



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**TO: ALL DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL
WORKING PARTY MEMBERS**

**(Copy to recipients of Democratic
Renewal Working Party Papers)**

Our reference CS
Your reference N/A
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13 June 2016

Dear Councillor

**ST EDMUNDSBURY DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL WORKING PARTY –
MONDAY 23 MAY 2016**

Report No: DEM/SE/16/002 – Community Governance Review

Attached is an addendum to the above report, which was circulated at the meeting of the Democratic Renewal Working Party on 23 May 2016.

Yours sincerely

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Additional submission in relation to Appendix C

No	Area or Properties Under Review	Parishes Directly Affected	Matter covered by final recommendation
17	Oak Lodge, Mill Road, Hengrave (IP28 6LP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Culford •Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve •Hengrave 	Boundary between Culford, Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve and Hengrave in vicinity of Mill Road
<p><i>A new submission has been received from a local elector in Fornham St Genevieve on 18 May 2016. The elector indicated that they had not been aware of the CGR until after the end of the consultation because their property was not directly affected, and they had been unaware of discussions at parish level. Their submission also refers to events which occurred on 17 May 2016. They have therefore asked that the Working Party be made aware of their views.</i></p> <p>“It is requested that new evidence, issues and proposals be considered by the Working Party before a final recommendation is placed before Council for adoption.</p> <p>Alternatively, if it is not possible to include new evidence in the current CGR, as the Council has been consulted on the terms of reference, has published its final recommendations and the consultation is closed, then it is requested that Council should consider a separate CGR on this specific matter.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was not a consensus from Phase 1 or Phase 2 consultation on the change, with the parish councils and two affected electors expressing different views. 2. Whilst there is a concensus that the area should be transferred out of Culford Parish, insufficient weight has been given to the submissions by Culford West Stow & Wordwell Parish Council and by Fornham St Martin cum St Genevieve Parish Council, who are both of the view that Oak Lodge should be in Fornham St Genevieve parish. These two parish councils represent the view of the majority of parish electors which should be given more significant weight in relation to the alternative view expressed by two electors. 3. The Lark River forms a natural boundary between the parishes and there is merit in considering a recommendation to use the river as a strong natural boundary, such a change resulting in a more cohesive community and enabling more effective and convenient delivery of local services. 4. The consultation map is potentially misleading in that it may give rise to the view that all of the hatched area is within the curtilage of Oak Lodge. Reference to Land Registry data shows that the land area to the south west of the river is attached to Mill Farm, Hengrave whilst a relatively small area to the north east of the river is attached to Oak Lodge. 5. Oak Lodge land has always formed part of the overall Larks Pool Farm site since being transferred from the Little Farm (Culford) proprietorship into the Larks Pool Farm proprietorship in early 1970’s. In 1984 planning consent was given for Oak Lodge but subject to agricultural dwelling 			

restriction attaching to Larks Pool Farm use.

6. In 1991 the Mill Road bridge over the River Lark was demolished and the vehicular right of way between Fornham St Genevieve and Hengrave was stopped up by SCC Highways through court order in 1993. Delivery of local services from Hengrave has not been possible since 1991 and an effective and convenient delivery of local services can only be made along Mill Road from the Fornham St Genevieve/Culford direction.
7. Arising from the stopping up of the Lark River bridge highway access in 1993 there has been ongoing confusion and delay for haulage and parcels carriers attempting to locate properties in Mill Road north east of the river due to misinterpretation of parish boundaries. Of far greater concern is that emergency services, called out to incidents on the Culford side of Mill Road, have been misdirected by despatch controllers to attempt access from the Hengrave side of the river. This partly arises from mapping data not being updated in relation to the bridge closure, but also from Oak Lodge and/or Larks Pool Farm residents using Hengrave in their address or incorrectly referring to Mill Road as Hengrave Road.
8. Several incidents of fire, police and ambulance services being misdirected via Hengrave have occurred since 1993 and these continue more recently. On 3rd September 2013 a local resident called out the fire brigade to a serious late night car fire incident at Larks Pool Farm at 3.30 am. The fire appliance was directed to access via Hengrave but fortunately, due to the local knowledge of one fireman on board, was able to re-interpret the directions and arrive promptly via Culford. On 17 May 2016 two police vehicles found it necessary to disturb a nearby resident at 35 minutes past midnight in order to request directions to an incident at Oak Lodge believing the property was located in Hengrave. The proposed changes of boundary accompanying this new evidence [See below] will enable more effective and convenient delivery of local services including vital emergency services.
9. The reason for Oak Lodge adopting Hengrave into its address is that in 1984 the property was included within the Royal Mail "postal walk" associated with Mill Farm, Hengrave, which lies to the south west of the river, and allocated a postal code IP28 6LR. A separate Culford "postal walk" included, and ended at, Larks Pool Farm, allocated a postal code IP28 6LP. When the bridge was removed in 1991 Royal Mail, for effective and convenient delivery reason, changed Oak Lodge to postal code IP28 6LP, in common with Larks Pool Farm, and attached Oak Lodge to the Culford "postal walk".
10. Hengrave Parish Council has not responded to the consultation and has never engaged with any historical planning or other matters relating to Oak Lodge or Larks Pool Farm. The parish Chairman advised a local elector in 2015 that Hengrave Parish Council consider the Oak Lodge area to be over the natural river boundary and a part of Larks Pool Farm situated within Fornham St Genevieve and Culford parishes, and of minor relevance to the Hengrave parish.
11. Bearing in mind the strong natural boundary of the river and the historical context detailed above, it would be more logical to recommend that Oak

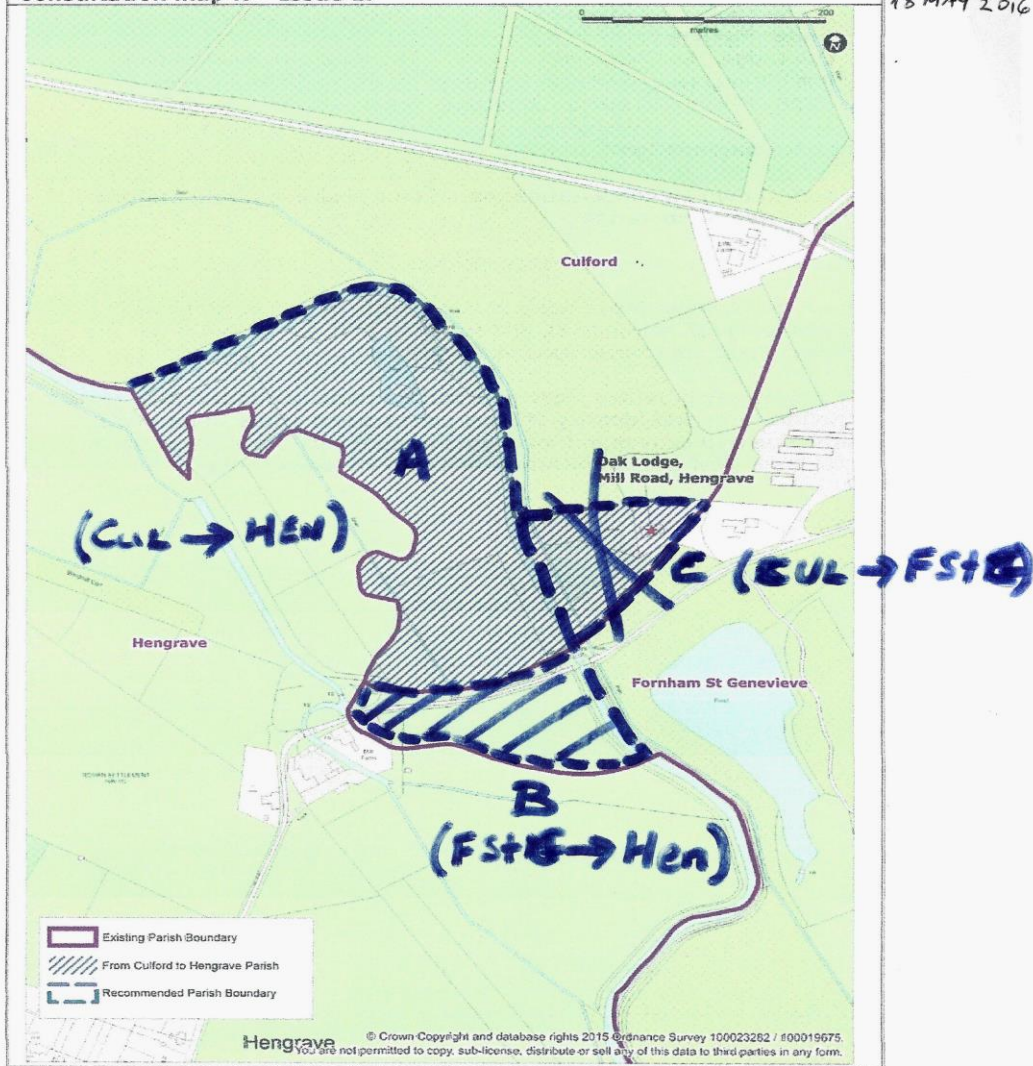
Lodge land north east of the river is transferred to Fornham St Genevieve parish to reflect the interests and identity of local electors and offer them more effective and convenient local government whilst additionally enabling more effective and convenient delivery of local services and a more cohesive community.

12. It is further recommended that the new boundary line between Fornham St Genevieve and Hengrave parishes be extended along the river to include the small area of land lying south of Mill Road and south west of the river extending up to Mill Farm Hengrave. This utilises the strong natural boundary of the river and relates to a small area of orphan land more naturally associated with Hengrave. This area of land is attached to Mill Farm and by transfer from Fornham St Genevieve parish to Hengrave parish would potentially provide a more appropriate parish boundary to reflect the interests and identity of local electors and offer them more effective and convenient local government as well as enabling more effective and convenient delivery of local services and a more cohesive community.
13. For the sake of good order please find attached an amended plan which will help to clarify evidence in support of boundary change proposals:
 - "A" Land west of River Lark and north of Mill Road to be transferred from Culford to Hengrave parish
 - "B" Land west of River Lark and south of Mill Road to be transferred from Fornham St Genevieve to Hengrave parish
 - "C" Oak Lodge to be transferred from Culford to Fornham St Genevieve parish

[see map overleaf]

18 MAY 2016

Consultation map K - Issue 17



14. There is reason to believe that this would gain the consensus of both Hengrave and Fornham St Genevieve parish councils as well as that of electors residing at or nearby to Mill Farm Hengrave.
15. The above are significant new issues which are deserving of careful consideration by the Working Party before reaching a conclusion on final recommendation to Council."

It was subsequently clarified to the elector that the purpose of the phase 2 consultation was to test the final recommendation. Furthermore, the new boundary changes proposed by them would result in an outcome that those taking part in the phase 2 consultation could not necessarily have anticipated in their responses (or decision not to respond). The officers also confirmed the response of Culford, West Stow and Wordwell Parish Council to the elector. In response to this exchange of information, the elector further commented:

"Culford supported the transfer to Fornham St Genevieve in Phase 1 consultation but in Phase 2 had no particular preference either way so went along with the emerging Working Party recommendation - their primary emphasis being the logic for transfer out of Culford.

The main issues of strong natural river boundary and properties east of the river being physically cut-off from Hengrave since 1991 do not appear to have been closely examined by parishes or Working Party and it seems sensible to look at the wider picture again quite carefully.

I can understand that individual electors will have quite strong emotional attachment or personal affinity to one side of a boundary or another - but I have made the assumption that serious decisions on electoral boundaries are not normally decided on emotion but on dispassionate balance of judgement having regard to all available evidence.

I am content for the Working Party to pause for reflection before either pursuing the current recommendation or establishing significant difference arising from the additional evidence leading to future CGR fast or slow track. I regret that I was not aware of Phase 1 and Phase 2 consultation until after end April cut-off having not been contacted directly or missed any discussion or report at parish level."

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