

Local Government  
Boundary Commission  
For England  
Report No.554

Review of Non-Metropolitan Counties

COUNTY OF NORFOLK  
BOUNDARIES WITH  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
AND SUFFOLK

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BOUNDARY COMMISSION

FOR ENGLAND

REPORT NO. 554

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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REVIEW OF NON-METROPOLITAN COUNTIES  
THE COUNTY OF NORFOLK: BOUNDARIES WITH CAMBRIDGESHIRE, LINCOLNSHIRE AND  
SUFFOLK

COMMISSION'S FINAL PROPOSALS

INTRODUCTION

1. On 26 July 1985 we wrote to Norfolk County Council announcing our intention to undertake a review of Norfolk under section 48(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. Copies of our letter were sent to all the local authorities in Norfolk and in the adjoining counties. Copies were also sent to the Members of Parliament with constituency interests, the headquarters of the main political parties, and Government Departments which might have an interest, as well as to the East Anglian and Trent Regional Health Authorities, British Telecom, the Eastern and East Midlands Electricity and Gas Boards, the Anglian Water Authority, the English Tourist Board, Port Authorities in Norfolk and the adjoining counties, the local government press, local television and radio stations serving the area and the National and County Associations of Local Councils.

2. The County Council was requested, in co-operation as necessary with the other County Councils and with the District Councils concerned, to publish a notice for two successive weeks in appropriate local newspapers so as to give wide publicity to the start of the review. The County Council was 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 it has a statutory function.

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

#### THE SUBMISSIONS MADE TO US

4. We received responses from the County Councils of Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Suffolk; the District Councils of Breckland, Forest Heath and Fenland, and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk; and from various town and parish councils.

#### BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE COUNTIES OF NORFOLK AND CAMBRIDGESSHIRE

##### Walsoken/Wisbech

5. Fenland District Council (Cambridgeshire) submitted proposals affecting four lengths of its boundary with the borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. The first suggestion would involve the transfer into the parish of Wisbech (and the district of Fenland) of a substantial part of the parish of Walsoken, in the borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, extending eastward to the Wisbech bypass and northward to Green Dike and Dark Lane. This would take in development which straddled the present county boundary to the immediate east of the town of Wisbech. The effect would be to transfer 935 residents of Walsoken (total population 1091) into Wisbech. Wisbech Town Council put forward a similar though slightly less extensive scheme for this same area. Cambridgeshire County Council supported Fenland District Council's proposal. Norfolk County Council, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, Walsoken Parish Council and Councillor Harold Goose, were opposed to either scheme.

Emneth/Elm

6. Fenland District Council's second suggestion concerned the possible transfer into its district (and the parish of Elm) of part of the parish of Emneth where, in its view, a community of interest existed between those residents who would be affected by the proposal and the village of Elm. Cambridgeshire County Council supported the transfer, but the principal authorities in Norfolk were all opposed to any change in the boundary.

Outwell (Norfolk)/ Outwell (Isle)

Upwell (Norfolk)/Upwell (Isle)

7. Fenland District Council also suggested that parts of the parishes of Outwell (Isle) and Upwell (Isle), Cambridgeshire, be transferred respectively to the parishes of Outwell (Norfolk) and Upwell (Norfolk), in the borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, thus uniting within one county communities divided by the existing boundary. King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council agreed in principle with the merits of this suggestion, but produced its own proposals to transfer the whole of Outwell (Isle) and a substantial area of Upwell (Isle) into Norfolk. Both the County Councils opposed any alteration to the boundary in this vicinity. Norfolk County Council contended that any administrative difficulties created by the present boundary were overcome by co-operation between the local authorities. The Outwell and Upwell (Norfolk) Parish Councils supported the counter-suggestion by King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.

BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE COUNTIES OF NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK

Hopton-on-Sea/Corton

8. Corton Parish Council, in the district of Waveney (Suffolk), suggested a minor boundary change, to transfer into its parish part of the parish of Hopton-on-Sea, in the borough of Great Yarmouth. It claimed that part of the existing boundary, aligned with a footpath, was poorly defined, and proposed that it should instead follow the more recognisable features of Longfulans Lane

and the Coast Road. Suffolk County Council and Waveney District Council had no objection to the proposal, but Norfolk County Council and Great Yarmouth Borough Council were opposed. Norfolk County Council said that the footpath was recorded as a public right of way and could be restored.

#### Weeting/Brandon

9. Forest Heath District Council, Suffolk, proposed that part of the parish of Weeting, in the district of Breckland, Norfolk, be transferred to the parish of Brandon and the district of Forest Heath. The area sought contained mainly industrial properties but with some small residential areas lying just to the north of the town of Brandon; Forest Heath District Council suggested that the residents and employees of the area looked to Brandon and Forest Heath for their services and facilities. Suffolk County Council and Brandon Town Council had no objections to the proposed change. Norfolk County Council and Breckland District Council objected to the proposal. The County Council argued that the change would deprive the parish of Weeting of substantial rateable value and failed to take account of all development in the area; it suggested alternative alignments, either on the Little Ouse River or the railway line further to the north of Brandon. Weeting Parish Council disputed the extent to which the inhabitants of the area used the amenities within Suffolk and agreed with the County Council's suggestion of the railway line.

#### BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE COUNTIES OF NORFOLK AND LINCOLNSHIRE

10. No proposals were put forward in respect of the Norfolk/Lincolnshire boundary at this stage. Lincolnshire County Council wrote that no changes should be made.

## OUR DRAFT PROPOSALS

### BOUNDARY BETWEEN NORFOLK AND CAMBRIDGESHIRE

#### Walsoken/Wisbech

11. We considered the proposals from Fenland District Council and Wisbech Town Council to transfer a substantial area of the parish of Walsoken into the district of Fenland. We agreed that the built up area of Walsoken to the immediate east of Wisbech formed an extension of the town and should be incorporated within Cambridgeshire. We felt, however, that there was no reason for also transferring that part of Walsoken lying to the north and north east of Wisbech. We therefore concluded that we should issue a draft proposal to realign the boundary to follow the A47 (Wisbech) bypass to the east and Black Bear Lane to the north.

#### Electoral Consequences

12. Our draft proposal would have involved the transfer of approximately 500 electors from the borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to the district of Fenland and we decided to recommend that these electors should be allocated to the Wards and Electoral Divisions detailed in the Annex to this report.

#### Emneth/Elm

13. We noted that the part of the parish of Emneth sought for transfer into Cambridgeshire was divided by the A47 (Wisbech) bypass and that it appeared to be nearer to the Elm community than to Emneth. We concluded however that the part of the area suggested for transfer which lay to the south of the bypass road, was effectively separated not only from Elm by the A1122 road but also from the town of Wisbech by the bypass. Furthermore, that part lying to the north of the bypass appeared to have a greater affinity with Wisbech than with Elm. We, decided, therefore, to issue a draft proposal to transfer into

Wisbech that part of Emneth to the north of the bypass but to make no proposals in respect of the area to the south of the road.

#### Electoral Consequences

14. Our draft proposal would have involved the transfer of about 100 electors from the borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to the district of Fenland. We decided to recommend that these electors should be allocated to the Wisbech East Ward and Wisbech South Electoral Division as detailed in the Annex to this report.

#### Outwell (Norfolk)/Outwell (Isle)

#### Upwell (Norfolk)/Upwell (Isle)

15. We noted that although the present boundary clearly divided the Outwell and Upwell communities, there appeared to be good co-operation between the parish councils over the provision and use of services and amenities: to that extent there was a case for taking no action. However, we took the view that the need for arrangements between the local authorities was prima facie evidence that the existing boundary was unsatisfactory. More significantly there were whole communities which should not be split by a local authority boundary - a view held by the two local authorities involved. The suggestion by King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council to transfer into Norfolk the whole of Outwell (Isle) and a substantial area of Upwell (Isle) seemed preferable to the scheme put forward by Fenland District Council, which would still leave some division of the communities. We felt however that King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council's proposal for Upwell (Isle) was too extensive in that it sought to encompass outlying areas and properties which were clearly not part of the Upwell community. As an alternative, an alignment which Ordnance Survey had suggested offered a compromise between the two schemes, and would transfer into Norfolk those properties lying on the outskirts of the Upwell settlement which could reasonably be considered as forming part of that community. We decided to issue draft proposals to transfer into Norfolk the whole of the parish of Outwell (Isle) and that part of the parish of Upwell (Isle) encompassed by the Ordnance Survey suggested line.

### Electoral Consequences

16. Our draft proposals would have involved the transfer of 425 electors of the parish of Outwell (Isle) and 450 electors of the parish of Upwell (Isle), in the district of Fenland, to the borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. We decided to recommend that these electors should be allocated to the Upwell, Outwell and Delph Ward and Marshland South Electoral Division as detailed in the Annex to this report.

### BOUNDARY BETWEEN NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK

#### Hopton-on-Sea/Corton

17. We did not concur with Corton Parish Council's argument that adjustment to the boundary was necessary because of its present poor definition on the ground; we concluded there was no case in terms of effective and convenient local government to support the transfer of the area sought and decided that we would make no proposals.

#### Weeting/Brandon

18. We noted that the existing boundary was unsatisfactory insofar as it split at least one property and in part followed no identifiable features. We considered that while either of the counter-proposals put forward by Norfolk County Council would rectify these anomalies, the suggestion by Forest Heath District Council offered a more acceptable solution; the area sought for transfer clearly formed an extension to the town of Brandon and lay some distance from the main settlement of Weeting. We therefore decided to issue a draft proposal based on Forest Heath District Council's scheme.

### Electoral Consequences

19. Our draft proposal would have involved the transfer of 15 electors from the district of Breckland to the district of Forest Heath and we decided to recommend that these electors should be allocated to the Wards and Electoral Division detailed in the Annex to this report.

20. Our draft proposals and interim decision to make no proposals were published in a letter to Norfolk County Council on 30 January 1987. Copies were sent to the County Councils of Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Suffolk, to the District, Borough and Parish Councils affected, and to other organisations and individuals who had made representations to us or who might have had an interest in the boundary issues. The County Councils of Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk were asked to arrange publication of a notice giving details of our draft proposals and to place copies of it at places where public notices are customarily displayed. They were also asked to place copies of our draft proposals letter on deposit for inspection at their main offices for a period of eight weeks. Comments were invited by 27 March 1987.

#### RESPONSE TO OUR DRAFT PROPOSALS AND INTERIM DECISION

21. We received representations from 29 sources in response to our draft proposals letter. In the main, these were from local authorities, local councillors and businesses affected by our draft proposals.

#### BOUNDARY BETWEEN NORFOLK AND CAMBRIDGESHIRE

##### Walsoken/Wisbech

##### Emmeth/Wisbech

22. Our draft proposals to relign the boundary east and south-east of Wisbech along the A47 by pass were opposed by those Norfolk local authorities concerned. Norfolk County Council argued there was no justification for such a change and suggested that it would harm the viability of what would remain within Norfolk of the parish of Walsoken. The County Council suggested we should hold a local meeting before we formulated our final proposals. King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council contended that Walsoken and Emmeth were long established Norfolk communities and no case had been made out to support the transfer of parts of the parishes into Cambridgeshire. Walsoken Parish Council had conducted a poll throughout the parish; 691 parishioners favoured no change whilst 58 wished to transfer into Cambridgeshire. Emmeth Parish Council had conducted a referendum among those residents of the parish affected by the draft

households replied, of which only one favoured transfer. West Walton Parish Council, Mr Henry Bellingham MP, Cllr Harold Goose and a private individual added their opposition to the draft proposals. Another objector, a local firm, claimed that transfer of its premises into Cambridgeshire might lead to redundancies given that rates in the district of Fenland were substantially higher.

23. Cambridgeshire County Council, Fenland District Council and Wisbech Town Council supported the draft proposals.

24. Fenland District Council suggested a further adjustment to the Walsoken/Wisbech boundary to the north of the town. They argued that an alignment on Waterlees Road and Second Marsh Road would remove an anomaly where the county boundary splits a property, and allow for current development which might spill over the existing boundary. It would also incorporate within Cambridgeshire all of the operational part of the port at Wisbech, of which the Council is the harbour and port authority.

25. We agreed that alteration to the boundary appeared necessary but felt that Fenland District Council's suggestion was excessive. We preferred a less extensive alteration which would still remove the anomaly and take in the development area. We decided to issue a further draft proposal accordingly.

Outwell (Norfolk)/Outwell (Isle)

Upwell (Norfolk)/Upwell (Isle)

26. Norfolk County Council, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, Fenland District Council, and Upwell (Norfolk) Parish Council supported the draft proposals. Cllr Harold Goose added that the Outwell and Upwell communities ought to be united within Norfolk as all the services used by the residents were located on the Norfolk side of the boundary. Only Cambridgeshire County Council expressed objections, claiming that local opposition to any proposed change was vigorous. It argued that the proposals did not resolve the problems within the area and that the existing well-defined boundary should be left alone.

BOUNDARY BETWEEN NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK

Weeting/Brandon

27. Our draft proposal was strongly opposed by Norfolk County Council, Breckland District Council, Weeting Parish Council, Sir Paul Hawkins MP, District Cllr. Mrs S Childerhouse, and a number of local companies whose industrial properties were situated along Fengate Drive, part of the area proposed for transfer. The County Council contended that our proposed boundary followed no identifiable features nor made any allowance for possible further development; as an alternative, it reiterated the earlier suggestion that the boundary should follow the railway line. Other objectors pointed to the fact that the proposed boundary had been rendered anomalous by recent development in the vicinity of Fengate Drive. Breckland District Council provided up to date information relating to recent and expected development in the area.

28. Support for the draft proposal came from Suffolk County Council, Forest Heath District Council, Brandon Parish Council and West Suffolk Health Authority.

BOUNDARY BETWEEN NORFOLK AND LINCOLNSHIRE

District of South Holland (Lincolnshire)/Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

29. King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council put forward a new proposal to transfer into its borough the Wingland Marsh area of the parish of Sutton Bridge, in the district of South Holland, the boundary to be tied to the Nene Outfall Cut. Lincolnshire County Council, South Holland District Council, Sutton Bridge Parish Council, and Sir Richard Body MP, all objected to the scheme; 30 local residents also wrote to add their objections, whilst two supported the proposal.

30. We considered that the Borough Council's case rested entirely on the contention that the Nene Outfall Cut formed a better physical division than the existing road and field boundaries. We concluded that the Borough Council had failed to make out a reasonable case in terms of effective and convenient local government to support its claim, and decided to issue an interim decision to make no proposals.

31. We published our additional draft proposal concerning the Walsoken/Wisbech boundary and the interim decision to make no proposals in respect of Wingland Marsh, in a letter to Norfolk County Council dated 9 December 1987. Copies were sent to all the other local authorities concerned and to other bodies and persons who made representations to us. Comments were invited by 3 February 1988.

#### RESPONSE TO OUR ADDITIONAL DRAFT PROPOSAL AND INTERIM DECISION

32. Responses to the additional draft proposal were received from six sources. Norfolk County Council had no further comment to make but reiterated its opposition to our more substantial proposals for changes in the Wisbech area. Walsoken Parish Council said it was not completely against the proposed alteration to this stretch of the boundary with Wisbech while reiterating its opposition to our original draft proposals. Cambridgeshire County Council were opposed to the suggested boundary alignment which it argued was too restrictive and made no allowance for possible future development; it proposed an alternative, which would tie the boundary to Waterlees Road and First Marsh Road. Fenland District Council said its original proposal offered a more suitable long term boundary. Mr Henry Bellingham MP and the same private individual restated their opposition to any change to the boundary between Walsoken and Wisbech.

33. There was no comment on our interim decision in respect of the Norfolk/Lincolnshire boundary at Wingland Marsh.

#### OUR FINAL PROPOSALS

34. As required by section 60(2) of the Local Government Act 1972, we have carefully considered all the representations made to us in response to our draft proposals, additional draft proposals and interim decisions to make no proposals

Walsoken/Emneth/Wisbech (our original draft proposals)

35. We note that our draft proposals would still leave the parish of Walsoken with approximately 300 electors and a rateable value of about £50,000, and we are satisfied that the future viability of the parish is not in doubt.

Notwithstanding the continuing opposition of the local authorities in Norfolk, we have concluded that no significant new information has been submitted to cause us to abandon or amend our draft proposals for change to the boundaries of Walsoken and Emneth in the areas east and south-east of Wisbech. A number of references have been made to the strength of local feeling, expressed by way of referenda conducted by Walsoken and Emneth Parish Councils, though there has been little direct comment to us. Those areas of Walsoken and Emneth proposed for transfer appear to have few ties with the rest of their respective parishes as they are effectively severed by the A47 bypass and would seem to look naturally toward Wisbech. Despite the apparent local opposition, we have decided to adhere to our draft proposals and confirm them as our final proposals. We conclude that a local meeting would not yield any further useful information.

Walsoken/Wisbech (our additional draft proposal - paragraphs 24 and 25 above)

36. We have noted the objections raised by Cambridgeshire County Council and Fenland District Council, but consider that neither authority has been able to demonstrate that the suggested alignment would itself create anomalies or that development northward from Wisbech can be expected in the near future. We have therefore decided to confirm our additional draft proposal as our final proposal.

Outwell/Upwell

38. We have noted that, with the exception of Cambridgeshire County Council, our draft proposals to unite within Norfolk the Outwell and Upwell communities have been welcomed, and have decided to confirm them as final.

Weeting./Brandon

38. We consider that the area proposed for transfer is clearly orientated toward Brandon and that generally the representations contain nothing new

to make us conclude otherwise. We have looked again at the alternative propounded by Norfolk County Council, to realign the boundary with the railway line, but feel this is the least satisfactory option as it ignores the fact that no discernible break exists between Brandon and the area in question. We note the up to date information provided by Breckland District Council relating to recent and expected development in the vicinity of Fengate Drove. We have decided to confirm our draft proposal as final, but with a minor adjustment to our suggested boundary to take account of the known new development. We have also considered the possible inclusion in the area to be transferred of a property known as "Raltay", but have decided against doing so since its access is not via Fengate Drove.

39. There has been no comment on our interim decisions to make no proposals for changes between the parishes of Hopton-on-Sea and Corton (Norfolk/Suffolk boundary) and at Wingland Marsh (Norfolk/Lincolnshire boundary). We have therefore decided to confirm our interim decisions as our final decisions.

40. We are satisfied that the changes set out above are desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government and we propose them accordingly. We further propose the consequential electoral changes set out in the Annex to this report.

#### PUBLICATION

41. A separate letter enclosing copies of this report is being sent to the County Councils of Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Suffolk asking them to deposit copies at their main offices for inspection over a six-month period. The County Councils are also being asked to co-operate in putting 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, after the expiry of six weeks from the date it is submitted to you. Copies of this report, which also includes small scale maps, are also being sent to those who received the consultation letter and to those who responded in writing.

Signed

G J ELLERTON (Chairman)

J G POWELL (Deputy Chairman)

G E CHERRY

K F J ENNALS

G R PRENTICE

H R V SARKANY

BRIAN SCHOLES

S T GARRISH

Secretary

23 April 1988

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

COUNTY BOUNDARY REVIEW

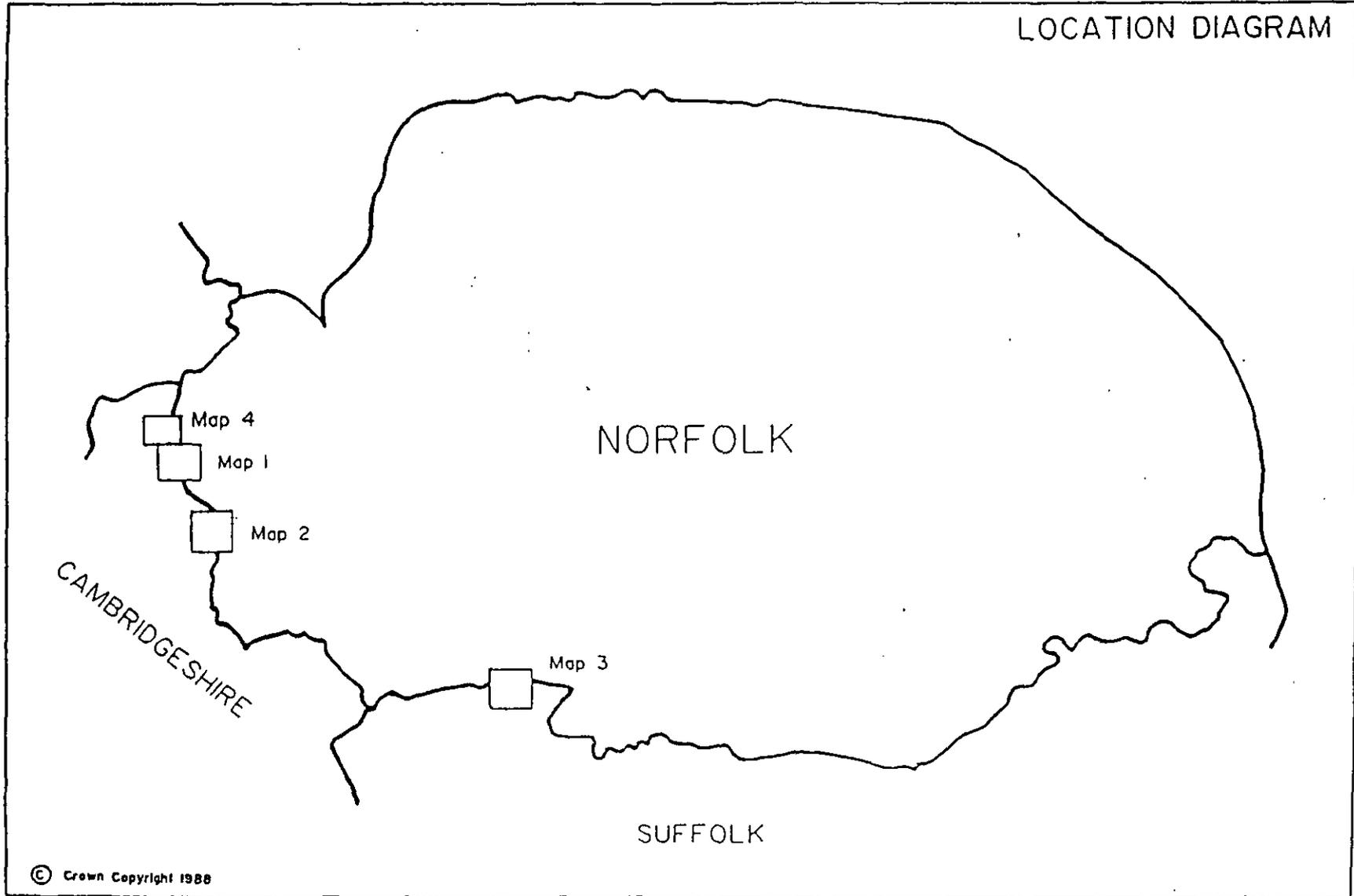
NORFOLK

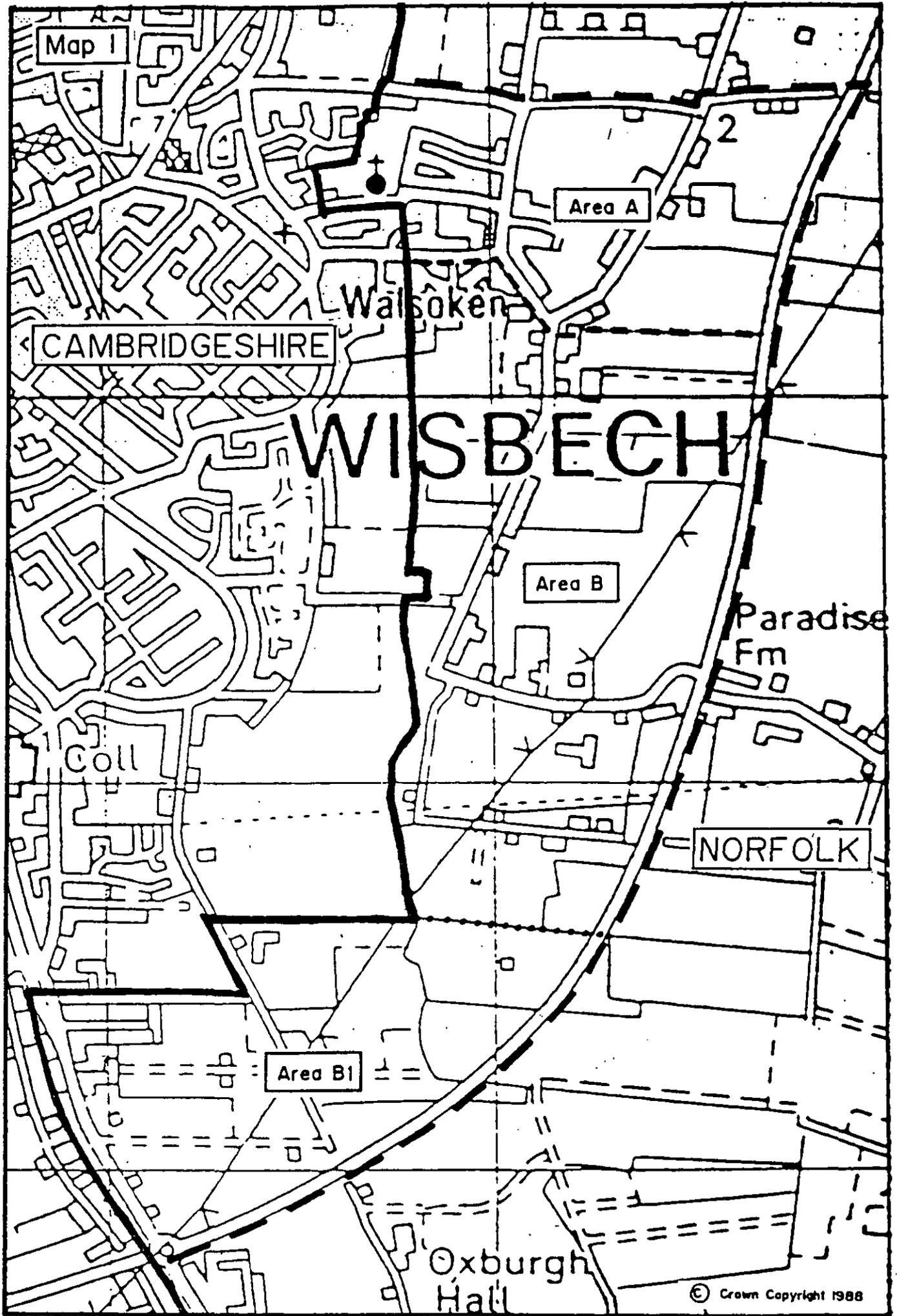
AFFECTING CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND SUFFOLK

FINAL PROPOSALS

Existing County Boundary.....	—————
Proposed County Boundary.....	— — — — —
Existing CP Boundary.....	• • • • •
Proposed District Ward/ED Boundary ...	- - - - -

LOCATION DIAGRAM





Map 1

Area A

Walsoken

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

WISBECH

Area B

Paradise Fm

Coll

NORFOLK

Area B1

Oxburgh Hall

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Map 2

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Area C

OUTWELL CP

Birdbeck Field

am-Hall Field

Cotton's Common

Upwell

Area D

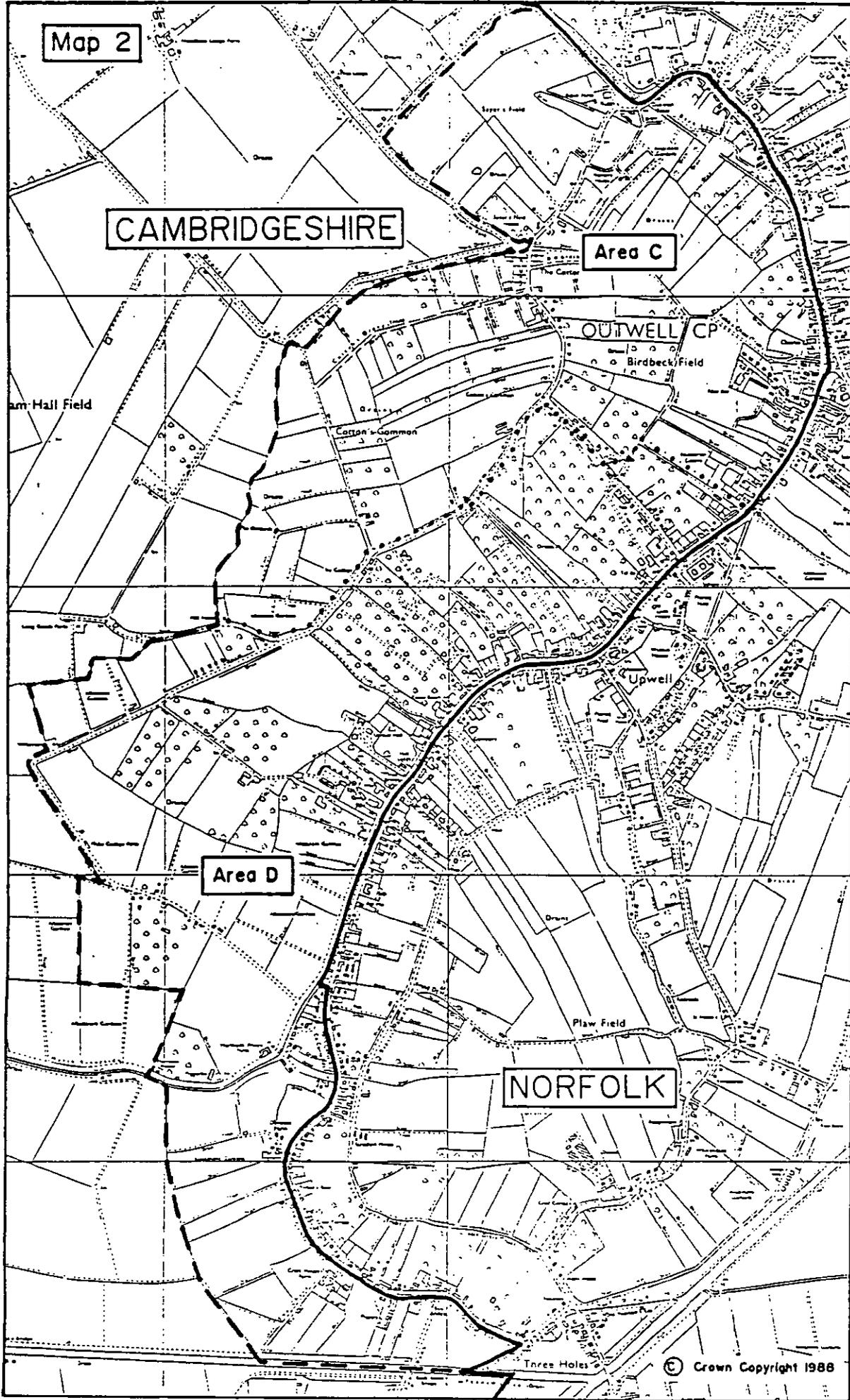
Orms

Plaw Field

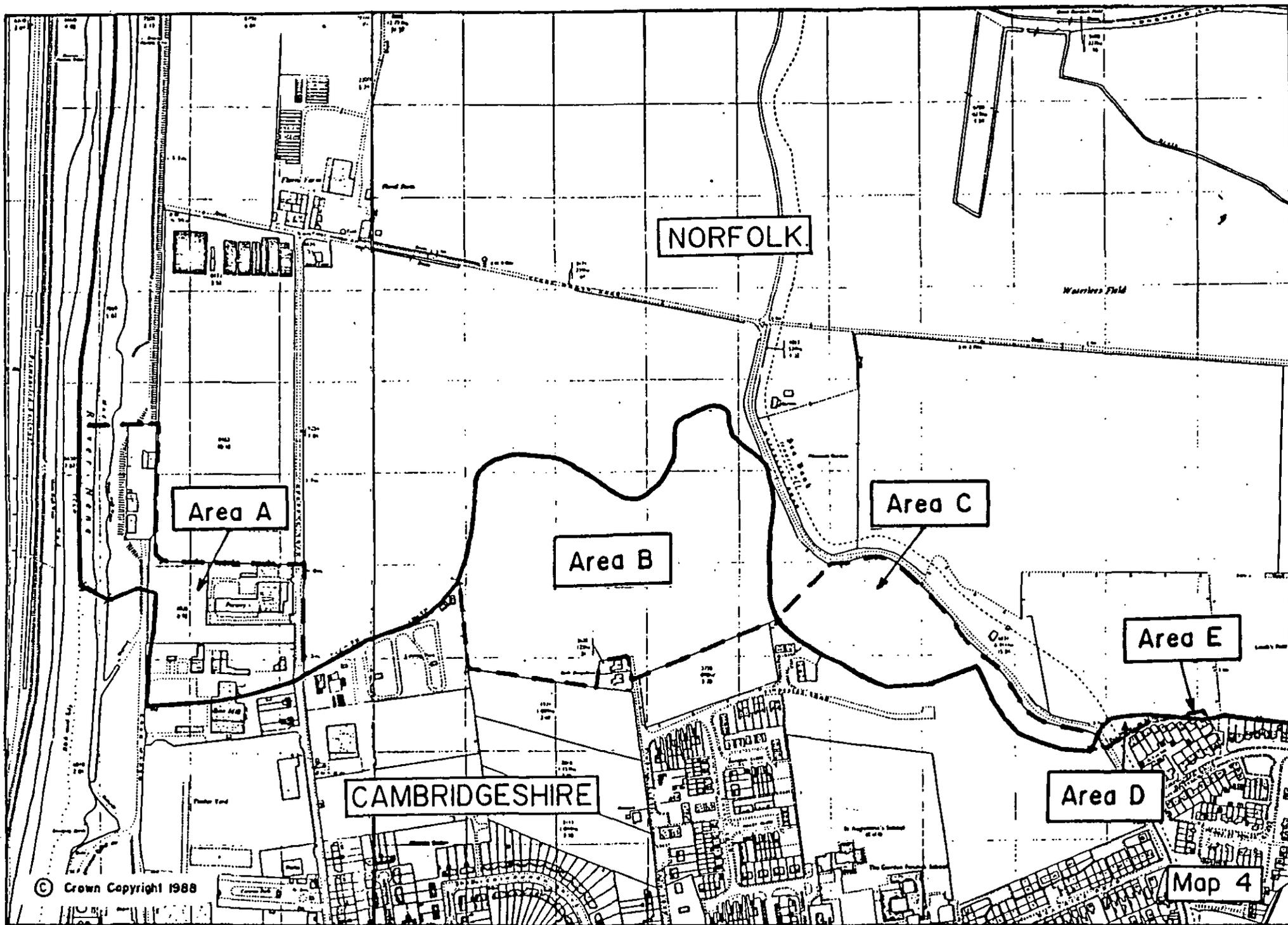
NORFOLK

Three Holes

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NORFOLK

Worles Field

Area A

Area B

Area C

Area E

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Area D

Map 4

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## CONSEQUENTIAL CHANGES

MAP NO.	AREA REF.	FROM	TO
1	A	Norfolk King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Walsoken CP Mershe Lande Ward Marshland South ED	Cambridgeshire Fenland District Wisbech CP Wisbech North East Ward Wisbech North ED
1	B	Norfolk King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Walsoken CP Mershe Lande Ward Marshland South ED	Cambridgeshire Fenland District Wisbech CP Wisbech East Ward Wisbech South ED
1	Bi	Norfolk King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Emneth CP Emneth Ward Marshland South ED	Cambridgeshire Fenland District Wisbech CP Wisbech East Ward Wisbech South ED
2	C	Cambridgeshire Fenland District Outwell CP (C) Outwell and Upwell Ward Elm ED	Norfolk King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Outwell CP (N) Upwell, Outwell and Delph Ward Marshland South ED
2	D	Cambridgeshire Fenland District Upwell CP (C) Outwell and Upwell Ward Elm ED	Norfolk King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Upwell CP (N) Upwell, Outwell and Delph Ward Marshland South ED
3	E	Norfolk Breckland District Weeting-with-Broomhill CP Weeting Ward Wissey ED	Suffolk Forest Heath District Brandon CP Brandon West Ward Brandon ED
3	F	Norfolk Breckland District Weeting-with-Broomhill CP Weeting Ward Wissey ED	Suffolk Forest Heath District Brandon CP Brandon East Ward Brandon ED
4	A C E	Norfolk King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Walsoken CP Mershe Lande Ward Marshland ED	Cambridgeshire Fenland District Wisbech CP Wisbech North Ward Wisbech North ED
4	B D	Cambridgeshire Fenland District Wisbech CP Wisbech North Ward Wisbech North ED	Norfolk King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Walsoken CP Mershe Lande Ward Marshland ED

