LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

REVIEW OF GREATER LONDON, THE LONDON BOROUGHS AND THE CITY OF LONDON

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING

Boundaries with: BARKING AND DAGENHAM LB
REDBRIDGE LB
THURROCK BOROUGH
BRENTWOOD AND EPPING FOREST DISTRICTS IN ESSEX

REPORT NO. 654
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

CHAIRMAN

Sir Geoffrey Ellerton CMG MBE

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INTRODUCTION

1. This is our final report on the boundaries between the London Borough of Havering and its neighbouring local authorities in London and in Essex. We are recommending a number of changes to these boundaries, to reflect local affinities and to tidy up anomalies. Our report explains how we have arrived at these conclusions, following public consultation on our initial (draft) proposals for changes and of our subsequent further draft proposal in respect of Rush Green. Our final recommendations are listed in Annex A, and illustrated on the Maps at Annex B.

2. On 1 April 1987, we announced the start of a review of Greater London, the London Boroughs and the City of London, as part of the programme of reviews we are required to undertake by virtue of section 48(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. We wrote to each of the local authorities concerned.

3. Copies of our letter were sent to the adjoining London borough councils; the appropriate county, district and parish councils bordering Greater London; the local authority associations; Members of Parliament with constituency interests; and the headquarters of the main political parties. In addition, copies were sent to the Metropolitan Police and to those government departments, regional health authorities, and electricity, gas and water undertakings which might have an interest, as well as to local television and radio stations serving the Greater London area, and to a number of other interested persons and organisations.

4. The London Boroughs and the City of London were requested to assist us in publicising the start of the review by inserting a
notice for two successive weeks in local newspapers so as to give a wide coverage in the areas concerned.

5. A period of seven months from the date of our letter was allowed for all local authorities and any person or body interested in the review to send us their views on whether changes to the boundaries of Greater London authorities were desirable and, if so, what those changes should be and how they would serve the interests of effective and convenient local government, the criterion laid down in the 1972 Act.

APPROACH TO THE REVIEW OF GREATER LONDON

General

6. As with our previous reports on London borough boundaries, we have thought it appropriate to commence with some relevant general considerations on the Review of London which have arisen from our examination of this and other London borough areas.

7. We took the opportunity, in our Report No 550, "People and Places", to explain in some detail the approach we take to our work and the factors which we take into consideration when conducting reviews, including the guidelines given to us by the Secretary of State (those in respect of the reviews of London are set out in Department of the Environment Circular 20/86).

8. Subsequently, in July 1988, we issued a Press Notice, copies of which were sent to London boroughs, explaining the manner in which we proposed to conduct the review of London boundaries. In the Notice, we said that, from the evidence seen so far, this was unlikely to be the right time to advocate comprehensive change in the pattern of London government - although the notice listed a number of submissions for major changes to particular boundaries which had been made to the Commission, some of which the Commission had itself foreseen in "People and Places". These and other major changes to particular boundaries are being considered by the Commission at the appropriate stage of the relevant reviews.

Wider London Issues

9. Our review of the London Boroughs and the City of London is the first such review to have been undertaken since the creation of the present London boroughs in 1965, under the provisions of the London Government Act 1963. Although our view remains that this
review is not the right occasion for a fundamental reappraisal of
the extent of London or the pattern of London boroughs, which would
inevitably raise questions about the nature and structure of London
government, we do see it as very much part of our role to identify
and record any general issues which arise and which may need to be
considered in any more fundamental review of London in the future.
During the present review, we considered suggestions made to us
that the Borough of Havering might be divided into two separate
London Boroughs, or that it might be transferred as a whole to the
County of Essex.

The outer boundary of London

10. Our guidelines indicate that special care would be required in
considering changes to the outer boundary of Greater London,
because the distribution of functions is different within and
outside that boundary. The Commission’s press notice also referred
to the particular problems presented by the outer London boundary,
which does not always follow the edge of the built-up area and
where the relevance of the M25 and the Green Belt would need to be
considered. We have borne in mind the need to find, if possible, a
clear boundary for outer London which will not be rapidly over-laid
by development. However, where continuous development already
spills over the outer London boundary, we may not necessarily seek
to extend the boundary up to the limit of that development. Indeed,
the conurbation of London has in some places already stretched far
into the countryside along salients of development. We have to
reach a balanced view as to where the boundary should lie, taking
account of shape, community ties and the impact of major and new
infrastructure, as well as the extent of development.

The M25

11. Early in our deliberations, we acknowledged that, with a few
exceptions, the M25 encompasses the continuous built up area of
London. We took the view that the capital’s boundary should not
normally extend beyond it. On the other hand, it could not be
regarded as a satisfactory boundary for Greater London as a whole,
particularly in the south, where it encompasses substantial areas
of open countryside, including parts of the North Downs.
Nevertheless, there are stretches of the M25 which are close to the
present outer boundary of London. As we indicated in "People and
Places", we recognise the need to consider each of these stretches
to see whether it offers a better boundary for the future, taking
into account the effect of the motorway itself on local ties in the
vicinity. Representations were made to us in the course of the present review that the M25 might form an appropriate north-eastern and eastern boundary between Havering and Essex. Our consideration and conclusions in this respect are set out later in this report.

London’s Green Belt

12. There is a presumption against development in the Green Belt. Again, as we indicated in "People and Places", fears are often expressed to us that an urban authority will more readily seek to extend its built-up areas into green belt than will a rural authority. We do not accept this as a general premise; once an area of green belt has been defined, its status should not be affected by a change in the authority in which it lies. Nor is there any reason to suppose that London boroughs are any less able to preserve and maintain green belt than shire districts and counties. There are already significant tracts of Green Belt within the existing boundaries of Greater London, and we have seen no evidence to suggest that they are under any greater threat than Green Belt land lying immediately beyond these boundaries. Indeed, policies for the protection and improvement of Green Belt are advocated in the Department of the Environment's Strategic Planning Guidance for London and will form part of boroughs' Unitary Development Plans.

13. We have therefore taken the approach that, while the relevance of the Green Belt needs to be taken into account as we look at each section of the outer London boundary, it would be inappropriate to consider excluding Green Belt land from London solely on the misplaced grounds that London boroughs are unsuitable custodians of such areas.

THE SUBMISSIONS MADE TO US

14. In response to our letter of 1 April 1987, we received representations from the London Boroughs of Havering, Barking & Dagenham, and Redbridge; from Essex County Council, and the District Councils of Brentwood, Epping Forest, and Thurrock; from Stapleford Abbots Parish Council; and from two organisations and a member of the public; in respect of the boundaries of the Borough of Havering.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MAJOR CHANGE

15. Three representations suggested radical changes to the shape or status of Havering. **Havering Central Committee of Ratepayers' &**
Residents’ & Kindred Associations suggested that the Borough might be divided into two separate London boroughs, roughly equivalent to the areas of the pre-1965 Borough of Romford and Urban District of Hornchurch. In its view, both areas would have sufficient residents to support services, and the change would enable more personal contact between electors and their representatives. The Emerson Park and Ardleigh Green Residents Association agreed.

16. A member of the public suggested that the London Borough of Havering should be transferred (as a whole) to the County of Essex, to facilitate the management of public records. However, London boroughs and shire districts are not "areas of like description" under the 1972 Act, and it is at least questionable whether such a change could properly be proposed under existing legislation.

17. We were not convinced that there was sufficient evidence that change on such a scale would be in the interests of effective and convenient local government in the area, nor of any widespread support for this suggestion. We therefore made an interim decision not to propose such change.

OUR DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR BOUNDARY CHANGES AND OUR INTERIM DECISIONS TO MAKE NO PROPOSALS

(1) THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HAVERING AND BARKING & DAGENHAM

a. Rush Green

18. Havering LBC suggested that several residential roads in Rush Green, together with Rush Green Hospital and its grounds and Rush Green Primary School (but not Barking College of Technology) should be transferred from the Borough of Barking & Dagenham to Havering. It considered that the residents of this area use the shopping and leisure facilities and employment opportunities offered by Hornchurch and Romford rather than those of Dagenham. The Havering Central Committee of Ratepayers and Residents’ and Kindred Associations agreed.

19. Barking & Dagenham LBC suggested that the boundary in this area, which at present divides properties, should be realigned to Rush Green Road and the River Rom. The Council considered that the road is a clear physical feature between developments, and that it would be logical to associate the properties south of the road with the rest of the Rush Green Estate, in Barking & Dagenham.
20. Having considered all the evidence, we concluded that a sufficient case had been made for the transfer of the residential area south of Rush Green Road from Barking & Dagenham to Havering, both to unify the community of Rush Green and to recognise its affinity with the built-up area of Hornchurch. We therefore decided to adopt Havering’s suggestion as our draft proposal.

b. Crow Lane

21. Barking & Dagenham LBC suggested that the residential area in the vicinity of Crow Lane, together with Coombe Wood Drive and part of Salcombe Drive, should be transferred from Havering to Barking & Dagenham. We concluded that these areas appeared to be more closely associated with the outskirts of Dagenham than with Romford, and decided to adopt the Council’s suggestion as our draft proposal. Our consideration of the responses to this and to our subsequent further draft proposal in respect of the area will be set out, with our final recommendation, in our (separate) report on the boundaries of the Borough of Barking & Dagenham.

(2) THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN HAVERING, BARKING & DAGENHAM AND REDBRIDGE

Marks Gate

22. Having noted the suggestions made by Havering and by Barking & Dagenham in respect of the salient formed by the present boundaries in this area, we decided not to make any proposals for this area until we had considered the suggestions made to us for changes to the boundary between the Boroughs of Barking & Dagenham and Redbridge. Our subsequent consideration and our final recommendation in respect of this area will therefore be set out in our (separate) report on the other boundaries of the Borough of Barking & Dagenham.

(3) THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HAVERING AND REDBRIDGE

Hainault Forest Golf Course and Country Park

23. Redbridge LBC suggested that Hainault Forest Golf Course should be united in its area, to assist effective management of the facility, and that the Country Park should also be united in Redbridge. Havering LBC however objected, on the grounds that it owned part of the Golf Course and wished to continue its management role, and that the facility is used by Havering residents. The
Council also wished to retain a measure of control over any future development in this area.

24. We concluded that the case for change was not convincing. There was no evidence that the existing joint management arrangements had led to any problems. We therefore took an interim decision to propose no change in this area.

(4) THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HAVERING AND EPPING FOREST

Oakhill Road, Stapleford Abbots

25. Havering LBC suggested that the boundary should be realigned in this area, as it splits properties on Oakhill Road and is undefined. It considered that those residents who would be transferred to Havering have a greater community of interest with Havering-atte-Bower and Havering generally than with Stapleford Abbots in Essex. Epping Forest DC suggested an alternative realignment to the south of the properties in question, which would in its view produce a more logical boundary and unite the properties, which it believed had an affinity with Epping Forest, in that District.

26. We considered that the properties split by the boundary were part of the village of Stapleford Abbots and appeared to have more affinity with Essex than with Havering, in London. We therefore decided to adopt the District Council’s suggestion as our draft proposal, with a minor technical amendment.

(5) THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HAVERING AND BRENTWOOD

a. Beredens Lane, Warley

27. Brentwood DC suggested that the boundary should be realigned to the M25 in the vicinity of Beredens Lane, Warley, thereby transferring two properties (Beredens Cottages) from Havering to Essex. The Council pointed out that the two properties could only be accessed directly from Havering by means of a footbridge over the M25. Both Essex County Council and Havering LBC opposed this suggestion, as neither wished to see the principle of using the M25 as a boundary established as a precedent.

28. We noted that access to the properties was not straightforward, but decided that Brentwood’s suggestion was too minor on its own to be justified. We therefore took an interim decision to
propose no change in this respect. This was however subsumed by our subsequent consideration (paragraphs 30-32 below) of an alternative suggestion in respect of this stretch of the boundary.

b. The M25 Motorway

29. The Havering Central Committee of Ratepayers & Residents' & Kindred Associations suggested that the boundary should be realigned to follow the line of the M25, between Junction 29 and Maylands Golf Course just north of Junction 28.

30. We noted that the stretch of the M25 in question cuts through open areas, which are designated as Green Belt and appear to have more affinity with the shire county of Essex than with the more continually developed areas in the nearby London borough. However, we also noted that the M25 here runs very close to the present outer London boundary, which crosses and recrosses it without relating to any particular alternative ground feature. To adopt the M25 as a new boundary here would not therefore transfer substantial areas of open countryside into London.

31. For this reason, we decided to issue a draft proposal that the outer London boundary should be realigned to the M25, between Navestock Common and North Ockendon, and that, in consequence, the Brentwood/Thurrock district boundary should continue westwards along the Upminster/West Horndon railway line from the point where this meets the present outer London boundary (north-east of Monks Farm) to the point where it passes under the M25. This would, in our view, produce a durable and identifiable outer London boundary.

(6) THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HAVERING AND THURROCK

a. Aveley Road, Wennington

32. Havering LBC suggested that the boundary should be realigned from the centre to the eastern edge of Aveley Road, so that maintenance of the road becomes the sole responsibility of Thurrock Borough Council. As Thurrock agreed that this would be sensible, we decided to adopt this suggestion as a draft proposal.

b. Sandy Lane, Wennington

33. Havering LBC suggested that the boundary here should be realigned to simplify maintenance of the main A13 road. The effect would be to transfer the Aveley refuse tip number 2 from Thurrock
to Havering and to divide the number 3 refuse tip between the two authorities. However, both the Essex authorities objected, taking the view that Thurrock should retain planning and environmental control over the refuse tips in the interests of local residents who live in Thurrock.

34. Thurrock Borough Council suggested an alternative realignment to the eastern side of the A13, whereby a small part of Aveley number 2 tip (labelled "Clay pit" on the map attached to our draft proposals letter) would be transferred from Havering to Thurrock. In its view, this would simplify highway maintenance and administration; Havering would become the sole highway authority for the A13 in this area, and Thurrock (under agency arrangements) would be responsible for maintaining Sandy Lane. We agreed with this assessment, and decided to adopt Thurrock's suggestion as our draft proposal, with minor technical amendments.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF OUR DRAFT PROPOSALS AND INTERIM DECISIONS

35. The letter announcing our draft proposals and interim decisions was published on 17 October 1988. Copies were sent to all the local authorities concerned and to all those who had made representations to us. The local authorities were asked (a) to publish a notice announcing our draft proposals and interim decisions; (b) to post copies of the notice at places where public notices are customarily displayed; and (c) to place copies of our letter on deposit for inspection at their main offices for a period of eight weeks. Comments on our proposals and interim decisions were invited by 12 December 1988.

RESPONSE TO OUR DRAFT PROPOSALS AND INTERIM DECISIONS

36. We received a total of 242 representations in response to our draft proposals; eleven submissions from local authorities, three letters from Members of Parliament; and two petitions. The remainder were from interested local persons and bodies.

(1) THE OVERALL STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN HAVERING

37. We had indicated our intention not to propose changes to the structure of local government in Havering, rejecting as unsubstantiated suggestions that the borough should be divided into separate boroughs of Romford and Hornchurch (as it was before 1965), or that it should lose its status as a London Borough and be transferred to Essex. In response, six members of the public
advocated major boundary changes.

38. One representation suggested that Brentwood should be absorbed into Havering, taking the view that this would lead to more efficient administration. Another took the view that Havering is too large; that residents of the Parish of Stapleford Abbots (in Epping Forest) look to Romford for shopping and recreation facilities; and that a community of interest exists between this parish and the village of Havering-Atte-Bower (in Havering). Three alternative boundary realignments were put forward, with the aim of uniting these villages:

a. to transfer Havering-Atte-Bower to Epping Forest (Havering LBC would be renamed Hornchurch LBC); or

b. to incorporate Stapleford Abbots into Havering; or

c. to divide Havering, uniting Stapleford Abbots with the former District of Romford as a separate district in Essex, leaving the area of the former Hornchurch Urban District as a separate London borough.

39. We considered all these representations carefully, but concluded that no fresh arguments had been advanced or evidence provided to justify such major changes. There is no evidence that the current arrangements clearly fail to provide effective and convenient local government in the areas in question. We have therefore decided to confirm our decision to make no proposals to alter the basic structure of the Borough. However, the minor boundary issues raised in these representations are considered later in this report, in the context of the areas concerned.

(2) THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HAVERING AND BARKING & DAGENHAM

Rush Green

40. Our draft proposal for Rush Green - that the residential area south of the present boundary (flanked by the College of Technology and including the Hospital and the streets immediately south of it) should be transferred from Barking & Dagenham to Havering - was supported by Havering LBC and by 25 members of the public.

41. Barking & Dagenham LBC opposed the draft proposal on the grounds that it did not take account of historical links between Rush Green and the Borough, the views of local residents, or the
Council's current commitment to service provision in the area. The Council's submission was accompanied by four petitions, totalling 1895 signatures, from local residents and organisations.

42. The Council reaffirmed its previous view that a smaller realignment of the boundary to Rush Green Road and the River Rom would offer the most sensible solution, with the least possible disruption. However, it also suggested that, should the Commission confirm its view that Rush Green is a single community which should be united, there was a strong argument for realigning the boundary to the north, to unite Rush Green in Barking & Dagenham (within which the greater part of the area lies). The Council drew attention to existing servicing arrangements and to what it considered to be the barrier effect of the River Rom, and the major road junction of the Rom Valley Way and the A124.

43. Our draft proposal was also opposed by Mr Bryan Gould, MP for Dagenham; two local councillors; the Barking & Dagenham branches of the Labour Party and of the Social and Liberal Democrats; the Barking & Dagenham Chamber of Commerce; the Local Joint Committee of the local government trades unions NALGO, MTSA and NUPE; the Rush Green Residents' Association; and the Rush Green Social Club. The Principal of the Barking College of Technology and members of the Rush Green Luncheon and Leisure Club also made representations. Some 91 members of the public also objected to the draft proposal.

44. We also received three suggestions for alternative boundary alignments in this area. The Havering Central Committee suggested that Meadow Road, Bell House Road, Claydon Road and Barton Road should remain in Barking & Dagenham. The Standing Committee of the Church Council of St. Augustine of Canterbury suggested that Wisdons Close should be included in the area defined as Rush Green. Two local residents suggested a minor realignment to include a service road in the area proposed for transfer.

45. On further consideration, we took the view that the arguments for and against uniting Rush Green in Havering were finely balanced. We noted that the Rom Valley By-pass provided a link between Rush Green and Romford and considered that, as a regional shopping centre, Romford exerts a strong influence on Rush Green. We also noted the proximity of Dagenham Civic Centre to Rush Green, and the evidence that the area appeared to have equally strong historic and community links with Barking & Dagenham. However, we were conscious that to unite Rush Green within Barking & Dagenham would extend that Borough almost to the outskirts of Romford.
46. We concluded that, in the light of the responses to our draft proposal, there appeared to be insufficient direct community of interest between residents in the two parts of Rush Green to justify uniting it in a single authority. We therefore decided to withdraw our draft proposal and to issue instead a further draft proposal, adopting Barking & Dagenham’s suggested realignment of the boundary along Rush Green Road and the River Rom.

(3) THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HAVERING AND REDBRIDGE

Hainault Forest Golf Course and Country Park

47. Our interim decision to propose no change in this area, on the basis that the evidence for uniting these areas in Redbridge was unconvincing, was supported by Havering LBC and by a member of the public. Redbridge LBC reiterated its view that the golf course would benefit from the management of a single authority.

48. We have concluded that no fresh arguments have been advanced on this issue in response to our draft proposal letter, and we have accordingly decided to confirm our interim decision as final.

(4) THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HAVERING AND EPPING FOREST

Oakhill Road, Stapleford Abbotts

49. We had adopted, with a minor amendment, a realignment suggested by Epping Forest DC, to unite properties divided by the present boundary and to recognise their affinities with Stapleford Abbotts. Our draft proposal was supported by Epping Forest DC, Essex CC and a member of the public; Havering LBC did not object.

50. The Chase Cross Conservative Party suggested that ten properties at the southern end of Oakhill Road should be transferred to Havering, as they look more to that borough than to Epping Forest. It also pointed out that our proposed new boundary ran between two areas of land (on either side of the nearby road junction) in common ownership. A member of the public opposed the transfer of his property. Another member of the public suggested that the Parish of Stapleford Abbotts should be transferred to Havering, in view of its affinity with the village of Havering-Atte-Bower, or that this village should be transferred to Epping Forest and that "Havering" should be renamed "Hornchurch".

51. We have considered all these representations. We have
concluded that the claimed affinity between Stapleford Abbotts and Havering-Atte-Bower does not in itself justify a boundary change on the scale suggested, and that it would be inappropriate to transfer Havering-Atte-Bower to Epping Forest, given the proximity of this village to Romford (in Havering) and the lack of a suitable ground feature between them which could be used as a boundary.

52. We are not convinced that the houses to the west of Oakhill Road have different affinities from those immediately north of them, as implied by the Chase Cross Conservative Party. However, we accept the point about the land on either side of the road junction. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft proposal for the stretch of boundary to the west of Oakhill Road as final, but to withdraw our proposal in respect of Area E on the map enclosed with our draft proposals letter, thereby leaving the present boundary to the east of Oakhill Road unchanged.

(5) THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN HAVERING AND BRENTWOOD AND BETWEEN HAVERING AND THURROCK

a. Beredens Lane, Warley and the M25 Motorway

53. As noted earlier in this report, our interim decision to propose no change in the vicinity of Beredens Lane was subsumed by our draft proposal that the boundary should be realigned to the M25 between Navestock Common and North Ockendon, and that the Brentwood/Thurrock boundary should in consequence be realigned to the railway line.

54. Our draft proposal was opposed by Havering LBC, Essex County Council, Brentwood District Council, one Member of Parliament, two borough councillors, two local political parties, three local associations and 79 private individuals, of whom 72 opposed the transfer of North Ockendon to Thurrock, and seven opposed the transfer of properties on the Havering side of Great Warley to Brentwood. A member of the public suggested two radical alternative changes. Our draft proposal was supported by Thurrock Borough Council, one Member of Parliament, one local political party and one local association.

55. Havering LBC noted the view we had expressed, in reporting on another review, that the suggested use of the M25 as a boundary in a particular area of North London was inappropriate. The Council pointed out that our proposal would transfer to Brentwood 460 residents, a sewage treatment works and two commercial sites (one
of which had been the subject of a public enquiry in respect of the implications of redevelopment within the Green Belt). It suggested that we had used as a criterion for this review a general principle that Green Belt land has no place in a London authority. It took the view that this would have implications for other authorities and for the outer boundary of Greater London as a whole.

56. The Council drew attention to its record in respect of the Green Belt. It believed that our draft proposal for this boundary was not justified under the guidelines for our review of London, nor in terms of Green Belt policy. (This is not in fact the case. Our approach to the question of the Green Belt and the outer London boundary are set out in paragraphs 12 and 13 above.)

57. The Council also suggested that our draft proposal failed to reflect community ties in the area affected which were in its view with Cranham and Upminster rather than with Brentwood and Grays. It believed that the motorway acts as a barrier between communities southwards to the River Thames, and that, on that basis, it would be logical also to propose that the area of Thurrock to the west of the M25 should be transferred to Havering. However, it did not support such a change.

58. Essex County Council and Brentwood BC considered that our draft proposal was unnecessary. The County Council expressed concern at its implications. Sir Nicholas Bonsor, MP for Upminster, noted that many of his constituents opposed change. He believed that North Ockendon had more affinity with Havering than with Thurrock and noted that elderly residents would lose their access to free public transport and to a Dial-A-Ride service. He drew attention to road links across the M25, and suggested that the natural boundaries around the village were the Mar Dyke River and its tributaries.

59. Similar points were made by two borough councillors (who referred to a meeting of the Upminster and Cranham Ratepayers and Residents Association in November 1988, at which strong opposition to change had been expressed) and by a member of the public, who regarded Havering as an effective custodian of the Green Belt. He preferred two alternative realignments, to either the Mar Dyke River (bringing South Ockendon, Aveley and Purfleet into Havering); or to the M25 and other main roads in the vicinity (transferring South Ockendon, Aveley, Purfleet, Bulphan and Orsett to Havering).

60. Opposing the draft proposal, the Havering Central Committee of
Ratepayers' & Residents' & Kindred Associations contended that there were strong community ties between North Ockendon and Cranham (Havering) and suggested that there might be a case for uniting North and South Ockendon in Havering. Residents of North Ockendon objected that the change would affect the provision of education and access to other facilities; that Havering has provided financial assistance to local organisations; that the Department of Transport had given an assurance that the road would not be a barrier between the village and Upminster; and that North Ockendon has established close links with Havering. One believed that the village should be transferred to Brentwood rather than to Thurrock. Residents of Great Warley claimed affinities with Upminster.

61. The Upminster Common Conservation Association feared that use of the M25 as a boundary would increase pressure for development on Green Belt land to the west. The Harold Wood Branch Labour Party and the Upminster Constituency Labour Party opposed the transfer of certain areas, on grounds of accessibility and of historical associations.

62. Thurrock Borough Council supported our draft proposal, as did Mr Tim Janman, MP for Thurrock, the Thurrock Conservative Party, and the Great Warley Conservation Society (on planning grounds).

63. In this report, we have indicated our general view that, while the M25 cannot be regarded as a satisfactory boundary for Greater London as a whole, it might be appropriate, in areas where the motorway is close to the present outer London boundary, to consider whether the motorway might offer a better boundary in the future - subject to local community ties. Our draft proposal for the Navestock Common/North Ockendon stretch was based on the perception that the motorway in this area would be more satisfactory than the present outer London boundary, which is poorly defined.

64. We do not accept the suggestion that the boundary should be moved eastwards to the Mar Dyke river. To do so would mean transferring South Ockendon to Havering; in our view, this settlement has closer links with Grays and Little Thurrock in Essex. However, the position to the north appears to be different; we note that many residents of North Ockendon feel strong affinities with areas to the west of the M25, in Havering.

65. We also note the view that it would be logical to extend the principle of our draft proposal by using the M25 as the outer London boundary as far south as the River Thames. While this has
much to commend it in principle, we are not persuaded that the settlements of Belhus Park and Aveley have closer links with Upminster and Hornchurch to the north than with Little Thurrock and Grays to the south-east, and there is no evidence that such a radical change would be justified at this stage, in terms of effective and convenient local government.

66. We have therefore decided to withdraw our draft proposal for the area south of the Upminster/West Horndon railway line, retaining the present boundary and leaving North Ockendon in Havering, to reflect local community ties. However, we have decided to confirm as final our draft proposal for the stretch of the M25 from Navestock Common southwards to the railway line.

b. **Aveley Road, Wennington**

67. Our draft proposal for the realignment of the boundary to the eastern edge of Aveley Road, to simplify maintenance arrangements, was supported by Havering LBC and by the Essex authorities, and also by London Regional Transport, which noted that the statutory position in respect of public sector bus operations is different on either side of the Greater London boundary and believed that the proposed change would simplify its operations. We have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final.

c. **Sandy Lane, Wennington**

68. We adopted as our draft proposal a suggestion by Thurrock BC that the boundary should be realigned to the eastern side of the A13 main road, to simplify highway maintenance. This was supported by the Essex authorities, and by London Regional Transport (for the reason noted in paragraph 67 above). Thurrock DC drew attention to the possibility that an area south of Moor Hall (Area C on Map 9 attached to our draft proposals letter) might in future be used for waste disposal, and suggested an alternative realignment around this area. However, Havering LBC opposed our draft proposal, reaffirming its view that Sandy Lane and the refuse tip number 2 should be transferred to its area.

69. We have considered the two alternative alignments suggested by the local authorities, but we have concluded that neither would result in a more satisfactory boundary than the alignment we proposed. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft proposal for this area as final.
ANNOUNCEMENT OF OUR FURTHER DRAFT PROPOSAL

70. Our letter announcing our further draft proposal for the Rush Green area was issued on 21 June 1991. The local authorities concerned were asked to ensure that it received the same publicity as our original draft proposals. Copies of our letter were also sent to all those who had made representations to us in respect of Rush Green. Comments were invited by 23 August 1991.

71. In response to our letter, we received 307 representations. These comprised submissions from two local authorities, a Member of Parliament, and three local councillors; 148 proforma letters and 152 letters from private individuals; and a petition opposing the further draft proposal, with 682 signatures.

RESPONSE TO OUR FURTHER DRAFT PROPOSAL: OUR FINAL PROPOSALS

72. Barking & Dagenham supported our further draft proposal, believing that it recognised the strong affinities between Rush Green and Barking & Dagenham. The Council was pleased that we had taken into account what it considered to be the overwhelming strength of feeling amongst the Rush Green community, and stressed its own commitment to the area. Three Barking & Dagenham councillors made similar points. The Rush Green Residents' Association stated that a survey of the area suggested that 99% of local residents favoured the further draft proposal, and claimed that all local residents now shop at Thurrock Shopping Centre and Barking New Centre.

73. The Barking College of Technology supported our further draft proposal, taking the view that the change would improve the coherence of the Rush Green area. The Barking College of Technology Senior Citizens Discussion Group, the Barking & Dagenham Chamber of Commerce, and the Rush Green Luncheon and Leisure Centre agreed, as did six local residents who noted that the nearest social facilities are provided by Barking & Dagenham. The Metropolitan Police had no objection to the proposed change.

74. Havering LBC opposed our further draft proposal, stating that many local residents object because they look to Romford for shopping, social and leisure facilities and consider themselves part of Havering. The Council believed that if all local residents were consulted, a majority would prefer Rush Green to be united in Havering. It drew attention to the physical relationship of the area to Romford and to the break in development between Dagenham
and Rush Green, an important Green Belt barrier identified as such in the 1976 Greater London Development Plan.

75. Havering considered that the change it had originally suggested had the advantage of uniting, in a single local authority area, facilities used by the whole Rush Green community, as well as the main Rush Green shopping area. However, the Council suggested a further alternative, if we remained of the opinion that Rush Green should not be united, that in its view would cause minimal disruption but would still provide a logical boundary. The line advocated by the Council would follow the front or the rear of properties in Horace Avenue, Leonard Avenue, Rush Green Road (transferring nos 98-152 and nos 143-165 Dagenham Road and the whole of Lilac Gardens to Havering), and Gorseway, and then run eastwards to the River Rom. In response, Barking and Dagenham commented that this offered little improvement to the present untidy boundary.

76. Sir Michael Neubert MP opposed the further draft proposal. He preferred Havering LBC’s original suggestion, and suggested that, if we decided that the area should not be united in a single borough, the boundary should be left unchanged.

77. The Romford Conservative Association stated that it had sought the views of local residents (who in its view have a strong affinity with Romford) and that change was overwhelmingly opposed. The Romford Liberal Democrats had conducted a survey and had obtained a similar result. They suggested an alternative change which would retain those opposed to change in Havering and transfer the Romford YMCA to that borough.

78. The Havering Central Committee of Ratepayers’ & Residents’ & Kindred Associations preferred its own previous suggestion that Meadow Road, Bell House Road, Claydon Road and Barton Road should remain in Barking & Dagenham, and added that in its view the Bellhouse estate and the Ford Sports Ground should be transferred to that borough. The Romford YMCA is the largest voluntary charity organization in the area and depends on financial support from both boroughs. It wished to remain divided by the boundary, and suggested a minor change to this end.

79. Some local residents objected on the grounds that the further draft proposal would exacerbate existing divisions; that the area does not relate to Barking & Dagenham but has strong ties with Romford; that local children would no longer be guaranteed places
at Havering schools; that local services along Rush Green Road would be duplicated; that public transport links the area with Romford; and that a more natural boundary would be the open area to the south and east (designated for the East London "Community Forest").

80. Having considered these representations, we were disappointed that both our draft proposal and our much more limited further draft proposal had attracted such opposition. We have concluded that the responses to both proposals, taken together, confirm that Rush Green cannot be said to be an identifiable community and that an attempt to unite it in a single local authority area cannot be justified. Indeed, residents in one area opposed our draft proposal on the grounds of their affinity with Barking & Dagenham while others only one street away opposed our further draft proposal on the grounds of their close affinity with Havering.

81. We have therefore decided not to revert to our original draft proposal, as Havering LBC has suggested, or to adopt the suggestion submitted by the Havering Central Committee of Ratepayers’ & Residents’ & Kindred Associations.

82. However, we take the view that the present ill-defined boundary is unsatisfactory and requires amendment. We have therefore considered the various minor alternative changes suggested in representations. We note that the Romford YMCA’s suggestion would result in a defaced boundary, while Havering LBC’s suggestion would be difficult to follow on the ground and would divide Dagenham Road. A third suggestion would leave the boundary ill-defined between Dagenham Road and Lilac Gardens. None of these changes would in our view represent an improvement on the present situation, which should not be left as it is.

83. It is clear that no form of major change would command general support from local residents. In our view, our further draft proposal offers the most durable and easily-identifiable boundary for the future, commensurate with the general local desire to avoid major change. We have therefore decided to confirm it as final, subject to a minor modification to follow a centre of road alignment along Rush Green Road, to improve access from Barking & Dagenham.

ELECTORAL CONSEQUENCES

84. We received no comments on the electoral consequences of our
draft and further draft proposals, which were set out in schedules attached to the relevant letters. The electoral consequences of our final proposals, which would not significantly affect the balance of representation in the areas concerned, are set out in the schedule to this report.

CONCLUSION

85. We believe that our final proposals, which are summarised in Annex A to this report, are in the interests of effective and convenient local government and we commend them to you accordingly.

PUBLICATION

86. A separate letter is being sent to the London Boroughs of Havering, Barking & Dagenham, and Redbridge; to Essex County Council; to the District Councils of Brentwood and Epping Forest; and to Thurrock Borough Council, asking them to deposit copies of this report at their main offices for inspection for a period of six months. They are also being asked to put notices to that effect on public notice boards. Arrangements have been made for similar notices to be inserted in the local press. The notices will explain that the Commission has fulfilled its statutory role in this matter and that it now falls to you to make an Order implementing the proposals, if you think fit, though not earlier than six weeks from the date our final proposals are submitted to you.

87. Copies of this report, with the maps attached at Annex B illustrating the proposed changes, are being sent to all those who received our draft and further draft proposal letters and to those who made written representations to us.
Signed: G J ELLERTON (Chairman)

K F J ENNALS

G R PRENTICE

HELEN SARKANY

C W SMITH

K YOUNG

R D COMPTON
Commission Secretary
5 March 1992
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<td>realign boundary to eastern edge of Aveley Road</td>
<td>32, 67, Map 5</td>
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<td>Aveley Road, Wennington</td>
<td>realign boundary east of A13, transferring Aveley No.2 tip from Havering to Thurrock</td>
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LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

REVIEWS OF GREATER LONDON, THE LONDON BOROUGHS AND THE CITY OF LONDON

HAVERING LB

AFFECTING BARKING AND DAGENHAM LB

FINAL PROPOSALS

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Produced by Ordnance Survey for the
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