

## South Cambridgeshire District

### Personal Details:

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**Organisation Name:** Oakington and Westwick Parish Council

### Comment text:

I am writing on behalf of Oakington and Westwick Parish Council (O&W), as Chairman of that Council, to express our views that we should NOT be included in the proposed "Longstanton" ward, but maybe instead included in the "Girton" Ward, which is the other main current boundary to our Parish. We are only a small Parish and as such would not have a greatly significant effect on the electoral numbers of any ward. Our objections are mainly based on the fact that the Longstanton ward will inevitably have a great focus on the development of Northstowe, and we do not wish the interests of O&W to be swamped by those of Northstowe, our residents largely want to maintain an independence and separate existence to that town. In terms of the material considerations for ward definition: The proposal as it stands does NOT "reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links". There is no transport link from Oakington to the north west, except for a badly maintained cycle route. The result is that there have for at least 70 years been almost no community links with Longstanton, our links are mainly with Cottenham, Histon, Girton and Cambridge. This is unlikely to change in the future as there is still be no other direct link with Longstanton & Northstowe in the future plans. Under "Transport links", as mentioned, there are essentially no direct links from O&W to Longstanton and none planned. There is nothing envisaged in the Northstowe plans as they stand at present that would foster such a connection. The existence of the Oakington airfield since World War II has presented a very distinct barrier separating the region, and the building of Northstowe on that airfield is unlikely to change this position. Existing bus routes from O&W are to Girton and Cambridge, and only the Guided Bus provides links to Longstanton and beyond, but in nearly all cases the Guided Bus Stop is so far out of the villages as to be unpopular with most residents. Under "Community Groups" both Longstanton and O&W have separate Parish Councils with few common interests. It seems likely that as Northstowe gains bulk it will acquire its own Parish or Town Council, and as such time it seems likely that Parish boundary changes may happen to break the Northstowe area into three rather than two parishes. There are no residents of O&W in the area that would be likely to pass to Northstowe, partly as this area has been isolated due to it being part of the airfield, so there seems no justification to lump O&W with the rest of this area. Under Facilities, the proposed pattern of wards bears no relation at all to where local people go for shops, medical services, leisure facilities etc, largely due to lack of transport links as above. O&W residents shop in Cambridge, Bar Hill or Histon mainly, and use medical facilities in these locations or in Girton. The secondary school catchment area is Histon (IVC) and leisure facilities in use are generally either there or in Cambridge. The remainder of the proposed Longstanton Ward is, apart from use of Bar Hill and possibly Cambridge, totally different, and forms part of the Swavesey school catchment. We would strongly prefer to be in a ward that has the same affinities as ourselves. Under interests, there are very few areas in which O&W residents share interests with Longstanton and beyond. Only the history of the area in general seems to have a common foundation. Under identifiable parish or ward boundaries, there are few in the existing ward system and none likely to be generated by pending developments. Rivers flow through parishes rather than along boundaries, there are almost no contour delineations. Only the A14 provides any sort of recognisable edge to the parishes and wards in the immediate area. In terms of river flows, O&W is in a completely different river catchment area to that of Longstanton, and O&W shares catchment with Bar Hill, Girton, Histon and north-west Cambridge, and it is in those directions that we look for joint consideration of drainage and flooding issues. So to summarise, the current plans ignores all O&W current affinities and provides no replacements. It is likely to lead to Councillors having little knowledge of, or interest in, our circumstances and leave us with very little voice or support at the District Council. We ask that the proposal be adjusted to take all these points into consideration, and to better match the criteria for effective wards.

### Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded