

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR
HACKNEY

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

September 1999

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Hackney.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Professor Michael Clarke (Deputy Chairman)

Peter Brokenshire

Kru Desai

Pamela Gordon

Robin Gray

Robert Hughes CBE

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

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CONTENTS

	page
LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE	<i>v</i>
SUMMARY	<i>vii</i>
1 INTRODUCTION	<i>1</i>
2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS	<i>3</i>
3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>7</i>
4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION	<i>9</i>
5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>11</i>
6 NEXT STEPS	<i>21</i>
APPENDICES	
A Final Recommendations for Hackney: Detailed Mapping	<i>23</i>
B Draft Recommendations for Hackney (March 1999)	<i>29</i>

A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Hackney is inserted inside the back cover of the report



Local Government Commission for England

7 September 1999

Dear Secretary of State

On 22 September 1998 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Hackney under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in March 1999 and undertook an eight-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 minor modifications have been made (see paragraph 79) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Hackney.

We recommend that Hackney Borough Council should be served by 57 councillors representing 19 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

We note that you have now set out in the White Paper *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People* (Cm 4014, HMO), 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 Borough 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 Hackney on 22 September 1998. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 23 March 1999, after which we undertook an eight-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 Hackney:

- **in three of the 23 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and one ward varies by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2003 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 six wards, and by more than 20 per cent in one ward.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraph 79) are that:

- **Hackney Borough Council should be served by 57 councillors, compared to 60 at present;**
- **there should be 19 wards, four fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all of the existing wards.**

These recommendations seek to ensure that the number of electors represented by each borough councillor is as nearly as possible the same, having regard to local circumstances.

- **In none of the 19 wards would the number of electors per councillor vary by more than 7 per cent from the borough average, now or 6 per cent in 2003.**

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 19 October 1999:

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

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

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas (existing wards)	Map reference
1 Brownswood	3	Brownswood ward; New River ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
2 Cazenove	3	Northfield ward (part); Northwold ward (part); Springfield ward (part)	Maps 2, A4, A5 and large map
3 Chatham	3	Chatham ward (part); Homerton ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
4 Clissold	3	Clissold ward (part); North Defoe ward (part); South Defoe ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
5 Dalston	3	Clissold ward (part); Dalston ward (part); Rectory ward (part); Westdown ward (part)	Maps 2, A1 and large map
6 De Beauvoir	3	De Beauvoir ward; Wenlock ward (part)	Maps 2, A2 and large map
7 Hackney Central	3	Chatham ward (part); Dalston ward (part); Eastdown ward (part); Westdown ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
8 Hackney Downs	3	Eastdown ward (part); Northwold ward (part); Rectory ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
9 Haggerston	3	Haggerston ward (part); Moorfields ward (part)	Maps 2, A2 and large map
10 Hoxton	3	Moorfields ward (part); Wenlock ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
11 King's Park	3	Homerton ward (part); King's Park ward	Map 2 and large map
12 Leabridge	3	Chatham ward (part); Homerton ward (part); Leabridge ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
13 Lordship	3	New River ward (part); North Defoe ward; Northfield ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
14 New River	3	New River ward (part); Northfield ward (part); Springfield ward (part)	Maps 2, A3, A4 and large map
15 Queensbridge	3	Haggerston ward (part); Queensbridge ward	Maps 2, A2 and large map
16 Springfield	3	Leabridge ward (part); Northfield ward (part); Springfield ward (part)	Maps 2, A3, A4, A5 and large map

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

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas (existing wards)	Map reference
17	Stoke Newington Central	3	Clissold ward (part); North Defoe ward (part); Northwold ward (part); Rectory ward (part); South Defoe ward (part)	Maps 2, A1 and large map
18	Victoria	3	Victoria ward; Wick ward (part)	Map 2 and large map
19	Wick	3	Wick ward (part)	Map 2 and large map

Note: Map 2, the maps in Appendix A and the large map in the back of the report illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.

Figure 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Hackney

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Brownswood	3	6,203	2,068	1	6,217	2,072	-3
2 Cazenove	3	6,215	2,072	1	6,659	2,220	4
3 Chatham	3	6,049	2,016	-2	6,230	2,077	-2
4 Clissold	3	6,292	2,097	2	6,434	2,145	1
5 Dalston	3	6,323	2,108	3	6,552	2,184	3
6 De Beauvoir	3	6,106	2,035	-1	6,185	2,062	-3
7 Hackney Central	3	6,128	2,043	0	6,326	2,109	-1
8 Hackney Downs	3	6,445	2,148	5	6,751	2,250	6
9 Haggerston	3	5,958	1,986	-3	6,227	2,076	-2
10 Hoxton	3	6,263	2,088	2	6,357	2,119	0
11 King's Park	3	5,967	1,989	-3	6,292	2,097	-1
12 Leabridge	3	6,112	2,037	-1	6,382	2,127	0
13 Lordship	3	6,082	2,027	-1	6,376	2,125	0
14 New River	3	6,230	2,077	1	6,646	2,215	4
15 Queensbridge	3	5,809	1,936	-5	6,085	2,028	-5
16 Springfield	3	5,690	1,897	-7	6,218	2,073	-3
17 Stoke Newington Central	3	6,374	2,125	4	6,618	2,206	4
18 Victoria	3	6,501	2,167	6	6,701	2,234	5
19 Wick	3	5,986	1,995	-3	6,084	2,028	-5
Totals	57	116,733	—	—	121,340	—	—
Averages	—	—	2,048	—	—	2,129	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Hackney Borough Council's 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 borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the London borough of Hackney.

2 In broad terms, the objective of this periodic electoral review of Hackney is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor on the Borough Council is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the Borough Council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards.

3 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.

4 We have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (second edition published in March 1998), which sets out our approach to the reviews. We are not required to have regard to parliamentary constituency boundaries in developing our recommendations. Any new ward boundaries will be taken into account by the Parliamentary Boundary Commission in its reviews of parliamentary constituencies.

5 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as practicable, equality of representation across the borough as a whole. Wherever possible we try to build on schemes which have been prepared locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local interests are normally in a better position to judge what council size and ward configuration are most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while allowing proper reflection of the identities and interests of local communities.

6 We are not prescriptive on council size but, as indicated in our *Guidance*, would expect the overall number of members on a London borough council

usually to be between 40 and 80. We start from the general assumption that the existing council size already secures effective and convenient local government in that borough but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against an upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified: in particular, we do not accept that an increase in a borough's electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a borough council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other boroughs.

The London Boroughs

7 Our programme of periodic electoral reviews of all 386 local authorities in England started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004. The 1992 Act requires us to review most local authorities every 10 to 15 years. However, the Act is silent on the timing of the first London borough reviews by the Commission. The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.

8 Most London boroughs have not been reviewed since 1977. Following discussions with local authority interests on the appropriate timing of London borough reviews, we decided to start as soon as possible after the May 1998 London local government elections so that all reviews could be completed, and the necessary orders implementing our recommendations made by the Secretary of State, in time for the next London elections scheduled for May 2002. Our reviews of the 32 London boroughs started on a phased basis between June 1998 and February 1999.

9 We have sought to ensure that all concerned were aware of our approach to the reviews. Copies of our *Guidance* were sent to all London boroughs, along with other major interests. In March 1998 we briefed chief executives at a meeting of the London branch of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, and we also met with the Association of London Government. Since then we welcomed the opportunity to meet with chief

officers and, on an all-party basis, members in the majority of individual authorities. This has enabled us to brief authorities about our policies and procedures, our objective of electoral equality having regard to local circumstances, and the approach taken by the Commission in previous reviews.

10 Before we started our work in London, the Government published for consultation a Green Paper, *Modernising Local Government – Local Democracy and Community Leadership* (February 1998) which, inter alia, promoted the possibility of London boroughs having annual elections with three-member wards so that one councillor in each ward would stand for election each year. In view of this, we decided that the order in which the London reviews are undertaken should be determined by the proportion of three-member wards in each borough under the current arrangements. On this basis, Hackney was in the first phase of reviews.

11 The Government's subsequent White Paper, *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, published in July 1998, set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. For all unitary councils, including London boroughs, it proposed elections by thirds. It also refers to local accountability being maximised where the whole electorate in a council's area is involved in elections each time they take place, thereby pointing to a pattern of three-member wards in London boroughs to reflect a system of elections by thirds.

12 Following publication of the White Paper, we advised all authorities in our 1998/99 PER programme, including the London boroughs, that until any direction is received from the Secretary of State, the Commission would continue to maintain the approach to PERs as set out in the March 1998 *Guidance*. Nevertheless, we added that local authorities and other interested parties would no doubt wish to have regard to the Secretary of State's intentions and legislative proposals in formulating electoral schemes as part of PERs of their areas. Our general experience has been that proposals for three-member ward patterns emerged from most areas in London.

13 Finally, it should be noted that there are no parishes in London, and in fact there is no legislative provision for the establishment of parishes in London. This differentiates the reviews of London boroughs from the majority of the other electoral reviews we are carrying out

elsewhere in the country, where parishes feature highly and provide the building blocks for district or borough wards.

The Review of Hackney

14 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Hackney. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in July 1977 (Report No. 223).

15 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 22 September 1998, when we wrote to Hackney Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified the local authority associations, the Metropolitan Police, Members of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations, we placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and other publicity, and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations was 14 December 1998. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

16 Stage Three began on 23 March 1999 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Hackney*, and ended on 17 May 1999. 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

17 Hackney is an inner London borough covering an area of 1,950 hectares, with a population of approximately 180,000. It lies to the north-east of central London and comprises the communities of Stamford Hill, Stoke Newington, Clapton, Hackney, Dalston and Shoreditch. It is bounded by the borough of Haringey to the north, Waltham Forest and Newham to the east, Islington to the west and Tower Hamlets and the City of London to the south. The borough is relatively deprived, with one of the highest concentrations of social housing and unemployment in London. It is largely residential in nature, although it has a number of areas of parkland, including Hackney Marsh, Hackney Downs and London Fields. While the borough has only two London Underground stations (Old Street and Manor House) it is also served by the North London line and train services from Liverpool Street. The borough is linked with North London and Hertfordshire by the A10 trunk road.

18 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 borough average in percentage terms. In the text which follows, this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

19 The electorate of the borough is 116,733 (February 1998). The Council currently has 60 councillors who are elected from 23 wards (Map 1 and Figure 3). Fourteen wards are each represented by three councillors and nine wards elect two councillors each. As in all London boroughs, the whole council is elected together every four years. Since the last electoral review, there has been a decrease in electorate in the borough, with around 22 per cent fewer electors than two decades ago.

20 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,946 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 2,022 by the year 2003 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 three of the 23 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and in one ward by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Brownswood ward where each of the two councillors represents 29 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1:
Existing Wards in Hackney



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Figure 3:
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Brownswood	2	5,011	2,506	29	4,975	2,488	23
2 Chatham	3	5,607	1,869	-4	5,764	1,921	-5
3 Clissold	3	6,029	2,010	3	6,167	2,056	2
4 Dalston	3	5,415	1,805	-7	5,506	1,835	-9
5 De Beauvoir	3	5,959	1,986	2	6,038	2,013	0
6 Eastdown	3	5,159	1,720	-12	5,375	1,792	-11
7 Haggerston	2	4,273	2,137	10	4,517	2,259	12
8 Homerton	2	4,001	2,001	3	4,169	2,085	3
9 King's Park	2	3,820	1,910	-2	4,057	2,029	0
10 Leabridge	3	5,680	1,893	-3	5,938	1,979	-2
11 Moorfields	2	4,255	2,128	9	4,308	2,154	7
12 New River	3	6,393	2,131	10	6,716	2,239	11
13 North Defoe	2	3,514	1,757	-10	3,631	1,816	-10
14 Northfield	3	5,251	1,750	-10	5,638	1,879	-7
15 Northwold	3	5,717	1,906	-2	6,064	2,021	0
16 Queensbridge	3	5,520	1,840	-5	5,796	1,932	-4
17 Rectory	3	5,251	1,750	-10	5,517	1,839	-9
18 South Defoe	2	3,650	1,825	-6	3,734	1,867	-8
19 Springfield	3	6,330	2,110	8	6,986	2,329	15
20 Victoria	3	6,379	2,126	9	6,579	2,193	8
21 Wenlock	2	4,129	2,065	6	4,195	2,098	4

continued overleaf

Figure 3 (continued):
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
22 Westdown	2	3,282	1,641	-16	3,464	1,732	-14
23 Wick	3	6,108	2,036	5	6,206	2,069	2
Totals	60	116,733	—	—	121,340	—	—
Averages	—	—	1,946	—	—	2,022	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Hackney Borough Council's 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 borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1998, electors in Westdown ward were relatively over-represented by 16 per cent, while electors in Brownswood ward were relatively under-represented by 29 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

²¹ During Stage One we received four representations from the Borough Council, the Hackney Labour Group, Hackney Conservatives and Hackney Borough Council Liberal Democrat Group, all of whom submitted borough-wide schemes. In the light of these 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 Hackney.

²² Our draft recommendations were based on a combination of all these schemes, which achieved improved electoral equality, provided good boundaries while having regard to the statutory criteria and proposed a pattern of entirely three-member wards. We proposed that:

- (a) Hackney Borough Council should be served by 57 councillors;
- (b) there should be 19 wards, involving changes to the boundaries of all existing wards.

Draft Recommendation

Hackney Borough Council should comprise 57 councillors serving 19 wards.

²³ Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in no ward varying by more than 7 per cent from the borough average currently. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with all wards expected to vary by no more than 6 per cent from the borough average in 2003.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

²⁴ During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, three representations were received, a list of which is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Hackney Borough Council and the Commission.

provide clearer boundaries. It stated that its proposed changes have widespread local support from local residents, schools and a number of voluntary sector organisations.

Hackney Borough Council

²⁵ The Borough Council “unanimously resolved to accept the Commission’s proposals”. It also asked that the Commission “be congratulated on producing very objective and fair recommendations”. As part of its consultation exercise, the Borough Council also received a response from the Shoreditch Association, who objected to the proposed Hoxton ward name, but did not provide any definitive alternative.

Hackney Labour Group

²⁶ The Hackney Labour Group submitted views on behalf of Hackney Council Labour Group, Hackney North & Stoke Newington Constituency Labour Party, Hackney South & Shoreditch Constituency Labour Party and Hackney Labour Campaign Forum. It stated that while the draft recommendations differ from the submission that it made to the Commission in many respects, it could “see the logic guiding the Commission’s recommendations”. It particularly welcomed the fact that our draft proposals combined a high degree of electoral equality with boundaries that it considered represent real communities such as the new central wards for Hackney, Dalston and Stoke Newington. It was therefore “prepared to accept the Commission’s draft recommendations in their entirety”.

Other Representations

²⁷ We also received a representation from Fairholt Road Residents’ Association regarding the draft recommendations for Brownswood, Lordship and New River wards. It proposed minor boundary amendments to each of these three wards, arguing that they would better reflect community ties, and

5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

28 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Hackney is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities – and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the number of electors being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

29 In relation to Schedule 11, 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. We must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken.

30 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.

31 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, the objective of electoral equality 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 electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance over 10 per cent in any ward. In reviews of predominantly urban areas such as the London boroughs, our experience suggests that we would expect to achieve a high degree of electoral equality in all wards.

Electorate Forecasts

32 Over the past 20 years, the borough of Hackney has experienced a 22 per cent decline in its electorate. At Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of around 4 per cent from 116,733 to 121,340 over the five-year period from 1998. We recognise that the 1998 electorate reflected an historically low electorate figure for the borough, and that the 1999 register indicated an increase of over 2,000 electors in the last year. The Council has estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to the unitary development plan for the borough, and the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates, based on figures provided by the London Research Centre (LRC). Advice was obtained from the Borough Council on the likely effects to electorate figures of changes to ward boundaries.

33 During Stage One there was some disagreement over electorate forecasts in this area. In particular, both the Labour Group and the Conservatives argued that the electorate of Brownswood ward would increase over the next five years. The Council confirmed that it was content to continue using the projections provided by the LRC. In our draft recommendations report we accepted that electorate forecasting is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the forecast electorate, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

34 We received no comments on the Council's electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates presently available.

Council Size

35 We indicated in our *Guidance* that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a London borough to be in the range of 40 to 80. As already explained, the Commission's starting point is to assume that the current council size facilitates convenient and effective local government.

36 Hackney Borough Council currently has 60 members. Over the past 20 years, the borough has witnessed a decline in its electorate, while over the next five years it is forecast that there will be a small increase. At Stage One the Borough Council, the Hackney Labour Group, Hackney Conservatives and the Hackney Borough Council Liberal Democrat Group all proposed a reduction in council size from 60 to 57.

37 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 57 members.

38 At Stage Three we received no further comments on council size and remain content that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council of 57 members.

Electoral Arrangements

39 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered the representations received at Stage One from the Borough Council, Hackney Labour Group, Hackney Conservatives and Hackney Borough Council Liberal Democrat Group. We expressed gratitude for the positive approach taken by these respondents who had each submitted detailed borough-wide proposals for change to the present electoral arrangements. From these representations some considerations emerged which helped to inform us when preparing our draft recommendations.

40 First, there was a consensus within the Council for a reduction in council size from 60 to 57 representing 19 three-member wards. As these proposals attracted the support of all Stage One respondents, we incorporated them into our draft recommendations.

41 Second, we tried to reflect community considerations where it was consistent with our objective of electoral equality. However, there appeared to be little agreement between respondents' submissions on the location and precise boundaries of such communities within the borough. We sought to build on consensus where it existed, but recognised that at Stage One there were few areas of consensus on specific ward boundaries and not all submissions provided

evidence to support their argumentation. This made it difficult for us to understand fully the reasons why particular warding arrangements have been proposed. In preparing our draft recommendations, we endeavoured to unite each of the town centres of Hackney, Dalston and Stoke Newington in single wards in order to retain their integrity as commercial entities and, where possible, retained whole housing estates within a single ward, to reflect community ties. We also used the Grand Union Canal and main roads such as the A10, Mare Street and Green Lanes as boundaries, and the physical boundaries of Clissold Park, Hackney Downs and Well Street Common. We considered that, in Hackney, the boundaries of current polling districts were not always necessarily a reflection of community ties and therefore breached them in a number of areas.

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- (a) Brownswood, New River, Northfield and Springfield wards;
- (b) Clissold, North Defoe, Rectory and South Defoe wards;
- (c) Eastdown and Northwold wards;
- (d) Homerton, King's Park, Leabridge and Wick wards;
- (e) Chatham and Victoria wards;
- (f) Dalston, Queensbridge and Westdown wards;
- (g) De Beauvoir, Haggerston, Moorfields and Wenlock wards.

45 Details of our final recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on the maps at Appendix A and the large map inside the back cover of the report.

Brownswood, New River, Northfield and Springfield wards

46 The four wards of Brownswood, New River, Northfield and Springfield are located in the north of the borough covering Stamford Hill and Finsbury Park. At present Brownswood, New River and Springfield wards are under-represented, with 29 per cent, 10 per cent and 8 per cent more electors per councillor respectively than the borough average, while Northfield ward is over-represented, with 10 per cent fewer than the average. Electoral equality is not expected to improve significantly over the next five years.

47 At Stage One the Borough Council and Labour Group proposed no change to these wards, other than the allocation of an additional councillor to Brownswood ward. Their proposals improved levels of electoral equality for New River and Springfield wards, but Brownswood and Northfield wards would have continued to have electoral variances in excess of 10 per cent, which they justified in terms of the expected growth in Brownswood ward. The Conservatives attempted to address the over-representation that would result from Brownswood ward being represented by an additional councillor by transferring the western part of New River ward, improving electoral equality over the five-year period. The remaining three wards would all have minor boundary realignments. The Liberal Democrats also proposed an additional councillor for Brownswood ward, enlarging the ward eastwards to include part of New River ward to offset the ensuing over-representation. They proposed combining the

northern areas of New River, Northfield and Springfield wards to form a new ward, with the southern parts of New River and Northfield wards being combined with the western part of North Defoe ward to also form a new ward. The eastern part of Springfield ward would be extended southwards, while the western parts of Springfield and Northwold wards would be combined with the remainder of the existing Northfield ward.

48 Our draft recommendations for these four wards reflected the Liberal Democrats' scheme as it best addressed the under-representation in Brownswood ward. While the Conservatives' and Labour Group's submissions predicted an increase in electorate of approximately 800 and 500 electors respectively in this ward, the Borough Council predicted a relatively stable electorate over the five years from 1998 to 2003. The Borough Council confirmed that the projected figures provided by the London Research Centre remain the best available, and this view was reinforced by the 1999 electoral register which showed relatively little change in electorate (an increase of less than 100) over the 1998 base figures. We proposed that the West Reservoir, together with that the area to the south of Woodberry Down and west of Woodberry Grove (currently in New River ward) and the properties on Green Lanes and Greenway Close (currently in North Defoe ward) should be combined with Brownswood ward, as this area is self-contained and the reservoir and Woodberry Down would provide clear boundaries for the new ward.

49 We proposed an amended New River ward, combining the area including and to the north of the East Reservoir and Woodberry Down from the current New River ward, together with the area to the north of Dunsmure Road and Portland Avenue from Northfield ward, the area to the west of Rookwood Road and all the electors on Ravensdale Road and Olinda Road from the current Springfield ward. This warding arrangement retained the similar communities which abut the Seven Sisters Road and Amhurst Park in a single ward. We proposed a new Lordship ward (named after Lordship Road), combining the southern part of the current New River ward with part of Northfield ward to the east of the railway line (including the Guinness Trust Estate) and the part of North Defoe ward to the north of Stoke Newington Church Street, including the whole of Abney Park Cemetery. We considered that this would provide a compact ward for the north-western part of Stoke Newington as well as a

reasonable level of electoral equality. Our proposed Springfield ward would comprise the existing Springfield ward, less the area to the west of Rookwood Road, and the roads to the west of Clapton Common, but would be expanded southwards to include the area to the north of Mount Pleasant Hill currently in Leabridge ward, and the area to the east of Darenth Road in Northfield ward. Our proposed southern boundary of Springfield ward would incorporate all of Clapton Common and the estates leading from it and Braydon Road. Our proposals would provide the four wards of Brownswood, New River, Lordship and Springfield with electoral variances of no more than 7 per cent from the average currently, and 5 per cent by 2003.

50 At Stage Three the Borough Council and Labour Group supported our draft recommendations, while Fairholt Road Residents' Association proposed minor amendments to the boundaries between our proposed Brownswood, Lordship and New River wards. They proposed that the boundary between Brownswood and Lordship wards be amended so that Greenway Close and Clissold Court would form part of the new Lordship ward, in order to retain the existing ward boundary along Green Lanes to its junction with Brownswood Road. They stated that this proposal was based on the "desirability to keep Green Lanes as a clear and defined boundary". Between Brownswood and New River wards they proposed that the boundary should run along the centre of Seven Sisters Road and Woodberry Grove, rather than Woodberry Down. They argued that this proposal would utilise the busy Seven Sisters Road as a clear and defined boundary, while keeping the southern part of the Woodberry Downs Estate in a ward with the similar communities in Brownswood ward. They also proposed a revised boundary between New River and Lordship wards running along the centre of Fairholt Road, between Woodberry Grove and Cranwich Road. They argued that their recommendations would provide a better boundary, reuniting the north side of Fairholt Road with the East Reservoir, and would enhance political accountability to the local community.

51 We have decided to largely confirm our draft recommendations as final, but propose incorporating the changes proposed by the Fairholt Road Residents' Association as part of our final recommendations, as they would provide improved levels of electoral equality and secure clearer and more easily identifiable boundaries. These changes

are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report, and would result in Brownswood and New River wards both having 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average now, 3 per cent fewer and 4 per cent more in 2003 respectively, while Lordship and Springfield wards would have 1 per cent and 7 per cent fewer currently, equal to and 3 per cent fewer in 2003 respectively.

Clissold, North Defoe, Rectory and South Defoe wards

52 These four wards cover the Stoke Newington area of the borough. Clissold ward currently has 3 per cent more electors than the borough average, while North Defoe, Rectory and South Defoe wards currently have 10 per cent, 10 per cent and 6 per cent fewer than the average respectively. Little improvement is forecast over the next five years.

53 At Stage One the Borough Council and the Labour Group proposed two minor boundary amendments between South Defoe and Clissold wards and Westdown and Rectory wards, together with the amalgamation of North Defoe and South Defoe wards into a new Defoe ward. The Conservatives also proposed combining North Defoe and South Defoe wards, and part of South Defoe ward with most of the existing Clissold ward to form an amended Clissold ward. The remainder of Clissold ward would form part of a new Dalston ward. Rectory ward would expand northwards, while the southern part would form part of a new Dalston ward.

54 The Liberal Democrats proposed combining the eastern parts of South Defoe and North Defoe wards with the northern part of Rectory ward. The western parts of South Defoe and Clissold wards would be combined in a single ward, while the remainder of Clissold ward would be combined with the remainder of Rectory ward, the western areas of Westdown and Dalston wards to form a new ward.

55 Having carefully considered these proposals, we decided to base our draft recommendations on the Liberal Democrats' scheme as it would provide reasonable levels of electoral equality for the resulting wards, while having the advantage of uniting the centre of Stoke Newington in one ward. We did, however, propose a number of modifications to the boundaries in order to improve electoral equality and provide clearer boundaries. We proposed a new Stoke Newington Central ward,

comprising the part of Clissold ward to the east of Wordsworth Road, the part of South Defoe ward to the east of Nevill Road, the part of North Defoe ward to the south of the Abney Park Cemetery and east of Defoe Road and the parts of Northwold and Rectory wards to the north of and including Somerford Grove and Shacklewell Road and to the west side of Rectory Road. Our proposed Stoke Newington Central ward would retain the whole of the Somerford Grove and Yorkshire Grove estates within a single ward and would unite those streets which lead from Stoke Newington Road and Stoke Newington High Street. To its west, we proposed an amended Clissold ward combining the existing Clissold ward less the area to the east of Wordsworth Road and those parts of South Defoe and North Defoe wards to the west of Nevill Road and Defoe Road. This ward combined the primarily residential streets leading from Green Lanes, Stoke Newington Church Street and Albion Road. We considered that the eastern part of Rectory ward should be combined with areas to its east in a new Hackney Downs ward, discussed later in the report. We considered that these wards provided a reasonable level of electoral equality and would reflect community ties.

56 At Stage Three we received two representations – from the Borough Council and Labour Group – who both supported our draft proposals. We are therefore content to endorse our draft recommendations as final. The resulting Stoke Newington Central and Clissold wards would have 4 per cent and 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the average respectively (4 per cent and 1 per cent more by 2003).

Eastdown and Northwold wards

57 The two wards of Eastdown and Northwold form the western part of the Clapton neighbourhood committee area. On the basis of the existing boundaries and council size, Northwold ward has 2 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average and Eastdown ward has 12 per cent fewer than average.

58 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed retaining Northwold ward on its existing boundaries, while Eastdown ward would be extended southwards. This scheme was also put forward by the Labour Group, who stated that adding this area into Eastdown ward would give a “more natural [boundary], following the two local railway lines”. The Conservatives’ scheme proposed dividing the existing Northwold ward with the southern area forming part of a revised Rectory

ward, while the eastern area would form part of a revised Northfield ward with the northern area of Leabridge ward. They proposed a revised Eastdown ward, combining the current Eastdown ward less the southern area, with the southern area of Leabridge ward and the western area of Homerton ward. They argued that this warding pattern would “keep together the large Muslim community...[and] preserve the culture of this area and maintain the very high community spirit.” The Liberal Democrats proposed combining the eastern part of Northwold ward with the northern parts of Eastdown and Rectory wards to form a single ward. The southern area of Eastdown ward would then be combined with the eastern part of Dalston ward to form a new ward.

59 We considered the lack of consensus over detailed proposals suggested that there was little or no agreement as to the boundaries of communities or their links in this part of the borough. We decided to base our submission on elements of all of the proposals received. We considered that there was some merit in the Conservatives’ proposal to use Northwold Road as a boundary between wards as this is a significant east-west road and would provide a clear, identifiable boundary. We proposed a new Cazenove ward, (named after Cazenove Road), incorporating the part of Northwold ward to the north of Northwold Road, together with the Stamford Hill Estate area (north of Lynmouth Road) from Northfield ward and an area to the west of Clapton Common from Springfield ward. In relation to Eastdown ward, we considered that Hackney Downs would provide a clear, identifiable boundary and would reflect community ties well. We proposed creating a new Hackney Downs ward combining the part of the current Eastdown ward to the north of Downs Park Road, the part of Northwold ward to the south of Northwold Road and the part of Rectory ward to the east of Rectory Road. The southern part of Eastdown ward would be combined with parts of Westdown and Dalston wards to its south, and this is discussed in more detail later in the report.

60 At Stage Three the Borough Council and Labour Group both supported our draft recommendations. As we received no other representations regarding our proposals in this area we are content to confirm our draft recommendations as final. This would result in the new Cazenove and Hackney Downs wards having 1 per cent and 5 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (4 per cent and 6 per cent in 2003).

Homerton, King's Park, Leabridge and Wick wards

61 The four wards of Homerton, King's Park, Leabridge and Wick are situated in the east of the borough. Currently Homerton and Wick wards have 3 per cent and 5 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, while King's Park and Leabridge wards have 2 per cent and 3 per cent fewer. While Homerton and King's Park wards are each represented by two councillors, Leabridge and Wick are represented by three councillors.

62 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed dividing Homerton ward between King's Park and Chatham wards. It proposed minor boundary amendments to the south of Wick ward and no change to the existing Leabridge ward. The Labour Group put forward an identical scheme for the area stating that there were "no obvious natural boundaries to follow here". The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats put forward schemes differing from that of the Borough Council. The Conservatives proposed that the current Leabridge ward be divided between the proposed Leabridge and Eastdown wards, and that Homerton ward should be divided between the amended Eastdown and Chatsworth wards. They also proposed that the northern area of Wick ward be enlarged to incorporate King's Park ward, while the southern part of Wick ward should be combined with parts of Chatham and Victoria wards to form a new Homerton ward. The Liberal Democrats also proposed combining King's Park ward with the eastern part of Wick ward. Leabridge ward, less the northern area, would be combined with the remainder of Homerton ward and the eastern area of Eastdown ward to form a new ward.

63 We considered the representations that were received at Stage One and decided to base our draft recommendations on the proposals put forward by the Borough Council and Labour Group. We considered that these proposals would better reflect community ties, and in particular we considered that we should retain the links between the Trowbridge Estate and the area to its west. However, we proposed making minor boundary amendments in this area in order to improve electoral equality. All four schemes proposed redistributing Homerton ward between surrounding wards and our proposals reflected this consensus. We proposed that the western part of Homerton ward up to and including the shopping area on Chatsworth Road and the part of Chatham ward to the north of and including

Dunlace Road should be transferred to a revised Leabridge ward, and that the eastern part of Homerton ward (the areas to the east of Chatsworth Road and Glyn Road) should form part of a revised King's Park ward. We considered that such a change provided a good balance between electoral equality and community identities, and noted that all the representations received, with the exception of the Conservatives, proposed combining part of Homerton ward with King's Park ward. We proposed to largely retain the current Wick ward. We considered that there was some merit in transferring the Church Crescent area from Victoria ward to Wick ward, as proposed by the Borough Council and the Labour Group. This proposal also reflected the clear, identifiable boundary of Well Street Common between Victoria and Wick wards. However, we did not propose modifying the boundary between Wick ward and Chatham ward as such a change would have led to a higher level of electoral inequality.

64 At Stage Three the Borough Council and Labour Group fully supported our draft proposals for these three new wards. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Leabridge, King's Park and Wick wards as final, resulting in none of the wards having an electoral variance of more than 3 per cent now (5 per cent in 2003).

Chatham and Victoria wards

65 Chatham and Victoria wards cover the south-east of the borough to the east of Mare Street. Currently, Chatham and Victoria wards have 4 per cent fewer and 9 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average. These levels of electoral equality are not projected to change significantly over the next five years.

66 At Stage One the Borough Council and Labour Group proposed largely retaining the existing two wards. They proposed that the south-western area of the existing Homerton ward be incorporated in Chatham ward, Nisbet House be transferred to Wick ward, and Victoria ward be enlarged to incorporate the southern area of Wick ward. The Conservatives proposed that the northern area of Chatham ward would be combined with the eastern part of Homerton ward, while the southern part of Chatham ward would be combined with the most southerly streets of Wick ward and eastern area of Victoria ward. They proposed that the remainder of Victoria ward would be combined with the eastern area of the existing Queensbridge ward. The Liberal Democrats' proposals were based on the scheme put forward by the Borough Council's officers. They

proposed combining the western part of Chatham ward with the northern part of Victoria ward to form a new ward, while the eastern part of Chatham ward would be combined with the western part of Wick ward to form a single ward. The remainder of Victoria ward would be incorporated in a ward with the eastern part of Queensbridge ward, although they argued that London Fields should not be included in Victoria ward.

67 We carefully considered the representations received at Stage One, and based our recommendations on the scheme proposed for the area by the Borough Council and Labour Group. Our proposals largely retained the existing Victoria ward but made a minor modification to the eastern boundary to utilise Well Street Common as a ward boundary. In relation to Chatham ward, we proposed that the current ward be largely retained on its existing boundaries, but that part of Homerton ward to the west of Glyn Road be taken into the ward. We proposed that the part of the current ward to the north of Dunlace Road and west of Median Road be transferred to Leabridge ward, and also that the 10 electors on the eastern side of Mare Street to the north of the North London railway line be transferred to Hackney Central ward, in order to unite the main shopping area within a single ward. We considered whether we should change the name of the ward to Homerton to better reflect its geographical location, but retained the existing ward name of Chatham as proposed by the Borough Council and the Labour Group.

68 At Stage Three the Borough Council unanimously resolved to accept the Commission's proposals, as did the Labour Group. In the light of there being no opposition to our draft recommendations we are content to endorse them as final. This would result in Chatham and Victoria wards having 2 per cent and 6 per cent more electors than the borough average respectively (2 per cent fewer and 5 per cent more in 2003).

Dalston, Queensbridge and Westdown wards

69 The three wards of Dalston, Queensbridge and Westdown are located in the south of the borough. All three wards are currently over-represented with 7 per cent, 5 per cent and 16 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively. In Dalston ward, this level of electoral equality is expected to deteriorate, while in Queensbridge and Westdown wards it is expected to improve only marginally.

70 At Stage One the Borough Council and Labour Group proposed combining most of Dalston and Westdown wards to form an amended Dalston ward, bringing together the centre of Dalston into a single ward, while retaining Queensbridge ward on its existing boundaries. The Conservatives proposed a new Dalston ward combining Westdown ward in its entirety with the eastern part of Clissold ward and western part of Rectory ward. They also proposed a new Town Hall ward, comprising most of Dalston ward to the east with the southern area of Eastdown ward and western part of Chatham ward, stating that this would combine "the polling districts and streets which surround the northern end of Kingsland". They also proposed an amended Queensbridge ward, comprising most of the existing Queensbridge ward and the northern area of Haggerston ward. The Liberal Democrats' proposals were based on the Borough Council officers' scheme, combining the western part of Westdown ward with the southern part of Rectory ward, eastern part of Clissold ward and western part of Dalston ward into a single ward. The eastern parts of Dalston and Westdown wards would then be combined with the southern part of Eastdown ward to form a new ward. Under these proposals the remainder of Dalston ward would then form a new ward with the western part of Queensbridge ward.

71 In our draft recommendations we put forward a scheme based largely on the Borough Council's and Labour Group's proposals, thereby reflecting the consensus between all submissions that the town centres of Dalston and Hackney remain within single wards. We also considered that we should retain Richmond Road as a boundary and utilise the strong physical boundary of Hackney Downs. Our proposed Hackney Central ward covered the area to the south of Downs Park Road currently in Eastdown ward, together with the areas to the east of Lansdowne Road and Greenwood Road from Dalston ward and east of Cecilia Road from the current Westdown ward. Our proposed Dalston ward united the areas surrounding Kingsland High Street. This new ward comprised the part of Dalston ward to the west of Lansdowne Road and Fassett Square, the part of Westdown ward to the west of and including Cecilia Road, the part of Clissold ward to the south of Barretts Grove and the part of Rectory ward to the south of Somerford Grove, Shacklewell Road and Downs Road. We proposed retaining Queensbridge ward largely on its existing boundaries, as put forward by the Borough Council and the Labour Group. However, in order to improve electoral equality, we proposed transferring the area to the north of Lee Street and Livermere

Road from Haggerston ward into Queensbridge ward. We considered that such a change would also have the advantage of providing a ward boundary that would be clearer than the existing boundary, by removing the anomalous southward spur.

72 At Stage Three we received responses from the Borough Council and Labour Group supporting our draft recommendations in their entirety, with more specific references by the Labour Group stating that the proposals “combined a high degree of electoral equality with boundaries that represent ... real communities such as the new central wards for Hackney, Dalston and Stoke Newington”. We are therefore content to confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final. This would result in the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Dalston, Queensbridge and Hackney Central wards by 3 per cent, 5 per cent and equal to the average respectively (3 per cent, 5 per cent and 1 per cent in 2003).

De Beauvoir, Haggerston, Moorfields and Wenlock wards

73 The four wards of De Beauvoir, Haggerston, Moorfields and Wenlock are located in the south-west of the borough covering an area stretching from Shoreditch to Kingsland. The area is currently represented by nine councillors, with Haggerston, Moorfields and Wenlock wards each represented by two councillors and De Beauvoir ward represented by three councillors. On the basis of the current council size of 60, all four wards are under-represented. Currently, De Beauvoir, Haggerston, Moorfields and Wenlock wards have 2 per cent, 10 per cent, 9 per cent and 6 per cent more electors than the borough average respectively.

74 During Stage One the Borough Council proposed redrawing the boundaries of these four wards to create three wards each represented by three councillors. It proposed that Hoxton ward would comprise the southern part of Haggerston ward, the northern part of Moorfields ward and the southern part of De Beauvoir ward. Its proposed Shoreditch ward combined the whole of Wenlock ward together with the remainder of the existing Moorfields ward, while its proposed Kingsland ward comprised the northern part of the current De Beauvoir ward together with the northern part of Haggerston ward. The Labour Group’s proposals were similar to those put forward by the Borough Council. They proposed that the current De Beauvoir ward be retained, that Haggerston ward be expanded to include the eastern part of

Moorfields ward, and that the whole of Wenlock ward be combined with the western part of Moorfields ward, to form a new Shoreditch ward.

75 The Conservatives proposed that the current Haggerston ward be divided between the two wards of Hoxton and Queensbridge, with the northern and eastern parts of Haggerston ward being combined with the eastern part of the current Queensbridge ward. They proposed that the remainder of Queensbridge ward would be combined with the northern part of Kingsland ward and western area of Dalston ward to form an amended Kingsland ward. Wenlock ward would then be combined with the southern part of De Beauvoir ward. The Liberal Democrats also proposed that the existing four wards be divided between three new wards. They proposed that the whole of Haggerston ward be combined with the eastern part of Moorfields ward and that the whole of Wenlock ward be combined with the western part of Moorfields ward. However, the Liberal Democrats proposed that the southern part of Moorfields ward would be combined with a ward to its north and east rather than one to its west. Similarly to the Labour Group’s proposal, the Liberal Democrats agreed that the boundaries of De Beauvoir ward would remain unchanged.

76 Having considered the representations received at Stage One we based our draft recommendations for this area on the proposals of the Labour Group and the Liberal Democrats, subject to some minor modifications. We considered that we should largely retain the existing Queensbridge ward, however, in order to improve electoral equality, we proposed transferring the properties to the north of Lee Street and Livermere Road from Haggerston ward to Queensbridge ward. We proposed that the remainder of Haggerston ward be combined with the whole of Moorfields ward to the east of Hoxton Street and north of Old Street in a revised Haggerston ward. We proposed that De Beauvoir ward should remain largely unchanged as the ward encompasses an identifiable community between the borough boundary and the A10 arterial road and provides reasonable electoral equality. However, we recognised the Conservatives’ argument that the current southern boundary is fairly arbitrary and divides the Colville estate and we proposed transferring the area to the north of Shoreditch Park to a revised De Beauvoir ward. Our proposed Hoxton ward comprised the remaining part of Moorfields ward to the west of Hoxton Street and Pitfield Street together with Wenlock ward less the area to the north of Shoreditch Park and east of the New North Road.

77 At Stage Three we received support from the Borough Council and Labour Group for our proposals. The Borough Council submitted a response from the Shoreditch Association which stated that it objected to the proposed ward name of Hoxton. It stated that the general consensus was that this ward should be renamed Shoreditch ward, but that they would “go along with what the majority want”. However, we are not convinced that our proposed Hoxton ward should be renamed Shoreditch ward as we consider that the name would not reflect the area covered by the ward, with Shoreditch High Street being in our proposed Haggerston ward. In the light of the support that our draft recommendations received from the Borough Council and Labour Group, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations as final, resulting in the number of electors per councillor in the proposed De Beauvoir, Haggerston and Hoxton wards varying by 1 per cent, 3 per cent and 2 per cent respectively (3 per cent, 2 per cent and equal to the average in 2003).

Conclusions

78 Having considered carefully all the representations and evidence received in response to our consultation report, we have decided substantially to endorse our draft recommendations, subject to minor amendments to the boundaries of Brownswood, New River and Lordship wards.

79 We conclude that, in Hackney:

- (a) there should be a reduction in council size from 60 to 57;
- (b) there should be 19 wards, four less than at present, involving changes to the boundaries of all of the existing wards.

80 Figure 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1998 and 2003 electorate figures.

81 As shown in Figure 4, our final recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards where the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from three to none. This improved balance of representation is expected to continue in 2003. Our final recommendations are set out in more detail in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, the maps at Appendix A and the large map at the back of this report.

Final Recommendation

Hackney Borough Council should comprise 57 councillors serving 19 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, the maps at Appendix A and the large map in the back of the report.

*Figure 4 :
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

	1998 electorate		2003 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	60	57	60	57
Number of wards	23	19	23	19
Average number of electors per councillor	1,946	2,048	2,022	2,129
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	3	0	6	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	1	0	1	0

Map 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Hackney



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6. NEXT STEPS

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

83 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.

84 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 Sponsorship Division
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

APPENDIX A

Final Recommendations for Hackney: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for the Hackney area.

Map A1 illustrates the proposed ward boundary between Dalston and Stoke Newington Central wards.

Map A2 illustrates the proposed ward boundary between Haggerston and Queensbridge wards.

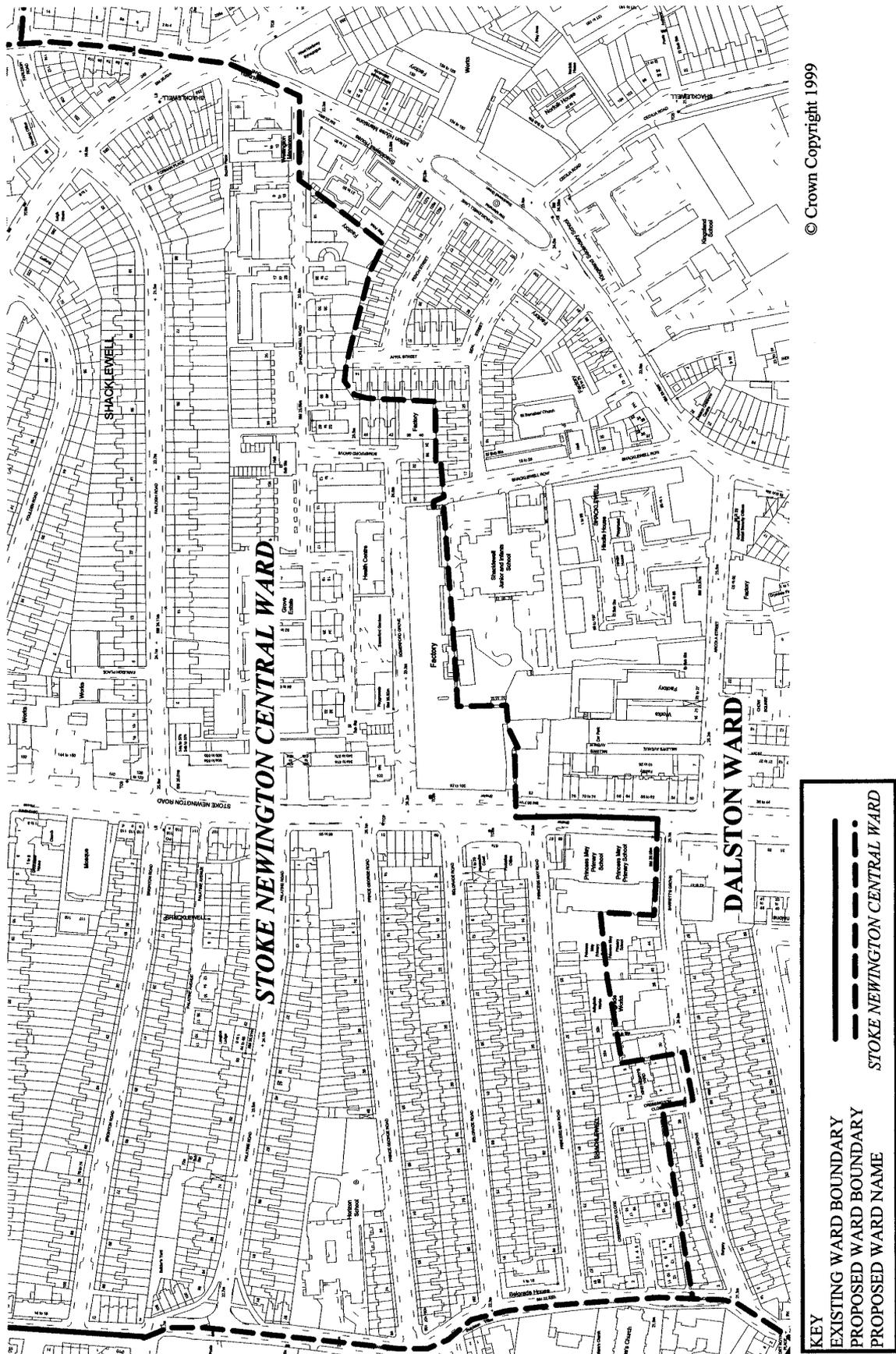
Map A3 illustrates the proposed ward boundary between New River and Springfield wards.

Map A4 illustrates the proposed ward boundary between New River, Cazenove and Springfield wards.

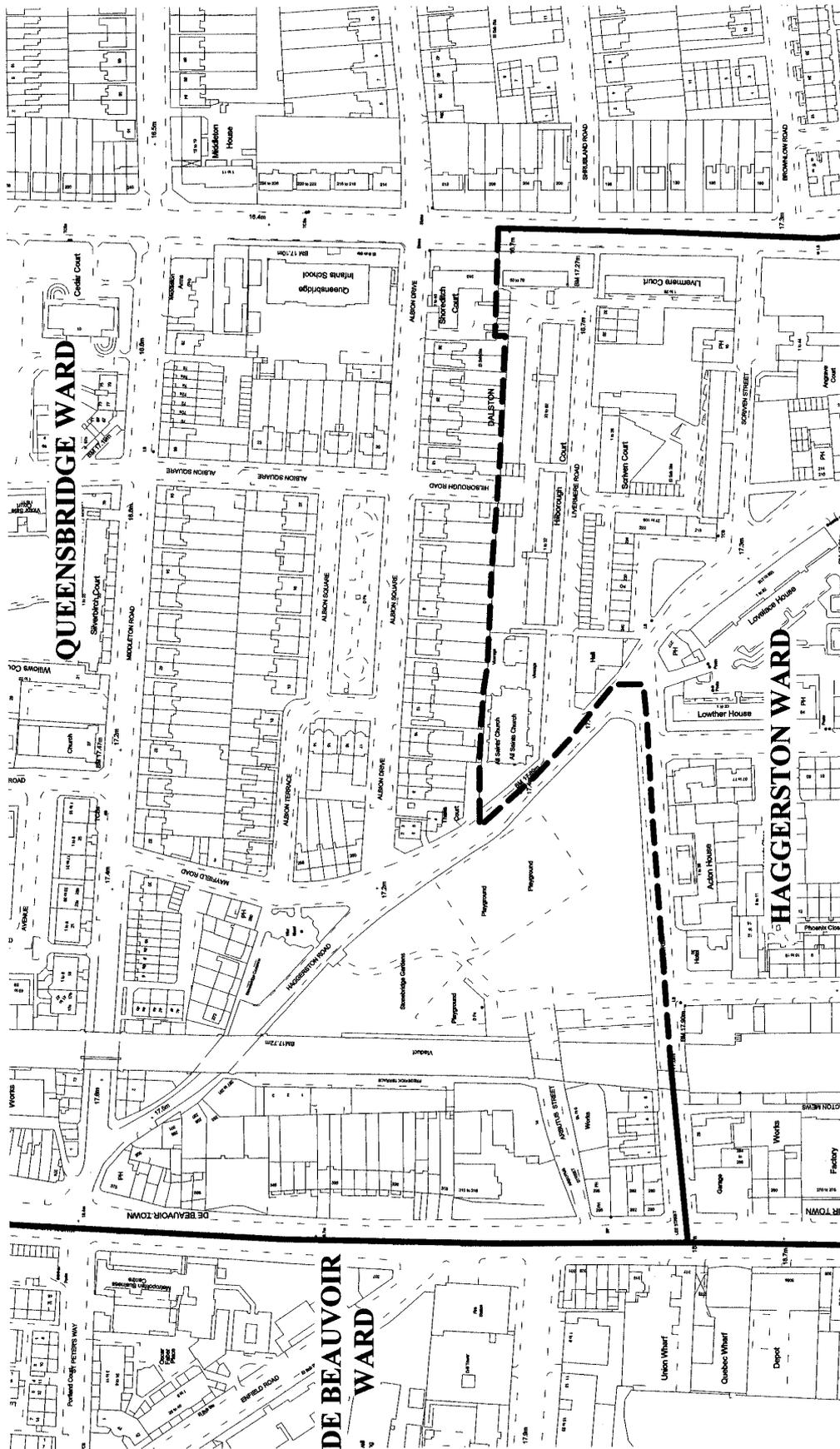
Map A5 illustrates the proposed ward boundary between Cazenove and Springfield wards.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the existing and proposed ward boundaries within the borough of Hackney.

Map A1:
 The proposed ward boundary between Dalston and Stoke Newington Central wards



Map A2:
The proposed ward boundary between Haggerston and Queensbridge wards



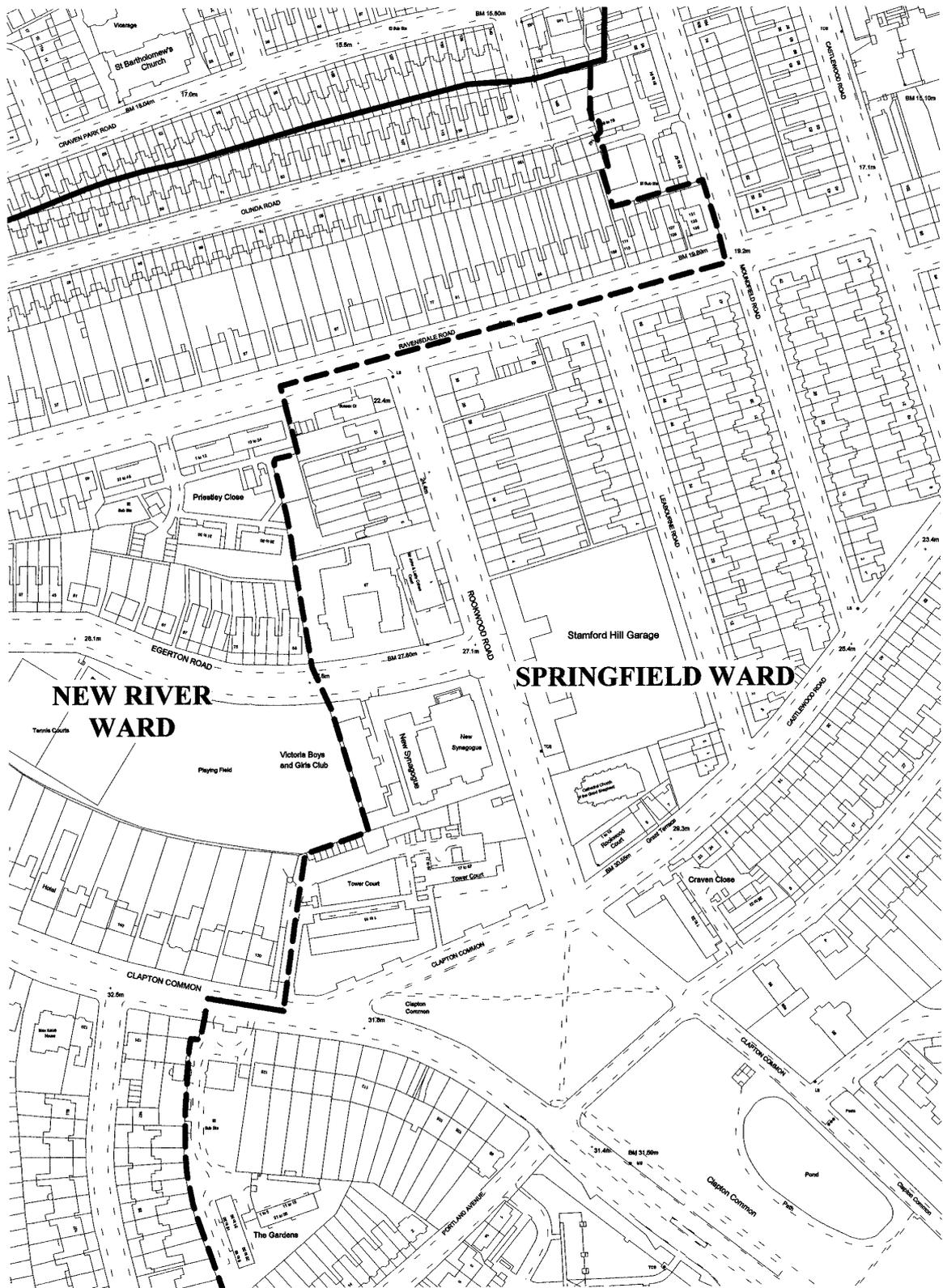
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KEY

— EXISTING WARD BOUNDARY

- - - PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARY

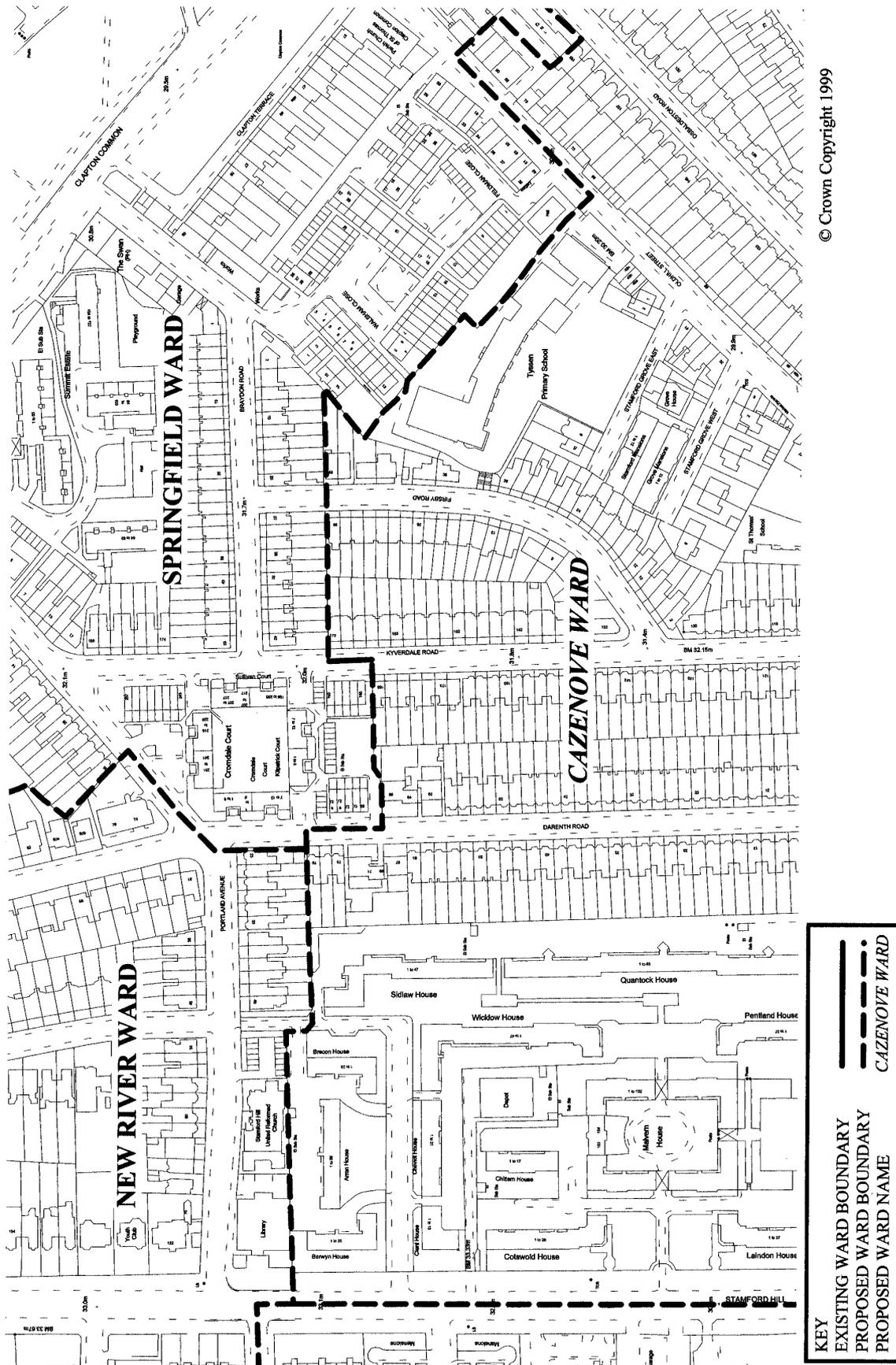
Map A3:
 The proposed ward boundary between New River and Springfield wards



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

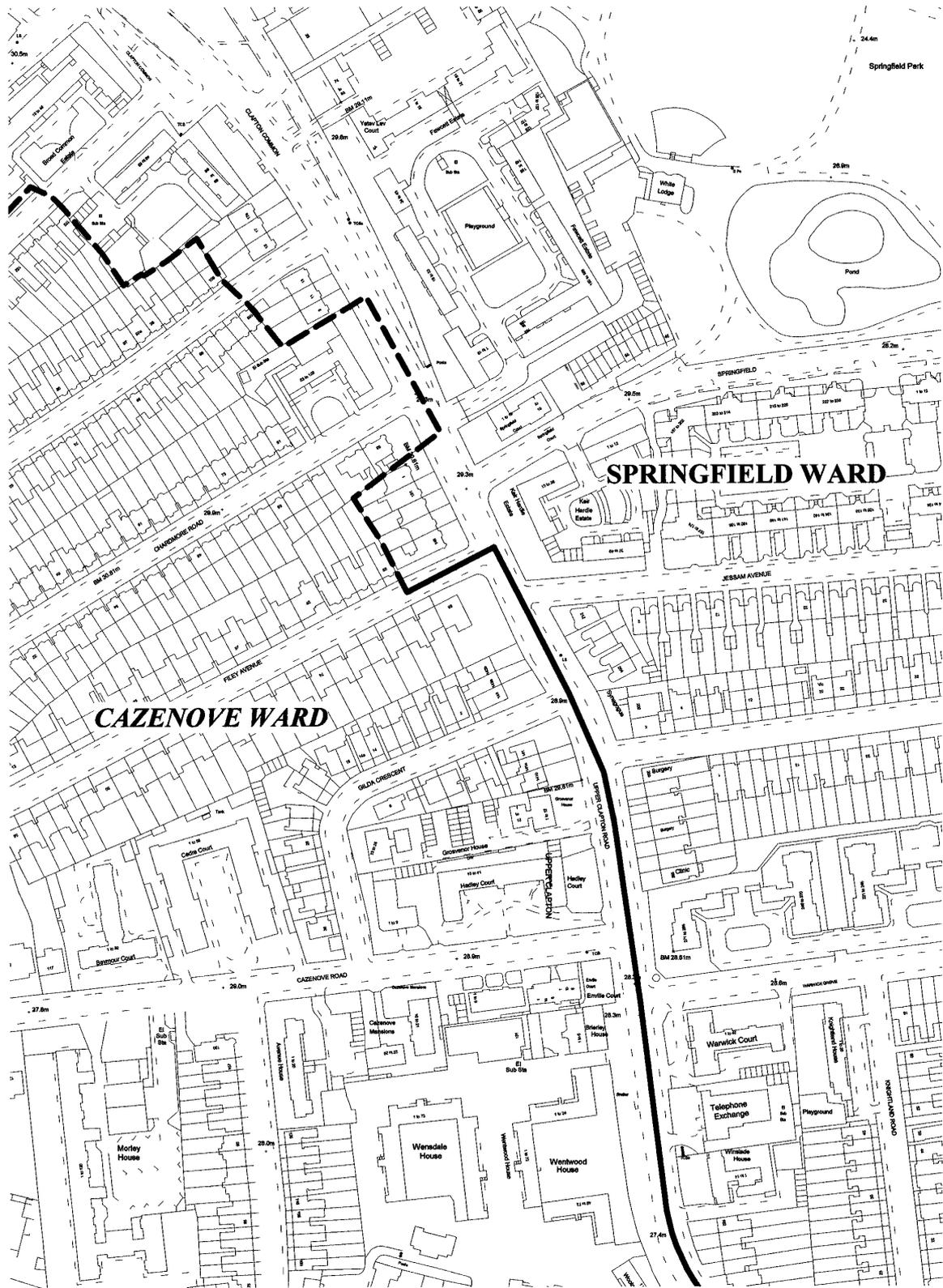
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Map A4:
 The proposed ward boundary between New River, Cazenove and Springfield wards



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Map A5:
 The proposed ward boundary between Cazenove and Springfield wards



KEY	
EXISTING WARD BOUNDARY	-----
PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARY	—————
PROPOSED WARD NAME	•••••
	CAZENOVE WARD

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APPENDIX B

Draft Recommendations for Hackney

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 2, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations in respect of three wards where our draft proposals are set out below.

Figure A1:

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

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Brownswood	3	6,068	2,023	-1	6,082	2,027	-5
Lordship	3	6,166	2,055	0	6,460	2,153	1
New River	3	6,281	2,094	2	6,697	2,232	5

Source: Electorate figures are based on Hackney Borough Council's 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 borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

