I believe that the revised forecast electorate numbers supplied with this consultation are much more likely to be in accordance with the actual electorate in the five year timeframe because they take better account of allocated housing sites and large permitted housing developments. I therefore approve of them.

The revised electorate numbers for the existing two polling districts in Theale parish mean that a ward made up of just those polling districts will meet the target electorate per councillor figure for 42 councillors and be well within the commission’s tolerance. The new ward covering Theale should therefore comprise just those two polling districts. I therefore concur with West Berkshire Council’s latest proposals for Theale ward in their submission to this consultation.

Tidmarsh and Sulham, which the Council previously wanted to include in a Theale ward, look to Pangbourne for their services and they should therefore be included in a ward that includes Pangbourne. They no longer need to be included in a Theale-based ward to meet the target electorate per councillor figure.

The parish of Englefield was also included in the Council’s previous proposal for Theale ward. This is no longer necessary to meet the target electorate per councillor figure for a ward based on Theale. Englefield parish is also of a different character to the parish of Theale in that it is rural and much of it is in the AONB. The parish of Englefield should therefore be included in the same ward as parishes to its west.

Kind Regards,

Alan Macro
Councillor for Theale
West Berkshire Council
I have now done more research and wish to revise my proposals for Theale ward.

I have confirmed that occupants of only 12 of the 29 apartments erected in Cumber Place, Theale, have been registered on the electoral roll to date.

Applications to convert offices into 16 homes have been made, occupants of only 4 have been registered on the electoral roll. (Applications can only be refused on limited grounds: flood risk, ground contamination, traffic generation. None of these apply to applications in Theale so we can safely assume that all will be converted.)

I propose three different options, in order of preference:

Option 1

A single member Theale ward consisting of just the parish of Theale – polling districts ZTA1 and ZTA2. Full account taken of Cumber Place and the outstanding approved and office conversion planning applications. Assuming two occupants per planned home, this would give 3241 electors per councillor. This would be 277, or 8.5%, more than the “target” for 42 councillors.

Englefield, Tidmarsh and Sulham polling districts (included in West Berkshire Council’s proposal for Theale ward) would be included in the new two-member Pangbourne and Purley ward. Please see the attached spreadsheet for the effect on this ward.

Option 2.

A single member Theale ward consisting of the parish of Theale (polling districts ZTA1 and ZTA2) plus the Englefield polling district. Full account taken of the outstanding approved and office conversion planning applications, with the exception of Lakeside and North Lakeside. It is taking some time for this site to be developed. Assuming two occupants per planned home, this would give 2742 electors per councillor. This would be 222, or 8.1%, lower than the “target” for 42 councillors.

Tidmarsh and Sulham polling districts (included in West Berkshire Council’s proposal for Theale ward) would be included in the new two-member Pangbourne and Purley ward. Please see the attached spreadsheet for the effect on this ward.

Option 3.

A single member Theale ward consisting of the parish of Theale (polling districts ZTA1 and ZTA2) plus Englefield and Sulhamstead No 1 (YSG1) polling districts. No account would be taken of the outstanding approved planning applications. This would give 2870 electors per councillor. This would be 94, or 3.3%, less than the “target” for 42 councillors.
Please see the attached spreadsheet for the effect on the Council’s proposed Pangbourne and Purley, and Burghfield wards.

The data used in my calculations were obtained from a spreadsheet distributed to members by West Berkshire Council (Final ward calculations for Steering Group.xls) while it was formulating its submission. This data is included on the WBC Original sheet of the attached spreadsheet.

Alan Macro
Councillor for Theale
West Berkshire Council

From: Alan Macro
Sent: 03 April 2017 02:35
To: reviews@lbce.org.uk
Subject: New council ward boundaries for West Berkshire

I have the following observations on the boundaries of a new ward covering the parish of Theale:

I believe that a ward based on the existing ward and parish boundaries can fulfil the Commission’s requirements when the following are taken into account:

- The 15 or so flats in Cumber Place that have been built, but not yet occupied or registered on the electoral roll
- The proposals to turn between 20 and 30 offices in various parts of Theale into flats
- The 325/350 homes given planning permission at Lakeside (two alternative plans)
- The 9 homes given planning permission in St Ives Close (two separate plans)
- The approved plans to convert the Red Lion pub into either 8 or 9 homes
- The 2 homes given planning permission in The Green

I accept that the Lakeside developments are taking a long time to come to fruition. If the Commission does not want to include those homes then an alternative would be to include the villages of Englefield and North Street in a Theale-based ward. Both these villages look to Theale for services such as shops and doctors’ surgery. Homes in North Street are separated from homes in Theale by just two fields. If this does not sufficiently make up the numbers then the adjoining polling district in Sulhamstead parish should be considered. This part of Sulhamstead also looks to Theale for its services.

The M4 motorway should be considered as a “natural” boundary for a ward based on Theale. A ward should not include both Theale and areas the other side of the motorway, such as Calcot, Sulham or Tidmarsh.

Alan Macro
Councillor for Theale
West Berkshire Council