

**Community Governance  
Review 2019/20**

**Final Recommendations of  
the Electoral Review  
Committee**

**August 2020**

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## **Links**

[Terms of Reference of the Electoral Review Committee](#)

[Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review 2019/20](#)

[Guidance on Community Governance Reviews](#)

[Pre-consultation information pack on submitted schemes, parish responses, electorate projections, public engagement and survey responses](#)

[Consultation responses on Draft Recommendations \(online and physical responses input into online survey\)](#)

[Consultation responses on Draft Recommendations \(Email and physical\)](#)

All documents can also be accessed from links available at <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council-democracy-cgr>

Contact [CGR@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:CGR@wiltshire.gov.uk) or CGR, Democratic Services, County Hall, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN for information.

## **Purpose**

1. This document sets out the details of the Final Recommendations of the Electoral Review Committee for the Community Governance Review 2019/20, along with reasoning and descriptions of the process followed.

## **What is a Community Governance Review?**

2. A Community Governance Review is a process under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (“The Act”), to provide opportunity to review and make changes to governance arrangements to town and parish councils.
3. This is to ensure that they continue to be reflective of the identity and interest of local communities, and that they are as efficient and effective in their governance as can be.

## **What can a Community Governance Review change?**

4. A Community Governance Review can make a number of changes to parish governance when there is clear evidence to do so, including:
  - It can make changes to parish areas – including: changes to boundaries between parishes, mergers of two or more parishes, creating a new parish out of part of one or more existing parishes.
  - It can make changes to electoral arrangements within parish areas – including: changes to the number of parish councillors, introducing or changing parish warding arrangements.
  - It can accommodate changing the name of a parish.
  - It can accommodate the grouping together of parishes under a common parish council.
  - Other governance arrangement changes.
5. A Community Governance Review cannot change the Electoral Divisions of Wiltshire Council. However, Wiltshire Council can request those Divisions be amended by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (“The LGBCE”), who make any such decision, as a result of a Community Governance Review.

## **The Electoral Review Committee**

6. Wiltshire Council established the Electoral Review Committee (“The Committee”) to oversee any Community Governance Reviews.
7. This is a politically proportionate committee of ten elected Wiltshire Councillors to oversee the process and prepare recommendations relating to any review to a meeting of Full Council, who make the decision.
8. The members of the Committee are as follows:

Cllr Richard Clewer (Chairman)

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling

Cllr Ian McLennan

Cllr Gavin Grant (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Clare Cape

Cllr Christopher Newbury

Cllr Ashley O'Neill  
Cllr Stuart Wheeler

Cllr Jonathon Seed  
Cllr Graham Wright

### **On what grounds will a Community Governance Review be decided?**

9. Any decision relating to parish arrangements must ensure that those arrangements:
  - Reflect the identity and interests of local communities
  - Ensure effective and convenient local governance
10. In conducting a review and making recommendations, the Committee has taken account of guidance issued by the relevant Secretary of State and the LGBCE.
11. Factors that are not relevant to the statutory and guidance criteria, such as council tax precept levels, cannot be considered.

### **Background to the 2019/20 Review**

12. From 2017-2019 the LGBCE undertook an Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council. While this retained the number of divisions at 98, the changes as now approved by Parliament made consequential changes to many town and parish governance arrangements.
13. Combined with development growth across existing town and parish boundaries, or creation of new communities with their own identity within an existing parish, Wiltshire Council determined that a review was therefore necessary in some areas to ensure the community governance arrangements were still reflective of local identity and interests and were effective and convenient.
14. All parishes in Wiltshire were contacted in the summer of 2019 to see if there were any changes to governance arrangements they wished the council to consider, and a number of requests were received. A petition was also received in September 2019 requesting creation of a new parish. As this met the required number of signatures, a review of that area was required to be undertaken. Other requests would be considered when the council, through the Committee, determined it was practical to do so.
15. On 1 November 2019 Wiltshire Council published terms of reference for a Community Governance Review for the following parish areas:

Calne Without	Chippenham	Chippenham Without	Hilperton
Huish	Kington St Michael	Lacock	Langley Burrell Without
Manningford	Melksham	Melksham Without	Netherhampton
North Bradley	Pewsey	Salisbury	Seend
Southwick	Trowbridge	West Ashton	Wilcot
Woodborough	Yatton Keynell		

16. The terms of reference were updated in February 2020 to adjust the timescales for the review, and further in May 2020 to extend timescales for consultation in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
17. The Committee was able to recommend, and the Council to approve, governance changes which were not suggested by parishes or individuals, if it considered it appropriate to do so. Any such proposal would have been required, like any other recommendation, to be subject to consultation before it could be approved by Council.

### **Pre-consultation**

18. During the first stage of the review the Committee received additional proposals relating to the review areas. During the second stage the Committee undertook pre-consultation information gathering, including:
  - Sessions between representatives of the Committee and affected unitary councillors, parish councils and lead petitioners.
  - Public meetings in Melksham, Melksham Without, Calne Without and Trowbridge
  - An online survey of proposals received, and a physical survey sent to those areas potentially impacted by being transferred from one parish to another in proposals as submitted to the council, or where a merger or creation of parishes was potentially to be proposed, with links to further information including electorate projections and council tax implications.
19. There was no requirement under the Act or Guidance for the Committee to undertake such levels of pre-consultation surveying or notification.

### **Draft Recommendations**

20. At its meeting on 24 March 2020 the Committee considered an information pack compiling relevant materials from the pre-consultation information gathering including session notes, proposal details, electorate projections, parish council responses, and public representations received by email, post or online survey.
21. The Committee agreed Draft Recommendations for each area and delegated preparation and approval of a detailed Draft Recommendations document to be consulted upon to the Director of Legal, Electoral and Registration Services after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.
22. It was also agreed by the Committee that all those who had been written to in previous stages as residing in an area where they might potentially be moved between parishes, or where there was a parish merger proposal, would also be written to with details of the Draft Recommendations. An online survey would also be prepared.

23. The Committee was required to undertake appropriate consultation on any Draft Recommendations. Taking account of the requirements of the Act, the Committee adjusted the terms of reference for the review to extend the period for consultation on the Draft Recommendations in light of the Covid-19 situation. The consultation ran from 15 May to 10 July 2020, though further email and physical responses received beyond that date were accepted.
24. The Committee was satisfied both that it was appropriate to undertake a consultation during the present situation and that the consultation which took place was appropriate. This noted the level of pre-consultation that took place as detailed above, and additional consultation not required by the Act such as physically writing to those potentially affected. It also noted the extension to the consultation period, and that in some areas the lack of a decision would lead to a situation of ineffective or inappropriate boundaries at the next elections.
25. Although the Committee would have preferred to have undertaken further public meetings, government guidance during the Covid-19 situation would not permit this. It also considered that owing to the need for a decision within September 2020 in order for any changes to take effect for the next elections in May 2021, it would not have been appropriate to delay a decision by Full Council by suspending the consultation. In some areas this might result in areas where governance arrangements were no longer effective or convenient, or not in the interests of the community. It has been noted that the LGBCE has launched consultations on boundary changes during the Covid-19 situation.
26. Over 250 responses were received in response to the online and physical consultation on the Draft Recommendations.

### **Preparation of Final Recommendations**

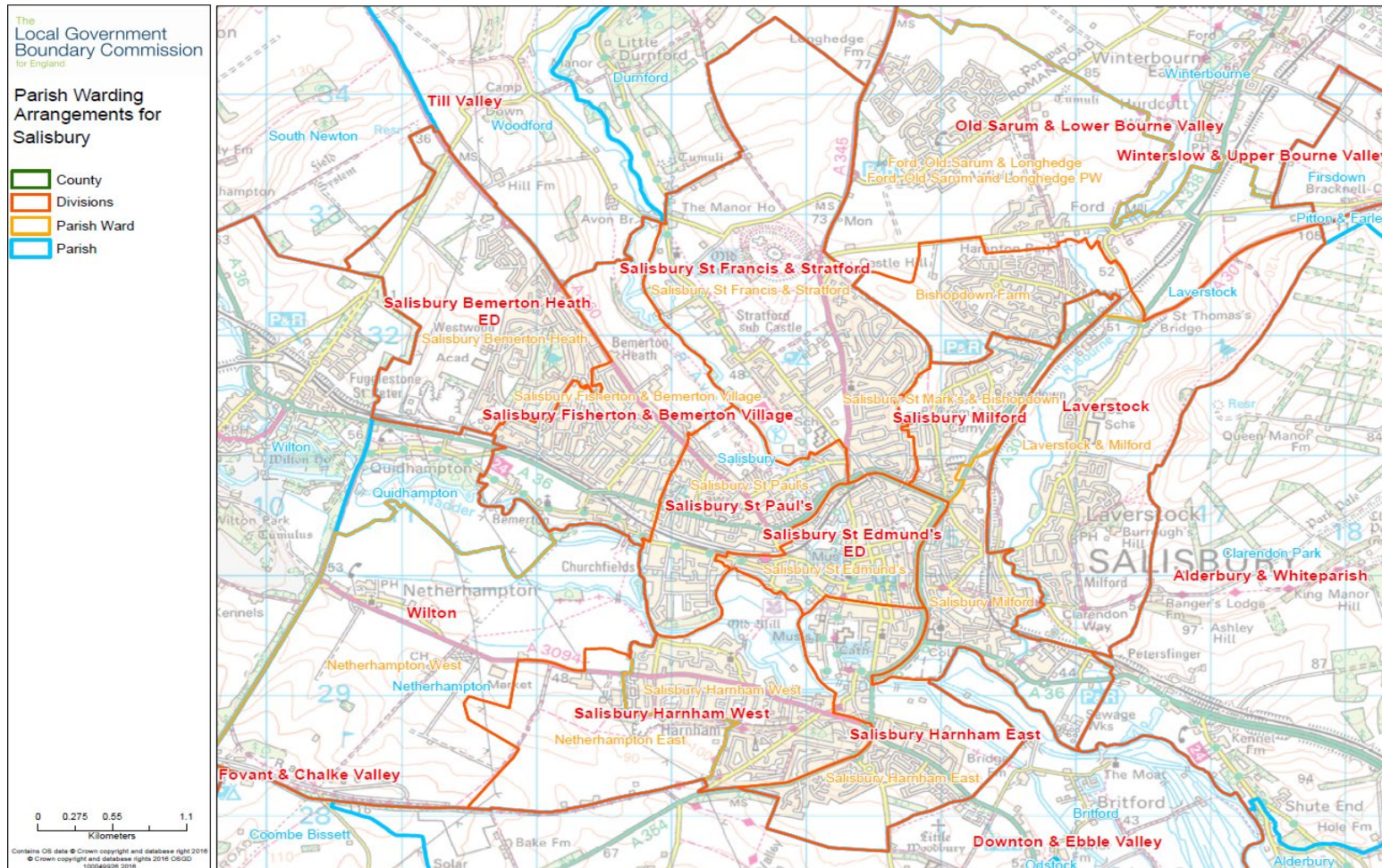
27. The Committee received details of all responses to the consultation on the Draft Recommendations at its meeting on 13 August 2020.
28. At that meeting the Committee determined its Final Recommendations, delegating preparation of a Final Recommendations document to the Director of Legal and Governance, after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.
29. This document sets out the full reasoning behind those Final Recommendations, which will be presented for consideration to a meeting of Full Council on 9 September 2020.
30. Unlike the Draft Recommendations document, except in relation to parish mergers the Final Recommendations document does not include full details of alternative proposals which were received and explored during pre-consultation but which were not recommended by the Committee.

## FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

### Salisbury and Netherhampton

#### Background

- As a result of the Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) imposed new Electoral Divisions to take effect at the next elections in May 2021. Those new divisions for Salisbury are shown below along with parish warding arrangements, which were subject to consequential changes by the LGBCE.





2. The changes resulted in the parish of Netherhampton being warded, with the ward of Netherhampton West in the Wilton Division, and the ward of Netherhampton East in the Salisbury Harnham West Division.
3. As the incoming arrangement divided a parish between an urban and non-urban based Electoral Division, the Committee resolved to survey the views of interested parties on whether it would be appropriate to transfer the ward of Netherhampton East into the city of Salisbury.

Pre-consultation information gathering

4. During the pre-consultation phase, representatives of Salisbury City Council indicated that they supported the proposal. Representatives of Netherhampton Parish Council also acknowledged that the area in question would share character and interests with Salisbury more than the remainder of Netherhampton parish due to considerable incoming development.
5. The area in question broadly follows the line of an allocated housing site which has also received outline planning permission for the development of up to 640 dwellings, contiguous to the built-up area of the city of Salisbury, and a small number of additional dwellings along Shaftesbury Drove. It was noted that the majority of existing housing in the parish of Netherhampton lay close to the boundary with Wilton, and the total electorate of the parish was only 119 electors in 2019. The Parish Council had noted that the parish had closer connections with Wilton than Salisbury.
6. 4 responses were received from the public during the pre-consultation phase, 2 in agreement and 1 in disagreement citing the village status of Netherhampton. A suggestion was received to amend the proposed area to be transferred to run along existing footpaths much used by city residents. However, as such an area would lie outside the incoming Electoral Divisions and would not include sufficient population to be appropriately warded, the Committee was not persuaded that there were sufficient grounds to request the LG BCE amend its Electoral Divisions. They considered that the proposed line following broadly the line of development reflected the natural communities of the area as they would exist.
7. The Committee further noted that the area in question as detailed above would be distinct in character from the remainder of Netherhampton parish. Updated electorate projections indicated that over 300 electors would be present in the area proposed to be moved by 2024. Whilst this was a reduction from earlier estimates, the extant planning permission indicated that there would continue to be considerable development up to and beyond 2024, the period guidance stipulates should be considered when undertaking reviews, which was a material factor in considering appropriate community governance.
8. Therefore, the Committee considered the area would be a more cohesive community if joined with the city of Salisbury. It would also reflect the natural community that would exist, preserve the more rural identity of Netherhampton, and reflect a clear and identifiable barrier between the two parishes as the extent of allocated development land. It would reflect that the urban community had and was



expanding as a result of new housing development and ensure that neighbours were in the same parish. It ensured alignment with the unitary boundary which would enable effective governance across the area.

9. For these reasons and as set out in the recommendation, the Committee agreed to recommend that the Netherhampton East Ward be transferred to Salisbury City.
10. Additionally, the areas covered by the other seven Electoral Divisions for the city of Salisbury will each be served by three city councillors going forwards. The existing wards of Netherhampton East and Salisbury Harnham West were to be served by one and two councillors respectively, for a total of three. Therefore, the Committee considered that it would be appropriate and consistent to recommend that the amended Salisbury Harnham West city ward to likewise be served by three councillors.
11. Accordingly, it was considered appropriate to recommend that the total number of councillors for Salisbury City Council be increased from 23 to 24.
12. Concurrently, the legal minimum number of councillors for a parish is five. Therefore, the parish of Netherhampton was recommended to remain at five councillors. The scale and geographic spread of the population of the remainder of the parish did not in the Committee's view justify any warding arrangement.

#### Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

13. There were 4 responses to the Draft Recommendations as detailed above. 3 were in agreement, citing evolving demographics and that the Netherhampton East Ward was intrinsically linked with the development and infrastructure of Salisbury Harnham West. 1 response suggested an amendment as a result of some properties being accessible through Lower Bemerton in Salisbury. The Committee took account of this but did not consider there was sufficient reason to re-consult and propose transfer of any additional areas not within the proposed Salisbury Harnham West Division.
14. The Committee considered the responses and all relevant factors and guidance and resolved to uphold its Draft Recommendations in their entirety. The area of Netherhampton East in governance and community terms was more appropriately included within Salisbury City, it was logical for all city wards to contain the same number of councillors, with a concomitant increase in the total number, and Netherhampton parish was required by law to contain no fewer than 5 councillors.

#### **Recommendation 1**

**1.1 That the area of the Netherhampton East Ward of the parish of Netherhampton be transferred to the parish of Salisbury City as part of the Salisbury Harnham West Ward.**

**1.2 That the Salisbury Harnham West Ward be increased from two city councillors to three.**

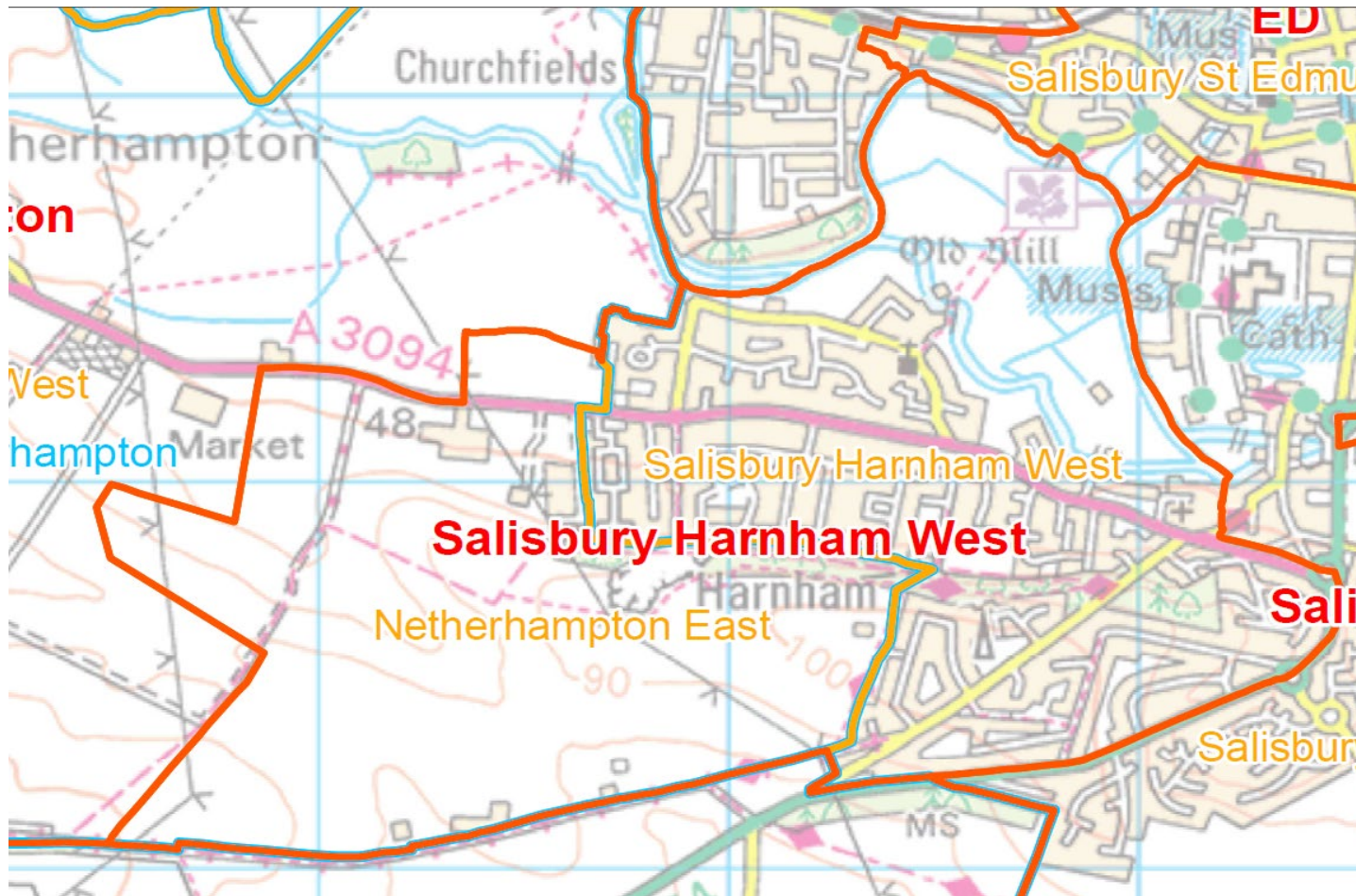
**1.3 That the total number of councillors for Salisbury City Council be increased from 23 to 24.**

**1.4 That the parish of Netherhampton be comprised of five parish councillors, without wards.**

**Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 78, 80, 83, 84, 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

*In order for these changes to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*

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## **Salisbury**

### **Background**

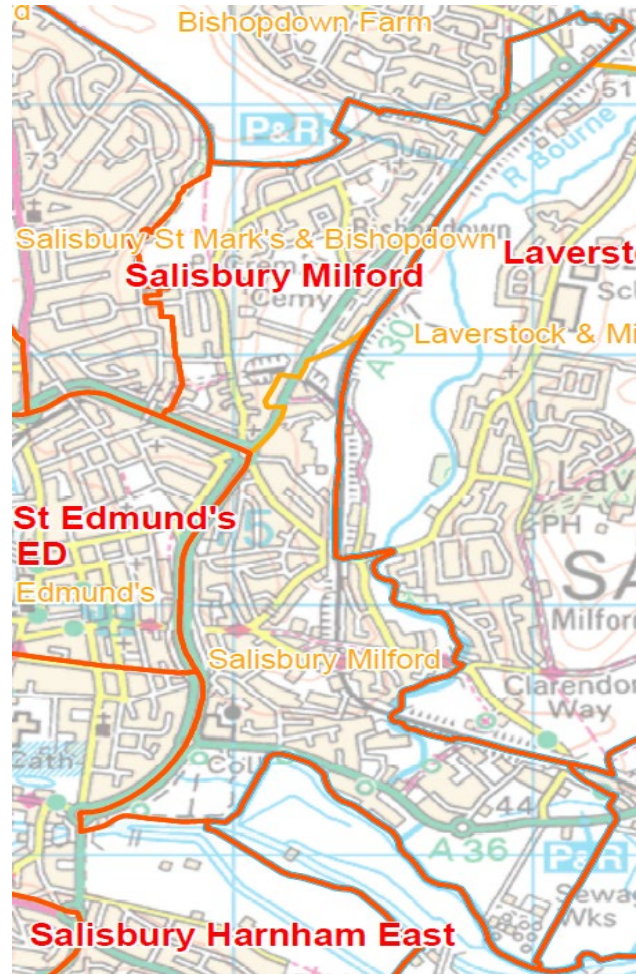
15. The decision of the LGBCE also saw changes made to the wards of Salisbury City Council. In six cases the new wards were created to be coterminous, that is, align, with the Electoral Division boundaries. In Salisbury Harnham West this was not possible due to the Division also containing a ward of Netherhampton. As detailed in Recommendation 1, this is intended to be addressed by transferring Netherhampton East into Salisbury Harnham West, thus making seven of the Electoral Divisions coterminous with the Salisbury City Wards.
16. The final Electoral Division, Salisbury Milford, has been divided by the LGBCE into two parish wards: Salisbury St Mark's and Bishopdown and Salisbury Milford, with one and two city councillors respectively.
17. There is no detail in the LGBCE report setting out why in this one instance the Electoral Division was not made coterminous with a Salisbury City Ward, although previously the Bishopdown area was included in an Electoral Division with the Bishopdown Farm region of Laverstock and Ford parish. As the ward structure was only circulated in the Final Recommendations of the LGBCE, there was no opportunity for any interested parties to comment on this arrangement.

### **Pre-consultation information gathering**

18. Salisbury City Council requested that the wards and the Electoral Division be made coterminous with a single ward of three city councillors, in line with every other city ward. During the pre-consultation phase a single representation was received in support of the proposal.
19. In forming its Draft Recommendations, the Committee therefore considered the current governance situation to be anomalous. It decided to propose the change to ensure consistent administration, thus providing more effective and convenient governance. It also considered that it would be more appropriate for community cohesion to not divide the city communities unnecessarily and so recommended the wards be merged. This would also be in keeping with the approach taken in other urban parts of the council area.

### **Consultation on the Draft Recommendations**

20. 2 responses were received to the consultation on the Draft Recommendations, each in support of the proposal. One also requested the name of the parish be changed to City of New Sarum.
21. The Committee considered the responses and all relevant factors and guidance and resolved to uphold its Draft Recommendations in their entirety. There were no objections to the proposals which amended an anomalous situation and so improved governance. It did not consider there was evidence of significant community support for changing the name of the parish.



**Recommendation 2**

**2.1 To merge the Salisbury City wards of Salisbury Milford and Salisbury St Mark's and Bishopdown into a single ward of three councillors, coterminous with the Salisbury Milford Electoral Division. The city ward would also be called Salisbury Milford.**

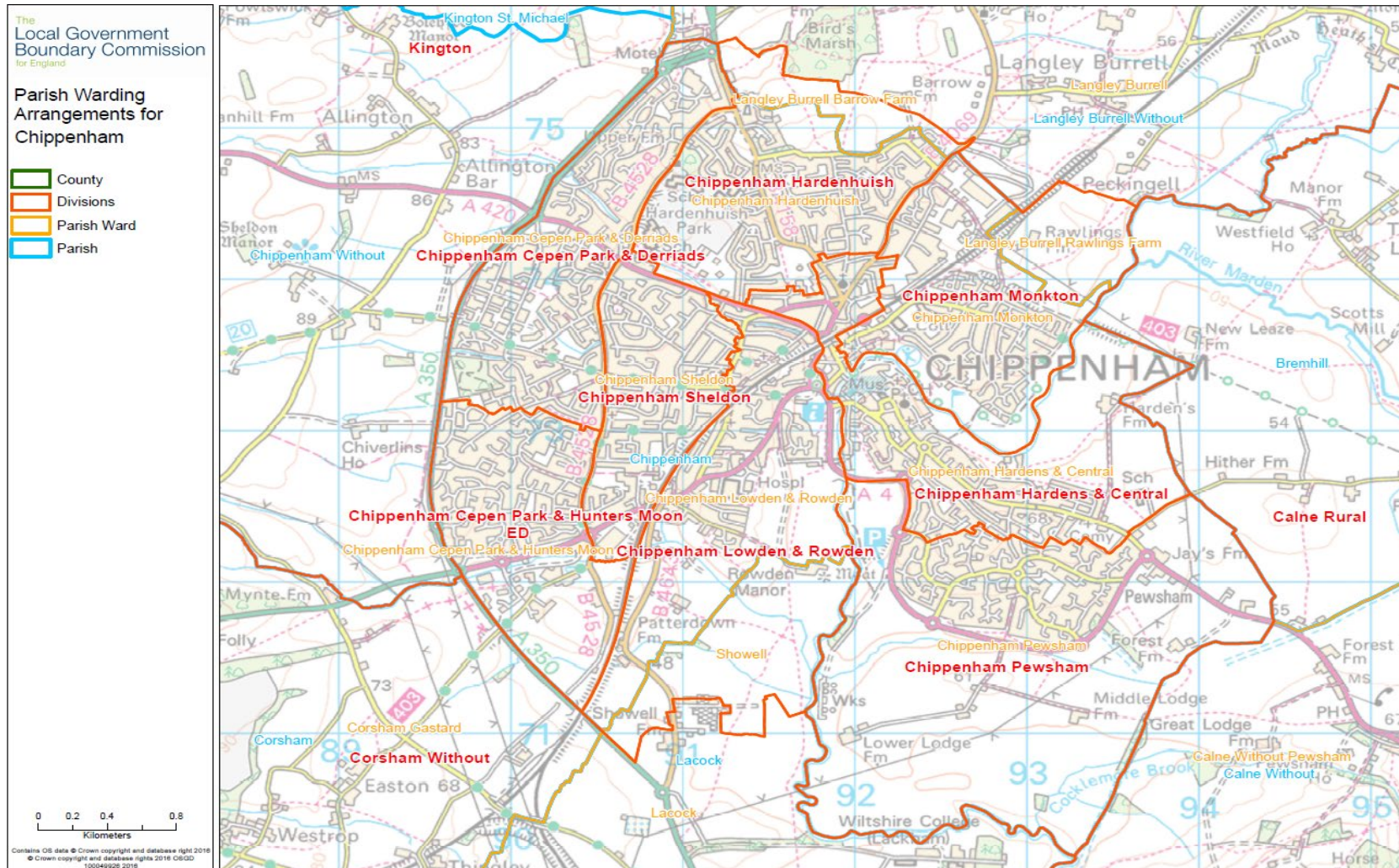
**Reason: Paragraph 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

*In order for this change to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*



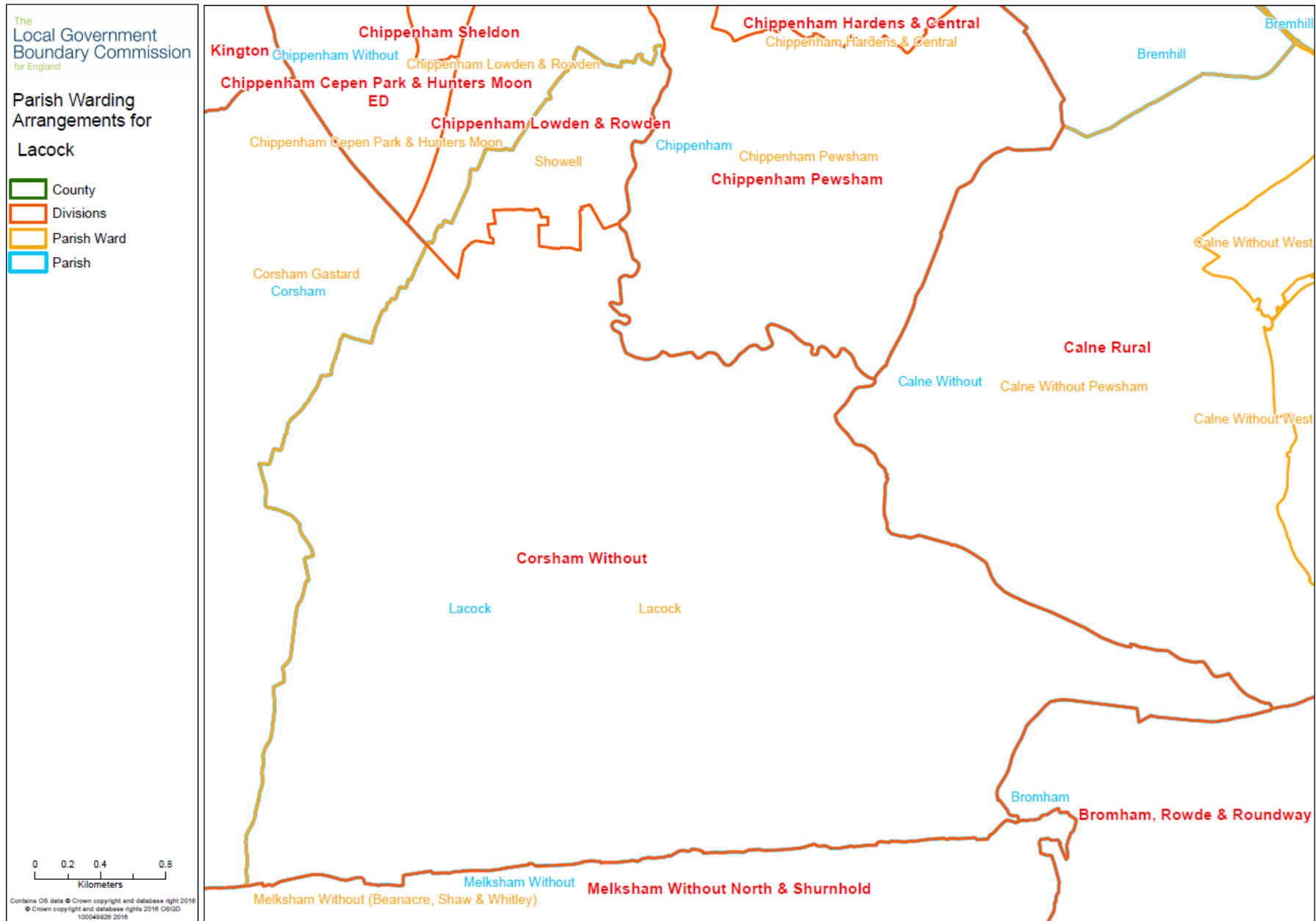
## Chippenham, Lacock and Langley Burrell Without Background

22. As a result of the Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England imposed new Electoral Divisions to take effect at the next elections in May 2021. Those new divisions for Chippenham are shown below along with parish warding arrangements, which were also subject to consequential changes by the LGBCE.













24. As the incoming arrangement divided these parishes between urban and non-urban based Electoral Divisions, the Committee resolved to survey the views of interested parties on whether it would be appropriate to transfer the wards of Rawlings Farm, Barrow Farm and Showell, to Chippenham Town Council.

Pre-consultation information gathering

25. During the pre-consultation phase representatives of Langley Burrell Without Parish Council and Lacock Parish Council each confirmed they would be supportive of the areas in question being transferred to Chippenham Town Council, and the Chippenham Town Council itself supported the proposals.

26. Langley Burrell Without noted that the development areas to the north of Chippenham placed within the Chippenham based unitary Electoral Divisions would look towards the urban area of Chippenham for services and amenities. It also noted that without a transfer of the new development areas the parish would find itself split between three separate unitary Electoral Divisions, which would not provide effective or convenient governance.

27. Lacock Parish Council representatives agreed with the proposal, although they noted that the Showell nurseries area had not been included, which they stated this was also part of proposed development.

Langley Burrell Without

28. In the pre-consultation phase 3 responses were received to the online survey regarding the two Langley Burrell Without proposals, all in agreement, stating new housing developments on the edge of the town should be moved within the town boundary.

29. In forming its Draft Recommendations, the Committee therefore considered that combining the new development areas within Langley Burrell Without with the rest of the urban area would provide for more cohesive and natural communities reflecting the expansion of the urban area and eliminate what would be an anomalous boundary. It would preserve the rural identity of Langley Burrell Without, would reflect a clear separation between the town and the surrounding parishes, and would improve governance by not dividing parishes between more electoral divisions than necessary or reasonable.

30. Accordingly, for Langley Burrell Without it was recommended that the parish revert to an unwarded parish of five parish councillors.

Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

31. No objections or comments were received to this aspect of the recommendations. The Committee therefore considered all relevant factors and guidance and resolved to uphold its Draft Recommendations in respect of the transfers of land from Langley Burrell Without to Chippenham.

Lacock

32. 5 responses were received to the pre-consultation online survey in relation to the Lacock proposals, 3 in agreement for the same reason as the Langley Burrell Without proposals. 1 response from a Lacock Parish Council representative as noted above suggested amendment to include the Showell Nurseries area. 1 response was in disagreement, citing house prices and council tax, which are factors which could not be considered a part of the review. A petition from the residents of Rowden Lane, who would be transferred under the proposals, was also received. This raised the issues of council tax increases, as well as physical, historic, and community connections with the rest of Lacock parish such as use of local shops, nurseries, and community events. It also noted the character of the area as part of the parish and its rural nature.
33. In forming its Draft Recommendations, the Committee did not support inclusion within the proposed area to be transferred to the town of the Showell nurseries area. The Committee had to consider issues of both effective and convenient governance and community interest and identity, in the present but also within a period of five years. The area lay outside the Electoral Division boundaries and it was considered it might be appropriate to consider transferring the area to the town as a developed area in the future. This was because it would be contiguous with the rest of the urban area and lack character and interests with the remainder of Lacock. However, at the present time it would cause unnecessary administrative and boundary confusion as it would require additional or anomalous warding arrangements or Electoral Division changes.
34. In relation to the proposed transfer of the Showell ward, the Committee noted the line of the ward followed the line of an allocated housing site in the approved Chippenham Site Allocations Plan (referenced as the Wiltshire Housing Sites Allocation Plan in the Draft Recommendations document). As noted, the Council was required under the statutory guidance to not only consider the existing position in areas under review but also how the area would change in years to come based on projected development and its effect on the community, its interests and its identity.
35. The Committee considered that whilst the area in question was largely undeveloped at the present time, significant development was projected. The characteristics of the ward as a whole would be urban, not rural such as was the case with the remainder of Lacock, as the parish council itself had noted. Though comments including a petition from local residents in the Showell ward had been received during pre-consultation information gathering which emphasised community connections with Lacock for a particular part of the incoming Showell ward, the Committee considered that the developing position of the wider area was such that it would increasingly be more appropriate for it to be transferred within the town boundary.
36. Accordingly, for Lacock, it was recommended that the parish revert to an unwarded parish of eleven parish councillors.

Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

37. There were 5 responses to the online survey during the consultation on the Draft Recommendations relating to the transfer of Showell ward to Chippenham, all objecting to the proposal. The comments pointed towards the opposition of the local residents, connections with Lacock including the Rowden Lane hamlet's heritage status, stating there would be no benefits for existing residents, that the interests and identity of the area did not support such a change and objecting to the lack of a face to face meeting with the Committee. Multiple email or letter contributions were also received from residents of Rowden Lane in objection to the proposal, highlighting the hamlet's rural status and its history within Lacock parish.
38. In relation to a lack of face to face meetings, this was not a requirement of legislation or guidance, and the Committee had undertaken extensive pre-consultation and consultation with the parishes and the public, as shown by the responses received during both phases, in order to ensure appropriate consultation.
39. Regarding the status of the area in question, the Committee noted that Rowden Lane itself was not to include significant development, and that indicative plans included a country park as part of the significant housing development taking place within the area that Showell ward covered.
40. Nevertheless, the area of that ward as a whole was, within the required period to be projected, expected to be predominantly urban in character. Some respondents had suggested an error in the Draft Recommendations for referring to the character of the area as increasingly urban, but this had been in reference to the area of the ward as a whole, not merely Rowden Lane. The overwhelming bulk of incoming residents within the period required to be considered would have their interests and identities align with the town as a result of natural urban expansion, and the country park was an integral part of that housing development area. On balance, and although the objections of the residents of Rowden Lane were carefully considered, it was not felt there were significant enough connections with Lacock to overcome the governance improvements of fewer wards and aligned boundaries, and the community interests of the wider area being more closely aligned with the town.
41. In relation to the issue of community interests and identity, the support of the parish council for the transfer as reported to the Committee was of significant relevance. Furthermore, given the major access to Rowden Lane was through the new housing area, and the only land link with the remainder of Lacock parish would require inclusion of the country park which was to be an integral part of the urban extension development, it was not considered appropriate or viable to exclude the Rowden Lane area from any proposed transfer at this time. The area could not be appropriately warded given its population, and therefore to transfer the other areas without Rowden Lane would require an amendment of the Electoral Division by the LGBCE. Consent for such was considered unlikely in the short term, particularly given the initial proposal of the LGBCE had been to include a larger rural area within Chippenham Lowden and Rowden.

42. The area was also not a part of the Lacock conservation area, though it was a conservation area, which can also exist within town boundaries. Given the area covered by the housing site, the isolation from the remainder of the parish, and the unviability therefore of suggesting amendment to exclude just the area of Rowden Lane as was the case with the Showell nurseries area, the Committee continued to resolve that on balance the statutory criteria supported a transfer of the Showell ward.
43. Some references had been made to businesses marketing themselves within the parish of Lacock, however the Committee did not consider marketing strategies could have sufficient weight to oppose a transfer, if considered otherwise appropriate under the criteria.
44. There was also reference to the long history of the area and its connections with Lacock. These connections were a factor which the Committee took into careful consideration. However, whilst historical connections were of relevance, Community Governance Reviews enabled changes to parish boundaries where the circumstances had changed for various reasons, including new development, if it were considered appropriate under the statutory criteria. The Committee considered that the historical connections did not outweigh the strong governance improvements for the area as a whole, and that the community interests and identity as a whole more suitably now sat with the town, particular given the view provided by the parish council.
45. Therefore, as with the Langley Burrell Without proposals, the Committee considered that combining the new development areas with the rest of the urban area would provide for more cohesive and natural communities reflecting the expansion of the urban area and eliminate an anomalous boundary. It would preserve the rural identity of Lacock by providing a clear separation between the town and the surrounding parish settlements, would improve governance by not dividing parishes between more electoral divisions than was necessary or reasonable and so would improve governance of the area.
46. As a result, the Committee considered the responses and all relevant factors and guidance, and resolved to uphold its Draft Recommendations in their entirety.
47. However, the Committee did consider that the precise boundary should possibly be looked at again in the future, to see if it were possible to adjust to satisfy current local residents, even though the balance of the criteria for the overall ward justified a transfer at this time given the administrative constraints, governance improvements and community interests of the wider area.

### **Recommendation 3**

- 3.1 That the area of the Barrow Farm Ward of Langley Burrell Without be transferred to Chippenham Town Council and merged with the Chippenham Hardenhuish Ward, to continue to contain three councillors.**
- 3.2 That the area of the Rawlings Farm Ward of Langley Burrell Without be transferred to Chippenham Town Council and merged with the Chippenham Monkton Ward, to continue to contain three councillors.**

**3.3 That the area of the Showell Ward of Lacock be transferred to Chippenham Town Council and merged with the Chippenham Lowden and Rowden Ward, to continue to contain three councillors.**

**3.4 That Lacock Parish Council be comprised of eleven councillors, without warding arrangements.**

**3.5 That Langley Burrell Without Parish Council be comprised of five councillors, without warding arrangements.**

**Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 78, 80, 83, 84, 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

*In order for these changes to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*



## **Chippenham Without and Kington St Michael**

### **Background**

48. A request for a review was also received by Chippenham Without Parish Council. This request was that Cedar Lodge, Allington, which at present lies within the parish of Kington St Michael, be transferred to the parish of Chippenham Without. As well as being within the Allington Conservation Area the property was stated to be more closely aligned geographically and in community terms with Allington and the parish of Chippenham Without.

### **Proposal map – detail and whole parish map**



### **Pre-consultation information gathering**

49. During the pre-consultation stage Kington St Michael Parish Council confirmed that they supported the proposal. 4 responses were received during the pre-consultation online survey. All were in agreement, noting the area was within the Allington conservation area and its position in Kington St Michael anomalous.



50. The Committee was persuaded by the argument that the inclusion of Cedar Lodge with Chippenham Without would more appropriately reflect local identity and facilitate effective and convenient local governance. The property had closer connections with Chippenham Without and the proposal had cross community support. It would therefore better reflect the community interests and identity of the one property contained to be located within Chippenham Without.

Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

51. No representations were received in relation to the Draft Recommendation. Therefore, having considered all relevant factors and guidance the Committee upheld its Draft Recommendation.

**Recommendation 4**

**4.1 That the area including Cedar Lodge, Allington, shown above be transferred from Kington St Michael to Chippenham Without.**

**Reason: Paragraph 84 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

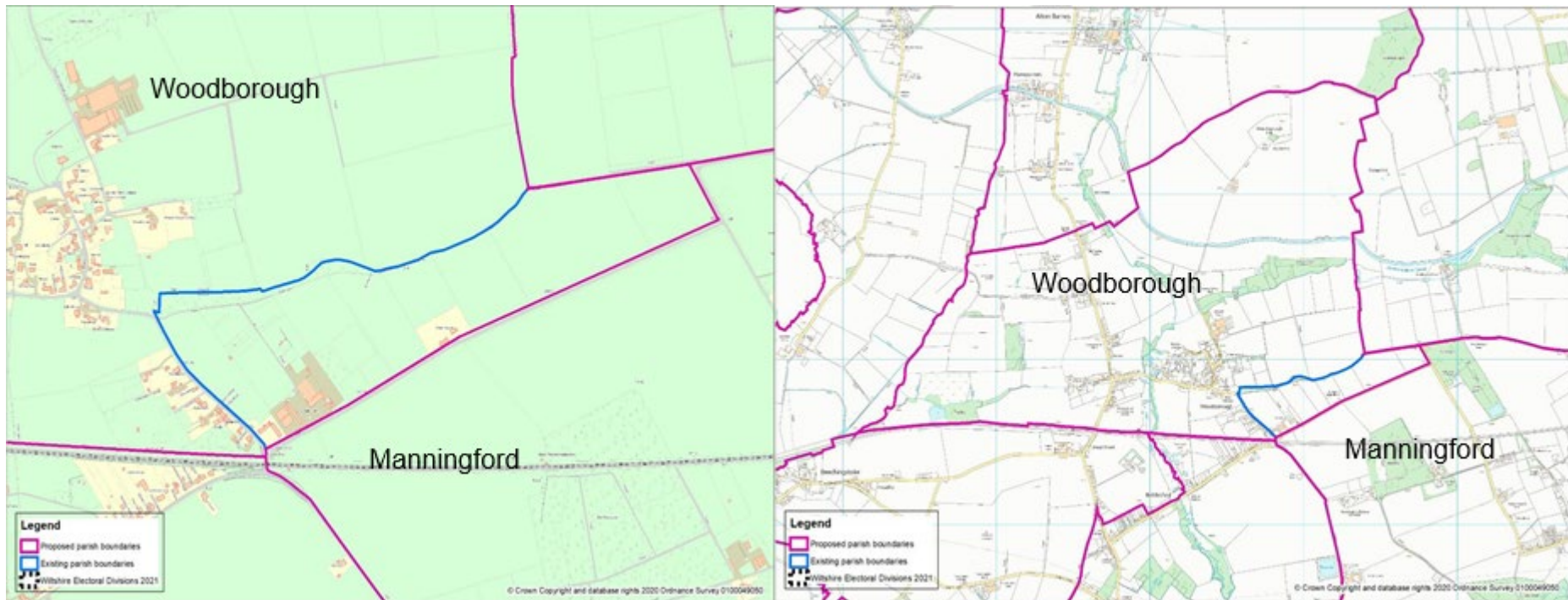
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## **Manningford and Woodborough**

### **Background**

52. The parish councils of Woodborough and Manningford each submitted a proposal that an area of the parish of Manningford, referred to as the nursery barns and garden centre, should be transferred to the parish of Woodborough. It was stated that the Garden Centre and houses known as Nursery Barns were geographically much closer to the village of Woodborough and commonly referred to as being in Woodborough.

### **Proposal map – detail and whole parish map**



### **Pre-consultation information gathering**

53. During the pre-consultation phase both parish councils confirmed they were supportive of the proposal. 5 comments were received on the online survey, all in agreement with several statements that most believed the area already within Woodborough.

54. Given the parish councils were in agreement and the lack of disagreement in response, the Committee agreed to recommend that the area be transferred to the parish of Woodborough as being more reflective of the local community identity. It also recognised that the area in question represented a section of built up development removed from the rest of the community in Manningford whilst being closely connected to the community of Woodborough, and would run along recognisable, clear boundaries.

#### Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

55. 1 comment was received on the online survey during the consultation on the Draft Recommendations in support of the recommendation. The parish councils also confirmed their support for the recommendation, clarifying the exact position of the boundary line along the roads in question to ensure effective governance.
56. The Committee accepted the point of clarification when final maps were to be prepared for submission to relevant bodies as this did not amount to a substantive revision requiring consultation. Therefore, taking account of all responses and relevant factors and guidance the Committee confirmed their Draft Recommendation.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**5.1 That the area shown above be transferred from the parish of Manningford to the parish of Woodborough.**

**Reason: Paragraph 84 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

## **Pewsey**

### **Background**

57. Pewsey Parish Council had also requested that its two existing parish wards be merged into one. They stated they did not consider warding of the parish, comprising approximately 3000 electors, was necessary and that the division between the two wards was arbitrary.

### **Pre-consultation information gathering**

58. The existing wards divide the parish into areas represented by ten and eleven councillors respectively. It was requested that the parish council therefore comprise 21 parish councillors in a single ward. 1 response was received during the pre-consultation survey, in agreement.

59. The Committee received no suggestions that the request was unreasonable. The unwarded nature of many parishes along with the active nature of the parish council and its members as reported was noted.

60. The Committee therefore considered that the removal of wards as requested would simplify the governance arrangements of the parish and remove anomalous warding arrangements and consulted on that recommendation.

### **Consultation on the Draft Recommendations**

61. 1 response was received to the Draft Recommendation in support, and therefore taking account of all responses and relevant factors and guidance the Committee confirmed their Draft Recommendation.

## **Recommendation 6**

**6.1 That the parish of Pewsey be represented by a parish council comprising 21 councillors, without warding arrangements.**

**Reasons: Paragraphs 84, 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

## **Wilcot and Pewsey**

### **Background**

62. Wilcot Parish Council had requested that the area of the Sunnyhill Caravan Park be reviewed to ensure that all residents were contained within the same parish. Examples were provided by the parish of council were all the properties included in the parish of Pewsey, where at present 1.5 properties were located, or the parish of Wilcot, where the majority of the properties were presently located. Subsequently, the parish council stated evidence showed that the area had already been determined previously to be located entirely within the parish of Wilcot and believed the existing maps to be in error.
63. The Committee made enquiries with the Ordnance Survey, responsible for holding and compiling maps for official purposes. They confirmed that they had no record of the area in question being included entirely within the parish of Wilcot, and that a further legal order would need to be made to enact that position if it was considered appropriate to do so.

### **Pre-consultation information gathering**

64. The Committee therefore included the proposal in its list of surveyed Schemes during pre-consultation. 14 responses were received, with 6 in agreement, 2 suggesting amendment and 6 in disagreement. However, several of the comments listed as in disagreement were in fact supportive of the suggestion that the whole area be within Wilcot. The comments on amendment had also included suggestion the area was already within Wilcot, which as noted above was not the case.
65. In forming its Draft Recommendation, the Committee noted that most of the area was already within the parish of Wilcot, and that the connections with the parish of Wilcot for the local community were much more significant than any connection with the parish of Pewsey, with the current official division of the area clearly being anomalous and ineffective. It therefore agreed to recommend that the area be transferred to the parish of Wilcot in order to provide more effective and convenient local governance.
66. As Pewsey and Wilcot are contained in different unitary Electoral Divisions, and the area in question would be too small to ward and in any case warding arrangements would not be appropriate for effective governance, the Committee also agreed to recommend that the LGBCE be requested to amend the unitary Electoral Division line accordingly.

### **Consultation on the Draft Recommendations**

67. There were 6 responses during the consultation on the Draft Recommendations, all in support. Wilcot Parish Council also confirmed its support for the proposals.
68. Therefore, and considering all responses and relevant factors including guidance, the Committee resolved to confirm its Draft Recommendations in their entirety for the reasons provided.

Proposal - Details and whole parish map (including recommendation 8 relating to Huish)



**Recommendation 7**

**7.1 That the area shown above be transferred from the parish of Pewsey to the parish of Wilcot, Huish and Oare (see Recommendation 8.3).**

**7.2 That the Electoral Divisions of Pewsey Vale West and Pewsey be amended to be coterminous with the parish boundaries of Pewsey and Wilcot, Huish and Oare.**

**Reason: Paragraph 84 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

*In order for these changes to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*

## **Wilcot and Huish**

### **Background**

69. The Committee also considered a request from Wilcot Parish Council to remove the warding arrangements of its parish. It considered that the warding arrangements were irrelevant to local administration and not conducive to unity of feeling and purpose within the combined parish. It also requested the name of the parish be changed to reflect the nature of the communities within it, to Wilcot, Huish and Oare Parish Council, the name under which it was commonly known.
70. In reviewing the request, the Committee established that the parish of Huish, which contains only 37 electors and has been in some form of joint arrangements with Wilcot for an extended period, had not been officially merged with Wilcot as was commonly understood by the parish council and others to be the case. In order to give effect to the intent of the request from the parish council, it would therefore be necessary to formally merge the two parishes, as well as remove the current warding arrangements of Wilcot, warded as Wilcot East and Wilcot West.

### **Pre-consultation information gathering**

71. During the pre-consultation phase there were 11 responses to the online survey, with 8 in agreement stating the historic boundaries were irrelevant to local administration or ineffective, and not reflective of current identity. 2 comments suggesting amendment were in fact either seeking clarification or supportive of what they believed to be the existing position, which the parish council was seeking to formalise, and the comment in disagreement included no reasoning.
72. Therefore, and given the longstanding connection of the two parishes, the tiny population of Huish which would not support a parish council of its own and where a separate parish meeting was unnecessary given the existing ad hoc arrangements, the Committee in forming its Draft Recommendations supported recommending the official merger of the two parishes into one. It supported recommending no warding arrangements be in place, as this better reflected the communities in question. It accepted that the current number of parish councillors was reasonable and should be maintained.
73. Given the extent of the population of Oare within the parish, the Committee also accepted the reasoning that the parish name should be amended to reflect its significance.
74. The Committee made its recommendation to ensure the area was represented in way which reflected community identity with viable administrative units for appropriate provision of local services.

### **Consultation on the Draft Recommendations**

75. 13 comments were received on the online consultation on the Draft Recommendations. 10 were in agreement, noting the simplification of the arrangements. 3 comments were received in objection, stating the parishes of Wilcot and Huish had different identities and the



historic situation should be retained. The parish council confirmed its support for the recommendation.

76. The Committee noted the comments in objection, but also that administratively the two parishes were already connected and given the very small electorate, the historic joint administration of the parishes and the responses received, it was appropriate that the two be formally merged.
77. Accordingly, after considering all responses and other factors and guidance, the Committee confirmed its Draft Recommendations in their entirety.

### **Recommendation 8**

**8.1 That the parishes of Wilcot and Huish be merged into a single parish.**

**8.2 For the combined parish to have no warding arrangements, with nine councillors.**

**8.3 For the combined parish to be called Wilcot, Huish and Oare.**

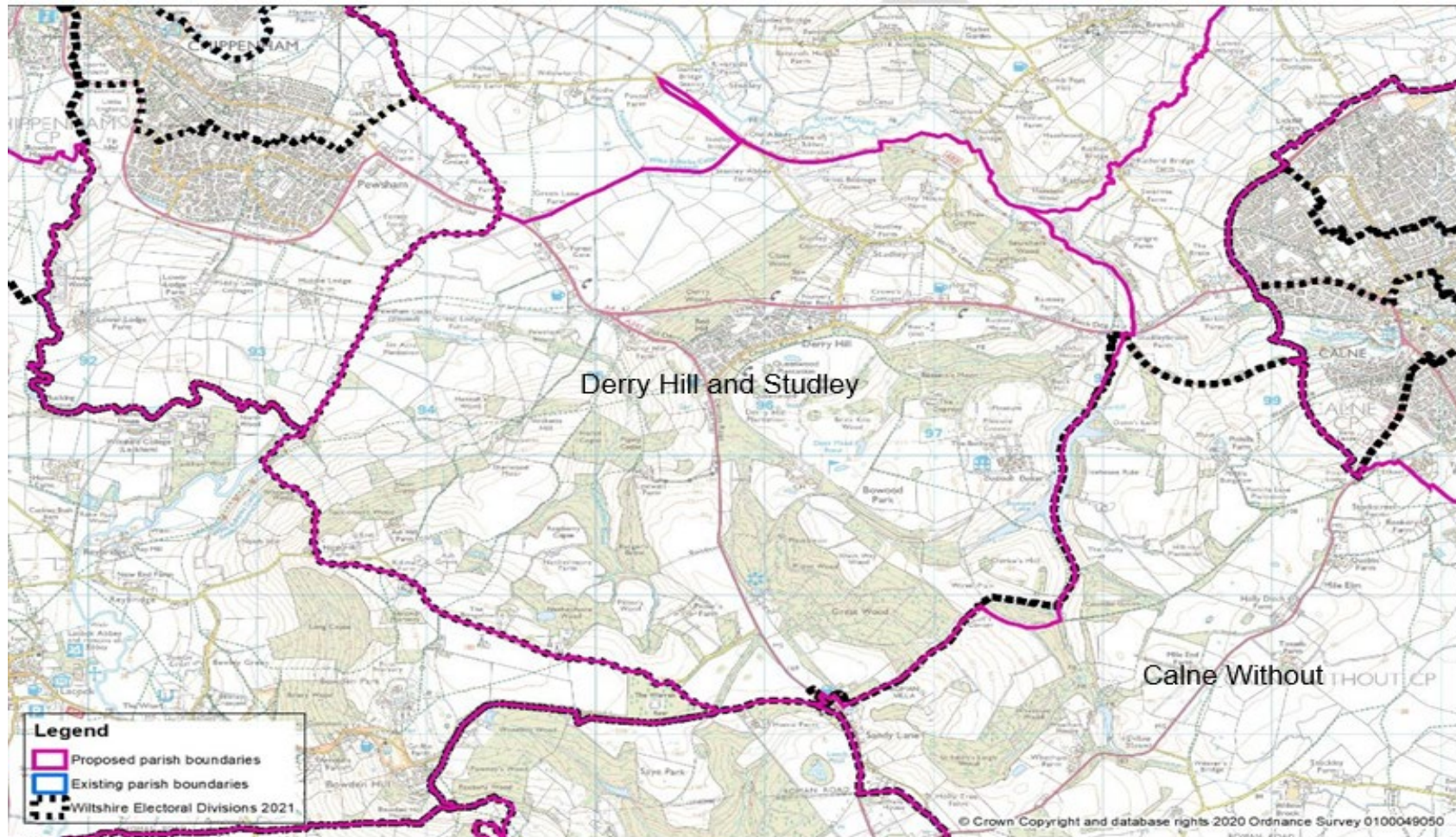
**Reasons: Paragraph 80, 81 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

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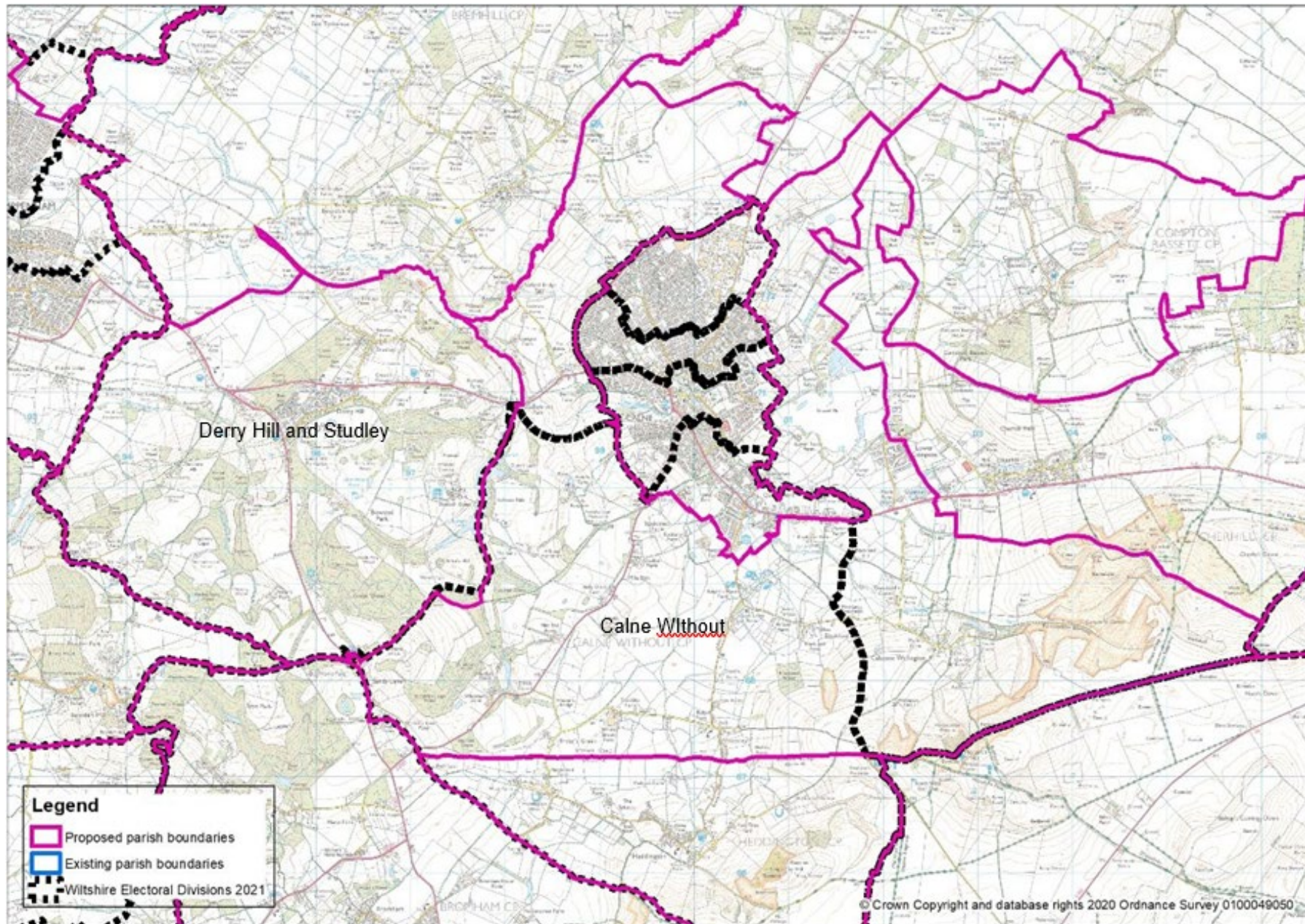
## **Calne Without: Derry Hill and Studley**

### Background

78. On 24 September 2019 the Committee received a petition from electors of the parish of Calne Without requesting that a new parish be formed around the area of Derry Hill and Studley. The petition contained 673 signatures, with further signatures later submitted. The new parish was proposed to contain nine councillors, without wards, comprising the area currently contained within the West and Pewsham wards of Calne Without in their pre-May 2021 form.







79. The request along with further information submitted by the petitioners argued that Derry Hill and Studley made up a viable, identifiable community and that the large, disparate parish of Calne Without did not reflect its community interests or identity. It was stated that over time significant development growth around Derry Hill had changed the character of the area from that of the rest of the parish, and that effective governance would be improved for the area if it had its own parish council.

Pre-consultation information gathering

80. During the pre-consultation stage Calne Without Parish Council resolved to oppose the creation of the new parish, stating that the area would not be better served by a separate council, and that there would be a detriment to the remainder of Calne Without should Derry Hill and Studley form their own parish.

81. 84 responses were received for the online survey during the pre-consultation with a further 11 written responses. 59 of the survey results were in favour of the new parish, 22 against, and 3 suggested amendment.

82. Arguments in favour included that Derry Hill and Studley had a very different character and population scale than other parts of the parish compared to when the parish was formed and that existing boundaries were no longer appropriate. It was stated that the proposal enjoyed majority support across the Derry Hill and Studley area, and that the remainder of Calne Without would form a sustainable parish in its own right. It was felt that the new parish would be more appropriate for the community interests and identity, was more representative and had simpler governance arrangements. It was also stated that the proposal was more locally focused for needs which would be distinct from other parts of the parish and that at present Derry Hill could be overruled despite forming the largest part of the parish.

83. Arguments in objection included that the area was well served under the current arrangements and would not see improved governance under a separate parish council. It was argued that the area was stronger when combined with the other communities of Calne Without, and that the remainder of Calne Without would be adversely affected by the creation of the new parish. It was also stated that the proposed area additionally included rural elements which would not fit well within the larger Derry Hill if not also within a wider Calne Without parish which had other more rural aspects.

84. The three comments proposing amendment all suggested that more information was needed before a decision could be made, for instance consideration of potential merger of the remainder of Calne Without with other parishes should Derry Hill form its own parish.

85. In forming its Draft Recommendations, the Committee noted that in terms of electorate there would be viable numbers for sizable parishes for both Derry Hill and Studley and the remainder of Calne Without, with over 1000 electors in each, should a new parish be formed. It noted the significant representations made in the form of the petition in support of a new parish and in representations that had been received. It considered that compelling evidence had been provided that a new parish would be viable and sustainable, as

well as supported by a significant number of the existing parish and particularly those within the proposed area of the new parish, with strong reasoning provided in relation to both governance and community identity and interests.

86. The Committee also noted, however, that the impacts on the remainder of Calne Without would be severe. It had been said that there would be no community facilities remaining in the parish, with an impact on provision of some local services, and it was noted that additional requests had been received from Calne Town Council for other elements of Calne Without to be transferred to the town, potentially reducing the scale of the parish still further. Comments received at various stages had raised concerns to the Committee about the viability of the parish should a new one be created, notwithstanding the electorate numbers, with some suggestions that the disparate nature of its communities meant that it might be appropriate for them to be combined with other parishes in the area such as Heddington or Bremhill, should Derry Hill and Studley form a new, separate parish.
87. Despite the strong case made for a new parish, the Committee therefore resolved not to recommend its creation in response to the petition at the present time. This was because of the need to further consider the potential impacts on the remainder of Calne Without, and whether it would be appropriate in the event of creation of a new parish for the remainder of Calne Without to be combined in some fashion with other neighbouring parishes, which it felt needed to be determined at the same time as creation of any new parish. As those parishes were not included in the terms of reference for the 2019/20 review, it was not possible to consider and make recommendations regarding those aspects. The Committee did not consider it appropriate to secure effective and convenient governance nor reflect community interests and identity by creating a new parish until a wider review could be undertaken.
88. It was noted that whilst a request for a review of an area already reviewed within the last two years could be refused, the Committee could voluntarily decide to hold another review sooner if it considered it appropriate to do so. Therefore, it determined to recommend holding a further review including Calne Without, Calne and surrounding parishes when it was practicable to do so.
89. Although the Committee was not required to consult upon a proposal to take no further action at this time, it did include it as part of the consultation in order to canvass views.

#### Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

90. 37 responses were received for the online survey during the consultation. 21 agreed with the recommendation, which included a future review, with some respondents clear they were in favour of a new parish in principle at the conclusion of such a review and some others opposed. 1 response suggested an amendment to remove a future review and not support creation of a new parish. 15 responses were in disagreement, mostly as a result of being in favour of creation of a new parish.
91. The parish council supported the recommendation, acknowledging that the Committee had recognised compelling evidence and support for a new parish council for Derry Hill and Studley, but also the need to consider the matter more broadly in the context of all

surrounding parishes.

92. The lead petitioner also provided a detailed response, emphasising that Calne Without would be viable in population without Derry Hill and Studley even if new housing were transferred to Calne town and could easily continue to fund community services, but also suggested a number of options for a future review if viability was a concern of the Committee. The representation also stated community cohesion within the existing parish, including cross use of services, was not high which was one reason why the present administrative arrangement was not reflective of current identity or community interest.
93. Taking account of all responses and relevant factors including guidance, the Committee confirmed its initial Draft Recommendation. As arrangements for the remainder of Calne Without in the event of a new parish being created had not been consulted upon, it would not be possible for Full Council to approve its creation in advance of the next elections, as further consultation on particular governance arrangements for both the new and remaining parish would in any case be required.

### **Recommendation 9**

- 9.1 To NOT recommend creation of a new parish at Derry Hill and Studley during the 2019/20 Community Governance Review.**
- 9.2 To undertake a further Community Governance Review when practicable, to include Calne Without, Calne Town, and other surrounding parishes, so that all potential options and impacts could be considered.**

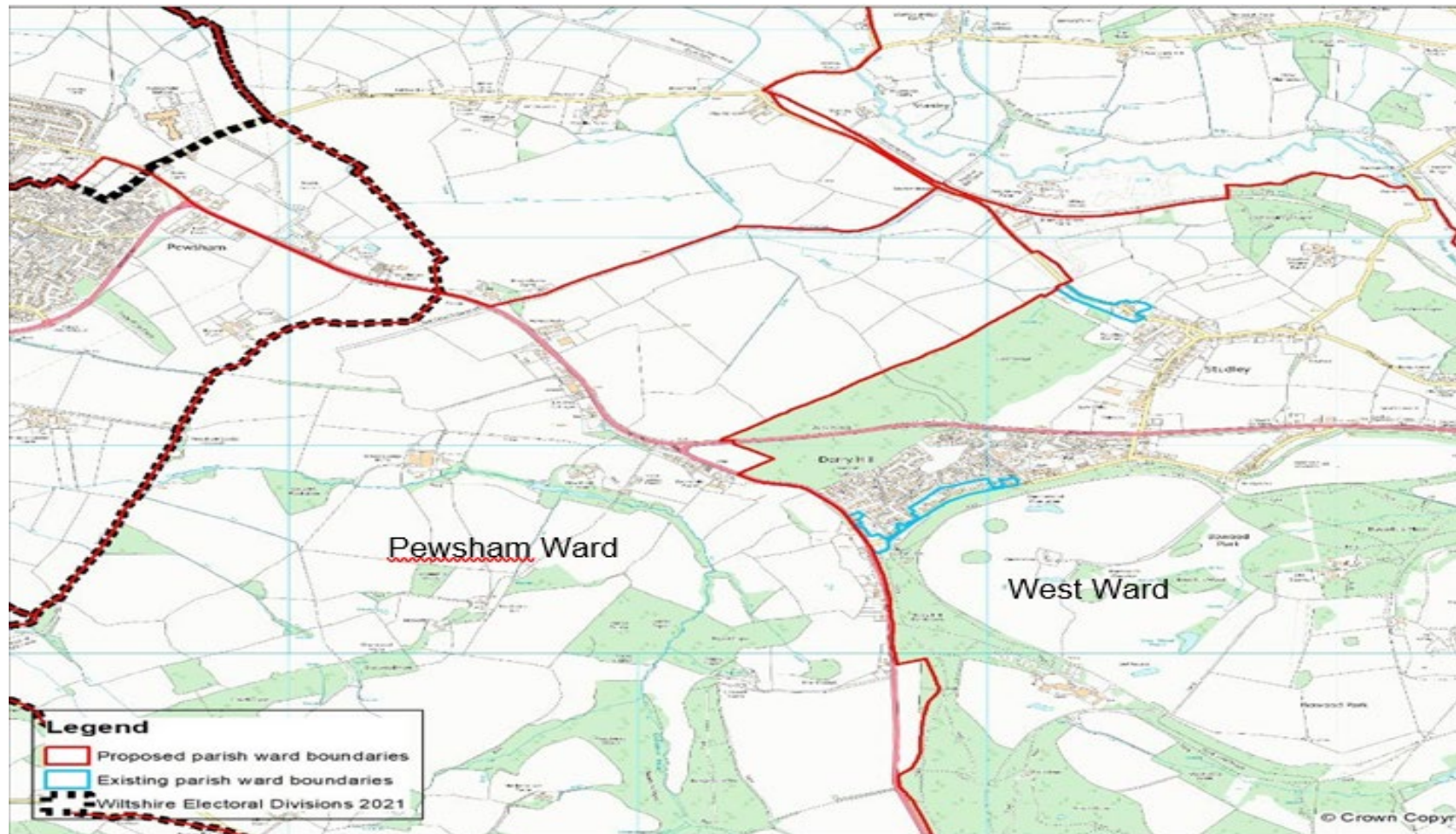
**Reasons: Paragraphs 63, 73, 74, 80 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews.**



## **Calne Without: Warding**

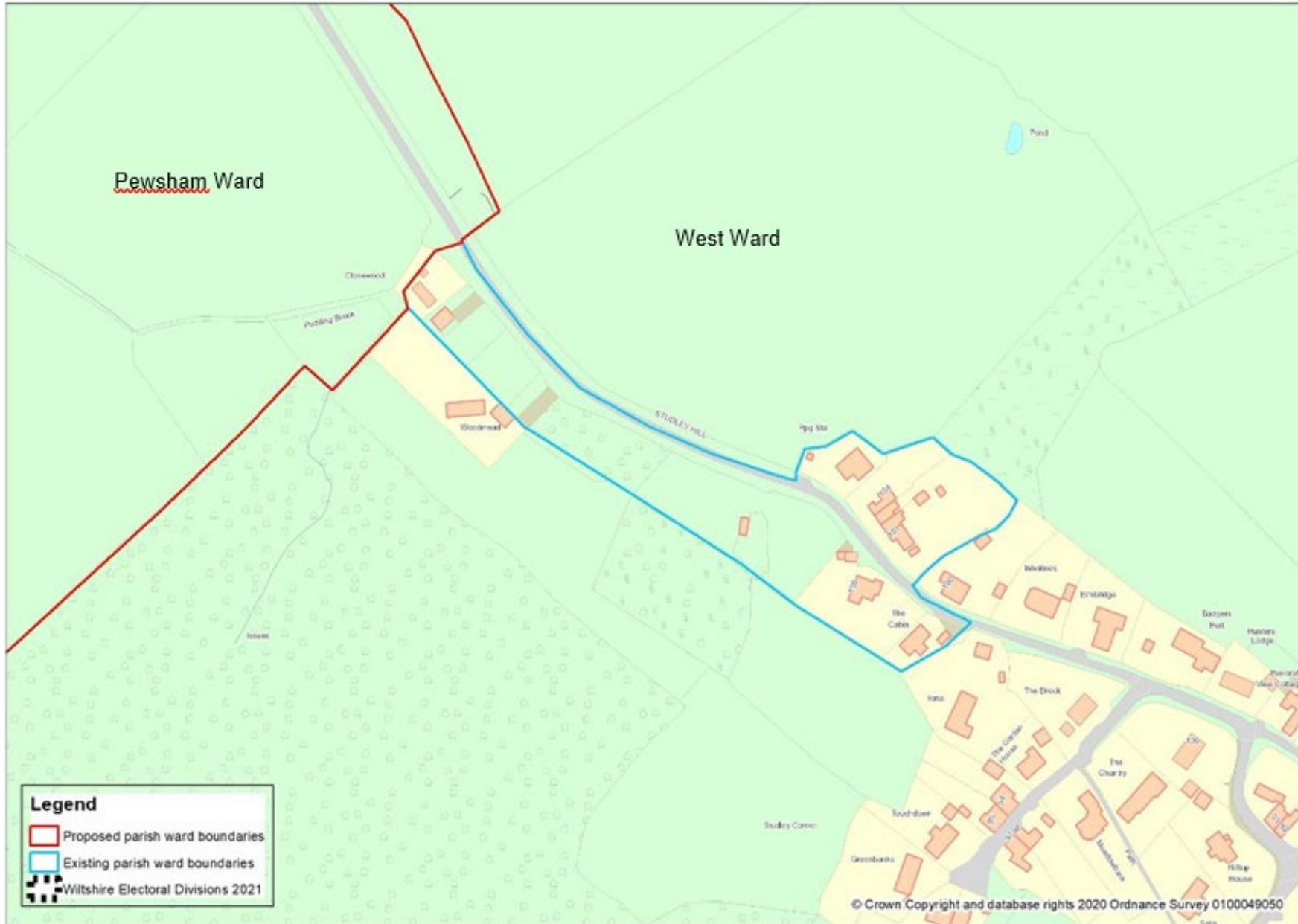
### **Background**

94. A request had been received from Calne Without Parish Council seeking amendment to the boundary line between the existing wards of Pewsham and West.
95. Although the decision of the LGBCE in the Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council had made consequential changes to the parish warding arrangements of Calne Without, the boundary line between the West and Pewsham Wards had remained the same.









Pre-consultation information gathering

96. During the pre-consultation phase the Parish council argued that the existing boundary was anomalous and unclear to residents on the ground.
97. 49 responses were received for the online survey during the pre-consultation phase. 30 were in favour, 1 suggested amendment, and 18 were against. The amendment suggestion was that there should be no wards. Of the comments listed as against many were in fact comments opposing creation of a new parish, with the remainder stating there was no need for a change.
98. In forming its Draft Recommendations Committee agreed with the proposal and reasoning of the Parish Council that the existing boundary did not provide effective and convenient governance and was clearly anomalous, and therefore agreed to recommend that the boundary be amended.

Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

99. 9 comments were received for the online consultation on the Draft Recommendations, all in agreement. One of those comments suggested that the number of councillors for the wards should also be reviewed.
100. Taking account of all the representations and relevant factors including guidance and noting its intention to review the entirety of the parish at a future date which would include reviewing councillor numbers, the Committee resolved to confirm its initial Draft Recommendations in order to ensure effective and convenient governance.

**Recommendation 10**

**10.1 To amend the boundary between the West and Pewsham Wards of Calne Without Parish Council as shown above.**

**Reasons: Paragraph 84, 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

*In order for this change to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*



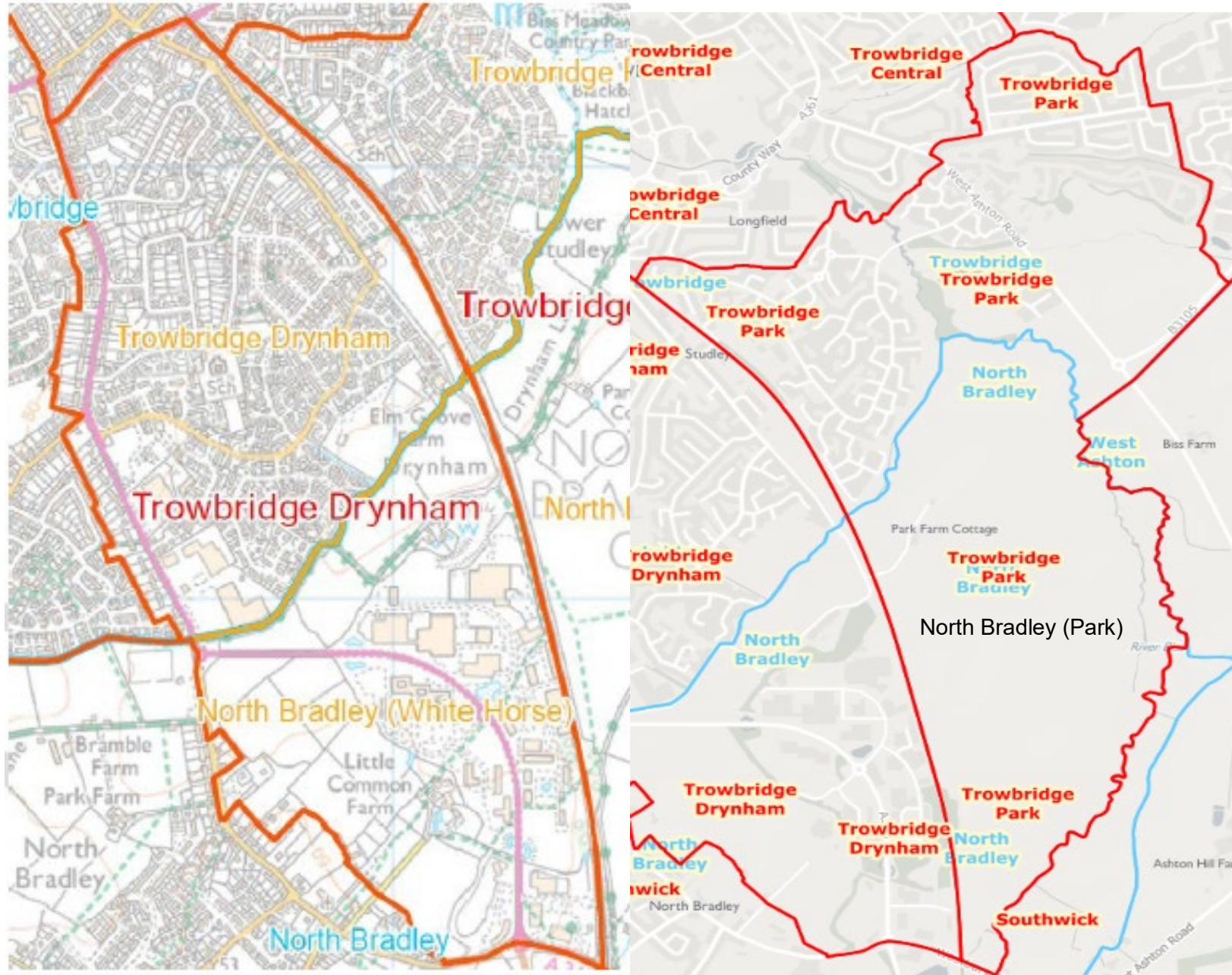








102. As the incoming arrangement divided the parish between urban and non-urban based Electoral Divisions, the Committee resolved to survey the views of interested parties on whether it would be appropriate to transfer the wards of White Horse (North Bradley) and Park (North Bradley) to Trowbridge Town Council.
103. Additionally, a request was received by Trowbridge Town Council for transfer of similar areas of land from North Bradley to Trowbridge, along with other requests relating to other parishes detailed in the Draft Recommendations document.
104. The map overleaf shows the incoming White Horse ward of North Bradley Parish Council, which together with the Trowbridge Drynham ward of Trowbridge Town Council is coterminous with the boundary of the Trowbridge Drynham unitary Electoral Division. Trowbridge Town Council had proposed a similar proposal for the area, which included only land surrounding the White Horse Business Park and allocated housing site areas along Drynham Lane.
105. The map overleaf also shows the incoming Park ward of North Bradley Parish Council, which together with the Trowbridge Park ward of Trowbridge Town Council is coterminous with the boundary of the Trowbridge Park unitary Electoral Division. Trowbridge Town Council had proposed including the area within the town boundary. Taken together, the areas include approximately 12-14 electors as of 2019.



106. North Bradley Parish Council opposed any transfer of land from North Bradley to Trowbridge, stating that the areas had been reviewed in 2016/7 and another review was not warranted. They stated that the Neighbourhood Development Plan for the parish was very near completion, that the proposal did not take into account planning core policies and that there was not a requirement for parish and unitary boundaries to coincide, with much of the development in the area years away. It also noted at the time of objection that the Wiltshire Housing Sites Allocation Plan had not been adopted.

Pre-consultation information gathering

107. The Park and White Horse proposals were surveyed separately. There were 11 responses to the online portal regarding the proposal to transfer the White Horse ward. 9 were in disagreement, 2 in agreement. There were 7 responses to the online portal regarding the proposal to transfer the Park ward. 5 were in disagreement, 2 in agreement.

108. In both cases comments in agreement included that new development areas would identify more with the town, and the boundaries needed to be and likely to remain identifiable. Comments in disagreement included highlighting the village status and mostly rural nature of North Bradley.

109. In considering the matter, the Committee noted that the Wiltshire Housing Sites Allocation Plan had received approval from a government inspector and been adopted by Full Council as of 25 February 2020, and although the line in this area had been amended slightly, the housing allocation within it was increased. It noted that whilst updated electorate projections for the area by 2021 were lower than during previous estimates, significant development was still anticipated across the area of the wards by 2021 and 2024. It had felt that statutory guidance was clear that it was not merely the situation as it existed which was relevant but also any change to the number and distribution of electors within five years of the start of the review, taking into account planning permissions, local plans and assumptions.

110. In relation to Neighbourhood Development Plans, the Committee advised that any adopted plan would not prevent, if appropriate, the transfer of an area from one parish to another. The plan would remain in force for the area set out for the entire period of the plan unless the parishes themselves decided to restart the process, and plans could apply to more than a parish area. As a distinct legal process, it therefore would not obviate the need for an assessment on whether the statutory criteria were met for the purposes of a Community Governance Review.

111. Furthermore, whilst it was the case that it was not a requirement that unitary Electoral Divisions align to a parish boundary, the Committee had to consider whether to do so would be appropriate in this instance. With the area to consist primarily of significant new development it was considered the nature of the incoming community would find its interests and identity more in line with the urban area of the town than with the more rural parish.

112. It was also considered that alignment with the unitary Electoral Division, in this instance, would also provide more effective and convenient governance by reducing warding arrangements and the split of a parish between urban based and rural based divisions. Notably, if development in the area were at a slower pace than projected, then the ward of White Horse, which will legally be in existence for the next election because of the unitary Division, might contain so few electors as to be an unreasonable and unviable ward. However, projections at the time indicated significant development would take place, further altering the character of the area from a more rural one.
113. Therefore, the Committee considered that to transfer the areas in question would be appropriate in terms of community cohesion as well as protecting the rural identity of the parish. It would also represent what would predominantly be new urban development on the edge of the town rather than a natural part of the rural parish community, reflected a clearer dividing line between the two parishes. It recognised the changing nature of the community as a result of development and would provide clearer and more effective governance.
114. Taking into account particularly the need to consider the likely position within five years, the Committee was not persuaded by arguments that the proposals were premature. The Wiltshire Housing Sites Allocation Plan had been adopted and formed a relevant factor, and it was not the case that development was only discussed in general terms for the area.
115. Furthermore, in seeking to protect the separate character and distinctiveness of the parish of North Bradley, the Committee felt that its identity would be under threat if the area in question were not transferred as this would blur the boundary between the two parishes considerably and alter the nature of the presently rural parish. The separation between the two parishes would therefore be eroded by not transferring the area as the nature of the area changed in the coming years, which would undermine arguments on maintaining a distinction between the town and the parish.
116. The Committee had not supported the proposals from Trowbridge Town Council. Transferring an area other than that aligned with the unitary Division would require consent of the LGBCE to amend the unitary Division boundary, as the remaining area could not be appropriately warded separately. The LGBCE had rejected such a proposal when setting the Division Boundary, and the Committee considered it unlikely they would alter that position given no additional reasoning. It would also result in an even more reduced North Bradley ward within the Trowbridge Drynham Division, maintaining the split of the parish between multiple divisions, which given other recommendations would not be providing effective governance.
117. The area of the Park ward additionally was not only an allocated housing site but included part of an area covered by outline planning permission for up to 2500 dwellings. Updated electorate projections for the relevant five-year period were reduced, but it was still projected that significant development would be taking place in the area within the period that was required to be considered, and

considerable development beyond it. This was also definitively an urban extension of the town area and its character and community would align to the urban area rather than the rural parish.

118. Therefore, the Committee considered that it was appropriate and reasonable for both the Park and White Horse wards to be transferred to Trowbridge Town Council.
119. With the proposed transfer of these two areas and noting the historic lack of warding arrangements for the parish, the Committee agreed to recommend that the parish of North Bradley continue to be served by eleven parish councillors, without wards.

#### Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

120. 62 responses were received for the online consultation on the Draft Recommendations. 1 comment was in agreement, with 61 in disagreement. Around 30 emailed or physical submissions were also provided, either in objection or raising legal or procedural matters.
121. Although the areas proposed to be transferred only involved 12-14 electors, and notwithstanding the overall size of the village, there was clearly a significant level of local objection to the proposals among the parish area.
122. Nevertheless, the key question for the Committee was whether the arguments presented and the evidence which existed met the statutory criteria to justify transfer of the areas in question.

#### Effective and Convenient Local Governance

123. The Committee had considered that North Bradley parish being divided between 3 Electoral Divisions was not an effective or convenient governance arrangement. This was particularly so given its history of being unwarded, and that even if development projections for development before the May 2021 elections were borne out, the parish would find itself with 3 wards of 9 councillors, 1 councillor and 1 councillor respectively, with the vast majority of the electorate at that election within the larger ward. If it were the case the development projections were not borne out, an even higher proportion of the electorate would be within the larger ward, and there would be wards with fewer than 10 of the electorate. If the new development was built as projected for 2021 and 2024, the proportions in the ward would be closer. However, this would be as a result of the changing of the character of the Park and White Horse wards from very sparsely populated, rural-focused elements, to being dominated by urban expansion.
124. Whilst it was therefore not a requirement, the Committee considered the statutory criteria would support a reduction in the number of wards and alignment with the unitary Electoral Division as a more effective and convenient arrangement. The question was whether there were also factors of community interest or identity to support such a transfer, or whether those reasons opposed a transfer.

#### Village and rural identity

125. Many of the comments including a form letter signed by several dozen respondents stating that they wanted to keep North Bradley as a rural village. Others also expressed considerable opposition to proposals for or the prospect of sizable development in the parish. The Committee noted these comments and the strength of feeling among those respondents, but it was the case that the outcome of the



review would not impact whether or not there was development within the parish or have any impact upon its rurality. Therefore, opposition to the principle of there being development or parts of the parish becoming more urban in character would not be affected by the review.

126. Most of the areas of the two wards were covered by allocated housing sites or extant planning permissions, and the character of those areas becoming more urban than rural would be entirely unaffected by which parish they were contained within. It was the view of the Committee that the evidence demonstrated that within the period required to be considered and increasingly so beyond that period, the areas in question would predominantly be urban in character, focus, identity and interests.
127. If there were an argument that the rural and village identity of North Bradley should be maintained and preserved, then the Committee felt that this would be an argument in favour of transferring the wards in question, particularly the Park ward covered in its entirety with outline planning permission for up to 2500 dwellings. Without such a transfer, the incoming development which was predicted would fundamentally alter the character of the parish from that which the respondents wished it to be, that is, a rural village.
128. Therefore, a dividing line of the unitary Electoral Division marking the town boundary and the parish boundary would provide a distinction between the rural and predominantly urban areas which would be confused without such a transfer, thereby diminishing the character and identity of the village as a distinct entity. Existing housing along Drynham lane could at present claim a rural setting, but evidence from planning projections suggested that this would change within the required period. As such, while a desire for rurality could not be maintained for all the parish, the proposed transfers would ensure that the parish as a whole remained a rurally focused one. Even if that were not the case, the area was most accessible from Trowbridge, remote from the remainder of the parish and separated by the White Horse Business Park which was of a more urban character. A transfer would therefore preserve the identity of the parish as respondents wished, and not to do so would not prevent the development that was opposed.

#### Premature

129. It was claimed by some respondents that the proposals were premature. The Committee considered that the use of the word 'premature' could appear to indicate acceptance of the principle of the transfer of the area should housing be delivered within the period required by the statutory guidance, but that there was disagreement on whether it would be. Even if that were not the intended argument, the Committee did not agree that that proposals were premature, noting that those making requests could do so after only a few years had elapsed, when in most cases there would not be significant changes. Small changes in situation could justify a transfer, if it was considered the statutory criteria were met.
130. Arguments submitted had emphasised no 'current' justification for a change. However, as will be set out below whilst the current situation is relevant and was carefully considered, the developing situation is also of relevance. Guidance provides that reviews should include consideration of electorates based on, among other factors, local development frameworks.
131. Under the guidance Electoral forecasts should be based on information known at the start of the process. This was communicated to all

parties through information packs linked in notifications to interested parties. The Committee noted that several parties disagreed with the forecasts, including updated forecasts, and had regard to those views. However, it did not consider that sufficient evidence had been provided to suggest the forecasts from Wiltshire Council's Spatial Planning Team could not be relied upon.

132. It was additionally stated that until the precise line of where houses would be sited was known, a decision could not be made. The Committee was not persuaded by this argument given the period which could be considered, which would not have been set at such a length if such a level of proscription was a requirement.
133. The parish council had further stated that moving the land would not speed up expansion of the housing supply. This had not in any case been a consideration of the Committee, which was concerned only with the statutory criteria and taking account of national guidance. Whilst the parish council made many comments regarding not seeking to prevent all development, the Committee was not concerned with preventing or supporting development, only assessing the developing situation.

#### Future housing

134. Representations were received stating that the Committee's consideration of a period of five years from the start of the review was in error, and therefore there was no justification for the proposed changes for the reasons as set out above. This was not the case. The Committee was required by paragraph 170 of the guidance to consider both the current position and that within a period of five years from the start of the review, and this explicitly included consideration of incoming housing development which would have an impact on the character and interests of the areas. It states: '*This ensures that the review does not simply reflect a single moment but takes account of expected population movements in the short- to medium-term*'. If only the current situation were relevant there would be no need for such guidance. A reading of the entirety of the guidance in context, moreover, supported the council's position that future projections were of relevance, as per the last review undertaken by the council.
135. The Committee had to balance these interests. It concluded that on the basis of the governance improvements as outlined, the overwhelming number of residents of the area would be predominantly urban and look to the town for facilities and interests. The very small number of present residents, and that many objections received were to the principle of development which was not affected by the review, added to determining that the changing nature of area was sufficiently strong to meet the statutory criteria in respect of community interests and identity.

#### Neighbourhood plan

136. The parish council in particular raised many objections to the proposals in respect of their Neighbourhood Plan, which had completed its final stage and was awaiting confirmation in a referendum, which had been delayed as a result of Covid-19. At its current stage the plan had considerable weight in planning matters.
137. Nevertheless, a Neighbourhood Plan whether adopted or unadopted was not determinative in a Community Governance Review. The two were distinct processes, and if it were considered that the statutory criteria for a review were met, a parish boundary could be

amended notwithstanding the Neighbourhood plan. This in no way invalidated the plan, which if adopted would remain in effect for the plan period, or if not yet adopted would not affect its ability to be adopted by those within the proscribed area, noting that such plans were not restricted to covering only a parish area.

138. Whilst as noted it was the case that the emerging plan had significant weight in decision making for the area to which it related, the review would not affect the weight given to that plan, nor would its weight in planning matters mean no review could make a decision on community governance grounds.
139. That being the case, the Committee was not persuaded that the status of the developing Neighbourhood Plan could or should prevent the transfer of any part of North Bradley to Trowbridge, if it considered under the statutory criteria that this was justified. Planning policies including the Core Strategy referencing the town and the village also did not mean the parish boundaries were inviolable, otherwise there would be no means to conduct a Community Governance Review at any time, even if appropriate. If it was the case the local development framework or neighbourhood plans prevented such a transfer, this would be set out in legislation.
140. The Committee was not persuaded that the plan as a reflection of community of interest overcame the factors in favour of a transfer, particularly given the review would not have an impact on the plan.

#### Other Development Areas

141. Some comments were received stating that there had been no changes since the last review in 2015/16, and that there was an inconsistency of approach in including the areas within White Horse and Park wards but not other areas of proposed development around the town, some of which it was stated were in a more advanced state.
142. It was the case that there has been a change in circumstances since the last review of the area. The unitary Division changes had resulted in consequential changes to the parish boundaries with resulting governance implications, the area proposed to be moved including allocated housing sites or had outline planning permission and were projected by Spatial Planning to deliver housing within the required periods, which had not previously been the case. The question was whether those changes in circumstances justified the transfer of the areas under the statutory criteria, not that there had been no change, as this was not the case even though development had not yet begun.
143. In respect of other areas of proposed development around Trowbridge, various proposals had been reviewed by the Committee when preparing its Draft Recommendations. The issue was in recommending a transfer both statutory criteria needed to be met. Other areas of proposed development included areas where it was not predicted there would be sufficient development within the period required to be considered to have an impact in community terms, lay outside the incoming Electoral Divisions for Trowbridge and so where to transfer them would require ineffective and inconvenient governance arrangements, or both. Whilst some of those areas, it was felt, might be appropriate to transfer to the Town at some point, it had not been felt that this was justified under the criteria at the present time. The proposed areas of White Horse and Park wards were distinct, in the view of the Committee, in meeting both statutory criteria

if they were transferred.

Other

144. Several responses were received, and representations made, regarding a number of properties along Woodmarsh set back from the road which were included in the Trowbridge Drynham unitary Electoral Division and therefore the White Horse ward, unlike other properties facing onto Woodmarsh where the boundary line ran behind the properties. An amendment was presented to the Committee at its meeting on 13 August 2020 to exclude those few areas, noting in particular that they were accessed off Woodmarsh.
145. The Committee accepted that there was a stronger argument for the inclusion of the areas behind the houses facing onto Woodmarsh than the houses that faced on to it. However, those few properties had been included in the White Horse ward by the LGBCE. Given the timescales of the review and for implementation of any changes in advance of the May 2021 elections, if the Committee recommended an alternative proposal not including those properties this would require additional consultation before it could be considered by Full Council, and if consented to by the LGBCE then adjustment, albeit minor, of the unitary Electoral Division.
146. The Committee considered whether, in effect, leaving the entire area of the White Horse ward within North Bradley at this time was appropriate, as this would be the result of any further delay. Whilst this could be reasonable for the few properties in question, they considered whether it was reasonable for the projected, more urban properties that would be incoming into the area to not be transferred as that would be appropriate for their community interests and identity and of the ward as a whole, in the view of the Committee.
147. Additionally, the Committee also noted the many expressed concerns that development would not be delivered as swiftly as projected. Were this the case, not transferring the area of the White Horse ward would mean wards of between 5-10 electors at the next elections. This would not be a viable governance arrangement, and even if not likely if that was an identified risk, this affected the balance of arguments.
148. In considering both statutory criteria, the Committee therefore considered that on the whole the character and interests of the White Horse ward would be such that a transfer was justified. It would be a more effective and convenient governance arrangement. Not transferring that area ahead of the May 2021 elections would on balance not be appropriate in terms of the overall ward character and interests and identity and could risk a wholly unacceptable governance situation.
149. However, whilst it considered that the situation and criteria on balance supported a transfer of the identified area at this time, the Committee did consider that the precise line of the boundary could possibly be reviewed again in future, particularly when the lines of development would be clearer, and to correct any minor anomalies arising from the lines drawn by the LGBCE.
150. Several responses also raised that the proposals would result in the graveyard of the Baptist church which was set back from the church itself, being in one parish, and the church proper in another. The Committee did not consider that this was a significant factor, in particular noting that the area would no matter the outcome of the review be in different unitary Electoral Divisions, and parishes

frequently collaborated on issues affecting their borders.

151. There were comments that the proposals reduced the size of North Bradley parish by 25%. This would not in itself be an argument in support or objection of any proposal, as if it were appropriate under the criteria entire parishes could be merged together, with no limit on scale of a transfer. It was a question of whether the circumstances in a particular case justified a level of transfer, whatever its scale, under the statutory criteria.
152. Comments were made regarding Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions and the pooling of those contributions to the town rather than the parish. In accordance with legislation, the neighbourhood proportion of CIL received by parish councils must be used to '*support the development of the area*'. This means that CIL funds received by a parish council (because development is taking place in their area) can be used to fund infrastructure in a different administrative area where it will support that development, as well as being used to fund infrastructure within the parish itself. This principle remains in place regardless of the outcome of the review and helps ensure neighbourhood CIL funds can be invested in infrastructure projects impacted by development regardless of which parish they may be located in. There is an expectation in Planning Practice Guidance that parish councils should work together to agree on CIL infrastructure spending priorities where necessary.
153. Specific CIL receipts already committed at the time of any boundary change will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, considering their community impacts but also a number of other factors, for instance the purpose of assets, restrictions on disposals, and monies already spent. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 provides a methodology for resolving issues associated with parish assets, liabilities, and functions in the event of parish re-organisation.

#### Recommendation

154. In conclusion, and taking into account all responses and relevant factors, including guidance, the Committee resolved to uphold its Draft Recommendations in their entirety.
155. Although there were significant numbers of objections from local residents, the Committee resolved that for reasons of effective and convenient local governance, and recognising as appropriate the fundamentally changing nature of the majority of the area in question in respect of identity and interests, and the detrimental impact on governance of there being no decision at this time, on balance of the evidence and strength of arguments the changes were appropriate and should be supported. In particular, the proposals would help preserve the identity and character of North Bradley as a rural parish adjacent to a large town for the long term, whereas its character and identity would be significantly altered if the change were not supported.

#### **Recommendation 11**

- 11.1 That the area of the White Horse ward of North Bradley Parish Council be transferred to Trowbridge Town Council as part of the Trowbridge Drynham ward, coterminous with the Unitary Division of the same name, and to be represented by three town**



**councillors.**

- 11.2 That the area of the Park ward of North Bradley Parish Council be transferred to Trowbridge Town Council as part of the Trowbridge Park ward, coterminous with the Unitary Division of the same name, and to be represented by three town councillors.**
- 11.3 That North Bradley Parish Council be comprised of eleven parish councillors, without warding arrangements.**

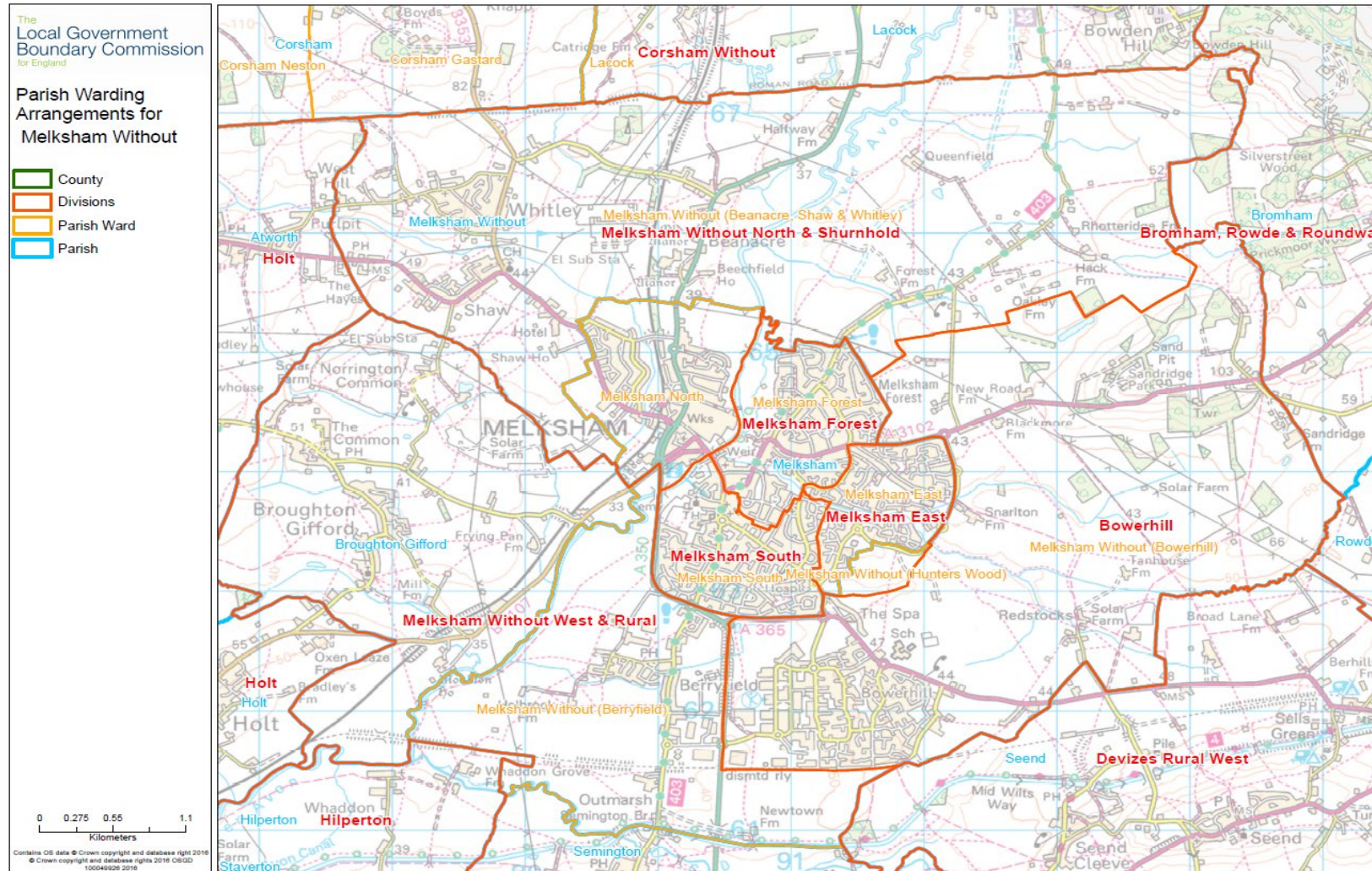
**Reasons: Paragraphs 54, 73, 78, 80, 83, 84, 85 and 170 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

*In order for these changes to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*

**Melksham Merger**

**Background**

156. As a result of the Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England imposed new Electoral Divisions to take effect at the next elections in May 2021. Those new divisions for Melksham and Melksham Without are shown below along with parish warding arrangements, which were subject to consequential changes by the LGBCE.



157. The changes resulted in the ward of Hunters Wood, Melksham Without, being within the Melksham East Division, with the remainder of the parish contained within the Melksham Without North and Shurnhold Division, Bowerhill Division, and Melksham Without West and Rural Division.
158. As the incoming arrangement divided the parish between urban and non-urban based Electoral Divisions, the Committee resolved to review the governance arrangements for both parishes.

Pre-consultation information gathering

159. During the first stage of the review the Committee received a request from Melksham Town Council proposing that the parishes of Melksham and Melksham Without be merged into a single parish. This was surveyed during the pre-consultation stage as Scheme 24 Option A. The Town Council also suggested as a potential alternative that the parishes be merged, with the exception of the areas of Shaw and Whitley, which could form their own parish if desired or appropriate. This was surveyed during the pre-consultation stage as Scheme 24 Option B.
160. During initial stages of the review the Committee also received detailed proposals for additional merger options from members of the public. This included a merger of the two parishes excepting the areas of Shaw, Whitley and Beanacre, which was surveyed during the pre-consultation stage as Scheme 24 Option C. A further detailed proposal was that there be a merger of the two parishes excepting the areas of Shaw, Whitley, Beanacre and Blackmore, which was surveyed during the pre-consultation stage as Scheme 24 Option D.
161. Melksham Without Parish Council did not support any merger proposal option.
162. There were 253 responses for the online survey during the pre-consultation, with 6 additional representations. Respondents were able to indicate support for more than one option on the survey.
163. 123 responses marked that they were opposed to any merger proposal. 86 marked that they were supportive of Option A, a full merger, however several dozen of these also marked they were opposed to any merger, and the narrative responses provided indicated that opposition to a merger was the principal reason for responding in most of those cases. 30 responses marked that they were supportive of Option B. 25 responses marked that they were supportive of Option C. 11 responses marked that they were supportive of Option D.
164. Arguments in support of a merger generally included, but were not limited to, that the boundary between the two parishes had become anomalous as a result of recent housing development, linking the town with the urban conurbations at Berryfield and Bowerhill, necessitating joint management between the parishes. Also, with the continued expansion of Melksham, the needs of the combined community would continue to align and grow, and a combined authority would enable more efficient administration and decision-making for all the Melksham area communities. Community cohesion would be best served by a single council working together.
165. Arguments in support of the more limited merger proposals included, but were not limited to, that an area of Shaw and Whitley, Shaw,

Whitley and Beanacre, or Shaw, Whitley, Beanacre and Blackmore, would be able to form viable parishes with suitable governance arrangements based on closer geographical links and great shares character than with either Melksham town or the areas of the existing parish of Melksham Without to the south of Melksham. It was argued that the areas contained community facilities, were already in some cases recognised as distinct through warding arrangements and compared favourably in scale with many other parishes. Some of the areas would have little new housing development which meant they had different character than other areas within the parish. Conversely, Berryfield and Bowerhill no longer had significant buffers with the town and looked more to the town for facilities and services.

166. Arguments opposed to any merger included but were not limited to that the existing parish contained an effective organisation of multiple communities which shared the characteristics of being close to but not part of the town of Melksham. It was argued those communities retained strong identity as their own entities within the cooperation of the parish despite recent housing development, and that governance for those areas would not be improved by a merger. It was stated those areas which did form part of the urban extension of the town were proposed to be transferred, but that the remainder formed a cohesive community and that there was no benefit to creating an artificially large unit.
167. In forming its Draft Recommendations, the Committee considered the many strong representations from both parishes and interested parties relating to the various merger options. It was acknowledged on all sides that both parishes were viable and effective entities which undertook a great deal of work for and in their communities. The Committee therefore needed to determine if there were sufficient grounds to consider that it was in the interests of the wider community and the smaller communities within it to be represented by a single council, or a different arrangement of multiple councils. It needed to consider whether this was an appropriate reflection of the identities of the area, and whether it would improve the effective and convenient local governance of the area.
168. The Committee noted in the first instance that there was not agreement between the two parish councils regarding the desirability of a merger, though it also noted that in any such merger it would not be a takeover of one parish by another, but creation of a new legal entity of shared electorate, assets and responsibilities.
169. The Committee recognised that identification of a community is not a precise or rigid matter, and that even the focus of day to day activities may not be reflected in how people feel about their own community identity, for example where local community interest may lie within a part of a town with a specific identity rather than the entirety of the town, and that it is possible for a parish to be based on small but discrete housing areas rather than a wider urban area. The key issue for the question of the merger was whether the disparate communities had sufficient connecting identity and interests, to suggest that one overarching council was appropriate. Melksham Without Parish was itself an existing example of such an arrangement, comprising a number of communities not all with good direct connections with one another, combined for administrative and community purposes. Community cohesion, with people

having a stake in their local area based on a natural community, were key considerations.

170. The Committee noted that there were some strong arguments supporting a contention that the Shaw and Whitley area in particular, possibly including Beanacre, and the Bowerhill area, represented discrete natural communities.
171. Shaw, Whitley and Beanacre to the north of Melksham Town were considerably smaller and different in character than Bowerhill, and the area more generally was not identified as potentially to include significant new levels of housing and community development in years to come as was the case with areas more to the south and east of the town.
172. Bowerhill, meanwhile, was a sizable community that as a result of infill development was adjoining the urban area of the town and comprised a significant portion of Melksham Without Parish which might well increase in years to come, much larger than any other section of the parish.
173. Both these areas appeared to have a strong sense of identity as discrete areas and had local community facilities and groups for the provision of services, as to a lesser extent did areas such as Berryfield.
174. However, whilst the Committee noted that these areas in particular could possibly make a strong case for establishment as their own parish areas, and had sufficient electorates and facilities to be viable as such, there did not appear to be a significant local desire for this to be undertaken as an option. There were also strong arguments made regarding the effectiveness and combined community cooperation and identity of the various Melksham Without communities.
175. As such, whilst the Committee noted the arguments of the Town Council as to the benefits of a potential merger, particularly with the larger, more urban area of Bowerhill, it was not persuaded that the evidence was sufficiently strong to justify on the basis of community interest and identity the merger of Melksham Without with Melksham.
176. Although alternative, less full merger options had been provided in detail, the Committee was also not persuaded that those options were justified for the same reasons. Although an alternative balance of the split between the two parishes had some weight of argument as the Committee had noted above, it was the case that strong connections remained between the various areas of Melksham Without including Shaw, Whitley and Beanacre, and that there did not appear to be significant support for a revision of those arrangements.
177. In recommending that there be no merger the Committee had noted that cooperation between the two parishes on important considerations was possible without a merger. Although urban extension of the town, which was projected to increase in years to come, was in some areas making the boundary between the two parishes more complicated, there remained a strong sense of identity for retention of a separate parish council, and it did not appear that there would be any governance improvements sufficient to overcome the negative impact for several areas in relation to community identity.



178. Furthermore, despite the individual community identities that existed in some areas, the Committee did not consider the evidence strong enough to recommend significant adjustment of the division between the two parishes as suggested by other merger options. Nor did it consider that the reduction or elimination of buffer land between Bowerhill and Melksham as a result of development sufficient grounds to combine that area alone with the town, given the evidence of strong community identity distinct from the town that was received, and that that identity included its combination with other parts of Melksham Without.
179. Although it had resolved to recommend not to proceed with a merger, the Committee also noted that were any merger to go ahead consideration would need to be given to any warding arrangements, which would require consent of the LG BCE, and if partial mergers were suggested this might also require requesting amendment of the unitary Electoral Divisions. Additionally, there would be a significant period required to facilitate the legal and administrative joining of the parishes, their liabilities and assets.

Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

180. There were 82 responses to the online consultation on the Draft Recommendations, and 1 additional representation. 70 responses were in agreement with the recommendation, 10 in disagreement and 2 suggested amendment.
181. Comments in agreement included that the town and parish had different requirements and characters and that both parishes were well served under the current arrangements. The rurality of much of Melksham Without was noted and that this would be preserved. It was stated that a merger would lead to an unwieldy entity, that the two parishes were able to cooperate fully where needed already, and that a merger would not reflect the interests of the communities.
182. Comments in disagreement included that there was much duplication between the two parishes and that amalgamating the two would be more effective and convenient, as this would reflect that the area was one community with many parts. It was stated the boundaries between the two parishes at present was unclear, and a single council would have clearer administration. It was also stated that the outlying communities all looked to the town.
183. Of the suggested amendments, one was a comment relevant to Recommendation 13 regarding the area north of Sandridge Common, mistakenly stating it was far from the other areas proposed to be transferred to Melksham. The other suggested amendment was that a decision regarding the merger be deferred, believing that the impact of Covid-19, allocation of funding for a bypass around Melksham, consultations on local Neighbourhood Plans, further applications of housing development, and other reasons, meant that there needed to be further engagement and consideration.
184. The Committee did not agree with a suggested deferment. There had not been a restriction of opportunity for people to comment on the consultation, Neighbourhood Plans were a separate process, and reviews should be completed within 12 months and could consider matters within a five-year period of the start of the review. Any decision would not, in any case, remove the potential for a future review

of the areas if requested and appropriate at that time.

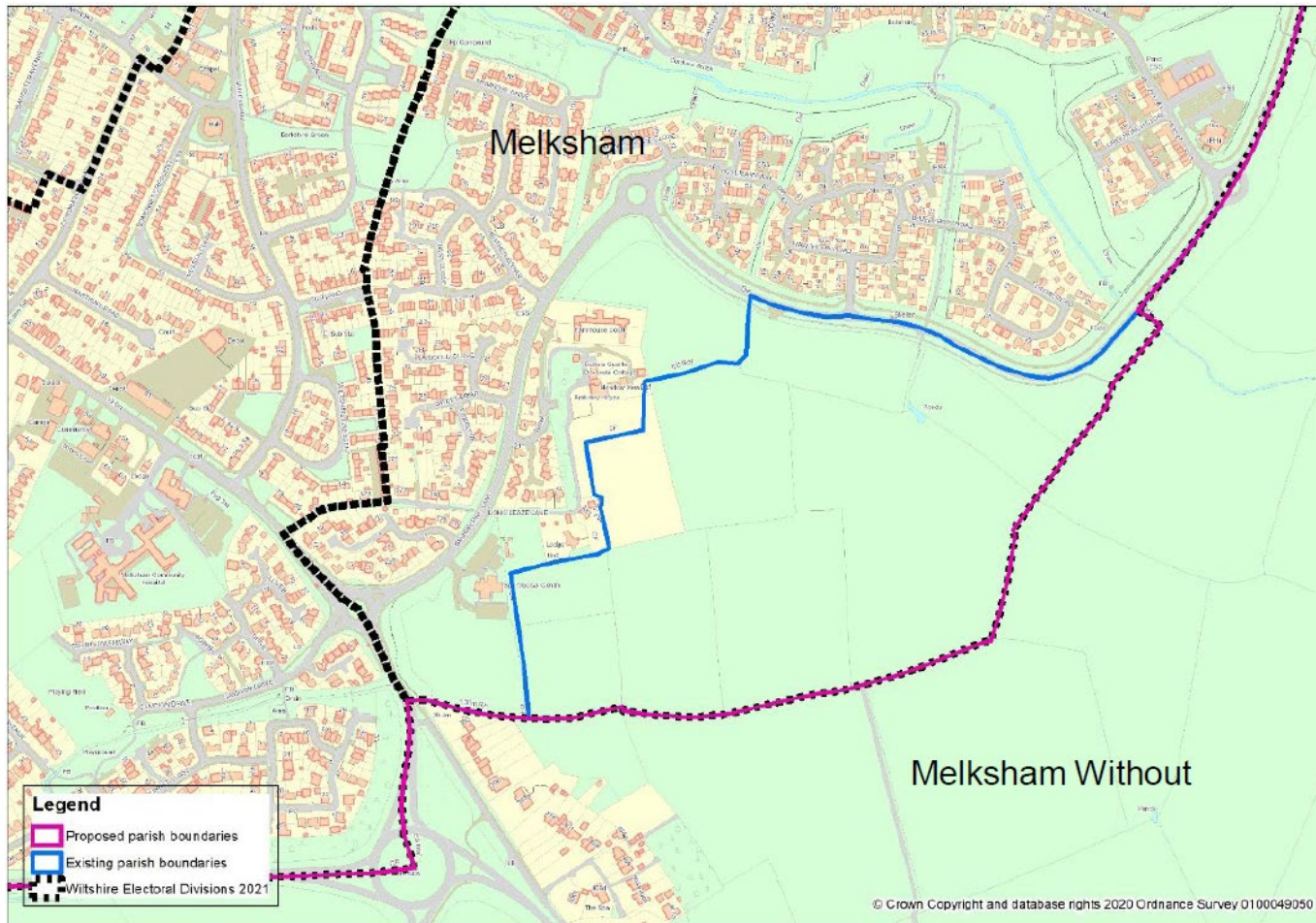
185. However, the Committee noted that the possibility of a merger had been explored in depth twice since 2015. Given the reasons for its Draft Recommendation not to merge the two communities, the Committee considered it unlikely that a further review would be justified for a considerable time, although this would be for a future Council and Committee to consider.
186. Therefore, taking into account all the responses and other relevant factors including guidance, the Committee resolved to confirm its Draft Recommendation. It did not consider sufficient evidence had been provided to justify merging the two effective parish councils in terms of effective and convenient governance. Nor did it consider that their community interests would be improved by such an arrangement or that there was sufficiently strong public support for such a proposal, particularly among Melksham Without parish, to suggest such a merger was appropriate in terms of community identity or interests.
187. As the Committee had not consulted on the precise arrangements in the event of merger of the parishes, for example warding arrangements, it would not be possible for Full Council to approve such a merger in advance of the next elections, as further consultation on particular governance arrangements would be required before such a decision could be made.

## **Recommendation 12**

### **12.1 To NOT recommend a merger of Melksham and Melksham Without Parishes.**

**Melksham and Melksham Without**  
**Background – Hunters Wood**

- 188. The Committee also received requests for transfers of land from Melksham Without to Melksham, requested by Melksham Without Parish Council.
- 189. The first of these involved the Hunters Wood ward of Melksham Without, which was to be within the Melksham East unitary Electoral Division. The Committee had also requested the proposal be reviewed, due to the parish being divided between the town and parish-based divisions.



190. Whilst the Town Council believed a merger of the two parishes was the most suitable option, it had supported the inclusion of the area of the Hunters Wood ward within the urban based Electoral Division during the Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council.
191. It was stated that the area in question was part of the urban expansion of the town, whose community focus and identity would be indelibly linked with the town. Its presence within the unitary division also meant that there would be more effective governance if the ward were merged with that of Melksham East in order to be coterminous with that division.

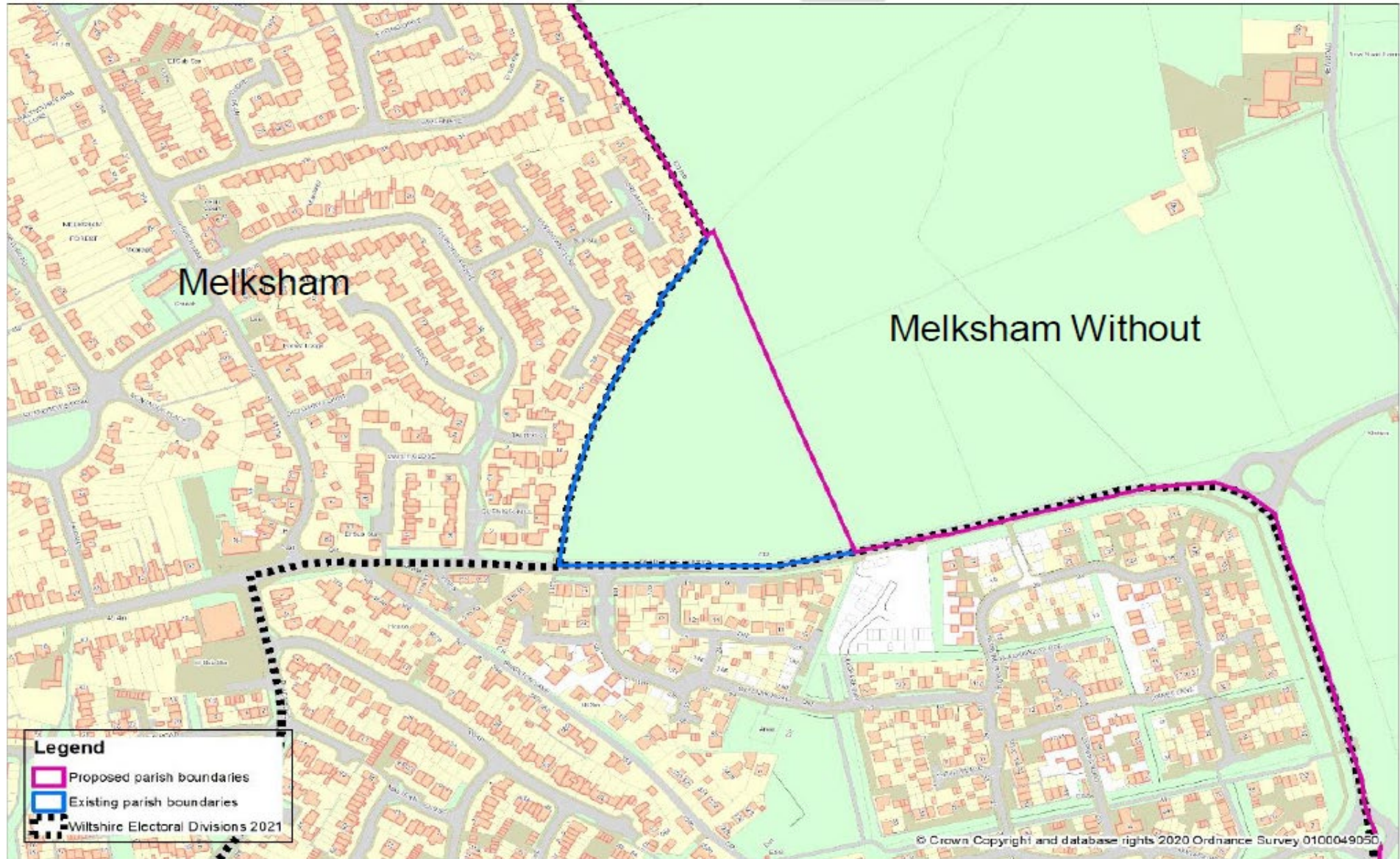
Pre-consultation information gathering

192. During the pre-consultation survey 68 responses were received. 30 were in agreement. Of 2 comments stating amendment, neither in fact proposed any amendment, with 1 supportive of a merger of the two parishes and another commenting on the survey itself. 36 responses stated they were in disagreement with the proposal. However, many comments in agreement and disagreement were also in fact comments relating to the full merger proposals, though others did comment on the area as an extension to the town through new housing development.
193. In forming its Draft Recommendations, the Committee was persuaded by the arguments in support of the transfer, for reasons of community cohesion, the natural boundary between the town and the parish, governance improvement and recognising the development growth of the community, noting in particular the support of both parish councils to the principal of the move given comments during the Electoral Review.

Background – Land north of Sandridge Common

194. The Parish Council had also proposed that area referred to as the land north of Sandridge Common also be transferred to the town, and the Committee had agreed to review it as well.
195. The Town Council, again whilst preferring a merger of the two parishes, had been in agreement that the area represented a part of urban development growth aligned with the other town communities and had supported its inclusion in an urban based Electoral Division during the Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council, although this had not been enacted by the LGBCE.
196. The area in question does not fall within the incoming Melksham East Division, but instead the Bowerhill Division. The LGBCE made that decision despite Wiltshire Council, Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council all arguing that for reasons of governance and community it was more appropriately included within Melksham East.







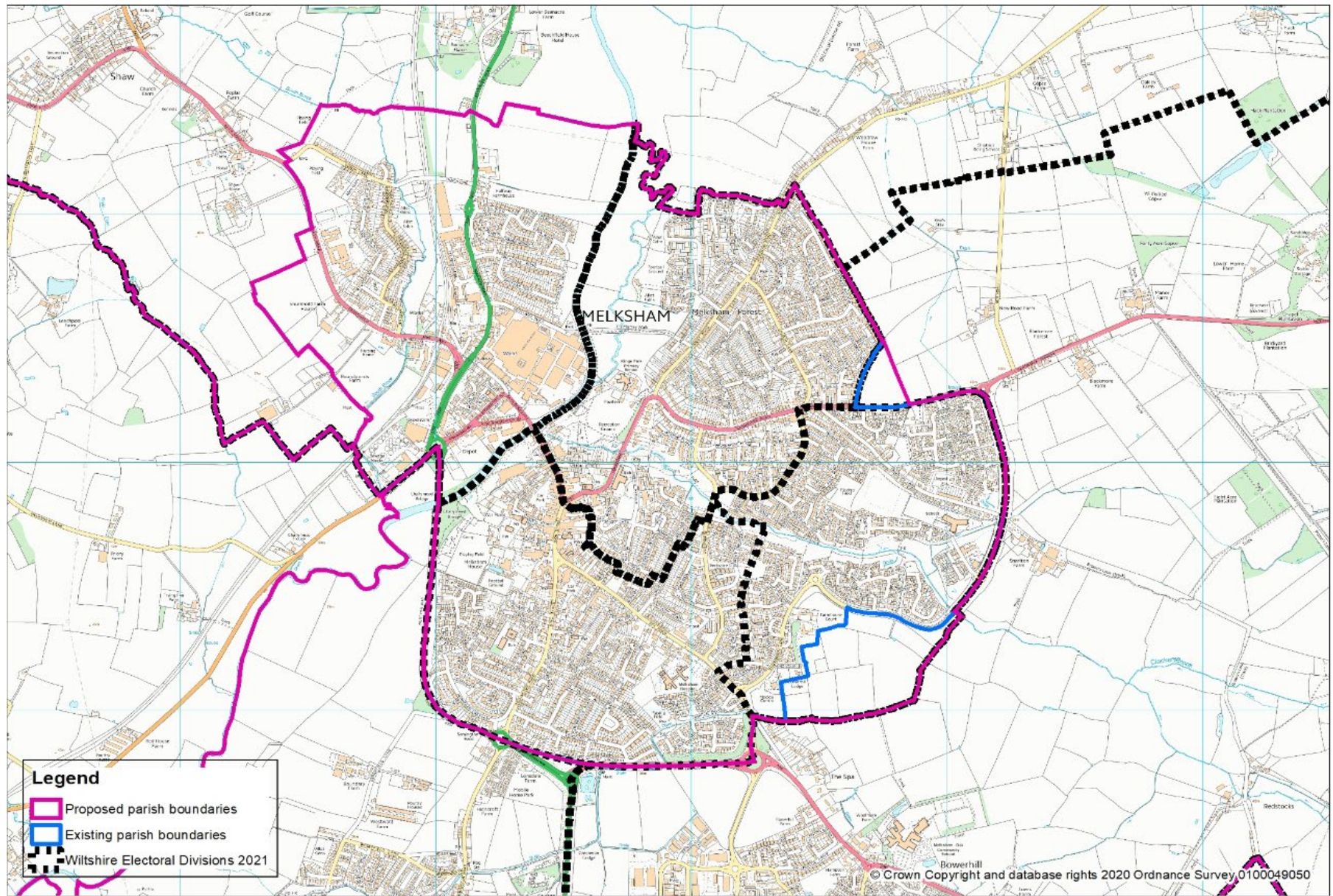
Pre-consultation information gathering

197. 63 responses were received during the pre-consultation survey. 33 stated they were in agreement, 27 in disagreement, and 2 suggesting amendment. As with the preceding proposal, 1 of the amendments was in fact a comment on the survey itself. Another was in relation to the merger proposal. Many of the comments in agreement and disagreement were also in relation to the merger proposals. However, there were comments that it was an extension of the urban area and that it would fit appropriately with either Melksham East or Melksham Forest.
198. In forming its Draft Recommendations and taking account of the details above and particularly the views of the parish council, the Committee considered that despite that decision of the LGBCE the evidence supported a transfer of the area from the parish to the town.
199. The Committee also noted that the area was projected to contain approximately 172 electors by 2024. To transfer those electors from Bowerhill Division to Melksham East Division would result in them having variances of -10/11% and 2% respectively. Eleven incoming Divisions had variances at or over 10%, ranging from -11% to 13%. Given the very strong evidence that the area in question was an urban extension of existing town communities and of shared character or interest with the town, the Committee recommended that the LGBCE be strongly urged to consent to the transfer.
200. If the parish transfer were approved, the Council could then request the LGBCE amend its Electoral Divisions, noting as above that this would not exceed variances that the LGBCE itself had approved elsewhere in the council area. Further development within the Bowerhill division was also possible, which would further reduce its high variance over time.

Additional matters

201. Having made those two recommendations, the Committee had considered whether any additional changes were justified for governance arrangements. For the town it was recommended that all wards remain with the same number of town councillors, but the boundary of Melksham East Ward would be adjusted to be coterminous with the Melksham East Division as would be requested of the LGBCE.
202. For Melksham Without Parish Council it had been requested that the additional parish councillor who would have represented Hunters Wood instead represent Beanacre, Shaw and Whitley, for a total remaining at thirteen.
203. The Committee considered that the proposal was reasonable and suitable for governance, including preventing the dominance of the Bowerhill ward. It also supported a request from the Parish Council that the ward be named Beanacre, Shaw, Whitley and Blackmore, to more properly reference all the communities in that area.

Proposed Parish Map



Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

204. 41 responses were received during the consultation on the Draft Recommendations. 32 were in agreement, 7 in disagreement, and 2 proposed amendments.
205. Comments in agreement included that the proposals reflected the changing situation with new development, that the areas aligned more with the character and interests of the town, that the division of parish councillors as suggested was appropriate and that the areas were contiguous with the town.
206. Comments in disagreement included opposing the transfer of the land north of Sandridge Common, that a merger would a more appropriate solution than continually adjusting the boundary between the two parishes, and an objecting comment that recommendation 13.5 would add an additional parish councillor. This was not the case, as the overall number of councillors for Melksham Without would remain the same under the proposals.
207. The comments suggesting amendment each requested the area covered by recommendation 13.2, land north of Sandridge Common, not be included in the transfer. One comment suggested it was too far from other areas transferrable to Melksham East. The Committee did not accept that this was the case, noting the views of the parish council and that the area was a new urban development immediately adjacent to Melksham East and Melksham Forest.
208. Therefore, considering all responses received and other relevant factors including guidance, the Committee resolved to confirm its Draft Recommendations in their entirety. The areas in question were built up areas of the town in character and governance would be improved by changing the boundaries to reflect that position. Adjustments to the parish warding arrangements were reasonable, and it was appropriate to request amendment to the Divisions to avoid ineffective and anomalous warding within the town.

**Recommendation 13**

- 13.1 That the area of the Hunters Wood Ward be transferred to the parish of Melksham as part of the Melksham East Ward.**
- 13.2 That the area known as the 'Land north of Sandridge Common' as shown above be transferred to the parish of Melksham as part of the Melksham East ward.**
- 13.3 That the Melksham East Ward continue to contain four town councillors.**
- 13.4 To request that the LGBCE amend the Melksham East Division to be coterminous with the proposed revised Melksham East Ward.**

**13.5 That the Beanacre, Shaw and Whitley Ward be increased to four parish councillors, and be renamed Beanacre, Shaw, Whitley and Blackmore.**

**Reasons: Paragraph 73, 78, 80, 83, 84, 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

*In order for these changes to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*

## **Summary of Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1**

**1.1 That the area of the Netherhampton East Ward be transferred to the parish of Salisbury City as part of the Salisbury Harnham West Ward.**

**1.2 That the Salisbury Harnham West Ward be increased from two city councillors to three.**

**1.3 That the total number of councillors for Salisbury City Council be increased from 23 to 24.**

**1.4 That the parish of Netherhampton be comprised of five councillors, without wards.**

Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 78, 80, 83, 84, 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

*In order for these changes to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*

### **Recommendation 2**

**2.1 To merge the Salisbury City wards of Salisbury Milford and Salisbury St Mark's and Bishopdown into a single ward of three councillors, coterminous with the Salisbury Milford Electoral Division. The city ward would also be called Salisbury Milford.**

Reason: Paragraph 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

*In order for this change to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*

### **Recommendation 3**

**3.1 That the area of the Barrow Farm Ward of Langley Burrell Without be transferred to Chippenham Town Council and merged with the Chippenham Hardenhuish Ward, to continue to contain three town councillors.**

**3.2 That the area of the Rawlings Farm Ward of Langley Burrell Without be transferred to Chippenham Town Council and merged with the Chippenham Monkton Ward, to continue to contain three town councillors.**



**3.3 That the area of the Showell Ward of Lacock be transferred to Chippenham Town Council and merged with the Chippenham Lowden and Rowden Ward, to continue to contain three town councillors.**

**3.4 That Lacock Parish Council be comprised of eleven councillors, without warding arrangements.**

**3.5 That Langley Burrell Without Parish Council be comprised of five councillors, without warding arrangements.**

Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 78, 80, 83, 84, 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

*In order for these changes to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*

#### **Recommendation 4**

**4.1 That the area including Cedar Lodge, Allington, shown above be transferred from Kington St Michael to Chippenham Without.**

Reason: Paragraph 84 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

#### **Recommendation 5**

**5.1 That the area shown above be transferred from the parish of Manningford to the parish of Woodborough.**

Reason: Paragraph 84 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

#### **Recommendation 6**

**6.1 That the parish of Pewsey be represented by a parish council comprising 21 parish councillors, without warding arrangements.**

Reasons: Paragraphs 84, 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

## **Recommendation 7**

**7.1 That the area shown above be transferred from the parish of Pewsey to the parish of Wilcot, Huish and Oare (see Recommendation 8.3).**

**7.2 That the Electoral Divisions of Pewsey Vale West and Pewsey be amended to be coterminous with the parish boundaries of Pewsey and Wilcot, Huish and Oare.**

Reason: Paragraph 84 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

*In order for these changes to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*

## **Recommendation 8**

**8.1 That the parishes of Wilcot and Huish be merged into a single parish.**

**8.2 For the combined parish to have no warding arrangements, with nine councillors.**

**8.3 For the combined parish to be called Wilcot, Huish and Oare.**

Reasons: Paragraph 80, 81 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

## **Recommendation 9**

**9.1 To NOT recommend creation of a new parish at Derry Hill and Studley during the 2019/20 Community Governance Review.**

**9.2 To undertake a further Community Governance Review when practicable, to include Calne Without, Calne Town, and other surrounding parishes, so that all potential options and impacts could be considered.**

Reasons: Paragraphs 63, 73, 74, 80 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews.

## **Recommendation 10**

**10.1 To amend the boundary between the West and Pewsham Wards of Calne Without Parish Council as shown above.**

Reasons: Paragraph 84, 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

*In order for this change to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*

## **Recommendation 11**

**11.1 That the area of the White Horse ward of North Bradley Parish Council be transferred to Trowbridge Town Council as part of the Trowbridge Drynham ward, coterminous with the Unitary Division of the same name, and to be represented by three town councillors.**

**11.2 That the area of the Park ward of North Bradley Parish Council be transferred to Trowbridge Town Council as part of the Trowbridge Park ward, coterminous with the Unitary Division of the same name, and to be represented by three town councillors.**

**11.3 That North Bradley Parish Council be comprised of eleven councillors, without warding arrangements.**

Reasons: Paragraph 54, 73, 78, 80, 83, 84, 85 and 170 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews.

*In order for these changes to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*

## **Recommendation 12**

**12.1 To NOT recommend a merger of Melksham and Melksham Without Parishes.**

## **Recommendation 13**

**13.1 That the area of the Hunters Wood Ward be transferred to the parish of Melksham as part of the Melksham East Ward.**

**13.2 That the area known as the 'Land north of Sandridge Common' as shown above be transferred to the parish of Melksham as part of the Melksham East ward.**

**13.3 That the Melksham East Ward continue to contain four town councillors.**

**13.4 To request that the LGBCE amend the Melksham East Division to be coterminous with the proposed revised Melksham East Ward.**

**13.5 That the Beanacre, Shaw and Whitley Ward be increased to four parish councillors, and be renamed Beanacre, Shaw, Whitley and Blackmore.**

**Reasons: Paragraph 73, 78, 80, 83, 84, 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews**

*In order for these changes to take effect the Local Government Boundary Commission for England would need to provide consent.*