

**Community Governance
Review 2023/24**

**Final Recommendations of
the Electoral Review
Committee**

May 2024

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Links

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

[Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review 2023/24](#)

[Guidance on Community Governance Reviews](#)

[Pre -consultation Information Pack on projected electorates, submitted schemes, parish responses, public engagement and survey responses](#)

[Draft Recommendations](#)

[Draft Recommendations Consultation Information pack](#)

[Additional Draft Recommendations](#)

[Additional Draft Recommendations Consultation Information Pack](#)

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

Contact 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. This is to ensure that they are reflective of the identity and interests of local communities, and that they provide effective and convenient governance.

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, in order 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 Wiltshire Councillors to oversee the process and prepare recommendations for Full Council, who make the decision.
6. The members of the Committee when setting these Draft Recommendations were as follows:

Cllr Ashley O’Neill (Chairman)	Cllr Gavin Grant (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling	Cllr Allison Bucknell
Cllr Ernie Clark	Cllr Jacqui Lay
Cllr Ian McLennan	Cllr Paul Oatway QPM
Cllr Ian Thorn	Cllr Stuart Wheeler

On what grounds will a Community Governance Review be decided?

7. Any decision relating to parish arrangements must ensure that those arrangements:
 - Reflect the identity and interests of local communities;
 - Ensure effective and convenient local governance.
8. In conducting a review and making recommendations, the Committee follows the guidance issued by the relevant Secretary of State and the LGBCE.

9. Factors that are not relevant to the statutory and guidance criteria, such as council tax precept levels, cannot be taken into account.

Background to the 2023/24 Review

10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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 proceed with a review of their area.
13. Following a committee meeting on 26 June 2023, on 11 September 2023 Wiltshire Council published terms of reference for a Community Governance Review for the following parish areas:
 - Winterbourne
 - Laverstock & Ford
 - Firsdown
 - Idmiston
 - Durnford
 - Chippenham
 - Mere
 - Zeals
 - North Bradley
 - Trowbridge
 - Lacock
14. The terms of reference also included provision to review any parishes in Wiltshire where potential minor boundary 'anomalies' had been brought to the attention of the Committee. This was to enable complete consideration of any options which might emerge during information gathering. As a result the Committee also looked at parishes including Broad Town, Clyffe Pypard, Royal Wootton Bassett, Brinkworth, Salisbury, Westbury, Dilton Marsh, Melksham Without, Seend, and Bradford-on-Avon.
15. For the avoidance of doubt, the Committee is able to recommend, and the Council to approve, governance changes which were not suggested by any parishes or individuals, if it considers it appropriate to do so under the criteria and guidance. Any such proposal would need to be subject to consultation before approval.

Pre-consultation

16. During the first stage of the review the Committee received initial proposals relating to

the review areas and prepared background information on each area, such as electorate projections.

17. During the second stage the Committee undertook pre-consultation information gathering, including:

- Sessions between representatives of the Committee and affected unitary councillors, and where possible sessions with affected Parish Councils;
- Online surveys for those areas potentially impacted by a change of parish in proposals previously submitted to the Council.

Draft Recommendations Preparation and Consultation

18. At its meeting held on 9 January 2024 considered an information pack compiling all relevant materials including all the information above and other relevant information. It formed draft recommendations and consulted upon these from 12 February – 28 March 2024 (extended from 18 March).

19. The consultation included:

- A public meeting in Mere.
- An online survey
- Letters to households who were proposed to be transferred from one parish to another or from one ward to another
- A public briefing note sent to relevant parishes

20. At its meeting held on 3 April 2024 the Committee considered an information pack compiling all relevant materials from the draft recommendations consultation, including meeting sessions notes, responses from parish councils and public representations received by email, post or online survey, and representations made at the meeting.

21. The Committee agreed most recommendations, withdrew several others, and delegated preparation and approval of a detailed additional draft recommendations document for consultation to the Director, Legal and Governance. This would follow discussions with the Chairman of the Committee.

22. The delegation was in respect of two potential minor electoral boundary anomalies, relating to the town of Melksham and the parishes of North Bradley and Southwick.

23. As the additional draft recommendations made only minor changes, the Committee could decide to make the consultation online only, as it has done appropriately in the past. However, due to the small scale of the changes, the Committee agreed to write to potentially affected electors directly.

24. In keeping with practice as demonstrated by the LGBCE among others, the additional consultation would run for a shorter period as it was refining a previously consulted

option or on a very limited aspect of the overall recommendations.

25. The consultation on these additional draft recommendations ran from 10 April to 5 May 2024.
26. The Committee met on 7 May 2024 and confirmed the remaining recommendations for consideration by Full Council
27. The Draft Recommendations relating to original recommendations 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,10,11,12 were confirmed at the meeting on 3 April 2024. Original Draft Recommendations 5 and 9 were withdrawn at the meeting on 3 April 2024 as set out in the minutes for the meeting.

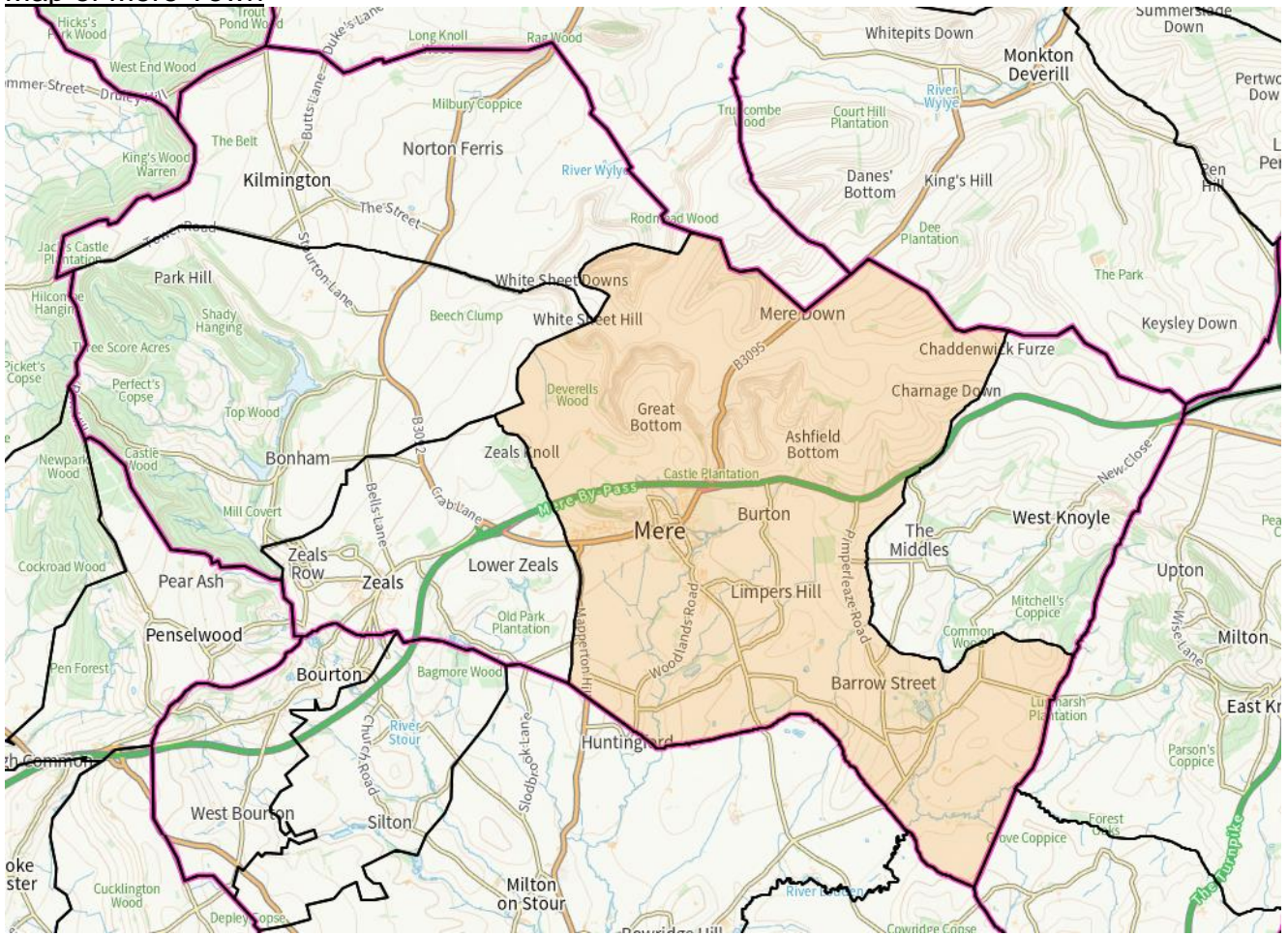
FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Mere and Zeals

Background

1. Mere is a small town in the south of Wiltshire along the border with Dorset. Within Wiltshire it is bordered to the West by the parishes of Zeals, Stourton with Gasper, and Kilmington, to the North by the parishes of Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield, Kingston Deverill, and to the East by the parishes of West Knoyle, East Knoyle, and Sedgehill and Semley.
2. In September 2023 the town was estimated to contain approximately 2600 electors. The town is served by Mere Town Council, which contains up to fifteen councillors and is unwarded. The town is part of the Unitary Division also named Mere, combining it with Kilmington, Stourton with Gasper, Zeals, and West Knoyle.

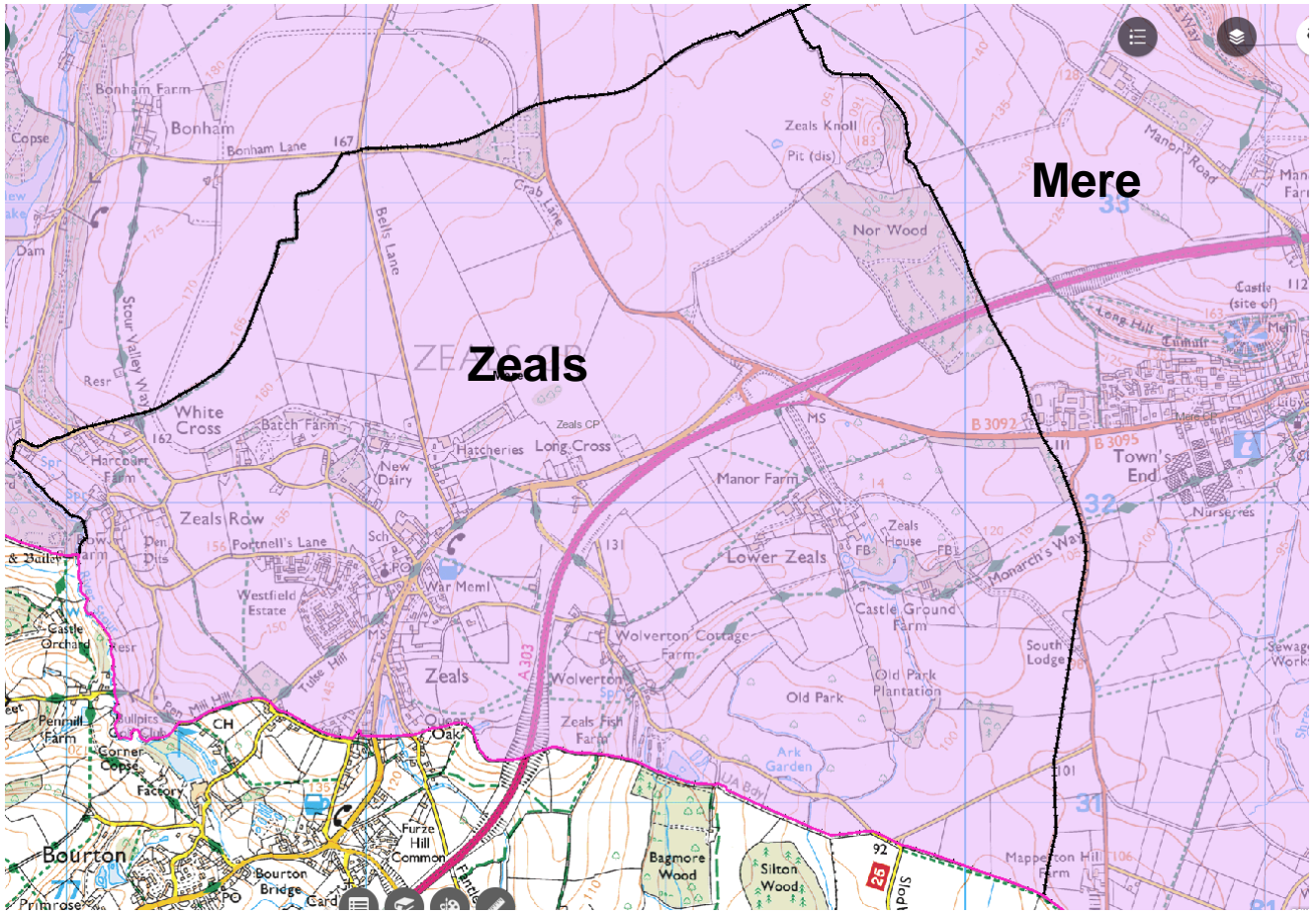
Map of Mere Town



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

3. A review of the boundaries of the town was requested by Mere Town Council, specifically in relation to the boundary with Zeals only.
4. Zeals is a small parish at the southwestern border of Wiltshire, adjoining both Dorset and Somerset. In September 2023 it was estimated to contain approximately 557 electors. It is served by a parish council, which contains up to 7 councillors and is unwarded. Within Wiltshire it is bordered by Stourton with Gasper to the North and Mere to the East.

Map of Zeals Parish



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Initial Proposals and pre-consultation information gathering

5. The initial request of Mere Town Council requested to amend the boundary with Zeals to include 'the triangular field area which sits within the B3092 & A303 slip road' with Mere. It was stated the site contains an area of land which has planning permission for business use, the Hill Brush Factory and Visit Hillbrush visit centre and a dwelling, and that there was planning permission for a 70 bed care home to the east of the site.
6. The Town Council argued that the general identification of the area was with Mere, noting the proximity with the built-up area of the town, that employment and traffic relating to the area would affect Mere more than Zeals, and that inclusion of the area within Mere itself would improve the cohesion and identity of the area.
7. Zeals Parish Council objected to the proposal. They considered strongly that the existing historic boundary should be retained, that there were connections for the area with Zeals Knoll, that commercial development on the site would have impacts beyond the adjacent town of Mere, and that any future residents would identify with Zeals.
8. An online survey was set up for November 2023 to allow comments on the submitted proposal. The councils in the area were asked to promote this, to assist the committee with any local views at this stage, though Mere Town Council stated they would wait for any

formal draft recommendation before advertising widely. Details and reasoning behind all comments are included with the information pack considered by the Committee and linked in this document.

9. 115 comments were received in total to the survey, although this did include approximately 10 from duplicated email addresses. Nearly all the responses were from residents of Zeals, with 112 comments in opposition to the proposal, and 3 in support.
10. Comments in support included that the area was along the main route into Mere, future residents of the care home would relate more to Mere than the distant main community of Zeals, and that in community terms the area would fit more appropriately with Mere.
11. Comments in opposition included the potential loss of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds for the parish council in the event of more development, emphasised the historic nature of the boundary, stated that the area related more to Lower Zeals than Mere, and that there were no benefits to amending the boundary.

Committee Discussion

12. The Committee was mindful that any recommendation or lack thereof must align with the statutory criteria, in respect of both community identity and interests, and effective and convenient governance.
13. Notwithstanding the large number of responses which were received, the critical factor was the nature and content of arguments and evidence received. The public views were therefore vital for identification of those arguments and evidence, but the number of responses in itself was not definitive, should other evidence be more persuasive in the particular circumstances.
14. The Committee reflected on the character of the area, lying between two main roads and on the historic approach into the town, whose built up area was adjoining the site. Only one dwelling was presently on the site, but as required by the official guidance the Committee was obliged to consider the prospective character of the area and if this was to alter in a significant way. The development of a significant care home site, which would increase the number of electors on the site and institute a community in its own right, was a significant factor to consider. The area overlooked the small community of Lower Zeals but lacked direct links, and was a substantial distance from the core village community of Zeals itself.
15. The purpose of Community Governance Reviews was to assess an area and determine if amended boundaries or governance arrangements would be an improvement on the existing situation, so the historic nature of the boundary was relevant but not determinative. The question for the Committee was whether a change, as proposed or otherwise, would in their view be more reflective of the community identity in the area, and be a more effective and convenient arrangement.
16. The Committee gave limited weight to the comments raising matters of CIL funding. This is

a charge levied on new development to support the provision, improvement, replacement, operation, or maintenance of infrastructure, or other matters concerned with addressing the demands that a development places on an area.

17. If it were determined that an area of prospective development more appropriately sat within a particular parish and it were transferred, any CIL funding would continue to be used for those purposes. That is, whilst a different council may receive the CIL receipts, those receipts would be utilised to mitigate or adjust for the development in question. Accordingly, this would not override consideration of community identity under the criteria.

Committee Draft Recommendation Proposal

18. Considering all the information and guidance, the Committee felt that the changing nature of the area with the care home community, the proximity to the built-up area of the town and closer association with any residential or employment on the site, and the limited connections with the larger Zeals community, argued in support of the proposal from Mere Town Council.
19. The Committee acknowledged the comments and arguments received in objection, but was not persuaded that these had identified factors of community identity or governance sufficient to leave the boundary as it was, in particular with the changing character of the area with the care home and the influx of new residents which the Committee felt would align much more closely with the adjacent town.
20. The Committee also reviewed other parts of the current boundaries and arrangements and did not consider any representations or evidence supported additional alterations. It therefore resolved to formally consult on the proposal.

Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

21. 11 survey responses were received in relation to the proposals. 9 were in support, and 2 were against. A further 3 written responses were received, also in agreement with the proposal.
22. Comments in support of the proposal included that the site was adjacent to the built up area of the town, the incoming care home community would naturally look to and use the facilities in Mere, the community of Zeals was a considerable distance from the area, and there were comments regarding the links between Mere and the Hillbrush company part occupying the site.
23. Comments against the proposal included that other businesses would be able to use the site, the historic area was part of Zeals, and opposing the town council taking on responsibility for the area.

Committee Discussion

24. The Committee was satisfied that the close proximity of the site to the current urban area, the links with the incoming care home community, and separation from any community of Zeals, supported its draft recommendation.

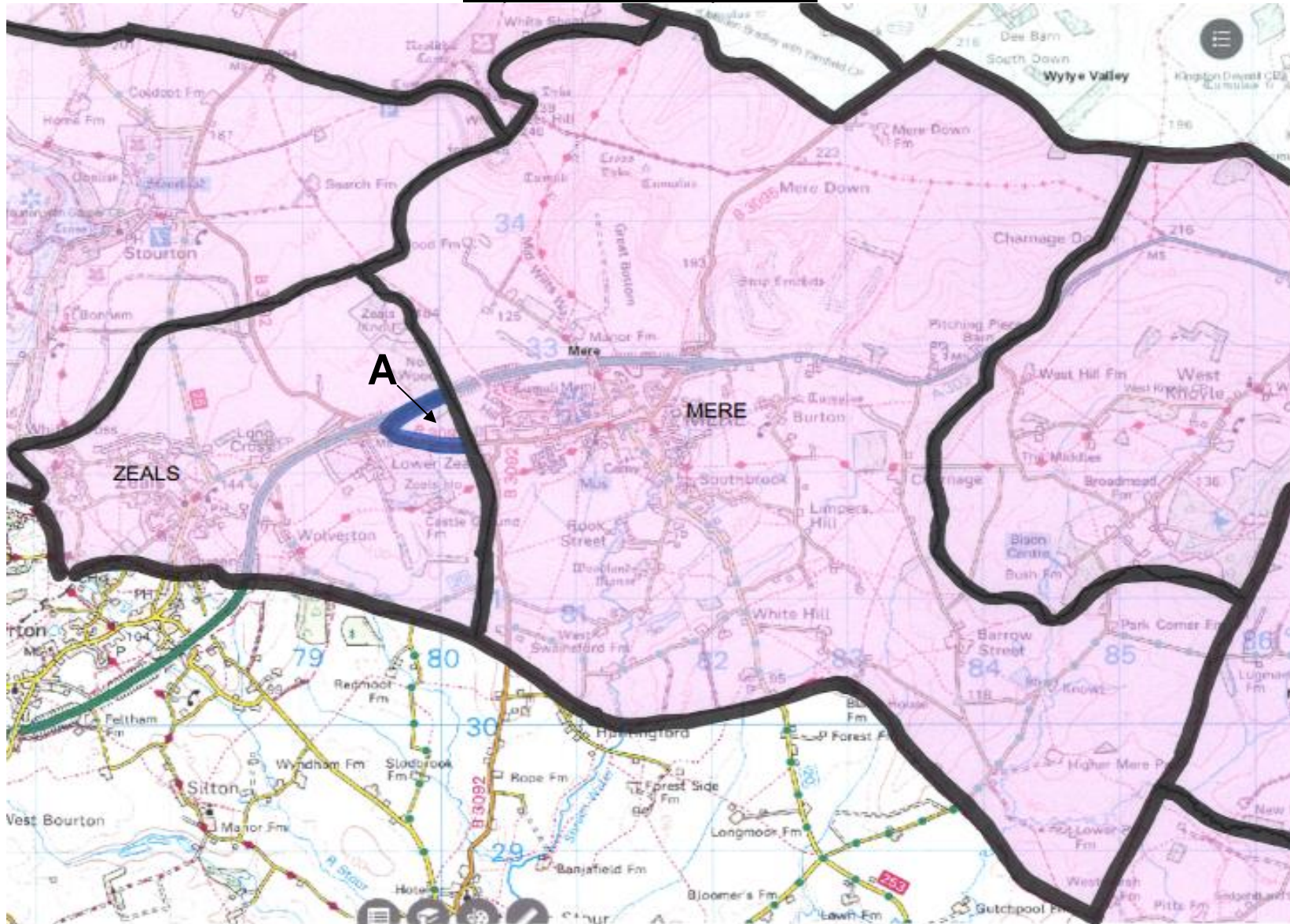
25. The very purpose of Community Governance Reviews was to consider if existing arrangements and boundaries remained appropriate and effective and make changes if they were not. The simple existence of an historic boundary would not, if other evidence argued otherwise, suggest no change was appropriate.
26. In this case the Committee resolved that the arguments in favour of the proposal continued to outweigh those against. Further, they were not persuaded by the arguments that had been made opposing the draft recommendation.
27. Having considered the evidence, statutory criteria, guidance, and other relevant information, the Committee therefore proposed the following:

Recommendation 1

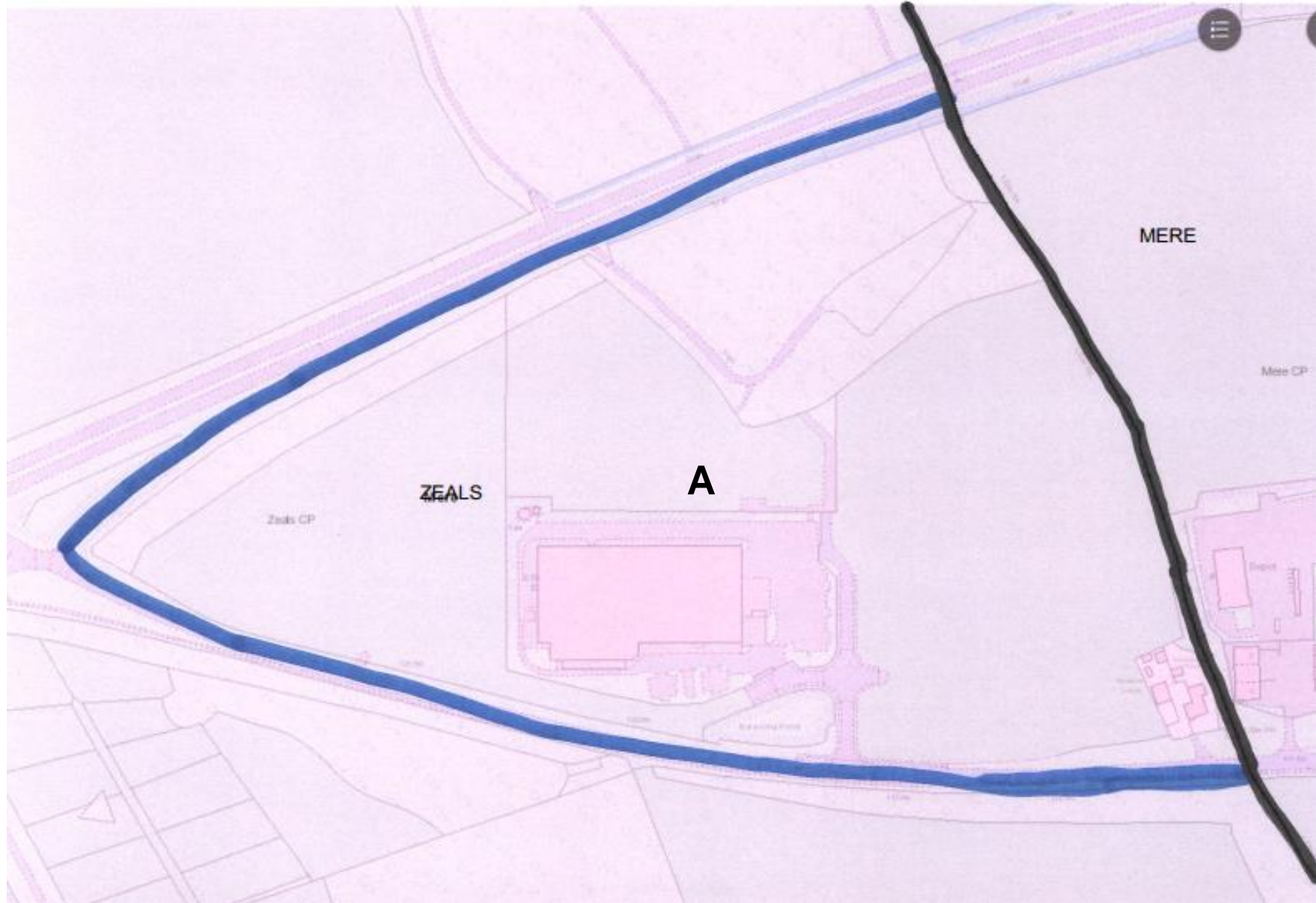
- 1.1 That the area marked as A in the maps below be transferred from the parish of Zeals to the town of Mere.**

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

Proposed Revised Map of Mere



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Area in blue to transfer from Zeals to Mere



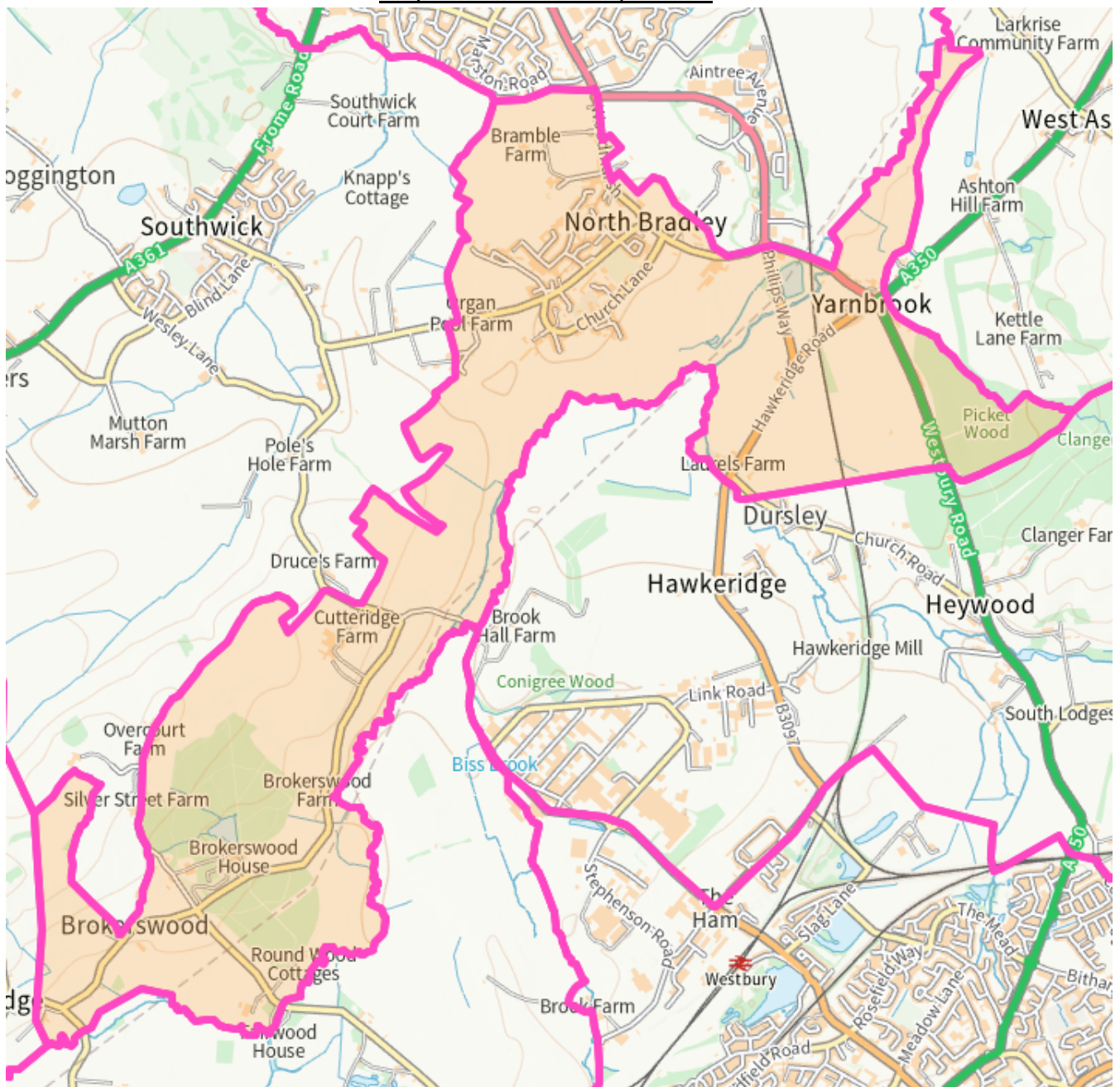
© Crown Copyright and Database Rights 2022 Ordnance Survey 100049050
Area in blue to transfer from Zeals to Mere

North Bradley and Trowbridge

Background

28. North Bradley is a large village immediately south of Trowbridge next to the boundary with Somerset. It is bordered within Wiltshire by West Ashton to the East, Heywood and Dilton Marsh to the South, Southwick to the West, and Trowbridge to the North. In September 2023 the parish was estimated to contain approximately 1438 electors. The parish is served by North Bradley Parish Council, which contains up to eleven councillors and is unwarded. The parish forms part of the Southwick Electoral Division, together with Southwick and West Ashton parishes, and is part of Trowbridge Area Board.

Map of North Bradley Parish

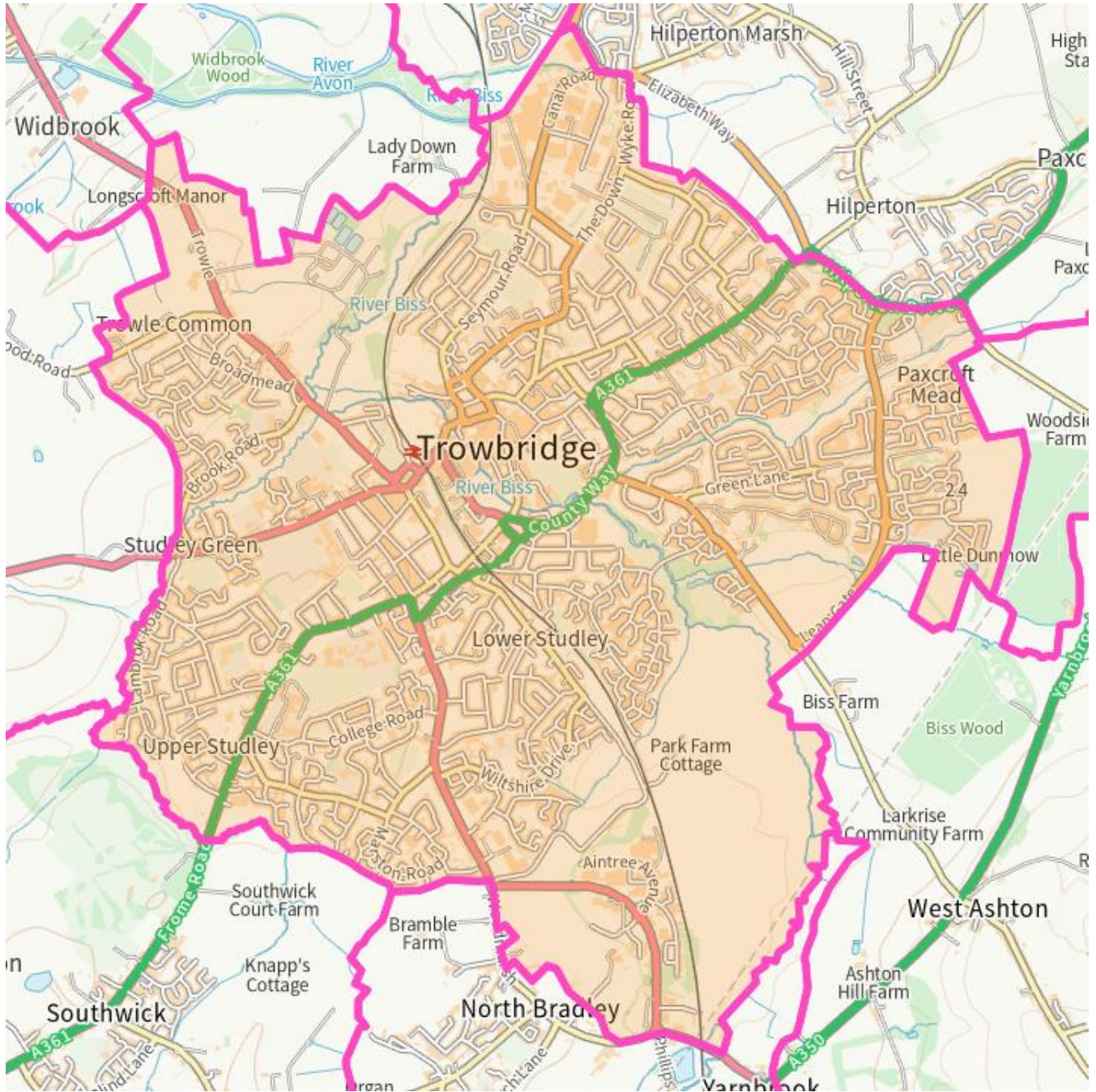


Map from <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/qb/>

29. Trowbridge is a market town on the eastern border of Wiltshire. It is bordered by Bradford-on-Avon, Holt, Staverton, and Hilperton to the North, Steeple Ashton and West Ashton to

the East, North Bradley and Southwick to the South, and Wingfield to the West. In September 2023 the town was estimated to contain approximately 27,686 electors. The town is served by Trowbridge Town Council, which contains up to twenty-one councillors across seven wards, which are coterminous with and share names with the seven Electoral Divisions. Together with the Hilperton and Southwick Divisions these make up the Trowbridge Area Board.

Map of Trowbridge Town



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

Community Governance Review 2019/20

30. In 2019/20 the Committee undertook a Community Governance Review in respect of North Bradley and Trowbridge, in response to significant existing or projected development in the area and following the outcome of the Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council, which set new

Electoral Divisions for Wiltshire Council. This had placed two areas predominantly covered by draft allocated housing sites within Trowbridge based Divisions, Trowbridge Park and Trowbridge Drynam.

31. The Committee had undertaken a very extensive review of the area across multiple consultations, and for reasons set out in full in the Final Recommendations for the 2019/20 review, had recommended transferring those areas into Trowbridge town proper, principally due to the changing character of the area and to preserve the distinct identity of the North Bradley community. Full Council approved the Final Recommendations, and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) consented to the changes. As stated at Paragraph 155 of the Final Recommendations:

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

32. In deciding which areas to review as part of the 2023/24 review, however, the Committee noted the comments relating specifically to the matter of a number of existing properties facing onto the Woodmarsh road which were included in the transfer to Trowbridge, in particular Paragraph 149:

However, whilst it considered that the situation and criteria on balance supported a transfer of the identified area at this time, the Committee did consider that the precise line of the boundary could possibly be reviewed again in future, particularly when the lines of development would be clearer, and to correct any minor anomalies arising from the lines drawn by the LGBCE.

33. In particular it is very important to note that the Divisional line drawn by the LGBCE, which was then utilised to form the parish boundary, followed the line of the draft Wiltshire Housing Sites Allocations Plan. Before the Divisions came into effect, but after the LGBCE had made its decision, the finalised Housing Sites Allocation Plan was approved by Council.

34. The draft sites plan had encompassed a number of existing properties of North Bradley facing onto Woodmarsh or accessed from Little Common toward the main part of the village. The finalised sites plan excluded existing properties and was drawn more precisely on empty areas lying between the A363 and the village core.

Terms of the review

35. In advance of the review North Bradley Parish Council had submitted a request seeking reversal of the outcome of the 2019/20 review.
36. However, for reasons that will be touched upon further, in setting the terms of reference for the 2023/24 review the Committee, noting the limited period since the last review, the existing and projected development and extent of the electorate, that less than one electoral cycle had been completed since the last review, and complexities relating to any required consent of the LG BCE to any further changes, resolved to limit the review to the precise boundary line which was specifically identified as anomalous in 2019/20, since that the issue had not been raised early enough in the process to seek to amend the proposal in time for May 2021 elections.

Initial proposals and pre-consultation information gathering

37. During the review an alternative proposal put by the Parish Council was to draw the boundary line along the A363, running between the White Horse Business Park, with all areas to the south to be placed within North Bradley. It has been the case that in some areas and situations significant main roads can form clear, natural boundaries. The Parish Council argued strongly that their proposal was more reflective of how the community existed and would develop.
38. Trowbridge Town Council also submitted a proposal wherein all existing properties accessed from Woodmarsh or Little Common would be placed within North Bradley, whilst any projected incoming properties would remain in Trowbridge and accessed from the A363. This would be achieved by largely following the line of the finalised housing sites allocation plan, to retain incoming development as part of the town, whilst restoring historic properties to the parish.
39. An online survey was set up for November 2023 to allow comments on the Town Council proposal. 1 comment was received from a local resident in support, stating their property's inclusion in 2021 was not logical, left them disjointed from their neighbours, and that their house sat on Woodmarsh which was part of North Bradley.

Committee Discussion

40. It is not the intention of the Committee to reopen all previous arguments made during the 2019/20 review as to a request for a reversal of that decision. As detailed above the terms of reference for the 2023/24 had set out the limited nature of the review regarding the boundary between the town and the parish, and the reasons for this.
41. The current review is therefore concerned with proposals relating to the area south of the A363 and the housing site area and the impact of this and other factors on what would form the most effective and convenient boundary line which best represented the community identity of the area.
42. Whilst it was the case that development in the areas that in 2019/20 had been projected to

take place within five years had not occurred, the fundamental situation remained that the areas transferred to Trowbridge at the elections in 2021 were made up of allocated housing sites with very significant planning applications in various stages of consideration or approval. Legal advice for past reviews had been consistent that the projected situation within five years was a valid consideration as well as the present situation, and the vast changes expected for the area and the alteration of its character could not be dismissed, even though earlier projections had been delayed. No parties had suggested the nature of the area in terms of development would not be altering, though they disagreed on the appropriate remedy for this.

43. On top of all the other reasons for the transfer of the areas in 2021, which can be found at length in the Final Recommendations for 2019/20, the character of the wider area in question and nature of the communities was still projected to alter to that of a denser, more urban character, albeit on a slower timescale than initially predicted.
44. Had the boundary remained unamended, or if it were now amended to include significant new areas of projected urban expansion, the distinction between town and parish would begin to blur, and its identity would be negatively impacted.
45. It was also the case that the slower than anticipated development in the area added procedural complications even were it considered appropriate to reverse a decision which only came into effect less than three years before, which it was not. Consent would be required from the LGBCE for any change, and the lack of electors currently present would not allow for the area to be warded, as would be required if transferred to the parish from the town. Accordingly, the LGBCE would need to consent to a Division change. As the intention of the creation of the Drynham Division was to place future urban development together, removing a significant part of it would ensure the Division would be permanently undersized.
46. It had not been argued before the Committee that development would be sufficiently advanced by the next elections to allow for warding. However, even if it were, it was not felt it would be persuasive to the LGBCE, nor would it be effective or convenient governance, to isolate a single dense urban housing site within the parish as a ward separate to the rest of that parish, nor to request the Electoral Division be altered to depart from the consistent approach of the LGBCE to draw these around areas of urban expansion, and instead to exclude such expansion in one instance, and then only in part not in full.
47. In relation to the proposal to draw the boundary line along the A363, it is also important to note that guidance on reviews to assist in interpreting the statutory criteria is not one size fits all, and the unique characteristics of any given area could lead to vastly different recommended outcomes depending on which elements of the evidence were considered to be more vital or persuasive in those particular circumstances. It is therefore the case that any decision relating to any area would ultimately be a judgment call factoring in those circumstances and applicability of the criteria.

48. In areas of increasing urbanisation, it can be difficult to establish dividing lines between parishes. It may be argued that clear natural boundaries such as major roads, railway lines, or rivers, often form a reasonable, even improved, delineation between different communities. Alternatively, it may be argued that more precise lines better reflect the actual nature of the communities or the character of the area. The Committee has supported both approaches depending on the situation and area, as has the LGBCE.
49. Whilst significant roads could and did form sensible boundaries in many places, the Committee felt the circumstances did not support that in this instance. Instead, a line along the road would divide the urban business park, and it would place projected dense housing into the parish and alter its identity. It would not in this instance form a clear separation between the differing characters of the parish and town by drawing the line along the main road.
50. For these reasons and the reasons of the 2019/20 review which continued to apply, the Committee did not support the proposal of redrawing the boundary between the town and parish along the A363 road.
51. Instead, the Committee was persuaded that in this instance that it was more appropriate to draw a more precise boundary line to reflect the nature of the existing properties and incoming development as a more appropriate reflection of the communities.

Committee Draft Recommendation Proposal

52. The Committee considered the progression of housing sites and development in the area, including the proposed masterplans for the area, albeit not yet approved. They considered the principle of how to ensure parish and town remained distinct even as development was projected to narrow the space between the built-up areas, as maintaining that distinction appeared to be supported by both parishes, even if there was not agreement on the best way to maintain it.
53. The Committee considered the nature and character of the area considered in the review, how it was projected to develop, how properties were accessed, and where they aligned to most appropriately. It continued to feel that denser new housing estates related most under the criteria with the town, of which they would currently be a part given the existing boundaries, contrasted with the historic existing properties.
54. The proposal from the Town Council was evaluated, including whether a different line could be drawn as suggested by a representative from the Parish Council, to place more open green space within the parish in that eventuality. The Committee concluded the area was associated with the housing site and was reasonably proposed to remain included with it, but for those areas suggested to be undeveloped.
55. In conclusion, the Committee accepted the principle that the historic existing properties accessed from Woodmarsh/Westbury Road were a core part of the parish community and identity, whilst believing the incoming expansion projected within five years accessed from

the A363 and forming a different character and community in its own right, were correctly oriented with the town at present. As such, the Committee supported the proposal of the Town Council to amend the boundary as detailed in the recommendation below.

Consultation on the Draft Recommendations

56. 3 survey responses were received in relation to the proposals, all from within the area proposed to be transferred, all in agreement. 1 written response was received in opposition to the proposal.
57. Comments in support of the proposal included that the area was effectively already a part of the parish, and was accessed from the parish.
58. Comments against the proposal suggested amendment to the proposed transfer line to run alongside the proposed housing line within indicative masterplans for the housing applications submitted on the site, not including the open space areas also on the housing site allocation area.

Committee Discussion

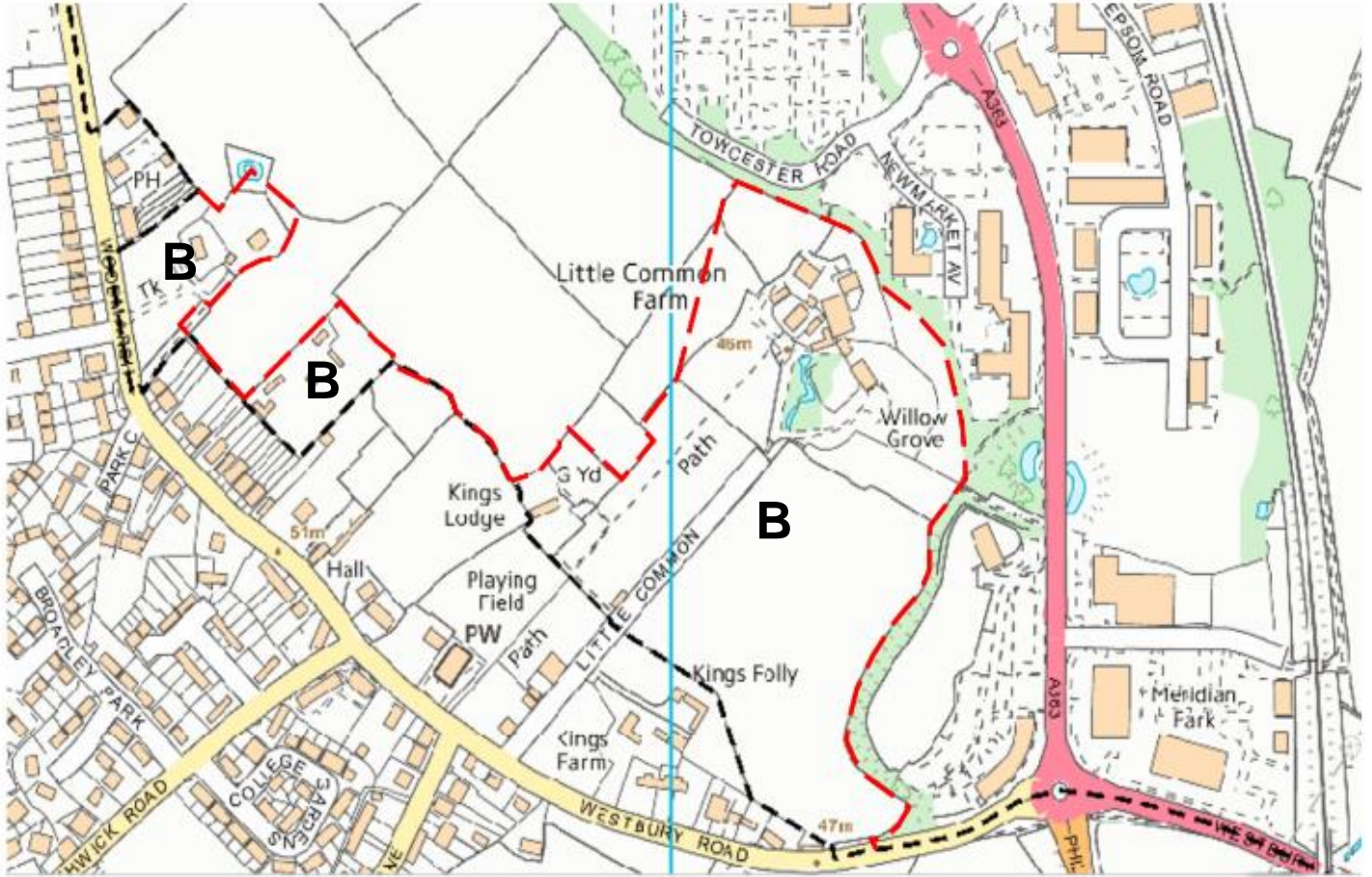
59. The Committee noted the comments regarding the precise line of incoming housing, but continued to consider the housing site area was inextricably connected as a site and should be included together, but for the actual existing housing which was proposed to be transferred to the parish, where it had sat until 2021.
60. Noting also the support expressed from residents within the area, the Committee continued to support its draft recommendation.
61. Having considered the evidence, statutory criteria, guidance, and other relevant information, the Committee therefore proposed the following:

Recommendation 2

- 2.1 That Areas B shown in the map below be transferred from Trowbridge Town to the parish of North Bradley.**
- 2.2 To request that the LGBCE amend the Electoral Divisions of Southwick and Trowbridge Drynham to be coterminous with the revised parish boundaries.**

Reasons: Paragraphs 80, 83, 85, and 170 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews

Proposed Map of Trowbridge/North Bradley boundary



Black line is current parish boundary. Red line is proposed parish boundary.

Miscellaneous Minor Parish Changes

62. As part of its terms of reference the Committee reviewed a series of different parishes across Wiltshire to consider potential minor alterations, where they had been made aware of potential issues with boundaries not being appropriate.
63. Being minor in nature and as significant reviews were not undertaken for the entirety of the parishes in question, they will be listed together following consideration below of each area in turn, as each change is recommended for the same broad reasons.

Salisbury

64. The Committee's attention was drawn to a number of properties in Dorset Road and Cambridge Road in Salisbury, which it was suggested more appropriately sat within different Electoral Divisions. The Divisions are coterminous with wards of the City Council of the same name.
65. In each case it was suggested that the boundary line as drawn by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) had inadvertently placed properties which faced one onto a road into the incorrect Division, most likely as a result of how their orientation appeared on a map.
66. It was proposed to move one property from Salisbury Milford to Salisbury St Francis and Stratford, with another property moving in the other direction. This will be detailed in the maps section of this recommendation.
67. The Local Division member for St Francis and Stratford was in support, and no comment was received from the City Council.
68. The Committee was satisfied that the properties had been placed incorrectly when the Division was created, and recommending the boundary be amended to resolve this. This would require consent of the LGBCE, and to change the Divisions.

Royal Wootton Bassett and Brinkworth

69. The Committee was advised by Electoral Services of a series of farm buildings and a dwelling which were divided by the parish boundary between Brinkworth and Royal Wootton Bassett.
70. No response has been received to an informal survey regarding the area, but the Committee was in agreement that the separation of the area was not in accordance with the criteria, and that the area aligned more with Brinkworth than Royal Wootton Bassett, where the residence was registered for purposes of elections.
71. It was therefore agreed to propose a transfer from Royal Wootton Bassett to Brinkworth, as detailed in the maps section of this recommendation. This would require a change to the Electoral Division.

Chippenham

72. The Committee's attention was drawn to a number of properties at Ray Close in Chippenham, which it was suggested were separated from other properties in the Close by the existing boundary between Chippenham Pewsham and Chippenham Hardens & Central Divisions. The Divisions are coterminous with wards of the Town Council of the same name.
73. The Local Division members were in support of unifying Ray Close within a single Division, as it was considered the separation not in accordance with the statutory criteria. No other responses were received to an online survey.
74. The Committee was satisfied that the existing boundary represented an ineffective governance arrangement, and recommended the boundary be amended to resolve this. This would require consent of the LGBCE, and to change the Divisions.

Trowbridge

75. The Committee's considered a number of properties Frampton Court in Trowbridge, which it was suggested were included within an inappropriate Division, part of Trowbridge Grove instead of Trowbridge Lambrok. The Divisions are coterminous with wards of the Town Council of the same name.
76. The Local Division members were in support of amending the boundary to include the properties at Frampton Court within Trowbridge Lambrok. The properties faced onto the Court and were part of the Studley Green estate, instead of the properties of Whiterow Park to which they were currently attached. The Town Council was in support of the proposal. It was considered the LGBCE had likely drawn the line incorrectly due to the orientation of properties as seen on a map.
77. The Committee was satisfied that the existing boundary represented an ineffective governance arrangement, and recommended the boundary be amended to resolve this. This would require consent of the LGBCE, and to change the Divisions.

Calne

78. The Committee noted a small development area to the south of the town of Calne which extended just over the boundary into the existing parish of Calne Without. The existing boundary would therefore split the development and indeed part of a single property. This was not appropriate in community terms, nor did it represent an effective governance arrangements.
79. During its 2021/22 review the Committee had not addressed the site area, and it was considered appropriate to ensure all built-up areas be included within the town proper, as had been the case with all other parts of the town. Calne Without Parish Council supported the proposal.
80. The Committee therefore proposed to transfer the area into the town and seek to amend the Divisional boundaries accordingly.

81. Following the Community Governance Review for 2021/22, the area now proposed to be moved to the town was due to be part of the expanded parish of Cherhill.
82. Electoral Services also drew attention to an area facing onto the High Street, which included a number of dwellings, which were in a different Division than the rest of the street. It was therefore proposed to make a minor adjustment between the Divisions of Calne Central and Canle Chilvester & Abberd accordingly.

Bradford on Avon

83. Electoral Services had highlighted a potential anomaly in the parish of Bradford-on-Avon. This related to a property in Kingston Road, which was in the Bradford-on-Avon North ward and Division, with all other properties in Kingston Road in the South ward and Division.
84. The Committee agreed the separation of the property appeared to be an unintentional anomaly and that under the criteria should have been included with the others in the same road. A change would also be required to the Electoral Division if the change were approved.

Melksham

85. Electoral Services had highlighted a potential anomaly in the parish of Melksham. This related to Bolwell Place, a block of flats which was split between the Melksham Forest and Melksham South wards and Divisions.
86. The Committee agreed the separation of the flats appeared to be an unintentional anomaly and that under the criteria should have been included together. Subject to also clarifying the exact boundaries in the area, they agreed to consult on a proposal to combine the area in the Melksham Forest ward and Division. It was confirmed after the meeting that a polling district line but not the unitary line formed the boundary between the High Street and Lowbourn Road addressed, and it was agreed to proposed aligning the unitary boundary to the addresses by moving a small area from Forest ward to South ward as well.

Westbury and Dilton Marsh

87. Electoral Services had highlighted potential anomaly at the area of Millstream Cottages in Westbury, where the boundary line did not follow the stream as it appeared was intended, which had some potential consequences.
88. As a minor anomaly the area had not been identified and subject to pre-consultation with other parties. The Committee received representations at its meeting that given the most recent review in 2022/23, which had been divisive within Westbury, that such a change was not necessary to recommend at this time.
89. The Committee noted the line of the maps appeared to indicate properties were divided by the parish and Division line, and this could represent an ineffective arrangement which needed to be addressed, as there could be confusion as to where a resident elector should vote. Further, that similar minor boundary issues may affect many area, but without impacting electors.

90. In this instance although the properties were registered in the correct parish the line of the boundary crossing through the properties had the potential for confusion, and so a change was justified to consult upon.

Consultation Summary

91. Only 2 responses were received to the above minor proposals, one relating to Chippenham and the other Melksham, both in favour.

92. As minor changes with limited impact, the Committee remained satisfied its proposals were appropriate under the criteria and confirmed all the above for determination by Full Council.

Additional Recommendations - Melksham

93. In response to the consultation on other changes Melksham Town Council highlighted a further potential anomaly in the town.

94. This related to Coronation Road, currently serving as the boundary between the Forest and South wards and Divisions. It was noted this means residents on one side of the road voted in one ward/division, and the other voted in a different ward/division, and that this was not an effective or convenient electoral governance arrangement.

95. The Committee at its meeting on 3 April 2024 agreed with the reasoning of the Town Council, which had been raised by the Local Member for the area.

96. Accordingly, it was agreed to consult upon a proposal to ensure the entirety of Coronation Road sat within a single ward/division.

97. No response was received to that consultation, with one of the Local Members confirming support. The Committee therefore agreed to recommend the proposal to Full Council as a Final Recommendation.

Additional Recommendations – North Bradley/Southwick

98. Although the Committee was currently engaged in a review of another part of North Bradley parish from September 2023, this had not included reviewing its boundary with Southwick.

99. Following a query from North Bradley Parish Council to the Elections team on 16 March 2024 regarding a property which they had been consulted about a submitted planning application, the Committee was advised that the boundary as currently drawn not only divided the tiny settlement at Scotland and Ireland, but which ran through several properties.

100. On 21 March 2024 the parish councils for Southwick and North Bradley were contacted to enquire if they had any views about whether any changes should be made to the current boundary. Neither council was in a position to respond ahead of the next scheduled meeting of the Electoral Review Committee.

101. The terms of reference for the 2023/24 review permit the Committee to include additional

minor anomalies from within any parish in Wiltshire as part of their review, notwithstanding they had not previously been subject to pre-consultation and information gathering, so long as an appropriate process could be followed.

102. Accordingly, at its meeting on 3 April 2024 the Committee delegated authority to the Director, Legal and Governance, to undertake a short consultation regarding the boundary at Scotland and Ireland, taking account of any views that might be received by the parish councils.
103. The parish councils were further contacted on 3 April 2024 with one potential consultation option.

Committee Proposal

104. The current boundary cutting through several properties was considered to be neither convenient nor effective.
105. Furthermore, although Scotland and Ireland are listed separately on a road sign opposite the entrance to the site, the tiny settlement is inextricably connected, being a single settlement, and no appreciable distinction between the two listed areas with properties listed 1-12, and so it is considered the current arrangements also do not reflect the community interests or identity of the area.
106. It was therefore considered appropriate that the area could be unified within a single parish in accordance with the statutory criteria, and to consult for local views on such a proposal.
107. The settlement is geographically closer to the village of North Bradley, with the village speed limit signs visible from the road entrance to Scotland and Ireland. The road entrance to the settlement is currently within North Bradley, sitting at the bottom of the hill leading up towards Southwick village. By virtue of geography and community connection there appeared to be greater affinity with North Bradley than Southwick for residents of Scotland and Ireland.
108. For these reasons, the Director after consultation with the Committee, under delegated authority agreed to consult with local electors on a proposal to unify the area within North Bradley.
109. 1 survey response from a resident of the area proposed to be transferred was received during the consultation period, which was in support, stating the area had no affiliation with Southwick.
110. North Bradley Parish Council indicated their support for the proposal, subject to appropriate consultation with residents. It is noted that the Committee sent two letters to all the residents of the area during the consultation.
111. One further response was received disapproving of the proposal, saying it was a piecemeal change to the boundary and that a fuller consideration would be appropriate than was possible in the limited timeframes to make any changes before the 2025 elections. In

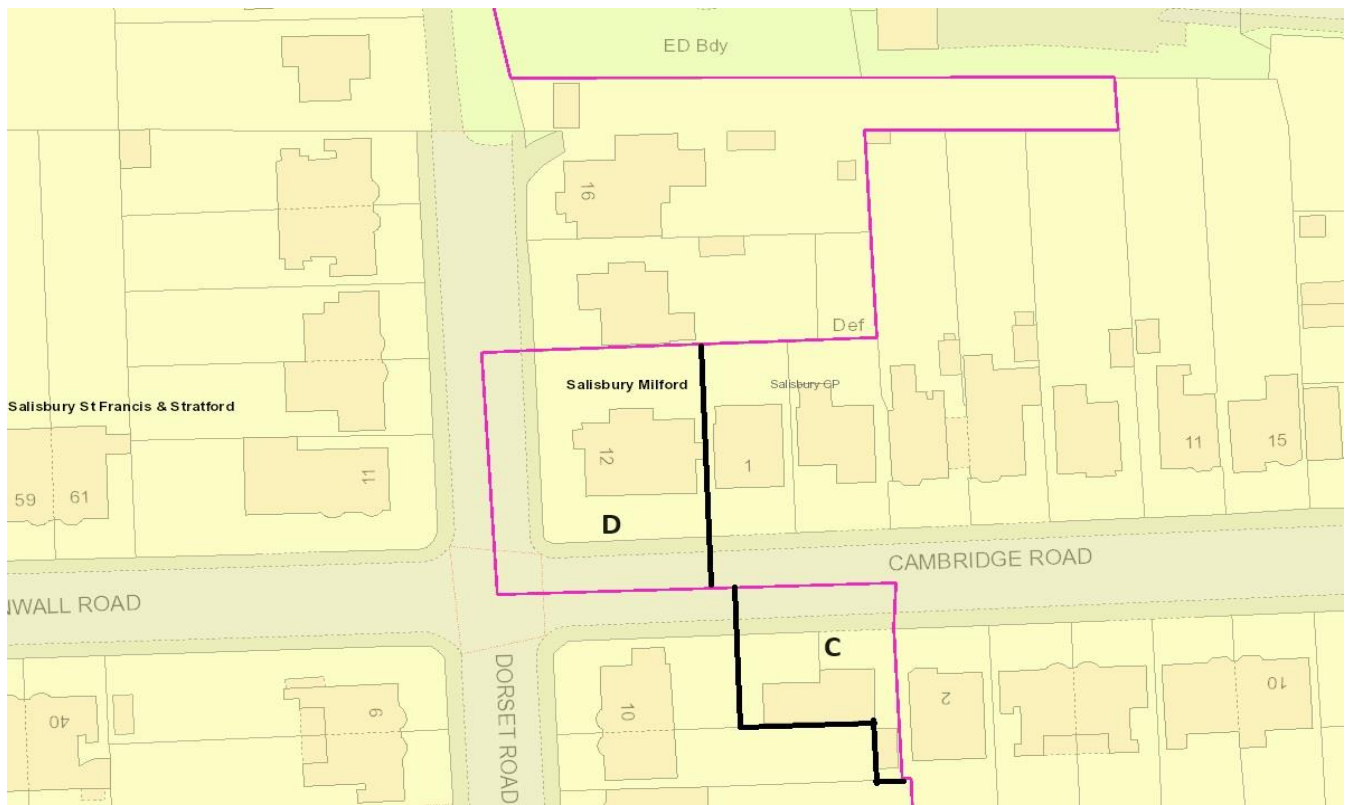
particular a planning decision permitting a significant number of homes crossing the boundary of North Bradley and Southwick alongside the Trowbridge boundary was highlighted.

112. The Committee noted the comments received, but also that the existing boundary ran through several properties and that this was not an effective or convenient arrangement. Notwithstanding whether a wider review was appropriate at another time, they considered that such an issue, having been brought to council's attention, should be resolved where this was possible before the next elections.
113. It therefore agreed to recommend the change to Full Council.
114. Having considered the evidence, statutory criteria, guidance, and other relevant information, the Committee therefore proposed the following in relation to all of the above minor boundary changes:

Recommendation 3

- 3.1 That the area shown as C in the map below be transferred from the Salisbury St Francis and Stratford Ward of Salisbury City Council to the Salisbury Milford Ward.**
- 3.2 That the area shown as D in the map below be transferred from the Salisbury Milford Ward of Salisbury City Council to the Salisbury St Francis and Stratford Ward.**
- 3.3 To request the LGBCE amend the Electoral Divisions accordingly.**

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



Recommendation 4

4.1 That the area shown as E in the map below be transferred from the parish of Royal Wootton Bassett to the parish of Brinkworth.

4.2 To request the LGBCE amend the Electoral Divisions of Brinkworth and Royal Wootton Bassett South and West accordingly.

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



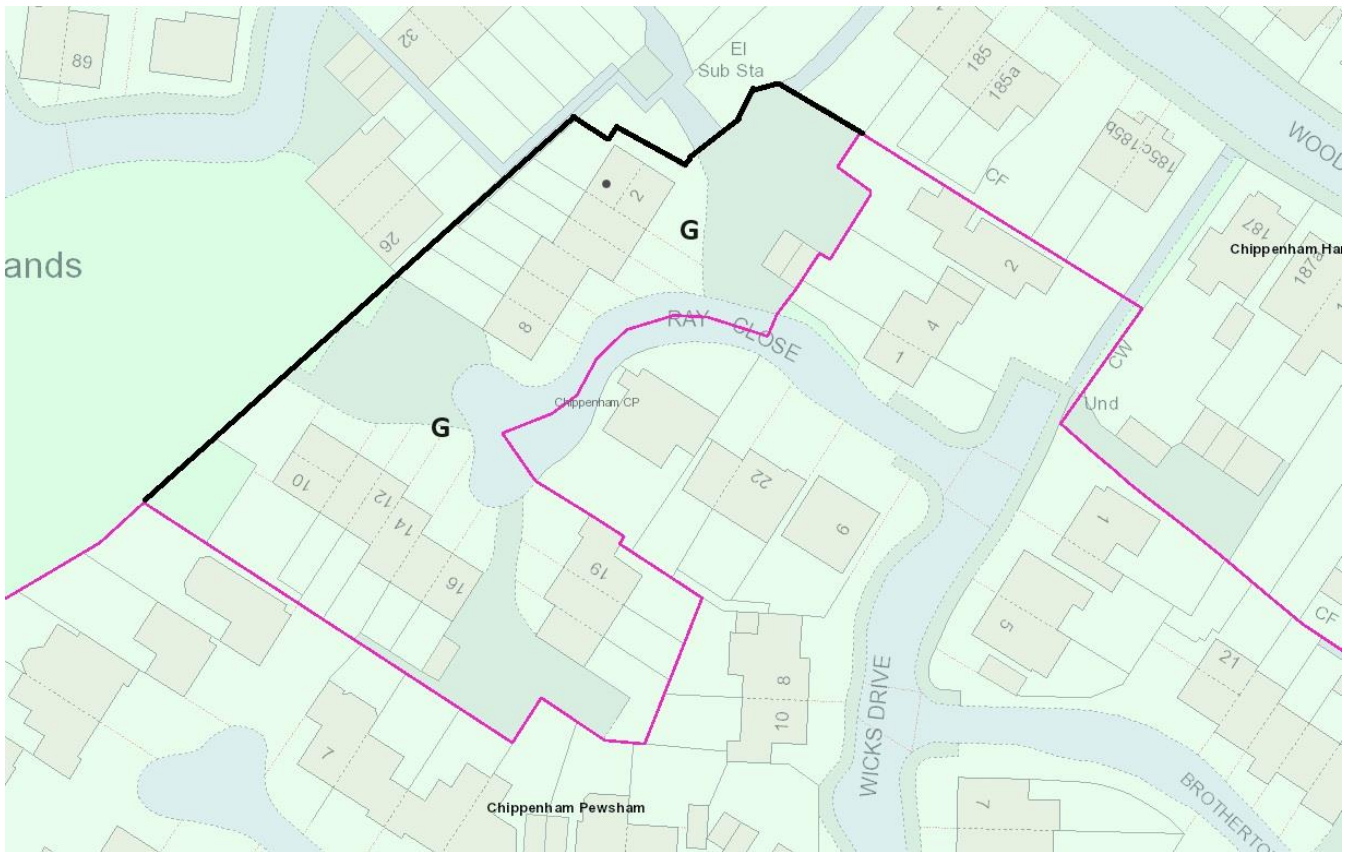
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Recommendation 5

5.1 That the area shown as G in the map below be transferred from the Chippenham Hardens and Central Ward of Chippenham Town Council to the Chippenham Pewsham Ward.

5.2 To request the LGBCE amend the Electoral Divisions accordingly.

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



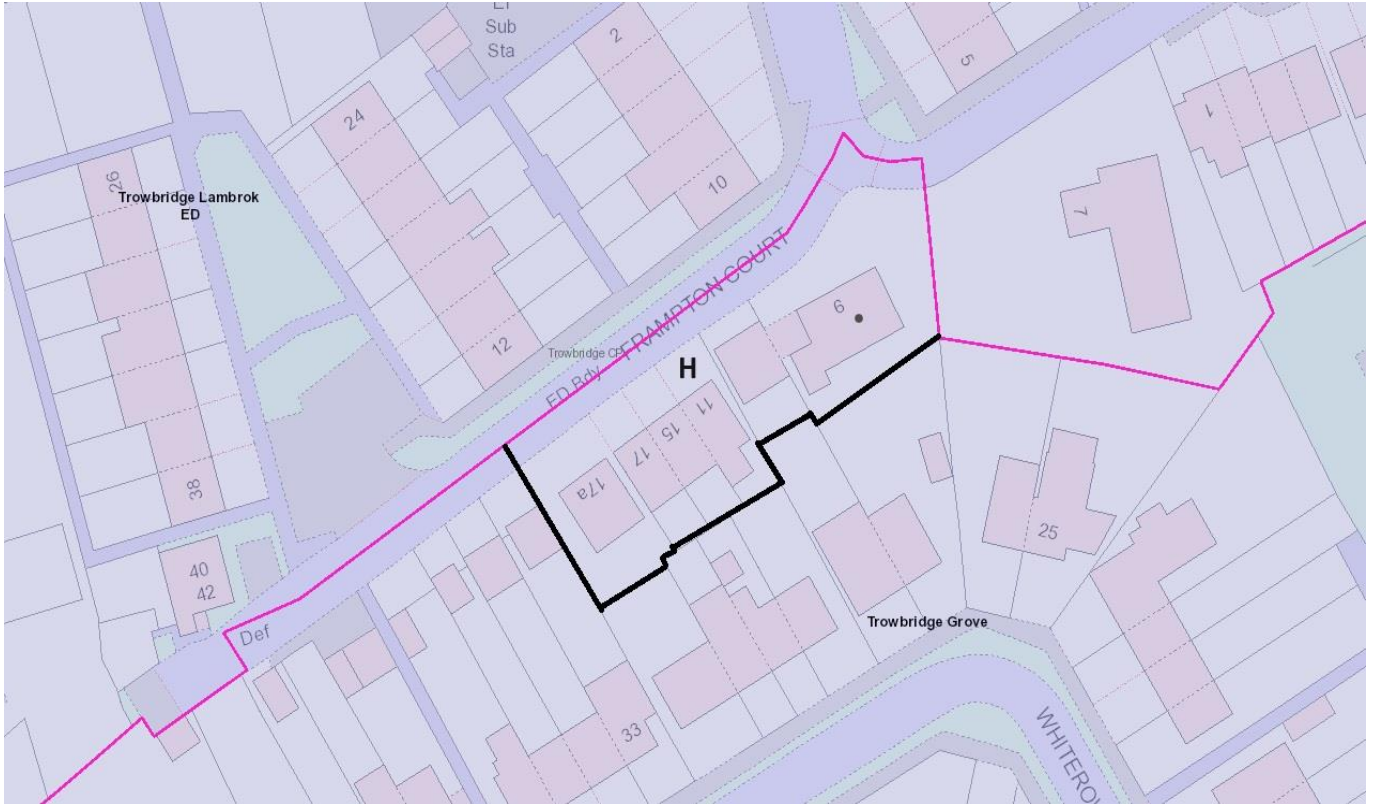
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Recommendation 6

6.1 That the area shown as H in the map below be transferred from the Trowbridge Grove Ward of Trowbridge Town Council to the Trowbridge Lambrok Ward.

6.2 To request the LGBCE amend the Electoral Divisions accordingly.

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



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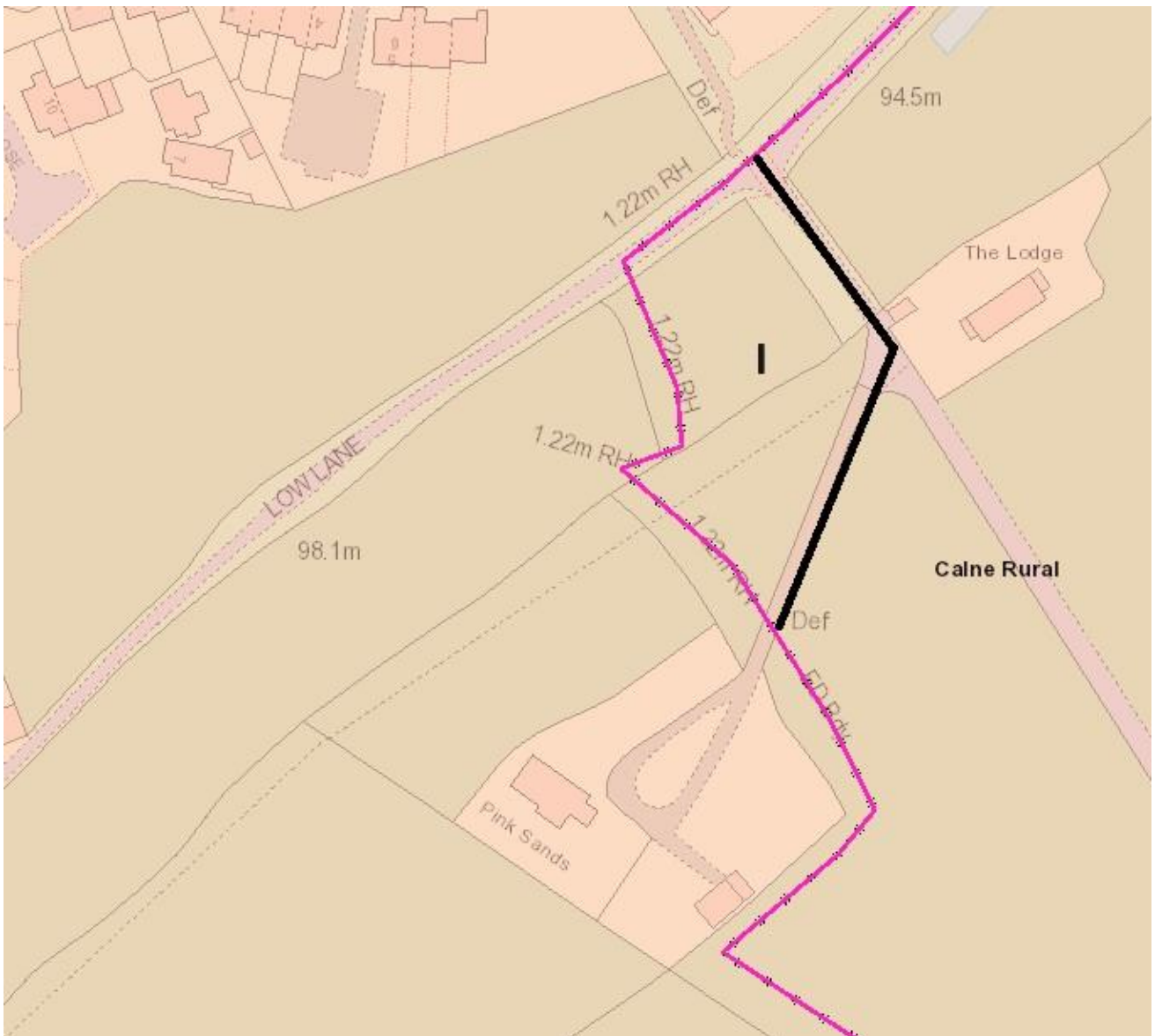
Recommendation 7

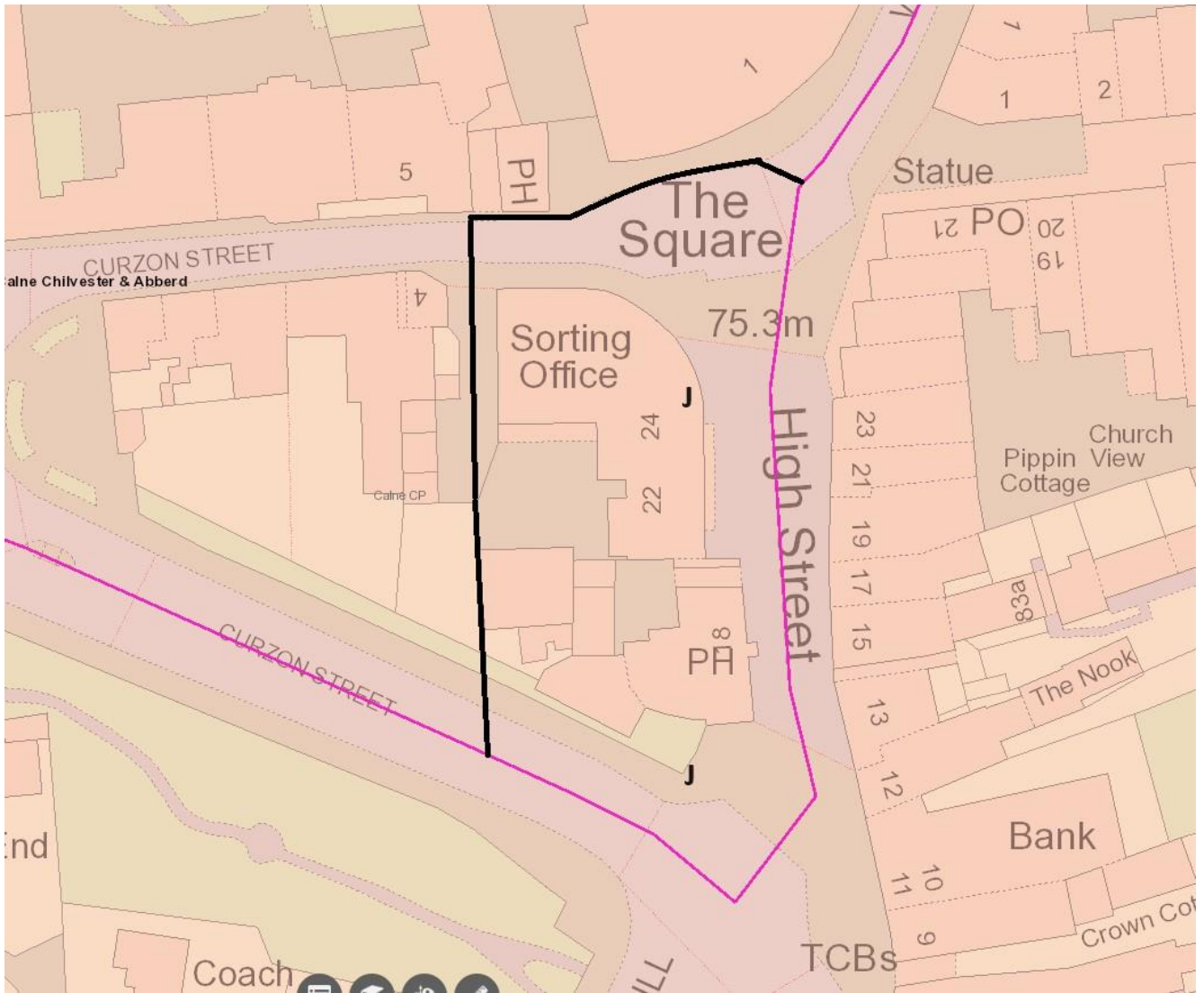
7.1 That the area shown as I in the map below be transferred from the parish of Calne Without to the parish of Calne, as part of the Calne Central ward.

7.2 That the area shown as J in the map below be transferred from the Calne Chilvester and Abberd ward of Calne Town Council to the Calne Central ward.

7.3 To request the LGBCE amend the Electoral Divisions of Calne Rural, Calne Central, and Calne Central accordingly.

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





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Recommendation 8

- 8.1 That the area shown as L in the map below be transferred from Bradford-on-Avon North ward of Bradford-on-Avon Town Council to the Bradford-on-Avon South ward.**
- 8.2 To request the LGBCE amend the Electoral Divisions accordingly.**

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

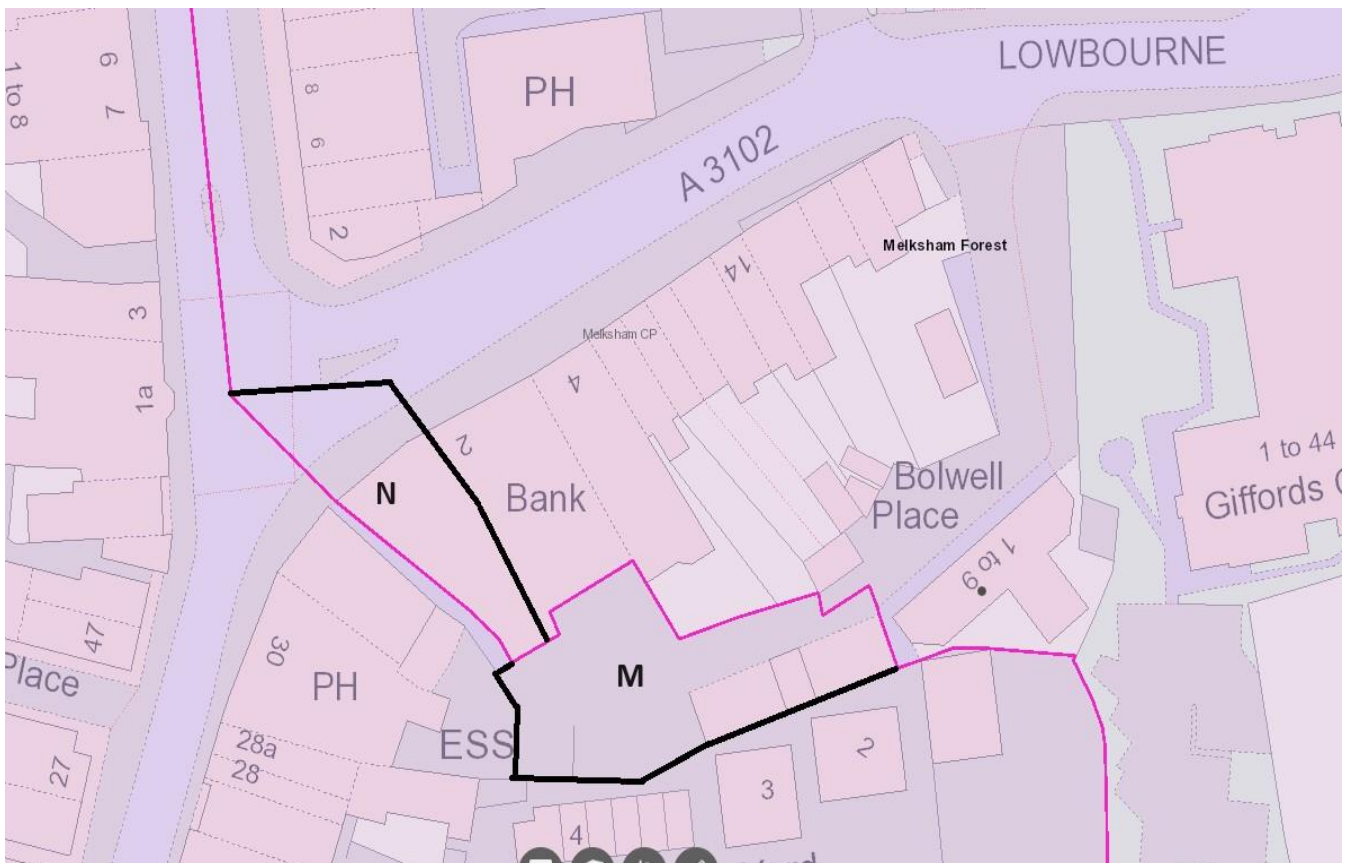


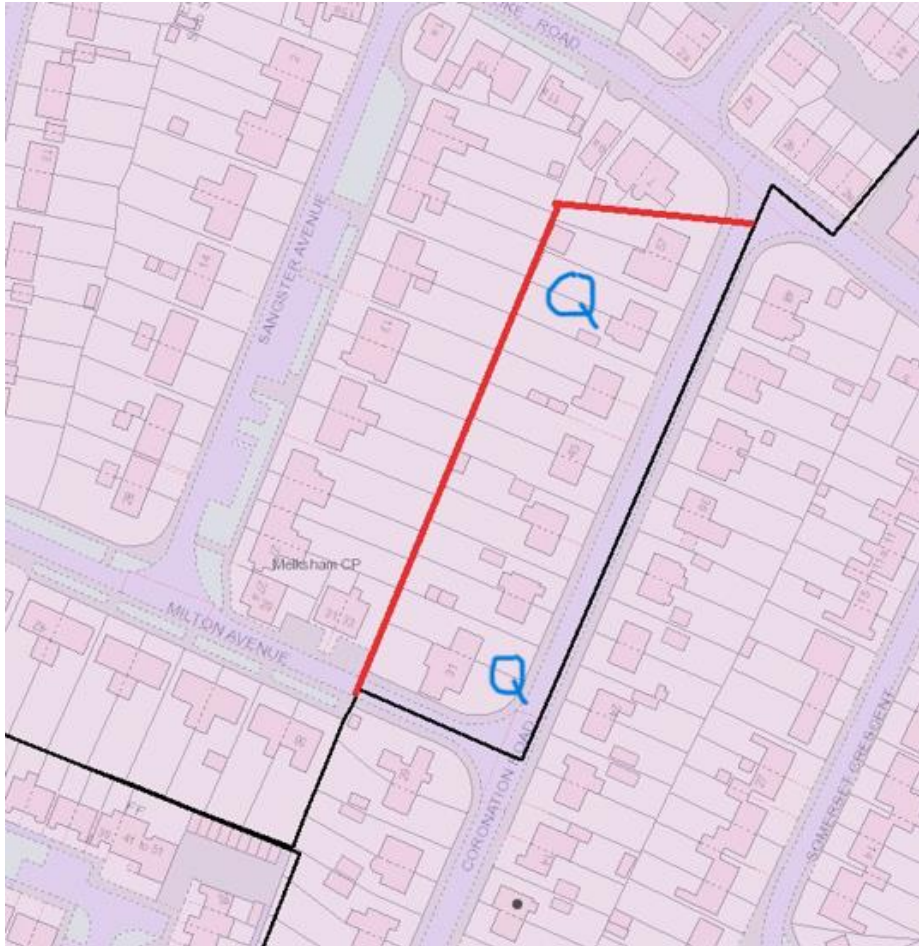
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Recommendation 9

- 9.1 That the area shown as M in the map below be transferred from Melksham South ward of Melksham Town Council to the Melksham Forest ward.
- 9.2 That the area shown as N in the map below be transferred from Melksham Forest ward of Melksham Town Council to the Melksham South ward.
- 9.3 That the area shown as Q in the map below be transferred from Melksham Forest ward of Melksham Town Council to the Melksham South ward.
- 9.4 To request the LGBCE amend the Electoral Divisions accordingly.

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





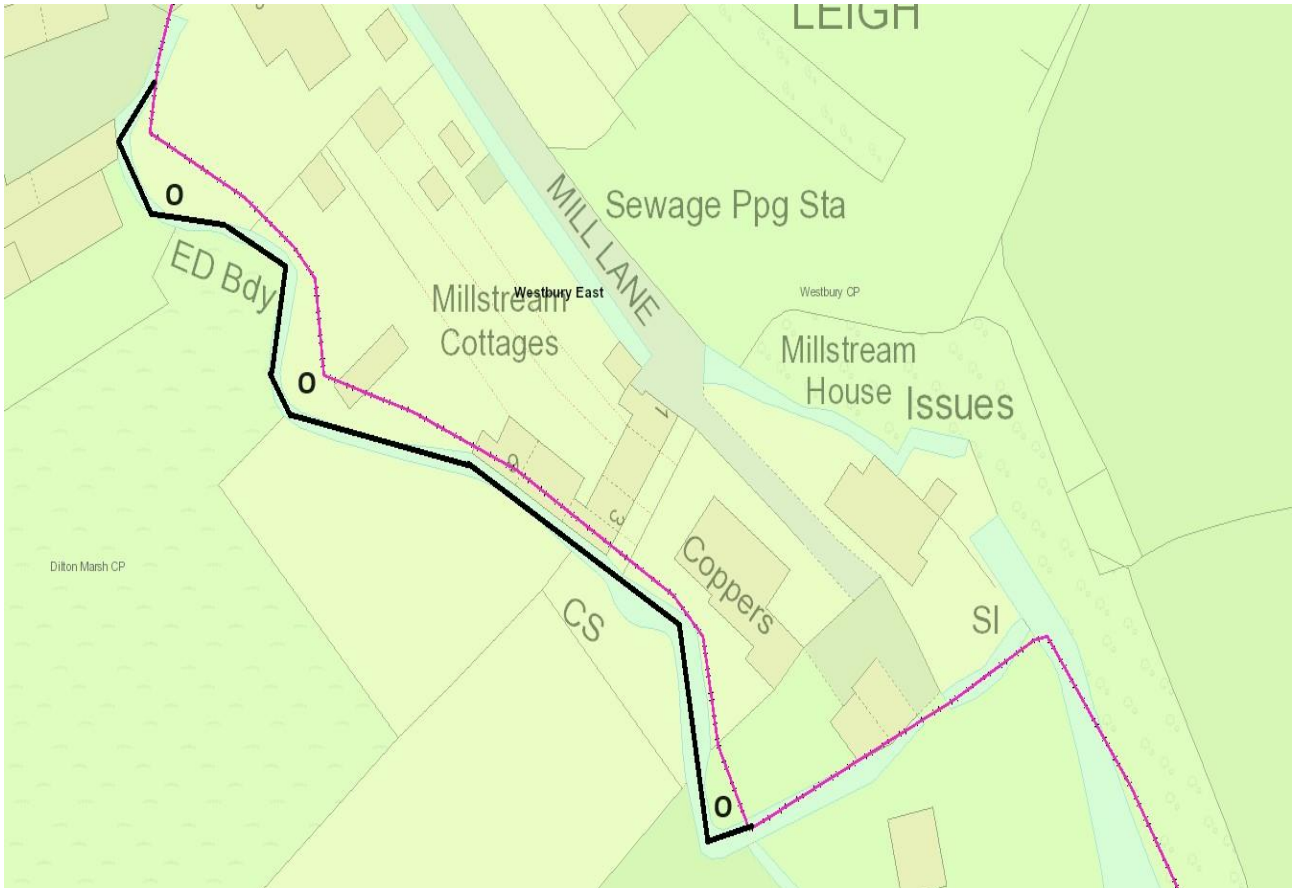
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Recommendation 10

10.1 That the area shown as O in the map below be transferred from the parish of Dilton Marsh to Westbury as part of the Westbury East ward.

10.2 To request the LGBCE amend the Electoral Divisions of Westbury East and Ethandune accordingly.

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

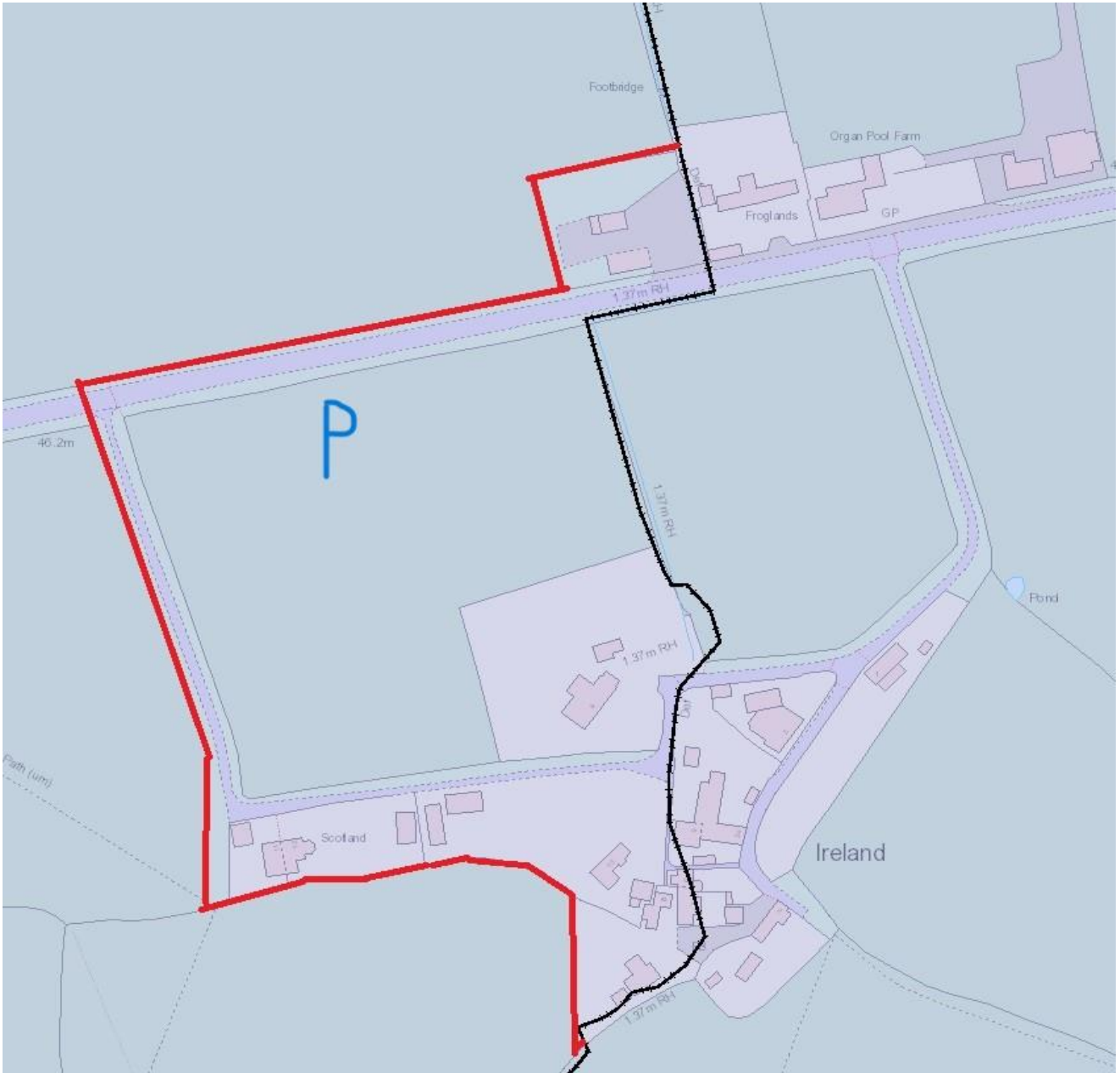


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Recommendation 11

11.1 That the area shown as P in the map below be transferred from the parish of Southwick to the parish of North Bradley.

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



Areas reviewed without recommendations being made

115. The Committee considered a series of requests from the parish of Winterbourne for minor changes to their boundary relating to the parishes of Laverstock & Ford, Durnford, Firsdown, and Idmiston.
116. In each of the areas proposed by Winterbourne Parish Council, the Committee noted limited or non-existent responses from parish councils and surveys, and the lack of perceived governance improvement from the very minor changes.
117. They determined there were no significant community benefits to the proposals and declined to make a recommendation to amend the governance arrangements in the area.
118. The Committee had reviewed a single property currently in Seend which had been brought to its attention, and whether this would more appropriately be within the Parish of Melksham Without.
119. Having considered the area, and noting that both parish councils had confirmed they were content with the current arrangements, no change was recommended.
120. The Committee also considered the boundary between Lacock and Chippenham. As part of the 2019/2020 Review involving Chippenham and Lacock parishes, the Committee recommended, and it was agreed, to transfer an area of land containing new housing within the new Chippenham Lowden and Rowden Division from Lacock to Chippenham.
121. The area also included the small area of Rowden Lane, a rural hamlet accessed through the town. The Council had agreed to take a further look at the area to see if the boundary line should be amended but had no specific proposals to pre-consult upon.
122. The Committee noted that residents in Rowden Lane were written to twice as part of information gathering, in addition to the online survey, and that only one response had been received, which sought to reverse the previous decision.
123. Future development phases in the area were discussed, and the Committee agreed that Rowden Lane was correctly included as part of Chippenham, noting the lack of connection with Lacock and that neither Lacock Parish Council or Chippenham Town Council had requested any change to the current boundary. They therefore declined to recommend any changes to the area.
124. The Committee had also made draft recommendations in relation to Clyffe Pypard and Broad Town, and also West Overton and Wilcot, Huish, and Oare, where isolated properties on the boundaries were raised as potentially more appropriately sitting in other parishes.
125. The Committee received consultation responses in relation to each area, and after discussion resolved to withdraw its recommendations and make no recommendations for change for those areas.