

**Community Governance  
Review 2021/22**

**Final Recommendations of  
the Electoral Review  
Committee**

**October 2022**

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## **Links**

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

[Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review 2021/22](#)

[Guidance on Community Governance Reviews](#)

[Pre-Consultation Information Pack – Committee Meeting 8 February 2022](#)

[Draft Recommendations](#)

[Initial Draft Recommendations Consultation Information – Committee Meeting 31 May 2022](#)

[First Additional Draft Recommendations Consultation Information – Committee Meeting 5 July 2022](#)

[Second Additional Draft Recommendations Consultation Information – Committee Meeting 28 September 2022](#)

[Final Recommendations of the 2019/2020 Community Governance Review](#)

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 questions or other details.

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

1. A Community Governance Review is a process under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 which allows for the review of Town, City, and Parish Council governance arrangements, and for any appropriate changes to be made. This ensures that they continue to be reflective of the identity and interests of local communities, and that they are as efficient and effective in their governance as possible.

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

2. A Community Governance Review can make changes to parish governance when there is clear evidence to do so, including changing:
  - Parish areas: such as changes to boundaries between parishes, mergers of two or more parishes, or creating a new parish out of part of one or more existing parishes;
  - Electoral arrangements within parish areas: such as changes to the number of Parish Councillors, or introducing/changing parish warding arrangements;
  - The name of a parish;
  - The grouping together of parishes under a common Parish Council;
  - Other governance arrangements.
3. A Community Governance Review cannot change the Electoral Divisions of Wiltshire Council. However, it can request those Divisions be amended by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (“The LGBCE”), who are responsible for such decisions, to align to any changed parish boundaries.

### **The Electoral Review Committee**

4. Wiltshire Council has established the Electoral Review Committee (“The Committee”) to oversee any Community Governance Review process.
5. 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.
6. The members of the Committee at the time of the latest Committee meeting setting these Final Recommendations were as follows:

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling (Chairman)

Cllr Allison Bucknell

Cllr Jacqui Lay

Cllr Ashley O’Neill

Cllr Ian Thorn

Cllr Gavin Grant (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Ernie Clark

Cllr Ian McLennan

Cllr Paul Oatway QPM

Cllr Stuart Wheeler

7. For the avoidance of doubt Cllr Thorn did not vote on any proposals affecting Calne Town, where he is a Town Councillor, and Cllr Grant did not vote on any proposals affecting Malmesbury, where he is a Town Councillor. At various meetings both made statements or answered factual questions in their capacity as members of the relevant councils, though not necessarily on that council’s behalf, but did not vote on any committee decision affecting them.

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

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

**Background to the 2021/22 Review**

11. From 2017-2019 the LGBCE undertook an Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council. While this retained the number of divisions at 98, the changes as approved by Parliament made consequential changes to many town and parish governance arrangements.
12. 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 reviews were necessary in some areas to ensure the community governance arrangements were still reflective of local identity and interests, and were effective and convenient.
13. 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. Due to resourcing, these would be considered when the council, through the Committee, determined it was practicable to do so. Parishes were recontacted in subsequent years to confirm if they still wished to request a review of their area.
14. On 22 September 2021, Wiltshire Council published terms of reference for a Community Governance Review for the following parish areas:
  - Beechingstoke;
  - Woodborough;
  - North Newnton;
  - Wilsford;
  - Marden;
  - Patney;
  - Stanton St Bernard;
  - Malmesbury;
  - Calne;
  - Calne Without;
  - Bremhill;
  - Hilmarton;
  - Compton Bassett;
  - Cherhill;
  - Heddington;
  - St Paul Malmesbury Without.
15. The terms of reference also explicitly specified that parishes 'surrounding those listed' were also included. This was to enable complete consideration of any options which might emerge during the information gathering stage or at a later stage. Were this not the case, appropriate changes which emerged might need to be deferred to a future review, as occurred for Calne Without during the 2019/20 review, if proposals emerged which were not within the scope of the review
16. The terms of reference were updated in in December 2021, February 2022, May 2022 and

August 2022 to adjust the timescales for the review, such as to account for additional consultations to take place.

17. The Committee is able to recommend, and the Council to approve, governance changes which were not suggested by parishes or individuals, if it considers it appropriate to do so. Any such proposal would be subject to consultation before it could be approved.

### **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 unitary councillors and Parish Councils affected by any initial proposals submitted;
- Online public events for: Beechingstoke (and surrounding areas), Calne Without (and surrounding areas), and Malmesbury/St Paul Malmesbury Without;
- Online surveys for those areas potentially impacted by a change of parish in proposals as submitted to the Council.

### **Draft Recommendations and Consultations**

19. At its meeting on 8 February 2022 the Committee considered the above information and formed Draft Recommendations. These were then consulted upon between 18 March and 5 May 2022.

20. The consultation included:

- Further sessions between representatives of the Committee and affected unitary councillors and Parish Councils, on request or where this had not previously taken place;
- Public events held in Calne and Malmesbury;
- Online surveys on the Draft Recommendations;
- Letters to households in Calne Without and St Paul Malmesbury Without, and others where it was proposed they be transferred from one parish to another.

21. At its meeting on 31 May 2022 the Committee considered the above information, confirmed some Draft Recommendations and made amendments to others. Due to the extensive consultation which had already taken place, and the minor nature of the proposed amendments, in keeping with the practice as demonstrated by the LGBCE, these were then consulted upon for a shorter period from 7 June - 28 June 2022. Details are provided in the main body of this report.

22. The consultation, referred to as the First Additional Draft Recommendations Consultation, included:

- Online surveys on the first additional Draft Recommendations

- A briefing note and press release

23. At its meeting on 5 July 2022 the Committee considered the above information, and agreed to amend further its proposals in relation to minor parts of one recommendation. The Committee deferred consideration on one recommendation to a future meeting to allow for more information to be received, including representations from relevant Parish Councils.

24. At its meeting on 8 August 2022 the Committee considered that further information and agreed to amend a significant part of one recommendation and consult up on an additional proposal. Details are provided in the main body of this report.

25. It was noted at that time that extensive information gathering had already taken place. There had also been a higher response from some areas during the online only pre-consultation survey than the Draft Recommendations consultation itself, which had involved physical letters. As the Second Additional Draft Recommendations made minor changes to the previous options consulted upon, or were more limited in nature, it was agreed that the consultation on the additional Draft Recommendations would be online only.

26. The consultation on Second Additional Draft Recommendations ran from 15 August to 16 September 2022.

27. The consultation included:

- Online surveys on the second additional Draft Recommendations
- A briefing note and press release

### **Preparation of Final Recommendations**

28. Across its meetings on 31 May, 5 July, 8 August and 28 September 2022, the Committee considered all relevant information as detailed above and delegated preparation of Final Recommendations for all areas to the Director, Legal and Governance, after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.

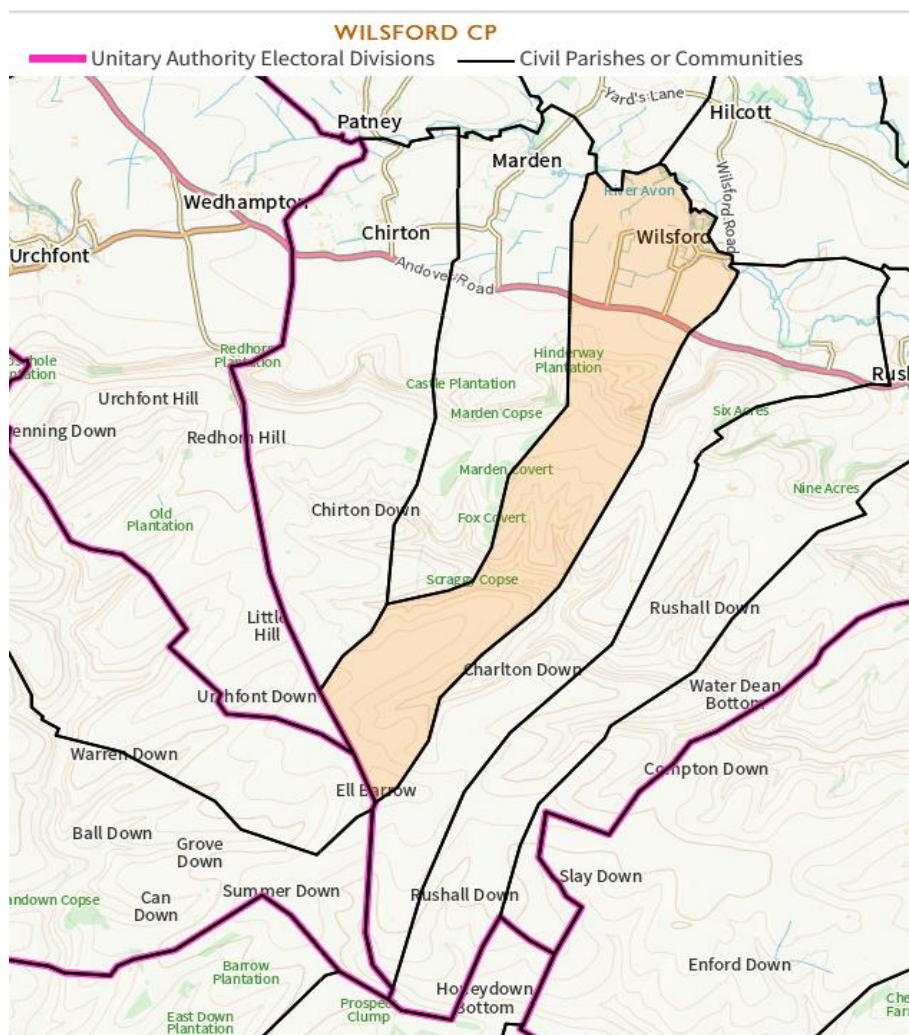
29. This document sets out the full reasoning behind those Final Recommendations, which will be presented for consideration to a meeting of Full Council on 18 October 2022.

## **FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Charlton St Peter and Wilsford**

#### **Background**

1. The Parish of Wilsford was included within a review focused on the parish of Beechingstoke, which had been without a Parish Council for several election cycles, as it borders Beechingstoke.
2. Following consideration of all relevant information and responses from a high proportion of the electors of the parish of Beechingstoke, a Parish Council was able to be reformed and the Committee agreed to make no recommendations relating to its governance arrangements, and concluded the review of that parish. There were also no recommendations for other surrounding parishes, with the exception of Wilsford.
3. As of August 2021, Wilsford had an electorate of only 66. The parish, highlighted below, is served by a Parish Council also covering the parish of Charlton, which is adjacent to the east and contains approximately 136 electors.



Map from <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/gb/>

#### **Pre-consultation information gathering and preparation of Draft Recommendations**

4. During the first phase of the review of Beechingstoke and its surrounding parishes, the Committee established the existence of an anomaly in the electoral arrangements for Charlton (now renamed Charlton St Peter, see paragraph 7) and Wilsford. As legally separate parishes,

the two would need to be formally grouped together under a joint Parish Council in order to be represented together. This was what the Parish Council believed to be the case and how it is referred to by other bodies.

5. However, where two or more parishes are grouped together, they should elect councillors separately for each parish to sit on a joint Parish Council. Instead, for an extended period, Charlton and Wilsford have been treated electorally as if they were a single parish and therefore had elected councillors to a single parish.
6. The Parish Council requested the anomaly be corrected to confirm the arrangement that had been thought to be in place. Additionally, Charlton was more commonly referred to in the community and the Parish Council as Charlton St Peter. It was requested this also be formally confirmed.
7. As changing the name of a parish can be undertaken under s.75 of the Local Government Act 1972, Full Council formally amended the name as requested by the Parish Council at a meeting on 17 May 2022. This would also avoid any potential confusion with another parish in Wiltshire named Charlton, near Malmesbury.
8. 8 responses were received to the online survey at the pre-consultation stage, all supportive of correcting the anomaly.
9. The Committee at its meeting on 8 February 2022 accepted that for reasons of effective and convenient governance the two parishes should be formally confirmed under a joint Parish Council. The current situation was a legal anomaly and the two communities as currently represented were content to remain distinct parishes under a single council.
10. As the current Parish Council has seven members, it was agreed following the meeting to recommend that Wilsford contain two councillors and Charlton St Peter five councillors.

#### Consultation on the Draft Recommendations and Preparation of Final Recommendations

11. Only 2 further responses were received to the Draft Recommendations Consultation, 1 in agreement and 1 in disagreement. No comments were provided along with the responses.
12. However, given the support of the Parish Council, the anomalous arrangement that was being corrected and previous arguments in support of confirming the grouping arrangement the Committee, having considered the responses and all relevant factors and guidance, agreed to uphold its recommendation.
13. Having considered the evidence, statutory criteria, guidance, and other relevant information, the Committee therefore agreed the following:

#### Recommendation 1

- 1.1 That the parishes of Charlton St Peter and Wilsford be grouped under a Joint Parish Council named Charlton St Peter and Wilsford Joint Parish Council.**
- 1.2 The Parish of Wilsford to contain two Parish Councillors.**
- 1.3 The Parish of Charlton St Peter to contain five Parish Councillors.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

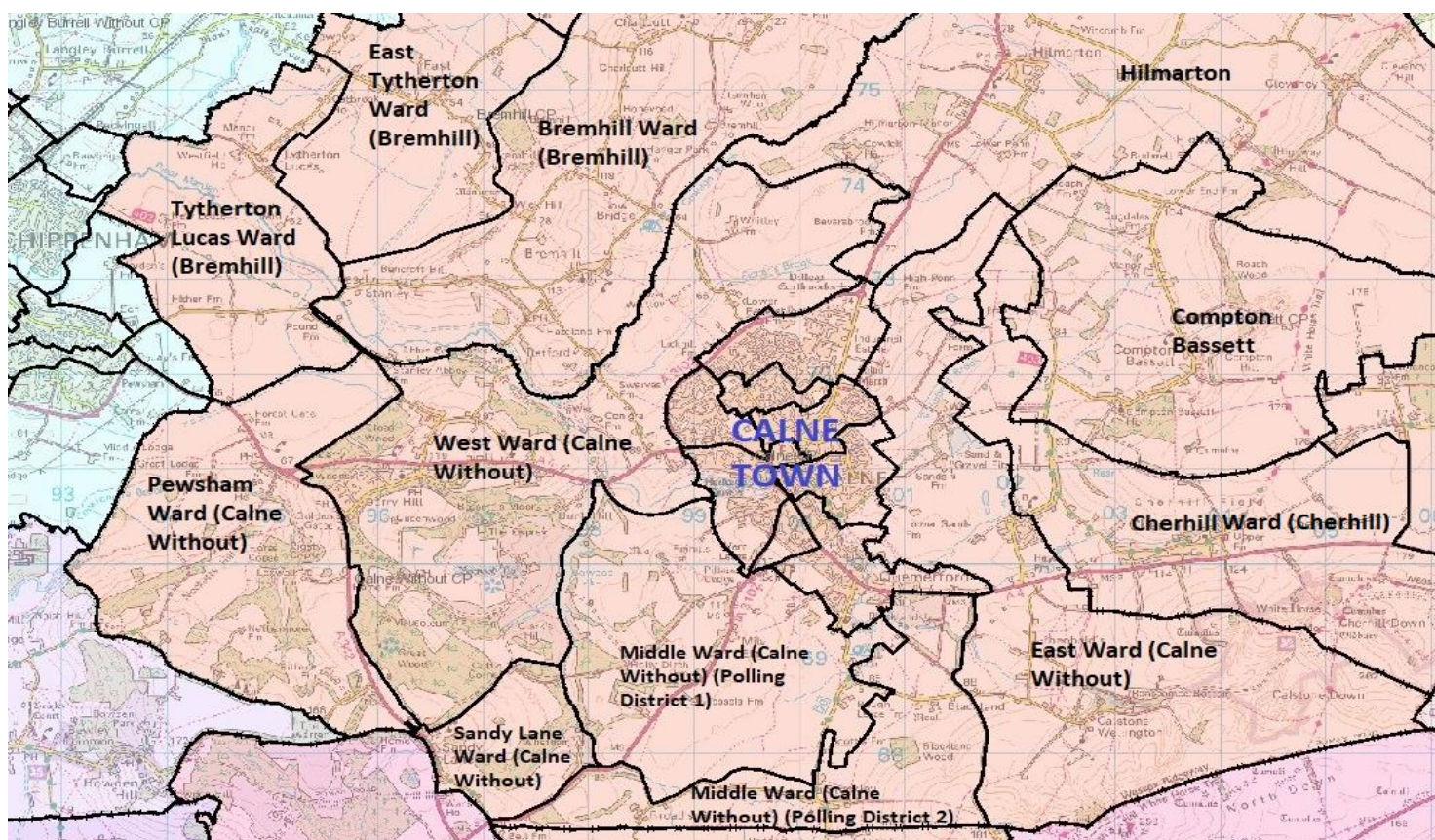


### **Background to Recommendations 2-7 (Calne Without)**

14. The Parish of Calne Without is a large parish that surrounds most of the town of Calne. It includes a number of different settlements, including Derry Hill, Lower Compton, Stockley, and other smaller communities.

15. As of August 2021, the total electorate was approximately 2674. The Parish Council comprises five wards totalling 15 councillors:

- East Ward – 640 electors – 3 councillors;
- Middle Ward – 526 electors – 4 councillors;
- Pewsham Ward – 159 electors – 1 councillor;
- Sandy Lane Ward – 75 electors – 1 councillor;
- West Ward – 1274 electors – 6 councillors.



### **2019 Review**

16. On 24 September 2019 the Electoral Review Committee (“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 & Studley. The petition contained 673 signatures, with further signatures later submitted, from the proposed area of the new parish.

17. It was proposed that the new parish would contain nine councillors, without wards, and comprise the area at the time sitting within the area of the West and Pewsham wards of Calne Without. Following the Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council, the area of the West Ward was amended by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (“The LGBCE”) to cover a slightly different area, with the current ward as shown on the map above.

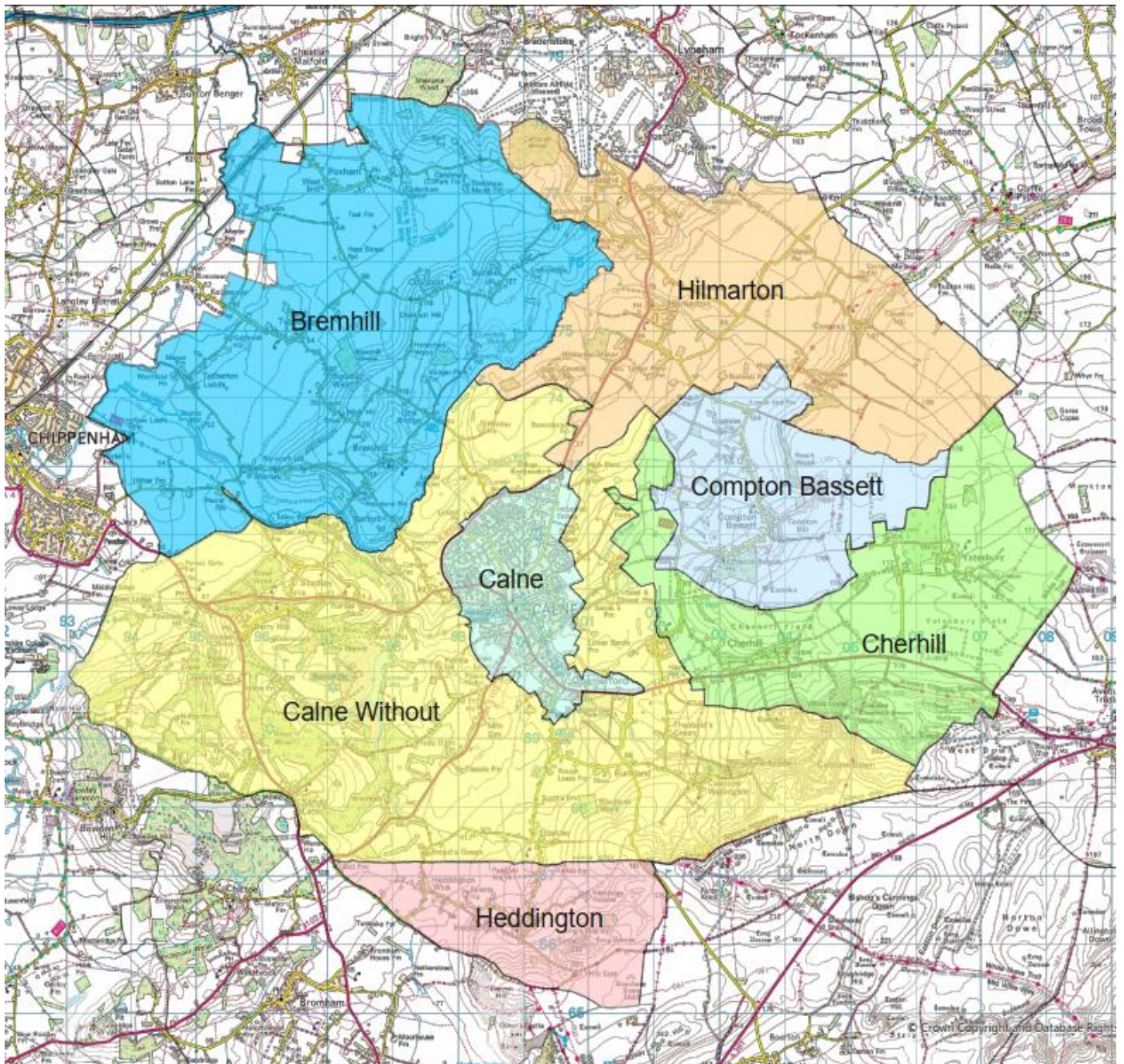
18. The request along with further information submitted by the petitioners argued that Derry Hill & Studley made up a viable, identifiable community and that the large, disparate parish of Calne Without did not reflect its community interests or identity. It was stated that over time significant development 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. The request was opposed by Calne Without Parish Council at the time who considered 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 & Studley form their own parish.
19. In response to the petition, a review of Calne Without was held in 2019/20, including meetings with the Parish Council, lead petitioners and the public. In its final recommendations at that time the Committee considered that a strong case had been made by the petitioners but recommended that, other than resolving some minor warding issues, a further review take place to determine a fuller recommendation.
20. The new review would encompass all surrounding parishes in order to be able to consider the entire area, and all potential options for effective and convenient governance that might be appropriate for the communities in the area.
21. Accordingly, for the 2021/22 review, the parishes of Calne Town, Bremhill, Hilmarton, Compton Bassett, Cherhill, and Heddington were included along with Calne Without. The review would also be able to encompass any parishes surrounding those listed such as Langley Burrell Without, Christian Malford and Bromham, should any requests be received, or options recommended, which impacted them. These parishes were contacted at the point proposals were agreed which affected them.
22. During the first stages of the 2021/22 review when meeting with parishes and gathering information from surveys, the Committee included those requests which had been received for the beginning of the review. These were:
  - The proposal for a new parish at Derry Hill & Studley, and either the remainder of Calne Without remaining a parish in its own right, or some or all elements of it being transferred to other parishes;
  - Proposals from Calne Town Council to transfer areas of Calne Without to the town;
  - A proposal from Compton Bassett Parish Council to transfer areas from Calne Without and Cherhill to Compton Bassett;
23. The 2019 review and thus this subsequent review were prompted by the submission of the petition for a new parish. This remained a significant piece of evidence of community identity via a major consultative exercise, although it was now a few years old, and as such remained a major factor to consider.
24. However, the Committee was mindful throughout of the purpose of a review to examine all aspects of electoral and governance arrangements in the areas listed, and the need to consider every area in respect of the statutory criteria. This would mean that, irrespective of

any view on the initial new parish proposal and other submitted proposals, for which further information was sought through an online survey at the pre-consultation stage, every area would be considered in turn with an open mind.

25. The recommendations that follow were therefore made as appropriate taking account of the statutory criteria, guidance, evidence gathered, and arguments received. As each area was considered in turn, within the overall context of the wider area, the recommendations that follow address each area individually.

26. A map of the existing parish boundaries in the Calne community area is included below

Calne Community Area Parish Map (2021)



## **Calne Town**

### **Background**

27. Calne Town comprises 19 councillors across four wards. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of 14,175. Three of its wards are coterminous with a unitary Electoral Division of the same name. The final ward, Calne South, is included within the Calne South unitary division, which also includes the Middle Ward and Sandy Lane Ward of Calne Without, and also the parish of Heddington.



28. Prior to the 2021/22 review Calne Town had requested the transfer of a number of areas from

the parish of Calne Without into the town. The requests included incorporating, as described by the Town Council: i) the Beversbrook Sport Facility and Allotments, which were on a long term lease to the Town Council; ii) the new development off Low Lane to the east of the town; iii) Cherhill View allotments, Cherhill View housing estate, and Rookery Farm, which included recent urban development which it was felt were part of a community with the town and several areas of land; and iv) land at Penhill Farm to Abberd Lane, land to the west of Kingsbury Green Academy, and land to the north of Quemerford. The detailed reasons for the requests were included within the information packs considered by Committee.

29. Following the beginning of the review Calne Town clarified its requests to include further sections of land to the east of the town, which were also considered by the Committee.

Pre-consultation information gathering and preparation of Draft Recommendations

30. Paragraph 170 of the statutory guidance on community governance reviews requires that the Committee consider both the current position and that within a period of five years from the start of the review. This includes consideration of incoming housing development which would have an impact on the character and interests of the area. It also 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'*.
31. Accordingly, even if it were the case that further urban-focused housing was expected by some parties in a number of the areas requested, the Committee could only take account of existing housing, or that predicted to occur within the next five years. The Committee consulted the Spatial Information team at Wiltshire Council for information on allocated housing areas and granted or submitted planning permission for housing of more than 10 dwellings in the Calne area. Furthermore, the character, identity and interests of that new housing area was relevant.
32. Meeting with representatives of the Town and Parish Councils, discussion with Calne Without included views that where urban development extended over the current town boundary this could reasonably be included within the town, and as such they supported elements of the Town Council proposal where there was definitive development taking place or which had already taken place. The Town Council reiterated its reasons for requesting the areas listed, including areas looked after by the Town Council such as the recreation centre, the incorporation of developed areas, and the additional areas to the east. It was confirmed several of the areas included no housing or imminent projected development.
33. Each of the four initial proposals from the Town Council had been included in an online survey. 40 responses commented on each proposal in turn, with between 21-29 in agreement, and between 5-9 in disagreement, with others expressing no opinion. Responses made referred to land being under the control of the Town Council and therefore suggested that it should belong within the town.
34. The Committee considered all of the information gathered and views submitted. It noted that the area referred to variously as Rookery Farm/Marden Farm/Cherhill View estate to the south of Calne was already developed and was accessed from within Calne Town. The density and

extent of the development, and its character, was overwhelmingly urban in nature. The character, identity and interests of the area was strongly felt to align with the town.

35. The lower portion of land proposed by the Town Council off Low Lane was currently being developed. It too was of a significant scale and urban in character and interests and had no community connection or governance reason to align with the more rural parish of Calne Without.
36. Notably, the Committee considered that both areas could have been identified during the Electoral Review as areas to be included within urban based Electoral Divisions, in keeping with its own recommendations, accepted by the LGBCE, for other major settlements such as Trowbridge, Melksham, Chippenham and Salisbury.
37. However, the other areas requested by the Town Council did not contain new areas of housing, nor were they projected to include such areas within the next five years. Whilst the Committee could recommend the transfer of areas without significant electorates, it did not consider the evidence supported that this would lead to improved governance, or that it was reflective of the communities involved or their identity or interests. Calne Town was a large, dense and highly urban parish without any rural hinterland. Whilst many responses saw the areas as the natural focus for future development that might take place, this was speculative and could not be taken into account at this stage as it would not be appropriate under the criteria to transfer those areas.
38. Of the areas the Committee did consider should be transferred, whilst the Low Lane area was of a scale that it could conceivably be a ward of the Town Council and remain within the Calne Rural Electoral Division, this was not considered to be an effective or convenient arrangement. An additional ward with possibly a single councillor outside a town-based Division would not improve governance effectiveness. Accordingly, the Committee recommended that the LGBCE be requested to amend the Calne Central Division to be coterminous with the Calne Central Ward, and both to include the Low Lane area.
39. The Rookery Farm/Marden Farm/Cherhill View area was within the Calne South Division which also included Heddington. Calne South therefore already existed as a division which was part urban and part rural and could remain so with an increased Calne South town ward incorporating the area of development. The Committee noted the revised town ward electorate would still be smaller than the other town wards, and as such should remain at four councillors rather than the five councillors of the other town wards.
40. A final area was identified to the west of the town by the Committee. This was an area which had been granted planning permission for a sizable new development following a planning appeal. As this area would also be of urban character and identity, the Committee likewise recommended it be included as part of the Calne Central Ward, and within an amended Calne Central Division which would also require LGBCE consent.

#### Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

41. 13 responses were received to the online survey in agreement with the recommendation to

move the three areas – Rookery Farm/Marden Farm/Cherhill View, Low Lane, and land to the west of Calne – into the town and request amendment to the Electoral Divisions accordingly. 11 responses were in disagreement and 3 suggested amendments to the proposal.

42. Comments in support of the recommendation included being close in proximity to the town already and thus being more conveniently represented, the urban nature of the areas proposed to be transferred was not in character with the rural parish of which they were currently a part.
43. Comments opposed to the recommendation included financial implications, that the existing arrangements for Calne Without were appropriate, the area was more rural in character and that connections to the town were limited.
44. Comments were also received at the public meeting and in comments on other consultations, detailed further under Recommendation 6, objecting to the movement of the entire estate to the south into Calne Town, stating they did not see any benefits to the proposal, identified more with the rural surroundings of Calne Without or the proposed expanded Heddington, raising points including around the payment of estate management fees.
45. Suggested amendments involved including the actual Rookery Farm site, accessed from the same road to the town but not within the proposal moving the Rookery Farm estate into the town, within the area to be transferred into the town. The draft proposal would see it moved into an expanded Heddington parish. The Town Council also reiterated its support for transferring the area of the Beversbrook Sports and Community facility and allotments into the Calne Town boundary.

#### Final Recommendation

46. The Committee did not agree with comments that the estate to the south of the town shared characteristics, identity or interests with Heddington or the remainder of Calne Without. They continued to consider that the area was a clear urban extension of the town and most appropriately under the criteria included within it, notwithstanding the points raised about local estate maintenance, which would be a matter for the Town Council to consider how and if to approach.
47. In relation to the Rookery Farm site itself, the Committee considered that the area, even if accessed through the town, remained of a distinct character compared to the more built up urban area of the nearby estate. Under the criteria it was therefore appropriate to remain with the parish even though it was stated it was not a working farm site.
48. In respect of the sports facility, the area contained no electors, and the Committee was not persuaded there were any compelling reasons of effective governance or community identity to justify transferring the area to within the town. The land was also north of the main road which served as the boundary with the parish, which the Committee was recommending be extended along the rest of the northern town boundary, and so to transfer the area would make the dividing line between the parishes less clear.

49. Accordingly, the Committee upheld its initial recommendation. The areas to be transferred were urban in nature and character and would be more appropriately and effectively represented and governed as part of the Town Council, a position supported by the existing Calne Without Parish Council which included those areas.
50. As the wards of Calne Without and Calne Town were amended in the 2017-19 Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council, the LGBCE would need to provide consent to any parish governance changes proposed.
51. Having considered the evidence, statutory criteria, guidance, and other relevant information, the Committee therefore agreed the following:

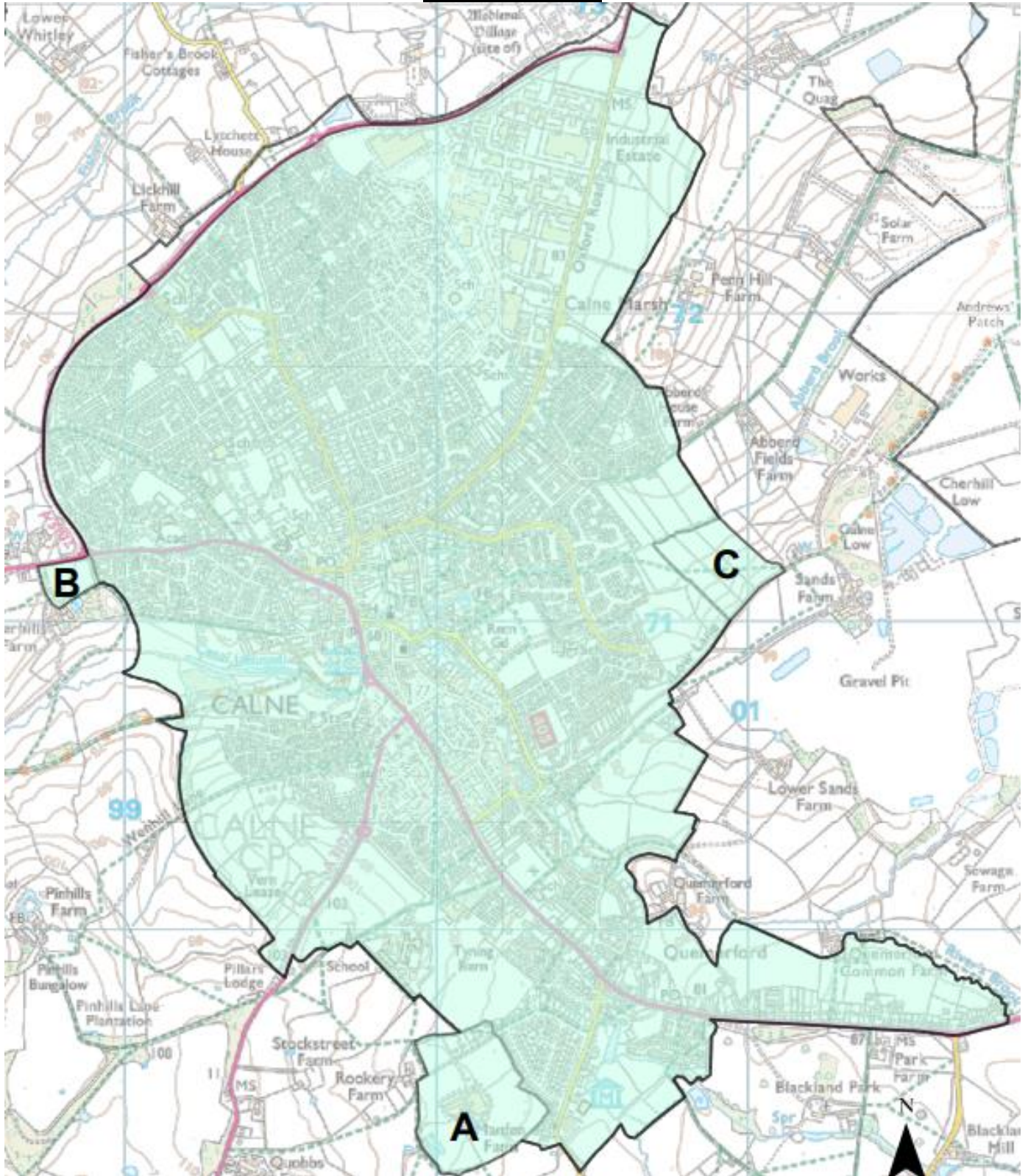
**Recommendation 2**

- 2.1 That the area marked as A be transferred from Calne Without to Calne Town as part of the Calne South Town Ward. Calne South Ward to continue to have four councillors.**
- 2.2 That the areas marked as B and C be transferred from Calne Without to Calne Town as part of the Calne Central Town Ward. Calne Central Ward to continue to have five councillors.**
- 2.3 To request that the LGBCE amend the Calne Central and Calne Rural Electoral Divisions to be coterminous with the proposed revised parish boundaries of Calne Town and Calne Without.**

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



### Calne Town Map



Shaded area is proposed new parish boundary, Dark grey line existing parish line.  
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## **Bremhill**

### **Background**

52. The parish of Bremhill is a large parish to the north of Derry Hill & Studley in Calne Without, and north-west of Calne Town. As of August 2021, it has an electorate of approximately 801. The Parish Council comprises four wards and 15 councillors.
53. The Committee met representatives of Bremhill Parish Council during the early stages of the review to discuss proposals that had been submitted in relation to a new parish at Derry Hill & Studley, and associated impacts on other parishes. Opportunity was also provided for the Parish Council to submit any new proposals.

### **Pre-consultation information gathering and preparation of Draft Recommendations**

54. Bremhill Parish Council submitted a detailed proposal for the transfer of a number of areas of Calne Without, including some elements within the initial Derry Hill & Studley new parish proposal. It argued the area of Rose Cottage, Stanley Abbey Farm and remains of Stanley Abbey were linked with Bremhill, with community, heritage and historical cohesion improved if they were transferred. It also included areas to the north of Calne Town, to better align to main roads as a more natural and identifiable boundary. It stated the areas requested amounted to approximately 28 properties.
55. A number of other suggestions sought to align boundaries with identifiable elements on the ground, or to correct perceived anomalies such as a few properties in Christian Malford and Langley Burrell Without. It was argued that these had addresses referencing Bremhill and looked to Bremhill for amenities and services, or that all other properties along the same road were within Bremhill and there was no community or governance reason for them to be separated from their neighbours as at present. Bremhill Parish Council also suggested a small field boundary be amended and moved into Langley Burrell Without, to be a more appropriate boundary taking account of local farming operations.
56. The Committee had considered that Bremhill had submitted a coherent and persuasive argument that the areas of Calne Without, Christian Malford and Langley Burrell Without would appropriately sit within Bremhill parish. The areas were similar in nature, limited in scale and looked to and aligned with Bremhill and so would form an appropriate transfer under the statutory criteria. The areas would if transferred become part of the appropriate wards of Bremhill. Langley Burrell Without would remain unwarded.
57. The precise line and number of properties impacted would need to be considered carefully, to ensure no more urban properties around Derry Hill or Calne itself were moved into the rural focused parish of Bremhill. The Committee also discussed slightly amending the boundary with Hilmarton and Calne Without along the A3102 to avoid splitting a number of structures between three parishes. Other such very minor amendments to correct anomalies for example to align to river boundaries could also form part of any changes. The area of D2 was proposed to be transferred from the Town Council, in order that the boundary of the parishes run more naturally along the main road, as it did for other parts of its length.

58. Given the limited scale of the proposals, no changes to other governance arrangements for Bremhill were considered necessary or appropriate under the statutory criteria. As there were consequential changes made to Calne Without, Calne Town and Langley Burrell Without during the 2017-19 Electoral Review, any changes to those parishes would require the consent of the LGBCE.
59. The changes relating to Christian Malford and Langley Burrell Without involved the Electoral Division of Kington. As the areas proposed to be transferred could not be warded separately, it was noted that if the changes were approved this would require the LGBCE to agree to amend the Electoral Division boundaries of Kington and Calne Rural to match the proposed parish boundaries. Similarly, a small section of the area to be transferred from Calne Town, which included no electors, would require the amendment of the Calne North Electoral Division.

#### Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

60. 19 responses were received to the online survey. Physical letters had been sent to the residents of Calne Without, 12 responses were in agreement, 2 in disagreement, and 5 suggested amendment.
61. Comments in agreement included comment that the areas proposed had similar density and characteristics with Bremhill parish and had better connections to the settlements there than with Derry Hill. Also that the proposal better reflected the identity of the areas proposed and was part of the overall reorganisation of the area, which was supported.
62. Comments in disagreement included that some of those proposed to be moved had greater affinity with Calne Without and Studley, and that the existing parish was well run and effective.
63. Suggested amendments included that some of the properties along the A4 would not align well to the parish of Bremhill, that the area of Black Dog Halt and associated properties should be retained in Derry Hill or Calne Town. Other comments were made that it also would be more appropriate for properties around Stanley Abbey Farm to be in Derry Hill, although the areas at Ratford and Fishers Brook were supported to move into Bremhill.
64. Langley Burrell Parish Council objected to the proposals. In addition to criticising the process followed, the Parish Council considered there was no wish to adjust the community area boundaries and that the statutory criteria supported retaining the current arrangements.

#### Additional consultations and preparation of Final Recommendations

65. The Committee was not persuaded by the arguments presented by Langley Burrell Without Parish Council regarding the small transfers to Bremhill. The administrative impacts arising from the proposal were minor but sensible adjustments reflective of the roads, field boundaries and local community in the area. The current area was far removed from the settlements of Langley Burrell, with other houses on the same road within Bremhill parish. Although only a few properties were impacted a comment had still been received from within the area itself stating they aligned to Bremhill, including that they already received contact from Bremhill Parish Council, and all neighbours were part of Bremhill parish. The Committee considered the arguments presented by Bremhill Parish Council to be reasonable and logical, supported by

the consultation, and in alignment with the statutory criteria.

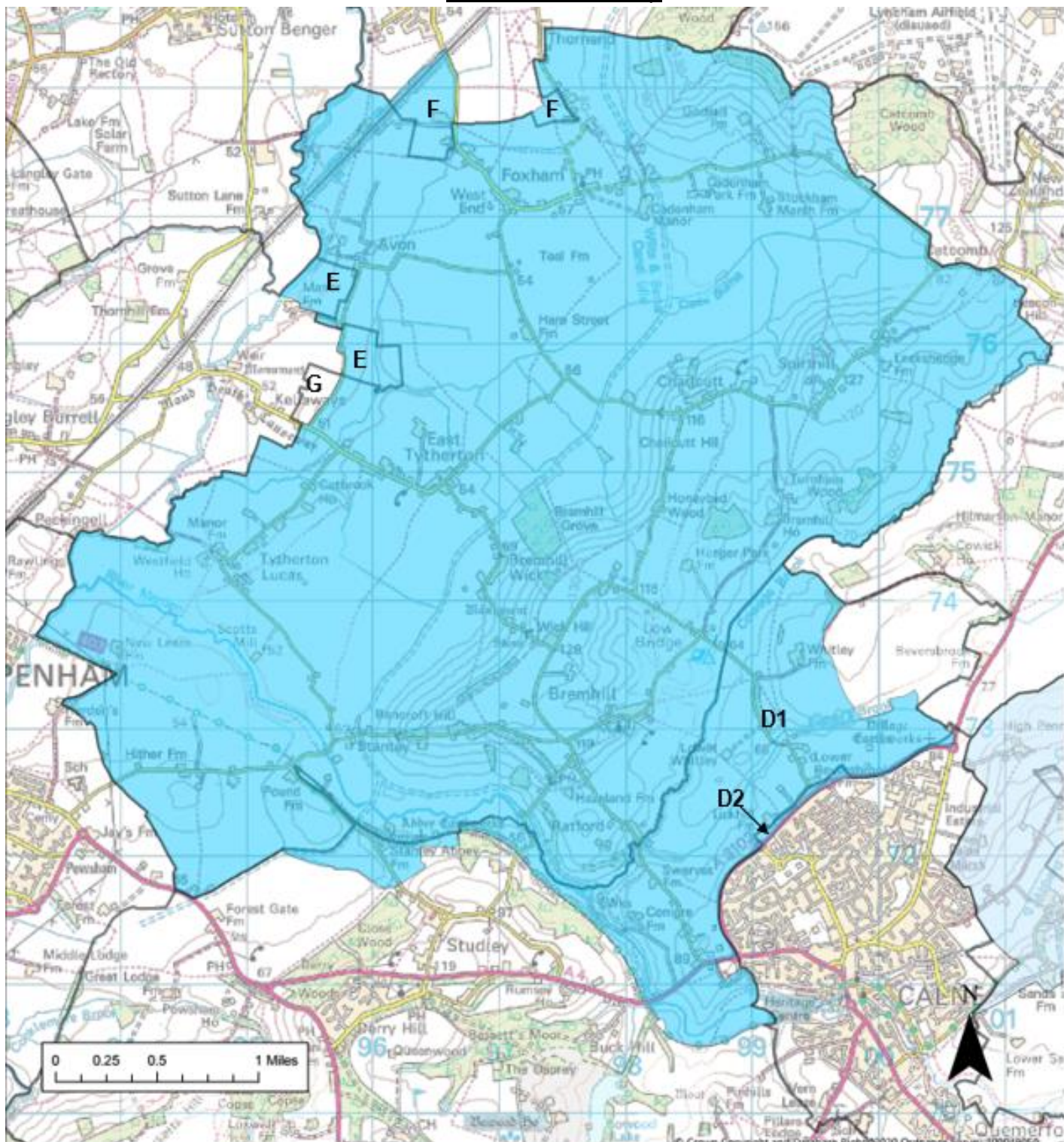
66. No response was received from Christian Malford Parish Council, but several responses had been received from the small number of properties proposed to be transferred from that area, which were supportive of the proposal.
67. Calne Town Council had requested the Committee review its decision to not propose to transfer an area of the Beversbrook sports and community facility into the town from what was proposed to be moved into Bremhill from Calne Without, as noted under Recommendation 2. The Committee re-considered the arguments made supported transferring the area, which had no residents, to within the boundary of the town, but did not consider it was necessary or appropriate under the criteria to propose a transfer as it did not consider sufficient arguments of identity or governance supported such a proposal.
68. In relation to the southern boundary of Bremhill as proposed, there was a mixture of comments from responders and at the public meeting, including in relation to Stanley Abbey Farm and properties along the A4 nearer Calne Town. On balance, the Committee was satisfied that its initial proposals in the area were in line with the criteria and remained the most appropriate boundary between the proposed new communities. Following further submissions from Calne Without Parish Council requesting the area remain within the parish, the Committee continued to feel that a stronger case had been put that the area would align more with Bremhill.
69. The exception to the lack of area adjustment was at the small area of Black Dog Halt, where it was considered that the line should be very slightly amended to include a number of properties which were considerably distant from any settlement of Bremhill, or any road or route to Bremhill, and aligned more with Derry Hill. The Committee therefore slightly amended the proposed area D1 to exclude that area, and this was supported in a following consultation.
70. 11 further responses were received to the online survey for the amended proposals. 8 were in agreement 2 in disagreement and 1 suggested amendment.
71. Comments in support included that the boundary proposed was logical, including the change to the area at Black Dog Halt, would be more appropriate geographically and provide better representation.
72. Comments in opposition including from Calne Without Parish Council continued to feel the area at Stanley Abbey Farm was more appropriately located within the revised Calne Without parish, with the amendment proposed making the same suggestion.
73. Whilst the Committee acknowledged the view of the parish council, it did not consider further arguments or evidence had been submitted to alter its initial view that on balance a stronger case had been made for the representation of the area by Bremhill.
74. Having considered the evidence, statutory criteria, guidance, and other relevant information, the Committee therefore agreed the following:

**Recommendation 3**

- 3.1 That the areas marked as D1 and D2 be transferred from Calne Without and Calne Town respectively to Bremhill as part of the Bremhill Ward of Bremhill Parish Council. Bremhill Ward to continue to have five councillors.**
- 3.2 That the area marked as E be transferred from Langley Burrell Without to Bremhill as part of the East Tytherton Ward of Bremhill Parish Council. East Tytherton Ward to continue to have three councillors.**
- 3.3 That the area marked as F be transferred from Christian Malford to Bremhill as part of the Foxham Ward of Bremhill Parish Council. Foxham Ward to continue to have three councillors.**
- 3.4 That the area marked as G be transferred from Bremhill to Langley Burrell Without. Langley Burrell Without to continue to have five councillors.**
- 3.5 To request that the LGBCE amend the Kington, Calne North and Calne Rural Electoral Divisions to be coterminous with the proposed revised parish boundaries of Calne Without, Christian Malford, Bremhill, Langley Burrell Without and Calne Town.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

### Bremhill Parish Map



*Shaded area is proposed new parish boundary, Dark blue-grey line existing parish line.*

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## **Hilmarton and Compton Bassett**

### **Background**

75. Hilmarton is a moderately-sized rural parish to the north of Calne Town. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of 586. The parish is unwarded and the Parish Council has up to eleven councillors.
76. Compton Bassett is a small rural parish to the east of Calne Town and south of Hilmarton. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of 199. The parish is unwarded and has up to seven councillors.
77. The Committee met representatives of both councils to discuss proposals that had been submitted in relation to Calne Without. The Parish Councils were also given the opportunity to submit any new proposals.

### **Pre-consultation information gathering and preparation of Draft Recommendations**

78. Both Parish Councils submitted proposals for the transfer of parts of Calne Without immediately adjacent to the east side of Calne Town. Both proposals included the area of High Penn cottages and Penn Wood nature reserve. As such, if a transfer from Calne Without were to be considered appropriate under the criteria, only one of the parishes could be the recipient, or an amended proposal would be required.
79. Hilmarton also proposed extending their boundary slightly into what was described as Bremhill, but which is currently (subject to recommendation 3.1) part of Calne Without West Ward. This was a small area around Beversbrook Farm where business/agricultural buildings, but no dwellings, were divided by the current parish boundaries.
80. Compton Bassett's proposal included a larger section of Calne Without and also a section of the parish of Cherhill. As well as the High Penn area the proposal extended south to include the areas around Sands Farm and other Hills Group quarry and extraction sites.
81. It was stated that due to the alignment of the parishes and rights of way access, Compton Bassett was more impacted by the Hills activity and was most active in responding to planning applications and other matters affecting the area, which was geographically distant from and without much direct access to any settlements of Calne Without.
82. The area of Cherhill that would need to be transferred to allow the area from Calne Without to be transferred to Compton Bassett contained few or no electors. Cherhill Parish Council supported the proposal from Compton Bassett Parish Council.
83. The proposal from Compton Bassett was received during the first stage of the review and was included as part of the public surveying. There were 26 responses, 14 in agreement, 8 in disagreement and 4 expressing no opinion.
84. Comments in favour included that the proposal was logical and would be a more effective governance arrangement. Comments in disagreement included that the area was suitably served by the existing council and there was no compelling reason to make a change or that

the area would be more appropriately included within Hilmarton or Calne Town.

85. The Committee considered that the area around High Penn was physically remote from any other communities of Calne Without and, although the Parish Council was an effective entity, the extended eastern part of the parish was not reflective of the communities that existed, and therefore was not an effective governance arrangement.
86. On balance, it considered the closest major community connections for most of the area were with Compton Bassett. It was felt that the rights of way, geography and industrial activity would be more effectively governed as part of an extended Compton Bassett. It was significant that Cherhill had supported the arguments of Compton Bassett as well, strengthening the argument for that proposal.
87. The area of High Penn itself is accessed from within Calne Town, but is still rural in nature. It would not be appropriate to transfer it to the town, which had not in any case requested this. Compton Bassett, given its rural nature and links, would be appropriate for High Penn to be transferred to given the proposed transfer of the wider area. It was noted this would not prevent any other parishes from commenting on relevant planning matters in the area.
88. It was felt the second Hilmarton proposal could make the boundary clearer, and so it was agreed to recommend to transfer a small section of fields from Calne Without to improve governance around the area.

#### Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

89. 9 responses were received to the online survey. Physical letters had been sent to the residents of Calne Without. 7 responses were in agreement, with 2 in disagreement.
90. Arguments in support of the recommendation were that the proposal was sensible and logical, aligning communities as part of the wider proposals for Calne Without.
91. Arguments against the recommendation were that the existing parish council for Calne Without was efficient and well run, making the proposals unnecessary.

#### Final Recommendations

92. The Committee noted the continued support of Cherhill Parish Council, the comments in support. Assessing the nature of the small communities or industries in the areas, it was considered their identity and interests related far more to Compton Bassett than other areas, and the minor transfer to Hilmarton was a sensible adjustment for a more logical boundary.
93. Given the number of electors involved, it was not considered necessary or appropriate to recommend any change to warding arrangements for either Compton Bassett or Hilmarton.
94. Having considered the evidence, statutory criteria, guidance, and other relevant information, the Committee therefore agreed the following:



**Recommendation 4**

**4.1 That the area marked as H1 be transferred from Cherhill to Compton Bassett.**

**4.2 That the area marked as H2 be transferred from Calne Without to Compton Bassett.**

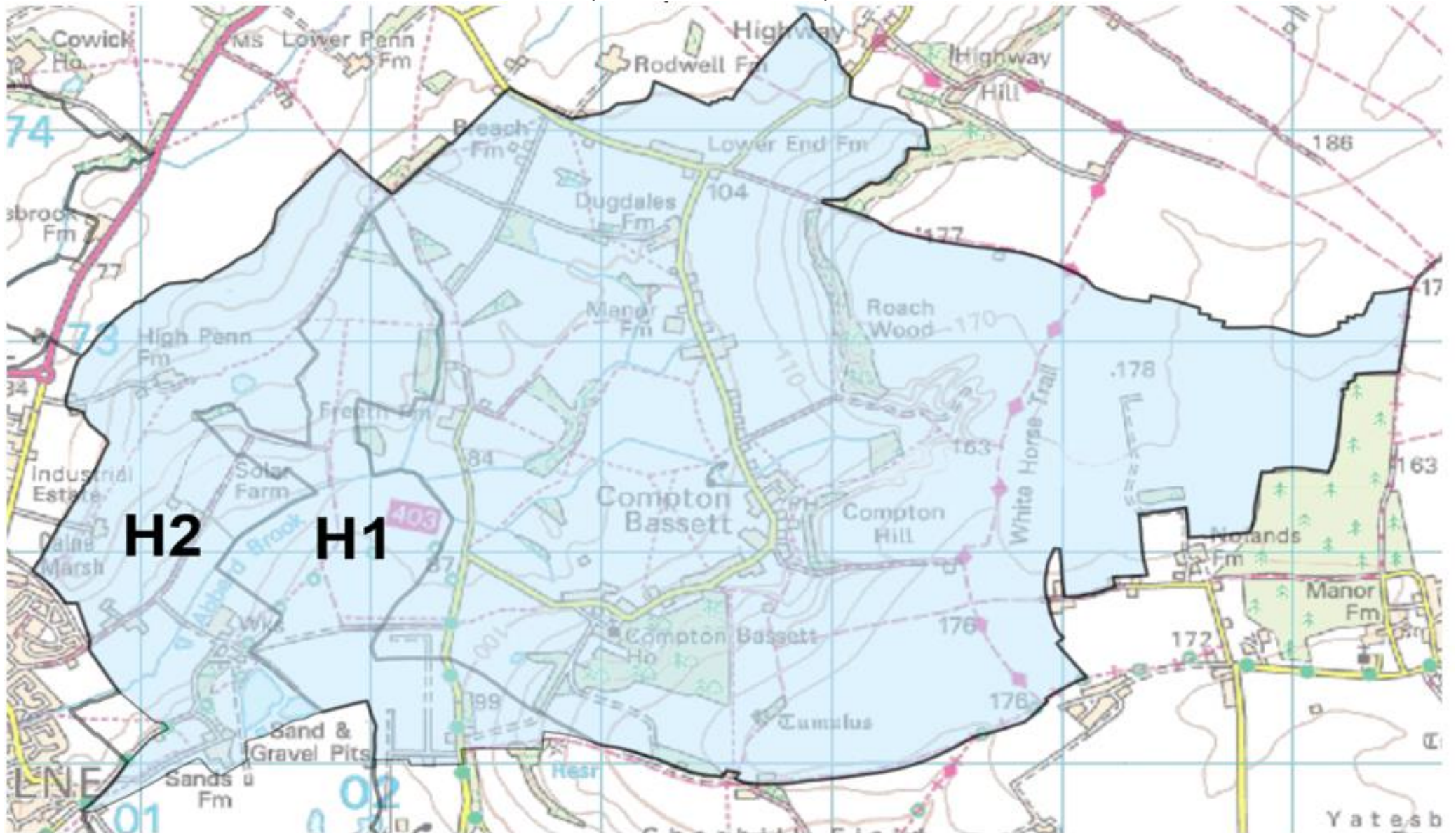
**4.3 That the area marked as I be transferred from Calne Without to Hilmarton**

**4.4 That Compton Bassett continue to have seven councillors.**

**4.5 That Hilmarton continue to have eleven councillors.**

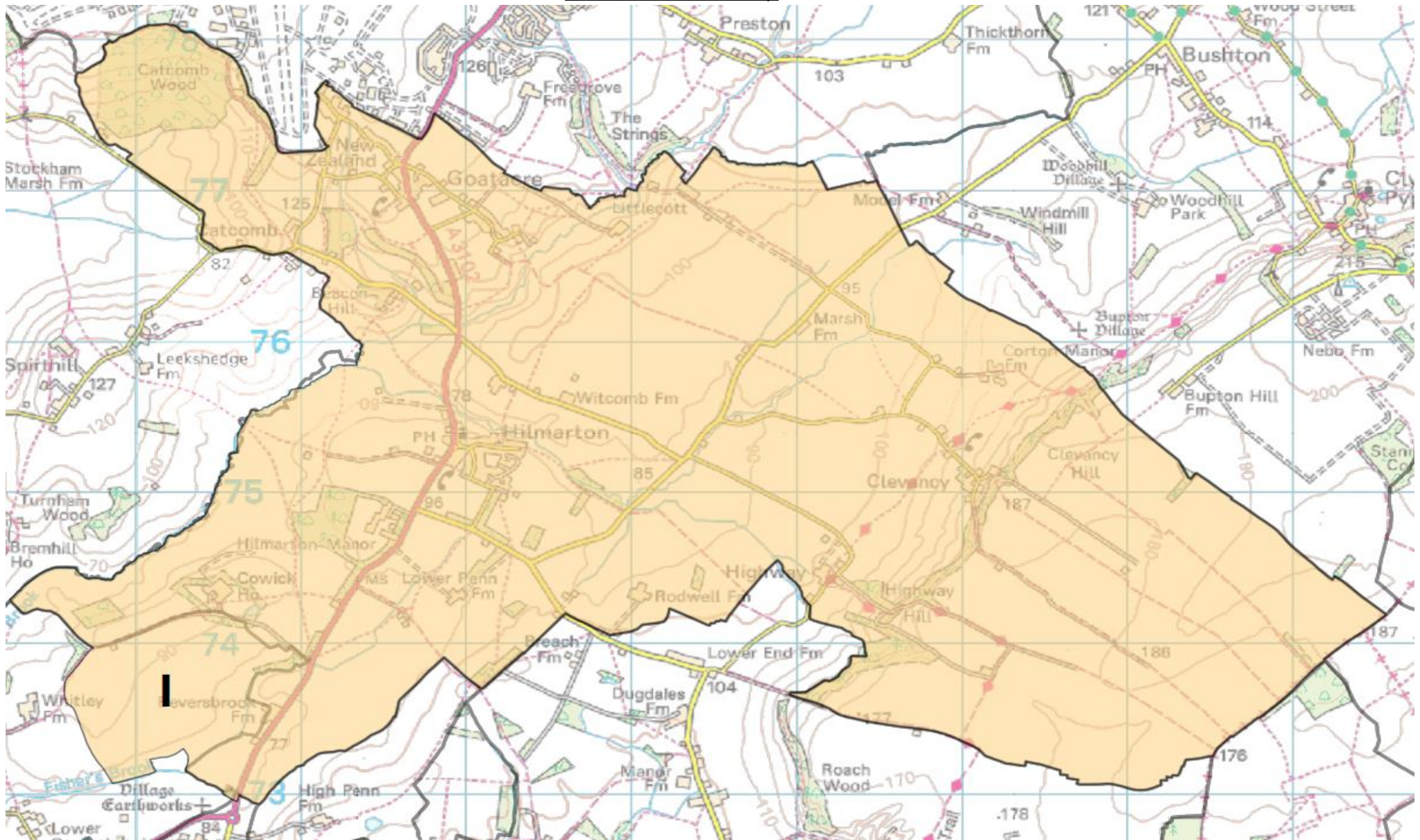
*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 83, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews.*

Compton Bassett Parish Map



*Shaded area is proposed new parish boundary, Dark grey line existing parish line.*

Hilmarton Parish Map



Shaded area is proposed new parish boundary.

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## **Cherhill**

### **Background**

95. Cherhill is a moderately sized rural parish to east of Calne Town and Calne Without. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of approximately 610. The parish has two wards: Cherhill, with five councillors, and Yatesbury, with two councillors.
96. The Committee met representatives of the Parish Council in the early stages of the review to discuss proposals that had been submitted in relation to Calne Without. The Parish Council was also given the opportunity to submit any new proposals.
97. The Parish Council supported a proposal from Compton Bassett Parish Council to transfer part of Cherhill to Compton Bassett, as set out in Recommendation 4.

### **Pre-consultation information gathering and preparation of Draft Recommendations**

98. During preliminary discussions, Cherhill Parish Council had also confirmed its support for a potential transfer of the settlement of Lower Compton to Cherhill.
99. Lower Compton is currently a settlement within the East Ward of Calne Without north of the A4 lying approximately halfway between Cherhill village and Calne Town. Cherhill Parish Council argued that many of the residents looked to Cherhill for community and services, including access to the local school. As a small but dense settlement within a rural area, its character and identity fitted more closely with Cherhill than with the disparate and more distant communities of Calne Without. Lower Compton was also separated from the principal settlement of Calne Without, Derry Hill, by the town of Calne itself.
100. The Committee had been persuaded by the arguments submitted by Cherhill Parish Council. Lower Compton is physically close to Cherhill village with many community connections, was of a similar scale, and was closer in character than the town or the large semi urban area of Derry Hill. In terms of community and effective governance it was considered that a combination with Cherhill provided a more appropriate community connection and would permit an improved governance arrangement as a result.
101. The Committee had therefore considered other nearby communities within what remained of the East Ward of Calne Without, which had an eastern border running south along the road toward Bishops Cannings. This included the small settlements of Calstone Wellington and Theobald's Green. This is a highly rural area, with direct connection north to the A4 close to Lower Compton and the road to Cherhill. Given existing connections with Lower Compton, it was considered this area should also be transferred to the closer, rural focused parish of Cherhill.
102. The inclusion of Lower Compton, Calstone Wellington and the rest of East Ward from Calne Without would increase the electorate of Cherhill by a sizable amount. Accordingly, it was proposed that the area should be transferred as its own ward, Lower Compton and Calstone Wellington, with four councillors, in recognition of its significance within the expanded parish.

Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

103. 14 responses were received to the online survey. Physical letters had been sent to the residents of Calne Without. 9 responses were in agreement with the recommendation, 2 were against, and 3 responses were received suggesting an amendment to the recommendation.
104. Comments in support included that the change proposed was long overdue, that the area proposed was much closer to and aligned in community terms with Cherhill, which would improve effective and convenient governance, and was part of a series of logical reorganisation across the wider Calne Without and Calne area.
105. One comment in opposition included a comment that the existing parish council of Calne Without was efficient and well-run, and the proposed transfer of the area proposed to Cherhill was unnecessary. The other comment in fact focused on the area of Cherhill View related to the recommendations relating to proposed transfers to Calne Town from Calne Without as set out under Recommendation 2.
106. All three comments proposing amendment to the proposals related to the area and hamlet of Blackland. This area was previously divided by the warding arrangements of Calne Without as it currently exists. That line, which follows the road south, was used for the proposed area to transfer to Cherhill, and as such the area would be divided between parishes under the current recommendation. It was suggested by some that this area should be kept together as one small, rural community, and that this would align more to the expanded parish of Heddington, but others suggested retaining it as proposed as part of Cherhill.
107. An additional suggestion was that the expanded Cherhill Parish Council should comprise 4 wards, not 3. It was argued Lower Compton was distinct from Calstone and Blackland, and separate wards would be appropriate. It was also suggested that the number of councillors for each ward should be adjusted, with 6 across the separated Lower Compton and Calstone and Blackland wards that were proposed.
108. Calne Without Parish Council responded to request an amendment to ensure Blackland was not divided by the proposed changes, suggesting the whole of Blackland should be moved to Cherhill if Calstone was so moved. They supported the proposal that Blackland and Calstone form 1 ward of 2 councillors, and Lower Compton 1 ward with 4 councillors.

Additional Consultations and Preparation of Final Recommendations

109. The Committee was persuaded by the arguments that the small community at Blackland should be included together in a single parish, as more reflective of their community identity. Including the area in a single parish would also provide better governance than the original committee proposal.
110. In determining which parish the area should be part of, and with the Committee agreeing in principle with the reorganisation of Calne Without Parish which under Recommendation 6 was proposing to move the area south of Calne to be transferred to Heddington parish, the Committee considered the proposal to include the area within the expanded Cherhill Parish

Council to be most appropriate under the criteria. Connections with the area were stronger than with Heddington, and the existing parish council for the area, Calne Without, indicated its support for that proposal as the most appropriate.

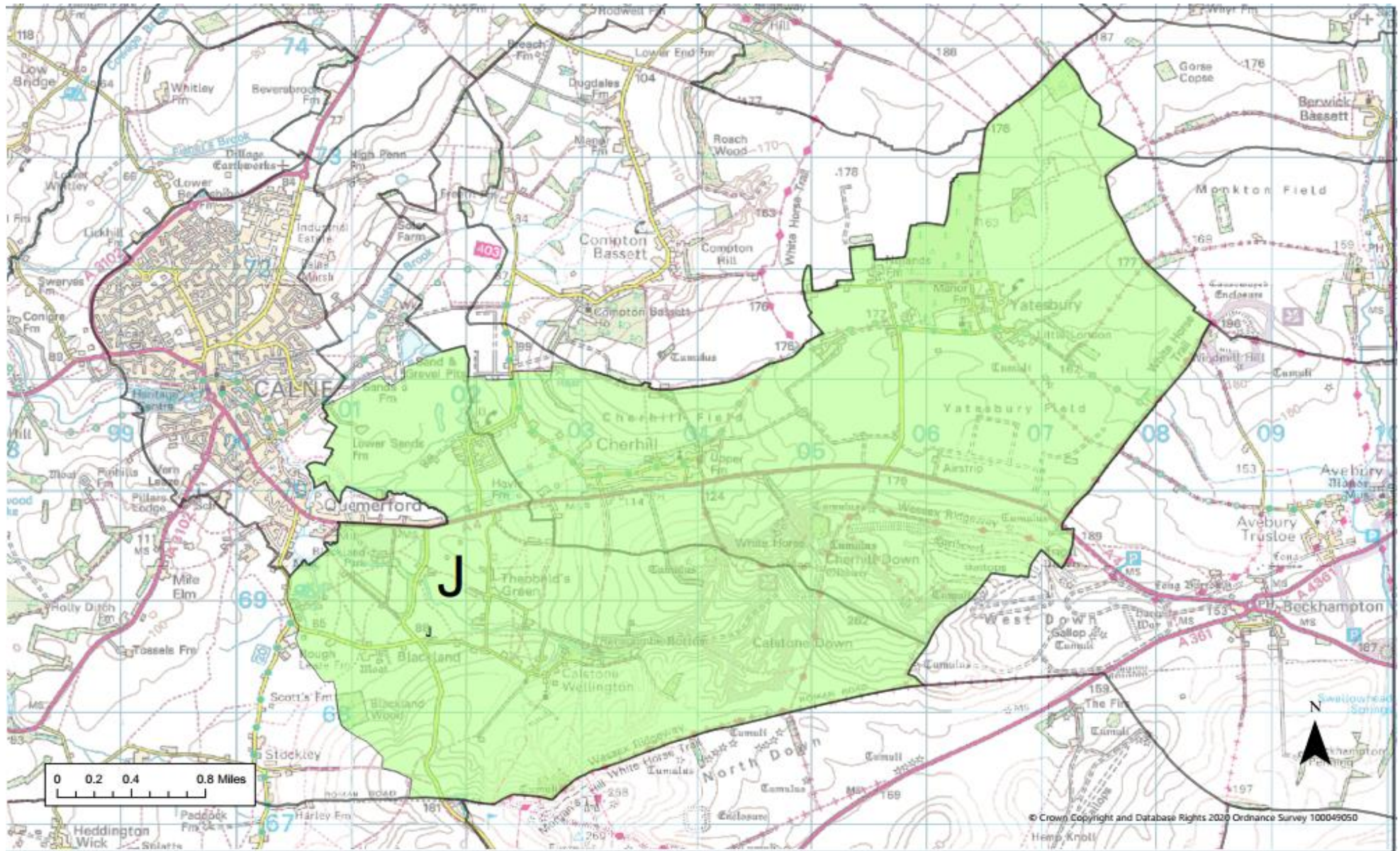
111. The Committee was also persuaded that the very small rural communities could reasonably form a ward separate to that of the estate at Lower Compton, being distinct in their characters. It agreed that Blackland, Calstone and the other small rural communities should form a ward of 2 councillors.
112. In assessing Lower Compton, although it had a significant population the density and limited geographic extent of the estate was such that the Committee considered 4 councillors would be excessive and ineffective in governance terms. It was felt given the nature of the area a ward of 3 councillors would be sufficient and appropriate. This would also mean the core of the expanded parish community at Cherhill and Yatesbury was appropriately reflected as the community centre, and noted that the population of the transferred area remained slightly less than the existing part of Cherhill.
113. This would mean 4 wards for the parish, which was comparable to the nearby parish of Bremhill, and was considered appropriate for a large parish with multiple distinct communities. It was felt that those communities retained close links with one another such that inclusion together aligned to the criteria.
114. Accordingly, the Committee considered it should amend its initial recommendation to adjust the area proposed to be moved into Cherhill to include the entirety of the Blackland area. It agreed that given the populations present and separate communities, the area transferred should form 2 wards: Lower Compton, which would contain three councillors, and Blackland and Calstone, which would contain two councillors, for a total of 12 across the parish council as a whole. The historic core of the parish would therefore retain 7 of the 12 councillors.
115. 10 responses were received to the online survey of the new proposals. 9 were in agreement, including from Calne Without Parish Council, with 1 response proposing an amendment.
116. Arguments in favour were that the proposal was a more appropriate geographic representation and would enable better representation of residents in the area.
117. The suggested amendment was that the Lower Compton ward should have more than 3 councillors, noting the population as comparable to Cherhill ward.
118. The Committee welcomed the support of the parish council currently representing the area, and although it noted the comment about the councillor numbers, considered its reasoning about the level of appropriate representation for a small, dense estate versus an larger, more disparate rural area with a village centre, to still be appropriate.
119. Having considered the evidence, statutory criteria, guidance, and other relevant information, the Committee therefore agreed the following:

**Recommendation 5**

- 5.1 That the area marked as J be transferred from Calne Without to Cherhill.**
- 5.2 That the area marked as J form two wards: Lower Compton Ward, and Blackland and Calstone Ward.**
- 5.3 That Cherhill Parish Council comprise twelve councillors across four wards as set out in the map below: 1) Cherhill 2) Yatesbury 3) Lower Compton 4) Blackland and Calstone**
- 5.4 Cherhill Ward would continue to contain five councillors.**
- 5.5 Yatesbury Ward would continue to contain two councillors.**
- 5.6 Lower Compton Ward to contain three councillors.**
- 5.7 Blackland and Calstone Ward to contain two councillors.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 80, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

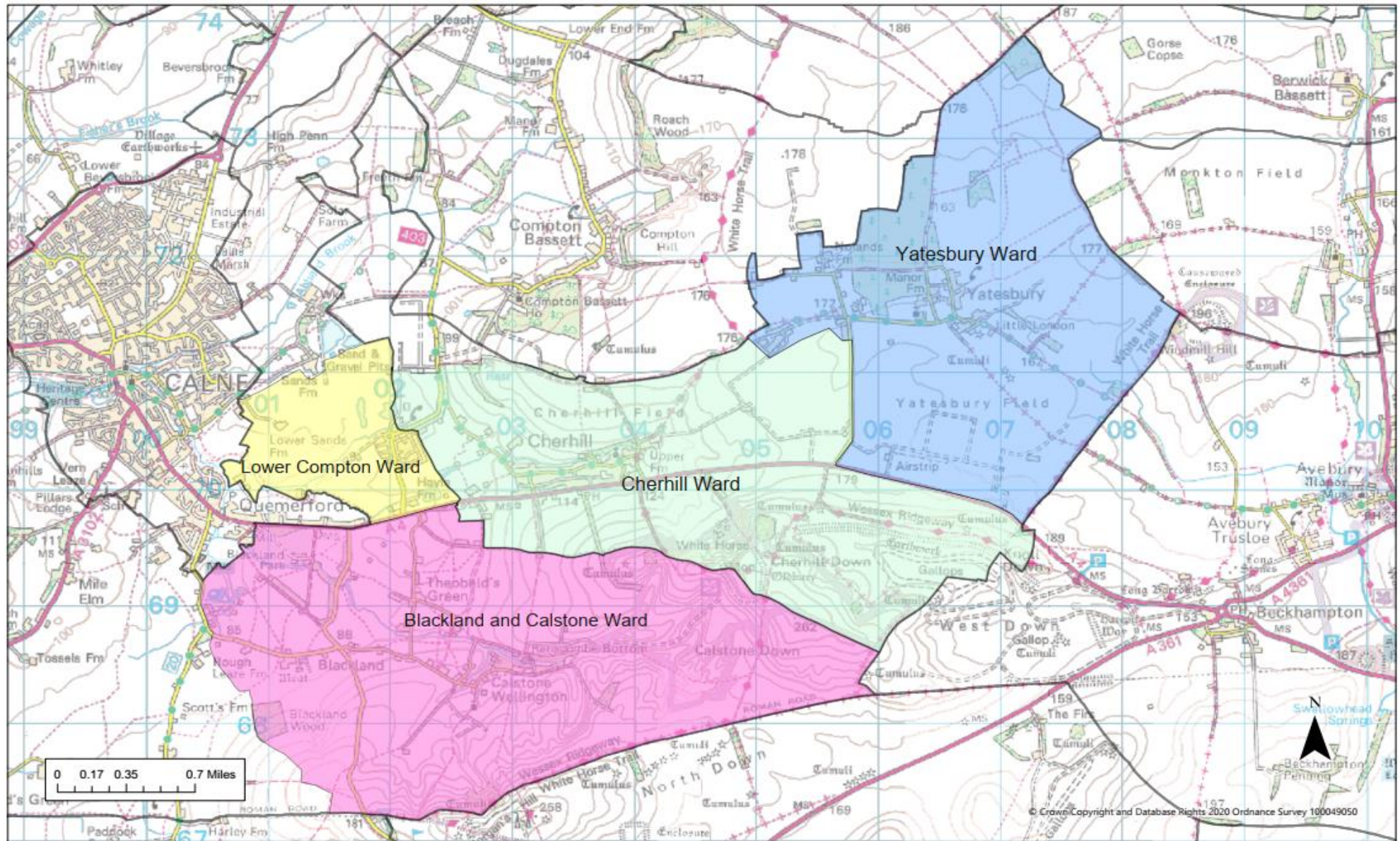
### Cherhill Parish Map



Shaded area is proposed new parish boundary, Dark grey line existing parish line.



### Cherhill Ward Map



## **Heddington**

### **Background**

120. Heddington is a small rural parish directly south of Calne Town and Calne Without. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of approximately 599. The parish is unwarded and has up to seven Parish Councillors.
121. The Committee met representatives of the Parish Council during the early stages of the review to discuss proposals that had been submitted in relation to Calne Without. The Parish Council was also given the opportunity to submit any new proposals.

### **Pre-consultation information gathering and preparation of Draft Recommendations**

122. During initial discussions it was noted that Stockley, Broads Green and Mile Elm were adjacent to the parish of Heddington and had some community connections. It was strongly considered by the Parish Council that the Sandy Lane area, which was included with Heddington and the Middle Ward of Calne Without in the Calne South Electoral Division, was very rural and did not have any strong connections with the community at Heddington despite that inclusion.
123. The Committee had considered the area, mindful of its previous recommendations relating to Calne Without. At present the Middle Ward had an electorate larger than Heddington, but to a large extent this is due to the urban extension at Rookery/Marden Farm, which was proposed under Recommendation 2 to transfer into the town. Without that estate the remainder of the current Middle Ward is a large area, but sparsely populated and rural, and therefore similar in character and identity to Heddington.
124. The Committee had also noted the close proximity of the community at Stockley to Heddington rather than the primary settlement or other settlements of Calne Without. The road links were direct and the two areas shared many community connections, including the annual Heddington and Stockley Steam Rally and County Fair.
125. Therefore, when considering the community connections, shared identity, and the reduced electorate of the rural area south of Calne Town, the Committee recommended that the remaining area of the Middle Ward of Calne Without be transferred to the parish of Heddington. It considered that this was not a case of the area “ending up” with Heddington, but that this was an arrangement which was a better reflection of the character and connections of the area.
126. Due to the increase in electorate, it was considered that a further two parish councillors should be added to the Parish Council of Heddington, for a total of nine. The Committee did not determine that a name change was required. Following initial informal feedback from Heddington Parish Council, it was suggested the transferred area form its own ward and be called Heddington Without.

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

127. 17 responses were received to the online survey. 9 were in support, 3 against, and 5 suggested amendments.

128. Comments in support included that the current arrangements for Calne Without were no longer appropriate, the area proposed had very strong connections with Heddington, the changes were overdue, and they was part of a logical realignment of parishes in the Calne area
129. Comments against included that the existing parish of Calne Without was efficient and well-run. Others raised that they were located in Cherhill view estate, which was proposed to move into Calne Town under a separate recommendation, and they did not see any benefits to such a move, or that they identified more with the rural surroundings, which would include the revised and expanded Heddington.
130. One suggested amendment was that Rookery Farm itself not be included as part of Heddington as it would not be connected in any direct way if the Cherhill view area was moved into Calne Town, where it would be accessed from.
131. Another suggested amendment raised issues around fees paid to a management company and raising whether the Town Council would take on responsibility for maintenance if transferred.
132. 2 suggestions supported amending the boundary between the proposed expanded Heddington and the renamed Derry Hill & Studley, to ensure the historic Bowood estate was contained within a single parish. At present the ward boundaries split the estate, but as these were within the same parish this did not cause any governance or community issues, which would occur if the areas were located in different parishes.
133. Heddington Parish Council supported the transfer of the areas proposed under the recommendation, but requested that the wards be named Heddington, and Stockley.
134. Calne Without Parish Council supported proposals to amend the boundary between Heddington and the renamed Derry Hill & Studley, with the Bowood Estate to be located within Derry Hill & Studley, and houses in private ownership at Mile Elm transferring to Heddington.

#### Additional Consultations and Preparation of Final Recommendations

135. The Committee did not agree with comments that the Cherhill view estate shared characteristics, identity or interests with either Heddington or the remainder of Calne Without. They continued to consider that the area was an urban extension of the town and most appropriately under the criteria included within it, notwithstanding the points raised about local estate maintenance, which would be a matter for the Town Council to consider.
136. In relation to the Rookery Farm site itself, the Committee considered that a farm site, even if accessed through the town, remained of a distinct, rural character compared to the built up urban area, and thus under the criteria was appropriate to remain with the parish. Similar situations, with a farm access being through an urban area, existed in other parts of the county, and so the Committee did not support including it within the area transferred to the town.

137. The Committee was persuaded that for reasons of community and identity the Bowood Estate should be contained within a single parish. As a significant and historic part of the local community identity this should be retained in a single parish now that the Committee was recommending an overall reorganisation, which would also ensure more efficient governance.
138. It was therefore proposed to amend the area to be transferred from Calne Without to Heddington accordingly, subject to the further amendment of the Cherhill proposals at Blackland as set out in Recommendation 5. The precise line would depend upon additional information as to the boundaries of the Bowood Estate. The Committee also supported renaming the parish wards as requested by Heddington Parish Council, as a better reflection of the community identities of the areas.
139. As the changes at Blackland, to be moved into Cherhill from Calne Without, crossed the unitary division boundaries and could not form their own ward, it would be necessary to request the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (“LGBCE”) to amend the Electoral Division boundaries of Calne Rural and Calne South to align to the proposed new parish boundaries.
140. In further consultation upon the amended proposals 13 responses were received to the online survey. 10 were in favour, 2 in disagreement and 1 amendment was proposed.
141. Arguments in support of the recommendation, including from Calne Without Parish Council, included that the proposals better represented the area, the inclusion of the entire Bowood estate in a single parish was sensible, and that the area was naturally a part of Heddington due to proximity of the major communities within it.
142. Arguments in opposition included further reference to the Cherhill View estate considered previously under Recommendation 2. The proposed amendment noted that the Rookery Farm site was not a working farm and felt it would be more appropriately included with the rest of the estate.
143. The Rookery Farm site issue and Cherhill view matter have been considered under Recommendation 2, where it was considered that although not a working farm site, the character of the buildings there and relative ease to reach the remainder of the new Heddington parish, made its inclusion appropriate. The proposed eastern boundary of the revised Heddington Parish is set out further under Recommendation 5.
144. The Committee noted the positive responses to the latest proposal and did not consider further evidence or submissions were sufficient to alter its reasoning for the area.
145. Having considered the evidence, statutory criteria, guidance, and other relevant information, the Committee therefore agreed the following:

### **Recommendation 6**

#### **6.1 That the area marked as K be transferred from Calne Without to Heddington.**

**6.2 That the area marked as K comprise the 'Stockley Ward' of Heddington Parish Council.**

**6.3 The Stockley ward to have two parish councillors.**

**6.4 The remaining part of the parish would be called 'Heddington Ward'.**

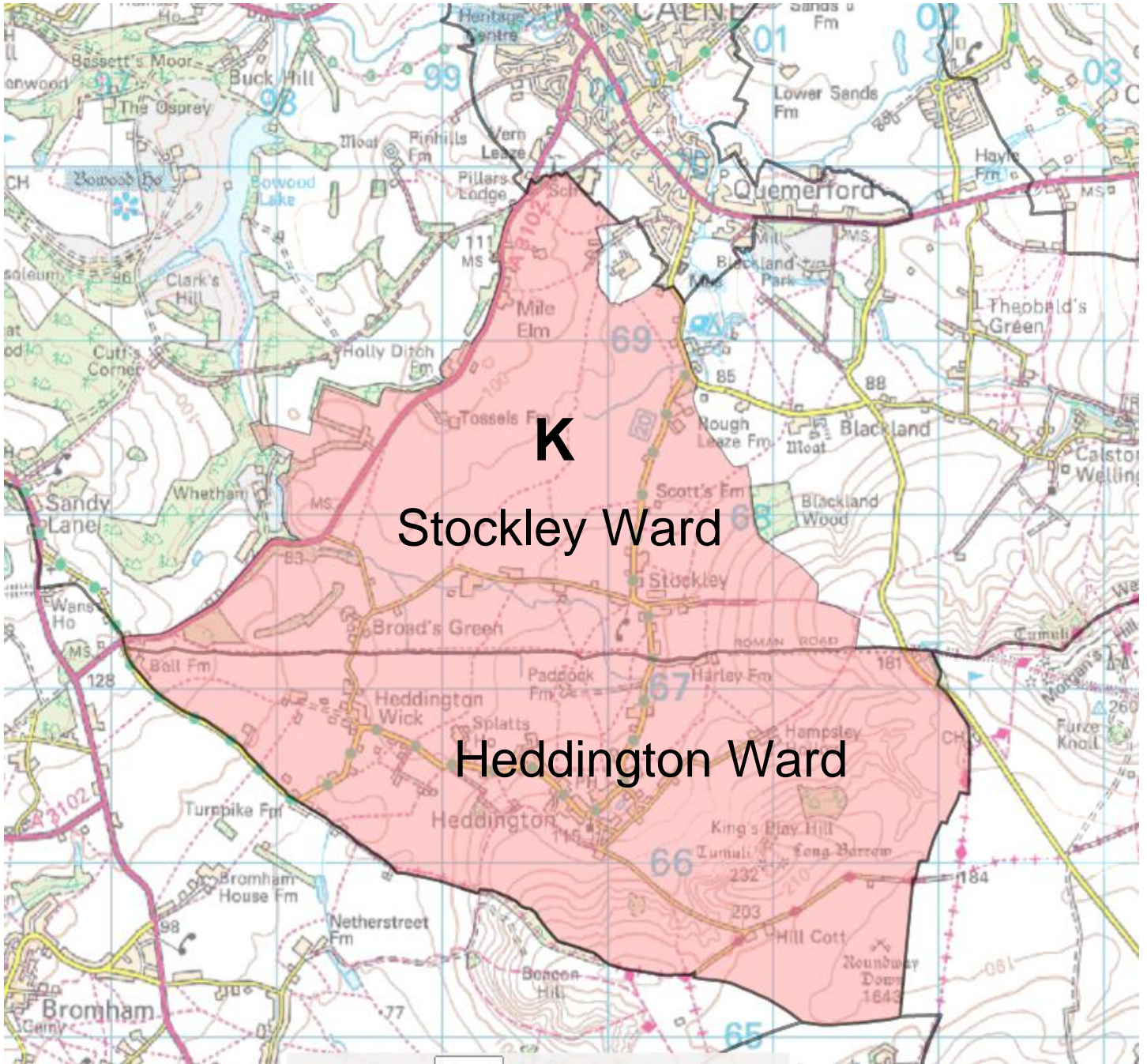
**6.5 Heddington Ward would comprise seven parish councillors.**

**6.6 That the parish of Heddington therefore be increased to a total of nine councillors.**

**6.7 To request that the LGBCE amend the Calne South and Calne Rural Divisions to be coterminous with the proposed revised boundaries of the Heddington, Cherhill and Derry Hill & Studley Parishes.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 80, 83, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

Heddington Parish Map



Shaded area is proposed new parish boundary, Dark grey line existing parish line. Old parish line forms ward boundary between Stockley and Heddington Wards

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## **Calne Without (Derry Hill & Studley)**

### **Background and pre-consultation information gathering**

146. The details of the parish of Calne Without and the background of the 2019/20 review were set out in full under paragraphs 14-26. In summary, a petition with over 700 signatures had been received in 2019 requesting a new parish be created for Derry Hill & Studley, which remained a significant factor to consider. The Parish Council for Calne Without at the time opposed that proposal. After an initial review, on recommendation of the Electoral Review Committee (“The Committee”), Full Council determined not to proceed with creation of a new parish at that time, but requested that a further review take place encompassing all surrounding parishes in order to full explore all appropriate options.
147. For the 2021/22 review the Committee therefore began by surveying opinion on the option of creating a new parish, and the possibility of retaining the remaining area as the continuing Calne Without Parish Council. It also surveyed on the option of abolishing the parish and transferring all elements to other parishes, both being suggestions that had been received as part of the 2019/20 review in response to the petition.
148. At the initiation of the 2021/22 review Calne Without Parish Council (“the Parish Council”), by majority, continued to oppose the creation of a new parish at Derry Hill & Studley for the reasons that had also been set out during the previous review. These included that the disparate communities of Calne Without worked more efficiently as a group and the communities would not be better served by dividing their governance arrangements. A major part of the Committee’s and Council’s decision to undertake a further review had been concern about the impact on the remainder of Calne Without were a new parish created. Some members suggested that if it were felt that Derry Hill was not sufficiently represented by the current arrangements, the warding arrangements could be rebalanced. However, the majority resolution of the Parish Council did alter during the progression of the review.
149. Those representing the former petition continued to stress the high level of response from that petition in support of a new parish, which the Committee had noted as part of its view in the 2019/20 review that a strong case had been made of the community identity and interests of local residents. The areas of West Ward and Pewsham Ward as initially requested included the major settlement of the parish where the bulk of facilities and services were located. It was argued that other areas might be more effectively represented if not combined with the large semi-urban settlement at Derry Hill.
150. During the pre-consultation online survey, 85 responses were received: 63 in support of a new parish proposal, 19 against, 1 giving no opinion. 2 responses suggested amended proposals, with one suggesting the same boundaries for a new parish but with warding, and the other incorrectly stating the proposal left Pewsham within the remaining part of Calne Without. Of those in support of a new parish proposal, there was division on what should occur to the remainder of Calne Without, with 33 suggesting retention of the current Parish Council and 39 suggesting it should be dissolved.

### **Preparation of Draft Recommendations**

151. It was important to note that for the 2021/22 review the Committee surveyed opinion on the

option of creating a new parish, and the possibility of retaining the remaining area as the continuing Calne Without Parish Council, or of abolishing the parish and transferring elements elsewhere, because these were options that had been received as part of the 2019/20 review in response to the petition. It was considered important to undertake information gathering on the already submitted proposals.

152. However, the Committee was not obligated to consider only those proposals, and in fact was required to consider all potential options if the evidence and information suggested alternatives would better reflect community identity and interests or provide more effective and convenient local governance, the statutory criteria.
153. During discussion with parish representatives and the public, it became apparent that the area around Derry Hill & Studley was considered by many as the centre or heart of the existing parish. It was the core community, comprising over half of the population and where most of the services, assets and amenities were located. As a result of development in recent decades it had a distinctive character from much of the rest of the parish, made up of smaller, more rural based communities physically distant from the semi-urban Derry Hill & Studley. This did not prevent the possibility of effective community and governance between those communities, as the Committee had seen in its previous review of Melksham Without. However, in contrast to that review, other communities in Calne Without did not share a similar level of community development distinct from the dominant population centre, such as village halls or other amenity provisions, indeed that lack was noted by both views in respect of creation of a new parish.
154. Given the strong sense of identity expressed and evidence of community for Derry Hill & Studley through the petition, and to a degree also shown by the balance of responses received during the online survey, which was in favour, the Committee considered first whether other sections of the parish shared a community connection as strong with each other and with Derry Hill, or if those areas in fact aligned more appropriately to other areas.
155. The Committee's examination of surrounding parishes and their alignment to or connection with communities within what is currently Calne Without have been set out in the preceding Recommendations 2-6.
156. In summary, in the case of Bremhill, changes proposed were minor or for largely rural tracks of land where it was felt there was no particular community connection with the core of Calne Without parish, though the precise appropriate boundary was amended during the consultations.
157. For Compton Bassett, the eastern part of Calne Without proposed to be transferred was both remote from and distinct in character from the core of Calne Without parish, or any other part, and it was not considered that it shared any particular connection stronger than that with geographically closer and more rurally focused parishes such as Compton Bassett.
158. For Cherhill, strong arguments had been presented regarding the community at Lower



Compton aligning more closely with Cherhill than with any other part of Calne Without, with the smaller communities such as Calstone Wellington not sharing character, identity or interests with the large semi-urban elements to the west, and the Parish Council indicated its support for amended proposals in that area during the consultations.

159. The proposals at Heddington were not as strong as some other areas, but the close connections with some of the communities such as Stockley, and the sparsely populated rural nature of the remainder argued against any continued inclusion with the core of Calne Without for any reason of community or identity.
160. However, although of a rural character, representations had made clear that the small community at Sandy Lane did align more to Derry Hill & Studley than other areas. Like Pewsham they were of rural character and their closeness to the core settlement, absent for other areas such as Calstone Wellington, Blackland or Mile Elm, ensured effective governance could take place and a sense of shared community remained possible.
161. The community at Sandy Lane also included a small number of properties within the parish of Bromham, which were artificially divided by the parish line, running between a number of properties. It was proposed that this be transferred to the same area as the rest of Calne Without as part of the review.
162. Furthermore, as previously noted, within Calne Without as it currently stood, Derry Hill, Studley and Pewsham comprised over 50% of the parish electorate, with 1433 electors out of a total of 2733 as of August 2021. A sizable amount of the electorate within Middle Ward was contained at Rookery/Marden Farm estate, and a sizable amount of the electorate of East Ward was in the land off Low Lane, both of which were accepted by nearly all parties contacted including the various parish councils as urban extensions of Calne Town which should be transferred into the town.
163. As a result, Derry Hill, Studley and Pewsham would comprise an even larger percentage of the parish even without any other changes. To a large degree, Calne Without was Derry Hill and its closely associated communities, and some other parts of the parish would not be considered for inclusion as part of the same community when considering the area were a parish being formed afresh.
164. However, the Committee noted it was not necessary or appropriate to abolish any parish as part of the review. Abolishment of a parish was a rare occurrence, particularly when a parish and its council were shown and known to be viable and effective. Whilst the Committee did not believe the evidence demonstrated parish boundaries or arrangements of Calne Without were the most appropriate under the statutory criteria, and a more efficient and effective arrangement would be possible, there was no question that the Parish Council was a viable entity.
165. Taking into consideration the principal settlement status of Derry Hill & Studley within the parish even before any other transfers besides Calne Town were considered, it could be argued that the parish could have been appropriately named Derry Hill & Studley even without

any changes. Many parishes in Wiltshire were named for their largest settlement, even as they contained other, often much smaller, settlements. Cherhill was a local example, also including the small community at Yatesbury.

166. Given the Committee's recommendations for transfers from Calne Without to parishes at Calne, Bremhill, Hilmarton, Compton Bassett, Cherhill and Heddington in Recommendations 2-6 on their own merits, the remaining part of Calne Without therefore comprised the bulk of West Ward, Pewsham Ward and Sandy Lane Ward. This would be a parish of over 1400 electors, concentrated on a major settlement which had repeatedly demonstrated a strong sense of individual identity.
167. Accordingly, subject to recommendations 2-6, the Committee supported the renaming of Calne Without to Derry Hill & Studley, and to remove its warding arrangements, leaving a single ward of nine councillors. As Sandy Lane was currently within the Calne South Electoral Division, whilst this could remain as a ward separate from the rest of the renamed parish, the Committee supported requesting the LGBCE amend the boundaries of the Calne South and Calne Rural Electoral Divisions to align to the amended parish boundaries, as a more effective and convenient arrangement. With the intention to move part of the parish of Bromham into the renamed parish as well, this would require requesting a further adjustment to the Electoral Division of Bromham, Rowde and Roundway.

#### Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

168. 47 responses were received to the online survey. Physical letters had been sent to the residents of Calne Without and a public meeting held in Calne Town on the proposals. 40 responses were in agreement with the proposal, 6 were in disagreement and 1 had suggested amendment.
169. Arguments in support of the proposal included that the scale and nature of Derry Hill & Studley justified a parish reorganisation focused on it as a core community, and that its identity and interests were very different to the other communities to the east as a result of the changes such as significant development that had taken place. It was suggested the proposed changes ensured the parish arrangements were more relevant, would better serve the interests of local residents and reflect the identity of the area more appropriately. Some did not think the current arrangements were very effective and the proposals were more representative for local people.
170. Arguments in opposition to the proposal included that it would undermine links between the local communities, that the existing parish council was effective and well run, and a larger parish would be more effective than smaller entities.
171. Amendments suggested by online survey or other means included that the historic Bowood Estate was divided by the proposal and the boundary should be amended to include it within a single parish. Other comments included support for or opposition to warding for the redrawn parish with some in opposition considering this to be an ineffective and unnecessary arrangement, and which noted the original petition did not call for a warded parish.

172. Calne Without Parish Council provided a representation in support of the proposal to amend and rename the boundaries of Calne Without Parish, to become Derry Hill & Studley, subject to a number of amendments. It considered that the boundary should be redrawn to include the entirety of the Bowood Estate, and so adjust the boundary with the expanded Heddington parish, and that the parish should be divided into three wards. It proposed wards for Pewsham, Sandy Lane, and Derry Hill & Studley. The Parish Council also sought amendments on recommendations relating to Cherhill and Heddington, and requested the Committee take the views of residents into consideration in relation to the Bremhill proposals.

#### Preparation of First Additional Draft Recommendations

173. The Committee considered it highly significant that the existing Calne Without Parish Council had expressed its support for the proposals of the Committee, subject to a number of amendments. This, together with the bulk of responses being in support, and the support of the other parish councils directly affected by the proposals, was relevant when considering if the criteria of community interests and identity had been achieved. The Committee was satisfied that the evidence and responses received were supportive of the overall principal of the proposed changes, which had received extensive multiple consultations to refine them.
174. As set out in Recommendation 6, the Committee was persuaded by the arguments put forth by the parish council and others that the historic Bowood Estate should not be divided between different parishes. Such a division would not reflect a natural boundary or the communities in the area, nor would it be an effective or convenient arrangement. Therefore, the Committee agreed that the boundary with the expanded parish of Heddington should be amended to ensure the estate was located within a single parish. For the most part this would exclude most residential properties not part of the estate, and so involve a limited population transfer change from the initial recommendation. Subject to confirmation as to the precise boundary of the Bowood Estate, the Committee agreed to amend its proposal to include the estate within the proposed renamed parish of Derry Hill & Studley, as this was the most appropriate placement.
175. In relation to the southern boundary of Bremhill as proposed by the Draft Recommendations, as noted under Recommendation 3 there was a mixture of comments from responders and at the public meeting, including in relation to Stanley Abbey Farm and properties along the A4 nearer Calne Town. On balance, the Committee was satisfied that its initial proposals in the area were in line with the criteria and remained the most appropriate boundary between the proposed new communities.
176. The exception was at the small area of Black Dog Halt, where it was considered that the line should be very slightly amended to include a very small number of properties which were considerably distant from any settlement of Bremhill, or any road or route to Bremhill, and aligned more with Derry Hill. The Committee would therefore slightly amend the proposed area D1 as detailed under Recommendation 3 to exclude that area.
177. In relation to warding, whilst it noted many parishes were unwarded and effective, the Committee accepted the arguments of the Parish Council that in this instance warding would

be an appropriate and effective arrangement. Although a new parish was not being formally created there was a significant change resulting in a much tighter boundary around the core, dominant settlement of Derry Hill & Studley, together with a still extensive area of more rural land and smaller communities in Pewsham and Sandy Lane. In order to ensure these retained their own identities and to reflect their distinction from the semi-urban Derry Hill & Studley, and the expanded rural area to include the full Bowood Estate, separate wards would be proposed.

178. Electoral equality was not a requirement for parish wards, but the Committee noted the populations of the respective areas, with Pewsham at approximately 160 electors, the expanded Sandy Lane at approximately 100, and Derry Hill & Studley at approximately 1200, with the proportions expected to remain similar in future projections.
179. Increasing the overall number of councillors to 11, with single councillors for Pewsham and Sandy Lane, which was presently the case, and the Derry Hill & Studley Ward having 9, would therefore ensure relatively close electoral equality across the proposed wards.
180. The Parish Council did not specify precise ward boundaries in its representation to the Committee. Accordingly, the Committee considered that a Pewsham ward mostly replicating the existing Pewsham ward would remain appropriate, and that the existing Sandy Lane ward could be expanded to include the Bowood Estate, both being more rural areas surrounding the main settlement of Derry Hill & Studley. This would form a new ward to be called Bowood and Sandy Lane.
181. As noted under other Recommendation 6, adjusting the boundary with Heddington would require requesting the LG BCE amend the unitary Divisions of Calne South and Calne Rural.
182. No comments had been received in relation to transferring a part of Bromham in order to unify the Sandy Lane community, and so this would continue to be proposed for the reasons set out previously.

#### Consultation on the First Additional Draft Recommendations

183. In further consultation on the amended proposals, 19 responses were received. 7 were in agreement with the proposal, 1 was in disagreement and 11 had suggested amendment.
184. One amendment related to the proposed name of the parish, suggesting it should remain Calne Without and not be changed to Derry Hill & Studley, noting the presence of other communities and the historic name of the parish.
185. The Committee was not persuaded by this argument. It was much more common and appropriate for parishes to be named for their primary settlement, as with local examples at Bremhill and Cherhill, and Derry Hill & Studley was overwhelmingly the core of the reduced scale parish. Furthermore, with the other changes made to parishes in the area, the parishes of Bremhill, Hilmarton, Cherhill, Compton Bassett and Heddington would also share a boundary with Calne Town. The legacy Calne Without would therefore be no more 'without' Calne than any other parish, and retaining the name could be both confusing and not reflective of its identity as a distinct community rather than being defined by its proximity to the town.

186. Most of the comments proposing amendments requested that the Committee revert to its initial proposal of an unwarded parish for Derry Hill & Studley. These continued to argue it provided better representation, warding provided no governance benefits, suggested there was a trend toward unwarded parishes, electoral equality would not be a factor in an unwarded parish, and that there was no real risk that Sandy Lane or Pewsham would not be properly represented in an unwarded parish. The initial petition being for an unwarded parish was once more highlighted.
187. The Committee considered the arguments closely. However, it noted that parishes were not one size fits all and remained a mixture of warded and unwarded across the local area, within Wiltshire, and nationally. It was relevant that, unlike the initial petition, the Committee was not creating a new parish, but had proposed transferring elements from the existing parish to others, with Calne Without Parish Council therefore continuing to represent the proposed new area.
188. The views of the Parish Council itself were one of several factors, including the comments received from various parties and the petition, but were of particular relevance and the Committee found its view on its own preferred governance of the revised parish to be convincing. It noted that should the parish wish to amend its arrangements in future to become unwarded, if it felt the benefits of individual representation for the more rural elements was unnecessary, it could request this. The Committee therefore upheld its recommendation that the parish be divided into three wards.
189. The Parish Council supported the a three ward structure and the suggested names of those wards, but requested minor amendments to the boundary of the proposed Bowood and Sandy Lane, and Derry Hill & Studley, wards. It was noted that a number of properties facing onto the same road would be in different wards under the existing proposal.
190. The Committee accepted the arguments of the Parish Council. Whilst the bulk of the land and properties of the Bowood estate would remain in one ward, there would be governance benefits in adjusting the line to ensure those on the same road as identified by the Parish Council would be represented in the same ward. The Committee therefore agreed to amend the boundary and consult further on that proposal.
191. Lastly, the Parish Council again raised the issue of the area around Abbey Farm, continuing to feel the area aligned more closely and would be more appropriately represented within the renamed Derry Hill & Studley parish than Bremhill, as currently recommended.
192. The Committee took account of the view of Calne Without Parish Council, but continued to feel the argument presented by Bremhill Parish Council, on balance, to be the most appropriate. It therefore upheld its previous recommendations for the reasoning set out previously.

#### Further Consultation and Preparation of Final Recommendations

193. Only 1 further response was received to the additional online consultation on the Second Additional Draft Recommendations. This was from Calne Without Parish Council, and was in

support of the proposals.

194. The Committee was therefore satisfied that over the course of four formal consultations and two additional engagement exercises, with reduced responses as the proposals were refined further and impacted smaller and smaller aspects of the proposals, had identified the most appropriate governance arrangements and extent of Derry Hill & Studley, the wider Calne Without, and other areas. It therefore confirmed the proposals for recommendation.

### Conclusion and Final Recommendations

195. The Committee has undertaken an examination of the parish arrangements in and around Calne Without over a number of years, including multiple rounds of online and physical consultation, public meetings, and a series of committee workshops and committee meetings.
196. It had focused on determining whether alternative arrangements would ensure more effective governance and better reflect the identity of the communities in the area, listened carefully to representations received from residents, interested parties and parish councils, in order to develop additional proposals where the evidence and arguments supported this under the statutory criteria.
197. The Committee considered that the consultations on the various Draft Recommendations demonstrated overall support for its proposed reorganisation of the parishes, and noted specifically the support from each of the parish councils involved around Calne Without, and also Calne Without Parish Council itself as the Committee adjusted its proposals.
198. Should the Final Recommendation be confirmed by Full Council, the LGBCE would need to give their consent to the proposal, and the Committee believed the level of consultation – including 3 formal and 1 information consultation in 2022 alone - cooperative work, parish support, and responsive adjustments would demonstrate that the statutory criteria had been met.
199. Having considered the evidence, statutory criteria, guidance, and other relevant information, the Committee therefore agreed the following

### Recommendation 7

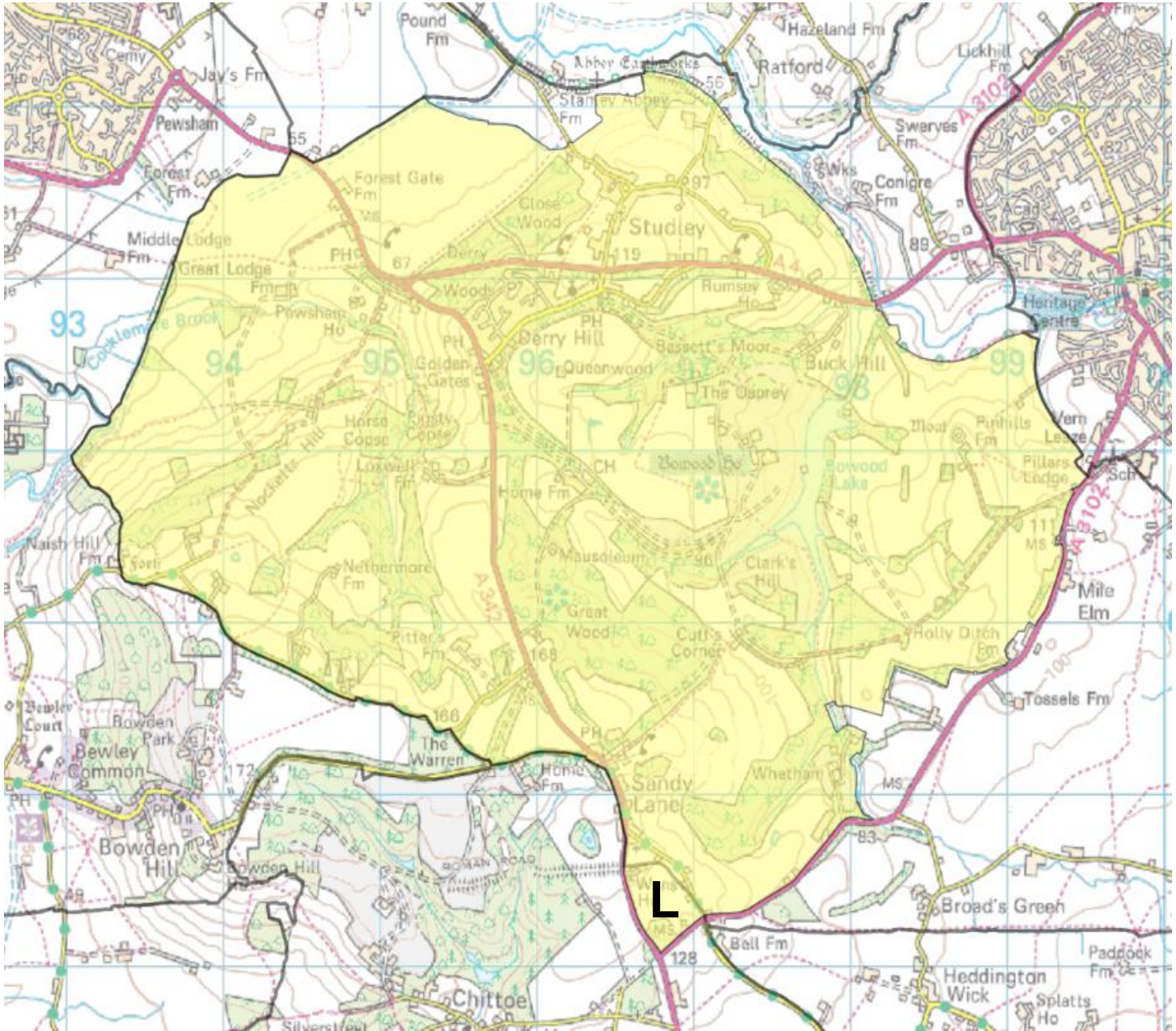
- 7.1 That subject to Recommendations 2-6, that the area shown in the map below, being the remaining part of Calne Without parish, be renamed from Calne Without to Derry Hill & Studley.**
- 7.2 That the area marked as L be transferred from the parish of Bromham to the renamed parish of Derry Hill & Studley.**
- 7.3 That the renamed parish of Derry Hill & Studley contain Eleven councillors across three wards: 1) Pewsham 2) Derry Hill & Studley 3) Bowood and Sandy Lane, as set out in the map below.**
- 7.4 Pewsham Ward would contain one councillor.**
- 7.5 Derry Hill & Studley Ward would contain nine councillors.**

**7.6 Bowood and Sandy Lane Ward would contain one councillor.**

**7.7 To request that the LGBCE amend the Calne South, Bromham, Rowde and Roundway, and Calne Rural Divisions to be coterminous with the proposed revised boundaries of the renamed parish of Derry Hill & Studley.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 54, 58, 59, 63, 73, 74, 80, 83, 84, 85 and 170 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews.*

**Derry Hill & Studley Parish Map**

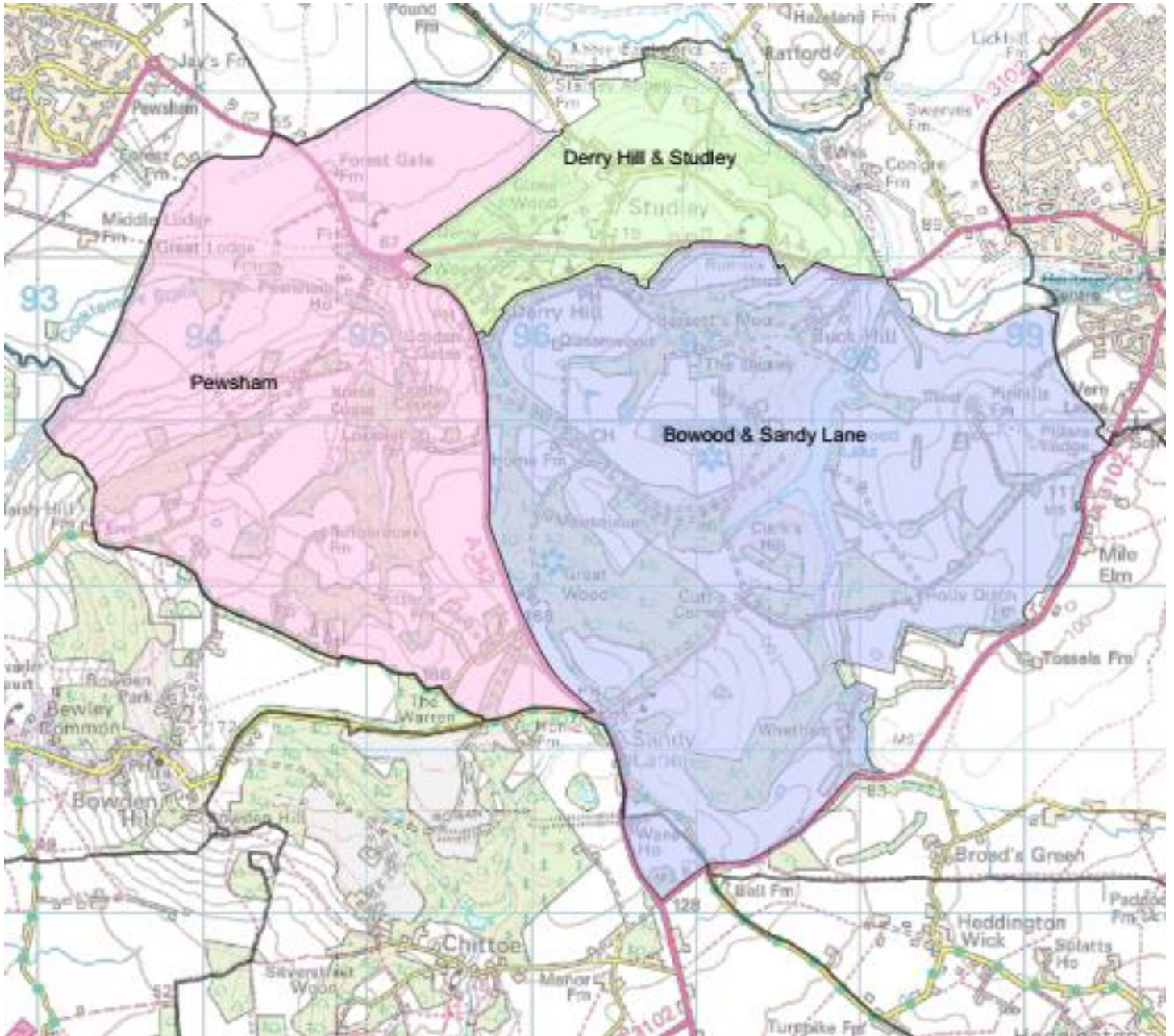


Shaded area is proposed new parish boundary, Dark grey line existing parish line.

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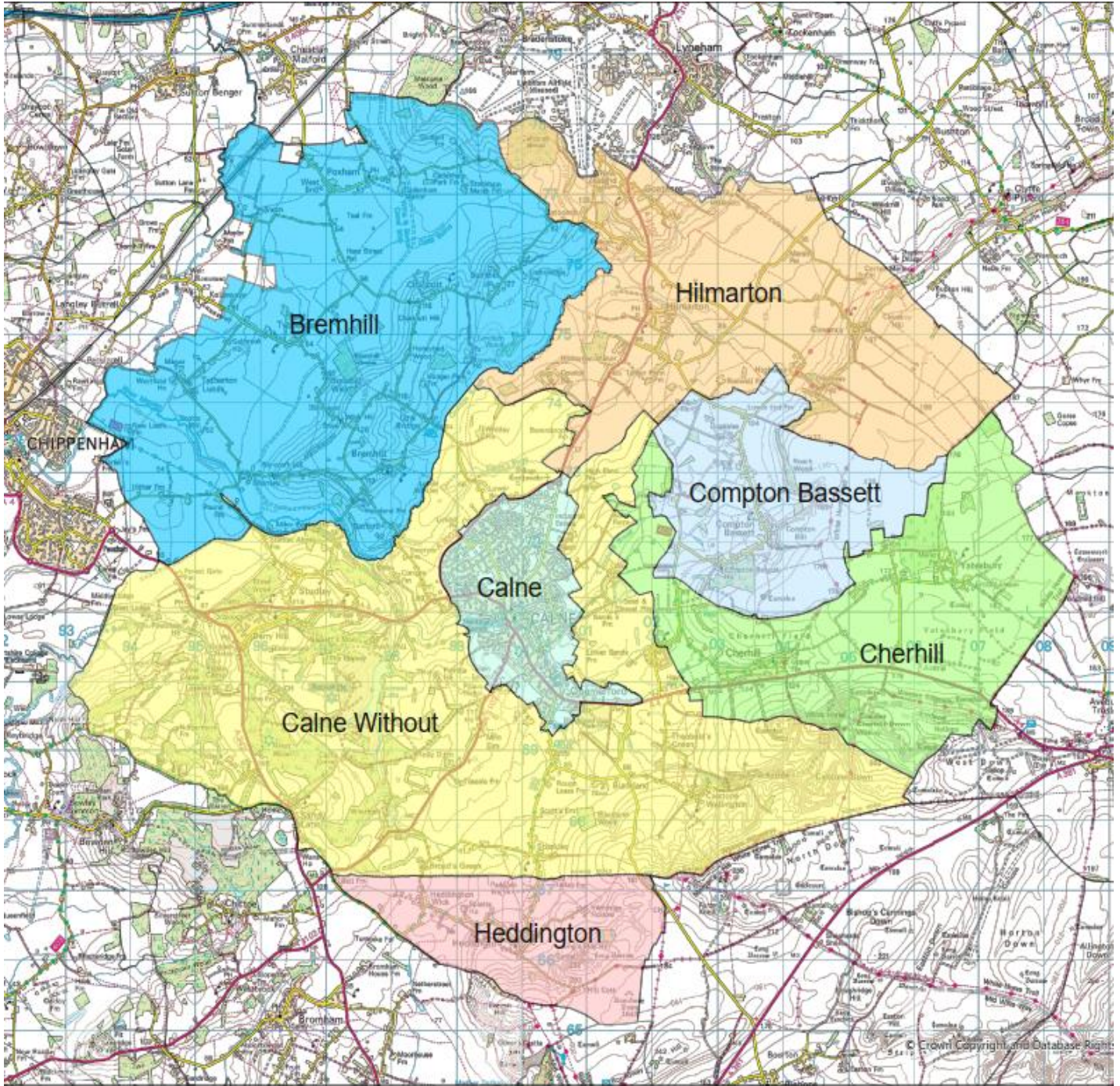


Derry Hill & Studley Ward Map



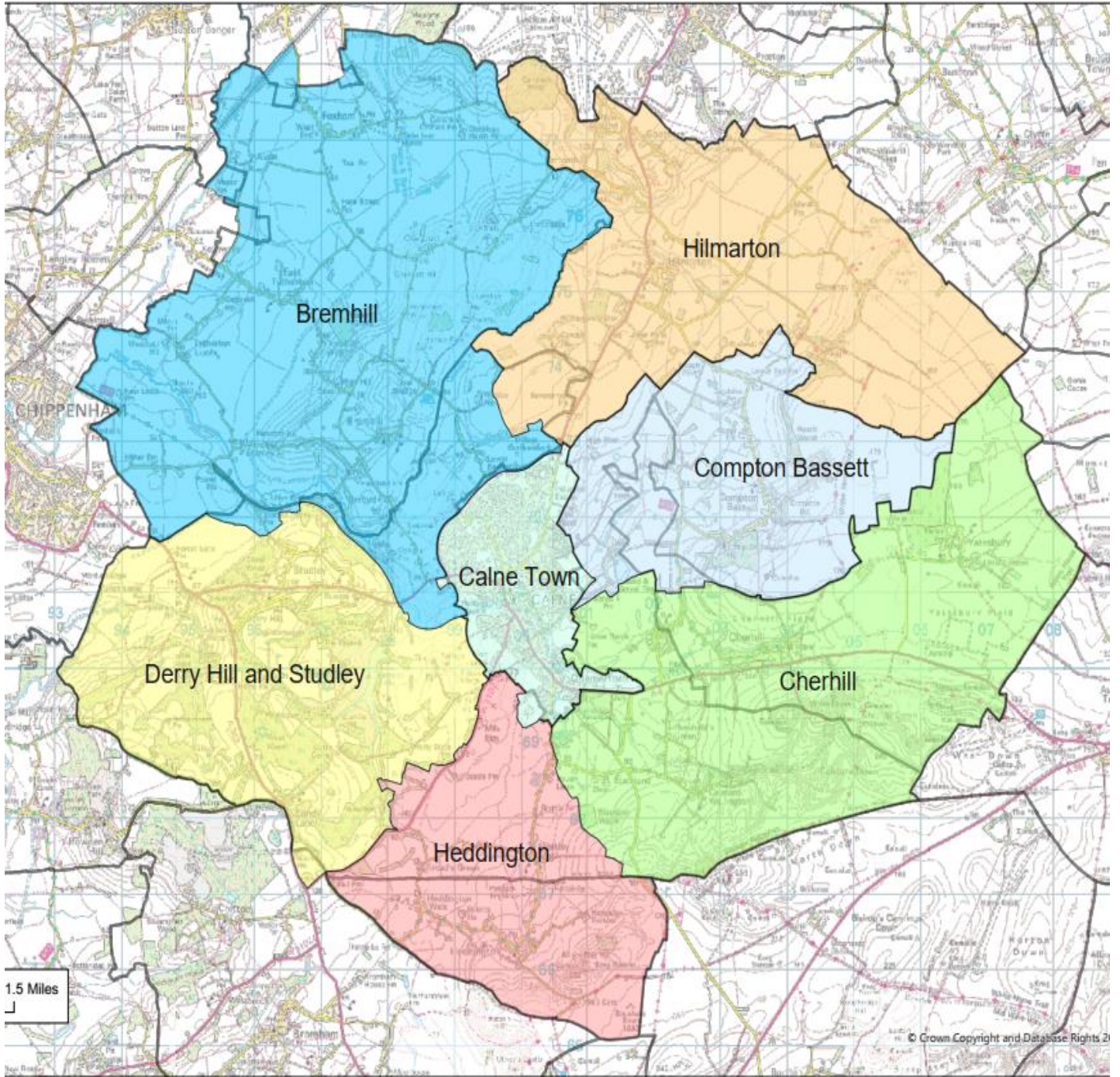
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Current Map of Parishes within the Calne Community Area (2021 boundaries)



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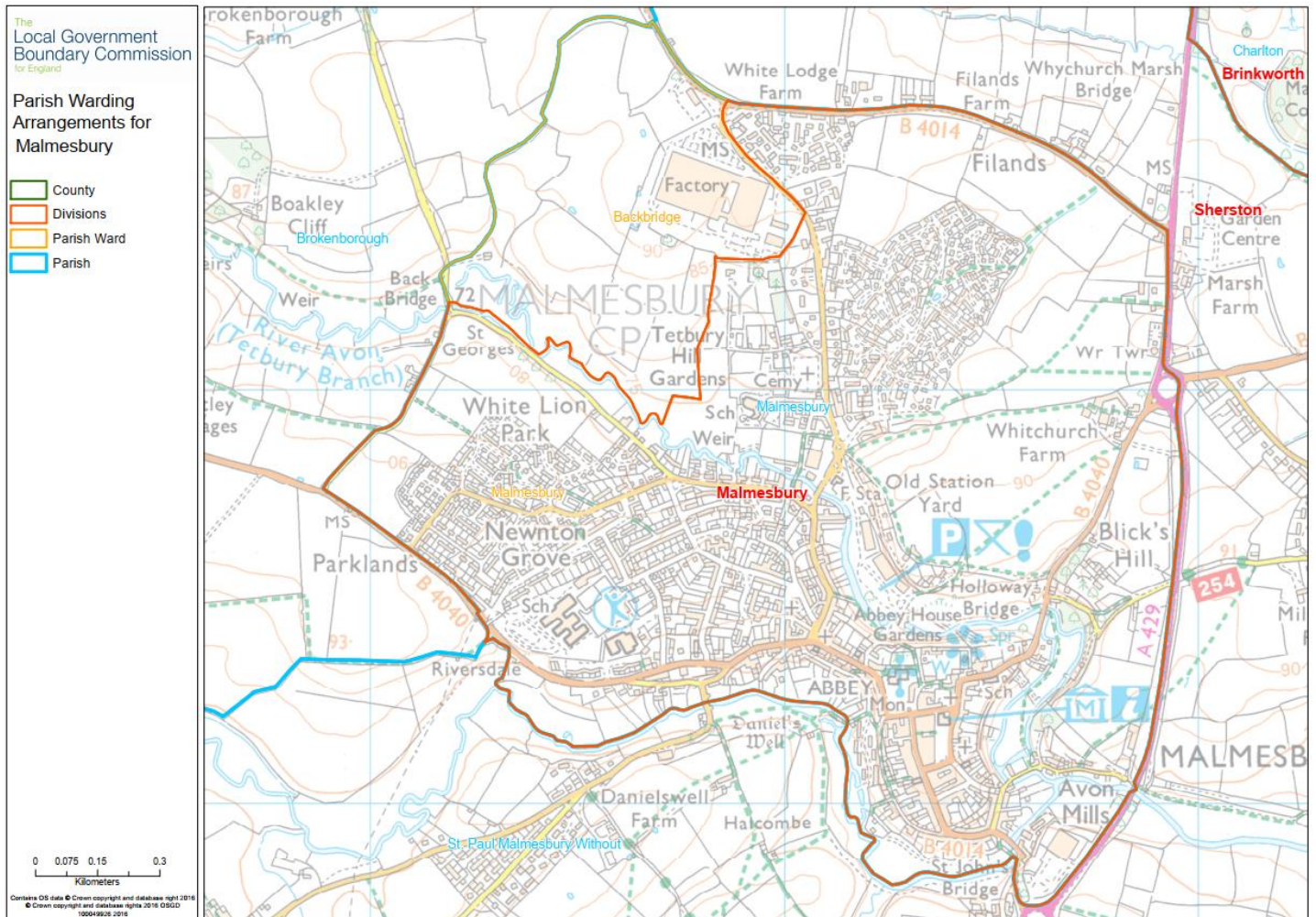
Proposed Map of Parishes within the Calne Community Area (2025 boundaries)



## **Malmesbury, St Paul Malmesbury Without, and Brokenborough**

### **Background**

200. Malmesbury is a historic small town in the north of Wiltshire. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of approximately 4473. The parish has two wards: Backbridge ward with one councillor, and a Malmesbury ward of 15 councillors.
201. Backbridge ward is included as part of the Sherston Unitary Electoral Division, with Malmesbury ward comprising the entirety of the Malmesbury Unitary Election Division. This arrangement was because the town was projected to have too large an electorate within five years to be contained within a single Division.



202. St Paul Malmesbury Without is a large parish located north, east and south of Malmesbury Town. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of approximately 1818. The Parish Council has two wards, with Westport Ward having two councillors, and St Paul ward with ten councillors.
203. In 2019 Malmesbury Town Council had requested the transfer of a number of large areas of St Paul Malmesbury Without to the town. This would include increasing the total number of councillors and breaking up the current Malmesbury Ward into a number of smaller wards. It was said that this took into account recognised historic boundaries and the identity of the area and would improve community governance for the town and the parish.
204. St Paul Malmesbury Without in response to the request from the Town Council had requested

the Backbridge Ward be transferred into the parish, arguing that this was a more effective governance arrangement given its location within the Sherston Division. They had also requested that the two wards of the parish be combined and the parish to become unwarded. The Parish Council opposed the proposed transfers requested by the Town Council.

Pre-consultation information gathering and preparation of Draft Recommendations

205. The Committee met representatives of both parishes separately and held an online public meeting attended by a number of local residents as well as representatives during the information gathering initial stages of the review.
206. There were 171 responses to an initial online survey. Importantly, this surveyed opinion on specific proposals that had been received, and could not preclude the possibility of further alternative proposals being considered appropriate.
207. In response to the Town Council proposal 44 were in agreement, 124 against, 2 with no opinion and 1 proposing an alternative option. Arguments in favour included that the Milbourne, Foxley Road and Burton Hill areas requested were closely related to the town, some as urban extensions of it, and not distinct from it as opposed to other communities in the parish such as Corston. It was argued it was more cohesive of an arrangement and the residents in the areas benefited from the services provided by the town. Arguments in opposition included that the Parish Council was effective and appropriately represented and supported the residents in those areas, and that changing the parish's multiple rural based communities provided no improvement in governance or identity.
208. In response to the Parish Council proposal 72 were in favour, 60 opposed, 34 gave no opinion and 5 responses were blank. Arguments in favour included that it would be a more efficient governance arrangement to remove the Backbridge Ward from Malmesbury given it was within the Sherston Division. Arguments in opposition included that it would make the boundary between the town and parish less distinct and that it was being developed as an urban area. Some of the responses received highlighted a misunderstanding about Backbridge Ward already being part of the parish, which was not the case.
209. Malmesbury Town Council and St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Council held discussions regarding possible compromise proposals during this stage of the review. It was reported that the Town Council had withdrawn its requests for most of the area to the north of the town apart from a small strip north of Filands and some employment land to the northeast, for the village of Milbourne to the east of the town, and for the Foxley/Common Road area to the south-west. In response it was reported that the Parish Council had withdrawn its request in relation to the Backbridge Ward.
210. The final area of discussion was therefore the built up area at Burton Hill and Cowbridge. It was reported that limited agreement had been reached on a small section appropriately aligning with the town, but there remained disagreement on a wider area being incorporated within the town. The Parish Council considered the majority of the area did not wish to be transferred and did not accept the arguments of the Town Council. The Town Council argued that the entire area was urban in character on a main route into the town near to the high

street, but offered an option of a transfer without Cowbridge to enable the parish to retain a land link with Milbourne should some of Burton Hill be moved into the town.

### Preparation of Draft Recommendations

211. The Committee had noted the updated responses from the Town Council and the Parish Council, as well as the public responses. It had noted that there were a number of communities around Malmesbury which had their own characters and identities. Some were larger than others, or closer to the town, and as the updated responses from the councils involved demonstrated, the most appropriate governance solution for one might not be appropriate for the others. If no better option could be found, no change could be recommended, but while public responses were an important consideration, they were not in themselves determinative, but dependent on arguments and evidence in respect of the statutory criteria.
212. In respect of the St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Council proposal, irrespective of whether it was withdrawn as a request, the Committee did not consider that the supposed efficiency of combining Sherston Division based wards with the Parish Council was sufficient to overcome the substantial community reasons for it to remain within the town. The area was projected to include significant urban development and would not share character or interests with the rest of the parish.
213. St Paul Malmesbury Without included a number of different communities and covered a large geographic area. The large village of Corston lay to the south of the parish, with some more developed areas closer to the town at Foxley/Common Road in the south-west. The area north of the town was mostly fields with few residents, and the moderately sized village at Milbourne lay to the east of the town with a small amount of rural land between. There were no direct road links from Milbourne to the rest of the parish communities, which were accessed through the town of Malmesbury itself.
214. The Committee was in agreement with much of the updated representations from the local councils and did not consider that the areas listed above shared character, identity or interests with Malmesbury Town, a rapidly growing, densely urban area.
215. As the Committee had seen in its review of Melksham Without in particular, it was possible for a large and disparate parish to be effectively and appropriately arranged without direct connections between some of its communities. However, it was still necessary for a parish to be contiguous, that is joined together, under the law.
216. This was of particular relevance as the Committee considered at this point the area at Burton Hill and Cowbridge. The Parish Council, for most of that area, and the residents who had responded to the survey from that area, had mostly opposed the request of the Town Council. Nevertheless, the Committee in reviewing the character of the area had considered at this stage that it was of a built up and urban nature, in close proximity not just with the town but with the high street of the town, and along the major commuting route to and from the town. It felt that those entering into the town would see little to no change in the character of the area

as they moved through Burton Hill and Cowbridge and into the town itself as currently existing. The Committee therefore considered that the identity and interests of the area aligned more closely with the town than any community of the parish, having its own character distinct from the more rural focused areas.

217. As a result the Committee had accordingly felt it necessary to consider what arrangement would provide more effective and convenient local governance. Due to the shape of St Paul Malmesbury Without, the Burton Hill and Cowbridge area effectively formed a block between the Milbourne and more rural areas to the north, and the communities around Corston and to the south-west. If the area were transferred in its entirety into the town of Malmesbury, this would mean Milbourne and the northern parts could not remain part of St Paul Malmesbury Without.
218. The Committee had considered the option presented wherein Cowbridge would remain part of the parish, allowing a small land link to be retained, whilst Burton Hill was transferred into the town. However, it considered this suggestion was arbitrary and illogical and could not be recommended. It did not consider the representations and evidence supported this as a natural division within the communities at Burton Hill and Cowbridge, and believed that such an artificial separation would not align to either of the statutory criteria.
219. Ultimately, the Committee considered that the preponderance of the evidence was that, notwithstanding the resident views expressed which had been taken into account, the character of the area at Burton Hill and Cowbridge was overwhelmingly aligned with the town of Malmesbury. It considered it was urban in extent, nature and proximity, and although this would lead to required changes elsewhere, at the time the Committee felt no other option explored more appropriately reflected the identity and interests of the area. Nor did the Committee believe retaining the current arrangement met the statutory criteria as it did not consider the current arrangement appropriately reflected its identity and interests.
220. Accordingly, it was proposed that the Burton Hill and Cowbridge area, along with the area at Daniel's Well as also reported to the Committee and discussed by the affected councils as a reasonable area to be moved, be transferred into the town of Malmesbury. As the unitary division of Malmesbury was already at the upper extent of variance from the average that was permitted, the area would have to be separately warded and remain within the Sherston Division. Any change to the parish boundaries of Malmesbury would require the consent of the LGBCE.
221. The Committee also recommended putting in place further warding within the town for a more appropriate division of Parish Councillors, including noting the projected increases in electorate for Backbridge.
222. In the northern part of the town and parish the Committee did not consider a case had been made necessitating any changes to bring in properties north of the B4104. Areas projected to be developed or as result of appeals lay to the south, already within the town, and there were no governance reasons to further amend the boundary. The exception, it was agreed at this stage, was some business/industrial areas to the east of the town, which predominantly

impacted residents of the town. As these included no electors the change would require the LGBCE to consent to change the unitary division boundaries, with no effect on the variance of the divisions. It accepted the proposal of a transfer of such land due to already recommending wider reorganisation of the community elsewhere, and thus part of a broader improvement of governance.

223. The remaining issue was therefore the village of Milbourne and further northern part of St Paul Malmesbury Without, which would be separated from the rest of the parish if the recommendations were approved. The Committee considered if the area could form its own parish or be combined in some form with nearby parishes. It was reported that the parish of Charlton to the north might be interested in joining with the community at Milbourne, which lay within or alongside the Charlton Park estate and had decent road connections. The parish would remain unwarded with an increase of two to eleven parish councillors.
224. The Committee determined that it would recommend a transfer of the Milbourne area to Charlton. Although large enough to form its own ward, with the main part of Charlton within the Brinkworth Division, the Committee noted the LGBCE had, through lack of alternative acceptable options, permitted the Sherston Division to 'doughnut' the Division of Malmesbury. If Milbourne were transferred to Charlton, and the Brinkworth Division were to be likewise amended to align to the revised parishes, this would end that arrangement which the LGBCE regarded as unsatisfactory, and so provide a more effective and efficient governance arrangement.
225. A small change in respect of a farm accessed from Brokenborough which would align better with that community was also agreed to be recommended to be transferred from St Paul Malmesbury Without.

#### Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

226. 153 responses were received to the online survey on the draft recommendations. Physical letters were sent to the residents of St Paul Malmesbury Without. 110 responses were in disagreement, 36 in agreement and 7 suggested amendments to the proposals. A number of emailed or written responses were also received, and a public meeting was held in Malmesbury for local residents of the wider area.
227. Of the 36 comments in agreement 23 were from current residents of the town. 11 comments were from current residents of St Paul Malmesbury Without, with 2 comments from elsewhere.
228. Arguments in favour of the proposals included that it was a sensible rebalancing of the area, could lead to more support for the areas which used town facilities and services, that the parish boundaries did not all reflect the nature of the communities, that the areas were naturally associated with the town, that Charlton and Milbourne were similar in character, and it made sense to include the more urban like areas within the town.
229. Of the comments in disagreement 99 of 110 were from residents of St Paul Malmesbury Without, 2 from current residents of the town, and 8 from current residents of Charlton. St Paul



Malmesbury Without Parish Council strongly objected to the proposals, and the parishes of Charlton, Brokenborough and Lea and Cleverton confirmed that they did not support the principle of transferring the northern parts of St Paul Malmesbury Without, such as Milbourne, to another parish.

230. Arguments in disagreement with the proposals included not perceiving any governance benefits to transferred residents and so no need to make changes, that the current arrangements were effective under the current parish council, that not all the areas proposed were urban in character, that Charlton had no meaningful connections with Milbourne, and that the multiple communities were well integrated by the current arrangements
231. Proposed amendments included supporting the principle of including Milbourne with Charlton, changing the name to reflect the new boundaries, including Milbourne with Lea and Cleverton instead, merging the remaining part of St Paul Malmesbury Without with Hullavington, or including only the properties west of the A429 to the south of the town in any transfer from the parish.
232. Following a deferral at the meetings on 31 May and 5 July 2022 to allow the Town Council and Parish Council to discuss ideas in more detail, a new, reduced proposal was received from the Town Council, as agreement was not able to be reached with the Parish Council. A variant of that proposal was also provided by the Unitary Members for Malmesbury and Sherston, proposing to transfer a smaller area of Burton Hill only into the Town

#### Preparation of Additional Recommendations

233. In analysing the responses to the consultation, the Committee noted that its initial Draft Recommendation had not received support from a significant number of respondents. It had been necessary to test those proposals as they had been distinct from any options informally surveyed during information gathering. It noted the representations from both the current parish responsible for the area, who were strongly opposed, and the surrounding parishes such as Charlton, Lea and Garsden, and Brokenborough, who had formally confirmed they were not supportive of any proposal to transfer the Milbourne area to another parish.
234. The Committee noted that there did not appear to be support for Milbourne to be transferred to another parish, or to form its own parish. This was a relevant consideration, as the Committee had felt on balance that such a proposal had the potential to be appropriate under the criteria given its concerns about the existing governance arrangements at Burton Hill, but upon being tested with the local electorate a great many additional objections had been raised.
235. The Committee reconsidered the Burton Hill and Cowbridge areas very carefully in light of the evidence received, as it had been its recommendation for that area which had led to proposal of wider and more significant options for change.
236. The Parish Council had at times proposed certain parts of the Burton Hill area might possibly be considered for transfer to the Town Council, but had also made strong representations regarding the effectiveness of the current parish arrangements, the community feeling of those

within much of that area, and that not all parts of that area had an urban or even semi-urban character, amongst other arguments. Its preferred position was for no changes to be made to the boundaries.

237. The Town Council in support of its more reduced proposal referenced the guidance on community governance reviews, stating its new proposal focused on immutable local features such as roads, rivers and footpaths. The reduced further proposal from the Unitary Councillors for Malmesbury and Sherston proposed an area west of the A429 down to Arches Lane should be transferred. They felt that the very close proximity to the High Street of the town, the housing density, direct public transport links, and other reasons supported the transfer as being more reflective of the identity of the area, and the proposal clearly delineated the boundary between the two parishes, whereas the current arrangement was not clear.
238. The Committee was mindful that if an area was to be divided there needed to be strong reasons to justify this, in particular to explain why some properties were moved and not others. This had been reflected in the updated representations, which had noted the complexity of defining under the required guidance a boundary between the town and the parish if some areas to the east of the A429 were included, or to separate, for example, Cowbridge from Burton Hill. The Committee explored the options proposed around the A429 and Arches Lane, to determine if there were sound and sufficient reasons to consider parts as being more appropriate to one community than to the others.
239. The Committee noted the extended period that had been used to see if agreement between the parties could be reached, and that, even had agreement been reached, the Committee would have been required to assess any proposal against the statutory criteria. Given the reasoning provided in the many public objections, lack of agreement between the councils involved, and disagreement on whether any division of the area at Burton Hill would be appropriate in community or governance terms, the Committee was not satisfied that transferring any part of the area to Malmesbury Town would lead to improved governance, and it was not satisfied a drawing of the line around properties in that area was most appropriate in community terms.
240. Accordingly, the Committee withdrew its original draft recommendation in respect of Burton Hill and Cowbridge.
241. In respect of the business/industrial area to the north-east of Malmesbury, the Committee had supported this as being more in character with the built up nature of the town. Given the other changes that were being proposed, although the land itself included no electors it considered it could support transferring that area as part of the wider reorganisation of community governance. The Town Council and local Member highlighted the presence of other industrial areas with the town council area.
242. Although it recognised the arguments in support of the initial proposal to include the industrial area, the Committee was persuaded that given the existence of other small industrial or business areas within the parish council area, and that any proposal to include it deviated a

clear boundary such as the existing main road, that there was not sufficient evidence of improved community identity or effective or convenient governance to justify the change. Additionally, in the absence of any other community reorganisation, stronger justification would have been necessary of how governance would be improved given the lack of residents. It therefore withdrew its initial draft recommendation.

243. In respect of the area proposed to be moved to Brokenborough Parish Council, that parish council had proposed a slight extension of the area to follow field boundaries which were within the same ownerships in the area. They reported this had been raised with St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Council.
244. Although it was a minor change, the Committee did not support the proposed amendment. Though the property proposed to be included was currently within ownership of those at the farm, this could change, and it was not a significant community or governance issue for a large area of farmland to be divided between several parishes. The Committee therefore confirmed its initial recommended new boundary along the brook and would recommend it to Full Council.
245. Accordingly, the Committee would propose no changes to the boundaries of Malmesbury or St Paul Malmesbury Without, except for the small section of St Paul Malmesbury Without to Brokenborough.
246. The warding of Malmesbury it was proposed would reflect that previously consulted upon, minus any transferred area previously proposed. St Paul Malmesbury would be recommended as unwarded, with twelve councillors, as the parish council had initially requested.

Consultation on Additional Draft Recommendations and Preparation of Final Recommendations

247. A single representation was received to the online consultation, notwithstanding the same methodology has been used as for the pre-consultation surveying. The response was in support of the recommendation.
248. Malmesbury Town Council also verbally updated the Committee that, no external changes having been accepted by the Committee in its latest recommendations, it supported the proposed warding for the town.
249. The Committee, having significantly adjusted its proposals in response to feedback, evidence and arguments previously received, was satisfied that it had arrived at an option which reflected the identity and interests of the area.
250. Having considered the evidence, statutory criteria, guidance, and other relevant information, the Committee therefore agreed the following:

**Recommendation 8**

**8.1 That Malmesbury Town Council contain a total of 17 councillors in the following wards as shown in the map below:**

- i. Backbridge Ward (two councillors)**

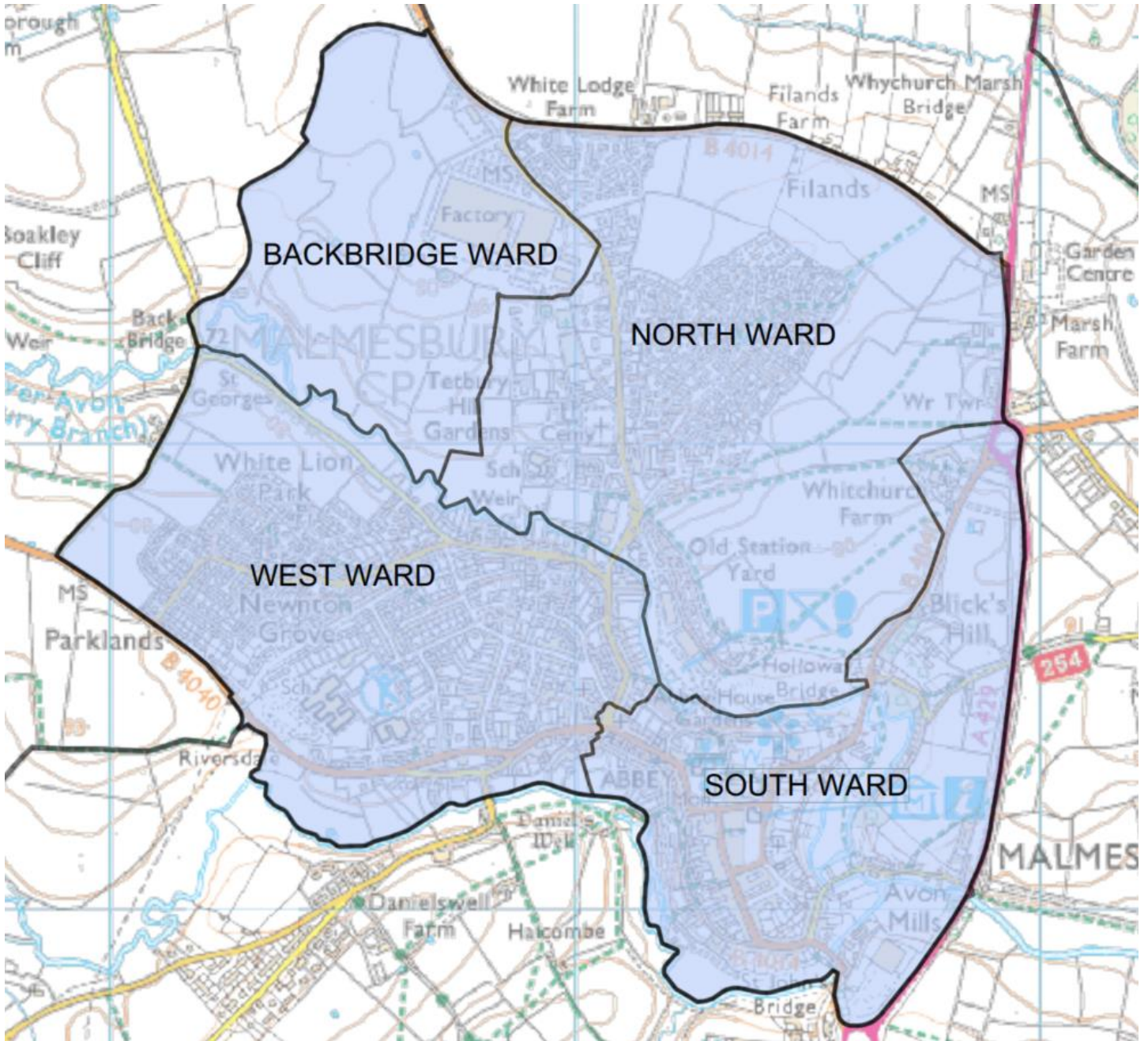
- ii. Malmesbury North Ward (six councillors)**
- iii. Malmesbury South (two councillors)**
- iv. Malmesbury West (seven councillors).**

**8.2 That the area marked as M be transferred from St Paul Malmesbury to the parish of Brokenborough.**

**8.3 The parish of St Paul Malmesbury Without to be unwarded, with Twelve Councillors.**

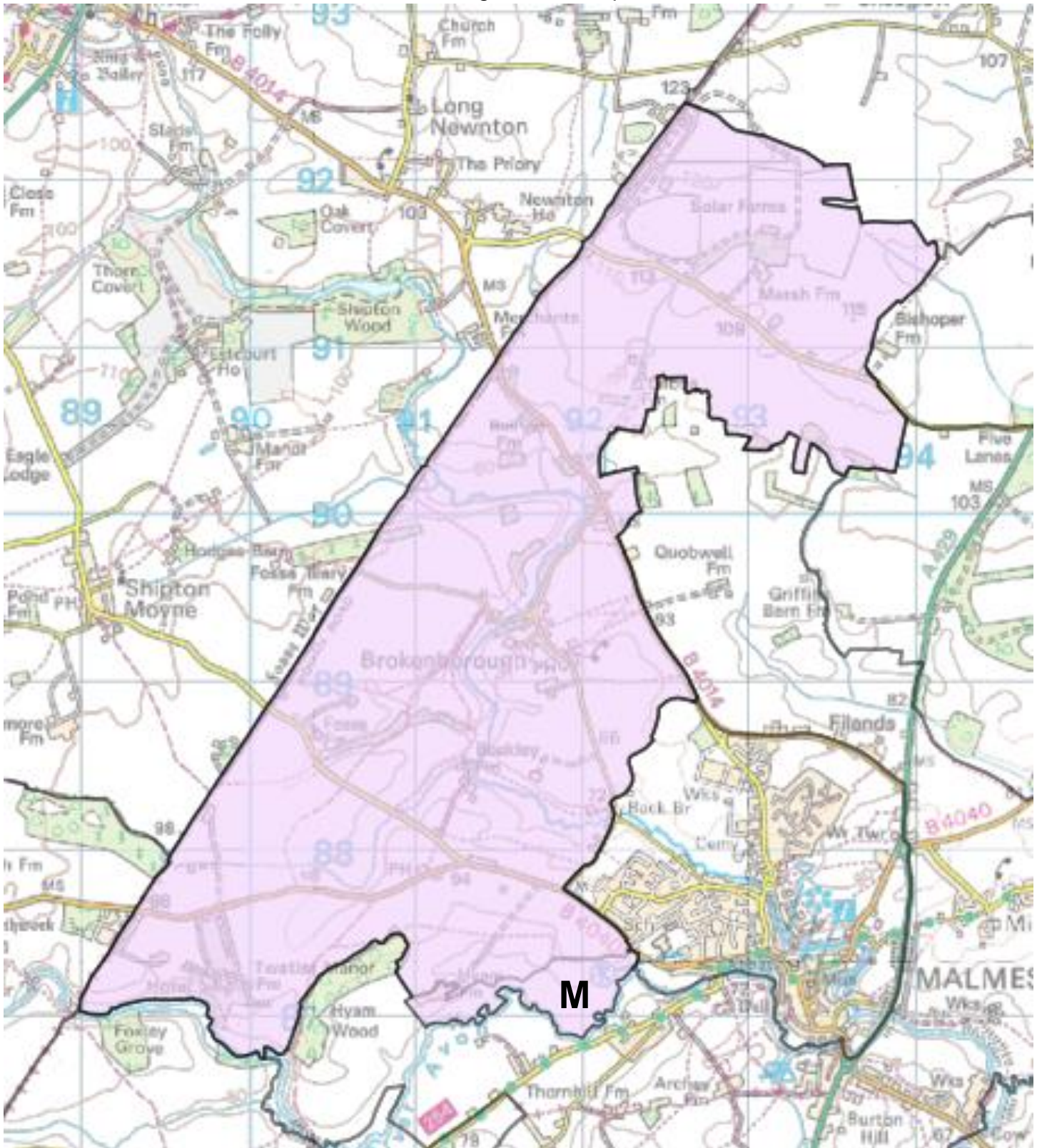
*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 80, 83, of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

Malmesbury Ward Map



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Brokenborough Parish Map



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