THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND
CONSULTATION ON NEW COUNCIL WARD BOUNDARIES FOR WINDSOR AND
MAIDENHEAD

PROPOSAL ON BEHALF OF THE OAKLEY GREEN & FIFIELD RESIDENTS
ASSOCIATION

This submission is made in response to the first period of consultation for a pattern of wards for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead launched on 26 September. The Oakley Green & Fifield Residents Association (‘OGFRA’) was established over 40 years ago by the residents of Oakley Green and Fifield to, inter alia, preserve or to improve local amenities in the interests of present and future residents.

Proposal

We have the following proposal for a change to a ward boundary:

That a change is made to the boundary between Clewer North ward and Bray ward.

We propose that the shaded area shown on Map 1 (see Annex), which is bounded to the north by the ‘old’ A308, to the east by Willows Path, to the south by Dedworth Road (B3024) and to the west by Oakley Green Road (B3383), is removed from Clewer North ward and included instead in Bray (Oakley Green and Fifield) ward; this would be both beneficial to residents and improve electoral representation.

This necessitates the redrawing of the Bray (Oakley Green and Fifield) ward boundary as shown in Map 2 (see Annex).

The area in question is very rural in character. It is situated on the edge of Windsor, lying between green fields, farmland and open spaces on one side, and the large housing estates of west Windsor on the other. It contains between 50-100 households.

We refer to the shaded area in Map 1 in our comments below as Area A for ease of reference.

Justification

We have noted the Commission’s three main criteria which it must follow when it produces a new pattern of wards or electoral divisions, which are:

i. The new pattern of wards should mean that each councillor represents roughly the same number of voters as elected members elsewhere in the authority.
ii. Ward patterns should – as far as possible – reflect community interests and identities and boundaries should be identifiable.

iii. The electoral arrangements should promote effective and convenient local government and reflect the electoral cycle of the council.

Our justification for the above proposal are as follows:

1. Each councillor should represent roughly the same number of electors.

The proposal would improve the councillor/elector ratio.

Reference the document W&M Council Size Submission

The current distribution of electors per councillor in Clewer North ward and Bray ward, as shown in the above-referenced document, is as follows:

Table 5: RBWM electors per Councillor by ward (as of June 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Cllrs</th>
<th>Electors</th>
<th>Per Cllr</th>
<th>Variance from Avg in RBWM (1,952)</th>
<th>Variance from Avg in Berkshire - excluding RBWM (2,226 electors)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clewer North</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,980</td>
<td>1,993</td>
<td>+2.1%</td>
<td>-10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bray</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,834</td>
<td>1,945</td>
<td>-0.4%</td>
<td>-12.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the table below, as per our boundary proposal, 100 electors have been subtracted from the Clewer North total and added to the Bray total.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Cllrs</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clewer North</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,880</td>
<td>1,960</td>
<td>+0.4%</td>
<td>-11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bray</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5,934</td>
<td>1,978</td>
<td>+1.3%</td>
<td>-11.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The amended table above shows that moving the boundary as described would improve the current/proposed councillor/elector ratio, in terms of bringing the ratios for the 2 wards closer together and improving the variances from RBWM and Berkshire averages. The proposal to reduce the number of RBWM councillors to 43 (if adopted) will alter these councillor/elector ratios, although a change of 100 electors should not materially alter the outcome.

Other factors such as local development/migration are speculative, so are not discussed here.

2. Ward patterns should – as far as possible – reflect community interests and identities and boundaries should be identifiable.

Interests and identities.

The area of Clewer North which we propose becomes part of Bray ward (Bray Oakley Green and Fifield) is located right on the edge of Windsor, where urban development stops and the countryside begins. Residents feel part of the green open space that surrounds them. They become involved in Bray Parish activities, eg summer fair, residents’ groups. They are less
involved in Clewer North activities as the identities and interests of residents have more in common with the rural community of Bray than the urban community of Clewer North.

Community groups. Two local community groups in Bray Parish very well represent residents’ interests in the area under discussion. The Residents’ Association in Clewer North less so, as it is concerned with urban issues rather than rural.

Ward Councillors. The ethos of ward councillors in the Windsor wards (which includes Clewer North) is very much pro-development, whereas that of the council representatives for Bray Parish is more countryside orientated and favours protecting what Green Belt we have in the area. The latter view is shared by residents of Area A as that is the environment in which they live.

Boundaries.

The boundaries of Area A are shown in Map 1. They comprise roads and a public footpath so are clearly identifiable and defensible.

3. The electoral arrangements should promote effective and convenient local government and reflect the electoral cycle of the council.

An anomalous situation exists in that Area A is currently situated within the Bray Parish boundary, and also within the boundary of the electoral ward of Clewer North. This means therefore that the boundaries for councillors’ interests and responsibilities are not clearly drawn. Bray (Oakley Green and Fifield) councillors and Clewer North councillors have overlapping interests in the area. Very often either both sets of councillors, or neither, respond to local issues affecting Area A. Removal of Area A from Clewer North ward would resolve this conflict.

Alteration of the ward boundaries as proposed in this submission would restore the position to that which existed prior to the re-organisation of local government following the passing of the Local Government Act 1972. A situation which worked better for residents.

We believe that this submission sets out clearly our reasons for redrawing the ward boundary for Bray (Oakley Green and Fifield), so removing Area A from Clewer North ward.

Relevant details for OGFRA are provided overleaf.

3 December 2017
OGFRA Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation Name</th>
<th>Oakley Green &amp; Fifield Residents Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisation Type</td>
<td>Community Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Martin Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We understand that once submitted, OGFRA’s comments will be published by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England at the end of the consultation period. Personal details such as postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers will be redacted before the submission is published.
Map 1: Existing Parish and electoral ward boundaries

Shaded area (Area A) represents area to be moved from Clewer North ward to Bray (Oakley Green and Fifield) ward
Map 2: Revised Bray ward boundary (adjoining Clewer North ward)

Revised Bray (Oakley Green and Fifield) ward boundary after Area A moved from Clewer North ward.