

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR
BARROW-IN-FURNESS
IN CUMBRIA

*Report to the Secretary of State for the
Environment, Transport and the Regions*

November 1997

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Barrow-in-Furness in Cumbria.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Helena Shovelton (Deputy Chairman)

Peter Brokenshire

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Robin Gray

Bob Scruton

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Local Government Commission for England

4 November 1997

Dear Secretary of State

On 25 October 1996 the Commission commenced a periodic electoral review of the borough of Barrow-in-Furness under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in May 1997 and undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have confirmed our draft recommendations, with one minor modification in the light of further evidence (see paragraph 46). This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Barrow-in-Furness.

We recommend that Barrow Borough Council should be served by 38 councillors representing 13 wards, and that some changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We recommend that the Council should continue to be elected by thirds.

I would like to thank members and officers of the Borough 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Malcolm Grant'.

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT
Chairman

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Barrow-in-Furness ('Barrow') on 25 October 1996. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 28 May 1997, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the representations we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and offers our final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Barrow because:

- **in three of the 13 wards, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough;**
- **by 2001, the number of electors per councillor in four of the 13 wards is likely to vary by more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figure 1) are that:

- **Barrow Borough Council should be served by 38 councillors, the same as at present;**
- **there should continue to be 13 wards;**
- **the boundaries of 11 of the existing wards should be modified, while two wards, Barrow Island and Hindpool, should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place by thirds.**

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

- **In 12 of the 13 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average; Barrow Island ward would have an electoral variance of 15 per cent.**

- **By 2001, the number of electors per councillor is projected to continue to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average in 12 wards.**

A recommendation is also made for change to town council electoral arrangements. It provides for:

- **change to the warding arrangements for the parish of Dalton Town with Newton.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 16 December 1997:

**The Secretary of State
Local Government Review
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU**

Figure 1:
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

| | Ward name | Number of councillors | Constituent areas | Map reference |
|----|------------------|------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1 | Barrow Island | 2 | <i>Unchanged</i> | Large map |
| 2 | Central | 3 | Central ward; Risedale ward (part) | Large map |
| 3 | Dalton North | 3 | Dalton North ward (part – Askam & Ireleth parish, Lindal & Marton parish, Dowdales parish ward (part) of Dalton Town with Newton parish) | Map A2 and large map |
| 4 | Dalton South | 3 | Dalton South ward; Dalton North ward (part – Anty Cross & Newton and Becksid parish wards, and Dowdales parish ward (part) of Dalton Town with Newton parish) | Map A2 and large map |
| 5 | Hawcoat | 3 | Hawcoat ward (part) | Large map |
| 6 | Hindpool | 3 | <i>Unchanged</i> | Large map |
| 7 | Newbarns | 3 | Newbarns ward (part) | Large map |
| 8 | Ormsgill | 3 | Ormsgill ward (part) | Large map |
| 9 | Parkside | 3 | Parkside ward (part); Hawcoat ward (part); Newbarns ward (part); Ormsgill ward (part) | Large map |
| 10 | Risedale | 3 | Risedale ward (part); Parkside ward (part); Roosecote ward (part) | Large map |
| 11 | Roosecote | 3 | Roosecote ward (part); Newbarns ward (part) | Large map |
| 12 | Walney North | 3 | Walney North ward; Walney South ward (part) | Large map |
| 13 | Walney South | 3 | Walney South ward (part) | Large map |

Notes: 1 Only the wards of Dalton North and Dalton South are parished.
2 The maps in Appendix A illustrate the proposed ward boundaries.

1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of Barrow in Cumbria. We have now reviewed all the districts in Cumbria as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews of all principal local authority areas in England.

2 In undertaking these reviews we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

3 We have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (published in March 1996 and supplemented in September 1996), which sets out our approach to the reviews.

4 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 25 October 1996, when we wrote to Barrow Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. Our letter was copied to Cumbria County Council, Cumbria Police Authority, the local authority associations, Cumbria Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the borough, Members of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations, we published notices in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review more widely. The closing date for receipt of representations was 20 January 1997. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

5 Stage Three began on 28 May 1997 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Barrow-in-Furness in Cumbria*, and ended on 22 July 1997. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

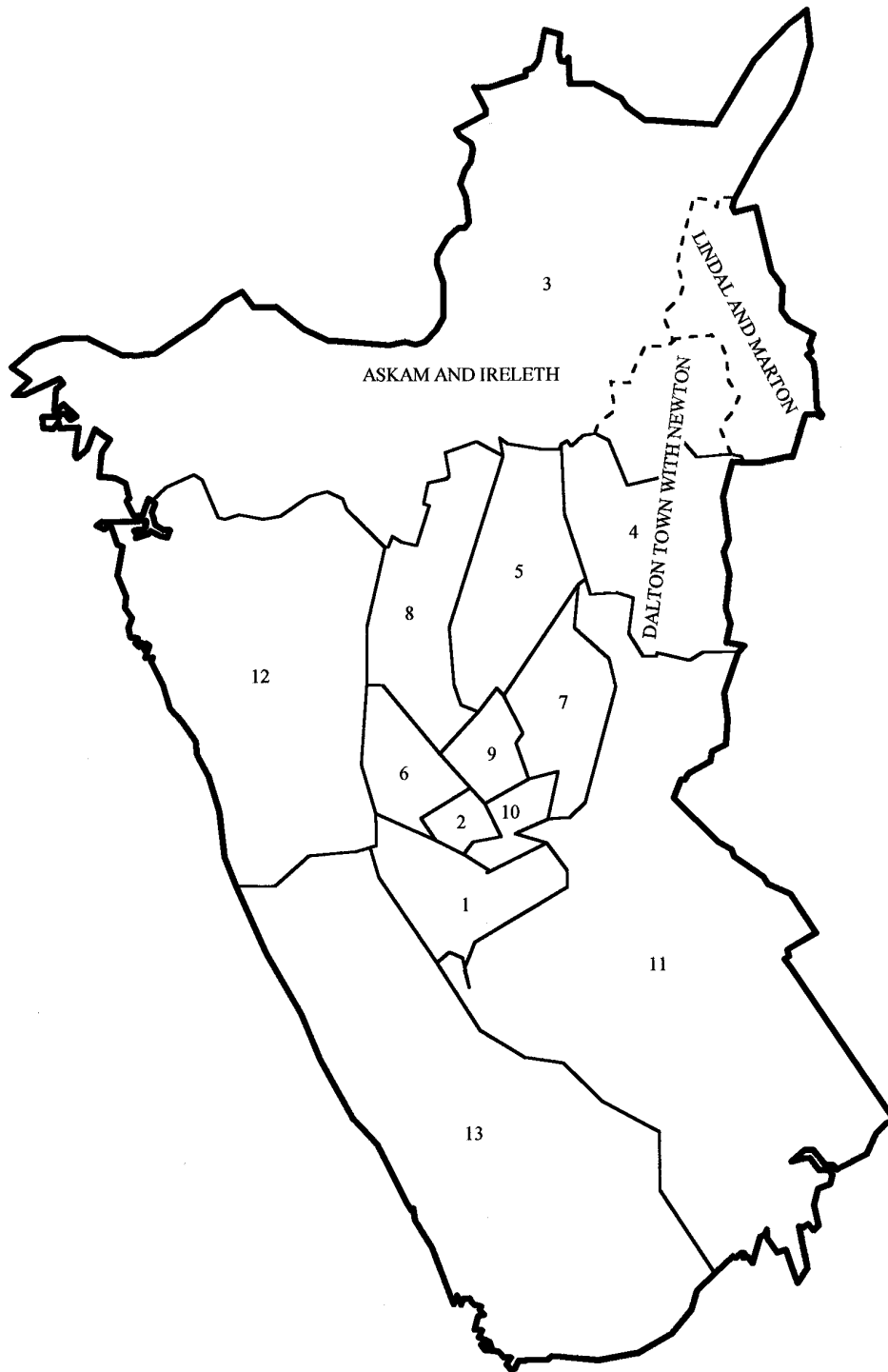
⁶ The borough of Barrow is located in south-west Cumbria, at the tip of the Furness Peninsula. It is geographically small, covering only 77 square kilometres, and is a largely urban area with a population of 72,000, accounting for about 15 per cent of the county's population. The borough contains two islands – Walney Island and Barrow Island – which are linked to the mainland by the A5087. VSEL, the shipbuilding company and the borough's major employer, is based on Barrow Island. The shipbuilding industry has undergone some decline in recent years, which may have contributed to a slight reduction in population and the borough being granted EU Assisted Area Status. The borough has three parishes covering the area to the north of Barrow town.

⁷ To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (the councillor:elector ratio) varies from the average for the borough in percentage terms, has been calculated. In the report, this calculation may also be described as 'electoral variance'.

⁸ The Borough Council has 38 councillors elected from 13 wards (Map 1 and Figure 2). Twelve wards are each represented by three councillors and one ward elects two councillors. The Council is elected by thirds, with the next elections due in May 1998. The electorate of the borough is 54,913 (February 1996) and each councillor represents an average of 1,445 electors. The Borough Council forecasts that the electorate will increase by 1 per cent to 55,400 by the year 2001, which would change the average number of electors per councillor to 1,458 (Figure 2).

⁹ Since the last electoral review was completed in 1975 by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), changes in population and electorate have been unevenly spread across the borough. As a result, in three of the 13 wards the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average. The most significant electoral imbalance is in Risedale ward where each councillor represents on average 1,215 electors, 16 per cent fewer electors than the borough average.

Map 1:
Existing Wards in Barrow



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

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- | | | |
|-----------------|------------|-----------------|
| Key to Wards | | |
| 1 Barrow Island | 6 Hindpool | 10 Risedale |
| 2 Central | 7 Newbarns | 11 Roosecote |
| 3 Dalton North | 8 Ormsgill | 12 Walney North |
| 4 Dalton South | 9 Parkside | 13 Walney South |
| 5 Hawcoat | | |

Figure 2:
Existing Electoral Arrangements

| Ward name | Number of councillors | Electorate (1996) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % | Electorate (2001) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Barrow Island | 2 | 2,471 | 1,236 | -15 | 2,412 | 1,206 | -17 |
| 2 Central | 3 | 3,912 | 1,304 | -10 | 3,921 | 1,307 | -10 |
| 3 Dalton North | 3 | 4,701 | 1,567 | 8 | 4,886 | 1,629 | 12 |
| 4 Dalton South | 3 | 4,440 | 1,480 | 2 | 4,449 | 1,483 | 2 |
| 5 Hawcoat | 3 | 4,530 | 1,510 | 4 | 4,456 | 1,485 | 2 |
| 6 Hindpool | 3 | 4,269 | 1,423 | -2 | 4,280 | 1,427 | -2 |
| 7 Newbarns | 3 | 4,658 | 1,553 | 7 | 5,032 | 1,677 | 15 |
| 8 Ormsgill | 3 | 4,867 | 1,622 | 12 | 4,782 | 1,594 | 9 |
| 9 Parkside | 3 | 4,084 | 1,361 | -6 | 4,066 | 1,355 | -7 |
| 10 Risedale | 3 | 3,644 | 1,215 | -16 | 3,621 | 1,207 | -17 |
| 11 Roosecote | 3 | 4,418 | 1,473 | 2 | 4,616 | 1,539 | 6 |
| 12 Walney North | 3 | 4,261 | 1,420 | -2 | 4,256 | 1,419 | -3 |
| 13 Walney South | 3 | 4,658 | 1,553 | 7 | 4,623 | 1,541 | 6 |
| Totals | 38 | 54,913 | — | — | 55,400 | — | — |
| Averages | — | — | 1,445 | — | — | 1,458 | — |

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1996, electors in Risedale ward were relatively over-represented by 16 per cent, while electors in Ormsgill ward were relatively under-represented by 12 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

¹⁰ During Stage One we received representations from Barrow Borough Council, Dalton with Newton Town Council, a borough councillor and two residents. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Barrow-in-Furness in Cumbria*. Our draft recommendations, which reflected the views of the Borough Council, proposed that:

- (a) Barrow Borough Council should be served by 38 councillors representing 13 wards;
- (b) the boundaries of 11 wards should be modified;
- (c) there should be no change to Barrow Island and Hindpool wards.

Draft Recommendation

Barrow Borough Council should comprise 38 councillors, serving 13 wards. The Council should continue to be elected by thirds.

¹¹ Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 12 of the 13 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was expected to be maintained for the period to 2001.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

¹² During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, five representations were received. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission.

Barrow Borough Council

¹³ The Borough Council agreed with our draft recommendations, which reflected the Council's Stage One proposals. It did, however, propose one minor amendment to the boundary between Central and Risedale wards which would include an area, currently in Risedale ward, in Central ward. The area, situated between Salthouse Road and Cavendish Dock, and to the west of the railway line, contains no electors.

The Conservatives

¹⁴ The National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations – North West Area endorsed our draft recommendations for the borough on behalf of Barrow & Furness Conservative Association and the Conservative Group on the Borough Council. The Conservative Group also wrote separately to support our draft recommendations.

Dalton with Newton Town Council

¹⁵ Dalton with Newton Town Council agreed with our draft recommendation to transfer the northern section of Market Street and Market Place in Dalton town, from Dalton North ward to Dalton South ward. The Town Council, however, considered that Barrow town (the rest of the borough outside Dalton North and Dalton South wards) was over-represented and proposed the abolition of Barrow Island, Central and Risedale wards and their replacement with two new wards. This proposal, which was not put forward by the Town Council at Stage One, would reduce the overall representation in Barrow town from 32 to 30 councillors.

Other Representations

¹⁶ Cumbria County Council wrote to advise us that it did not oppose our draft recommendations. No other representations were received.

5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

¹⁷ As indicated previously, the Commission's prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Barrow is to achieve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 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".

¹⁸ However, our function is not merely arithmetical. First, our 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, we must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken. Third, we must consider the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities.

¹⁹ 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. However, our approach is that such flexibility must be kept to a minimum, consistent with the statutory criteria.

²⁰ In our March 1996 *Guidance*, we 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 emphasised in our September 1996 supplement to the *Guidance*, while we accept that absolute equality of representation is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, such equality should be the starting point in any electoral review.

Electorate Projections

²¹ During Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the period 1996 to 2001, projecting an increase in the electorate of 1 per cent over the five-year period from 54,913 to 55,400. The Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. The Borough Council provided details of the likely effect on electorates of ward boundary changes. In our draft recommendations report we accepted that this is an inexact science and, having given consideration to projected electorates, was content that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

²² We received no comments on the Council's electorate projections during Stage Three, and remain satisfied that they provide the best estimates presently available.

Council Size

²³ Our March 1996 *Guidance* indicated that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a district or borough council to be in the range of 30 to 60.

²⁴ Barrow Borough Council is at present served by 38 councillors. The Council did not propose any change to council size during Stage One. In our draft recommendations report we considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. We concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council of 38 members.

²⁵ At Stage Three the Borough Council reiterated its support for this proposal, while Dalton with Newton Town Council supported a reduction in the number of councillors representing Barrow town from 32 to 30 (an overall reduction to 36 councillors for the whole borough). However, if the size of the Council is to be 38, and we are not

persuaded to move away from this view, Barrow town is entitled to 32 councillors.

Electoral Arrangements

26 Having considered all representations received during Stage Three of the review, we have reconsidered our draft recommendations. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Walney North and Walney South wards;
- (b) Barrow Island ward;
- (c) Dalton North and Dalton South wards;
- (d) Central, Hawcoat, Hindpool, Newbarns Ormsgill, Parkside, Risedale and Roosecote wards.

27 Details of our final recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 4, and illustrated in Appendix A including the large map inserted at the back of the report.

Walney North and Walney South wards

28 Walney Island, situated in the extreme west of the borough, is separated from the rest of the town by Barrow Island and the Walney Channel. Currently, the number of electors per councillor is 2 per cent below the borough average in Walney North ward and 7 per cent above in Walney South ward. In order to improve electoral equality, we put forward the Borough Council's proposal to transfer 85 electors from the southern side of Central Drive to Walney North ward.

29 During Stage Three the Borough Council continued to support the proposed transfer and no further representations were received. Accordingly, we confirm our draft recommendation for Walney as final. Under the final recommendation the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the borough average in Walney North ward and 5 per cent above the average in Walney South ward (1 per cent below and 4 per cent above respectively in 2001).

Barrow Island ward

30 Barrow Island, situated between Barrow town and Walney Island, currently forms a ward on its own, represented by two councillors. The Island is partly occupied by the VSEL shipyard but there is a residential area which is a separate community to the rest of Barrow town. The Island is currently

over-represented with the number of electors per councillor being 15 per cent below the borough average (17 per cent in 2001). Despite this relatively high electoral variance, we proposed no change to this ward as part of our draft recommendations because of the distinct geography and community identity of the area.

31 At Stage Three, four of the five submissions we received agreed with our draft recommendation for Barrow Island. However, Dalton with Newton Town Council put forward an alternative configuration of wards to replace Barrow Island, Central and Risedale wards with two three-member wards to reduce the overall representation in the town. While we recognise that electoral imbalance would remain in Barrow Island ward, we consider that the distinct geography of the Island would mean that combining it with other wards in the town would be artificial in community identity terms and would also require further consequential boundary changes. Accordingly, we confirm our draft recommendation for a separate two-member Barrow Island ward as final.

Dalton North and Dalton South wards

32 Dalton North and Dalton South wards are situated in the north-east of the borough. Dalton North ward comprises the parishes of Askam & Ireleth and Lindal & Marton, and Dowdales parish ward of Dalton Town with Newton parish. Dalton South ward comprises Beckside and Anty Cross & Newton parish wards of Dalton Town with Newton parish. Under the current arrangements, the number of electors per councillor is 8 per cent above the borough average in Dalton North ward (12 per cent in 2001) and 2 per cent above the average in Dalton South ward, remaining the same in 2001.

33 We consulted on the Borough Council's proposal that 122 electors from the north side of Market Street and Market Place in Dalton town should be transferred from Dalton North ward to Dalton South ward, in order to improve electoral equality, although we noted that the proposed boundary was not as clear as the present one which follows the centre of Market Street. Both the Borough Council and the Town Council agreed with the draft recommendation. Accordingly, we confirm our draft recommendation for Dalton North and Dalton South wards as final (see Map A2 in Appendix A). The number of electors per councillor in Dalton North ward would be 6 per cent above the borough average (7 per cent in 2001) and 5 per cent above the average in Dalton South ward (8 per cent in 2001).

Central, Hawcoat, Hindpool, Newbarns, Ormsgill, Parkside, Risedale and Roosecote wards

34 The wards covering the remainder of the borough, including Barrow town, have a similar social and demographic profile. Under the existing arrangements, representation in six of the eight wards is within 10 per cent of the borough average. However, in two wards, Risedale and Ormsgill, the number of electors per councillor is 16 per cent below the average and 12 per cent above the average respectively. In Newbarns ward the number of electors per councillor is 7 per cent above the average, projected to increase to 15 per cent in 2001. At Stage One the Borough Council proposed a number of minor boundary modifications to improve electoral equality in these wards stating that it had attempted "to keep recognised communities and boundaries virtually intact". No other representations were received regarding these wards.

35 We considered that the Borough Council's proposals for these eight wards (including no change to Hindpool ward) would provide good electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria, and put them forward as our draft recommendations in their entirety.

36 At Stage Three the Borough Council (with one minor amendment to Central and Risedale wards as detailed below), the Barrow & Furness Conservative Group and the National Union of Conservative & Unionist Associations - North West Area, supported our draft recommendations for the town. Dalton with Newton Town Council considered that Barrow town is comparatively over-represented as a whole and that Central, Risedale and Barrow Island wards should be replaced with two new three-member wards. We consider, however, that our draft recommendations provide a good level of representation throughout the borough, having regard to local communities and the geography of the area. The minor boundary amendment between Central and Risedale wards proposed by the Borough Council would incorporate the area between Salthouse Road and Cavendish Dock, west of the railway line, in Central ward. The area, which is currently in Risedale ward, contains no electors and would provide a better boundary. Subject to this modified boundary, we confirm our draft recommendations for these eight wards as final. Each of the proposed wards is considered in more detail below and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

37 The average number of electors per councillor in Hindpool ward is currently 2 per cent below the borough average in 1996 and 2001. In view of the good electoral equality, we proposed no change to Hindpool ward. At Stage Three we received no opposition to our draft recommendation and therefore confirm no change to Hindpool ward as final.

38 For Risedale ward we consulted on the Borough Council's proposal that 426 electors in Fife Street, Greengate Street, Lorne Road and Park Avenue, currently in Parkside ward, should be transferred to Risedale ward; and a further 424 electors in Frederick Street, North Street, Roose Road, St Luke's Street, Salthouse Gardens, Salthouse Road, Sandgate and Sherwin Street, all currently in Roosecote ward, should be transferred to Risedale ward.

39 We also consulted on the Borough Council's proposal that 317 electors in Brathay Crescent, Briggs Street, Foundry Street, Levens Terrace, New Street, Raglan Court, Raglan Street, Salthouse Road and Vulcan Road, currently in Risedale ward, should be transferred to Central ward. Under these proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 4 per cent below the borough average in Risedale ward (5 per cent below in 2001) and 2 per cent below the average in Central ward (3 per cent below in 2001).

40 In its response to our draft recommendations the Borough Council proposed a further boundary change transferring the area south of Salthouse Road and north of Cavendish Dock from Risedale ward to Central ward. As already indicated, this area contains no residential properties and the proposed boundary, running along the railway line, would be more recognisable. We agree that this boundary is an improvement and recognise that the proposal would not affect any electors. In view of the improved electoral equality, and in the light of the representations received, we confirm our draft recommendations for Risedale and Central wards, together with the modified boundary described above, as final.

41 In addition to the boundary change between Parkside and Risedale wards outlined above, we consulted on three further changes to Parkside ward, as proposed by the Borough Council. The proposals would transfer electors currently in Ormsgill, Hawcoat and Newbarns wards, to Parkside ward: 439 electors in Oxford Street, Hibbert Road, Westgate Road, Westmorland

Street, West View Road and part of Lancaster Street should be transferred from Ormsgill ward; 92 electors in Derbyshire Road, Devonshire Road and Oxford Street should be transferred from Hawcoat ward; and 55 electors in Yew Tree Gardens, Yew Tree Terrace, Yew Tree Walk and Hollow Lane ('Newbarns village') should be transferred from Newbarns ward.

42 The number of electors per councillor in the modified Parkside ward would be 2 per cent below the borough average, while the representation in both Ormsgill and Hawcoat wards would be 2 per cent above the average (2 per cent below, 3 per cent below and equal to the borough average respectively in 2001).

43 In addition to the changes to Newbarns ward described above, we proposed a boundary change between Newbarns and Roosecote wards to further reduce the electoral imbalance in Newbarns ward. Reflecting the Borough Council's proposals, we proposed that 181 electors in Riverside Gardens, Roose Road, Rosse Field and Yarl Meadow should be transferred from Newbarns ward to Roosecote ward. The number of electors per councillor in the modified Newbarns ward would be 2 per cent above the borough average (7 per cent above in 2001) and 4 per cent below the average in the modified Roosecote ward (2 per cent in 2001).

44 In view of the general support we received for our proposals, which reflect the proposals submitted by the Borough Council during Stage

One, we are confirming our draft recommendations for Hawcoat, Newbarns, Ormsgill, Parkside and Roosecote wards, as final.

Electoral Cycle

45 In our draft recommendations report we proposed that the present system of elections by thirds in Barrow be retained. At Stage Three the Borough Council reiterated its support for this proposal. No other representations were received on this issue, and we therefore confirm our draft recommendation as final.

Conclusions

46 Having considered carefully all the evidence and representations we have received in response to our consultation report, we have decided to endorse our draft recommendations, subject to the boundary amendment already detailed between Central and Risedale wards. We have concluded that the council size should remain the same at 38; that there should be 13 wards, the same as at present; that the boundaries of 11 of the existing wards should be modified; and that elections should continue to be held by thirds.

47 Figure 3 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1996 and 2001 electorate figures.

*Figure 3:
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

| | 1996 electorate | | 2001 projected electorate | |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Current arrangements | Final recommendations | Current arrangements | Final recommendations |
| Number of councillors | 38 | 38 | 38 | 38 |
| Number of wards | 13 | 13 | 13 | 13 |
| Average number of electors per councillor | 1,445 | 1,445 | 1,458 | 1,458 |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average | 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

48 As Figure 3 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from three to one, with the level of electoral equality expected to continue to 2001. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

Final Recommendation

Barrow Borough Council should comprise 38 councillors serving 13 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 4, and illustrated in Map 2 and Appendix A to this report. The Council should continue to be elected by thirds.

Final Recommendation

Elections for parish and town councils should be held at the same time as elections for principal authorities.

Town Council Electoral Arrangements

49 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards it must also be also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district. Accordingly, we propose a consequential parish ward change to Dalton Town with Newton parish.

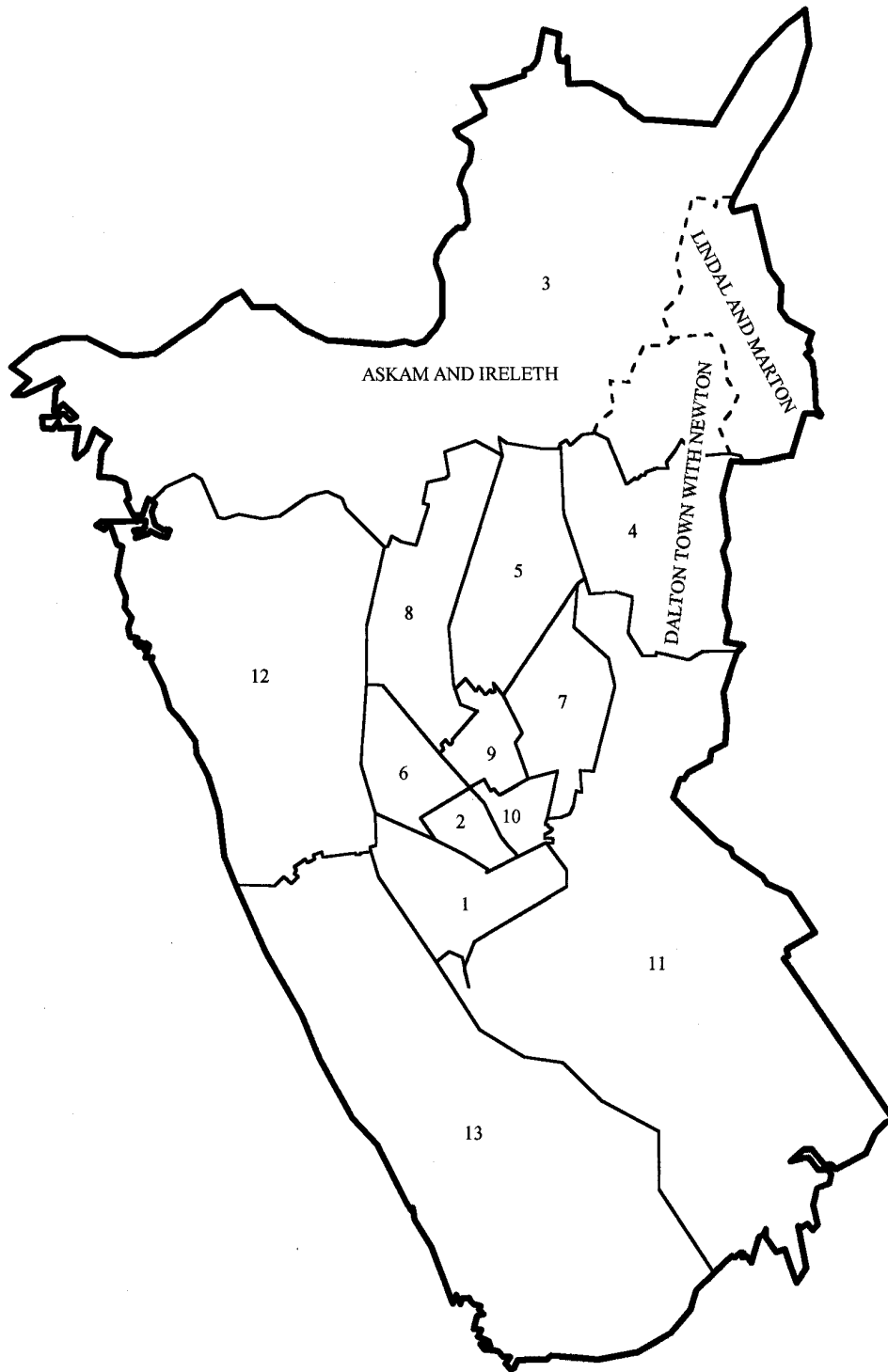
50 In our draft recommendations report we proposed that the parish wards in Dalton should be modified to reflect the proposed Borough Council wards in the town. At Stage Three both the Borough Council and Dalton with Newton Town Council supported our draft recommendation, and we therefore confirm it as final.

Final Recommendation

The boundary between Dowdales and Beckside parish wards of Dalton Town with Newton parish should be modified to reflect the proposed Borough Council wards, as illustrated in Map A2 at Appendix A.

51 In our draft recommendations report we also proposed that there should be no change to the electoral cycle of parish and town councils in the borough, and are confirming this recommendation as final.

Map 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Barrow



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

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Key to Wards

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1 Barrow Island | 6 Hindpool | 10 Risedale |
| 2 Central | 7 Newbarns | 11 Roosecote |
| 3 Dalton North | 8 Ormsgill | 12 Walney North |
| 4 Dalton South | 9 Parkside | 13 Walney South |
| 5 Hawcoat | | |

Figure 4:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Barrow

| Ward name | Number of councillors | Electorate (1996) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % | Electorate (2001) | Number of electors per councillor | Variance from average % |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Barrow Island | 2 | 2,471 | 1,236 | -15 | 2,412 | 1,206 | -17 |
| 2 Central | 3 | 4,229 | 1,410 | -2 | 4,238 | 1,413 | -3 |
| 3 Dalton North | 3 | 4,579 | 1,526 | 6 | 4,671 | 1,557 | 7 |
| 4 Dalton South | 3 | 4,562 | 1,521 | 5 | 4,704 | 1,568 | 8 |
| 5 Hawcoat | 3 | 4,438 | 1,479 | 2 | 4,380 | 1,460 | 0 |
| 6 Hindpool | 3 | 4,269 | 1,423 | -2 | 4,280 | 1,427 | -2 |
| 7 Newbarns | 3 | 4,422 | 1,474 | 2 | 4,667 | 1,556 | 7 |
| 8 Ormsgill | 3 | 4,428 | 1,476 | 2 | 4,238 | 1,413 | -3 |
| 9 Parkside | 3 | 4,244 | 1,415 | -2 | 4,299 | 1,433 | -2 |
| 10 Risedale | 3 | 4,177 | 1,392 | -4 | 4,154 | 1,385 | -5 |
| 11 Roosecote | 3 | 4,175 | 1,392 | -4 | 4,478 | 1,493 | 2 |
| 12 Walney North | 3 | 4,346 | 1,449 | 0 | 4,341 | 1,447 | -1 |
| 13 Walney South | 3 | 4,573 | 1,524 | 5 | 4,538 | 1,513 | 4 |
| Totals | 38 | 54,913 | — | — | 55,400 | — | |
| Averages | — | — | 1,445 | — | — | 1,458 | — |

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

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

6. NEXT STEPS

52 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Barrow and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

53 It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our 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 our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

54 All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

The Secretary of State
Local Government Review
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

APPENDIX A

Final Recommendations for Barrow: Detailed Mapping

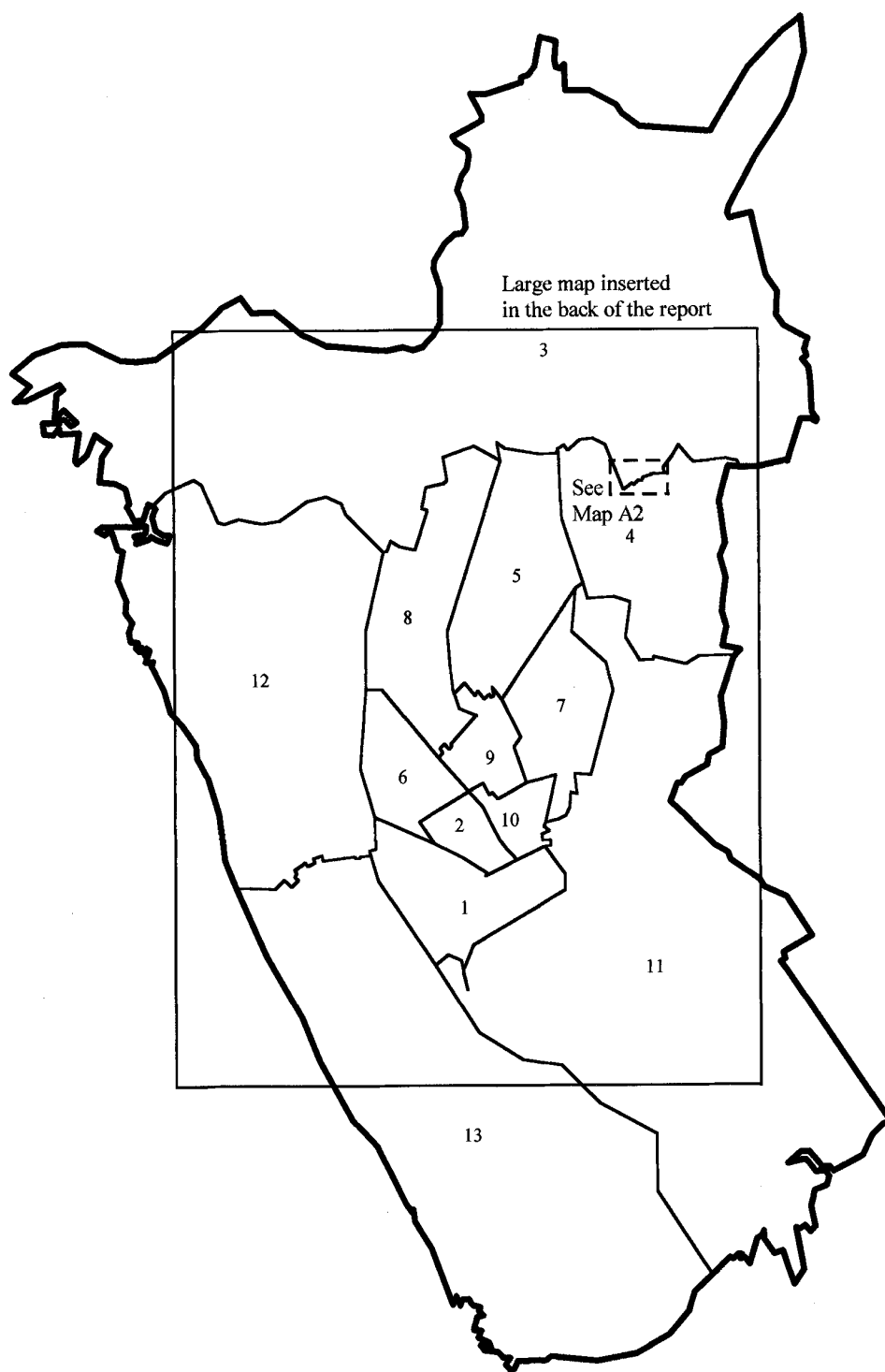
The following maps illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for the Barrow area.

Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the borough and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail in Map A2 and the large map inserted in the back of the report.

Map A2 illustrates the proposed ward boundary in Dalton town, between Dalton North ward and Dalton South ward.

The **large map** inserted in the back of this report illustrates the Commission's proposed warding for Barrow.

Map A1:
Final Recommendations for Barrow: Key Map

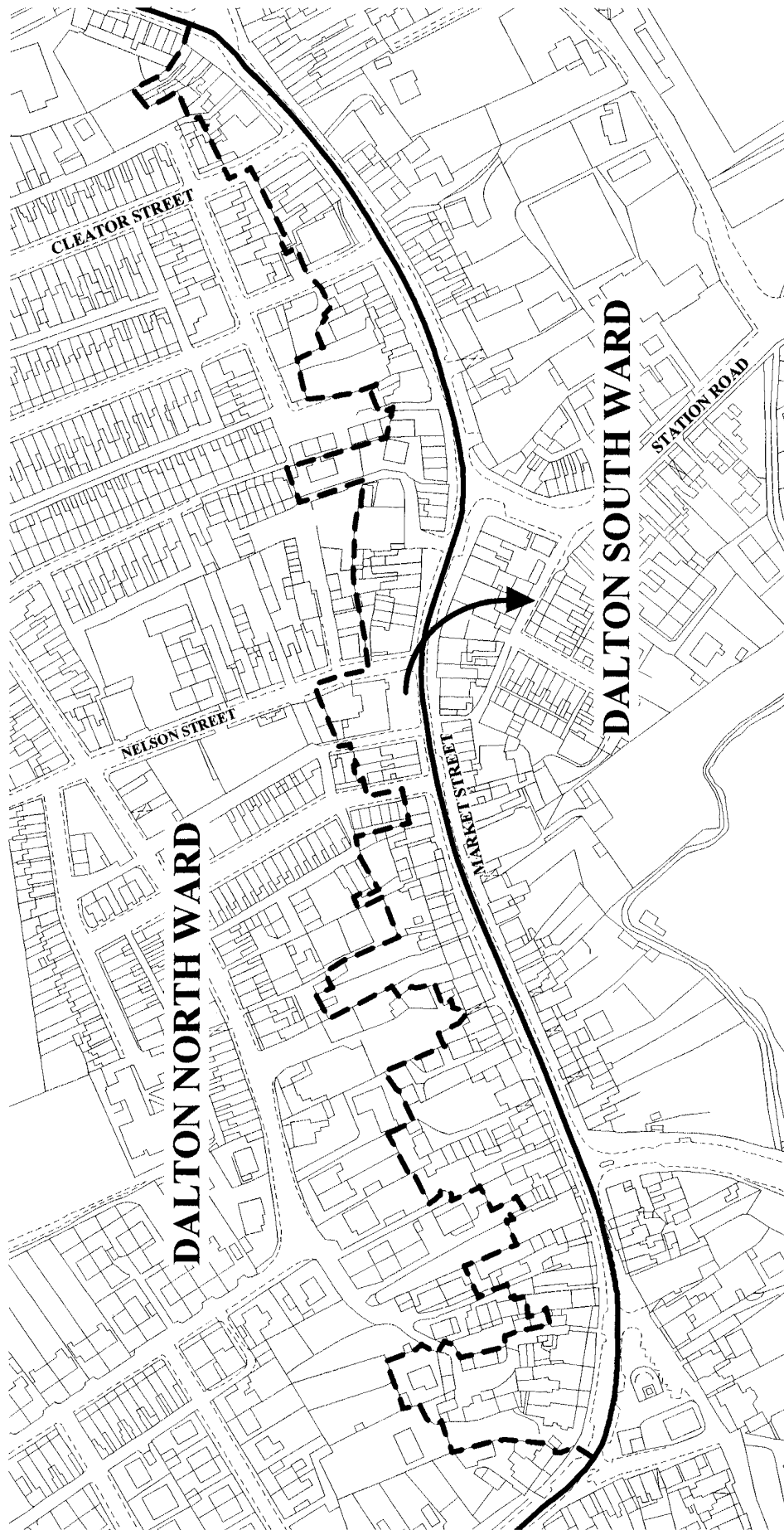


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- | | | |
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Map A2:
Proposed Ward Boundary between Dalton North and Dalton South



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