

North West Leicestershire

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Organisation Name: (Parish or town councillor)

Comment text:

Related subject: Coleorton

See attached file

Attached Documents:

- lgbce-review-of-wards.docx

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11th November 2024

Dear Sir,

Re: The LGBCE Review of Ward Boundaries for NW Leicestershire District Council - Coleorton Parish

You state that when carrying out an electoral review the Commission has three main considerations:

1. Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
2. Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
3. Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

Combining part of Coleorton parish with Heather and Packington may achieve the first consideration, but it strongly fails in the other two. I strongly urge you to reconsider this warding arrangement with respect to Coleorton parish.

The A511 is a significant road that skims through the southern border of Coleorton parish; there are no electors that are resident there. Consequently, natural social association and public transport links are very weak to Heather and Packington. The significance of the A511, along with the industrialisation of Corkscrew Lane, which did act as a popular active transport route to Ashby, the likelihood of natural links to the rest of the proposed ward are going to be difficult.

The current separation of the Parish by two District wards is a detriment to the good governance of the area, as most people have no idea of the boundary and the impact it has upon communications between the various councillors. The ward boundary seems arbitrary; often the councillors do not understand the boundaries either.

If Coleorton parish is to continue being split, attaching it to Heather and Packington makes little sense beyond arithmetic. There is little shared history, nor regular associations. The road network does not allow easy communication from Coleorton to Heather. Proposals for distribution warehousing and offices that are under construction or at the planning stage will only accentuate the separation of Coleorton parish from those south of the A511 – what appears a rural connection due to the presence of fields may not be there by 2030.

In May 2024, boundary changes suggested at the NWLDC Annual meeting brought the Parish of Coleorton into one ward and aligned it with neighbouring parishes which have connected histories and current activities into a Worthington & Coleorton District Ward.

Coleorton Parish does have an irregular shape and the settlements within in it are dispersed and may appear unconnected, but the deep history of the parish does form many connections. The name Farm Town may suggest that it is a different area to the Coleorton Hall area, but this is not so, as it was in the service of the Hall so the connections are deep. The Grade II registered parkland garden created by the Hall, stretches between the B5324 (Rempstone Road) and Lower Moor Road, right across the A512 to the northern edge of Church Town. The primary school on the old Ashby Road, was built by the Beaumonts, as were the churches, St. Mary's and St John's. St Mary's is an active place of worship and St John's chapel is currently closed, but the graveyard is still active.

Historically, Coleorton has been part of Thringstone and Swannington, as well as Worthington. The development of many social connections within Coleorton are around Worthington and Swannington parishes.

The boundary solution to the District, provided in May, seems the most appropriate. This builds upon the natural interchange and socialisations. Even the geology suggests the as the east/west split suggested by NWLDC, rather than the horizontal bands suggested by the LGBCE

Coleorton, Worthington and Breedon have strong mining and quarrying histories which are connected – the drift between the Bug and Wink at Coleorton Wood, stretched to the Lount workings. Newbold Coleorton is in the Worthington Parish. The eastern wards have a more agricultural history and character to them.

Coleorton is part of the Flagstaff Church Community so the congregation will attend Worthington and Breedon services.

I recognise that the ward patterns suggested at May cause the Long Whatton & Diseworth parish to be split, but I think that they may be a better division here due to the distinction of two areas, as suggested by the two names, than the splitting of Coleorton.

Unfortunately, my intimate knowledge of Packington and Heather is not so extensive that I can provide a suggestion that is fitting, other than be guided to use the proposals in the May suggestions, along with the LGBCE suggestion of increasing the number of Ashby wards. The more southern parishes in the Heather area will probably have socialisations that make more sense.

I strongly urge you to make Coleorton Parish a united parish and keep it aligned with other parishes north of the A511.

Yours faithfully,

Siobhan Dillon

A councillor on Coleorton Parish Council