

## Governance Review Report – June 2014

### Introduction

*This report is an updated version of a report which was originally presented to Wiltshire Council in 2011, was updated in June 2013 following the elections and has now been further updated in June 2014, following the commencement of the Community Governance Review by Wiltshire Council.*

Trowbridge Town Council has welcomed the commencement of the Community Governance Review by Wiltshire Council and presents this updated report. The first section below, whilst no longer directly relevant, as the review has now commenced, is presented as background to the issue, as it details the request made by the town council to persuade Wiltshire Council to undertake a review.

*When Area Board boundaries were set up by the Unitary Implementation Executive (IE) in 2009, concerns were expressed by the IE that both Area Board boundaries and Unitary Division boundaries, upon which the Area Boards were based, did not reflect community identity in a number of areas. It was indicated in a report to the IE that support would be given to undertaking a Community Governance Review (CGR) in some areas to see if improvements to community identity within Area Boards could be achieved. This suggestion was strongly supported by the IE and by those who are now senior members of the Council.*

*A number of boundary anomalies were resolved in the then North Wiltshire District area of the County at the same time as Wiltshire Council was established (April 2009), such as at Chippenham around Cepen Park and in Calne, resulting from long standing parish boundary reviews which were undertaken under the old system. The current system no longer requires input from the DCLG and the Secretary of State's approval. The review is the sole responsibility of Wiltshire Council. Whilst electoral arrangements have been reviewed, parish boundary reviews have not been undertaken in the former West Wiltshire area since the last ones were implemented in 1991. More than thirty years would, in all estimates be too long, particularly in an area which has experienced significant development and housing growth. For some time Trowbridge Town Council has been concerned that there are similar anomalies in other parts of the Wiltshire Council area, such as:*

*The area to the north of Bishopdown where the parish boundary between the City of Salisbury and the Parish of Laverstock cuts through the middle of a housing estate, leaving Laverstock Parish part in South Wilts Area Board and part in Salisbury Area Board. The report to the IE on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009, in answer to an issue raised by Cllr Mary Douglas said; 'Confirmed that part of the Laverstock CP includes parts of Hampton Park housing estate which are within the Salisbury St Marks and Bishopdown ED in the Salisbury Area Board – suggested early electoral review of City boundary.'*

*A number of areas around Trowbridge, are clearly part of the community of Trowbridge but attached to parishes in the Bradford-on-Avon Community Area. These include Shore Place, which is in Wingfield Parish but part of a Trowbridge housing estate and only accessible via Trowbridge. The report to the IE on 16<sup>th</sup> March in answer to representations from Trowbridge Town Council said; 'It is suggested that an electoral (governance) review of the Trowbridge area would be required to address the overlap of urban areas into neighbouring parishes.'*

*In addition a Community Governance Review could resolve other community identity issues, not directly impacting upon Area Boards, around Salisbury, Westbury, Devizes, Melksham as well as at Trowbridge, where in Moyle Park and Walmsley Chase the parish boundary runs through the middle of houses.*

*In May 2011 when Wiltshire Council considered this issue, whilst recognising their statutory duty to undertake a Community Governance Review on a periodic basis Wiltshire Council resolved not to consider the matter further until after the 2013 elections. The 2011 report to Wiltshire Council says, "1.1 The Council is required to undertake Governance Reviews, i.e. to keep under review the boundaries and seating arrangements of parishes and parish wards within the county" . and, "2.3 The frequency of such reviews is not specified, although ten years would appear to be the generally accepted maximum."*

*With the expectation that the Core Strategy and Local Plan for Wiltshire will be adopted in 2014 it would be wholly appropriate for Wiltshire Council now to accept its responsibilities and undertake a CGR.*

*At a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee of Trowbridge Town Council it was resolved:*  
***That Trowbridge Town Council submits the report, with any appropriate updates if required, to Wiltshire Council as a formal request for a Community Governance Review, to ensure that the future boundaries of the town include appropriate areas and that the most appropriate Local Council represents the identified community of Trowbridge. And that the Town Council coordinates this approach with other Local Councils seeking a CGR from Wiltshire Council.***

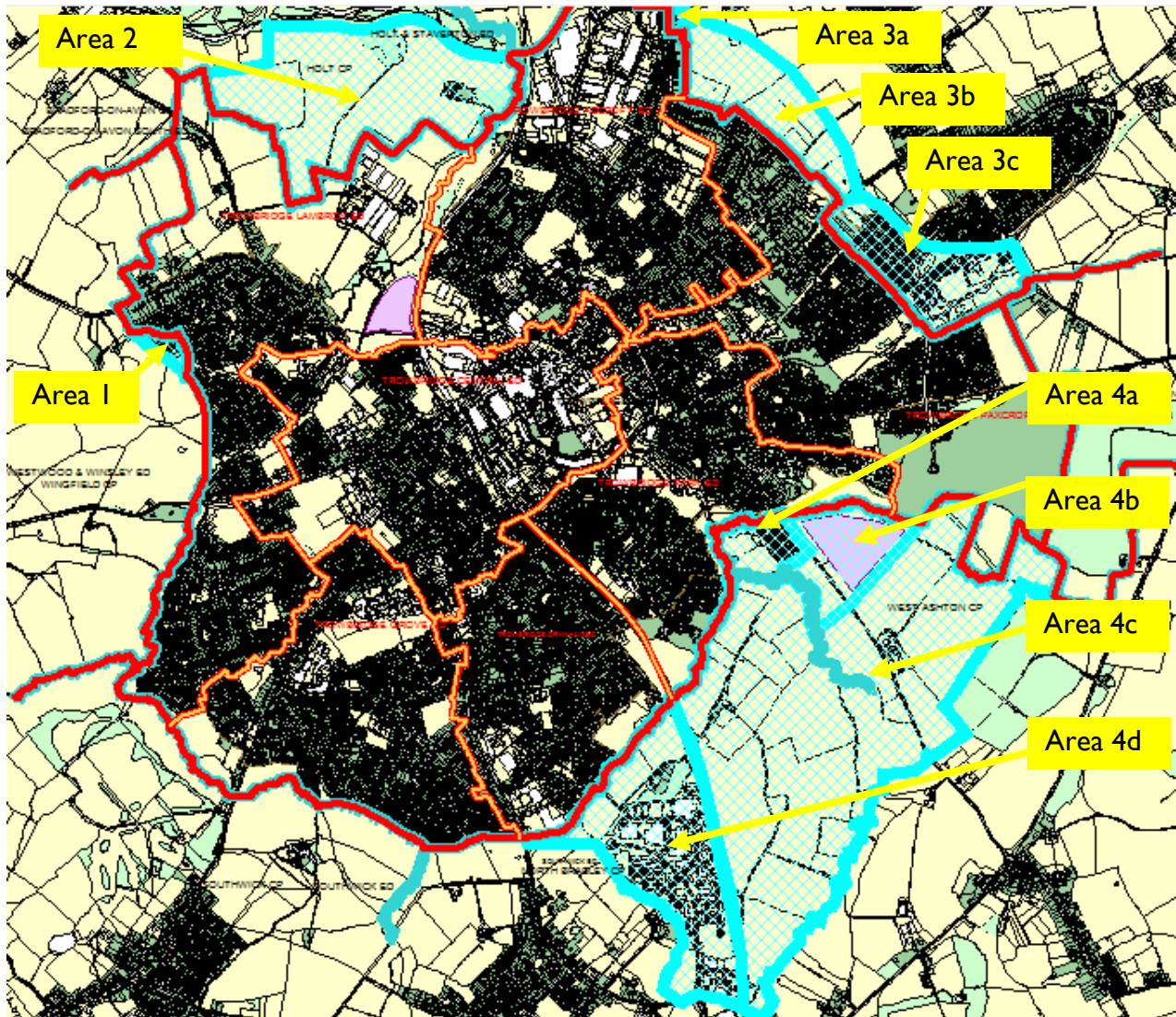
*Trowbridge Town Council would therefore request:*

- 1. That Wiltshire Council now commit to undertaking a Community Governance Review to address existing parish boundary anomalies and deliver clearer community identity across growing communities in Wiltshire.*
- 2. That Wiltshire Council ensures that, with four years in which to undertake a Community Governance Review and implement any changes, the results of any review will be implemented prior to the next Wiltshire Council and Parish Council elections in 2017.*
- 3. That Wiltshire Council ensure that any review includes changes to town and parish boundaries to extend the area covered by growing communities to include allocated for significant development in the local plan period covered by the Core Strategy which is scheduled to be adopted in 2014, so that the implementation of Neighbourhood Plans and Community Infrastructure Levy applies in a sensible and logical way, allowing constructive partnership between local councils and Wiltshire Council to support growth, economic recovery and service delivery.*

The remainder of the report is an updated version of the detail specifying the particular areas adjacent to the boundary of Trowbridge Town which the town council considers merit review and has been updated to reflect the most recent information available and presents more up to date mapping, particularly providing greater detail of areas (Area 4c and Area 4d) which were previously outside the scope of the town council's mapping software.

## Suggested changes around Trowbridge supported by the Town Council

The areas which Trowbridge Town Council considers need to be addressed as part of any Community Governance Review are detailed on the map below, highlighted in cyan cross hatching. All of the suggested changes also anticipate revisions to the Unitary Division boundaries, but none result in an electorate with an unacceptable variation from the average.



Existing Parish Boundary



Wiltshire Council Electoral Division Boundary



Town Council Ward Boundary



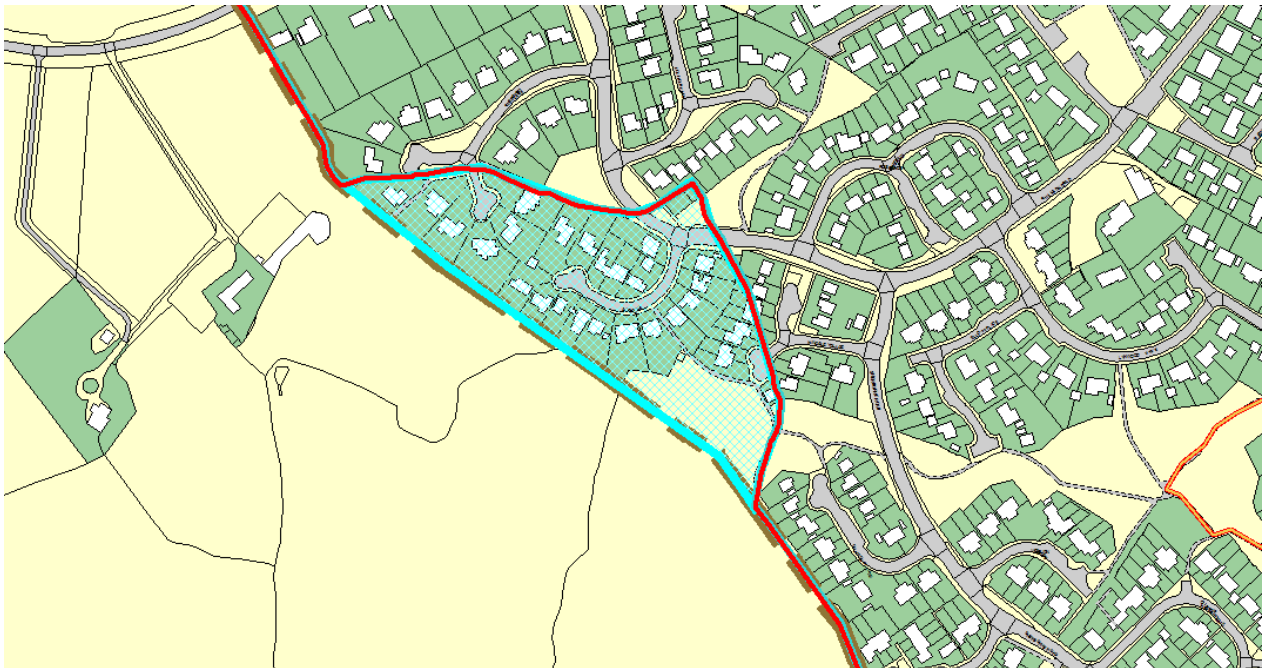
Suggested Changes 

**Summary of Changes to Unitary Electoral Divisions:**

<b>Electoral Division</b>	<b>2012 electorate (estimate)</b>	<b>transfers</b>	<b>Revised 2012 electorate</b>	<b>Variance from average (3695)</b>
Winsley & Westwood	3413	-59	3354	-9.2%
Holt and Staverton	3430	-2	3428	-7.2%
Hilperton	3706	-17-445	3244	-12.2%
Southwick	3420	-223-10-3	3184	-13.8%
Trowbridge Lambrok	3560	+59+2	3621	-2.0%
Trowbridge Adcroft	3518	+17	3535	-4.3%
Trowbridge Paxcroft	3518	+445	3963	+7.3%
Trowbridge Park	3358	+223+10	3591	-2.8%
Trowbridge Drynham	3410	+3	3413	-7.6%

The average of 3,695 electors is based upon the total WC electorate estimate for 2012 of 362,128 electors across the 98 Electoral Divisions (EDs). None of these changes for the Trowbridge area give a greater variance from average than existing EDs of +15% for Malmesbury and Warminster Broadway and -18% for Winterslow. The following pages detail the suggested changes and provide an estimate of the changes in electorate for each Unitary Electoral Division affected.

**Area I – Shore Place**



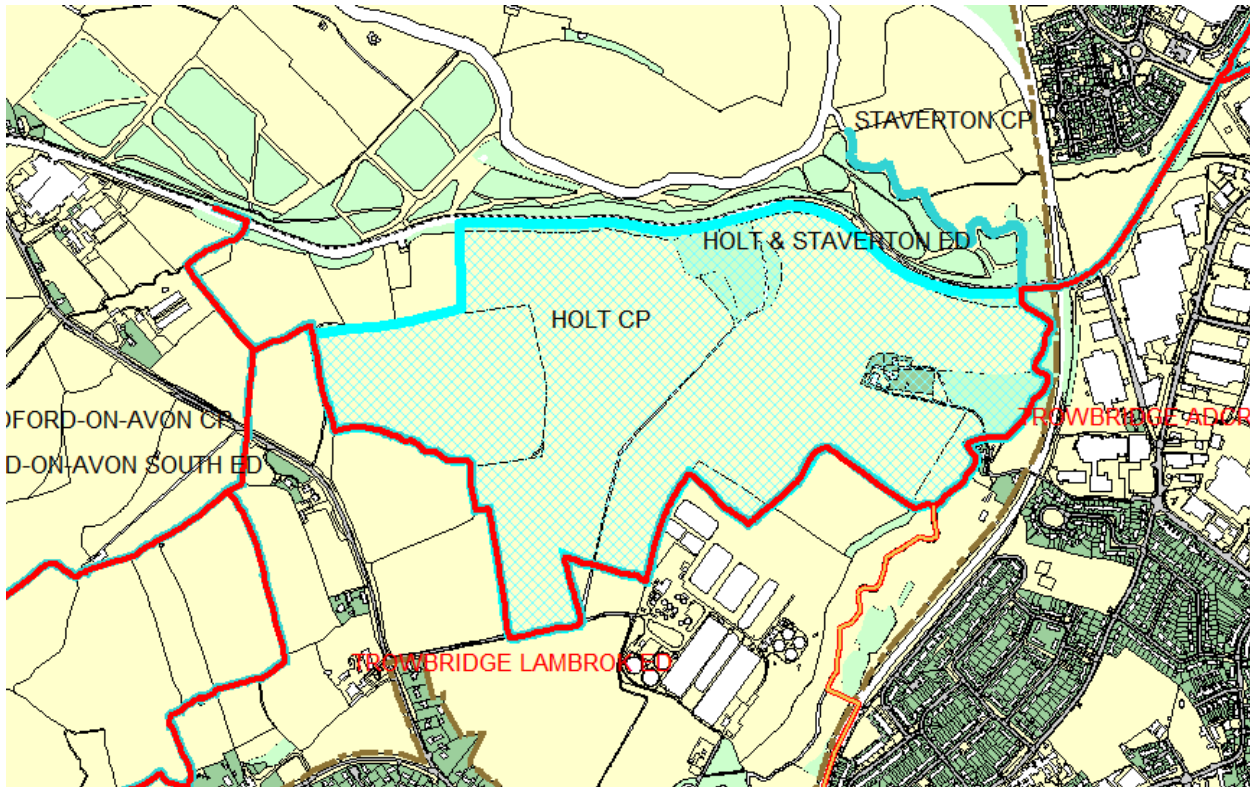
District Plan  
Town Policy  
Limit



Area I comprises a small area to the West of the town which is part of the Broadmead Estate, but which is in Wingfield Parish (Winsley and Westwood ED), including addresses in Shore Place, Chepston Place and Kingsley Place. This area is only accessible from Trowbridge and is remote from the remaining population of Wingfield. The boundary between the estate and therefore the built up area of Trowbridge and rural farmland within the Green Belt provides a significantly improved natural boundary. It is the only part of Wingfield not in the Green Belt.

Approximately 28 properties are affected. Assuming 59 electors would transfer this would reduce the 2012 electorate of the Winsley and Westwood ED to 3354 and would increase Trowbridge Lambrok ED to 3619.

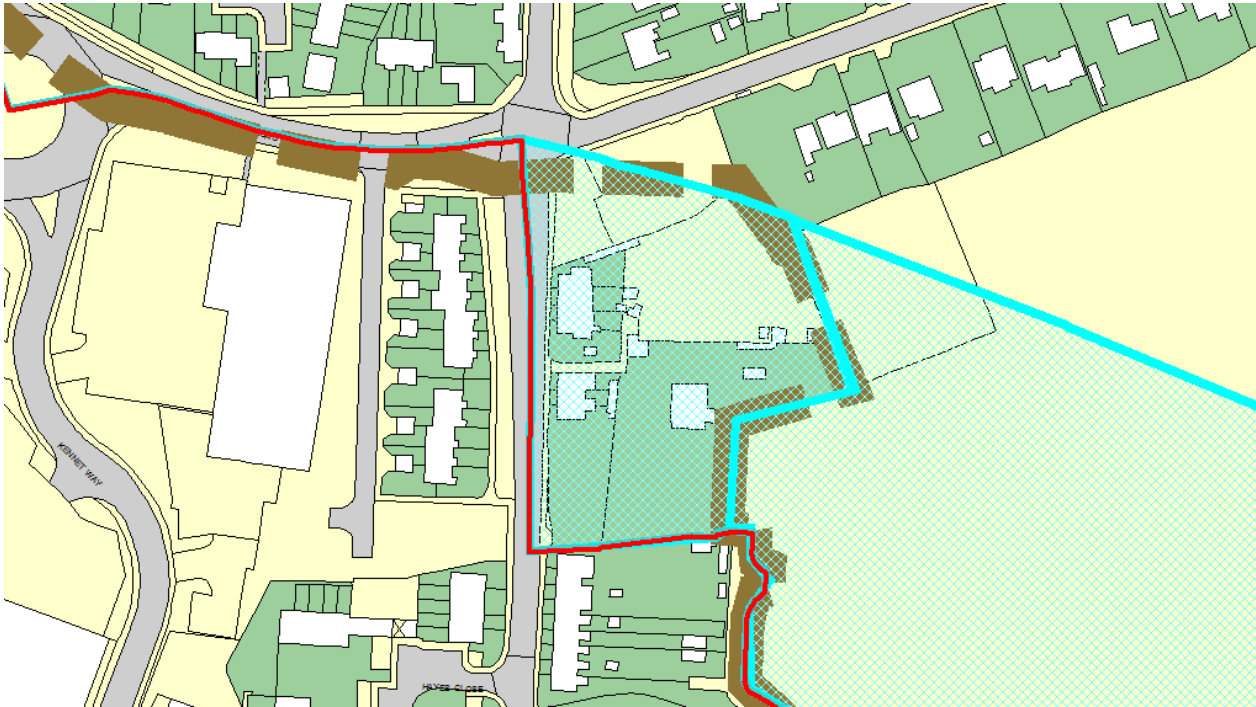
**Area 2 – Lady Down Farm**



Area 2 comprises an area to the North West of the town, currently part of Holt Parish (Holt and Staverton ED), lying south of the Kennet and Avon Canal but outside the Bradford on Avon Landscape Protection Zone and including Lady Down Farm. Some of it lies within the Sewage Works Limit and all of it lies within the Green Belt. The Canal forms a good natural Boundary. The current boundary in a number of places is undefined by field boundaries. The area is not accessible directly from the remainder of Holt Parish.

The only residence affected is only accessible from Trowbridge. Assuming 2 electors would transfer this would reduce the 2012 electorate of Holt and Staverton ED to 3428 and would further increase Trowbridge Lambrok to 3621.

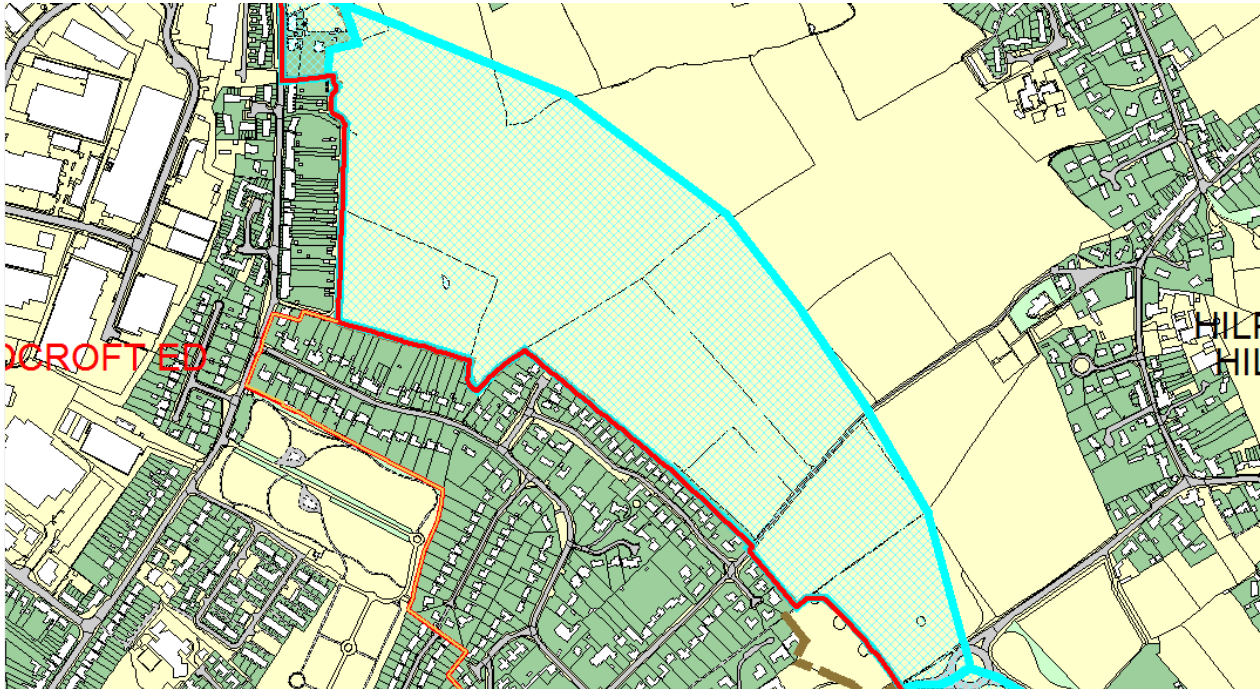
**Area 3a – Wyke Road**



Area 3a comprises a small area of Hilperton Parish (Hilperton ED) which was part of the town until the last review was implemented in 1991, including properties fronting onto Wyke Road. The nearest properties across the road and to the south fronting Wyke Road are all in Trowbridge. The area will lie to the south of the Hilperton Relief Road when completed (due 2015).

Approximately 8 properties are affected. Assuming 17 electors would transfer this would reduce the 2012 electorate of the Hilperton ED to 3689 and would increase Trowbridge Adcroft ED to 3535.

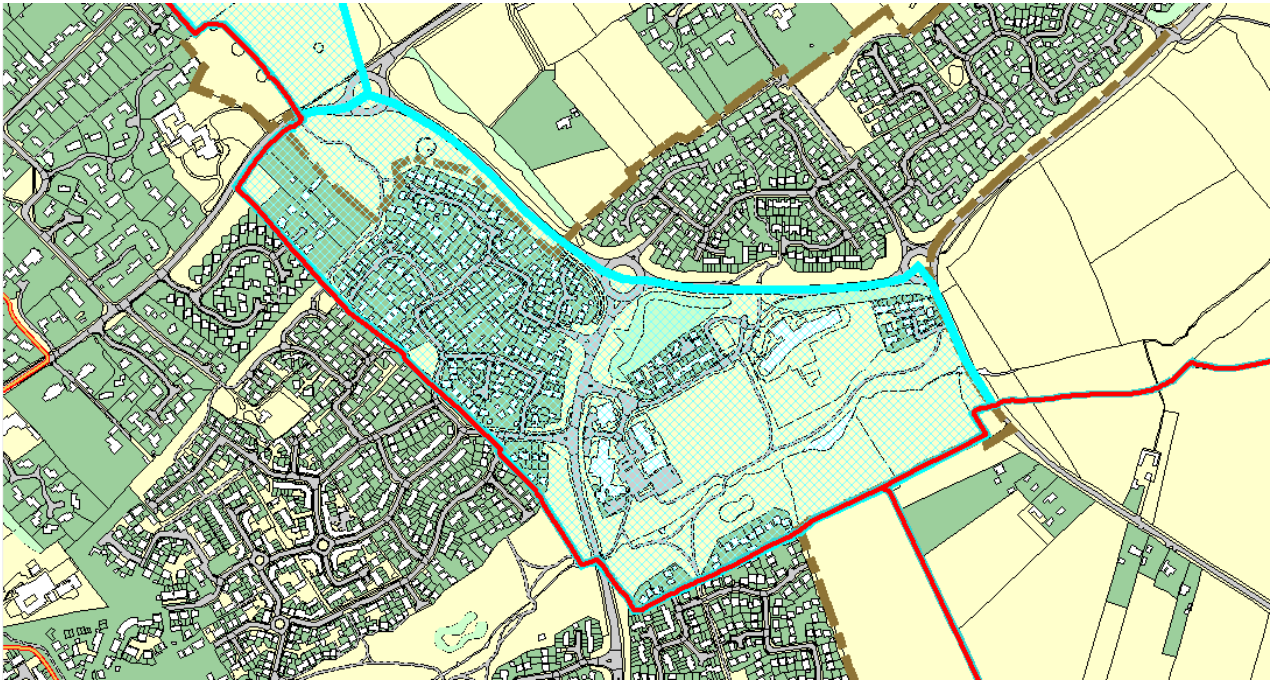
**Area 3b – Hilperton Gap South**



Area 3b comprises all of the remainder (after accounting for Area 3a) of the area lying to the south and west of the Hilperton Relief Road, (due to be completed by end 2015). This is part of Hilperton Parish (Hilperton ED) but was part of Trowbridge Parish until the last review was implemented in 1991. The relief road will form a good natural boundary when completed.

No properties are affected.

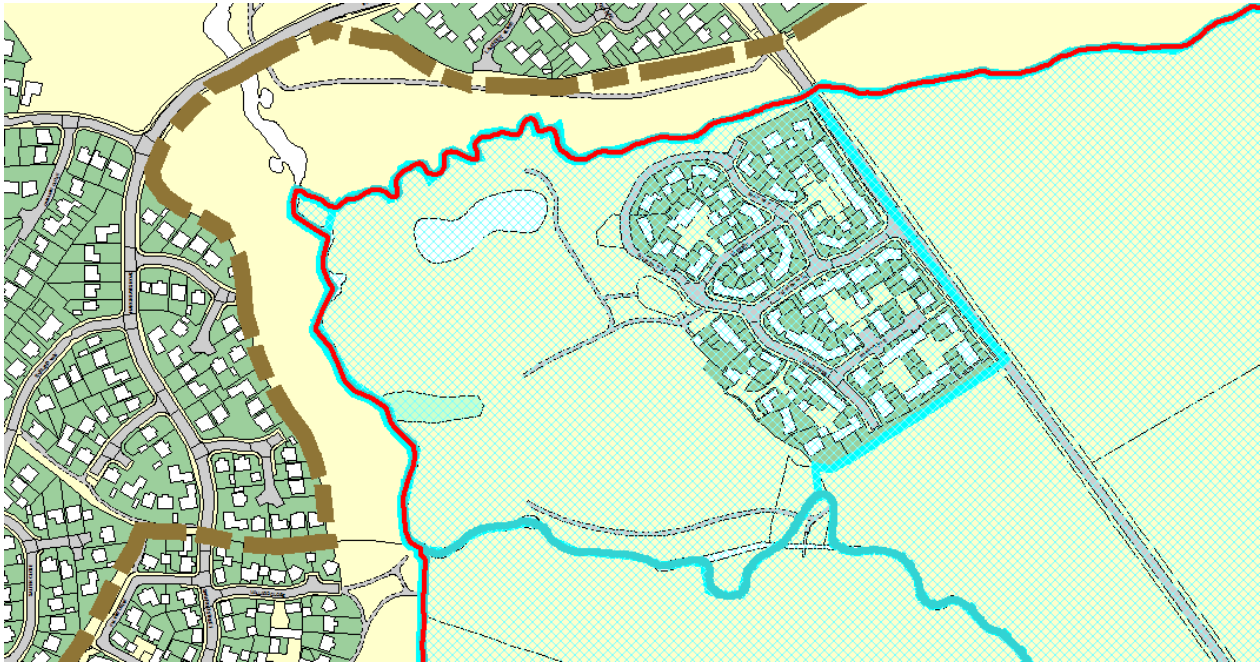


**Area 3c Paxcroft Mead South of Hilperton Drive**

Area 3c comprises all of the developed land lying to the South of the existing Hilperton Drive in Hilperton Parish (Hilperton ED), which forms a good natural boundary. It includes properties in: Hilperton Road, Halfway Close, Castley Road, Painters Mead, Faverole Way, Gibbs Leaze, Fairwood Close, Montague Court, Leap Gate, Hackett Place and Moyle Park. Approximately 210 properties are affected plus businesses, the Community Centre and The Mead School at Hackett Place. It is not considered appropriate to extend the boundary North of Hilperton Drive as Hilperton Drive forms a good natural boundary to Hilperton village and therefore Hilperton Parish. The current boundary runs through the middle of properties in Moyle Park and Walmesley Chase and a number of streets are split by the current boundary (Moyle Park, Montague Court, Walmesley Chase, Painters Mead, Hilperton Road and Halfway Close).

Assuming 445 electors would transfer this would further reduce the 2012 electorate of the Hilperton ED to 3244 and would increase Trowbridge Paxcroft ED to 3963.

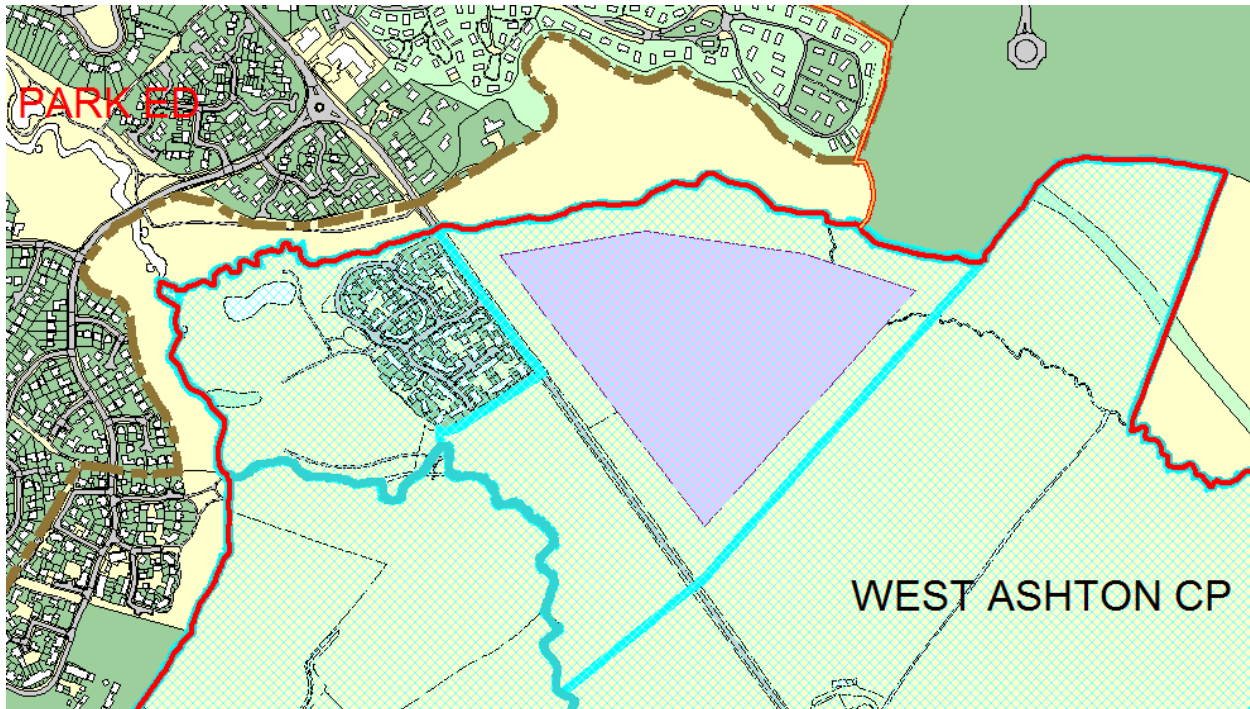
**Area 4a – Old Farm**



Area 4a comprises the area of developed land and adjacent floodplain at Old Farm, off the West Ashton Road, currently in West Ashton Parish (Southwick ED). This is within 100 metres of the main built up area of Trowbridge yet remote from the remainder of West Ashton village which is some 1600m away at the closest point near the A350 crossroads.

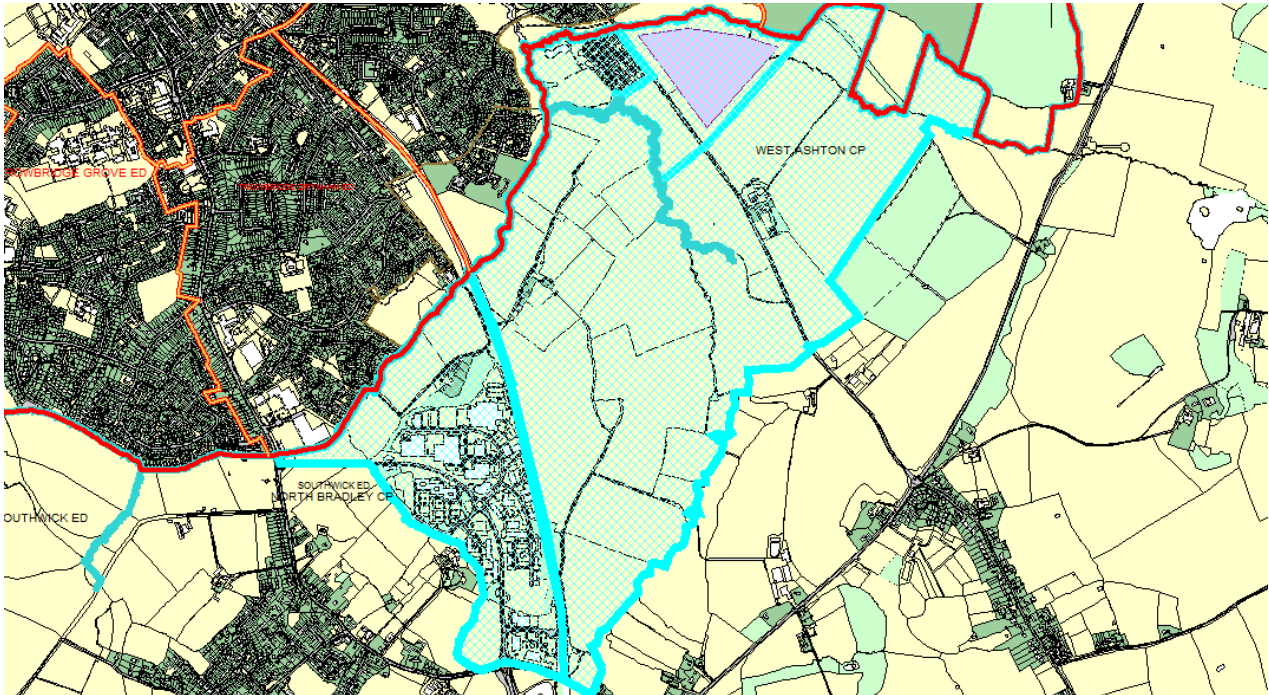
Approximately 105 properties are affected. Assuming 223 electors would transfer this would reduce the 2012 electorate of the Southwick ED to 3197 and would increase Trowbridge Park ED to 3581.

**Area 4b – West Ashton Road Employment Land**



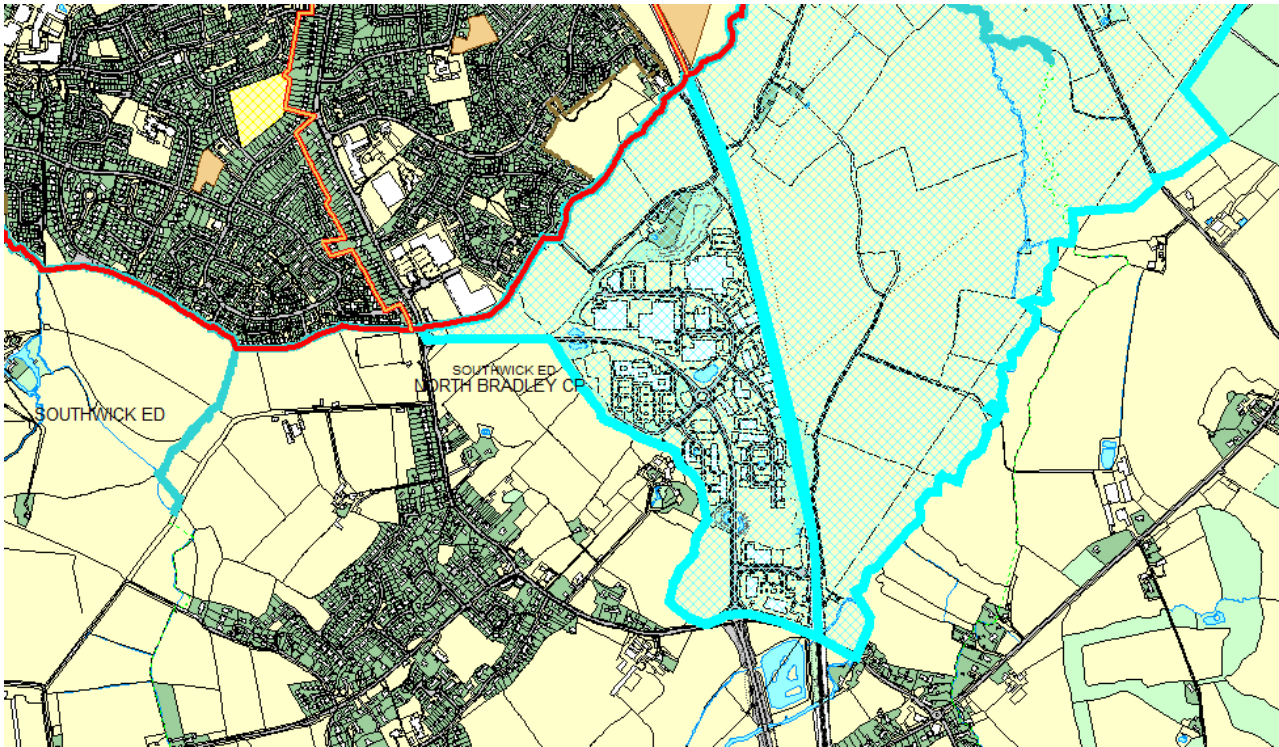
Area 4b comprises an area allocated as employment development land and the adjacent flood plain either side of the West Ashton Road and south of Trowbridge Lodge Park which is west of the link road between Leap Gate and West Ashton Road.

No existing properties are affected.

**Area 4c – Ashton Park Urban Extension**

Area 4 c comprises parts of West Ashton and North Bradley Parishes (Southwick ED) which are included in the Wiltshire Core Strategy allocations for residential and employment land, known as the Ashton Park Urban Extension. The area is bounded to the east and south by Biss Wood and the River Biss as far as the A363, all of which will form good natural boundaries for both the urban area of Trowbridge and therefore for the Parish Boundary. To the west it is bounded by the railway line.

Approximately 5 existing residential properties are affected as well as farm buildings. Assuming 10 electors would transfer this would further reduce the 2012 electorate of the Southwick ED to 3187 and would further increase Trowbridge Park ED to 3591

**Area 4d – White Horse Business Park**

Area 4d comprises all of the White Horse Business Park and additional similar commercial development around the White Horse Business Park as well as the land between the Business Park and the town boundary. It takes the proposed new town boundary from the A363 railway bridge, encompassing all of the commercial development around the western edge of the White Horse Business Park and then continues on the A363 to the Bradley Road Roundabout where it rejoins the existing town boundary at Woodmarsh.

Only 2 residential properties are affected as well as farm buildings and a large number of commercial buildings. Assuming 3 electors would transfer this would further reduce the 2012 electorate of the Southwick ED to 3184 and would increase Trowbridge Drynham ED to 3413 electors.

## **Other Changes NOT Supported by the Town Council**

A number of other changes could be made to further improve community identity, but the arguments for changes, such as those affecting parts of Staverton Parish to the north of the canal around the Marina and New Terrace and in Hilperton including parts of Paxcroft Mead to the North of Hilperton Drive and areas to the East of Hammond Way, are significantly less sound and therefore not supported by the Town Council:

### **Staverton Marina**

It is argued that parts of Staverton Marina are part of the community of Trowbridge. This is based upon the boundary of the old town policy limit, (West Wilts District Plan, first alteration), which includes areas of Staverton bounded by the canal, New Terrace and the railway line. There are a number of difficult issues related to a revision of the boundary in this area. The Canal and river form an excellent natural southern boundary for Staverton Parish, the only other natural boundary would be the railway line. Removing all of the area south of the railway line from Staverton Parish would remove the vast majority of the population from the parish and would have an impact therefore on the Holt and Staverton Unitary Division, resulting in an unacceptable variation from the average electorate. Much of the area borders residential parts of Hilperton Parish. It does not border residential parts of Trowbridge, those areas of Trowbridge bordering this area are industrial.

### **Paxcroft Mead North of Hilperton Drive**

It is argued that the remainder of Paxcroft Mead lying to the north of Hilperton Drive is part of the community of Trowbridge. This is based upon the boundary of the old town policy limit, which includes this area. There are a number of difficult issues related to a further revision of the boundary in this area. Hilperton Drive (A361) forms a very good natural boundary between the urban area and the village of Hilperton. No other better natural boundaries exist in this area between the urban area and the village. This area, whilst within the town policy limit, is at a significantly greater distance from the centre of Trowbridge than other areas of existing or future residential development around the town. This change would have a very significant impact upon the electorate of the Hilperton ED and would result in an unacceptable variation from the average electorate.

### **East of Hammond Way**

It is argued that parts of Hilperton lying to the east of Hammond Way and North of Canal Road, close to the northern end of Wyke Road, Horse Road and Marsh Road are part of the community of Trowbridge. Some of this area was part of Trowbridge prior to the previous revision implemented in 1991. There are a number of difficult issues related to a further revision of the boundary in this area. There is no better natural boundary than Canal Road between this area and Trowbridge, which forms the current boundary. The proposals 3a and 3b above further improve the use of natural boundaries in this area. This area is contiguous with the centre of the village of Hilperton, along Marsh Road and is throughout, generally residential development. The area is wholly contained within the current Hilperton Village development boundary. This change would have a very significant impact upon the electorate of the Hilperton ED and would result in an unacceptable variation from the average electorate.

**Lance Allan**  
**Town Clerk**