

Mansfield, Simon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 March 2022 10:30
To: reviews
Subject: Wychavon ward boundary changes

Categories: Submissions, Simon

I agree wholeheartedly with the feedback provided to you by Little Comberton PC, namely:

Formal response to draft recommendations to Wychavon District Council's Ward Boundary changes: Little Comberton Parish Council

One of the three main considerations for the boundary review is ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity and interests.

We feel very strongly that what is being proposed does the complete opposite for Little Comberton. We are a Bredon Hill Village with very close links to the neighbouring villages of Great Comberton and Elmley Castle, but the Boundary Commission proposals will sever these links.

Currently we are part of a ward on the north flank of Bredon Hill on the edge of the Cotswolds AONB, experiencing similar challenges to neighbouring parishes in terms of planning and development pressures, traffic and transport issues, sensitive landscape considerations, flooding and land drainage management. The villages have been very closely linked both socially and historically for many decades; Elmley Castle First School is a focus for nursery and primary education, Little Comberton has been part of the Elmley Castle Parochial Church benefice for many years, the community village pub in Elmley Castle is actively supported by volunteers and shareholders from Little and Great Comberton, Elmley Castle Cricket Club has many members and players from the Combertons, children from the village attend the Elmley Beaver and Cub group, and there are two choirs largely drawn from the three parishes. In addition, the residents of the three villages have strong social connections with a shared sense of identity, this manifests itself in joint working on charity events and fundraising, supporting village initiatives and general good neighbourliness. This is evidenced by the Elmley, Bricklehampton & The Combertons Parish Notice Board on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ElmleyBrickleCombertons/>) and by The Link publication which promotes village events and initiatives from across the three parishes, see <https://www.little-comberton.com/thelinkmagazine>.

There is a longstanding history of supportive and collaborative working amongst the parish councils of Little and Great Comberton and Elmley Castle on a range of issues, from responding to contentious and significant planning applications on the edge of the AONB to addressing speeding traffic concerns, issues that have been generally supported by the ward councillor.

The Boundary Commission proposals will divide these parishes and will undermine the sense of identity. It will group us with other settlements that do not share the same issues and that we do not have the same connectiveness with. In the instances of Great and Little Comberton, these villages will now be on the edges of two different wards, which are dominated by far larger settlements well outside the Cotswolds AONB. There is a real danger that the sensitive AONB landscape issues that we have to deal with in the Combertons could be overlooked by ward councillors who will be largely focussing on the concerns of the far larger villages of Eckington and Fladbury, where new major development and river flooding issues are significant.

In paragraph 68 of the Boundary Commission report for Wychavon it is stated that 'We have received no specific evidence of any community links between Great and Little Comberton parishes, and therefore propose to place these parishes in different wards in order to accommodate good electoral equality for both Eckington and Fladbury. We would welcome further evidence as to the community identity of these areas in our consultation on these draft recommendations.' We hope the evidence that we have provided above will convince the Boundary Commission that Little Comberton should be in the same ward as Great Comberton and Elmley Castle. Little Comberton is a small Bredon Hill village with similar issues to its neighbouring villages, and has a very strong community identity based on these close connections.

Little Comberton Parish Council
4th March 2022

Regards, 
Great Comberton resident