

6 August 2015

Review Officer (Elmbridge)
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England,
14th Floor,
Millbank Tower,
London, SW1P 4QP.

Dear Sir

Elmbridge review

As a ward councilor in Hinchley Wood I am delighted that the Boundary Commission has listened to local residents and proposed a solution which preserves, to a greater extent, the community's identity. However, I am disappointed the Boundary Commission proposes to cede yet more of the area traditionally and culturally regarded as Hinchley Wood, namely "Lynwood Road and adjoining roads", to Long Ditton.

I am not opposed to the proposed extension of the western boundary of the former Weston Green ward along Douglas Road as far as Arran Way to accommodate the retention of Cranmere School within the new warding arrangements. However, I can see no merit in the proposal by Elmbridge Borough Council to transfer the part of Lower Green north of the railway, from Esher to Hinchley Wood/ Weston Green Ward, particularly in the light of the proposal that "Lynwood Road and adjoining roads", an integral part of Hinchley Wood, be sculpted out.

Lower Green is within the parish Christ Church, Esher and draws worshippers therefrom. The Lower Green Community Centre (Farm Road) - initially funded and established by the Esher Residents Association with local volunteers - serves a social club, the Silver and Gold club for older residents and other community activities, and with King Georges Hall and West End village hall, inspires not only Lower Green with a social cohesiveness, but a community identity evident across the whole of Esher. Lower Green is linked to Esher by a bus service and access points under the railway.

The sacrifice of the Lynwood Road salient can be justified only on grounds of (1) electoral equality having a higher precedence than (2) the interests and identities of local communities and/ or (3) promoting effective and convenient local government, so, suggesting a boundary change involving a significant number of Lower Green electors, will negate the grounds for lopping off "Lynwood Road and adjoining roads" in the first place.

Notwithstanding the above, and as Long Ditton already has equivalent community assets, I write to request that the Boundary Commission consider drawing the new ward boundary along the rear boundary of the relevant properties in Lynwood Road rather than along the southbound railway spur, in order to retain within Hinchley Wood/ Weston Green a significant area of open space comprising:

- its only Recreation ground with children's play area
- an Allotment Association and
- the Scout/ Guide movement meeting place,

These facilities are accessible to local residents by footbridges and used regularly by the community. This request does not anticipate the transfer of any electors.

Yours faithfully

Cllr N Haig-Brown