

Local Government
Boundary Commission
For England
Report No.556

Review of Non-Metropolitan Counties.

COUNTY OF WILTSHIRE
BOUNDARIES WITH
BERKSHIRE, DORSET
AND OXFORDSHIRE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BOUNDARY COMMISSION

FOR ENGLAND

REPORT NO.

556

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

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SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
REVIEW OF NON-METROPOLITAN COUNTIES
COUNTY OF WILTSHIRE: BOUNDARIES WITH BERKSHIRE, DORSET AND OXFORDSHIRE

COMMISSION'S FINAL PROPOSALS

INTRODUCTION

On 27 January 1986 we wrote to Wiltshire County Council announcing our intention to undertake a review under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. Copies of the letter were sent to the principal local authorities and all the parishes in the Counties of Wiltshire, Avon, Berkshire, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Somerset; the National and County Associations of Local Councils; the Members of Parliament with constituency interests; the headquarters of the main political parties and Government Department which might have an interest; the Oxford, South West and Wessex Regional Health Authorities; the Somerset Health Authority; British Telecom; the Southern and South Western Electricity Boards; the Southern and South Western Gas Boards; the Anglian, Severn-Trent, Southern, South West Thames and Wessex Water Authorities; the English Tourist Board; the local television and radio stations serving the area; and the Local Government Chronicle and the Municipal Journal.

2. The County Councils were requested, in co-operation as necessary with other County Councils and with the District Councils concerned, to assist us in publicising the start of the review by publishing a notice for two successive weeks in appropriate local newspapers to give the widest possible publicity to cover the areas concerned. The County Councils were asked to ensure that the issue of the consultation letter was drawn to the attention of those concerned with services such as the police and the administration of justice in respect of which they have a statutory function.

3. A period of six months from the date of the letter was allowed for all local authorities, including those in the surrounding counties, and anyone else

interested in the review to submit to us their views in detail on whether changes in the county boundary were desirable; if so, what those changes should be; and how they would serve the interests of effective and convenient local government.

THE SUBMISSIONS MADE TO US

4. In response to our letter we received representations from the principal local authorities concerned, and from a number of parish councils, interested organisations and residents of Wiltshire and its adjoining counties.

5. The submissions made to us included various recommendations for changes to Wiltshire's boundaries with Avon, Berkshire, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, and Somerset. This report deals only with Wiltshire's boundaries with the Counties of Berkshire, Dorset and Oxfordshire. The submissions made to us in connection with the boundaries of Wiltshire with Avon, Gloucestershire, and Hampshire are being considered in the reviews of those Counties which are still in progress. We reported to you on 17 December 1987 concerning the Somerset/Wiltshire boundary.

OUR CONSIDERATION OF THE SUBMISSIONS

The Boundary between the Counties of Dorset and Wiltshire

6. Motcombe Parish Council, in Dorset, suggested a minor realignment of the county boundary between its parish, in the district of North Dorset, and the parish of Sedgemoor and Semley, in the district of Salisbury, in Wiltshire. The Parish Council suggested that the boundary should follow the side of the A350 rather than the crest of the hill through Kingsettle Wood, Shaftesbury as at present. The suggestion was made on the grounds that it would unite land ownerships to the west of the road within one local authority structure (ie parish, district and county) and, thereby, remove planning control difficulties in the area. The majority of the local authorities concerned supported the change; Wiltshire County Council, however, saw no justification for it in the light of your guidelines.

7. We agreed with the views expressed by the majority of the local authorities concerned and felt that the change would tie the boundary to a well-defined feature.

8. North Dorset District Council suggested a small change to the county boundary near Shaftesbury, between the parish of Shaftesbury, in North Dorset, and the parish of Donhead St Mary, in the district of Salisbury, in Wiltshire. The District Council felt that the boundary should follow the perimeter of the proposed Littledown Industrial Estate and that this would be desirable for the future planning and administration of the area. The majority of the local authorities concerned supported the change, although Wiltshire County Council saw no justification for it in the light of your guidelines. The parish of Donhead St Mary, which stood to lose part of its area, made no comment.

9. We considered that the industrial estate would clearly be associated with Shaftesbury, in Dorset, and noted that its road access was from Dorset and that it was separated from the nearest populated area in Wiltshire by farmland. We felt that the industrial estate could be expected to look to Dorset for its services and noted that most of the local authorities concerned were in favour of the change.

The Boundary between the Counties of Berkshire and Wiltshire

10. Berkshire County Council claimed that the M4 Motorway near Membury had isolated a small part of Wiltshire, which was only accessible from Berkshire. It suggested that the county boundary should follow the south-western side of the motorway, thus transferring the isolated land from the parish of Baydon in the district of Kennet, in Wiltshire to the parish of Lambourn, in the district of Newbury, in Berkshire. Wiltshire County Council had no objection to the change but pointed out that there was one inhabited property, known as 'Middle Pond', in the area proposed for transfer.

11. Kennet District Council opposed the change as outlined by Berkshire County Council. It agreed some change was necessary and admitted that the M4 would make a more identifiable boundary. However, it considered that Berkshire County

Council's realignment took no account of the pattern of community life in the parishes of Baydon and Lambourn.

12. Kennet District Council suggested an alternative change, prompted by the comments of Baydon Parish Council (which wanted Baydon Hole Farm and part of Farncombe Down to be included in its parish). The District Council supported the Parish Council in this and considered that the ten electors in the area proposed for transfer were more closely connected with Baydon than with Lambourn. The District Council felt that this change would better serve community life and interest and the provision of services. Wiltshire County Council had no objection to Kennet District Council's suggestion but Berkshire County Council opposed it.

13. We considered Berkshire County Council's realignment at first sight to have greater merit than that put forward by Kennet District Council; as it would result in a clearly defined and easily recognisable boundary and involved the transfer of less land and fewer people than the District Council's alternative change. However, we noted that Berkshire County Council's assertion that the land in question was isolated from Baydon by the motorway appeared to be inaccurate since there was a road leading directly to Baydon within easy reach of the residents of the area proposed for transfer. The County Councils of Wiltshire and Berkshire confirmed, on further enquiry, that the isolation of the land had been the main reason for the suggested change. However, on further consideration, we concluded that it would still be sensible to realign the boundary to follow the south-western side of the M4 in order to make it more easily identifiable than at present.

14. Kennet District Council further suggested that the county boundary between the parish of Shalbourne, in its district and the parish of Hungerford, in the district of Newbury should be realigned to follow a minor road off the A338, and a footpath, in order to clarify it. The District Council claimed that the present boundary caused confusion and said that Shalbourne Parish Council supported the change. Wiltshire County Council did not oppose the suggestion but Berkshire County Council objected to it, seeing no advantage in adjusting the boundary.

15. We felt that the present boundary was clearly confusing and we therefore decided to take this opportunity to improve it.

The Boundary Between Oxfordshire and Wiltshire

16. Oxfordshire County Council advised us that it did not wish to seek any change to the present county boundary with Wiltshire. No other local authority wished to propose any alteration to the existing boundary nor did we see any prima facie case for change.

OUR DRAFT PROPOSALS AND INTERIM DECISIONS

17. We decided, therefore, that we would publish draft proposals for changes to the Dorset/Wiltshire boundary, at Kingsettle Wood and Littledown, based on the suggestions of Motcombe Parish Council and North Dorset District Council, but, in each case, amended to reflect minor technical adjustments suggested by Ordnance Survey. We also decided to publish draft proposals for changes to the Berkshire/Wiltshire boundary, in the vicinity of Membury and at Shalbourne, based on Berkshire County Council's suggestion at Membury and Kennet District Council's suggestion at Shalbourne, but again amended in each case to reflect minor technical adjustments suggested by Ordnance Survey.

18. Our draft proposals therefore involved the transfer of land affecting the Wiltshire parishes of Sedgehill and Semley and Donhead St Mary (Salisbury district), Baydon, Ramsbury and Shalbourne (Kennet district); the Dorset parishes of Motcombe and Shaftesbury (North Dorset district); and the Berkshire Parishes of Lambourn and Hungerford (Newbury district).

19. In the absence of any local desire for change to the Oxfordshire/Wiltshire boundary we also concluded that no changes to this boundary could be justified in terms of effective and convenient local government. We therefore reached an interim decision to make no proposals for changes to the boundary between Oxfordshire and Wiltshire.

20. Our draft proposals for changes to the Berkshire/Wiltshire and Dorset/Wiltshire boundaries were published on 22 September 1987. Having advertised the start of the review extensively throughout Wiltshire and its adjoining counties, we decided that, in view of the limited response to our consultation letter (as it concerned Wiltshire's boundaries with Berkshire and Dorset) we need only advertise our draft proposals in the areas affected. Copies of our letter giving details of our decisions were, therefore, sent to the principal local authorities directly concerned and to those who appeared to us to have an interest in the review of Wiltshire's boundaries with Berkshire and Dorset.

21. The County Councils of Berkshire, Dorset and Wiltshire were asked to arrange publication of a notice in the local press giving details of our draft proposals and to place copies of them on display at places where public notices are customarily displayed. They were also asked to place copies of our draft proposals letter on deposit for inspection at their main offices for a period of eight weeks. Comments were invited by 17 November 1987.

22. Our interim decision to make no proposals for changes to the Oxford/Wiltshire boundary was re-advertised on 28 March 1988 after it was noted that our initial letter had omitted to mention this decision specifically. Copies of our fresh consultation letter were sent to those principal local authorities directly involved and those who appeared to us to have an interest in the matter.

23. The County Councils of Oxfordshire and Wiltshire were asked to arrange publication of a fresh notice giving details of our interim decision and to place copies of it on display where public notices are customarily displayed. They were also asked to place copies of our interim decision letter on deposit for inspection at their main offices for a period of eight weeks. Comments were invited by 23 May 1988.

RESPONSE TO OUR DRAFT PROPOSALS

24. We received representations from nine sources in response to our draft proposals and interim decision letters. Wiltshire County Council stated that it had no objection to our draft proposals and the County Councils' of Dorset and Berkshire supported them. Kennet District Council had no objection to our draft proposals for the boundary near Shalbourne but did object to our proposed boundary near Membury. It reiterated its preference for its alternative realignment. Salisbury District Council supported our draft proposals.

25. Baydon Parish Council objected to our draft proposals for Membury on the grounds that the inhabitants of the property proposed for transfer were more closely connected, both geographically and in terms of community of interest, with Baydon than with Lambourn. The Parish Council favoured the status quo but asked that, if change were thought necessary, the new county boundary should follow the line of Ermin Street.

26. The Police Federation for England and Wales, the Thames Water Authority and the Wessex Water Authority all confirmed that they had no comments to make.

OUR FINAL PROPOSALS

28. As required by Section 60 of the Local Government Act 1972, we have re-assessed our draft proposals in the light of the representations made to us.

29. Our draft proposals concerning the Dorset/Wiltshire boundary at Kingsettle Wood, Shaftesbury and at the proposed Littledown Industrial Estate, Shaftesbury, had evoked no opposition and we had little difficulty in deciding to confirm our draft proposals as our final proposals.

30. We carefully considered the response to our draft proposals affecting the Berkshire/Wiltshire boundary at Membury and at Shalbourne. The boundary change proposed at Shalbourne was supported by all the local authorities who had responded to our consultation letter and we decided therefore to confirm it as

our final proposal. The alternative alignments at Membury suggested by Kennet District Council and Baydon Parish Council would not, in our opinion, provide as satisfactory a boundary as that set out in our draft proposals. We established that the residents involved had no firm views on the matter and therefore in the absence of any evidence that the residents affected had a closer affinity with Wiltshire we decided to adhere to our draft proposals.

31. Our interim decision to propose no change to the boundary between Oxfordshire and Wiltshire had not evoked any adverse comment. We therefore decided to confirm our interim decision.

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

PUBLICATION

33. A separate letter, enclosing copies of this Report, is being sent to the County Councils of Berkshire, Dorset, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire, asking them to deposit copies of this Report at their main offices for inspection over a six month period and to put notices to this effect on public notice boards and in the local press. The text of the notice will explain that the Commission has fulfilled its statutory role in the matter, and that it now falls to you to make an Order implementing the proposals if you think fit, but not before six weeks from the date they are submitted to you. Copies of this Report, which includes small scale sketch maps, are also being sent to those those who received our

draft proposals and interim decision letters and to those who responded in writing.

Signed:

G J ELLERTON (Chairman)

J G POWELL (Deputy Chairman)

G E CHERRY

K F J ENNALS

G R PRENTICE

HELEN SARKANY

BRIAN SCHOLES

S T GARRISH

Secretary

9 June 1988

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

COUNTY BOUNDARY REVIEW

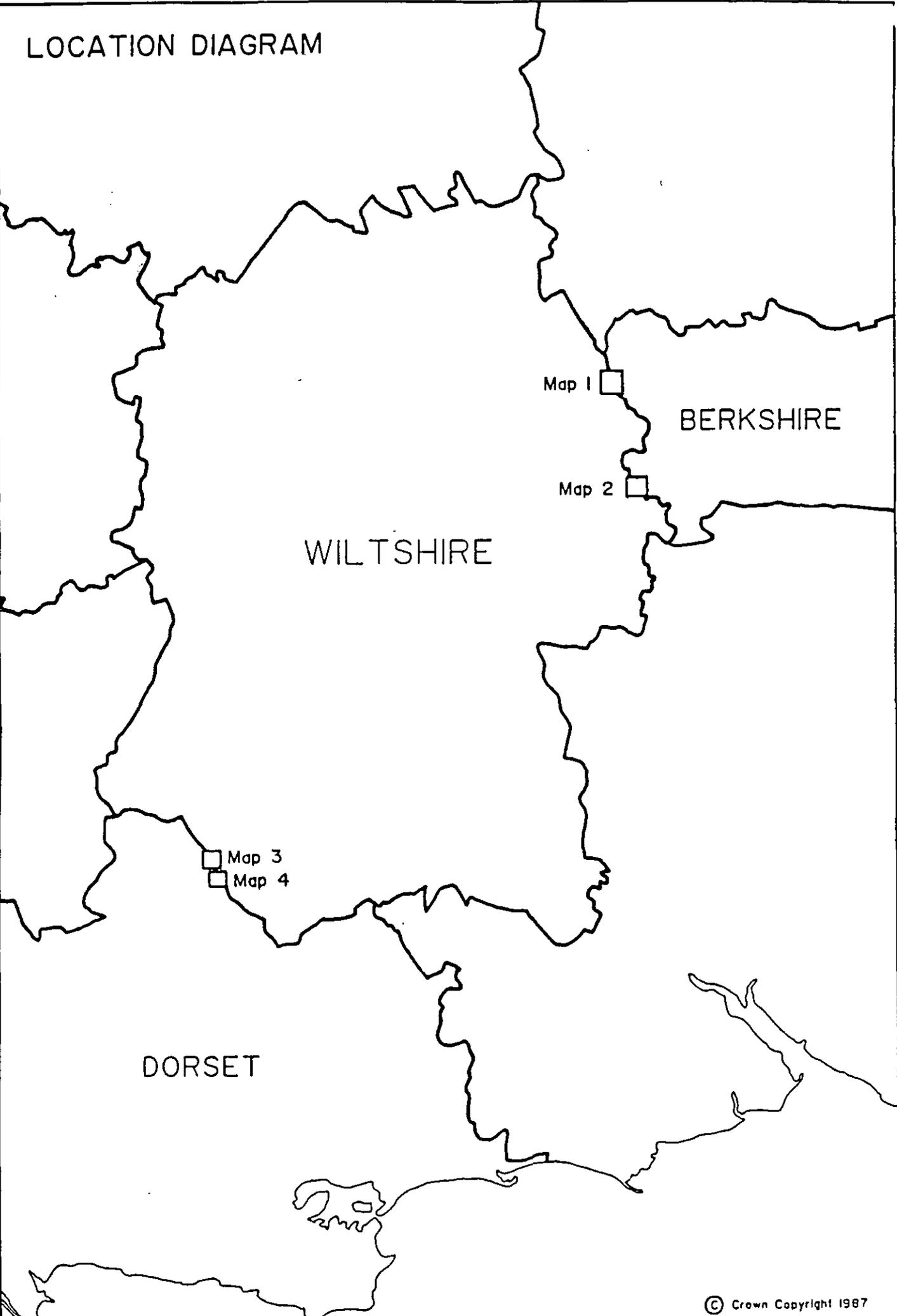
WILTSHIRE

AFFECTING BERKSHIRE AND DORSET

FINAL PROPOSALS

Existing County Boundary	—————
Proposed County Boundary	- - - - -
Existing CP Boundary	—————

LOCATION DIAGRAM



Map 1

BERKSHIRE

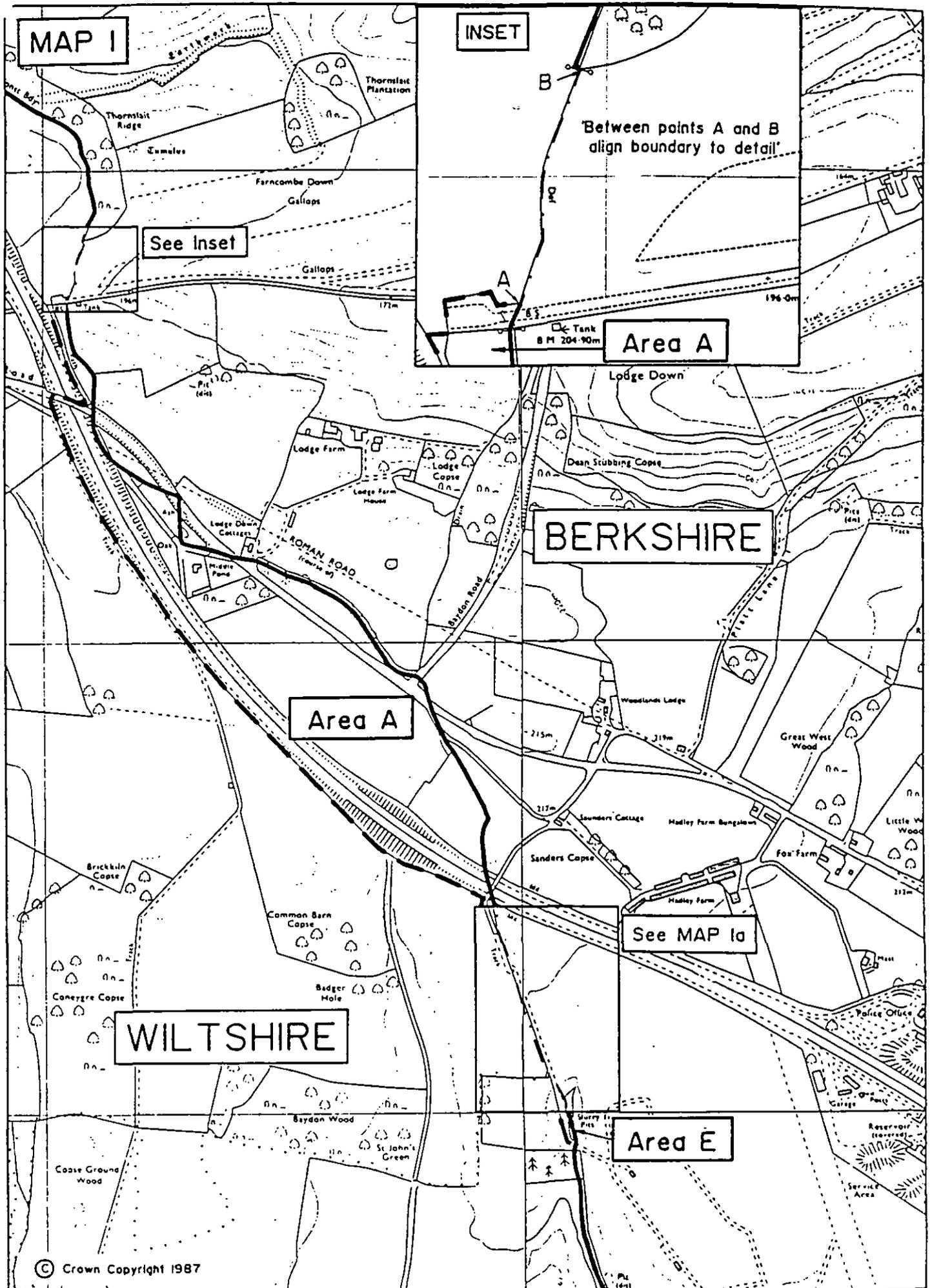
Map 2

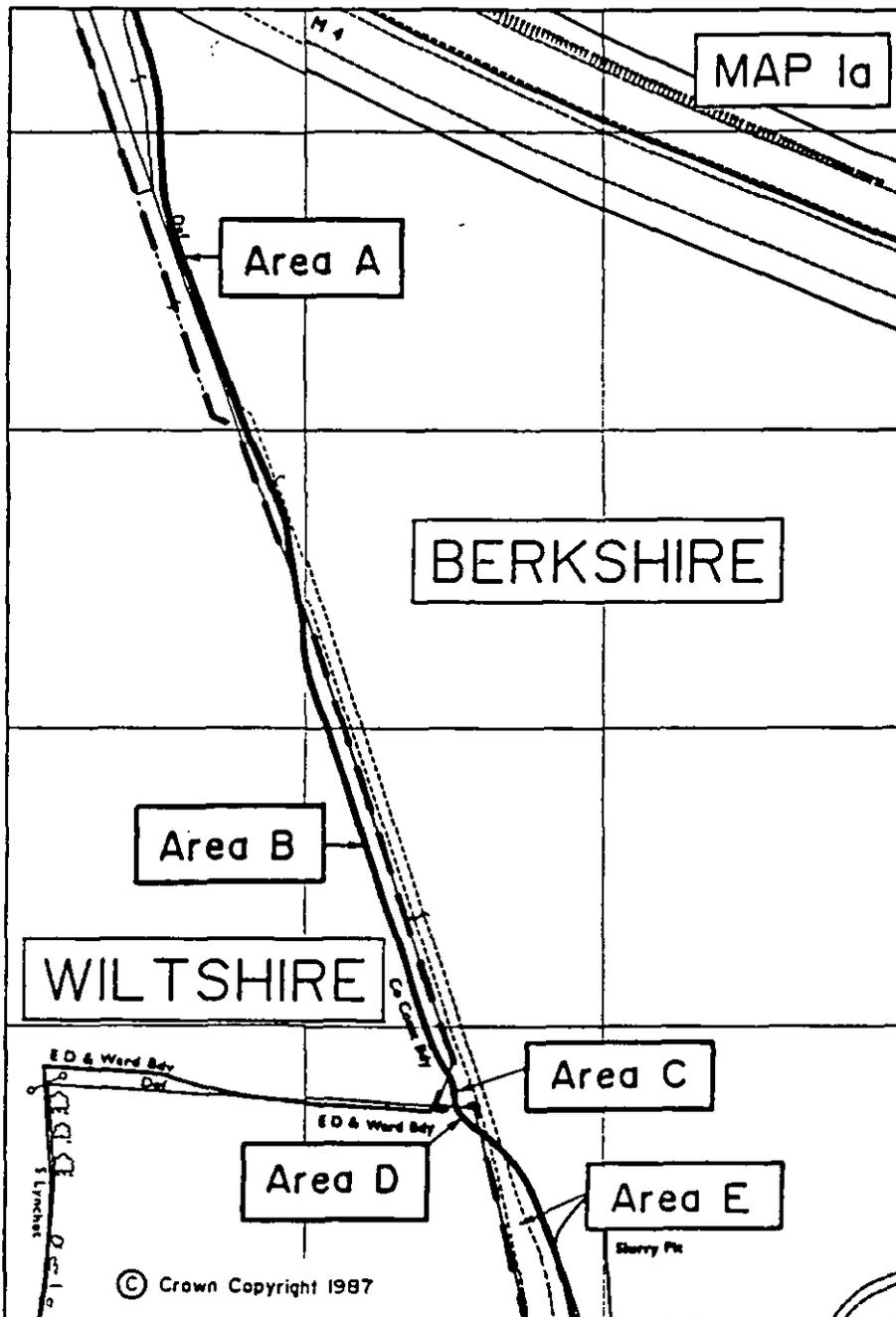
WILTSHIRE

Map 3

Map 4

DORSET





MAP 2

BERKSHIRE

Area B

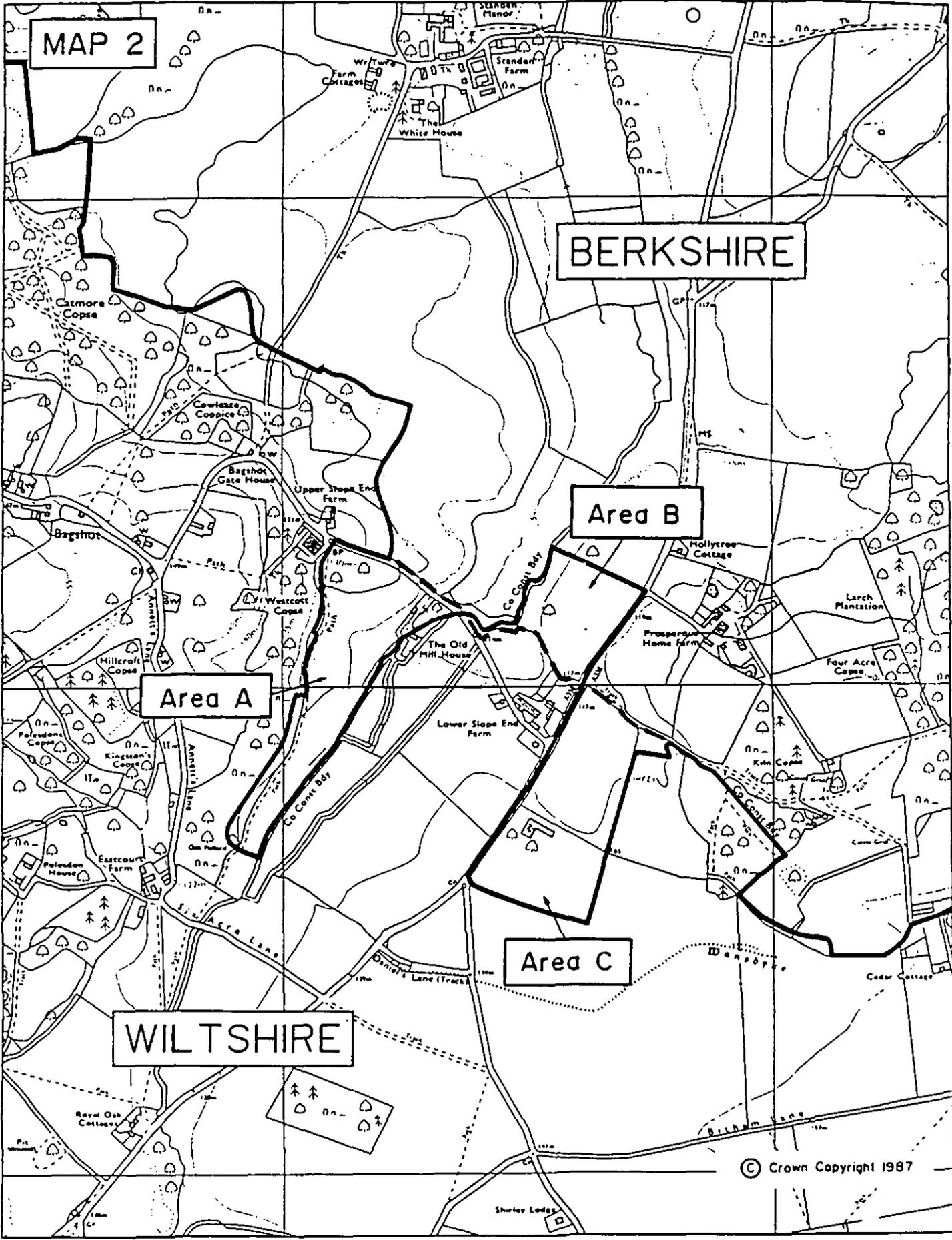
Area A

Area C

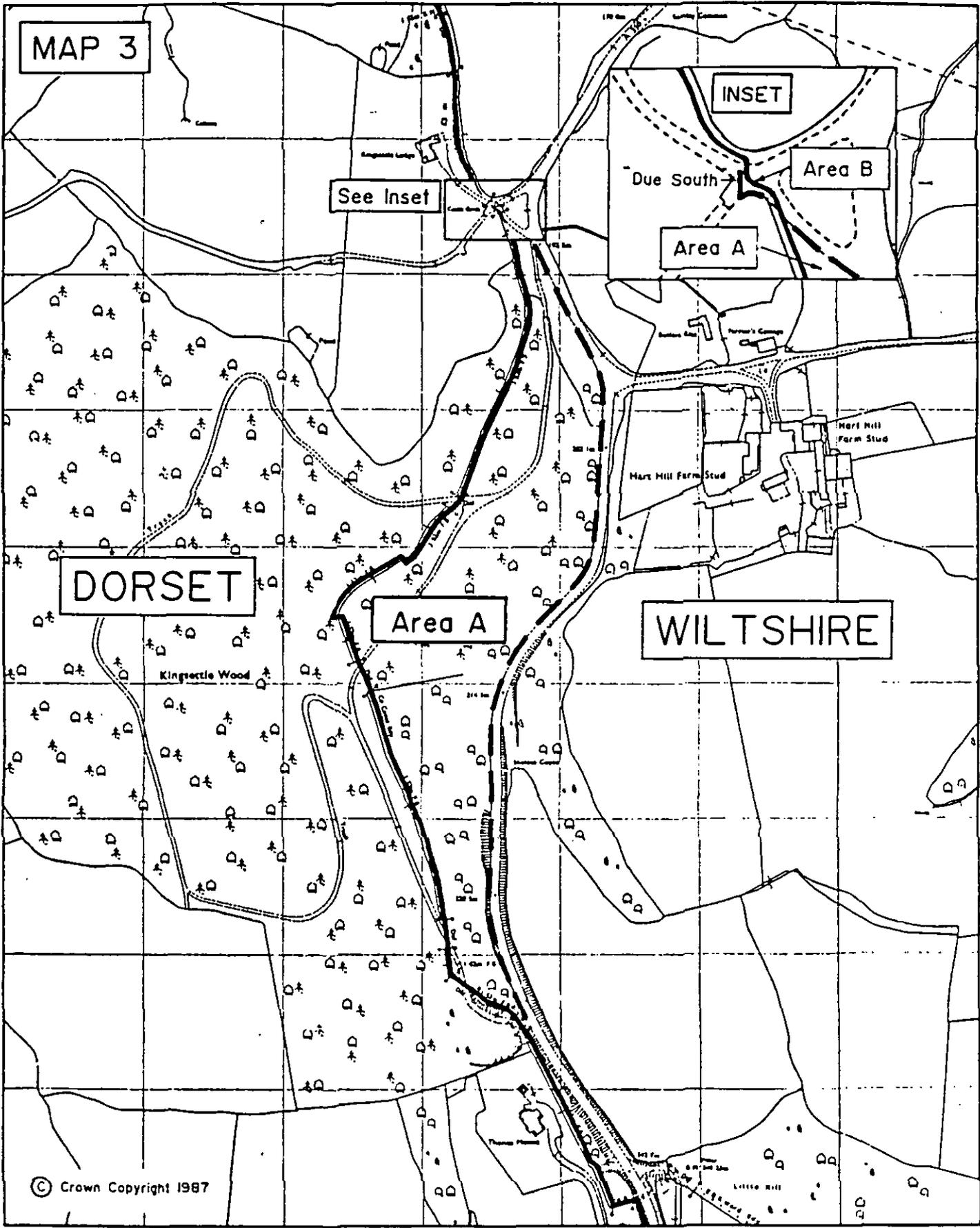
WILTSHIRE

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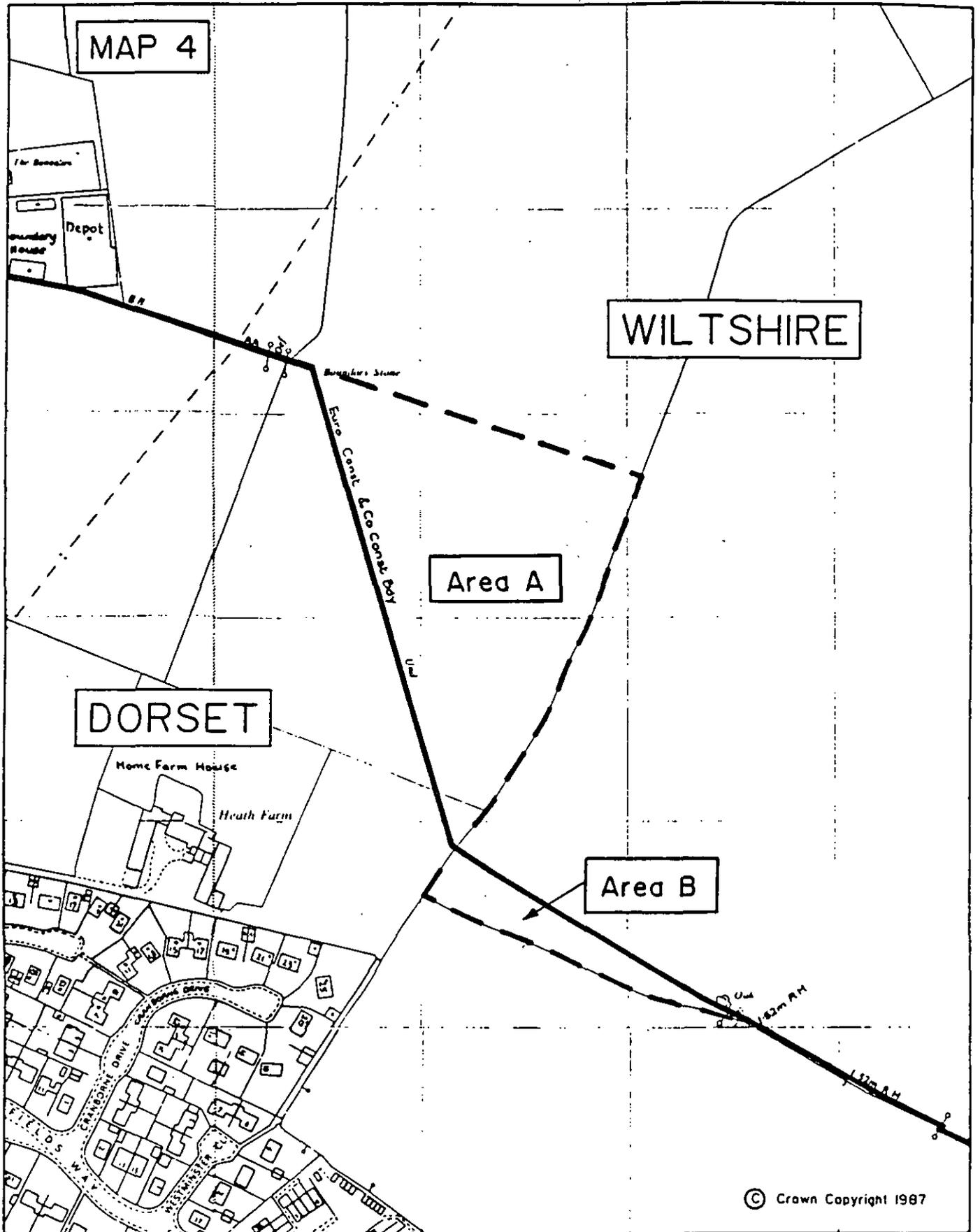
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MAP 3



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CONSEQUENTIAL CHANGES

MAP NO.	AREA REF.	FROM	TO	MAP NO.	AREA REF.	FROM	TO
1 1a	A C	Wiltshire Kennet District Baydon CP Aldbourn Ward Aldbourn and Ramsbury ED	Berkshire Newbury District Lambourn CP Lambourn Valley Ward Lambourn Valley ED	3	A	Wiltshire Salisbury District Sedgehill and Semley CP Knole Ward Mere ED	Dorset North Dorset District Motcombe CP Motcombe Village PW Motcombe Ward Shaftesbury ED
	B	Berkshire Newbury District Lambourn CP Lambourn Valley Ward Lambourn Valley ED	Wiltshire Kennet District Baydon CP Aldbourn Ward Aldbourn and Ramsbury ED		B	Dorset North Dorset District Motcombe CP Motcombe Village PW Motcombe Ward Shaftesbury ED	Wiltshire Salisbury District Sedgehill and Semley CP Knole Ward Mere ED
	D	Berkshire Newbury District Lambourn CP Lambourn Valley Ward Lambourn Valley ED	Wiltshire Kennet District Ramsbury CP Ramsbury Ward Aldbourn and Ramsbury ED	4	A	Wiltshire Salisbury District Donhead St Mary CP Donhead Ward Tisbury ED	Dorset North Dorset District Shaftesbury CP Grosvenor PW Shaftesbury Grosvenor Ward Shaftesbury ED
	E	Wiltshire Kennet District Ramsbury CP Ramsbury Ward Aldbourn and Ramsbury ED	Berkshire Newbury District Lambourn CP Lambourn Valley Ward Lambourn Valley ED		B	Dorset North Dorset District Shaftesbury CP Grosvenor PW Shaftesbury Grosvenor Ward Shaftesbury ED	Wiltshire Salisbury District Donhead St Mary CP Donhead Ward Tisbury ED
2	A C	Berkshire Newbury District Hungerford CP Hungerford Ward Hungerford ED	Wiltshire Kennet District Shalbourne CP Shalbourne Ward Bedwyn ED				
	B	Wiltshire Kennet District Shalbourne CP Shalbourne Ward Bedwyn ED	Berkshire Newbury District Hungerford CP Hungerford Ward Hungerford ED				

