Dear Sirs

I was astonished to read about proposals to abolish our ward, Brompton ward, and split it into three wards, with the small area where I live to be put in the ward which represents Kensington High Street and Queens Gate. As a result, our area (Princes Gate Mews and a small bit of Exhibition Rd running from as far south as Cromwell Rd only) will be in the Kensington High Street and Queens Gate (“Queensgate ward”), whereas the rest of the existing Brompton Ward would be split in two with the south part of South Kensington put in one and Knightsbridge in another.

First and foremost, I am opposing our area being put into “Queens Gate Ward” because it will not: “deliver electoral equality for voters”, “reflect local interests and identities”, “promote effective and convenient local government” – criteria you base your decisions when considering this sort of proposals.

If, however, Brompton Ward really has to be abolished (for some extraordinary reasons), I suggest that our area should be merged with Hans Town ward so that common issues facing us in Knightsbridge and South Kensington can be addressed by the same Councillors. This is because we are part of Knightsbridge/South Kensington – not High Street Kensington – geographically, historically, traditionally!

I am providing more details below:

1) I am very much against abolition of Brompton Ward. This Ward reflects the historic boundaries of a long standing community which has very strong links with South Kensington and Knightsbridge - not Queensgate/High street Kensington/Kensington! Our nearest bus and tube link directly to South Kensington station and Knightsbridge. The pedestrian tunnel opposite our home, [REDACTED] – literally opposite our home - leads to South Kensington tube station! By comparison, High Street Kensington is at least 25 mins by foot. We shop, go to gym, eat out, etc. predominantly in Knightsbridge/South Kensington – not Queensgate/High Street Kensington or Kensington in general. Further, we are part of the Brompton Oratory parish, which further highlights the historic/traditional links we have that will be neglected if this proposal goes ahead. Our area is part of South Kensington/Knightsbridge, not of High Street Kensington or Queens Gate! As a result, these proposals do not “reflect local interests and identities”.

2) Our area (the area the Boundary Commission consultation calls ‘the museums and streets north of Cromwell Gardens’) has nothing in common with Queensgate/Kensington High Street and the Councillors for Queensgate Ward will be more interested the main and western end of their Ward which is dominated by Kensington High Street (the area which I personally hardly ever even go to). Voters in our area, by contrast, will be seriously disadvantaged by being split from the rest of Knightsbridge and South Kensington and represented by Councillors whose main interests lie elsewhere. As a result, these proposals do not “deliver electoral equality for voters”. Our voices will not be heard or will be effectively discriminated against.

3) All the residents in the current Brompton Ward are facing common issues – pressure for longer licensing hours, more tables and chairs licenses, litter, alcohol-fuelled disruption, late night noise, loss of local amenity shops and
pressure for development and commercialisation. The same issues facing our area face Knightsbridge and South Kensington - for example, splitting the north part of Exhibition Rd from the south (when events frequently take place on both parts at the same time) makes no sense, meaning these proposals will not “promote effective and convenient local government”. Our Councillors have helped us in past to address some of these issues and they know them very well. New Councillors whose main interest lie elsewhere will have to spend quite a bit of time and effort to get up (and keep up) to speed with the local situation, which again will not “promote effective and local government”.

I request that you reject this ill-thought-through proposal. I am surprised how it could be raised in the first place as it is totally against any (!) of the criteria you consider, as detailed above!

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Yours faithfully

Dr Ardeshir Nowrouzi