

LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

DRAFT  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
ELECTORAL  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
WELLINGBOROUGH IN  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

*October 1996*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Wellingborough in Northamptonshire.

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# SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of the electoral arrangements for the Wellingborough area on 19 March 1996.

- This report summarises the submissions that the Commission received during the first stage of the review, and makes draft recommendations for change.

The Commission found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Wellingborough because:

- in seven of the 15 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough;
- in one ward, Redwell, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by 95 per cent from the average;
- the level of electoral equality is not expected to improve over the next five years, when the number of electors per councillor is projected to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in seven wards, including by 107 per cent in the Redwell ward.

The Commission's draft recommendations for electoral arrangements are that:

- Wellingborough Borough Council should be served by 36 councillors, instead of the current 34;
- there should be 15 wards, as at present;
- modifications should be made to the boundaries of six of the existing wards, including the Redwell ward which should be divided into two new wards, each represented by two councillors.

These recommendations:

- would provide ten of the 15 wards where the average number of electors represented by each councillor varies by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average;
- are projected to provide all but two wards with representation varying by no more than 10 per cent from the average in five years' time.

This report sets out the Commission's draft recommendations on which comments are invited.

- The Commission will consult on its draft recommendations for nine weeks.
- After considering local views, the Commission will make its final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment.
- It will then be for the Secretary of State to accept, modify or reject the Commission's final recommendations after a further six weeks' consultation period.
- The Secretary of State will determine when any changes would come into effect.

You should express your views by writing directly to the Commission at the address below by 3 January 1997:

Wellingborough Review  
Local Government Commission for England  
Dolphyn Court  
10/11 Great Turnstile  
London WC1V 7JU

# 1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains the Commission's draft recommendations for changes to the electoral arrangements of Wellingborough Borough Council and its constituent parish councils.

2 The Commission is currently reviewing all the districts in Northamptonshire as part of its programme of periodic electoral reviews of all principal local authority areas in England. This is the first review of the electoral arrangements of Wellingborough that has been undertaken by the Local Government Commission. The last such review was undertaken by the Commission's predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State for the Environment in May 1979 (Report No. 333). The electoral arrangements of Northamptonshire County Council were last reviewed in November 1980 (Report No. 403). It is intended that a review of the County Council's electoral arrangements will follow the review of the Northamptonshire districts.

3 In undertaking these reviews, the Commission is required to have regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (Appendix C); and
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (Appendix D), so far as practicable.

4 The Commission has published guidance, *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (March 1996), which sets out the approach it is taking to this electoral programme of reviews. Copies are available from the Commission.

5 The review is in four stages (Figure 1).

6 Stage One commenced on 19 March 1996. The Commission wrote to Wellingborough Borough Council inviting it to submit proposals for improvements to the present electoral arrangements. Copies of the letter were sent to Northamptonshire County Council, Northamptonshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, parish councils in the area, Members of Parliament and Members of the European Parliament with constituency interests in Wellingborough, and the headquarters of the main political parties. In addition, public notices were placed in local newspapers announcing the start of the review and inviting comments from members of the public and interested bodies. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 11 June 1996. All representations received during Stage One may be inspected at the Commission's offices by appointment, and a list of respondents is available on request.

7 At Stage Two the Commission considered all the representations received during Stage One and formulated its draft recommendations.

8 Stage Three commenced on 31 October 1996 and will end on 3 January 1997. This stage involves the publication of draft recommendations in this report and public consultation on them.

9 During Stage Four the Commission will reconsider the draft recommendations in the light of the views expressed during the consultation period. It will then submit final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment. Interested parties will have a further six weeks to make representations to the Secretary of State. It will then be for him to accept, modify or reject the Commission's final recommendations. If the Secretary of State accepts the recommendations,

Figure 1:  
*Stages of the Review*

Stage	Description of stage
Stage One	Submission of proposals to the Commission
Stage Two	The Commission's analysis and deliberation
Stage Three	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation
Stage Four	Final deliberation and report to the Secretary of State for the Environment

with or without modification, he will make an Order. The Commission anticipates that the revised electoral arrangements should be in place for the next borough council elections in May 1999.

## 2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

*10* The borough of Wellingborough covers over 16,000 hectares and is situated in the east of Northamptonshire. Its administrative centre is the market town of Wellingborough, which has seen considerable population increases since the war. The town also serves as the focal point for much of the adjacent area of East Northamptonshire district. There are several small towns and villages in the borough, such as Earls Barton, Finedon, Irchester and Wollaston, which have grown significantly in recent years.

*11* In order to compare levels of electoral equality between wards, the Commission has calculated the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (councillor:elector ratio) varies from the average for the area in percentage terms. In the text which follows this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

*12* The current electoral arrangements in the borough provide for 15 wards represented by 34 councillors (Map 1 and Figure 2). Eight wards are each represented by three councillors, three wards by two councillors each, and four wards by a single councillor per ward. The whole council is elected every four years, with the next elections due in May 1999.

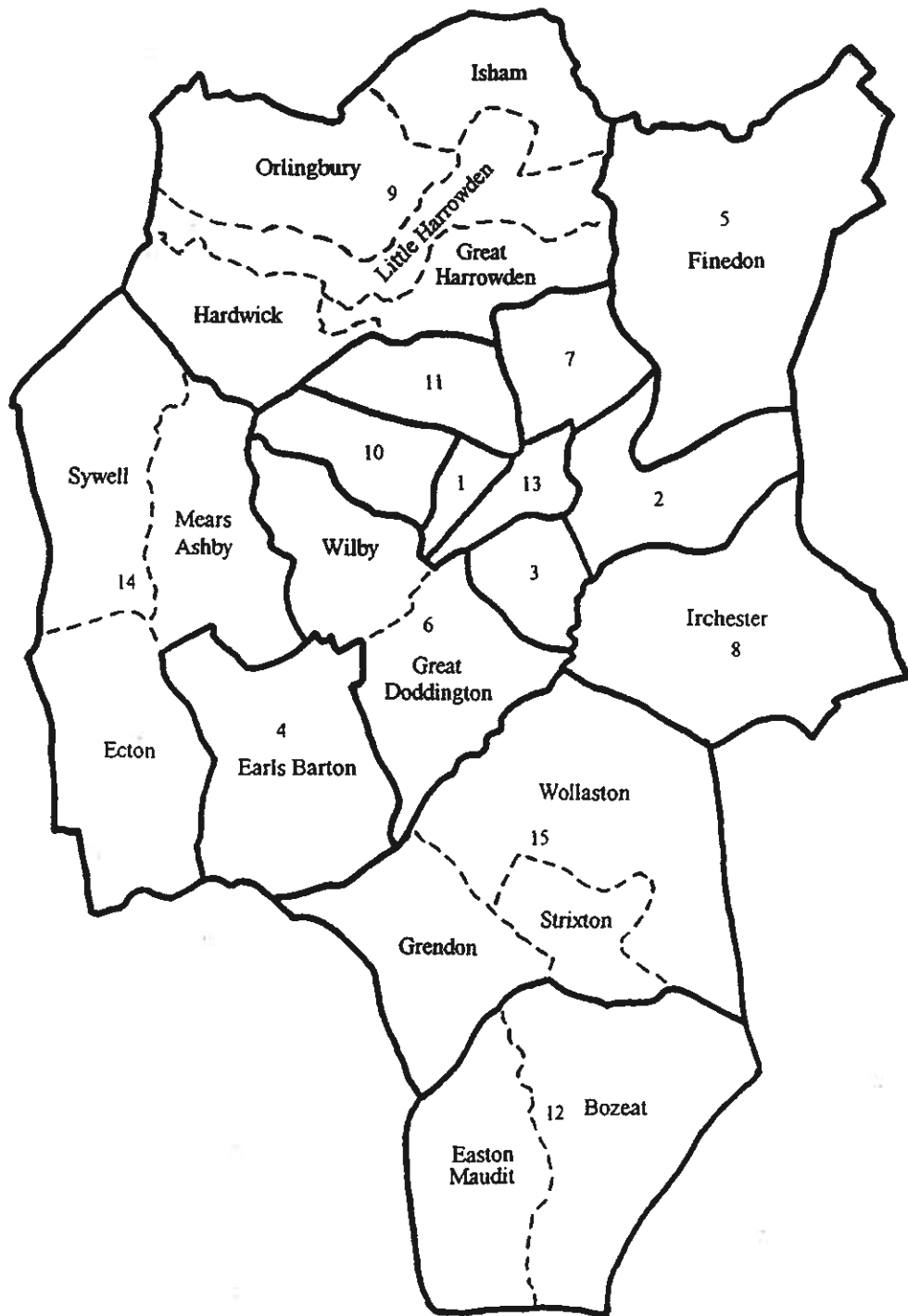
*13* Based on the current electoral register (February 1996), the total electorate of the borough is 52,636 and each councillor represents on average 1,548 electors. The Borough Council forecasts that the electorate will increase to over 56,000 by the year 2001, which would increase the average number of electors per councillor to 1,650 (Figure 2).

*14* Since the last electoral review by the LGBC in 1979, growth in electorate has not been evenly spread across the borough and, as a result, there are currently seven wards in which the number of electors per councillor varies from the average by over 10 per cent. The most significant imbalance is in the Redwell ward where the number of electors per councillor is 95 per cent above the average; in other words, each of the two councillors for this ward represents on average 3,012 electors, compared to the borough average of 1,548 electors.

*15* As part of this review, the Commission may also make recommendations relating to the electoral arrangements of the 18 parish councils in the borough, one of which, Irchester, is currently warded.



Map 1:  
Existing Wards and Constituent Parishes in Wellingborough



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

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Key To Wards

1 Brickhill	6 Great Doddington and Wilby	11 Redwell
2 Castle	7 Hemmingwell	12 South
3 Croyland	8 Irchester	13 Swanspool
4 Earls Barton	9 North	14 West
5 Finedon	10 Queensway	15 Wollaston

Figure 2:  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	1996 (Current)				2001 (Projected)		
	Number of councillors	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Brickhill	3	4,336	1,445	-7	4,509	1,503	-9
2 Castle	3	4,728	1,583	2	4,989	1,663	1
3 Croyland	3	4,020	1,340	-13	4,164	1,388	-16
4 Earls Barton	3	4,052	1,351	-13	4,196	1,399	-15
5 Finedon	2	3,264	1,632	5	3,300	1,650	0
6 Great Doddington and Wilby	1	1,567	1,567	1	2,346	2,346	42
7 Hemmingwell	3	4,608	1,536	-1	5,053	1,684	2
8 Irchester	3	3,912	1,304	-16	3,951	1,317	-20
9 North	1	1,738	1,738	12	1,760	1,760	7
10 Queensway	3	4,258	1,419	-8	4,485	1,495	-9
11 Redwell	2	6,024	3,012	95	6,820	3,410	107
12 South	1	1,512	1,512	-2	1,575	1,575	-5
13 Swanspool	3	4,465	1,488	-4	4,654	1,551	-6
14 West	1	1,361	1,361	-12	1,361	1,361	-17
15 Wollaston	2	2,771	1,386	-11	2,920	1,460	-11
<b>Totals</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>52,636</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>56,083</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,548</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,650</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on Wellingborough Borough Council's submission.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough, in percentage terms. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1996, electors in Croyland ward are relatively over-represented by 13 per cent, while electors in Redwell ward are relatively under-represented by 95 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

16 At the start of the review, members of the public and other interested parties were invited to write to the Commission giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Wellingborough Borough Council and its constituent parish councils.

17 During the initial stages of the review, officers from the Commission visited the area and met officers from Wellingborough Borough Council. The Commission is most grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance.

#### *Wellingborough Borough Council*

18 The Borough Council expressed the view that it was in the best interests of the community to make the fewest changes possible to electoral arrangements in the borough. It put forward one change, however, to address a serious imbalance in representation in the Redwell ward. Over the next five years, considerable development is expected to occur in Wellingborough town, much of it - involving some 400 houses - in the Redwell area. The Council therefore proposed a division of Redwell into two new wards, Redwell East and Redwell West, with two councillors representing each ward, to accommodate the projected increase in electorate. This would increase the council size from 34 to 36 and the number of wards from 15 to 16.

19 The Borough Council expressed concerns about the present boundary of Great Doddington parish which, in its view, does not properly reflect the geographic or demographic position. It had hoped that, following representations made to the Secretary of State, the Commission would have been directed to review the boundary. This would have enabled the borough ward of Great Doddington and Wilby to be modified, thus dealing with the substantial electoral imbalance in the area.

20 The Council proposed no further changes to electoral arrangements in the borough.

#### *Parish Councils*

21 Earls Barton Parish Council supported the retention of its present boundaries and electoral arrangements, arguing that change would damage strongly established local communities.

#### *Other Representations*

22 No other representations were received during Stage One.



## 4. THE COMMISSION'S ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

23 As indicated previously, the Commission's objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Wellingborough Borough is to secure electoral equality, having regard to its statutory criteria and to 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".

24 However, the Commission's function is not merely arithmetical, for three reasons. First, its recommendations are not 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, regard is to be had to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to local ties which might be broken. Third, the Commission must have regard to the need for effective and convenient local government, and the interests and identities of local communities.

25 It is therefore impracticable 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.

26 In conducting its electoral reviews, the Commission's predecessor, the LGBC, considered that variations from the average number of electors per councillor for an authority as a whole should be kept to the absolute minimum. It might consider a variation of up to plus or minus 10 per cent in a particular ward as being "acceptable", although variations in excess of plus or minus 20 per cent were generally accepted only in very exceptional circumstances.

27 The Commission's view is that the LGBC's approach to this issue had considerable merit, insofar as it combined a clearly defined tolerance threshold with the degree of flexibility necessary to achieve reasonable levels of electoral equality across a local authority's area. Accordingly, the Commission decided to adopt this approach for the purposes of its electoral review work.

28 In its March 1996 *Guidance*, the Commission expressed the view that "proposals for changes in electoral arrangements should therefore be based on variations in each ward of no more than plus or

minus 10 per cent from the average councillor:elector ratio for the authority, having regard to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates. Imbalances in excess of plus or minus 20 per cent may be acceptable, but only in highly exceptional circumstances, and ... will have to be justified in full".

### *Electorate Projections*

29 Wellingborough Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2001, projecting an increase in the electorate of 3,447 over the five-year period, from 52,636 to 56,083. The Borough Council has 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. Reasonable estimates have been made of the changes in electorate that will arise and advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of ward boundary changes has been obtained. The Commission accepts that this is an inexact science, and having given consideration to the Council's projections, is content that they represent the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

### *Council Size*

30 The Commission indicated in its March 1996 *Guidance* that it would normally expect the number of councillors serving a district council to be in the range of 30 to 60.

31 Wellingborough Borough Council is at present served by 34 councillors. During Stage One of the review, the Council proposed that this should be increased to 36. As the Commission made clear in its *Guidance*, it needs substantial evidence to be persuaded that there is justification for increasing the size of district councils, although the Commission also acknowledged that in certain circumstances such a proposal may be warranted. Having considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, the Commission has concluded that its statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council size of 36. It would welcome further evidence on council size during Stage Three.

## *Electoral Arrangements*

32 The Borough Council proposed changes to the Redwell ward, which it considered essential to meet the Commission's statutory criteria, while maintaining present arrangements elsewhere. The Council's proposal would result in the number of electors per councillor varying by more than 10 per cent from the borough average in four of the 15 wards, increasing to five wards by the year 2001. The most significant variance in five years' time is projected to be in Great Doddington and Wilby ward, where the number of electors per councillor would be 51 per cent above the borough average. The Borough Council's proposals are detailed in Appendix B.

33 While the Commission recognised that an improvement in electoral equality would be achieved under the Borough Council's proposals, it remained concerned about electoral imbalance in the borough, particularly in Great Doddington and Wilby ward. The Commission therefore considered whether modifications could be made to the Borough Council's scheme. In doing so, the Commission noted that the need to retain coterminosity between ward boundaries and parish boundaries (or their wards) constrained the ability to secure electoral equality within the borough. The following areas and existing wards of the borough are considered in turn:

- (i) Wellingborough town;
- (ii) Earls Barton;
- (iii) Great Doddington and Wilby;
- (iv) West;
- (v) Finedon, Irchester, North, South and Wollaston.

### *Wellingborough Town*

34 At present, Wellingborough town consists of seven wards - Brickhill, Castle, Croyland, Hemmingwell, Queensway, Redwell and Swanspool. All are three-member wards, with the exception of Redwell which is represented by two councillors. The most significant electoral variance in the town currently exists in Redwell ward, where the number of electors represented by each councillor is 95 per cent above the borough average, projected to increase to 107 per cent by 2001 as a result of major residential development in that part of the town.

35 The Commission accepts the Borough Council's proposal that the ward be divided into two new wards, Redwell East and Redwell West, with two councillors per ward, as this would significantly improve electoral equality and appears to reflect local community identities. Under the Commission's draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Redwell East ward would be 16 per cent above the borough average (9 per cent in 2001), and 10 per cent below the average in Redwell West ward (10 per cent above in 2001).

36 The proposed changes in Redwell would result in the number of electors per councillor in the remaining wards in the town varying by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average: in Brickhill it would be 1 per cent below the average; in Castle, 8 per cent above; in Croyland, 8 per cent below; in Hemmingwell, 5 per cent above; in Queensway, 3 per cent below and in Swanspool, 2 per cent above. By 2001, only Croyland ward would vary by more than 10 per cent from the average, with the number of electors per councillor projected to be 11 per cent below the average. While the Council's scheme would improve the levels of electoral equality, the Commission considers that some minor boundary adjustments to Castle, Croyland and Hemmingwell wards would further enhance electoral equality in those wards.

37 The Commission therefore proposes that the southern boundary of Castle ward (with Croyland ward) be modified to follow Midland Road, going south along Senwick Road and the Embankment to where it joins the River Nene. The northern boundary of Castle ward (with Hemmingwell ward) would follow Nest Lane to the roundabout, then run east along Rixon Road to the junction with Finedon Road where it would continue along the existing boundary.

38 The number of electors per councillor in the revised Castle, Croyland and Hemmingwell wards would be 1 per cent above, 6 per cent above and 2 per cent below the average, respectively. By 2001, representation in both Castle and Hemmingwell wards is projected to equal the average for the borough, and be 3 per cent above the average in Croyland ward. The Commission is consulting on these amended boundaries.

### *Earls Barton*

39 The Borough Council did not propose any changes to the three-member ward of Earls Barton. Under its scheme, the number of electors represented by each councillor would be 8 per cent below the borough average (10 per cent in 2001). However, in order to improve electoral equality, the Commission proposes that Ecton parish (presently in West ward) be incorporated in the new Earls Barton ward. The number of electors per councillor in the revised ward would be only 1 per cent above the borough average, projected to be 3 per cent below by 2001.

### *Great Doddington and Wilby*

40 As a consequence of major development in the area, the number of electors per councillor in Great Doddington and Wilby ward would increase from 7 per cent above the borough average in 1996, to 51 per cent in 2001, under the Borough Council's proposals.

41 The Borough Council indicated that it had sought a direction from the Secretary of State to the Commission to review the boundary between Great Doddington parish and Croyland ward in Wellingborough town, which it considers does not reflect either the geography or demography of the area.

42 In the absence of such a direction, the Borough Council proposed no change to the ward boundary of Great Doddington and Wilby. However, it suggested that the Commission may wish to consider the amalgamation of Great Doddington and Wilby and West wards in order to deal with the major imbalance which would result from the major development expected to take place in Great Doddington. It added: "If the proposed house building development takes place, and if the parish boundary is revised at some time in the future, it would then be a simple matter to separate the ward into two original components and reinstate the original boundary".

43 This suggestion, however, would still result in substantial electoral under-representation in five years' time.

44 The Commission therefore proposes that the ward boundary should be extended to include only the parishes of Mears Ashby and Sywell (currently in West ward) to form a new Great Doddington, Wilby and West ward, to be served by two councillors. The number of electors per councillor

would initially be 12 per cent below the borough average, projected to be 7 per cent above the average in 2001. The Commission would welcome views on this proposal, including on the proposed ward name of Great Doddington, Wilby and West.

### *West*

45 The Borough Council contended that the constituent parishes of Sywell, Ecton and Mears Ashby in West ward regard themselves as a single unit, and did not propose any changes to the ward. In the Council's scheme, the number of electors per councillor would vary by 7 per cent below the borough average, projected to increase to 13 per cent in 2001. In order to improve the levels of electoral equality within the borough, the Commission proposes that the parishes in this ward be transferred to neighbouring wards. The parishes of Sywell and Mears Ashby would be joined with Great Doddington and Wilby parishes to form a revised Great Doddington, Wilby and West ward (described earlier). Ecton parish would be incorporated with Earls Barton parish to form a revised Earls Barton ward (also described earlier).

### *Finedon, Irchester, North, South and Wollaston*

46 The current Finedon ward, comprising the parish of the same name, is represented by two borough councillors. The ward borders North ward to the west and Wellingborough town to the south. The Borough Council proposed no change to Finedon ward and the number of electors per councillor would be 12 per cent below the borough average, improving to 6 per cent by 2001. The Commission considered a merger with North ward to create a new three-member ward which would provide a slightly better level of electoral equality for the area. This would, however, create a geographically large ward covering around a quarter of the borough area. After careful consideration, the Commission decided against proposing a merger of Finedon ward with either North ward or one of the Wellingborough town wards because of the different rural and urban nature of the areas and therefore accepts the Borough Council's proposal for no change to Finedon ward.

47 Irchester ward currently comprises the parish of the same name and is represented by three councillors, with the average number of electors per councillor varying by 16 per cent below the borough average (20 per cent in 2001). The



Borough Council did not propose any changes for this ward and in its submission, it stated that "the geographical location of the ward is not conducive to the inclusion of another parish within the ward..." and that "the River Nene and the A45 form a natural boundary between the town and Irchester ward". While the Commission acknowledges this, it considered alternative options which might improve electoral equality in the area. Given the geography of this part of the borough, the only alternative for Irchester would be to extend its southern boundary into Wollaston ward. However, the particular distribution of electors in that ward, especially in Wollaston parish, and the overall scheme for Wellingborough, precluded that option. Therefore, despite the level of electoral inequality in this ward, the Commission supports the Council's proposal for no change to Irchester ward. Under the Commission's draft recommendations and the Borough Council's scheme, the number of electors represented by each of the three councillors for the ward would be 11 per cent below the average (15 per cent in 2001).

48 The Borough Council stated that the parishes of Great Harrowden, Hardwick, Isham, Little Harrowden and Orlingbury, which are currently included in North ward, look towards Kettering town or Wellingborough town and did not propose any changes to the existing arrangements. The number of electors represented by the ward's single councillor would be 19 per cent above the borough average (13 per cent in 2001). To secure better electoral equality, the Commission considered merging North ward with the neighbouring Finedon ward to form a new three-member ward, but noted that such a ward would be geographically large, with disparate communities. The Commission therefore proposes no change to North ward, but would welcome views on this proposal during Stage Three.

49 The Borough Council proposed no change to South ward in which, under its scheme and the Commission's draft recommendations, the number of electors represented by the single councillor would be 3 per cent above the average, improving to 1 per cent in 2001. In view of this level of electoral equality, the Commission proposes no change to the ward.

50 The average number of electors per councillor in Wollaston ward, currently represented by two councillors, would be 5 per cent below the borough average, increasing to 6 per cent in 2001, under the Commission's draft recommendations. The Commission believes that electoral equality in this ward cannot be improved without adversely affecting representation in the rest of the borough and therefore proposes no change.

### *Electoral Cycle*

51 The Commission did not receive any representations for change to the existing practice of whole council elections in Wellingborough.

### *Parish Council Electoral Arrangements*

52 During Stage One the Commission did not receive any proposals for changes to the existing electoral arrangements of parish councils in Wellingborough.

### *Conclusions*

53 The Commission has carefully considered all the evidence and representations it received during the first stage of the review, and has concluded that, while the Borough Council's scheme reduces electoral inequality, it can be further improved as detailed above, especially in the Great Doddington and Wilby area. The Commission believes that its proposals would strike a satisfactory balance according to the criteria guiding the Commission's work, and therefore puts them forward for public consultation.

54 Figure 3 shows the impact of the Commission's proposals on electoral equality, comparing the current arrangements with the Commission's draft recommendations, based on current electorate figures and the projected electorate for the year 2001.

Figure 3:  
Comparison of Current and Recommended Arrangements

	1996 electorate		2001 projected electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	34	36	34	36
Number of wards	15	15	15	15
Average number of electors per councillor	1,548	1,462	1,650	1,558
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	7	5	7	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	1	0	2	0

55 Taken as a whole, the Commission's draft recommendations would provide for five of the 15 wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the borough average. Having regard to the Council's projected electorates, only two wards would vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 2001. This represents a significant improvement over the existing electoral arrangements and improves on the Borough Council's scheme. The Commission's draft recommendations are set out in more detail in Figures 4 and 5, Map 2 and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

#### *Draft Recommendation*

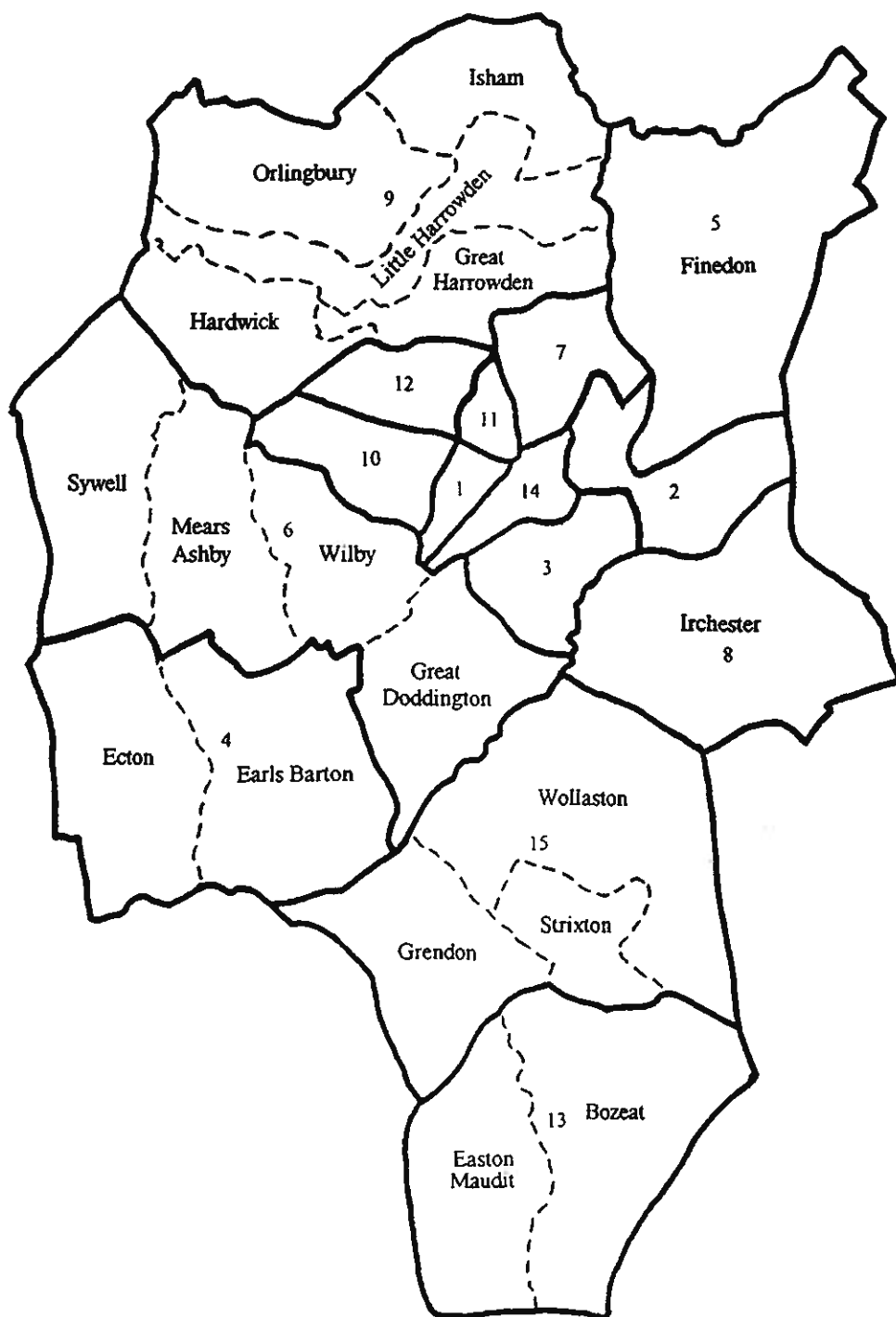
Wellingborough Borough Council should comprise 36 councillors serving 15 wards, as detailed in Figures 4 and 5 and Appendix A to this report. The whole council should be elected every four years, as at present.

56 The Commission has not reached final conclusions on the electoral arrangements for the Wellingborough area and welcomes comments relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, electoral cycle, ward names and parish council electoral arrangements. The Commission will consider all the evidence submitted to it during the consultation period before reaching final recommendations.

#### *Boundary Change*

57 The Commission received a copy of the Borough Council's application to the Secretary of State to alter the boundary between Croyland ward (in Wellingborough town) and Great Doddington parish to follow the A45 (also known as Wilby Way). The Commission has advised the Council that it cannot consider changes to parish boundaries unless directed by the Secretary of State to undertake such a review.

Map 2:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Wellingborough



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

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Key To Wards

- |                |                                    |                 |
|----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Brickhill    | 6 Great Doddington, Wilby and West | 11 Redwell East |
| 2 Castle       | 7 Hemmingwell                      | 12 Redwell West |
| 3 Croylard     | 8 Irchester                        | 13 South        |
| 4 Earls Barton | 9 North                            | 14 Swanspool    |
| 5 Finedon      | 10 Queensway                       | 15 Wollaston    |

Figure 4:  
*The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas*

Ward name	Constituent areas	Map reference
1 Brickhill	Brickhill ward	Large map
2 Castle	Castle ward (part), Hemmingwell ward (part)	Large map
3 Croyland	Croyland ward, Castle ward (part)	Large map
4 Earls Barton	Earls Barton and Ecton parishes	Map 2
5 Finedon	Finedon parish	Map 2
6 Great Doddington, Wilby and West	parishes of Great Doddington, Mears Ashby, Sywell and Wilby	Map 2
7 Hemmingwell	Hemmingwell ward (part)	Large map
8 Irchester	Irchester parish	Map 2
9 North	parishes of Great Harrowden, Hardwick, Isham, Little Harrowden and Orlingbury	Map 2
10 Queensway	Queensway ward	Large map
11 Redwell East	Redwell ward (part)	Large map
12 Redwell West	Redwell ward (part)	Large map
13 South	parishes of Bozeat and Easton Maudit	Map 2
14 Swanspool	Swanspool ward	Large map
15 Wollaston	parishes of Grendon, Strixton and Wollaston	Map 2

*Note: The large map is inserted in the back of the report and details the ward boundaries in Wellingborough town.*

Figure 5:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Wellingborough

Ward name	1996 (Current)				2001 (Projected)		
	Number of councillors	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Brickhill	3	4,336	1,445	-1	4,509	1,503	-4
2 Castle	3	4,420	1,473	1	4,683	1,561	0
3 Croyland	3	4,640	1,547	6	4,829	1,610	3
4 Earls Barton	3	4,412	1,471	1	4,556	1,519	-3
5 Finedon	2	3,264	1,632	12	3,300	1,650	6
6 Great Doddington, Wilby and West	2	2,568	1,284	-12	3,347	1,674	7
7 Hemmingwell	3	4,316	1,439	-2	4,694	1,565	0
8 Irchester	3	3,912	1,304	-11	3,951	1,317	-15
9 North	1	1,738	1,738	19	1,760	1,760	13
10 Queensway	3	4,258	1,419	-3	4,485	1,495	-4
11 Redwell East	2	3,395	1,698	16	3,395	1,698	9
12 Redwell West	2	2,629	1,315	-10	3,425	1,713	10
13 South	1	1,512	1,512	3	1,575	1,575	1
14 Swanspool	3	4,465	1,488	2	4,654	1,551	0
15 Wollaston	2	2,771	1,386	-5	2,920	1,460	-6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>52,636</b>	-	-	<b>56,083</b>	-	-
<b>Averages</b>	-	-	<b>1,462</b>	-	-	<b>1,558</b>	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on Wellingborough Borough Council's submission.

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

## 5. NEXT STEPS

*58* The Commission is putting forward draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Wellingborough. Now it is up to the people of the area. The Commission will take fully into account all representations, which must be received no later than 3 January 1997. Representations received after this date may not be taken into account by the Commission. All representations will be available for public inspection by appointment, and a list of respondents will be available on request after the end of the consultation period.

*59* Views may be expressed by writing directly to the Commission:

Wellingborough Review  
Local Government Commission for England  
Dolphyn Court  
10/11 Great Turnstile  
London WC1V 7JU

*60* In light of all representations received, the Commission will review its draft recommendations to consider whether they should be altered, before reporting finally to the Secretary of State for the Environment. After the submission of its final recommendations, all further representations should be sent to the Secretary of State, who cannot make an Order giving effect to the Commission's recommendations until six weeks after he receives them.



# APPENDIX A

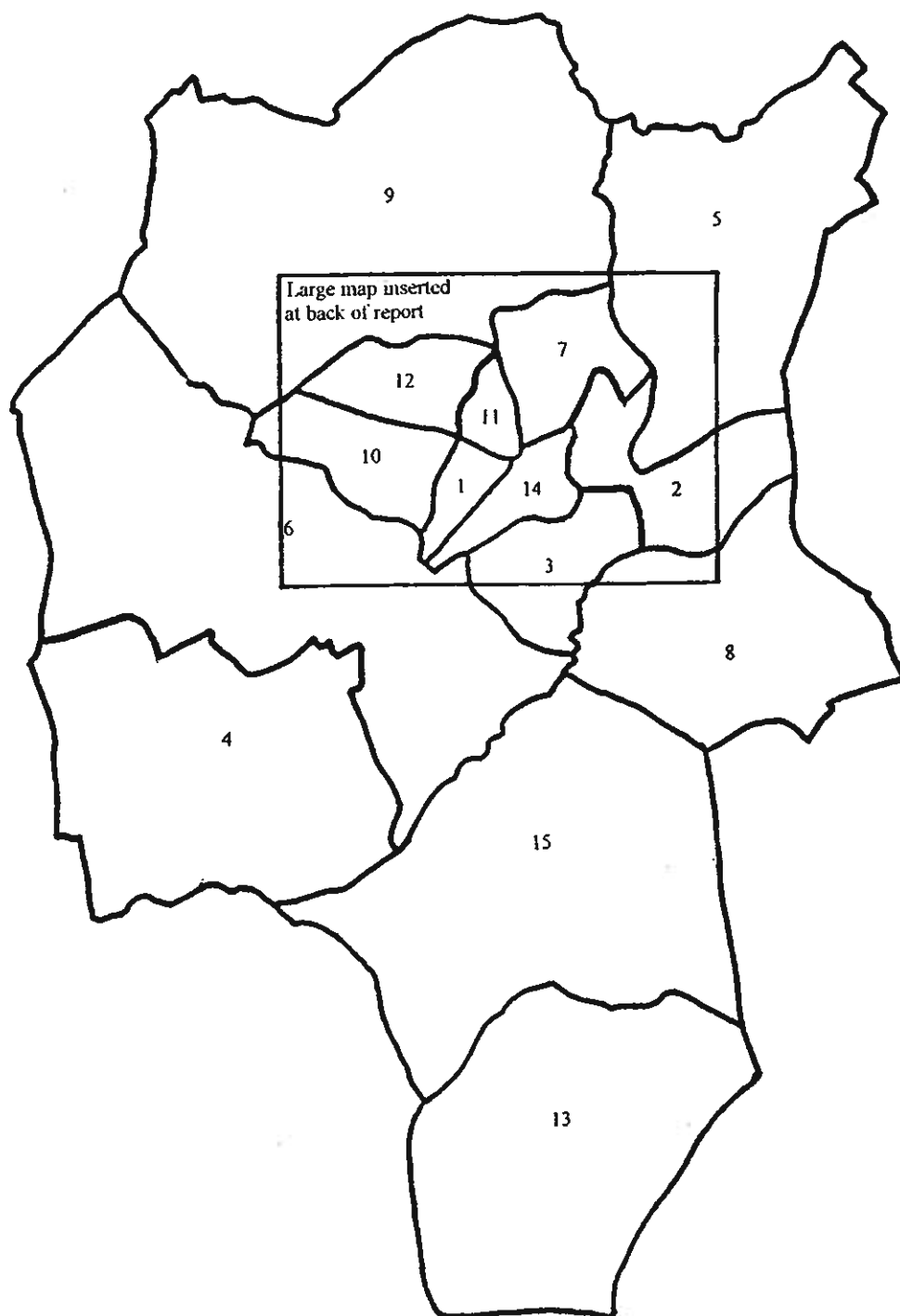
## **The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Wellingborough: Detailed Mapping**

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the borough and indicates the area of Wellingborough town which is shown in more detail in the **large map** inserted at the back of the report.



Map A1:

*The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Wellingborough: Key Map*



KEY  
PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARY —————

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Key To Wards

- |                |                                    |                 |
|----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Brickhill    | 6 Great Doddington, Wilby and West | 11 Redwell East |
| 2 Castle       | 7 Hemmingwell                      | 12 Redwell West |
| 3 Croyland     | 8 Irchester                        | 13 South        |
| 4 Earls Barton | 9 North                            | 14 Swanspool    |
| 5 Finedon      | 10 Queensway                       | 15 Wollaston    |

# APPENDIX B

## Wellingborough Borough Council's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Figure B1:

*Wellingborough Borough Council's Proposals: Constituent Areas*

Ward name	Constituent areas
1 Brickhill	Brickhill ward
2 Castle	Castle ward
3 Croyland	Croyland ward
4 Earls Barton	Earls Barton parish
5 Finedon	Finedon parish
6 Great Doddington and Wilby	parishes of Great Doddington and Wilby
7 Hemmingwell	Hemmingwell ward
8 Irchester	Irchester parish
9 North	parishes of Great Harrowden, Hardwick, Isham, Little Harrowden and Orlingbury
10 Queensway	Queensway ward
11 Redwell East	Redwell ward (part)
12 Redwell West	Redwell ward (part)
13 South	parishes of Bozeat and Easton Maudit
14 Swanspool	Swanspool ward
15 West	parishes of Ecton, Mears Ashby and Sywell
16 Wollaston	parishes of Grendon, Strixton and Wollaston

Figure B2:  
Wellingborough Borough Council's Proposals

Ward name	1996 (Current)				2001 (Projected)		
	Number of councillors	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Brickhill	3	4,336	1,445	-1	4,509	1,503	-4
2 Castle	3	4,748	1,583	8	4,989	1,663	7
3 Croyland	3	4,020	1,340	-8	4,164	1,388	-11
4 Earls Barton	3	4,052	1,351	-8	4,196	1,399	-10
5 Finedon	2	3,264	1,632	12	3,300	1,650	6
6 Great Doddington and Wilby	1	1,567	1,567	7	2,346	2,346	51
7 Hemmingwell	3	4,608	1,536	5	5,053	1,684	8
8 Irchester	3	3,912	1,304	-11	3,951	1,317	-15
9 North	1	1,738	1,738	19	1,760	1,760	13
10 Queensway	3	4,258	1,419	-3	4,485	1,495	-4
11 Redwell East	2	3,395	1,698	16	3,395	1,698	9
12 Redwell West	2	2,629	1,315	-10	3,425	1,713	10
13 South	1	1,512	1,512	3	1,575	1,575	1
14 Swanspool	3	4,465	1,488	2	4,654	1,551	0
15 West	1	1,361	1,361	-7	1,361	1,361	-13
16 Wollaston	2	2,771	1,386	-5	2,920	1,460	-6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>52,636</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>56,083</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,462</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,558</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Wellingborough Borough Council's submission

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

# APPENDIX D

## Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972: Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements

1 By virtue of section 27 of the Local Government Act 1992, in undertaking a review of electoral arrangements the Commission is required to comply so far as is reasonably practicable with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. For ease of reference, those provisions of Schedule 11 which are relevant to this review are set out below.

2 In relation to shire districts:

Having regard to any changes in the number or distribution of the local government electors of the district likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration (by the Secretary of State or the Commission):

- (a) the ratio of the number of local government electors to the number of councillors to be elected shall be, as nearly as may be, the same in every ward in the district;
- (b) in a district every ward of a parish council shall lie wholly within a single ward of the district;
- (c) in a district every parish which is not divided into parish wards shall lie wholly within a single ward of the district.

3 The Schedule also provides that, subject to (a) - (c) above, regard should be had to:

- (d) the desirability of fixing ward boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
- (e) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular ward boundary.

4 The Schedule provides that, in considering whether a parish should be divided into wards, regard shall be had to the questions whether:

- (i) the number or distribution of electors for the parish is such as to make a single election of parish councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and
- (ii) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented on the parish council.

5 Where it is decided to divide any such parish into parish wards, in considering the size and boundaries of the wards and in fixing the number of parish councillors to be elected for each ward, regard shall be had to:

- (i) any change in the number or distribution of electors of the parish which is likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration;
- (ii) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
- (iii) any local ties which will be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries.

6 Where it is decided not to divide the parish into parish wards, in fixing the number of councillors to be elected for each parish regard shall be had to the number and distribution of electors of the parish and any change which is likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the fixing of the number of parish councillors.