

**From:** Jill Lovecy [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 27 March 2017 18:20  
**To:** reviews  
**Subject:** Objection to removal of Whitworth Art Gallery and Whitworth Park from Moss Side Ward, Manchester

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
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Dear Boundary Commissioners

I am writing to you on behalf of Claremont Primary School Governing Body. We wish to object in the strongest possible terms to the proposal to sever the historic ties between Moss Side Ward and the Whitworth Park and Whitworth Art Gallery.

There seems to be no rationale at all for this proposal. It involves no significant transfer of population to even out ward numbers. What it does is to remove from a deprived ward a world class cultural institution, which, from its origins, was intrinsically bound up with Moss Side and which is a source of great pride to our local community.

Our children and, through the children, their parents too take part in the Gallery's educational outreach activities and our cohorts of pupils most gifted in the creative arts are enrolled in specialist educational programmes that are run at the Gallery.

For the children and their parents - and for the children and parents of neighbouring Moss Side schools - that this treasure house belongs in Moss Side makes a huge difference.

Central to our mission as a school is encouraging our children and their families - most of whom are first generation immigrants and refugees - to have aspirations that will take them beyond the confines that beset their daily lives. The Gallery, in its park setting, is a brilliant icon for us, joining our families to a much wider world and providing a stepping stone for our children into the whole university precinct stretching north from the Gallery.

The history of the Gallery and its park is crucial here.

Whitworth's executors were both ambitious and quite practical as they developed their Gallery project. They aimed to entice the families of the surrounding area, and most especially their children, through the park into the educative experience of a gallery of fine arts and design. Their longer-term purpose was to promote the acculturation of these young people into the kind of knowledge of design and creative skills that would be increasingly needed by the city's burgeoning textile industries.

Maria Balshaw's appointment to the Gallery, and the very substantial Nat Lottery funding awarded to the Whitworth Gallery under her leadership, was crucially based around her project to revive the original rationale for the creation of this 'Gallery-in-a-park'.

In order to renew this primary purpose - and in Balshaw's words to re-create 'a gallery in a park' and 'a park in a gallery' - all the fencing was taken down, that separated park from Gallery. Then a whole westward re-alignment of the Gallery's building was undertaken. The creation of a western (Moss Side-facing) entrance, and its inviting all-glass cafe wing was designed specifically to promote accessibility to the Gallery through the park, inviting in the residents of Moss Side who live adjacent to the park.

That is also why the illuminated wording on the upper western facade and the lit-up sculpture on the upper floor gallery have been sited where they are, to be visible westwards to the people living in close proximity and who are thus encouraged to see the Gallery as part of their local visual landscape - again, that is the residents of Moss Side (and also Hulme)

This primary rationale of building a relationship between the Gallery and the people living closest to it flies in the face of any casual and quite artificial transfer of the Gallery and its park to the ward of Ardwick with which the park and Gallery have neither any historical nor any significant geographical linkage.

The original intentions of the Gallery's benefactors and the reasoning that won such large-scale public funding for Maria Balshaw's stunning modernisation project should be respected. It is the councillors of Moss Side who should continue to interface with the Gallery's management in ensuring that the Gallery's popular, outward-facing mission is sustained and renewed in future years.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Jill Lovecy  
Chair of Governors  
Claremont Primary School, Moss Side

Sent from my iPhone

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