

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR
HAMMERSMITH &
FULHAM

*Report to the Secretary of State for the
Environment, Transport and the Regions*

January 2000

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Hammersmith & Fulham.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Professor Michael Clarke (Deputy Chairman)

Peter Brokenshire

Kru Desai

Pamela Gordon

Robin Gray

Robert Hughes CBE

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Hammersmith & Fulham is inserted inside the back cover of the report.



Local Government Commission for England

25 January 2000

Dear Secretary of State

On 9 February 1999 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Hammersmith & Fulham under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in August 1999 and undertook an 10-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraph 186) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Hammersmith & Fulham.

We recommend that the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham should be served by 46 councillors representing 16 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

We note that you have now set out in the White Paper *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People* (Cm 4014, HMSO), legislative proposals for a number of changes to local authority electoral arrangements. However, until such time as that new legislation is in place we are obliged to conduct our work in accordance with current legislation, and to continue our current approach to periodic electoral reviews.

I would like to thank members and officers of the Borough Council and other local people who have contributed to the review. Their co-operation and assistance have been very much appreciated by Commissioners and staff.

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT
Chairman

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Hammersmith & Fulham on 9 February 1999. We published our draft recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements on 3 August 1999, after which we undertook an 10-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the representations we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and contains our final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Hammersmith & Fulham:

- **in 10 of the 23 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough;**
- **this level of electoral equality is not expected to improve significantly over the next five years.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 186-187) are that:

- **Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council should be served by 46 councillors, four fewer than at present;**
- **there should be 16 wards, seven fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all but one of the existing wards.**

These recommendations seek to ensure that the number of electors represented by each borough councillor is as nearly as possible the same, having regard to local circumstances.

- **In none of the 16 wards would the number of electors per councillor vary by more than 6 per cent from the borough average by 2004.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 7 March 2000:

**The Secretary of State
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Local Government Sponsorship Division
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU**

*Figure 1:
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary*

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas (existing wards)
1 Addison	3	Addison ward (part); Brook Green ward (part)
2 Askew	3	Coningham ward (part); Starch Green ward (part)
3 Avonmore & Brook Green	3	Addison ward (part); Avonmore ward; Broadway ward (part); Brook Green ward (part)
4 Broadway	3	Broadway ward (part); Brook Green ward (part); Grove ward (part); Margravine ward (part); Ravenscourt ward (part)
5 College Park & Old Oak	2	<i>Unchanged</i>
6 Fulham Broadway	3	Eel Brook ward (part); Normand ward (part); Sherbrooke ward (part); Walham ward (part)
7 Fulham Reach	3	Broadway ward (part); Crabtree ward (part); Margravine ward (part); Normand ward (part)
8 Munster	3	Colehill ward (part); Sherbrooke ward (part)
9 North End	3	Gibbs Green ward; Normand ward (part)
10 Palace Riverside	2	Crabtree ward (part); Palace ward (part)
11 Parsons Green & Walham	3	Eel Brook ward (part); Palace ward (part); Sands End ward (part); Sullivan ward (part); Walham ward (part)
12 Ravenscourt Park	3	Grove ward (part); Ravenscourt ward (part); Starch Green ward (part)
13 Sands End	3	Sands End ward (part); Sullivan ward (part)
14 Town	3	Colehill ward (part); Eel Brook ward (part); Town ward
15 White City & Shepherd's Bush	3	Addison ward (part); Coningham ward (part); White City & Shepherd's Bush ward (part); Wormholt ward (part)
16 Wormholt	3	White City & Shepherd's Bush ward (part); Wormholt ward (part)

Note: Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.

Figure 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Hammersmith & Fulham

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Addison	3	7,811	2,604	6	7,821	2,607	4
2 Askew	3	7,462	2,487	1	7,596	2,532	1
3 Avonmore & Brook Green	3	7,796	2,599	6	7,822	2,607	4
4 Broadway	3	7,428	2,476	1	7,462	2,487	-1
5 College Park & Old Oak	2	4,644	2,322	-5	4,935	2,468	-2
6 Fulham Broadway	3	7,034	2,345	-4	7,124	2,375	-5
7 Fulham Reach	3	7,300	2,433	-1	7,300	2,433	-3
8 Munster	3	7,478	2,493	2	7,486	2,495	0
9 North End	3	7,734	2,578	5	7,726	2,575	3
10 Palace Riverside	2	5,226	2,613	7	5,277	2,639	5
11 Parsons Green & Walham	3	7,108	2,369	-3	7,245	2,415	-4
12 Ravenscourt Park	3	7,012	2,337	-5	7,269	2,423	-3
13 Sands End	3	6,718	2,239	-9	7,957	2,652	6
14 Town	3	7,055	2,352	-4	7,067	2,356	-6
15 White City & Shepherd's Bush	3	7,452	2,484	1	7,591	2,530	1
16 Wormholt	3	7,603	2,534	3	7,640	2,547	2
Totals	46	112,861	—	—	115,318	—	—
Averages	—	—	2,454	—	—	2,507	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.

2 In broad terms, the objective of this periodic electoral review (PER) of Hammersmith & Fulham is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor on the Borough Council is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the Borough Council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards.

3 In undertaking these reviews, we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 We have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties*, which sets out our approach to the reviews. We are not required to have regard to parliamentary constituency boundaries in developing our recommendations. Any new ward boundaries will be taken into account by the Parliamentary Boundary Commission in its reviews of parliamentary constituencies.

5 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as practicable, equality of representation across the borough as a whole. Wherever possible we try to build on schemes which have been prepared locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local interests are normally in a better position to judge what council size and ward configuration are most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while allowing proper reflection of the identities and interests of local communities.

6 We are not prescriptive on council size. We start from the general assumption that the existing council size already secures effective and convenient local government in that borough but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against an upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified: in particular, we do not accept that an increase in a borough's electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a borough council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other boroughs.

The London Boroughs

7 Our programme of periodic electoral reviews of all 386 local authorities in England started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004. The 1992 Act requires us to review most local authorities every 10 to 15 years. However, the Act is silent on the timing of reviews of the London boroughs. The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.

8 Most London boroughs have not been reviewed since 1977. Following discussions with local authority interests on the appropriate timing of London borough reviews, we decided to start as soon as possible after the May 1998 London local government elections so that all reviews could be completed, and the necessary orders implementing our recommendations made by the Secretary of State, in time for the next London elections scheduled for May 2002. Our reviews of the 32 London boroughs started on a phased basis between June 1998 and February 1999.

9 We have sought to ensure that all concerned were aware of our approach to the reviews. Copies of our *Guidance* were sent to all London boroughs, along with other major interests. In March 1998 we briefed chief executives at a meeting of the

London branch of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, and we also met with the Association of London Government. Since then we welcomed the opportunity to meet with chief officers and, on an all-party basis, members in the majority of individual authorities. This has enabled us to brief authorities about our policies and procedures, our objective of achieving electoral equality having regard to local circumstances, and the approach taken by the Commission in previous reviews.

10 Before we started our work in London, the Government published for consultation a Green Paper, *Modernising Local Government – Local Democracy and Community Leadership* (February 1998) which, inter alia, promoted the possibility of London boroughs having annual elections with three-member wards so that one councillor in each ward would stand for election each year. In view of this, we decided that the order in which the London reviews are undertaken should be determined by the proportion of three-member wards in each borough under the current arrangements. On this basis, Hammersmith & Fulham was in the fourth phase of reviews.

11 The Government's subsequent White Paper, *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, published in July 1998, set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. For all unitary councils, including London boroughs, it proposed elections by thirds. It also refers to local accountability being maximised where the whole electorate in a council's area is involved in elections each time they take place, thereby pointing to a pattern of three-member wards in London boroughs to reflect a system of elections by thirds.

12 Following publication of the White Paper, we advised all authorities in our 1998/99 PER programme, including the London boroughs that, until any direction is received from the Secretary of State, the Commission would continue to maintain the approach to PERs as set out in the March 1998 Guidance. Nevertheless, we added that local authorities and other interested parties would no doubt wish to have regard to the Secretary of State's intentions and legislative proposals in formulating electoral schemes as part of PERs of their areas. Our general experience has been that proposals for three-member ward patterns emerged from most areas in London.

13 Finally, it should be noted that there are no parishes in London, and in fact there is no legislative provision for the establishment of

parishes in London. This differentiates the reviews of London boroughs from the majority of the other electoral reviews we are carrying out elsewhere in the country, where parishes feature highly and provide the building blocks for district or borough wards.

The Review of Hammersmith & Fulham

14 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Hammersmith & Fulham. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in May 1977 (Report No. 210).

15 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 9 February 1999, when we wrote to Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified the local authority associations, the Metropolitan Police, Members of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations, we placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and other publicity, and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations was 3 May 1999.

16 At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations. Stage Three began on 3 August 1999 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Hammersmith & Fulham*, and ended on 11 October 1999. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions.

17 At the end of Stage Three, we conducted further consultation regarding the issue of council size, in the light of the Administration Group's new proposal for a council size of 42. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

18 Hammersmith & Fulham is situated on the western edge of Inner London. It is bounded by the River Thames and the boroughs of Hounslow, Ealing, Brent and Kensington & Chelsea. The borough is the third smallest of the 32 London Boroughs in electorate terms and the fourth smallest by area. However, it has the fourth highest population density with 92 inhabitants per hectare. Hammersmith & Fulham features a number of significant east-west transport arteries: the Westway (A40(M)), Uxbridge Road (A4020), Goldhawk Road (A402), Talgarth Road (A4) and Lillie Road (A3218). It is also served by four London Underground railway lines (Central, Hammersmith & City, Piccadilly and District). Hammersmith & Fulham is primarily residential in nature, although the north of the borough is dominated by Wormwood Scrubs prison.

19 To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, we calculated the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (the councillor:elector ratio) varies from the borough average in percentage terms. In the text which follows, this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

20 The electorate of the borough (February 1999) is 112,861. The Council currently has 50 councillors who are elected from 23 wards (Map 1 and Figure 3). Nineteen wards are each represented by two councillors and four wards elect three councillors each. As in all London boroughs, the whole council is elected together every four years.

21 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,257 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 2,306 by the year 2004 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in 10 of the 23 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and in three wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalances are in College

Park & Old Oak ward, where each of the three councillors represents on average 31 per cent fewer electors than the borough average, and Walham ward, where each of the two councillors represents 24 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1:
Existing Wards in Hammersmith & Fulham



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Figure 3:
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Addison	2	5,184	2,592	15	5,194	2,597	13
2 Avonmore	2	4,669	2,335	3	4,669	2,335	1
3 Broadway	2	3,859	1,930	-15	3,899	1,950	-15
4 Brook Green	2	5,455	2,728	21	5,455	2,728	18
5 Colehill	2	4,720	2,360	5	4,728	2,364	3
6 College Park & Old Oak	3	4,644	1,548	-31	4,837	1,612	-30
7 Coningham	3	7,622	2,541	13	7,795	2,598	13
8 Crabtree	2	4,238	2,119	-6	4,267	2,134	-7
9 Eel Brook	2	4,329	2,165	-4	4,383	2,192	-5
10 Gibbs Green	2	5,316	2,658	18	5,305	2,653	15
11 Grove	2	4,778	2,389	6	4,798	2,399	4
12 Margravine	2	4,417	2,209	-2	4,417	2,209	-4
13 Normand	2	4,440	2,220	-2	4,455	2,228	-3
14 Palace	2	4,156	2,078	-8	4,186	2,093	-9
15 Ravenscourt	2	4,250	2,125	-6	4,492	2,246	-3
16 Sands End	2	5,391	2,696	19	6,662	3,331	44
17 Sherbrooke	2	3,901	1,951	-14	3,901	1,951	-15
18 Starch Green	2	4,276	2,138	-5	4,301	2,151	-7
19 Sullivan	2	4,442	2,221	-2	4,517	2,259	-2
20 Town	2	4,915	2,458	9	4,927	2,464	7
21 Walham	2	5,606	2,803	24	5,734	2,867	24
22 White City & Shepherd's Bush	3	6,277	2,092	-7	6,367	2,122	-8

continued overleaf

Figure 3 (continued):
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
23 Wormholt	3	5,976	1,992	-12	6,013	2,004	-13
Totals	50	112,861	—	—	115,302	—	—
Averages	—	—	2,257	—	—	2,306	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council's submission.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1999, electors in College Park & Old Oak ward were relatively over-represented by 31 per cent, while electors in Waltham ward were relatively under-represented by 24 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

²² During Stage One we received nine representations, of which two were borough-wide schemes submitted by the Borough Council and the Conservative Group on the Council. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Hammersmith & Fulham*.

²³ In formulating our draft recommendations we noted that there was a lack of consensus regarding the appropriate number of councillors to serve on Hammersmith & Fulham Council and the number and boundaries of wards. Our draft recommendations were based on a combination of our own proposals and the schemes submitted. Our proposals achieved improved electoral equality, provided good boundaries while having regard to the statutory criteria and proposed a mixed pattern of two- and three-member wards. We proposed that:

- (a) Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council should be served by 46 councillors;
- (b) there should be 16 wards, involving changes to all but one of the existing wards.

Draft Recommendation

Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council should comprise 46 councillors serving 16 wards.

²⁴ Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in all 16 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average. This improved level of electoral equality was expected to continue in 2004.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

25 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 50 representations were received. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council and the Commission.

Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council

26 The Borough Council did not comment on our draft recommendations at Stage Three. However, as part of further consultation, the Borough Council expressed a preference for a council size of 42 as proposed by the Administration Group, rather than a 45-member council as proposed in its Stage One submission or our draft recommendation for a 46-member council. The Borough Council noted “that the Queen’s Speech on 18 November contained proposals for a Local Government Bill introducing new models of political management, including the model adopted by the Council in June 1998” but did not provide any further evidence in support of its views. It also endorsed the Administration Group’s Stage Three proposals, which it argued provided a superior level of electoral equality and an even pattern of three-member wards across the borough.

Hammersmith & Fulham Administration Group

27 The Administration Group submitted a borough-wide scheme based on a council size of 42 (three fewer than the Borough Council’s Stage One proposal and eight fewer than at present) and a pattern of three-member wards. They stated that “whilst acknowledging the Commission’s desire to preserve certain key boundaries across the borough [they do] not accept the necessity for any two-member wards within this borough.” On the issue of council size, the Administration Group stated that it generally supported a reduction in council size to 45, but “there should be a presumption in favour of the smallest size for an authority commensurate with the efficient and democratic discharge of its duties”. They argued that the

proposed reduction in council size to 42 was “made in a wider context of reform and streamlining of political institutions in the UK” and that such a reduction would improve the effectiveness of local government within the borough.

28 Under the Administration Group’s scheme, the boundaries of all existing wards would be changed. Most notably, College Park & Old Oak ward would remain a three-member ward by including part of Wormholt ward, thereby breaching the Westway in the west. Their scheme proposed combining Margravine ward with most of Crabtree ward to create a three-member Fulham Reach ward, and creating two new wards – Sands End & Sullivan and Parsons Green & Walham – oriented north-south, similar to our draft recommendations for the area. Under the Administration Group’s proposals, no ward would have an electoral variance of more than 6 per cent from the average (excluding Sands End ward which would have 12 per cent fewer electors than the borough average in 1999, improving to 3 per cent more by 2004).

Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council Conservative Group

29 The Conservative Group broadly supported our draft recommendations for Hammersmith & Fulham. Regarding the proposed council size of 46, they stated that while they continued “to believe that there should not be a significant change in council size ... [they] do not consider the draft proposals on council size are wholly unreasonable”. The Conservatives also expressed support for our proposed mixed pattern of two- and three-member wards, noting the difficulties associated with creating three-member wards with natural boundaries under a reduced council size of 46 (most notably in College Park & Old Oak ward in the north of the borough). Furthermore, they argued that the change in the Government’s policy towards annual elections had weakened the argument for three-member wards. The Conservatives proposed minor boundary changes to our draft recommendations for Askew, Margravine, North End, Parsons Green &

Walham, Ravenscourt Park and Sands End wards “to improve electoral equality and to more accurately reflect the interests and identities of local communities”. They proposed more substantial changes to the boundary between Broadway and Brook Green wards, affecting around 2,700 electors. Under the Conservative Group’s Stage Three proposals, no ward would have an electoral variance of more than 6 per cent from the borough average currently and by 2004.

Members of Parliament

30 We received submissions from both of the borough’s Members of Parliament at Stage Three. Mr Clive Soley, MP for Ealing, Acton & Shepherd’s Bush, noted the high degree of local deprivation and the large councillor workload in College Park & Old Oak ward and argued that the area should be represented by three-councillors. He was not convinced “that the Westway is so severe a physical boundary that it is preferable to retain ... a two-member College Park & Old Oak ward” and favoured the Administration Group’s proposed Westway ward. He generally supported our draft recommendations for the creation of a Ravenscourt Park ward but was “not convinced of the need to break up Starch Green ward”.

31 As part of the Administration Group’s own consultation exercise, Mr Iain Colman, MP for Hammersmith & Fulham, expressed support for the Administration Group’s alternative proposals. He stated he was “sceptical about the importance in the overall scheme of things of the issue of council size” and argued that the proposed reduction in council size to 42 should be given serious consideration by the Commission. Regarding our draft recommendations, he opposed the retention of a two-member Margravine ward and expressed particular concern about the proposed boundary between Ravenscourt Park and Broadway wards, arguing that it would divide the Grove (or Brackenbury Village) community.

Other Representations

32 We received a further 51 representations in response to our draft recommendations. In addition, the Administration Group’s submission contained 113 representations which had been received as part of their own consultation exercise.

33 Hammersmith & Fulham and Ealing, Acton & Shepherd’s Bush Constituency Liberal Democrats

(henceforth Liberal Democrats) expressed broad agreement with our draft recommendations “both in terms of electoral equality and the re-balancing of the electoral compositions of wards” and proposed changes to our draft recommendations in several wards. They stated that little evidence had been produced in support of a further reduction in council size and that the administration had undertaken little local consultation on the new cabinet style of government.

34 White City Residents’ Association and three local residents opposed our draft recommendations to combine part of the White City Estate with Wormholt ward and argued in favour of uniting all of the White City Estate within one ward. Councillor Gibbons favoured the Administration Group’s proposals for the White City area.

35 Stamford Brook Residents’ Association objected to the division of the Starch Green community and the creation of a new Askew ward, and supported combining the whole of Starch Green with Ravenscourt ward. Councillor Evans supported the Administration Group’s proposed Ravenscourt Park ward. Councillor Allen, Grove Branch Labour Party and Grove Neighbourhood Council opposed our proposals for Grove ward on the basis that they would divide the Grove community between two wards and supported the Administration Group’s proposals for the area.

36 Brook Green Association and one local resident opposed our proposals for the Brook Green area, arguing that they would divide the community between three wards (Broadway, Brook Green and Olympia wards). Councillor Mallinson and one local resident broadly supported our draft recommendations for the existing Avonmore ward. Lytton Tenants’ & Residents’ Association and one local resident favoured renaming Olympia ward as Avonmore or Brook Green, which are identifiable communities in the area. Councillor Karian welcomed our proposed Brook Green ward, but favoured the Administration Group’s proposed Addison ward which he argued would ensure that streets were not divided between different wards.

37 The Fulham Society questioned the necessity for two-member wards in the borough, but had no objection to the proposed council size of 46. It suggested several boundary changes to our proposals for Munster, Olympia, Parsons Green & Walham and Town wards, and suggested alternative ward names for Palace Riverside and Fulham Broadway wards. Crabtree Estate

Residents' Association and three local residents favoured the Administration Group's proposed Fulham Reach ward, which would combine part of Crabtree ward with Margravine ward. One resident favoured retaining the existing two-member Margravine ward, as put forward in our draft recommendations. Two respondents opposed our proposals for a new Palace Riverside ward, stating that it covered too large a geographical area.

38 Harbledown Road Residents' Association and two local residents expressed broad support for our proposals for a revised Town ward and one resident supported our proposed Fulham Broadway ward. One local resident supported our proposals for a new North End ward, but opposed the reduction in council size from 50 to 46. Councillor Garrett expressed concern that our draft recommendation would divide the North Sherbrooke community between Munster and Fulham Broadway wards, and supported the Administration Group's proposals for this area. We received 14 submissions from local residents' associations and individuals requesting that all of the Pearscroft Road be included within Sands End ward, rather than Parsons Green & Walham ward, arguing that it is an integral part of the Sands End community.

39 As part of the Administration Group's own consultation exercise, Councillors Aherne, Birdsey, Browne, Burke, Cartwright, Caruana, Davies, Graham, Gray, Harcourt, Hicks, Homan, Powell, Rees, Slaughter, Smallman, Stanley, Trellogan, Vaughan, Wicks and Wilkinson expressed support for the Administration Group's 42-member scheme and the proposals for their respective constituencies. Brook Green, Crabtree & Margravine, Eel Brook & Walham, Normand & Sherbrooke, Sands End & Sullivan and Town, Palace & Colehill branches of the Labour Party also expressed support for the Administration Group's proposals in their area.

40 Springvale Residents' Association, Charecroft Tenants' Association and two residents supported the Administration Group's proposed Addison and Avonmore & Brook Green wards. Three residents supported our draft recommendations for Addison and Avonmore wards, but proposed retaining Avonmore as a ward name. One resident suggested retaining Avonmore ward as a two-member ward and renaming it Avonmore & Blythe ward.

41 Cleverley Estate, Wengham Hayter & Orwell, Woodman's Mews and Wormholt tenants' and residents' associations expressed a preference for

the Administration Group's proposals for their area. Three residents favoured creating a three-member College Park & Old Oak ward and considered that the Westway is not a significant barrier to communities.

42 Aspen Gardens Tenants' Association, Kings Court Residents' Association and three local residents opposed our draft recommendations which would divide the communities in the existing Grove and Starch Green wards and supported joining Starch Green ward with a modified Ravenscourt Park ward, as proposed by the Administration Group. Seven local residents favoured retaining separate representation for the Starch Green area, but argued that if change was necessary, the the whole of the area should be combined with Ravenscourt Park ward. One local resident considered that the boundaries of our proposed Ravenscourt Park ward were arbitrary and four residents favoured retaining Flora Gardens within Ravenscourt Park ward.

43 Field Road Tenants' Association (accompanied by a petition of 50 signatures), Hammersmith Embankment Residents' Association and 18 local residents supported the Administration Group's proposed Fulham Reach ward. One local resident argued that Fulham Palace Road does not constitute a natural boundary in the north, but that it unites communities on both sides of it. A local resident broadly welcomed our draft recommendations for a new Munster ward, but favoured the Administration Group's proposed ward boundaries, which would retain the Aintree Estate in Fulham Broadway ward.

44 Five local residents expressed support for the Administration's proposed West Kensington ward. Another 22 local residents (via pro forma letter) stated there was little difference between our draft recommendations and the Administration Group's proposals for Fulham Broadway ward, but supported the Administration's scheme because it would provide for three-member wards throughout the borough and better reflect the community around North End Road. One resident favoured including Chaldon Road within Fulham Broadway ward. Townmead Youth Club and Sands End Adventure Project & Sands End Playhouse broadly supported our draft recommendations for Sands End ward, but argued that all of Pearscroft Road (including Pearscroft Court, Bulow Court, Jepson House and Manor Court) should be included within the ward.

5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

45 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Hammersmith & Fulham is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities – and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

46 In relation to Schedule 11, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on assumptions as to changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the ensuing five years. We must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken.

47 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which provides for exactly the same number of electors per councillor in every ward of an authority. There must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach, in the context of the statutory criteria, is that such flexibility must be kept to a minimum.

48 Our *Guidance* states that, while we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, the objective of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance over 10

per cent in any ward. In reviews of predominantly urban areas such as the London boroughs, our experience suggests that we would expect to achieve a high degree of electoral equality in all wards.

Electorate Forecasts

49 At Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2004, projecting an increase in the electorate of 2 per cent from 112,861 to 115,302 over the five-year period from 1999 to 2004. It expected most of the growth to be in Ravenscourt and Sands End wards due to the proposed redevelopment of Queen Charlotte’s Hospital and the Imperial Wharf sites in each ward respectively. The Council has estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to the unitary development plan for the borough, and the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries was obtained.

50 In our draft recommendations report we accepted that forecasting electorate is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the forecast electorates, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

51 At the beginning of Stage Three, it was brought to our attention by the Hammersmith & Fulham Conservatives that there were some anomalies regarding the electorate figures in several of our proposed wards (Askew, Fulham Broadway, Munster, Palace Riverside, Parsons Green & Walham, Sands End and White City & Shepherd’s Bush). As a whole, the net effect of these changes on our draft recommendations was an overall improvement in the level of electoral equality throughout the borough by 2004. After consideration, we decided that it would assist consultation if local people could be informed of these anomalies at the earliest opportunity and on

28 September 1999 a letter was sent to Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council requesting that the appropriate steps be taken to bring this matter to the attention of those considering making comments on our proposals. We also stated that we would give further consideration to the most appropriate warding arrangements for these areas, taking into account any representations received by the end of Stage Three. We received no comments on the Council's electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates presently available.

Council Size

52 Much of the debate in our review of Hammersmith & Fulham has centred on the issue of council size and, in particular, the implications for council size of the Government's proposals for executive styles of political management in local government, as set out in the White Paper Local Leadership, Local Choice and the Local Government Bill which was published on 26 November 1999.

53 The Government's proposals, which include an enhanced scrutiny and representational role for councillors, have led many local authorities, among them the London borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, to consider whether there should be changes to their current council size. However, there is no implicit or explicit assumption either in the White Paper or in the Local Government Bill that a greater or smaller number of councillors would be needed to implement a new structure of political management. Local government seems divided on the implications for council size of a move towards a new structure; some local authorities and political groupings are of the view that, to undertake the scrutiny and representational functions, they will require more councillors, others believe firmly that a cabinet or executive style of management will require fewer.

54 We have always been willing to facilitate local authority proposals for developments in different democratic styles and political management structures. A number of authorities, such as Hammersmith & Fulham, have already initiated changes to their management structures in advance of legislation. A PER provides the opportunity for council size to be changed if that should be a desirable corollary to implementing such a scheme

of modernisation. However, there are a number of relevant considerations which we must take into account.

55 Interested parties must be able to demonstrate to us that such schemes have been fully thought through; how, in detail, they intend to implement their proposals and what new structure they intend putting in place. We place particular importance on proposals for significant changes in council size being properly developed in the context of a review of internal management and the role of councillors in the new structure.

56 In reaching conclusions on council size, we start from the general assumption that the existing number of councillors elected to serve on a council already secures effective and convenient local government. We are always willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be the case, particularly in the context of new political management structures. However, as our Guidance makes clear, we have found it necessary to guard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and any proposals we receive for an increase in council size need to be fully justified. In particular, we do not accept that changes should be made to the size of an authority simply to make it more consistent with that of a neighbouring authority.

57 While Hammersmith & Fulham, like a number of other local authorities, has come a long way in introducing a new political management structure, it cannot be assumed that there will be no further changes to the Council's internal management. The Local Government Bill still at an early stage in its passage through Parliament, and additional initiatives aimed at furthering the Government's agenda for modernising local government may follow. Our objective in making recommendations is to put in place a council size which will not simply address immediate concerns, but be enduring. Accordingly, we need to be wary of acceding to changes in council size which are based on the assumption that, in authorities which have already introduced new political management structures, those structures are now fixed.

58 Finally, there is the issue of political advantage. To a greater or lesser extent there is a political dimension to each PER, with party groupings putting forward competing electoral schemes for our consideration. These often owe more to achieving a desired political outcome at local

elections than to providing effective and convenient local governance of an area. It therefore behoves us to be vigilant in considering proposals involving significant changes in council size, or proposals which, for no obvious reason, their proponents alter part way through a review.

⁵⁹ Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council currently has 50 members. The electorate of the borough has fluctuated over the past 20 years, with the current electorate almost identical to that in 1975 (113,050).

⁶⁰ At Stage One the Borough Council, which is Labour controlled, proposed reducing the number of councillors for the borough from 50 to 45. It argued that Hammersmith & Fulham was the first borough to have set up a full cabinet model of internal management (in June 1998) prior to the Commission embarking on its PER and that political structure is therefore a consideration when addressing the issue of council size. It argued that while a council size of 50 was appropriate when it had a traditional committee system, this was no longer the case as much of the authority's work now rested with the Mayor and his six deputies. Furthermore, the Borough Council considered that even a council size of 45 may be high in view of future systems of modernised local government. It noted that the current council size was established in 1965 and predicted that over the period 1965 to 2004 there will have been a net reduction of 54,470 in the borough's population.

⁶¹ The Conservative Group proposed a council size of 51, one councillor more than at present, to facilitate a pattern of three-member wards across the borough. They stated that one of the main aims of introducing a cabinet style of management in Hammersmith & Fulham had been to give greater prominence to councillors' role within their area and improve representation, and at no stage had there been any suggestion of modifying council size. They also noted that while 90 per cent of authorities are proposing a move to a cabinet style government, no significant change in council size has been proposed in the majority of councils. The Conservatives argued that a council size of 45 would run counter to the Commission's preference to build on local consensus which in this case the Council "has neither sought nor achieved". As part of the Conservative Group's own consultation, Rosebank Residents' Association expressed concern about a reduction in council size. One

local resident favoured a reduction in council size to 40, while another opposed any decrease in council size.

⁶² The Liberal Democrats expressed their support for the current council size, but proposed a council size of 51 in order to create 17 three-member wards. They considered that the change to internal management arrangements was an insufficient reason to change council size and argued that "the recent move towards a centralised decision-making process by the ruling group is ... an experiment" that has not been accepted by all parties within the borough. They also commented that Hammersmith & Fulham is an inner-city borough with high incidences of local deprivation leading to high levels of casework for councillors.

⁶³ We recognised that in relation to Hammersmith & Fulham, there was no consensus over the issue of council size and that the change to a new system of internal political management was not predicated on a reduction in council size. However, we also recognised that Hammersmith & Fulham is one of the smallest boroughs in London and has been operating a new system of internal management for a year. Under the new structure much of the decision-making now rests with the Mayor and his six deputies. We had clear evidence of a new structure of political management in operation and considered that as a consequence, it was not unreasonable for the Council to reassess what would be the most appropriate council size for the borough. We were also aware that Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council had undertaken local consultation on changes to the Council's political structures. We did not consider that a reduction in council size of the level suggested by the Council would lead to a deterioration in the convenience and effectiveness of local government in the borough, and therefore were content to put forward a reduction in council size.

⁶⁴ However, we considered that, having regard to the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received, the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council size of 46, rather than 45 as proposed by the Borough Council.

⁶⁵ At Stage Three, we received a new borough-wide scheme from the Administration Group, the Council's Labour controlled Executive, proposing

a council size of 42, three fewer than the Borough Council's initial proposal and four fewer than our draft recommendations. Notwithstanding the information and evidence contained in their submission, we considered that further evidence was required to substantiate the change in council size proposed before reaching our final recommendations. We offered the Borough Council, the Administration Group, the Conservative Group and the Liberal Democrats a further opportunity to present additional evidence regarding the most appropriate council size for Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council. In particular, we invited evidence as to why a council size of 42 would be more appropriate in facilitating the new political management structure than a council size of 46, as proposed by the Borough Council at Stage One. In response, we received further evidence from the Borough Council, the Administration Group, the Conservative Group and the Liberal Democrats.

66 The Administration Group argued that, in formulating their submission, they had found it impossible to build a 45-member scheme which reflected the statutory criteria and the submissions received, and put forward a 42-member scheme instead. They argued that a council size of 42 was not unreasonable in the light of the "wider context of reform and streamlining of political institutions in the UK", citing the example of the Greater London Authority which will have an assembly of 25 members. The Administration Group did not consider that "the effect of a reduction in size from 45 councillors ... to 42 will be a change of substance affecting either the general or detailed functioning of the Council," but that a council size of "42 is better than 45, principally because the same arguments that support a reduction to 45 councillors apply, but with great vigour." They judged that the optimum size for an authority is the smallest commensurate with the proper discharge of its duties and argued that a reduction in council size would improve the effectiveness of local government within the borough. Under the new system of management, a council size of 42 members would be sufficient to carry out the defined executive, scrutiny, quasi-judicial, constituency and community roles.

67 The Administration Group opposed the view that "council size should be settled as a preliminary issue", arguing that "council size is not one of the statutory criteria". While they did not consider it

unimportant, the Administration Group argued that council size was only the fourth most important factor in the review of electoral arrangements in Hammersmith & Fulham, after "electoral equality, consistency of representation and the respecting of natural boundaries".

68 At Stage Three, the Borough Council stated that "the optimum size is the smallest consistent with providing effective local government, under its current modernised system of political management." It expressed a preference for a council size of 42, as put forward by the Administration Group, which it considered would provide "superior electoral equality and an even pattern of three-member wards across the borough".

69 The Conservative Group expressed support for our draft recommendation for a council size of 46. They stated that while they "continue to believe that there should not be a significant change in council size ... [they] do not consider the draft proposals on Council size are wholly unreasonable". Regarding the Administration Group's proposals for a council size of 42, the Conservatives argued that there has been no significant change in the system of political management since Stage One to justify a change of view by the Administration Group to further reduce council size to 42. They also argued that such a reduction might endanger the practical working of the new 'cabinet style' system in Hammersmith & Fulham, arguing that in the event of a change to a more politically balanced authority, the Administration might find itself with most councillors in executive roles and few, if any, 'backbench' councillors to fulfil the scrutiny role. They further considered that the representative role of councillors would be threatened by a reduction in council size. Finally, they asserted that, unlike at Stage One, there had been no significant public consultation behind a further reduction in council size and that the Administration Group's Stage Three submission did not command local consensus.

70 The Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendation for a council size of 46. They opposed the Administration Group's 42-member proposal, stating that little evidence had been produced in support of a further reduction in council size. They observed that the Administration had undertaken little local consultation on the new cabinet style of government or a further reduction in council size. The Liberal Democrats argued that a further reduction in council size would only

exacerbate existing problems with heavy councillor workloads, particularly in deprived areas of the borough.

71 As part of the Administration Group's own consultation exercise, Iain Colman, MP for Hammersmith & Fulham, stated he was "sceptical about the importance in the overall scheme of things of the issue of council size" and stated that the Administration Group's proposed reduction in council size to 42 should be given serious consideration. A further 11 submissions specifically supported the Administration's proposed council size of 42, most of which argued that a smaller council size would more accurately reflect Hammersmith & Fulham's size as the third smallest London borough.

72 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three regarding council size, a number of considerations have arisen. We state in our Guidance and in discussions with councils and other interested parties that changes to council size need to be justified. We are prepared to consider evidence as to the effect which a new political management structure may have on council size. However, it is insufficient for interested parties to simply assert that the implementation of a particular structure will require a particular council size. In our work in other review areas we have received a number of proposals, based on a new internal structure, some of which would involve increases in council size, while others would involve a reduction. It is clear that the diversity in local government does not preclude either a reduction or increase in council size. We therefore consider the area concerned, and the evidence received, on its own merits, and reach conclusions having regard to our statutory criteria.

73 The Administration Group contended that council size should not be the starting point for the review, and that electoral equality, consistency of representation and respecting natural boundaries were more important criteria. This runs contrary to our approach to reviews which is informed by the Enfield Judgement in the House of Lords. This stated that the most appropriate number of councillors should be determined prior to considering issues of boundaries and electoral equality.

74 We have noted that the Administration Group's submission draws comparisons between their proposals for a council size of 42 and our

recommendations for other London boroughs. However, we consider that our Guidance is clear on such comparisons: "We believe that proposals for increases [or decreases] in council size should be fully justified. In particular, we do not accept ... that changes should be made to the size of an authority simply to make it more consistent with that of a neighbouring area ... We will only seek equality of representation within a principal authority area, not between areas." As stated above, the Commission's duty is to ensure consistency in its approach to periodic electoral reviews, having regard for local circumstances and local views, rather than to achieving consistency of outcomes. Given that the circumstances in each local authority that we have reviewed so far are different and that each area is unique in its own way, the Commission tries to ensure that the approach we take to each review is the same, even though this may result in differing outcomes.

75 In reaching conclusions on council size, we look to build on local consensus. In the case of Hammersmith & Fulham, it is clear that no such consensus has been achieved. Indeed, the views expressed on this issue during Stage Three were split along party political lines: while the Conservative Group and the Liberal Democrats supported our proposed council size of 46, the Administration Group and Borough Council favoured a further reduction in council size to 42. Furthermore, we have found no evidence that there has been significant local consultation on a further reduction in council size to 42. Indeed, of the 113 submissions received as part of the Administration Group's own consultation exercise, only 12 made specific reference to council size. From the submissions received, it cannot be said that we identified overwhelming local support for any particular council size in Hammersmith & Fulham.

76 We have carefully considered the evidence received in response to our draft recommendations. On balance, we do not consider that the evidence provided has established how a council size of 42, as opposed to 46 members, would better reflect the statutory criteria. Furthermore, we are not persuaded the effective operation of the new political management structure in Hammersmith & Fulham is dependent on a council size of 42. Nor does the evidence establish that the new structure would be unable to operate effectively with a council size of 46, as initially proposed by the Borough Council. Given the evidence received

during Stage Three and subsequently, we do not consider our draft recommendation for a council size of 46, which enjoyed some local support, to be fundamentally flawed. Accordingly, in view of the improved level of electoral equality which would be achieved under our draft recommendations, we are confirming our draft recommendations for a council size of 46 as final.

Electoral Arrangements

77 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered the representations received at Stage One, including the borough-wide schemes from the Borough Council and the Conservative Group on the Council. From these representations, some considerations emerged which helped to inform us when preparing our draft recommendations.

78 First, we were persuaded by the evidence submitted in support of a reduction in council size and proposed a council of 46 members as part of our draft recommendations. This reduction in council size, resulting in an increase in the average councillor to elector ratio from 2,257 to 2,454, together with the significant electoral imbalances evident in the current wards meant that we proposed significant changes to the existing ward pattern in our draft recommendations.

79 Second, we noted that the current electoral arrangements provide for predominantly two-member wards, although there are also four three-member wards. The Borough Council and the Conservative Group both submitted proposals which were based on a pattern of three-member wards for Hammersmith & Fulham. Upon inspection, we considered that there are a number of significant physical barriers in the borough, such as the Westway, Talgarth Road and Lillie Road, which we believed should continue to be reflected in any future warding arrangement. In order to do this, as well as reflect our view that a reduction in council size was appropriate, we proposed a mixed pattern of 14 three-member wards and 2 two-member wards.

80 Third, we noted the arguments put to us about community identities in the borough. We attempted to reflect such considerations in our draft recommendations where it would be consistent with our objective of electoral equality, although we noted that there was no consensus

locally on the precise boundaries of such communities. Wherever possible, we sought to build on the proposals put to us at Stage One in formulating our draft recommendations.

81 Given our preliminary conclusion in relation to the most appropriate council size and number of councillors per ward for Hammersmith & Fulham, we were unable to adopt in their entirety any of the borough-wide schemes submitted. In our draft recommendations we devised a scheme for 14 three-member wards and 2 two-member wards, based on a combination of our own proposals and those submitted at Stage One. Under our draft recommendations no ward would vary by more than 10 per cent from the borough average currently, improving to 6 per cent from the average by 2004. We considered that these draft recommendations would build on existing arrangements, while also reflecting the views of a number of respondents at Stage One.

82 In response to our draft recommendations report, we received a total of 50 representations, including a new borough-wide scheme from the Administration Group and extensive comments from the Conservative Group on the Council. Most of the other submissions were from residents' associations, residents and other interested parties which commented on the draft recommendations insofar as they related to their local areas. A further 118 submissions were received as part of the Administration Group's own consultation exercise.

83 We have given consideration to all the submissions we received at Stage Three and propose, in the light of these representations, modifying our draft recommendations in some areas. We have not, however, been persuaded to adopt in full the Administration Group's Stage Three proposals. We consider that the purpose of Stage Three is primarily to consult on our draft recommendations, and to make any amendments in the light of the further evidence received, which we consider would result in a demonstrable improvement to the current arrangements and to our draft recommendations. We do not consider that the Administration Group has demonstrated that, in general, its proposals would better reflect the statutory criteria than our draft recommendations or the current arrangements. In particular, as discussed above, we have not been persuaded by their proposals for a 42-member council to modify our draft recommendation for a council size of 46.

84 We have noted the continued preference of the Administration Group for three-member wards in Hammersmith & Fulham, while the Conservative Group and the Liberal Democrats have supported our proposed pattern of mostly, but not entirely, three-member wards. We maintain that our approach to the issue of three-member wards in London has remained constant throughout the programme of periodic electoral reviews. Following the publication of the Government's White Paper *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, published in July 1998, the Commission's Chief Executive wrote to all local authorities in October 1998, expanding further on our Guidance, and stating that while councils and local interests may wish to have regard to this White Paper, the Commission would be continuing to take the same approach as outlined in its March 1998 Guidance. Our approach has been to continue to reflect the statutory criteria, and to give consideration to submissions made to us.

85 We acknowledge that the definition of a community area is a subjective issue. However, in our final recommendations we have given weight to those submissions which provided evidence in support of arguments over the location of proposed ward boundaries. We recognise that we have been unable to achieve complete consensus on the most appropriate ward boundaries for Hammersmith & Fulham, with a number of differing views expressed at Stage Three. In general, however, there has not been a groundswell of opposition to our draft recommendations and we conclude that there is no evidence to suggest that our draft recommendations are fundamentally flawed.

86 As already stated, it was brought to our attention early in Stage Three that there were some anomalies regarding the electorate figures we had proposed for several of our proposed wards. The net effect of these changes on our draft recommendations was an overall improvement in the level of electoral equality throughout the borough by 2004. We have given further consideration to the most appropriate warding arrangements for these areas taking into account all representations received by the end of Stage Three.

87 In the light of further evidence and representations received during Stage Three, we have reviewed our draft recommendations, and judge that modifications should be made to a number of our proposed ward boundaries. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) College Park & Old Oak, White City & Shepherd's Bush and Wormholt wards;
- (b) Coningham, Ravenscourt and Starch Green wards;
- (c) Grove and Broadway wards;
- (d) Addison, Avonmore and Brook Green wards;
- (e) Crabtree, Margravine and Palace wards;
- (f) Gibbs Green, Normand and Walham wards;
- (g) Colehill and Sherbrooke wards;
- (h) Eel Brook, Sands End, Sullivan and Town wards.

88 Details of our final recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large map inside the back cover of the report.

College Park & Old Oak, White City & Shepherd's Bush and Wormholt wards

89 The three wards of College Park & Old Oak, White City & Shepherd's Bush and Wormholt are located in the north of the borough and are represented by three councillors each. College Park & Old Oak covers that area of the borough to the north of the Westway (A40M) and is a large, disparate ward containing Wormwood Scrubs prison. The ward currently has the worst level of electoral equality in the borough, with 31 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average. White City & Shepherd's Bush and Wormholt wards are also over-represented, with 7 per cent and 12 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively. The level of electoral equality in each ward is not projected to improve significantly by 2004.

90 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed creating three new three-member wards for the area. It proposed a new Wormwood ward combining the existing College Park & Old Oak ward with part of the existing Wormholt ward. The Council stated that although "College Park & Old Oak has a natural southern boundary in the Westway", it proposed breaching the road in order to achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality and a three-member ward. It proposed that part of Wormholt ward comprising the Cleverley and Wormholt estates (containing around 3,000 electors) should form part of the new Wormwood ward and that the Westway should form the southern boundary of the eastern part of the ward.

The Borough Council's proposed White City ward would be bounded by the Westway in the north and Uxbridge Road in the south, and would contain part of Wormholt ward to the east of Galloway Road, part of College Park & Old Oak ward and part of White City & Shepherd's Bush ward. It proposed combining part of White City & Shepherd's Bush ward (including the Edward Woods Estate) with the majority of Addison ward and a small area of Brook Green ward to form a three-member Shepherd's Bush Green ward. The Borough Council's proposed Shepherd's Bush Green, Wormwood and White City wards would have 1 per cent more, 1 per cent fewer and 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, based on a council size of 45.

91 The Conservative Group put forward three new three-member wards for this area of the borough - Wormwood, White City and Shepherd's Bush. Their proposed Wormwood ward, similar to that proposed by the Borough Council, would comprise most of the existing College Park & Old Oak ward and the Wormholt and Cleverly estates, currently located in Wormholt ward. They argued that the Westway "would normally form an ideal ward boundary", but opted to breach the Westway in the west in order to create a three-member ward with a reasonable level of electoral equality. The Conservatives proposed combining the remaining part of Wormholt ward with the White City Estate and Batman Close, currently in White City & Shepherd's Bush ward, to form a new three-member White City ward. Their proposed Shepherd's Bush ward would contain most of the existing White City & Shepherd's Bush ward, part of College Park & Old Oak ward and the northern half of Addison ward, which they argued would reunite the community around Shepherd's Bush into one ward. Under the Conservative Group's scheme, Wormwood, White City and Shepherd's Bush wards would have electoral variances of no more than 2 per cent from the borough average, based on a council size of 51.

92 In his submission, Councillor Ivan Gibbons argued that the simplest warding arrangement in the north of the borough would be to retain the existing College Park & Old Oak ward with two councillors, "thus avoiding the massive re-drawing of other ward boundaries in the north of the Borough", whilst maintaining parliamentary constituency boundaries. He cited a letter received from the Minister for Local Government & Housing, the Rt Hon Hilary Armstrong MP,

stating that the then forthcoming White Paper did not "expect there to be a requirement for three-member wards in London boroughs". Edward Woods Tenants' & Residents' Association requested that they remain part of White City & Shepherd's Bush ward, arguing that their interests are closely associated with the White City area and that they have "fought long and hard on issues affecting [their] position here".

93 In our draft recommendations, we noted that the particular geography of the existing three-member College Park & Old Oak ward, situated in the northernmost part of the borough and bounded on three sides by the boroughs of Brent, Ealing and Kensington & Chelsea, presents formidable obstacles to the revision of ward boundaries in the area. It is relatively sparsely populated and, in order to achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality as a three-member ward, would necessitate a significantly larger ward, in geographical terms, than other areas of the borough. Consequently, any proposals for change in this area would have a disproportionate effect on the whole of the north of the borough. In particular, under the Council's proposal, the Edward Woods Estate would be combined with areas to the south of Goldhawk Road which was opposed by both the Edward Woods Tenants' & Residents' Association and Councillor Gibbons. While we recognised that both the Borough Council and the Conservative Group put forward a pattern consisting entirely of three-member wards for the borough, we considered that the north of the borough constitutes a distinctive area which should retain separate representation. We noted that both the Borough Council and the Conservative Group acknowledged that the Westway constitutes the natural southern boundary for College Park & Old Oak ward and that they stated that they had breached the Westway in order to facilitate a three-member ward structure. In the light of the submissions received, the geographical distinctiveness of the area and the statutory criteria guiding our work, we proposed retaining the existing College Park & Old Oak ward on its current boundaries, but reducing its representation to two councillors.

94 Our draft recommendation for a two-member College Park & Old Oak ward limited the extent to which we were able to recommend the ward boundary changes put forward by the Borough Council and the Conservative Group for the existing Wormholt and White City & Shepherd's

Bush wards. In the light of this, we proposed broadly retaining the existing Wormholt ward, subject to some boundary changes. We proposed transferring the White City Estate, currently located in White City & Shepherd's Bush ward, to the revised Wormholt ward. Our proposed White City & Shepherd's Bush ward would combine the existing ward, excluding the White City Estate, with the part of Wormholt ward to the east of Bloemfontein Road and south of South Africa Road and the part of Coningham ward to the east of Stowe Road. It would also contain three roads currently located in Addison ward – Wells Road, Woodger Road and Bamboro Gardens – which can be accessed only from Goldhawk Road.

95 At Stage Three, the Administration Group proposed a three-member Westway ward, similar to the Borough Council's Stage One proposal for Wormholt ward, which would combine most of the existing College Park & Old Oak ward (to the north of the Westway) with the Cleverley and Wormholt estates from Wormholt ward. It stated that "whilst we concur with the Commission that the Westway (A40M) is obviously a natural boundary which ideally would be respected, we are not of the view that this ward is sufficiently isolated ... to justify departing from the uniform pattern of three-member wards that has been recommended for every other inner London borough." They cited several examples of other 'isolated' London communities where they argued that, despite the disparate nature of their area and the existence of physical boundaries, the Commission had recommended three-member wards with good levels of electoral equality. The Administration Group argued that "although the Westway serves as a physical barrier there remains a community of interest between the Old Oak and Wormholt areas", as demonstrated by their similar architecture, the fact that they both look to the East Acton and Old Oak Common Lane areas for their facilities and the fact that the Wormholt Estate straddles the Westway. The Administration Group proposed creating a three-member White City ward, broadly similar to the Borough Council's Stage One proposal, which would include the White City and Edward Woods estates. They opposed our draft recommendations for this area on the basis that our proposed White City & Shepherd's Bush ward would contain only part of the White City community. Under the Administration Group's proposals, Westway and White City wards would have electoral variances of

no more than 1 per cent from the borough average (2 per cent by 2004), based on a council size of 42.

96 The Conservative Group supported our draft recommendations in this area without amendment. They argued that the case for retaining the existing College Park & Old Oak ward is overwhelming, as a three-member ward would be unrealistically large and the Westway provides a very significant boundary. Regarding our proposed Wormholt ward, the Conservative Group argued that "the White City Estate fits naturally within the larger area to the west to form a ward." They noted comments made by Councillor Gibbons that many White City residents shop in Shepherd's Bush town centre and travel to White City station, but argued that this also applies to residents in Wormholt ward. The Conservatives argued the proposed ward would recognise the community of interest around Shepherd's Bush Green and argued that the ward should be named Shepherd's Bush ward.

97 The Liberal Democrats generally supported our draft recommendations in the north of the borough, subject to some minor boundary changes. They opposed the Administration Group's proposals for this area, arguing that "it [is] very hard to take seriously any submission that insists that because the architecture on either side of the Westway is identical, the Westway does not represent a self-evidently obvious ward boundary." They proposed modifying Wormholt ward to include the small part of College Park & Old Oak ward to the south of the Westway and modifying White City & Shepherd's Bush ward to include the Charecroft Estate area of Addison ward instead of being part of the current Coningham ward.

98 Mr Clive Soley, the Member of Parliament for Ealing, Acton & Shepherd's Bush, argued that as the second most deprived ward in the borough, College Park & Old Oak ward required three members. He argued that while the Commission stated its preference that the Westway should not be breached, it did so in the east of the proposed ward and in the neighbouring borough of Ealing. He preferred the Administration's proposals which, he argued, would have the advantage of uniting the White City Estate. Councillor Gibbons expressed support for the Administration Group's proposals which would ensure that White City and Edward Woods estates remain within the same ward. White City Residents' Association and three local residents opposed our draft recommendation to

combine part of the White City Estate with Wormholt ward and argued in favour of uniting all of the White City Estate within one ward.

99 As part of the Administration Group's own consultation, Councillors Aherne, Browne, Burke, Harcourt, McLaughlin, Powell and Smallman supported the Administration's proposals for the area, arguing that the Westway does not constitute a significant boundary between communities and that our draft recommendations would divide the White City community and reduce the representation for College Park & Old Oak ward by creating a two-member ward. Cleverley Estate, Wingham Hayter & Orwell, Woodman's Mews and Wormholt tenants' and residents' associations expressed a preference for the Administration Group's proposals for their area. Three residents favoured creating a three-member College Park & Old Oak ward and considered that the Westway is not a significant barrier to communities.

100 We have given careful consideration to the representations received. We note that there is a lack of consensus regarding our proposals for this area. While the Conservative Group and the Liberal Democrats supported our proposed two-member College Park & Old Oak ward, the Administration Group favoured retaining a pattern of three-member wards for the borough and proposed a new Westway ward, combining part of College Park & Old Oak ward with part of Wormholt ward. As stated previously, our approach to three-member wards in London has remained consistent throughout our programme of periodic electoral reviews: to reflect the statutory criteria and to give consideration to the submissions made to us.

101 We have noted that the Administration Group's arguments for a three-member Westway ward are in part based on comparisons with other London boroughs. However, as outlined in our Guidance, we seek to treat each area on its own merits. We have given further consideration to our draft recommendations in the light of the representations received. We concur with the view of the Liberal Democrats that utilising the Westway for its entire length would provide a better boundary for the proposed ward, but propose retaining the existing boundary in order to achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality. We do not agree with the Administration Group's view that links either side of the Westway are stronger in

the west than in the east, where either side is linked by Wood Lane. Similarly, we are not persuaded by the arguments relating to the workload of councillors. While we accept that reducing the number of councillors for College Park & Old Oak ward might lead to an increased workload for them, we consider that retaining the same number of councillors but increasing the number of electors that are represented by 3,300, by reducing council size to 42, also does so. We remain of the view that College Park & Old Oak ward contains a number of disparate communities which are separated from the rest of the borough by the Westway and that this area should remain separately represented by two councillors. We consider that this option would provide the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria.

102 With respect to our draft recommendations for Wormholt and White City & Shepherd's Bush wards, we have noted the comments made to us which opposed combining the White City Estate with the Wormholt area. However, we have not been persuaded by the balance of the evidence received that the communities in these areas are so distinct as to preclude combining them in one ward for electoral purposes and are content to put forward our draft recommendations for this area as final. We further note the support of the Conservative Group and the Liberal Democrats for the inclusion of the White City Estate in a revised Wormholt ward, on the basis that there is better access to the area from the west and the support for bringing the communities around Shepherd's Bush into one ward. We have not, in the absence of widespread support for such a change, been persuaded to transfer a larger area of Addison ward to the proposed White City & Shepherd's Bush ward as proposed by the Liberal Democrats. Under our final recommendations, College Park & Old Oak, Wormholt and White City & Shepherd's Bush wards would have 5 per cent fewer, 3 per cent more and 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (2 per cent fewer, 2 per cent more and 1 per cent more by 2004).

Coningham, Ravenscourt and Starch Green wards

103 Coningham, Ravenscourt and Starch Green wards are located in the north-west of the borough. Currently, Coningham ward is represented by three councillors and has 13 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, while

Ravenscourt and Starch Green wards are each represented by two councillors and have 6 per cent and 5 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively. The level of electoral equality is not expected to improve significantly by 2004.

104 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed no change to the existing Coningham ward, which it argued has clear and natural boundaries. It also proposed a new three-member Ravenscourt Park ward, covering all of the existing Starch Green ward together with the western part of Ravenscourt ward. Under the Borough Council's proposals, the remaining part of Ravenscourt ward would form part of a revised three-member Broadway ward, as discussed below. The Council's proposed Coningham and Ravenscourt Park wards would have electoral variances of no more than 1 per cent from the borough average, based on a council size of 45.

105 The Conservative Group proposed creating a new three-member Askew ward, which would cover the northern part of Starch Green ward and the western part of Coningham ward. The eastern part of Coningham ward would be combined with part of Grove ward to form part of a new Godolphin ward, as discussed below. They also proposed a new Ravenscourt Park ward, containing the southern part of Starch Green ward, the area to the south of Wendell Road, the majority of Ravenscourt ward and the western part of Grove ward, thereby uniting "a large community around Ravenscourt Park, the dominant feature of the new ward". The Conservative Group's proposed Askew and Ravenscourt Park wards would both have 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average, based on a council size of 51.

106 Having carefully considered the representations received for this area, we noted that the Borough Council and the Conservative Group proposed different options with respect to these wards. While the Borough Council proposed retaining the existing Coningham ward, the Conservative Group put forward a new Askew ward, combining part of Coningham with part of Starch Green ward. The lack of consensus appeared to suggest there was no agreement as to the boundaries of communities in this area and in particular to the significance of Askew Road. Having visited the area, we were not persuaded that Askew Road is as significant as other primary roads in the borough or that it acts

as a significant boundary between communities. We considered that in order to reflect community ties and achieve reasonable electoral equality in the neighbouring White City & Shepherd's Bush ward, there was a good case for dividing the current Coningham ward and creating a new ward straddling Askew Road. The Conservatives argued that Askew Road acts as a focal point, uniting communities on both sides of the road, and that it "is the centre of the community in this area of Hammersmith, providing a 'Key Local Shopping Centre' in the Borough's UDP [Unitary Development Plan]". We therefore proposed creating a new three-member Askew ward, similar to that proposed by the Conservative Group, which would contain the part of Starch Green ward to the north of Wendell Road and Binden Road/Ash Church Terrace and the part of Coningham ward to the west of Stowe Road.

107 We also noted that both borough-wide schemes proposed creating a new three-member Ravenscourt Park ward, combining areas either side of Goldhawk Road. The Borough Council's proposed Ravenscourt Park would contain all of Starch Green ward and most of Ravenscourt ward, whereas the Conservative Group's proposed ward would contain the southern part of Starch Green ward, most of Ravenscourt ward and part of Grove ward. We were content to put forward a three-member Ravenscourt Park ward as part of our draft recommendations based on the proposals made to us. Our proposed ward would contain all of the existing Ravenscourt ward together with the part of Starch Green ward to the south of Wendell Road and Binden Road/Ash Church Terrace. In order to further improve electoral equality, we also proposed including within the new ward the part of Grove ward to the west of and including Brackenbury Road and Banim Street, as well as Brackenbury Gardens and Carthew Villas, which have their only access from Brackenbury Road.

108 Under our draft recommendations, Askew ward would have 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, improving to 2 per cent more by 2004. Ravenscourt Park ward would have equal to the average number of electors per councillor and 1 per cent more than the average by 2004. We recognised that there is some disagreement as to the most suitable ward boundaries in this area, and welcomed further comments from local residents and interested parties at Stage Three.

109 At Stage Three, the Administration Group proposed a revised Coningham ward combining the majority of the existing ward together with the northern part of Addison ward. They also proposed creating a new Ravenscourt Park ward, containing all of Starch Green ward and part of Ravenscourt ward. In order to improve further electoral equality in their proposed wards, the Administration Group proposed transferring a triangle of streets from the west of Coningham ward to Ravenscourt Park ward. They opposed our draft recommendations for Ravenscourt Park ward on the basis that they would divide Starch Green ward, which they argued reflects a historically significant community which should not be divided. They expressed support, however, for the principle of creating a ward that breaches Goldhawk Road. Regarding our proposed boundary between Ravenscourt Park and Broadway wards, the Administration Group considered that our proposed boundary "is far from being an ideal natural boundary and should be avoided if at all possible". They proposed that a boundary along the B408 (Paddenswick Road and Dalling Road) would provide the most natural and logical boundary. Under the Administration Group's proposals, Coningham and Ravenscourt Park ward would have electoral variances of no more than 5 per cent from the borough average currently, improving to 3 per cent by 2004, based on a council size of 42.

110 The Conservative Group broadly supported our draft recommendations in this area, but proposed a slightly different boundary between our proposed Askew and Ravenscourt Park wards. The Conservatives stated that their original proposal had the advantage of utilising Wendell Road as a boundary between their proposed Ravenscourt Park and Askew wards. They noted that this boundary forms the northern boundary of the Ravenscourt and Starch Green Conservation Area. In their revised proposal, the Conservative Group suggested that most of this area could be restored to Ravenscourt Park ward, and proposed a new ward boundary along Bassein Park Road, Rylett Road and Ashchurch Terrace. To provide for improved electoral equality in Askew ward, they suggested transferring the area to the east of Ashchurch Grove to this ward. They argued that this change would have the added advantage of including the whole of Askew Road within Askew ward. The Conservative Group's revised Askew and Ravenscourt Park wards would have 1 per cent more and 5 per cent fewer electors per councillor

than the borough average respectively (1 per cent more and 3 per cent fewer by 2004).

111 The Liberal Democrats broadly supported our draft recommendations for Askew and Ravenscourt Park wards. They considered that the boundaries of the proposed Askew ward were generally sensible but argued that the proposed ward could be improved if the whole of the area to the south of Wendell Road formed part of Ravenscourt Park ward. In relation to the proposed Ravenscourt Park ward they argued that it was preferable for the Park to be in the centre of the proposed ward rather than to one edge as proposed by the Borough Council. They did, however, consider that the ward could be improved by moving the ward boundary westwards to Carthew Road and Bradmore Park Road.

112 At Stage Three, Stamford Brook Residents' Association objected to "the north/south subdivision of the existing Starch Green ward" and the creation of a new Askew ward. They argued that our draft recommendations would divide the community in Starch Green and combine different communities on either side of Askew Road. They supported combining the whole of Starch Green with Ravenscourt ward. Councillor Evans supported the Administration Group's proposed Ravenscourt Park ward, which would contain the whole of the existing Starch Green ward. Mr Clive Soley MP supported the creation of a Ravenscourt Park ward, but stated "I am not convinced of the need to break up Starch Green ward."

113 As part of the Administration Group's own consultation, Councillors Rees and Wilkinson, Kings Court Residents' Association and three local residents opposed our draft recommendations, which they argued would divide the communities in the existing Grove and Starch Green wards and supported joining Starch Green ward with a modified Ravenscourt Park ward, as proposed by the Administration Group. Councillors Graham and Stanley opposed our draft recommendation for a new Askew ward, arguing that Askew Road is a significant boundary and that the new ward boundaries divide the Starch Green and Coningham communities. Councillor Wicks supported the Administration Group's proposal to retain Coningham ward and opposed our draft recommendations in this area. Six local residents favoured retaining separate representation for the Starch Green area, but argued that if change was necessary, that the whole of the area should be

combined with Ravenscourt Park ward. One local resident considered that the boundaries of our proposed Ravenscourt Park ward were arbitrary and asked if more coherent alternatives could be found. We received four pro-forma letters from residents of Flora Gardens, arguing that they should form part of Ravenscourt Park ward as proposed by both the Commission and the Administration Group. They preferred the Administration Group's proposals, however, on the basis that they considered their proposed eastern boundary for the ward as superior.

114 We have considered the comments received regarding our proposals in this area. We note that several submissions opposed our proposals to divide the existing Starch Green ward and favoured combining the area with Ravenscourt Park, rather than the area to the east of Askew Road. We also note, however, that there is a lack of consensus locally as to whether Askew Road acts as a focal point or a barrier between communities in that area. In particular we note that the Administration Group's proposed Ravenscourt Park ward would breach Askew Road and their comment that they "do not dispute the contention that Askew Road is a focal point of the community".

115 Having considered the evidence received at Stage Three, we have not been persuaded that our draft recommendations for this area are fundamentally flawed and consider that they provide a good balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. We are proposing, however, minor changes to Ravenscourt Park ward in order to provide for more clearly identifiable boundaries. We propose that the eastern boundary of our proposed Ravenscourt Park ward should be modified to run to the rear of properties on Bradmore Park Road, Cardross Street and Brackenbury Road. This boundary is broadly similar to the Liberal Democrats' proposal. We propose that the northern boundary should be modified to follow the rear of the properties on the south side of Wendell Road to Askew Road. To provide for improved electoral equality, we propose transferring the area to the east of Ashchurch Grove to Askew ward, thereby uniting all of Askew Road within one ward, as proposed by the Conservative Group. Under our final recommendations, Askew and Ravenscourt Park wards would have 1 per cent more and 5 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average, improving to 1 per cent more and 3 per cent fewer by 2004.

Grove and Broadway wards

116 Grove ward is currently a two-member ward located to the west of the London Underground Hammersmith & City Line, to the south of Goldhawk Road and north of Glenthorne Road. Broadway ward is also represented by two councillors and unites the communities around Hammersmith town centre. The ward focuses on the main shopping areas of Hammersmith Broadway and King Street and is dissected by the Hammersmith Flyover. Under existing electoral arrangements, Grove and Broadway wards have 6 per cent more and 15 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (4 per cent more and 15 per cent fewer by 2004).

117 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed a revised three-member Broadway ward containing the existing Grove ward, together with the part of Broadway ward to the north of Hammersmith Bridge Road and the part of Ravenscourt ward to the east of Beavor Lane and south of King Street. It proposed transferring the area to the south of the Hammersmith Bridge Road and the Hammersmith Flyover to a new Fulham Reach ward, and that the area to the east of the Broadway Centre should be transferred to a revised Brook Green ward. Under the Borough Council's proposed warding arrangements, Broadway ward would have equal to the average number of electors per councillor currently (2 per cent below the borough average by 2004), based on a council size by 45. As part of the Borough Council's consultation exercise, a local resident proposed including the whole of Yeldham Road within Broadway ward, rather than dividing the street between Broadway ward and Fulham Reach ward, as proposed by the Borough Council.

118 The Conservative Group proposed creating a new three-member Godolphin ward, straddling Goldhawk Road, which would contain the part of Grove ward to the east of Brackenbury Road and the part of Coningham ward to the east of and including Coningham Road. They also put forward a revised three-member Broadway ward, which they argued would unite all the main civic and amenity sites of Hammersmith within one ward. This ward would combine part of Broadway ward with the part of Margravine ward to the north of Greyhound Road and the part of Ravenscourt ward to the east of Rivercourt Road

and Ravenscourt Road. The Conservative Group's proposed Godolphin and Broadway wards would have 1 per cent and 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively, based on a council size of 51.

¹¹⁹ In our draft recommendations, we noted that there was considerable agreement regarding the creation of a three-member Broadway ward centring on Hammersmith town centre, although the Borough Council and the Conservative Group disagreed about the precise boundaries of the revised ward. In the light of this broad agreement, we were content to put forward a three-member Broadway ward as part of our draft recommendations. Our proposal to retain Goldhawk Road as a boundary and to include part of the existing Grove ward within a new Ravenscourt Park ward, as described above, limited the extent to which we are able to consider the Conservative Group's proposals for a new Godolphin ward, which was based on a council size of 51. We agreed with the Borough Council that the existing Broadway ward "cannot claim to have particularly strong or natural boundaries with other wards" and considered that the current ward unites several communities which focus on the town centre. Our proposals were based on the Borough Council's, although we made some changes. In particular, we proposed largely retaining the existing southern boundary of Broadway ward, which we considered would have the advantage of retaining the Peabody and Guinness estates within a ward based on Hammersmith town centre. However, we took into account a local resident's suggestion that Yeldham Road should not be divided between Broadway and Margravine wards and proposed that all of Yeldham Road and Biscay Road, should be included within a revised Broadway ward.

¹²⁰ We concurred with the Borough Council's view that the existing boundary between Avonmore and Broadway wards should be modified, and proposed that the area to the east of Shortlands should be combined with Avonmore ward. We proposed that part of Grove ward should transfer to a new Ravenscourt Park ward and that the area to the east of Brackenbury Road should form part of the revised Broadway ward. We further proposed including the part of Addison ward to the south of Brook Green in the new ward. We considered that Hammersmith Broadway and the town centre are the clear focal points for residents in all of these areas. Under the proposed electoral arrangements, Broadway ward would initially

have 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, improving to 2 per cent more by 2004.

¹²¹ At Stage Three, the Administration Group broadly supported our draft recommendations for this area but expressed concern about the precise ward boundaries proposed. Their proposed Hammersmith Broadway ward would include the part of Ravenscourt ward nearest to the River Thames, all of Grove ward, the majority of the existing Broadway ward and seven electors from Brook Green ward. They argued that their proposed warding arrangements would maintain the whole of the community in Grove ward within one ward and would utilise Hammersmith Bridge Road, "the definitive physical and natural boundary in the area", as a ward boundary. They argued that the London Underground Hammersmith & City Line "is a major physical boundary between the communities living either side of it and as such we disagree with the Commission's proposal" to include part of the Brook Green area in the revised Broadway ward" Under their proposals, Hammersmith Broadway ward would have 2 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (4 per cent fewer by 2004), based on a council size of 42.

¹²² The Conservative Group also broadly welcomed our draft recommendations for Broadway ward and particularly "the acceptance of the need to bring the major public and landmark buildings in Hammersmith town centre into one ward." However, they proposed significant changes to our proposed eastern boundary for Broadway ward, on the basis that our draft recommendations would divide the Brook Green community. In order to unite the Brook Green community within one ward, they proposed retaining polling district IC within Brook Green ward, and transferring the area to the west of Shepherd's Bush Road, currently in Addison ward, to Broadway ward (renamed Broadway Central ward). To further improve the level of electoral equality in their Broadway Central ward, the Conservatives proposed transferring a small area around Benbow Road (containing 382 electors) to Ravenscourt Park ward. Under the Conservative Group's proposals, Broadway Central ward would have 8 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (5 per cent more by 2004).

¹²³ The Liberal Democrats supported the creation of a ward centred on Hammersmith Broadway but

argued that the northern end of the proposed ward was a considerable distance from Hammersmith town centre and is closer to Shepherd's Bush Green. They suggested retaining an enlarged Grove ward which would incorporate part of Coningham ward, similar to the Conservative Group's Stage One proposed Godolphin ward, and extending the existing Broadway ward to include Biscay Road area and a larger portion of the current Addison ward. Councillor Allen, Grove Branch Labour Party and Grove Neighbourhood Council opposed our proposals for Grove ward on the basis that they would divide the Grove community between two wards and supported the Administration Group's proposals, which they argued would unite the area with Hammersmith town centre.

¹²⁴ As part of the Administration Group's own consultation exercise, Iain Colman, MP for Hammersmith & Fulham, expressed concern about our proposed boundary between Ravenscourt Park and Broadway wards, stating that "the Grove (Brackenbury Village) community is a cohesive one of similar residential side-streets sandwiched between the Hammersmith & City railway line in the east and Dalling Road in the west ... and there is a community of interest which unites the residents." Councillor Cartwright, Broadway Branch Labour Party and Aspen Gardens Tenants' Association opposed the inclusion of part of the Brook Green area in Broadway ward and the division of the Grove community between Ravenscourt Park and Broadway wards.

¹²⁵ Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we note that there was broad agreement with our draft recommendation to create a three-member Broadway ward uniting the area around the Hammersmith town centre. We have not been persuaded by the Conservative Group's and the Liberal Democrats' Stage Three proposals for this area, which would combine areas on both sides of the Hammersmith & City railway line, which we consider to be a significant boundary between communities. As outlined above, we are largely confirming our proposed Ravenscourt Park ward and have not been persuaded to extend the western boundary of our proposed Broadway ward to Paddenswick Road and Dalling Road, as suggested by the Administration Group. We note, however, that there was significant opposition to our proposals to transfer part of the existing Brook Green ward to

Broadway ward, thereby dividing the community in this area. We consider that there is some merit in retaining all of the Green itself and the community around it within one ward, and propose several changes to our draft recommendations in this area. We propose transferring the area containing 836 electors around Brook Green to Olympia ward (renamed Avonmore & Brook Green ward, as discussed below), rather than Broadway ward as initially proposed. To improve the level of electoral equality in Broadway ward, we propose modifying the western boundary of Broadway ward in the north to include Brackenbury Road, Brackenbury Gardens, Carthew Road, Carthew Villas and Banim Street within this ward. This change would also reflect, in part, concerns from local residents about the division of the 'Brackenbury Village' community in Grove ward, by retaining a larger proportion of that community within one ward. Under our final recommendations Broadway ward would have 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average currently and 1 per cent fewer by 2004.

Addison, Avonmore and Brook Green wards

¹²⁶ The wards of Addison, Avonmore and Brook Green are situated in the east of the borough and are bounded by the London Underground Hammersmith & City Line in the west, Goldhawk Road and Shepherd's Bush Green to the north and the Talgarth Road and West Cromwell Road to the south. Each ward is currently represented by two councillors. Under existing arrangements, Addison and Brook Green wards are considerably under-represented, with 15 per cent and 21 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively, while Avonmore ward currently has 3 per cent more than average. The level of electoral equality in each ward is not expected to change significantly by 2004.

¹²⁷ At Stage One the Borough Council proposed creating three new three-member wards: Shepherd's Bush Green, Brook Green and North End. It stated that Addison and Brook Green wards "cover a mass of residential streets primarily to the east of Shepherd's Bush Road for which there is no natural boundary." It proposed combining part of White City & Shepherd's Bush ward with the most of Addison ward and a small area of Brook Green ward to form a three-member

Shepherd's Bush Green ward, as detailed above. The Council proposed that the remaining part of Brook Green ward should be combined with part of Broadway ward and part of Avonmore ward to form a revised three-member Brook Green ward. The remaining part of Avonmore ward, to the east of North End Road, would form part of a new North End ward as discussed below. The Borough Council's proposed Shepherd's Bush Green and Brook Green wards would have electoral variances of 1 per cent from the borough average based on a council size of 45.

¹²⁸ The Conservatives put forward a revised three-member Brook Green ward and a new three-member Olympia ward for the area. They proposed that the southern part of Addison ward, which they asserted has a "natural affinity" with the area covered by Brook Green ward, should be joined with this ward to form a new three-member Olympia ward. They stated that the southern boundary of this ward would ideally be the Talgarth Road, but that for reasons of electoral equality they proposed including a small section of Gibbs Green ward to the north of Comeragh Road (containing around 1,200 electors). The Conservative Group's proposed Brook Green and Olympia wards would have 2 per cent and 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, assuming a council size of 51.

¹²⁹ Councillor Mallinson objected to the Borough Council's proposal to divide the existing Avonmore ward between two new wards, and proposed extending the current ward westwards to Hammersmith Broadway. West Kensington Residents' Association supported the retention of the existing Avonmore ward and opposed the Borough Council's proposal to divide the ward between the new Brook Green and North End wards, which they argued reflect vague, unconnected areas. They expressed a preference for the Conservative Group's proposals for the area. A local resident also opposed any division of Avonmore ward and supported the Conservative Group's proposals to create a new Olympia ward, stating that "Olympia has a big effect on the area and its inclusion would enable the [West Kensington] Residents' Association to form even closer ties with its management for the benefit of the area." He also suggested that Avonmore ward could be extended westwards to Colet Gardens, currently in Broadway ward, rather than breaching the Talgarth Road as put forward by the

Conservatives. As part of the Borough Council's own consultation procedure, the Brook Green Association regretted that the Council's proposed Brook Green ward would include areas to the south of the Hammersmith Road and divide the Peabody Estate.

¹³⁰ In our draft recommendations we noted that there was a lack of consensus regarding the most appropriate warding arrangements for the existing Addison, Avonmore and Brook Green wards. We also noted that several respondents opposed the Borough Council's division of Avonmore ward along North End Road. In the light of this opposition, we based our proposals on the Conservative Group's proposals for this area, proposing the creation of a three-member Olympia ward. We concurred with their assessment that the Olympia exhibition centre "has a very strong influence on the lives of those in its vicinity, notably the impact of parking, traffic and noise". We considered that the Talgarth Road and West Cromwell Road are of greater significance. We therefore proposed creating a three-member Olympia ward which was broadly based on the Conservative Group's submission, albeit with significant boundary changes in order to achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality under a council size of 46 members. Our proposed ward would contain all of the existing Avonmore ward, part of Broadway ward to the east of Shortlands /Wilsons Road and part of Brook Green ward to the east of Brook Green. The northern boundary of Olympia ward would run to the rear of Caithness Road, the rear of the properties on the north side of Faroe Road and along the centre of Milson Road to the borough boundary.

¹³¹ With respect to Brook Green ward, we noted that the Borough Council and the Conservative Group each put forward a three-member Brook Green ward, but with different ward boundaries. We proposed combining part of Addison ward, excluding the areas having access from Goldhawk Road (Wells Road, Woodger Road and Bamboro Gardens), together with the north part of Brook Green ward to form a three-member Brook Green ward. The southern boundary of this ward would follow the rear of Caithness Road, the north side of Faroe Road and the middle of Milson Road to the borough boundary. Under our proposed warding arrangements Brook Green and Olympia wards would initially have 7 per cent more and 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough

average (4 per cent more and 6 per cent fewer by 2004).

¹³² At Stage Three, the Administration Group proposed creating two three-member wards for this area – Addison and Avonmore & Brook Green wards. Under their proposals, Addison ward would contain most of the existing Addison ward and the northern part of the existing Brook Green ward. Avonmore & Brook Green ward would contain the remaining part of Brook Green ward, the existing Avonmore ward and part of Broadway ward. The Administration Group accepted the desirability of not breaching the Talgarth Road and the London Underground District and Piccadilly lines. They expressed concern that our proposals for the area would separate Brook Green from Brook Green ward. While they broadly welcomed the creation of a ward focused on Olympia ward, suggested that Faroe Road, Ceylon Road, Porten Road and the whole of Milson Road should form part of Addison ward. Under the Administration Group's 42-member scheme, Addison and Avonmore & Brook Green wards would have electoral variances of no more than 2 per cent from the borough average currently and 4 per cent by 2004.

¹³³ The Conservative Group proposed significant changes to our draft recommendations for Brook Green ward, as described above. They proposed transferring the area to the east of Shepherd's Bush Road to Broadway ward and transferring polling district IC, containing Brook Green, to Brook Green ward. They argued that the primary advantage of their proposals would be to unite all of the Brook Green area within one ward and also provide a clear boundary between Broadway and Brook Green wards along Shepherd's Bush Road. They proposed no changes to our draft recommendations for Olympia ward.

¹³⁴ The Liberal Democrats generally supported our draft recommendation to retain all of Avonmore ward within our proposed Olympia ward. However, they proposed that none of Broadway ward be included in the new ward and that the ward expand northwards towards Shepherd's Bush Green. They supported making the Talgarth Road the southern boundary for the ward. They did not propose exact boundaries for a revised Olympia ward, but argued that their proposals "would create a ward that was very much centred on Olympia, rather than having it in one corner of the

ward". The Liberal Democrats argued that our proposed Brook Green Ward be divided between Broadway, Shepherd's Bush and Olympia wards.

¹³⁵ At Stage Three, Brook Green Association opposed our draft proposals for their area, arguing they would create a "ragged border through the heart of Brook Green residential area" and divide it between three wards (Broadway, Brook Green and Olympia wards). They suggested including Sinclair Road in our proposed Olympia ward and transferring parts of Caithness, Aynhoe, Souldern, Girdlers, Faroe and Ceylon roads to Brook Green ward, but renaming it Addison ward. Councillor Mallinson and one local resident broadly supported our draft recommendations for the existing Avonmore ward. Lytton Tenants & Residents' Association and one local resident favoured renaming Olympia ward as Avonmore or Brook Green, which he asserted are identifiable communities. Councillor Karian welcomed our proposed Brook Green ward, but favoured the Administration Group's proposal which would retain the existing Addison ward name and ensure that streets are not divided between different wards. The Fulham Society supported our proposed warding arrangements for Avonmore ward, rather than those proposed by the Council or the Conservatives at Stage One.

¹³⁶ As part of the Administration Group's own consultation, Councillor Hicks expressed support for the Administration's proposals for the area. She welcomed their proposed Avonmore & Brook Green ward and supported including the part of the current Brook Green ward bounded by Hammersmith Road, Brook Green and the London Underground Hammersmith & City line (polling district IC) in this ward instead of Broadway ward. She argued that as "the Green is the focal point for communities living east of the Hammersmith & City railway line" and favoured using Brook Green as part of the new ward name. Brook Green Branch Labour Party also favoured the Administration Group's proposed Avonmore & Brook Green ward which, in their view, "is the least unnatural option available". Lytton Tenants' & Residents' Association favoured increasing the size of Avonmore ward and expressed a preference for the name Avonmore & Brook Green ward. Springvale Residents' Association, Charecroft Tenants' Association and two residents supported the Administration Group's proposed Addison and

Avonmore & Brook Green wards. Three residents supported our draft recommendations in this area, but proposed retaining Avonmore as a ward name. One resident suggested retaining Avonmore ward as a two-member ward and renaming it Avonmore & Blythe ward.

137 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three. We note that there was significant opposition to our proposals in the Brook Green area on the basis that they would divide Brook Green from its surrounding community. We also note that there was a degree of consensus among submissions received that the Brook Green area is distinct from the rest of our proposed Broadway ward, although they proposed different ward boundaries. In the light of this evidence, we propose several changes to our draft recommendations for this area. We propose modifying the boundary between Olympia and Broadway wards to include 836 electors around Brook Green (part of polling district IC) within a revised Olympia ward. The revised boundary would run southwards along the Hammersmith & City railway line and part of Shepherd's Bush Road, eastwards to the rear of Bute Gardens (on the north side) and southwards to the rear of Rowan Road (on the west side) and along the middle of Shortlands Road. Given that our revised Olympia ward would comprise all of the existing Avonmore ward and a large part of the existing Brook Green ward, we propose renaming it Avonmore & Brook Green ward to better reflect the totality of the area covered by the ward, and renaming Brook Green ward as Addison ward, as put to us by several respondents at Stage Three. We propose a minor change to the boundary between Addison and Avonmore & Brook Green ward to include all of Milson Road within Addison ward, as proposed by the Administration Group, rather than dividing it between the two wards, as initially proposed. We propose one further amendment to the southern boundary of our proposed Avonmore & Brook Green ward. We propose to transfer the 100 electors south of Talgarth Road to a new Fulham Reach ward, as detailed below, to ensure that Talgarth Road boundary is reflected for its whole length.

138 Under our final recommendations Addison and Avonmore & Brook Green wards would initially have 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, improving to 4 per cent more by 2004.

Crabtree, Margravine and Palace wards

139 Crabtree and Palace wards broadly cover the area between Fulham Palace Road and the River Thames in the south-west of the borough. Margravine ward is located to the south of the Hammersmith Flyover/Talgarth Road between Fulham Palace Road and the Queen's Club. Under existing electoral arrangements, each ward is represented by two councillors. Crabtree, Margravine and Palace wards are all currently over-represented with 6 per cent, 2 per cent and 8 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average. The level of electoral equality in each ward is not projected to improve by 2004.

140 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed creating two three-member wards – Fulham Reach and Palace – for this area. Its proposed Fulham Reach ward would cover the area to the south of Hammersmith Bridge Road (currently in Broadway ward), the majority of the existing Margravine ward, the northern part of Crabtree ward and the Queen's Club (currently in Gibbs Green ward). The Council argued that the northern end of Fulham Palace Road “acts as a focal point for the community on either side of it”. The Borough Council put forward a revised three-member Palace ward, covering the existing Palace ward, the southern part of Crabtree ward and part of Town ward. Under its proposed warding arrangements, Fulham Reach and Palace wards would have electoral variances equal to the borough average, based on a council size of 45.

141 The Conservative Group proposed a new three-member Palace Riverside ward, containing all of Crabtree ward, part of Palace ward to the north of Putney Bridge and a small part of Broadway ward to the south of Queen Caroline Street. As with the Borough Council's Palace ward, Fulham Palace Road would serve as the eastern boundary of the ward. The Conservatives proposed that the remaining part of Palace ward should form part of a new Hurlingham ward, together with part of Town ward and part of Sands End ward. They argued that the new Hurlingham ward would form a logical triangle between the river, Fulham Road and the Parsons Green Lane/Peterborough Road. With respect to the existing Margravine ward, they proposed that the area to the north of Greyhound Road should form part of a revised Broadway ward, as described above, and that the area to the south of Greyhound Road would form part of a new three-member Munster ward. The Conservative Group's proposed Palace Riverside and Hurlingham wards

would have electoral variances of no more than 1 per cent currently and by 2004, based on a council size of 51. As part of the Conservative Group's own consultation exercise, Rosebank Residents' Association expressed their opposition to the Borough Council's proposed Fulham Reach ward. They argued that the River Thames and the Fulham Palace Road provide logical boundaries for this area.

¹⁴² The Fulham Society suggested any new warding arrangements should reflect natural boundaries and historic areas in the borough and argued that the boundary between the Borough Council's proposed Fulham Reach and Palace wards does not meet this criteria.

¹⁴³ In our draft recommendations, we noted that both the Borough Council and the Conservatives proposed creating a ward along the length of the River Thames and to the west of Fulham Palace ward, albeit with significantly different boundaries in the north and south of the ward. We also noted that there was some local opposition to the Borough Council's proposed Fulham Reach ward, which would breach the current boundary on Fulham Palace Road. We noted the Conservative Group's view that the communities in Crabtree and Palace wards share much affinity and are not divided by any significant east-west boundary. On the basis of the evidence we received at Stage One, we were not persuaded that the Borough Council's proposed Fulham Reach ward would adequately fulfil the statutory criteria. We therefore based our draft recommendations on the Conservative Group's proposals for this area. Nevertheless, given our proposed council size of 46, we were unable to put forward their proposed Palace Riverside ward in its entirety, as it was based on a council size of 51. We proposed creating a three-member Palace Riverside ward, comprising the existing Crabtree ward and most of Palace ward, excluding the area to the north of Hurlingham Road. The remaining part of Palace ward would form part of a revised Parsons Green & Walham ward, as discussed below.

¹⁴⁴ With respect to the existing Margravine ward, we noted that there was a lack of consensus between the borough-wide proposals for this area. The Borough Council proposed combining Margravine ward with Crabtree ward, whereas the Conservative Group proposed dividing the ward between Broadway and Munster wards. We recognised, however, that our proposed Palace Riverside and Broadway wards, described

previously in the report, limited the extent to which we were able to put forward either borough-wide proposal for this area. We also noted that the current ward has several significant boundaries: the London Underground District Line and Talgarth Road in the north, Fulham Palace Road in the west and Lillie Road in the south and considered that any warding arrangement in this area should respect these prominent boundaries. In the light of this, we considered that there were sound electoral equality and community arguments for retaining a two-member Margravine ward and put this forward as part of our draft recommendations, with minor changes. We proposed that the south side of Yeldham Road and all of Biscay Road in the north of the ward, which can be accessed only from Fulham Palace Road, should be transferred to a revised Broadway ward, as described above. This change would ensure that all of Yeldham Road is located within one ward. Under our proposed warding arrangements, Palace Riverside and Margravine wards would each have 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (1 per cent more and 1 per cent fewer respectively by 2004).

¹⁴⁵ At Stage Three, the Administration Group opposed our draft recommendations for this area. It argued that our proposed Palace Riverside ward is "a long, disparate, uncohesive and sprawling ward spanning several competing communities" and it strongly opposed the retention of a two-member Margravine ward. Under its 42-member scheme, the Administration Group stated that it "sought to retain the broad blueprint for the south of the borough that the Commission has recommended". It proposed creating two three-member wards - Fulham Reach and Fulham Palace - similar to the Borough Council's Stage One proposals for this area. It asserted that there are strong community links across Fulham Palace Road to the north of Lillie Road. Under the Administration Group's proposals, Fulham Reach and Fulham Palace wards would have electoral variances of no more than 5 per cent currently and 3 per cent by 2004, based on a council size of 42.

¹⁴⁶ The Conservative Group welcomed our proposals for this area. They stated that "although the new [Palace Riverside] ward covers a large area, it has a great deal of logic" and supported the retention of a two-member Margravine ward. They proposed one minor boundary change to transfer 37 electors in Lillie Mansions to Margravine ward

from North End ward.

¹⁴⁷ The Liberal Democrats argued that our proposed Palace Riverside ward “does not constitute its own distinct community ... [and] that there is a more natural community at the northern end of this ward with the adjoining Margravine ward.” They proposed combining our proposed two-member Margravine ward with the area to the north of Crabtree Lane or Larnach Road and Wingrave Road, currently in Crabtree ward, to create a three-member Charing Cross ward, named after the local hospital. To compensate for the loss of electors in the north of our proposed Palace Riverside ward, they proposed retaining the whole of the Hurlingham area in a revised ward. Crabtree Estate Residents’ Association and four local residents strongly opposed our draft recommendations to abolish Crabtree ward and combine the area with the existing Palace ward. They expressed support for the Administration Group’s proposals for the area. Two local residents supported our proposals to retain a two-member Margravine ward. The Fulham Society suggested that our proposed Palace Riverside ward should be more appropriately named Fulham Palace or Fulham Reach ward.

¹⁴⁸ As part of the Administration Group’s own consultation exercise, Mr Iain Coleman MP stated he saw no justification for the retention of a two-member Margravine ward, particularly in “a ward that lies almost at the centre of our urban, inner London Borough.” He also expressed concerns about our proposed Palace Riverside ward on the basis that “it covers far too large a geographical area to enable its councillors to represent their constituents’ completely differing views, outlook and identities” and that it divides Hurlingham Road. He favoured the Administration Group’s proposals which he argued would reduce the geographical spread of both wards and produce more cohesive wards. Councillors Birdsey, Davies, Gray and Homan, Crabtree & Margravine Branch Labour Party, Field Road Tenants’ Association (accompanied by a petition of 50 signatures), Hammersmith Embankment Residents’ Association and 19 local residents supported the Administration Group’s proposed Fulham Reach ward. Some of these submissions also opposed our draft recommendations for a two-member Margravine ward and a three-member Palace Riverside ward. One local resident

argued that Fulham Palace Road does not constitute a natural boundary in the north, but unites communities on both sides of it.

¹⁴⁹ Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we note that the majority of the submissions regarding this area favoured creating a three-member ward, spanning both sides of Fulham Palace Road in the north, as proposed by the Administration Group and the Liberal Democrats. We have been persuaded that the Fulham Palace Road does, to an extent, act as a focal point for communities in this area and that there is some affinity between the areas either side of this road. In particular, we note the comments made regarding shopping and community facilities on the Fulham Palace Road and the paucity of communication links with the area to the south. We have therefore decided to move away from our draft recommendations in this area. We propose combining Margravine ward, as proposed in our draft recommendations, with the area to the north of and including Crabtree Lane, currently in Crabtree ward, to create a three-member Fulham Reach ward. Our proposals would result in the creation of a compact three-member ward with Fulham Palace Road as its focal point, as broadly proposed by the Administration Group and the Liberal Democrats. We propose a minor amendment to the eastern boundary of our proposed Fulham Reach ward to include 37 electors on Lillie Road, near Normand Park, which under our draft recommendations would have been isolated from the rest of North End ward. We have not been persuaded to modify our draft recommendations regarding the ward’s boundary with Broadway ward and maintain that Chancellor Road and the rear of properties on Biscay Road would provide the most appropriate boundary in this area. However, we propose a minor amendment to the boundary between Fulham Reach and Avonmore & Brook Green wards. We propose to transfer the 100 electors south of Talgarth Road to Fulham Reach ward, to ensure that the Talgarth Road boundary is reflected for its whole length.

¹⁵⁰ We note that the remainder of our proposed Palace Riverside ward, that which is not transferred to a new Fulham Reach ward, would contain 5,226 electors and therefore, would merit representation by two councillors. We also note that our proposals for the south of the borough more generally have

been well received at Stage Three and that there is a recognition that the Bishop's Park area is distinct and separated from the rest of Fulham by the Fulham Palace Road. In order to reflect these concerns, we propose modifying our draft recommendations to create a two-member Palace Riverside ward, bounded by the River Thames in the west, Crabtree Lane in the north, Fulham Palace Road in the east and Hurlingham Road and Broomhouse Lane in the south. We have considered further the ward boundary in the Hurlingham area with a view to uniting it in one ward as suggested by the Administration Group and the Liberal Democrats. However, we concluded that such an option would incur significant disruption to neighbouring wards and, on balance, we have decided to confirm our draft recommendations in this area.

¹⁵¹ We consider that our proposals for this area adequately reflect the statutory criteria and provide a reasonable level of electoral equality, whilst taking account of submissions received at Stage Three. Under our final recommendations Fulham Reach and Palace Riverside wards would initially have 1 per cent fewer and 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (3 per cent fewer and 5 per cent more by 2004).

Gibbs Green, Normand and Walham wards

¹⁵² Gibbs Green, Normand and Walham wards are located in the south-east part of the borough, stretching from Kigs Road in the south to Talgarth Road and West Cromwell Road in the north. Each ward is currently represented by two councillors. Under existing electoral arrangements, Gibbs Green and Walham are under-represented, with 18 per cent and 24 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average. Normand ward has 2 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average. The level of electoral equality in each ward is not expected to change significantly by 2004.

¹⁵³ At Stage One the Borough Council proposed creating a three-member North End ward, stretching from Hammersmith Road in the north to the London Underground District Line in the south, containing parts of the existing Avonmore, Gibbs Green and Walham wards. It acknowledged that its proposed North End ward would be

dissected by the Hammersmith Road and Talgarth Road and the Piccadilly/District railway lines, but stated that the requirements of electoral equality made the crossing of such major boundaries inevitable. It proposed combining part of Gibbs Green, part of Normand ward to the north of Lillie Road and part of Margravine ward to create a new three-member Baron's Court ward. The remaining part of Walham ward would form part of a revised three-member Sands End ward and the Clem Attlee Estate, currently in Normand ward, would form part of a new three-member Dawes ward, as discussed below. The Borough Council's proposed Baron's Court and North End wards would have electoral variances of no more than 4 per cent above or below the borough average, based on a council size of 45.

¹⁵⁴ The Conservative Group also proposed creating a three-member North End ward, although with markedly different ward boundaries. Their proposed ward would contain most of the existing Gibbs Green ward and part of Normand ward, including all of Queen's Club Gardens and Normand Park. The Conservatives stated that the North End ward name was chosen because North End Road acts as a focal point for residents in this area of northern Fulham. They proposed creating a new three-member Market ward comprising part of Walham ward to the north of Fulham Road, part of Eel Brook ward to the north of Dawes Road, the Clem Attlee Estate in Normand ward and a small part of Eel Brook ward. The Conservative Group argued that their proposed Market ward, named after a historic 1880s market, would form a cohesive whole around Fulham centre. Under the Conservative Group's proposed warding arrangements North End and Market wards would have electoral variances of no more than 2 per cent from the borough average, based on a council size of 51.

¹⁵⁵ In our draft recommendations, although we recognised that the Borough Council's would proposals provide a reasonable level of electoral equality, we noted that its proposed North End ward would be dissected by two major roads – Talgarth Road and Lillie Road. We considered that the Conservative Group's proposals better fulfilled the statutory criteria and put them forward as part of our draft recommendations, with some boundary changes to improve electoral equality under a council size of 46. We proposed that North End ward should comprise all of the existing Gibbs

Green ward and the part of Normand ward to the north of Lillie Road and west of Musard Road and Moylan Road.

¹⁵⁶ We proposed that the existing Walham ward, excluding the area to the south of the London Underground District Line, be joined with the Clem Attlee Estate in Normand ward and the area to the north of Dawes Road, currently located in Eel Brook and Sherbrooke wards, to form a three-member Fulham Broadway ward. We recognised that our proposals for this area were different from those proposed locally, and stated that we would particularly welcome views from local residents and interested parties regarding our proposed ward names at Stage Three. Under our draft recommendations, North End and Fulham Broadway wards would have electoral variances of 5 per cent above and equal to the borough average (3 per cent above and 1 per cent below by 2004), based on a council size of 46.

¹⁵⁷ At Stage Three, the Administration Group proposed creating two three-member wards in this area – West Kensington and Fulham Broadway – which were broadly based on our draft recommendations for the area, with some minor alterations which they argued would better reflect local identities and electoral equality under the proposed council size of 42. They proposed transferring the Aintree Estate, currently in Sherbrooke ward, and the area to the east of Kelvendon Road and north of Fulham Road, currently in Eel Brook ward, to Fulham Broadway ward. The Administration Group proposed renaming North End ward as West Kensington ward, which they stated “is a far more identifiable name for the area”. Under their proposals, West Kensington and Fulham Broadway wards would have electoral variances of no more than 5 per cent from the borough average (3 per cent by 2004), based on a council size of 42.

¹⁵⁸ The Conservatives welcomed our proposals for this area without any modification. Although they did not oppose the ward name of Fulham Broadway, they suggested that Halford, Lillie or Market would also be more appropriate ward names for the area. The Liberal Democrats did not comment on our draft recommendations for this area. The Fulham Society considered that Fulham Broadway was not the most appropriate name for the new ward, and suggested it might be more appropriately named Lillie ward, after Sir John

Lillie who lived in the area. Two local residents expressed support for our proposed new Fulham Broadway ward, arguing that it would unite communities on both sides of North End Road.

¹⁵⁹ As part of the Administration Group’s own consultation, Councillors Caruana, Slaughter and Vaughan, Normand & Sherbrooke Branch Labour Party, Eel Brook & Walham Branch Labour Party and two local residents expressed support for the Administration’s proposals for this area. Councillor Treloggan supported both our draft recommendations and the Administration Group’s proposals, which he argued were broadly similar, but favoured the Administration Group’s proposed West Kensington ward. A local resident welcomed proposals to put both sides of Vereker Road into the same ward and expressed a preference for the name West Kensington ward, rather than North End ward. An additional 22 pro-forma letters were received from local residents supporting the formation of a new Fulham Broadway ward. They argued there was little difference between our draft recommendations and the Administration Group’s proposed ward, but that they favoured the Administration’s proposals as they would provide for three-member wards throughout the borough and would better reflect the community around North End Road. One resident favoured including Chaldon Road within Fulham Broadway ward.

¹⁶⁰ Having carefully considered the representations received during Stage Three, we note that there was considerable support for our draft recommendations to create a three-member North End ward with North End Road as its focal point. We also note that the Administration Group’s proposed West Kensington and Fulham Broadway wards largely reflected our draft recommendations for this area, although with slightly different boundaries. While we recognise that the Administration Group’s proposals were supported locally as part of its own consultation exercise, our proposed council size of 46 limits the extent to which we are able to consider their proposed ward boundaries, which were based on a council size of 42. We are therefore content to confirm our draft recommendations for this area as final, subject to a minor amendment to the western boundary of North End ward in order to transfer 37 electors on Lillie Road to Fulham Reach ward, as described above.

¹⁶¹ We have given further consideration to ward names for this area. We recognise that there were differing views expressed locally, with some

support for our proposed ward names. In the light of this, we have decided to confirm our draft recommendations on this issue. Under our final recommendations, North End and Fulham Broadway wards 5 per cent more and equal to the average number of electors per councillor (3 per cent more and 1 per cent fewer by 2004).

Colehill and Sherbrooke wards

¹⁶² Colehill and Sherbrooke wards are located in densely populated residential areas in the south of the borough. Each ward is currently represented by two councillors. Under existing electoral arrangements, Colehill ward is relatively under-represented, with 5 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average. Sherbrooke ward is currently one of the smallest wards in terms of electorate with 14 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average. The level of electoral equality is not expected to change significantly by 2004.

¹⁶³ At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed creating a new three-member Munster ward, comprising all of the existing Colehill ward together with parts of Margravine, Town and Sherbrooke wards. It argued that the proposed new ward would constitute “a fairly cohesive unit with all the residential roads integrating comfortably”. The remainder of Sherbrooke ward would form part of a new three-member Dawes ward, together with the Clem Attlee Estate in Normand ward and part of Eel Brook ward to the north of the London Underground District Line. The Borough Council’s proposed Munster and Dawes wards would have electoral variances equal to and 2 per cent above the borough average respectively, based on a council size of 45.

¹⁶⁴ Similar to the Borough Council, the Conservative Group proposed creating a three-member Munster ward covering all of Colehill ward, part of Margravine ward and part of Normand ward. They argued that their proposed ward would have a good level of commonality and that the residents in the south of Margravine ward looked towards Munster Road for shops and other amenities. The Conservatives put forward a new three-member Filmer ward comprising the entirety of Sherbrooke ward and part of Town ward to the north of Fulham Road. It would also contain part of Eel Brook ward between Dawes Road and the

London Underground District Line and part of Normand ward. Under the Conservative Group’s proposed warding arrangements, Munster and Filmer wards would have electoral variances of no more than 3 per cent above or below the borough average, based on a council size of 51.

¹⁶⁵ In our draft recommendations we noted that both the Borough Council and the Conservatives proposed creating a three-member Munster ward, although with different ward boundaries. We concurred with the Borough Council’s assessment that Munster Road acts as a focal point for communities living around it, and proposed a three-member Munster ward combining areas on either side of the road. However, we proposed to breach Munster Road to the north of Bishops Road as these roads can be accessed directly from Munster Road, rather than to the south of Bishops Road where the main access is from Fulham Road. Under our draft recommendations, Munster ward would contain Colehill ward (excluding the north side of Fulham Road) and the part of Sherbrooke ward to the west of Pellant Road and south of Dawes Road.

¹⁶⁶ We also proposed that the area to the east of Pellant Road and north of Dawes Road, currently in Sherbrooke ward, should form part of a new three-member Fulham Broadway ward, as described above. We proposed transferring the north side of Fulham Road to a revised three-member Town ward, thereby uniting all of Fulham Road within one ward, as described below. Our proposed Munster ward would have 2 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (equal to the average by 2004).

¹⁶⁷ At Stage Three, the Administration Group put forward a three-member Munster ward, broadly similar to our draft recommendations for the area. It would contain most of the existing Colehill ward, the part of Sherbrooke ward to the south of Lillie Road, the part of Town ward to the north of Fulham Road and a small part of Margravine ward. They argued that their proposed boundary changes in this area were shaped by their proposal not to retain a Town ward. Under the Administration Group’s proposals, Munster ward would have 5 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, based on a council size of 42.

¹⁶⁸ The Conservatives expressed support for our proposed Munster ward, arguing that this proposal would ensure that Hartop and Lannoy Points

remain united with the remainder of the Aintree Estate. They argued that “Pellant Road is the logical eastern boundary, as it is in practice nearly impossible to cross east to west over this road.” They agreed, however, with comments made by the Fulham Society which opposed our draft recommendation to transfer the north side of Fulham Road to Town ward, but stated that as the proposed Town ward was one of the smallest proposed, a compensatory change may be required elsewhere in order to retain a reasonable level of electoral equality.

169 As a result of their proposed changes to Margravine, Crabtree and Palace wards, as discussed above, the Liberal Democrats proposed creating a two-member Munster ward for this area. Their proposed ward would reflect our proposed Munster ward, except that the area to the south of Burnfoot Avenue or Gowan Avenue would form part of a revised Town ward. One resident agreed with our proposal to create a ward centred around Munster Road with Pellant Road as its eastern ward boundary, but requested that we reconsider our proposal to take the north side of Fulham Road, currently in Colehill ward, into Town ward. Councillor Garrett generally supported our proposals for the existing Sherbrooke ward, but opposed using Pellant Road as a ward boundary, saying that the Aintree Estate and streets to the north-east of Dawes Road are isolated from the rest of the ward. He proposed using Dawes Road as a ward boundary, therefore transferring the Aintree Estate and its surrounding streets to Fulham Broadway ward.

170 As part of the Administration Group’s own consultation, a local resident broadly welcomed our draft recommendations for a new Munster ward, but favoured the Administration Group’s proposed ward boundaries in the area, which would retain the Aintree Estate in Fulham Broadway ward.

171 We have carefully considered the representations received. We note that the Administration Group’s proposals for this area broadly reflect our own proposals, albeit with different ward boundaries in order to achieve electoral equality under a council size of 42. We also note that there was general support for creating a three-member ward with Munster Road as its focal point, although there was a lack of consensus locally as to whether the

Aintree Estate should form part of Munster ward or Fulham Broadway ward. There was also a lack of consensus locally as to whether the southern boundary of Munster ward should follow the north side or the middle of Fulham road. While we have considered the Liberal Democrats’ proposals for this area, our final recommendations for Palace Riverside ward, described previously in the report, limit our ability to put forward their proposed warding arrangements for this area. In addition, for electoral equality reasons and in order to unite the Fulham Road in one ward, we propose to confirm the proposed southern boundary for Munster ward. In the light of this evidence, we have not been persuaded to alter our draft recommendations for this area. We remain of the view that our proposed Munster ward provides a reasonable balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and are content therefore to confirm our draft recommendations for Munster ward as final.

Eel Brook, Sands End, Sullivan and Town wards

172 The four wards of Eel Brook, Sands End, Sullivan and Town are located in the south of the borough. Eel Brook and Town wards contain residential areas around Fulham Road and to the north of New King’s Road. Sands End and Sullivan wards are also primarily residential and have their southern boundary along the river Thames. It is expected that a significant portion of the growth in the borough will be in Sands End ward, where the Borough Council projects an additional 1,200 electors by 2004 due to the proposed redevelopment of the Imperial Wharf site. Under the existing warding arrangements, Eel Brook, Sullivan and Town wards have 4 per cent fewer, 2 per cent fewer and 9 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (5 per cent fewer, 2 per cent fewer and 7 per cent more by 2004). Sands Ends ward currently has 19 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average and is expected to increase to 44 per cent more than the average by 2004.

173 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed creating two three-member wards oriented east-west in this area – Parsons Green and Sands End. Its proposed Sands End ward would comprise most of the existing Sands End ward, the part of Walham ward to the south of the London

Underground District Line, and a small area of Sullivan ward to the west of Wandsworth Bridge Road. To accommodate the significant development planned for the Imperial Wharf site in Sands End ward, the Borough Council felt it was required to “produce a ward which, at present, is significantly beneath electoral equality.” The Council proposed combining most of Sullivan ward with part of Town ward part of Eel Brook ward and part of Sands End ward to create a new Parsons Green ward. According to the Borough Council’s scheme the remaining area of Eel Brook ward to the north of the London Underground District Line would form part of a new Dawes ward, while the remainder of the existing Town ward would be divided between its proposed Munster and Palace wards. The Borough Council’s proposed Parsons Green ward would have 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (2 per cent more by 2004). Its proposed Sands End ward would initially have 14 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average, improving significantly to 1 per cent more by 2004, based on the forecast growth in electorate over the next five years.

¹⁷⁴ The Conservatives put forward three new wards for this area – Hurlingham, Parsons Green and Sandford – each represented by three councillors. Hurlingham ward would contain the part of Palace ward to the east of Fulham Palace, the part of Town ward to the south of Fulham Road and part of Sullivan ward to the west of Peterborough Road. Their proposed Parsons Green and Sandford wards would be oriented east-west, sharing a boundary along Wandsworth Bridge Road and the rear of Hazlebury Road and Edenvale Street to the River Thames. Under their scheme, Parsons Green ward would contain part of Eel Brook ward, part of Sullivan ward and part of Sands End ward. Sands End ward would comprise most of the existing two-member Sands End ward, as well as the part of Walham ward to the south of Fulham Road. The area to the north of Fulham Road, currently located in Eel Brook and Town wards, would form part of their proposed Filmer ward. Under the Conservative Group’s proposals, Hurlingham and Parsons Green wards would have electoral variances of no more than 2 per cent from the borough average based on a council size of 51. Their proposed Sandford ward would have 16 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average, improving to 1 per cent more than

average by 2004.

¹⁷⁵ Councillor Bird submitted alternative proposals to the Borough Council for this area of the borough. He proposed creating two new wards – Sands End & Sullivan and Parsons Green & Walham – oriented north-south rather than east-west. He stated that there are strong links between the south of Sullivan ward and the existing Sands End ward, in terms of transport links, public amenities and community organisations. As part of the Borough Council’s own consultation process, the Association of Residents in Sands End (ARISE), Philpot Square Residents’ Association, Sands End Adventure Project & Sands End Playhouse, Sullivan Court Residents’ Association and four residents indicated their preference for Councillor Bird’s alternative option for this area. The Liberal Democrats opposed the Borough Council’s proposed Sands End ward citing concern over the practical impact of such a proposal.

¹⁷⁶ In our draft recommendations, we noted that the Borough Council and the Conservative Group had both put forward two three-member wards for this area oriented east-west, whereas Councillor Bird proposed creating two wards oriented north-south. Furthermore, we recognised that there was significant opposition to the Borough Council’s proposed Parsons Green and Sands End wards, largely based on the lack of community ties between areas on both sides of New Kings Road and the resulting division of long-established communities in Sands End and Sullivan wards. We also noted the arguments put to us about community identities in Sands End and Sullivan wards, although we recognised that there was no consensus locally on the precise boundary of the communities. As a result, we were persuaded that community interests and identities in this area would be better reflected by creating two three-member wards – one for the north and another for the south – broadly similar to those put forward by Councillor Bird. We put forward as part of our draft recommendations a revised Sands End ward, containing most of the existing Sands End ward (excluding around 1,000 electors to the north of the Gas Works site, Maltings Place and Pearscroft Road) and part of Sullivan ward to the south of Clancarty Road (including Sullivan Court). In the north, we put forward a new Parsons Green & Walham ward, containing the area to the south of the London Underground District Line, currently

located in Eel Brook and Walham wards. The ward would also contain part of the existing Palace ward to the north of Hurlingham Road and around 1000 electors from the northern part of Sands End ward.

177 We also put forward as part of our draft recommendations a revised three-member Town ward. The ward would contain most of the existing Town ward (excluding the area to the west of Munster Road and south of the London Underground District Line), the part of Eel Brook ward to the north of the London Underground District Line, and around 150 electors on Fulham Road currently located in Colehill ward. Our proposed Town ward would have Fulham Road as its focal point, thereby uniting the communities around it within one ward. Under our draft recommendations, Sands End ward would initially have 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average, improving to 6 per cent above the borough average by 2004. Parsons Green & Walham and Town ward would both have 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor (4 per cent and 6 per cent fewer respectively by 2004).

178 At Stage Three, the Administration Group proposed creating two three-member wards – Parsons Green & Walham and Sands End & Sullivan – oriented north-south, broadly similar to our draft recommendations for the area. They argued that all of the Pearscroft Road Estate and the streets south of Clancarty Road should form part of the proposed Sands End & Sullivan ward, rather than form part of a new Parsons Green & Walham ward as proposed in our draft recommendations. The Administration Group's proposed Parsons Green & Walham ward would stretch northwards to the Fulham Road, while the part of the existing Town ward to the north of Fulham Road would form part of Munster ward as discussed above. The Fulham High Street area would form part of their proposed Fulham Palace ward also as discussed above. The Administration Group also stated that, although they did not feel overwhelming strongly about ward names, they would wish to retain Sullivan as part of the proposed ward name, arguing that Sullivan Court is a major estate in the ward. Under the Administration Group's proposals, Parsons Green & Walham and Sands End & Sullivan wards would have 4 per cent more and 12 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average

respectively (4 per cent and 3 per cent more by 2004), based on a council size of 42.

179 The Conservative Group expressed support for our draft recommendations for this area, subject to a minor boundary amendment to include Maltings Place within Sands End ward, which they argued would provide for a better ward boundary. They argued that our proposed Parsons Green & Walham and Town wards would unite similar communities around Kings Road/New Kings Road and Fulham Road respectively. In particular, they argued that it "is sensible and logical" to unite the whole of Fulham Road within Town ward. With regard to our proposed Sands End ward, the Conservatives argued that one of the difficulties of this area is that community identities are somewhat fluid, but they agreed that there was a logic to our proposed boundaries in this area. The Conservatives also addressed comments made by a local resident regarding the inclusion of the Pearscroft Estate in Sands End, arguing that this change would not be possible without significantly worsening the level of electoral equality in the proposed ward.

180 The Liberal Democrats proposed modifying our proposed Town ward to include part of our proposed Munster ward to the south of Burnfoot Avenue or Gowan Avenue, which in their view would produce a ward which broadly straddles both sides of Fulham Road between Fulham Broadway and Fulham Palace Road. They also proposed modifying the northern boundary of Sands End ward to include Pearscroft Road, which in their view would provide a more logical boundary.

181 At Stage Three, the Fulham Society expressed considerable reservations about our proposal for a new Parsons Green & Walham ward, arguing that there appears to be little community of interest across the area. Harbledown Road Residents' Association and three local residents supported our proposals for Town ward. We received a further 13 submissions from Councillor Bird, the Association of Residents in Sands End, Pearscroft Tenants' & Residents' Association, Sands End Adventure Project, Sands End Playhouse, Sands End Community Festival, Watermeadow Court Residents' Association and six residents who welcomed our proposals for their area but argued that all of Pearscroft Road (including Pearscroft

Court, Bulow Court, Jepson House and Manor Court) should be included within the new Sands End ward. One resident suggested moving Maltings Place from Parsons Green & Walham ward to Sands End ward, arguing that this change would provide a clearer boundary between the two wards.

182 As part of the Administration Group's own consultation, Town, Palace & Colehill Branch Labour Party, Sands End & Sullivan Branch Labour Party and Councillor Homan favoured the Administration Group's proposals in this area. Townmead Youth Club broadly supported our draft recommendations for a three-member Sands End ward, but requested that all of Pearscroft Road be included within the ward.

183 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three. We note that there was general support for our proposals to create two three-member wards, oriented north-south, rather than east-west as at present. We also note, however, that there was significant support from the Administration Group, residents' associations and local residents for retaining the whole of the Pearscroft Estate community within Sands End ward. In the light of this evidence, we propose modifying the boundary between Parsons Green & Walham and Sands End wards to follow the middle of Sandilands Road, such that the whole of Pearscroft Road (including Pearscroft Court, Bulow Court, Jepson House and Manor Court) would form part of Sands End ward. We also propose a minor amendment to the ward boundary in the west of Sands End ward to include Sullivan School in this ward, together with Sullivan Court. In the light of the general support received for our proposed ward names, we have not been persuaded to change the name of Sands End ward to Sands End & Sullivan ward, as proposed by the Administration Group. We have also not been persuaded to include Maltings Place within Sands End ward, as proposed by the Conservative Group, which under our revised proposals would result in a worsened level of electoral equality in Sands End ward

184 We are also content to confirm our draft recommendation for our proposed Town ward, which would untie communities around the Fulham Road. As discussed above, we have not been persuaded to modify the ward's proposed boundary with Munster ward as this proposal would remove part of Fulham Road from the ward

and would lead to a deterioration in the level of electoral equality.

185 Under our final recommendations, Parsons Green & Walham and Town wards would initially have 3 per cent and 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (4 per cent and 6 per cent fewer by 2004). Sands End ward would have 9 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average, improving to 6 per cent more than the borough average by 2004.

Conclusions

186 Having considered carefully all the representations and evidence received in response to our consultation report, we have decided substantially to endorse our draft recommendations, subject to the following amendments:

- (a) the boundary between Ravenscourt Park ward and Askew and Broadway wards should be amended to follow a more clearly identifiable boundary and provide for improved electoral equality in each ward;
- (b) the proposed Brook Green ward should be renamed Addison ward;
- (c) the ward boundaries of Ravenscourt Park, Olympia (renamed Avonmore & Brook Green) and Brook Green (renamed Addison) wards should be amended to retain the Brook Green area and Milson Road within one ward.
- (d) in the south-west of the borough, our proposed two-member Margravine and three-member Palace Riverside wards should be replaced by a three-member Fulham Reach ward, based on the Administration Group's and the Liberal Democrats' proposals, and a two-member Palace Riverside ward;
- (e) the boundary between Fulham Reach and North End wards should be amended to include 37 electors on Lillie Road within Fulham Reach ward, as proposed by the Conservative Group;
- (f) the boundary between Fulham Reach and Avonmore & Brook Green wards should be amended to include 100 electors to the south of Talgarth Road within Fulham Reach ward;
- (g) the boundary between Parsons Green & Walham and Sands End wards should be amended to include all of Pearscroft Road

within Sands End ward.

187 We conclude that, in Hammersmith & Fulham:

- (a) there should a reduction in council size from 50 to 46;
- (b) there should be 16 wards, seven fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all but one of the existing wards.

188 Figure 4 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1999 electorate figures and with forecast electorates for the year 2004.

189 As shown in Figure 4, our draft recommendations for Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards where the

number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from 10 to none. This improved balance of representation is expected to continue in 2004.

*Figure 4 :
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

	1999 electorate		2004 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	50	46	50	46
Number of wards	23	16	23	16
Average number of electors per councillor	2,257	2,454	2,306	2,507
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	10	0	10	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	3	0	3	0

Map 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Hammersmith & Fulham



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6. NEXT STEPS

¹⁹⁰ Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Hammersmith & Fulham and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

¹⁹¹ It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order. Such an order will not be made earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

¹⁹² All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

The Secretary of State
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Local Government Sponsorship Division
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

APPENDIX A

Draft Recommendations for Hammersmith & Fulham

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 2, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations in respect of a number of wards where our draft proposals are set out below.

*Figure A1:
The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward*

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Askew	3	7,573	2,524	3	7,676	2,559	2
2 Broadway	3	7,618	2,539	3	7,652	2,551	2
3 Brook Green	3	7,841	2,614	7	7,851	2,617	4
4 Margravine	2	4,983	2,492	2	4,983	2,492	-1
5 Olympia	3	7,030	2,343	-4	7,056	2,352	-6
6 Palace Riverside	3	7,534	2,511	2	7,581	2,527	1
7 Parsons Green & Walham	3	7,082	2,361	-4	7,211	2,404	-4
8 Ravenscourt Park	3	7,341	2,447	0	7,598	2,533	1
9 Sands End	3	6,653	2,218	-10	7,986	2,662	6

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

