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Local Government Boundary Commission For England Report No.551

Review of Non-Metropolitan Counties

COUNTY OF

CLEVELAND AND

ITS BOUNDARY WITH
DURHAM

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BOUNDARY COMMISSION

FOR ENGLAND

REPORT NO. 551

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
REVIEW OF NON-METROPOLITAN COUNTIES
THE COUNTY OF CLEVELAND AND ITS BOUNDARY WITH DURHAM

COMMISSION'S FINAL REPORT AND PROPOSALS

INTRODUCTION

1. On 2 September 1986 we wrote to the County Councils of Cleveland and Durham announcing our intention to undertake reviews of the counties under section 48(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. Copies of these letters were sent to all the principal local authorities and parishes in Cleveland and Durham and in the surrounding counties of Cumbria, Northumberland and North Yorkshire. Copies were also sent to the Members of Parliament with constituency interests, the headquarters of the main political parties, and government departments with an interest, as well as to the Northern Regional Health Authority, British Telecom, the North Eastern Electricity Board, the Northern Gas Board, the Northumbrian Water Authority, the English Tourist Board, Port Authorities in the Counties, the Editors of the Municipal Journal and Local Government Chronicle, local television and radio stations serving the area, and the National and County Associations of Local Councils.

2. The County Councils of Cleveland and Durham were requested, in co-operation as necessary with other County Councils and with the District Councils concerned, 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. The County Councils were also asked to ensure that the issue of the consultation letter was drawn to the attention of those concerned with services such as the administration of justice and police, in respect of which they have a statutory function.

3. A period of six months from the date of the letters was allowed for all local authorities, including those in the surrounding counties, and any person or body interested in the review, to submit to us their views in detail on whether changes to the county boundaries were desirable and, if so, what those changes should be and how they would serve the interests of effective and convenient local government.

4. The review of the boundary between Cleveland and Durham was carried out in two parts with separate draft proposal letters being issued in each county. However, in this report we deal with the boundary as a whole.

THE SUBMISSIONS MADE TO US

5. In response to our letters we received representations from the County Councils of Cleveland and Durham, the Borough Councils of Darlington, Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees, Sedgefield District Council, Sedgefield Town Council, the Parish Councils of Grindon (Cleveland), Belmont and Easington Village, Middleton St George and from Sheraton with Hulam Parish Meeting (Durham), H. M. Lord- Lieutenant of Cleveland, the Conservative Group on Hartlepool Borough Council, Cleveland Rural Voice, and other interested bodies and individuals. We also received a petition on behalf of the "Campaign to get Hartlepool out of Cleveland" and a cyclostyled appeal in support of returning Hartlepool to the County of Durham.

6. Various proposals have also been put to us for changes to Cleveland's boundary with North Yorkshire and Durham's boundaries with Cumbria, Northumberland and North Yorkshire. These issues are being considered under the reviews of those counties, which are still in progress. Durham's boundary with Tyne and Wear will be considered separately as part of the review of the Metropolitan County.

THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE COUNTIES OF CLEVELAND AND DURHAM

The Question of Radical Change

7. The Lord Lieutenant of Cleveland had raised the issue of the size of the county in the context of the review of North Yorkshire. He had commented that if any change was to be made, it should be to enlarge Cleveland so as to bring within it certain towns on its periphery, or to abolish it. Cleveland County Council's submission also referred to the dependence of areas outside the county boundary on the Cleveland conurbation. One resident also implied that Cleveland should be abolished, while others suggested that the County should revert to Durham to the north of the River Tees and North Yorkshire to the south.

8. The "Campaign to get Hartlepool out of Cleveland" suggested that Hartlepool should regain county borough status and be transferred to the county of Durham. It forwarded a petition with 18,034 names in support of this view. We also received a cyclostyled letter from 625 residents of Hartlepool, expressing their wish to be transferred back to Durham. The question of metropolitan status for Hartlepool had been raised by Mr Ted Leadbitter MP, before the start of the review. The main argument for transfer was that Middlesborough had prospered at the expense of Hartlepool, which had suffered a loss of status and a deterioration in services. The majority of comments we received expressed a similar view. Other arguments advanced were based on the strong geographical, historical and cultural links of the area with Durham. Durham County Council and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council commented that they wanted no major change to Cleveland while Hartlepool Borough Council considered that there would be no benefit in transferring the borough to Durham.

Thorpe Larches

9. Sedgfield District Council had referred to the Cleveland and Durham (Areas) Order 1982, which had transferred an area from the borough of Stockton-on-Tees and the parish of Grindon, in Cleveland, to the town and district of Sedgfield, thus uniting the community in Durham. It had later transpired that a small

number of comparatively isolated dwellings nearby had not been included in the transfer. Sedgefield District Council suggested that this area too should be transferred from Cleveland to Durham, so as to unite it with the small community from which it is currently separated by the boundary. Durham County Council and Sedgefield Town Council supported this suggestion, whilst Cleveland County Council did not object.

Teesside Airport

10. Darlington Borough Council suggested that the present Durham/Cleveland boundary at Teesside Airport, should be changed so as to include the control tower and a corner of the hangar in the same district and county (Darlington and Durham) as the rest of the airport buildings. Ordnance Survey suggested that the whole of the boundary across the airport be re-aligned to follow the eastern perimeter. Middleton St. George Parish Council supported this suggestion, but strong objection to it was made by Durham and Cleveland County Councils whose main arguments were that the existing boundary caused no problems and that any major change would lead to the exclusion of one of the authorities from the running of the airport. The establishment of the new Airport Company had, they said, only been achieved by close co-operation between the two counties which remained vital to its future success. Darlington Borough Council also opposed Ordnance Survey's proposal and subsequently withdrew its original suggestion.

OUR DRAFT PROPOSAL AND INTERIM DECISIONS

The Question of Radical Change

11. We considered the submission from the "Campaign to get Hartlepool out of Cleveland" and all the comments received from individuals opposed to the continuation of the county. We noted the suggestions to give Hartlepool the status of a metropolitan borough, or county borough, but observed we had no powers to make such proposals. We recognised the continued feeling in Hartlepool and other areas against the creation of the new County and the sense of grievance

many still felt at the loss of their borough's status at the time of local government re-organisation. However, we considered that the transfer of any sizeable areas from Cleveland would, having regard to its existing size and resources, cause the county to be significantly weakened. We considered the case for the abolition of Cleveland, bearing in mind the guidelines set out in Circular 12/84 issued by your Department, which suggest that the abolition of a principal area "will be appropriate only in very exceptional circumstances where present arrangements clearly fail to provide effective and convenient local government," and concluded that the evidence so far presented did not come near to suggesting that this was true of Cleveland. We noted that no principal authority in the areas, and this includes Hartlepool Borough Council, had suggested such a major change. We therefore took an interim decision to make no proposal for radical changes to, or abolition of, the county of Cleveland.

Thorpe Larches

12. We noted that there was no opposition to the suggestion to transfer the properties near Thorpe Larches, which we considered to be closely associated with the community in Durham. We therefore decided to issue a draft proposal to transfer the area from Cleveland to Durham, incorporating a technical amendment suggested by Ordnance Survey.

Teesside Airport

13. We noted that Darlington Borough Council had withdrawn its original suggestion and that the two principal authorities did not support Ordnance Survey's suggestion. We also noted that the airport was jointly administered by the two County Councils, which were satisfied with the arrangement. We concluded that although the existing boundary was not very clearly defined, there was in this instance little to be gained in terms of effective and convenient local government by uniting the airport in Durham. We therefore decided to take an interim decision to make no proposals for Teesside Airport.

14. The letter announcing our interim decision to make no proposals for radical changes to the County of Cleveland was published on 16 November 1987 while our draft proposals to unite Thorpe Larches in Durham and our decision to make no proposals for Teesside Airport was published on 23 November 1987. Copies were sent to all those who had received copies of our letter of 2 September 1986 or had made representations to us. Durham and Cleveland County Councils were asked to publish notices giving details of our decisions and to post copies of them at places where public notices are customarily displayed. They were also asked to place copies of our letters on deposit for inspection at their main offices for a period of 8 weeks. Comments were invited by 11 January 1988 and 20 January 1988 respectively.

RESPONSE TO OUR DRAFT PROPOSAL AND INTERIM DECISIONS

15. We received representations from 9 sources in response to our interim decision letter on Cleveland and from 5 sources in response to our draft proposals letter on Durham. They included comments from Cleveland, Durham and North Yorkshire County Councils, Teesdale and Sedgfield District Councils, Hartlepool Borough Council, British Gas Northern, the Northern Regional Health Authority, the British Waterways Board, Cleveland Rural Voice and two members of the public.

16. Only one of the representations was opposed to our decision to make no proposals for radical changes to Cleveland. No comments were received in opposition to our decisions at Thorpe Larches and Teesside Airport.

OUR FINAL PROPOSALS

17. As required by section 60(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 we have carefully considered all the representations made to us.

The Question of Radical Change

18. We reconsidered the position of the county of Cleveland as a whole, and in particular the suggestion that Hartlepool should be returned to Durham. We

were in fact surprised at the very small response to our interim decision letter which brought forward no new arguments. We have decided to confirm our interim decision to make no proposals as our final decision.

Thorpe Larches

19. We noted the support of the local authorities concerned for our draft proposal and have decided to confirm it as our final proposal.

Teesside Airport

20. We considered the representations placed before us on this issue and noted that Ordnance Survey's suggestion appears to provide a clearer boundary. However, in view of the almost unanimous opposition to this suggestion and the apparently successful joint administration of the airport, we again concluded there was little to be gained in terms of effective and convenient local government from uniting the airport in Durham. We have therefore decided to confirm our interim decision to make no proposals for Teesside Airport as our final decision.

PUBLICATION

21. A separate letter enclosing copies of this report is being sent to the County Councils of Cleveland, Durham and North Yorkshire asking them to deposit copies of this report at their main offices for inspection for six-months. They are also asked to put notices to this effect on public notice boards and in the local press. The text of the notice 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 proposal, if you think fit, though not earlier than six weeks from the date it is submitted to you. Copies of this report,

which also includes a map, are also being sent to those who received our draft proposal and interim decision letters and to those who made comments.

LS

G J ELLERTON (Chairman)

J G POWELL (Deputy Chairman)

K F J ENNALS

G R PRENTICE

G E CHERRY

H R V SARKANY

BRIAN SCHOLES

S T GARRISH
Secretary

26 MAY 1988

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

COUNTY BOUNDARY REVIEW

CLEVELAND/DURHAM

FINAL PROPOSALS

Existing County Boundary



Proposed Boundary



LOCATION DIAGRAM



CONSEQUENTIAL CHANGES

MAP NO.	AREA REF.	FROM	TO
1	A	Cleveland Stockton on Tees District Grindon CP Whitton Ward Preston, Whitton and Wolviston ED	Durham Sedgfield District Sedgfield CP Sedgfield Ward Sedgfield ED
	B	Durham Sedgfield District Sedgfield CP Sedgfield Ward Sedgfield ED	Cleveland Stockton on Tees District Grindon CP Whitton Ward Preston, Whitton and Wolviston ED

MAP 1

DURHAM

The Gables

Area A

Woodside

Long Canal, 10 to 1000 ft
Long Canal, 80 ft

Area B

CLEVELAND



