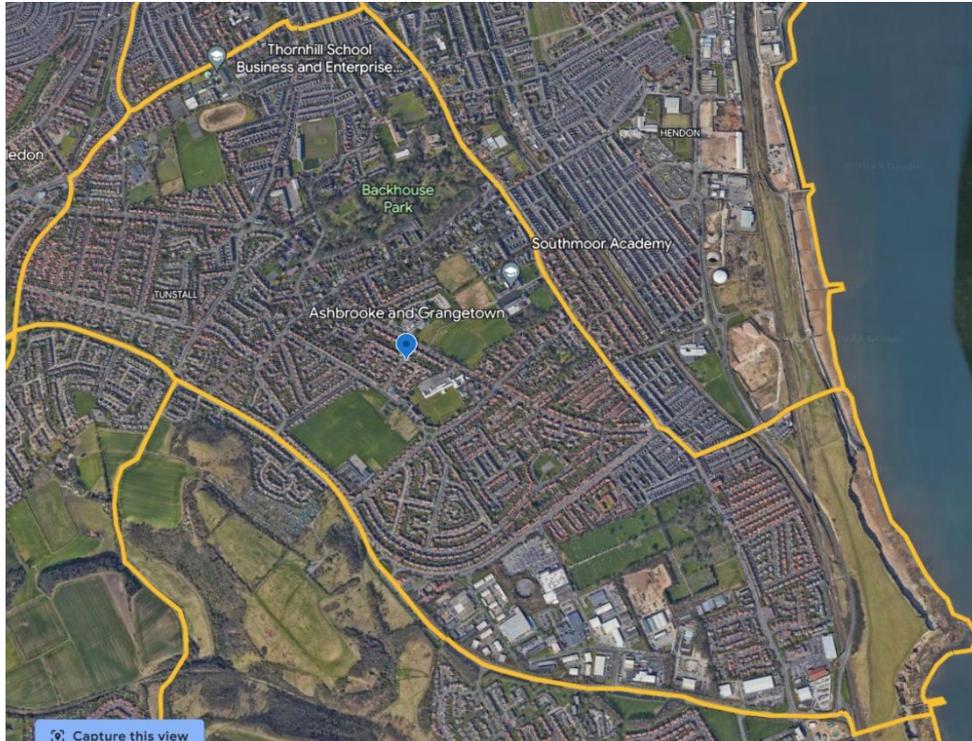
All these proposals are based on three-member wards, elected in thirds.

Appendix B gives an overview of how the 25 proposed wards fit together.

Ashbrooke and Grangetown

Projected number of electors: 9,401

Closest existing ward: St Michael's



Effective and convenient governance

This ward is 3.4km from its northern most point at Thornhill School to its southern most point in Grangetown, on the coastline. From its western boundary to its eastern boundary, it is 0.95km. It is therefore easy to commute within the ward by foot, as well as by bus and cycle lanes.

Community interests and identities

This ward is made up of the Ashbrooke, Tunstall, Hill View and Grangetown communities which are geographically close, integrated by shared community issues and all linked by the fact they are the immediate suburbs outside of the city centre, which presents particular issues in respect of ASB, traffic management and parking.

Much of it consists of much of what already exists as a single ward, under the auspices of St Michael's, but has expanded to take in more of the Grangetown community which was previously split between St Michael's, Ryhope and Hendon.

Southmoor Academy serves the local community as the principal secondary school for pupils from the local primary schools within the ward.

Residents groups operating in this area include:

- Friends of Backhouse Park
- Ashbrooke and Grangetown Residents Association

Online communities relevant to this proposal include:

- Ashbrook, Tunstall and Grangetown Community News
- Ashbrooke, Hill View and Tunstall Have Your Say

All of these groups, as well as the Next Door neighbourhood social media site, group these areas together as a community.

Residents in this area use community assets such as the Rosedene pub, the St Michael's Community Centre and St Nicholas' church – all of which we keep within the ward – as places to congregate, socialise and take part in community activities. A series of church halls allow for regular ward surgeries in all parts of the ward (St Aidan's church, St Michael's Community Centre, St Nicholas Church, St Johns church and St Cecilia's Church)

In the resident consultation one person who responded living in the current St Michael's ward cited "Wilson's, Ashbrooke Florist, Sumner and Johnson hair dresser, Spar on Ryhope Road" in response to "Which local shops do you use?", all of these amenities are located within the central part of Ashbrooke and Grangetown proposed ward. They also said that "Backhouse Park" was what made the community distinctive, with a second resident of St Michael's saying that "housing style" was the main identity factor.

Taking this into account Backhouse Park remains in the proposed ward and the housing style can be visually seen to run smoothly before hitting another ward boundary (predominantly historic Victorian housing).

Easily identifiable boundaries

The ward uses the coastline as its eastern boundary.

Except for the sea and a small footpath joining the cliffs to the mainland, all of the ward's other boundaries are marked out by main roads.

Its southern boundary is Leechmere Road, which is a distinctive and well-known road which links the outer city suburbs contained within this ward with the former pit village of Ryhope. Part of this road is national speed limit, which makes it a convincing boundary between this ward and the proposed Hollycarrside and Ryhope Ward.

The ward's northern boundary is largely the same as at present: Thornholme Road divides the ward from the proposed Millfield and Thornhill Ward and does so convincingly as most of the southern side of the road is occupied by a large secondary school. Whereas the current border follows the first exit at the Thornholme Road roundabout (i.e. up Tunstall Road), our proposed boundary uses

the second exit (i.e. via Belvedere Road) as a) visually, this is a straighter line and therefore more easily identifiable and b) it allows us to unite the city centre in a single ward (more about which is said under our justification for the proposed Hendon and City Centre Ward).

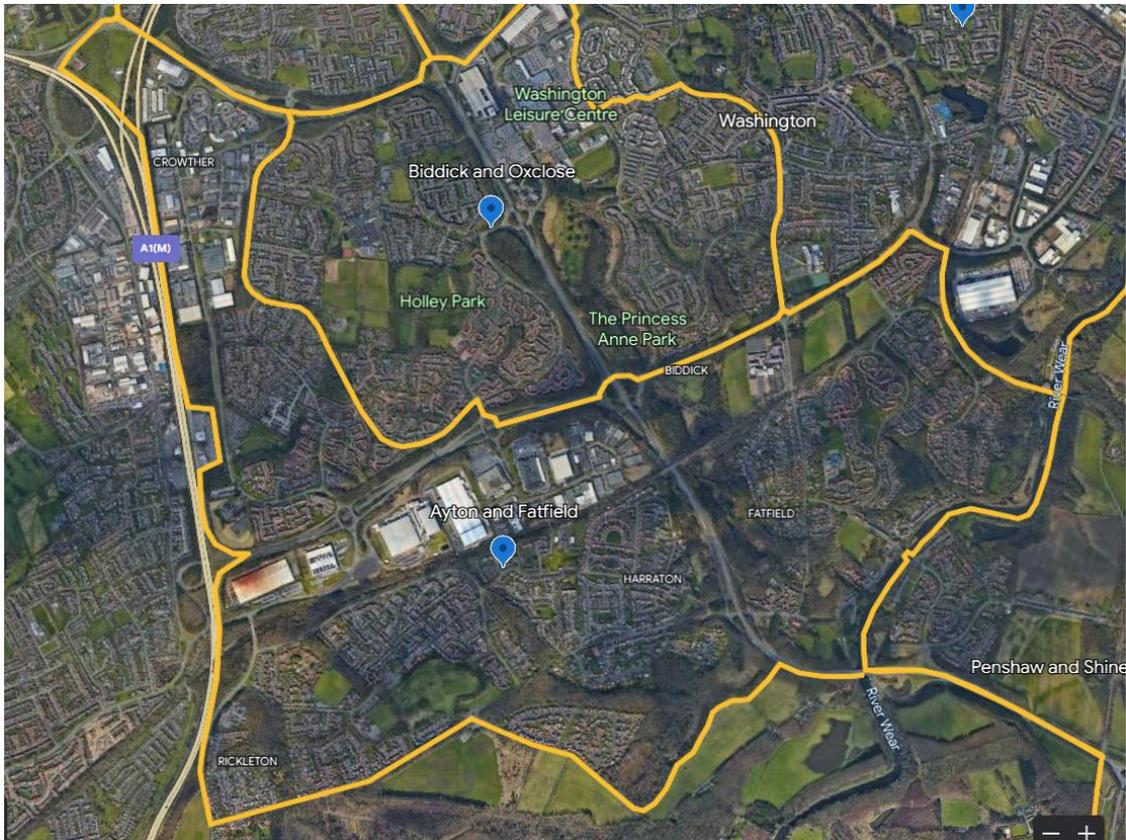
The western boundary between this ward and the proposed Barnes and Humbledon Ward represents a substantial and consequential improvement on the current boundary between St Michael's and Barnes. The current boundary is a disused railway line – known locally as the mineral line – but because part of this route is an underpass beneath the Barnes gyratory, the border must stop tracking the pathway, follow the main road around the gyratory instead to avoid being underground, and then revert back to the mineral line. It is both hard to distinguish and inconsistent. Further, the use of the mineral line means that the Barnes pub is not within the Barnes Ward (which is confusing to residents who associate the two).

Overall, these proposals present boundaries which will be familiar to residents as they closely reflect existing boundaries, but make improvements to the western boundary (by tracking the road not the mineral line) and expand the eastern boundary to the coastline, to take in more of Grangetown than is in the current St Michael's Ward.

Ayton and Fatfield

Number of electors: 8,282

Closest existing ward: Washington South



Effective and convenient governance

This ward is 3.1km from its northern most point to its southern border and the same distance from its western to its eastern border.

The ward name better reflects this community by incorporating the names of the villages at either end: Ayton to the west and Fatfield to the east. The current arrangement of naming Washington wards based on geography (north, south, etc.) was rejected in our resident survey.

Community interests and identities

Washington is a town within the local authority area that has its own identity, transport links, central shopping area and local industry (most notably Nissan). It has an NE postcode and borders the Gateshead and South Tyneside local authorities which means that – unlike in Sunderland – some people have a dual identity (drawing upon both the local Wearside and Tyneside cultures) which is unique to Washington. It is therefore right that Washington is separated from the rest of

Sunderland and, as such, we have placed the W01 polling district, which is not in any way discernibly part of Washington (as evidenced by its DH postcode), into the Coalfields.

Washington is separated into distinctive villages and our approach has been to divide it into five wards at the borders of these villages – uniting communities that are currently divided by the boundaries presently in place.

Within this ward, we have placed the Ayton, Fatfield, Rickleton and Harraton villages. These are demographically similar and they are the southern most communities within Washington, thereby creating a genuine south Washington ward (as the current Washington South Ward is, geographically, more of a western boundary ward).

Local footpaths and bus networks link these communities together, including the fact that the communities in this ward surround the coast to coast cycle path.

There are similar housing types across the ward with a mix of social housing through to executive housing.

The community is served by local schools, including Rickleton Primary School, Fatfield Academy, St. Robert of Newminster and Harry Watts Academy.

The central shopping location covering all of Washington is recognised as The Galleries in the neighbouring ward, however each village features local shops. Shops that are well used by the residents of each village are located across Ayton, Rickleton, Harraton and Fatfield.

The ward also has a series of restaurants/pubs, with an area of Fatfield Riverside featuring a large number of both.

A number of medical practices operate within the ward and bus services are regular and link the communities together.

Community groups make use of spaces in Ayton Rickleton, Harraton and Fatfield. For young people, Fatfield features 1st Fatfield Scout Group, used by many young people already from across the proposed ward.

In terms of culture and leisure, Fatfield includes Washington Arts Centre, Southern Area Playing Fields and parks in Ayton, Rickleton and Fatfield.

The Washington South Residents Association covers this geography (in that it is a genuine south of Washington group, rather than a Washington South Ward group).

Easily identifiable boundaries

The ward's southern and western boundaries are the local authority's border and, in the former's case, the River Wear. Its eastern boundary follows a route leading from the Cox Green footbridge over the Wear before joining with its northern boundary: the A195, which it follows to Ayton Road, following that road as the natural end point

of the Ayton community until it leads to the A1231 which connects with the ward's western border.

Overall, the proposed ward uses local authority boundaries, the natural boundary of the river and distinctive roads/pathways to carve out full communities rather than place artificial borders through the middle of them. This gives the ward – on its western side – the appearance of having a longer edge than on the eastern side, but this is necessary to keep the Ayton community united as one community within the ward. Continuing down the A195 rather than turning up Ayton Road would produce a ward that fell substantially beneath the threshold: the only way to preserve Ayton village as a whole unit, without dividing it, is to include it within this ward. Its inclusion in the ward to its right or above it would lead those to be substantially oversized.

Barnes and Humbledon

Projected number of electors: 9,158

Closest existing ward: Barnes



Effective and convenient governance

This ward is 2.7km at its widest (i.e. along its northern boundary) and 1.4km between its northern most and southern most points. It is, as with the current Barnes Ward, one of the most compact wards thereby making local governance arrangements easy to deliver.

Community interests and identities

In our opening to this document, we acknowledge that all of the wards within South Sunderland (between the A19 to the west and the sea to the east) have to expand in size. The current Barnes Ward is 5% below the average and so, as a result, needs to expand.

It does this by taking in more of the Broadway – a community already partly in the ward – and by moving its eastern border onto the main road, rather than following the old railway line.

In respect of the inclusion of more of the Broadway, Presently Barnes Ward contains part of The Broadway (street name), Broadway Junior School, Broadway Youth and Community Centre and the Broadway pub. The proposed extension means it will

now take in more of The Broadway (street name), the Broadway shopping centre (which has expanded into Barnes Ward anyway, with planning permission recently granted to Asda) and more of the Broadway roundabout. The inclusion of more of Barnes Park extension also unites it with the main park. Not only is this logical, but it reflects what many residents already assume: residents from the Broadway attend the Barnes Residents Association and write to the current Barnes Ward councillors with concerns about the local (and highly contested) roundabout. Recent debates about planning permission for the aforementioned Asda development also led to residents from the extended Broadway community joining the campaign to oppose it.

The Barnes pub and the Broadway pub at opposing ends of the ward are the two principal local places at which people socialise.

Following the closure of Ewesley Road Methodist Church, the Humbledon Methodist Church at the centre of the ward is one of the last remaining places of worship that serves this community. The Springwell Health Centre is the most local medical centre to much of this community, away from the main hospital grounds.

The park at the centre of the ward provides opportunities for walking, sports and children's play as well as featuring a café. It is popular with local dog walkers from across the ward and, set within the grounds of the park, is a branch of Sunderland College and the Goals football centre. Emerging from the college grounds is a purpose built footbridge which crosses the A690 and connects with Humbledon Hill.

There are three principal shopping areas within the ward: Lidl and the Prospect shops situated between Plains Farm (North) and Springwell; the Broadway shopping centre which this proposed ward brings together; and Chester Road shops on the ward's northern border.

Residents in the Broadway area that we have added to the Barnes and Humbledon Ward (currently in St Anne's) stated a) that they do not associate themselves with South Hylton with which they are currently grouped and b) that their main local shopping parade is the Melbourne Place/Broadway shops that span Barnes and St Anne's Wards at the Broadway, not the shopping centre that is at the heart of the St Anne's Ward. This demonstrates stronger social and community links between the Broadway and the current Barnes Ward than with the St Anne's Ward.

Our proposed ward, whilst similar to the existing Barnes Ward, is named Barnes and Humbledon. This better reflects the fact that Plains Farm North and Humbledon Hill, the two communities south of the A690, are also part of the ward.

Whilst our proposals continue to divide the Plains Farm estate, we think that this is justifiable within our proposals because:

- We have retained the existing boundary between Plains Farm (North) and Plains Farm (South) which is well established in residents' minds and with the Council.
- Street signage within the area clearly distinguishes between Plains Farm North (which is within Barnes and Humbledon) and Plains Farm South (which is within Lakeside and Sandhill)

- Plains Farm North, within our Barnes and Humbledon Ward, backs on Humbledon Hill and, indeed, part of the Humbledon Hill is only accessible via Plains Farm North. Plains Farm North also contains – within the groups of Plains Farm Academy – the Humbledon and Plains Farm Community Centre and the Humbledon and Plains Farm Youth Football Club site, so there are local community initiatives which link Plains Farm and Humbledon.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The boundaries of this proposed ward are largely the same as the existing Barnes Ward, with two changes:

- A) As described in the Ashbrooke and Grangetown commentary, the border between these two wards is improved by following the road rather than the old mineral line. This continues to be true of the border between this ward (as proposed) and the newly designed Millfield and Thornhill Ward. Presently the boundary between the two is the old mineral line – but this has the effect of cutting Ranson Street, Dunelm and Eden House Road into two, splitting the three between the Barnes and Millfield Wards. By following the A690 and then joining (via Western Hill) Chester Road, it presents a more coherent and easier to describe boundary. Residents group feedback also highlights support for this for a specific localised issue (see ‘Endorsements’)
- B) At the north western corner of the ward, it expands to take in more of the Broadway. We have explained why this is justifiable on community grounds under the sub-heading above.

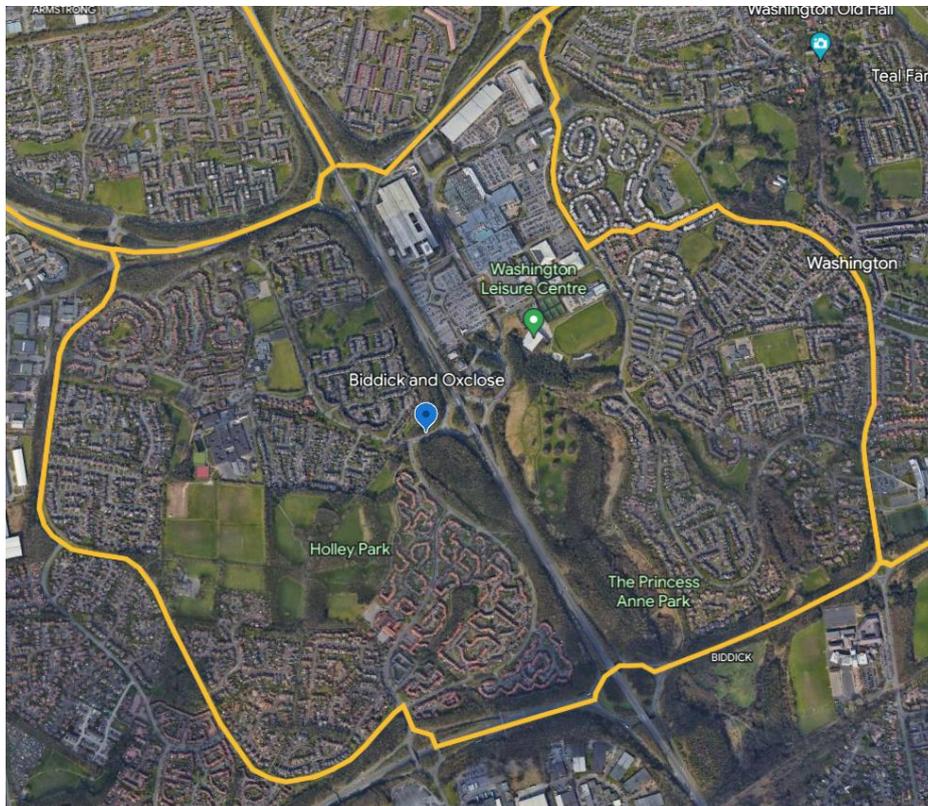
Both these modifications are therefore designed to bring into the new Barnes and Humbledon Ward elements of streets (e.g. Ranson Street, Dunelm) and communities (the Broadway) which are already partly in the ward.

There are two main resident associations operating within the Barnes Ward: the Barnes Residents Association (BRA) which has endorsed this proposal and the Barnes, Pallion and Millfield Residents Association (BPMRA). The latter grouping highlights why Chester Road is a necessary boundary between our proposed Barnes and Humbledon Ward and the successors to the current Pallion and Millfield Wards. BPMRA meetings take place in Pallion Action Group on East Moor Road. It is attended by the councillors for all three wards. However, whilst residents of Pallion and Millfield regularly attend and raise issues of mutual concern, the number of residents from the Barnes Ward in attendance is invariably zero. This highlights that whilst there is continuity and commonality between the existing Pallion and Millfield Wards, Chester Road very much provides a distinctive and convincing end point between Barnes and Pallion/Millfield. This also happens to be the same boundary that Northumbria Police uses, so Barnes has a different policing team to the others.

Biddick and Oxclose

Number of electors: 8,093

Closest existing ward: Washington Central



Effective and convenient governance

The ward is 2.4km from west to east and 1.8km from north to south.

The name of the ward represents the two largest communities within the ward. Whilst this is a town centre and could have, within a Washington specific context, been called Town Centre Ward, we have avoided this as there would inevitably, within a wider local authority context, be confusion as to whether this referred to Washington, to the City Centre within Sunderland (colloquially still referred to as ‘the town’) or one of the economic centres within the Coalfields.

Community interests and identities

Washington is a town within the local authority area that has its own identity, transport links, central shopping area and local industry (most notably Nissan). It has an NE postcode and borders the Gateshead and South Tyneside local authorities which means that – unlike in Sunderland – some people have a dual identity (drawing upon both the local Wearside and Tyneside cultures) which is unique to Washington. It is therefore right that Washington is separated from the rest of

Sunderland and, as such, we have placed the W01 polling district, which is not in any way discernibly part of Washington (as evidenced by its DH postcode), into the Coalfields.

Washington is separated into distinctive villages and our approach has been to divide it into five wards at the borders of these villages – uniting communities that are currently divided by the boundaries presently in place.

This ward is designed to bring together, into a single warding arrangement, the villages and communities that are immediate to the Galleries shopping centre and neighbouring leisure and retail outlet that serves as the centre of Washington. It is in effect a town centre ward. The communities surrounding the shopping complex are faced with similar issues such as the dispersal and dumping of shopping trolleys; crime and anti-social behaviour; and

The ward is served by two parks which residents in the villages use frequently and the same social housing provider operates across the ward.

Transport links to and from the Galleries are available across Washington and so the proximity of residents in this ward to the centre means that public transport is eminently available. It is also possible to use walking and cycle routes to navigate this ward.

In addition to the Galleries, the villages surrounding it all feature local shops - located in Oxclose, Lambton and Biddick.

In terms of leisure, the ward includes large parks - Princess Anne Park, centrally located and Holley Park, located to the West, between Oxclose and Lambton. Holley Park is named after Stephen Holley, one of the founders of Washington New Town which makes its inclusion in the town centre ward particularly pertinent. Washington Leisure Centre is located within the ward.

Schools located in the ward are Lambton Primary School, Oxclose Community Academy, Oxclose Primary Academy and St. John Boste Primary School.

The ward has a doctor surgeries are located at The Galleries, together with purpose built primary health care centre.

The Galleries is also where Washington Police Station is located.

Pubs and restaurants are located at The Galleries and additionally in Oxclose and Lambton which provide more distinctive identities to the local communities within the ward.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The A195 and the A1231 provide the ward with its southern and northern boundaries, respectively.

The eastern boundary follows Biddick Lane up to the back of the Galleries retail park, which acts as the point of distinction between this ward and its neighbour, until it joins the A1231.

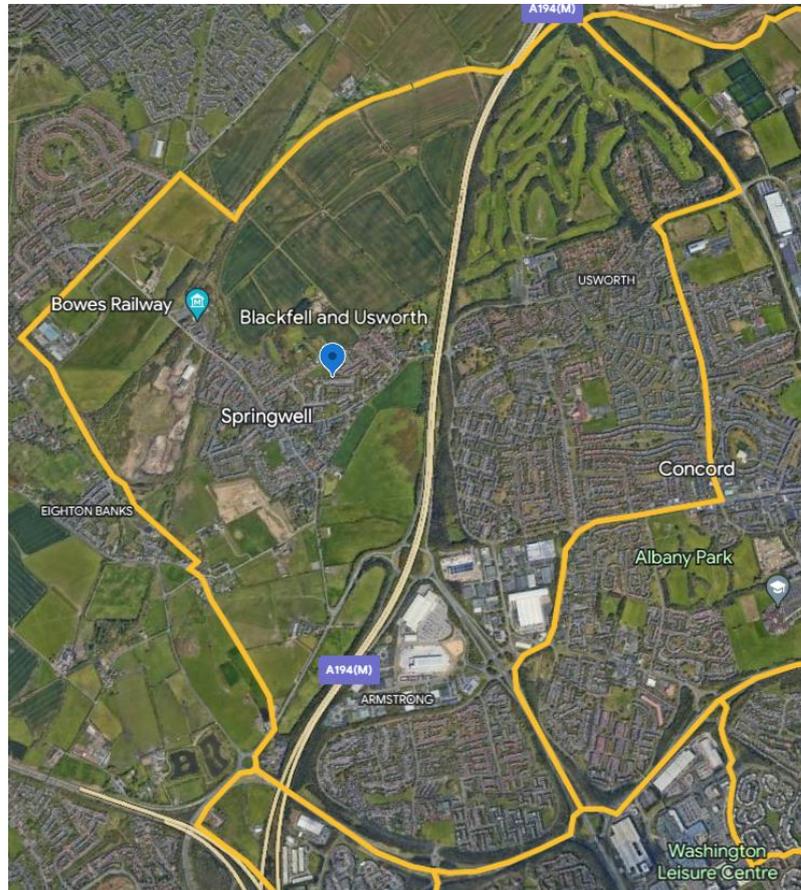
The western boundary is Ayton Road, which separates the residential Oxclose from the Crowther Industrial estate and, more generally, from the Ayton village.

Overall, these are distinctive main roads that are more clear-cut than some of the back lanes and ambiguous walkways that currently act as ward boundaries in Washington.

Blackfell and Usworth

Number of electors: 9,168

Closest existing ward: Washington West



Effective and convenient governance

From west to east, the ward measures 2.8km; it is 3.6km from its northern most point to its southern border. It is therefore a small ward which is easy to represent. It takes in distinctive communities in their whole.

Community interests and identities

Washington is a town within the local authority area that has its own identity, transport links, central shopping area and local industry (most notably Nissan). It has an NE postcode and borders the Gateshead and South Tyneside local authorities which means that – unlike in Sunderland – some people have a dual identity (drawing upon both the local Wearside and Tyneside cultures) which is unique to Washington. It is therefore right that Washington is separated from the rest of Sunderland and, as such, we have placed the W01 polling district, which is not in

any way discernibly part of Washington (as evidenced by its DH postcode), into the Coalfields.

Washington is separated into distinctive villages and our approach has been to divide it into five wards at the borders of these villages – uniting communities that are currently divided by the boundaries presently in place.

This warding proposal brings all of Usworth into one ward, rather than arbitrarily splitting it between two.

The ward features a broad range of housing types – but what unites them as a community is their proximity to Gateshead (which is just over the border) and the distance from Sunderland. Of all of the Washington Wards, it is these that most have a sense among residents of being more ‘Geordie’ than ‘Mackem’. This came out in our resident survey.

There are local shops located across the ward in Blackfell, Springwell and Donwell, but Blackfell also features a large Aldi store. There is also a retail sit that features a B&Q and a series of other stores and cafes. Blackfell also has its own Post Office.

The George Washington hotel and golf course are located in the ward and it includes parks in Blackfell, Springwell, Donwell and Usworth.

Blackfell and Springwell both feature local schools that serve these villages and there are pubs and restaurants located at Blackfell, Springwell, Donwell and Usworth.

A regular bus service connects the area to Washington, as well as to Gateshead and Newcastle.

Resident associations operating within the ward include Blackfell Community Hub and Springwell Residents Association.

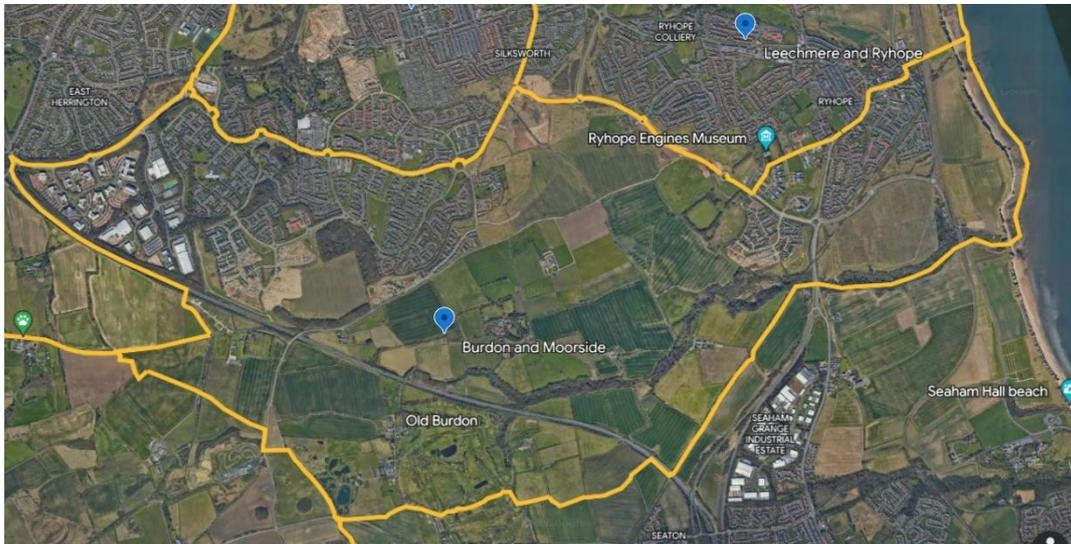
Easily identifiable boundaries

The western and northern boundaries of the ward are the local authority boundaries. The eastern boundary follows a prominent road southwards to the A1231 (which acts as the southern border). The eastern boundary also marks the end of the communities within this ward and the beginning of Albany and Concord, which are both contained, in full, within the neighbouring Concord and Sulgrave Ward.

Burdon and Moorside

Projected number of electors: 8,465

Closest existing ward: Doxford



Effective and convenient governance

The ward is 4.9km from west to east and 2.5km from north to south.

This proposed ward effectively represents what Sunderland City Council has identified as its South Sunderland Development Area. By tying this ward closely to the development plan, it reflects the emergence of a newly created community and better enables the Council to conduct its business *vis a vis* the aims of the plan.

Presently, the proposed ward appears to join two communities, but the Commission is asked to note that the strategy outlined by the Council – already well underway – and the new housing that will be completed by 2026-29 will bridge the gap that is visible at present and turn this into a single community – all linked by the Burdon Road. This is evidenced by the fact that the northern boundary is, in part, a road that is currently under construction.

There is currently under construction the Ryhope-Doxford Link Road (image below) that has the sole purpose of linking the new build estates constructed in the South Sunderland Development Zone in Ryhope and Doxford together, bypassing communities such as Ryhope, Silksworth and Tunstall. This will make transport around the ward easier and more accessible for residents and councillors and it is further evidence of the way in which this ward is being intentionally and consciously constructed, by the Council, as a future community. It therefore makes sense to align the warding arrangements with the development and economic strategies in place within the South Sunderland Development Zone and to formalise the zone into a ward.



Ryhope-Doxford Link Road

This warding proposal respects the integrity of the Burdon parish boundaries and keeps it intact, within the wider ward boundary.

Community interests and identities

This community principally consists of executive housing and is part of a new growth area that will include new housing developments, new businesses and new retail offers – some of which has already emerged and is identifiable.

Whilst this is a geographically large ward, much of the to the south is farmers' fields – and the social, economic, development and community life of the ward is within the northern most part. It is possible to drive and walk throughout the ward as it currently exists, but the new roads and footpaths that are being developed alongside the new housing will mean this ward feels like a unified and singular community by 2026. Burdon Lane runs through this ward and gives it a strong connection to the Burdon identity as well as, in a literal sense, connecting it to Burdon.

The identity will be derived from the fact that part of the ward is under construction and is being purposely designed with a singular “village community” feel by the developers, the houses will therefore follow the same architectural style and be integrated into new planned roads, such as the new Ryhope-Doxford link road which will be the spine.¹

¹ Read more about the proposal to create a new village community within this proposed ward here: <https://www.chroniclive.co.uk/news/north-east-news/south-sunderland-750-home-village-11020531>

The Moorside area of the ward already contains a number of leisure and community spaces such as gyms, a local secondary school and employment opportunities, but the Council's strategy is to further develop the area not just in terms of housing but in terms of local economy and employment opportunities.

The North Western border follows a dual carriageway with limited pedestrian crossings, demonstrated by residents who completed our local survey who said they are dissuaded from approaching or crossing the road because of this.

Easily identifiable boundaries

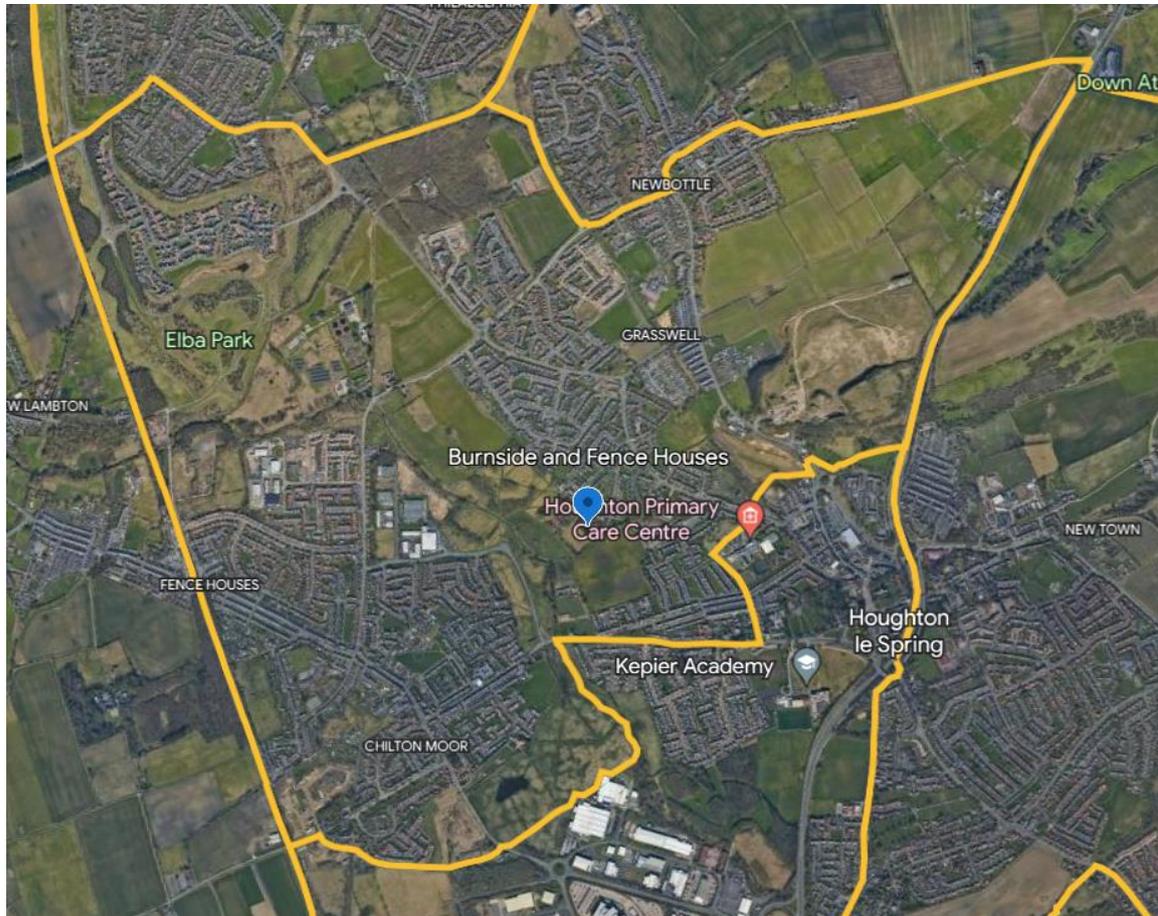
The boundary to the south is the local authority's border with County Durham and is the border that is currently used. The western border follows precisely the current western boundary of the Doxford Ward and, in so doing, keeps as a whole the Burdon Parish. It then tracks the A19 to the Moorside roundabout and follows a footpath that runs parallel to Moorside before following a series of main roads (most notably Doxford Park Road, denoting the end of Doxford Park and the beginning of Burdon) eastwards.

The north/north eastern border follows the new Ryhope-Doxford link road that is intended to be a continuation of the dual carriageway through the community.

Burnside and Fence Houses

Number of electors: 9,533

Closest existing ward: Houghton



Effective and convenient governance

This ward largely replicates the existing Houghton Ward but renames it Burnside and Fence Houses to reflect the two largest communities within the ward, as all of the Coalfields have Houghton-le-Spring in their full addresses (after the name of the town) and are, accordingly, all within the Houghton parliamentary constituency. The name change reflects more distinctive local communities within the ward: the Burnside in the centre and Fence Houses to the west.

It is 2.6km wide and 3.6km from its north boundary to its south.

Community interests and identities

The Burnside and Fence Houses Ward encompasses several distinctive communities which see themselves as part of a wider Houghton town community.

The Burnside community is denoted by the Burnside Stores and a series of street names (e.g. Burnside Avenue, Littleburn Close, Brinkburn Crescent, Woodburn Drive) which reinforce this local community identity.

Fence Houses is a large housing settlement to the west of the ward. It is well connected to the rest of the community – for example, Nexus operates the 520 bus service which runs to Kepier Medical Practice, which is within the Burnside.

A series of primary schools serve the local community, including two which are named after the Burnside and Fence Houses communities.

Small convenience stores operate within the ward, but good transport links exist to the larger shopping areas of Houghton centre and the Galleries shopping centre in Washington.

A series of pubs and takeaways provide spaces for socialising and represent the extent of the ward's nighttime economy.

The Beehive Pub, within the ward, is a centre of the community and popular with local people.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The western boundary of the ward is the boundary of the local authority area and the eastern boundary is the A690.

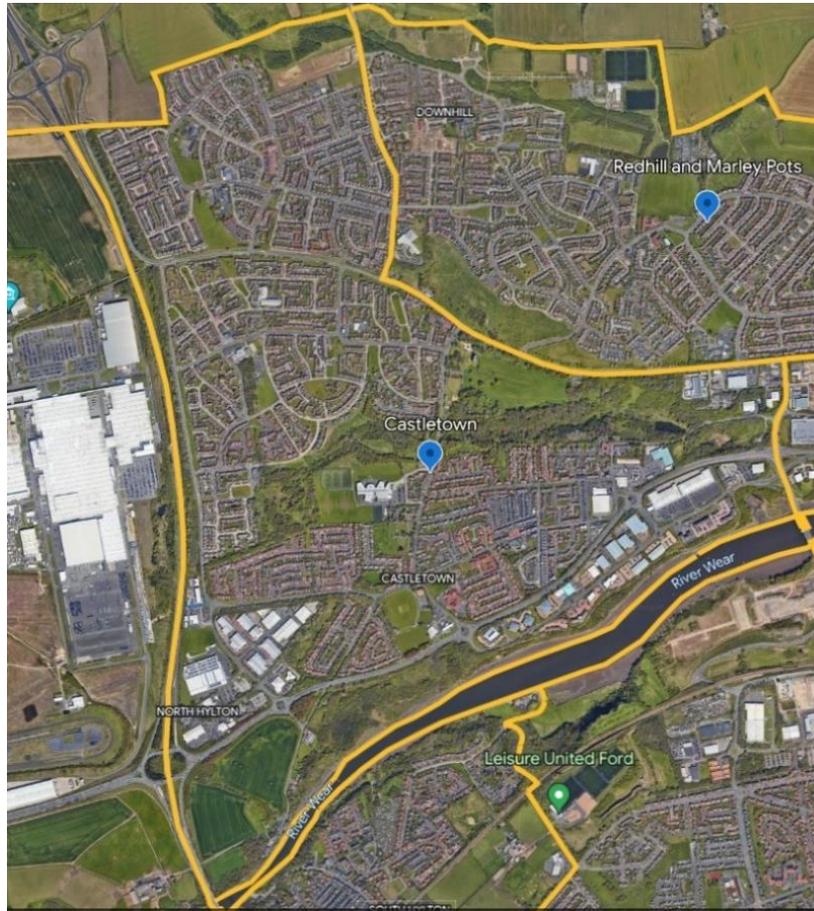
The southern boundary is, in part, the existing boundary of the Houghton Ward but – because the current ward is too big – the boundary then follows Dairy Lane in part before running up the back of the Houghton Primary Care Centre site and then the footpath that leads to the A690. Whilst it would have been visually more satisfactory to continue on Dairy Lane to the A690, this would have a) made the ward too large in terms of the number of electors and b) divided Houghton town centre which we have consciously preserved for inclusion in the Houghton and Moorsley Ward.

The northern boundary uses a series of main roads to travel eastwards towards the A690, which acts as its eastern boundary. It runs parallel to Shiney Row, meaning that that community is not divided by the boundary and instead contained fully within the Penshaw and Shiney Row Ward. The boundary is as close to a straight line as it possible to draw from the western boundary to the A690.

Castletown

Projected number of electors: 9,117

Closest existing ward: Castle



Effective and convenient governance

This ward is 2.3km from the western boundary to the east and 2.5km from the northern boundary to the river, which acts as the southern boundary.

It is essentially the same as the existing Castle Ward, but is improved in two ways:

- The name better reflects the community identity and is more recognisable as a placename across the city and the region.
- The Town End Farm Community is contained within the ward, rather than split between Castle and Redhill as it is at present. This means that only one set of councillors need be involved in Town End Farm related issues, act as consultees for planning applications and act as a point of contact for policing matters.

Community interests and identities

At the heart of the ward is the Hylton Castle site.

Along the riverside, a series of shops, call centres and businesses provide local people with employment and leisure opportunities. Fast-food takeaways, pubs and bars also provide opportunities for local people to socialise. Further within the ward, Hylton Castle Working Men's Club and Town End Far Working Men's Club both provide social spaces and reinforce the identities of the two communities within the ward: Castletown, built around the Hylton Castle, and Town End Farm.

Co-op and Lidl supermarkets are within the boundary of the ward and a new Sainsbury's is just over the border.

A series of primary schools – including Castletown Primary School and St John Bosco RC Primary School – serve the families of the ward and Castle View Enterprise Academy is the principal secondary school for the area.

Bunny Hill Surgery provides medical facilities for people within this ward, though under current warding arrangements it is within Redhill Ward and, in our proposed arrangements, it is located on the ward boundary within the Redhill and Marley Pots Ward.

At present, Town End Farm is arbitrarily split between the Castle and the Redhill Wards, inserting an artificial boundary between two parts of the same community. Our proposal unites Town End Farm as one community within the Castletown Ward.

The ward is renamed 'Castletown' as we feel that 'Castle' is too ambiguous; it does not refer specifically to a place within the city that residents across Sunderland would immediately recognise as Hylton Castle. By contrast, 'Castletown' is a much more widely known placename and also represents the most prominent community within the ward.

There are strong local transport links within this ward and opportunities for active travel: footpaths and cycleways allow for travel throughout the ward.

Historically Castletown was the first community in this part of Sunderland, cushioned between Hylton Castle and the former Castletown Colliery. This is the case with a great deal of Sunderland communities which were located around a central coal pit and the community and pit names reflected this.

The Chiswick Square shopping parade is located central in this ward and is well used as the effective 'high street' of the community. Characteristic of 1960-70s housing estate construction that integrated shopping centres into communities, the

Castletown shopping parade has remained open and well used partly due to the isolated nature of the community from the rest of the city. The community boundaries are also in line with those seen on the community neighbourhood website Nextdoor, notably the line between Town End Farm and Downhill.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The southern border of this ward is the River Wear and, to the west, the A19. The northern border is the local authority boundary.

The remainder of the ward's boundaries use main roads to separate it from neighbouring wards. Travelling southwards from the local authority boundary, the eastern border follows the main road (Hylton Road) that divides the Town End Farm community from the Downhill community, travelling eastwards along Washington Road and North Hyton Road, then finally travelling southwards on Castletown Way to the Northern Spire Bridge. The use of Castletown Way as a border further reinforces this as a logical beginning/end point for the Castletown Ward and for the re-naming of the ward (Castletown as opposed to Castle).

The use of Hylton Lane as a border is due to two factors: first is that it is a main road, one of a few main roads leading from South Tyneside to Sunderland local authorities, and secondly is that it is a clear architectural community divide. The Castletown houses are continuous semi-detached housing whilst the alternative side has an extended row of flats and apartments not seen anywhere in Castletown.

In our resident consultation we found that there was support for our boundary exactly ("Castletown Dene down to the River Wear) whilst also support for the argument that the area felt like "a village (or) small town" in itself and was a distinct community.

Concord and Sulgrave

Number of electors: 8,691

Closest existing ward: Washington North



Effective and convenient governance

The ward measures 5.2km from west to east and 2.8km from north to south. It is roughly the same size as at present – though it has to be recognised that the western half of the ward is not residential. It contains the Nissan factors and surrounding satellite manufacturers.

Community interests and identities

Washington is a town within the local authority area that has its own identity, transport links, central shopping area and local industry (most notably Nissan). It has an NE postcode and borders the Gateshead and South Tyneside local authorities which means that – unlike in Sunderland – some people have a dual identity (drawing upon both the local Wearside and Tyneside cultures) which is unique to Washington. It is therefore right that Washington is separated from the rest of Sunderland and, as such, we have placed the W01 polling district, which is not in any way discernibly part of Washington (as evidenced by its DH postcode), into the Coalfields.

Washington is separated into distinctive villages and our approach has been to divide it into five wards at the borders of these villages – uniting communities that are currently divided by the boundaries presently in place.

Concord includes a bus depot which connects this ward with the rest of Washington, with Sunderland and with Tyneside. Local services also make the ward easy to navigate.

Concord also features a shopping parade which is well used and a doctor surgery. In addition, local shops are located within Albany and Sulgrave and the Peel Retail Park, included within the ward, features a popular local gym and large supermarkets.

Local shops located across the ward in Albany, Concord and Sulgrave.

In terms of leisure, there are a series of parks and the North Hub football site located in the ward.

There are local churches located in Concord and Sulgrave and the schools located in the ward are Albany Village Primary School, George Washington Primary School, Marlborough Primary School and Usworth Colliery Primary School

There are pubs and restaurants throughout the ward, including around the Nissan site.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The eastern boundary of the ward is the A19; the northern boundary the local authority boundary and the southern boundary the A1231.

The western boundary is the road that separates the villages of Albany and Concord from Usworth, which is recognised by local residents as the natural start/end point of two villages. It follows the A1290 back to the northern boundary of the local authority area.

Grindon and South Hylton

Projected number of electors: 8,922

Closest existing ward: St Anne's



Effective and convenient governance

The ward is 2.9km from north to south and 1.3km at its widest point from west to east. The name represents the two largest communities within this ward.

This ward is joined by the three main roads: The A183, Hylton Road and Hylton Bank. These are all connect together and give access to all sections of the ward.

Portsmouth Road Shops, South Hylton Tansy Centre and St Nicholas Orthodox Church offer three community venues for ward surgeries that are equidistant across the proposed ward, allowing for councillors ward surgeries to be in all parts of the community and give equal access to all residents.

Community interests and identities

At the centre of this ward is a shopping complex which serves residents, as does the industrial site which features a supermarket and a fast food takeaway, with development continuing. The Hastings Hill pub serves as a local venue for people to socialise (particularly following the closure of the Grindon Mill pub) which means the Hastings Hill pub is the 'local' for many within this area, alongside the Grindon Social Club. Conversely, the Grindon Mill pub site has been developed into a gym which serves the local community from both sides of the main road.

The old Pennywell community has been demolished in part and new, executive housing has taken its place. This has altered the character of the area and made the north of the A183 more like Hastings Hill, to its south.

Until recently the Portsmouth Road, Pennywell shops were the only supermarkets in the community and we know through resident consultation that the Asda and Iceland located here are the go-to shop for many residents. One resident who lives in South Hylton, the northern most part of the proposed ward, stated his main supermarket was the "Pennywell Asda".

Residents living within this area are also uniquely located to the entrance, from Sunderland, to the A19 to Washington, to Durham and to Newcastle/Gateshead. They are therefore more likely to think of themselves as living on the edge of Sunderland with weaker connections to the centre than, for example, residents in the neighbouring wards to its east.

The ward is served by a doctor surgery in South Hylton by Academy 360 school, among others in the area including Grindon Infant School and St Anne's RC Primary.

It has community centres in South Hylton (Tansy Centre), in Pennywell (Pennywell Community Centre) and in Grindon (Young People Centre).

Local bus serves are frequent and bring the community together. It is also served by the South Hylton metro station which residents across this ward use to travel into the centre of Sunderland, to north Sunderland and into Newcastle. The metro is within walking distance of Grindon and Hastings Hill, but not Thorney Close, which emphasises why the current Sandhill Ward is not coherent.

Gentoo is the principal provider of social housing across the ward and similar issues arise from this. Gentoo is also the developer responsible for the Chester Gate development at the heart of the ward.

These communities have, in recent times, also shared a PCSO.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The northern boundary of the ward is the River Wear.

The southern boundary is a footpath that leads from Grindon Lane to Foxcover Road. To the south of this is a substantial amount of green space that separates

Grindon from Thorney Close with which it is currently paired within the Sandhill Ward, despite Thorney Close have a more natural 'flow' into Farrington and Grindon pairing more coherently with Hastings Hill and the community is faces over the A690.

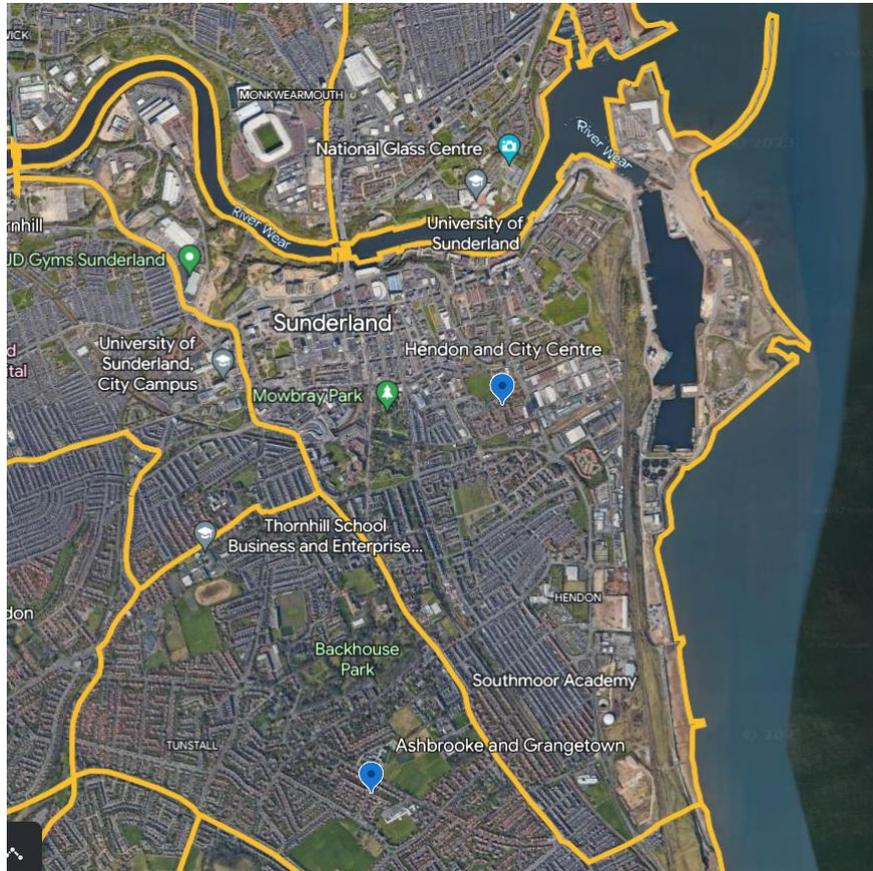
Presently the St Anne's Ward's western boundary crosses the A19 for no particular reason. We have standardised this and the A19 acts as the western boundary to the full ward.

The eastern boundary follows a series of main roads, starting on Grindon Lane, towards the river. At its closest point to the river, it maintains the current boundary between St Anne's Ward and Pallion Ward, which is a footpath down to the Sunderland Rowing Club. The green space around North View Academy and around the Ford Quarry complex separate South Hylton from Ford Estate and makes a strong case for these being in separate wards – particularly since housing developments in the area have focused more on the integration of the communities either side of the A183.

Hendon and City Centre

Number of electors: 9,635

Closest existing ward: Hendon



Effective and convenient governance

The proposed Hendon and City Centre Ward places the entirety of Sunderland city centre into a single ward, which includes the new Riverside Sunderland housing and public/private sector development.²

The key benefit of this warding proposal is that it brings Sunderland City Centre into a single ward, rather than the present arrangement whereby it is split between three.

The Hendon community which is also within the ward is the only one that is to the east of the city centre – and it links the city centre with the port (a strategic asset for the Council).

By reducing the number of councillors representing the city centre from nine to three, it means that the Council has fewer statutory consultees to consult on planning matters; it makes it easier to speak with one voice on matters relating to ASB and

² See the Riverside Sunderland website here: <https://www.riversidesunderland.com/>

crime; and it creates a single ward team – in terms of elected representatives – for the police to contact and consult with one city centre matters.³

The inclusion of ‘City Centre’ in the ward name also helps to give a greater sense of identity to the city centre at a time when it is undergoing considerable change – including more residential developments, new office accommodation being built, and greater investment by the public and private sector which is creating new jobs.

The ward is 2.7km from its northern most point to its southern border and the distance is 2.6km from its western to eastern border.

We propose that this is a three-member ward.

Community interests and identities

This community is unique in that it is the only one in the city which includes city centre living: a large number of high-rise accommodations, high levels student accommodation occupancy, a busy nighttime economy sitting alongside residential buildings are all features of this.

The community within this ward – both in Hendon and within the city centre – is defined by a lot of high rise residential accommodation which is far less common across the city, but common in other city centres.

The new Riverside development which is contained within this ward is evidence of a strategic attempt by the Council – using Levelling Up and other government funding – to create a new vision of the city centre which mixes housing with business. This should therefore be included in the city centre, where residential and business spaces are also situated alongside one another – and not in the Millfield Ward, as it currently is, as the latter is very much defined by being a suburb on the outskirts of the city.

The city itself serves residents well in respect of shopping opportunities, city centre parks, a museum and other cultural activities. It is easy to walk throughout the ward and there are also local bus services that cater for it. The metro links within the ward connect residents to the rest of Sunderland; national train and bus services to the rest of the country; and there are cycle routes for local, city-wide and regional travel.

The ward is well served by a number of primary schools within the Hendon community and the city centre has its own policing arrangements.

The ward is inclusive of all of the Deptford area which ties in with the economic aims of the Council *vis a vis* its Riverside strategy and makes governance of, and delivery of, this plan more achievable.

Finally, the border aligns perfectly with the City Centre community as defined by Next Door.

³ There is a specialist city centre policing team and the East Area is granted additional representation on LMAPS, the local multi-agency partnership board which brings police and Council together, precisely to deal with representation at that committee for the city centre.

Easily identifiable boundaries

This ward's northern boundary is the River Wear and its eastern boundary is the sea.

Its southern border (shared with Ashbrook and Grangetown) is a distinctive and clearly identifiable road that leads towards the sea.

Its western border follows the existing Hendon Ward border up Ryhope Road, but then follows the A123, the A183 and the A1231 around the outskirts of the city centre travelling northward until it reaches the Queen Alexandra Bridge.

Two of these boundaries are clearly defined by bodies of water; the others follow natural boundaries in the form of main roads that comfortably separate natural communities.

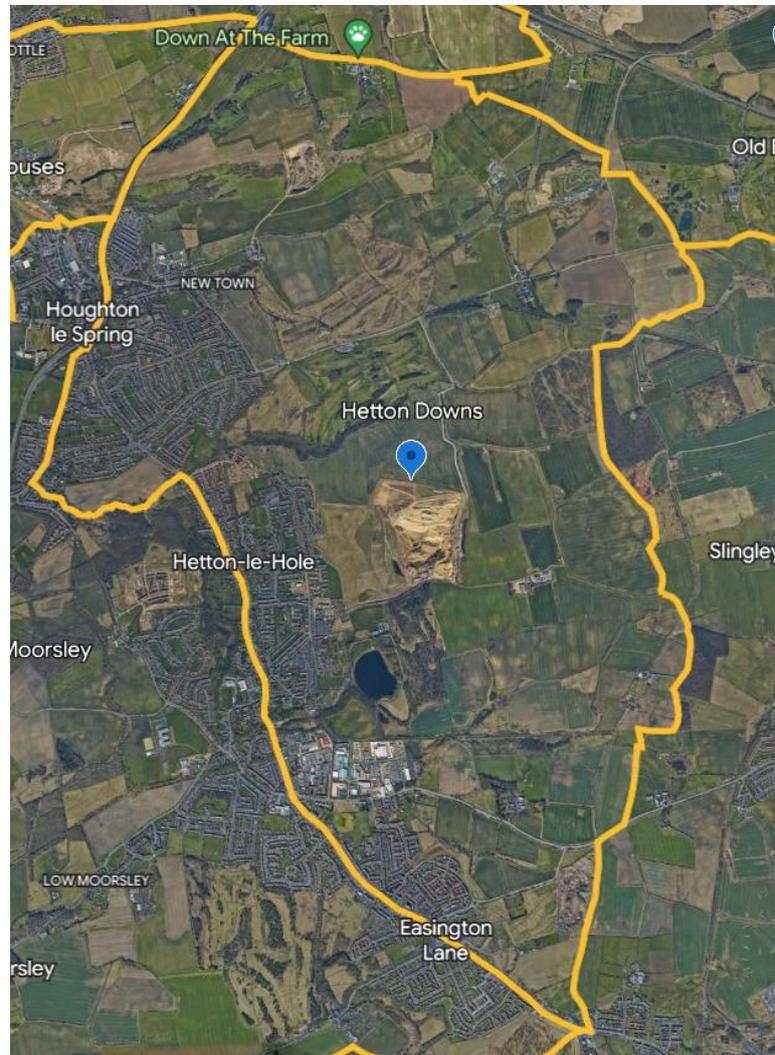
The ward also contains in full what is recognised by Sunderland City Council as the official boundary of the city centre.

These borders therefore rely upon natural, easy to identify boundaries that separate Hendon and Sunderland city centre from the suburbs that are outside of the city centre, giving a greater coherence to the city centre's identity in the process.

Hetton Downs

Number of electors: 9,447

Closest existing ward: Copt Hill



Effective and convenient governance

This ward keeps the Warden Law parish intact and is one of two wards that covers the Hetton Town Council area. It is, as the Commission will note, not possible to fit the Hetton Town Council geography into a single ward because the number of electors represented by the Town Council is substantially outside of the range of acceptability *vis a vis* elector numbers. Therefore, we have split Hetton Town Council more or less evenly between two Hetton focused wards: an west Hetton ward named Houghton and Moorsley and an east Hetton ward, presented here and named Hetton Downs after the large housing estate at the centre of the ward.

Like the current Copt Hill Ward, most of the population lives on the western boundary of the ward, with much of the land to the east being unoccupied farmland. Whilst it

appears large in size (6.2km by 3.5km) it is practical for the Council to undergo its business and for councillors to operate within the ward.

Community interests and identities

This ward represents one half of Hetton. It is served by a series of local primary schools, including Bernard Gilpin Primary and Gillas Lane. Eppleton Primary is further south within the ward and principally serves the Downs.

Hetton Lyons Country Park provides leisure

The ward is well served by local transport links into Country Durham; into Houghton centre; to Washington; and into Sunderland (including to the Royal Hospital).

The Copt Hill pub sits at the north of the ward, with the Burn Inn and the Three Tons closer to the boundary with the proposed Houghton and Moorsley Ward.

Easington Lane Primary School, Hetton Lyons Cricket Club and Hetton Social Club are all in the south of the ward, close to the Country Durham local authority border.

Local convenience stores are located throughout the community.

Residents in this ward will inevitably see themselves as part of a wider Hetton community which is too large to contain within a single ward, but this proposal represents a way of neatly dividing Hetton down the A182 in a way which makes it a coherent ward within its own right, whilst also fitting neatly into wider community identities.

There is a road within the ward that leads directly into the Warden Law parish.

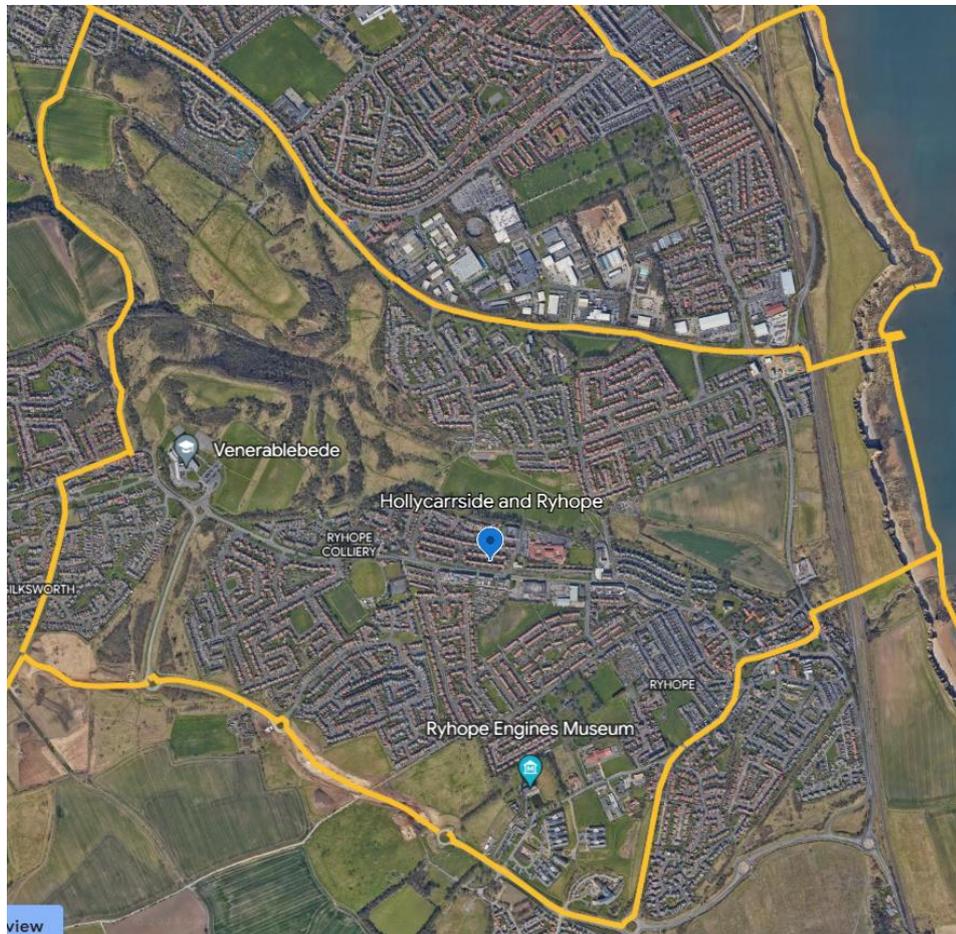
Easily identifiable boundaries

To the east, the ward boundary is the local authority boundary. The northern boundary follows the boundaries of the Warden Law and Burdon parishes and, subsequently, follows the A690, Durham Road and then follows a distinctive body of water to the A182. This boundary was necessary to the ward viable in terms of elector numbers. Whilst following the A182 immediately would have appeared tidier, the ward would have been too small and the ward to its west too big. The A182 is then used consistently to travel southwards to the end of the local authority area.

Hollycarrside and Ryhope

Projected number of electors: 8,048

Closest existing ward: Ryhope



Effective and convenient governance

This ward is 2.6km from its western to its eastern border and 2.7km from its northern border to its southern border. It is a fundamentally easy ward to navigate as Leechemere Road and the Hope Road provide access to it and it has a series of interconnected main roads running throughout it.

This ward also takes in some new housing development in the south west corner of the ward, where new roads are also being constructed.

The ward also has a walking trail from one end to the other, through Tunstall hill.

The name of the ward better reflects that residents of Hollycarrside – the settlement at the north of the ward, which is currently in the Ryhope Ward – do not associate themselves with Ryhope. Further, the inclusion of Myrella Crescent and the properties on the Hope Road (which is the western boundary) takes these properties out of Silksworth Ward (where it is at present) and puts them with Hollycarrside, which is more logical because these houses are cut off from Silksworth by a

substantial amount of green space (in the form of a hill), but are connected to Hollycarrside by Leechmere Road.

The Ryhope Community Centre sits perfectly in the centre of the ward and can be used for ward surgeries, offering equal access for residents. The ward is linked with main roads, bus links and a substantial amount of off-road footpaths for convenient traversing of the ward by residents of councillors.

Ryhope Street is also home to the Ryhope high street, which runs as a spine road through the community, with the Ryhope Community Centre sitting on Ryhope Street. The high street has several pubs, an Asda supermarket and a gym and is well used by residents. It is therefore convenient as a central binding force for the ward and for the centre to be used for accessible ward surgeries.

Community interests and identities

Ryhope's former colliery site, its Engines Museum, its Village centre and former mining houses add to the character of the ward – and there is a clear distinction between the historic Ryhope and the new executive housing on the Burdon development site which we have placed into the new Burdon and Moorside Ward.

The inclusion of Myrella Crescent and the eastern part of Tunstall hill reflects the fact that these houses are an extension of the Hollycarrside area, along Leechmere Road, rather than a part of Silksworth – which it is incongruously paired with under current warding arrangements but from which it is separated by a hill.

Most families in this area are likely to send their child to the local Venerable Bede Academy.

Ryhope ward currently spreads from North to South, with this new ward re-orientating that to East to West which is the natural way the community runs taking into account road, Ryhope high street, historic train lines and nature walks that run from the coast to Tunstall Hills. The ward runs through the historic settlement at the coast through to the where it meets the historic pit village area near Silksworth.

The Tunstall Hills Nature Reserve is central to the ward, with many of the old train lines that ran through the hills now existing as paths and walk routes that connect the area. The Tunstall Hill and Ryhope Cutting is also designated an area of Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) 6 and we felt it important to keep it contained within one ward.

Local bus services run throughout this ward and take residents into Silksworth, into the city centre, and up Leechmere Road to Sunderland Royal Hospital. Local medical facilities are also located within the ward.

Easily identifiable boundaries

This ward has very clear-cut boundaries. To the east, the sea; to the west, the Hope Road; to the north, Leechmere Road; and to the south, a combination of Rotary Road and a new road currently under construction (which highlights a natural divide between the Ryhope community and the new Burdon area being developed by the Council under its South Area Development strategy).

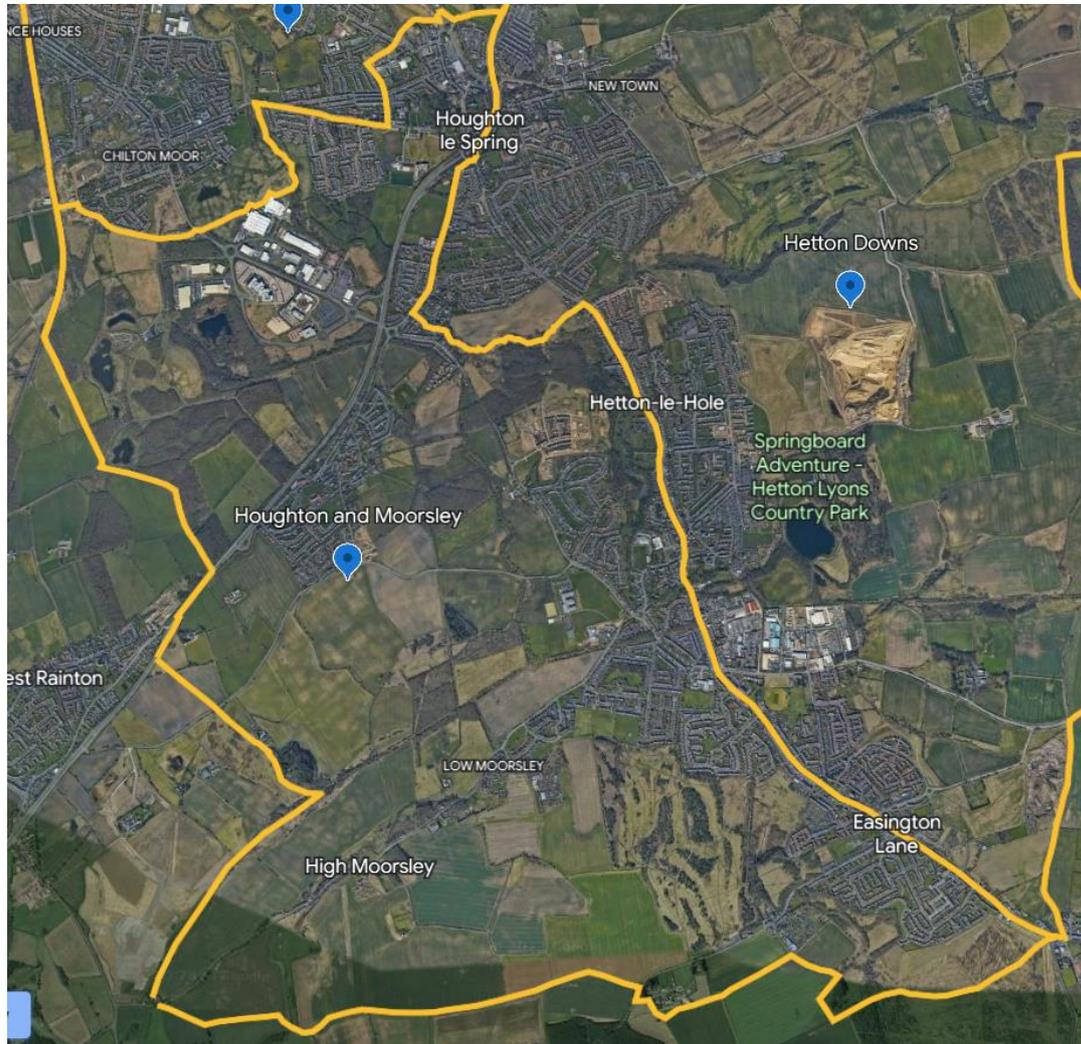
The entrance to the Hope Road, shown below, indicates why this is a suitable natural boundary: although there is housing on both sides, the tree-lined roadsides mean that these houses are cut off from one another visually, as well as by the main road between them.



Houghton and Moorsley

Number of electors: 9,466

Closest existing ward: Hetton



Effective and convenient governance

The ward measures 5.2km from its most northern point to its most southern; it is 3.3km from the western boundary to the eastern boundary.

The ward, along with Hetton Downs, is also respectful of the Hetton Town Council, as the Town Council area is neatly contained within these two wards and the names are commensurate with the Town Council's ward names.

Community interests and identities

As with the proposed Hetton Downs Ward, residents of this ward will inevitably see themselves as part of a wider Hetton community that is represented by the Town Council, but too big to contain within a single city council ward.

This proposed ward makes sense because it includes in its entirety Houghton town centre (which lends its name to the ward to reflect this fact) and a series of community assets that make it a coherent community in its own right.

The town centre provides the principal centre of economic activity to ward residents.

Houghton Kepier school serves the ward residents, along with a series of primary schools.

The ward is well connected by bus to other communities within the ward and to the town's bus station, which is on the border of the ward. The bus station provides links (via the 35 service) to Sunderland Royal Hospital and other services go to Dalton Park, Country Durham, Seaham, Newcastle, Sunderland and the Galleries, in Washington.

The 168 bus services links East Rainton with Easington Lane, Hetton and Hetton medical practice.

Easington lane Community Access Point – a community centre – is located within the ward.

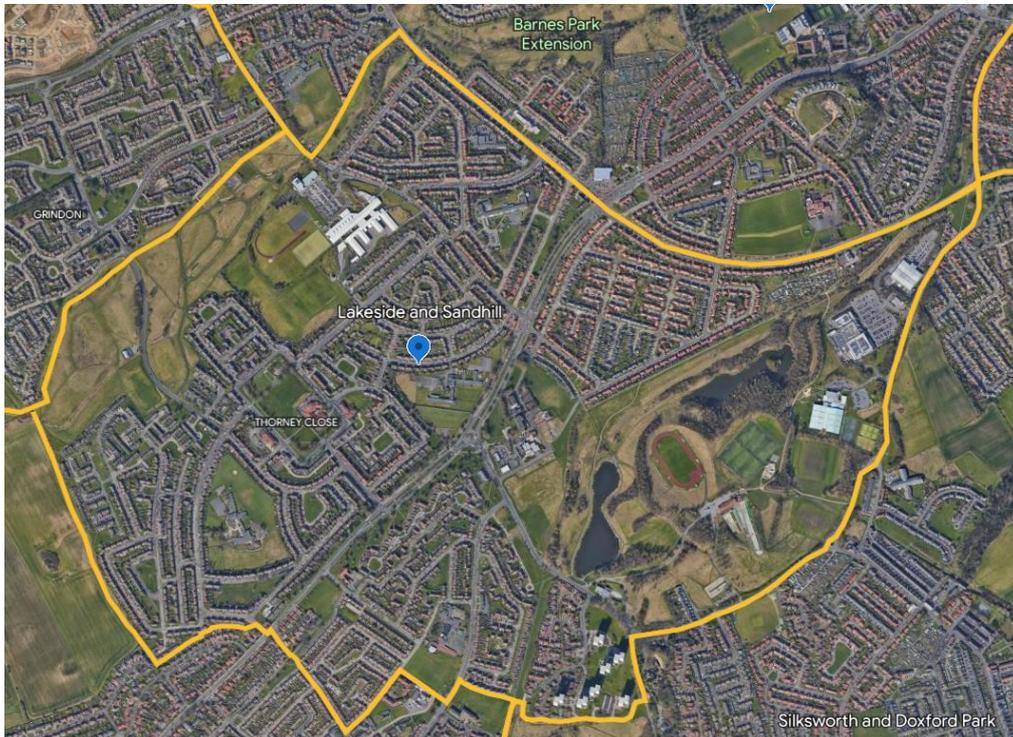
Easily identifiable boundaries

The ward's western and southern boundaries are the local authority area's boundary with County Durham. The eastern boundary is, for the most part, the A183 which is followed consistently until a body of water is followed to join the A183 with Durham Road which then leads onto the A690. The boundary of Houghton centre is followed – keep in place some of the existing boundary with Copt Hill Ward, and then Dairy Lane links this with the existing Houghton Ward boundary heading westwards towards the endpoint of the local authority area.

Lakeside and Sandhill

Projected number of electors: 8,022

Closest existing ward: Sandhill



Effective and convenient governance

The ward measures 1.8km from its northern most point to its southern most point and 2.3km from its western to its eastern border.

We have not included Springwell in the ward name, despite this being a community within the ward, because it is one of two communities called Springwell in the local authority area: the other being in Washington.

Community interests and identities

This ward consists of a consistent demographic and a style of housing that is largely ex local authority or part of current social housing stock.

A local library at the Sandhill Centre serves this community, as does a popular GP practice which sits at the heart of it, on the A690.

Buses regularly run up and down the A690 and throughout the estates within the ward. It is also easy to walk and cycle around.

The ward contains the popular Lakeside Park, a supermarket and a branch of the Everyone Active (Council's arm's length) leisure centres.

A new shopping centre is being developed on the site of the old Farringdon Police Station, which is at the exact centre point of the ward, with a housing development neighbouring it. These developments will connect Plains Farm South, Lakeside and Farringdon and the new shopping site will be at the heart of this community, providing a centre piece around which the rest of it is constructed. It will complement the existing convenience store and McDonalds drive-thru (already on the site) and serve all parts of this proposed ward (as well as residents from beyond it).

Community centres and community rooms operate across the ward, including in Thorney Close, Lakeside Village and Sandhill.

There are small convenience stores and shopping parades throughout the ward which serve local communities, as well as the Sainsbury's set within the grounds of Lakeside Park.

We have commented under Barnes and Humbledon Ward why it is justifiable to split Plains Farm (North) and Plains Farm (South), the latter of which is in this ward. Further to the points made under Barnes and Humbledon:

- Plains Farm South is suited to the new Lakeside and Sandhill Ward for two reasons. Firstly, it is within the catchment area of Sandhill View School and formerly it was within the old Sandhill Ward (prior to the 2004 boundary review). It also backs directly onto the Lakeside Village and onto Lakeside Park; some Plains Farm South residents' back gates lead directly into Lakeside Park and it would not, therefore, be unreasonable for them to be associated with Lakeside.
- The new housing development at the land east of Primate Road will fill the gap between Farringdon and Plains Farm South, meaning that there will be continuous housing leading from Plains Farm South to the southern border of this ward.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The western and eastern boundaries have large green spaces running parallel to them which separate the communities within this ward from those on the other side of the grassed areas. This is especially true of Plains Farm (South)'s separation from Silksworth (the ward it is currently in) and highlights why its inclusion here is more justifiable than the current warding arrangements for it.

The eastern boundary runs down Silksworth Lane and neatly divides the Lakeside Park and Lakeside Village from Silksworth.

The southern boundary of the ward is in part the current boundary between the existing Sandhill and St Chad's Wards. We have then crossed the A690 and followed Munslow, Ashdown, Archer, Anthony and then Allendale Road to meet – in as straight a line as possible – Amsterdam Road, the footpath that runs behind Lakeside Village. We used Archer Road rather than continuing down Ashdown Road onto Allendale Road because this would have separated more residents on the same

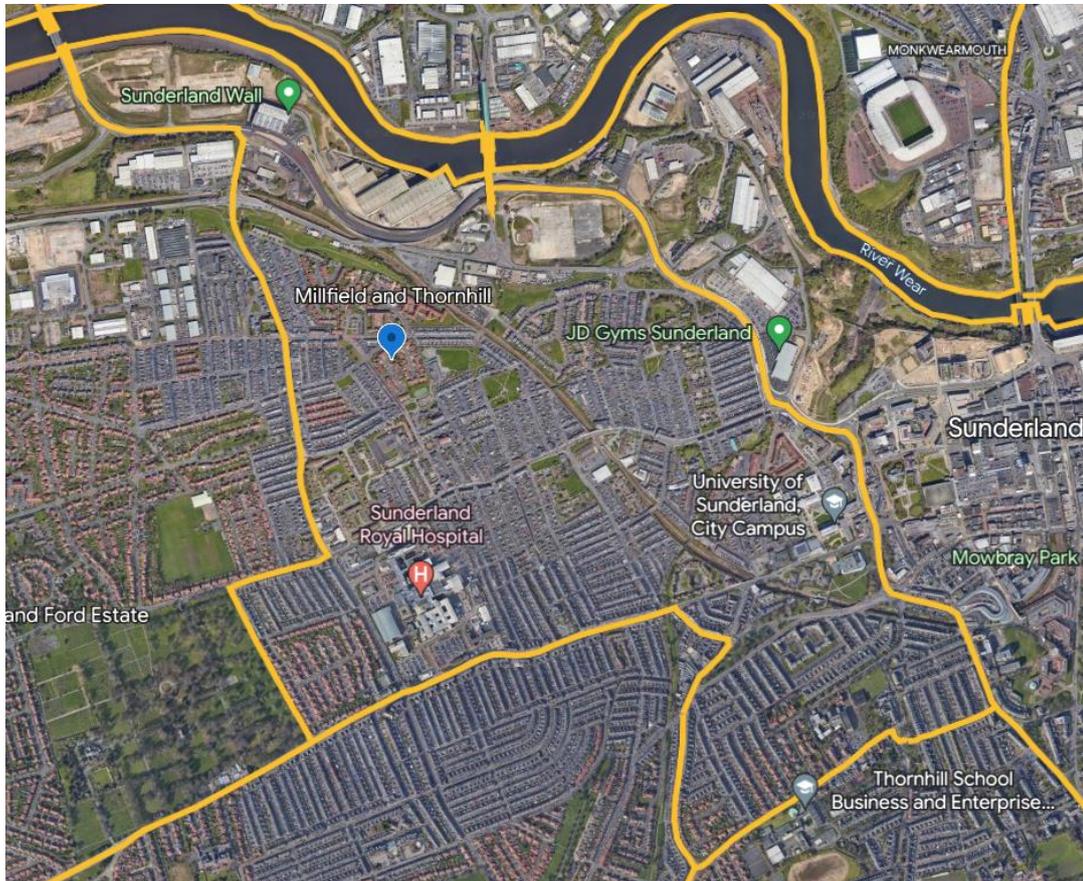
street between two wards than the option we took, which is less disruptive. Furthermore, the primary school playing field and then green space to the east of it both provide a clear and distinctive space between the ward boundary and the housing resuming.

To both the west and east of this ward, large amounts of green space divide this community from those that neighbour it.

Millfield and Thornhill

Projected number of electors: 9,101

Closest existing ward: Millfield



Effective and convenient governance

The ward is 1.5km west to east and 1.7km north to south.

The ward name included Thornhill which is currently within the existing Millfield Ward but is separate to the Millfield community.

Community interests and identities

The ward is a suburb which sits immediately outside of the city centre with strong transport links into the centre, including the Millfield metro link which leads to Pallion in one direction and Sunderland city centre in the other.

One of two branches of the University of Sunderland are within this ward and the University's library and mosque are open to the wider public and are well used by the local community.

The ward is represented at the Barnes, Pallion and Millfield Residents Association and the Thornholme Residents Association.

The proposal here largely reflects the existing Millfield Ward, except it takes in more of the Pallion community which is already split between the present Pallion and Millfield Wards.

At the heart of the ward, a series of pocket parks provide leisure spaces for exercise and dog walking.

The ward is catered for by shopping districts on Chester Road, which acts as its southern border, Pallion Road (which is the western boundary with the new Pallion and Ford Estate Ward) and Hylton Road, which is the main 'spine' of the ward, with shops, businesses and churches. An Aldi serves the wider community from this location, as does the city's main mosque.

Most of the streets within Millfield lead to/from this road and the community is very much built around it.

Sunderland Royal Hospital is within the ward and there are strong local transport links to it both within the ward and across the city.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The northern boundary of the ward is the River Wear. The western boundary is shared with Pallion and Ford Estate and is Pallion Road and, subsequently, the boundary of the Bishopwearmouth Cemetery.

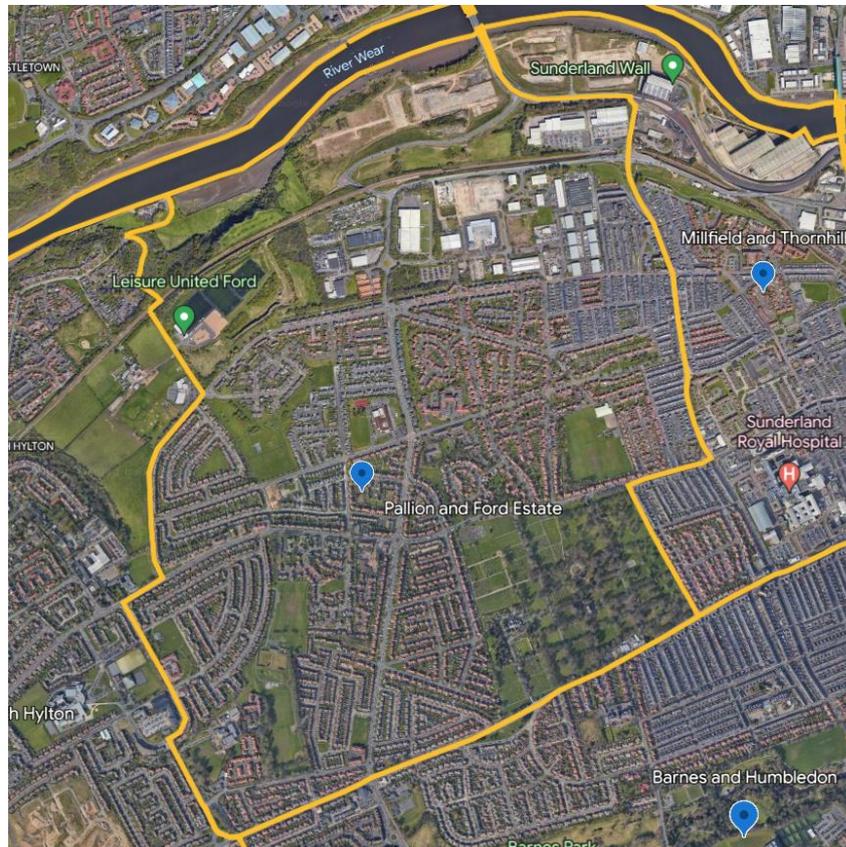
The southern boundary is Chester Road, leading onto the A690 and then maintaining the existing border on Thornholme Road that is currently in place between St Michael's and Millfield. The use of the A690 instead of the old mineral line as the boundary between Barnes and Millfield is clearer and more coherent.

The eastern boundary is the A123, the A183 and the A1231 which separates the ward from the city centre.

Pallion and Ford Estate

Projected number of electors: 9,237

Closest existing ward: Pallion



Effective and convenient governance

The ward measures 2km north to south; 1.8km west to east.

The inclusion of Ford Estate in the name rightly reflects that the western half of this ward is not Pallion but an entirely separate community with its own identity: this is also true of the current Pallion Ward.

Community interests and identities

The Pallion and Ford Estate ward is broadly as before, with minor modifications.

The ward has a shopping terrace on Pallion Road, which acts as its eastern border. This provides local employment and shopping opportunities for residents of the ward.

The eastern part of the ward reflects the Next Door community for this area – referred to on there as East Pennywell, but better known as Ford Estate – which reflects how local people communicate.

Pallion industrial estate features a range of factories whilst Pallion Retail Park sits along the riverside, providing shopping and employment opportunities. The new Pallion Household Waste and Recycling Centre is within the ward.

Blackie Park provides leisure space for dog walking and exercise and is well used by residents within this area. It is most commonly used by those within this proposed ward, as neighbouring wards are well catered for by other more local parks (e.g. Barnes Park).

Barnes, Pallion and Millfield Residents Association operates within this ward, but this only serves to highlight the similarities between Millfield and Pallion and the distinction between these two with Barnes, as no Barnes residents ever attend and the issues raised are separate to those that concern the Barnes community.

Local bus routes provide easy access around the ward, but it is also possible to walk around as it is a small, largely residential ward. A metro station named Pallion serves residents of the ward heading into neighbouring Millfield, to the city centre, and into Newcastle.

All of Ford Estate and Hylton Lane are brought into a single ward.

Fordfield Road runs from the ward's western boundary to its eastern boundary, giving greater credence to the inclusion of Ford Estate in the ward name (and highlighting that this is not just a Pallion Ward, but that Ford makes up a substantial part of the community too).

Easily identifiable boundaries

The ward's northern boundary is the River Wear.

To the east, it maintains part of the current Pallion/St Anne's boundary leading from the river but then follows St Luke's Road, Portsmouth Road and Pennywell Road to the A183 (Chester Road) where it joins its southern boundary.

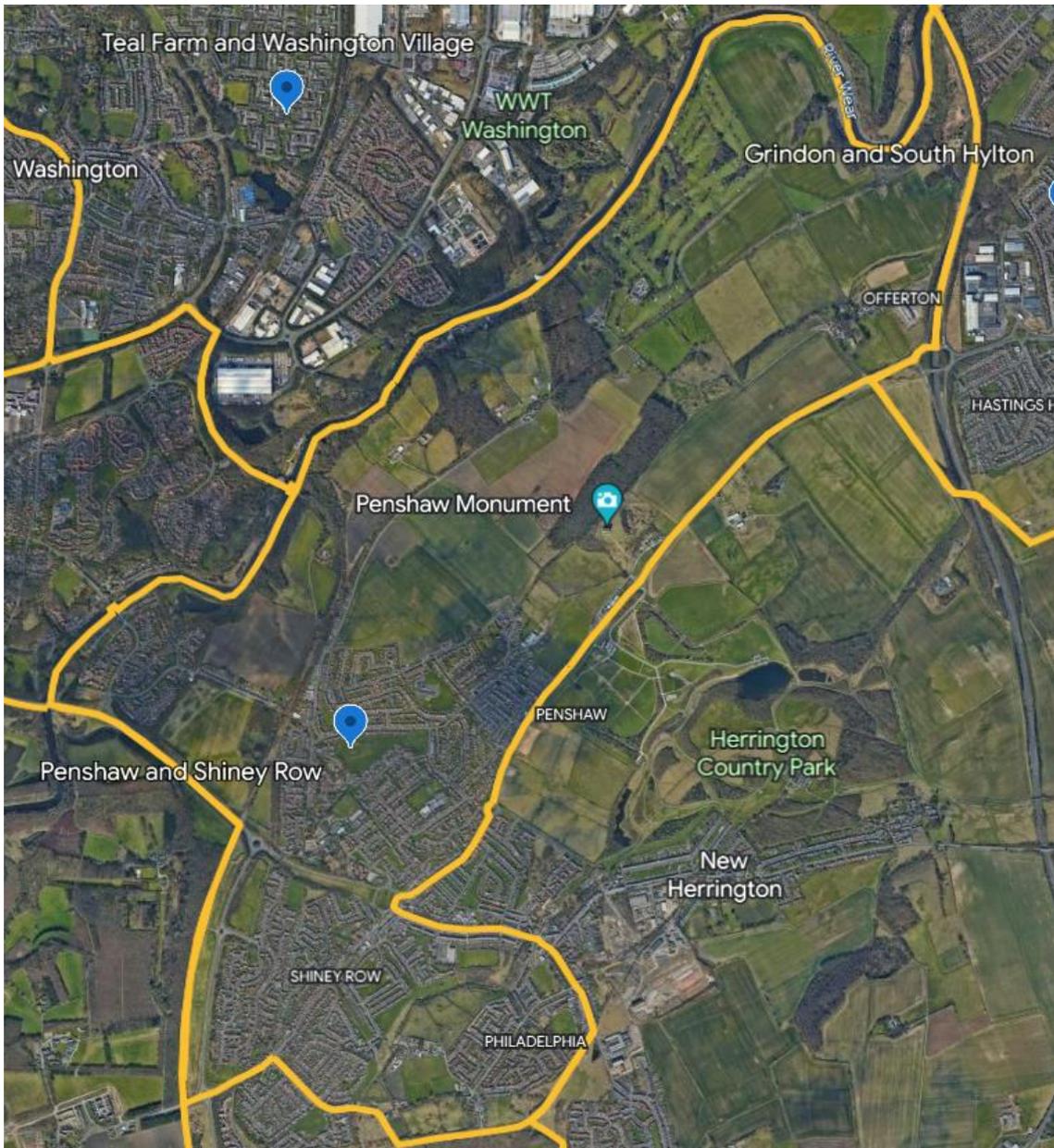
The southern boundary remains Chester Road. This is not just a strong boundary because it is a notable road, but because the Bishopwearmouth Cemetery puts substantial distance between the houses within the ward and those over the boundary within the Barnes Ward.

The eastern boundary runs up the boundary wall of the cemetery, down Hylton Road to Pallion Road and follows Pallion Road to the A1231.

Penshaw and Shiney Row

Projected number of electors: 9,649

Closest existing ward: Shiney Row



Effective and convenient governance

The ward is 4.6km from north to south and 2.8km west to east.

The inclusion of Penshaw in the name reflects that Penshaw monument – the most distinctive local attraction in the entire Coalfields – is in the ward and that the W01

polling district, an extension of Penshaw with a DH postcode, is in the ward, rather than in a Washington ward, where it is currently incongruously placed.

As with other Coalfields wards, the ward is geographically large because of the amount of space that is farming land, but the actual residential area is small and compact. In this case, almost half of the land mass is farming land, unoccupied by residents.

Community interests and identities

The ward consists of three main areas: Penshaw, Shiney Row and Philadelphia. Offerton and Cox Green, very small farming communities on the outskirts of Penshaw, are also within the ward.

These are joined together by a strong local bus network and local taxi services, which are numerous in the area.

The inclusion of Penshaw monument – a local landmark which is associated with Penshaw across the city – gives the area its sense of local identity.

There are Co-op supermarkets in both Shiney Row and Penshaw. There is a shopping parade on Chester Road at the centre of the ward which is well used by the local community rather than travelling to Houghton centre or the Galleries.

In leisure terms, the Philadelphia Cricket and Community Club and Wearside golf club provide sporting opportunities, whilst Shiney Row Methodist Church, Shiney Row Community Centre, SHARP (a citizens advice style service) all provide community and socialising spaces.

Mount Pleasant lake and the Penshaw monument hill attract walkers and dog walkers.

Local schools in the ward include Our Lady Queen of Peace, Barnwell Academy and New Penshaw Academy, all of which serve the local community.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The western boundary is the River Wear and the local authority boundary. The northern boundary is also the River Wear – leading to the A19 which provides the eastern boundary to the ward. This follows Chester Road for the full length of Herrington Country Park before following the A182 and Coaley Lane, and then the Lumley Park/Moors Burn to the local authority border to the west.

Redhill and Marley Pots

Projected number of electors: 8,234

Closest existing ward: Redhill



Effective and convenient governance

The ward is 2.5km in width and 1.2km from north to south.

The name of the ward retains a reference Redhill (as it is at present) which neatly captures the Redhouse and Downhill communities, but also includes Marley Pots, to reflect the fact that all of Marley Pots is now contained within this ward and to explain – by inclusion within the name – the end point of the ward.

Community interests and identities

This is a largely residential area that broadly reflects the current Redhill Ward.

It is served by the Bunny Hill Centre which, among other things, contains a local medical practice among other social services.

The Marley Park Community Fire Station is within the ward and helps to strengthen the identity of the

Redhouse is served by pockets of convenience stores and a Post Office. Each area has its own shopping parade, but there is no major site of economic activity within the ward.

The Last Orders pub is at the heart of Redhouse and Redhouse Community Centre serves the area.

Buses are frequently and regular and run throughout these estates, connecting them to the rest of the city.

Redhill and Marley Potts were both constructed at the same time after the war, designed to be integrated communities from the outset.

The ward is served by two mains secondary schools; Red House Academy and Harry Watts Academy, and one primary school being Northern Saints Primary School.

St Cuthbert's Church is one of the few churches and is situated 1.01km from the western boundary and 1.52km from the eastern boundary showing that it is roughly central to the ward and can be used for east access ward surgeries for councillors and residents to travel to.

The community here is primarily inward facing due to the boundaries we have identified, large industrial estates, fields or main roads can be seen on the map and the road construction is designed to lead people to central shopping parades.

Shopping parades can be found at Rochdale Way, Rawmarsh Road and Redmond Road are all evenly spread out and contain a handful of shops serving the local community.

The Leisure United Downhill centre is located at the north most point of the ward and services the area as a central sport facility

Easily identifiable boundaries

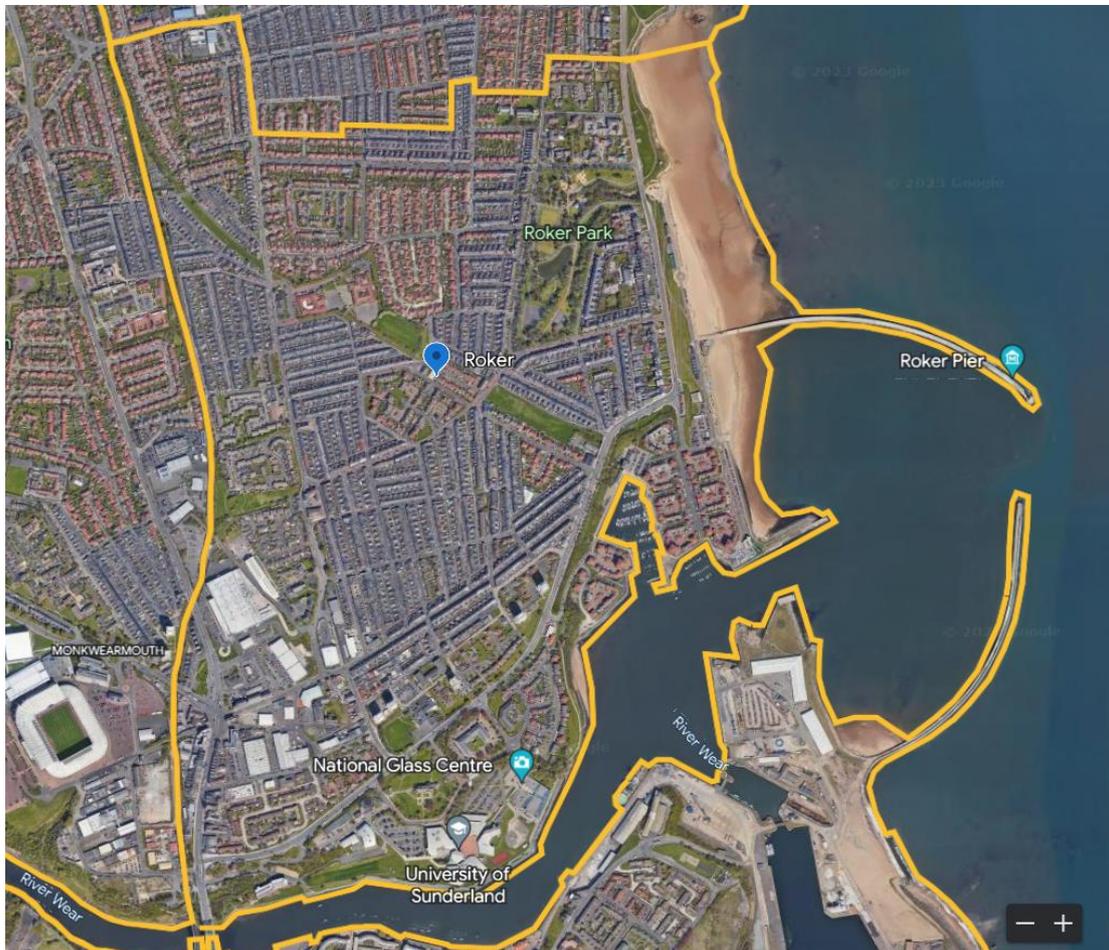
This ward is broadly the same as the existing Redhill Ward but it expands to the east to take in all of Marley Pots (currently split with Southwick Ward) and loses Town End Farm to the west of the current ward to the new Castletown Ward, for reasons explained in the Castletown section.

The northern border is the local authority boundary. The southern border is a clear, distinctive main road between Downhill, Redhouse and Marley Pots and Southwick. The western border is where Town End Farm ends and Downhill begins, separating two communities at the natural beginning and end point, representing an improvement on the current boundary which splits a community in a way that is unreasonable. To the east, the border takes in all of Marley Pots.

Roker

Projected number of electors: 8,420

Closest existing ward: St Peter's



Effective and convenient governance

The ward is 2km from its most northern point to the river and 1.4km from west to east.

It largely reflects the current St Peter's Ward, but we have renamed it Roker because (as reflected below) the majority of community assets reflect this name.

Community interests and identities

The community here is clearly defined as one of the city's two principal sea front communities: Roker and Seaburn.

Roker Retail Park sits on the western boundary and is a popular site for shopping among local residents. It contains a Tesco superstore which is one of two principal

supermarkets north of the river, but east of the metro line. Roker Retail Park also serves to distinguish the beginning/end point between Roker and Southwick.

Roker Avenue and Lower Dundas Street both have small, localised shopping parades that support the local community.

The ward features a range of hireable community spaces which include the Tesco Community Room, Roker United Reform Church, Redby Community Centre, St Andrew's Church, New Springs City Church and St Peter's Church and Roker Methodist Church.

Roker Park and the Roker sea front provide distinguishing leisure spaces for residents and are popular with people across the city. The sea front has a number of popular bars and restaurants. The inclusion of Roker in the names of these assets highlights the identity that is most prevalent within the area.

The ward is served by three primary schools: Redby Academy, St Benet's RC Primary School and Dame Dorothy Primary School.

Roker Retail Park with fast-food takeaways, supermarkets and convenience stores. Used by the community but also marks the end of Southwick and the beginning of Roker.

Roker Marina and Roker beach act as the eastern boundary. Roker Pier serves as a standout local landmark which gives a stronger sense of identity to the ward (and stronger justification for the ward name).

Strong local transport links are in operation: the metro serves the ward from two stations into the city centre, the south of Sunderland and into Tyneside. Regular bus services also serve the ward – northwards into Roker and Southwick and southwards into the city centre and south Sunderland.

SCAG operates as the main youth provider within the ward, operating out of Redby Community Centre.

The ward also includes some of Fulwell which is justifiable on a number of grounds.

The existing ward boundary already included some of Fulwell – but the ward boundary proposed by us is tidier and more coherent.

Residents in the part of Fulwell within our Roker Ward are most likely to utilise Tesco within the Roker area (whereas people within Seaburn are more likely to use Morrisons in Seaburn). Equally, the Fulwell area contained within the Roker Ward shares an SR6 postcode with Roker, rather than the SR5 postcode that much of the rest of Fulwell has.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The sea (to the east) and the River Wear (to the south) provide natural boundaries to the proposed Roker Ward. To the west, the present warding arrangement sees the current Southwick Ward cut across Newcastle Road to take in parts of the

community to the east of this boundary in a way that is not natural or coherent. We have resolved this issue by using the metro line consistently from the river to the local authority boundary in the north (i.e. the northern border of the proposed Seaburn Ward). The Roker Ward's northern boundary represents an improvement on jagged looking dividing line that currently exists between Fulwell and St Peter's.

Seaburn

Projected number of electors: 8,148

Closest existing ward: Fulwell



Effective and convenient governance

The ward is 1.8km from north to south and 2.3km from west to east.

The name of this ward reflects the fact that, presently and in our proposed wards, the Fulwell area is split across three wards. At present, there are parts of Fulwell in the Fulwell, Southwick and St Peter's Wards. Under our proposals, Fulwell remains split between the three successor wards: Seaburn, Roker, and Southwick and Fulwell Mill. This is unavoidable because of the size and shape of Fulwell.

Community interests and identities

The Seaburn Ward predominantly focuses on the residential areas including Seaburn, Seaburn Dene and South Bents. Small parts of what was traditionally Fulwell remain in the proposed Ward named Seaburn.

The ward includes one primary school, a junior school, an infant academy and a secondary academy.

Also prevalent is a popular and busy shopping street (Sea Road) and a well established daytime and night time leisure offer on the Seaburn sea front, which is now the second major Sunderland night time economy venue.

The beach is popular with residents across the region (especially in the summer months), but it – with the sea front promenade – is also popular with local dog walkers.

The Fulwell Library serves as a social space for the community, but is also well used by residents of the surrounding wards too. The Fulwell Community Association on Chapman Street provides community space and the Monkwearmouth Academy youth provision. Fulwell Methodist Church also provides community space to the local community.

One of the biggest community allotments within the city is sited on Shields Road in the proposed new ward.

The metro provides travel to the proposed Roker Ward and into the centre of Sunderland, as well as into Tyneside and to Newcastle Airport. Local bus services run throughout the ward and link Seaburn Dene to the city centre and beyond.

Morrisons at the north of the ward serves as the primary shopping facility for residents in this area – and a natural community boundary can be determined towards the south of the ward by focusing on who shops at Morrisons and who shops at Roker Tesco. This is a particularly stark contrast since the closure of the Fulwell Sainsbury's which was previously somewhere between the two and close to the existing border between the present Fulwell and St Peter's Wards.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The northern boundary of this ward is the local authority boundary with South Tyneside and the eastern boundary of it is the sea.⁴

The eastern boundary of the ward – between this ward and the new Southwick and Fulwell Mill ward – is the Tyne and Wear metro line. This is an improvement on the current boundary (Newcastle Road) because the metro line is a natural, below ground level boundary in any event – but it has the effect of creating, within the current Fulwell Ward, the E04 polling district which is cut off from the rest of the ward and which has a closer community and geographic connection to the part of Fulwell in the current Southwick Ward, with which it shares the SR5 postcode.

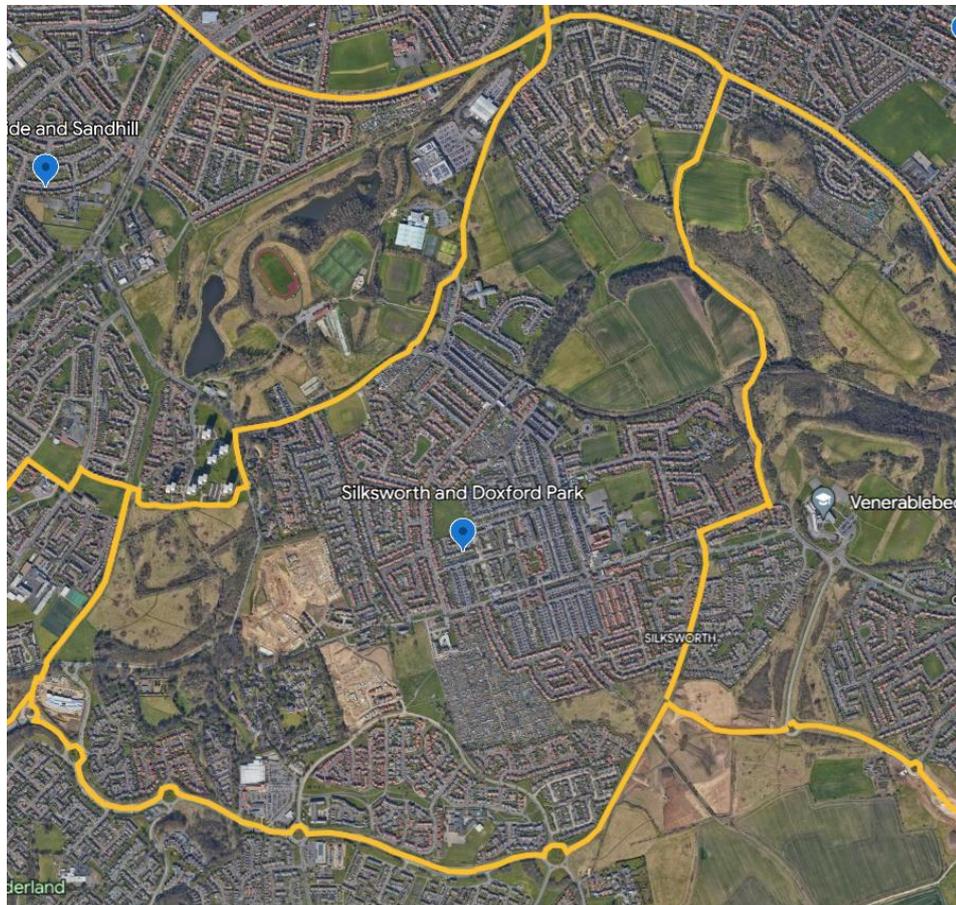
⁴ We note here that we have attempted to replicate, through freehand drawing software, the exactness of the border between the ward and the sea. We have done this as accurately as possible, but the Commission should note that the exact line placement of the boundary as it exists supersedes our attempt to reproduce it here. The mismatch between our drawing and the actual border has no impact upon elector numbers.

The southern boundary with the proposed new Roker Ward follows a series of clearly distinguished roads from west to east, beginning at the Seaburn metro station and progressing towards the coast. This partly reflects the existing boundary between the current Fulwell and St Peter's Wards, but is more standardised and tidier than at present.

Silksworth and Doxford Park

Projected number of electors: 9,253

Closest existing ward: Silksworth



Effective and convenient governance

The ward is 2.7km from north to south and 1.9km from west to east.

Silksworth is a historic village and as such has been built from the centre outwards, this can be seen in the layout of the community: starting at the Silksworth Recreation Park that sits at the centre of the proposed ward.

The New Silksworth Methodist Church, St Matthews Church and Silksworth Sports Complex are spread out across the ward and offer convenient access for Council ward surgeries for all residents, with the New Silksworth Methodist Church being the most centrally placed and within walking distance of all parts of the community.

Community interests and identities

This ward combines the historic Silksworth community with the neighbouring Doxford Park.

The ward features the Morrison's supermarket and Doxford Park shopping centre which is routinely used by residents of Silksworth and Doxford. It is closer to many residents' houses than the Sainsbury's supermarket near to Tunstall.

A collection of smaller parks provide leisure space for residents and community centres are variously located within the ward, providing a good amount of community space.

The Silksworth village is maintained as a whole.

Presently, parts of Doxford Park that fall within this proposed ward are included in Northumbria Police's A3 beat area, along with Silksworth. This sets Doxford Park apart from other areas and, in Council terms, means that Doxford councillors are somewhat unusually expected to attend police meetings alongside Silksworth and neighbouring ward councillors. By including Doxford Park and Silksworth in a single ward, it resolves the contradiction that exists between policing boundaries and other local authority imposed boundaries, and means that the ward could be policed as a single entitle with a single set of councillors to cooperate with the police.

There are walkways within this ward that bind it together as a coherent community, whereas the current Doxford Ward leaves Doxford Park and Mill Hill split from the rest of the community. The houses at the edges of the ward have paths and cycleways that allow residents to easy community to the centre. There are strong transport links throughout the ward and bus services which allow residents to easily navigate Silksworth and Doxford and go beyond into the city centre and other parts of the city, such as the hospital.

Silksworth has, on Blind Lane, a small shopping parade and a series of smaller shops that give a sense of local community identity.

Silksworth's most southern streets, such as Cambridge Road, back onto Doxford Park – there is very little between them – and no streets are divided by the proposed borders; it is a natural continuation of housing development.

New Silksworth Medical Practice serves the Doxford Park area whilst St Matthew's Church also serves both communities.

The ward is also well served by local bus services which connect residents throughout the ward, as well as providing routes into Country Durham, Sunderland, and Newcastle.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The ward uses identifiable roads to mark out its boundaries. To the north Leechmere Road continues to be used as a boundary, as it is at present between Silksworth and St Michael's (current names). The Tunstall Hope Road provides the eastern boundary and sensitively separates parts of the current Silksworth Ward (namely the area around Myrella Crescent) from Silksworth, with which it has nothing in common.

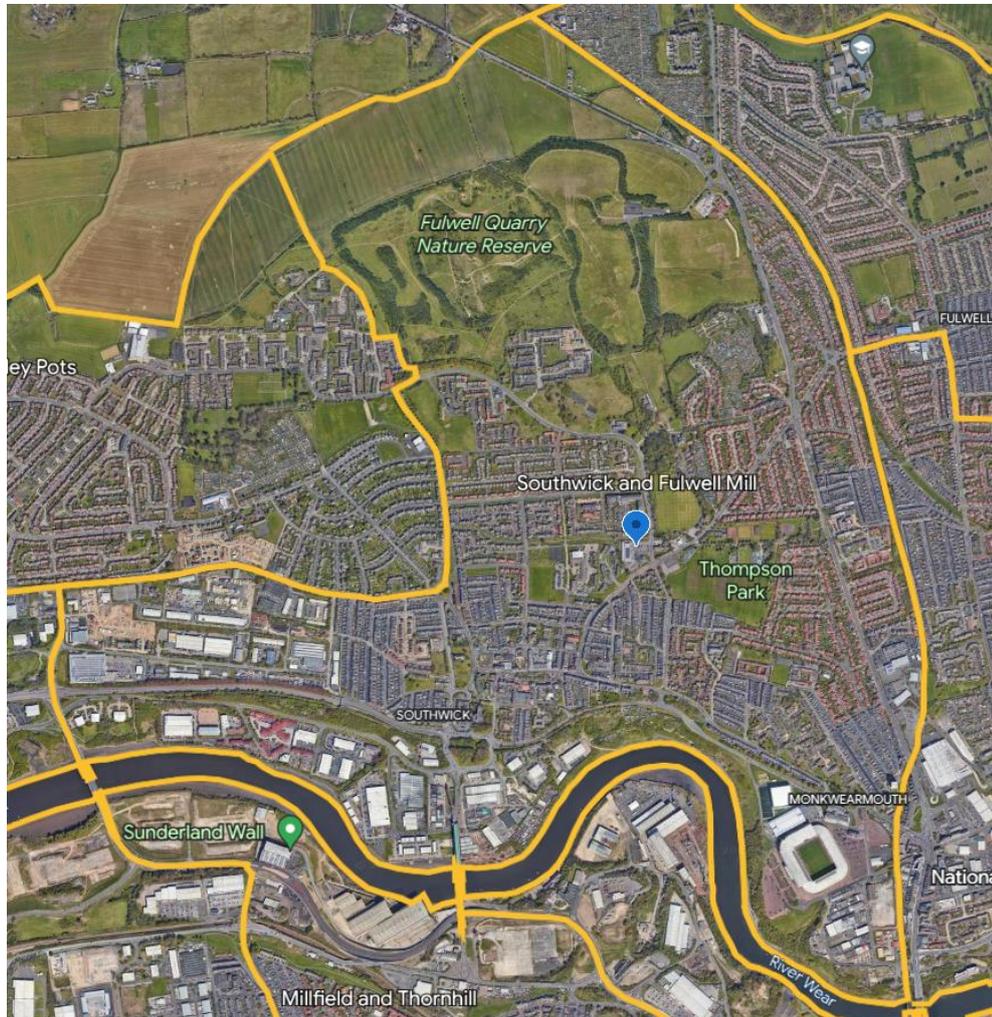
The western border of the ward, Silksworth Lane, features the new Silksworth pit wheel visitor display which also clearly marks out the beginning of the Silksworth community. The rest of the western border is a strategic cycle way which leads to Doxford Park Road.

The southern border, Doxford Park Road, marks the clear end of point of Doxford Park but is also not traversable by foot, meaning that there is little indication that there is a natural community that is easily accessible to residents. On the other hand, though, Silksworth (e.g. Cambridge Street) backs onto Doxford Park and there is barely any distinction between the two.

Southwick and Fulwell Mill

Projected number of electors: 8,870

Closest existing ward: Southwick



Effective and convenient governance

The ward is 2.8km west to east and 2.6km north to south.

The naming of the ward reflects the fact that the Southwick community is contained within it, but that the east of Fulwell – the houses built surrounding and facing Fulwell Mill – are also in the ward. Some of this community is in the existing Southwick Ward, but in our proposals we have standardised the boundary between Southwick and the wards to its east using the metro line which runs the length of north Sunderland.

Community interests and identities

The Fulwell community is currently split unevenly between the Southwick, St Peter's and Fulwell Wards, with the SR5 postcode area of Fulwell (surrounding the well-known Fulwell Mill) being largely – though not fully – in the Southwick Ward. This proposal unites all of the SR5 part of Fulwell within one ward and is specific in stating that this community is Fulwell Mill.

Notably the electors of the E04 polling district (the SR5 area of Fulwell within the current Fulwell Ward) have to cross the boundary into Southwick Ward for use of a polling station (formerly the Grange pub; latterly the Fulwell Mill tea rooms) because there are no community assets within this polling district. It therefore makes for better community cohesion to unit this stretch of Fulwell with the remainder of the Fulwell Mill community.

The Quarry runs the length of the northern ward boundary is a popular walk route and nature spot that is popular with residents. Residents in the Fulwell area are more likely to use this as a recreational/exercise space than the beach or Fulwell park, as others who live further into Fulwell would.

The Southwick Industrial estate marks the point at which Castletown and Southwick are separated and the business units on the industrial estate provide jobs and services to the Southwick community.

Southwick Green has a series of shops and a GP practice, alongside Southwick Police Station, which are well used by the local community and provide a strong sense of community identity. The Green also serves as a local transport hub because it is a central area from which to get a number of bus services to other parts of the ward and throughout the rest of the city.

Carnival House runs a lot of events, groups and classes within the Southwick Community.

Thompson Park is a popular place for residents of both Southwick and the west of Fulwell to socialise, exercise and enjoy leisure time. Nearby, the Stadium of Light and the Aquatics Centre provide sporting and exercise opportunities to the ward, but these are also popular venues with residents across the city and the region.

This community will soon be linked to the city centre by a new footbridge and new housing and employment opportunities will emerge as the Council's plan for the Sheepholds takes shape.⁵

⁵ Read more about the Council's plans for an urban residential neighbourhood:
https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/media/19986/Housing-Development-Summit-Sheepfolds-site/pdf/Housing_Development_Summit_-_Sheepfolds_site.pdf?m=636523006301930000

Easily identifiable boundaries

The northern boundary is the local authority's boundary with South Tyneside. The eastern boundary represents a major improvement on the 'zig zag' approach currently in place: instead, we have used the metro line which runs from north to south and accurately separates Southwick and Fulwell Mill from Seaburn and, south of that, Roker.

The southern ward boundary is the River Wear.

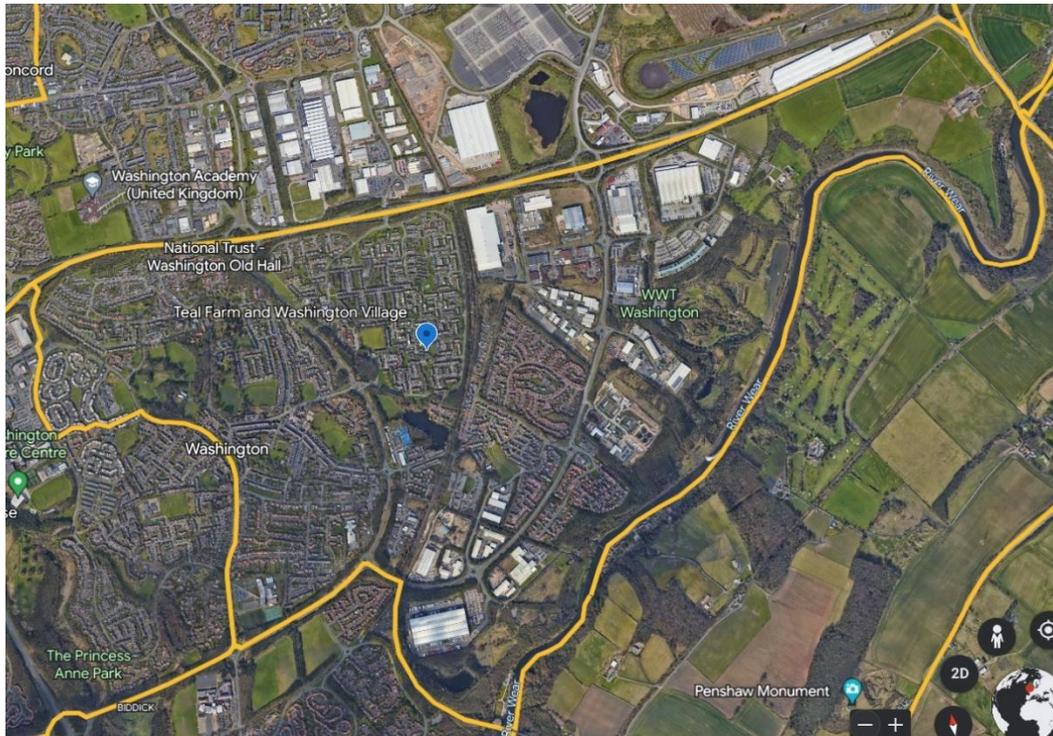
To the east, the boundary is the end point of the Marley Pots community/start of the Fulwell Quarry site. This runs southwards to North Hylton Road where the boundary then travels eastwards to the A1231 where Southwick Industrial Estate marks the separate of Southwick and Castletown.

What we have described here as the Fulwell Mill part of this ward is known on the Next Door neighbourhood site as West Fulwell – and it is aligned with the rest of the ward as we have proposed, rather than with the Seaburn community which is distinct from it because of the metro line.

Teal Farm and Washington Village

Number of electors: 8,348

Closest existing ward: Washington East



Effective and convenient governance

The ward is 4.4km in width and 2.3km from north to south.

The ward name reflects the two most prominent villages within the ward (including the most historic).

Community interests and identities

Washington is a town within the local authority area that has its own identity, transport links, central shopping area and local industry (most notably Nissan). It has an NE postcode and borders the Gateshead and South Tyneside local authorities which means that – unlike in Sunderland – some people have a dual identity (drawing upon both the local Wearside and Tyneside cultures) which is unique to Washington. It is therefore right that Washington is separated from the rest of Sunderland and, as such, we have placed the W01 polling district, which is not in any way discernibly part of Washington (as evidenced by its DH postcode), into the Coalfields.

Washington is separated into distinctive villages and our approach has been to divide it into five wards at the borders of these villages – uniting communities that are currently divided by the boundaries presently in place.

The ward has local shopping centres in each village and a small, popular Sainsbury's store in Teal Farm.

The community is served by Wessington Primary School, John F Kennedy Primary School, St Joseph's Primary School and Barmston Village Primary School.

A local medical practice which serves residents from across the area is located in Barmston and there are pubs and restaurants in Teal Farm, Columbia and Washington Village.

The area is well connected by local bus routes, but it is also easy to walk and cycle around the area.

The Washington Village is the site of the Old Town Hall which is of historic interest and therefore reflected in the ward name.

Resident Associations operating in the area include the Teal Farm and Barmston Residents Association.

Easily identifiable boundaries

This ward's eastern boundary is the River Wear. It represents an improvement on the current Washington East Ward, which it replaces, as it does not cross the river to take in an area with a DH postcode and where residents do not consider their area to be Washington.

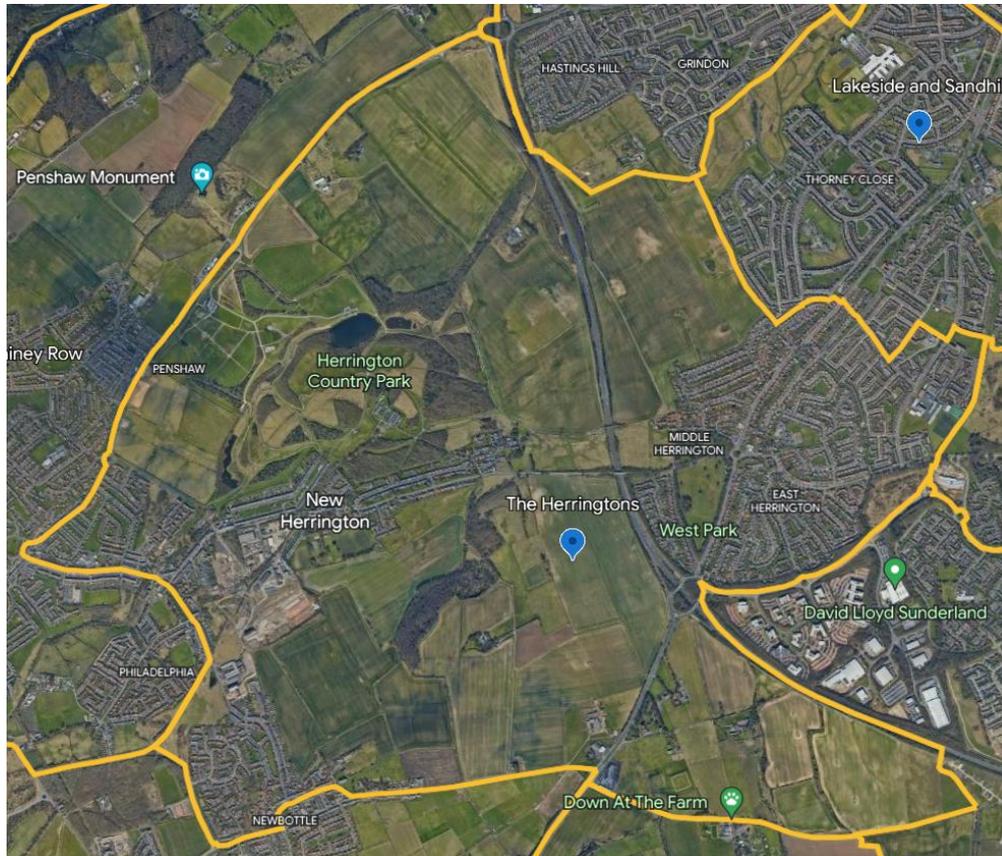
It uses the A19 as its eastern boundary and the A1231 as its northern boundary.

The western boundary of the ward follows Biddick Lane, the A195, Pattinson Road and then footpath which separates Teal Farm from Fatfield back to the River Wear.

The Herringtons

Projected number of electors: 8,162

Closest existing ward: St Chad's



Effective and convenient governance

We set out earlier in this document the need for at least one ward to cross the A19 to increase the level of representation within the Coalfields. This represents the most logical way of crossing the A19 as there are various walkways and roads, such as Herrington Road which connects all of Herrington together and Foxcover Lane, which provide routes from one part of Herrington to another without

Whilst it appears geographically large (4.5km from east to west and 3.3km from north to south), this is principally because of the farmland to the south and the Herrington Country Park to the north. The residential community spans Herrington Road which runs east to west through the middle of this proposed ward and, whilst it is not visually obvious, the community is consistent from west to east (a point made by the Friends of Herrington Village).

Community interests and identities

The Herringtons Ward we have proposed unites East and Middle Herrington, on the east of the A19, with New Herrington, Herrington Grange and Herrington View developments, as well as Herrington Hill. Herrington Country Park (which has no residential buildings in it) occupies the majority of the northern most part of the ward.

This ward united an historic, recognised community within Sunderland as demonstrated by the marketing of properties in this area by local estate agents.⁶

We consider this to be both the most logical, and least disruptive, means of addressing the under-representation with the Coalfields. The historic and well-known Herrington community being united within one ward acts as a 'bridge' between South Sunderland and the Coalfields: it is not an artificial community forged out of necessity, but one which already has roads and footpaths uniting it, despite the A19 division (see Foxcover Lane and Herrington Road as examples).

Residents in this area frequently use Herrington Country Park for exercise and dog walking.

There is a residents group set up specifically for the Herringtons (the Friends of Herrington) and the issues within it and a Herrington Village Residents Association that also crosses the border of the current St Chad's and Shiney Row Wards for matters related to the Herringtons. The latter group hosts events for the Herringtons which are to the exclusion – in marketing terms – of Shiney Row and the Lakeside Village aspects of the Shiney Row and St Chad's Wards (as they current exist). However, these events – which have been successful – do emphasise the sense of natural community within the proposed ward.

Local amenities include East Herrington Primary and Herrington Medical Centre.

The Board Inn, the Stackyard and the Stables pubs are popular with residents of Herrington and there is a walk route between all three which is commonly used by those who visit all three venues as part of a pub crawl.

Easily identifiable boundaries

The ward's northern boundary follows Foxcover Lane under the A19 and into East Herrington. This then crosses the A690 and through Farrington as described in the Lakeside and Sandhill Ward proposal.

The eastern boundary then follows a cycle lane from Farrington down to the A19 and, when meeting the A19, travels south to meet Stoneygate Lane, which acts as the southern boundary (inclusive of all of Herrington Hill). The jagged approach from

⁶ See for example the Peter Heron webpage 'The Herringtons Area and Property Guide' (<https://www.peterheron.co.uk/buy/area-guides/the-herringtons/>) and the Paul Airey Estate Agents webpage 'The Herringtons' (<https://www.paulairey.co.uk/about/area-guide/the-herringtons/>)

the A19 onto Stoneygate lane is reflective of the Burdon Parish boundary, which we were conscious not to cross in designing this ward.

The western boundary then follows the A182 and A1823 back to the A19.

APPENDIX A: ENDORSEMENTS

These proposals were prepared following consultation with the following groups and, subsequently, received their endorsement:

Barnes Residents Association endorses the proposals for the new Barnes and Humbledon Ward

- “These proposals make sense. The remainder of the Broadway shopping centre is included within the ward at one end and, at the other, Ranson Street and Dunelm are no longer cut in half by the boundary. Using the mineral line as a boundary was a bad idea because nobody knows it is there. The proposal to use Durham Road is more logical. Our group receives lots of complaints about Mayfair garage – it is not in the current ward but it is in this new ward, which is beneficial because the garage is in Millfield but the issues it causes impact Barnes residents. Finally it makes total sense to include the historic Barnes pub – known as such for generations – in the Barnes and Humbledon Ward, given people think of it (and the Barnes gyratory where it is located) when they hear ‘Barnes’.” – Kevin Leonard, Chair of Barnes Residents Association

Friends of the Sea Front endorses the proposals for the Seaburn, Roker, and Southwick and Fulwell Mill proposals

- “The Friends of the Sea Front strongly endorse the proposals to rename the sea front wards Seaburn and Roker, rather than the more ambiguous Fulwell (which is not within a single ward in any case) and St Peter’s (which is not a specific geography). We strongly endorse the proposals to create a Southwick and Fulwell Mill ward which acknowledges that East Fulwell is separate in terms of housing type, sense of community and appearance to West Fulwell. Using the metro line as a divider is a much more easily understood boundary than that which currently is in place.” – Michael Hartnack, Chairman of FSF

Coalfields Residents – a residents group – has endorsed the proposals for the Coalfields

- “These proposals make sense and reflect how people in the town of Houghton Le Spring socialise, travel, interact and communicate. The community names in the ward titles is a better reflection of who lives in these wards than at present. Hetton Ward does not include all of Hetton. Houghton does not include all of Houghton centre. Copt Hill includes areas which are not Copt Hill. These problems are overcome with these new names. The dividing line

drawn up through the middle of Hetton is neat and accurately reflects the divide in the east and west of the town. We are grateful that the Conservatives took our advice and renamed their proposed 'Hetton Lyons' Ward the 'Hetton Downs' Ward, as we requested." – Craig Morrison, Chair of Coalfields Residents

Washington South Residents Association endorses the full proposal for the five Washington ward proposals

- "All of the Washington proposals make sense. The use of main roads rather than obscure back lanes, the inclusion of full villages into wards rather than splitting them up, and the naming of wards after places instead of compass points are major improvements on the current situation. We strongly support removing the DH postcode area from Washington, as this is a part of Houghton, and these arrangements leave Washington with five wards that are purely Washington. The creation of a town centre ward is appreciated by residents. We are pleased that the replacement for Washington South Ward is a genuine south of Washington ward which reflects our membership, rather than the current ward geography which is actually a west of Washington ward called South." – Peter Noble, Chairman

Friends of Herrington Village have collectively endorsed the proposal for The Herringtons Ward

- "The proposal for a Herrington Ward reflects the feelings of Herrington residents who think that the village should be together as a single entity on the Council. Herrington is a continuous community with roads linking across the A19 at various points to bind us together. As Herrington continues to expand with the new Herrington Grange and Herrington View developments, it is right that there is a single ward on the Council to give full representation to the Herringtons." – Friends of Herrington Village

Blackfell Community Hub endorsed our proposals for Washington without providing a statement.

APPENDIX B: OVERVIEW MAP

