

Cannock Chase District Council

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Comment text:

This is a submission on behalf of Cannock Chase District Council. A politically balanced working group was set up to work across party lines to try and achieve a 'consensus' view and develop a set of proposals that accommodated the LGBCE's proposals for a reduction in numbers to 36 Councillors. It was assumed that this would amount to a reduction to 12 wards to correspond with the Council's 'by thirds' electoral cycle. Unfortunately, while there was a large amount of agreement and consistency in the thinking of the working group, there were a few areas where there were minor differences of opinion. The documents as attached reflect the views of a majority of the Council, but not all members. Individual political groups may also be submitting their own proposals separately which will indicate where there are differences. The 'Summary of Comments' document gives further background to the proposals, including where agreement could not be reached. The other documents are maps of proposed boundaries; and a copy of the draft Minute of Council at which the proposals were considered.

Uploaded Documents:

https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1659108414_Submission+Document+CCDC+010822.pdf

Proposals for the Boundary Review of Cannock Chase District Council

The starting point for this proposal was to achieve 12 wards of broadly equal electorate size to meet the Local Government Boundary Commission's proposal for 36 members with effect from May 2024 while maintaining current electoral cycle (thirds).

Consideration has been given to the split of Member numbers and wards across the District and it is proposed that the 3 principal areas of Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley should comprise 3 wards each. The other 3 areas are those with their own distinct identities i.e., Norton Canes, Heath Hayes & Wimblebury and Hawks Green.

Having established this as a principle, given that each of the 3 principal areas currently have 4 wards each, it was agreed to remove a ward from each of these areas as a starting point for reviewing the ward boundaries. Effectively, this means that the following wards will be absorbed into new wards:

- Cannock East;
- Rawnsley; and
- Hagley

Consideration was given to the existing ward boundaries to identify those that remain relevant and reflect the local communities, those where new housing developments have created a shift in identity and to redefine the 3 principal areas to reflect the loss of a ward in each one.

There is a preference, where practicable, to move away from 'compass-point' ward names. At this stage, suggestions have not been made for all such wards but changes would be supported where they bring greater clarity to the area in question. Existing names are used in the first instance to help indicate the area in question.

The proposed ward boundaries are illustrated in the maps attached at Appendix 2. A narrative setting out the context and considerations for each ward proposal is set out below with suggestions as to names where appropriate.

Norton Canes

It is proposed that the boundary for Norton Canes remains as per the current ward boundary. This is a distinct geographic community bounded by main roads and large open areas that aligns with the parish boundary. There is no 'bleed' into adjoining areas. It has its own 'village' identity; and is very self contained. It has its own shops; schools; library; community centre; churches (x2); and doctors. There are several community groups; along with cubs; brownies; and scouts etc.

There is a large new housing development proposed south of Lichfield Road at its junction with Heath Way which could cause an issue for the ward boundary in the future; but this has been discounted for now as the development is some years away. Bounded by Newlands Lane, this area may more naturally sit within Heath Hayes and / or Heath Hayes & Wimblebury.

There is a buffer of green belt with Heath Hayes and the main roads act as a boundary.

Name: It is proposed that the name of the ward should remain as **Norton Canes**.

Heath Hayes East & Wimblebury (Proposed: Heath Hayes & Wimblebury)

Marginal changes are proposed to the existing ward boundary. These include:

- The boundaries now extending to include both sides of Hill Street between the junctions with Keys Park Road at one end and Hayes Way at the other end.
- All of the estates off Keys Park Road and Brickworks Road, i.e. including the sections of the Waterlily Close, Watermint Close, Foxtail Way, Meadowsweet Way and Sweetbriar Way estates currently in Hednesford South ward.
- The addition of the whole of Wimblebury road up to Littleworth Road.
- All the fields south of Cannock Wood Road.
- The Hednesford Town Football Club estate (marketed by Taylor Wimpey as the 'Cherry Blossom' development, including Pitmen Way; Dew Close; O'Connor Avenue; and Griffiths Way).

Although a substantial majority of the working group are supportive of the proposal, a Hednesford ward member expressed concerns that this proposal will result in Hednesford Town Football Club no longer being in a Hednesford ward. However, it was acknowledged that the football ground has moved twice from its original site and is still easily identifiable by name.

Key evidence in support of the proposal for this ward is:

- It comprises two linked 'villages' but sharing a connection. Between them, they have shops; schools; library; community centre; churches (x3); post offices (1 each); doctors and dentist; pubs and social clubs. There are several community groups; along with cubs; brownies; and scouts etc.
- There is a nature reserve (Brickworks Nature reserve) in the middle of the two communities, along with a park; allotments; playing pitches; fields and open spaces and Wimblebury Mound (Cannel Mount) running alongside Wimblebury Road from Five Ways island and into Wimblebury and into John Street.
- The schools that the children go to are within the ward boundary i.e. Five Ways, Gorsemoor and Heath Hayes Academy.
- HTFC ground (Keys Park) has a Heath Hayes stand and a Wimblebury stand.
- Industrial units opposite Keys Park will help to form a northern boundary with the adjoining ward.
- Southern part of Hill Street included because of proximity to schools; facilities etc in Heath Hayes. Makes sense to keep this section of road in one area. The residents associate more closely with Heath Hayes through Five Ways School and it is closer to shops in Heath Hayes, rather than Hednesford.

Name: It is proposed that "East" should be dropped from the ward name i.e. **Heath Hayes & Wimblebury**, as locals refer to the older part of Heath Hayes contained within this ward simply as Heath Hayes.

Hawks Green

The existing boundary of Hawks Green will remain the same with the following additions:

- Hill Street is the new boundary between Hawks Green and Heath Hayes and Wimblebury (with none of it being in Hawks Green).
- Farm Close and the remainder of Keys Close are added from Hednesford South.
- Hawks Green will extend its western border to Old Hednesford Road in Cannock to take in: the Pebble Mill Drive estate, the Stoney Lea Road estate, Hollies Avenue and Hollies Park Road.
- At the southern border: houses on Kensington Place, Meadow Way and the ones on Gorsemoor Road which were built at the same time would move into Hawks Green as these properties are part of the Meadow Way estate.

It is proposed that Old Hednesford Road will form part of the boundary for the ward rather than using the railway line. This is because there is a road that crosses beneath the railway line (Hawks Green Lane) and there are references to 'Hawks Green' on the Cannock side, such as the Hawks Green Depot (which includes a new development called 'The Hills') and the Hawks Green Industrial Estate.

Key evidence in support of the proposal for this ward is:

- As referred to above, the new boundary would take in the Hawks Green Depot.
- The majority of the housing in this area was all built around the same time (mid to late-1980's), with other large developments following in early 2000's.
- The Hayes Green Community Centre which falls within the ward is an integral part of the community, along with Tesco superstore; neighbouring shops; and pubs (Winding Wheel and Newhall Farm). This is the central point for surrounding roads.
- New Designer Outlet Village sits on the edge of these developments and adjacent to Hawks Green Industrial estate, so it makes sense to include this area as well.
- Historically, i.e. before large scale residential development took place there, the area was always referred to as 'Hawks Green' (from Hawks Green Lane?).
- Milking Brook nature reserve is also connected via Hawks Green Brook to Mill Green Nature Reserve, and other brooks and pools are located throughout and link the area.

Name: It is proposed that the ward name remain as **Hawks Green**.

Cannock South (Proposed: TBC)

The boundary for Cannock South would be extended to include:

- Dartmouth Avenue,
- St James's Road, Elms Drive, Birch Avenue, Maple Crescent and The Willows;
- Beech Tree Lane,

- St Luke's Close, and
- South Close

(these currently sit within the existing Cannock West ward).

Key evidence in support of the proposal for this ward is:

- Dartmouth Road leads to the town centre which sits within the Cannock South ward.
- Residents use healthcare and education facilities around Longford Road and Wolverhampton Road.
- Access roads from Newhall Street, Dartmouth Ave, Queen Street all link into the town; existing roads all offshoots and central to the town area.
- Post office and other shops in Bideford Way (Longford); and range of shops and restaurants in Bridgtown.

Name: There is no agreement on a name for the revised ward but it is considered that reference should be made to Bridgtown within the ward name as the community are keen to keep their separate identity. 'Cannock Central' and 'Cannock Longford and Bridgtown' have also been suggested.

Cannock West (Proposed: TBC)

The new boundary between Cannock West and Cannock North is Cemetery Road. This would result in the inclusion of the Bevan Lee estate (including Cambria Street and Celtic Road) in Cannock West. The new boundary between Cannock West and Chads Moor is Common Lane and Heath Gap Road.

Key evidence in support of the proposal for this ward is:

- Both Cannock Park and Cannock Leisure Centre are facilities these residents would use.
- The Bevan Lee estate is included within the proposed area as the children from the estate go to school at Cardinal Griffin and Chase High both of which are in Cannock West.
- The proposed ward includes areas to the north and south of Cannock Park, which is in the middle of the area and is a uniting feature.

Name: There is no agreement on a name for this ward but suggestions include: 'Parkside' (the name of a former ward in this area) and 'Cannock Shoal Hill', though it was noted that what is recognised locally as the 'Shoal Hill' area makes up only one half of the proposed ward.

Cannock North (Proposed: Chads Moor)

It is proposed that the current boundary along Belt Road should be retained, albeit with Apollo Close moving into this area as it is part of the Saturn Road estate, and Festival Mews, which is currently split, transferring to the Hednesford Green Heath ward.

Key evidence in support of the proposal for this ward is:

- The area has a clear identity, distinct from Cannock or Hednesford.
- OS maps contain the names of both Chadsmoor and West Chadsmoor.
- The Chadsmoor name is widely used as an identifier in the area on schools; a medical practice; a church; and shops.
- The combined area contains a number of schools and churches and other community facilities.
- There are two main shopping areas: the larger one in the east of the proposed ward on Cannock Road and a smaller one to the west, Festival Court, off Pye Green Road. Between them they offer a range of shops; a post office; restaurants and takeaways.
- The County electoral division is already called Chadsmoor.

Name: It is proposed that this ward should be named **Chadsmoor** as this reflects its identity as a distinct community, as seen in the names of several schools and businesses.

Hednesford Green Heath (Proposed: TBC)

It is proposed that this ward should remain as per the current boundary with the minor addition of the entirety of Festival Mews from Hednesford North on the southern boundary.

Key evidence in support of the proposal for this ward is:

- The area is developing rapidly within existing boundaries - principally on the west side - and needs its own identity.
- Lots of new housing in this area, including a new school.
- Existing shops; schools in earlier developments around Rosehill.
- Belt Road is a natural boundary to the south and other adjacent wards help to define the area.

Name: There is no agreement on the name for this ward, but suggestions include: retaining the current name, or 'Pye Green Valley', or 'Hednesford Valley'.

Hednesford North (Proposed: TBC)

This will remain largely as per the current ward but with the addition of:

- part of Stafford Lane;
- Uxbridge Street.
- Eskrett Street,
- Cheviot Rise;
- Anglesey Street
- Cornwall Road,
- Cheviot Rise, etc. and
- the Essex Drive estate.

Key evidence in support of the proposal for this ward is:

- Some of the streets are already partially within the current ward.
- The Essex Drive estate is self-contained and immediately adjacent to the other streets but separated from adjoining wards by a railway line on one side and Ridings Brook on the other.

Name: There is no agreement on the name for this ward. Suggestions included 'West Hill'; 'Pye Green', but this might cause confusion with Hednesford Town Council wards, and also other proposals (see Hednesford Green Heath); or 'Chaseside'(?).

Hednesford South (Proposed: Hednesford Hills & Rawnsley)

It is proposed that the north-western border for this ward should be taken as the "Ridings Brook", rather than Uxbridge Street. This would result in the inclusion in the ward of the following streets:

- Pendle Hill,
- Kingfisher Drive,
- Church Hill Mews.

Rather than using the Sevens Road and Cannock Wood Road as the southern boundary around Prospect Village, it is proposed to move the boundary around the adjacent fields so that a row of 8 or so houses on Sevens Road and a nearby farm fall within this ward.

Key evidence in support of the proposal for this ward is:

- The ward would include the entire length of Littleworth Road rather than splitting it between two or more wards.
- All of the areas known as Hill Top; Church Hill; Littleworth; Rawnsley; Hazel Slade; and the outlying Prospect Village; and Cannock Wood are kept together and not divided.
- This is a mix of small communities that aren't big enough to have own ward, many of which have their own identities and communities groups.
- The communities have to go somewhere, and there is a more natural link to Hednesford than elsewhere. Road links are via Littleworth Road and Rawnsley Road for facilities in Hednesford.

Rugeley and Brereton

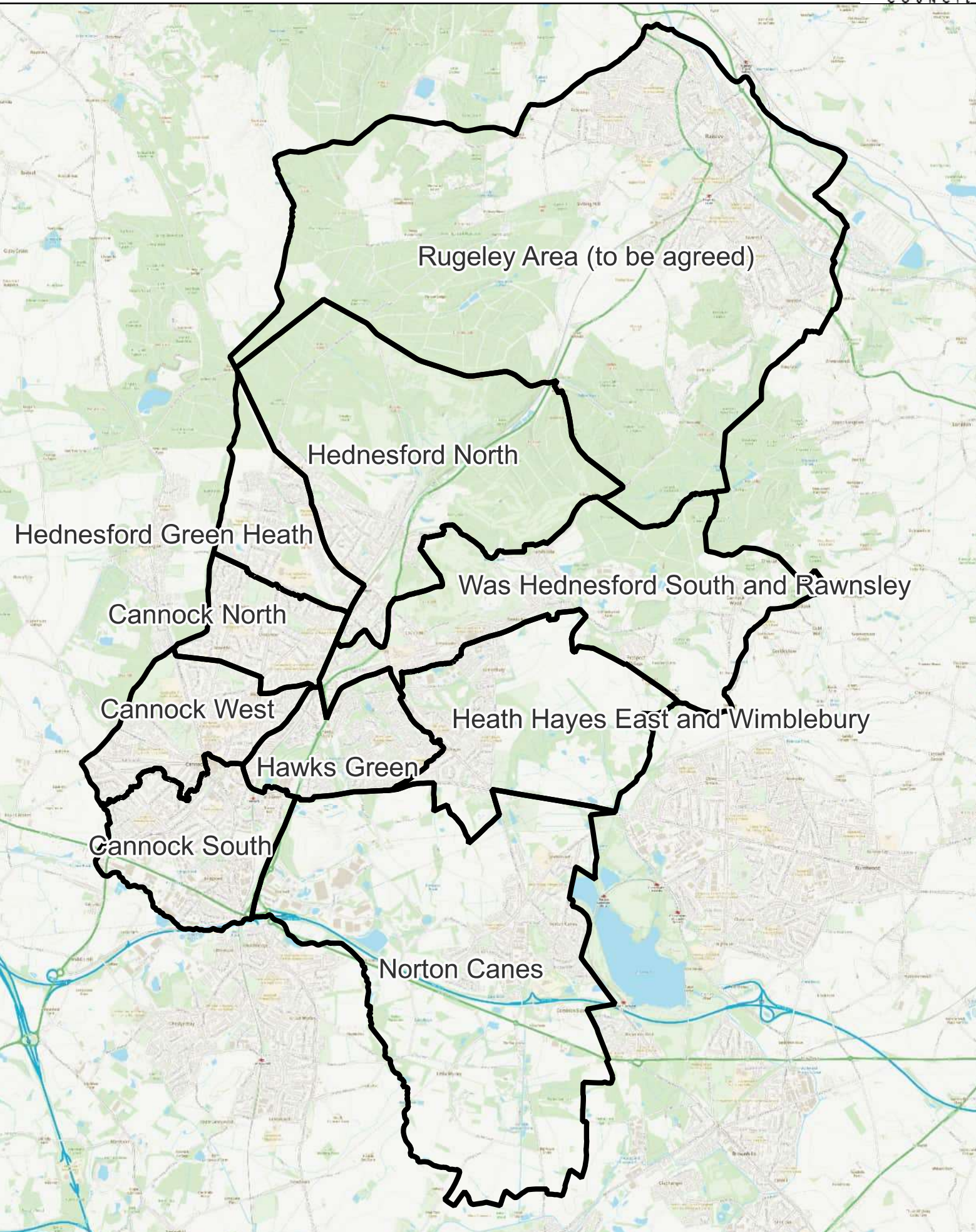
It is considered that the Rugeley and Brereton area should comprise 3 wards with the current Hagley ward being incorporated into one or more of the 3 remaining wards. It is proposed that the 3 current ward names should be retained i.e.:

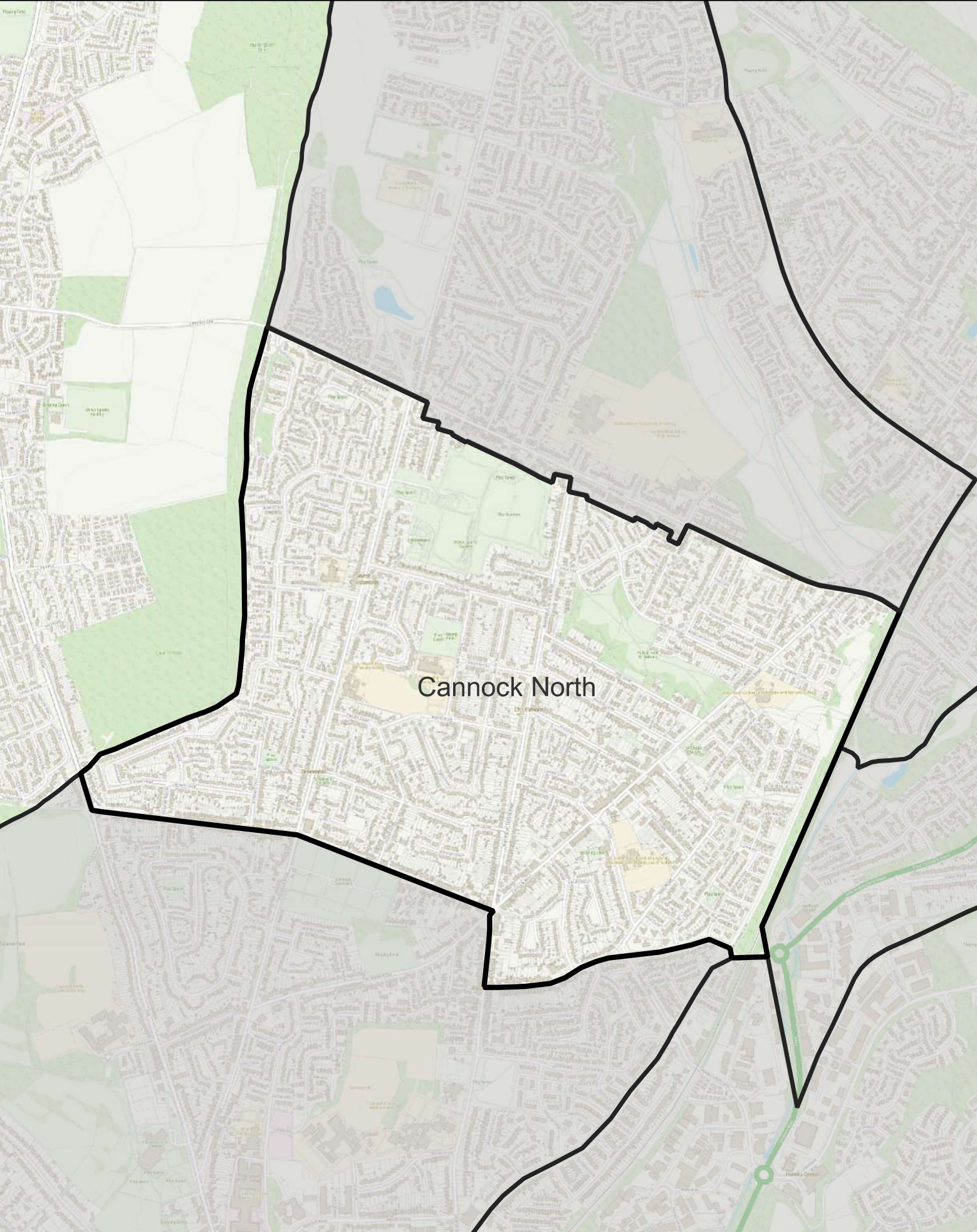
- Brereton & Ravenhill
- Western Springs (linked to twinned town in Illinois, USA)
- Etching Hill and the Heath - could be simply Etching Hill

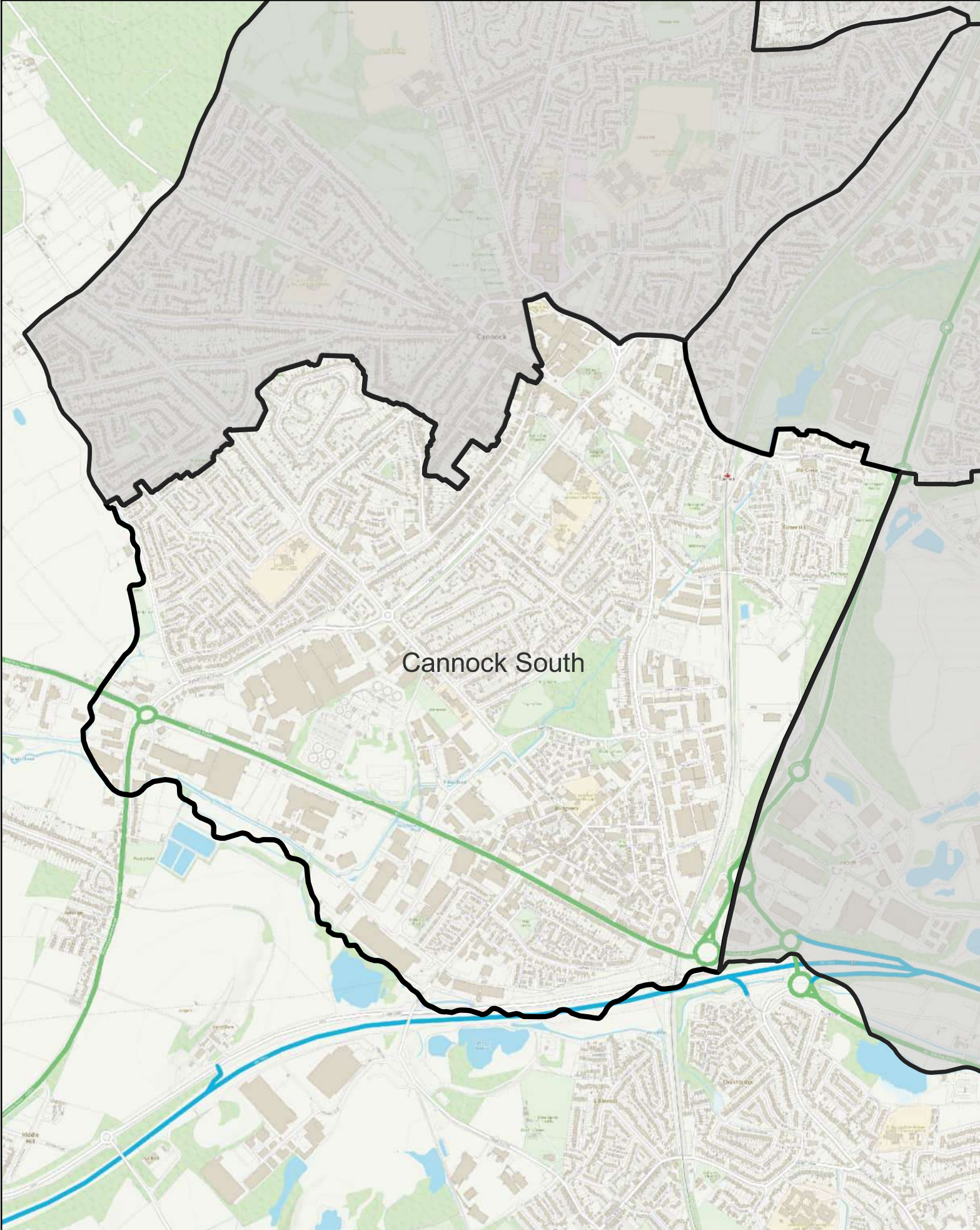
Whilst agreement was reached on the outer boundary for the Rugeley area remaining as currently, no consensus has been reached on the internal boundaries for the 3 wards.

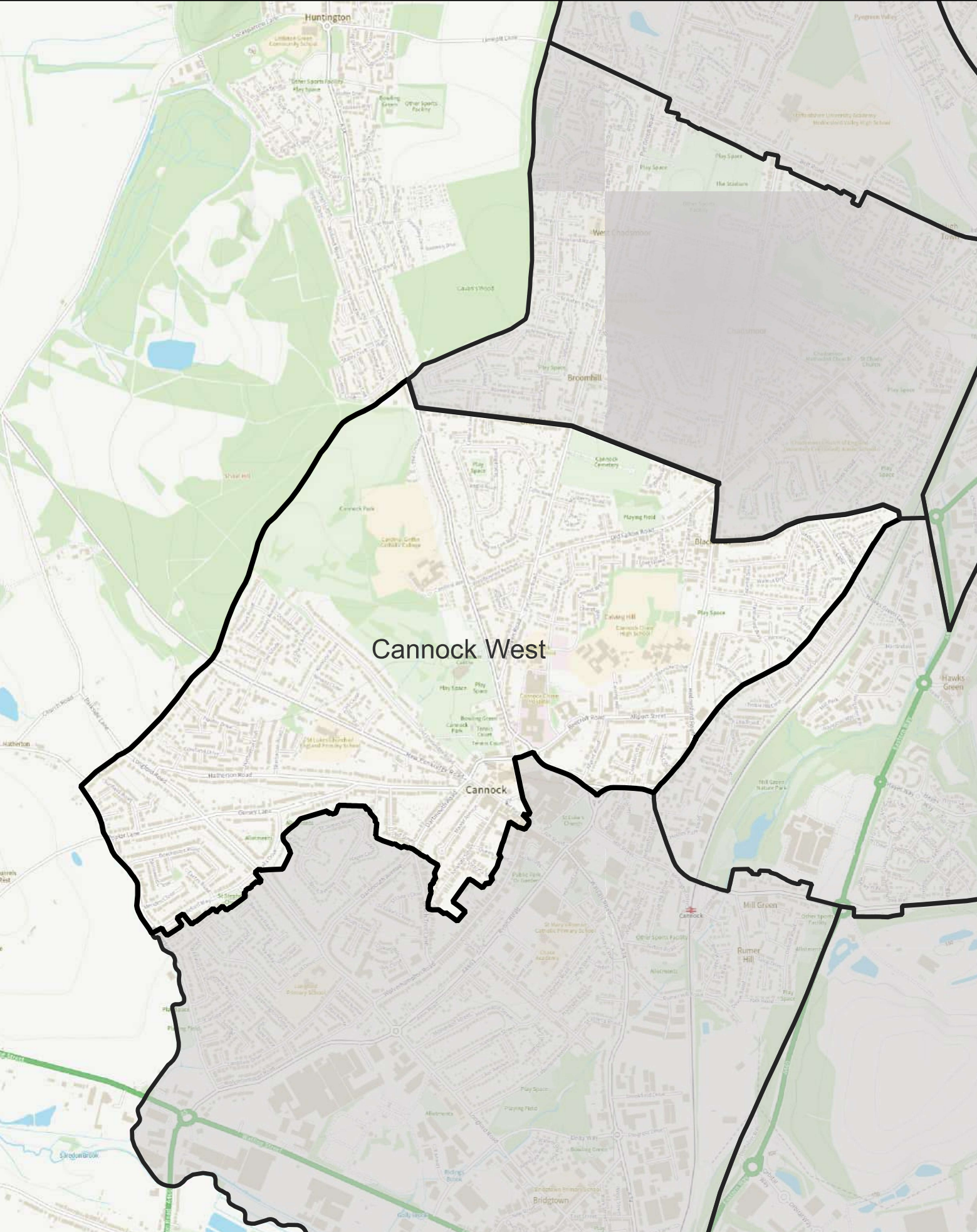
Issues raised include:

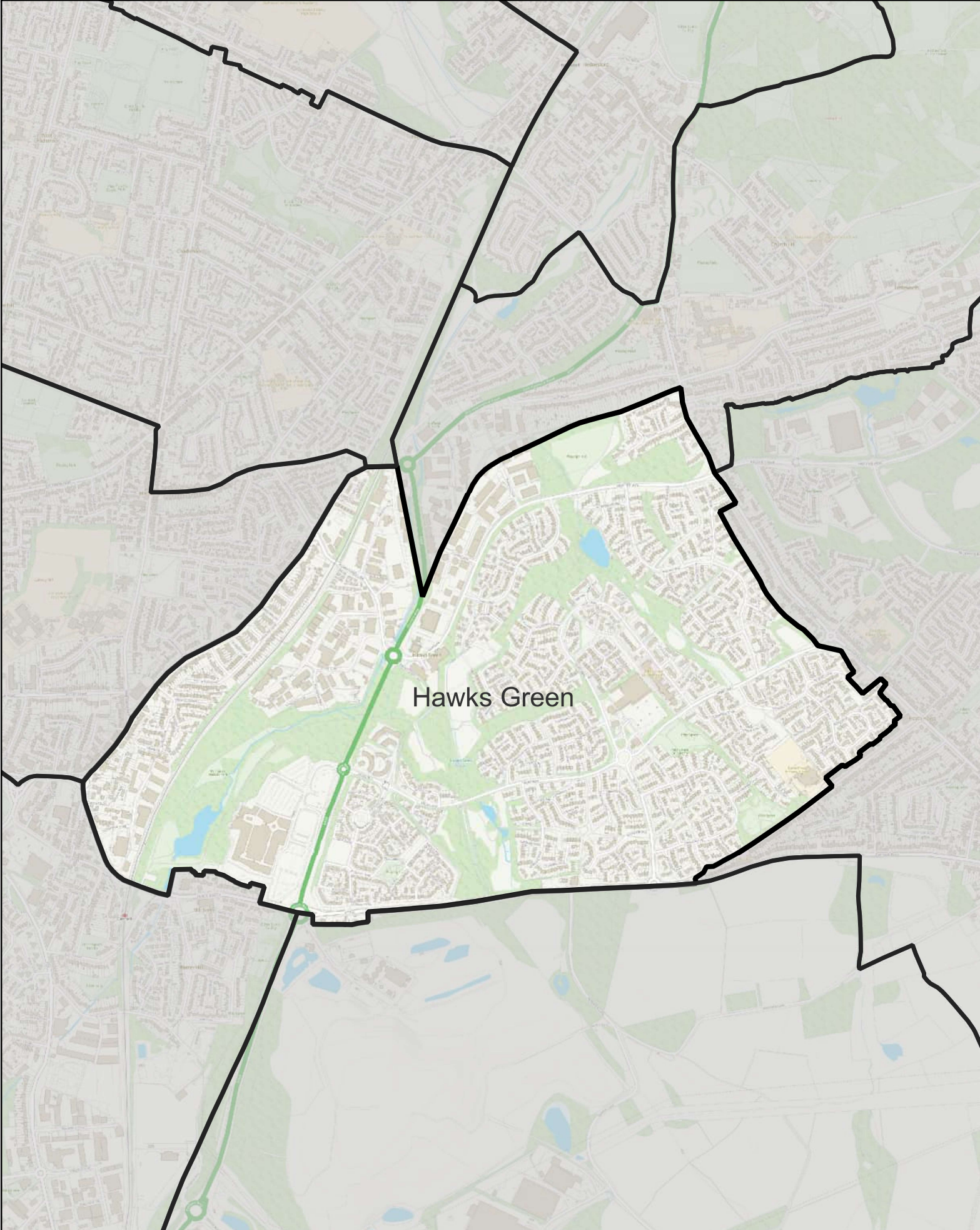
- Which ward the new residential development on the former power station site should sit within, i.e. Brereton & Ravenhill or Western Springs. It currently sits within the Brereton ward with the former cooling towers having dominated the skyline. However, it was considered by a substantial majority of the group that the geographical boundaries such as a main A road, canal and rail line divide the two areas and it is likely that those living on the new housing development are more likely to connect with the town centre, which is in Western Springs. The proposal for the new development is supportive of connecting it with the town centre and includes a planning for a footpath into the town centre, which sits within the current Western Springs Ward.
- Provision for healthcare facilities for residents have been earmarked for the Aelfgar Surgery in Rugeley. Brereton & Ravenhill already has its own health centre off Main Road.
- However, concerns were raised by a Brereton & Ravenhill ward member.
- The inclusion of the Pear Tree estate within the Brereton ward as it is a former coal mining estate similar to those in Brereton and has alleyways which connect the two communities.
- Use of the Western Springs Road as a ward boundary - there are different views on how the local community identifies itself.

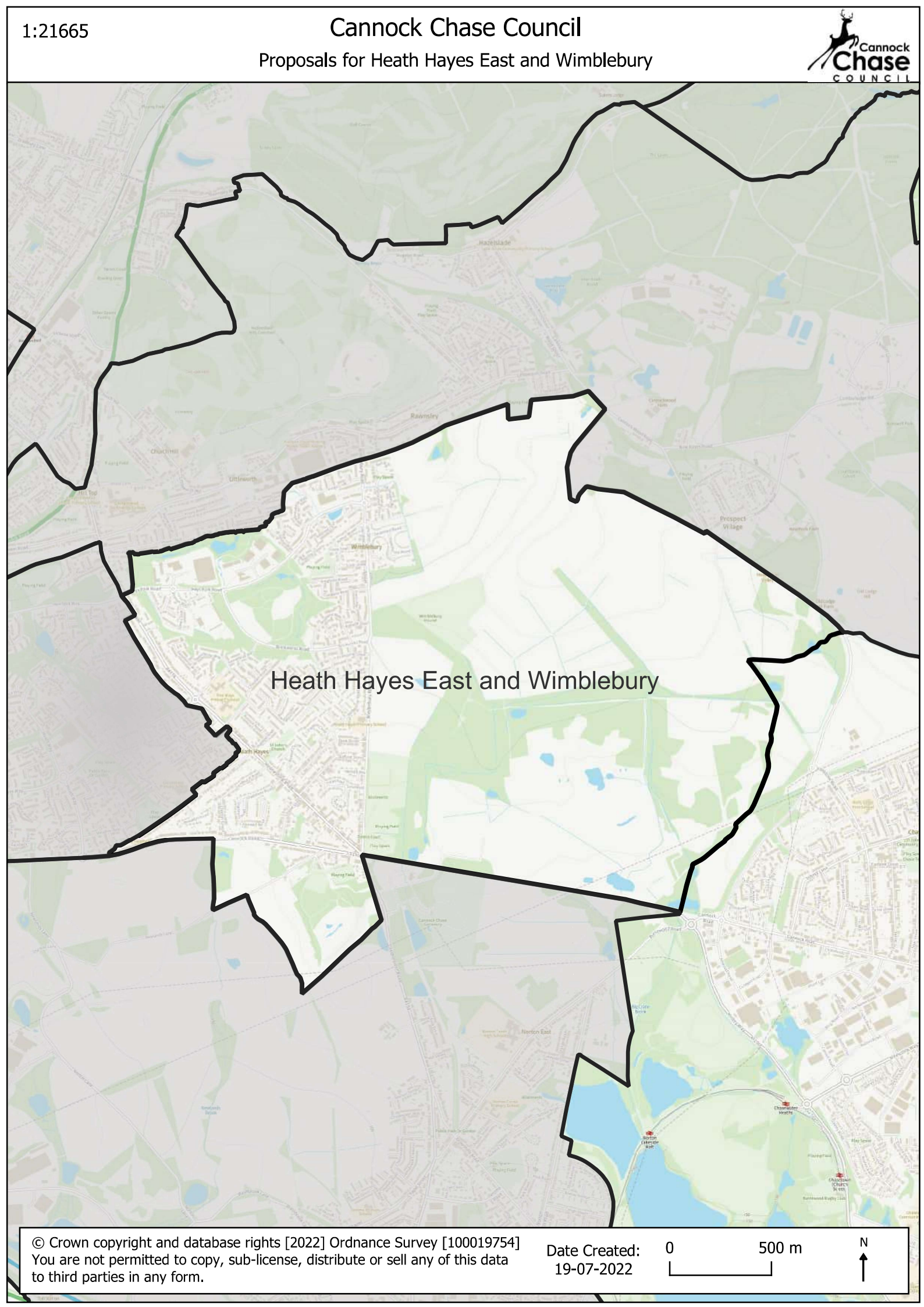






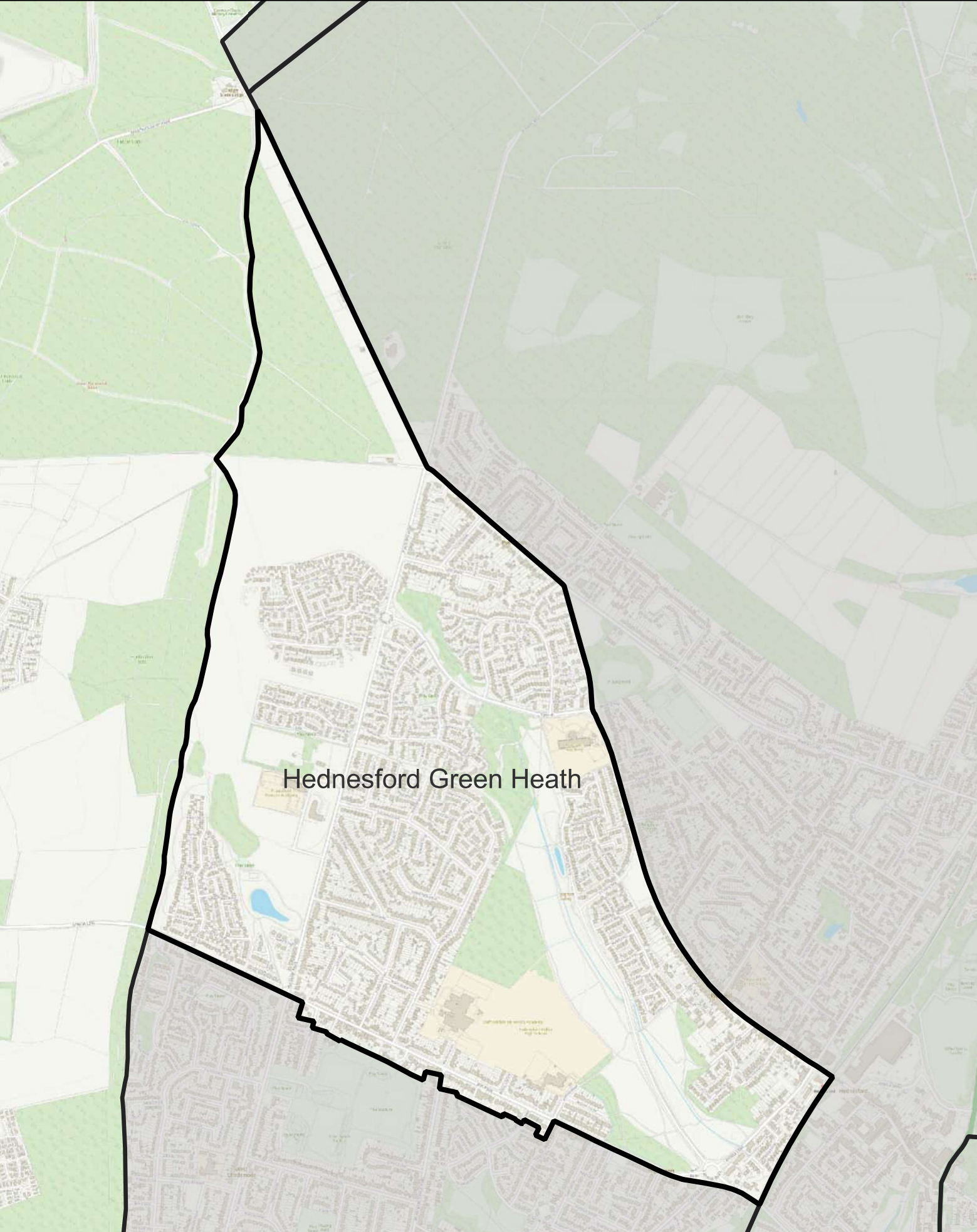


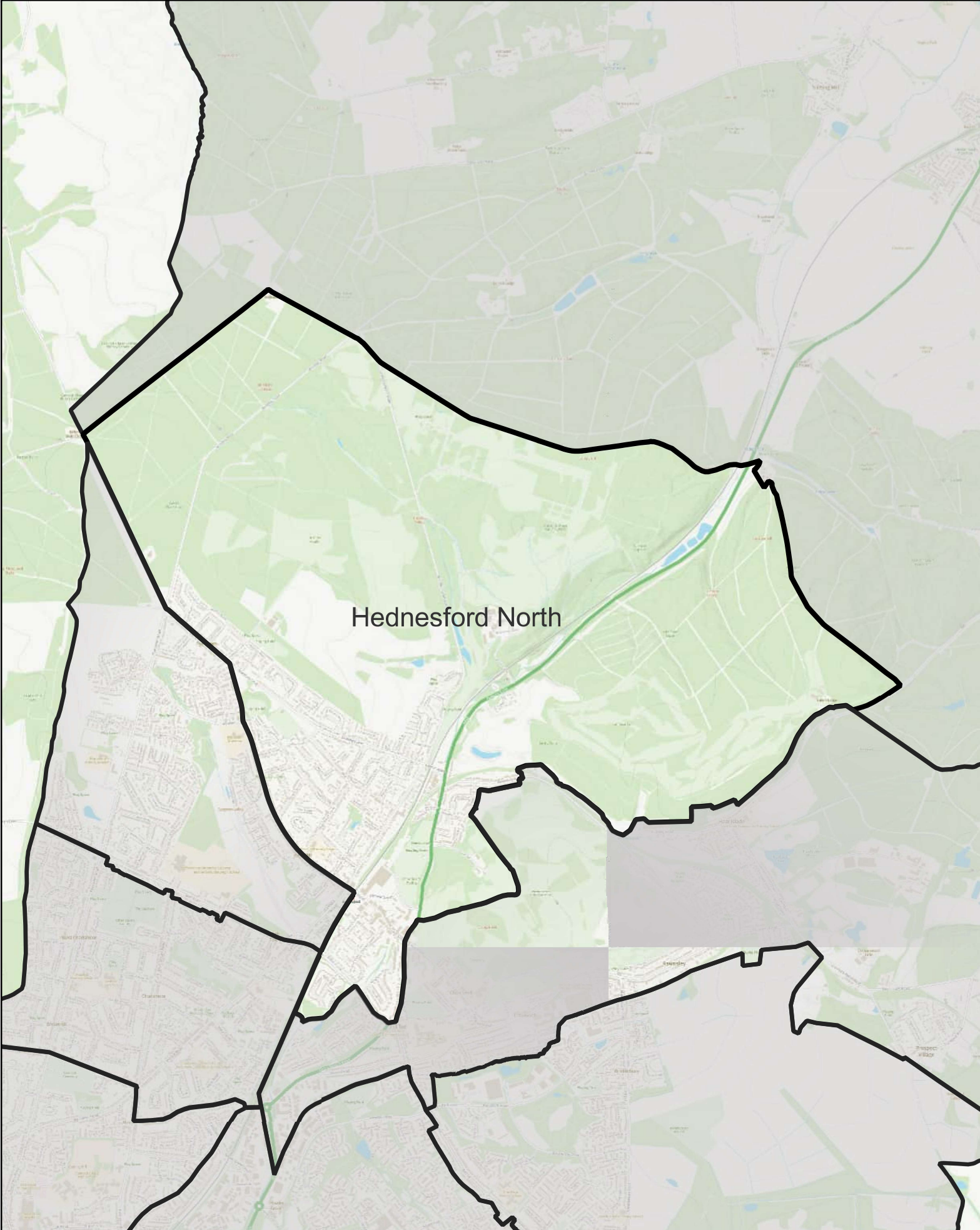




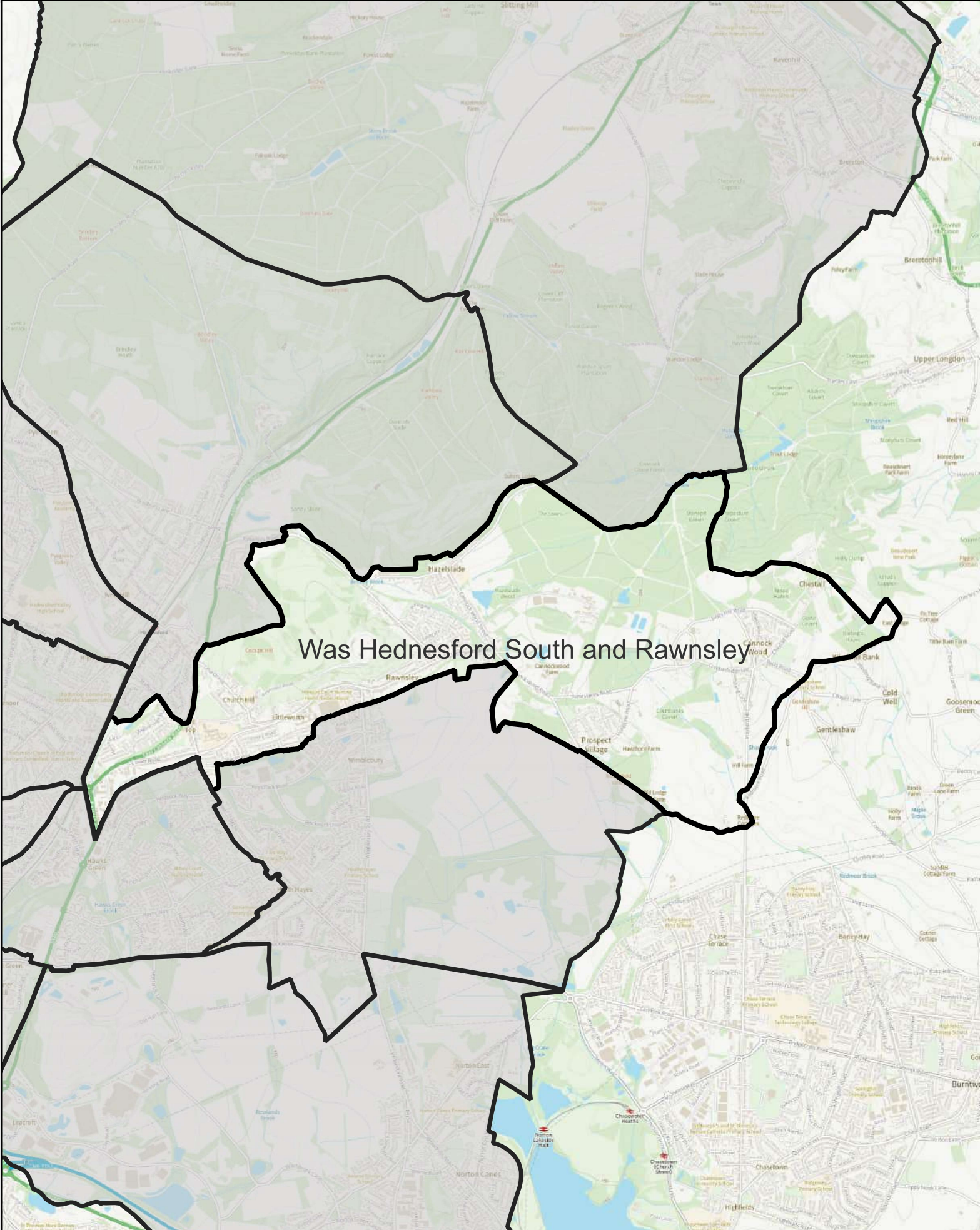
The map shows the area of Heath Hayes East and Wimblebury, outlined in black. The area is primarily green, indicating open land or parks, with some residential areas shown in light brown. The text 'Heath Hayes East and Wimblebury' is centered over the map.

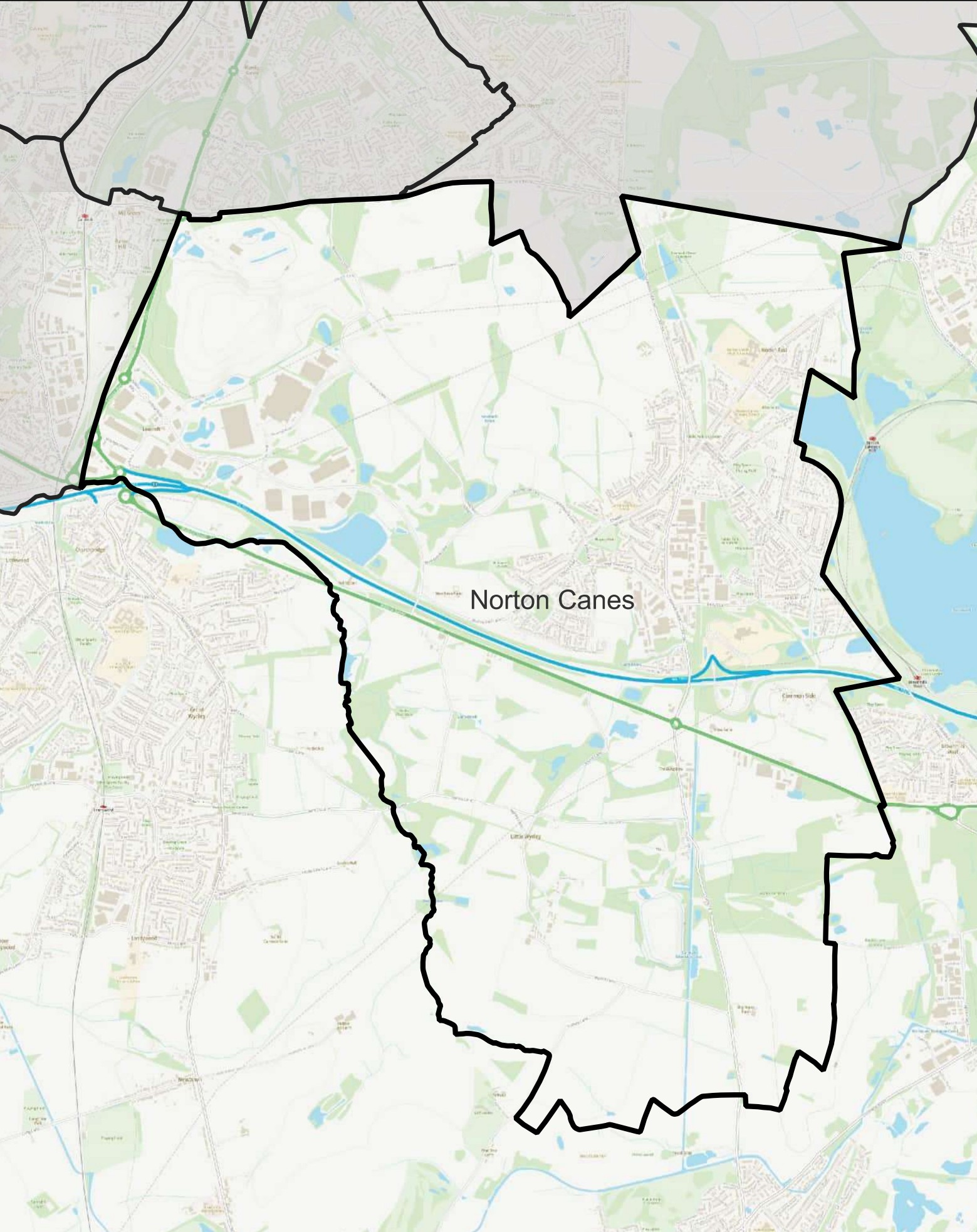
Heath Hayes East and Wimblebury

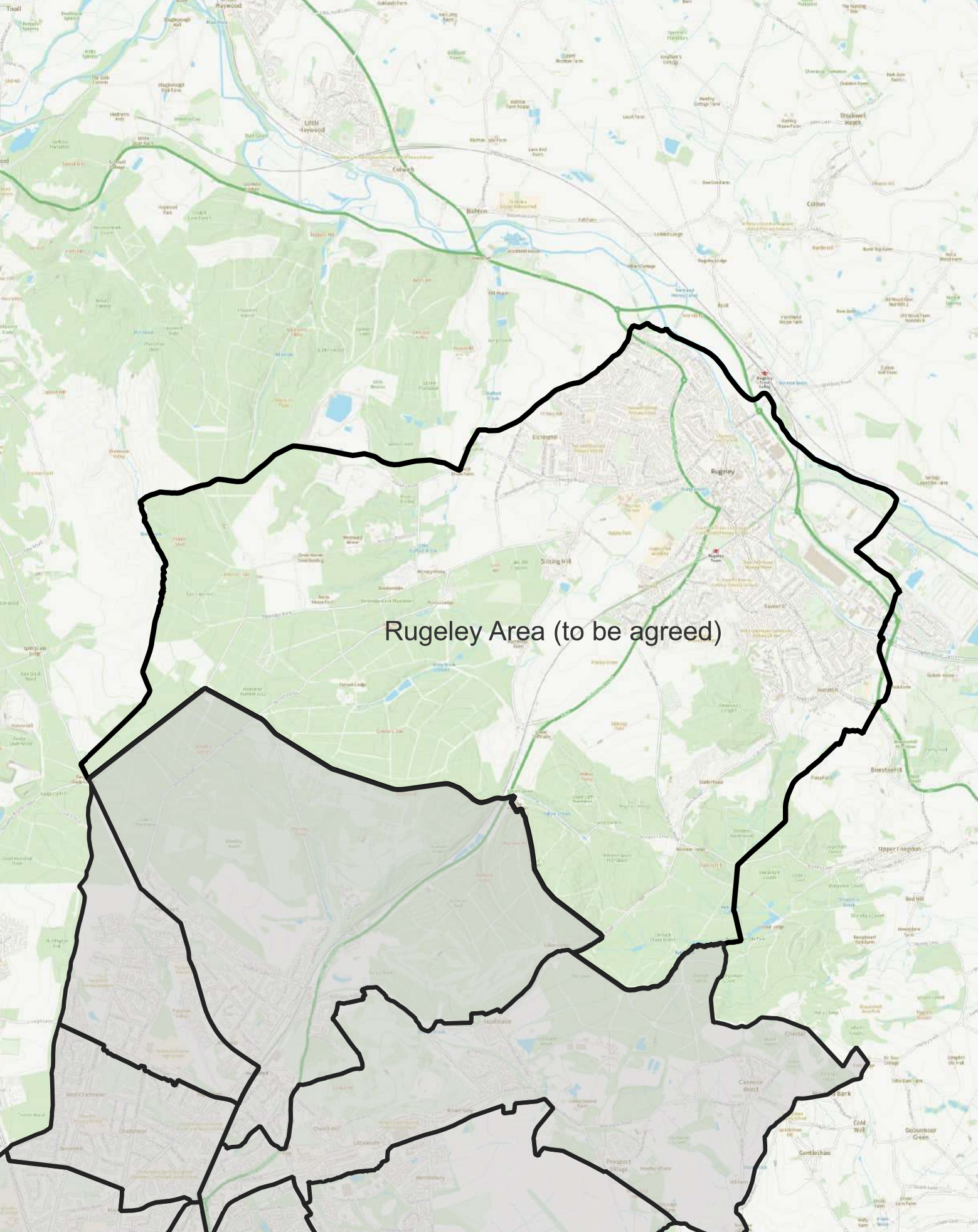




Hednesford North







Rugeley Area (to be agreed)

27. Local Boundary Review Working Group Proposals to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) for Initial Consultation

Consideration was given to the Report of the Local Boundary Review Working Group (Item 12.1 - 12.22).

An amended version of Report Appendix 2 had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

(Councillor T.B. Johnson left and returned to the meeting during the consideration of this item.)

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The ward boundaries proposals detailed in Report Appendix 1, and associated maps at Report Appendix 2 (as amended), be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as a Council submission as part of the initial phase of consultation.
- (B) Delegated authority be given to the Head of Governance and Corporate Services, in consultation with the Local Boundary Review Working Group, to add further explanatory narrative to Appendix 1, in support of the maps at Appendix 2.

Councillors J.S. Elson, P.A. Fisher, G.N. Molineux, and A.M. Muckley requested that their names be recorded as voting against the proposals as set out above.