

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS
FOR NORTH EAST
DERBYSHIRE

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

November 1998

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for North East Derbyshire.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Helena Shovelton (Deputy Chairman)

Peter Brokenshire

Professor Michael Clarke

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Local Government Commission for England

24 November 1998

Dear Secretary of State

On 2 December 1997 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of North East Derbyshire under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in June 1998 and undertook a ten-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraphs 103-104) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in North East Derbyshire.

We recommend that North East Derbyshire should be served by 53 councillors representing 25 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We recommend that the Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

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

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

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT
Chairman

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of North East Derbyshire on 2 December 1997. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 30 June 1998, after which we undertook a ten-week period of consultation.

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

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in North East Derbyshire:

- **in 11 of the 26 wards, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district, and four wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2002, electoral equality is not expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 13 wards, and by more than 20 per cent in six of these wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figure 1 and paragraphs 103-104) are that:

- **North East Derbyshire District Council should be served by 53 councillors, as at present;**
- **there should be 25 wards, one fewer than at present;**
- **changes should be made to the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards, resulting in a net reduction of one ward, while seven wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place every four years.**

These recommendations seek to ensure that the number of electors represented by each district

councillor is as nearly as possible the same, having regard to local circumstances.

- **In all 25 wards, the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average, both initially and in 2002.**

Recommendations are also made for changes to parish and town council electoral arrangements which provide for:

- **new warding arrangements for the parishes of Clay Cross, Dronfield, Eckington, Killamarsh, North Wingfield and Wingerworth.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 4 January 1999:

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

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

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1 Ashover	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (Ashover parish)	Map 2
2 Barlow & Holmesfield	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Barlow and Holmesfield)	Map 2
3 Brampton & Walton	2	Brampton & Walton ward (the parishes of Brampton and Holymoorside & Walton); Wingerworth ward (part – part of Wingerworth parish)	Maps 2 and A5
4 Clay Cross North	3	Clay Cross North ward (part – North parish ward (part) of Clay Cross parish); Wingerworth ward (part – part of Wingerworth parish)	Maps A4 and A5
5 Clay Cross South	2	Clay Cross South ward (South parish ward of Clay Cross parish); Clay Cross North ward (part – North parish ward (part) of Clay Cross parish)	Map A5
6 Coal Aston	2	Coal Aston ward (Coal Aston parish ward of Dronfield parish); Dronfield North ward (part – Dronfield North parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish)	Large map
7 Dronfield North	3	Dronfield North ward (part – Dronfield North parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish); Dronfield South ward (part – Dronfield South parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish)	Large map
8 Dronfield South	2	Dronfield South ward (part – Dronfield South parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish); Dronfield North ward (part – Dronfield North parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish)	Large map
9 Dronfield Woodhouse	2	Dronfield Woodhouse ward (part – Dronfield Woodhouse parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish); Gosforth Valley ward (part – Gosforth Valley parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish); Dronfield North ward (part – Dronfield North parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish); Dronfield South ward (part – Dronfield South parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish)	Large map

Figure 1 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
10	Eckington North	2	Eckington North ward (part – North parish ward (part) of Eckington parish)	Map A2
11	Eckington South	2	Eckington South ward (South parish ward of Eckington parish); Eckington North ward (part – North parish ward (part) of Eckington parish)	Map A2
12	Gosforth Valley	3	Gosforth Valley ward (part – Gosforth Valley parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish); Dronfield South ward (part – Dronfield South parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish); Dronfield Woodhouse ward (part – Dronfield Woodhouse parish ward (part) of Dronfield parish)	Large map
13	Grassmoor	2	<i>Unchanged</i> Hasland ward (the parishes of Grassmoor, Hasland & Winswick and Temple Normanton)	Map 2
14	Holmewood & Heath	2	Holmewood & Heath ward (Heath & Holmewood parish); North Wingfield Central ward (part – part of North Wingfield parish)	Map A6
15	Killamarsh East	2	Killamarsh East ward (East parish ward of Killamarsh parish); Killamarsh West ward (part – West parish ward (part) of Killamarsh parish)	Map A3
16	Killamarsh West	3	Killamarsh West ward (part – West parish ward (part) of Killamarsh parish)	Map A3
17	North Wingfield Central	3	North Wingfield Central ward (part – part of North Wingfield parish)	Map A6
18	Pilsley & Morton	3	Morton ward (part – the parishes of Morton and Stretton); Pilsley ward (Pilsley parish)	Map 2
19	Renishaw	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (Renishaw parish ward of Eckington parish)	Map 2
20	Ridgeway & Marsh Lane	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (Ridgeway & Marsh Lane parish ward of Eckington parish)	Map 2

continued overleaf

Figure 1 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
21	Shirland	3	Shirland ward (the parishes of Shirland & Higham and Wessington); Morton ward (part – Brackenfield parish)	Map 2
22	Sutton	2	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Calow and Sutton cum Duckmanton)	Map 2
23	Tupton	2	Tupton ward (Tupton parish); Wingerworth ward (part – part of Wingerworth parish)	Maps 2 and A5
24	Unstone	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (Unstone parish)	Map 2
25	Wingerworth	3	Wingerworth ward (part – part of Wingerworth parish)	Map A5

Notes: 1 The whole district is parished.

2 Map 2 and the maps in Appendix A illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.

1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for North East Derbyshire. We have now reviewed all the districts in Derbyshire as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews of all principal local authority areas in England.

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

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

3 We have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (published in March 1996, supplemented in September 1996 and updated in March 1998), which sets out our approach to the reviews.

4 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 2 December 1997, when we wrote to North East Derbyshire District Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. Our letter was copied to Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the district, the Member of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the district, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations, we published notices in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Council to publicise the review more widely. The closing date for receipt of representations was 9 March 1998.

5 At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

6 Stage Three began on 30 June 1998 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for North East Derbyshire*, and ended on 7 September 1998. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

7 The district of North East Derbyshire lies to the west of Bolsover and on the eastern edge of the Peak District National Park. It borders Sheffield to the north and almost completely encircles Chesterfield borough. The district encompasses 100 square kilometres and is essentially rural in character. Over half the population is located within the four main areas (and parishes) of Clay Cross, Dronfield, Eckington and Killamarsh. The remaining 20 parishes cover a range of smaller communities, the largest being Ashover which covers 9,560 acres and the smallest Temple Normanton which covers 520 acres. Dronfield, Eckington and Killamarsh have all experienced rapid growth in recent years with the development of large suburban estates. Killamarsh has seen its population increase by over 50 per cent in the last 15 years.

8 The landscape of North East Derbyshire is varied and ranges from the predominantly rural moorlands and dales in the west to the industrialised former coalfields on the eastern side. Coalmining, together with iron, steel and heavy engineering were the mainstay of the communities at Clay Cross, Dronfield, Eckington and Killamarsh, which are now the main shopping and business towns in the district. Mining has declined significantly in recent years along with the iron and steel industry, but heavy engineering industries are now prominent in this part of the district.

9 The Midland main railway line from Sheffield to London passes through the district, together with the M1 motorway.

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

11 The electorate of the district (February 1997) is 77,967. The Council presently has 53 councillors who are elected from 26 wards (Map 1 and Figure 2). Nine wards are each represented by three councillors, nine wards elect two councillors each, while the remaining eight are single-member wards. The Council holds elections of the whole council every four years.

12 Since the last electoral review, there has been an increase in electorate in North East Derbyshire, with around 9 per cent more electors than two decades ago.

13 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,471 electors, which the District Council forecasts will increase to 1,485 by the year 2002 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in 11 of the 26 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average and in four wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Brampton & Walton ward where the councillor represents 39 per cent fewer electors than the district average.

Map 1:
Existing Wards in North East Derbyshire



KEY	
EXISTING WARD BOUNDARY	—————
EXISTING PARISH BOUNDARY	- - - - -

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Key to Wards

1 Ashover	10 Eckington North	19 Pilsley
2 Barlow and Holmesfield	11 Eckington South	20 Renishaw
3 Brampton and Walton	12 Gosforth Valley	21 Ridgeway and Marsh Lane
4 Clay Cross North	13 Hasland	22 Shirland
5 Clay Cross South	14 Holmewood and Heath	23 Sutton
6 Coal Aston	15 Killamarsh East	24 Tupton
7 Dronfield North	16 Killamarsh West	25 Unstone
8 Dronfield South	17 Morton	26 Wingerworth
9 Dronfield Woodhouse	18 North Wingfield Central	

Figure 2:
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Ashover	1	1,493	1,493	1	1,473	1,473	-1
2 Barlow & Holmesfield	1	1,598	1,598	9	1,589	1,589	7
3 Brampton & Walton	3	2,683	894	-39	2,632	877	-41
4 Clay Cross North	3	4,364	1,455	-1	4,335	1,445	-3
5 Clay Cross South	2	2,713	1,357	-8	2,760	1,380	-7
6 Coal Aston (Dronfield)	2	2,663	1,332	-9	2,603	1,302	-12
7 Dronfield North	3	3,712	1,237	-16	3,652	1,217	-18
8 Dronfield South	3	5,313	1,771	20	5,389	1,796	21
9 Dronfield Woodhouse	1	1,663	1,663	13	1,653	1,653	11
10 Eckington North	2	3,163	1,568	7	3,234	1,617	9
11 Eckington South	2	2,734	1,367	-7	2,764	1,382	-7
12 Gosforth Valley (Dronfield)	3	4,765	1,588	8	4,954	1,651	11
13 Hasland	2	3,061	1,531	4	3,130	1,565	5
14 Holmewood & Heath	2	2,230	1,115	-24	2,239	1,120	-25
15 Killamarsh East	1	1,803	1,803	23	1,831	1,831	23
16 Killamarsh West	3	5,089	1,696	15	5,402	1,801	21
17 Morton	1	1,606	1,606	9	1,606	1,606	8
18 North Wingfield Central	3	5,022	1,674	14	5,070	1,690	14
19 Pilsley	2	2,527	1,264	-14	2,585	1,293	-13
20 Renishaw	1	1,498	1,498	2	1,518	1,518	2
21 Ridgeway & Marsh Lane	1	1,431	1,431	-3	1,403	1,403	-6

continued overleaf

Figure 2 (continued):
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
22 Shirland	3	4,128	1,376	-6	4,175	1,392	-6
23 Sutton	2	3,136	1,568	7	3,088	1,544	4
24 Tupton	2	2,401	1,201	-18	2,401	1,201	-19
25 Unstone	1	1,506	1,506	2	1,487	1,487	0
26 Wingerworth	3	5,692	1,897	29	5,721	1,907	28
Totals	53	77,967	—	—	78,694	—	—
Averages	—	—	1,471	—	—	1,485	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on North East Derbyshire District Council's Stage One submission.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1997, electors in Brampton & Walton ward were relatively over-represented by 39 per cent, while electors in Wingerworth ward were relatively under-represented by 29 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

14 During Stage One we received 31 representations, including a district-wide scheme from North East Derbyshire District Council. We also received representations from North East Derbyshire Liberal Democrats, North East Derbyshire District Labour Party, nine parish councils and one town council, Dronfield Labour Party, Wingerworth Community Association, Councillor Pickford, member for Holymoorside & Walton county division, and 15 local residents. In the light of all the representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for North East Derbyshire*.

15 We considered that the District Council's proposals would achieve significant improvements to electoral equality for the district as a whole, and for the most part would utilise clear boundaries. The proposals would retain the current council size of 53, but would redistribute these councillors across the district, with one less councillor in Brampton & Walton ward and one more councillor in the Killamarsh area. We put forward many of the District Council's proposals for consultation, with the exception of the five wards in Dronfield town, where we adopted the boundaries proposed by the Liberal Democrats as part of our draft recommendations. We believe that our proposals struck a satisfactory balance of the criteria guiding our work.

16 In summary, we proposed that:

- (a) North East Derbyshire District Council should be served by 53 councillors, as at present;
- (b) there should be 25 wards, one fewer than at present;
- (c) the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards should be modified;
- (d) elections should continue to be held for the whole council every four years.

Draft Recommendation

North East Derbyshire District Council should comprise 53 councillors, serving 25 wards. The whole Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

17 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in all of the 25 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the district average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to be maintained in 2002.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

18 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 89 representations (two of which included petitions) were received. A list of all respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of North East Derbyshire District Council and the Commission.

North East Derbyshire District Council

19 The District Council supported the draft recommendations for all areas of North East Derbyshire and confirmed that it wished to retain the current cycle of whole-council elections.

Derbyshire County Council

20 The County Council supported the draft recommendations, except for the wards of Eckington North and Eckington South, North Wingfield Central, Holmewood & Heath and the town of Dronfield. It also submitted its own electorate projections which differed very slightly from those of the District Council.

North East Derbyshire District Labour Party

21 North East Derbyshire District Labour Party supported the draft recommendations, except those for Dronfield, where it supported the District Council's Stage One proposals.

North East Derbyshire Liberal Democrats

22 The North East Derbyshire Liberal Democrats supported the draft recommendations for Dronfield but opposed the recommendation to increase the number of town councillors for the town.

Parish Councils

23 At Stage Three we also received representations from three parish councils. Holymoorside &

Walton Parish Council reiterated the views it expressed during Stage One and supported Wingerworth Community Association's proposals for that area, which it considered would best reflect local identities and geography. North Wingfield Parish Council opposed the draft recommendations for North Wingfield as likely to confuse the electorate and proposed the retention of the existing boundary between the wards of North Wingfield Central and Holmewood & Heath.

24 Wingerworth Parish Council opposed the draft recommendation for the area and initially requested an extension to the consultation period in order to "gather further information that will demonstrate to the Commission the strength of feeling in Wingerworth for our proposals". It reiterated the views expressed during Stage One, proposing an alternative solution which it considered "is much better and [would cause] far less disruption to all parishes concerned". The Parish Council proposed that the external boundary of Wingerworth ward should remain intact, but that it be divided into two wards, Wingerworth East and Wingerworth West, each to be represented by two councillors. In addition, it proposed that polling district DD be transferred from Clay Cross ward to Tupton ward, that Clay Cross North ward be represented by two councillors, one fewer than at present, and that the wards of Brampton & Walton and Barlow & Holmesfield should be combined to form a three-member ward. The Parish Council enclosed a petition of 296 residents in the Adlington estate and Nethermoor Road areas opposing the draft recommendations for the area.

Members of Parliament

25 Harry Barnes, MP for North East Derbyshire, supported Wingerworth Parish Council's request for an extension to the consultation period, but made no comment on the draft recommendations.

Other Representations

26 A further 80 representations were received in response to our draft recommendations, from the Dronfield Labour Party, three Wingerworth parish

councillors, 75 Wingerworth residents and a resident of North Wingfield.

27 The Dronfield Labour Party opposed the draft recommendations for Dronfield and supported the District Council's Stage One proposals.

28 Councillor Lewin opposed the draft recommendation for Wingerworth as he considered it did not reflect local community identities. He supported the Parish Council's Stage One proposals, that Brampton & Walton ward should be represented by two councillors and that Wingerworth ward should be divided into two two-member wards, Wingerworth East and Wingerworth West.

29 Councillor Tester also supported the Parish Council's Stage One proposals. He questioned the level of local support attributed to the Wingerworth Community Association's Stage One proposals.

30 Councillor Walker opposed the draft recommendations as they would affect the Hardwick Wood area of Wingerworth, on community identity grounds. She enclosed a petition signed by 41 residents of the area, opposing the draft recommendation that it should form part of Brampton & Walton district ward.

31 We also received submissions from 75 residents of Wingerworth ward, 74 of whom opposed the draft recommendations for the area. Some supported the Parish Council's Stage One proposals for the area, some supported the proposals of the Wingerworth Community Association (i.e. that Wingerworth should be represented by two two-member wards), others supported no change to the external boundaries of the ward. One Wingerworth resident supported the draft recommendations.

32 A resident of North Wingfield ward opposed the draft recommendation for this area and proposed the retention of the existing boundary between the wards of North Wingfield Central and Holmewood & Heath.

5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

33 As indicated previously, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for North East Derbyshire is to achieve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the ratio of electors to councillors being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

34 However, our function is not merely arithmetical. First, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on assumptions as to changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the ensuing five years. Second, we must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken. Third, we must consider the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities.

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

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

ward. Any imbalances of 20 per cent and over should arise only in the most exceptional of circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

Electorate Forecasts

37 At Stage One North East Derbyshire District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2002, projecting a small increase in the electorate of 1 per cent from 77,967 to 78,694 over the five-year period from 1997 to 2002. It expected that most of the growth would take place in the north of the district in the wards of Gosforth Valley and Killamarsh West. The Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, and the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. In our draft recommendations report, having given consideration to the forecast electorates, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

38 At Stage Three the County Council submitted marginally different electorate forecasts from those put forward by the District Council at Stage One. These differences were not, in the Commission's judgement, material, and in view of the inexact nature of electorate projections, we remain satisfied that the District Council's forecasts represent the best estimates presently available.

Council Size

39 Our *Guidance* indicates that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a borough or district council to be in the range of 30 to 60.

40 North East Derbyshire District Council is at present served by 53 councillors. At Stage One it proposed to retain this council size. In our draft recommendations report we considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. We concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral

equality would best be met by a council of 53 members.

41 At Stage Three no further comments were received on council size, and we confirm our draft recommendation for a council size of 53 as final.

Electoral Arrangements

42 During Stage One there appeared to be considerable agreement on the district-wide scheme proposed by the District Council. The Council proposed changes to 19 of the existing 26 wards, and the representations received indicated that there was consensus about the majority of the proposed ward boundaries. Alternative proposals focused on a number of specific areas, namely Wingerworth, Dronfield, Eckington, Killamarsh and North Wingfield. We concluded that, overall, the District Council's proposals represented a satisfactory balance of the need for electoral equality, and the requirement to reflect the statutory criteria governing the Commission's work.

43 However, we concluded that in Dronfield, the Liberal Democrats' proposals would achieve comparable levels of electoral equality, build on the existing ward pattern and utilise clear boundaries. On balance we adopted the Liberal Democrats' proposals for the Dronfield area as part of our draft recommendations.

44 During Stage Three there was general support for our draft recommendations, except for the Wingerworth area, where the Parish Council restated the views it expressed during Stage One and was supported by a number of other local residents.

45 We have reviewed our draft recommendations in light of the representations and evidence received. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Killamarsh East and Killamarsh West wards;
- (b) Eckington North, Eckington South, Renishaw, Ridgeway & Marsh Lane and Unstone wards;
- (c) Coal Aston, Dronfield North, Dronfield South, Dronfield Woodhouse and Gosforth Valley wards;
- (d) Barlow & Holmesfield, Brampton & Walton and Wingerworth wards;

(e) Ashover, Clay Cross North, Clay Cross South and Tupton wards;

(f) Hasland, Holmewood & Heath, North Wingfield Central and Sutton wards;

(g) Morton, Pilsley and Shirland wards.

46 Details of our final recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 4, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large map at the back of this report.

Killamarsh East and Killamarsh West wards

47 These two wards cover Killamarsh parish in the north-east of the district. Killamarsh East is a single-member ward, while Killamarsh West is represented by three councillors. The number of electors per councillor is 23 per cent above the district average in Killamarsh East ward, (unchanged in 2002), and 15 per cent above in Killamarsh West ward (21 per cent in 2002).

48 At Stage One the District Council indicated that the population in Killamarsh has increased by 50 per cent over the past 15 years, and that some further growth is expected over the next five years. To address the under-representation which exists in the area, the Council proposed to allocate an additional (second) councillor to Killamarsh East ward, arguing that the present imbalance could be addressed "within the parish boundaries". It argued that the current boundary between Killamarsh East and Killamarsh West wards already runs through the middle of an estate, and proposed that it should be modified to run south across Sheffield Road, to the rear of the properties on the west of Bridge Street (including Peacock Close) until it meets the existing boundary at High Street. As a result of this proposal 1,027 electors would be transferred from Killamarsh West ward to Killamarsh East ward. Killamarsh West ward would continue to be represented by three councillors and Killamarsh East ward would be represented by two councillors, one more than at present. Under the District Council's scheme the number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent below the district average in Killamarsh East ward (2 per cent below in 2002) and 8 per cent below in Killamarsh West ward (3 per cent above in 2002).

49 The North East Derbyshire District Labour Party supported the District Council's proposal to

increase the total number of councillors serving Killamarsh from four to five. However, while it supported “in principle” the Council’s proposed boundary between Killamarsh East and Killamarsh West wards, it proposed a further modification. It proposed that 411 electors in Sheffield Road, Bridge Street, Peacock Close, Kirkcroft Lane, Kirkcroft Avenue and Kirkcroft Drive should remain in Killamarsh West ward on the grounds that this would provide a more identifiable boundary between the wards. Under its proposal only 616 electors would be transferred from Killamarsh West ward to Killamarsh East ward, resulting in the number of electors per councillor being 18 per cent below the average in Killamarsh East ward (unchanged in 2002), and 1 per cent above in Killamarsh West ward (7 per cent in 2002). Killamarsh Parish Council submitted an identical proposal.

50 We considered carefully the arguments and evidence received during Stage One, and concluded that the District Council’s proposals would provide a better balance of representation between the two wards. We therefore adopted them as part of our draft recommendations.

51 At Stage Three the District Council and North East Derbyshire District Labour Party supported the draft recommendations. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, and in view of the improved level of electoral equality, we confirm our draft recommendations for the wards of Killamarsh East and Killamarsh West as final.

Eckington North, Eckington South, Renishaw, Ridgeway & Marsh Lane and Unstone wards

52 These five wards are also situated in the north-east of the district. In the single-member Unstone ward, which covers Unstone parish, the number of electors per councillor is 2 per cent above the district average (equal to the average in 2002). The remaining four wards cover Eckington parish and, under the current arrangements, the number of electors per councillor is 7 per cent above the average in Eckington North ward, 7 per cent below in Eckington South ward, 2 per cent above in Renishaw ward and 3 per cent below in Ridgeway & Marsh Lane ward.

53 At Stage One the District Council proposed no change to the wards of Renishaw, Ridgeway & Marsh Lane and Unstone as it considered that an

acceptable level of electoral equality already exists in these wards. However, it considered that the present electoral imbalance in the wards of Eckington North and Eckington South “could easily be addressed by a minor amendment”. It proposed that the boundary between the two wards be modified to run along the middle of Sitwell Street, thereby including an additional 192 electors currently in the sheltered housing development in Eckington North ward, in Eckington South ward. Under this proposal the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the district average in Eckington North ward and 1 per cent below in Eckington South ward (2 per cent above and equal to the average respectively in 2002).

54 The North East Derbyshire District Labour Party and Eckington Parish Council opposed the District Council’s proposed boundary change between Eckington North and South wards. The District Labour Party argued that the existing boundary is easily identifiable and that the level of electoral inequality did not justify change. It therefore proposed no change to the existing boundary between the wards of Eckington North and Eckington South. The Parish Council stated that the proposals “are likely to cause more confusion than assistance” and proposed that the existing boundary along the middle of West Street be retained.

55 We considered the representations made to us and acknowledged the support for no change to the wards of Renishaw, Ridgeway & Marsh Lane and Unstone, which would maintain good levels of electoral equality. However, we concluded that the District Council’s proposed boundary between the wards of Eckington North and Eckington South would achieve an improved balance of representation in the area. We therefore put forward the modified boundary as part of our draft recommendations.

56 At Stage Three the District Council and the North East Derbyshire District Labour Party supported the draft recommendations. However, the County Council opposed the draft recommendation for Eckington North and Eckington South wards, proposing instead the retention of the existing boundary, which it considered to be “ a long standing boundary ... clear and established”.

57 We have considered the views expressed during Stage Three, but consider our draft recommendations would provide a satisfactory boundary as well as improvement in electoral equality, and we have therefore decided to confirm our draft recommendations for the wards of Eckington North, Eckington South, Renishaw, Ridgeway & Marsh Lane and Unstone as final.

Coal Aston, Dronfield North, Dronfield South, Dronfield Woodhouse and Gosforth Valley wards

58 Dronfield is a mainly residential town (and parish) in the north of the district, bordering Sheffield, and is currently divided into five district wards. The electorate of Dronfield accounts for 23 per cent of the district's total electorate. The number of electors per councillor is 9 per cent below the district average in Coal Aston ward, 16 per cent below in Dronfield North ward, 20 per cent above in Dronfield South ward, 13 per cent above in Dronfield Woodhouse ward and 8 per cent above in Gosforth Valley ward. This level of electoral inequality is expected to worsen in four of the five wards over the five-year period.

59 During Stage One the District Council put forward proposals to re-ward the town, providing for a continuation of 12 councillors but with modifications to all five wards. The number of electors represented by each of the two councillors for Coal Aston ward would be 5 per cent above the average (unchanged in 2002), 1 per cent above the average in Dronfield North ward (equal to the average in 2002), 1 per cent above the district average in Dronfield South (unchanged in 2002), 2 per cent above in Dronfield Woodhouse (1 per cent in 2002) and 5 per cent above in Gosforth Valley (unchanged in 2002). Dronfield Labour Party and Dronfield Town Council supported the District Council's proposals for Dronfield.

60 The North East Derbyshire Liberal Democrats submitted alternative proposals for Dronfield. They considered that the District Council's proposals had little regard for "the natural geography and communities within Dronfield and involve far greater change to the long established current wards than is necessary to meet the requirements of the review". The Liberal Democrats divided the Dronfield area into two sections - north-east and south-west of the B6057

Sheffield Road/Chesterfield Lane, building on the current warding pattern. Under their proposal the electoral variance would be 5 per cent in Coal Aston (2 per cent in 2002) and 8 per cent in Dronfield North (5 per cent in 2002), 3 per cent in Dronfield Woodhouse ward, (4 per cent in 2002), 2 per cent in Dronfield South (4 per cent in 2002) and 2 per cent in Gosforth Valley ward (1 per cent in 2002).

61 In formulating their proposals, we noted that the District Council and the Liberal Democrats used slightly different methods to allocate the small growth in electorate forecast for Dronfield in 2002. Both the proposals from the District Council and the Liberal Democrats would provide better electoral equality than the current arrangements. Having given careful consideration to the different proposals received for the Dronfield area, we concluded that the Liberal Democrats' proposals would provide clearer boundaries and cause less overall change to the existing ward pattern. They would achieve better electoral equality than the current arrangements and we included them as part of our draft recommendations.

62 At Stage Three the District Council and the North East Derbyshire Liberal Democrats supported the draft recommendations. However, Derbyshire County Council, North East Derbyshire District Labour Party and the Dronfield Labour Party opposed the draft recommendations for the Dronfield area and supported instead the District Council's Stage One proposals. Derbyshire County Council and the Dronfield Labour Party considered that they would better reflect local community identities.

63 We have considered the various representations received during Stage Three, but note the support of the District Council for our draft recommendations. As they would provide for improved levels of electoral equality, clear boundaries and minimal disruption to the existing ward pattern, we confirm our draft recommendations for the wards of Coal Aston, Dronfield North, Dronfield South, Dronfield Woodhouse and Gosforth Valley as final.

Barlow & Holmesfield, Brampton & Walton and Wingerworth wards

64 The north-west of the district is covered by the two largely rural wards of Barlow & Holmesfield

and Brampton & Walton. The number of electors per councillor is 9 per cent above and 39 per cent below the district average respectively (7 per cent above and 41 per cent below in 2002). To the south-east of Brampton & Walton ward lies the three-member ward of Wingerworth which covers Wingerworth parish, where the number of electors represented by each councillor is 29 per cent above the average (28 per cent above in 2002).

65 At Stage One the District Council proposed no change for Barlow & Holmesfield ward and amendments to the boundaries of Brampton & Walton ward. The Council identified the area of Hardwick Wood in Wingerworth parish as having sufficient electorate to rectify the imbalance in Brampton & Walton ward. It therefore proposed that 221 electors be transferred from Wingerworth ward to Brampton & Walton ward, and that the latter ward be represented by two councillors, compared with three at present. Under the District Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent below the district average in Brampton & Walton ward (4 per cent in 2002).

66 The District Council proposed further modifications to the boundaries of Wingerworth ward, transferring mobile home parks in the south of the ward to Clay Cross North ward, and the Adlington estate and part of Nethermoor Road east of Tricket Brook, from Wingerworth ward to Tupton ward. In addition, the Council proposed that the boundary between Clay Cross North and Clay Cross South wards be modified, as described later in the chapter.

67 The District Council noted that the revised Wingerworth ward would comprise a large residential development comprising 84 per cent of the electorate of the existing ward. It acknowledged the difficulties in finding a solution in this area, but considered that its proposal "continues to keep identifiable communities together, whilst accepting that it will involve warding the parish into four wards". The revised Wingerworth ward would be represented by three councillors as at present. The number of electors per councillor would be 8 per cent above the average (7 per cent in 2002).

68 Wingerworth Parish Council opposed the District Council's proposals for Wingerworth ward. It noted that the ward would be reduced to

40 per cent of its present land area and considered that "any subsequent review of parish boundaries would then adopt the same boundaries as those proposed by [the District Council]". The Parish Council argued that the District Council's proposals would "radically alter the nature of the parish from that of a rural community with an urban centre to a totally urban dormitory village". It stated that Wingerworth would lose its social mix, industrial and employment centres, rural areas and the communities within them. The Parish Council therefore proposed alternative electoral arrangements for the Wingerworth area.

69 The Parish Council proposed that the external boundaries of Wingerworth ward remain unchanged, but that it be divided into two two-member wards, to be named Wingerworth East and Wingerworth West. It proposed that polling district DD be transferred from Clay Cross North ward to Tupton ward, which would continue to be represented by two councillors. It also proposed that the boundary between Clay Cross North and Clay Cross South wards be modified with each ward being represented by two councillors.

70 The Parish Council also proposed that the wards of Barlow & Holmesfield and Brampton & Walton be merged to form a three-member ward. Under the Parish Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent below the average in Wingerworth (4 per cent in 2002) and 4 per cent above in Tupton (3 per cent in 2002). However, the two wards in Clay Cross, detailed later, would both be relatively under-represented, by 11 per cent (9 per cent in 2002) and 7 per cent (8 per cent in 2002) respectively.

71 Wingerworth Community Association stated that there was "widespread concern" in the community at the District Council's proposals for Wingerworth, although the Association acknowledged the need for change to the current electoral arrangements. The Association proposed that the external boundary of Wingerworth ward should be unchanged but that the ward should be divided into two-two member wards, Wingerworth North and Wingerworth South.

72 It proposed that the wards of Barlow & Holmesfield and Brampton & Walton should be combined to form a three-member ward, and that the boundary between North Wingfield Central

ward and Tupton ward be realigned, that the boundary between Tupton ward and Clay Cross North ward be realigned, that the boundary between North Wingfield Central ward and Holmewood & Heath ward be realigned, and that the boundary between Clay Cross North ward and Clay Cross South ward be realigned. Under the Community Association's proposals the electoral variances would be 3 per cent in both the proposed Wingerworth North and Wingerworth South wards, 1 per cent in Tupton, 7 per cent in Clay Cross North ward and 3 per cent in Clay Cross South ward.

73 During Stage One we also received representations from four other parish councils in this area. Holmesfield Parish Council supported Wingerworth Parish Council's proposals. Holymoorside & Walton Parish Council opposed the District Council's proposals and supported those of Wingerworth Community Association, particularly for a three-member ward for Barlow & Holmesfield and Brampton & Walton. Brampton Parish Council also supported the Community Association's proposals and opposed the District Council's proposal to realign the boundary between Wingerworth ward and Brampton & Walton ward. Barlow Parish Council supported the District Council's proposal for no change to Barlow & Holmesfield ward but opposed the District Council's proposals for Wingerworth, which it considered would adversely affect Wingerworth's "village identity".

74 In view of the fact that the District Council's proposals would provide a high degree of electoral equality, and, in its view, recognise identifiable communities and boundaries, we adopted them as part of our draft recommendations.

75 At Stage Three the District Council, Derbyshire County Council and North East Derbyshire District Labour Party supported the draft recommendations for Barlow & Holmesfield, Brampton & Walton and Wingerworth wards, while Holymoorside & Walton and Wingerworth parish councils, three Wingerworth parish councillors and 74 Wingerworth residents opposed the draft recommendations for the area.

76 Wingerworth Parish Council considered that, in our draft recommendations, we had given "undue

weight" to the views of the District Council, neglected the views of Wingerworth residents, "downplayed the likelihood of a future review of parish boundaries" and "failed to take account of the historic under-representation of Wingerworth in North East Derbyshire as a whole". It also commented on the "unreasonable nature of and rigid application to the mathematical targets of the review" and that "the simplicity of the Parish Council's scheme compared with the Commission's proposals has been ignored". Consequently, it restated its Stage One proposals.

77 The Parish Council enclosed a petition signed by 296 residents of the Adlington estate and Nethermoor Road areas, opposing the draft recommendations for Wingerworth, and expressing concern at being included in Tupton ward, some apparently under the misapprehension that the proposal would also place them in Tupton parish. However, the external boundaries of a parish cannot be altered by a periodic electoral review, and can only be changed by means of a parish boundary review. As indicated in our draft recommendations report, under the Local Government and Rating Act 1997, the District Council has the power to review parish boundaries and to make recommendations to the Secretary of State. Holymoorside & Walton Parish Council also opposed the draft recommendations for the area, and supported instead a three-member ward for Barlow & Holmesfield and Brampton & Walton. The draft recommendations were also opposed by 74 Wingerworth residents (the majority of these from the central area of Wingerworth, and a significant number of representations were received from the Nethermoor Road area), and three parish councillors.

78 Councillor Walker, a member of Wingerworth Parish Council, opposed the inclusion of the Hardwick Wood area in Brampton & Walton ward on community identity grounds, and enclosed a petition signed by 41 residents of the Hardwick Wood area opposing the draft recommendation for the area. One Wingerworth resident supported the draft recommendations.

79 Under Wingerworth Parish Council's proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent below the average in a three-member Barlow & Holmesfield and Brampton & Walton

ward (5 per cent in 2002), 3 per cent below the average in Wingerworth (4 per cent in 2002), 11 per cent above in Clay Cross North (9 per cent in 2002), 7 per cent above in Clay Cross South in both 1997 and 2002, and 4 per cent above in Tupton in both 1997 and 2002.

80 The Parish Council argued that the Hardwick Wood area's community ties "are only with Wingerworth" and rejected the District Council's assertion that the area "sat quite well in Brampton & Walton ward". It noted that the transfer of 81 electors in the Nethermoor Road area from Wingerworth to Tupton wards would move away from using the full length of the A61 Derby Road as the boundary between the two wards. The Parish Council also considered that polling district DD in Clay Cross should form part of Tupton ward on community identity grounds, stating that the area "is part of the postal area of Tupton, it is called New Tupton, the children there attend Tupton Hall Comprehensive School. These are real and demonstrable ties".

81 We have considered carefully the representations and evidence received. These representations have been conflicting in their views and, while we have taken all views received into account, we cannot reflect all the proposals put to us. We have re-considered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three responses, and following visits to the area by Commission staff. Under the Parish Council's proposals, the level of electoral equality in Clay Cross North, Clay Cross South and Tupton wards would be worse than under the draft recommendations, both initially and in 2002, although the Parish Council's proposals would produce a better level of electoral equality in Wingerworth itself.

82 We have also noted that the draft recommendations for Wingerworth were supported by the District Council, the County Council, and the District Labour Party. Our draft recommendations also considered the area as part of the district as a whole, rather than in isolation.

83 We are not convinced that the inclusion of the Adlington Estate in Tupton ward would have a sufficiently detrimental effect on community identities to justify the increased levels of electoral inequality in both wards, if it were retained in Wingerworth ward. The Adlington Estate is

separated from the remainder of Wingerworth by the A61, and is linked to Tupton by main roads and comprises similar housing to that of Tupton.

84 We consider that an appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria would be met by placing the Hardwick Wood area with Brampton & Walton ward, as the two areas have similar semi-rural characteristics and are connected by good road links. Nor do we consider that the inclusion of the caravan sites to the south of Wingerworth, in Clay Cross North ward, would have a detrimental effect on community links.

85 We are also aware that there existed a degree of confusion locally as regards the parameters of the review. As stated earlier, our recommendations would not affect the external boundaries of parishes, as such changes cannot be proposed by a periodic electoral review. The Parish Council voiced its concerns at the possible impact of a future parish review reinforcing the proposed changes to district ward boundaries, although the District Council stated at Stage One that "no preconceptions were made about any possible future parish review".

86 On balance, we have concluded that we should modify our draft recommendations and propose that the 81 electors in the Nethermoor Road area (who we originally proposed should be transferred to Tupton ward), should remain in Wingerworth district ward. In addition to better reflecting local community identities, this would also provide a better eastern boundary for the proposed Wingerworth ward, as it would follow the A61 Derby Road. Elsewhere we confirm our draft recommendations for Wingerworth as final. Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 9 per cent above the average in Wingerworth ward (unchanged in 2002). We consider that the slight increase in electoral inequality is justified, as the area comprises similar housing types and is separated from the remainder of Tupton ward by the A61.

87 In the light of our proposal for Wingerworth, we propose confirming our draft recommendations for Brampton & Walton ward, and for no change to Barlow & Holmesfield ward as final. The number of electors per councillor would be 9 per cent above the district average in Barlow & Holmesfield ward (7 per cent in 2002) and 1 per

cent below in Brampton & Walton ward (4 per cent below in 2002).

Ashover, Clay Cross North, Clay Cross South and Tupton wards

88 The number of electors per councillor in the wards of Ashover, Clay Cross North, Clay Cross South and Tupton is 1 per cent above the district average, 1 per cent below, 8 per cent below and 18 per cent below respectively, with little improvement expected by 2002.

89 Ashover ward lies in the west of the district and borders Derbyshire Dales district. The District Council proposed no change to Ashover ward, which is coterminous with the parish of the same name, and considered that this was justified by the ward's "position and make up" together with the existing level of electoral equality. No other representations for change to this ward were received and, in light of the high degree of electoral equality which exists, we proposed no change to Ashover ward as part of our draft recommendations.

90 We adopted the District Council's proposed realignment of the boundary between Wingerworth ward and Clay Cross North ward as part of our draft recommendations. During Stage One the Council argued that the area identifies "with Clay Cross and indeed vote at a polling station within the Clay Cross North ward", and considered that the transfer was justified in terms of electoral equality and community identity. We also adopted the District Council's proposal to realign the boundary between the wards of Clay Cross North and Clay Cross South. The number of electors per councillor would be 3 per cent below the average in Clay Cross North ward (4 per cent in 2002) and 2 per cent above the average in Clay Cross South ward (both now and in 2002).

91 As part of our draft recommendations, we also adopted the District Council's proposal to transfer the Adlington Estate from Wingerworth ward to Tupton ward, and that a small area of Nethermoor Road, off Tupton roundabout, as far as the boundary with Tricket Brook, should also form part of Tupton ward. The number of electors per councillor in Tupton ward would be 1 per cent below the average (2 per cent in 2002).

92 At Stage Three the District Council, Derbyshire County Council and North East Derbyshire District Labour Party supported the draft recommendations for Ashover, Clay Cross North, Clay Cross South and Tupton wards. Wingerworth Parish Council, three Wingerworth parish councillors and 74 Wingerworth residents opposed the draft recommendations for Clay Cross and Tupton, putting forward alternative proposals which would avoid the inclusion of parts of Wingerworth parish in adjacent district wards.

93 As stated earlier, we do not propose adopting Wingerworth Parish Council's proposals for the wards of Tupton, Clay Cross North or Clay Cross South. However, we propose modifying our draft recommendation so that 81 electors in the Nethermoor Road area remain in Wingerworth district ward and are not transferred to Tupton ward, in order to better reflect local community identities and utilise a more coherent boundary. With this one exception, we propose confirming our draft recommendations for these wards as final. Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 1 per cent above the average in Ashover ward (1 per cent below in 2002), 3 per cent below in Clay Cross North (4 per cent in 2002), 2 per cent above in Clay Cross South (unchanged in 2002) and 4 per cent below in Tupton (unchanged in 2002).

Hasland, Holmewood & Heath, North Wingfield Central and Sutton wards

94 In the central eastern part of the district lie the two-member wards of Hasland, Holmewood & Heath and Sutton, and the three-member ward of North Wingfield Central. The number of electors per councillor is 4 per cent above the district average in Hasland, 24 per cent below in Holmewood & Heath, 14 per cent above in North Wingfield Central and 7 per cent above in Sutton, with no overall improvement expected by 2002.

95 As part of our draft recommendations we adopted the District Council's proposals for no change to the boundaries of Hasland and Sutton wards, a modification to the boundary between the wards of Holmewood & Heath and North Wingfield Central and to rename Hasland ward as Grassmoor.

96 At Stage Three the District Council and North East Derbyshire District Labour Party supported the draft recommendations for the wards of Hasland, Holmewood & Heath, North Wingfield Central and Sutton. The County Council opposed the draft recommendation for Holmewood & Heath and North Wingfield Central and proposed the retention of the existing boundary between the two wards on community identity grounds and because it would provide a better boundary. North Wingfield Parish Council and a local resident also opposed the draft recommendation for the two wards and proposed the retention of the existing boundary between them on community identity grounds.

97 However, the retention of the existing boundary between Holmewood & Heath and North Wingfield Central wards would result in an unacceptably high level of electoral inequality (24 per cent below in Holmewood & Heath, 14 per cent above in North Wingfield Central). Therefore, in the light of the evidence received, the improved levels of electoral equality which would result, and in the absence of any acceptable alternative proposals, we have decided to confirm our draft recommendations for the wards of Hasland, Holmewood & Heath, North Wingfield Central and Sutton as final.

Morton, Pilsley and Shirland wards

98 The three wards of Morton, Pilsley and Shirland cover the southern part of the district. Morton ward comprises the parishes of Brackenfield, Morton and Stretton; Pilsley ward covers the parish of the same name; and Shirland ward comprises the parishes of Shirland & Higham and Wessington. The number of electors per councillor in the three wards is 9 per cent above, 14 per cent below and 6 per cent below the district average respectively, with minimal improvement expected in 2002.

99 We proposed adopting the District Council's proposals for these wards as part of our draft recommendations, namely that Brackenfield parish should join with the parishes of Shirland & Higham and Wessington to form a revised Shirland ward which would continue to be represented by three councillors, and the parishes of Morton, Pilsley and Stretton should combine to form a new three-member Pilsley & Morton ward. Under this

proposal the number of electors per councillor would be 10 per cent below the average in Pilsley & Morton ward (unchanged in 2002) and 3 per cent below in Shirland ward (2 per cent in 2002).

100 At Stage Three, no other representations were received concerning the proposals. We have looked for alternative ways of further reducing the electoral inequality in the proposed Pilsley & Morton ward but could not find a solution without adversely affecting the community identity and electoral equality in the wider area. Therefore, we are confirming our draft recommendations for the wards of Morton, Pilsley and Shirland as final.

Electoral Cycle

101 At Stage One we received no proposals for change to North East Derbyshire District Council's present system of whole-council elections, and we therefore did not recommend any change.

102 At Stage Three we received no further representations regarding the electoral cycle. We therefore confirm our draft recommendation for no change to the present system of whole-council elections as final.

Conclusions

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

- (a) the boundary between Wingerworth and Tupton wards should run along the A61 Derby Road.

104 Our final recommendations for North East Derbyshire District Council are that:

- (a) there should continue to be 53 councillors;
- (b) there should be 25 wards, one fewer than at present;
- (c) the boundaries of 19 of the existing wards should be modified;
- (d) the council should continue to be elected every four years.

Figure 3:
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	1997 electorate		2002 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	53	53	53	53
Number of wards	26	25	26	25
Average number of electors per councillor	1,471	1,485	1,471	1,485
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	11	0	13	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	4	0	6	0

105 Figure 3 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1997 and 2002 electorate figures.

106 As Figure 3 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from 11 to none, with no ward varying by more than 10 per cent by 2002. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

Final Recommendation

North East Derbyshire District Council should comprise 53 councillors serving 25 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 4, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A. The whole Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

Parish Council Electoral Arrangements

107 At Stage One we received a number of submissions regarding parish council electoral arrangements. In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out

in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards, it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district. Accordingly, we proposed consequential warding arrangements for a number of parishes to reflect the proposed district wards.

108 As part of our draft recommendations we proposed modifying the boundary between Eckington North and Eckington South district wards and therefore proposed a consequential change to the parish ward boundary. This would involve transferring 192 electors from North ward to South ward. However, we proposed no change to the existing level of representation in the respective wards. At Stage Three we did not receive any comments on these proposals and therefore confirm them as final.

Final Recommendation

Eckington Parish Council should have 17 councillors, as at present, serving four wards: North (represented by six councillors), South (five), Renishaw (three) and Ridgeway (three). The parish ward boundary between North and South wards should be modified to reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated on Map A2 in Appendix A.

109 In our draft recommendations report we proposed modifying the boundary between Killamarsh East and Killamarsh West district wards and therefore proposed a consequential change to the parish ward boundary. This would involve transferring 1,027 electors from West ward to East ward, and we also proposed a redistribution of parish councillors to give a more equitable distribution of councillors. East ward would be represented by six parish councillors, one more than at present, and West ward by nine councillors, one less than at present. At Stage Three we did not receive any comments on these proposals and therefore confirm them as final.

Final Recommendation

Killamarsh Parish Council should have 15 councillors, as at present, serving two modified parish wards: East (represented by six councillors) and West (represented by nine councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards should be modified to reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated on Map A3 in Appendix A.

110 In our draft recommendations report we proposed that Wingerworth parish should have four wards – Adlington, Hardwick Wood, Wingerworth and Woodthorpe. For district warding purposes, Wingerworth parish ward would form a modified Wingerworth district ward; Woodthorpe parish ward would form part of Clay Cross North district ward; Hardwick Wood parish ward would form part of Brampton & Walton district ward; and Adlington parish ward would form part of Tupton district ward. Accordingly, we proposed distributing the councillors between the proposed parish wards on the basis of electorate, as set out below.

111 At Stage Three, Wingerworth Parish Council opposed the draft recommendations for the area, and reiterated its Stage One submission that the parish be divided into two wards, east and west, to reflect its proposed district warding arrangements.

112 As stated earlier, we have decided to modify our draft recommendations for Wingerworth district ward so that 81 electors in Nethermoor Road should remain in Wingerworth ward. Consequently we propose that these electors should form part of the proposed Wingerworth parish ward. Subject to this modification, we

confirm our draft recommendations for the parish warding arrangements as final.

Final Recommendation

Wingerworth Parish Council should have 14 councillors, two more than at present, serving four parish wards: Adlington (represented by one councillor), Hardwick Wood (one), Wingerworth (11) and Woodthorpe (one). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed district wards in the area, as illustrated on Map A4 in Appendix A.

113 In our draft recommendations report, we proposed modifying the boundary between Clay Cross North and Clay Cross South district wards, and proposed modifying the parish ward boundary accordingly, transferring 281 electors from North ward to South ward. We also proposed a redistribution of councillors so that North ward should be represented by seven councillors (an increase of one) and South ward by four councillors (a reduction of one). We did not receive any comments on these proposals and therefore confirm them as final.

Final Recommendation

Clay Cross Parish Council should have 11 councillors, as at present, serving two modified wards: North ward (represented by seven councillors) and South ward (represented by four councillors). The boundary between the two parish wards should be modified to reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated on Map A5 in Appendix A.

114 In our draft recommendations report we proposed that North Wingfield parish should be warded into two to reflect the proposed District Council wards: West ward comprising 4,408 electors, represented by nine councillors; and East ward comprising 614 electors, represented by one councillor. For district warding purposes, West parish ward would form a district ward on its own, and East parish ward would form part of Holmewood & Heath district ward.

115 At Stage Three, North Wingfield Parish Council restated its opposition to this proposal, and

requested no change. However, in view of the high degree of electoral equality which would be achieved in the area, we propose confirming our draft recommendation for the district and parish wards of North Wingfield as final.

Final Recommendation

North Wingfield Parish Council should have 10 councillors, as at present, serving two wards: West (represented by nine councillors) and East (represented by one councillor). The boundary between the two proposed parish wards should reflect the proposed district ward boundary, as illustrated on Map A6 in Appendix A.

116 In our draft recommendations report we adopted the North East Derbyshire Liberal Democrats' proposed district wards in Dronfield, and therefore proposed modifying the boundaries of the five parish wards to reflect the proposed district ward boundaries which are illustrated on the large map. However, we proposed consulting on the Town Council's proposal to increase its total number of councillors from 17 to 19, and to redistribute the parish councillors between the parish wards.

117 At Stage Three North East Derbyshire Liberal Democrats opposed the draft recommendation to increase the number of town councillors in Dronfield, and considered that electoral equality would not be significantly improved and that an increase is not required.

118 However, having considered all the evidence received, we have decided to confirm our draft recommendation for the parish of Dronfield as final.

Final Recommendation

Dronfield Town Council should have 19 councillors, two more than at present, serving five modified parish wards: Coal Aston (represented by three councillors), Dronfield Woodhouse (three), Gosforth Valley (five), North (five) and South (three). The parish ward boundaries should be modified to reflect the proposed district wards, as illustrated on the large map in the back of the report.

119 In our draft recommendations report we proposed that there should be no change to the electoral cycle of parish councils in the district. At Stage Three we did not receive any comments and are confirming this as final.

Final Recommendation

Elections for parish councils should continue to take place every four years, on the same cycle as that for the District Council.

Map 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for North East Derbyshire



KEY
 PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARY ———
 EXISTING PARISH BOUNDARY - - - -

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Key to Wards

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Ashover | 10 Eckington North | 19 Renishaw |
| 2 Barlow and Holmesfield | 11 Eckington South | 20 Ridgeway and Marsh Lane |
| 3 Brampton and Walton | 12 Gosforth Valley | 21 Shirland |
| 4 Clay Cross North | 13 Grassmoor | 22 Sutton |
| 5 Clay Cross South | 14 Holmewood and Heath | 23 Tupton |
| 6 Coal Aston | 15 Killamarsh East | 24 Unstone |
| 7 Dronfield North | 16 Killamarsh West | 25 Wingerworth |
| 8 Dronfield South | 17 North Wingfield Central | |
| 9 Dronfield Woodhouse | 18 Pilsley and Morton | |

Figure 4:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for North East Derbyshire

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Ashover	1	1,493	1,493	1	1,473	1,473	-1
2 Barlow & Holmesfield	1	1,598	1,598	9	1,589	1,589	7
3 Brampton & Walton	2	2,904	1,452	-1	2,853	1,427	-4
4 Clay Cross North	3	4,284	1,428	-3	4,258	1,419	-4
5 Clay Cross South	2	2,994	1,497	2	3,039	1,520	2
6 Coal Aston (Dronfield)	2	3,081	1,541	5	3,023	1,512	2
7 Dronfield North	2	3,178	1,589	8	3,118	1,559	5
8 Dronfield South	3	4,521	1,507	2	4,619	1,540	4
9 Dronfield Woodhouse	2	3,034	1,517	3	3,100	1,550	4
10 Eckington North	2	2,944	1,472	0	3,037	1,519	2
11 Eckington South	2	2,926	1,463	-1	2,961	1,481	0
12 Gosforth Valley (Dronfield)	3	4,304	1,435	-2	4,397	1,466	-1
13 Grassmoor	2	3,061	1,531	4	3,130	1,565	5
14 Holmewood & Heath	2	2,844	1,422	-3	2,859	1,430	-4
15 Killamarsh East	2	2,830	1,415	-4	2,921	1,461	-2
16 Killamarsh West	3	4,062	1,354	-8	4,312	1,437	-3
17 North Wingfield Central	3	4,408	1,469	0	4,450	1,483	0
18 Pilsley & Morton	3	3,960	1,320	-10	4,018	1,339	-10
19 Renishaw	1	1,498	1,498	2	1,518	1,518	2
20 Ridgeway & Marsh Lane	1	1,431	1,431	-3	1,403	1,403	-6
21 Shirland	3	4,301	1,434	-3	4,348	1,449	-2

Figure 4 (continued):

The Commission's Final Recommendations for North East Derbyshire

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
22 Sutton	2	3,136	1,568	7	3,088	1,544	4
23 Tupton	2	2,839	1,420	-4	2,840	1,420	-4
24 Unstone	1	1,506	1,506	2	1,487	1,487	0
25 Wingerworth	3	4,832	1,611	9	4,859	1,620	9
Totals	53	77,969	—	—	78,700	—	—
Averages	—	—	1,471	—	—	1,485	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on North East Derbyshire District Council's Stage One submission, except for the Dronfield wards where the North East Derbyshire Liberal Democrats' Stage One figures have been used.

Notes: 1 The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2 The total electorate figures differ marginally from those in Figure 2, but this would have a negligible effect on the electoral variance.

6. NEXT STEPS

¹²⁰ Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in North East Derbyshire and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

¹²¹ It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order. Such an order will not be made earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

¹²² All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

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

APPENDIX A

Final Recommendations for North East Derbyshire: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for North East Derbyshire.

Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the district and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail on Maps A2 to A6 and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

Map A2 illustrates the proposed boundary between Eckington North ward and Eckington South ward.

Map A3 illustrates the proposed boundary between Killamarsh East ward and Killamarsh West ward.

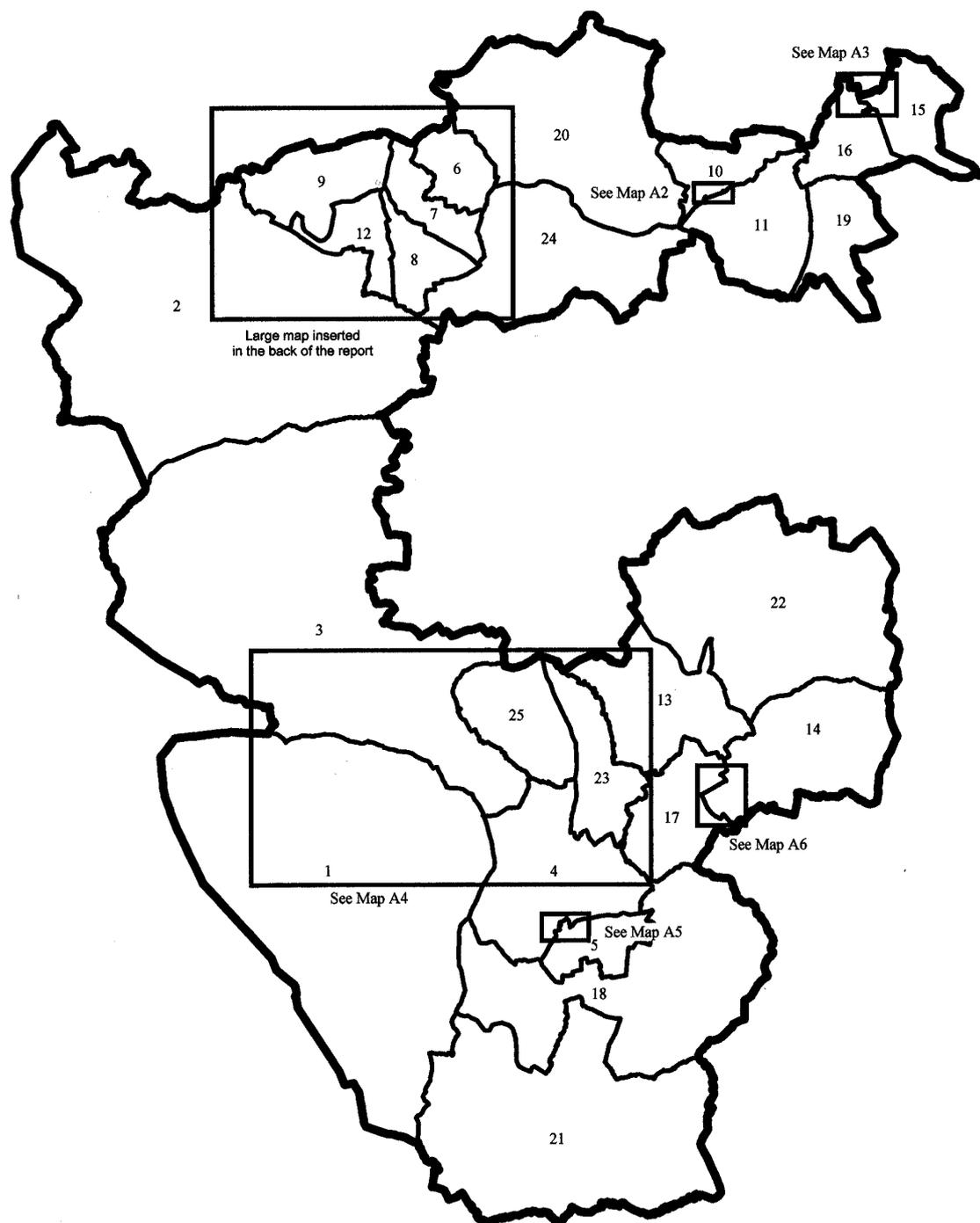
Map A4 illustrates the proposed district and parish wards in the Wingerworth area.

Map A5 illustrates the proposed boundary between Clay Cross North ward and Clay Cross South ward.

Map A6 illustrates the proposed boundary between Holmewood & Heath ward and North Wingfield Central ward, and the proposed parish warding of North Wingfield.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the Commission's proposed warding arrangements in Dronfield.

Map A1:
Final Recommendations for North East Derbyshire: Key Map

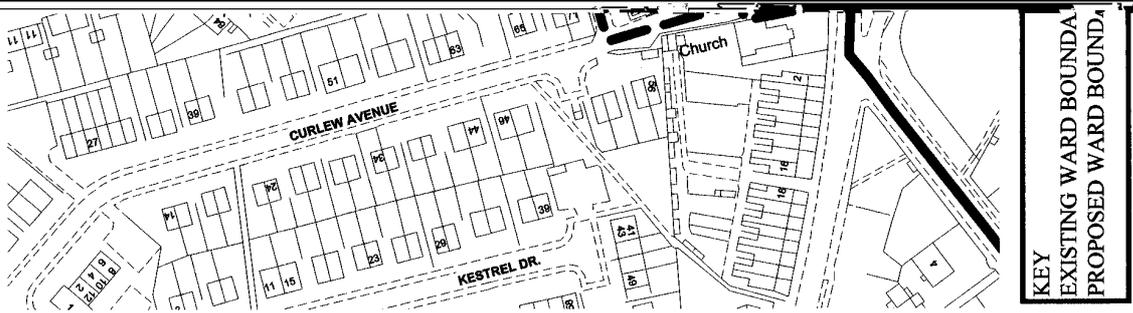
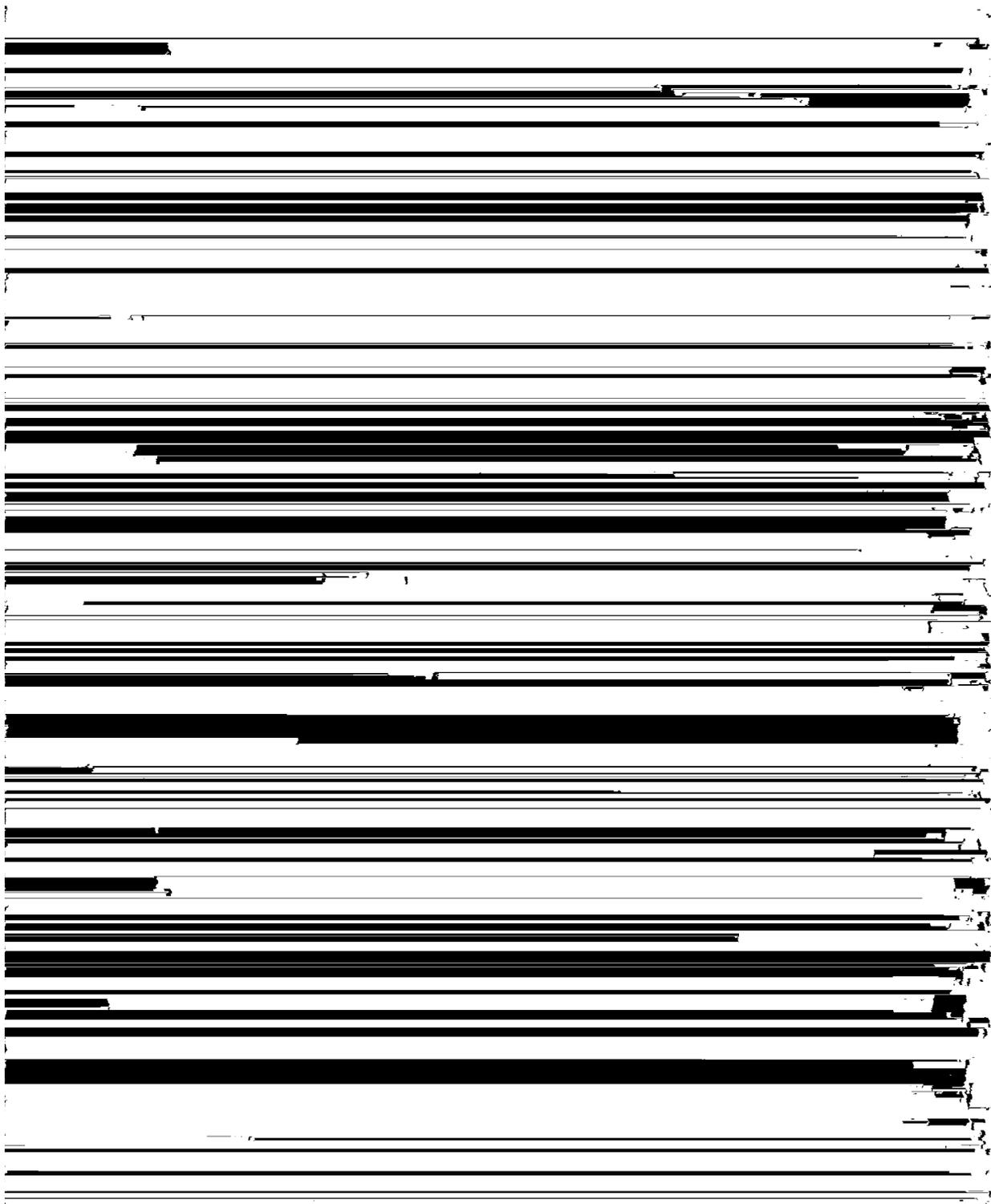


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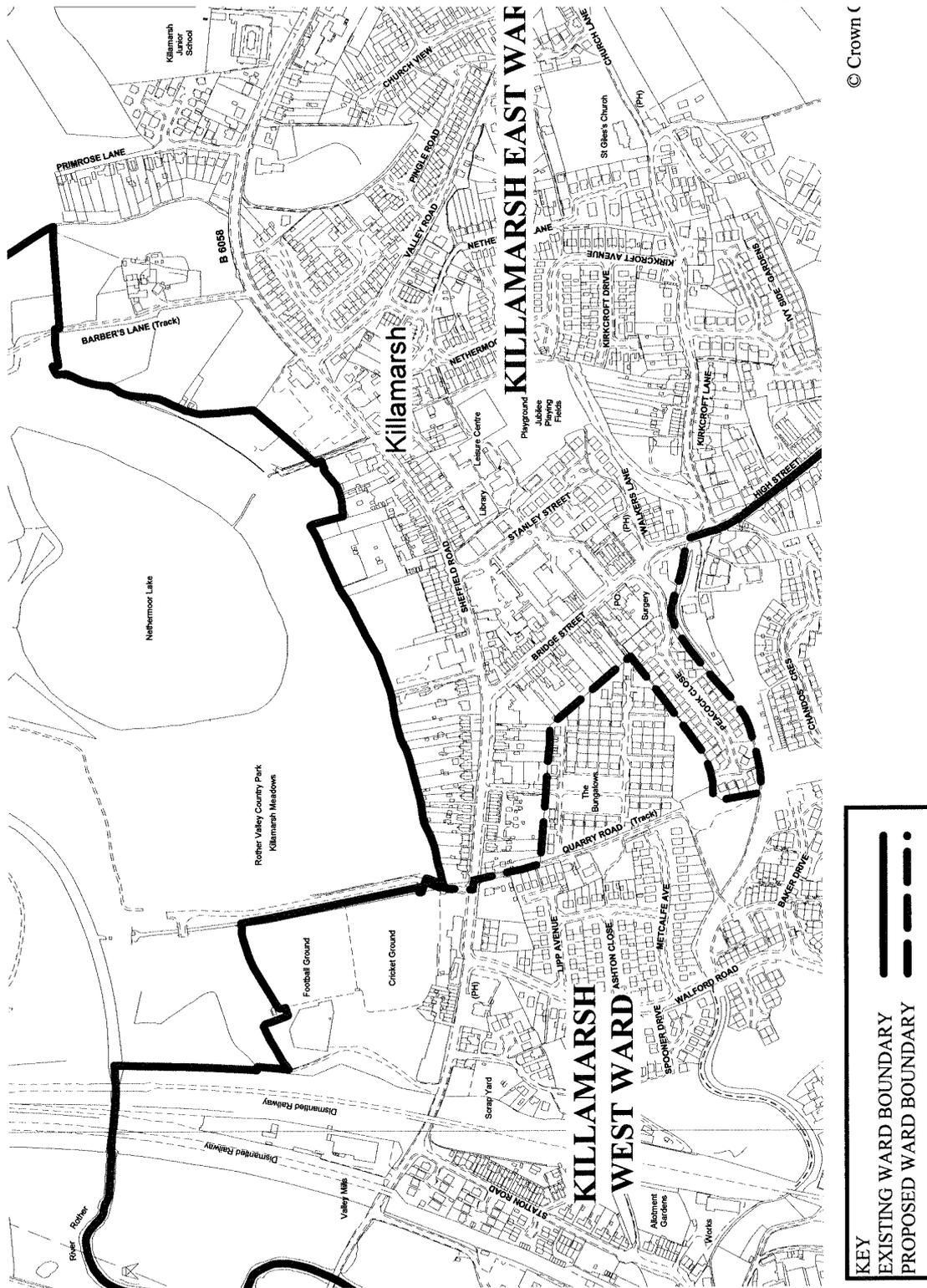
Key to Wards

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
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| 9 Dronfield Woodhouse | 18 Pilsley and Morton | |

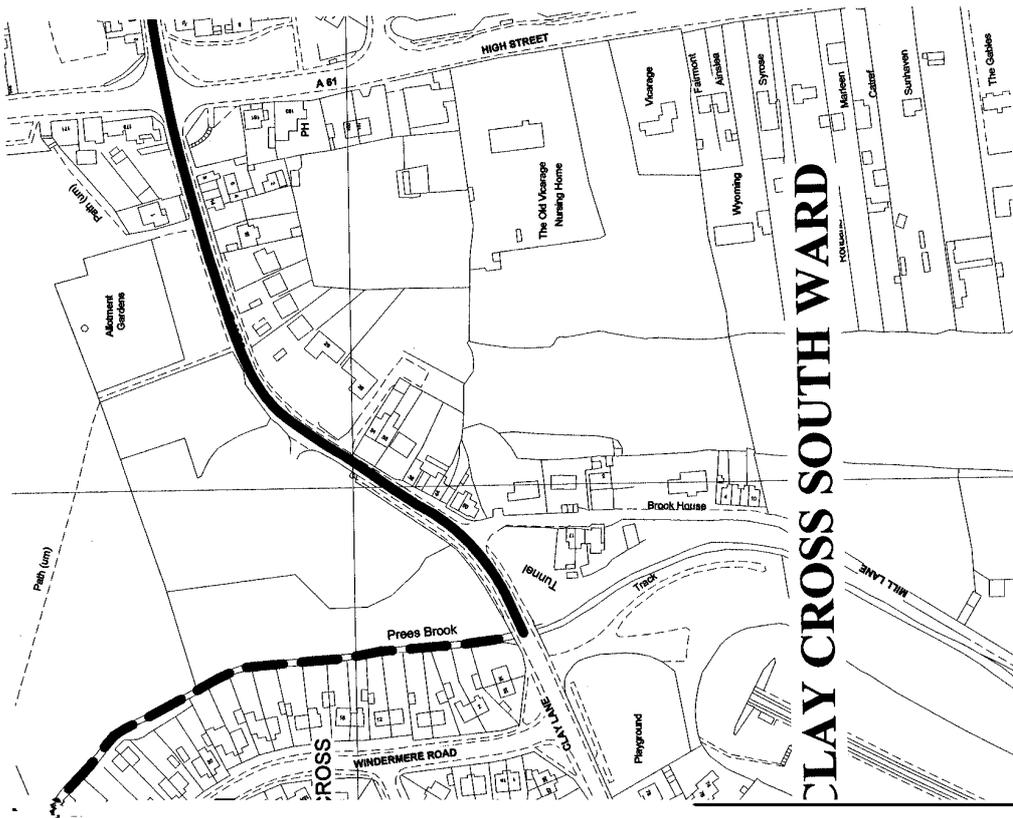
Map A2:
Proposed Boundary between Eckington North ward and Eckington South ward



Map A3:
 Proposed Boundary between Killamarsh East ward and Killamarsh West ward

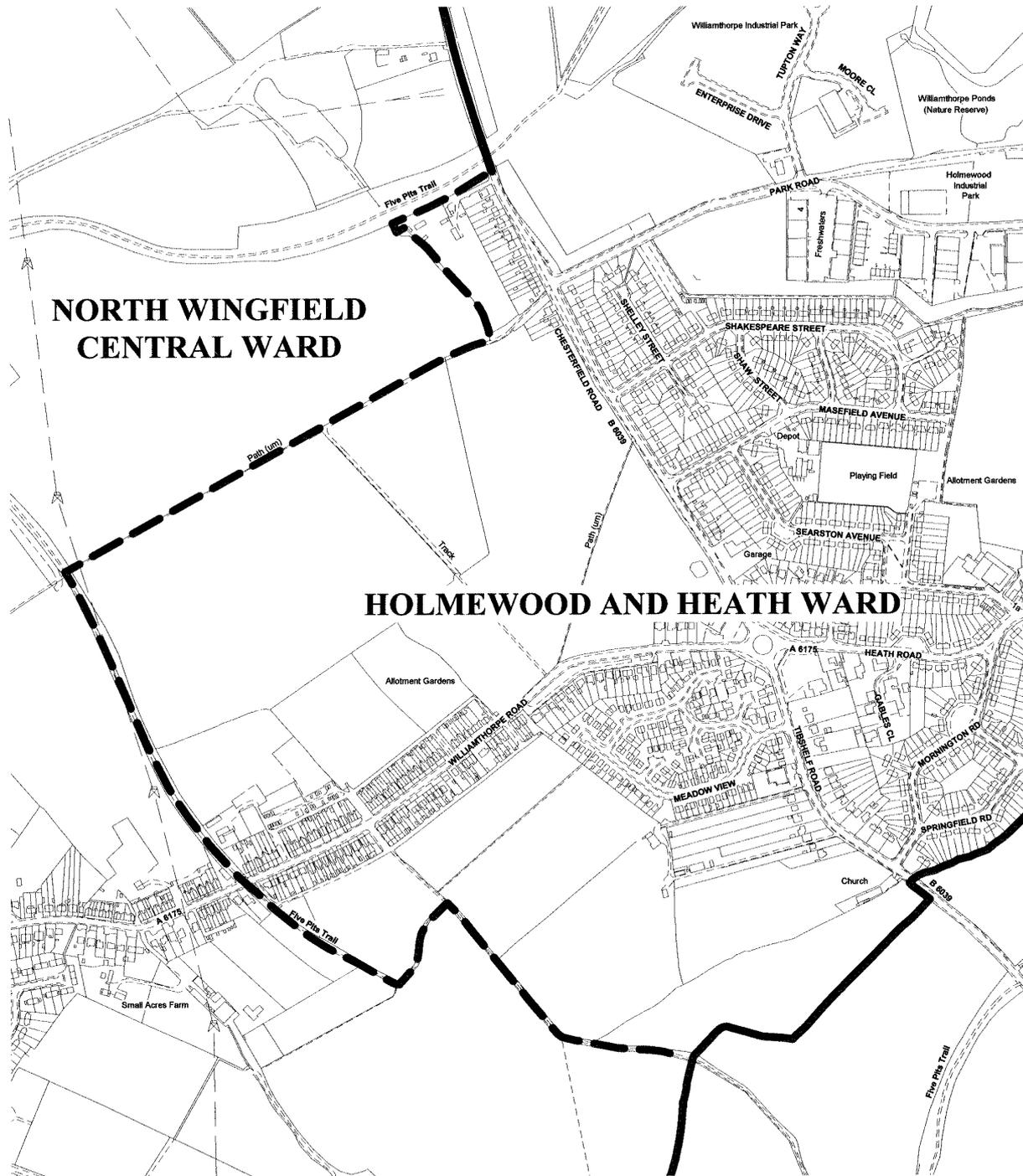


Map A5:
Proposed Boundary between Clay Cross North ward and Clay Cross South ward



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Map A6:
 Proposed Boundary between Holmewood & Heath ward and North Wingfield Central ward and
 the proposed parish warding of North Wingfield



KEY	
EXISTING WARD BOUNDARY	—————
PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARY	—————

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APPENDIX B

Draft Recommendations for North East Derbyshire

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 4, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations only in respect of Tupton and Wingerworth wards, where our draft proposals were as set out in Figure B1.

Although the constituent areas appear the same as under our final recommendations, in fact the affected areas are not exactly the same. The final recommendations are detailed in Chapter 5.

Figure B1:

The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas
Tupton	2	Tupton ward (Tupton parish); Wingerworth ward (part – part of Wingerworth parish)
Wingerworth	3	Wingerworth ward (part – part of Wingerworth parish)

Figure B2:

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

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Tupton	2	2,920	1,460	-1	2,921	1,461	-2
Wingerworth	3	4,751	1,584	8	4,778	1,593	7

Source: Electorate figures are based on the District Council's Stage One submission.