

LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
ELECTORAL  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
LINCOLN IN  
LINCOLNSHIRE

*Report to the Secretary of State for  
the Environment*

*March 1997*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Lincoln in Lincolnshire.

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## Local Government Commission for England

25 March 1997

Dear Secretary of State

On 19 March 1996 the Commission commenced a periodic electoral review of the City of Lincoln under the Local Government Act 1992. It published its draft recommendations in October 1996 and undertook a nine-week period of consultation.

The Commission has now formulated its final recommendations in the light of the consultation. It has, for the most part, confirmed its draft recommendations, although it has modified some of its initial warding proposals in the light of further evidence. This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in the area.

The Commission is therefore recommending to you that Lincoln should be served by 33 councillors representing 11 wards, and that some changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the Commission's statutory criteria. It is recommended that the Council should continue to be elected by thirds.

I would like to thank members and officers of the City 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 Lincoln on 19 March 1996. It published its draft recommendations on electoral arrangements on 31 October 1996, after which it undertook a nine-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the submissions received by the Commission during consultation on its draft recommendations, and offers its final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

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

- **in seven of the 11 wards, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the city;**
- **in three of these wards, the number of electors per councillor varies by 20 per cent or more from the average;**
- **by 2001, the number of electors per councillor is likely to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in seven of the wards.**

The Commission's final recommendations for the City Council's electoral arrangements (Figure 1) are that:

- **Lincoln City Council should continue to be served by 33 councillors;**
- **there should continue to be 11 wards;**
- **the ward boundaries of eight of the existing wards should be modified, while three wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place by thirds, with the next elections taking place in 1998.**

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

- **In all 11 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the city average.**
- **This high level of electoral equality is expected to be still in place in 2001.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, who will not make an Order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 5 May 1997.

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

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
1 Abbey	3	Abbey ward, Minster ward (part)	Large map
2 Birchwood	3	Birchwood ward (part)	Large map
3 Boultham	3	Boultham ward (part), Tritton ward (part), Moorland ward (part)	Large map
4 Bracebridge	3	<i>Unchanged</i>	Large map
5 Carholme	3	<i>Unchanged</i>	Large map
6 Castle	3	<i>Unchanged</i>	Large map
7 Glebe	3	Minster ward (part)	Map A2 and Large map
8 Hartsholme	3	Birchwood ward (part), Tritton ward (part)	Large map
9 Minster	3	Longdales ward, Minster ward (part)	Map A2 and Large map
10 Moorland	3	Moorland ward (part), Tritton ward (part)	Large map
11 Park	3	Park ward, Boultham ward (part)	Large map

*Notes: 1 The large map inserted in the back of this report illustrates the ward boundaries in Lincoln.*

*2 Lincoln is not parished.*

# 1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the city of Lincoln in Lincolnshire.

2 The Commission has now reviewed the districts in Lincolnshire as part of its programme of periodic electoral reviews of all principal local authority areas in England. This is the Commission's first review of the electoral arrangements for Lincoln. The last such review was undertaken by the Commission's predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in October 1978 (Report No. 292). The electoral arrangements of Lincoln County Council were last reviewed in September 1980 (Report No. 396). It is intended that a review of the County Council's electoral arrangements will follow in due course.

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:
  - (a) to reflect the identities and interests of local people; and
  - (b) to secure effective and convenient local government;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 The Commission has also had regard to its own *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (published in March 1996 and supplemented in September 1996). This sets out its approach to the reviews.

5 The review of Lincoln was in four stages (Figure 2).

6 Stage One commenced on 19 March 1996. The Commission wrote to Lincoln City Council inviting it to make proposals for its future electoral arrangements. Copies of that letter were sent to Lincolnshire County Council, the other borough and district councils in Lincolnshire, the Lincolnshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, Members of Parliament and Members of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the district, and the headquarters of the main political parties. The Commission also placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the City Council itself to publicise the review.

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

8 Stage Three began on 31 October 1996 with the publication of the Commission's report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Lincoln in Lincolnshire*. Copies were sent to all those to whom the Commission wrote at the start of the review as well as those who had written to the Commission during Stage One, inviting comments on the Commission's preliminary conclusions. Again, the Commission placed a notice in local press, issued a press release and invited the City Council to publicise the report more widely.

9 Finally, during Stage Four, the Commission reconsidered its draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation.

Figure 2:  
*Stages of the Review*

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



## 2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

10 Lincoln is a compact city with a population of almost 85,000 covering an area of 3,600 hectares. It is the county town of Lincolnshire and is a city of international significance, with many historic buildings. It also acts as a focus for the main roads and rail routes across the county. The city contains no parish councils.

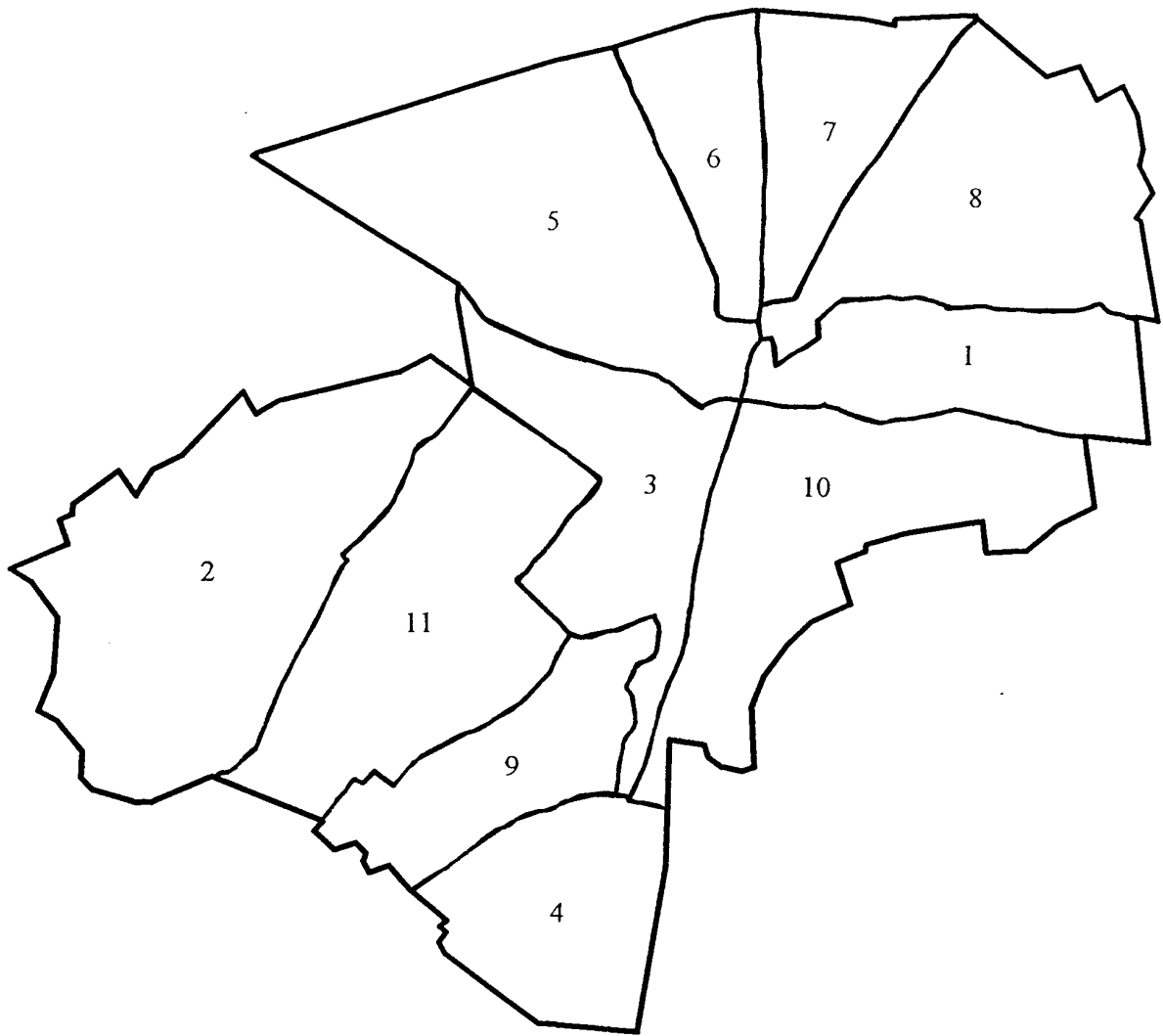
11 Lincoln is an unusual shape, with urban development stretching outwards to both the north and south, and squeezed in the centre so that there are only three points crossing the railway line which link the north and south of the city. Residential development now stretches to the city boundary in most directions. While the majority of wards in the city centre have experienced little growth or even a small decline in electorate over the last 20 years, there has been significant growth on the fringes. This has led to the city experiencing an 18 per cent increase in electorate overall. Birchwood, Bracebridge and Minster wards in particular have experienced significant growth, with Birchwood ward experiencing a threefold increase in electorate from 3,007 electors in 1976 to 10,231 electors in 1996. The City Council expects residential development to continue on the fringes of the city over the next five years, with some of the most significant increases in electorate expected in Birchwood, Bracebridge and Longdales wards.

12 The current electoral arrangements in the city provide for 33 councillors representing 11 wards (see Map 1 and Figure 3). Each of the 11 wards are represented by three city councillors and the wards are identical to the current County Council electoral divisions. Lincoln currently holds its elections by thirds, where one-third of the councillors retire every year (except in those years when county council elections are held). The next city council elections are due in May 1998. The current electorate of the city is 63,707 (February 1996) and each councillor represents an average of 1,931 electors. The City Council forecasts that the electorate of the city will increase to 66,450 by the year 2001, which would change the average number of electors per councillor to 2,014 (Figure 3).

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

14 Since the last review by the LGBC in 1978, changes in population and electorate have not been evenly spread across the city. As a result, the number of electors per councillor varies significantly from the average in many wards. There are currently seven wards where the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the city. In three of these wards, the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 20 per cent from the average. In Birchwood, the number of electors per councillor is some 77 per cent above the city average so that the councillor for this ward represents 3,410 electors compared to the average 1,931.

Map 1:  
Existing Wards in Lincoln



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Key to Wards

1 Abbey	4 Bracebridge	7 Longdales	10 Park
2 Birchwood	5 Carholme	8 Minster	11 Tritton
3 Boultham	6 Castle	9 Moorland	

Figure 3:  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	1996				2001 (Projected)		
	Number of councillors	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Abbey	3	5,032	1,677	-13	5,154	1,718	-15
2 Birchwood	3	10,231	3,410	77	11,093	3,698	84
3 Boultham	3	5,202	1,734	-10	5,547	1,849	-8
4 Bracebridge	3	6,080	2,027	5	6,441	2,147	7
5 Carholme	3	5,488	1,829	-5	5,711	1,904	-5
6 Castle	3	5,312	1,771	-8	5,420	1,807	-10
7 Longdales	3	4,832	1,611	-17	5,128	1,709	-15
8 Minster	3	7,427	2,476	28	7,618	2,539	26
9 Moorland	3	4,935	1,645	-15	5,029	1,676	-17
10 Park	3	4,973	1,658	-14	5,030	1,677	-17
11 Tritton	3	4,195	1,398	-28	4,279	1,426	-29
<b>Totals</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>63,707</b>	—	—	<b>66,450</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,931</b>	—	—	<b>2,014</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Lincoln City Council's submission.

Notes: 1 The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1996, electors in Birchwood are relatively under-represented by 77 per cent, while electors in Tritton are relatively over-represented by 28 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2 Since the publication of the Commission's draft recommendations, amendments have been made to the forecasted electorate of Boultham ward and the total for the City Council area - see Chapter 5.



### 3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

15 During Stage One, the Commission received submissions from Lincoln City Council and the Lincoln Conservative Association on electoral arrangements in the city. In the light of these representations, the Commission formulated its preliminary conclusions which were set out in its report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Lincoln in Lincolnshire*. The Commission proposed that Lincoln should be served by 34 councillors, serving 12 wards. It also proposed that:

- (a) the current ward of Birchwood ward should be divided into two new wards, Birchwood and Doddington, each represented by three councillors;
- (b) the current Tritton ward should be abolished. The Boultham Moor area should be transferred to a revised Moorland ward; the Swanpool Garden Suburb and the area to the north of Skellingthorpe Road should be transferred to Boultham ward; and the Hartsholme estate should form its own new ward of Hartsholme represented by one councillor;
- (c) the Boultham Park area, currently in Moorland ward, should be transferred to Boultham ward;
- (d) the present Park ward should be enlarged to include the part of the St Catherine's area to the west of the River Witham and the south of Hamilton Road, currently in Boultham ward;
- (e) the existing ward of Minster should be reduced. The area to the south of Wragby Road, except the properties on Bunker's Hill, should be transferred to Abbey ward, and the Cathedral area and the properties to the west of the St Giles estate should be merged with Longdales ward. Minster ward should be renamed King George ward, and, to reflect the inclusion of the Cathedral within the ward, Longdales ward should be renamed Minster ward;
- (f) there should be no change to the existing arrangements for the wards of Bracebridge, Carholme and Castle.

#### Draft Recommendation

Lincoln City Council should comprise 34 councillors serving 12 wards. Elections should continue to be held by thirds.

16 The Commission's proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 10 per cent or less from the city average in all 12 wards. This would remain the case in 2001.

17 The Commission's draft recommendations are summarised in Appendix B.



## 4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

18 During the consultation on the Commission's draft recommendations report, 10 submissions were received. A list of all respondents is available on request from the Commission.

### **Lincoln City Council**

19 In its response to the Commission's consultation report, Lincoln City Council restated its original scheme for a structure of 11 wards, each represented by three councillors but on modified boundaries. It contended that its original proposals were preferable in the areas where they differed from the Commission's draft recommendations. In particular, the Council opposed the recommendation for a single-member Hartsholme ward covering the Hartsholme estate. It reiterated its proposal for a three-member ward merging that part of the current Birchwood ward to the east of Pershore Way and Birchwood Avenue with the Hartsholme area of Tritton ward. It considered that the creation of a single-member ward while retaining three-member wards in the rest of the authority was not sustainable, and the resultant increase to 34 councillors conflicted with the objective of retaining an odd number of councillors. In addition, while it recognised that Hartsholme Lake and Country Park separates the Birchwood area from the Hartsholme area, it argued that the areas are linked by pedestrian footpaths.

20 The City Council submitted an alternative proposal for the Minster and Longdales wards. It disagreed with the Commission's draft recommendation to transfer the area around the Cathedral from Minster ward to Longdales ward, and to rename the current wards. It argued that the Commission's proposals were "unnecessarily sweeping in that they make substantial changes in the boundaries of the wards and cut across one of the main radial routes which since 1979 have constituted the ward boundary". It considered that the Ermine estate and Becksidge village areas in the north of the current Longdales ward do not have strong links with the area around the Cathedral which the Commission proposed should be transferred from the current Minster ward. The Council argued that it would be preferable to transfer the Nettleham Fields area from Minster

ward to Longdales ward as it was newly developed and shared shopping facilities on Nettleham Road with part of the Ermine estate.

21 The City Council supported the Commission's proposal to retain the link between the current Minster ward and the properties to the south of Wragby Road around Bunkers Hill, agreeing that the area shared community ties with the St Giles estate and Nettleham Fields areas. It did not, however, agree with the Commission's proposal that only part of the St Catherine's area should be transferred from Boultham ward to Park ward. It argued that the whole area should be transferred, and that Catchwater Drain should be used as the boundary for the ward instead of Hamilton Road and the River Witham.

### **Lincoln Constituency Conservative Association**

22 The Lincoln Constituency Conservative Association agreed with most of the Commission's draft recommendations, particularly supporting the proposals for the current Birchwood ward. However, it argued that the current wards, particularly in the north of the city, combine a number of differing housing and community types, and as a result do not afford representation to the less dominant party. It also argued that further consideration should be given to whether the centre of roads or the rear of houses would provide the more appropriate boundary for wards.

23 It was concerned at the proposal to transfer Swanpool Garden Suburb from Tritton ward to a revised Boultham ward, and argued that the area has more in common with the Commission's proposed Hartsholme ward. It recognised that merging the two areas would create a ward with 24 per cent more electors per councillor than the city average, but argued that it did not consider that "the number game should over-rule common sense community links". It also suggested that as an alternative, Hartsholme ward could be extended northwards to include both Swanpool Garden Suburb and Skewbridge provided that as the Skewbridge area was developed, additional councillors could be allocated to the ward.

## **Lincolnshire County Council**

24 The County Council commented “on areas where the draft recommendations differ from the original District Council submission... based on the premise that County Council, in general terms and notwithstanding the issue of electoral equality, is minded to support the District Council where the Council considers that such arrangements can be justified on community identity/interest grounds”.

25 The County Council opposed the Commission’s draft recommendations in two areas of Lincoln. It argued that the proposal for a new single-member ward for the Hartsholme area would create an unnecessary anomaly in the present arrangements, as currently each of the City Council wards is coterminous with their respective county electoral divisions. If Hartsholme ward were combined with either the proposed Doddington ward or Moorland ward for County Council electoral purposes, this would provide a county division which is projected to have between 7,332 and 8,027 electors by 2001. This division would be much larger than all the other county divisions in the city, which are expected to have between 5,420 and 6,441 electors by 2001. The County Council also supported the City Council’s proposals in relation to Longdales and Minster wards, in preference to the Commission’s proposals, on the basis that it believed they better reflected community identity and interests.

## **Other Representations**

26 The Commission received a further seven submissions in respect of its draft recommendations from local residents. Of those, five submissions were in relation to the proposed changes to Minster and Longdales wards, of which four favoured the City Council’s proposals for the area and one submission favoured no change. Those opposing the Commission’s draft recommendations argued that the changes would alter the character of the two wards, and that the Nettleham Fields development shared common shopping facilities with the Ermine Estate and Becksid village areas. They also brought to the Commission’s attention the historic nature of the Longdales area and name.

27 The Commission also received a submission from a resident of Swanpool Garden Suburb arguing that Hartsholme and Swanpool form an integrated community sharing local schools, shops, services and public house and that it should continue to form part of a ward with Hartsholme. One resident also argued for a change to unitary local government in Lincoln and for considering whether the powers of the Chief Executive should be increased.

## 5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

28 As indicated previously, the Commission's prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Lincoln was to achieve electoral equality, having regard to the 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".

29 However, the Commission's function is not merely arithmetical, for three reasons. First, its 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. Second, it must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken. Third, the Commission has had to consider the desirability of servicing effective and convenient local government, and reflecting the interests and identities of local communities.

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. 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: a variation of up to plus or minus 10 per cent in a particular ward may be regarded as being "acceptable", but variations in excess of plus or minus 20 per cent were generally accepted only in very exceptional circumstances.

31 The Commission's view is that the LGBC's approach to this issue had 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 has decided to adopt this approach for the purposes of its reviews.

32 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". However, as the Commission emphasised in its September 1996 supplement to the *Guidance*: "While the Commission accepts that absolute equality of representation is likely to be unattainable, it considers that, if electoral imbalances are kept to a minimum, such equality should be the starting point in any electoral review".

### Electorate Projections

33 At Stage One, Lincoln City Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2001, projecting an increase in the electorate of 4 per cent over the five-year period, from 63,707 to 66,250. The City Council 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 from 1996.

34 The City Council's electorate projections did not take account of the development of the Lincoln campus of the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside. In its draft recommendations report, the Commission considered that it should, if possible, take account of this development in any projection of electorate. The University is expected to have some 3,300 full-time student places by the year 2000, and accommodation is planned to be provided on campus for some 680. The Commission considered that it was premature to predict the location of student electors living off-campus as there was currently no reliable information, and considered that the issue should be addressed as part of a future electoral review. However, it concluded that all 680 students

expected to be resident on campus by the year 2000 should be included in its five-year electorate projections. This increased the projected electorate of the current Boultham ward from 5,347 to 6,027, and the total electorate of the city from 66,250 to 66,930.

35 At Stage Three, Lincolnshire County Council argued that the City Council had over-estimated the increase in electorate for the five-year period. It forecast that the adult population of the city would rise by only 1.8 per cent during the same period. It considered that the difference between the two projections was most likely due to the City Council under-estimating the dwelling vacancy rate, assuming that it would fall to some 1 per cent by 2001 from a current figure of 4 per cent.

36 Evidence from the 1997 electoral register appears to suggest that the City Council's projections may overstate the level of electorate growth in Lincoln over the next five years. The register shows that the total electorate for the city declined by over 200 between 1996 and 1997, and that the only wards to register an increase in electors were Birchwood, Tritton, Boultham and Castle. The register also showed that only 75 students of the 322 students resident on campus decided to register at their college address, with most continuing to register at their parents' address. On the basis of this preliminary evidence, the City Council submitted revised electorate forecasts for Boultham ward and the City Council area. It suggested that it would be reasonable to assume that on the basis of 680 student residences being completed by 2001, that some 200 would register at their college address. It projected that the electorate of the current Boultham ward should now be revised to 5,547 electors by 2001, and that the total for the city should be reduced to 66,450 by 2001.

37 The Commission accepts that projecting change in electorate is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the City Council's revised projections, it shares the caution of the County Council over the overall rate of growth. However, apart from the current Birchwood, Boultham, Bracebridge and Longdales wards, relatively little new development is expected to take place in the city over the coming five years. Therefore, the impact of any over-estimation in electorate is expected to be evenly spread across the city and any revision to electorate projections is likely to have only a very marginal effect on the distribution of electors between wards. On this basis, the Commission is content to continue to use the City Council's projections, as revised at Stage Three.

## Council Size

38 The Commission has 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.

39 Lincoln City Council is at present served by 33 councillors. During Stage One, the Council did not propose any change to council size, while the Lincoln Conservative Association, in its three options, proposed council sizes ranging from 22 to 41 councillors. In its draft recommendations report, the Commission considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. The Commission concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be served by a council of 34 members. The Commission received support for this council size from the Lincoln Conservative Association. However, Lincoln City Council opposed this draft recommendation on the basis that it preferred to continue to have 33 councillors. Lincolnshire County Council supported the City Council's preference on the basis that it could continue to have 11 county divisions coterminous with those wards. Having considered the further evidence received during Stage Three, the Commission has decided to change its draft recommendation. It has concluded that its statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would be best met by a council size of 33. Accordingly Lincoln would remain at the lower end of the indicative range for council size.

## Electoral Arrangements

40 Having considered all representations received during both Stages One and Three of the review, the Commission has further considered its draft recommendations. The following areas are covered in turn:

- (a) Birchwood and Tritton wards;
- (b) Moorland, Boultham and Park wards;
- (c) Bracebridge ward;
- (d) Abbey, Minster and Longdales wards;
- (e) Carholme and Castle wards.

41 Details of the Commission's final recommendations are shown in Figure 5, Map 2 and the map inserted in the back of this report.

## **Birchwood and Tritton**

42 As a result of significant growth since the last review of electoral arrangements, Birchwood ward has the most significant level of electoral imbalance in Lincoln, with 77 per cent more electors per councillor than average. In its draft recommendations report, the Commission proposed that the current ward should be divided into two new wards: Birchwood ward covering the area to the west of Birchwood Avenue and the Leslie Mansen Primary School; and Doddington ward covering the area to the east of that boundary as far as the existing ward boundary of Hartsholme Lake. The neighbouring ward, Tritton, has suffered a relative decline in electorate, and currently the number of electors per councillor is some 28 per cent below average. The Commission proposed to abolish the current ward and divide it into three parts. The Hartsholme estate would form a single-member ward in its own right, Swanpool Garden Suburb and the area to the north of Skellingthorpe Road would join Boultham ward, and the Boultham Moor area would join Moorland ward.

43 During Stage Three of the review, the Commission received four submissions commenting on the Birchwood and Hartsholme area. The Lincoln Conservative Association agreed with the Commission's proposals for two new wards in Birchwood. While it recognised the legitimacy of the proposal for a separate ward for Hartsholme, it argued that Swanpool Garden Suburb should be part of the ward as the two areas share a number of common facilities. As an alternative, it suggested that Hartsholme ward could be expanded to include both Swanpool Garden Suburb and the Skewbridge area, and that representation could be increased as the Skewbridge area developed and its electorate grew. A resident of Swanpool also opposed the separation of Swanpool Garden Suburb from the Hartsholme estate, and argued that they form an integrated community and share some facilities. He suggested that the future development at Skewbridge would necessitate further boundary changes at a future electoral review.

44 The City Council restated its proposal for a new Birchwood ward containing that part of the current ward to the west of Pershore Way and Birchwood Avenue, and a new Hartsholme ward merging the rest of the current Birchwood ward with the Hartsholme estate currently in Tritton ward. The Council argued that its proposals would meet the Commission's criteria by providing a good level of electoral equality, and that the Commission's draft recommendations for a single-member ward for

Hartsholme, with the remainder of the city divided into three-member wards, was not sustainable. While it recognised that the Hartsholme estate is separated from Birchwood by Hartsholme Lake and Country Park, it argued that there are pedestrian links through the park.

45 Lincolnshire County Council supported the City Council's proposals. It argued that the Commission's proposals for a single-member ward for Hartsholme would necessitate a change from the present arrangement in Lincoln, whereby city ward and county electoral division boundaries are coterminous. It argued that at a future electoral review of the County Council, Hartsholme ward would have to be combined with a neighbouring ward in order to create a new county electoral division. This would lead to Hartsholme ward being combined with either the proposed Doddington ward or revised Moorland ward, which would create a county electoral division of between 7,332 and 8,027 electors by 2001, while all other county electoral divisions in the city would have fewer than 6,500 electors.

46 The Commission has carefully considered the evidence submitted to it during Stage Three of the review. It recognises that its draft recommendation for a single-member ward for Hartsholme would be a significant departure from current practice. Lincoln City Council has had a structure entirely consisting of three-member wards for over 50 years, and the creation of a single-member ward would lead to one area of the city having an election every four years for its councillor, while all other areas would have three councillors with elections held in three out of every four years. It would also mean, as has been argued by the County Council, that county electoral divisions and City Council wards would no longer be coterminous and lead to the creation of one relatively large county electoral division.

47 In its submission, the City Council challenged the significance of the physical boundary of Hartsholme Lake and Country Park. It argued that while Hartsholme and Birchwood are clearly separated by the lake, there are a number of pedestrian links between the two areas. While accepting this, the Commission remains of the view that the areas are distinctly different, and that a merger between the two areas may not best reflect community identities. Notwithstanding this issue, the Commission recognises that the current preference in Lincoln is for elections by thirds and that the city has a tradition of three-member wards. It is persuaded that the creation of a single-member ward in part of the city would be a significant

departure from current practice and that electors may find such a change confusing. On balance, therefore, it has concluded that the statutory criteria would be better served by the merger of Hartsholme with part of Birchwood into a new Hartsholme ward, since though there may be some detrimental effects on community identity, such a solution is likely to secure more effective and convenient local government in the area.

48 In view of the recommendation that the Hartsholme area be merged with part of the current Birchwood ward, the Commission reconsidered the boundary of the proposed Birchwood ward. In its draft recommendations, the Commission proposed that the boundary should follow the centre of Skellingthorpe Road and Birchwood Avenue and the rear of the Doddington Park development. The City Council's preferred boundary was to use the rear of the properties on Skellingthorpe Road, and the centre of Birchwood Avenue and Pershore Way. While the Commission's proposal would have the advantage of containing the whole of the Doddington Park development within one ward, the City Council's proposal would provide a stronger western boundary for the proposed Hartsholme ward, as well as providing a better level of electoral equality. On this basis, the Commission has decided to recommend the City Council's proposed boundary in this area.

49 The Commission has, however, decided to make two amendments to the City Council's proposed boundaries. First, it has decided that the area to the north of Skellingthorpe Road (around Burghley Road and Haddon Close) should form part of the proposed Birchwood ward rather than part of Hartsholme ward. This change would appear to have no detrimental effect on community identities and would lead to improved electoral equality by transferring 113 electors from Hartsholme ward to Birchwood ward.

50 The second area of change relates to the proposed development at Skewbridge. The Commission understands that there is still some considerable doubt as to both the nature and timing of the proposed development, and that as a result the City Council has not included it in its projection of electorate for the period up to 2001. However, any development in this area is likely to obscure the current ward boundary between Birchwood and Tritton wards, which it proposed at consultation stage should form the new ward boundary between Birchwood and Boutham wards. Therefore, the Commission has decided to modify its proposed boundary in this area by

recommending the transfer of the area to the north of Catchwater Drain from Birchwood ward to Boutham ward. This change would have no impact on ward electorates, would provide a more permanent boundary for the ward and would ensure that any future development at Skewbridge would not be divided between two different wards.

51 There appears to be considerable community ties between Swanpool Garden Suburb and the Hartsholme estate. The Commission therefore, as part of this review, considered the implications of retaining the two areas within a single ward. Swanpool Garden Suburb currently contains 506 electors and, if it was transferred from the proposed Boutham ward, this would reduce the electorate of that ward so that it would have 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than average. It would also increase the electorate of the proposed Hartsholme ward so that it would have 18 per cent more electors per councillor than average. The proposed Hartsholme ward is an area in which some growth is expected and the level of electoral inequality would continue to increase over the next five years. On balance, therefore, the Commission has decided to recommend that Swanpool Garden Suburb should in future form part of the proposed Boutham ward rather than the proposed Hartsholme ward.

52 In relation to the Boutham Moor area of Tritton ward, the Commission proposed that the area should be merged with Moorland ward. The railway line provides a good physical boundary to the revised Moorland ward, and marks the boundary between communities. At Stage Three, no further submissions regarding this proposal were received, other than the City Council's support for the change. Consequently, the Commission is content to confirm this proposal as final.

53 To summarise, the Commission has concluded that two new wards should be formed from the current Birchwood and Tritton wards, with the remainder of the current wards transferred to neighbouring wards. The new Birchwood ward would contain the part of the existing ward to the south of Catchwater Drain, north of Skellingthorpe Road and west of Birchwood Avenue and Pershore Way; and the new Hartsholme ward would contain the part of the current Birchwood ward to the east of Pershore Way and Birchwood Avenue, to the south of Skellingthorpe Road and west of the Lincoln to Newark railway line. The Boutham Moor area of Tritton ward would be transferred to Moorland ward. Swanpool Garden Suburb, Skewbridge and

the area to the north of Skellingthorpe Road currently in Tritton ward, and the area to the north of Catchwater Drain in Birchwood ward would be transferred to a revised Boutham ward. Birchwood ward would have 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than average currently, and 5 per cent more than average by 2001. Hartsholme ward would have 9 per cent more electors per councillor both currently and in 2001. Details of these proposals are illustrated in the map at the back of this report.

### **Moorland, Boutham and Park**

54 In its draft recommendations report, the Commission proposed a number of boundary changes in order to address the level of over-representation in Moorland, Boutham and Park wards. Currently, Moorland ward has 15 per cent fewer electors per councillor than average, while Boutham and Park wards have 10 per cent and 14 per cent fewer than average respectively. The Boutham Moor area of Tritton ward was to be transferred to Moorland ward, while Swanpool Garden Suburb area and the area to the north of Skellingthorpe Road (also in Tritton ward) was to be transferred to Boutham ward (as discussed above). The Commission also proposed that the Boutham Park area be transferred from Moorland to Boutham ward and that part of the St Catherine's area be transferred from Boutham to Park ward. The overall impact of these changes was to provide three wards which, on the basis of the proposed 34 councillors, would provide no wards with a level of electoral imbalance exceeding 6 per cent from the average.

55 At Stage Three, the City Council supported the Commission's proposals for each of the three wards, except for the proposal to transfer only part of the St Catherine's area from Boutham and Park wards. Its preference remained to transfer the whole of the St Catherine's area to Park ward and to use the boundary of Catchwater Drain rather than Hamilton Road and the River Witham. The Lincoln Conservative Association was broadly content with the Commission's recommendations, with the exception of the proposal to transfer Swanpool Garden Suburb to Boutham ward as discussed above.

56 In the light of the representations received, the Commission reconsidered its proposed ward boundary between Boutham and Park wards in the St Catherine's area. It notes that while the City Council's proposed boundary would unite the St Catherine's area in one ward, it would over-compensate for the current level of over-

representation in Park ward. In addition, the ward's close proximity to the University campus may lead the area to have a greater number of electors in future than is currently forecast. While the Commission's final recommendation for a council size of 33 instead of 34 would reduce the degree of under-representation in Park ward, it notes that if it were to recommend the City Council's preferred option in this area, it would become the largest ward in the city with some 9 per cent more electors per councillor than the average, as compared to 3 per cent more than average given by the Commission's proposed boundary.

57 As indicated earlier, the City Council also revised its electorate forecasts for Boutham ward on the basis that the 1997 electoral register showed that less than a quarter of eligible students had registered to vote at the new University campus. It considered that a reasonable estimate would be that by 2001, some 200 students may register at the campus out of a projected 680 expected to be resident. The new electorate projections for Boutham ward were considered reasonable by the Commission, and their impact on the proposed Boutham ward was examined. In its draft recommendations, the Commission made provision for all 680 students expected to be resident on campus to be included in its projections for 2001. It noted that the revised estimate of 200 student electors actually improves the level of electoral equality in the ward.

58 The Commission's draft recommendations would appear to have been largely accepted with the exceptions outlined above. The Commission considers that its requirements for electoral equality are best met by its proposals, and therefore proposes to confirm its draft recommendations as final.

### **Bracebridge**

59 In its draft recommendations report, the Commission endorsed the City Council's proposal that the existing ward arrangements in Bracebridge be retained. It noted that the existing ward had clearly defined boundaries and provided a relatively acceptable level of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor currently 8 per cent above average and projected to increase to 9 per cent above average by 2001.

60 The Commission received no further submissions regarding these proposals, other than the City Council's support for the recommendation relating to this area.

Consequently, it has decided to recommend the continuation of the current arrangements in this area.

### **Abbey, Minster and Longdales**

61 In the north of the city, the major impact on electorates over the period since the last review has been the growth of Minster ward. Over the last 20 years, the electorate of this ward has increased by 25 per cent from 5,953 to 7,427, primarily as a result of the Nettleham Fields and Nettleham Glebe developments, and the number of electors per councillor is currently 28 per cent above average. Abbey and Longdales wards, on the other hand, have witnessed small reductions in electorate, and they are currently over-represented by 13 per cent and 17 per cent respectively.

62 In its draft recommendations report, the Commission proposed to transfer the properties to the south of Wragby Road from Minster ward to Abbey ward, but to retain the link between the properties to the south of Bunker's Hill (between Outer Circle Road and the City Council boundary) with the neighbouring St Giles and Nettleham Glebe areas. This increased the electorate of Abbey ward from 5,032 to 5,531, so that the number of electors per councillor would be only 2 per cent below average. The Commission also proposed the transfer of the area around the Cathedral from the current Minster ward to Longdales ward. It considered that this proposal would unite in one ward all the properties around the Cathedral, and would significantly reduce the level of electoral inequality in the current Longdales and Minster wards. In order to reflect the transfer of the Cathedral between wards and retain the historic ward name, it also proposed to rename the current Longdales ward Minster ward. It suggested that the current Minster ward should be renamed King George ward, after the playing fields which link all three parts of the proposed ward (St Giles, Nettleham Glebe and Nettleham Fields).

63 At Stage Three, while the Lincoln Conservative Association agreed with most of the Commission's draft recommendations, it commented: "It is noticeable that the mix of housing and community types in a number of wards, particularly in the north of the city, will give an almost guaranteed bias to one particular party, and it seems to us that it is better to allocate council seats on the basis of particular types of housing and community". In addition, it argued that in Lincoln one side of an arterial road may not be in a different community

from another. Lincoln City Council supported the Commission's draft recommendation that only the Wragby Road area should be transferred to a revised Abbey ward. However, it reiterated its preference for the transfer of the Nettleham Fields area to Longdales ward from Minster ward rather than the Cathedral area. It argued that the Commission's proposed ward boundary would cut across one of the main radial routes which since 1979 has constituted the ward boundary, and that the Beckside Village and Ermine estate areas of the current Longdales ward have few links with the community at the southern end of the current Minster ward. In addition, it argued that Beckside village, the Ermine Estate and Nettleham Fields share shopping facilities on Nettleham Road. Its preference was supported by Lincolnshire County Council and four residents.

64 In the light of further representations, the Commission has reconsidered its draft recommendations. It accepts that the wards in this part of Lincoln combine a number of small communities, and that it can therefore prove difficult to reflect both community identities and the need for electoral equality. It has concluded, however, that its proposal has achieved the best, available balance.

65 The City Council argued that the Commission's draft recommendation would link areas on both sides of a radial road which have for some time been in separate wards. While the Commission acknowledges this, it notes that Lincoln Conservative Association has argued that communities in Lincoln are often astride arterial roads rather than bounded by them, and that the City Council's alternative proposal to transfer Nettleham Fields would have the same effect. While the Commission accepts that Nettleham Fields has some affinity with the neighbouring areas of the current Longdales ward, as it shares facilities with the Ermine Estate and Beckside Village on the Nettleham Road, it considers that this argument could be equally applied to much of the St Giles estate which adjoins Nettleham Road. It also remains of the view that the two developments of Nettleham Fields and Nettleham Glebe have a greater affinity with each other, than with their surrounding areas. They are similar in character, both being recently completed private residential developments, are linked by the Wolsey Way and share a regular bus service.

66 The Commission has concluded that the area surrounding the Cathedral is one in which there are community links astride a major road, and that its

proposal has the advantage of uniting the whole area within one ward. While it acknowledges that areas such as Lee Road and Greetwellgate have little affinity with the Ermine estate area, it might equally be argued that they have few links with the St Giles estate. In addition, the Commission considers that these areas appear to have a much greater affinity with the Newport area of the current Longdales ward than the rest of the current Minster ward. It also notes that its draft recommendation (on the basis of a council size of 33) would provide a greater degree of electoral equality than the City Council's scheme.

67 The Commission has therefore decided to confirm as final recommendation its draft proposals for change. It has, however, decided to make one modification. In the light of the representations received, it has decided to rename the proposed King George ward Glebe ward after the former Glebe Farm and the Nettleham Glebe development on which it was built, which will remain a prominent part of the new ward. The proposed Glebe ward would have 6 per cent more electors per councillor than average, while the proposed Abbey and Minster wards would have 5 per cent and 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than average respectively.

## **Carholme and Castle**

68 At Stage One, the Commission proposed no change to these wards which lie to the north-west of the city. It noted that, on the basis of 34 councillors, that the current wards provided a good level of electoral equality, with Carholme and Castle wards having some 2 per cent and 6 per cent fewer electors than average.

69 The Commission received no further submissions regarding these proposals, other than the City Council's support for all the recommendations relating to this area and Lincoln Conservative Association's broad acceptance, subject to the comments outlined above. The Commission notes that retaining the current council size of 33 does lead to a slightly poorer level of electoral equality (with Carholme and Castle wards having 5 per cent and 8 per cent fewer electors per councillor than average), but has concluded that the proposal appears to have a degree of local support and would avoid unnecessary disruption to current arrangements. Consequently, the Commission has decided to confirm its draft recommendations as final.

## **Electoral Cycle**

70 In its draft recommendations report, the Commission proposed that the present system of election by thirds be retained. At Stage Three, the City Council maintained its support for these arrangements. No other representations were received on this issue, and the Commission has therefore decided to confirm its draft recommendation.

## **Conclusions**

71 Having considered all the evidence and representations it has received on its draft recommendations, the Commission has concluded that there should be no change to the current council size of 33; that there should continue to be 11 wards; that elections should continue to be by thirds; and that the boundaries of eight of the existing wards should be modified. Figure 4 shows the impact of the Commission's final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, as based on 1996 electorate figures, and with projected electorates for the year 2001.

72 As Figure 4 shows, the Commission's recommendations would result in a reduction from seven to none in the number of wards where the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average. This improvement would be maintained in the projected figures for 2001. Under these proposals, the average number of electors per councillor would remain at 1,931. The Commission concludes that its recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

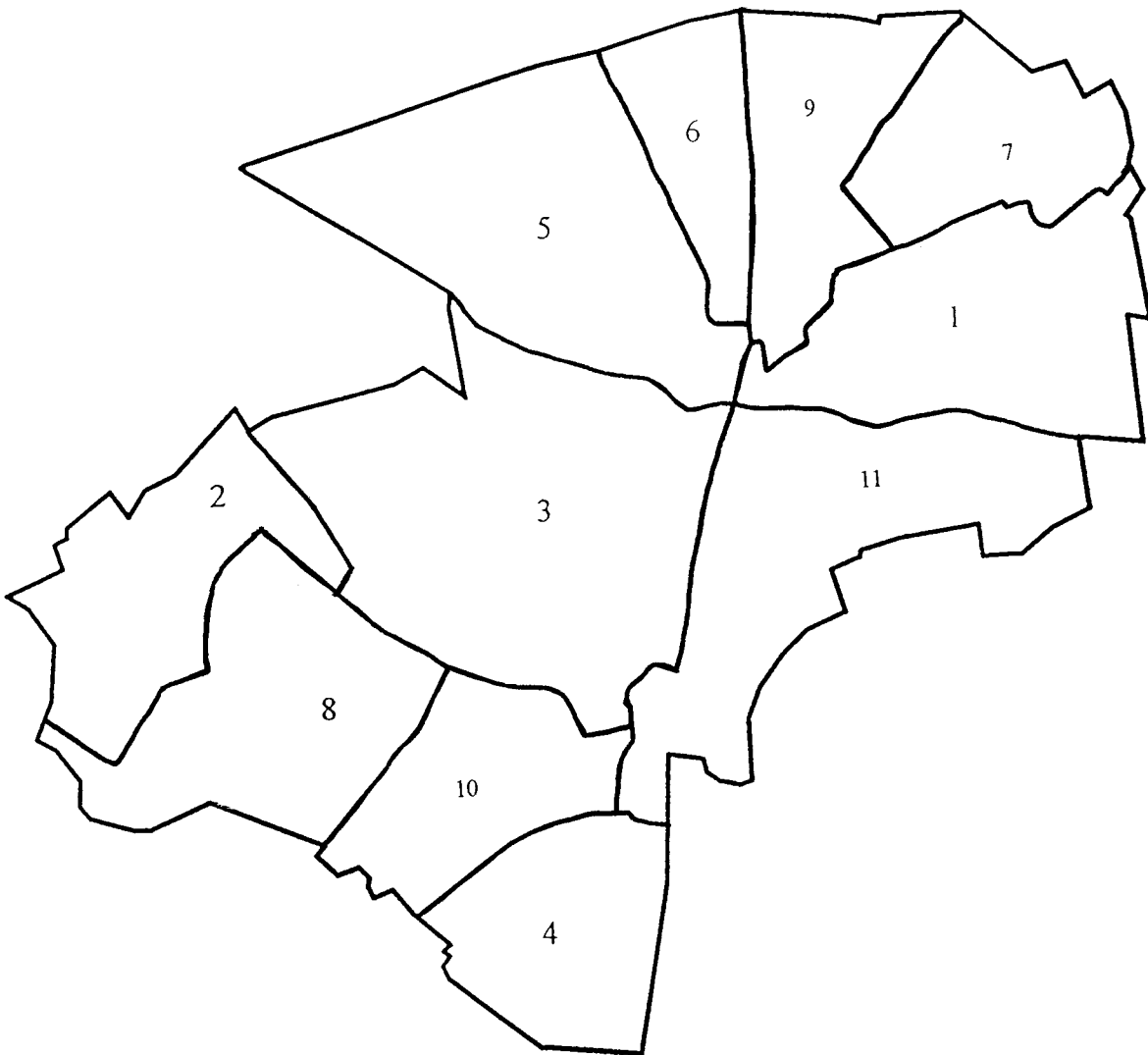
### **Final Recommendation**

Lincoln City Council should comprise 33 councillors serving 11 wards, as detailed in Figures 1 and 5, Map 2, Appendix A and the map at the rear of this report. Elections should continue to be held by thirds.

*Figure 4:  
Comparison of Current and Recommended Arrangements*

	1996 electorate		2001 projected electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	33	33	33	33
Number of wards	11	11	11	11
Average number of electors per councillor	1,931	1,931	2,014	2,014
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	7	0	7	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	3	0	3	0

Map 2:  
*The Commission's Final Recommendations for Lincoln*



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Key to Wards

1 Abbey	4 Bracebridge	7 Glebe	10 Moorland
2 Birchwood	5 Carholme	8 Hartsholme	11 Park
3 Boultham	6 Castle	9 Minster	

Figure 5:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Lincoln

Ward name	1996				2001 (Projected)		
	Number of councillors	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Abbey	3	5,531	1,844	-5	5,686	1,895	-6
2 Birchwood	3	5,735	1,912	-1	6,321	2,107	5
3 Boultham	3	5,714	1,905	-1	5,917	1,972	-2
4 Bracebridge	3	6,080	2,027	5	6,441	2,147	7
5 Carholme	3	5,488	1,829	-5	5,711	1,904	-5
6 Castle	3	5,312	1,771	-8	5,420	1,807	-10
7 Glebe	3	6,115	2,038	6	6,277	2,092	4
8 Hartsholme	3	6,319	2,106	9	6,581	2,194	9
9 Minster	3	5,645	1,882	-3	5,937	1,979	-2
10 Moorland	3	5,825	1,942	1	6,218	2,073	3
11 Park	3	5,943	1,981	3	5,941	1,980	-2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>63,707</b>	—	—	<b>66,450</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,931</b>	—	—	<b>2,014</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Lincoln City Council's submission.

Notes: 1 The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2 Since the publication of the Commission's draft recommendations, amendments have been made to the forecasted electorate of Boultham ward and the total for the City Council area - see Chapter 5.

## 6. NEXT STEPS

73 Having completed its review of electoral arrangements in Lincoln and submitted its final recommendations to the Secretary of State, the Commission has fulfilled its statutory role under the Local Government Act 1992.

74 It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to the Commission's 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 the Commission's recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

75 All further correspondence concerning the Commission's recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State at the following address:

The Secretary of State for the Environment  
Local Government Review  
Department of the Environment  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU



# APPENDIX A

## Final Recommendations for Lincoln: Detailed Mapping

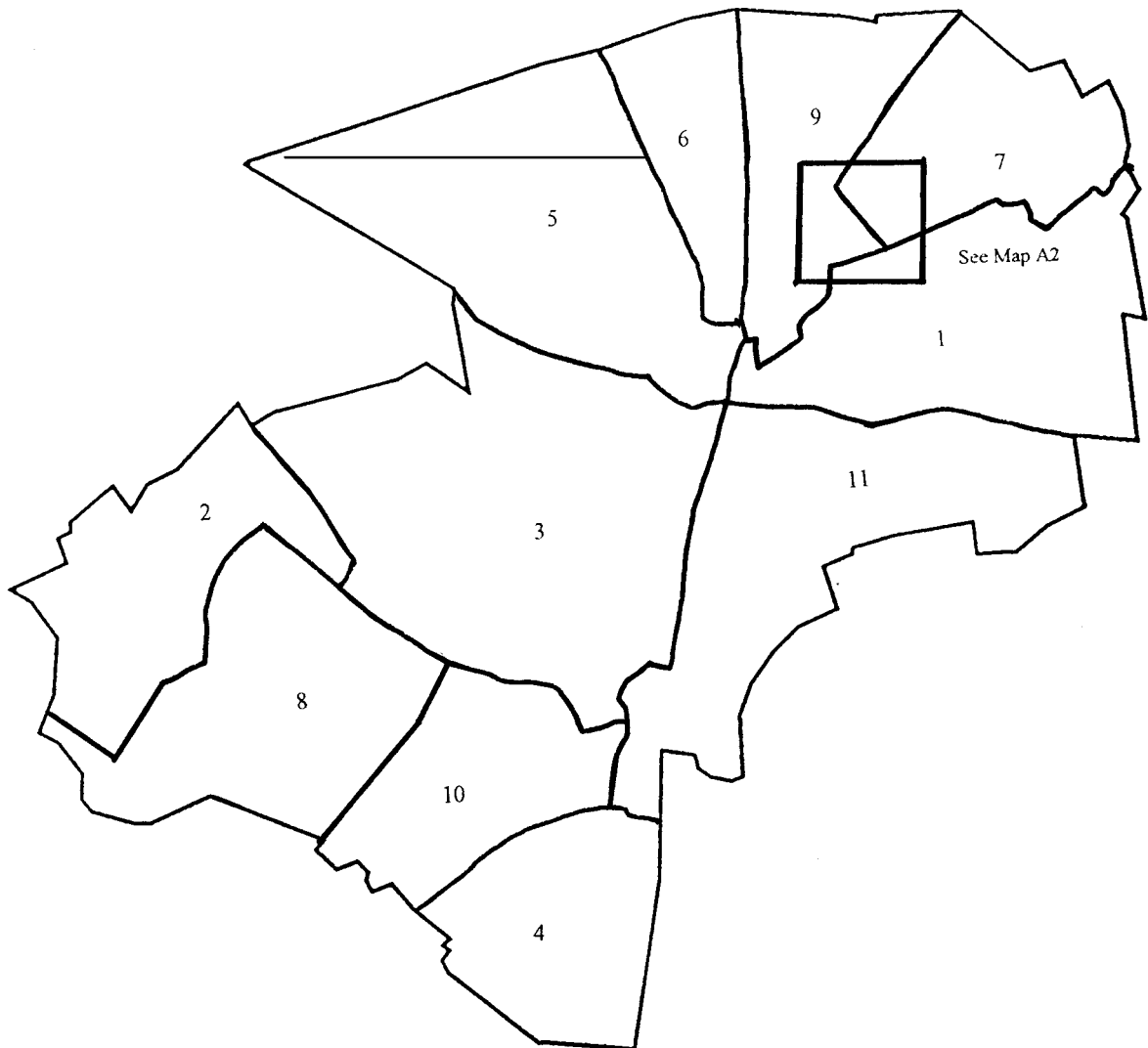
The following maps, together with the map inserted in the back of this report, illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for Lincoln City.

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the area which is shown in more detail in Map A2.

**Map A2** illustrates part of the proposed boundary between Glebe and Minster wards.

The **large map** inserted at the back of the report illustrates the ward boundaries for the city as a whole.

Map A1:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Lincoln: Key Map

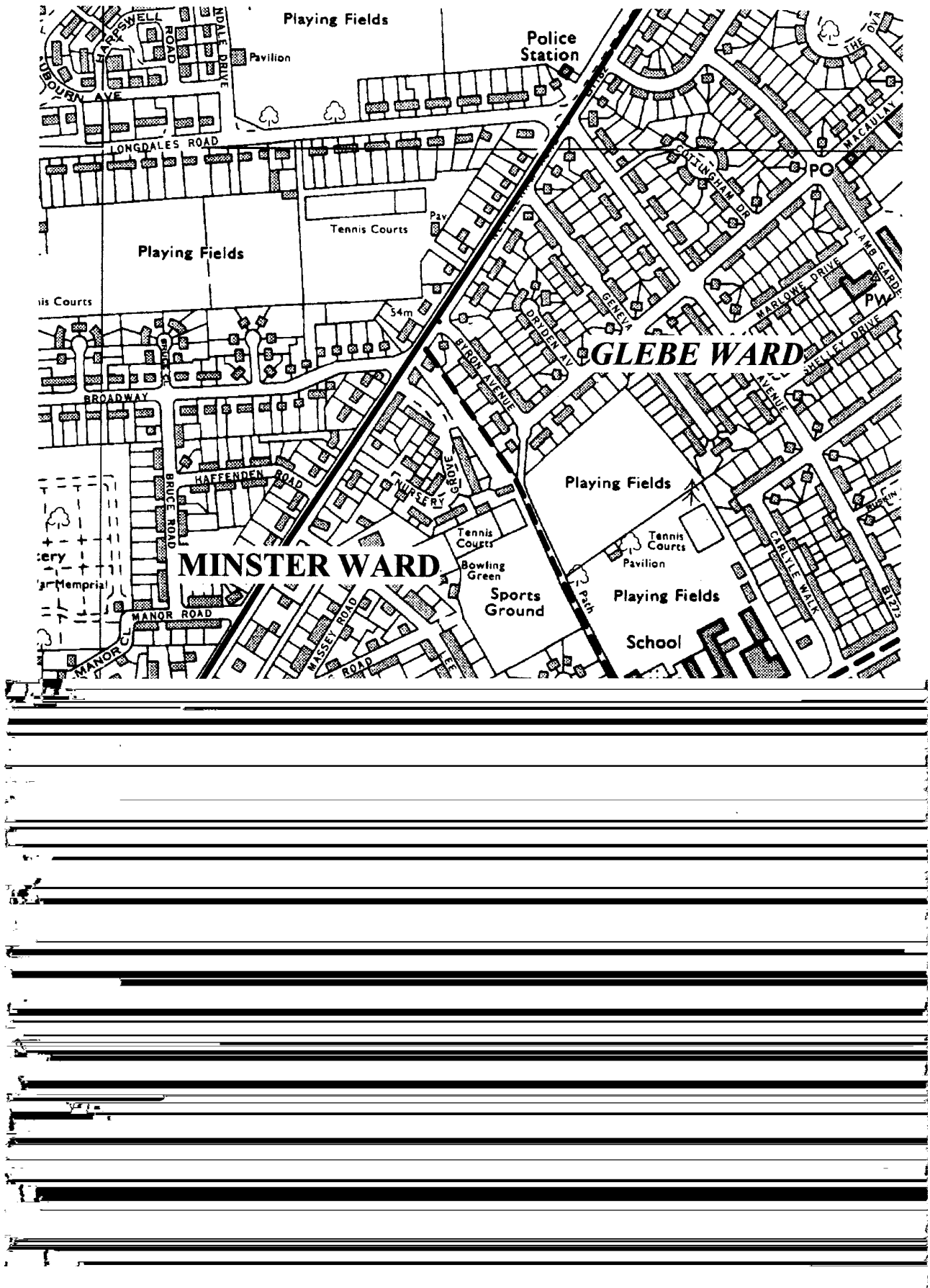


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Key to Wards

- |             |               |              |             |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1 Abbey     | 4 Bracebridge | 7 Glebe      | 10 Moorland |
| 2 Birchwood | 5 Carholme    | 8 Hartsholme | 11 Park     |
| 3 Boultham  | 6 Castle      | 9 Minster    |             |

Map A2:  
Proposed Boundary Between Glebe and Minster Wards





# APPENDIX B

## Draft Recommendations for Lincoln

*Figure B1:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
1 Abbey	Abbey ward, Minster ward (part)
2 Birchwood	Birchwood ward (part)
3 Boultham	Boultham ward (part), Tritton ward (part), Moorland ward (part)
4 Bracebridge	<i>Unchanged</i>
5 Carholme	<i>Unchanged</i>
6 Castle	<i>Unchanged</i>
7 Doddington	Birchwood ward (part)
8 Hartsholme	Tritton ward (part)
9 King George	Minster ward (part)
10 Minster	Longdales ward, Minster ward (part)
11 Moorland	Moorland ward (part), Tritton ward (part)
12 Park	Park ward, Boultham ward (part)

*Notes: 1 The large map inserted in the back of this report details the ward boundaries in Lincoln.*

*2 Lincoln is not parished.*

Figure B2:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Lincoln

Ward name	1996				2001 (Projected)		
	Number of councillors	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Abbey	3	5,531	1,844	-2	5,686	1,895	-4
2 Birchwood	3	5,052	1,684	-10	5,580	1,860	-6
3 Boultham	3	5,714	1,905	2	6,397	2,132	8
4 Bracebridge	3	6,080	2,027	8	6,441	2,147	9
5 Carholme	3	5,488	1,829	-2	5,711	1,904	-3
6 Castle	3	5,312	1,771	-6	5,420	1,807	-8
7 Doddington	3	5,179	1,726	-8	5,513	1,838	-7
8 Hartsholme	1	1,823	1,823	-3	1,809	1,809	-8
9 King George	3	6,115	2,038	9	6,277	2,092	6
10 Minster	3	5,645	1,882	0	5,937	1,979	1
11 Moorland	3	5,825	1,942	4	6,218	2,073	5
12 Park	3	5,943	1,981	6	5,941	1,980	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>63,707</b>	—	—	<b>66,930</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,874</b>	—	—	<b>1,969</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Lincoln City Council's submission.

Notes: 1 The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2 Since the publication of the Commission's draft recommendations, amendments have been made to the forecasted electorate of Boultham ward and the total for the City Council area - see Chapter 5.