

**Local Government
Boundary Commission
For England
Report No. 514**

Principal Area Boundary Review

BOROUGHES OF

EASTLEIGH/

TEST VALLEY

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BOUNDARY COMMISSION

FOR ENGLAND

REPORT NO. 514

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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THE RT. HON. KENNETH BAKER MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

1. In a letter dated 30 March 1982 Eastleigh Borough Council requested us to undertake a review of parts of the boundary between their Borough and Test Valley Borough in three areas in the vicinity of Ampfield, Chilworth and North Baddesley (known as Areas A, B and C respectively). They made their request as a result of looking at their area to see if a review of the boundaries with adjoining authorities was necessary.

2. We examined this request in the light of section 48(5) of the Local Government Act 1972. The other local authorities directly concerned, and Hampshire County Council, wished to resist the idea of boundary changes and there was substantial opposition from the residents of Area A to any suggestion that the area might be transferred to Eastleigh Borough. We noted that Area A was practically fully developed and that the Chandlers Ford District Plan indicated that all or most of Area C would be developed. Development in Area B on the other hand was more uncertain.

3. We wrote to Eastleigh Borough Council on 6 January 1983 informing them that we would consider making proposals in respect of Area A provided that an adequate case for doing so was made, but that we should defer action on Areas B and C unless the limits of the proposed development in those areas could be clearly defined within the next two years. If they were, we would be prepared to look at the three areas as a whole at the appropriate time. In reply the Council did not press further regarding Area B, but expressed their disappointment regarding Area C, as this area was part of the Chandlers Ford District Plan for which agreed limits had been set on the area for development.

4. We concluded that, having regard to DOE Circular 33/78 and our own guidelines, we should consider further whether we should make proposals for changes in the district boundary affecting Areas A and C. We accordingly wrote to Eastleigh

Borough Council on 19 July 1983 informing them that we had decided to undertake a review in respect of these two areas, and invited them to prepare a detailed scheme. Copies of this letter were sent to Hampshire County Council, Test Valley Borough Council, Ampfield, Chilworth and North Baddesley Parish Councils, the Members of Parliament for the constituencies concerned, the headquarters of the main political parties, local newspapers circulating in the area, local radio stations serving the area, and the local government press. The two Borough Councils were also requested to assist us in giving publicity to the start of the review by publishing a notice for two successive weeks in local newspapers, and displaying copies of the notice at places where public notices are customarily displayed.

5. Eastleigh Borough Council published their detailed scheme on 24 May 1984. It was advertised in the local press and by public notice. The period allowed for comments expired on 19 July 1984.

6. The detailed scheme submitted by Eastleigh Borough Council in essence suggested the transfer of Area A, bounded by Hursley Road, Baddesley Road and Hook Road, in north-west Chandlers Ford (presently within the parish of Ampfield), and the transfer of Area B (previously referred to as Area C in Eastleigh Borough Council's original request to us) extending to the west of Chandlers Ford (presently within the parishes of Chilworth and North Baddesley), from the Borough of Test Valley to the unparished area of Eastleigh Borough.

7. Hampshire County Council, Test Valley Borough Council, Ampfield, Chilworth and North Baddesley Parish Councils and a large number of local residents and organisations opposed the changes suggested. Only a few representations supported them.

8. We considered the detailed scheme in accordance with section 48(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and DOE Circular 33/78. We concluded at that time that although maps of the area suggested including Area A in Eastleigh Borough other

factors had to be considered, for example, the views of the local inhabitants, who were almost totally opposed to the suggested changes, their desire to remain in Test Valley and their satisfaction with the services provided by that authority. In addition, we noted the obvious effectiveness and popularity of Ampfield Parish as a local government unit as demonstrated by the MORI poll carried out in the area. The changes proposed would result in the deparishing of Area A (part of Ampfield Parish), and although parish status could be retained for the area, we were reluctant to divide the parish without good reason. We thus became convinced that Areas A and B, as part of the Chandlers Ford development, should be dealt with consistently due to their common geographical position on the western fringe of the present built up area.

9. In the case of Area B (parts of North Baddesley and Chilworth Parishes), we felt that it was too soon to decide whether there should be a change in the local authority administering this area of urban development. We were also unclear about the limits of the proposed development, and felt that Eastleigh's arguments for including this area within their boundary were less convincing than those in respect of Area A. This led us to the view that Area B should remain with Test Valley with the consequence that the case for including Area A in Eastleigh was weakened.

10. We noted that Hampshire County Council called for a period of stability in local government to avoid damaging relationships and cooperation between local authorities, and expressed a desire not to see proposals for development of county significance on the urban fringe of a rural authority, which had been agreed by the District Councils concerned, inevitably being followed by territorial expansion of the urban authority to incorporate that development. We were not persuaded by the evidence that the changes sought would result in any identifiable improvement in the provision and operation of services, and at this stage in the development of Chandlers Ford we felt that the continuation of the existing arrangements had some advantage. We concluded that the present boundary seemed to reflect the pattern of community life and that the suggested realignment would not be desirable in the interests of

effective and convenient local government. We therefore reached an interim decision to make no proposals.

11. Our interim decision was announced on 31 May 1985 in a joint letter to Eastleigh and Test Valley Borough Councils. Copies of the letter were sent to Hampshire County Council, Ampfield, Chilworth and North Baddesley Parish Councils, the Members of Parliament for the constituencies concerned, the headquarters of the main political parties, South Eastern Regional Office of your Department, local newspapers circulating in the area, local radio and television stations serving the area, the local government press, and those who had made representations to us. The two Borough Councils were asked to publish a notice giving details of the interim decision, and to place copies of it on display at places where public notices were customarily displayed. They were also asked to place copies of the letter announcing the interim decision on deposit for inspection at their main offices for a period of eight weeks. Comments were invited by 26 July 1985.

12. We received 31 representations in response to our letter. Hampshire County Council supported our interim decision, Eastleigh Borough Council had no further comments to add, Test Valley Borough Council welcomed our interim decision, and Ampfield, Braishfield, Chilworth and North Baddesley Parish Councils all wrote in support. In addition Braishfield Village Association, Hampshire Association of Parish Councils and 22 private individuals all supported our interim decision. No objections were received.

13. As required by section 60(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 we have reassessed our interim decision in the light of the representations made to us. We noted that our interim decision had been widely welcomed in the area, but we still had some reservations about it. We recalled that initially we had considered, from maps of the area, that Area A was an integral part of Eastleigh, and that Areas A and B

should stand together, but at that time the western boundary of Area B had not been defined, therefore the case for Area A had been weakened. However, in the time that had elapsed since we embarked on the review, the situation had noticeably changed in that the western distributor road, which marked the boundary of Area B had now been constructed and development had commenced. Consequently, we felt that there was possibly a stronger case for both boundary changes. Further we noted that in a recent letter Eastleigh Borough Council maintained their view that the changes they sought more than met the criteria referred to in Circular 33/78 and that no logical argument had been propounded against them.

14. On the other hand, we had to recognise that the representations in response to our interim decision had not produced any new evidence which would justify a re-appraisal of our decision, and had moreover confirmed a very strong attachment on the part of many residents to the status quo. On balance, we therefore concluded that it was right to confirm our interim decision to make no proposals as our final decision. However, we would add that in view of the continuing development of Chandlers Ford, we would be ready to consider boundary changes in this area again in the future.

15. Separate letters, enclosing copies of this report, are being sent to Eastleigh Borough Council and Test Valley Borough Council asking them to deposit copies of this report at their main offices for inspection over a six month period and to put

notices to this effect on public notice boards. Copies of this report are also being sent to other recipients of our letter of 31 May 1985.

LS.

SIGNED: G J ELLERTON (Chairman)

J G POWELL (Deputy Chairman)

JOAN ACKNER

G E CHERRY

K J L NEWELL

G R PRENTICE

BRIAN SCHOLES

S T GARRISH

Secretary

13 February 1986