

Sunderland

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Comment text:

Dear Sirs,

Re: Sunderland Boundary Review

I am a surveyor and urban planner, with a strong understanding of Sunderland's communities. I am currently writing multiple studies of Sunderland's development as a city.

I oppose these latest proposals from the Commission.

Generally, I support the proposals in respect of the north of the river and do agree that Washington cannot have compass point names going forward, given that what was previously classed as 'East' for example was due to become 'South'. This would have been confusing to residents and the proposed names are a much better alternative.

Firstly, with regard to the St Chad's Ward, I note the Commission's request for specific feedback in relation to this. This has very little underpinning logic. There is no coherence to these communities. The distance from Humbledon Hill to East Herrington is substantial - but more so when taking into account the hilly nature of the walk from one end to the other. Councillors and residents alike would need to drive to be able to operate in this ward. Where, for example, would polling stations go? The community assets are very limited and nobody with any knowledge of the city would see this as a singular community that meets any of the Commission's tests for warding proposals. Had this been proposed by a

political party at the beginning of the consultation, I suspect the Commission would have rejected it. This, to me, seems like a poorly thought out presentation of what was left over and it is not good enough.

Having worked as a surveyor in the city for 8 years, I am baffled as to how the argument that the Herringtons are not a singular and distinctive community has taken hold. This is untrue. Estate agents in the city market the Herringtons as a distinct area and buyers ask explicitly about this; there is a mutual interest across the area which has both a historic identity, but - with the new Herrington View development - is also cemented as a single community by forthcoming changes.

Likewise, I am perplexed by the notion that Silksworth and Farringdon are so distinctive that they cannot share a ward boundary; to then suggest that Tunstall, which is a world apart from Silksworth in terms of everything from community identity to house price and style, is bizarre. The ostensible history of Silksworth is foregrounded in the report but then no acknowledgement is given, within that history, of the fact that Farringdon is an historic hamlet of Silksworth which only reinforces why they should be part of the same ward. Little consideration is given, for example, to the history of Ashbrooke (which is an official conservation zone) as the Commission splices this between 3 wards; likewise Tunstall is carved up; Humbledon split between two wards. The history argument cannot be applied to one corner of the city (especially since the Commission made no reference to this in its original criteria) at the expense of others' histories.

Overall, these proposals are poor, they neglect genuine community identities, proposed boundaries are bizarre, weak arguments are deployed, and the Commission itself appears to know already that the suggested St Chad's Ward is a nonsense.

Yours,

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Attached Documents:

None attached